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**The Piano Works of Stefans Grové (1922-2014):
A Study of Stylistic Influences, Technical Elements and
Canon Formation in South African Art Music**

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**Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts**

City, University of London

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September 2016

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Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the following persons and institutions, without whose help I would not have been able to complete this document:

My supervisor, Dr. Christopher Wiley, for his hard work and expertise in guiding me through my research and the completion of this thesis. My piano teacher at the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, Prof. Ronan O'Hora, for the many insightful lessons and discussions.

My parents, Prof. Marinus and Mrs. Marie Schoeman and my family, Mrs. Adèle Groenewald, Adèle Venter, Dawid Venter and Kosie Schoeman as well as my partner, Ashley Fripp. Prof. Joseph Stanford, my piano teacher between 1998 and 2009, who first acquainted me with Stefans Grové and his music, and who instilled my passion for the methodology of piano playing and teaching. Ms. Tessa Uys and Ms. Maria Tretyakova for their guidance and support throughout this project.

The Oppenheimer Memorial Trust, the National Research Foundation, the Wingate Scholarships, the Worshipful Company of Cordwainers, the Drake Calleja Trust, the Guildhall School Trust and City University London for generous financial support.

Dr. Gerrit Jordaan, for his hard work in engraving the music examples for Chapters 1 and 2 of this thesis as well as Antoni Schonken and Arthur Feder for engraving those in Chapter 3. Isobel Rycroft, Music Library, University of Pretoria and Santie de Jongh, DOMUS, University of Stellenbosch. Dr. Anzél Gerber, for many discussions on performance and pedagogy as well as being instrumental in commissioning Grové's Concerto for Cello, Piano and Orchestra (2013). Prof. Stephanus Muller and Prof. Chris Walton for their kind support and their extensive research on Grové's music.

The Southern African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) for providing me with many of Grové's scores and for commissioning several of his works, with particular thanks to Noelene Kotzé.

Dr. Laudan Nooshin and Mr. Ian Pace from City University London, and Dr. Kate Romano from the Guildhall School of Music & Drama for their support and advice throughout this degree.

The late Prof. Stefans Grové, the subject of this thesis, for his wonderful music and for his kind assistance during my research for this document.

Abstract

Stefans Grové (1922-2014) is widely regarded as one of South Africa's most distinguished composers of art music. He was one of the most prolific contributors to the country's piano literature, having written large-scale cycles as well as several miniatures for the instrument. This thesis engages with his more widely-performed oeuvre, as well as earlier works that are forgotten or not currently in the public domain. A number of his piano works composed towards the end of his life are discussed here for the first time in an academic context. The two main premises explored in this thesis are the composer's stylistic development and his approach to elements of piano technique and performance. His pianistic oeuvre is divided into style periods, and the seminal structural tools that recur throughout his creative career are evaluated.

A study of the composer's engagement with indigenous Southern African musical and cultural elements forms a substantial part of the second and fourth chapters of this thesis. The realisation of technical elements in Grové's piano music for concert performers as well as less advanced players is discussed in the third chapter, with reference to the formulations on the didactics of piano playing by pedagogues such as Heinrich Neuhaus, Béla Bartók, József Gát and Geörgy Sándor. Aspects of finger technique, articulation and pedalling are the main points of investigation. In the outer chapters, Grové is placed within the historical context of piano tuition in South Africa and his position within the national canon of art music is considered and contextualised.

Abbreviations

ABRSM – Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music

DOMUS – Documentation Centre for Music, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa

FET – Further Education and Training, Grades 10-12 of Secondary School Education in South Africa

IAM – Indigenous Art Music, as included in the National Curriculum Statement (Grade 10-12), Department of Basic Education, South Africa

ILAM – International Library of African Music, Grahamstown, South Africa

NCS – National Curriculum Statement, Department of Basic Education, South Africa

SABC – South African Broadcasting Corporation

SACM – South African College of Music, University of Cape Town

SAMRO – Southern African Music Rights Organisation

SASMT – South African Society of Music Teachers

SENA – SAMRO Endowment for the National Arts

UCT – University of Cape Town, South Africa

UNISA – University of South Africa

WAM – Western Art Music, as included in the NCS, Department of Basic Education, South Africa

INTRODUCTION

1. Foreword

Stefans Grové (23 July 1922 – 29 May 2014) is widely regarded as one of South Africa's most distinguished composers. His large oeuvre includes an opera, a ballet, several works for symphony orchestra, choir works, concertos for various instruments and orchestra, a vast and varied amount of chamber music, as well as solo flute, clarinet, organ and piano works.

My first personal encounter with the composer took place in January 2004. As one of the participants in the 10th UNISA (University of South Africa) International Piano Competition, I was required to prepare his piano work *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003). This was the set piece for the first round of the competition, which takes place every four years in Pretoria, South Africa. Founded in 1982, the UNISA Music Competition has developed into one of the most important events of its kind in the world and in 1991 became a member of the World Federation of International Music Competitions in Geneva. Since its inception, the competition has promoted contemporary South African music by commissioning both up-and-coming and established composers to write works for various instruments (Paxinos 1994: 207). During the past three decades UNISA has hosted both national and international competitions for piano, voice, violin, viola, cello, guitar, organ, flute and clarinet. Grové was one of the most eminent composers to be engaged by UNISA and three of his piano works were used as test pieces in the competition (1986, 1992 and 2004). *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* was specially commissioned by UNISA and the Southern African Music Rights Organisation (hereafter SAMRO) for the 2004 Piano Competition. It is only a short work, but it contains many of the seminal features of Grové's mature style. At first glance, it is readily apparent that *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* is constructed of short motifs, making it difficult to trace an overall coherence. Even the slightly longer phrases (never more than two bars long) are a compilation of short motivic units. One of its many technical challenges, then, is to move seamlessly from one unit to another within a very fast tempo. The general occurrence of wide jumps between the registers of the piano coupled to a wealth of details of dynamics and articulation can easily result in a harsh tone and an overall atmosphere of aggressiveness in performance. An abundance of accents and the fast repetition of chords, often involving dissonant intervals of the major or minor second, reminded me of similar instances in Bartók's piano music (particularly from his *Bagatelles*, op. 6 onwards) as well as Mervyn Cooke's description in *The Cambridge Companion to the Piano*:

Many poor performances of Bartók's piano music emphasise its percussive quality to the detriment of all else. Anyone who has heard recordings of Bartók's own playing, or indeed who has taken the time to study the wide range of subtle articulation markings printed in the composer's scores, will surely agree with Roy Howat's verdict that he was 'a pianist of the lyrical Romantic tradition – never a hard hitter – with an exceptional ear for fine nuances of timbre, rhythm and melody' (Cooke 1998: 198).

Already during an initial study of Grové's *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance*, I found that a successful performance was dependent on achieving a balance between the general percussive character of the piece and its many finer dynamic nuances. Cooke's chapter not only directed my attention to the similarity between Grové's colouristic approach and that of Bartók, but also to his stylistic position in relation to compositional trends of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, both in South Africa and abroad. Grové may have received his early musical training in an environment that was very far removed from the mainstream developments in European and American art music, but he was certainly aware of the 'anti-Romantic' sentiments harboured by composers such as Stravinsky, Bartók and Prokofiev. Howat's statement that Bartók was 'a pianist from the lyrical Romantic tradition' can be connected to the fact that he studied piano with István Thomán, a pupil of Franz Liszt (Fischer 2001: 92-93). As a performer and pedagogue Bartók engaged on an intense level with Liszt's music and instilled this tradition of piano-playing into his students (Fischer 2001: 93 & Suchoff 2002: 5, 16). By contrast, his own piano works from the early 1900s reveal an increasing tendency towards a more transparent and economical texture. He gradually moved away from the Romantic influences of Liszt and Brahms, and he emphasised the percussive qualities and a greater variety of possibilities of articulation on the piano.¹ Bartók strongly admired Debussy as a composer who investigated pianistic colours, without trying to use the instrument to produce 'legato, cantabile lines, which are more idiomatic to a bowed or wind instrument' (Fischer 2001: 94).

Before I became acquainted with Grové's music, I had already performed works by two younger-generation South African composers: *Chaconne* (1999) by Hendrik Hofmeyr (b. 1957) and the suite *From the Poets* (1992) by Peter Klatzow (b. 1945). I had also studied the piano music of Grové's South African contemporaries, including *Pastorale e Capriccio*, *Night Music*, *Ricordanza* and *Tristia*

¹ Bartók expressed his views in a radio broadcast on 2 July 1944, during which he talked about his Piano Suite, op. 14: "When this work was composed, I had in mind the refinement of piano technique – changing it into a more transparent style. This is a style of 'bone and muscle', opposing the heavily-chordal writing of the late-Romantic period. Unessential ornaments (like broken chords) are omitted, making it a simpler style" (Bartók 1944).

by Arnold van Wyk (1916-1983), as well as *Preludes*, op. 18 by Hubert du Plessis (1922-2011).² To my mind, all of these works reveal a predilection for densely-textured Romantic piano writing.³ The character of Grové's *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* seemed to me closer to the percussive idioms of Bartók's *Allegro Barbaro* or the piano music of Stravinsky (who was, indeed, one of the first composers to use the piano as a percussion instrument, in orchestral works such as *Les Noces*, 1914-23). Although Grové does not incorporate elements of the post-1945 *avant-garde* in his compositions, his transparent textures do convey a modernist freshness that sets him apart from the Romantic style favoured by his South African colleagues (Muller 2006: 3 & I. Grové 2013: 141).

It was not only the use of timbre in *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* that reminded me of Bartók, but also the strong reference to African folklore – both in the title as well as melodic and rhythmic fragments. In the programme notes to *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance*, Stephanus Muller writes that Grové is the 'first Afrikaner composer, and subsequently the most successful South African composer, to engage in a rapprochement between his Western craft and his physical, and in many ways metaphysical, African space' (Muller 2003: 2). It thus appeared to me that Grové built on the foundations laid by Bartók, by combining his personal style with elements of indigenous folk music from his home country and adjacent regions.

A week before the UNISA competition, I had the opportunity to play the work for the composer in a masterclass. As other pianists who had the opportunity to discuss his works with him would attest (Botha 2007; Stolp 2013; Swart 2013), Grové immediately communicated understanding and appreciation. During the masterclass he did not focus on technical elements. Rather, he explained how each motif can be linked to a certain dramatic gesture. *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* was

² Stephanus Muller (Muller & Walton 2006: 2) claims that Grové 'never knew Van Wyk or Du Plessis that well'. He also stated that the 'three composers did not share the same emotionality, moved in different circles, enjoyed a different sense of humour and had different friends'. Du Plessis and Grové both studied with the British composer William Henry Bell in Cape Town in the 1940s. They seldom met, as Du Plessis was lecturing in Grahamstown at the time. Many years later, Du Plessis (1973: 73) wrote: "Both Prof. and Mrs Bell became very fond of Stefans Grové and greatly admired his talent. When later I got to know him, I felt similarly disposed towards him. Of the three of us [John Joubert, another South African composer who studied with Bell, was the third], Stefans was the most 'intellectual' musician, showing a predisposition towards 'neo-classical' linear structures. John and I leaned towards 'neo-romanticism'".

³ In a review written by an unknown author (signed E.R.) in the journal *Music and Letters* (1965, Vol. 46.1), Hubert du Plessis's *Preludes*, op. 18 are described as works that show 'plenty of pianistic imagination within an idiom that is basically romantic [sic]'. Matildie Thom, a music lecturer at the University of the Free State, described the Romantic influences in Arnold van Wyk's piano works in her MMus dissertation, *Die Laatklavierwerke van Arnold van Wyk (1916-1983)* (Thom 2006).

inspired by the ritualistic *Nyau Dance* from Malawi, as described in the ethnomusicological writings of Hugh Tracey (*Sound of Africa* series, 1973).⁴ Indeed, the composer's notes on the connection between the piece and the energetic tribal dance on which it is based were published along with the music. It was only during this masterclass that I started to understand how the composer traced all the individual motivic fragments and sound colours back to imaginative visual images, choreographic gestures or the inflections of speech (much like Bartók's *parlando rubato*). Grové emphasised a continuous rhythmic flow in the work and discussed how a very fast tempo is necessary to convey the virile quality of the *Nyau Dance*, which in Malawian culture is usually performed only by young men. He did express a concern regarding one particular technical challenge in bars 23 and 24 (see Example 1). He felt that the rapid shifts of dynamic marking coupled to the wide leaps between registers in the left hand would pose difficulty to the pianist and that the effect would consequently be distorted. In this section, it would help if the right hand takes the main responsibility of making the rapid dynamic shifts, leaving the left hand to concentrate on the wide leaps. The left hand will make a natural crescendo when changing register.

Example 1: Stefans Grové, *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance*, Music from Africa no. 23 (2003), b. 23



I found Grové's comments on this passage helpful as they opened up discussions of editorial details and the specificity of the text.⁵ The process of achieving a balance between technical difficulties and

⁴ In the programme notes the composer uses the name *Nyasaland* and not *Malawi*. Before its independence, Malawi was a British protectorate and Hugh Tracey used the old name in his essays. Even if the composer followed Tracey in this respect, I still find it awkward that Grové did not use the current name in his notes. This oversight may have contributed to musicologists suggesting that his inclusion of indigenous Southern African elements in his music is a form of neo-colonialism (Pooley 2008, 2013).

⁵ There were a few misprints in the UNISA's published score of *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* and I found it helpful to clarify these details with the composer during the masterclass.

elements of characterisation also formed part of this discourse. It became apparent to me that the rapid dynamic shifts in bars 23 and 24 of *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* are no more than isolated examples of how the pianist could use rubato to adjust the tempo to facilitate execution. Strategically-placed commas or caesuras could make all the difference in successfully communicating such a dramatic gesture. I saw this as a unique opportunity to interact with the composer and to gather ideas on shaping my interpretation of the music. Grové's apparent flexibility in terms of tempo markings and his constant emphasis on colour, transparency and dramatic impact contributed to my impression that the score, albeit filled with meticulous detail, leaves a great deal of space for the performer to construct a unique and communicative sound world. Grové came across as being prescriptive about clarity of articulation through the only sparse use of the sustain pedal. Simultaneously, his emphasis on improvisatory freedom, spontaneity and imagination from the performer became apparent.

The masterclass and discussion with Grové had a significant impact on my first performance of his *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance*. This experience prompted me to investigate Grové's general compositional output. Through further research I came across a large portion of his piano music that is no longer in the public domain. During a career of almost seventy years, Grové wrote several large-scale works for professional pianists as well as easier piano pieces that were included in UNISA's graded music examination syllabus.⁶ I also heard Grové perform his own piano improvisations in the style of other composers at a concert in 2005. It turns out that these improvisations, entitled *An Experience in Musical Styles*, were written down and presented during numerous lecture recitals in the USA and South Africa. They provide an overview of keyboard styles ranging from William Byrd to Noel Coward and many of them can be regarded as well-balanced musical compositions in their own right. With the help of SAMRO and the Documentation Centre for Music (hereafter DOMUS) at the University of Stellenbosch, I have located piano works from Grové's student years in the 1940s and 1950s. Although the composer had yet to find his unique creative voice in these early works, they are nevertheless of academic interest. It is possible to trace within

⁶ The University of South Africa (UNISA) offers graded practical and music theory examinations. This system is similar to the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and Trinity College of Music in London and will be discussed in greater depth in Chapters 1 and 4 of the thesis.

them the forerunners to the elements that constitute Grové's mature style, which in terms of his piano writing manifested itself in 1966 when he composed his *Toccata and Rhapsody*.⁷

In 1984 Grové experienced a 'road to Damascus moment' (Walton 2007: 28), when he heard an indigenous South African work song performed by a street labourer in Pretoria. He integrated this melody into his *Sonate op Afrika-Motiewe* for violin and piano (1984-5) and subsequently started to catalogue his works under the title *Music from Africa*. By the time of Grové's death in 2014, this series included 45 complete works of which ten are for solo piano,⁸ one is for piano duet (piano four hands), one is for clavichord with the option of performing it on the piano, two are for piano and orchestra and twelve are for chamber ensembles that include the piano. When taking these figures into account, one could certainly classify the post-1984 'African' period as Grové's most productive one in terms of piano writing. In an interview he asserted that 'Of all the instruments that I learnt to play I am most intimately acquainted with the piano and it remains my most beloved instrument. The older I get, the easier it becomes to compose for the piano' (Schoeman 2012a). Grové's pianistic oeuvre has indeed expanded exponentially during the last ten years of his life. In 2012 he composed his last solo piano work, a cycle of four movements entitled *My Jaargetye/My Seasons*. This was commissioned by the Music Department (Odeion School of Music) of the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein to be performed by myself at a Festival and Symposium, held in August 2012 to commemorate the composer's 90th birthday. During this Festival and Symposium, I gave performances of other large-scale works, including *Nonyana* (1994) and *Images from Africa* (1999). Together with the Odeion String Quartet I also premiered Grové's Piano Quintet *A Venda Legend* (2012). In 2013 the SAMRO Endowment for the National Arts commissioned a new Concerto for Cello, Piano and Orchestra, entitled *Bushman Prayers*. This Double Concerto was premiered by myself, the cellist Anzél Gerber and the Cape Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Yasuo Shinozaki in Cape Town on 11 June 2015, followed by a repeat performance with the KwaZulu-Natal Philharmonic Orchestra and conductor Carlos Izcaray in Durban a week later. Through many of these activities, I benefitted from extensive opportunities to interact with Grové. This provided me with

⁷ The *Toccata* (1966) is still a prescribed work in the Grade 8 syllabus of the UNISA Examinations. In an autobiographical article, Grové himself refers to the *Toccata* as his first mature piano work (Grové 1975b: 69). The *Rhapsody* has been withdrawn by the composer (Zwamborn 1995: 23).

⁸ One of the nine chamber works that form part of the *Music from Africa* series, *Conversations (Music from Africa No. 31, 2005)*, was written for the rarely encountered combination of piano and organ. The fourth movement (*Monologue II*) is a *Toccata* for solo piano and, according to Grové, can be performed separately. This movement is included in the ten 'African' solo piano works.

access to his thought processes and highlighted attributes in his works that he considered most important. He described himself as a composer of programme music who converted things that he had 'seen, heard and read' into musical sounds (Schoeman 2012a). Although Grové's own insights and programmatic descriptions are invaluable in the process of bringing his music to life in performance, I also find it helpful to study the research of others on several aspects of his work. In the 'Literature review' of this introduction I provide a summary of these various musicological discourses. Within this thesis I would like to expand on these, but also emphasise new areas of research. As a performer of Grové's music, I have found comparatively little discussion of his major contribution to the piano literature and to performing practices in South Africa. I find that several aspects of his distinctive colouristic approach to the piano are having a profound effect on my technique. This includes finger control and dexterity as well as refinement in my use of the three pedals (sustaining pedal, *una corda* and sostenuto pedal). Although there are references to some aspects of performance in articles on Grové's piano music by Joseph Stanford, Izak Grové and Inette Swart, a more in-depth study is needed on the technical challenges in the composer's vast oeuvre.

The educational value of indigenous music in South Africa was seriously neglected during the apartheid era (1948-1994). After the first democratic elections in 1994 it has taken another seventeen years to devise a structure for the inclusion of traditional music into secondary school curricula, which until recently centred primarily on the history of Western art music. A new National Curriculum Statement (NCS) on Music was published by the National Department of Education in 2011. The subject area of Indigenous Art Music in South Africa has for the first time been included in the Further Education and Training Phase (Grades 10-12 at secondary school level). This curriculum is still in the early stages of its implementation and the aim is to equip young musicians, many of whom will eventually become piano students at the various music departments of universities in South Africa, with an awareness of the rich diversity of traditional music cultures in that country. Grové, essentially a composer of the European-American art music tradition who integrates elements of indigenous music into his works, may be regarded as a pivotal figure in the education of South African pianists. However, his music is currently studied mainly by advanced musicians. Some of his works are included in the UNISA examination syllabus for Grade 7, Grade 8 and Performer's Assessment (previously Teacher's and Performer's Licentiate). A selected number of his easier piano pieces (from the 'African' period and earlier) were once on the UNISA syllabus for the lower grades, but they are now almost forgotten. Through my research I endeavour to re-acquaint piano students, professional musicians and teachers alike with Grové's wider oeuvre and to draw their attention to interpretative questions, elements of piano technique as well as the diverse cultural influences in his

works. I also intend to shed light on Grové's last piano works (2010-2012) that have hitherto not been included in any academic discussions. Finally, I shall place Grové's pianistic oeuvre within the larger canon of South African art music. The repertoire of other composers from that country as well as the role of educational institutions and curricula in establishing a canon will be evaluated.

2. The Aims and Intentions of the Thesis

The principal aim of this thesis is to define the distinct stylistic and technical elements in the piano works of Stefans Grové. I shall limit this study to the composer's works for solo piano, while also making peripheral reference to chamber music and orchestral works that played a major role in his stylistic development. Firstly, I investigate the history of piano-playing in Grové's native country South Africa, in order to determine his educational background and how this influenced his formation as a pianist and consequently also his compositional approach to the instrument. I then move on to divide his pianistic oeuvre into style periods, and investigate his use of structural and colouristic construction techniques. A substantial part of the thesis will be devoted to delineating Grové's engagement with Southern African indigenous musical elements and to garnering a closer understanding of how he integrates them into his piano music. His distinctive approach to piano technique will be discussed with reference to a variety of case studies, in particular the large-scale piano works from his so-called 'African' period. The thesis further aims to determine Grové's position within the South African art music canon, by evaluating educational curricula and syllabuses in that country. In this discussion of canon formation, I also place Grové's piano works alongside those of his South African contemporaries for the purposes of further contextualisation.

3. Chapter Outline and Theoretical Framework of the Thesis

Chapter 1: A historical overview of pianism in South Africa and Stefans Grové's position within this context

Stefans Grové studied with a variety of teachers in South Africa and thus had exposure to several piano methods. He became one of the country's most prolific composers of music for the instrument and contributed a large output of works for concert performers as well as less experienced players. The overall aim of this chapter is to introduce the composer biographically and to explore the relationship between his piano music and broader developments in the South African tradition of art music. I therefore conduct a historical study on the origins of the education of pianists in that country. The initial role of European musicians who lived and worked in the Cape Colony such as Frederick Logier and Carl Junghenn is investigated. Their educational methods predominantly

stemmed from the German tradition of piano-playing, and their activities had an impact on the establishment of the country's first university music department, the Stellenbosch Conservatoire (1905). Grové's childhood teachers had in turn trained with the founders of the Stellenbosch Conservatoire and this possibly explains why the keyboard works of the German Baroque and Classical periods constituted such a substantial part of his earlier education. My research also branches out to a number of British musicians who lived and work in Cape Town after the foundation of the South African College of Music (1910). The focal point will be to investigate the pianistic legacy of Grové's three main teachers at the South African College – William Henry Bell, Erik Chisholm and Cameron Taylor. Other British pianists such as Roger Ascham, Sydney Rosenbloom and Horace Barton are also discussed in this chapter. They composed and published many piano works after settling in South African cities like Port Elizabeth, Johannesburg and Pretoria and helped laying the educational foundations for a new generation of performers and composers in the country. The UNISA music examination system (established in 1894 under the auspices of the ABRSM) played a significant role in bringing music education syllabuses to all parts of South Africa at the end of the nineteenth century. It was only as late as 1978 that the works of locally-born and educated composers were systematically included in the UNISA Examination system (Paxinos 1994: 161). Grové was one of the first composers to write bespoke works for the syllabus. The final section of this chapter engages more directly with Grové's pianistic background and his connection with educational traditions in that country. I also evaluate his lifelong connection with the UNISA Examination system, either through his early music studies or his later compositional activities.

Chapter 2: The piano music of Stefans Grové – a stylistic survey

The second chapter of the thesis moves to the central thrust of the subject, as it endeavours to shed light on Grové's extensive contribution to the South African piano literature. It has to be stated that this chapter is considerably longer than the other parts of the thesis. Through a comprehensive chronological survey, I indicate how Grové's style has evolved and how certain seminal compositional elements recurred throughout his career. This brings across the concept that there is a distinct homogeneity to his overall pianistic output. I, however, did not want to divide this large amount of material over more than one chapter, as this would inevitably interrupt the narrative as well as the periodisation model that I devise in order to structure this discussion.

Furthermore, I endeavour to shed light on the multifaceted nature of Grové's piano works by focusing on seminal structural tools, the extensive variety of timbral concepts and also the

integration of specific indigenous elements. The differentiation between large-scale works and miniatures plays a significant role in this chapter. I briefly refer to existing discussions of structural elements by Mary Rörich (1987 & 1992), Mareli Stolp (2013) and Izak Grové (2013),⁹ but ultimately draw my own analytical conclusions on the large-scale works, with particular emphasis on *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (1994) and *Yemoja (Images from Africa)* (1999). Several of these works contain a set of germinating cells in the opening introduction that are then further developed and transformed throughout. Some of the germinating motivic elements reappear in later works and to demonstrate this I compare *Yemoja* to the set of five small miniatures, *Glimpses* (2004). The composer often referred to the impact of his orchestration on his piano music (Muller 2007, Schoeman 2012a, 2012b). In terms of clarifying certain stylistic concepts, it is therefore necessary to situate Grové's piano works within his general oeuvre and peripherally to refer to both his orchestral and chamber music. At various points during the chapter, the impact of Grové's literary activities on his piano works, particularly those of his fourth style period, is evaluated by means of an investigation of short stories, sketches and the choices of programmatic titles. In the final section of the chapter, I formulate ideas on late-style developments in Grové's pianistic oeuvre by drawing on texts by Adorno, Muller and Saïd. I trace the developments within Grové's so-called African period, and his very final works (written between 2010 and 2012) are investigated in more detail.

Chapter 3: The realisation of technical elements in the piano works of Stefans Grové

In this chapter I apply to Grové's works the technical principles of major pedagogues on the didactics of piano-playing. The eight concepts of finger technique that appear in Chapter 4 of Heinrich Neuhaus's book *The Art of Piano Playing* are helpful tools in the realisation of pianistic difficulties that appear throughout Grové's oeuvre. Concurrently with Neuhaus's book, I also utilise József Gát's book *The Technique of Piano Playing* in developing methods to execute challenging octave passages and leaps. These didactic treatises also influenced my choice of fingerings in particularly complex passage-work in Grové's piano music. I furthermore draw upon solutions to a wide variety of technical problems from Geörgy Sándor's book *On Piano Playing – Motion, Sound and Expression*.

⁹ Izak Grové is Emeritus Professor in Musicology at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa. He is a cousin of Stefans Grové. Stephanus Muller (Muller & Walton 2006: 55) claims Izak Grové's article 'Ek het huis toe gekom: Stefans Grové op 75' (I. Grové 1998) to be an important contribution to academic scholarship on the composer's music.

This source is useful in describing the appropriate movements and practising methods when negotiating challenging corners of Grové's pianistic output.

Benjamin Suchoff's (2002) guide to Bartók's *Mikrokosmos* and Victoria Fischer's article (1995) and chapter (2001) on the educational piano works of that composer provide insight into observing and executing the large variety of articulation markings in Grové's piano works, particularly his fantasy *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (1994). *The Pianist's Guide to Pedaling* by Joseph Banowetz along with Neuhaus's supplementary discussion to Chapter 4 in his book are employed in developing strategies for a refined use of the sustaining, *una corda* and the *sostenuto* pedals in Grové's works. The composer's application of regular pedalling techniques (such as pedalling for the sake of legato or acoustic enhancement), the use of the middle pedal in the creation of a plethora of overtones, and the slow release and rapid depressing of the sustaining pedal are all aspects that attest to his refined colouristic approach to the piano. Although references to pedalling are interspersed throughout the chapter, I devote a separate section to those examples in Grové's *Music from Africa* series that may be regarded as a more contemporary approach to the notation and implementation of these pianistic devices.

Before concluding the chapter, I return to the pieces that Grové composed for UNISA examination syllabuses to ascertain how they relate to the technical principles that are discussed earlier in the chapter. The technically less-challenging works of the African period, including *Glimpses* (2004) and *Obstinacy* (2007), also form part of the description of Grové's educational contribution.

Chapter 4: A critical evaluation of Stefans Grové's piano works in relation to canon formation and curriculum design in South Africa

Where previous chapters focused on a historical view of Grové's pianism, along with the stylistic and technical content of his works, this final chapter endeavours to shed light on the composer's position within a national canon of piano literature. I evaluate the role of musicologists, institutions, published scores, and curricula (such as the latest National Curriculum Statement of the Department of Basic Education as well as the syllabuses of UNISA) in the formation of this canon. I furthermore explore the concept of canon formation throughout the chapter by referring to key concepts in Marcia Citron's book *Gender and the Musical Canon*. The main emphasis will fall on Grové and his contemporaries, particularly Arnold van Wyk and Hubert du Plessis, who represent a group of composers from a past historical era. The impact and relevance of their work in the current sphere of South African art music practice will be investigated. This will be supplemented by observations

on the role of instrumental music tuition in schools as well as the integration of South African art music into the national curriculum. The chapter will be divided into three categories that define the principal characteristics of South African piano music: virtuosic works written for advanced pianists, works that amalgamate Western construction techniques and elements from indigenous traditional South African music, and finally educational piano works composed for less experienced players. I shall discuss Grové's contribution in all three of these areas.

4. A Review of Literature and other Sources

4.1 Principal Writings on Stefans Grové's life and works

Although I have referred to selected sources in the above chapter outline, in this following section I intend to further elaborate on the writings that assisted me in my research on Stefans Grové.

In 1987, the eminent South African musicologist Mary Rörich wrote a substantial chapter in *Composers of South Africa Today*, edited by Peter Klatzow (1987: 77-101), in which she chronologically illustrated the stylistic development of chamber and orchestral music from Grové's youth until the early 1980s. Her analysis of the large-scale symphonic poem in the form of a concerto grosso, *Kettingrye/Chain Rows* (1978), encompasses several of Grové's methods of motivic transformation, timbre modulation and orchestration. This chapter was also revised as an article for UNISA's journal *Musica* in 1992. Rörich's research on the earlier part of Grové's oeuvre assisted me in garnering a better understanding of tonal, rhythmic and structural procedures in his music. This formed an important basis for my discussions of Grové's neo-Baroque and atonal piano works in the second chapter of this thesis.

The most important source on the composer, Stephanus Muller and Chris Walton's book *A Composer in Africa – Essays on the Life and Work of Stefans Grové* (henceforth Muller & Walton 2006), was published in 2006. Apart from the two editors' own insightful chapters, the anthology also includes historical accounts by some of Grové's students (Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph, Étienne van Rensburg and Ray Sprenkle) and an essay on the composer's flute music by John Hinch. Grové's literary sketches from the newspaper *Hoofstad* appear as an Appendix, alongside an annotated work catalogue and an extensive bibliography. The foreword was written by another student of Grové, the executive editor of the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2001), John Tyrrell. *A Composer in Africa – Essays on the Life and Work of Stefans Grové* is the first international publication on Grové's music and one of the few major sources written in English (excepting Grové's

own sketches, which were not translated from the original Afrikaans for inclusion within the volume). Two further articles appeared in international journals, including Muller's 'A Composer in Africa: An Interview with Stefans Grové' (*Tempo*, 2007) and Walton's 'Composing Africa: Stefans Grové at 85' (*The Musical Times*, 2007). The book and articles by Muller and Walton provide comprehensive overviews of Grové's biography, aspects of his style, and detailed analytical references to selected works.

Grové's identity as a white Afrikaner composer in South Africa has also received attention from Chris Walton and Stephanus Muller. In his essay, 'Connect only Connect: Stefans Grové's Road from Bethlehem to Damascus' (Muller & Walton 2006: 63-73), Walton discusses the composer's position within the complicated socio-political apartheid era. His earlier article 'Bond of Broeders' (Walton 2004: 63-74) targets this difficult question in more depth, as he heavily criticises the racially-exclusive policies of Anton Hartman (1918-1982), the Head of Music at the SABC and an ardent supporter of white South African composers (including Grové). Muller carefully considers the impact of Grové's Afrikaner identity in two separate essays: 'Place, Identity and a Station Platform' and 'Imagining Afrikaners Musically: Reflections on the African Music of Stefans Grové' (Muller & Walton 2006: 1-8; 17-28). As an Afrikaner who received a substantial portion of his musical training during apartheid South Africa, Muller's articles are very critical of the musical establishments of the National Party's regime in the country. Although his essays on Grové focus more on the metaphysical implications of the composer's adopted 'Afrocentricity' along with aspects of musical analysis, his later article on Arnold van Wyk (Muller 2008: 61-78) ventures more explicitly into the subject of how gifted artists were often marginalised during apartheid.

A Festschrift (2013) was published by the South African Academy for Science and Arts in celebration of Grové's 90th birthday in 2012. This edition of *Journal of Humanities* (Vol. 53, No. 2) is entirely dedicated to aspects of Grové's work. The editor of the Festschrift, Izak Grové, contributed an article on the composer's stylistic development, entitled 'Between Bethlehem and Bloubergstrand: from the 'old' towards the 'own' in Stefans Grové's oeuvre'. This discussion is related to his essays of 1998 and 2001, in which he advocates a stylistic homogeneity that connects Grové's earliest compositions to his mature works from the 'African period'. In this essay from 2013, Izak Grové does not take into account the latest works of the composer, although he briefly refers to *Conversations* for organ and piano (Music from Africa No. 31, 2005). Izak Grové's writings strongly informed my research on the composer's stylistic development as well as the general colouristic, harmonic, motivic and contrapuntal aspects of his oeuvre.

The articles for the 2013 Festschrift were all written in Afrikaans (with the addition of English abstracts), and include several new contributions to research on Grové's piano music. The composer's engagement with indigenous elements forms a substantial part of the various discourses in this journal. There seems to be differing opinions about the implications of Grové's treatment of indigenous South African elements in his music. Gregory Barz, Matildie Thom and Waldo Weyer follow a less critical approach. Barz and Thom describe the influences of the Xhosa *Uhadí* or the Sesotho *Lesiba*¹⁰ bows on Grové's *Raka* Piano Concerto and the piano work *Songs and Dances from Africa* (of which I shall provide a more detailed description in Chapter 2). In his article "The exotic element in the music of Stefans Grové: a manifestation of 'cultural translation'" Weyer provides an extensive exegesis on how Grové's *Mbira Song carried by the Night Breezes* (*Songs and Dances from Africa*, no. 6) should not be seen as a mere relict of an attempt to portray 'exotic' sound colours, but rather as an attempt to create a convincing amalgamation between Western construction techniques and a fabricated indigenous Southern African melody. Thomas Pooley on the other hand disputes the authenticity of the indigenous elements. In his article "'Afrika-Voorstellings': Stefans Grové se *Liedere en Danse van Afrika* as fiksies", he argues that Grové reveals an indifference to the diversity of Southern African cultures in his generalising application of the 'indigenous'. He writes that "Grové's skill in engineering a novel syntax for the dances [*Songs and Dances from Africa*] is remarkable in itself. It draws on a very wide range of references, some of which are generic features of (Southern) African traditions, but most of which are often neither explicitly exoticist nor ethnographic in presentation. Altogether, Grové has constructed an imagined, syncretic image of 'Africa' that reifies 'tradition' in a timeless, ethnographic present. This creates a caricature that ignores the complex cultural-historical relations of the musics and peoples in question" (Pooley 2013: 172). Muller and Walton (2006) also discussed the dangers of neo-colonialism in Grové's application of indigenous elements, but they conclude that the composer's 'Afrocentrism' should not be seen as a political statement and that the synthesis between his 'Western' craft and the music of his black fellow-countrymen produces a subjective, almost fictional vision of what South Africa means to him. This is probably why Muller uses the phrase 'metaphysical African space' when he writes about this creative synthesis (Muller 2003 & 2006).

¹⁰ Barz erroneously refers to the *Lesiba* bow, as Grové attempted to portray a female singer that accompanies herself on the Zulu *Umakhweyana* gourd-resonated bow. As the *Lesiba* bow requires the mouth to reproduce sounds, it would not be possible to play the instrument and sing at the same time. I shall return to this in more depth in Chapter 2 of the thesis.

The 2013 Festschrift also contains essays by two pianists, Mareli Stolp and Inette Swart. They emphasise the impact of their interaction with the composer on their performances of his work, which they demonstrate by means of two case studies (the last movement from *Images from Africa* and the recent set of three pieces, *Haunting Music*). Swart refers to certain colouristic effects in *Haunting Music* that reveal, according to her, the strong influences of Ravel's *Gaspard de la Nuit*. Upon further discussion with Grové, it became clear to me that he is little acquainted with Ravel's score. He did, however, acknowledge the return to his early fascination with impressionistic colours in his last compositions.

These publications notwithstanding, there remains no study that has hitherto endeavoured to provide an in-depth discussion of Grové's complete pianistic oeuvre. Five dissertations on individual piano works (or in one instance, a series of works) have appeared at South African universities over the past twenty years. These dissertations were all written in Afrikaans, which renders research in this area relatively inaccessible to the wider (particularly Anglo-American) music world. The theoretical analysis of Grové's works seems to have been the main priority of these contributions to academia. Alexander Johnson undertook a thorough investigation of rhythm, melody, form and permutation techniques in Grové's piano work *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-1990). Eugene Joubert and Tinus (MC) Botha completed, respectively, Master's and doctoral dissertations in which they identified the transformation of pitch class sets in the more recent *Images from Africa* for piano (Music from Africa no. 18, 1999) and the Concertino for piano and chamber orchestra (Music from Africa no. 24, 2004). Hanlie Zwamborn wrote a short dissertation on the solo piano works of Grové at the University of Stellenbosch in 1995. Although she includes little analytical information, she divides his creativity into stylistic periods with reference to his own autobiographical sketch published in *Musicus*, UNISA's educational journal (Grové 1975b: 68-71). Her dissertation also provided me with a descriptive catalogue of the earlier piano works along with information on those pieces that have been withdrawn by the composer. This dissertation became outdated rather quickly, as most of Grové's important piano works had yet to be composed by 1995.

Grové's contributions to the repertoire for instruments other than the piano have been explored in dissertations and articles. The earliest analysis of his string techniques appear in Engela Joubert's dissertation on Grové's *Sonate of Afrika Motiewe* for Violin and Piano (Music from Africa no. 1, 1984-5). As a student, Grové also studied the viola and in 1994 he composed a Sonata for Viola and Piano (Music from Africa no. 13, 1995), dedicated to Jeanne-Louise Moolman. By the time of his death in 2014, Grové had completed the first movement and various sketches for the second and third

movements of a Viola Concerto (entitled *Journey to the Crystal*). Gerrit Jordaan conducted research on Grové's organ music in his doctoral dissertation (2008) at the Northwest University in Potchefstroom. He also contributed a further article to the Festschrift of 2013 on the three major organ works *Afrika Hymnus I*, *Afrika Hymnus II* and *Afrika Hymnus III*. Jordaan elucidated the composer's depiction of birdsong through a variety of organ registrations. This enabled me to identify similar patterns in Grové's piano work *Images from Africa* (1999). The combination of short staccato and legatissimo articulations on the organ, coupled to a distinctive approach to registration were extensively covered by Jordaan and made it possible for me to relate these discussions to Grové's piano works. In 2004 the flautist John Hinch completed an analytical survey of all of Grové's pieces for wind instruments that had been included in the UNISA Examination syllabus; there is no comparable article on the examination pieces for piano. Alongside his piano studies, Grové also spent much time on honing his craft as a flautist. Hinch's research sheds light on the fact that Grové was much acquainted with the mechanical construction of the flute as well as the broad repertoire for the instrument. He wrote about Grové's fondness for the flute's lower registers and how this crystallised in his compositions. The composer also studied the similarities between the flute and the recorder and he was very much aware of the complexities of cross-fingering, breath control and tonguing on both instruments (Hinch in Muller & Walton 2006: 10). Hinch also strengthened Walton's argument (2007) that Grové was a master at narrowing down his style to write effective miniatures and idiomatic pieces that would not present performers with 'insurmountable difficulties' (Hinch 2006: 12). Several aspects of Hinch's research encouraged me to evaluate Grové's pianistic oeuvre in a similar way.

In addition to his compositional activity, Grové was also a noted writer of short stories who elicited praise from one of South Africa's revered literary figures, the late André P. Brink (Walton 2007: 26). In 2006, Jiendra de Winnaar researched the relationship between Grové's literary work and his music in her Master's dissertation at the University of Pretoria, investigating his published set *Oor mense, diere & dinge* (*On people, animals and things*) and his literary sketches for the Afrikaans newspaper *Hoofstad*. Thom (2013) also investigated the parallels between two of Grové's works and the controversial epic poem *Raka* by NP van Wyk Louw. She has thereby contributed to this discourse by connecting the composer to the literature of others and not merely to his own. Aside from prose and fiction, Grové wrote hundreds of concert reviews for the major newspapers in South Africa. For *Musicus* he also reviewed numerous compact discs and written articles on chromaticism from the Renaissance to the Romantic era. His comprehensive article on the use of dance movement styles in JS Bach's Cantatas confirms him as a leading South African expert on Baroque music. Several

articles and dissertations on Grové's music mention his work as an academic and music critic, but nowhere did I find information on the relationship between these writings and his music. His own writings on elements of performance have impacted my research on the realisation of technical difficulties in his music.

4.2 Further sources on Stefans Grové

Broadly coincident with the publications of Muller and Walton, two German publishers have taken up some of the Grové's music in their catalogues. *Verlag Neue Musik* in Berlin published two piano works (*Nonyana*, the *Ceremonial Dancer* and *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance*) as part of their *New African Music Project*. In Leipzig, *Friedrich Hofmeister Verlag* have taken a keen interest in Grové's chamber music (Walton 2007: 34): his *Soul Bird* (a trio for flute, cello and piano, 1998) and *Musa – Das Tanzlegendchen* (based on a novella by Gottfried Keller, 2006) for speaker and chamber ensemble. Published scores, along with the many copies of original manuscripts that the composer provided me with, enabled me to analyse and practise his works and thus to acquaint myself with the many stylistic and technical features.

Although a select number of Grové's piano works have been recorded, the last commercial compact disc was released by Claremont Records in 1998.¹¹ Aside from these few commercial recordings, I have managed to analyse further audio-visual archive materials at the Music Library of the University of Pretoria.

In the opening 'Foreword', I have discussed my first encounters with Grové. During my research for this document, I have travelled to South Africa on three occasions during which I met and interviewed the composer at his home in Pretoria. In January 2011, we discussed many of his works, his style and his early study years in Bloemfontein, Cape Town and the USA. The website 'classicsa.co.za' asked me to conduct an interview with the composer for publication on his 90th birthday on 23 July 2012 (see Appendix 3 at the end of the thesis). This interview had to take place telephonically, as I was in London at the time. In order to make an accurate transcript of the discussion, I video-recorded the complete telephonic interview. A month later, on 11 August, I

¹¹ GSE Claremont Records was a recording company based in Cape Town, South Africa. The company released several compact discs featuring South African performers and composers. It is not entirely clear when the company ceased activity, but their catalogue is now no longer for sale. University libraries in South Africa are in possession of all commercial recordings that were made of Grové's music.

conducted a public interview with the composer at a Festival and Symposium on his life and works at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein, South Africa. On that occasion, I also made use of the opportunity to have further discussions with Grové and I played more of his works to him at his home a week later. These various interviews and discussions revealed much information on the composer's conception of facilitating technically difficult passages by means of added caesuras and commas. We also discussed the influences of Bartók's articulation markings on Grové's scores, and he referred me to the Bach editions of the Hungarian composer (I only later discovered Victoria Fischer's article and chapter on Bartók's outline of touch species and articulation markings, which I utilise in Chapter 3 of the thesis). The last meeting I had with Grové, was in July 2013. On that occasion, in collaboration with cellist Anzél Gerber, I discussed his new work *Concerto for Cello, Piano and Orchestra Bushman Prayers* with him. Grové was always interested in instrumental techniques, and he addressed questions to Gerber about the performance of harmonics on the cello. He also referred to the text that had inspired the new Double-Concerto (Wilhelm Bleek's transcriptions of Khoisan poetry, collected at Breakwater Convict Station in the Northern Cape during the early 1870s) and performed extracts from the second movement on the piano in his work room.

4.3 Other supporting literature

In the section 'Chapter Outline and Theoretical Framework of the Thesis' I refer to several sources that I consult as part of my research on musical styles, indigenous Southern African music and the didactics of piano-playing. The writings of Theodor Adorno ('Spätstil Beethovens', 1937) and Edward Saïd (*On Late Style*, 2006) have exerted a significant influence on my stylistic survey of Grové's piano music. Further bibliography on twentieth-century music, such as books by Robert Morgan, Vincent Persichetti and Eric Salzman, are also consulted. More specialised sources on the piano music from this period are helpful in formulating detailed descriptions of the influences that Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky, Bartók, Hindemith and Messiaen had on Grové's creative development. *The Cambridge Guide to the Piano* (edited by David Rowland) contains essays on piano styles from the last century, but also on nationalism, repertoire, the instrument's early development, pedagogical traditions and the important pianists of the past. Grové himself directed me to Hindemith's book *A Composer's World* (1952), where the compositional method of using an *Einfall* (inspiration or idea) as structural tool is explained in depth. Hindemith had a particularly strong influence on Grové's neo-Baroque works from the 1950s, and even in his late-works he implemented the German composer's principles of linear counterpoint and the developmental use of motivic *Einfälle*. Danuser's essay 'Inspiration,

Rationalität, Zufall – über musikalische Poetik im 20. Jahrhundert' (1990) is useful in describing the concept of *Einfall* in Grové's music.

In terms of music education in South Africa, my principal sources have been a range of articles. Elizabeth Oehrle (*British Journal of Music Education*, 1993) discusses the social role of indigenous music in South Africa and the shortcomings of teachers to make provision for the systematic inclusion of this subject area in the country's core curriculum in the years prior to the end of Apartheid. More recent statistical research by Jacques De Wet, Anri Herbst and Susan Rijdsdijk (*Journal of Research in Music Education*, 2005) confirms the dearth of sufficient instrumental training in music education at primary and secondary levels in the Western Cape Province. Although the practice of Western musical instruments formed part of teacher training programmes at the time when this article was written, there was almost no provision for the training of indigenous Southern African instruments such as gourd-resonated bows or drums. A series of essays *Musical Arts in Africa: Theory, Practice and Education* (published and edited by Meki Nzewi, Anri Herbst and Kofi Agawu in 2003) has provided new strategies for the inclusion of indigenous music in secondary school curricula. This had a profound impact on the recent National Curriculum Statement (NCS) for Grades 10-12, where indigenous music is finally placed on an equal footing with Western art music. I have studied the NCS and find it to be of concern that Grové (who engages with both of these subject areas) is not included in the list of South African composers that are introduced in the Grade 11 syllabus. Marcia Citron's book *Gender and the Musical Canon* has provided me with information on the broader characteristics of repertorial and disciplinary canons. I have applied her formulations to the South African art music tradition, with specific reference to the composers from that country who were born before the Second World War.

Historical research on piano tuition in South Africa is facilitated by the various publications of Jan Bouws. His book *Geskiedenis van Musiekonderwys in Suid-Afrika (1652-1902)* (The History of Music Education in South Africa) includes valuable information on the early piano teachers in the Cape Colony and the founding of music departments at universities. The Centre for Music Education at the University of Pretoria has compiled a survey entitled *Historical Development of Music Education in South Africa* (edited by Caroline van Niekerk). This document investigates teaching methods used in all provinces of the country, as well as evaluating the implementation of educational systems by Jacques-Dalcroze, Kodály, Orff and others. My research on the UNISA Music Examinations is supported by the 1994 edition of *Musicus* (Vol. 22, No. 2), which is entirely devoted to the first centenary of this system in South Africa. Socrates Paxinos, who compiled this edition, wrote

chapters on the founding of the Examinations at the University of the Cape of Good Hope (today UNISA), the eventual independence of the UNISA Examinations from the ABRSM, the inclusion of music by South African composers in the syllabus, the history of music scholarships (including a list of all the prize winners until 1994) and finally the UNISA International Music Competitions. I found Paxinos's research, despite being outdated by more than twenty years, helpful in defining Grové's pianistic background as well as his compositional contribution to the UNISA examination repertoire.

An overall perspective on the development of methods of piano-teaching has been extracted from Kloppenburg's book *De Ontwikkelingsgang van de Piano-Methoden* (1951). As mentioned in the 'Chapter outline' above, I have consulted Benjamin Suchoff's and Victoria Fischer's books and articles on Bartók alongside the didactical treatises by Hungarian pedagogues Gát and Sándor to negotiate technical challenges in Grové's piano music. In terms of Russian pianistic traditions, my main source of information has been Neuhaus's *The Art of Piano Playing* (1958, translated to English by K. A. Leibovitch). The British system of piano tuition had a significant impact on teaching methods in South Africa. In this regard, I evaluate the writings of Tobias Matthay, professor at the Royal Academy of Music between 1876 and 1925. Matthay's pedagogical activities influenced the ABRSM Examinations and he taught many of Britain's finest pianists, including Moura Lympany, Clifford Curzon, York Bowen and Myra Hess. Some of the first UNISA examiners were leading pedagogues in the United Kingdom and their publications (especially those of the pianist Oscar Beringer) are also taken into account. The *South African Music Encyclopaedia* (edited by Jacques Malan, 1986) is the most comprehensive source on the influence of British pedagogues on music education in South Africa. The four volumes of this encyclopaedia include substantial articles on Grové's two British teachers, William Henry Bell and Erik Chisholm. I also investigated further sources in order to find more information on Grové's other teacher at the South African College of Music, Cameron Taylor. This has proved to be a challenging endeavour, and I could finally only trace a short inscription in Malan's *Encyclopaedia* as well as brief references to Taylor in Ingrid Gollom's Master's dissertation, *The History of the Cape Town Orchestra: 1914-1997*. Grové's own article in *Musicus* (2006) provided a more detailed account of Cameron Taylor's considerable abilities as a pianist and pedagogue.

Selected ethnomusicological literature has been helpful in identifying the indigenous elements in Grové's music. The composer often refers to the recordings and articles of Hugh Tracey, but in this study I also emphasise the importance of John Blacking's *Venda Children's Songs* (1969), a source that describes the impact of music on everyday life in the northern part of South Africa. Jaco Kruger revised Blacking's articles as a concise entry on Venda music in the *New Grove Dictionary of Music*

and Musicians (2001). As Venda culture plays a major role in Grové's *Music from Africa* series, I find it surprising that these sources have been completely overlooked by musicologists writing on Grové. Further articles in the *New Grove Dictionary* clearly define the characteristics of the remaining South African indigenous musics – Zulu, Xhosa, Ndebele (David Rycroft, Angela Impey) and Sotho (Gregory Barz). Percival Kirby's book *The Musical Instruments of the Native Races of South Africa* (1934) scientifically illustrates the acoustics and construction of indigenous songs by means of graphs. His observations were in their day very helpful in differentiating between the various population groups, but have since become outdated. More general sources on African music that have been consulted in this thesis are Francis Bebey's *African Music – A People's Art* and JH Kwabena Nketia's *The Music of Africa*. The third section of Nketia's book (*Structures in African Music*) includes chapters on the use of polyphony and melody in vocal and instrumental music. By providing many examples of these melodies in Western notation, he indicates how the rhythmic irregularities of the music from northern African countries have radiated to the southern part of the continent. In July 2013 I visited the International Library of African Music (hereafter ILAM) in Grahamstown, South Africa. I attended lectures by Andrew Tracey (son of Hugh Tracey) and gathered information on the theoretical construction of the music from different parts of South Africa. Tracey demonstrated the sound of various bows (the *Lesiba*, *Uhadi* and the *Umakhweyana*) and even related the harmonic and intervallic contents that result from the tuning of these instruments to the popular songs by the world-renowned singer Miriam Makeba.

5. A catalogue of the complete piano works by Stefans Grové

In order to facilitate references to the works that will be discussed in this thesis, I include a complete catalogue of Grové's piano music from the 1940s until his death in 2014. The composer kindly provided me with the latest manuscripts along with the two works that were published by *Verlag Neue Musik* in Berlin. I have visited the archives of DOMUS at the University of Stellenbosch on a number of occasions. This archive is in possession of Grové's early sketches, many concert programmes, newspaper articles and manuscripts. It has been possible to trace all the piano works from the 1940s and 1950s along with a host of chamber and orchestral music at the DOMUS Archive. At the University of Pretoria I gained access to both the Library of the Music Department and the FZ van der Merwe Collection, subsections of the greater Department of Library Services. Here I came across audiovisual materials that bear testimony to earlier performances of Grové's works. I had the opportunity to listen to tape cassette recordings of his Violin Concerto (performed by Annie Kosman and the SABC Symphony Orchestra), the orchestral work *Chain Rows* (conducted by Edgar Cree, also

with the SABC Symphony Orchestra) and even early piano pieces that were recorded on long play records. The University of Pretoria Music Library also hosts many of the academic dissertations on Grové's music. Ultimately, I managed to find most of his piano works in these libraries and archives. The SAMRO Endowment for the National Arts and Department of Music Examinations at UNISA provided me with electronic copies of all the materials that I have not been able to obtain via another route. I hereby provide a chronological catalogue of all Grové's works for solo piano. In this catalogue, the works are already divided into the four style periods that I shall identify and discuss in Chapter 2 of the thesis. In order to further contextualise this catalogue, I add the date ranges of each period. Earlier in this introduction I have referred to Grové's 'Damascus' experience of 1984, after which he consciously embraced elements of indigenous Southern African music. The first work of this (ultimately his last) stylistic period was the *Sonate op Afrika-motiewe* (Sonata on African motifs) for violin and piano, which he catalogued as *Music from Africa* no. 1. Subsequently, most of his remaining works carry a *Music from Africa* number. The missing numbers in the sequence below refer to all Grové's works that are not for solo piano, including orchestral and chamber music. Muller & Walton's catalogue stretches only up to 2006, and I therefore include all the piano works of the composer's last years below:

The First Period: Study Years (ca. 1939-1947)

1. *Five Piano Pieces* (1945)
 - Cortège
 - Elektron
 - Scaramouche
 - Berceuse
 - Kubisme – Toccata
2. *Prélude* (1945)
3. *Six Mood Pictures* (withdrawn by the composer; selected manuscript extracts are available in DOMUS, Stellenbosch)

The Second Period: The neo-Baroque Phase (1947-1958)

1. *Three Piano Pieces* (originally *Drei Inventionen*) (1951)
 - Toccata
 - Pastorale

- Fuga

The Third Period: Expressionism, Atonality and Functional Music (1959-1983)

1. *Toccata and Rhapsody* (1966) (of which the Rhapsody is withdrawn and not available). The *Toccata* was published by UNISA. It was the South African work set for the Third UNISA International Piano Competition in Pretoria (1986). Currently, it is still included on the Grade 8 (at one stage also Grade 7) syllabus of the UNISA Music Examinations.
2. *Four Piano Pieces* (1975) (of which only the first two pieces are still available, Nos. 3 and 4 are lost)
 - Sangwinies
 - Tweespalt (for the Left Hand)
 - Nagmusiek
 - Apodikties
3. Graded Piano Pieces for the Young, composed for the University of South Africa (UNISA) Music Examination Syllabus
 - *Night Music from A Far Eastern Country* (Grade 1)
 - *Simple Evening Song* (Grade 1)
 - *A Sad Song* (Grade 1)
 - *Study – Three Birds Sing* (Grade 1)
 - *Cock-fighting* (Grade 4)
 - *A Short Toccata* (Grade 5)
 - *Wind Bells in the Night* for piano four hands (Grade 1)
 - *The Bells* for piano four hands (Grade 2)
 - *Waltz of the Elephant* for piano four hands (Grade 3)

Paxinos (1994: 167) refers to other works that do not appear either in Zwamborn's dissertation or Muller & Walton's catalogue (I could not trace the scores for these pieces):

- *Sympathy* (Grade 4)
- *Dialogue – Gershwin/Bartók* (Grade 4)

There are sketches for three further elementary piano pieces in the DOMUS archive (University of Stellenbosch):

- *First Piece for my Mushikin* (probably Grade 4 standard) – date of completion: 12 May 1977
 - Untitled, tempo marking 'Aggressively' (Grade 4 standard) – date of completion: 12 May 1977
 - *A Sad Waltz* (probably Grade 2 or Grade 3 standard) – date of completion: 23 May 1978
4. *An Experience in Musical Styles* (ca. 1970)

Harpsichord and piano pieces written in imitation of the following composers:

William Byrd, Johann Sebastian Bach, Domenico Scarlatti, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven, Franz Schubert, Frédéric Chopin, Robert Schumann, Johannes Brahms, César Franck, Claude Debussy, Gustav Mahler, Enrique Granados, Alexander Scriabin, Francis Poulenc, Louis Moreau Gottschalk and Noel Coward. Performed as part of lecture recitals in the USA and South Africa between 1970 and 2005. [The Mahler, Granados and Gottschalk imitations are not available. Walton erroneously referred to Cole Porter instead of Noel Coward in his 2006 catalogue.]

The Fourth Period: Music from Africa (1984-2014)

1. *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), Music from Africa no. 5
 - Stamping Dance
 - A Night Song in the Distance
 - Greeting the New Day
 - A Quiet Song in the Twilight
 - Dance of The Witchdoctor
 - Mbira Song carried by the Night Breezes
 - Dance of the Wind Spirit
2. *Nonyana, The Ceremonial Dancer* (1994), Music from Africa no. 12
3. *Images from Africa* (1998-1999), Music from Africa no. 18
 - Morning Music
 - Twilight Music

- Invocation of the Water Spirits
 - Lamenting Birds
 - Yemoja, Queen of the Waters
4. *Masks for Piano Four Hands* (1999), Music from Africa no. 20
 - Mask of the Water Spirit
 - Mask of the Night Spirit
 - Mask of the War Spirit
 5. *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003), Music from Africa no. 23
 6. *Glimpses, Five Miniatures for Piano* (2004), Music from Africa no. 28
 - The limping Lion – Dem Verfasser Gewidmet (Dedicated to the Author)
 - The Meditating Butterfly – For Alison (Grové’s wife)
 - Configurations of the Dragonfly – Pour Christopher (Grové’s son)
 - The serene Sea Horse – For Chloé (Grové’s daughter)
 - The masked Weaver’s masquerade – For Kara (Grové’s daughter)
 7. *Toccata for solo piano (Monologue II)*, from *Conversations for Piano and Organ*, Music from Africa no. 31 (2005)
 8. *In der Stillen Welt von Gestern*, A Suite for Clavichord or Piano (2005), Music from Africa no. 32 (nine untitled movements)
 9. *Obstinacy* (composed for the UNISA Music Examinations, Grade 7), Music from Africa no. 35
 10. *Zauberhafte Musik (Haunting Music)* (2010), Music from Africa no. 39
 - Strange Valley in the Mists
 - Wandering through an enchanted Forest
 - Hobgoblin at Midnight
 11. *Klaviergedanken (Piano Thoughts)* (2010), Music from Africa no. 40

12. *My Jaargetye/My Seasons* (2012), Music from Africa no. 43

- On an Autumn Day
- Wandering in a white, cold Landscape
- First Spring Rain and the Awakening of delicate Colours
- Summer Abundance

Functional Music composed during Grové's 'Fourth'/'African' Period that do not correspond to the general compositional or stylistic traits of the time:

Jewish Folksongs (1993) (arrangements of existing Jewish folk melodies, written for Lucette Louw's Batmitzvah)

- Mēsareh Jisrael
- Holem zaádu
- Hava Nagila

Cadenzas for the first and third movements of Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 22 in E flat major, K. 482 (1997)

CHAPTER 1

A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF PIANISM IN SOUTH AFRICA AND STEFANS GROVÉ'S POSITION WITHIN THIS CONTEXT

1. Introduction

On the cover of Stephanus Muller and Chris Walton book, *A Composer in Africa – Essays on the Life and Work of Stefans Grové* (2006), the following statement appears: 'Stefans Grové ... possesses one of the most distinct compositional voices of our time and is regarded by many as Africa's greatest living composer'. This description can also be found in UNISA's journal for musicology and music teachers, *Musicus* (Vol. 36.1: 121, 2008), as well as on several internet websites. It is difficult to fathom such a statement when it is borne in mind that Africa is the world's second-largest and second-most-populous continent. The countless musical traditions of Africa are simply too diverse to justify the singling out of only one composer in such a manner. Attention should also be drawn here to Joan O'Connor's questions in her review of Muller and Walton's book: 'What do you know about classical music from Africa? Can you name one composer from that continent? Have you heard any of the music on radio or television or at a concert?' (O'Connor 2008: 478). In view of the impossibility of generalising about such vast subjects, in this thesis I shall use terminologies such as 'South Africa', 'Southern Africa' and 'Western art music' for the sake of clarity. I shall address O'Connor's questions by providing a historical account of Western European art music practices in South Africa. As my research is centred on Grové's piano works, it is not possible to investigate the performance practice of other instruments that are studied and played in that country. The concept of 'pianism' is already a broad area in itself and involves performers, teachers, composers, instruments, educational establishments and concert organisations alike.

Socrates Paxinos's survey of musicology in South Africa (1987) reveals that not only did a systematic documentation of musical activities commence at a very late stage, but also that the various musical art forms in that country were studied for the most part in isolation from each other. With the exception of Percival Kirby,¹ who has conducted research on both indigenous and Western art music, the adoption of interdisciplinary approaches to musicological studies has mostly been a rare occurrence. A further disparity exists between musicological research on Western art music in South

¹ Percival Kirby (1887-1970) was a professor of musicology at the University of the Witwatersrand. I briefly refer to his book *The Music of the Native Races of South Africa* (1934) in the introduction to this thesis.

Africa and the performing arts. Young musicians play the works of South African composers during competitions and examinations, but often only because it is a compulsory requirement or there is a special prize involved for the best renditions of such works. These experiences seldom induce professional musicians consistently to include this music in their recital programmes, and testimony of this can be found in the relatively small discography of South African piano music. It is also quite rare to find performers in that country who engage in a theoretical analysis of the works of local composers. All of these factors might have been responsible for the relative lack of international awareness of South African art music (or 'classical music', as O'Connor puts it).

Stephanus Muller wrote the following about Arnold van Wyk, one of the so-called 'founding fathers' (Muller and Walton 2006: 2 and Weyer 2013: 249) of the composition of Western art music in South Africa: 'Twenty-five years after his death Van Wyk's music has, with periodic and mostly insignificant exceptions, disappeared from South African concert stages. Few if any ordinary South Africans recognise the name of the man once deemed important enough a national figure for his resignation from a music faculty to be reported countrywide in newspapers' (Muller 2008: 78). This observation by Muller is valid for several of the South African composers who undertook pioneering work during the earlier and middle parts of the twentieth century. Stefans Grové, however, proved to be an exception to the rule. His 90th birthday in 2012 was accompanied by a rekindled interest in his work, both in the area of musicology and performance. Grové was still actively writing music by the time of his death (aged 91) and thus had a longer career than any other native South African composer of his generation (except for John Joubert who has lived and worked in England for most of his life). He was a musician who in many ways bridged the gap between the various study fields of composition, performance and musicology. His substantial contribution to the South African piano repertoire, his artistic embracing of indigenous music, his work as a music critic and academic as well as his engagement with Afrikaans literature made him a significant cultural figure in the 'Rainbow Nation' of South Africa.² The aim of this chapter is to gain deeper insight into the historical development of piano performance in South Africa and to evaluate Grové's work within this context.

² Archbishop Desmond Tutu (winner of the 1983 Nobel Peace Prize) coined the term 'Rainbow Nation' after the first democratic elections in South Africa in 1994 (Dickow & Møller 2002:180). On the surface, this term can be seen as a metaphor for the ethnic diversity of South Africa, the vastness of its population (more than 50 million people spread out over 471,443 square miles of land) and the multitude of languages that are spoken there (of which eleven are official). On a deeper level, it can refer to the colourful variety of art forms practised in the country.

The first step is to describe the general development of pianism and art music in South Africa, with specific reference to the activities of significant performers and teachers who lived and worked in that country. Aside from the early musical developments in the colonial South Africa, I emphasise the significant role that the first two university-level music schools, the Conservatoire in Stellenbosch and the South African Music College (SACM) in Cape Town, played in the development of the education of pianists in the country. I then move on to a brief outline of the music examination system of UNISA and its impact on the education of pianists and composers of piano music. Although references to Grové are interspersed throughout this discussion on historical developments in South Africa, I focus more on his personal pianistic background and his professional engagement with the instrument in the final section of this chapter. I explore how he had been influenced by various educational methods and traditions, particularly during his years of apprenticeship in Bloemfontein and Cape Town. The overall aim of this chapter is to provide the reader with background information on the country, the 'physical and, in many ways metaphysical space' (Muller 2003: 2) that played an important part in shaping Grové as a composer of piano music. In 1990 and 1991, Grové provided his own insights into the development of South African art music over four articles, published under the overarching title *Die Ontstaan en Ontwikkeling van Suid-Afrikaanse Kunsmusiek*³ in the UNISA's journal *Musicus*. I draw upon the basic elements of his historical outlines and further expand upon them by consulting the writings of a number of South African musicologists.

2. A historical overview of pianism in South Africa

2.1 The early beginnings

In 1652 the Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (Dutch East India Company, hereafter VOC) established a halfway station between Europe and India at the Cape of Good Hope, South Africa. The colonial settlement at the Cape remained under Dutch rule until the two British invasions of 1795 and 1806. The cultural influence of the Netherlands spread to the outposts of the VOC in Africa and Asia. Portraits and still-life paintings by seventeenth-century artists such as Jan Vermeer, Gerard Terborgh, Gabriel Metsu and Jan Steen illustrated the musical activity of the time (Bouws 1972: 2) and it is likely that the instruments seen in these art works were also used in South Africa, although there is very little evidence of the exact nature of music performance and education in the Cape

³ *The Birth and Development of South African Art Music.*

during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁴ Colonialists established religious institutions at an early stage, including the German Lutheran Church, the *Groote Kerk* of the Dutch Reformed Church and later also St. George's Anglican Church. The liturgical performance of Genevan *Psalms* and other religious hymns remained the most substantial aspect of music-making during the first 150 years of colonial South Africa. It is likely that the Dutch settlers in the Cape followed a strictly Calvinist approach in their practice of religious music. The conservative performances of the Genevan *Psalms* in the Dutch Reformed churches did not make way for elaborate instrumental improvisation and harmonisation. Organ accompaniment was even forbidden by the early Dutch ministers who were trained in the Calvinist tradition (Bruinsma 1954: 207). The arrival of French Huguenots in the Cape in 1688 reinforced this church music tradition. The Genevan *Psalms* were sung without accompaniment and most probably in unison. This inevitably led to the late introduction of church organs in the Cape, the first larger instrument being installed only in 1737 at the *Groote Kerk* (Cape Town) (Bouws 1972: 7).

The earliest secular keyboard compositions to be found in the archives of the Dutch Reformed Church (*Nederduitsch Gereformeerde Kerk*) are a series of *Menuetten* (Example 2) that were written in the notebooks of a reverend from Stellenbosch, Meent Borchers. These short dance movements portray the clear influences of the suites and partitas by European Baroque composers and were presumably composed during the second half of the eighteenth century (Bouws 1972: 4). The *Menuetten* in the notebooks of Borchers seem quite conservative in comparison to the keyboard works of Haydn, Mozart, Clementi and CPE Bach written around that time. They nevertheless indicate that the harpsichord had been in use in the Cape. The movements might also have been arranged for instrumental wind or string trios. Mears and May (2001: 87) indicate that innovative instrumental practices only started to manifest themselves in South Africa after the Colony came

⁴ Jan Bouws writes the following in his chapter 'Edward Knolles Green, 'n Kaapse musiekhandelaar' (I freely translate this passage): 'As music played an important role in high society of the Netherlands, one might assume that VOC officials were sure to take the harpsichords, violins, flutes and music books of their spouses and children with them before leaving for the *Cape of Good Hope*. Since among them were military musicians and members of the garrison who practised music, it seems to follow that they would have packed wind, string and other instruments' (Bouws 1982: 33, my trans.). Although the organ was evidently the most important instrument in the Cape during the years of the VOC, there are nevertheless some references to harpsichords, virginals and spinets as well (Venter in Malan 1986d: 16). In a diary entry from 1652, Jan van Riebeeck (the commander of the first Dutch delegation in the Cape) describes his wife playing on a *clavesingal* (Venter in Malan 1986d: 57 found this information in Jan van Riebeeck's *Daghregister III*, ed. by D.B. Bosman, Cape Town 1957).

under British rule. The musical evenings arranged by Lady Anne Barnard (1750-1825) played a major role in the establishment of secular music performance. As the official hostess of the first British Governor-general, Earl Macartney, Lady Barnard introduced the use of instrumental ensembles as accompaniment to ceremonial occasions and parties at the Castle.⁵ As a poet and painter she also contributed to the general artistic sphere in the Cape, before returning to London in 1798. Aside from Lady Barnard's social gatherings, there were several Dutch and British regimental bands that performed in the Cape. Bouws refers to the instrumental education that military musicians provided along with more specialised classes that were eventually introduced by the German violinists Carl Christoph Pabst, Johann Christoph Schrumph and Frederik Carl Lemming during the early years of the nineteenth century (Bouws 1972: 25).

Example 2: Meent Borchers, *Menuetten* written for a keyboard instrument, 18th century



⁵ The Castle is the oldest building in South Africa. The initial clay and timber fort that was built by Jan van Riebeeck had to make way for a large building with thick stone walls and deep moats surrounding it. The Castle was completed in 1679 and today it is regarded as the best-preserved fort of the VOC.

The first notable system of piano teaching had been introduced in the Cape Colony by the Irish musician Frederick Logier in 1826 (Bouws 1972: 17-20). At that time the piano as a household instrument was still a rarity in South Africa and there was little awareness of the new developments in European music. Smaller organs and a type of reed organ called the Seraphine were more common.⁶ Logier introduced South African audiences and students to the music of prominent Baroque and Classical composers: Corelli, JS Bach, Handel, Domenico Scarlatti, Haydn, Mozart, Clementi, Beethoven, Cramer, Dussek, Pleyel and Moscheles (Bouws 1972: 19). In 1814, Frederick Logier's father, the German pianist Johann Bernhard Logier (1777-1846), had patented a piano teaching method that involved a distinct set of principles. The practical guidelines of this method included the instalment of group classes in music theory and ensemble-playing. Johann Logier even encouraged the use of more than one piano in a room in order to instil a refined aural awareness among students. A valuable part of the method was the development of a student's performance skills through participation in public examinations. Johann Logier also invented a device that would guide the hands and wrist of the pianist.⁷ The so-called chiroplast was attached to the piano and invites comparison with other restrictive devices such as Henri Herz's *dactylion*, where the fingers are guided by a series of rings hanging over the keyboard (Lindeman 2001: 453). Apart from the devices by Herz and Johann Logier, there were several other methods during the first quarter of the nineteenth century that placed emphasis on the stationary position of the wrist, relying on the fingers to produce brilliance and sonority during performance (Kloppenburger 1951: 159-161). These

⁶ The first fortepianos were imported in the Cape around 1795. Chris Venter's comprehensive survey of the pianos that were used in South Africa during the nineteenth century appears in Malan's *South African Music Encyclopedia* (Venter in Malan 1986d: 16-19). Upright pianos (including William Southwell's *Cabinet Pianoforte* and Robert Wornum's *Cottage Piano*) were more popular due to their smaller sizes. Horizontal pianos (in German, *Tafelklavier*) were also imported by E.K. Green and other distributors and remained popular in South Africa until the 1850s. The larger English grand pianos by John Broadwood were gradually introduced during the nineteenth century. A particularly fine Broadwood piano can still be found in the main house of the Vergelegen Wine Estate in Somerset-West (a smaller city near Cape Town). The first piano manufacturer in South Africa was G.B. Darter who established a firm in 1840. This firm also sold sheet music and provided tuning and repair services until it finally closed in 1974 (Mears & May 2001: 88). Music schools, universities and concert halls in South Africa acquired a fine collection of Steinway, Yamaha, Bösendorfer, Kawai and Fazioli pianos during the twentieth century. Today there is only one company that imports pianos, particularly those by Steinway & Sons. This company is called *Pianoforte* and is based in Cape Town.

⁷ In 1818 a critical document with the title *An Exposition of the Musical System of Mr. Logier with Strictures on his Chiroplast* was published by a committee of 'professors in London'. This document is now in the possession of the British Library in London. Each aspect of JB Logier's system is systematically analysed, and the authors are very critical of all the various methods. They particularly criticise Logier's idea that the teacher and pupil must wade through 'many tedious hours [...] before anything like a proper disposition of the hand is obtained' (Attwood et al 1818: 9-10). They rather encourage pianists to "abandon this 'mechanical contrivance', and depend on their own labour and assiduity" (Attwood et al 1818: 12).

various methods are proven to create a great amount of tension in the forearms and hands. Rainbow (1990: 196) states that the chiroplast's 'rigid slots prevented the thumbs from passing under the fingers. This precluded even basic scale-playing and effective mobility was unattainable'.

Johann Logier's son, Frederick Logier (1801-1867) was only 26 years old when he established a 'Pianoforte Institute' at 45 Bree Street, Cape Town. He benefited from the administrative support of Edward Knolles Green, who opened a music shop in the Cape Colony in collaboration with the London company Clementi & Co. in 1814 (Bouws 1982: 34).⁸ Logier closely followed the principles of his father's method and his students attracted particular attention through the public music examinations that took place at the Stock Exchange in Cape Town. An intense lesson schedule was followed from Monday to Saturday and it seems that the students made rapid progress. Logier also focused on creating a fine balance between music theory and practical lessons. The use of the chiroplast was seen as an interesting novelty, but Bouws (1986: 169) mentions that Logier only used the device during the initial study phase to keep the wrists of his young students from dropping too low. It is unfortunate that the institute had to be closed down only a few years after Green's sudden death in 1828 (Paxinos 1994: 10). Logier continued to give piano, harp, violin and cello lessons thereafter. He was appointed as organist of the Lutheran Church, St. George's Anglican Church and later the *Groote Kerk*; he held this post until his death in 1867. His major contribution to the musical life in Cape Town was to instil an awareness of the important European composers, selected piano methods (particularly those of his father) as well as the benefits of structured tuition across several hours per week.

Another pianist who played an active role in the establishment of music in the Cape was the German Carl Junghenn, a student of the celebrated virtuoso Sigismond Thalberg. Junghenn arrived in Cape Town in 1844 and gave a number of recitals, including Thalberg's demanding *Semiramide* Fantasy and Carl Maria von Weber's *Aufforderung zum Tanz* in his programmes (Bouws 1972: 21-22). Junghenn was well-versed in the methods of Clementi, Czerny and Kalkbrenner. In 1851 he published an exercise book called *The Art of Playing the Piano-Forte from the Earliest Rudiments to the Highest State of Cultivation* (Van de Sandt de Villiers & Tier Publishers, Cape Town), a rough

⁸ E. K. Green was summoned to Cape Town in 1814 in order to assist with the installation of a new organ in the Lutheran Church on Strand Street. He did not return to London; soon after his arrival in the Cape, he started a music shop, selling instruments and music books. He also imported pianos and organs and eventually sold the new Mälzel metronomes that had come on the market in 1816 (Bouws 1982: 36).

translation of Czerny's *Briefe über den Unterricht auf dem Piano-Forte* (Letters on Pianoforte Education, 1846). Junghenn extracted only the technical principles from Czerny's text and did not adopt the original format, in which the composer addressed various aspects of piano-playing to an imaginary student by means of letters. These 'letters' of Czerny are supplementary explanations and exercises to his major four-part *Große Pianoforteschool*, op. 500 (1828). The exercises formed a substantial part of Junghenn's teaching, but he also set Kalkbrenner's *Modern Method* along with the studies of Henri Bertini and Aloys Schmitt for his students. Junghenn worked as a journalist for local newspapers (mainly for the *Cape Monitor*) and he criticised other teachers and their methods in his articles. This led to his alienation from the general musical society and possibly jeopardised the influence that he might have had on the further development of music education (Bouws in Malan 1986: 67). He was particularly outspoken against the general public's attraction to the salon pieces of British composers such as Sydney Smith and Henry Brinley Richards⁹ during the middle part of the nineteenth century and he encouraged music lovers and performers to focus their attention on the more standard repertoire such as Mendelssohn's *Songs without Words* (Bouws 1972: 24).

2.2 The activities of JS de Villiers and the establishment of the Stellenbosch Conservatoire

It has not been possible to trace evidence of interaction between Junghenn and Logier, which is strange when taking into account that there were not many piano teachers in the Cape during the nineteenth century. It seems that both these pianists lacked the focus needed to create a sustainable learning environment for aspiring musicians. Logier was declared bankrupt in 1843 and was obliged to move away from the strict regulations of his father's system by teaching religious and popular pieces to his students as well; this type of concession towards 'salon pieces' would have been criticised by Junghenn (Bouws in Malan 1986c: 67). Logier also played such a variety of instruments that it may have been difficult for him to focus on the piano. Junghenn, on the other hand, did specialise in piano playing and teaching, but did not settle in one town, preferring to

⁹ Smith and Brinley Richards were respected musicians in England during the nineteenth century. Brinley Richards was even a student of Chopin in Paris, and his piano works are highly idiomatic. As a professor of the Royal Academy of Music, he also established the first regional music examinations in England, Scotland and his native Wales (Edwards & Leighton Thomas 2001: 333). The character pieces of Smith and Brinley Richards were written for less experienced players. They are certainly of a higher quality than the German-oriented Junghenn would have liked to admit.

continue travelling in order to attract more students. He even interrupted his activities by attempting to find his fortune on the diamond fields in Kimberley.

One connection that can be drawn between the two musicians is that both had contact with Jan Stephanus de Villiers, who came from Paarl, a small town near Cape Town and Stellenbosch. De Villiers (1827-1902) studied under the guidance of Logier in Cape Town for seven years before returning to his hometown, where he was appointed organist of the Dutch Reformed Church. He held this position for more than fifty years and became a respected teacher of organ, piano, violin and harp as well as composing ambitious religious works. One of his oratorios, *Zion en Babylon*, was heavily criticised by Junghenn in an article that appeared in *Het Volksblad* in 1867 (Bouws in Malan 1986c: 69/Grové 1990: 38). Junghenn's criticism was not without foundation, as De Villiers's compositions are technically quite unrefined. Of his estimated 80 works, 48 were printed. The idiom in which he composed included a preponderance of parallel thirds and sixths as well as monotonous rhythmic repetition (Malan 1986a: 344). These are, however, the earliest surviving serious compositional attempts by a South African-born musician and are therefore of considerable cultural importance. The reverend from the congregation in Paarl where De Villiers played the organ, SJ du Toit, enthusiastically named him 'die Afrikaanse Beethoven' (Bouws 1947: 106). This description is significant, as it evidences recognition that De Villiers was writing music akin to Western art music. Furthermore, the word 'Afrikaans' had not featured in many circles before that time, particularly in a cultural context. De Villiers also became a member of a new society called *Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners* (Fellowship of Real Afrikaners). This was a group of intellectuals who lived in the vicinity of Cape Town and strove for a more academic status for the Afrikaans language.

The language of Afrikaans developed throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Having evolved primarily from Dutch, it also includes influences from the Malayan language that was spoken by slaves who settled in the Cape during the eighteenth century (Giliomee & Mbenga 2007: 71). A number of Afrikaans words originated in the language of the Khoikhoi, the first indigenous inhabitants that Dutch settlers encountered in the Cape. The cross-cultural influences in the evolution of Afrikaans, coupled to the fact that it was evidently spoken by members of all classes (slaves and gentry), may have prompted the Dutch intelligentsia of the Cape to consider those who identified the language as their mother tongue to be inferior. Van Wyk (1991: 82) writes that 'unconscious diachrony of the Afrikaner betrays racial hybridisation and contact. This is seen in the number of Malay-Portuguese and Khoi-Khoi words contained in the Afrikaans vocabulary. It is further reflected in the grammatical structure itself; for instance in the disappearance of inflection'.

The members of the *Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners*, who included Arnoldus Pannevis, GWA van der Lingen and the above-mentioned SJ du Toit, recognised the poetic value of Afrikaans. They also felt that the general public did not fully understand Dutch and that Afrikaans could fulfil a more effective role during religious worship in Dutch Reformed churches. JS de Villiers became an important member of this group, as he set various Afrikaans texts to music (Bouws 1957: 15). He therefore created a platform for Afrikaners to express religious and nationalistic sentiments through vocal music. The most significant example would be De Villiers's choral composition *Di Afrikaanse Volkslied*, an anthem based on the words of Pannevis and SJ Du Toit. The patriotic works of JS de Villiers formed a cornerstone of the *Eerste Afrikaanse Taalbeweging* (First Afrikaans Language Movement), being performed in the Cape and as far afield as Bloemfontein. The general outrage that followed Junghenn's negative criticism of De Villiers's music can be seen as illustrative of his popularity among Afrikaans-speaking people (Malan 1986a: 340). Despite the unimaginative use of melody, harmony and counterpoint in these works, De Villiers nevertheless inspired the younger generation of composers to set Afrikaans texts (Grové 1990: 38).

The tradition of the Afrikaans art song commenced in 1908 when Jan Gysbert Hugo Bosman,¹⁰ a young musician from the Cape Colony, composed his *Drie Lieder* based on poetry by Eugène Marais, Jan Celliers and Jakob du Toit (also known as Totius) (Grové 1990: 39, 42). With the advent of a more structured music education in South Africa during the early years of the twentieth century, many young composers initially honed their craft through the medium of Afrikaans art song. Bouws (1982: 175) finds it surprising that not only did Afrikaner composers such as Johannes and Gideon Fagan, Arnold van Wyk, Blanche Gerstman, Hubert du Plessis and Stefans Grové engage in this genre, but also that English-speaking musicians (even European immigrants) held Afrikaans as a musical language in high esteem. A notable example is Horace Barton, a British pianist who

¹⁰ Jan Gysbert Hugo Bosman (who adopted the pseudonym of Bosman di Ravelli) was the first South African-born concert pianist. Born in 1882 in Piketberg, he went on to study with Alexander Winterberger (a student of Liszt) at the Leipzig Conservatoire and later also attended masterclasses by Vladimir de Pachmann (Grové 1990: 38). He played challenging repertoire and performed Chopin's Piano Concerto no. 2 in F minor, op. 21 in Berlin in 1903. Although he had dreams of starting a national music academy in South Africa and played an active role in the Second Afrikaans Language Movement (in collaboration with the literary theorist Gustav Preller), he permanently left the country in 1910 to pursue a European concert career. Apart from his pianistic abilities, he was also a linguist who specialised in Arabic and Persian. His Arabic-English glossary to the Koran was used as a text book at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London (Malan 1986a: 217). Ravelli's final years were spent in Somerset Strand (near Cape Town, where he died in 1967) in the company of his friend and one of South Africa's renowned painters, Maggie Laubser.

immigrated to South Africa, who composed several Afrikaans art songs with piano and orchestral accompaniment.

JS de Villiers also composed a number of piano works that portray the influences of his teacher Frederick Logier. At the culmination of his study years he gave a concert in which he performed a set of piano variations by Henri Herz as well as his own work, *Grand Fantasia, Theme and Five Variations* (Malan 1986a: 339).¹¹ De Villiers contributed programmatic piano works, illustrating significant events in the Cape. When the company Saul Solomon opened a printing press in Kortmark Street, De Villiers composed the piece *The steam printing press* (1855). Prince Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh, visited the Cape in 1867. This inspired De Villiers to write no fewer than four occasional works, including the three piano pieces *Prince Alfred's Grand March*, *Prince Alfred's Quick March* and *Prince Alfred's Galop*. These programmatic pieces were all published in Cape Town (Darnell & Murray as well as A S Robertson) and it is likely that they were distributed throughout the Colony, where they would have captured the imagination of the English and Afrikaans-speaking population (Bouws 1982: 106).

It was not only the compositions of JS de Villiers that had a far-reaching influence on the development of Western art music in South Africa. In 1905 two of his daughters (who had also studied with him), Nancy de Villiers and Elizabeth von Willich, joined forces with Friedrich Jannasch and Hans Endler in founding the South African Conservatorium of Music in Stellenbosch. This was the first advanced-level music institution in South Africa; in 1934 it became part of the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Stellenbosch. Jannasch studied in Germany and worked as an organist in Denmark and Sweden before returning to Stellenbosch in 1883, becoming the first director of the Stellenbosch Conservatorium in 1906. As a specialist of church music, he played a vital role in the compilation of the first Afrikaans Hymnal (1906), composing several Psalm melodies himself (Otterman in Bouws 1982: 192-193). He also supervised the installation of numerous Marcussen organs in the Cape Province. In 1921, Jannasch was succeeded by his younger colleague, the Austrian composer and musicologist Hans Endler. Endler was more interested in opera and

¹¹ None of the sources on JS de Villiers specify which set of variations by Herz he performed during his recital in Cape Town. Malan (1986a: 339) quoted a review of the concert that appeared in *Sam Sly's Journal*: '[De Villiers] gave universal satisfaction by the power of his execution'. However, Lindeman (2001: 453) singles out Herz's *Variations on 'Non più e Mesta' from Rossini's 'La Cenerentola'* (1831) as his most popular work, and it is plausible that this was the piece performed by De Villiers. Whichever variation set it was, De Villiers must have possessed considerable technical skill to tackle the many challenges of this music, which would have included glissandos in thirds, rapid scales and arpeggios as well as taxing dotted-note passages.

operettas and staged several smaller productions (including works by Gilbert and Sullivan) during his tenure. He also introduced alternative methods of music education such as Jacques-Dalcroze Eurhythmics.

Not long after the Conservatorium was installed as a music department of the University, its directorship was taken over by Maria Fisser. She was the daughter of Elizabeth von Willich and granddaughter of JS de Villiers and thus came from a musical family. The *South African Music Encyclopedia* (Malan 1986b: 67-68) indicates that Fisser was a sought-after harmony and organ lecturer. She was, however, also one of the leading piano teachers of her generation and had relinquished a successful private practice in the small town of Robertson to become a professor at the University of Stellenbosch. She counted many pioneering musicians such as Arnold van Wyk and Hennie Joubert among her students. Van Wyk would become one of the country's most illustrious composers and Hennie Joubert, in addition to developing a career as a successful concert pianist and vocal accompanist, was appointed as the Director of the UNISA Music Examinations. Joubert also founded the UNISA International Music Competitions in 1982 after having served on the jury of the Montevideo International Piano Competition in Uruguay (Paxinos 1994: 207). A national piano competition is named after Hennie Joubert and takes place every two years in Stellenbosch.

2.3 The British influence on South African pianism: the South African College of Music

The University of Stellenbosch can be regarded as a historical bastion of Afrikaner culture (Giliomee 1987: 60 & Muller 2008: 72). By contrast, the University of Cape Town¹² was initially modelled after the educational and cultural traditions of Great Britain. The last Governor of the Cape Colony (before South Africa became a Union in 1910), Walter Hely-Hutchinson, recognised the need for a more structured education in the arts. He was a driving force behind the opening of the South African College of Music (hereafter SACM) in Cape Town on 20 January 1910. This institution was supported throughout its earliest years by the Cape Government, and the Superintendent of Education, Sir Thomas Muir, secured the continuation of funding from the City Council. This financial stability was

¹² The University of Cape Town is the oldest in South Africa. It was initially founded as the South African College in 1829. It was only elevated to full university status in 1918.

accompanied by the enthusiasm of the founder members of the College, particularly Madame Apolline Niay Darroll (Malan 1986c: 201).¹³

In 1912 the City Council of Cape Town appointed William Henry Bell (1873-1946) as director of the SACM. It is not clear why Bell decided to take on this position, leaving behind a promising career in England to do so. Before he departed for South Africa he was a professor of harmony at the Royal Academy of Music. He had also built a fine reputation as a composer, his orchestral works having been performed by such renowned conductors as Arthur Nikisch, Henry Wood, Thomas Beecham and Hans Richter (Barnett 2001: 183 & HH Van der Spuy in Malan 1986a: 153). He went on to make a dynamic contribution to the musical life of South Africa. One of his first initiatives (along with his colleague, the conductor Theo Wendt) was to establish the Cape Town Municipal Symphony Orchestra in 1914. Under his leadership, the South African College of Music became a faculty of the University of Cape Town (1923) and he developed a ballet and opera company as part of the institution. He remained a prolific composer and drew inspiration from his newly-adopted home country as can be seen in his *South African Symphony*, which was first performed by the Cape Town Symphony Orchestra in 1928 (HH Van der Spuy in Malan 1986a: 157).

Bell and Niay worked closely to create a stimulating environment, particularly for performers. Bell's wife, Helen McEwen (daughter of Sir John McEwen, the former principal of the Royal Academy of Music) was a gifted pianist who had studied with one of the leading British pedagogues of the time, Tobias Matthay. Through the Bells' mediation, it was possible for several young South African musicians to continue their studies under Matthay in London. In 1903, Matthay published his first treatise on piano playing, *The Act of Touch in all its Diversity*. This was the first of eighteen books that were to come from Matthay's pen during his lifetime. In *The Act of Touch*, he endeavoured to undertake a detailed analysis of the physiological aspects of piano playing, inventing the term 'touch-species' for all the various vertical movements that are performed on the instrument. The combination of forearm rotation and muscular relaxation is the governing principle that recurs throughout Matthay's writings (Dawes 2001: 139).

¹³ Niay was a concert pianist who had grown up in Warwickshire, England. She studied with Franklin Taylor at the Royal College of Music and gave a recital for the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) in 1890. After having travelled to Australia in 1893 and founding the Conservatoire of Music in New South Wales, she settled in Cape Town, where she married her cousin George Darroll. She also founded the Music Teachers' Association of South Africa and the South African Eisteddfod in Cape Town (1903). One of Niay's students, Albina Bini became a particularly influential musician in South Africa and gave the country's first performance of the Piano Concerto no. 1 by Brahms with the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra in 1930 (Gollom 2000: 63).

Despite the controversy and criticism that surrounded these didactic practices,¹⁴ he nonetheless had an impact on the artistic development of some of the most celebrated British pianists of the twentieth century (Dawes 2001: 139). A notable example that comes to mind is Dame Myra Hess (1890-1965). She gained popularity through her National Gallery Concerts held during the Second World War, even when London came under fire during the Blitz. Hess was filmed in a performance of Beethoven's Piano Sonata in F minor *Appassionata*, op. 57, during one of these concerts.¹⁵ I find this film to be of particular significance in illustrating the clear influence of Matthay's methods in Hess's playing. In the fast, *forte* tremolo passages of the Sonata's first movement, for example, Hess uses a wide forearm rotation, simultaneously keeping the shoulders and upper arm muscles relaxed. Furthermore, she achieves a fine balance between finger dexterity and a large orchestral sound.

This playing style served as an example to Hess's contemporaries, one of which was the South African pianist Adolph Hallis (1896-1989). Hallis won the Overseas Scholarship from the University of the Cape of Good Hope (later the University of South Africa/UNISA) after obtaining excellent results in his Performer's Licentiate examination in 1911 (Paxinos 1994: 186). He went to the Royal Academy of Music to study with Oscar Beringer, but Matthay soon became his main teacher. Hallis developed a large repertoire under Matthay's guidance and upon his return to Cape Town he impressed the public with his performance of Chopin's Sonata in B minor, op. 58 and Tchaikovsky's Concerto no. 1 in B flat minor, op. 23 (Malan 1986c: 158). At the age of nineteen, he was appointed as a piano lecturer at the SACM. This was the beginning of a long career as a teacher that saw Hallis give lessons and masterclasses throughout South Africa. His initial stay in Cape Town only lasted four years as he returned to London to build a successful concert career. He was the first pianist to record all of Debussy's *Twelve Etudes* for the Decca record label (Malan 1986c: 158). As an advocate of contemporary music he gave the South African premières of Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto no. 3,

¹⁴ James Ching (1900-1961) was a teacher in London who opposed the methods of Matthay. Although he studied with Matthay in his youth, he went on to have regular consultation lessons with Rudolf Breithaupt (who opposed restrictive devices such as Logier's chiroplast). Breithaupt's methods of using the larger levers (including the shoulders) radically differed from Matthay's forearm techniques. This inspired Ching to write his own book in which he uses more scientific examples to oppose Matthay's methods.

¹⁵ Footage from two of Hess's National Gallery performances was included in the documentary *The Art of Piano* (Labrand & Sturrock 1999).

op. 30 as well as Hindemith's Piano Concerto (1945), and he also promoted the music from his home country (*Musicus* Vol. 31.1: 47).¹⁶

Through the connections of William Henry Bell and the support of the overseas scholarships offered by UNISA, the music conservatoires in London remained popular study destinations for South African musicians.¹⁷ Simultaneously, there were also a number of British pedagogues who made Cape Town their home and influenced the development of piano tuition at the SACM. After Bell's retirement in 1935, the directorship of the school was taken over by a series of British musicians. Stewart Deas (a former student of Donald Tovey in Edinburgh) was head of the institution between 1936 and 1939. He focused on the expansion of the University's Symphony Orchestra and collaborated with William Pickerill from the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra to secure the performances of young composers' works (Malan 1986c: 202). During the years of the Second World War, the SACM was directed by the English pianist Eric Grant. Grant was a professor of piano at the Royal Academy of Music and initially travelled to South Africa as an examiner for the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and UNISA. He built on Bell's foundations by encouraging South African pianists to further their studies in London (Paxinos 1994: 85). Two further colleagues of Grant maintained the British tradition at the College: Cameron Taylor (1905-?) and Colin Taylor (1881-1973).¹⁸

Although Cameron Taylor was born in Canada, he studied at the Royal College of Music in London. He met his wife, a Capetonian, at the College and this influenced him to move to South Africa in 1932 (Malan 1986d: 324). For ten years he was active as a concert pianist in South Africa and also taught privately at the time. He regularly appeared as soloist with the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra and recorded for the SABC (Malan 1986d: 324 & Gollom 2000: 73). Due to an eventual

¹⁶ One such example would be his lecture recital at the Aeolian Hall in London in 1922. On this occasion he presented the children's music of Sydney Rosenbloom, a British composer who had settled in Johannesburg (Henderson Matthey 1945: 59). I return to Rosenbloom later in this chapter.

¹⁷ Contemporaries of Adolph Hallis who had connections with the SACM and studied under the guidance of Matthey in London were Adelaide Newman, Sona Whiteman and Isador Epstein. These pianists eventually established lively teaching practices in Johannesburg.

¹⁸ Colin Taylor (not related to Cameron Taylor) was born in Oxford and, similarly to Grant, he commenced his relationship with South Africa as an examiner for UNISA. Bell appointed him as vice-principal of the SACM in 1921. As the first musician in the country to compose a large quantity of children's music (Venter in Malan 1986d: 29), he significantly contributed to piano tuition in South Africa. More than 60 of his piano works were distributed by prominent publishers, including Augener's Edition, Novello, Boosey & Hawkes and Legnick.

ailment in his right arm he could not practise enough to prepare for concerts and had to abandon his solo career in 1942 (Grové 2006c: 63). He then started to teach at the SACM and, for a brief period, the Conservatoire in Stellenbosch. His students Laura Searle and Yonty Solomon became prominent musicians and teachers in Cape Town and London and he also provided the young composition students John Joubert and Stefans Grové with a sound pianistic foundation (Malan 1986d: 324). Grové wrote an article for UNISA's journal *Musicus* on Cameron Taylor (Grové 2006: 63-64). He described Taylor as the teacher who had the greatest influence on him as an undergraduate student, even more so than his composition teacher William Henry Bell. He also attested to Taylor's significant abilities as a pianist by referring to his impressive SABC recording of Brahms's Second Piano Concerto with the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra in 1942 and his demonstrations of virtuoso repertoire such as Balakirev's *Islamey* Fantasy during piano lessons (Grové 2006: 63-64). I shall return to Grové's study years with Taylor later in this chapter.

2.4 Erik Chisholm (1904-1965)

In 1946 (the year that William Henry Bell died), another teacher of Stefans Grové, the Scottish composer Erik Chisholm, took up the directorship of the SACM. This turned out to be a dramatic development in the musical life of the Cape. Chisholm was a 'self-confessed communist and a sometime leading light of the new music scene in Glasgow who had met and corresponded with Bartók, Hindemith, Sorabji and others' (Walton 2007: 21). His tenure as director of the SACM was marked by substantial changes to the structure of the institution and he dismissed many part-time staff in order to make provision for more full-time employees. This made him an unpopular figure in many circles (Purser 2009: 136) and some staff members, such as Cameron Taylor, even resigned in protest and took up positions at the Stellenbosch Conservatoire instead (Grové 2006c: 64). Chisholm appreciated the pioneering work of William Henry Bell, but he felt that the SACM had stagnated during the war years and was out of step with contemporary educational trends in other parts of the world. Even though Chisholm came from a British musical background and studied with Donald Tovey in Edinburgh, he held a more cosmopolitan view on performance. His piano teacher was Lev Pouishnov (who in turn was a pupil of Anna Yesipova, Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Alexander Glazunov at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire) and he later also had contact with Nicolai Medtner (Purser 2009: 29). He was therefore well-versed in the elements of Russian pianism and performed with a technique that involved more shoulder action instead of the emphasis placed on the forearm by Matthay and other British teachers. In the years when he was still active as a concert pianist he played such demanding works as Bartók's First Piano Concerto, Sz. 83 and Medtner's Second Piano

Concerto, op. 50 (Malan 1986a: 260). Bartók visited Glasgow on two occasions during the 1930s to perform at Chisholm's Music Society. Chisholm's diary entries include impressions of his conversations with Bartók, particularly on the technical aspects of the Hungarian composer's piano works (Purser 2009: 34). Bartók impressed Chisholm with his seemingly effortless execution of passages that include large stretches, which he ascribed to his 'wrists of steel'.

Hindemith was another musician who performed at the Glasgow Music Society and Chisholm accompanied him in his Sonatas for Viola and Viola d'Amore. As a prelude to the evening's recital, Chisholm also arranged a performance of Hindemith's music for children *Wir bauen eine Stadt*, which is one of the works that can be classified as *Gebrauchsmusik* (music for use). The young performers' 'word-and-note-perfect' rendition apparently delighted the composer (Purser 2009: 24). From a piano-teaching perspective, it is of particular interest that Chisholm engaged with the children's music of both Bartók and Hindemith and that he had the opportunity to discuss these works with the composers themselves.

In light of these earlier experiences in Glasgow, it is not surprising that Chisholm appointed the virtuoso Lili Kraus as piano lecturer at the SACM in 1949. As a student of Bartók and Kodály, Kraus represented a pianistic tradition that considerably differed from the predominantly British methods that had hitherto prevailed in South African education. Malan (1986c: 178) writes that 'during the two years of [Kraus's] stay she introduced a new pianoforte technique which appeared strange to musicians who followed Tobias Matthay's principles of arm weight and rotary motion.' The British tradition continued to flourish through the work of other teachers such as Lamar Crowson and Laura Searle, but the students of Lili Kraus concurrently maintained the principles of the Hungarian piano school at the SACM.¹⁹ Chisholm's interest in the work of Bartók evidently left quite a legacy at the school and his successors, George Pulvermacher and Michael Brimer, continued this more international approach by appointing another Hungarian pianist, Thomas Rajna, to the staff.

Grové confirms that Chisholm was a 'breath of fresh air' at the SACM (Schoeman 2011 & 2012c). He created many opportunities for gifted young composers by founding the South African branch of the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM). This resulted in works by Arnold van Wyk and

¹⁹ One of Lili Kraus's students, Niel Solomon, was a piano lecturer at the SACM for many years. In a personal interview in December 2013, Solomon communicated Kraus's methods to me and described her impact on piano tuition at the SACM.

Grové being performed at conferences in Haifa, Israel and Salzburg, Austria. Chisholm also composed a large amount of piano music in Cape Town, notably his Piano Concerto no. 2, 'Hindustani'.²⁰ This work was dedicated to and first performed by Adolph Hallis during an ISCM concert at the University of Cape Town in 1949 (Purser 2009: 140). It was the first in a series of compositions based on Indian folk music. Chisholm's friend Kaikhosru Sorabji inspired him to travel to India and to study the rāgas in Hindustani music that were eventually incorporated into the 'Hindustani' Piano Concerto, the Violin Concerto and the Concerto for Orchestra. The Violin Concerto was performed during the Van Riebeeck Festival in 1952 (300 years after the VOC settled in the Cape of Good Hope). Chisholm's fascination with Indian music was not the only artistic controversy that was viewed with suspicion by the higher official circles in South Africa. Four years earlier, the National Party had won the general election, and started enforcing the laws of racial segregation that would only be eased during the late 1980s and finally overcome in 1994. Chisholm made no secret of his aversion to the political situation in South Africa.²¹ Even when the measures of apartheid became more severe during the 1960s, he fearlessly promoted the first performance of the Scottish composer Ronald Stevenson's (whom he appointed at the SACM) *Passacaglia on DSCH* (Purser 2009: 201). DSCH was the series of notes famously used by Dmitri Shostakovich in several of his works to represent his shortened name, and the obvious connection with a Russian composer led to Chisholm's office being raided by the South African security police shortly after the *Passacaglia* was performed.²² Furthermore, he had already ventured beyond the 'Iron Curtain', visiting and performing in Moscow in 1957. His host was none other than Kabalevsky and he served on a composition competition jury of which Shostakovich was the chair. Chisholm conducted his own *Hindustani Piano Concerto* in the Great Hall of the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatoire and the work was well-received (Purser 2009: 169). Despite his attempts to invite prominent Soviet artists such as

²⁰ Chris Venter (Malan 1986d: 30-31) wrote that Chisholm's vast compositional output had not yet been evaluated by the late 1960s. This has in many ways been rectified by the publication of John Purser's book on Chisholm (2009). During the past decade there have also been compact disc releases of Chisholm's solo piano works and concertos, which drew renewed international attention to this composer. Murray McLachlan recorded two albums of solo piano works in 2004. In 2012, the English pianist Danny Driver received a very favourable review in the *BBC Music Magazine* for his recordings of Chisholm's complete works for piano and orchestra.

²¹ During a lecture for the Latvian Composers' Union in 1962, Chisholm stated: 'It is only fair to say that the National Government in South Africa (which I detest) is providing separate University education for the non-European (non-white) people of S.A.' (Purser 2009: 176).

²² The apartheid government strictly prohibited contact with anything that resembled communism.

Gilels, Kabalevsky and Shostakovich to South Africa, he did not succeed in surpassing the political obstacles that were set by the Russian Ministry of Culture and the anti-Soviet South African government.

Chisholm's greatest contribution to the SACM was undoubtedly the expansion of the opera department and his collaboration with the dynamic Italian director Gregorio Fiasconaro. Aside from his focus on performing a large portion of the operatic repertoire (ranging from Pergolesi to Puccini and Bartók), his engagement with Eastern European and Russian music had a strong impact on the practice of instrumental music at the SACM. Ever since his childhood years in Glasgow he constantly researched the origins of Celtic folk music. This eventually branched out to the above-mentioned interest in Indian folk music, and also that of other countries where he lived and worked: Malaysia, the USA and finally South Africa. One of his ideals was the creation of a separate department for the study of 'native African music'.²³ This did not materialise, as Chisholm died suddenly in 1965. Fortunately the subject of ethnomusicology, with particular specialisation in the area of indigenous Southern African music, started to thrive elsewhere in the country under the auspices of Percival Kirby (University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg), Christopher Ballantine (University of Natal, Durban) and most significantly Hugh and Andrew Tracey (Rhodes University, Grahamstown).

2.5 Developments in other parts of South Africa

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century there were several British pianists who gave concert tours in South Africa and decided to make the country their home (Venter in Malan 1986d: 21). After the Great Trek of 1838, the Afrikaners (often referred to as *Voortrekkers* or *Boers*) moved towards the north of the country and developed new towns such as Pietermaritzburg, Durban, Bloemfontein, Pretoria, Potchefstroom and many smaller settlements. The *Voortrekkers* did not particularly appreciate the piano and regarded the instrument as a 'decadent British tool of entertainment' (Bouws 1947: 108 & 1982: 115). They continued to use the more easily portable harmonium and employed the instrument during religious ceremonies and smaller house gatherings. Foreign distributors such as Mackay, Jackson and Haarbarger still managed to sell instruments and music scores in all the towns (Venter in Malan 1986d: 20). Port Elizabeth was one of the first vibrant

²³ Chisholm wrote in an overview of the first 50 years of the SACM that 'there should be a department of African Native Music Studies and both Europeans and Africans should be trained to collect, classify and study African Native music' (Purser 2009: 175). The idea of collecting, classifying and studying folk music strongly illustrates the depth of Bartók's influence on Chisholm.

artistic centres outside of the immediate surroundings of Cape Town and Stellenbosch. A musician from London, Roger Ascham, settled there in 1893 and created quite a stir through his piano and organ recitals. He managed to attract large audiences to the Feathermarket Hall, where he played virtuosic organ works (including the *Toccata* from Widor's *Fifth Symphonie* – Malan 1986a: 52). He was equally active as a piano recitalist and notably performed many works by Chopin and Mendelssohn. As an ardent admirer of Liszt, whom he had met in London (Malan 1986a: 52), his own piano compositions consequently display many of the bravura elements typical of that composer's style. Ascham's cadenza to Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody* no. 2 in C sharp minor was published by Chappell & Co. in London. The fragment of this cadenza in Example 3 illustrates both the virtuosic and idiomatic qualities of Ascham's piano writing.

Example 3: Roger Ascham, Cadenza to Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody* no. 2, S. 244/2, bb. 1-8

Cadenza
pour la 2^e Rhapsodie Hongroise de Liszt
par Roger Ascham.

Piano

4

tempo Vivace

m.g.

P quasi trillo

Ped.

6

16

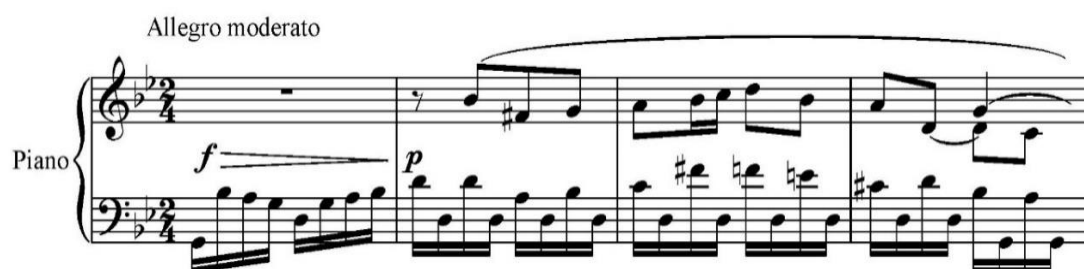
16

f

Ped.

Ascham was a devoted teacher and his students regularly performed in the Feathermarket Hall. Adolph Hallis²⁴ was one of these young musicians who played a variety of concertos, accompanied on second piano by Ascham. Hallis also studied composition under the guidance of another British musician, Horace Barton, one of the Afrikaans composers of art song to whom I referred earlier in this chapter (p. 54). Like Ascham, Barton wrote and published a large quantity of piano music that closely resembles the works of Schumann, Chopin, Liszt and Grieg. Barton's two larger piano works, the Sonata in G minor and the *Rondo Scherzando*, were published by Novello & Co. in London.²⁵ Examples 4a and 5a are extracts from Barton's Sonata in G minor which bear a resemblance to very similar figurations in Schumann's Sonata no. 2 in G minor, op. 22 as well as Grieg's Sonata in E minor, op. 7, also reproduced below for ease of comparison (Examples 4b and 5b). The influence of Schumann can be traced in the left-hand semiquaver accompaniment coupled to wide leaps in the first movement. The integration of perfect fourth intervals (e''/b' and f#''/c'') into the melody of the third movement in Barton's Sonata brings a similar motivic treatment in the last movement of the Grieg Sonata to mind. The relationship between Barton's work and those of Schumann and Grieg is further accentuated through the similar employment of G and E minor tonalities.

Example 4(A): Horace Barton, Piano Sonata in G minor, first movement, bb. 1-4



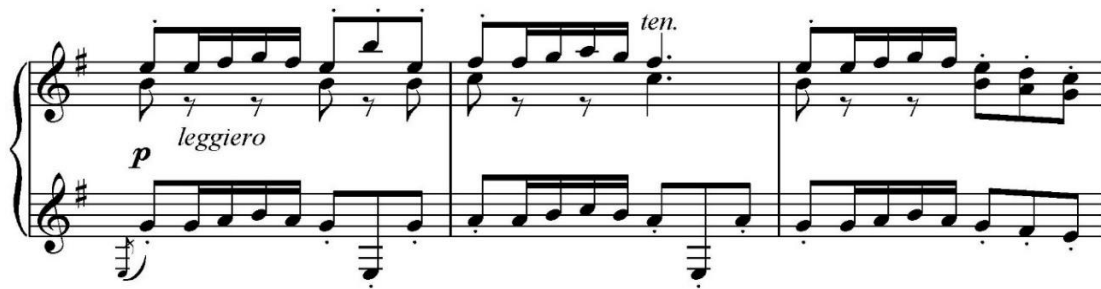
Example 4(B): Robert Schumann, Piano Sonata no. 2 in G minor, op. 22, first movement, bb. 41-45



²⁴ Hallis was born in Port Elizabeth in 1896. He received his first training from Ascham before moving to Cape Town and London to further his studies.

²⁵ Several piano works by Ascham and Barton are now held in the archives of the British Library.

Example 5(A): Horace Barton, Piano Sonata in G minor, third movement, bb. 24-26



Example 5(B): Edvard Grieg, Piano Sonata in E minor, op. 7, fourth movement, bars 205-209



A number of pianists from Europe gave concerts tours in South Africa before continuing their travels to the East Indies and Australia. These artists performed in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Grahamstown, Queenstown, Durban, Pietermaritzburg and later also Bloemfontein, Pretoria, Barberton and Johannesburg (which was only developed after gold was discovered there in 1886). One of the first significant solo recitals north of the Cape Colony was apparently given in Bloemfontein in 1877 by a Mrs. Carl Fischer, who was also the first pianist to perform complete sonatas and suites (Venter in Malan 1986d: 21-22). She was rapidly followed by the English pianist Alice Hart, who gave a series of recitals in Durban and settled there to become a sought-after teacher. A successful pianist and composer from London, Sydney Rosenbloom (1889-1967) immigrated to South Africa in 1920. Before moving to that country, he had taught at the Royal Academy of Music and performed Grieg's Piano Concerto at one of Henry Wood's Promenade Concerts in the Queen's Hall (1913). Most of his 38 opus numbers, published by Augener Edition in London, include remarkably mature piano works with influences of Chopin and Brahms.²⁶ Rosenbloom played a vital role in establishing piano teaching practices in Bloemfontein, Pretoria and Johannesburg. When Percival Kirby formed a music department at the University of the

²⁶ All of Rosenbloom's published works are available in the British Library.

Witwatersrand in 1921, he became one of the first lecturers. He was also involved in the University of Pretoria's attempts to create a music conservatoire.²⁷

Bloemfontein and the surrounding smaller towns of the Free State Province became more involved in structured music education during the 1930s and 1940s. David Roode and his younger brother Maarten Roode (the maternal uncles of Stefans Grové) were students of Maria Fisser in Robertson before they settled in the Free State. After receiving further training at the Royal Academy of Music in London, David Roode started the Free State Music School in 1934. He then became the first head of the music department that was incorporated into the University of the Free State in 1946 (Human 1992: 45).²⁸ Roode's younger brother, Maarten, undertook some pioneering work in the smaller Free State towns of Kestell, Boshof and Kroonstad. After working in Johannesburg as a church organist, he became the first head of the music department at the University of Potchefstroom. The Roode brothers composed religious music and art songs that are still performed today, but both also contributed educational piano music.

2.6 UNISA Music Examinations

An important moment in the history of Western art music in South Africa was the foundation of a national music examination system at the University of the Cape of Good Hope (today known as UNISA) in 1894. This system was originally affiliated with the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (hereafter ABRSM) that had commenced under the auspices of Sir Alexander Mackenzie (Royal Academy of Music) and Sir George Grove (Royal College of Music) in London five years earlier. British examiners travelled to South Africa and brought with them the expertise that was needed to standardise and improve music education in that country. Paxinos (1994: 124) ascribes the rapid growth of examination entries within the first ten years to the educational structure that the system provided to private teachers. This included a graded syllabus, inexpensive printed albums with examination pieces from the Baroque to the contemporary, supporting materials such as scale books and technical exercises, music theory manuals as well as general background materials preparing candidates for the questions that would be asked by examiners. In 1894 there were only nine

²⁷ A full-time music department at that University was only established in 1960, with Jacques Malan (editor of the *South African Music Encyclopedia*) as the first director.

²⁸ DJ Roode was also a passionate choir director and performed many oratorios such as Handel's *Messiah*, Haydn's *Creation* and Mendelssohn's *Elijah* in Bloemfontein (all in Afrikaans translation).

courses for practical and theory examinations and by 1994 (a century later) this had expanded to more than 360 courses. Judging on the statistics of the department the piano has always been the most popular discipline, partly because the repertoire is so vast and also because tertiary musical institutions such as the SACM and the Stellenbosch Conservatoire historically emphasised the study of this instrument in their undergraduate courses. The Teacher's Diploma for Piano (equivalent to the later UNISA Teacher's Licentiate) was instated in 1896. This created an ideal basis for teacher training, especially since candidates who enrolled for the Diploma had to demonstrate a considerable knowledge of the piano repertoire. The standard works by JS Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn and Chopin formed the central body of study material. This was supplemented by a great variety of etudes by Muzio Clementi, Carl Czerny, Henri Bertini, Louis Plaidy, Albert Loeschhorn, Stephen Heller, Henry Lemoine, Adolf von Henselt, Aloys Schmitt, Johann Baptist Cramer and Ignaz Moscheles (Paxinos 1994: 128 & 162).

The list of early British examiners includes some prominent pianists and teachers that were active around the turn of the nineteenth century. The first examiner to travel to Cape Town in 1894 was Franklin Taylor (1843-1919), an illustrious professor of the Royal College of Music and teacher of the SACM's founder, Apolline Niay Darroll. Between 1859 and 1861, Taylor studied in Leipzig with Plaidy and Moscheles (Anon 1899: 799). His fellow students at the Conservatoire were Edvard Grieg and Arthur Sullivan. After a few months of masterclasses with Clara Schumann in Paris he returned to London to pursue a concert career. He was praised in *The Times* (1865) for his 'excellent touch, agreeable if not powerful tone, and a manner of phrasing which, while rarely inexpressive, is never fantastic or overdone' after his performances of concertos by Mendelssohn and Hiller at the Crystal Palace (Anon 1899: 801). Taylor focused his attentions on piano pedagogy and this culminated in a variety of editions for the ABRSM of Sonatas by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert (annotated with Taylor's fingering solutions). These editions, published by Augener, were widely used in South Africa until they were superseded by Harold Craxton and Donald Tovey's publications in the 1940s.²⁹

Franklin Taylor's colleague in London, Oscar Beringer (1844-1922), became a regular examiner in South Africa in 1902. During his youth, Beringer became acquainted with Liszt, Thalberg, Von Bülow, Joachim and Rubinstein (Paxinos 1994: 83). As a student of Karl Tausig in Berlin, he gained vast

²⁹ The 2012 UNISA Piano syllabus provides teachers and students with references to various editions for all the prescribed repertoire. Since Franklin Taylor and Harold Craxton included many subjective phrasing and dynamic markings in their publications, the more historically-informed editions by Henle, Wiener Urtext and Bärenreiter have more or less replaced the older Augener and ABRSM editions.

technical experience that crystallised in the publication of his *Daily Technical Exercises* (Breitkopf), a book that is currently still in use in South Africa. His many volumes entitled *Beringer's School of Easy Classics* (Augener Edition) are also still popular among teachers. Another examiner who frequently visited South Africa was Harold Samuel (1879-1937). He gave a series of concerts in London in 1921, performing the complete piano works of JS Bach. During his examination tours he gave numerous lecture recitals on Bach interpretation and his editions of *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier* served as popular handbooks for Grade 8 and Licentiate candidates (Paxinos 1994: 84). Later on, some of the British examiners even made South Africa their home. Earlier in this chapter, I have referred to Eric Grant, Colin Taylor, Cameron Taylor and Stewart Deas, all active lecturers at the SACM. One can therefore conclude that the UNISA Examinations also impacted the educational life through the teaching activities of their examiners. Young local musicians were also awarded scholarships to study in London, and in this way a strong connection between South Africa and the British tradition of piano playing was forged.

In terms of contemporary music, the early syllabuses of the UNISA examinations made ample provision for British composers, in particular those musicians who taught at either the Royal College or Royal Academy of Music. William Sterndale Bennett, who was a foremost nineteenth century English composer and a prominent piano pedagogue of the Royal Academy, composed many elementary piano pieces that were included in the syllabus. Judging from the study handbooks from the first quarter of the twentieth century, it becomes clear that the Associated Board aimed at the advancement of British music throughout the Commonwealth. It is rather surprising that lesser significant works by unknown British composers such as Muriel Mungo Park and Charles Benbow enjoyed priority in the syllabus above more important composers like Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Debussy and Bartók. This situation prevailed until UNISA gained independence from the ABRSM in 1945.³⁰ When David Roode was appointed as the first South African-born director of the UNISA Music Examinations Department in 1958, the emphasis fell on the creation of stylistically more comprehensive syllabuses. The standard repertoire from the Baroque to the contemporary was first of all re-evaluated and the value of less familiar piano works by the Classical Czech (Bohemian) composers Benda, Mysliveček, Wařhal, Koželuh and Hummel was eventually discovered. Up to the present, these composers have regularly featured in the piano syllabuses from Pre-grade 1 to Grade

³⁰ In order to ascertain the tendencies in prescribed repertoire, I have compared the handbooks of the UNISA Music Examinations from 1895, 1920, 1933 and 1951. Paxinos (1994: 162) confirms the systematic preference to British composers until 1945 in his historical chapter on the curriculum of UNISA Examinations.

8. After the separation from the ABRSM, the UNISA Examination Department was approached by the South African Society of Music Teachers regarding the inclusion of works by local composers in the syllabus. In the aftermath of the Second World War there remained a dearth of contemporary South African piano music. UNISA did not have the financial means to commission new works and the Examination Committee invested more time in training South African teachers and examiners. It was only as late as 1978 that Roode's successors, Hennie Joubert and John Roos, implemented a structure whereby South African composers would be commissioned to write works especially for the syllabus (Paxinos 1994: 161).

The project has been beneficial to composers on several levels. Through the publication and distribution of their works by UNISA, they gained national exposure. Some of the works were written by respected teachers who were not necessarily known as professional composers. The creative activity of expressing their pedagogical views through educational compositions can be seen as a positive experience for both themselves and their students. Simultaneously, certain renowned South African composers who have built up a reputation with larger-scale works also hone their craft by having to write smaller exam pieces. Stefans Grové contributed no fewer than seventeen works for various instruments during the first years of the project (1978-1981). Chris Walton regarded this as an important aspect of the composer's stylistic development:

Being forced to express himself on a small scale and to precise technical requirements (ranging from grade one to eight) for a whole range of instruments that included [piano], piano duet, oboe, bassoon, trumpet, flute and clarinet, would appear to have forced Grové to focus his creative imagination in a manner that in fact helped to set it free. Indeed, he has since proven himself as a master of the miniature as of the larger scale (Walton 2007: 27-28).

Until 2012, the highest qualifications of the UNISA Music Examinations were the Teacher's and Performer's Licentiate.³¹ Although the Teacher's Licentiate required more focus on the methodology of instrumental teaching, the performance of four stylistically-contrasting works also used to be obligatory. The Performer's Licentiate (currently the Performer's Assessment) consists of a full-scale concert recital and here a programme of four large works has to be compiled. Candidates have to perform at least one composition from the twentieth or twenty-first century for the Performer's Assessment and UNISA provides a list of works to choose from. The syllabus currently includes a substantial list of South African piano concert works. This provides testimony of the quality of piano education in that country, as most of these composers are themselves pianists and

³¹ In 2012, the two Licentiate examinations were amalgamated into a single Performer's Assessment Examination.

are able to produce highly idiomatic, even virtuosic, music for the instrument. In Chapter 4 of this thesis, the role of the UNISA Examinations in tracing a canon of South African concert and educational repertoire will be investigated in more depth.

3. Stefans Grové's position within the context of South African pianism

In this final section of the chapter, I discuss how all the historical developments outlined thus far impacted the pianistic background of Grové. The composer spent most of his childhood in Bloemfontein, capital city of the Free State. Even though his mother was from German descent and he attended the Lutheran Church, most of his upbringing took place within Afrikaner society. When he was still a boy in the 1930s, a number of significant cultural manifestations took place. The Bible was translated into Afrikaans (1933) and a group of Afrikaans poets, such as Dirk Opperman, Uys Krige and NP van Wyk Louw, produced important works of literature. The South African Academy of Arts and Sciences also initiated the Hertzog Prize for Afrikaans literature, which created more publicity for these writers. The subject of music was still regarded, however, as a lesser priority in the Free State. With the deteriorating economic climate that accompanied the Great Depression of the 1930s, drastic cuts to the budget for music education were made throughout the Union of South Africa. In 1935 Christopher Wright lamented the negligent attitude of provincial education departments in the journal *The South African Music Teacher*, stating that they regard music as 'an extra, something of a luxury, a fad and frill, and in times of depression they only consider the essentials' (Van Niekerk 1997: 7). The young Grové received most of his musical stimuli in his family environment and not necessarily at school. This probably contributed to his autodidactic tendencies, as he had very little access to institutional music education.

Grové's uncles David and Maarten Roode, as well as his mother (according to the composer, a 'formidable pianist' – Schoeman 2012b) promoted musical activity in Bloemfontein with limited means. As private music teachers they relied heavily on the UNISA Music Examination Department to gain access to study materials. Grové received his first piano lessons from his mother and later continued his studies with his uncle David Roode, who not only trained in the Cape with Tina de Villiers and Maria Fisser, but from 1926 also at the Royal Academy of Music in London (Human 1991: 44). Grové relates that his mother and uncle provided him with a solid musical foundation and he worked on *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier* by JS Bach, along with Sonatas by Mozart, Haydn, Beethoven and Schubert, using the editions of Harold Samuel and Franklin Taylor that I discussed

earlier in this chapter (Schoeman 2011).³² The piano works of Horace Barton, Roger Ascham and Sydney Rosenbloom were distributed in Bloemfontein by the music shop of Haarburger (p. 66). Grové had access to these scores, but rather used them as exercises in sight-reading than performing them for examinations or arts festivals (Schoeman 2011 & 2012b). He also vividly remembers playing the Symphonies of Haydn in piano duet arrangements with his mother. Bloemfontein was, culturally speaking, a rather uneventful town in the 1930s. Impresarios nevertheless managed to lure several distinguished musicians from abroad to perform there. The young Grové attended concerts of such renowned pianists as Benno Moiseiwitsch and Arthur Rubinstein (Walton 2007: 20).³³ These listening experiences, along with his voracious study of musical scores, enabled him to internalise the many styles of the piano repertoire. Through the Carnegie Collection at the University of the Free State he became acquainted with Stravinsky's ballets, and a cellist friend also introduced him to a wide repertoire for that instrument, ranging from JS Bach to Hans Pfitzner and Sergei Rachmaninoff (Walton 2007: 20/Schoeman 2012b). Grové claims that he became well-acquainted with the orchestral and chamber music works of many composers by listening to the radio on a daily basis. In the 1930s, the SABC presented classical music programmes every afternoon (Hinch in Muller & Walton 2006: 9). By the age of 20 he obtained (under the guidance of his uncle) a Teacher's and Performer's Licentiate in piano as well as a Performer's Licentiate in organ from UNISA.

Grové, who mainly lived in an Afrikaner environment and did not speak English very well, experienced the British-orientated South African Music College as quite a 'culture shock' when he went there to study in 1945 (Schoeman 2011). As he admits in one of his literary sketches from the newspaper *Hoofstad*, Cape Town was a very cosmopolitan city in the 1940s and many 'eccentric people' (Grové in Muller & Walton 2006: 77) made up a unique artistic community. He became friends with Theo Wendt, the first conductor of the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra. As a regular house guest of the artistically-inclined accountant Ben Jaffe, he met prominent visual artists such as Irma Stern. The violin professor at the SACM, Ellie Marx, told Grové many stories about his years as member of the Gewandhaus Orchestra in Leipzig and how fascinating it was to see Brahms in the

³² Friskin & Freundlich (1973: 147) compare the Mozart Sonata editions of Franklin Taylor (Augener's Edition) to those of Béla Bartók (Kalmus). I shall return to Bartók's contribution as editor in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

³³ Gollom (2000: 87 & 93) provides evidence of performances by Benno Moiseiwitsch (April 1936) and Arthur Rubinstein (June 1939) with the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra.

audience at the first performance of his Fourth Symphony. Grové lodged at the home of Charlie Weich, a music critic at the Afrikaans newspaper *Die Burger*. As a well-respected intellectual, Weich often invited musicians, poets and artists over. On these occasions, the young Grové met the conductor William Pickerill and the Afrikaans poet Boerneef (Walton 2007: 21). His teachers at the SACM included several of the notable British musicians that I have mentioned earlier in this chapter. Eric Grant accepted him into the College, after Grové submitted a ballet suite for orchestra. Grant and Pickerill later arranged for the young Grové's early orchestral works to be played by the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra during rehearsals in order for him to hear what they sounded like.

Grové wrote in 2006 that it was his piano teacher at the SACM, Cameron Taylor, who had the strongest influence on his earlier music studies (Grové 2006: 63). He drew attention to the broad technical training that he received from Taylor, whom he described as a musician with a 'very deep knowledge of the mechanics of piano playing'. Grové continued to hone his craft as a sight-reader by often playing large works such as Rachmaninov's Suite no. 2, op. 17 and Saint-Saëns's Variations on a theme of Beethoven, op. 35 on two pianos with his teacher. They also worked on the German *Lieder* repertoire, in particular the works of Schumann. For Taylor, the most essential aspect of piano playing was textural clarity. In order to obtain this, he rigorously trained the young Grové in what he called 'expressive pedalling' (Grové 2006: 64).³⁴ Grové's first composition teacher was William Henry Bell, at that point already retired and living in Gordon's Bay. Bell trained the first generation of South African-born composers who were recognised in Europe and the United States of America. Although he had a significant impact on the artistic development of John Joubert, Stanley Glasser and Priaux Rainier, it is interesting that he personally singled out three young Afrikaner composers as the 'future of South African music' (Muller & Walton 2006: 2): Arnold van Wyk, Hubert du Plessis and Stefans Grové. Of the three composers, Van Wyk carried forward the British tradition. During the 1950s, he was even criticised for not being original and only emulating English composers (Izak Grové 2013: 141). During his years of apprenticeship he spent much time in London, where he largely fell under the influence of his friend Howard Ferguson as well as other British composers, Vaughan Williams and Britten (Otterman in Bouws 1982: 196). Du Plessis also studied in London, but through his teacher Alan Bush he became more interested in the expressionist music of the Second Viennese School. His song cycle *Vreemde Liefde (Strange Love)*, op. 7 is filled with dramatic dissonant

³⁴ Aside from Grové's own short article in *Musicus* (Grové 2006), he also gave a detailed account of his piano studies with Cameron Taylor in the public interview held at the Festival and Symposium in Bloemfontein (Schoeman 2012b).

gestures and in his *Preludes for Piano*, op. 18 he utilises twelve-tone techniques (Bouws 1982: 189). His constant experimentation with serial composition culminated in a dodecaphonic orchestral work *Musiek by Drie Skilderye van Henri Rousseau (Music for Three Paintings of Henri Rousseau, 1962)*.³⁵ Muller argues that Grové is an unlikely third member of this 'male troika' (Muller & Walton 2006: 2), referring to his having benefited from the very different compositional influences of Ravel, Bartók, Hindemith and Messiaen.³⁶ However, this is hardly surprising when taking into account that Grové was the only one of the three to study with Erik Chisholm. The Scottish director of the SACM was after all a close acquaintance of Bartók and Hindemith (see pp. 60 and 61). Grové's increasing commitment to the piano singles him out among his contemporaries, even if he approached the instrument more as a composer than a performer. He attended the masterclasses of the Hungarian pianist Lili Kraus in Cape Town, around the same time that he developed an interest for Bartók. He then started teaching experimental classes to young children, composing educational piano pieces for them (Rörich 1987: 78). Although it is not possible to locate these pieces today, a more recent testament of Grové's commitment to children's education exists in the form his many works written for the UNISA Examinations between 1978 and 2007. As a composer of piano works for the concert stage, Grové constantly strived towards a more personal and idiomatic expression. Almost seventy years after he commenced his studies at the SACM, he was still actively engaged in writing for the piano. Later in this thesis, Grové's contribution will be placed more explicitly alongside that of his contemporaries in order to ascertain whether a potential canon of South African piano literature can be traced.

For the last five years of his stay in Cape Town (1948-1953), Grové regularly worked as an accompanist for the SABC. There he demonstrated his ability to improvise in the style of various composers as he described in one of his short stories for the newspaper *Hoofstad* (Grové in Muller & Walton 2006: 79-81). He would repeat his stylistic demonstrations on several occasions during his later career, but the early performances for the SABC were more or less his last professional engagements as a solo pianist. In a recent interview he stated: 'I knew early on that I wanted to be a composer, as I did not enjoy practising. I was not a bad pianist, but I did not want [to] become a performer' (Schoeman 2012a). During the early 1950s, Grové embarked on several concert tours

³⁵ Thom 2001: 7

³⁶ Swart (2013: 208) claims, however, that Arnold van Wyk's large-scale piano work *Nagmusiek (Night Music, 1955-58)* also includes textures and techniques similar to Ravel's *Miroirs* (1905).

with the Dutch violinist and composer Arthur Wegelin. The programmes of these concerts are still available in the archives of DOMUS, and they include listings of substantial works from the violin and piano repertoire of composers such as Franck, Ravel and Debussy. The conclusion that can be drawn from these programme selections, is that Grové must have possessed considerable technical skills in order to engage with the demanding piano parts of these works.

After he was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship in 1953 to study at Harvard University, he focused his attentions mainly on composition. He continued to hold positions as a church organist, but he also studied the flute and viola.³⁷ His versatility as an instrumentalist came in useful, as it enhanced his ability to orchestrate and to compose idiomatic works for keyboard, wind and string instruments. In the 1960s he tried his hand as a conductor and directed ensemble concerts of mostly Baroque and Classical music at the Walter's Art Gallery in Baltimore (Sprenkle in Muller & Walton 2006: 32-33). He founded the *Pro Musica Rara Ensemble* while teaching at the Peabody Conservatory and performed many of the lesser-known Cantatas of JS Bach along with a large quantity of early music (dating as far back as 1450).

The largest part of Grové's output for the piano, which will be discussed in the next chapter, was written during the years that he taught at the University of Pretoria. This spans over a period of more than 30 years (1972-2003) and signifies the closer contact that he had with young pianists. Several of his colleagues started promoting his works among their students and thus a new performing tradition started to emerge. Grové was also involved with the foundation of a new course in South African Music History during the late-1980s. To this end, he wrote a series of articles for *Musica* on early music practices in the Cape Colony and he compiled valuable information of the earliest composers of Afrikaans art songs, such as S. Le Roux Marais, PJ Lemmer, Johannes and Gideon Fagan as well as Bosman di Ravelli (see page 54). Grové was a transitional figure that connected the educational sphere of South Africa in the early twentieth century to new trends of the early twenty-first century. He also lived and worked in an era where many political changes have taken place and the University of Pretoria has undergone serious steps of transformation to become an institution that embraces all cultures. As I have mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, Chris Walton is one of the leading researchers and writers on Grové's life and works. When Walton

³⁷ Grové's first flute teacher was Reginald Clay, a member of the Cape Town Symphony Orchestra. After moving to the USA, he continued to have flute lessons at the Longy School of Music with James Pappoutsakis. Whilst in Baltimore, he also took up a position as church organist at the Franklin Street Presbyterian Church. He has remained a church musician and only retired from his position as organist of the Lutheran Paulus Church in Pretoria in 2008.

became the head of the Music Department at the University of Pretoria, he significantly contributed to the development of studies in ethnomusicology and he appointed leading figures in the field such as Meki Nzewi (Nigeria) and Robert Kwami (Ghana). In this way, practitioners of Western art music started to gain exposure to interdisciplinary studies and piano students had the opportunity to play both their own instrument as well as a variety of indigenous instruments from Southern and Northern Africa. Walton was also instrumental in Grové's appointment as the University's Composer-in-Residence in 2003 and this led to a renewed creative surge that lasted until the composer's death in 2014.

Grové's legacy as a creator of piano music can be traced in the activities of his students. Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph and Alexander Johnson are two pianist-composers who followed his example, by writing quality music for children and for concert pianists (see Chapter 4). Many composers provided testimony of Grové's teaching abilities and how he could supply them with constructive advice upon first glance of the score (Sprenkle 2006 & Van Rensburg 2006). Zaidel-Rudolph (2006: 41) wrote:

I hung on to his every word in a didactic sense as I knew that one day, I too would find myself in the role of a teacher of composition. In my present post as composition professor at Wits University, I am applying many of his principles of teaching and following his approach to young people's music. For me, one of the most defining aspects of his teaching was his ability to separate craftsmanship and a good solid technique from the mysterious and indefinable elements of inspiration and intuitive musical creativity.

The most important national music competitions in South Africa often stipulate the performance of Grové's works. At the Hennie Joubert Piano Competition in 2012, his *Mbira Song Carried by the Night Breezes* (from *Songs and Dances from Africa*) was a compulsory work. Throughout his last years, Grové readily provided pianists and musicologists with advice on the interpretation of his music and he never came across as being restrictive (Schoeman 2011, 2012c, Stolp 2013 and Swart 2013). Although he seldom played the piano in public at this stage in his career, he still exerted a considerable influence on young performers. As a leading music critic for widely-distributed newspapers he reviewed hundreds of concerts during his time in Pretoria. In his youth, Grové had been influenced by British, German, Hungarian and Russian traditions of music-making. He underlined this by expressing his admiration for pianists from different countries and pianistic backgrounds: the American Murray Perahia (for his crisp articulation), the German Walter Gieseking (for the wide colour palette that he employs in interpreting the music of Debussy and Ravel), the Russian Sergei Rachmaninoff (for his polyphonic clarity and singing tone as well as the sparse use of the sustaining pedal) and also the Argentinian Martha Argerich (for amalgamating a plethora of

colours with clarity and transparency).³⁸ Through his compact disc reviews for *Musicus*, he also stayed abreast of the activities of the younger generations of pianists.

In this chapter I intended to define the broad educational and cultural background from which Grové's piano works originated. As a young Afrikaner, he received his most important training in British (and American) musical circles. At the same time, he practised the German Lutheran religion and was moulded as a church musician in the traditions of JS de Villiers and Friedrich Jannasch. Many of his short stories and narratives also brought across his attraction to, and engagement with, other ethnic groups in Southern Africa (Muller & Walton: 81-83; 85-87). This conglomeration of cultural influences did not confuse him in an artistic sense. It rather instilled within him the quest to discover a hybrid musical medium that communicates diversity in a personal and expressive way. In Chapter 2 of this thesis, I shall demonstrate how Grové combined various cultural perspectives in his piano works, particularly those that form part of his *Music from Africa* series.

³⁸ Schoeman 2012a & 2012b.

CHAPTER 2

THE PIANO MUSIC OF STEFANS GROVÉ – A STYLISTIC SURVEY

1. Introduction

In terms of quality and quantity, Stefans Grové's solo piano works constitute a substantial cross-section of his wider compositional output. As many of these pieces exist only in unpublished handwritten form, it is difficult to determine their exact number. Muller and Walton (2006: 114-121) provide an extensive catalogue of Grové's complete compositions. As the composer experienced a late surge of creative energy towards the end of his life (Schoeman 2012a), this catalogue rapidly became outdated; during the eight years following the publication of Muller and Walton's *A Composer in Africa*, he completed at least ten new works. Over the course of his long career, Grové also withdrew a number of piano compositions; several of the items in Muller and Walton's catalogue are now missing or no longer in the public domain. Taking all the available scores into account, Grové's pianistic oeuvre comprises 31 solo works, ranging from short examination pieces for children to large-scale cycles.¹ It is therefore possible to subdivide his pianistic output into 89 movements or self-contained pieces.

In this chapter I seek to expand on Muller and Walton's catalogue and to provide a chronological survey that systematically covers the individual compositions for solo piano. Grové's oeuvre will be divided into creative periods in order to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of his stylistic development and to ascertain whether biographical elements might have had an impact on the form and content of his music. The intention is to pave the way for discussion in Chapter 3, focusing on the realisation of a wide plethora of pianistic questions that inevitably arise from such an extensive corpus of works for the instrument. Although the study of such a broad area may seem ambitious, even a cursory analysis of both form and content in Grové's piano music is sufficient for the performer or researcher to determine that certain elements remain constant features throughout his development.² There is a definite homogeneity of ideas, particularly evident in the later works, which considerably minimises the scope of musical material and therefore facilitates an overall

¹ A clavichord work that can also be performed on the piano, *In der stillen Welt von Gestern* (2005), along with a few works for piano four-hands also form part of my enumeration of Grové's complete piano oeuvre.

² Izak Grové (1998: 106) relates the complete body of works to the interplay between linearity and timbre, that is to say, the composer's use of contrapuntal textures in combination with a wide palette of sound colours.

understanding of the composer's basic expressive vocabulary. Stephanus Muller went as far as to discuss with the composer the 'danger of self-repetition' in his works (Muller 2007: 20, 22-23). It is true that, upon first glance at Grové's various scores, it is straightforward to identify motivic similarities between them. This, however, is a conscious process for Grové, which he has expressed as follows:

The rhetorical aspect is very important. The way I say things, the way I present things to my listener ... Not only the message, but the way in which the message is coloured timbre-wise ... Also connected with that is how one work differs from another within one particular style. Now there the danger is that one can quote from oneself. And sometimes I catch myself in the third movement of this flute piece that I want to quote from *Yemoja* [the last movement of the piano cycle *Images from Africa*, Music from Africa no. 18, 1998-99]. So I had to adapt this motive so that it is more or less a family member of a motive in *Yemoja*. (Muller 2007: 22-23)

Aside from the motivic considerations discussed above, other reasons for self-quotation might include an attempt to evoke the repetitive aspects of traditional African music (a strong influence on Grové's work since 1984) and also the composer's need to reuse certain piano techniques that he found particularly effective. Grové was a gifted pianist and organist, and in his compositions for those instruments he never lost sight of the technical complexities of keyboard-playing. In the same way that an experienced performer-composer such as Franz Liszt often used the same embellishments and *fiorituras* in more than one work (a notable example would be some of the cadenza passages in *Venezia e Napoli*, which are reproduced almost identically in the Piano Concerto no. 1 in E flat major), Grové often duplicated certain technical patterns throughout his oeuvre. In a description of his working methods, Grové related that "one can't [maybe 'should not' would be a more appropriate way of phrasing this] invent music on an instrument.³ Then it becomes too much, as Hindemith said, like the working out of finger-patterns" (Muller 2007: 22). The repetition of motifs in Grové's oeuvre can therefore be seen as a logistical consideration, albeit an internalised part of his compositional vocabulary and a characteristic that is not necessarily the result of

³ With this statement Grové merely presented his own personal approach to composing for the piano. Several celebrated composers have written music at the instrument rather than at a desk. Grové's own teacher Aaron Copland wrote that 'few composers are capable of writing down entire compositions without at least a passing reference to the piano. In fact, Stravinsky in his *Autobiography* has even gone so far as to say that it is a bad thing to write music away from the piano because the composer should always be in contact with *la matière sonore*. That's a violent taking of the opposite side. But, in the end, the way in which a composer writes is a personal matter. The method is unimportant. It is the result that counts' (Copland 1939/2002: 18).

structural manipulation. In a more general context, this will be a significant point of analysis in the stylistic periodisation of his music.

Stephanus Muller (2006: 49) argues that the original concept of dividing a composer's work into three style periods, as in the case of Wilhelm von Lenz (*Beethoven et ses trois styles* – 1852), stemmed from the eighteenth-century organicist views exemplified in the art historian Johann Winckelmann's *Die Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* (1756-62). The idea of three creative periods relates to an anthropological model of life's three phases – youth, maturity and decay/death. In his book on late style, Edward Saïd (2006: 4-6) also drew up a three-phase model on which he claimed any study of the artistic ('self-making') process relies – beginning (the concept of birth or discovering the roots of existence), maturity (searching for one's position in society) and lateness (the onset of ill health, the decay of the body). Saïd then focused on the late creative periods of great artists and explored, whether 'at the end of their lives their work and thought acquires a new idiom' (Saïd 2006: 6). Generally speaking, the traditional three-phase model can also apply to the music of Grové. His biographical circumstances coincide with significant changes in style and increasing (or decreasing) productivity. A first period may include his apprenticeship years – his childhood and student years in South Africa and America (1922-1957).⁴ The second, mature period would then start with Grové's appointment at the Peabody Conservatory and the composition of his largely-orchestrated Violin Concerto (which was influenced by the atonal music of Schoenberg, Berg and Webern) and finish with his return to South Africa in the 1970s. The third and final period would start in 1984 when Grové embarked on a new stylistic route, namely his embracing of his African origins and of the integration of elements from indigenous music in a newly-catalogued group of works. However, although this three-phase model illustrates the broad contours of Grové's work, it does not provide sufficient insight into the stylistic changes that took place particularly during the first two periods ('youth' and 'maturity'). For the purposes of clarity, I therefore divide Grové's study years into two creative periods. This then results in a detailed discussion of four, not three, overall creative periods of which I provide an introductory outline here.

Between 1944 and 1948, Grové was still actively studying the piano and wrote an extensive series of programmatic pieces for the instrument. These pieces demonstrate the clear influences of Debussy's

⁴ It may seem odd to regard Grové's 'apprenticeship years' as taking him to his mid-thirties. It is, however, important to realise that the autodidactic nature of his compositional upbringing constituted a lengthy period of compositional and musicological training before the composer discovered his own creative voice.

piano works (including *Pour Le Piano* and the *Préludes*), traces of Stravinsky's ballets, as well as elements of the *Style Mécanique* and primitivistic sound colours apparent from the works of the *Les Six* composers in France, particularly Milhaud and Poulenc. It is therefore possible to identify a separate compositional phase during which Grové was still honing his craft by imitating other composers. This leads me to refer to his childhood and early study years in Cape Town as his first creative period. Grové's second stylistic period can be connected to his discovery of the neo-Baroque and contrapuntally-crafted works of Hindemith. On the title page of his Trio for violin, viola and cello (1948) he wrote: 'My first neo-classical work'. With this String Trio, a new stylistic phase opened up, in which Grové composed some of his earliest successful works, including *Three Piano Pieces/Inventions* of 1951 as well as the Sonata for flute and piano of 1955 (recorded by Jean-Pierre Rampal in 1968). After the Hindemith-inspired second phase, a third period ensued (1959-1983). This so-called 'mature middle period' (to quote both Grové, 1975 and Izak Grové, 2013) includes both Grové's final years in America as well as the first decade after his return to his native South Africa. Although his biographical circumstances changed considerably, the complete third period is represented by an expressionistic atonal style. The use of tone clusters and extremely dissonant harmonies also radiated from his orchestral works of the third period to the various piano pieces of the time (particularly *Four Piano Pieces*, 1975). This period pre-empted the strong sense of rhythmic impetus coupled to the use of structural motivicism that would reappear in the fourth and final style period. An additional aspect of Grové's creativity also came to the fore at this time: the composition of functional music. As a supplement to classroom discussions and lecture recitals at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore and South African universities, Grové wrote down sixteen of his improvisations in the style of other composers to form one unpublished album entitled *An Experience in Musical Styles*. In 1978, Grové was also commissioned by UNISA to compose examination pieces for various instruments. Apart from a few explicitly tonal piano miniatures for the lower grades, most of the examination pieces show elements that correspond to the atonal tendencies of his third 'mature' period. The stylistic improvisations that constitute *An Experience in Musical Styles* had already been conceived and performed during the composer's youth, but he only converted them into complete compositions during his teaching years in the United States. In order to keep within the boundaries of a chronological survey of Grové's piano works, I have elected to include these stylistic imitations in my discussion of the third period and not as isolated examples of functional music.

In terms of Grové's fourth and final period, which started with the *Violin Sonata on African Motifs* in 1984, I would like to focus on his rekindled creativity that was so evidently sparked by the discovery

of compositional stimuli stemming from traditional Southern African music. It is not uncommon for artists, writers or musicians to experience a surge of creative energy later in life. This happens as a result of sudden circumstantial changes or unexpected sources of inspiration (aptly described in German as *Einfall*). At an advanced stage in his career, aged 62, Grové discovered a new creative pathway. After his return to South Africa from the USA in 1972, he gradually re-acquainted himself with the indigenous music of black people and became aware of new ethnomusicological discoveries in his home country. After the so-called 'road to Damascus experience' (Muller & Walton 2006: 68) in 1984 he explicitly and systematically incorporated these indigenous elements into his work. This led the composer to become even more prolific. Izak Grové (1998: 101) emphasises Grové's heightened productivity during the early 1980s, when he wrote on average one work per month in contrast to having been almost completely inactive during his final years in America. Grové's *Music from Africa* series contains forty-five complete works and in this fourth creative period, he wrote more for the piano than at any other stage of his career. He related that he felt quite intimately acquainted with the piano and that it became increasingly easy for him to compose for this instrument (Schoeman 2012a).

In his essay 'Stefans Grové's Narratives of Lateness' (Muller and Walton 2006: 49-62), Muller evaluates some of the parallels that can be drawn between Grové's *Music from Africa* series and Theodor Adorno's perspectives on late style (particularly with reference to the late works of Beethoven).⁵ He describes Adorno's dispute of the organicist approach of Winckelmann, namely that old age and the proximity of death are influential factors in the study of a composer's late style:

For Adorno, this explanation relegates the late-work to the margins of art by making it into a mere document, a trace of old age. No wonder that discussions of Beethoven's late-works are rarely bereft of biographical details or mention of Fate. It is, writes Adorno, as if the approach of death makes all art theory irrelevant and puts it at arm's length from reality (Muller and Walton 2006: 49).

Furthermore, Muller argues that Grové's own narratives, writings, and programmatic introductions have significantly shaped the way scholars approach his work, particularly that of the 'African' period. In his essay he also quotes Roger Scruton, who in his *The Aesthetics of Music* writes that if

⁵ Muller gathered this information from Adorno's essay *Spätstil Beethovens* (written in 1937). The essay was published in a volume entitled *Moment Musicaux* (1964) and later also in a larger collection of writings by Adorno, *Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. 17 (1982). I consulted the original German text as well as Michael Spitzer's (2006) English translation. There is also a translation available by Susan Gillespie (2002). The publications from 1982, 2002 and 2006 appear in the Source List of this thesis.

programme music is not accompanied by a distinct title or narrative, the listener's imagination might produce an image different from that of the composer (Scruton 1997: 129-30). The views of Scruton are in line with Adorno's argument that an analysis of the music itself (and not its surrounding influences) should be the focal point in garnering a more profound understanding of a composer's creative development. In the survey that follows I evaluate how Grové's style has evolved throughout his life, taking into account how his earlier compositional procedures have shaped his later works. An analysis of stylistic content is an important aspect of such a study, as Adorno and Scruton suggest, but in this case I believe that it is not possible to discard the organicist approach altogether. Muller and Walton have emphasised the importance of biographical aspects, such as how Grové's return to South Africa has strongly contributed to his identity as a composer and inspired him to amalgamate his cosmopolitan style with the elements of indigenous cultures around him. In terms of other external influences in his music, De Winnaar (2006) gave a detailed description of the impact that Grové's activities as a writer and academic had on his compositions. Additionally, Rörich (1992: 51) commented that 'the creative sphere that provides the impetus for Grové's composing extends beyond the craft of music. He admits to an almost umbilical relationship between his musical and literary creativity'. Throughout this chapter, I shall endeavour to identify the composer's stylistic trajectory by investigating motifs and structures in his works from the 1940s until his death in 2014. At the same time I shall also keep track of biographical elements and other external influences such as literature. In the final section of this chapter, Muller's application of the late style theories of Adorno in his discussion of Grové's African works (particularly the String Quartet of 1993) will be critically re-evaluated and brought in relation to further changes that occurred in his very last piano works – *Haunting Music* (2010), *Piano Thoughts* (2010) and *My Seasons* (2012). A more in-depth perspective on late style theory will also be extracted from Edward Saïd's posthumously-published book (2006) on the subject. The latter's insights will assist me in expanding on the investigation of late style elements in Grové music.

During my discussions with Grové, he encouraged me to investigate the stylistic features in his pianistic oeuvre rather than to engage in an extensive theoretical analysis of each individual work. He felt that an academic study of motivic ideas and timbres alongside aspects of performance and technique would be a valuable contribution in drawing greater attention to, what he deemed as, his highly personal approach to the colouristic possibilities of the piano (Schoeman 2012c). This advice from the composer strongly influenced my methods in combining and structuring a large amount of material in this chapter. At the same time, I attempt to delineate Grové's significant compositional

tendencies by referring to intervallic relationships, tone clusters and melodic and motivic constructions (particularly in the final creative period, the *Music from Africa* series).

2. The First Period: Grové's Early Years of Study (ca. 1939-1947)⁶

Grové claimed that it was through improvisation that he became interested in composition, as this experimentation led to the writing down of musical ideas (Schoeman 2012a & 2012b). Malan (1982b: 141) stated of the young Grové that 'because he was shy and found it difficult to communicate with other children, he would rather sit at the piano, preferably not to practise, but to compose; as a child of nine he had started writing his first music'. Indeed, Grové later mentioned that he had been deeply unhappy upon receiving advice from his uncle to practise the piano instead of trying his hand at composition (Walton 2007: 19). He remained a self-taught composer until he started receiving formal training at the age of 22 when he commenced his studies with William Henry Bell in Cape Town (1945). Bell's compositions were strongly influenced by his teacher Charles Villiers Stanford, who was a major exponent of the Anglican Church music tradition in Britain and an ardent follower of Brahms and Dvořák. He consequently instilled an awareness of these composers among his students, valuing the structural innovation of their music, but also their ability to follow 'in the footsteps of their classical predecessors as regards form without in the least curbing their fanciful propensities. He belonged to the same order of classical-modernists' (Dunhill 1926-1927: 49). By contrast, Bell's fascination with the music dramas of Wagner was passed on to him by another of his teachers, Frederick Corder, who produced the first widely-used English translation of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (Warrack and Williamson 2001: 148). The density of orchestral textures and extended phrase structures are some of the distinctly Wagnerian traits that appear in Bell's early works such as *Symphonic Prologues to Chaucer's Canterbury Tales* (1896).

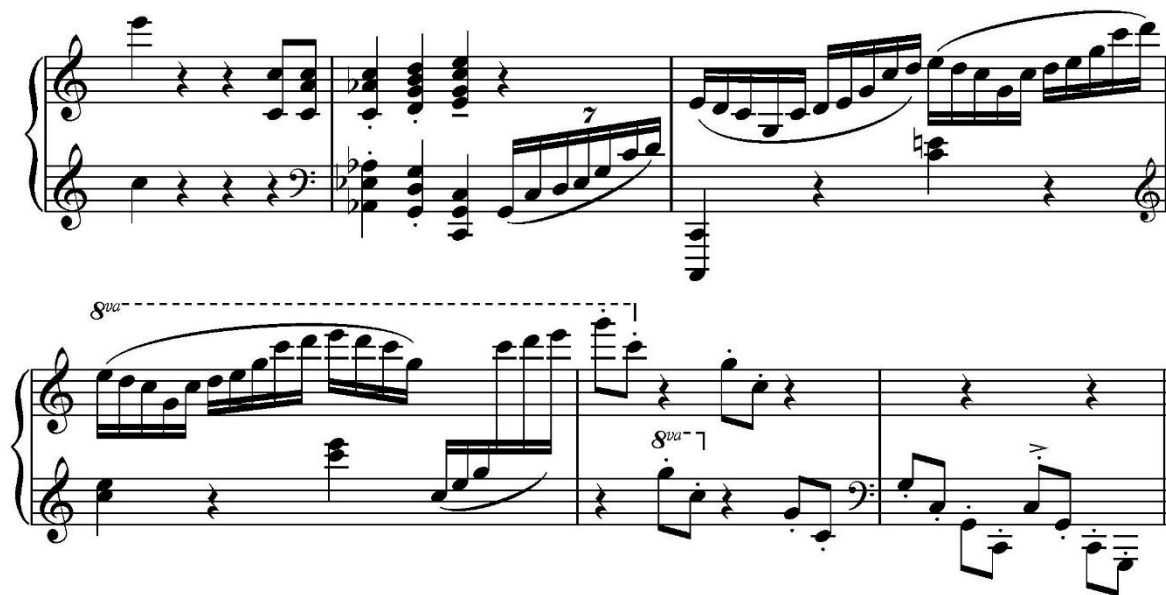
Bell demonstrated a profound knowledge of orchestration in his five symphonies and several symphonic poems and it was in this area that he contributed most effectively to the young Grové's education. In a personal interview with Grové (Schoeman 2011), he related to me how Bell conveyed his fascination with Wagner and Brahms, but did not force him in any direction – an aspect of Bell's teaching which he greatly appreciated. Grové saw it as unfortunate that Bell died only a year after their first meeting, but he confirmed that he had learnt a great deal about Brahms's developing

⁶ Grové started composing at the age of nine, but none of his earliest compositions survived. The first available sketch dates from 1939 (when the composer was seventeen years old). I therefore used 'ca. 1939' as the start date of Grové's early apprenticeship period.

variation techniques in that short period (Izak Grové 1998: 107). Indeed, as Mary Rörich (1992: 51) wrote, it is Brahms's use of 'motivicism as a main means of creating internal logic and cohesion that has provided an ongoing basis for Grové's own management of motivic material'.

Although Grové's first student works provide ample proof that he had built up a vocabulary of predominantly Impressionistic sound colours, he still employed a plethora of piano gestures that hint at Romantic influences. The archive of DOMUS in Stellenbosch is home to selected early sketches of Grové. One of his earliest surviving compositions found in this collection is a *Fantasy* for piano and strings (1939). On the title page he included the inscription, 'à la Rachmaninoff'. Single instances of chromatic chordal writing in this *Fantasy* may be regarded as references to Rachmaninoff, but the longer note values in the strings coupled with a *cantabile* melody and quaver accompaniment in the piano part to my mind suggest rather the influence of the slow movements in Chopin's Piano Concertos (see Appendix 1). Although the *Fantasy* is merely a sketch, it provides insight into some of the isolated instances of Romantic gestures in Grové's first substantial composition, *Five Piano Pieces* (1945). The coda of the second piece *Elektron*, for example, includes a C major flourish (Example 6) that strongly resembles certain passages in Chopin's Scherzo no. 3, op. 39 (bars 336-347), as well as the *Fantasy*, op. 49.

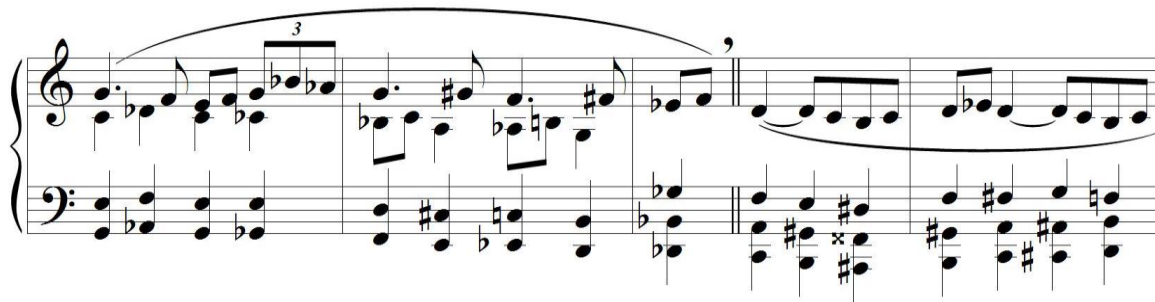
Example 6: Stefans Grové, *Five Piano Pieces* (1945), second movement (*Elektron*), coda



In the fourth movement (*Berceuse*) of *Five Piano Pieces*, the young composer ventured into late-Romantic chromatic progressions. The chorale-like passage between bars 34 and 39 (Example 7)

includes a progression that starts in C major, but gradually moves away from any specific tonal centre. The entire piece contains such rapid harmonic shifts that a facile analysis is impossible and a clear resolution into A minor can only be traced in the final two bars (65-66).

Example 7: Stefans Grové, *Five Piano Pieces* (1945), fourth movement (*Berceuse*), bb. 35-38



Grové for all practical purposes withdrew the *Five Piano Pieces* (1945), which he regarded as early compositional exercises (Grové 1975b: 68). Notwithstanding the lack of originality, these pieces include some stylistic elements that would reappear in his later, more sophisticated piano works. It is worth investigating these elements in order to facilitate a better understanding of the innovations in the later part of the composer's oeuvre.

The use of programmatic titles such as *Cortège* (no. 1), *Scaramouche* (no. 3) and *Berceuse* (no. 4) hint on a surface level at Grové's partiality towards the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century French composers. The literally-minded Grové naturally made use of expressive titles, an aspect that can be traced throughout his oeuvre (except the neo-Baroque period, which I describe in the next section of this chapter). There is also an evident visual connotation in the *Five Piano Pieces*. The title of the last movement (no. 5) is *Kubisme* (Afrikaans for cubism). It is significant that Grové, who at that point in his life had not yet travelled to Europe, demonstrated an awareness of a visual arts movement represented by such exponents as Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque. The use of colour as a structural and expressive medium in the music of Debussy and his contemporaries became appealing to the young Grové at this stage in his development. Even the few moments of diatonic Romanticism (one of which appears in Example 6 above) can be seen as experimentation with pianistic colour rather than adherence to motivic or harmonic structural principles. This colouristic approach laid the foundations for what became a central goal in Grové's compositional processes: 'the integration of form and content, the latter shaping the former' (Rörich 1987: 80). Salzman (1988: 23) aptly describes Debussy's style in a manner that might just as easily apply to Grové: 'the

rhythmic and phrase forms, the dynamics, the articulation, and the tone colour are as basic in the music of Debussy as the actual choice of pitches, or very nearly so’.

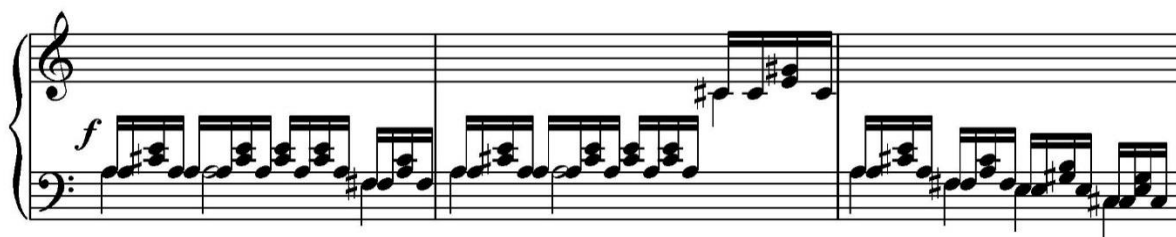
On 15 April 1946 (two days after Bell’s death) the composer performed four of these pieces for the first time at St. George’s Cathedral in Cape Town.⁷ The programme for this concert, which was entirely devoted to Grové’s music, also included extracts from an early *Ballet Suite* arranged for two pianos,⁸ three songs on texts by the Afrikaans poet Jan Celliers, a *Czardas* for violin and piano and a String Quartet in D major.⁹ The critic Felix Gross (who wrote under the pseudonym *Corno di Falsetto*) wrote a negative review about this concert in the cultural journal *Trek* (Bouws 1957: 119-120). In particular, Gross criticised Grové’s immature contrapuntal writing and lack of originality. He added that the works portray too many direct influences of Debussy, Ravel and Stravinsky and he advised the young composer to work hard at developing his own artistic voice and to improve his compositional technique through intense study, preferably abroad. These words might seem harsh, especially considering the fact that Grové had almost no formal training in composition up to that point. Gross’s review did lead Grové to discard certain stylistic influences as soon afterwards he started experimenting with Baroque techniques and developed a more meticulous attitude towards his use of counterpoint. It is understandable that Grové’s direct quotations from the piano works of Debussy might have been the reason why his lack of originality had been a point of criticism. It is particularly in the third movement of *Five Piano Pieces (Scaramouche)* that the toccata-like passages, from bar 121 onwards (Example 8a), can be seen to be clearly modelled on figurations that appear in the *Prélude* from Debussy’s *Pour le Piano* (Example 8b). These passages of Grové and Debussy both contain arpeggiated semiquaver figurations in the right hand, while the left hand (bass line) remains centred around the note a.

⁷ Grové had originally withdrawn just the opening movement, *Cortège*, and then included it again in the final version. Muller and Walton’s catalogue (2006:115) still erroneously refers to *Four Piano Pieces* without including the first movement.

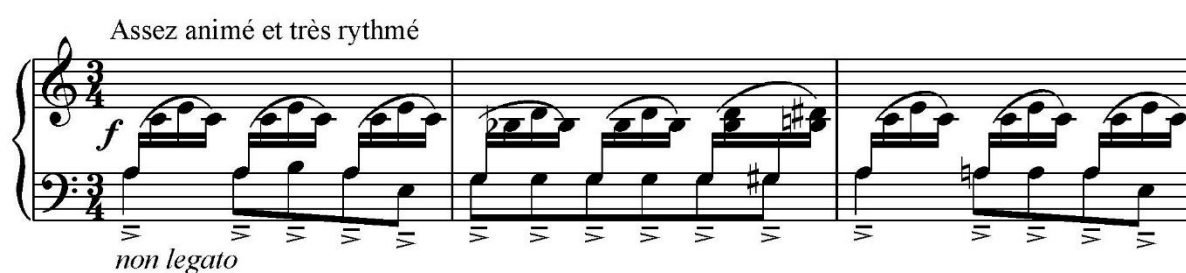
⁸ Grové wrote on the title page of the manuscript of the *Ballet Suite* that he performed the piece in collaboration with his sister Makkie on 15 April 1946. In Chapter 1 I describe how this work secured Grové’s entrance into the SACM.

⁹ This String Quartet in D major was dedicated to the memory of William Henry Bell. Bell’s other two students from the 1940s, John Joubert and Hubert du Plessis, also composed works in his memory. Joubert’s orchestral work *Threnody* was first performed in August 1946 by the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra, while Du Plessis’s later String Quartet, Op. 13 (1950-1953) carries the inscription ‘To the memory of William Henry Bell’ (HH van der Spuy in Malan 1986a: 153).

Example 8(A): Stefans Grové, *Five Piano Pieces* (1945), third movement (*Scaramouche*), bb. 121-123

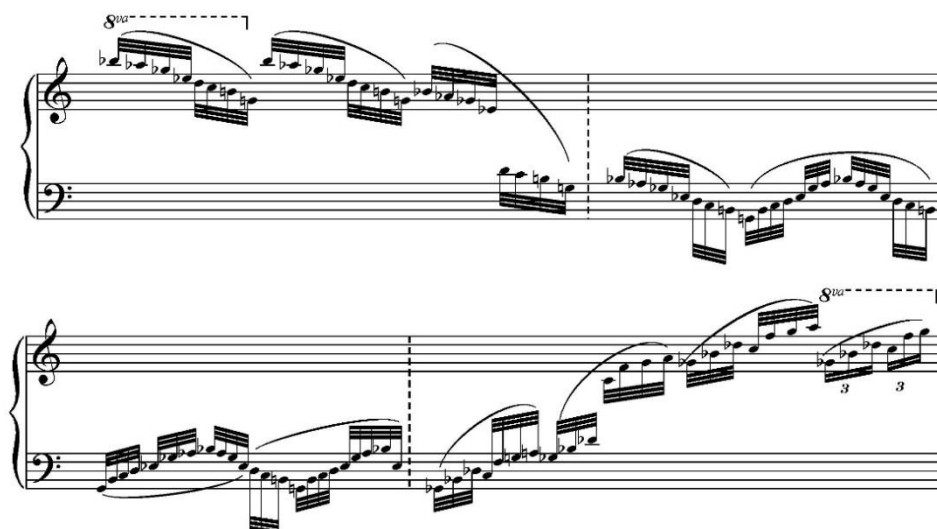


Example 8(B): Claude Debussy, *Pour le Piano*, L. 95, *Prélude*, bb. 1-4



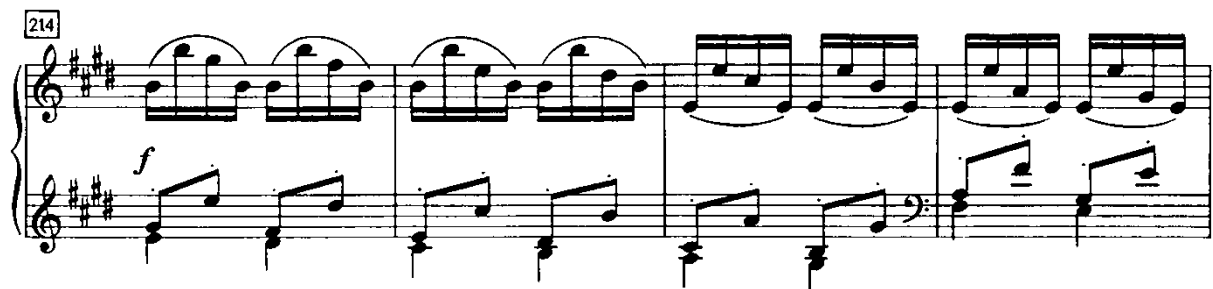
Another example of the inspiration that Grové drew from Debussy's piano music is the use of fast scalar passages written in imitation of harp *glissandi*. Debussy would not only make use of *glissandi* on the black or white keys of the piano, he would often employ harp-like figures, moving swiftly around the keyboard and evoking particular harmonies. Similar colouristic devices appear between bars 185-193 of Grové's *Scaramouche* from *Five Piano Pieces* (Example 9).

Example 9: Stefans Grové, *Five Piano Pieces* (1945), *Scaramouche*, bb. 185-188



Debussy, Ravel and Poulenc moulded several of their keyboard works in the tradition of earlier French harpsichord (*Clavecin*) composers. One clear example is to be found in the recapitulation of the *Toccata* from Debussy's *Pour le Piano* (Example 10A), where his textural approach is similar to that of Couperin, for example in *Le Tic-Toc-Choc ou les Maillotins* from his *Third Harpsichord Book*, 1722 (Example 10B). These techniques are challenging to perform on the piano, as the action of the modern instrument is heavier and the hands have to overlap during execution. On the harpsichord the division between the hands can often be managed by using two manuals, thus providing more space to achieve a crisp articulation. Grové employed similar semiquaver passages where the hands have to overlap in *Scaramouche*. He acknowledged that these toccata-like figurations throughout his pianistic oeuvre stem from the influence that the French *Clavecin* composers (and Debussy's adoption of this style) had on him in his early years (Schoeman 2011). Example 11 indicates how Grové emulated this Baroque-like clarity, coupled to a similar overlapping of the hands, in bars 173-175 of *Scaramouche*.

Example 10(A): Claude Debussy, *Pour le Piano*, L. 95, *Toccata*, bb. 214-217



Example 10(B): François Couperin, *Le Tic-Toc-Choc ou les Maillotins* (1722), bb. 1-2



Example 11: Stefans Grové, *Five Piano Pieces* (1945), *Scaramouche*, bb. 176-178



The toccata principle permeates all of Grové's *Five Piano Pieces*. In the second movement, *Elektron*, he provides a taste of what is to come, by alternating percussive chords between the hands. The general angularity of *Elektron* reveals a similarly mechanical approach to the final movement *Kubisme* (with the subtitle *Toccata*). Chris Venter (in Malan 1986d: 37) set this within the context of the *Style Mécanique*, a reactionary movement against the mystical qualities of Impressionism, practised by composers such as Milhaud and Honegger. This style was also adopted in 1937 by the Italian composer Luigi Dallapiccola, who in his short opera *Volo di Notte* attempted to evoke humankind's struggle against oppressive powers (Kämper 1984: 38). As the main character in Dallapiccola's futuristic work dies in a plane crash, the oppressive super-power in this case represents technological progress at the expense of humanity. It seems unlikely that Grové adopted this mechanical toccata style for ideological rather than artistic dimensions.¹⁰ Already in the works of his youth years, it is possible to observe a generally athletic writing style (Malan 1986b: 144). This rhythmic impetuosity culminated in the composer's consistent use of the *Toccata* genre. His first attempt is included within the *Five Piano Pieces*, and he would write at least one *Toccata* for the instrument during each of the four creative periods described in this thesis. In a stylistic sense, Grové's *Kubisme-Toccata* from *Five Piano Pieces* resembles the alternating of hands in the *Toccatas* of Prokofiev (op. 11) and Khachaturian as well as the rural stamping dance (*Stampftanz*) character of Bartók's *Allegro Barbaro*. The combination of thick chordal clusters renders the *Kubisme-Toccata* as

¹⁰ There is little evidence that Grové incorporated socio-political criticism in his work. A brief example appears in his short story from the 1982, *Monna Osoro het gekom* (Muller & Walton 2006: 90-92), in which Grové depicted the violence and intimidation inflicted by a white farmer on black workers. Later, as part of his *Music from Africa* series, he wrote works inspired by the Khoisan (Khoi-khoi and Bushman) cultures. He was moved by the suffering of these population groups and attempted to bring attention to the injustices that were committed against them through the narrative texts that accompany these compositions (Schoeman 2013). The three works in question are: *Seven Songs on Bushman Verses* for soprano, string quartet and piano (1990), *Figures in the Mist* for symphony orchestra (2012), and the Concerto for cello, piano and orchestra (*Bushman Prayers*, 2013).

rather unidiomatic and this potentially obstructs the pianist from being able to attempt the work at the fast tempo that the composer indicated (Example 12A).¹¹ Occasionally, Grové abandoned this vertical approach for slightly more melodic and linear writing, as can be seen in the chromatic thirds in bars 80-82 (Example 12B).

Example 12(A): Stefans Grové, *Five Piano Pieces* (1945), fifth movement (*Kubisme-Toccata*), bb. 1-4

V. Kubisme
(Toccata)

Snel

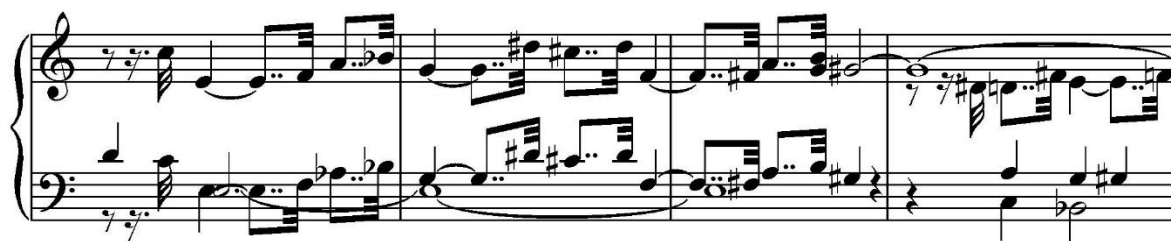
Example 12(B): Stefans Grové, *Five Piano Pieces* (1945), fifth movement (*Kubisme-Toccata*), bb. 80-82

My earlier reference to the harpsichord composers from the French Baroque flags up Grové's constant engagement with past music traditions. The French overture-rhythms in the opening movement (*Cortège*) of *Five Piano Pieces* may be seen as forerunners to the composer's second neo-Baroque period. *Cortège* also includes some of the few moments in the *Five Piano Pieces* where Grové experimented with contrapuntal techniques. Example 14 illustrates one instance in bars 20-22, where the soprano and tenor lines both carry a dotted-rhythm melody in unison above a stable

¹¹ In the last movement from *Five Piano Pieces*, Grové writes 'snel' (fast) at the top of the score. In Chapter 1, I referred to Grové's Afrikaans background. The fact that these early piano pieces are the final instances in which he gives expressive markings in his mother tongue may be indicative of his increasing exposure to the international music world.

pedal point in the bass line (on the note e). In bar 23, an alto voice enters with the dotted-rhythm melody and the soprano line takes over the longer pedal point (this time on the note g#'). It is not possible to find any specific tonality in the melodic line in this example (Example 13), and one can even extract twelve different chromatic notes (C, E, F, A flat, B flat, G, D#, C#, F#, A, B, G#). Although *Cortège* is not a serial composition, it can be regarded as an experiment in chromaticism and Grové did not shy away from the use of double sharps and double flats.¹² In bars 5 and 6 of the piece, the composer employed moments of bitonality by combining a G major chord in the right hand with an F# major chord in the left hand. In the coda he used the same principle, but he replaced the F# major chord in the left hand with an A flat major chord (the G major chord in right hand is tied over eight bars).

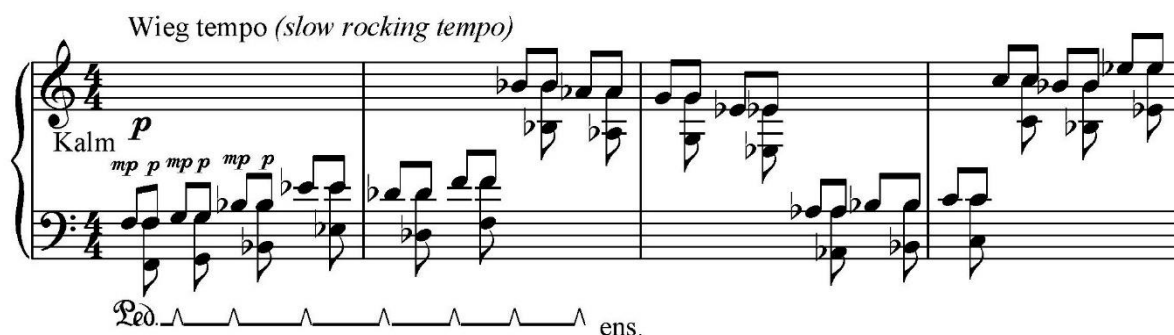
Example 13: Stefans Grové, *Five Piano Pieces* (1945), first movement (*Cortège*), bb. 20-23



A further aspect of Grové's *Five Piano Pieces* has been referred to by Izak Grové (2013:151) as 'deliberate colouristic manipulation'. The clearest indication of this is to be found in the *Berceuse* (no. 4), where the composer experimented with overtones by repeating the same note with two hands and by doubling it at the octave (Example 14). The slow tempo and meticulous pedal markings allow for the performer to bring out the subtle colouristic shadings. This sense of textural layering, especially by means of repeating a note or ostinato pattern with a different dynamic or colour, would become a significant aspect of Grové's later oeuvre. He describes this as 'timbre modulation', a colouristic effect that is achieved through subtle changes in pedalling, a variety of organ registrations, or through particular orchestral combinations (Rörich 1987: 84; Walton 2007: 33).

¹² His teacher, William Henry Bell, would not necessarily have approved of the sometimes awkward notation in this work. In one of his last letters to his other student Hubert du Plessis, Bell writes: 'I always view double flats with considerable mistrust' (Du Plessis 1973: 81).

Example 14: Stefans Grové, *Five Piano Pieces* (1945), fourth movement (*Berceuse*), bb. 1-4

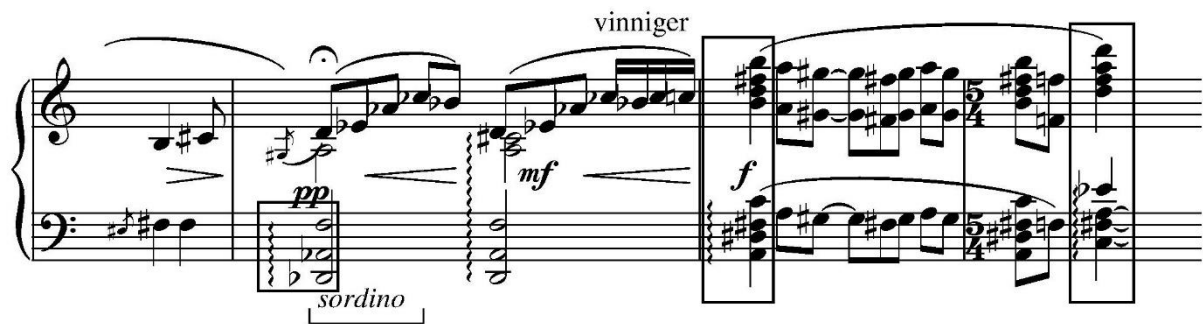


The form structures of *Five Piano Pieces* are mostly conventional; Grové utilised relatively free three-part (ABA) or rondo forms (Zwamborn 1995: 32). Due to the extent of the repetition of certain thematic materials, the long duration of *Elektron* and *Scaramouche* renders it difficult to trace an overall coherence in the whole. *Berceuse* is arguably the most effective piece of the set, perhaps because it is also the shortest. The various sections of this compact piece are clearly demarcated by the use of double bar lines (interestingly, a feature that would reappear more than fifty years later in Grové's rhapsodic *Yemoja*, the final movement of *Images from Africa*, 1999). The Romantic gestures that I have indicated earlier on, along with other piano-technical conventions such as the use of Alberti bass (in the middle section of *Elektron*), do not appear to be in keeping with the predominantly experimental context of the five pieces, and therefore contribute to a sense of eclecticism. Notwithstanding the fact that these works were clearly written as part of the composer's apprenticeship, they demonstrate his remarkable insight of the breadth of pianistic styles. This may be construed as a positive attribute rather than a criticism, as the young Grové had evidently started to assimilate and internalise these stylistic influences.

In 1946, a year after the *Five Piano Pieces*, Grové wrote a short *Prelude* for the piano. Hanlie Zwamborn (1995: 40) and Izak Grové (1998: 108) briefly refer to this character piece as being part of a period in which Grové stood under the influence of Debussy. Upon closer inspection of the manuscript it becomes clear, however, that the fascination with Impressionistic colours had waned considerably and that there are in actual fact very few influences of Debussy. The *Prelude* has an overall three-part structure and in the middle section (bb. 20-36) the build-up to the climax contains certain harmonies that to some extent recall the bitonality of Milhaud and Poulenc. Bars 27 and 28 are the only instances where tonal major and minor chords can be found, namely a D flat major triad in the left hand (bar 27) and a B minor chord in the right hand (bar 28). Grové created colourful dissonances in bars 28 and 29, where D# heard against D natural and F# against F natural tend to

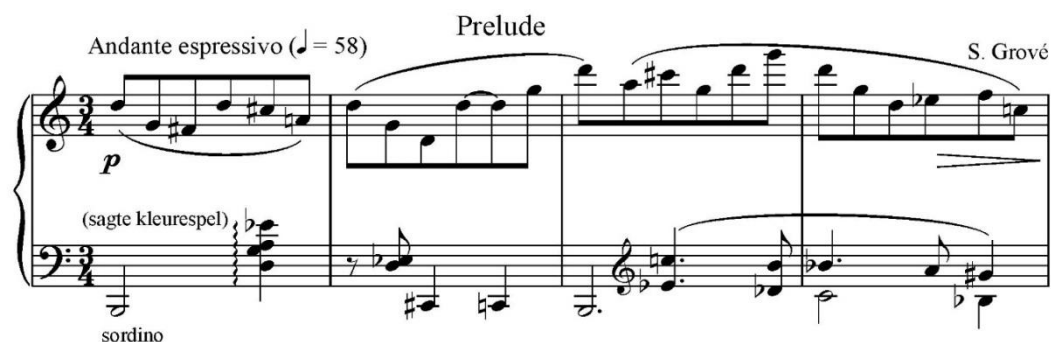
foreshadow the minor second and minor ninth intervals that would regularly appear in his later works (Example 15 indicates, with annotations, these bitonal chords in the *Prelude*). The alternation between the dissonant chords and octave passages constitute practically the last direct reference to Romantic piano writing in Grové's oeuvre, excluding the stylistic imitations and examination pieces that will be discussed in later in this chapter.

Example 15: Stefans Grové, *Prelude* (1946), bb. 26³-29²

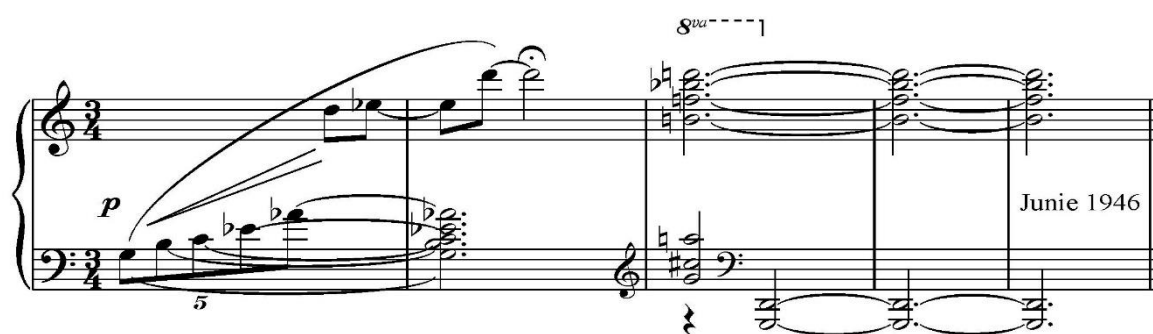


Grové predominantly used simple homophonic textures, and the occasional appearance of counterpoint in this *Prelude* is nonetheless unrefined. The single-line melody in the opening bars of the work is accompanied by colourfully-constructed chords. However, the harmonic and motivic development is of a more experimental nature than in the *Five Piano Pieces*. Although the *Prelude* starts and ends with passages that are centred around G (Examples 16A and 16B), the intense use of chromaticism renders it difficult to trace any real tonality through the work, aside from the isolated instances that I describe above. Two superficial references to Impressionistic colours occur at the opening and in the final bars of the piece. Grové firstly wrote 'sagte kleurespel' (soft colour play), and at the end he extended the final chords over two further bars (*laissez vibrer*) in a similar manner to certain *Préludes* of Debussy.

Example 16(A): Stefans Grové, *Prelude* (1946), bb. 1-4



Example 16(B): Stefans Grové, *Prelude* (1946), bb. 43-47



The more lasting impact of this short *Prelude* on Grové's further stylistic development was his application of particular rhythmic and motivic procedures. The 3/4 time signature at the opening, coupled to the rhythmic pattern in the left hand, initially suggests that the work contains a regular waltz rhythm. However, from bar 6, Grové regularly changed the time signature. The bar lines started to lose importance in delineating rhythmic units, as the composer instead employed phrase markings for this purpose. In bars 5-6 (Example 17), the phrasing encompasses both a 3/4 and a 4/4 bar to emphasise a longer rhythmic unit in the left hand, while the right hand executes a quaver-based ostinato on D.

Example 17: Stefans Grové, *Prelude* (1946), bb. 5-8



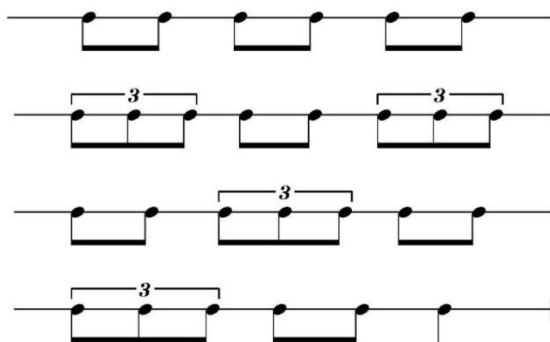
In bars 13-18 (Example 18A), Grové applied a similar technique in the phrasing of the right hand. The motivic treatment in the soprano line is significant here, as the composer started to modify the original pattern of six notes (which appear in bars 1, 13, 15 etc.). This procedure continues throughout the remainder of the piece and the rhythmic construction of the short quaver groups is constantly varied. Grové used rhythmic transformation of motifs throughout his oeuvre, later

adopting the term ‘permutation’ to describe this feature.¹³ In the *Prelude* (1946), the beginnings of these motivic permutations still take place within the framework of fixed time signatures. In Grové’s later works, the various motifs follow each other in a seamless fashion, without being tied down to any predestined constraints of a single or even shifting time signatures. In Example 18B, the rhythmic transformations (permutations) in the right hand part of bars 13-18 of the *Prelude* are extracted.

Example 18(A): Stefans Grové, *Prelude* (1946), bb. 11b-18



Example 18(B): Stefans Grové, *Prelude* (1946), bb. 13, 15-18, rhythmic transformations in the right hand part



¹³ In mathematical terms, the concept of permutation has a similar implication: a set of numbers whose order can be changed without losing some of the characteristics of the original. One example would be the set [1,2,3], which can be modified to [1,3,2], [2,1,3], [2,3,1], [3,1,2] and [3,2,1].

Grové was still actively performing as a pianist during his first creative period and he stood under the strong influence of his piano teacher at the SACM, Cameron Taylor (Grové 2006c: 63-64). It was only after he finished his piano studies that he engaged more intensively with other instruments. The *Elegy* for strings (1948) is his first significant work for a larger ensemble.¹⁴ In many ways, this can be seen as a transition between Grové's first and second creative periods. The intense dissonances along with the rhythmic expansion of seminal motifs serve as an introduction to his later compositional procedures. Concurrently, the extended tremolo passages in the *Elegy* are remnants of the composer's emphasis on timbre as a form-giving principle in his first period. Grové ceased the use of such devices in his *Trio* for strings (1948) and focused more on clear linear writing from this point onwards. He regarded this music as 'rather strict and ruthless, but neat in terms of its counterpoint. Every note can be accounted for' (Grové 1975b: 69). With these new priorities in mind, Grové entered his neo-Baroque phase.

3. The Second Period: Grové's Neo-Baroque Phase (1947-1958)

In 1947 Grové commenced his composition studies with Erik Chisholm, who rapidly started acquainting him with the more rigorous contrapuntal procedures of Hindemith (Schoeman 2011). Aside from a few instances of rather unsophisticated counterpoint in *Five Piano Pieces* (1945) and limited dialogue between the hands in the *Prelude* (1946) the young Grové did not really focus on polyphony in his earlier works. He related that he had learnt much from playing the music of JS Bach on the piano and the organ, but that he still did not have a clear vision as to how he could combine this structural knowledge with his compositional ideas. The concepts of colouristic manipulation and motivic transformation were the cornerstones of his earlier experimentation. Hindemith's music provided him with the creative flashpoint to amalgamate these ideas with linear writing (Grové 1975b: 69). At first, he mainly composed for instrumental ensembles without piano, thereby facilitating the differentiation between contrapuntal lines. Grové was studying the flute and viola at the time and started writing chamber music works for these instruments. In fact, the Second Period was much more devoted to instruments other than the piano. When he did compose for piano, he often prohibited the use of the sustaining pedal. The clarity of polyphonic lines therefore played an

¹⁴ The *Elegy* for strings (1948) was recorded by the National Symphony Orchestra of the SABC (TM2470 (81)/121393). The work was also performed at the Washington National Gallery in 1952 (Malan 1986b: 142).

important role, and Grové evidently felt that string and wind instruments were better vehicles to express this.¹⁵

When he returned to writing for solo piano in 1951, Grové consciously avoided any chordal writing infused with arpeggios and *glissandi*. His *Drei Inventionen* (later retitled *Three Piano Pieces*) were written in accordance with the fifteen Inventions by JS Bach (BWV 772-786). Grové meticulously adhered to two-part writing in the athletic first and third movements (*Toccata* and *Fuga*). The slower second movement (*Pastorale*) consists mostly of three polyphonic lines (similar to Bach's keyboard *Sinfonias*), except for brief four-part interludes where the left hand is subdivided into tenor and bass voices. The *Toccata* is the most conventional movement, as it is written in a clear binary form. The two sections are divided by a double bar line and Grové utilised canonic principles here. Six bars after the right hand (*dux*) opening of the main subject, the left hand (*comes*) exactly replicates the melody at the interval of a major sixth lower (Example 19). The canon is reversed in the second section, as the left hand becomes the *dux*, and the right hand follows eight bars later at the interval of a major third above. Grové accentuated this reversal of roles by providing a different articulation marking and inserting accents in the B section. What becomes apparent through these additional accents is that the theme is tonally modified. The original octave leap between the first and second quaver groups now becomes a dissonant major seventh (Example 20), an interval that would have seminal structural significance in Grové's expressionistic style of the 1960s and 1970s.

¹⁵ This was a highly prolific period in terms of chamber music composition and Grové completed a Trio for violin, viola and cello (1948), Duo for violin and cello (1950 – later transcribed for viola and cello), Trio for violin, cello and piano (1952), Serenade for flute, oboe, viola, bass clarinet and harp (1952), Trio for oboe, clarinet and bassoon (1952), Fugue for flute, oboe and bassoon (1952), Divertimento for recorder trio (1953), Sonata in one Movement for cello and piano (1954), Quintet for harp and string quartet (1954), Sonatina for two recorders (1955), *Metamorphosis on a the theme 'Morgen kommt der Weihnachtsmann'* in a variety of styles from Perotinus to Hindemith for recorder trio (1955), Sonata for flute and piano (1955), Divertimento (Serenade) for flute, oboe, clarinet and bassoon (1955) and two movements from a String Quartet (1958).

Example 19: Stefans Grové, *Three Piano Pieces* (1951), *Toccata*, bb. 1-9

Vivo

Example 20: Stefans Grové, *Three Piano Pieces* (1951), *Toccata*, section A (bb. 1-2) and section B (bb. 37-38), modification of the original pattern

A.

Vivo

B.

In addition to the two-part canonic texture of the *Toccata* from Grové's *Three Piano Pieces*, there is an evident melodic resemblance in this piece to Hindemith's Bach-inspired works from the 1920s. One example would be *Kammermusik* no. 2, where an angular anti-vocal character becomes apparent in the opening bars of the work. Hindemith only really confirmed the tonal centre through the pedal point on G, played by the lower strings (Example 21).

Example 21: Paul Hindemith, *Kammermusik* no. 2 for piano and chamber ensemble, op. 36, no. 1 (1924), bb. 1-2

Sehr lebhafte Achtel

The image shows a musical score for Paul Hindemith's *Kammermusik* no. 2. The title is "Sehr lebhafte Achtel". The score is for Piano and Chamber Ensemble. The Piano part is in 5/8 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a complex, angular melody with dynamic markings of *f* and *mf*. The Chamber Ensemble part is in 5/8 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a simple, angular melody with dynamic markings of *ff* and *mf*. The tempo is marked "Sehr lebhafte Achtel".


Izak Grové (1998: 107) argues that, notwithstanding Grové's embracing of a predominantly linear treatment of thematic material from the 1950s onwards, the constant inclusion of intervallic leaps in his melodies explains why his song oeuvre is relatively limited.¹⁶ The highly-charged chromaticism throughout the *Three Piano Pieces* creates the overall impression that this music is almost atonal. It seems that rhythmic impetus and contrapuntal rigour are the stronger factors that provide character to the pieces. Grové did, however, include selected audible pitch areas and adopted Hindemith's alternative use of the twelve chromatic notes of the diatonic scale by ranking each step in terms of harmonic importance and then building sequences based on the intervallic relationships between these pitches. The resolution on an undisguised F major chord at the end of both the *Toccata* and

¹⁶ Muller puts forward an alternative view in his interview with Grové (Muller 2007: 23), stating that 'vocal music has always been an integral part of [the composer's] creative expression'. This is a surprising conclusion, as Grové only wrote three vocal works (of which two are for choir) during the three decades between 1950 and 1981.

Fuga from *Three Piano Pieces* (along with D major in the *Pastorale*) can also be regarded as a tribute to Hindemith's treatment of the principles of harmonic tension and resolution. These brief moments of resolution also tend to provide a certain sense of unity, and Grové emphasised the structural symmetry by rounding off each section with a diatonic chord.

In the second and third pieces Grové used standard Baroque forms, which he adapted to his own modes of expression. The *Pastorale* (no. 2) outwardly appears to be a *Siciliana*, but the usual 6/8

time signature is replaced by 5/8. The typical *Siciliana* dotted rhythm () alternates

with a rapidly-executed ornament-like group (). As in the *Prelude* (1946), Grové made use of an irregular phrasing that extends over bar lines, particularly in the left hand. Despite this unusual rhythmic approach, the longer phrases and constant rhythmic movement maintained in one of the three (sometimes four) voice parts, create the aural impression that this piece nonetheless resembles a Baroque dance movement such as the *Siciliana* (Example 22). A double bar line in the centre of bar 24 divides the work into exactly two halves, but this rather indicates the dynamic contrast between the sections. It is not possible to trace any tonal relationship between them, implying the presence of a through-composed structure rather than a binary one. A climactic build-up in the five bars (bb. 19-23) prior to the central caesura unveils a sudden quickening of the rhythmic pace. Where the ornaments in the remainder of the work include short stepwise rhythmic groups of hemidemisemiquaver notes, Grové intensified the music by utilising demihemidemisemiquavers and extending into the extremities of the piano's registers within a considerable dynamic crescendo (Example 23). Regardless of the clarity of linear writing in the *Pastorale*, the colouristic glissando-like groups (slides) that occur before the climax provide a type of *Rückblick* (looking back) on techniques that were employed in the earlier piano works. This could be interpreted as the composer's way of consolidating pre-existing compositional priorities with his newly-found orientation to contrapuntal rigour.

Example 22: Stefans Grové, *Three Piano Pieces* (1951), *Pastorale*, bb. 1-6a

Andante
mf

4

Example 23: Stefans Grové, *Three Piano Pieces* (1951), *Pastorale*, bb. 19-27a

cresc.

ff

3

6

rall.
dim.

a tempo

p

6

The third movement (*Fuga*) is a fugue that consists of only two voices. Whilst Grové included motifs from the main fugal theme into the episodes, he also regularly applied two further subjects. The exposition of the fugue takes place within the first seventeen bars. Here, the second voice (in the left hand) enters two beats before the completion of the statement (in the right hand). Similar to several fugues of JS Bach, the main theme can be divided into three segments. Example 24a presents the exposition, following which the three segments (accentuated by articulation and phrase markings) of the theme are identified in Example 24b. In order to facilitate reference to these three segments, I attach letters (A, B and C) to each.

Example 24(A): Stefans Grové, *Three Piano Pieces* (1951), *Fuga*, the exposition, bb. 1-17



Example 24(B): Stefans Grové, *Three Piano Pieces* (1951), *Fuga*, the three segments of the main theme



After the exposition, the three segments excerpted above are continually transformed, but the main theme never returns in the form of a fugal recapitulation. Grové's extensive engagement with music prior to that of J. S. Bach may have led him in the direction of a more liberal approach to this genre. The term *fugue* was used in the Middle Ages to refer to canonic music, and by the Renaissance it was more specifically connected to imitative counterpoint in a composition. It is thus more constructive to regard the title of the third movement from Grové's *Three Piano Pieces* in light of the *fugato* treatment of thematic material, and rather describe this as an extended two-part invention – which is not a problematic assertion when taking the original title for the pieces (*Drei Inventionen*) into account. That notwithstanding, a single *stretto* and strategic reappearances of segments from the main theme can be singled out as elements that occasionally confirm a stricter fugal approach taken in this piece, akin to the traditions set by J. S. Bach. The *stretto* between bars 81 and 84 encompasses the melodic and rhythmic content of segment A (the leap motif). The right hand plays this motif in augmented form, while the left hand overlaps with the same material two bars later using the note values of the original (Example 25).

Example 25: Stefans Grové, *Three Piano Pieces* (1951), *Fuga*, bb. 81-85, the *stretto*



Segment A from the fugal theme contains the most seminal melodic and rhythmic material of the piece. The segment appears 14 times throughout the *Fuga* and at one point it is also melodically inverted (bb. 72-74 – Example 26). As stated above, Grové created two further subjects that are included in the fugal episodes. The more common of these two, is a theme that consists of a dotted crotchet and three quavers (which I describe as motif D). Furthermore, the composer also employs a chromatic staccato crotchet theme (motif E)¹⁷ that serves as a counterpart to brief reappearances of segments A, B and C as well as motif D. In Example 26, I indicate the combination of these various motifs and segments in bars 67-80 of the *Fuga*.

¹⁷ The staccatos of motif E are sometimes replaced by accents (>) or tenuto markings (-). Motif E occasionally appears in a rhythmically augmented and diminished form.

Example 26: Stefans Grové, *Three Piano Pieces* (1951), *Fuga*, bb. 67-80

In bars 57³-74¹ and 94³-101¹ (Example 27), transitional episodes appear that are derived from a combination of the leap motif of segment A, and the original (or inverted form) of the second three-note motif of segment B.

Example 27: Stefans Grové, *Three Piano Pieces* (1951), *Fuga*, bb. 95-98

A second, sequential episode between bars 112 and 126 (Example 28A) incorporates motif D in the right hand alongside inversions of segment B (left hand, bb. 112-116), rhythmic diminutions of segment A (left hand, bb. 117-121), and the accented motif E (left hand, bb. 122-127). This is followed by a climactic transformation of the stepwise motion of segment A (right hand, b. 127 and b. 130) and the leap motif of segment A (left hand, bb. 128-131). The continuous quaver movements of segment C are also maintained in this section (bb. 127-136) – see Example 28B. After a brief transition, consisting of sequential quaver-patterns (bb. 137-140), the fugal theme is partly stated in the *Prestissimo* coda (bb. 141-148) – see Example 28C. This coda cannot be regarded as a recapitulation due to the absence of a second entry in a different voice.

Example 28(A): Stefans Grové, *Three Piano Pieces* (1951), *Fuga*, bb. 113-125

113 D (until bar 126) mf

119 A+B sf p cresc.

Example 28(B): Stefans Grové, *Three Piano Pieces* (1951), *Fuga*, bb. 126-131

126 f A+C

131 sf A

Example 28(C): Stefans Grové, *Three Piano Pieces* (1951), *Fuga*, bb. 137-148

137 Prestissimo

141 ff A

148 E

One year after the completion of the *Three Piano Pieces* (1951), the work was performed at the ISCM's international conference in Salzburg.¹⁸ It is likely that the opportunity was mediated through the connections of Erik Chisholm, who had established a branch of the ISCM in South Africa in 1950.

¹⁸ Rachel Rabinowitz was the pianist; she subsequently recorded the work for EMI South Africa (unfortunately this is only available as an LP in selected libraries in South Africa). This recording was uploaded to Youtube in January 2014: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XxKgR7VadH8]

Engagements in various other countries followed, including a performance of the *Quintet for Harp and String Quartet* (1954) at the Guildhall Concert Series in London. For the Van Riebeeck Festival in South Africa (at which Chisholm's *Hindustani Piano Concerto* had been premièred in 1952), Grové composed a *Piano Trio* that is very similar to *Three Piano Pieces* in terms of syntax and structure. After moving to the United States, he continued to follow neo-Baroque principles strictly. First he revised the *Piano Trio* and then he composed a work that is still performed regularly today: the Sonata for flute and piano (1955). The Flute Sonata can be regarded as the culmination of his experimentation with traditional forms (in this case conventional sonata form). It brought him not only the New York Bohemian Club Composition Prize, but also the Margaret Croft Scholarship to study with Aaron Copland at the Tanglewood Summer School. His teacher at Harvard University was Walter Piston, a highly prolific composer who wrote eight symphonies and thirteen *concertante* works for solo instruments and orchestra. Today he is known primarily for his comprehensive treatise on orchestration and it is not surprising that this aspect of composition formed the basis of the young Grové's training (Schoeman 2011). During the next decade he would focus mainly on orchestral writing and did not compose a single piano work. The three major beacons of this phase are the *Sinfonia Concertante* (1956), the Violin Concerto (1959) and the Symphony (1962), between which a clear progression can be traced. Grové moved from the strict application of Baroque *concerto grosso* form in the *Sinfonia Concertante*, to a highly expressive atonality and densely-textured orchestration in the Violin Concerto, and finally an esoteric serial approach in the Symphony. It is possible to assert that Grové had entered his third stylistic period after his appointment as lecturer at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore (1957).

4. The Third Period: Grové's Road to Maturity (1959-1983)

4.1 Atonality and Expressionism

In his autobiographical article from 1975, Grové wrote that his Violin Concerto (1959) initiated a new more mature style (Grové 1975b: 69). Izak Grové (1998: 105) emphasises the influences of Schoenberg in this phase of the composer's development and writes:

The first movement of the Violin Concerto (1959) is still connected to the thematic 'polarity' of nineteenth-century sonata form, but this is effectively concealed – as with Bartók, for example – through exactly the idea of 'developing variation'. The lack of a sense of traditional (tonal) orientation through the use of a key signature and [easily-recognisable] theme, is compensated for by means of developmental phases that are delineated through variations in dynamics and tempo (I. Grové 2013: 152).

Almost thirty years ago, Rörich (1987: 84) flagged up a similar observation and compared the two-movement structure of the Violin Concerto to that of Berg's work for the same genre.¹⁹ She stated that 'the internal designs of both movements are defined, on the one hand by contrasts in tempo and texture, and on the other by recapitulation (although not necessarily literally) and thematic interrelationship'. Indeed, Grové constantly juxtaposed major and minor thirds in all the thematic formations of the first movement. In the second movement he used a seminal structural motif that consists of a whole tone followed by a minor third interval. These intervallic motifs recur throughout the various sections in order to create a sense of structural unity amidst constant changes of tempo and instrumentation. The linearity of the neo-Baroque phase is still present to some extent, but Grové also employed clearly vertical and homophonic textures in both the first and second movements. This may partly be a timbral consideration that effectively assists the sound of the solo violin part to acoustically resonate above the large orchestration. Furthermore, it stresses the transitional character of this work within Grové's oeuvre. He endeavoured to match his contrapuntal tendencies with experimentation in harmony and timbre. Through an analysis of the Violin Concerto it becomes clear that Grové had become capable of forging a hybrid medium at this point in his compositional career, having internalised several principles of Impressionism, the neo-Baroque and the Second Viennese School (Walton 2007: 23). Distinctive timbre (through rare instrument combinations – such as the duet between bass clarinet and flute in thematic passages in the Violin Concerto), linearity as well as constant motivic development are the concepts that he held on to, but he discarded any method that might have come across as formulaic. In 1975 he wrote: 'I do not believe in dogmas, as they taste like butterflies' wings, grasshoppers' legs and dust ... neither do I believe in academic construction tricks, as I do not build bridges. Content governs form, as everyone knows. A predestined form that waits like a skeleton for content to join in, usually smothers everything' (Grové 1975b: 71). The orchestral works from this period attest to Grové's increasing engagement with serial atonal techniques. In the Symphony (1962) he employed an eleven-tone series as a recurring structural element throughout the work. The alto flute announces eleven notes of the tone row in bars 2-4 of the work: c', d'', e flat', a', a flat'', b', f', e'', (c''), c#, g', f#. After some repetition of earlier pitches in bars 5-7, a twelfth note, b flat'', is finally added (Example 29). Despite

¹⁹ After the unaccompanied violin cadenza in the first movement, the orchestra enters quite clearly in the key of C major. This underlying tonality is maintained by the lower strings while the violin and selected woodwinds continue to play atonal figurations. The brief moments of diatonicism (albeit sometimes slightly hidden by the atonality of the solo part) indicate that Grové's work demonstrates a stronger link with Hindemith's Violin Concerto (1939) rather than that of Berg.

maintaining B flat as a recurring pedal point throughout the Symphony (Rörich 1987: 87 & 1992: 53), the composer continued to utilise only the first eleven tones as a unifying series. From bar 40 onwards, he also divided the tone row into segments and these sub-sections were further developed through motivic transformation and timbre modulation (Rörich 1992: 53). He thus created a work that hints at dodecaphonic procedures. In this instance, it is possible to compare Grové's use of fewer than twelve notes in serial composition to earlier works of Schoenberg, such as his *Five Piano Pieces*, op. 23 and *Serenade*, op. 24. Stravinsky and Messiaen later also composed serial works with different amounts of tones in their chosen rows. Furthermore, these serial techniques were extended to incorporate other musical elements such as note durations and even dynamics (Morgan in Randel 2003: 742). In Europe, composers like Messiaen and Boulez developed total serialism, and in America Milton Babbitt controlled both pitches and durations through serial means in his *Three Compositions for Piano* (1947). It is likely that Grové may have come across these developments already during his study years at Harvard University in the mid-1950s.

Example 29: Stefans Grové, Symphony (1962), alto flute part, bb. 2-10



Grové benefited from this serial technique, as it allowed him to systematically place the steps of the chromatic scale on an equal footing. Traditional polarisation towards a tonic or any other step of a scale was thereby ruled out and the composer was able to freely utilise less conventional intervals such as the major seventh. Where that interval had been almost forcefully incorporated in the *Three Piano Pieces* (see Example 20 above), Grové now adopted a chromatic tone row in order to organically centralise this dissonance. For many, this preoccupation with the major seventh potentially reveals an 'undertone of pessimism' in Grové's music (Izak Grové 1998: 106). When Inette Swart pressed him about this, he stated that he did not favour the word 'dissonance' and rather described his application of major seventh and minor second intervals as 'colourful harmonies' (Swart 2013: 211). The use of the word 'colourful' indicates that Grové never lost track of

the impressionistic concept, in which structure and harmony are often conditioned by timbral effects.

This is particularly true for the first piano work of Grové's atonal phase, the *Toccata* of 1966. After his appointment as lecturer of composition and theoretical subjects at Peabody Conservatory, Grové became immersed in acquainting his students with past traditions (Sprenkle in Muller & Walton 2006: 32-33). The study of early music constituted a more formal aspect of his academic work, and he performed madrigals from the Renaissance and the lesser-known Cantatas of JS Bach (see Chapter 1). His acrimonious personal circumstances (including two marriage breakdowns) evidently deprived him of the motivation to conceive radical compositional thoughts. After the Symphony he completed very few works in America. This includes incidental music for SABC Radio in South Africa, a short ballet score (*Alice in Wonderland*) for Peabody Conservatory's Dance Department and two short piano pieces, of which only the *Toccata* survives. It is a virtuosic work, and through its brilliant passagework and fast tempi it corresponds to the athletic qualities of the earlier *Kubisme-Toccata* from *Five Piano Pieces* (1945). At the same time, it is one of the seminal examples in Grové's oeuvre that indicates how his style evolved from a vertical to a more linear approach. The early *Kubisme-Toccata* is founded upon the chordal alternation between the two hands, but the *Toccata* (1966) mostly comprises one single line. Grové's experimentation with serial techniques also paved the way for the rapid succession of different chromatic tones at the opening of the work (Example 30).

Example 30: Stefans Grové, *Toccata* (1966), opening fragment



The composer consciously wanted to break loose from any formal, tonal and rhythmic constraints and created one single colouristic unit by using very few bar lines throughout (there are only six of them and they accentuate selected dynamic effects and changes of register in system 9, 10, 11 and

14).²⁰ As he stated in the programme notes to the work (Grové 1986), his intention was to construct a long continuous murmur of sound that is disturbed by sudden accents. In his 1975 autobiographical article he attached the metaphor of a wooden fire to the *Toccata*, whereby the unexpected accents are supposed to represent crackling noises (Grové 1975b: 69). The technique of employing timbre to imitate visual imagery would become an inseparable aspect of his craft, and I shall return to this aspect later in the chapter.

Two further contextual factors may be associated with the compositional methods in the *Toccata*. At Peabody Conservatory, Grové was surrounded by radical *avant-garde* compositional developments. Earle Brown²¹ replaced Benjamin Lees as the school's resident composer and promoted experimental performances that must have appeared (or sounded) strange to the traditionally-minded Grové. Ray Sprenkle, a pupil and assistant of Grové, recalled some of these events, where 'performers were variously bare-chested or clad in leotards, and in which the student composer himself rolled around the organ pedals, all to rapturous applause from students and staff alike' (Sprenkle in Muller & Walton 2006: 36). Despite being predominantly averse to such experimentation, Grové nonetheless confessed to have attempted a response to these *avant-garde* notions through his *Toccata* (Grové 1975b: 71). In reality he could not escape the connection with earlier methods of manipulating short motifs. His way of timbral nuancing has very little in common with *avant-garde* procedures, and use of the classical notation and articulation strengthens the argument against any real connection with such a style.²² The colouristic approach apparent in the *Toccata* is also prominent in two later piano works: the first movement from *Images from Africa* (1999 – Example 31a) and the opening of the third movement from Grové's last piano composition

²⁰ I played the *Toccata* (1966) for the composer during our meeting in January 2011. Grové explained his stylistic intentions, namely his aim towards creating a single colouristic unit without any tonal hierarchies and time signatures (Schoeman 2011).

²¹ Benjamin Lees was, like Grové, a follower of the Neoclassical techniques of the earlier 20th century. By contrast, Brown experimented with the principles of John Cage and developed his own graphic notation.

²² In his 1952 essay 'Probleme van die Suid-Afrikaanse komponis', Grové criticises the intellectual 'coldness' of the 'Babel Tower' of stylistic devices, such as aleatoric and electronic music. Although he uttered these words prior to his own radical creative development in America, he would always remain close to the principles of the early Modernist composers. The reason for his statement might be that he did not have insight into the psychological or intellectual motivation that composers experienced during the aftermath of the Second World War (the experiments of the *Internationale Ferienkürse für Neue Musik* in Darmstadt being a prominent example).

My Seasons (2012 – Example 31b). The *sostenuto* (middle) pedal became a significant tool in these later pieces. This can be used to make the overtones of a silently-depressed chord become audible by means of short staccato accents within the fast quaver passages. A haze of sound is therefore created, but transparency is maintained by means of the only sparse use of the sustaining pedal. It is also of interest to compare the fragments in Examples 31A and 31B, and to note that the ubiquitous major seventh interval creates a distinctive piquancy amidst the toccata textures.

Example 31(A): Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), *Morning Music* (first movement), opening fragment



Example 31(B): Stefans Grové, *My Seasons* (2012), *First Spring Rain and the Awakening of Delicate Colours* (third movement), opening fragment



The second contextual factor was recently discussed by Izak Grové (2013: 153), who drew attention to the parallels between the single-line texture of the *Toccata* and the *Partitas* for solo violin by JS Bach. Judging from the composer's intensive engagement with Baroque music at the time, the comparison does not seem out of place. Notwithstanding the three brief moments where the left and right hands perform quaver groups together, the texture of the work is essentially monophonic. The alternation of note stems (see Example 30 above) could be regarded as a reference to bowing technique on a string instrument. Furthermore, for the first time in his oeuvre, Grové provided the indication that the pedal should be used very sparingly. The sound of piano playing without the use of the sustaining pedal became an increasing colouristic preference of Grové's. He felt that the subtleties of finger control are thereby accentuated. This is in keeping with his views on Bach

interpretation, as he also prescribed a very scrupulous attitude to the use of the sustaining pedal in performances of the Baroque composer's works on the modern piano (Schoeman 2012b).²³

The first part of Grové's third creative period came to an end when he decided to move back to South Africa in 1972. At the age of fifty, he experienced a lack of artistic stimulation due to heavy teaching responsibilities at the Peabody Conservatory. He also felt the need to reconnect with his home country after having lived abroad for almost twenty years. Aside from the creative surge that accompanied his physical return to South Africa, Walton (Muller & Walton 2006: 67) singles out two further experiences that led to his marked increase in productivity. The first is his happy marriage to Alison Marquard, and the second, his discovery of the indigenous black African musical material of that country. One could certainly add others, such as his reconnection with his mother tongue of Afrikaans and the continuation of his activities as a writer. The title of his book of short stories *Oor Mense, Diere en Dinge* (On People, Animals and Things, written in 1974 and published in 1975),²⁴ alone indicates Grové's curiosity with his surroundings. His weekly literary sketches for the newspaper *Hoofstad* supplemented these observations, but he did not merely limit himself to expressing real-life experiences. An unpublished set of four monologues provides further testimony to Grové's colourful imagination. The second of the four is called *Die jong Moeder in Saal F12, 'n skisofreniese geval* (The young Mother in Ward F12, a schizophrenic case) and illustrates the dualism between the emotions of *Angst* and the resignation of a young mother whose child is lying in hospital with burning wounds. This vivid literary expression would soon radiate to Grové's musical creations. The *Toccata* (1966) already revealed traces of an orientation towards programmatic composition, but the newly-discovered passion for writing led to Grové's complete embracing of descriptive titles in his works.

The first piano piece that directly relates to his prose is *Tweespalt* (Discord), based on the above-mentioned monologue.²⁵ This study for the left hand is the first movement from the *Four Piano*

²³ Grové expressed his views on pedalling, both in his own works and that of other composers, at a public interview with me at his 90th Birthday Festival and Symposium in Bloemfontein, University of the Free State (Schoeman 2012b).

²⁴ Copies of Grové's literary works are held at the Merensky Library of the University of Pretoria. The *Four Monologues* are available in the 'Africana' Section of the FZ van der Merwe Collection.

²⁵ I refer again to Grové's autobiographical sketch in *Musicus* (1975), where he describes the contents of the *Monoloog* and identifies its relationship with the piano piece *Tweespalt*.

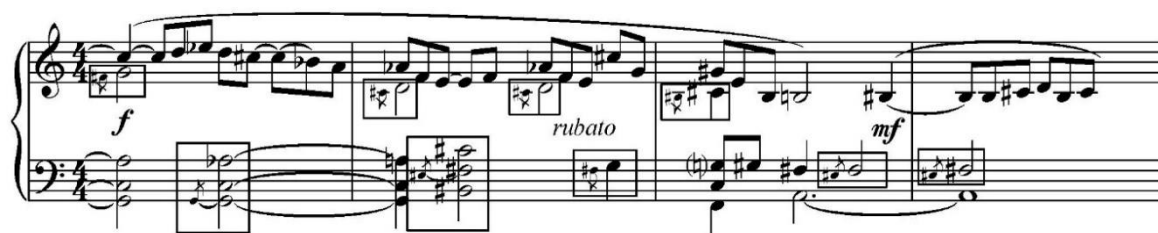
Pieces (1975), of which two of the set are now missing. Throughout the work, the duality of the young mother's emotions is symbolically portrayed by means of two contrasting layers. The upper line mainly comprises a stable b flat' representing calmness, which is contrasted with a mysterious melody in the lower registers of the piano (Example 32).

Example 32: Stefans Grové, *Four Piano Pieces* (1975), *Tweespalt*, bb. 1-5

Sanguinies ♩ = 66

Sudden outbursts appear in both voices in the form of dynamic contrasts, rhythmic diminution and augmentation, and subtle changes in pedalling and articulation. The expressionistic character of the piece is particularly accentuated through Grové's previously-noted penchant for major seventh intervals. However, I would like to focus instead on two stylistic elements that can be traced back to the early *Prelude* of 1946, and which would subsequently be developed in the composer's later works. The first aspect is the use of acciaccaturas as a colouristic medium. These acciaccaturas form an integral part of the structure and often accentuate the dissonant major seventh or minor second intervals. This occurs for the first time in the middle section of the *Prelude* (Example 33). In *Tweespalt* the intense application of acciaccaturas becomes a more explicitly expressive tool. The only sections where they do not appear are the quieter passages of the prologue (bars 1-3) and epilogue (bars 35-40). Acciaccaturas assume various (mostly characteristic) functions in the remainder of the work. This includes the accentuation of major sevenths (Example 34A), a symbolic representation of mental unrest in the repeated note passages (Example 34B) and the creation of a mysterious atmosphere by way of dissonant chords in a low register (Example 34C).

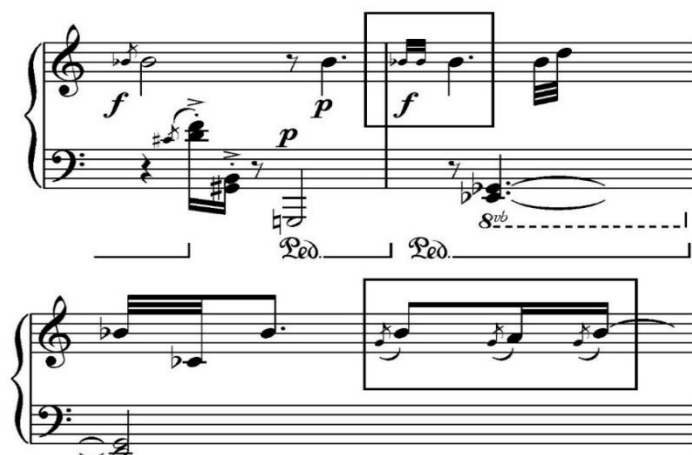
Example 33: Stefans Grové, *Prelude* (1946), acciaccaturas in bb. 23-26²



Example 34(A): Stefans Grové, *Four Piano Pieces* (1975), *Tweespalt*, b. 24



Example 34(B): Stefans Grové, *Four Piano Pieces* (1975), *Tweespalt*, bb. 9-10a and 10b

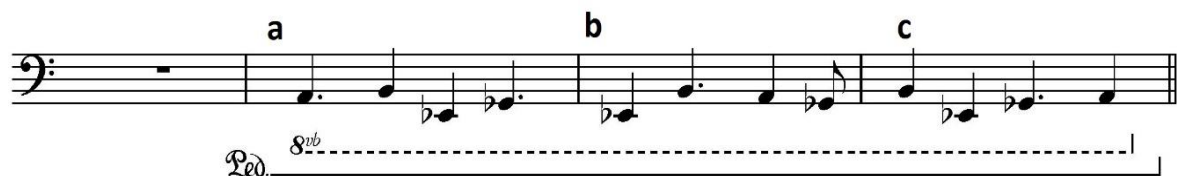


Example 34(C): Stefans Grové, *Four Piano Pieces* (1975), *Tweespalt*, b. 34



The second aspect in *Tweespalt* that can be traced back to the *Prelude* (1946) is the subtle modification of motifs (see Example 18A and 18B). Grové applies melodic permutation by continuously changing the order of the notes of the opening pitch-class set. Example 35 demonstrates the permutations in the first three bars of *Tweespalt*. In order to create structural unity, the composer returns to this left-hand figuration in bars 13-16 and 35-40 and maintains the four notes that constitute the opening motif (A, B, E flat, G flat,) – even if he continues to change the order of the pattern. Grové’s approach to rhythm is less methodical and the concept of refined permutation that encompasses both note values and pitches would only manifest itself in the works of his fourth period.

Example 35: Stefans Grové, *Four Piano Pieces* (1975), *Tweespalt*, permutations in bb. 1-4

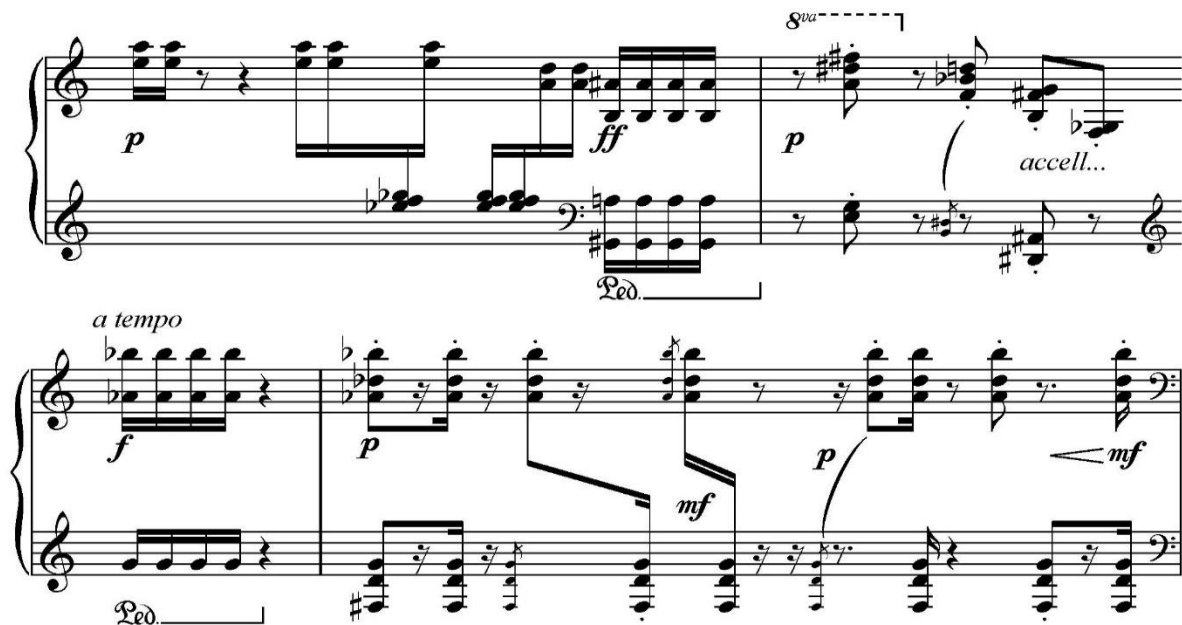


The piano pieces from 1975 indicate that Grové’s style did not significantly change after returning to South Africa, except for a slightly more energetic application of early ideas and somewhat denser approach to texture and harmony. The motivic writing of the *Toccata* (1966) remained a key aspect of these new works, and certain percussive vertical aspects of the early piano pieces seem to have re-emerged as well. *Sangwinies* (the only other surviving movement of the *Four Piano Pieces*) is an affirmation of the composer’s increasing interest in tone clusters. The title means ‘hot-blooded’ or even ‘positive’ or ‘happy’,²⁶ a significant word choice. Not only does this piece act as a rhythmically energetic counterpart to the more subdued and mysterious *Tweespalt*, it also projects a sense of youthful vigour that accompanied Grové return to his native country. Even if the atonal and expressionistic style in the short work emphasises a harsh declamatory atmosphere, the use of virtuosic runs and *pesante* chords renders this an extrovert display piece. The same stylistic elements that are prevalent in *Tweespalt*, such as major sevenths and characteristic acciaccaturas, are further illuminated by the loud sonorities and sudden dynamic contrasts in *Sangwinies*. In bars 7 and 8 of

²⁶ In the copy that SAMRO provided, the English translation to this title is *Sanguines*, which is the nominative and accusative plural in Latin for ‘blood’. A better translation would be *Sanguine*, which can also mean ‘positive’ or ‘happy’.

the work, the expressive tension is raised in that the acciaccaturas are performed by both hands and separated by the extremities of the register (Example 36).

Example 36: Stefans Grové, *Four Piano Pieces* (1975), *Sangwinies*, acciaccaturas and major seventh intervals, bb. 6-8



Several sources, including Mervyn Cooke (1998: 199), ascribe the invention of tone clusters to the American composer Henry Cowell. Erik Chisholm, Grové's teacher in Cape Town, mentioned in a diary entry (Purser 2009: 34) how he discussed tone clusters with Bartók after the Hungarian composer showed him the newly-completed Piano Concerto no. 2, Sz. 95 in Glasgow in 1932. When Chisholm surprisedly observed the novel tone clusters in the score, Bartók remarked that they were not 'my invention, I'm afraid. I got the idea from the young American composer, Henry Cowell' (Purser 2009: 34). Chisholm later befriended Cowell, who then confirmed that he introduced this technique to Bartók in London in 1923. Chisholm wrote: 'Cowell said that his chance encounter with Bartók was one of the most exciting episodes of his life. Bartók had invited him to come to Paris and demonstrate his revolutionary technical devices to some of Bartók's friends, including Ravel, Roussel and Manuel de Falla' (Purser 2009: 35). In his book *Twentieth-Century Harmony* (1961), Vincent Persichetti provided an example of tone clusters from Cowell's piano work *Lilt of the Reel*.²⁷ There is an underlying E-flat major tonality present in Cowell's composition and this stands in line with

²⁷ Persichetti misspelt the title of Cowell's work, writing 'Silt of the Reel'.

Persichetti's observation (1961: 128) that clusters can often be divided into chordal units to reveal an underlying tonality. A clear melodic pattern is also to be traced in *Lilt of the Reel* and this creates the impression that the cluster chords are used to colour and harmonise the work. It is not possible to trace any triads or tonalities within the clusters in Grové's *Sangwinies*. In bar 11 of the piece, he rather emphasised the percussive colouristic possibilities of tone clusters (Example 37), and further accentuated them by adding indications such as *secco*. The passage in bar 11 also has to be performed without the sustaining pedal. Similar to the early Impressionistic works of Grové, the concept of timbre as structural device (in this case through cluster chords) takes precedence over harmonic constructions.

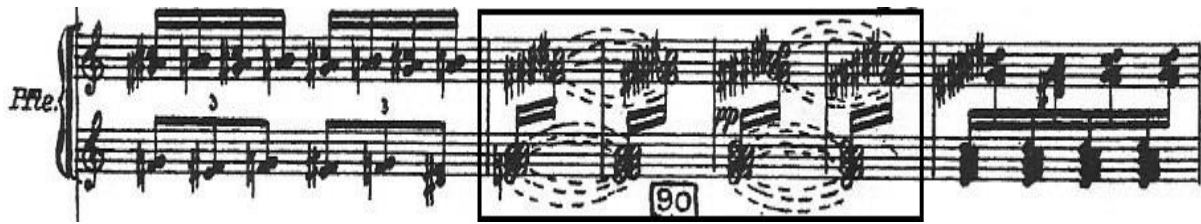
Example 37: Stefans Grové, *Four Piano Pieces* (1975), *Sangwinies*, tone clusters, bb. 10b-11



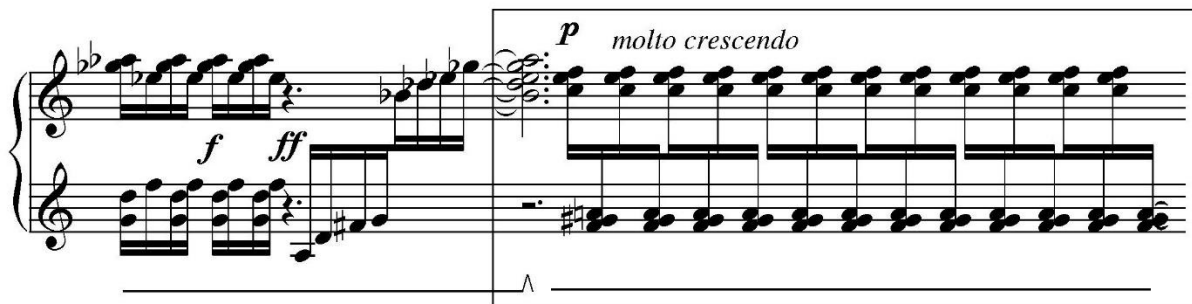
More than two decades later, Grové did employ cluster chords in a more harmonic sense in the last movement (*Yemoja*) of his *Images from Africa* (1999), an aspect to which I shall return later in this chapter.²⁸ However, the colouristic concept of clusters alternating between the hands continued to intensify in Grové oeuvre. These alternations between the hands in *Sangwinies* not only recall the vertical aspects of Grové's earlier *Kubisme-Toccata* (1945), but they can be seen as forerunners to future works such as *Short Toccata* (a short examination piece, 1981), *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (1994 – see Example 79 later in this chapter) as well as *Haunting Music* (2010). The influences of Bartók can particularly be traced in the first movement of *Haunting Music*. Grové employed fast cluster-tremolos that alternate between the hands and a manner similar to a passage in the second movement (bb. 89-92) of Bartók's Piano Concerto no. 2 (see Example 38A and 38B).

²⁸ See Example 58b later in this chapter.

Example 38(A): Béla Bartók, Concerto for Piano and Orchestra no. 2, Sz. 95, second movement, bb. 88-93



Example 38(B): Stefans Grové, *Haunting Music* (2010), first movement (*Strange Valley in the Mists*), b. 25



In the introduction to this thesis I already referred to the dryer percussive timbres in Grové's piano music and how they relate to the traditions set by Bartók. Cooke (1998: 199) claims that Bartók originally borrowed these timbres from Debussy, who included a fast-alternating dissonant chord tremolo at the end of his piano work *L'isle joyeuse*. A further argument made by Cooke, is that these percussive forms stemmed from the association with folk music:

Bartók's adaptation of musical material borrowed from folk music is well documented, and first surfaces in his piano writing in the collection *For Children* (1908-9). It seems plausible that his development of a percussive piano style owed something to an interest in the sonority of the cimbalom, a folk zither (played with two hammers) used in much east-European folk music (Cooke 1998: 198).

There is no evidence to suggest a connection between similar pianistic devices in Grové's *Sangwinies* and the playing of African drums, or indeed the xylophone or marimba. Grové made several references to indigenous musical practices in his short stories of the mid-1970s. This may have radiated to the stylistic changes in his music and even forecasted the *Music from Africa* series that commenced nine years later. Where he honed his craft at linear writing in the neo-Baroque works as well as the Violin Concerto and Symphony, he had evidently started to reapply the more vertical tendencies of his youth when he composed *Sangwinies*. This short piano work is thus a pivotal moment in Grové's career as it points both to the composer's apprenticeship years, but also to the

percussive attributes that would appear predominantly in his faster, athletic later works. The distinctly homogeneous stylistic aspects that can be traced throughout Grové's oeuvre are thus underlined.

4.2 Utility Music

The general flow of discussion on Grové's compositional development may seem to be interrupted by an investigation into his utility music. However, the following section on his music written for functional purposes should rather be seen as an affirmation and continuation of his earlier stylistic choices. I also evaluate further aspects that point in the direction of his later works. It is worth mentioning from the offset that Grové's utility music for the piano can be divided into two categories: a) tonal works that are written in imitation of music from previous centuries, and b) the works that show almost no tonality and portray general characteristics of the composer's third stylistic period.

A number of musicologists have confirmed that the influence of Hindemith can be traced in the linearity, contrapuntal procedures and angular intervallic melodic contours in most of Grové's works (Rörich 1987, Izak Grové 1998, Hinch 2004, Walton 2007). It is possible to emphasise further areas where a connection between the two composers becomes apparent. Hindemith was an active interpreter of early music, and this inspired Grové to embark on the serious academic study of Renaissance and Baroque composers' works (Izak Grové 2013: 141). Music education is another area that connects the two composers as they both created study material for amateurs and professionals.

The term *Gebrauchsmusik* (music for use) originated in the 1930s, when Hindemith and some of his contemporaries contemplated the role of music in society. Hindemith preferred the term *Sing-und-Spielmusik*, as this better represented his ideals (Morgan 1991: 225). He claimed that music should encourage participation rather than passive listening. Even twenty years after he consciously engaged in this project (along with other composers such as Orff, Bartók and Kodály), he still tailored several of his late chamber music works to make them technically accessible for less advanced performers. At the same time, he never compromised his personal stylistic considerations. Even though his *Sing-und-Spielmusik* is technically less complicated, he remains faithful to the motivic, harmonic and structural qualities of his *Vortragmusik* (concert music).

Grové follows a very similar approach and claims that he extracted his ideas from Hindemith's book *A Composer's World* (1952).²⁹ His functional works that are discussed in this section cannot strictly qualify as *Gebrauchsmusik*. He composed for a different target group and also did not live and work in the same type of educational climate as Hindemith, Kodály and others who were embroiled in the *Gebrauchsmusik* debate of the 1930s. Grové did, however, share Hindemith's ideals on the combination of writing technically accessible music that still falls within the parameters of his general style. He would continue along this route well into his later African period by writing *Vortragsmusik*, such as the five miniatures *Glimpses* (2004), where seminal structural cells from earlier works are tailored to be more concise and technically manageable. Grové thus revealed himself as a master of macro- and micro-structures. Further evidence of his awareness of the *Gebrauchsmusik* concept can be found in his academic articles on music education, where he regularly made use of this term (Grové 1960 & 1990: 38).

While he was still lecturing at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, Grové composed music for use in the classroom (Sprenkle in Muller & Walton 2006: 35). As he taught only composition and music theory at the time, he wanted to demonstrate to his students the value of being able to emulate many different styles and to build up a 'dictionary of quotations which can be consulted for the solution of certain problems' (Malan 1986b: 144). Two of his own sets of imitations are still available today. In 1955, he composed *Metamorphosen über das Thema 'Morgen kommt der Weihnachtsman'* for three recorders in the style of a wide range of composers, including Perotinus, De Cruce, Landini, Morley, JS Bach, Brahms, Johann Strauss II and Hindemith.³⁰ This engagement with stylistic features dating from the twelfth to twentieth centuries attests to Grové's interest in music from various epochs. Around 1970, he completed a more substantial album of sixteen pieces for the piano, entitled *An Experience in Musical Styles*.³¹ This is a result of several decades of closely

²⁹ Swart (2013: 210) writes that Grové extracted his methods of using *Einfall* (creative flashpoints) in his compositions from Hindemith's 1952 publication. During a personal discussion I had with Grové in July 2013, he also indicated that Hindemith's writings on *Sing-und-Spielmusik* pointed him in specific compositional directions.

³⁰ Grové adds the sub-heading 'in a contemporary style' to the variation in the style of Hindemith.

³¹ The original title of this unpublished album was *Good evening, Mrs. Brown*. This refers to an American lady Rosemary Brown who attracted attention in the 1960s with her allegations that she had made spiritual contact with composers of the past and that they had dictated 'posthumous' works to her (Izak Grové 2013: 146). Grové's association with this eccentric scenario, together with the choice of titles such as *Le Petit Chou-Chou Train* (for the Poulenc imitation) in this album, attests to his refined sense of humour.

observing a multitude of works by William Byrd, JS Bach, Domenico Scarlatti, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, Schumann, Brahms, Franck, Debussy, Mahler, Granados, Scriabin, Poulenc, Hindemith, Louis Moreau Gottschalk and Noël Coward. Grové eventually withdrew the imitations of Mahler, Gottschalk and Granados and he admitted that the emulations of Chopin and Scriabin cannot be regarded as idiomatic. In the remaining works, Grové internalised clearly recognisable features of the standard piano repertory such as the English Suites and Partitas (JS Bach), the slow movement from the Sonata in A minor, K. 310 (Mozart), *Kreislariana*, op. 16 and *Noveletten*, op. 21 (Schumann), *Vier Balladen*, op. 10 and *Sieben Fantasien*, op. 116 (Brahms), *Estampes* (Debussy), and *Trois Mouvements Perpétuels* (Poulenc). For the imitation of Hindemith, Grové duplicated the *Fuga* (third movement) from his *Three Piano Pieces* (1951). This affirms that the composer considered his early works as part of a prolonged apprenticeship and that he regarded them (or at least the *Fuga* from *Three Piano Pieces*) as imitative rather than original (Izak Grové 2013: 147).

The opening bars of the sixth imitation instantly remind the listener of the D flat major trio section of Schubert's *Moment Musical* D. 780, no. 6 (Example 39A). Grové particularly captured Schubert's adventurous use of harmony in bars 33-34 of this imitation. Here the music suddenly moves from the original key of E major to touch on the supertonic (F major), thereby creating the impression of a Neapolitan sixth harmony. This provides the passage with a distinctly Schubertian dramatic pathos (Example 39B).

Example 39(A): Stefans Grové, *An Experience in Musical Styles* (ca. 1970), *A Moment Musical* in the style of Franz Schubert (no. 6), bb. 1-6

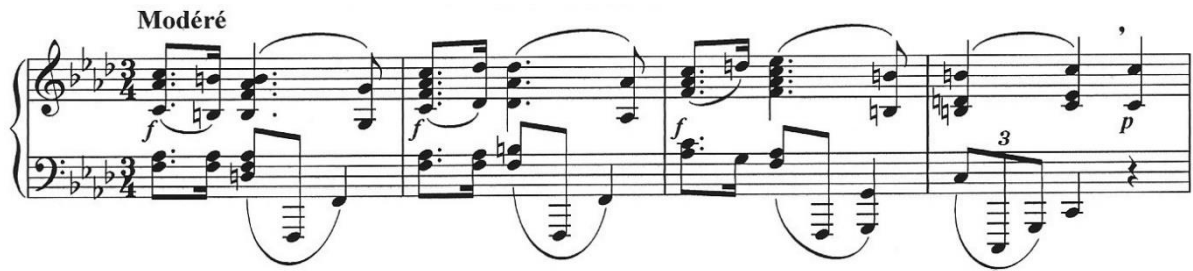


Example 39(B): Stefans Grové, *An Experience in Musical Styles* (ca. 1970), *A Moment Musical* in the style of Franz Schubert (no. 6), bb. 32-41



Two of the imitations allude to stylistic elements from music that was not written for the piano. Grové, who had been an active church musician until late in his life, emulated the chromaticism of Franck's *Chorales* for organ in the imitation no. 9 (Example 40). The String Quartets of Beethoven (possibly the Scherzo movement from Op. 135) may have inspired the fifth imitation instead of the composer's *Bagatellen* for piano suggested by Grové's title (Example 41).

Example 40: Stefans Grové, *An Experience in Musical Styles* (ca. 1970), *Fantaisie* in the style of César Franck (no. 9), bb. 1-4



Example 41: Stefans Grové, *An Experience in Musical Styles* (ca. 1970), *Bagatelle* in the style of Ludwig van Beethoven (no. 5), bb. 1-8



In 1981, Grové became one of the first renowned South African composers to receive a commission from the UNISA Music Examinations Department to write works for their syllabuses. By that time he had accumulated wide experience in writing for several wind, string and keyboard instruments. This enabled him to create works idiomatic to these instruments within a remarkably short space of time. The thirteen chamber music pieces for wind instruments and piano were written in just a month (Hinch 2004: 24). Grové made a larger contribution to the examination literature for piano than for any of the wind instruments. For the 1981 syllabus he wrote six solo piano pieces and three for piano duet.³² Some of the works for the lower grades are more tonally inclined to increase their accessibility to young performers. In that respect, they are not significantly different from the

³² Grové composed the tonal pieces *Wind Bells in the Night* (Grade 1), *The Bells* (Grade 2) and *Waltz of the Little Elephant* (Grade 3) for piano duet in 1981. My discussion here will focus only on the solo piano examination works. Similarly, in the section on Grové's African piano works (part 6 of this chapter), I shall not discuss the work for piano four hands, *Masks* (1999).

stylistic imitations in *An Experience in Musical Styles*. The Grade 1 piece *A Simple Evening Song* is a short two-voiced invention in F major that does not stand far apart from Schumann's *Album für die Jugend*, op. 68 or the earlier *Am Kamin* (from *Kinderszenen*, op. 15) (Example 42). The study *Three Birds Sing* (Grade 1) is slightly more complex as it is written in three parts. The right hand maintains two voices and this requires quite advanced finger control for Grade 1 level. Grové also creates tonal ambiguity within the context of C minor by repeatedly juxtaposing E natural in the right hand against E flat in the left. The overall penchant for perfect fourth intervals leads to further dissonance in this short work (Example 43).

Example 42: Stefans Grové, *Simple Evening Song* (1981, UNISA Grade 1), bb. 1-3



Example 43: Stefans Grové, *Study – Three Birds Sing* (1981, UNISA Grade 1), bb. 19-24



The other two Grade 1 pieces reflect more of the seminal ideas that correspond to Grové's general stylistic development and they fall in the second category that I have denoted at the opening of this section. The simple transparent texture of *Night Music from a Far Eastern country* seems appropriate in a work for the lower grades. As Grade 1 candidates do not make use of the sustaining pedal, the composer devised another method to create overtones. For the first time in his pianistic oeuvre he places a silently-depressed chord at the opening of the work. In his later cycles, *Images from Africa* (1999) and *My Seasons* (2012), he requires this type of chord to be maintained by means of the *sostenuto* (middle) pedal and both hands are free to execute intricate passage work. In *Night Music from a Far Eastern country* the left hand has to assume that responsibility. The right hand then

plays a crotchet melody of which the short staccato articulation allows for a sympathetic vibration of overtones resulting in a kaleidoscopic timbre. The pentatonic construction of the melody (G, A, C, D and E) supposedly represents the allusion to Far Eastern culture in the title. It also anticipates the composer's fourth stylistic period. The melodic patterns of his later African-inspired works contain a similar predilection for descending contours, minor thirds and perfect fourth intervals (Example 44).

Example 44: Stefans Grové, *Night Music from a Far Eastern Country* (1981, UNISA Grade 1), bb. 1-5



It is difficult to trace any clear tonality in the fourth of Grové's Grade 1 pieces, *A Sad Song*. The accompaniment is construed by means of unrelated diatonic major chords and the melodic line (imbued with several characteristic acciaccaturas) subsequently creates considerable dissonance. The overall rhythmic construction corresponds to the through-composed approach that Grové adopts in much of his piano music. Shifting time signatures and overlapping of bar lines by means of phrase marks strongly connects this piece with Grové's early *Prelude* (1946). It appears that Grové attempts to steer the listener's attention in the direction of timbre and motivic treatment in his works, and to break down the constraints of a macro-structure that superimposes itself on the musical content. Although the composition of examination pieces poses certain limitations in terms of duration and technical difficulties, Grové still succeeds in narrowing down his broader compositional ideas effectively in these miniatures.

Another potential argument can be made in regard of the melodic content of *A Sad Song*. From bar 9 to the end, the composer applies a rhetoric in the right hand that relates to the persistent repetition of certain intervals (particularly the minor third) in the later African works (Example 45).

Example 45: Stefans Grové, *A Sad Song* (1981, UNISA Grade 1), bb. 9-12

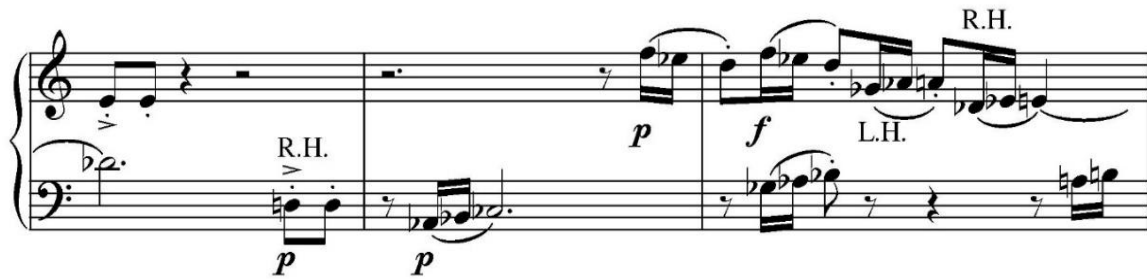


Grové has written about his experiences of attentively listening to the music of his black neighbours when he lived on a small holding near Pretoria in the mid-1970s. He even participated in informal gatherings where singing and dancing took place (Muller and Walton 2006: 86-87). There is no evidence to suggest that the descending minor third intervals (as in bar 9) and overall use of acciaccaturas in *A Sad Song* have any distinct relationship to indigenous musical practices, but it would not be unjustified to read the inflections of singing into these passages and consequently to regard them as forerunners of the African period. Grové has also stated that he studied intensely the ethnomusicologist Hugh Tracey's recordings of indigenous music from Southern and Central Africa during the 1980s (Schoeman 2012a). He does not specify the exact recordings (there are hundreds) or indicate when he analysed this material. It is likely that it took place only after Grové started with his *Music from Africa* series in 1984. This notwithstanding, the examination pieces of 1981 clearly encompass elements (albeit on a smaller scale) that reappear as so-called African manifestations in the later works. They may be illustrative of the fact that Grové had already started subconsciously to assimilate his rediscovered African identity in his music a few years before the 1984 'road to Damascus' moment.

The two examination works for higher grades also modestly point towards Grové's future work. At the same time, they pull together several of the threads of his earlier stylistic development. *Cock-fighting* (Grade 4) is a programmatic piece, in which the interplay between two voices generates a palpable nervous energy. The repetition of short motifs and the sudden silences between units contribute to this character. In Grové's thirteen examination pieces for wind, he notates breathing marks and accentuates sudden silences by means of commas or caesuras (Hinch 2004: 34). Similar procedures are followed in piano works such as *Cock-fighting*.³³ The resulting juxtaposition of short motivic passages and silences not only has a programmatic function, but also enables the performer to move seamlessly between extreme registers. The many repetitive aspects pave the way for a discussion of ostinato patterns in Grové's music. In the later African works, ostinato patterns are often employed to create structural homogeneity, and also to emphasise the hypnotically-repetitive aspect of indigenous rituals. In *Cock-fighting*, Grové constructs ostinati by means of defined three-note motifs that are not dissimilar from the figurations in the early *Fuga* from *Three Piano Pieces* (1951) (Example 46).

³³ In the piano examination pieces, Grové achieves sudden silences through rests or fermatas rather than commas.

Example 46: Stefans Grové, *Cock-fighting* (1981, UNISA Grade 4), bb. 7-9

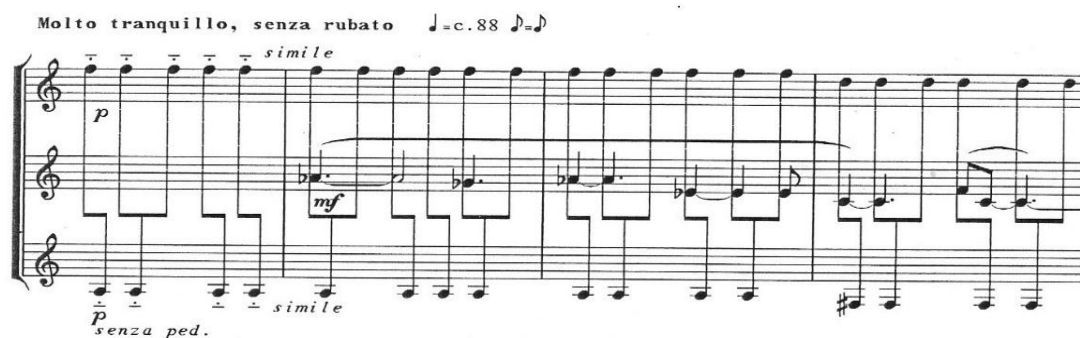


However, he also offered brief glimpses of a colouristic repeated-note ostinato in bars 12-13 and 27-31. He would later use this colour to imitate the plucked sounds of a Xhosa or Zulu gourd-resonated bow in the second movement (*A Night Song in the Distance*) of his first piano work from the *Music from Africa* series, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90). In Example 47A and 47B, the ostinato passages from *Cock-fighting* and *Night Song in the Distance* are presented.

Example 47(A): Stefans Grové, *Cock-fighting* (1981, UNISA Grade 4), bb. 27-31



Example 47(B): Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), *A Night Song in the Distance* bb. 1-4a



Short Toccata (Bondige Tokkate) (grade 5) is Grové's most technically-advanced examination piece in the 1981 UNISA syllabus. It is his fourth piano toccata, in which he united various aspects of the previous three. The energetic alternation of chords stem from the early *Kubisme-Toccata (Five Piano Pieces, 1945)*. He also followed a linear approach by not using any bar lines and creating a

continuous movement of short quaver groups. In that respect, it is very similar to the *Toccata* of 1966. In as much as the one-page *Short Toccata* is a technical study, it is also a significant compositional exercise. The more robust motivicism is a stylistic attribute that would be further developed in all of Grové's remaining piano works. At the same time, he infused some colouristic effects from his orchestral works (including *Kettingrye*, 1978, to which I return later in this chapter) into the toccata's linearity. Textural layering is to be found in the third system, where *fortissimo* and *pianissimo* chords are played simultaneously in the right and left hands respectively (Example 48).³⁴

Example 48: Stefans Grové, *Bondige Tokkate/Short Toccata* (1981, UNISA Grade 5), system 3



As in the early *Kubisme-Toccata* (1945) the compilation of chords in *Short Toccata* (1981) is not consistently idiomatic, and large leaps between registers do potentially withhold the performer from obtaining the fast metronome marking provided by the composer. The sequences are constructed in such a way that minor triads do not instil a sense of tonality. Several triads are aggregations of intervals of the fourth, one of the few ubiquitous harmonic elements that permeates an often intuitive tonal approach in the later African works. Izak Grové (1998: 108) also refers to quartal harmony as one of the pivotal elements in the composer's mature works. The intricate polyphonic gesture in the last system of Grové's *Short Toccata* is potentially challenging for a Grade 5 candidate (especially if his or her hands are small). The crisp articulation (*sempre staccato*) and the textural clarity that is required here renders this an effective study in finger independence. Example 49 illustrates how the shorter note values are to be articulated with the thumb and second fingers while the fourth and fifth fingers have to hold on to the sustained thirds. The composer writes *senza pedale* at the opening of the work, thereby placing even more responsibility on the fingers to create variety in timbre.

³⁴ This form of textural layering can already be found in *Cortège* (no. 1) from *Five Piano Pieces* (1945). In the *Short Toccata* Grové combines a variety of chords with the sustained pedal point instead of only a single melodic line as in *Cortège* – see Example 13.

N.B. The sharps, flats and naturals are only applicable to the specific group of notes in which they appear.

He has in many instances adhered to Hindemith's ideal that even concert music (*Vortragsmusik*) should be accessible to amateur performers. A selection of his more advanced works, such as *Tweespalt* (1975) and the *Toccata* (1966), have appeared regularly on the Grade 7 and 8 syllabuses of UNISA.³⁵ A more recent commission from UNISA was the piano piece *Obstinacy (Music from Africa, no. 35)*, which still appears on the Grade 7 syllabus. It is a work that portrays many of the structural and colouristic elements that I have discussed above, although the piano writing is far more idiomatic. The energy-driven motivic style is tempered by a clear linearity and the finger patterns lie comfortably within the span of the hand. Although it will be included in the following discussion of Grové's Afrocentric oeuvre, it is worth mentioning here that the composer evidently strived in this work towards expressing his motivic and colouristic ideas within a framework that is more accessible for less experienced players.

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5. The Fourth Period: 'Music from Africa' (1984-2014)

In previous sections of this chapter I have already situated some of the piano works from Grové's Afrocentric period within the context of his early styles. In an interview with Stephanus Muller, Grové stated the following:

Contrary to the beliefs of many musicologists, my Afro-centric style did not form a complete break from my previous style. It is a continuation of my energy-driven music, but with the addition of 'African' rhythmic groupings, descending tendencies in my phrase construction and, of course, the ostinato element (Muller 2007: 20).

This assertion reinforces the idea that Grové's fourth creative period should be regarded as an expansion of earlier stylistic experiments. My intention in this section is not to provide in-depth theoretical analyses of all twelve individual piano works from this stylistic period.³⁶ Instead, it is more fruitful to divide a survey of this music into a series of areas that have become increasing priorities for the composer. This will lead to a better understanding of the structural similarities between the works of the African period, as well as yielding insights into the differences between them (especially in light of the composer's constant experimentation with new sound colours). I shall also re-evaluate existing discourses and further investigate the incorporation of indigenous musical elements in Grové's works. The programmatic implications of these indigenous elements and their impact on the structure and timbre of the works will also be ascertained. Finally, I turn to a discussion of late style elements in Grové's piano works, referring to sources of Adorno (1937), Muller (2006) and Saïd (2006). Throughout this section on the *Music from Africa* series, I attempt to stay within the boundaries of a chronological discussion of the works. However, there will be a few exceptions. *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (1994) was written five years before the large-scale *Yemoja* (1999), but I shall firstly discuss *Yemoja* as part of a dissemination of Grové's employment of larger structures. A more in-depth discussion of *Nonyana* will then follow in the subsequent section on indigenous elements. In the section on late style, I shall also draw upon several works from the composer's *Music from Africa* series, and move freely between them in an attempt to substantiate certain arguments.

³⁶ The figure of 12 includes the clavichord work *In der Stillen Welt von Gestern*, *Music from Africa* no. 32.

5.1 Grové's large-scale piano works from the 'African' period

John Hinch (2004: 32) wrote that Grové exhibited a masterly control of both macro-structures and micro-structures. The first step in this survey is to differentiate between the composer's miniatures and those selected movements or works that have larger, more complicated structures. His miniatures are usually through-composed and here the micro-structures govern any sense of unity. The macro-structures refer more to Grové's use of what he termed 'chain form'. He stated that he had consciously moved away from ternary and binary structures and instead preferred creating chains of interspersing sections, resembling something that equates to ABCD etc. (Swart 2013: 210). The programmatic element is an organic part of this technique, as the composer suggested that the performers or listeners should imagine themselves walking through a (structural) landscape. It is as if one is moving through section A, then on to sections B and C. At a later point, the interpreter looks back and reminisces upon what has happened previously. This *Rückblick* provides a more informed view of the earlier material, as it has been conditioned by new ideas in the intervening sections. An earlier motif would therefore be transformed or varied, which symbolises the organic change that has taken place in the subconscious of the performer/listener. In 2007, Grové equated this ongoing transforming motivic unit to the concept of *Einfall*, a term associated with the late-Romantic German composers and the early works of the Second Viennese School. Danuser (1990: 91) traces this back to Richard Strauss, who would use an initial four-bar melodic phrase as a creative flashpoint, but then had to 'work hard' to define and develop larger structures from it. The following statement by Grové reveals his indebtedness to this poetic, instinct-driven compositional aesthetic:

I experience the 'vision' [...] quite regularly as what one calls in German 'Einfall'; before I begin a new work as a flash of, as yet, unfocused information which becomes cleared as soon as I begin to decipher the area which the flash illuminated. The full extent of the path ahead of me is never clear, with the result that further flashes are needed to illuminate the way ahead. These 'flashes' simply light up the terrain ahead and do not relieve me of very hard work to create order among the availability of possibilities (Muller 2007: 21-22).

Grové's words strikingly resemble Danuser's essay 'Inspiration, Rationalität, Zufall – über musikalische Poetik im 20. Jahrhundert' in which he posits Hindemith's suggestion of a creative 'vision'³⁷ and Schoenberg's *Formgefühl* to be the principal initiators of a tradition that would stretch

³⁷ It is of particular interest that Grové uses the same terminology as Hindemith. In a recent discussion I had with the composer, he stated that his ideas on *Einfall* were partly extracted from Hindemith's book *A Composer's World*, 1952. Danuser (1990: 94) quotes from an article that Hindemith wrote in 1933, where a

as far as Stockhausen and Rihm. Grové did not clarify when he started using these ‘creative flashes’ to ‘illuminate the way ahead’. In the interview with Muller, he attached this concept to selected works from his fourth African period. Grové later referred to the musical ‘visions’ that came to him during dreams (Swart 2013: 209 & Schoeman 2012a and 2012b, see Appendix 3). He described how he would often experience certain musical ideas, whether it be distinct timbres or motivic ideas, while sleeping. The composer would then wake up and decipher this material and he claimed that this would facilitate his work the next day. When Muller asked him to clarify the exact nature of these ‘visions’ or *Einfälle*, he responded in the following way:

I would say they [the *Einfälle*] contain pitch areas ... And the sonorities and the textures. Sometimes definite pitches too, though, because in my new flute piece, *Light and Shadows*³⁸, I heard the top D opening. And in *Projection and Reflection*³⁹, my saxophone piece, I heard this minor third of the A and the F sharp originally ... that motive of the saxophone was very important for me (Muller 2007: 22)

Taking this last statement into consideration, it does not seem out of place to attach the concept of *Einfall* to a motivic unit, particularly one of which a larger work germinates. In his *Music from Africa* series, Grové often started large-scale structures with an introduction consisting of seemingly unrelated motivic elements. These introductions come across as processes during which the composer assembled sets of *Einfälle* before extensively exploring and amalgamating the structural cells.

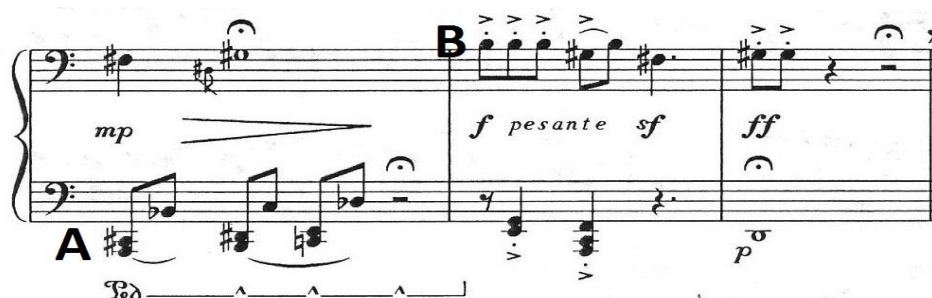
Such procedures are to be found in three large-scale works from Grové fourth ‘African’ style period: *Songs and Dances from Africa* (Music from Africa no. 5, 1988-1990), *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* – a Fantasy for Solo Piano (Music from Africa no. 12, 1994) and *Images from Africa* (Music from Africa no. 18, 1999). Aside from the one-movement work *Nonyana*, the larger cycles (*Songs and Dances from Africa* and *Images from Africa*) include at least one longer pivotal fantasy-like movement in which extended formal structures are developed from the basis of creative flashpoints. The central example from *Songs and Dances from Africa* is the third movement, *Greeting the New Day*. In the opening bars, two motivic cells appear (separated by a fermata) that are developed throughout the work (Example 50).

very similar methodology to that of Grové appears: the identification of an attractive idea (vision) and the expansion of it.

³⁸ *Music from Africa* no. 36, 2006

³⁹ *Music from Africa* no. 34, 2006

Example 50: Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), *Greeting the New Day* (third movement), bb. 1-3



Motif A is a declamatory introduction, comprising two notes accompanied by three groups of quavers. This represents an *aubade* to signify the arrival of the new day (Johnson 1992: 25). The motif retains its character throughout, and serves as a transition between the sections of the movement. Motif B (bar 2) is more significant, as it is transformed in the course of the work and even permeates the thematic content of the two toccata-like episodes (bb. 5-20; bb. 29-38 – for instance in the allusion shown in Example 51).

Example 51: Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), *Greeting the New Day* (third movement), bb. 5-6



In its undisguised form, motif B appears in the opening, then again in bars 23-27 and finally in the coda (bb. 39-42). The methods of contrapuntal texturing and permutation that are used to transform the motif can be traced back to both the *Prelude* (1946) and the *Three Piano Pieces* (1951). The coda of *Greeting the New Day* is a short canon, where the left hand (*comes*) follows the right hand (*dux*) at a distance of one quaver and a major second interval lower (Example 52). The articulation markings and accents in the *comes* (left hand part) are not exactly the same as those of the *dux* and these differences turn this into quite a challenging passage to perform.

Example 52: Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), *Greeting the New Day* (third movement), bb. 39-42, the coda



Constant permutations of motif B enable a seamless movement of rhythmic patterns. The *perpetuum mobile* character is only interrupted by the few isolated appearances of motif A. In Example 53, the permutations (with chordal accompaniment) of motif B are shown.

Example 53: Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), *Greeting the New Day* (third movement), bb. 23-26a, permutations of motif B



There are many instances where a motivic *Einfall* can be traced from one piano work to another within Grové's *Music from Africa* series. In the introduction to this chapter, I quoted the composer's remark concerning the dangers of self-repetition. Even if he repeated a thematic idea in a variety of works, he attempted to give new meaning to these motifs by either permutating them or integrating them within a different timbral context. The dry sound colours, sparse pedalling and many accents are factors that lend a percussive flavour to *Greeting the New Day* (*Songs and Dances from Africa*). The visceral character may be an attempt to recreate the mood of an indigenous dance. It is notable that Grové reused motif B from *Greeting the New Day* (see Example 50 above) in a much later work,

Dance Song for the Nyau Dance, Music from Africa no. 23 (2003), which depicts a tribal dance from Malawi (see the Introduction to this thesis). In bar 22, Grové employed motif B in the right hand. The left-hand figurations in *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* also reveal many other similarities with the earlier work (particularly motif A). Example 54 shows the outlines of these two motifs. The percussive nature of both works emphasises this self-quotation, but where *Greeting the New Day* is contrapuntally conceived, *Dance Song for Nyau Dance* is generally written in the vein of Grové's vertically-oriented percussive works from earlier periods, such as the examination piece *Short Toccata* (1981).

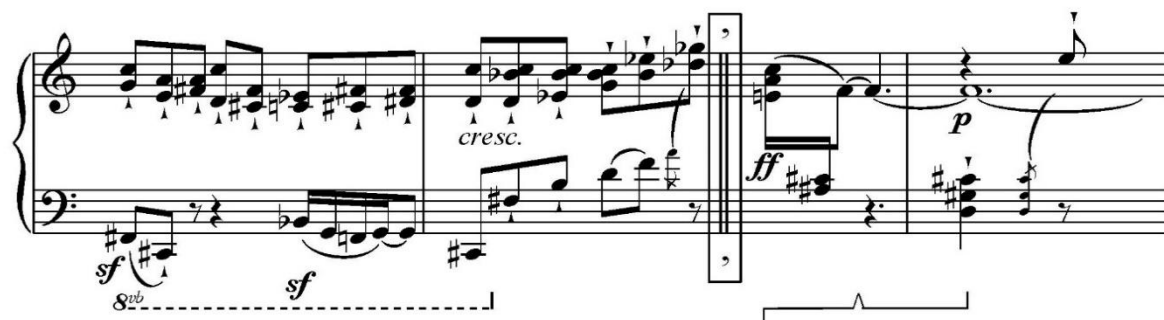
Example 54: Stefans Grové, two passages in *Dance Song the Nyau Dance* (2003) (b. 22 and b. 12) that strongly resemble motifs A and B from *Greeting the New Day* (third movement of *Songs and Dances from Africa*, 1988-90)

The image displays two musical excerpts, labeled A and B, from Stefans Grové's *Dance Song the Nyau Dance* (2003). Both excerpts are in G major and 4/4 time, starting at bar 12.
 Excerpt A shows a piano (p) section with a descending eighth-note melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand, followed by a forte (f) section with a more active right hand.
 Excerpt B shows a mezzo-forte (mf) section with a steady eighth-note melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand, followed by a sforzando (sf) section with a more active right hand.
 Both motifs include a 'Ped.' (pedal) marking at the end of the first section.

To return to Grové's programmatic analogy of chain form, I would like to focus on his longest piano work – the fifth and final movement of *Images from Africa*, Music from Africa no. 19 (1999), *Yemoja, Queen of the Waters*. In Nigerian Yorùbá mythology, this refers to the mother goddess, the patron deity of women and the Ògùn River. In the programme notes to *Images from Africa*, the composer included a descriptive poem from the Abeokuta region of Nigeria. This is an unusual reference for Grové, who mainly restricted himself to traditional indigenous cultural elements from Southern Africa. Where the earlier *Songs and Dances from Africa* programmatically depict specific instruments such as the Mbira, the gourd-resonated bow and the human voice (*stile parlando*), the cycle *Images*

from Africa is much less explicit in its statement of the indigenous. The somewhat indiscriminate approach to African mythology may potentially reopen the debate on the neocolonial implications of Grové's piano works. I would, however, first like to discuss the composer's structural application in *Yemoja*. Mareli Stolp (2013: 195-201) has provided an analytical overview of this intricate work, but made an error in counting the bar numbers, thereby detracting from the clarity of her findings. She argues that the work can be divided into five sections, separated by caesuras (usually a double bar line) applied by the composer. There are two instances where such a pause or caesura does not indicate a switch to new rhythmic or melodic material. On an audible level, the composer's own division between the sections has little effect on an understanding of the overall structure. Although Stolp's argument holds some truth about the structural implications of caesuras, she does not make provision for the fact that Grové varies the meaning of these devices in his compositions. In my earlier discussion of the UNISA examination pieces, I referred to commas or pauses that enable the performer to breathe (in the case of wind instruments) or to move more easily between registers (for keyboard players). In *Yemoja*, as in other virtuosic piano works from the *Music from Africa* series, the composer used a double bar line together with a comma to indicate a short breath. This slight alleviation of technical difficulty is consequently also accompanied by a dramatic silence and can possibly assist the performer in clearly demarcating a new thematic section (Example 55).

Example 55: Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), *Yemoja*, bb. 51-54a, caesura as *Luftpause*⁴⁰



I hereby provide my own structural outline of *Yemoja* that stands independently from Stolp's analysis. Table 1 below includes a schematic outline of *Yemoja*'s structure. This is followed by a discussion of the seminal motivic elements in the work.

⁴⁰ I use the German word *Luftpause*, as it adequately describes the combination of a comma that corresponds to both musical and physiological considerations.

Table 1: An overview of the chain structure in Stefans Grové's *Yemoja (Images from Africa, 1999)*

Section and tempo indications	Description
Introduction: Presto – Misterioso – Tempo 1	bb. 1-8: Opening staccato element (A) (see Example 55) bb. 9-10: Linear toccata element (B) (see Example 56) bb. 11-12: Element A (see end of Example 56 and beginning of 57a) bb. 13-18: Textural layering element (C) (<i>quasi gran cassa</i>) (see Example 57a) bb. 19-20: Percussive toccata element (D) (see Example 58a) bb. 21-24: Acciaccatura melodic element (E) (see Example 60) bb. 25-26: Transitional phrase
Section 1: Vivo (Tempo 1)	1.1 bb. 27-28: Opening element (A), transposed a perfect fourth higher and inverted bb. 30-52: Percussive toccata element (D) expanded with inflections of the acciaccatura melody (E) 1.2 (After the double bar line – see the <i>Luftpause</i> in Example 54) bb. 53-82: Percussive toccata with interjections of the acciaccatura melody and the second part of the opening element (D + E + A) 1.3 bb. 83-85: A sudden shift to the linear toccata pattern (B)
Section 2: Poco meno mosso (Tempo 2)	bb. 90-105: After the double bar line with a fermata, the textural layering element (C) enters in a more melodic form. This is only interrupted by two transitional passages (bb. 93-95 and 97-100) that are modifications of the opening element A. These transitions are separated from the chorale-like version of element C by way of double bar lines (caesuras).
Section 3: Tempo 1	3.1 bb. 106: Introductory passage based on the textural layering element (C) (with a crescendo <i>p – ff</i>) bb. 107-109: Percussive toccata material with brief references to the opening elements (D + A) 3.2 bb. 110-135: The linear toccata (B) commences (<i>leggero</i>) in b. 110 and continuously permutes until a dynamic climax (b. 120b) with bravura octaves and a generic indigenous melody, combined with the percussive toccata and acciaccatura elements (D + E)
Section 4: Tempo 2	bb. 136-145: Element C returns as a <i>misterioso</i> reminiscence (<i>Rückblick</i>) of Section 2
Section 5: Tempo 1	This final section can be regarded as a three-part toccata (bb. 146-188) 5.1

Section and tempo indications	Description
	<p>bb. 146-148: Opening element A</p> <p>5.2</p> <p>bb. 149-162: The percussive toccata in which acciaccaturas are more intensely employed (D + E) – the spreading out of acciaccaturas between the hands in <i>ff</i> gestures resembles <i>Sangwinies</i> (<i>Four Piano Pieces</i>, 1975)</p> <p>5.3</p> <p>bb. 163-167: The percussive toccata (D) returns in an undisguised form and the motivic material regularly passes from one hand to the other.</p> <p>bb. 177-188: After a brief reference to the opening motif (A) in bar 176, the linear toccata (B) forms an extended coda. The opening motif aggressively interjects in bb. 178 and 184 and contributes to a gradual crescendo. The linear toccata becomes interspersed with diatonic <i>ff</i> chords before a final and dramatic statement of the textural layering element (C) appears in the last three bars.</p>

It would seem that the ‘chain form’ of *Yemoja* only commences in bar 27 after an extended introduction. As in most of Grové’s fantasia-like structures,⁴¹ the introduction announces the thematic cells that are further developed or transformed in the various sections (chain links). Each of these cells in some way relates to Grové’s earlier style periods. This *Rückblick* (a term mostly associated with Brahms’s Piano Sonata no. 3) in *Yemoja* not only represents techniques that appear in the previous four movements of *Images from Africa*, but is also a culmination of the expressive tools that were starting to develop as far back as 1945. In the first seven bars of the work (bars 1-4 can be seen in Example 56), a short staccato quaver *Leitmotiv* in the left hand (no. 1) alternates with a mysterious response motif (no. 2) in the right hand. The left hand part enters with a restlessly permutating quaver motif (no. 3) in bar 3. This unifying opening phrase recurs in many different transpositions throughout the work and is referred to as structural element ‘A’ (both in the Table 1 as well as the music examples below).

⁴¹ Four of the etudes from *Songs and Dances from Africa* have a more extended form, but the two largest fantasies in Grové’s oeuvre are nonetheless *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (1994 – Music from Africa no. 12) and *Yemoja* (*Images from Africa*).

Example 56: Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), *Yemoja*, bb. 1-4

The musical score for Example 56, 'Yemoja' from 'Images from Africa', shows the first four bars. The tempo is marked 'Presto' with a quarter note equal to 132. The right hand (treble clef) has a series of sustained notes with a descending semiquaver pattern. The left hand (bass clef) has a descending semiquaver pattern. Dynamics include *p*, *mf*, *pp*, *mp*, and *sf*. Pedal markings are present at the end of bars 3 and 4.

After a long pause (with fermata) in bar 8, the first traces of the polyphonic toccata figurations commence, albeit only for two bars (bb. 9-10) – I refer to this as structural element ‘B’ (Example 56). Here, Grové built on his earlier neo-Baroque contrapuntal procedures and the linear motivicism of the *Toccata* (1966). The right hand is responsible for semiquaver motifs, simultaneously holding on to the longer top notes. Chapter 3 will include a more detailed analysis of the technical realisation of these types of passages in Grové’s piano music (they appear both in *Yemoja* as well as the later miniatures, *Glimpses*); for now it suffices to say that these descending semiquaver patterns coupled to longer sustained top note melodies require considerable tone control from the performer to differentiate between voices and to colour each layer appropriately. The ostinato counter-rhythm in the left hand adds a further antiphonal dimension to this passage. Prevalent descending perfect fourth intervals that are integrated into the semiquaver passage work represent typical features that often appear in Grové’s *Music from Africa* series. The sustained top notes together also form a consistent phrase of falling perfect fourth intervals (d''' – a'' – e'').

Example 57: Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), *Yemoja*, bb. 8-11, the first linear toccata motifs (structural element B)

The musical score for Example 57 is presented in two systems. The first system covers bars 8-11. The right hand (treble clef) begins with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic, playing a series of eighth notes. The left hand (bass clef) plays a similar rhythmic pattern. A boxed section labeled 'B' highlights a specific motif in the right hand. The second system continues the piece, featuring a forte (ff) dynamic in the left hand and a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic in the right hand. The score concludes with a piano (p) dynamic and a 'senza ped.' (senza pedale) instruction.

The third thematic element (to which I attach the letter 'C') in the introduction of *Yemoja*, appears in bars 13-18. Grové's indication that this passage should be imitative of the *gran cassa* (bass drum), places the structural element within the context of his orchestral colours. At this point I would like to refer to one of Grové's large-scale orchestral works, *Kettingrye* (*Chain Rows*, 1978). In bars 97-98, it is possible to trace one of the first examples in the composer's oeuvre where he combined a short cluster chord in some voice parts with longer sustained notes in others. The woodwinds maintain a long sustained dissonant chord, coupled to the top note of b flat'' on the organ. Concurrently, the strings, brass and lower registers of the organ are combined to perform abrupt short staccato chords. This passage can be seen in Appendix 2 at the end of the thesis. Grové strived towards the exact same colour in the *Misterioso* passage on the first page of *Yemoja*, and one can imagine a short staccato brass chord (right hand) sounding simultaneously with a soft sustained lower string sound (left hand) (Example 58A). This colour develops into a vocal-like line with cluster accompaniment between bars 90-92, 96, 101-106, and finally bars 136-139 of *Yemoja* (Example 58B).

Example 58(A): Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), *Yemoja*, bb. 12-15, colouristic manipulation and textural layering in the third structural element (C)

Example 58(B): Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), *Yemoja*, bb. 88b-91, conversion of structural element C into a chorale-like passage with the main melodic material in the left hand part

The fourth structural element of the introduction of *Yemoja* is a percussive toccata passage (element 'D'). Sharply-accented rhythmic groups of two and three semiquavers interspersed with dissonant chords relate more to the percussive trends of the early *Sangwinies* (*Four Piano Pieces*, 1975). Here the incessant motivicism becomes an inseparable part of Grové's percussive toccata style. This is not to be confused with the linear toccata style (structural element 'B') described above. I shall return to a further outline of Grové various toccata styles in section 5.2 below. In the remainder of *Yemoja*, the thematic percussive toccata material in element 'D' dictates the most substantial part of the

rhythmic and melodic fabric. The composer augmented the motivic unit by converting the semiquavers into quavers, providing each note with a short staccato. An original single-voiced motif can also be expanded by means of an added interval, or even two more notes to form triads. In Example 59, the original percussive toccata pattern (Example 59A) is placed next to three of its variants (Example 59B): (i.) single-note, (ii.) intervallic, and (iii.) chordal quaver groups.

Example 59(A): Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), *Yemoja*, bb. 19-20, the percussive toccata structural element (D)

Tempo 1°

The musical score for Example 59(A) is written for piano in D major. It features a percussive toccata pattern. The right hand plays a series of eighth notes, while the left hand plays a series of chords. The tempo is marked 1°. The dynamics are *ff* and *sfz*. The instruction *con pedale* is present.

Example 59(B): Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), *Yemoja*, rhythmically-augmented versions of the percussive toccata element D

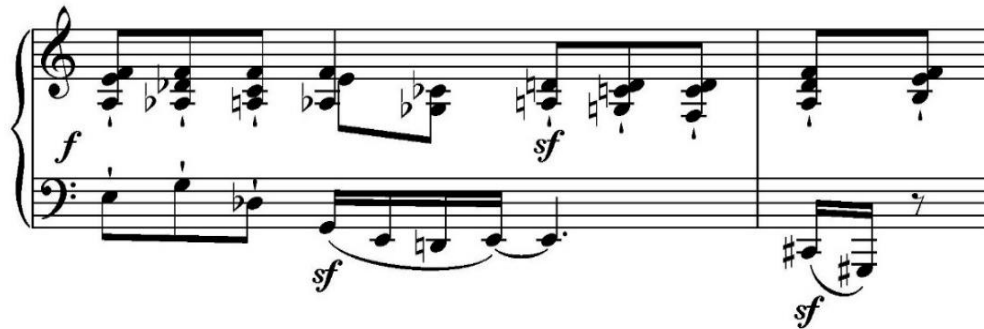
- i. The right hand plays single-note motivic units, bb. 29-30

The musical score for Example 59(B)i shows single-note motivic units in the right hand. The left hand plays chords. The dynamics are *p* and *sf*. The instruction *senza ped.* is present. The tempo is marked 1°.

- ii. The left hand plays motivic units consisting of intervals (mostly tritones), bb. 33-34a

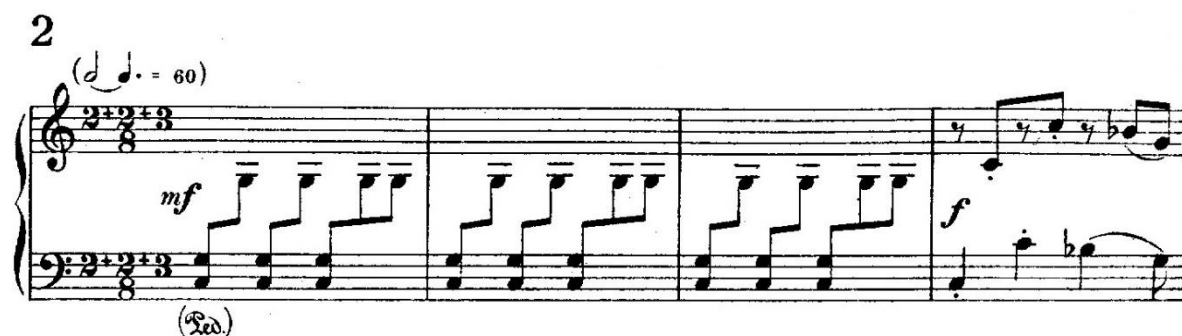
The musical score for Example 59(B)ii shows intervallic motivic units in the left hand. The right hand plays chords. The dynamics are *mp* and *sf*. The instruction *senza ped.* is present. The tempo is marked 1°.

- iii. The right hand plays motivic units consisting of chords, bb. 55-56a

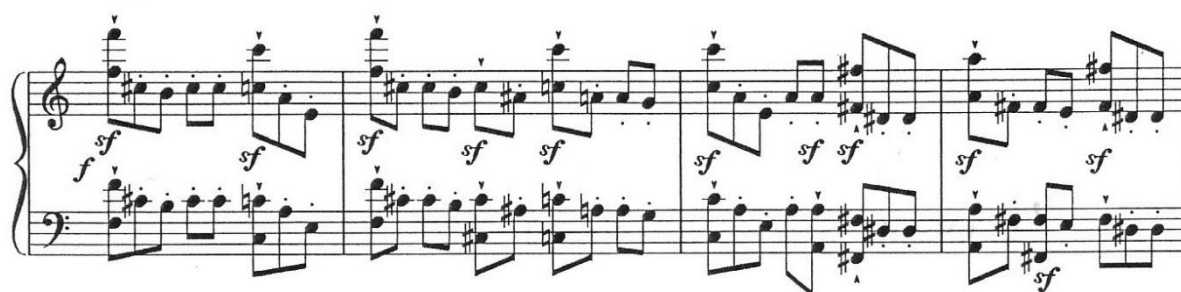


Grové's concept of short percussive rhythmic groupings was already developed in the first etude from *Songs and Dances from Africa*, the *Stamping Dance* (1988-90). Walton (2007: 30) writes that "Grové often has his music shift from one odd metre to another not dissimilar to that of Bartók's 'Bulgarian' music". The *Violin Sonata* (1984) is the only example of irregular rhythmic construction that Walton cites, but it appears that certain piano works such as *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90) and *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003) more clearly reveal the influences of Bartók's *Dances in Bulgarian Rhythm*, *Mikrokosmos* (nos. 148-153). As the Bulgarian Dances have an educational function, the composer clearly notates the rhythmic construction through time signatures. The impetuous rhythmic groups mostly adhere to the pattern set out at the beginning (Example 59a). Grové started to move away from these principles by omitting time signatures and utilising bar lines as phrase marks (or to conclude a particular statement). He was also more meticulous than Bartók when it came to pedal markings. The following examples (Example 60a and 60b) elucidate the similarities and differences between Grové's percussive motivicism and Bartók's Bulgarian dance rhythms. These passages of Grové and Bartók consist of motivic quaver patterns. Although Grové did not utilise time signatures like Bartók, the concept of rapid alternation between groups of two and three remains a constant feature throughout the pieces in question. Example 60c indicates similar treatment of motivic groups of two and three semiquavers in *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003).

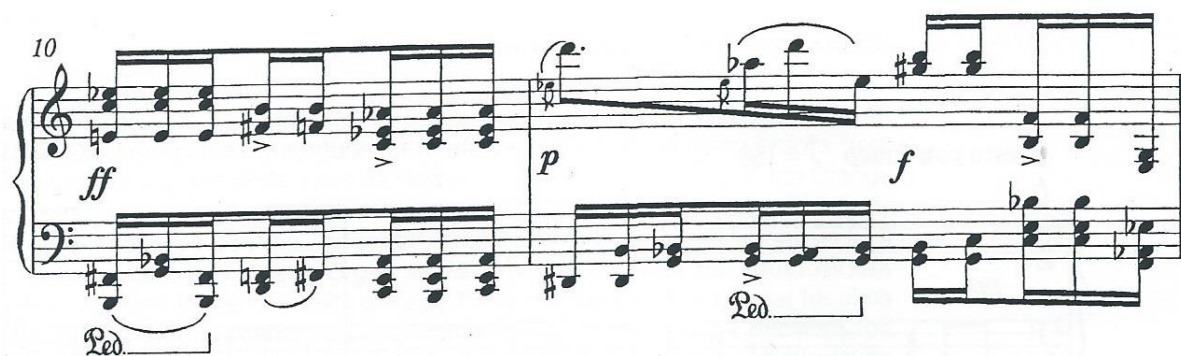
Example 60(A): Béla Bartók, *Mikrokosmos*, Sz. 107, *Dances in Bulgarian Rhythm* (no. 2), no. 149, bb. 1-4



Example 60(B): Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), first movement (*Stamping Dance*), bb. 1-4

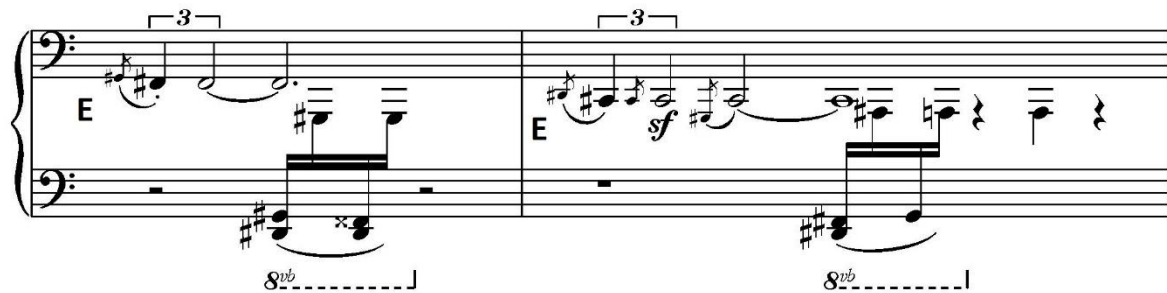


Example 60(C): Stefans Grové, *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003), bb. 10-11



To return to *Yemoja*, I would like to attach the letter 'E' to the fifth and final thematic element of the introduction. This element appears for the first time in bb. 21-24 (Example 61). I have discussed how Grové implemented acciaccaturas as early as the *Prelude* of 1946 in order to emphasise the intervallic construction of a work. These acciaccaturas adopted a more characteristic function in his atonal expressionist works from the 1970s. The initial statement of the acciaccatura motif (element 'E') in *Yemoja* has a rather contemplative nature, but as the work progresses it is incorporated into several of the above-mentioned percussive toccata passages.

Example 61: Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), *Yemoja*, bb. 21-22, acciaccatura motif in the introduction (E)



When taking the five principal thematic ideas of *Yemoja*'s introduction (bb. 1-26) into account, it becomes possible to divide the remainder of the work into sections where the five elements reappear in a developed or transposed form. All these transformations are described in Table 1 above, and one can trace how the five elements are systematically integrated into the five sections of the larger chain structure. What is seemingly important is that this chain structure is not a mere juxtaposition of unrelated motivic concepts. Notwithstanding the somewhat fragmented audible experience (a result of many pauses and caesuras), the micro-relationships between the clearly-delineated statements in the introduction and the various sections (chain-links) illustrate the composer's commitment to structural coherence.

To conclude this section, I would like to turn to distinct harmonic aspects of *Yemoja*. This work integrates seminal characteristics that reappear in many of the later piano works, chamber music and concertos from Grové's *Music from Africa* series. Two analytical essays appeared in 1992 – a dissertation by Alexander Johnson on Grové's piano cycle *Songs and Dances from Africa* and an article by Christopher James on the composer's orchestral work *Concertato Overture: Five Salutations on Two Zulu Themes* (Music from Africa No. 4, 1986). Both Johnson and James are representatives of the younger generation of South African composers and they studied theory and composition with Grové. While Johnson claims that Grové's harmonic structures defy analysis due to their intuitive nature, James (1992: 107-108) has more specifically summarised the composer's harmonic language as 'complex, fluctuating between moments of tonality, atonality and pantonality'. He went on to identify that the music is 'generally underpinned by a tonal reference point even if the melodic material contains atonal or pantonal leanings'. The latter statement signifies that James used the word 'pantonality' to describe nonfunctional tonality or pandiatonicism in Grové's music. Pandiatonicism in the works from the African period is often created as a result of

the composer's penchant for including seemingly unrelated diatonic triads within a predominantly dissonant motivic context. Again, I would like to refer to my outline of motivic transformations in Table 1 above and briefly indicate at which points in *Yemoja* Grové integrated specific diatonic triads that have practically no structural bearing and merely contribute to the timbral character of the passages in which they appear:

- In bar 19 of the introduction, the percussive toccata structural element (D) commences with an F-sharp major chord (first inversion) in the left hand (see Example 59a above; note also the dissonant minor second, major seventh and augmented octave intervals in this passage).
- In bars 29-32, the percussive toccata element (D) is expanded and permuted in the right hand, and this is harmonised by short crotchet staccato roll chords in B-flat minor (see Example 59b [i.] above) alternated by brisk quaver minor third intervals that suggest F minor-tonality.
- In Example 59b (iii.) above, the beginning of the chordal transformation of the percussive toccata element can be seen. This passage also incorporates various triads such as D-flat major, F major, D minor, A minor and A-flat major within rapid succession (bars 55-57).
- In bars 98-99, the opening staccato motif (staccato notes followed by quaver rest – element A) appears in chordal form. The right hands includes four repeated A minor triads (second inversion), combined with G-sharp minor triads (second inversion) in the left hand. This is the only passage in this work where the concept of bitonality may apply, due to the combination of A minor and G sharp minor triads that together form considerable dissonance.
- In the transitional percussive toccata (D) passage between bars 107 and 109, interspersed with brief inflections of the transposed and adjusted opening (A) motif, a variety of triads suddenly appear amidst chromatic passage work: E minor (second inversion), F minor (second inversion), A-flat major (second inversion) and B major (first inversion).
- Between bars 149 and 162, a climactic section with fortissimo dynamics and rapid alternations of chords and octaves between hands, the percussive toccata element is combined with brief interjections of the opening structural motif (A). Grové also added several acciaccaturas to the rapid chordal sequences, rendering this one of the most challenging passages to perform. Several tonal triads appear within this section, which emphasise the fluctuation between tonality and atonality that Christopher James suggested: C major (bar 149), A-flat major, E-flat minor and B major (bar 153-154) and A minor (bar 155-156). This passage can be seen in Appendix 4 (*Yemoja* bars 149-156), where the respective triads are indicated in the score.

I would finally like to return to the idea of tone clusters and their appearance in more melodic sections (see Table 1 as well as Example 58b, where I discuss the transformation of structural element C). Tone clusters in the earlier *Sangwinies* resemble a percussive timbre that has no particular harmonic implications. Grové applied the cluster-technique in a different way in bars 90, 92, 95 of *Yemoja*. The melodic content in these bars is quite clear, and the cluster chords are used to

harmonise the motifs and imbue them with a certain colour. Later in the work, in bars 101-105, the right hand chords that accompany the melody (now in the tenor voice, played by the left hand) are no longer clusters. They are combinations of perfect and diminished fourth intervals (bar 101-102), diminished fifth and major third intervals, in principle the ground position of a dominant seventh triad in C major (bars 103-104), and finally diatonic G major triads combined with diminished fifth and major third intervals in the left hand (bar 105).

In Example 62 below, it is also possible to trace how Grové constructed tone clusters in a more harmonic and melodic way in bars 94 to 95 of *Yemoja*. This is akin to the descriptions of Persichetti (1961: 129): 'A cluster is not always introduced by sounding all its tones simultaneously. These arpeggio versions of the cluster contribute variety to secundal patterns'. Grové achieved secundal patterns by gradually piling up chords through the overlapping of notes in the left hand. Simultaneously, he placed a different set of chromatic tones in the right hand to form a series of consecutive intervals that resonate with the left hand notes and chords. A further discussion will follow in the next section on how Grové achieved more clarity of voicing and textural layering in these passages by means of meticulous articulation markings (see Examples 67-70). From a harmonic perspective it suffices to take note of the intervals that ensue from the harmonisations of the transformed motif 3 of structural element A. The various intervals are indicated through letters in the extract below and a description of each follows. The piled up secundal clusters are marked with the letter x (it must also be added that, as per usual in Grové's *Music from Africa* series, the accidentals apply for the duration of a bar):

Example 62: Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), *Yemoja*, bb. 94-95a

- a) A combination of a minor second (between d flat and acciaccatura d natural) followed by a minor ninth (between d flat and c')
- b) An augmented octave between A-flat and a

- c) An augmented octave between G-flat and g
- d) A minor tenth between G-flat and a
- e) A minor sixth between B flat and g; later also an augmented fifth (minor sixth) between G-flat and d
- f) A perfect fourth between d-natural and g
- g) An augmented fourth between A-flat and d
- h) A variety of intervals that are formed between the sustained secundal cluster in the left hand and the right hand melody, with varying degrees of dissonance: a major seventh between, a tritone between, a major tenth (between the c' and the notes of the sustained cluster chord); a minor sixth, a diminished octave and a minor tenth (between the a and the notes of the sustained cluster chord).

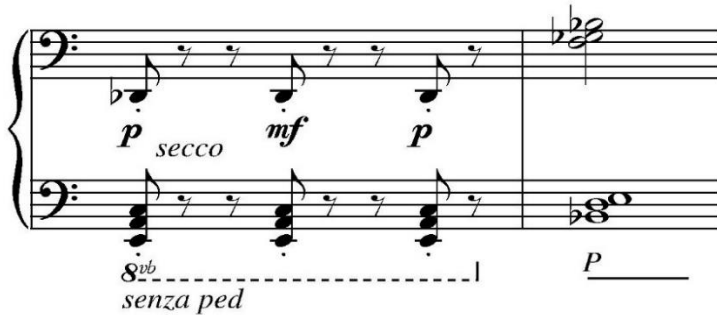
5.2 A discussion of structural and stylistic features in the shorter movements and miniatures for piano in Grové's *Music from Africa* series

After *Images from Africa*, Grové composed another nine piano works. They can be divided into larger cycles and short character pieces, but Grové never again employed extended chain form as he did in *Yemoja*.⁴² The five seminal ideas that are developed throughout this fantasy-movement, however, became pivotal materials in all of the later works. It appears that they provided Grové with a substantial repertory of the so-called *Einfälle* that he required to light the way forward. As Walton stated (2007: 28), the earlier UNISA pieces from 1981 'forced Grové to focus his creative imagination in a manner that in fact helped to set it free'. This provided him with the foundations to write effective miniatures. *Glimpses (Flitsbeelde, Music from Africa* no. 28, 2004) is a set of five short one-page pieces that have biographical resonances in that each is dedicated to a different member of Grové's family – the composer himself (no. 1), his wife (no. 2) and three children (nos. 3-5). The motifs from *Yemoja* are all manifested here, and Grové continued to create short sequences in which the various modifications of these ideas appear in close succession, often separated by a caesura. The short staccato opening element (A) of *Yemoja* extends to the opening of Miniature no. 1 (*The limping lion*) from *Glimpses*. In bars 3, 6 and 11, sudden percussive toccata figurations with crescendo and diminuendo dynamics (structural element 'D' from *Yemoja*) are employed to illustrate the 'roaring of a lion' (Jordaan 2007: 124). Example 63 displays the *misterioso* staccato fragment in

⁴²Another example of extended chain form structure is the piano fantasy *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (Music from Africa no. 12, 1994), to which I shall refer in more depth in my discussion of Grové's application of indigenous elements later in this chapter.

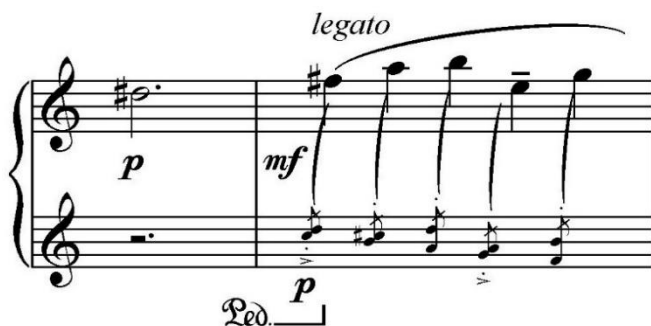
the opening. The same principle also appears in another short work of the time, *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (Music from Africa no. 23, 2003).

Example 63: Stefans Grové, *Glimpses* (2004), Miniature no. 1 (*The limping lion*), bb. 1-2a



Grové's intensive use of acciaccaturas for melodic and colouristic purposes is a second factor that plays a significant role throughout the Miniatures nos. 2 and 5 of *Glimpses*. Earlier works such as the *Prelude* (1946) and *Tweespalt* (*Four Piano Pieces*, 1975) include examples of acciaccaturas that contribute substantially to the textural fabric. Grové later implemented various acciaccaturas in almost every piano work from his *Music from Africa* series, of which structural element E from *Yemoja* can be regarded as a significant representation. In *Glimpses*, the acciaccaturas are either integrated into the melody or spread out over two systems and performed by both hands (Miniature 2 – Example 64A). Acciaccaturas also contribute to the accentuation of the predominant intervals in Grové's music, including major sevenths, minor seconds and in the African works, also minor thirds and perfect fourths. Aside from this effect, Miniature 5 from *Glimpses* refers to earlier tremolo effects that appear in the UNISA examination pieces for woodwind (1981). Hinch (2004: 28) compares this to the ululation in the singing of Xhosa women (Example 64B).

Example 64(A): Stefans Grové, *Glimpses* (2004), Miniature no. 2 (*The meditating Butterfly*), bb. 1-2

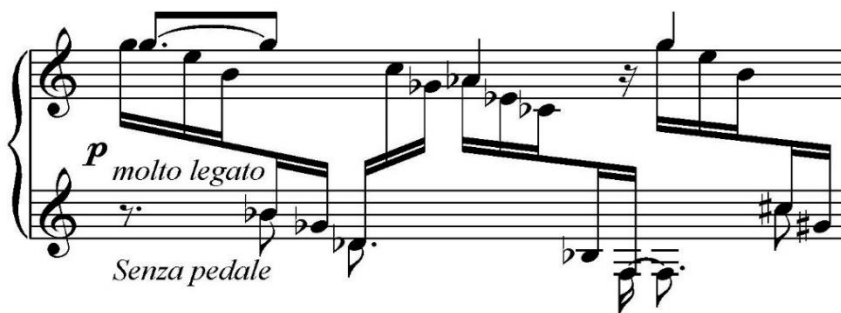


Example 64(B): Stefans Grové, *Glimpses* (2004), Miniature no. 5 (*The masked Weaver's masquerade*), b. 1



It is ultimately possible to extract three toccata styles from Grové's pianistic oeuvre. Firstly there is the percussive toccata style (element 'D' from *Yemoja*) and secondly the linear polyphonic toccata style (element 'B' from *Yemoja*). The major difference between the percussive and linear forms, is that Grové applied a vertical chordal approach in the first and a contrapuntal single-line (horizontal) texture in the second. The linear toccata style would often become visible through the tying over of certain notes and the subsequent creation of two polyphonic voices. One finger therefore has to hold on to a longer note while the others perform linear passagework underneath. This was represented by element 'B' in *Yemoja*, and the concept also permeates the complete Miniature no. 4 from *Glimpses* (Example 65).

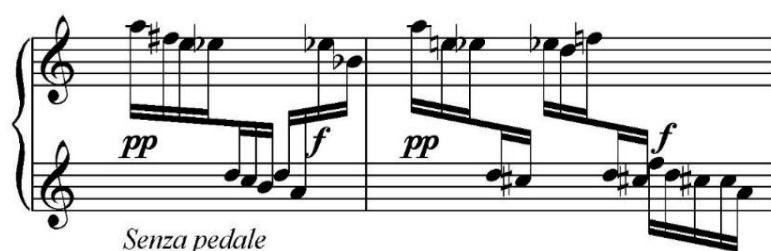
Example 65: Stefans Grové, *Glimpses* (2004), Miniature no. 4 (*The serene Sea Horse*), b. 1



The third toccata style first appeared in Grové's much earlier *Toccata* (1966), where motifs seamlessly alternate to create a single colouristic unit. Miniature 3 from *Glimpses* falls into this category, except that Grové did not employ regular bar lines here (Example 66). Alongside my earlier discussion of this *perpetuum mobile* style in the *Toccata* (1966), I also referred to similar examples in the first movement of *Images from Africa* (*Morning Music*, 1999) as well as the third movement

from Grové's last piano work (*My Seasons*, 2012). This colouristic approach mostly entails the emphasis of a single murmuring timbre that is suddenly interrupted by accents or changes of register. The *perpetuum mobile* toccata style comes across even more effectively when the *sostenuto* (middle) pedal is depressed to hold on to a silently-depressed opening chord, as certain overtones will be activated when selected notes in the fast passage work are accentuated or played with a sharply staccato articulation (see the earlier Examples 31a and 31b).

Example 66: Stefans Grové, *Glimpses* (2004), Miniature no. 3 (*Configurations of the Dragonfly*), bb. 1-2



A year after *Glimpses*, Grové incorporated a solo piano toccata as a monologue into his *Conversations* for organ and piano, *Music from Africa* no. 31. This virtuosic movement turned out to be Grové's last work in this genre and in it he amalgamated all three toccata styles that I have described above. The contrasts between dynamic levels and large jumps between registers are accentuated by the fluctuations from one toccata style to another. In the *piano leggero* sections Grové predominantly made use of the *perpetuum mobile* character of single-line semiquaver groups as well as linear contrapuntal toccata figurations. Sudden *fortissimo* outbursts are then combined with the percussive toccata style. This comprises the rapid alternation between the hands and the accented repetition of triads, thereby strengthening the argument that the percussive toccata element (structural element 'D' in *Yemoja*) is based on a more vertical harmonic approach.

A cautionary note has to be sounded when it comes to categorising Grové's repetitive use of certain motivic cells in his later works under a single set of compositional blueprints. This may cause one to overlook the composer's constant striving towards timbral innovations. In my discussion on the *Berceuse* from *Five Piano Pieces* (1945), I have already touched upon the colouristic manipulation of motifs by way of articulation and pedalling. This aspect of Grové's piano music needs to be further investigated, and again there is an example in *Yemoja*. In bars 94-95 the composer implemented a colour that in part also appeared in the earlier *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (*Music from Africa* no. 12, 1994): the overlapping of left-hand figurations to form a continuously sounding chord.

Simultaneously, the right hand plays staccato notes, appearing to leave behind an echo effect in the left hand (Example 67A and 67B indicate this colour in both *Nonyana* and *Yemoja*):

Example 67(A): Stefans Grové, *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (1994), bb. 6-7

Example 67(A) shows a musical score for two staves. The right staff (treble clef) contains staccato notes, while the left staff (bass clef) contains a sustained line. The dynamics are marked *mf* for the right hand and *p* for the left hand. The instruction *sostenuto senza ped* is written below the left hand.

Example 67(B): Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), *Yemoja*, bb. 94-95a

Example 67(B) shows a musical score for two staves. The right staff (treble clef) contains a series of staccato notes, while the left staff (bass clef) contains a sustained line. The dynamics are marked *ff*, *sf*, and *p*. The instruction *sostenuto senza ped* is written below the left hand.

In some of the works after *Yemoja*, Grové took this a step further by placing the two textural layers in unison. The right hand therefore duplicates the left hand, but with a different articulation. Grové compared this effect to a specific orchestral colour in one of his last orchestral works, *Gestalten in die Newel* (*Figures in the Mist*, 2012), based on Khoisan mythology:

The orchestration is very delicate and I often use the xylophone in combination with other instruments. My aim is to create a sense of transparency, but also to exploit the soloistic qualities of the various instrument groups. This can also refer to the simultaneous use of staccato and legato articulation that appear in my recent piano works (Schoeman 2012a).

This difference in articulation, where both hands are playing in unison, can only really be transmitted audibly if these passages are played without sustaining pedal. The left hand is therefore required to play *legatissimo* in order to sustain the longer overlapping note values. In the examination piece *Obstinacy* (*Music from Africa* no. 35, 2007), Grové experimented with this timbre in a less technically demanding context. Sudden interjections of the legato-staccato timbre (bb. 8, 14, 28, 35) permeate

the generally sparse toccata texture, and the right and left hand play in unison two octaves apart in order to accentuate the transparency of these passages (Example 68).

Example 68: Stefans Grové, *Obstinacy* (UNISA Grade 7, 2007), bb. 7-8

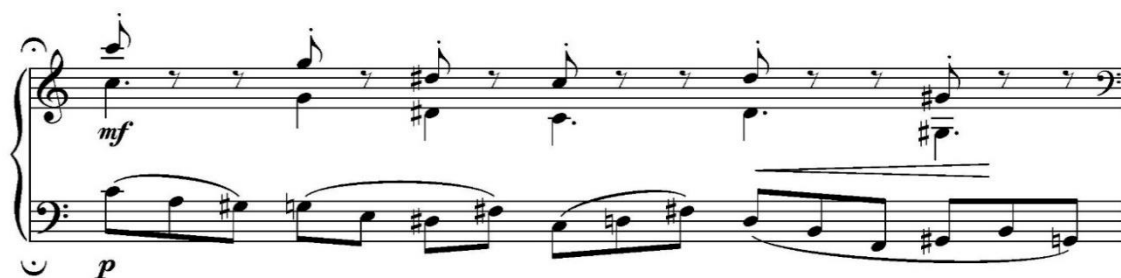


In Grové's last piano work, *My Seasons/Jaargetye* (Music from Africa no. 43, 2012), these forms of articulation appear in several dimensions. The colouristic manipulation in question here takes place only in the first and second movements (*On an Autumn Day* and *Wandering through a White, Cold Landscape*). In bar 21 of *On an Autumn Day*, an extended passage of staccato right-hand articulation coupled to a legatissimo lower bass line in unison sets the tone in this dark introspective movement (Example 69a). Grové challenged the performer with a similar effect in bar 28, where the right hand plays in octaves. The top notes are to be played with a short staccato articulation and the lower ones are to be sustained (Example 69b). Colouristic differentiation has to take place while the left hand plays a completely different motivic pattern consisting of Grové's ubiquitous two- and three-quaver groups. In the coda of this short piece, the textural layering element C from *Yemoja* (which can be traced back to *Kettingrye*, 1978) appears in the lower register of the piano (Example 69c). What separates this movement from all of Grové's earlier polyphonic works is that it is performed entirely without sustaining pedal as per the composer's instructions. The solutions to the technical difficulties that arise from this will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Example 69(A): Stefans Grové, *My Seasons* (2012), first movement, bb. 20-21, staccato and legato articulation between the hands



Example 69(B): Stefans Grové, *My Seasons* (2012), first movement, b. 27, staccato and tenuto articulation both in the right hand alongside legato motivic passage work in the left hand

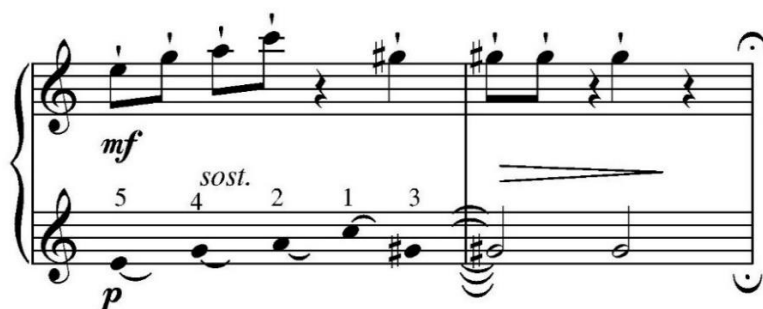


Example 69(C): Stefans Grové, *My Seasons* (2012), first movement, b. 34, textural layering (element C from *Yemoja*)



In the second movement of *My Seasons* (*Wandering through a White, Cold, Landscape*) the staccato-legato timbre takes on a structural function. A pentatonic passage (performed without pedal) appears in every system of the piece, but the composer modified it by converting major second and minor third intervals into dissonant major sevenths. In the first part of the coda (bb. 53-59) he augments the motif (quavers become crotchets) which suggests a natural *rallentando* in the music (Examples 70a and 70b).

Example 70(A): Stefans Grové, *My Seasons* (2012), second movement (*Wandering through a White, Cold Landscape*), bb. 6-7, the original staccato-legato effect



Example 70(B): Stefans Grové, *My Seasons* (2012), second movement (*Wandering through a White, Cold Landscape*), the tonal variants (permutations) of the staccato-legato effect

bb. 18-19	
bb. 29-30	
bb. 33-35	
bb. 44-46	
(Coda) bb. 54-56	

There are striking similarities between this short work and the Piano Quintet 'A Venda Legend' (Music from Africa no. 44), completed only one month after *My Seasons* in June 2012. When I gave the world première performances of both works in Bloemfontein,⁴³ I had the opportunity to gain further insight into Grové's constant experimentation with timbre. The staccato-legato effect from the second movement of *My Seasons* is not only duplicated in the piano part of the Quintet's third movement, but in the first movement of the latter work the composer extended this colour by doubling the legato articulation in the piano with viola pizzicatos (in unison – see Example 71). It is worth noting the resemblance between the colouristic transparency of the C-element in *Yemoja* and the long notes in the right hand coupled to staccato octaves in the left hand in the second and third bars (bars 37-38 of the Quintet's first movement) of the extract in Example 71.

Example 71: Stefans Grové, Piano Quintet 'A Venda Legend', first movement (*The dark and mysterious Pool*), bb. 36-40

The musical score for Example 71 consists of five staves. The top four staves represent the string quartet (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass), and the bottom staff represents the piano. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measure 36 is marked with a '36' above the first staff. Dynamics include *ff*, *sf*, *f*, and *p*. The piano part has a circled section in measures 37-38 and a boxed section in measure 39. The Viola part has a boxed section in measure 38 labeled 'pizz.'.

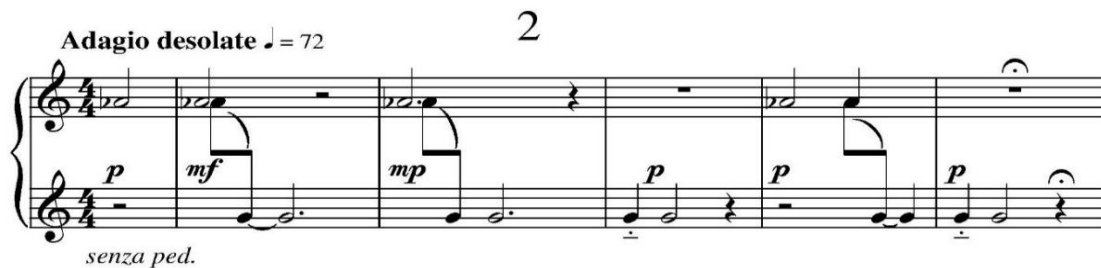
⁴³ This took place on 11 August 2012 at the Stefans Grové 90th Birthday Festival and Symposium at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein. I performed the Quintet in collaboration with the Odeion String Quartet.

I would like to turn to a further colouristic aspect in the second movement from *My Seasons*. In an interview with Grové in August 2012, he claimed that he had entered a period in which he was rediscovering and experimenting with the Impressionistic colours of his youth years (Schoeman 2012c). It is therefore not surprising to find traces of Debussy's *Des pas sur la neige* (from *Préludes*, Book 1) in Grové's *Wandering through a white, cold Landscape*. Examples 72a and 72b illustrate the intervallic and rhythmic similarities between the works of Debussy and Grové.

Example 72(A): Claude Debussy, *Préludes* (Book 1), L. 117, *Des pas sur la neige* (no. 6), bb. 1-3

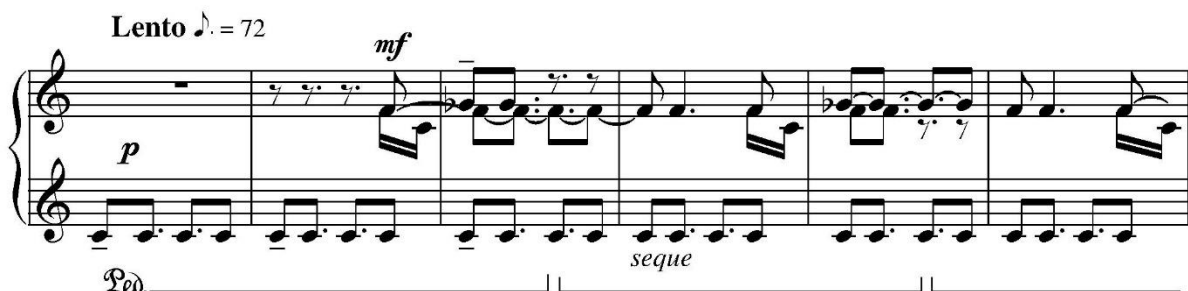


Example 72(B): Stefans Grové, *My Seasons* (2012), second movement (*Wandering in a white, Cold Landscape*), bb. 1-5 (with upbeat)



Inette Swart (2013: 222-223) also compares the left-hand ostinato in the second movement from *Haunting Music* (Music from Africa no. 39, 2010) to the ringing of a bell in *Le Gibet* from Ravel's Impressionistic work *Gaspard de la Nuit* (1905):

Example 73: Stefans Grové, *Haunting Music* (2010), second movement (*Wandering through an enchanted Forest*), bb. 1-6, left-hand ostinato



Grové did not agree with the comparison of Swart (Schoeman 2013), but he conceded that her statement touches upon the inherent programmatic influences in his general oeuvre. He first explained the importance of this approach to *Tweespalt* (from his *Four Piano Pieces* of 1975) in his autobiographical article for *Musicus* (Grové 1975b: 71). In that same article, Grové placed his activities as a writer on equal footing with his work as a composer. It became apparent that he harboured an interest in creative writing from a young age, and that this had been rekindled after his return to South Africa in the early 1970s:

My creative life now took a strange turn, as my blood brother the author, the other I, works simultaneously with myself the composer. What he produces in front of the typewriter, I reproduce in tones. My music has therefore become an echo of my prose. Now both have a close bearing on life and living people as well as their ups and downs. In other words, my music has become more programmatic, but not in the narrow sense of the word. Not at all. Only the mood and structure of my prose are transformed into music (Grové 1975b: 71 – my translation).

It is thus not surprising that the programmatic element intensified during the last forty years of his life and his compositions regularly demonstrated a connection with other art forms such as literature, painting and sculpture (the *Afrika Hymnus II* for organ, for example, was inspired by Ernest Mancoba's wooden sculpture *African Madonna*, 1929). It is worth entering into a brief discussion on the relationship between Grové's music, imagery and literature.

Jiendra de Winnaar (2006) investigated all the available writings of the composer. Her research was strengthened by the catalogue of Muller and Walton that appeared in the same year as her dissertation. Grové's output of creative writing in his native language of Afrikaans proves to be just as substantial as his contribution of concert reviews and academic articles. De Winnaar uses Grové's published book *Oor Mense, Diere en Dinge* (1975) as the basis of her discussion, but she also investigates the 36 short stories or sketches that appeared in the newspaper *Hoofstad* between 1982 and 1983.⁴⁴ She provides brief textual analyses of the short stories from *Oor Mense, Diere en*

⁴⁴ Some of the short stories from Grové's *Oor Mense, Diere en Dinge* were first published in *Huisgenoot* magazine (1974) and twenty years later, Koos Human also included one of them in his anthology *Willekeur* (1994). Earlier in this thesis, I have referred to Grové's many academic articles and reviews. They were published in the journals *Lantern*, *Musicus*, *SABC Bulletin*, *Standpunte* and *Vuka*, as well as the newspapers *Beeld*, *Oggendblad*, *Pretoria News* and *Rapport* (De Winnaar 2006: 56). Most of these writings are in Afrikaans, with the exception of the ones written for *Pretoria News* and *SABC Bulletin*. De Winnaar also mentions Grové's four unpublished monologues (1974 – I have already discussed the influence of one of these monologues on the piano piece *Tweespalt* earlier in this chapter).

Dinge as well as references to the thematic contents in the *Hoofstad* sketches (De Winnaar 2006: 67-81). Most of the musical references in these writings are identified. In the short story *Oggendhimne* ('Morning Hymn' – the first story in *Oor Mense, Diere en Dinge*), for example, Grové employed phrases like 'inside my head I hear the old Lutheran hymn *From deep affliction I cry out to You*' or 'somewhere a turtle dove coos its soft and melancholy little song' (De Winnaar 2006: 67-68).⁴⁵ He regularly based his writings on aspects of Afrikaner culture during the twentieth century, thus contributing to historical documentation. Some of the themes that appear include the realisations of a young man who moves to a large city from a conservative rural community (maybe this has an autobiographical implication as well)⁴⁶, or the self-consciousness of a housewife who attends the inauguration of a new pipe organ at her local church in a small town⁴⁷, or the comical experiences of a young Afrikaner student who boards in the house of an eccentric landlady in England.⁴⁸ Again, music is not a main theme in these stories, but symbolic references to it contribute to the general atmosphere and cultural undertones of the texts. There are also the non-fictional short stories that portray Grové's years in Cape Town and America.⁴⁹ Here he referred to his own musical activities in a humorous way, without employing overly-technical terminologies that would reduce the accessibility of these historical sketches to lay readers.

When taking De Winnaar's discussions with Grové into account, it is possible to conclude that his music was more influenced by his creative writing than the other way around. De Winnaar sheds light on the fact that he often approached the act of writing in a similar way to that of composing, the only difference being that he revised and rewrote his music – activities he claimed never to have carried out in his works of prose. Significantly, he pointed towards the logistical aspect of writing a short story the day before a newspaper's printing deadline. He resorted to *Einfälle*, small stimuli, that would provide the basis of a narrative that took little time to complete (De Winnaar 2006: 62).

⁴⁵ I freely translated these phrases from Afrikaans.

⁴⁶ *Sprinkaan in die stad* (a short story from *Oor Mense, Diere en Dinge*, 1975).

⁴⁷ *Basaartyd* (a short story from *Oor Mense, Diere en Dinge*, 1975).

⁴⁸ *Die klos in die koppie tee* (a sketch that appeared in the newspaper *Hoofstad*, 13 August 1982 - reprinted in Muller and Walton 2006: 92-94).

⁴⁹ *Uit herinnering se wei* (*Hoofstad*, 26 March 1982), *My stryd teen die skottelgoed lawaai* (*Hoofstad*, 2 April 1982) and *Vrede in rooi, 'n bo-aardse vrede ...* (*Hoofstad*, 7 May 1982). These sketches were reprinted in Muller & Walton 2006: 77-85 – see also Chapter 1 of this thesis.

His written stories can therefore be compared to his short compositions and miniatures such as *Glimpses* (2004) or the earlier *Tweespalt* and *Sangwinies* (1975), all works that were written in a short space of time. Grové admitted that there were also those occasions when he found it difficult to develop ideas based on initial impulses and to obtain structural homogeneity in his short stories. He furthermore stated that 'it remains a constant searching process to find the road ahead; one has to look back to where one came from and also ahead in order to determine where one is heading' (De Winnaar 2006: 64). On a broader structural level, one finds elements of 'looking back' (*Rückblick*) in the volume *Oor Mense, Diere en Dinge*. The title of the last short story, *Heimwee* (Nostalgia), further attests to this. Certain thematic motifs recur throughout the five short stories and it is possible to trace an overarching form between them. It is as if a chain of events is created in this set of narratives, and they share a common cultural space (De Winnaar 2006: 63-64). One can therefore assert that 'chain form' already took root in Grové's literary work before he started implementing it in his compositions. Three years after *Oor Mense, Diere en Dinge*, Grové completed the orchestral work *Chain Rows*. This was the first example where he followed extended chain form in his music, and he then further developed this during the later African period (as can be seen in the discussion on *Yemoja of Images from Africa* above).

Aside from the general relationship between Grové's literary and compositional activities (for example the use of inspirational stimuli or chain structures in both art forms), a further point of investigation lies in tracing the influence of titles and programme notes on his works (De Winnaar 2006: 91, 110-111, 116-117). Although programmatic titles appeared in his youth pieces, and again started to enter his oeuvre in the 1970s, they became an inseparable part of Grové's *Music from Africa* series. All the works from this series, with the exception of the Trio for horn, cello and piano (Music from Africa no. 6, 1989) and the Quintet for piccolo, two flutes, alto flute and harp (Music from Africa no. 27, 2004), contain programmatic titles. Grové also meticulously provided programmatic texts for several works, often with poetic use of language and translated to English and German in order to increase accessibility to an international audience (De Winnaar 2006: 90). Throughout his professional life, he regularly emphasised how the 'meaning' of a composition is the most essential part in establishing communication with the performer and listener (Grové 1960: 8; De Winnaar 2006: 83). By inserting written texts into his musical manuscripts, he aimed towards the enhancement of expressive meaning in his works. Grové stated the following: 'I think in terms of images. To a certain extent an image is of course an extension of words, but I have to say that I think in terms of images' (Muller & Walton 2006: 58). These images inspired his choice of titles in particularly the piano works from the *Music from Africa* series, and the titles then served as

inspiration during the compositional process (De Winnaar 2006: 116). The titles of all the piano works of the *Music from Africa* series are representative of the composer's various fields of interest, categorised in the following table:⁵⁰

Table 2: The thematic classification of titles in the piano works of Stefans Grové's *Music from Africa* series

Theme	Corresponding titles
Selected piano works carry titles that directly refer to indigenous cultures in Africa:	<p><i>Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer</i> (1994) – a representation of the central figure in the <i>Domba</i> dance of the Venda initiation rites for girls in South Africa.</p> <p><i>Dance Song for the Nyau Dance</i> (2003) – a representation of a Malawian dance ceremony for men.</p> <p><i>Yemoja</i> (fifth movement of <i>Images from Africa</i>, 1999) – a representation of a female deity in Nigerian Yorubá mythology.</p>
Grové created titles that indicate a fantastical theme, usually related to a narrative or fable of his own invention. These narratives are not necessarily written down (as in the case of some chamber music works, such as <i>Soul Bird</i> , a trio for flute, cello and piano, Music from Africa No. 19, 1998):	<p><i>Songs and Dances from Africa</i> (1988-1990): <i>Dance of the Wind Spirit</i> (seventh movement).</p> <p><i>Images from Africa</i> (1999): <i>Invocation of the Water Spirits</i> (third movement).</p> <p><i>Haunting Music</i> (2010): <i>Strange Valley in the Mists</i> (first movement), <i>Wandering through an enchanted Forest</i> (second movement), and <i>Hobgoblin at Midnight</i> (third movement).</p>
Certain titles combine fantastical themes with aspects of African (or more specifically Southern African) culture:	<i>Songs and Dances from Africa</i> (1988-1990): <i>Dance of the Witchdoctor</i> (fifth movement), and <i>Mbira Song carried by the Night Breezes</i> (sixth movement).
At his 85 th birthday concert in Pretoria, the composer divided his music into three main thematic categories: 'day music, twilight music and night music' (Grové 2007). Selected titles in his piano works directly relate to either one of these categories:	<p><i>Songs and Dances from Africa</i> (1988-1990): <i>Night Song in the Distance</i> (second movement), <i>Greeting the New Day</i> (third movement), and <i>A Quiet Song in the Twilight</i> (fourth movement).</p> <p><i>Images from Africa</i> (1999): <i>Morning Music</i> (first movement), and <i>Twilight Music</i> (second movement).</p>
Several titles indicate the composer's fascination with natural elements. These titles are mostly poetic and they bear a close relation to Grové's	<i>Songs and Dances from Africa</i> (1988-1990): <i>Dance of the</i>

⁵⁰ The numbering of these piano works within the *Music from Africa* series can be found in the catalogue at the end of the Introduction to the thesis.

Theme	Corresponding titles
description of his works as ‘tone paintings’ (Grové 2007):	<p><i>Wind Spirit</i> (seventh movement).</p> <p><i>Glimpses</i> (five miniatures, 2004): <i>The Limping Lion</i> (first movement), <i>The Meditating Butterfly</i> (second movement), <i>Configurations of the Dragonfly</i> (third movement), <i>The Serene Seahorse</i> (fourth movement), and <i>The Masked Weaver’s Masquerade</i> (fifth movement).</p> <p><i>My Seasons</i> (2012): <i>On an Autumn Day</i> (first movement), <i>Wandering in a White, Cold Landscape</i> (second movement), <i>First Spring Rain and the Awakening of Delicate Colours</i> (third movement), and <i>Summer Abundance</i> (fourth movement).</p>
The composer’s German background (his maternal grandfather hailed from Braunschweig) is sometimes reflected in the titles of works. He wrote several choral works for the Lutheran Church. There are also selected chamber music compositions of Grové’s <i>Music from Africa</i> series that are based on German literature. Only one keyboard work, however, carries a German title:	<i>In der stillen Welt von Gestern</i> , a suite for clavichord or piano (Music from Africa No. 32, 2005) – the nine short movements are all untitled.
In other piano works from the <i>Music from Africa</i> series, Grové created titles that represent general ideas without providing further information regarding their origin. He thereby left interpretation to the imagination of the performer and listener:	<p><i>Songs and Dances from Africa</i> (1988-1990): <i>Stamping Dance</i> (first movement, this can also be placed in the indigenous category).</p> <p><i>Images from Africa</i> (1999): <i>Lamenting Birds</i> (fourth movement).</p> <p><i>Obstinacy</i> (2007).</p> <p><i>Piano Thoughts</i> (2010).</p>

Grové further elucidated the titles of *Nonyana*, *Images from Africa*, *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* and *In der stillen Welt von Gestern* through the inclusion of programme notes in his scores. The texts that accompany the three works contain a mixture of factual and fantastical elements. This is particularly true in the case of *Images from Africa*, where he used creative writing to provide information about certain African cultures (earlier in this chapter I have already referred to Grové’s use of poetry to describe the Nigerian river goddess *Yemoja*).

In his final years, Grové became increasingly preoccupied with the transmission of ‘meaning’ in his compositions. To this end, he prescribed the narration of texts as part of performance. An example of this, is the chamber work *Musa, Das Tanzlegendchen* for flute, viola, cello, and piano (Music from Africa no. 32, 2010), where texts of the Swiss poet Gottfried Keller have to be read aloud at certain

points in the score – usually during a longer sustained note with a fermata (Muller 2007: 24). In Grové's last completed work *Bushman Prayers*, a Concerto for cello, piano and orchestra (Music from Africa no. 45, 2013), a narrator is required to present a poem at the opening of each of the three movements – *Prayer to the Sun*, *Prayer to the Moon*, and *Prayer to the Brightest Star in the Sky*. These prayers (poems) were originally recited by Dia!Kwain,⁵¹ a member of the Khoisan peoples, and they were transcribed and translated by Wilhelm Bleek between 1869 and 1873. Bleek compiled this information during his interactions with Khoisan (also referred to as Bushman) men from the Northern Cape region, where they served sentences at the Breakwater Convict Station.⁵² By integrating the narration of these poems into performances of the Double Concerto, Grové further established the interconnectedness between his music and literature. It would seem that Grové used text and narrative to steer the imagination of the performer and listener in certain directions. In several cases, particularly in his piano works, he attempted to emphasise the connection with indigenous cultures in Africa – mostly in Southern Africa. In the next section of this chapter, I move on to investigate the more specific indigenous elements in Grové's piano works from his fourth and final creative period.

5.3 An investigation of the indigenous African elements in Grové's piano music

Chris Walton (Muller & Walton 2006: 68) and Izak Grové (1998: 102) claim that Grové first started to integrate Black African indigenous materials into his ballet *Waratha*, written for the Performing Arts Council of Transvaal (PACT)⁵³ in 1976. As I have mentioned in the previous section on the composer's third style period, the piano work *Sangwinies* as well as the UNISA examination pieces of the late 1970s and early 1980s contain certain elements that would reappear after the 'road to Damascus' moment. None of these works necessarily reveal evidence of engagement with indigenous cultures. Grové's short stories of the time do nonetheless provide insight into some of the musical activities of

⁵¹ The exclamation mark in the transcription of Khoisan words refers to the post-alveolar or retroflex click consonants that are pronounced by means of a quick downward movement of the tongue (König 2008: 997).

⁵² Dia!Kwain contributed 2000 pages of narrative as well as several drawings to Bleek's archive of research materials on the Khoisan people of the Northern Cape (Skotnes 2007: 225).

⁵³ Each province in South Africa has a separate Performing Arts Council. Before 1994, South Africa had only four provinces: the Orange Free State, Transvaal, Cape of Good Hope and Natal Provinces (today there are nine provinces). PACT was situated at the State Theatre in Pretoria; the organisation was disbanded in 2000.

his black neighbours as well as his increasing focus on the cultural diversity of his home country. When he started working with more specific indigenous South African melodic materials in 1984, it still took a few years before he found a stylistic medium that did not merely resemble the traditions of exoticism or primitivism in the works of the early modernists (as Pooley suggests, 2013: 179). In fact, the so-called African period commenced rather tentatively. The *Sonate op Afrika-motiewe* for violin and piano (Music from Africa no. 1) was not originally intended as an Afrocentric work. Grové only started incorporating the indigenous melody he had heard on a street in Pretoria after completing the first and second movements (Muller in Muller & Walton 2006: 17-18). At that time he was in the process of revisiting his early neo-Baroque tendencies by constructing larger-scale works through recurring *ritornelli*.⁵⁴ These brief returns to stricter forms were applied in both the *Sonate op Afrika-motiewe* and the later *String Quartet 'Song of the African Spirits'* (Music from Africa no. 11, 1993).

The initial application of indigenous elements within these contexts appears rather forced, and somehow contradicts the observation of Grové's student Zaidel-Rudolph: 'This spirit of Africa informed his work but was nevertheless mediated through a Western cultural background ... I believe that it was his sense of reverence and respect for other people's music that prevented him from using literal quotations' (Zaidel-Rudolph in Muller & Walton 2006: 42). While the first part of this statement contains an essential truth about Grové's synthesis, Zaidel-Rudolph does not acknowledge that Grové did in fact quote specific melodies that were extracted from Hugh Tracey's recordings. The *Sonate op Afrika-motiewe* included quotations of the street worker's melody based on Grové's aural memory. On the other hand, the fourth movement from the seven etudes for piano, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (Music from Africa no. 5, 1988-1990), is more specifically based on the Xhosa song *Umalilela imango ingasiyo yakho* (*You envy someone else's hair*).⁵⁵ Around the same time, Grové incorporated two Zulu melodies into his orchestral work *Concertato Overture: Five*

⁵⁴ Muller argued that the use of ritornelli is a significant attribute of Bartók's First String Quartet, Sz. 40, and asked Grové if he had drawn any inspiration from that work during the composition of his own String Quartet. The composer denied that there was any conscious relationship between the works (Muller 2007: 21).

⁵⁵ Olivier (1998: 5) and Swart (2013: 213) supplied this information on the basis of interviews with the composer. Grové did not specify in which of Hugh Tracey's recordings he had heard this particular Xhosa melody. I have been able, however, to trace the original recording in Tracey's album *The Nguni sound South Africa and Swaziland* (see 'Discography', Tracey 1955-1958).

Salutations on Two Zulu Themes (Music from Africa No. 4, 1986). The composer employed chain-structure here as well and stated the following:

In this work, consisting of five sections, I have highlighted each of the four main divisions of the orchestra. The first section features the woodwinds, the second the brass, the third the percussion and the fourth the strings. The fifth section, or Coda, recalls some of the important events. The work is based on two Zulu themes which I remember from my childhood years. I have forgotten the name of the first, but have since identified the second as Siyanibulisa: 'We greet you all. Shake hands! Look at our hands. They are clean!' (James 1992: 107)

It thus becomes clear that Grové fluctuated between the general and the specific in his application of indigenous elements. Some of the melodies were penned vaguely according to how he remembered them, while he went to greater lengths to track down the titles of others and transcribe them with more precision. In *Songs and Dances from Africa*, he utilised the above-mentioned Xhosa melody, but furthermore fabricated his *own* melodies in the style of traditional music. The longer contours are to be traced only in the slow nocturnal song-etudes (nos. 2, 4 and 6) that contrast with the fast toccata-like dances (nos. 1, 3, 5 and 7). Where Grové's style embraced a fragmented motivicism in the atonal works from the 1970s, the longer phrases of indigenous melodies came as quite a novelty in *Songs and Dances from Africa*. It appears that the discovery of these materials instilled a lyricism in Grové's works. In 2007 he stated:

Since 1984 my style has also become more linear. In contrast to the motoric drive in the fast movements, I expressed myself in the slower music by means of 'night music' in which I rid myself of the rigidity of the fast music (Muller 2007: 20).

By way of example, I shall analyse the indigenous elements in *Songs and Dances from Africa*, particularly the more explicit references that appear in the above-mentioned slow movements (*A Night Song in the Distance*, *A Quiet Song in the Twilight*, and *Mbira Song carried by the Night Breezes*). Grové almost never specified the sources that he consulted in obtaining the indigenous material incorporated in these works, unlike a composer like Bartók who meticulously notated folk melodies in terms of 'design, content, placement of caesuras symbols, syllabic and ambitus figures, diacritics, recording and performer's data and other extra-musical symbols and text matter' (Suchoff 1997: v). Grové remarked in a lecture on his organ fantasy *Afrika Hymnus I* (Music from Africa no. 8, 1991-93) that he studied ensemble music of the Xhosa people and attempted to evoke the various voice parts through linear contrapuntal procedures (Grové 1995). In an interview (Schoeman 2012a), he revealed to me that he studied Hugh and Andrew Tracey's recordings at the library of UNISA. Since the early 1990s, these long play records have been converted to compact discs and are

commercially available at the International Library of African Music (ILAM) in Grahamstown or via internet music providers. Grové admitted that he did not keep track of the items he investigated or even his own transcriptions of indigenous performances into Western notation (Schoeman 2012c). Neither did he undertake fieldwork in Southern Africa (like Kevin Volans did in Zimbabwe) or enter into academic discussions on ethnomusicology. Thomas Pooley writes:

This method of imaging 'Africa' and 'Africans' is a mode of representation that has come under scrutiny of late. For instance, materials that Grové himself collected informally – usually unspecified or vaguely remembered – are incorporated as 'authentic' or 'typical' representations of African music. Too often these elements have been taken at face value by musicologists. By incorporating such features in such a way that the 'other' remains hidden and at a distance, while still [existing as] the object of gaze, constructs a double displacement (Pooley 2011: 55).

I have noted the vagueness of Grové's methods, which may also be symptomatic of how he overlooked the cultural diversity in Southern Africa. When he employed titles such as *A Venda Legend* (the recent Piano Quintet, 2012) or *Zulu Horizons* (two songs for baritone and orchestra, *Music from Africa* no. 9, 1992-3), it did not signify that he took specific musical influences from the Venda or Zulu peoples necessarily. He readily admitted that it had been the programmatic aspect in the various mythologies and folklores that attracted him and provided him with *Einfälle*. Pooley's argument that musicologists have taken the indigenous elements in Grové's music at face value is only partly true. There has been comparatively little study on exactly how the composer's observations of his fellow South Africans and their music (sometimes through Tracey's recordings) impacted his own textures, melodic construction and harmonies. The Xhosa people to whom I refer above, along with the Zulu and Swazi peoples, form part of the Nguni ethnic group of South Africa. The construction of their traditional music demonstrates a remarkable homogeneity. In most instances, the emphasis falls on polyphonic vocal textures, where a single melodic line is often accompanied by a chorus. Drums are not common instruments among the Nguni peoples, but musicians tend to perform instead with a variety of gourd-resonated bows. In the absence of a chorus, solo singers will accompany themselves by tapping or plucking this stringed instrument (Rycroft 1967: 88). With *A Quiet Song in the Twilight*, Grové imitated two voice parts in a traditional Xhosa song. The solo performer is represented by the upper line, which can be divided into seven phrases (the first four are presented in Example 74).

Example 74: Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), fourth movement (*A Quiet Song in the Twilight*), the first four vocal phrases



Slight modifications, particularly in rhythmic terms, supposedly evoke the change of words in a song or the inherent variations that form part of indigenous melodies. The curvatures are all descending and the predominant intervals are major seconds, minor thirds and most importantly, perfect fourths. It is not possible to convert a Nguni melody accurately into Western notation, as there are several quartertones involved and sometimes also fluctuations that inevitably accompany the click sounds in the Xhosa language.⁵⁶ Grové's transcription attempts are not dissimilar to that of Mzilikazi Khumalo, who wrote down several of the prominent Zulu singer Constance KaDinuzulu's (Princess Magogo) songs.⁵⁷ Peter Klatzow orchestrated Khumalo's arrangements, which are regularly performed in South Africa. The first Magogo song from that cycle, *Uyephi Na? (Where has he gone?)*, reveals a penchant for descending perfect fourth intervals, a characteristic that permeates the transcriptions of both Grové and Khumalo. The sliding of the voice is represented in the fifth and sixth phrases of the original melody of *A Quiet Song in the Twilight*. Grové included a triplet figure as

⁵⁶ Kwabena Nketia (1986) and Blacking (1967) have also transcribed African melodies using Western staff notation. Kirby (1934) and Rycroft (1962) developed graphic designs that incorporate the slide effects in the indigenous voice parts.

⁵⁷ Hugh Tracey recorded thirteen Magogo songs. Some of them can be found in the album *The Nguni Sound, Music of South Africa and Swaziland*, 1955, 1957-8.

an embellishment of the pattern and it is notable that the F natural does not form part of the original pentatonic scale of E, D, C, A and G (see Example 75).

Example 75: Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), fourth movement (*A Quiet Song in the Twilight*), imitation of the sliding voice patterns in a Xhosa melody (5th and 6th phrases)



The second voice part in Grové's *A Quiet Song in the Twilight* is a permutating ostinato pattern in the left hand that either suggests bow accompaniment or a vocal chorus line. Grové observed the intricate polyphonic practices of Nguni music, by creating two separate entities that only occasionally overlap (Example 76a). This can be compared to Rycroft's investigation of non-simultaneous entry in Zulu workers' songs, including one that he notated in Durban in 1964 (see Example 76b, extracted from Rycroft 1967: 91). The bar lines across the system in Grové's work represent the striking of the pickaxe, which occurs at irregular intervals during the course of a performance. It would seem that the bar lines function independently between different staves, but in reality they are rhythmically interdependent. The stability of the permutations, usually quaver groups of 2+2+2 alternating with 2+3+2, attest to the underlying rhythmic support that the left-hand part provides to the right-hand melody. This stands in line with Rycroft's observations that Xhosa or Zulu musicians, when asked to perform on their own, would never present their vocal parts in isolation from accompanimental figures. They would rather provide an overview of both parts by jumping between them. Despite the apparent rhythmic disparity between the parts, an individual musician is nevertheless able to transmit the essentials of the complete musical artefact (Rycroft 2001: 73).

Example 76(A): Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), fourth movement (*A Quiet Song in the Twilight*), bb. 1-6, the two independent voice parts

Tranquillo e senza rubato $\text{♩} = 96$ $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

pp *mp*

senza pedale

Example 76(B): Non-simultaneous entry of the voice parts in a Southern Zulu work song (Rycroft 1967:91)

Start

SOLO

Beginning of strophe

CHORUS

Ma - jo - la!

Soz - uga uga - uga Ma - jo - la!

Wu - wu - wu - uga

Pickaxes strike

Where *A Quiet Song in the Twilight* is mostly conceived on the principle of emulating the human voice, Grové explicitly cited the bow as the inspiration behind the accompanimental figures in *A*

Night Song in the Distance (no. 2 of *Songs and Dances from Africa*).⁵⁸ Barz (2013: 137) refers to the *Lesiba* mouth bow, which is played mostly by the Sesotho peoples of the Free State Province.⁵⁹ This is, however, a very different instrument from the ones that can be heard in Tracey's recordings (such as the previously mentioned Magogo song *Uyephi Na?*). With this in mind, it may well be that Grové intended the reference instead to be to the Nguni gourd-resonated bows. In their modern format, the Zulu *Ugubhu* or *Umakhweyana* as well as the Xhosa *Uhadi* bows consist of a curved wooden piece with a metal string attached. A calabash that serves as a gourd resonator is situated in the middle of the bow and usually rests on the shoulder of the performer. It can be shifted in various directions in order to manipulate the overtones that are created. The string is divided into two pitches by means of a piece of metal wire and the resulting intervals range from a whole tone to a minor third (Rycroft 2001: 73 & 75; Figure 1 and Figure 2 present illustrations of the *Lesiba* and *Umakhweyana* bows). In Grové's *A Night Song in the Distance* the two parts are spread out over three systems: the vocal part is represented on the middle stave and the tapping of the bow appears on the two outer staves in the form of half-tenuto quavers (Example 77). Grové referred to another work where he applied this principle. In the second movement from *Images from Africa* (1999), entitled *Twilight Music*, he attempted to evoke a solitary singer in the Kalahari Desert, accompanying himself with 'the musical bow, which is a very delicate instrument' (Grové 2007). Again, the composer utilised three staves – the middle stave portraying the vocal line, and the outer staves the gentle (staccato) tapping on the string of the bow.⁶⁰ As in *A Night Song in the Distance*, this second movement of *Images from Africa* underlines the idea that Grové wanted to depict a gourd-resonated bow and not the *Lesiba* bow. The *Lesiba* is played with the mouth, rendering it impossible for a musician to sing and accompany himself or herself simultaneously.

⁵⁸ I have previously made a passing reference to the use of ostinato patterns in this movement and compared it to the figurations at the end of the UNISA examination piece *Cock-fighting* (see Example 47 above).

⁵⁹ The Southern Sotho (Sesotho) peoples are situated in the Free State Province and Lesotho, not far from where Grové was born in the small town of Bethlehem.

⁶⁰ A further colouristic dimension was added in *Twilight Music* of *Images from Africa*. Where the earlier *A Night Song in the Distance* has to be performed without any pedal, *Twilight Music* incorporates the use of the middle pedal. This activates the overtones of the mutely-depressed cluster chords at the opening of the movement, resulting in a kaleidoscopic timbre. The composer intended to thereby further intensify the allusion to gourd-resonated bow music (Grové 2007).

Figure 1: The Sesotho *Lesiba* mouth bow, Free State Province, South Africa (photograph printed with permission of ILAM, Grahamstown, South Africa)



Figure 2: The Zulu *Umakhweyana* bow, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa (Rycroft 2001: 75)



Example 77: Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), second movement (*A Night Song in the Distance*), bb. 1-4a

Molto tranquillo, senza rubato ♩ = c. 88 ♩ = ♩

simile

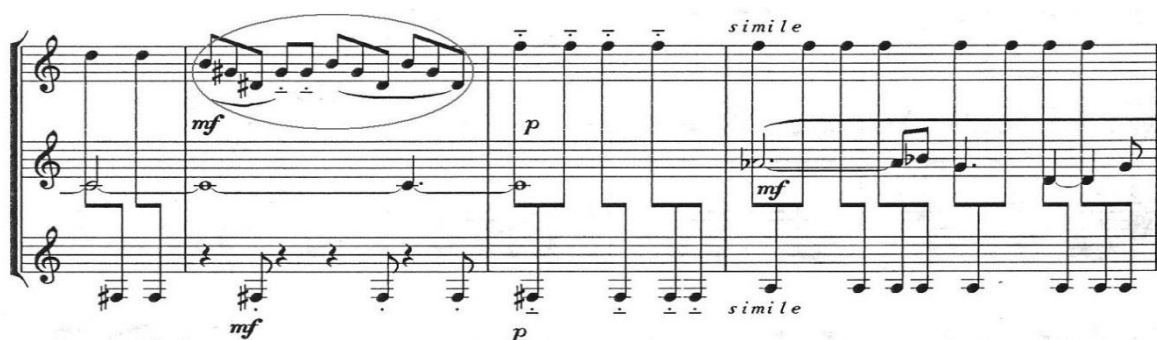
p

mf

p *senza ped.* *simile*

Grové furthermore integrated regular call-and-response motifs in *A Night Song in the Distance*. The quaver ostinato on the outer staves is interrupted by a recurring motif that is based on a G sharp minor triad. This triad is, however, also a combination of intervals of a minor third and a perfect fourth and thus carries harmonic and melodic importance (see Example 78 below). The shorter articulation of this answer motif contrasts with the long legato melody line on the middle staff. Call-and-response elements are integral to indigenous Southern African music. I have indicated the concept of non-simultaneous entry in vocal music and drew upon the example of Rycroft (1967) in which he illustrated the striking of the pickaxe in group-singing of Zulu workers. It is a common feature of this type of music-making, that a lead singer announces the basic melody and that his fellow workers will then respond with different material or with a slight elaboration of the opening phrase. In South African choral music, such as the works of Tyamzashe and Moerane (composers who will be discussed in Chapter 4 of this thesis), the idea of call-and-response forms part of religious settings. The nocturnal atmosphere in Grové's *A Night Song in the Distance* rather places the work in the more spiritual or religious category.

Example 78: Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), second movement (*A Night Song in a Distance*), bb. 4b-7, a contrasting motif to the legato melody



The only explicit reference to an African instrument written in the score of *Songs and Dances from Africa* appears in the sixth etude, *Mbira Song carried by the Night Breezes*. Textural layering in this work resembles the complicated polyphonic structures of Nguni music rather than the Mbira performances from Mozambique. The Mbira is a thumb piano that consists of metal staves attached to a calabash or hollowed-out piece of wood. Hugh Tracey identified several different types of Mbira instruments among the *Chopi* musicians north of Swaziland and eventually started producing his own Westernised version, the *Kalimba*. As an avid reader of Tracey's articles, Grové drew inspiration from the descriptions of Mbira ensembles and not from their distinct rhythmic or tonal musical patterns. This movement is therefore also an example of how Grové subconsciously combines cultural references to suit his modes of expression. As Pooley (2013: 179) argues, this *Mbira Song*

does not represent any real musical elements of the Shona peoples in Mozambique or Zimbabwe. In an interview with the composer (Schoeman 2011), he suggested to me that the complete etude should be performed with the sustaining pedal half-depressed. To my mind this leads to an impressionistic character that contrasts with the drier timbres in the second and fourth movements of *Songs and Dances from Africa* (*A Night Song in the Distance* and *A Quiet Song in the Twilight*). The pentatonic melodies in both the Mbira and the voice parts bring selected works of Debussy (*Pagodes* from *Estampes*) and Bartók (*From the Island of Bali*, *Mikrokosmos*) to mind. These composers often employed similar descending pentatonic patterns in their attempts to recreate musical sounds from Eastern Asia. Elliott Antokoletz (1981: 11) also places the persistent repetition of descending perfect fourth intervals within the context of pentatonic melodies in the first piece of Bartók's *Bagatelles*, op. 14. The perfect fourth remains an important interval in Grové's *Songs and Dances from Africa* and it is particularly in the pentatonic sections that this consistently appears. The 'orientalist' approach can also be found in Grové's programmatic tempo indication *esotico* in the *Mbira Song carried by the Night Breezes*. Where Pooley believes that the composer undermined his African project through his 'uncritical' implementation of indigenous themes, Weyer (2013: 263) suggests that one should rather consider a work such as *Mbira Song carried by the Night Breezes* as an attempt towards cultural translation and not one of authentic representation. This translation is inevitable when the composer imitates indigenous cultures on a Western European instrument such as the piano. It would seem that Grové's encounter with indigenous elements has partly impacted his compositional technique. In *Mbira Song carried by the Night Breezes*, he demonstrated complex contrapuntal procedures, including counterhythms in combination with permutating melodic voicing (spread out over three lines). Grové ascribed this contrapuntal rigour in *Songs and Dances from Africa* to the polyphonic music of the Nguni peoples. He also claimed that through many dynamic, pedal and articulation markings, he endeavoured to come closer to the timbral nuancing of Southern African instruments such as the mbira and the gourd-resonated bow (Grové 2007; Schoeman 2013).

Time signatures rarely occur in Grové's works from the 1960s until his death in 2014. In *Mbira Song carried by the Night Breezes*, he created an underlying stability by way of a 5/4 time signature. The extended phrasing that often crosses over the bar lines is again reminiscent of earlier works such as the *Prelude* (1946), which accentuates the through-composed nature of the piece. The composer also employed a key signature (G flat major), something that did not appear in his music since the early *Five Piano Pieces* (1945). In this case, the use of a key signature is more for logistical reasons, as Grové almost exclusively used the black keys in the piece and wanted to avoid flat signs in front of

each note. The right hand part of this *Mbira* song is entirely based on the pentatonic scale of G \flat and the original melodic pattern in the first bar is constantly subjected to permutations and inversions, as can be seen in the annotations of Example 79. Similar to *A Night Song in the Distance*, Grové utilises three systems to create polyphony between lines representing the Mbira (top stave), the human voice (middle stave) and a small drum (lower stave, an ostinato of repeated D flat and E flat crotchets).⁶¹

Example 79: Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), sixth movement (*Mbira Song carried by the Night Breezes*), bb. 1-6

Esotico: $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 80$

In 1994, SAMRO commissioned Grové to compose *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (*Music from Africa*, no. 12) for the masterclasses of the Russian pianist Vladimir Viardo in Pretoria. This coincided with a period in which Grové had been investigating another cultural area, namely the initiation schools for young girls of the BaVenda. The Venda is a population group that live in the Northern

⁶¹ Grové communicated this information to Alexander Johnson in 1992 (Johnson 1992: 50). Johnson (1992: 53-54) outlined the melodic permutations in *Mbira Song carried by the Night Breezes* in his short dissertation on *Songs and Dances from Africa*.

part of South Africa, on the border with Zimbabwe. Young girls between the ages of eleven and sixteen take part in three stages of an initiation process, preparing them for the responsibilities of adulthood. The societal hierarchies of the Venda are maintained throughout the first two stages (*Vhusha* and *Tshikanda*), as commoners and noble girls are usually separated. Only during the final stage, the *Domba*, do all girls come together to celebrate their coming of age (Reily 1998: 51-52). Music and dance are integral aspects of the three processes, and the British ethnomusicologist John Blacking undertook an intensive study of these artistic practices during field trips to the Venda district in the 1950s and 1960s. As Blacking closely collaborated with Hugh Tracey at ILAM (when it was still based in Roodepoort, Johannesburg), it is not surprising that Grové also came across his writings on the Venda initiation process. The final ritual, the so-called *Python Dance*, of the *Domba* initiation served as the inspiration for the piano fantasy that became *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer*. In this work, he attempted to capture certain aspects depicted in Blacking's article 'Tonal Organization in the Music of two Venda Initiation Schools' (1970). Firstly, Grové compiled his own programme notes based on these ethnomusicological writings. He described the *Nonyana* (meaning 'bird') as 'an energetic figure dressed in a cloak of blackened bark-fibre and a scarlet-bean head-dress topped with ostrich feathers. The curious creature ... uses a reed pipe as a voice-modifier to amplify the sound of its cries' (Grové in the programme notes of the *Verlag Neue Musik* publication, 2007 – see 'Scores' in the Source List). The colourful attire of the *Nonyana* figure can only be symbolised through the use of timbre, and Grové employed a wide variety of pedal and articulation markings. On the other hand, the reference to a voice-modifying reed pipe is a more specifically indigenous reference. Several overtone passages in *Nonyana* appear to emulate the fluctuations in the sound of the reed pipe (two of these timbral innovations can be seen in Example 80, b & d below).

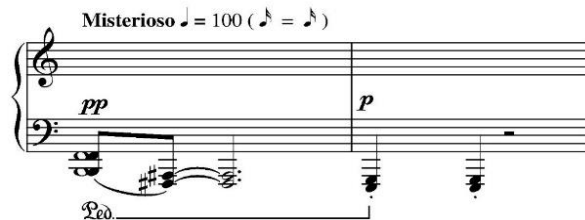
A second aspect of the *Domba* ceremony that Grové incorporated, is the concept of movement. As all Venda girls practise strenuous dance forms during all three stages of the initiation process (Reily 1998: 51),⁶² the composer deemed it particularly important to convey a sense of physical exertion in this piano fantasy. Wide leaps, complicated passagework and extreme dynamic fluctuations are among the challenges posed to the performer. Four thematic ideas that are stated in the introduction of *Nonyana* represent the various routines (Example 80) of the *Domba* dance and

⁶² In the Venda language, these dance forms are called *Milayo* and *Ndayo*.

require a particularly vivid characterisation through crisp articulation and dynamic tone control (Grové's programme notes in *Verlag Neue Musik* 2007; Olivier 1998: 6).

Example 80: Stefans Grové, *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (1994), the four dance routines of the Domba illustrated in the introduction (bb. 1-11)

- a) A crouching position, bb. 1 and 2; 4 and 5,⁶³ (I attach letter A to this motif)



- b) Upward arm movements with palms turned sideways, bar 3 (I attach letter B to this motif)



- c) Jerking movements of the dancer, looking at her own shadow, bb. 6-7 (I attach letter C to this melodic phrase)



⁶³ MC Botha (2007: 177) describes this motif as an iambic rhythm, which Grové implements in order to create rhythmic impetus particularly in his *Music from Africa* series.

d) A wild stamping dance, bb. 10-11 (I attach letter D to this toccata-like semiquaver passage)



Although written on a smaller scale, *Nonyana* is a forerunner to the later *Yemoja*. It is possible to analyse both works in the same way, by identifying every motif in the introduction and connecting them to further developments within the chain form structure. One of the most dramatic examples of thematic transformation is the diminution of the mysterious opening motif A. This results in percussive chordal passages in bars 37 and 51 (Example 81). In Example 80c above, the composer's modification of the thematic material by means of melodic and rhythmic permutations can be seen. This technique forms the basis of structural manipulation in *Nonyana*. The continuous rhythmic permutations of toccata textures leads to a *perpetuum mobile* character in the two most substantial sections of this work (bb. 17-75 and bb. 88-107).

Example 81: Stefans Grové, *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (1994), bb. 37 and 51, the diminution and character change of the opening motif (A)

I would like to focus on the melodic and rhythmic characteristics of the third routine (motif C) from *Nonyana* (see Example 80c above and Example 82a below), as it contains a combination of minor third, perfect fourth and major second intervals and is a clear example of the fragmented phrasing of Southern African vocal music. Upon closer examination, one finds that this melody is constructed

upon the hexatonic scale prevalent in Nguni bow music (Rycroft 2001: 76).⁶⁴ Initially, the first four steps of the scale (F#, D#, C#, G#) are repeated three times in bars 6-8. Only with the addition of the remaining two notes (A# and B) in the second half of bar 8 does the hexatonic pattern appear in its complete form. Blacking (1967: 164) described the common occurrence of the ♩ rhythmic pattern as an iambic quantity in Venda music. Grové stated that he had already employed this principle in his first so-called African work, the *Sonate op Afrika-motiewe*, as he always associated this with the inherent rhythmic impetus of faster dance music in Southern Africa (Botha 2007: 177). Blacking's transcriptions of the *mutavha* (Venda language for 'scale pattern') appear to be similar to Grové's notation in the extract below, as the constant rhythmic irregularity is emphasised by way of a succession of dotted quavers (Example 82b).

Example 82(A): Stefans Grové, *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (1994), b. 8, the hexatonic melody combined with iambic rhythmic figurations



Example 82(B): John Blacking's (1967: 177) transcription of a Venda *mutavha*, including the iambic rhythmic figuration

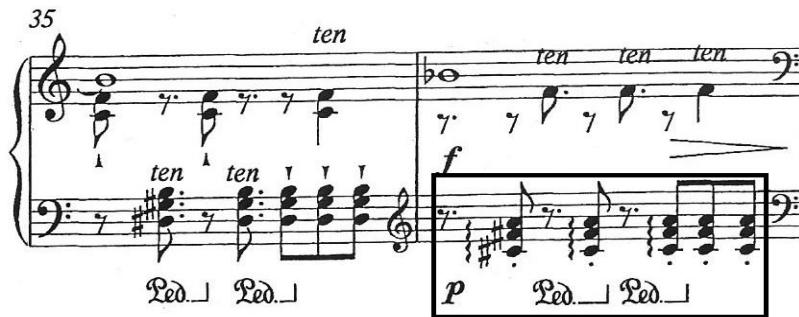


Aside from the emphasis on ceremonial and social indigenous musical practices, Grové also depicted universal concepts such as landscapes and the noises of animals. He went to great lengths in

⁶⁴ Again, the diversity in indigenous culture was somehow overlooked by Grové, as he utilised a Nguni scale structure in a Venda-inspired work. In Blacking's transcription of a Venda melody (Ex. 80b), he clearly indicated the use of non-pentatonic scales (which differ substantially from the hexatonic patterns in Grové's Venda-inspired work).

meticulously notating sounds. Grové's programme notes often point the imagination of the performer and listener in the direction of these illustrations. In *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003) he used short staccato roll chords to depict the 'the graceful movements of an antelope' (Grové in the programme notes to this piece – see Scores in the Source List). This passage can be seen in Example 83.

Example 83: Stefans Grové, *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003), bb. 35-36



More exact imitations of natural sounds are to be found in Grové's organ work *Afrika Hymnus I* (1991-1993), where, similar to Messiaen's *Messe de la Pentecôte*, *Livre d'Orgue* and *Livre du Saint Sacrement* (also for organ), several birdsongs were transcribed and integrated into the fabric of the music. Grové also recreated a variety of birdsong motifs in the woodwind parts of his *Raka Piano Concerto*. He collected the materials not by means of fieldwork, but through the recordings and accompanying discussions of various South African birds produced by the ornithologist Guy Gibbon in 1985 (Jordaan 2013: 162). He regarded the variety of organ registrations and the possibilities for crisp articulation by wind instruments as suitable vehicles for audible imitations of South African birds, but he occasionally also attempted to implement this timbre in his pianistic oeuvre. In Example 84a, the imitation of eight different bird species are identified in the score in the second movement of Grové's *Afrika Hymnus I* (bb. 19-24). Five of these motifs reappear in *Raka: Symphonic Poem in the Form of a Concerto for Piano and Orchestra* (Music from Africa No. 15), composed three years later in 1996 (Example 84b). One of these birdsong examples can be identified in the fourth movement of Grové's piano work *Images from Africa* (1999). In bar 35 of this movement (appropriately entitled *Lamenting Birds*) a rhythmically augmented and transposed version of the Crested Francolin motif appears (Example 84c).

Example 84(A): Stefans Grové, *Afrika Hymnus I* for organ (1990), bb. 19-24, the imitation of eight different birds

Meno mosso (♩ = 96, Tempo II *ad lib.*)

Hw Spll. 4'

Pos Ged. 4'

mp a) b) **mf**

pp a) Diederik Cuckoo
b) Blackheaded Oriole

+ Quintad. 8'

Hw Rohrl. 8'
Quinte 2 2/3'

Tempo primo

Pos Blokfl. 2'

mp c) d) **mf** **mf** 3 3

Ped Fl. 4'

c) **Pos Ged. 8'**

g) 3 3

Ped Ged. 8'

h) mf

c) Crested Francolin
d) Cardinal Woodpecker
e) Greyheaded Bush Shrike
f) Whitebrowed Robin
g) Fiery Necked Nightjar

Example 84(B): Stefans Grové, *Symphonic Poem in the Form of a Piano Concerto 'Raka'* (1996), bb. 17-19b, the imitation of five birds⁶⁵

Musical score for Example 84(B) from Stefans Grové's *Symphonic Poem in the Form of a Piano Concerto 'Raka'* (1996), measures 17-19b. The score features imitations of five birds across various instruments:

- Picc.**: Heuglin's Robin (measures 18-19b, marked *p*).
- Fl.**: Blackheaded Oriole (measure 18, marked *mp*).
- Ob.**: Crested Francolin (measures 18-19b, marked *mp*).
- C. A.**: [Unknown] (measures 17-18, marked *p*).
- Cl.**: Cardinal Woodpecker (measures 17-18, marked *p*).
- Bsn.**: Song of the women (measures 17-19b, marked *mf*).
- Hn.**: Cardinal Woodpecker (measures 17-18, marked *mp*).
- C Tpt.**: Cardinal Woodpecker (measures 17-18, marked *p*).

The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, dynamics (*p*, *mp*, *mf*, *pp*), and articulation marks.

Example 84(C): Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), fourth movement (*Lamenting Birds*), bb. 32-36

Musical score for Example 84(C) from Stefans Grové's *Images from Africa* (1999), fourth movement (*Lamenting Birds*), measures 32-36. The score features imitations of birds in piano:

- mf**: (measures 32-33, marked *mf*).
- pp**: (measures 34-35, marked *pp*).
- mp**: (measures 36-37, marked *mp*).

The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, dynamics (*mf*, *pp*, *mp*), and articulation marks.

As with the piano fantasy *Nonyana*, the composer utilised symbolic and programmatic concepts as the foundation of structural principles in *Lamenting Birds* (*Images from Africa*). In Example 84c

⁶⁵ The names of the birds appear alongside the respective motifs in the manuscript.

above, the tied semibreves represent the restrictive cage in which the birds are trapped (Grové's programme notes, 1999; Grové 2007). In that respect, this movement is not dissimilar from the second part of the organ work *Afrika Hymnus I*, entitled *Song of an old Woman in her Hut at Dawn*. The sustained chords remain a constant feature throughout, which Grové equated to the confinement and grief of an old woman, who sings an elegy after the death of her son.⁶⁶

During the last fifteen years of his life, Grové's focus shifted away from purely African influences. He often claimed that his music took inspiration from more universal concepts, such as exotic birds trapped in a cage or cold landscapes in winter (as in *Images from Africa* and *My Seasons*).⁶⁷ The composer also expressed a sense of dissatisfaction with the way he perceived his music to be received in his own country:

... I think maybe my future lies in Germany and these works like *Musa* [on texts of the Swiss poet Gottfried Keller] have German tempo indications and German titles. And I use German poetry too. It is very sad that it should be that I should feel like a hermit here, with rather few possibilities of performance (Muller 2007: 27).

These feelings of being isolated and misunderstood form part of the more complex intellectual position held by the composer at the end of his life. He continued to experience a creative surge after 2007, and he also accentuated the energy and inspiration he received from the interaction with young performers (Schoeman 2012a & 2012b). At the same time, this was contradicted by a sense of despondency that comes across in the above quotation. Aside from Grové's expressed disillusionment with the music industry in his country (Muller 2007 and Schoeman 2012a), he also suffered ill health in his last years. The composer ceased writing concert reviews and he also resigned from his position as organist of the Lutheran Church in Pretoria. There is therefore an artistic paradox to be traced here, which evidently impacted the composer's creative development in old age. This leads to the final discussion in this chapter, namely a description of late style developments in the composer's fourth style period.

⁶⁶ Jordaan (2013: 162) writes that the woman accompanies herself on the Xhosa *Uhadi* bow, but I could find no evidence that the composer intended to portray this in the music. The short staccato dotted quaver ostinato in the footwork may be representative of such symbolism (particularly in bb. 1-18).

⁶⁷ Earlier in this chapter, I have already discussed the more general influences of literature and imagery in Grové's music.

5.4 Elements of late style in Grové's fourth style period (*Music from Africa*)

I would like to return to Adorno's essay 'Beethoven's Late Style' (1937 – hereafter referred to as Adorno/transl. Spitzer 2006) and to Muller's positioning of certain perspectives on late style in relation to Grové's African period (Muller & Walton 2006: 49-62). Muller's chapter was published in the same year as the literary theoretician and cultural critic Edward Saïd's book *On Late Style* (2006). This series of essays by Saïd was compiled after his passing in September 2003 and then published posthumously. They contain a wide range of critical evaluations on the meaning of works written or produced at the end of significant writers, film-makers and composers' lives. Saïd recognised two distinct areas in which discussions of late style can be divided. Firstly, investigating late works that 'crown a lifetime of aesthetic endeavour' of which he cited Rembrandt, Matisse, Bach and Wagner as notable examples (Saïd 2006: 7). Secondly, there are those late works that are not harmonious and are filled with paradoxes and 'unresolved contradictions'. These late creations 'tear apart the career and the artist's craft and reopen the questions of meaning, success, and progress that the artist's late period is supposed to move beyond' (Saïd 2006: 7). Saïd was more interested in the second category, and he engaged more extensively in an exploration of those moments of 'nonserene tension' in late works. Like Muller, he drew upon Adorno's 1937-essay to gain access to a wealth of nonharmonious attributes in the late works of Beethoven, but consequently also in the music of the Second Viennese School and the writings of Adorno himself. Saïd's contextualisation of Adorno's essay (in Chapter 1 of his book: 'Timeliness and Lateness') will assist me in re-evaluating the relevance of Muller's statements in relation to Grové's *Music from Africa* series. Furthermore, the late style developments in Grové's works (particularly those for the piano) written between the time that Muller's findings were published and the composer's death in 2014 will be ascertained. Saïd's conceptualisations will also be employed in the elaboration of ideas, as well as in circumscribing further late style elements in Grové's music that have hitherto not been included in academic discussions.

I first of all summarise the central aspects of Adorno's essay before I move on to identifying elements of lateness in Grové's music. Adorno claimed that a formal analysis of Beethoven's late works should stand separately from the traditional theories on the subject – those 'discussions that

are rarely bereft of biographical details or mention of Fate' (Muller and Walton 2006: 49).⁶⁸ Such an analysis would indicate that these late works 'cannot be subsumed under the heading of expression' (Adorno/transl. Spitzer 2006: 124) and that they are rather enigmatic and resigned in nature, even 'expression-less'. He distrusted the organicist view that Beethoven's late works are necessarily more subjective and expressive than his earlier compositions simply because the composer was approaching death. He subsequently wrote:

[Death] is imposed on creatures alone, and not on their constructions, and thus has always appeared in art in a refracted form: as allegory. Psychological interpretation [of late works] fail to recognize this ... To be sure, it perceives the disruptive force of subjectivity in the late work of art. But it looks in the opposite direction to that in which this force is acting; it looks for it in the expression of subjectivity itself (Adorno/transl. Spitzer 2006: 125).

Adorno agreed with Immanuel Kant that 'subjectivity ... [entails] not so much to disintegrate form as to produce it' (Adorno/transl. Spitzer 2006: 124). He cited two examples from Beethoven's so-called middle period that he believed to demonstrate a greater authorial agency and 'urge of expression' than in the works of the late period – the Piano Sonata in F minor, op. 57 ('Appassionata') and the Symphony no. 5 in C minor, op. 67. He concluded that these middle period works are "certainly denser, more closed in structure and more 'harmonious' than the last quartets ... [and] to the same degree, more subjective, autonomous and spontaneous" (Adorno/transl. Spitzer 2006: 124). In his discussion of Adorno's essay, Saïd (2006: 10) added the Symphony no. 3 in E-flat major, op. 55 ('Eroica') as an example of the 'totally cogent and integrative driven logic' that formed part of Beethoven's middle period. The late works are different, as the role of conventions becomes much more significant. Adorno referred to the late Piano Sonatas as instances where 'conventional formulae and phraseology are inserted' and that they are 'full of decorative trills, cadences and fiorituras' (Adorno/transl. Spitzer 2006: 125). The often 'extremely careless and repetitive' use of these types of figurations would hardly be found in Beethoven's middle period (Saïd 2006: 10). Saïd singled out Adorno's fascination with the fragmentariness of the late work of Beethoven, caused by this amalgamation of structural conventions. Adorno observed that "in [late] Beethoven, as in Goethe [e.g. *Wilhelm Meister's Journeyman Years* and *Faust Part 2*], there is a plethora of 'unmastered material' ... conventions, for instance, are 'splintered off' from the main thrust of the

⁶⁸ See the introduction to this chapter, where I described the organicist approach to art theory as exemplified in the work of Winckelmann. 'Late style is what happens if art *does not* abdicate its rights in favour of reality' (Saïd 2006: 9).

compositions, ‘fallen away and abandoned’ (Saïd 2006: 11). In this way, an alienated landscape is created that demonstrates an apparent ‘disregard for its own continuity’ (Saïd 2006: 10). In terms of these late style conventions, both Saïd and Muller drew upon Adorno’s description of the ‘ingeniously simple semiquaver accompaniment’ (Adorno/trans. Spitzer 2006: 124)⁶⁹ of the first theme in the Piano Sonata no. 31 in A-flat major, op. 110. Adorno also hinted at the conventional long colouristic trills in the Piano Sonata no. 32, op. 111 (although he did not provide more specific information, one could assume that he referred to the trill on g''' and g'' in the second movement, bb. 161-171) in his contribution to Thomas Mann’s *Doktor Faustus*. Furthermore, there are two complex polyphonic sections in the last movement of op. 110 that stand as isolated gestures next to the ‘untransformed bareness’ of unison passages or the simple homophonic textures in the *Klagender Gesang* (third movement of op. 110, bb. 9-26 and 116-131).⁷⁰ These dramatic polyphonic sections, the type of which frequently appear also in other works of Beethoven’s late period, are referred to by Saïd as ‘abstruse and difficult’ (Saïd 2006: 10) material that even accentuate the simplicity of the conventions that follow them. The conventions come across as rhetorical devices that seldom have an impact on the overall structure of the works in which they appear. Adorno concluded that these fluctuations between disparate elements (polyphony and unisons, trills, primitively simple accompaniments) illuminate the fact that Beethoven’s ‘late work still remains a process, but not as a development; its process is an ignition between extremes which no longer tolerate a safe mean or spontaneous harmony’ (Adorno, transl. Spitzer 2006: 126). At the end of his essay, Adorno also evaluated the role of silences (caesuras) in the Beethoven’s late works:

The caesurae, however, the abrupt stops which characterize the latest Beethoven more than any other feature, are those moments of breaking free; the work falls silent as it is deserted, turning its hollowness outwards. (Adorno/ transl. Spitzer 2006: 126).

Saïd (2006: 11) remarked on the sense of abandonment in the above extract of Adorno, and how Beethoven ‘inhabits the late works as a lamenting personality, then seems to leave the work or phrases in it incomplete’. This as a marked contrast to the works of the middle period, such as the finale of the Symphony no. 5, where Beethoven at times ‘cannot seem to tear himself away from the

⁶⁹ Saïd consulted Susan Gillespie’s translation of Adorno’s text (Leppert 2002). She translates this as an ‘unabashedly primitive semiquaver accompaniment’.

⁷⁰ One could easily include certain parts of Beethoven’s *Hammerklavier* Sonata, op. 106 as well as the last movement of the Symphony no. 9, op. 125 into this discussion of polyphony interrupted by sudden unisons and sparse textures.

piece' (Saïd 2006: 12). Saïd wrote that Beethoven's late period works represent 'a moment when the artist who is fully in command of his medium nevertheless abandons communication with the established social order of which he is part and achieves a contradictory, alienated relationship with it. His late works constitute a form of exile' (Saïd 2006: 5). These 'nonserene' and 'unyielding' creations of Beethoven therefore dovetail neatly into the second category of the late-style discourse that Saïd found so considerably intriguing. There is no higher synthesis to be traced in these late works, as they do not 'fit any scheme' and their coherence can only be found in the overall symbolic units they represent, not in the various fragments of which they are constructed (the fragments 'can be exorcized only by the figure they form together' – Adorno/transl. Spitzer 2006: 126). So despite their irascibility, they still convey a 'lost totality' which Adorno finds catastrophic (Saïd 2006: 12-13). Saïd euphemised the choice of the word 'catastrophes' by indicating a sense of tragedy that comes across in Beethoven's late works.

Prior to a further investigation of the potential parallels between Adorno's late-style theories and Grové's music, the question should first be posed as to whether it is appropriate to apply formulations on Beethoven to the work of the South African composer. Beethoven after all lived and worked in a completely different environment and epoch. The answer to this question can arguably be found in Saïd's claim that Adorno transferred the negative dialectics of his 1937-essay to various other contexts. Saïd referred to Adorno's late publication *Philosophy of New Music* in which Schoenberg is described as a composer who had 'essentially prolonged the irreconcilabilities, negations, and immobilities of the late Beethoven' (Saïd 2006: 13). Similar to the late works of Beethoven, Schoenberg produced 'advanced music [that] has no recourse but to insist on its own ossification without concession to that would-be humanitarianism which it sees through'. The reference to ossification is apt here, as it illustrates the seclusion that artists can experience when creating their late works, often precisely as a result of their intransigence. Grové's statement, to which I referred earlier in the chapter, that he had been moving in a German direction due to a disillusionment with his own South African environment attests to his own artistic ossification. His use of the word 'hermit' (Muller 2007: 27) to describe feelings of isolation brings back the concepts of abandon and exile that Adorno saw in the late works of Beethoven. In a way, Grové (like Adorno) brought about his own alienation by following a singular artistic trajectory that for him held an essential truth (Izak Grové 2013: 154). This brings to mind Saïd's description of how Adorno presented himself:

[as] a philosopher and cultural critic in an enforced exile from society ... [for whom being late] meant therefore to be late for (and refuse) many rewards offered up by being

comfortable inside society, not least of which was to be read and understood easily by a large group of people (Saïd 2006: 21-22).

It seems that Grové, who in the process of gaining compositional maturity took great inspiration from Schoenberg, demonstrated a distinct wilfulness right from the start of his career, revealing a certain degree of intolerance towards public taste and opinion (Izak Grové 2013: 141). In a brief investigation of the critical reception of Grové's music, Izak Grové referred to a performance of the composer's *Lied van Transvaal* (based on the text of SJ Pretorius) at the opening of the Afrikaans Language Monument in Paarl, South Africa. Izak Grové (1998: 96) quotes a review of that concert by the church music specialist Gawie Cillié (again, I freely translate from Afrikaans): 'I was very sorry for the choir from Pretoria, as the choice of the composition by Grové was a most unfortunate one. This work is obviously an experiment without success. [...] The dissonances clearly brought irritation to the audience'. On the basis of Cillié's review, Grové comes across as an alienated spirit within the musical industry of his own country. His music was too 'experimental' and 'dissonant' for his local public to digest. Chris Walton (2007: 27) also remarked on the conservative tastes of the South African public and how the SABC Symphony Orchestra's performance of Grové's large-scale work *Chain Rows* failed 'to realise what the score itself promises, and documents as much as anything the apparent incomprehension of those in the hall, both musicians and audience'. The irony here, is that Grové was in fact a traditionalist. Both Sprenkle and Muller (Muller and Walton 2006: 34, 54) identified his discomfort at being confronted by the avant-garde experiments of the New York School while living in America. There are a few further factors that underlined his traditionalism. Firstly, and this stemmed from his youth and family background, there was his constant engagement with Lutheran church music traditions. As an organist he composed several arrangements of hymns for liturgical purposes. Secondly, his research on the music of JS Bach as well as period performance (Grové 1960, 1979, 1995) ties in with the traditional approach he followed both in his academic and compositional work. A third attribute of traditionalism in Grové is the adoption of indigenous African materials (Muller and Walton 2006: 54). I have outlined Grové's specific use of such elements in the previous section of this chapter, referring to his reverence for other cultures within his own South African environment. Grové lamented how traditional music in rural areas started to fade as a result of urbanisation and stated that he saw himself as a 'historian who is giving a speech on how things used to be' (Schoeman 2012a).⁷¹ Yet, despite this advocacy of and commitment to indigenous

⁷¹ This statement of Grové, brings to mind the biographer David Gilmour's reflection on Lampedusa's seminal late novel *The Leopard* (1958), in which the Italian writer sought to bring forward the idea that as an "ultimate descendant of an ancient noble line whose economic and physical extinction culminated in himself", he would

cultures, it is the Romanticised view of old traditions that have a prominent programmatic position in Grové's final style period. Again, his poetic programme notes are sometimes reminders of how an element of 'looking back' (*Rückblick*) permeates his late style. A distinct sense of longing to the simplicity of the distant past comes across in the notes to the clavichord work *In der stillen Welt von Gestern* (2005): 'The quietism of past centuries resulted in a peaceful manner of life. The exceptions were the organ music in Sunday services, the thunderstorms during Summertime [sic] and the roaring of cannons (fortunately far away)'.⁷²

Aside from this broader view of Grové's traditionalism, I would like to focus on the more specific markers of lateness in his *Music from Africa* series. Muller chooses the String Quartet 'Song of the African Spirits' (1993) as a case study in the identification of 'conventions' that Adorno found in late Beethoven, including 'the full gamut of caesuras, fragments, monotones, repetitions and cadences' (Muller and Walton 2006: 55). In this regard, particular attention is given to the descending interval that appears as a firm announcement (shared between the first violin and the cello) at the opening of the work. The impression is created that this interval has structural importance, as it is repeated continuously throughout the four movements of the Quartet alongside the recurring ritornelli that introduce each one of them.⁷³ Muller notes that the intervallic gesture has a 'negligible influence on the rest of the work' and that the accompaniment figurations which it envelops (*ponticello* colours in the second violin and viola parts) receive a more rigorous structural treatment. He therefore claims that this falling intervallic gesture takes the position of a late-style convention, as it continuously appears in its 'untransformed bareness', as a loose-standing fragment (Muller and Walton 2006: 59). This fragmentary use of motivic gestures can also be seen in the piano works of Grové's *Music from Africa* series. The opening structural element A from *Yemoja (Images from Africa)*,⁷⁴ for example, appears regularly throughout the work without any modification, except for occasional

be the last member of his family to have 'vital memories' or to be capable of evoking a 'unique Sicilian world' before it disappeared" (Saïd 2006: 94).

⁷² As in the case of *Images from Africa* (1999), Grové also wrote the programme notes to *In der stillen Welt von Gestern* in German. The English translations then follow afterwards.

⁷³ The various sections of the String Quartet are: Ritornello (*Con moto*), Movement I (*L'istesso tempo*), Ritornello (*L'istesso tempo*), Movement II (*Lento*), Ritornello (*Con moto*), Movement III (*L'istesso tempo ma grazioso*), Ritornello (*Presto*), and Movement IV (*L'istesso tempo. Leggiero ma non staccato*).

⁷⁴ See my analysis earlier in this chapter.

transposition.⁷⁵ The many sudden caesuras of *Yemoja* also suggest moments of ‘breaking free’, where the composer allows himself to move on to the ‘next fragment ... ordered to its place by escaping subjectivity and colluding for better or worse with what has gone before’ (Adorno/transl. Spitzer 2006: 126). The combination of thematic conventions and caesuras is therefore a key to understanding the chain form structures of *Yemoja* as well as the similarly-conceived *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (1994). Earlier in this chapter, I identified the various sections of *Yemoja* alongside their relation to the motivic exposition in the work’s introduction. Parallels have also been drawn between the motivic *Einfälle* in *Yemoja* and a later work, *Glimpses* (Five Miniatures, 2004). This is one example of how Grové unreservedly re-applied similar ideas throughout fourth style period. He admittedly recycled materials (see the brief discussion about self-repetition in the introduction to this chapter), and either reordered them or transferred them to a different timbral setting. They seem to become conventions that suddenly appear and then are swiftly replaced with completely different motivic material.

Keeping the broader *Music from Africa* series in mind, Muller also regards the indigenous elements in Grové’s ‘African’ works as the conventional phenomena of his late style (Muller and Walton 2006: 59). He singles out the generic melodies as the most important indigenous attributes in these works. With their small ambit and descending contours, these melodies (or melodic fragments) are often left untransformed and they recur at regular intervals throughout a work. I have managed to trace certain instances where such melodies are even shared between works, interjected as softer echoes amidst lively toccata-like sections. A prominent example of this is the *misterioso*-passage in bars 60-63 of *Nonyana* (1994) that suddenly reappears, albeit melodically slightly varied, in bar 45 of *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003).

Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer includes more extended melodic patterns than *Yemoja*, which is predominantly based on the combination of motifs.⁷⁶ The melodic phrase first stated between bars 6 and 8 of *Nonyana* is repeated twice (bars 14-16 and bars 75-78 – see Example 82a). Even though it is

⁷⁵ Only twice in this work does this opening motif 1 of structural element A briefly appear in a rhythmically diminished form. This contributes to climactic build-ups before the music is suddenly interrupted by caesuras. See Example 57b above.

⁷⁶ *Yemoja* does include brief melodic moments when he transformed structural motivic element C (from the introduction) into extended phrases that are harmonised by clusters later in the work. I have discussed this in my motivic analysis of *Yemoja* earlier in this chapter.

slightly modified through rhythmic and melodic permutation, and the second time also transposed from f-sharp' to d'', this melodic phrase has no impact on developmental procedures in other parts of the work. The non-melodious toccata motifs (briefly introduced in bar 10 of the work) receive a far more rigorous treatment and are extensively developed between bars 20-74 and then again in the coda (particularly from bar 91 until the end). It is thus possible to see how *Nonyana* demonstrates structural similarities with the String Quartet, written a year before. Moving ahead to the very last years of the composer's life, it is possible to trace an intensification of the procedure of the repetition and non-development of melodic fragments. In the second movement of *My Seasons (Wandering in a white, cold landscape)* there are two alternating elements that are hypnotically repeated. These elements are merely posited next to each other in a fragmented sequence, and there is no question of structural development here. Similar to the nocturnal song-like etudes of *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), a single timbre governs this complete movement. In Examples 72a and 72b above, I have likened the first element to the impressionistic meditative colours of Debussy (particularly the *Prélude, Des pas sur la neige*). The second thematic element with its various repetitions and permutations appears in Examples 70a and 70b above.

Muller mentions the role of caesuras in late style, but in principle he focuses more on motivic and melodic considerations. I would like to expand my earlier discussion on the significance of *Luftpausen* (a fermata on top of a bar line, as seen in *Yemoja*) or silences in Grové's African piano works. Similar to *Yemoja*, *Nonyana* is also filled with sudden silences, even aggressively preceded by *martellato* bass chords (bar 72-73). The music comes to a sudden halt at the sustained semibreve f with fermata in bar 74. This is akin to those descriptions of Adorno of the 'compressed polyphony with its tensions, disintegrating and escaping in the unison, leaving behind the naked note' (Adorno/transl. Spitzer 2006: 126). Again, this procedure is carried over to Grové's later works. The third movement of *Haunting Music* (2010) opens with a motoric toccata section consisting predominantly of semiquaver-runs, meticulous contrapuntal writing and palpitating iambic rhythms. The section concludes suddenly with two bars of chromatic semiquaver runs coupled to a crescendo in bars 16 and 17. At the end of bar 17, there is another sudden *Luftpause*. Immediately afterwards, from bars 18-21, a completely different atmosphere of quietly-repeating dotted quaver-notes emerges. These repeated tones are only slightly embellished with the various acciaccaturas that Grové regularly utilised. Then, in bar 22, the motoric toccata returns just as instantaneously as it stopped at the end of bar 17. This process of alternation between two atmospheres continues throughout the movement. The composer slightly varied each of the two ideas upon repetition – the semiquaver toccata becomes more polyphonic (increasing from two to three voices), and the single

notes turn into chords coupled to an alteration of legato to staccato articulation. Only in the short coda does Grové bring the two ideas together, but still in the form of a contracted dialogue. With Adorno's text in mind, one could try in vain to answer the question as to why Beethoven decided to place the esoteric unison-passages next to complex polyphonic sections in his late works. Grové, on the other hand, came closer to an explanation of this method in *Haunting Music* by adding a descriptive programmatic title. The third movement that I have just discussed, is called *Hobgoblin at Midnight*.⁷⁷ One could therefore imagine how the menacing toccata sections are characteristic portrayals of a Poltergeist (hobgoblin), leaving a shattered or mysterious setting behind or at least the softer and slower repeated notes indicate a sense of suspense. In the same year (2010), Grové completed another short work which he dedicated to his friend Chris Walton, entitled *Piano Thoughts*. A similar juxtaposition of repeated single notes and sudden contrapuntal interjections is employed here. Again, the single notes are in some cases accompanied by staccato-acciaccaturas and echoes of *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* appear in the rapid alternation of different dynamic and articulation markings. The polyphonic sections bring together two of the toccata styles that are interspersed throughout all Grové's African piano music (both solo and chamber works).

The intransigence of late Beethoven and Adorno that Muller attaches to Grové has thus far been summarised broadly under two categories: firstly the artistic alienation that resulted from following a singular musical trajectory, simultaneously preserving a sense of traditionalism; and secondly, the fragmentariness of larger structures in his late music that leaves behind a non-serene tension. One should remember that Muller based his findings on Grové's works from the 1990s. As the composer had been remarkably prolific during the last fifteen years of his life, it is possible to step away from Muller's observations and to discover further elements of lateness within the *Music from Africa* series. Although I shall return to this, I would first like to indicate a different approach to Grové's works of the 1990s by looking at the late-style of Richard Strauss. In the second chapter of his book, Saïd took note of the 'undiminished power and yet strangely recapitulatory and even-backward-looking and abstracted quality' of Strauss's late works. He went on to cite Norman del Mar, who saw Strauss's late period as an 'Indian Summer', a time when he experienced an unprecedented creative surge (Saïd 2006: 44). Indeed, a clearly-demarcated group of late works (the opera *Capriccio*, the Oboe Concerto, the Horn Concerto no. 2, the Sonatas for wind instruments and piano,

⁷⁷ The composer also provides a German translation of each movement, and this, the third movement, is entitled *Poltergeist um Mitternacht*.

Metamorphosen for strings, and *Vier Letzte Lieder* for soprano and orchestra) represents a composer at the height of his creative powers. Saïd (2006: 46) concluded that ‘unlike late-style Beethoven with its fissures and fragments, [these late works of Strauss are] smoothly polished, technically perfect, worldly, and at ease as music in an entirely musical world’.

This sense of energetic creative expression in old age leads me back to Grové’s *Yemoja*. Despite the work’s loose-standing motifs and sections (‘conventions’) that I have outlined above, it can nonetheless be regarded as an apex of structural manipulation and technical brilliance within the composer’s African period. Grové himself regarded *Yemoja* as the most comprehensive representation of ‘chain structure’ in his later oeuvre (Grové 2007, Schoeman 2013). He furthermore also took the motivic development that he started to explore in *Nonyana* a step further in this work by transforming the opening elements more thoroughly, except for structural element ‘A’ which only appears in transposition and is often restated as an echo. In *Nonyana*, he only developed the toccata-theme (motif d, see Example 80d above), where the opening melodic fragments are merely repeated and transposed a few times.⁷⁸ The increase in structural rigour that can be traced between *Nonyana* (1994) and *Yemoja* (1999) thus points towards a creative energy that does not necessarily stand in line with negative dialectics, the ‘catastrophic’ view that Adorno held of late style. These works rather portray an active sense of authorial agency that corresponds to the type of subjectivity that Adorno saw in Beethoven’s middle period as well as the organic roundedness of late-Strauss detected by Saïd and Del Mar. Grové remarked several times upon the creative surge that he had experienced since his appointment as Composer-in-Residence at the University of Pretoria in 2003. Indeed, his oeuvre expanded by over twenty works within his last ten years. He also claimed that he had taken much inspiration and accumulated creative energy from his experiences of working with young musicians (Schoeman 2012a) – both in helping them prepare for performances of his works, but also within the context of classroom-teaching and lectures at the University of Pretoria. Earlier on, Grové admitted in an interview with Adele Goosen (1989) that he regarded his Afrocentric style as a new beginning. This statement prompted Muller to cite Wagner’s proclamation that he saw himself as having entered ‘the youth of his third period of life’ (Muller and Walton 2006: 54). A constant sense of renewal thus marks the African period, which places late Grové just as much within the realms of late Strauss as in the ‘alienated’ world of late Beethoven.

⁷⁸ The opening ‘crouching movement’ (motif ‘a’) is rhythmically diminished on one occasion, see Example 80 above.

However, Saïd did go on to single out a form of intransigence in late Strauss. He described the 'lack of complaint' in these late works as well as their surprising sense of resignation, particularly as they were written at a time when so many atrocities took place in Second World War Germany and when prominent contemporaries of Strauss had completely left the 'tonal fold' (Saïd 2006: 43). In Strauss's late works there is a defiant application of late-Romantic, scathingly referred to by Adorno as, regressive tonalities. His anachronistic tendencies were further accentuated by the adoption of eighteenth-century thematic materials in his operas *Der Rosenkavalier* (1910), *Ariadne auf Naxos* (1916) and *Capriccio* (1941). Saïd investigated the latter work in more detail, particularly as it was written late in Strauss's life and took on a more contemplative and static narrative. He also referred to a few of Strauss's contemporaries who based their operatic works on eighteenth-century elements. Britten's *Peter Grimes* delineates the darker intrigues of a fishing community in Suffolk, whereas Weill's *Threepenny Opera* depicts the various societal stereotypes in Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*, transferred to the *Cabaret* culture of Berlin in the 1920s. Then there is Stravinsky's opera *The Rake's Progress*, of which the settings are inspired by paintings and engravings of a London brothel scene by Hogarth. Strauss's eighteenth-century themes are more focused on the light-hearted and trivial 'royalist and aristocratic exaggerations' that signifies 'the well-endowed man's ability to do as he pleases' (Saïd 2006: 39-40). In *Capriccio*, he conjured up a luxurious and idyllic setting (a theatre in Paris) in which contemplation and aesthetic debate takes centre stage. It was as if he wanted to create a 'cadential harmonic island' through which he was 'self-consciously and visibly retreating from the world of human affairs into a meditative, composed order' (Saïd 2006: 40).

In many ways Grové followed a similar approach within an often turbulent South African setting. The start of his African period coincided with the last decade of the apartheid era, and during his last creative years the country saw an escalation of crime and government corruption. Still, he maintained his traditional views, and demonstrated the type of resignation that Saïd identified in late Strauss (2006: 47). In 2006, Grové admitted to Jiendra de Winnaar (2006: 103-104) that, despite his general claim of having arrived at his final stylistic home-coming in the *Music from Africa* series, his priorities were again starting to change. He had been aiming towards a more intimate and personal expression in his music. References to Africa became vaguer, and he often found inspiration in German or Russian literature.⁷⁹ His piano-writing also became technically less-

⁷⁹ The third movement, *Thoughts and Dreams of floating in Darkness*, of *Conversations* for organ and piano (Music from Africa No. 31, 2005) is based on the short story *Easter Eve* by Anton Chekhov. Grové described the relationship between the literature and music in this movement at his 85th birthday concert (Grové 2007).

demanding. The difficult octave passages in *Songs and Dances from Africa* (e.g. in the first movement, *Stamping Dance*) were generally substituted with single-line melodies and sparser textures. The larger forms of works such as *Yemoja*, or even the String Quartet and the organ works *Afrika Hymnus* (I and II), were replaced by miniatures and the individual movements of larger cycles in solo, chamber and orchestral works never expand beyond a few minutes of performance duration. Grové's inclination towards a more personal expression can already be found in the title of this last piano work, *My Seasons*. During my preparations for the first performance of the work in August 2012, I discussed the psychological origins of the four movements with the composer. He compared it with his work *In der Stillen Welt von Gestern*, where he aimed at constructing a sound world that resembles the mystery and unspoilt character of the African landscapes, especially in the early times before the intrusion of colonialism. This 'very intimate clavichord expression', as Grové described it (Muller 2007: 22), evidently extended to *My Seasons*, as the complete exclusion of the sustaining pedal in the first, second and fourth movements (except for bb. 32-33 and bb. 36-41 of the fourth movement, *Summer Abundance*) was prescribed by the composer. It is not easy to transmit acoustically the intention of the transparent textures throughout a larger concert hall by relying on finger control alone. In the lengthy meditative second part of the third movement (*First Spring Rain and the Awakening of Delicate Colours*), the composer tied a dotted minim chord over four bars; this idea is repeated throughout the movement. With the help of a variety of technical strategies, it would be possible to perform all 101 bars of this section without the sustaining pedal. Further discussions with Grové, however, brought clarity to the idea that a fast vibrato pedalling technique could be more effective in obtaining a longer-sustained resonance of chords. Upon closer inspection of the score, it becomes clear that the composer completely omitted pedal indications in the second part of the third movement. It would therefore not be a question of disregarding the composer's intentions, when the performer makes discreet use of the sustaining pedal in order to acoustically enhance this section. In an interview with Grové, he also revealed to me that the *una corda* can effectively be applied in intimate passages such as these (Schoeman 2012b). He used the German expression '*mit Verschiebung*'⁸⁰ to indicate how the softer felts of the hammers that hit the

⁸⁰ When the *una corda* (left) pedal on a grand piano is depressed, the keyboard and hammers shift ('*Verschiebung*') slightly to the right 'so that on the majority of notes, two instead of three strings are struck' (Banowetz 1985: 110). An additional concept has to be added to Banowetz's basic description. The mechanism of the piano is such that the strings also make small rifts on the hammer. When the hammer shifts (along with the use of the *una corda* pedal), the softer less-used felt of each hits the strings and this also creates a softer tone colour. This will be further discussed in Chapter 3.

strings when the *una corda* is depressed effectively contribute to the required intimate sound colour.

Even though his music was written in a totally different harmonic idiom from Strauss, Grové evidently assimilated the type of escapism that the German late-Romantic composer obtained through the use of eighteenth-century elements. He did this through the intimate expression in his late works as well as the intensive interest in and experimentation with Baroque instruments such as the clavichord and the chamber organ. Furthermore, his Romanticised and fantastical fables in his programme notes attest to distinct anachronistic tendencies. Similar to Strauss, Grové does not bring the darker undertones of past traditions to the fore like Britten did in his vivid portrayal of Peter Grimes's ostracism from the Borough in Suffolk that led to his eventual suicide (Saïd 2006: 38). Grové's choice of titles and all the texts are mainly of an optimistic nature (De Winnaar 2006: 117). Even when he drew upon the literature of other authors to provide him with programmes or *Einfälle*, he still shied away from melancholic or depressing themes.

In conclusion, I extract from Saïd's argumentation that the fragmented almost incomplete late works of Beethoven leave 'the audience more perplexed and unsettled than before' (Saïd 2006: 7), whereas the late Strauss showed 'little sign of anguish or discomfort' by 'spinning measure after measure of assured, even eloquent music' (Saïd 2006: 45). In his late works, Grové brought these attributes together by prolifically creating a marked dualism between ebullient and energetic motivicism and dissonant pessimistic undertones. The latter can be traced, for example, in the ominous tritone intervals in the first movement of *My Seasons* (Example 85). In the second movement of the same work, a simple pentatonic figuration turns into a dissonant harmony through the addition of a G# alongside the sustained G.⁸¹ During further transformations, this figure also encompasses major seventh intervals that now appear to be nostalgic utterances of the vivid atonal works of the 1970s or the virtuosic coda from *Nonyana*.

⁸¹ See Example 70b for the tonal variants of this figuration from the second movement of *My Seasons* (2012).

Example 85: Stefans Grové, *My Seasons* (2012), first movement (On an Autumn Day), bb. 29b-30



Throughout this chapter I have discussed the homogeneous aspects of Grové's general style, by comparing various works from different style periods. Mary Rörich (1987 and 1992) and Izak Grové (1998 and 2013) also made references to homogeneity and dualism across Grové's oeuvre. In her analytical overview of the *Symphony* (1962), Rörich observed how the composer juxtaposed 'expressionistic angst with a lyrical, if melancholy, ethos. These expressive essences symbolise the existential implications of the philosophical concepts of heaven and earth ... the conceptualisation of earth elicits aggressive sound-events, high in dissonance level and thickly textured, while heaven elicits lyrical, subtly nuanced textures and timbres' (Rörich 1992: 52). Grové later confirmed this omnipresence of thematic dualism in his music, but stipulated a gradual intensification of the contrast between the energetic motivicism and toccata-like writing in faster movements and the nocturnal contemplative character in the slow movements (Muller 2007: 20). His Concerto for cello, piano and orchestra '*Bushman Prayers*', is a clear example of how fast motoric writing alternates with a searching, perplexed expression. In the second movement of this work, there is a prevalent atmosphere of loneliness and incompleteness. Quiet single-line melodies are shared between the piano and cello, sometimes shadowed by the vibraphone and taken over by the strings or the clarinet. At the end of the movement, the cello fades away with a dissonant flageolet chord. The last movement, on the other hand, is an energetic Baroque-like dance with a 9/8 time signature – a rare feature in Grové's general compositional output. Despite many dissonances, the underlying tonality of B-flat minor and a clear end cadence provides a decisive final statement. It is almost as if Grové knew that this would be his last complete work. When he passed away on 29 May 2014, he was still working on a Concerto for Viola and Orchestra. Of this, only the first movement was completed along with sketches for the second and third movements.⁸²

⁸² Grové mentioned his preparations for the Viola Concerto in two interviews (Schoeman 2012a and 2012b). The organist Gerrit Jordaan has been evaluating the materials on Grové's work desk after his death and is

Stefans Grové throughout his life remained a composer who experimented with the translation of his programmatic concepts into a wide plethora of colours. He demonstrated an openness to interpretative discussions of his work, and he never stopped amalgamating his artistic conviction with the desire to create an idiomatic product. In his last years, he remained prolific despite his ill health and sometimes depressed state of mind (Gerrit Jordaan in Spies 2014). In this chapter I have endeavoured to draw attention to the breadth of his contribution to the South African piano literature. The main emphasis fell on the description of seminal stylistic features (including structural, motivic and timbral principles), and I have referred to every single movement or miniature that Grové composed for solo piano. In conducting this stylistic survey, it became clear to me that the piano increasingly became Grové's preferred vehicle of artistic expression and he confirmed this on quite a few occasions (Schoeman 2012a and 2012b). Where his first two creative periods included only three solo piano works, he was extraordinarily prolific during his third and fourth periods. After returning to South Africa from the USA, he experienced several surges of creativity. This eventually resulted in the completion of 24 more solo works, many of which contain multiple movements. His chamber music oeuvre that involves the piano is equally substantial and certainly merits further in-depth study.

currently setting up an inventory of incomplete sketches. Jordaan communicated this information to me during a discussion in July 2014.

CHAPTER 3

THE REALISATION OF TECHNICAL ELEMENTS IN THE PIANO WORKS OF STEFANS GROVÉ

1. Introduction

Stefans Grové took a vested interest in matters of piano technique throughout his long career. In the period between 1950 and 1952, when he held a junior lectureship at the South African College of Music at the University of Cape Town, he also taught the piano to children and composed music expressly for these purposes.⁸³ Mary Rörich (1987: 78) saw this as the first manifestation of what she described as ‘Grové’s life-long involvement in, and uniquely creative approach to, the demanding and multifaceted challenges of music education’. Although he later mainly taught theoretical subjects and composition at universities, his constant engagement with the piano and collaboration with interpreters of his work can be seen as a confirmation of his interest in aspects of performance, particularly when it came to his own works. In Chapter 2, I discussed a wide range of stylistic elements that appear in his substantial oeuvre for solo piano. An evaluation of the earlier influences of a variety of trends in European art music on Grové enabled me to establish how he came to the point where he found his own compositional voice through the assimilation of different traditions. The French harpsichord school, the Impressionist composers of the early twentieth century, the timbral piquancy of the *Style Mécanique*, the neo-Baroque elements of Hindemith, the atonal expressionism of Schoenberg, birdsong in Messiaen’s organ works, as well as the indigenous melodies, rhythms and timbres of traditional Venda, Sotho and Nguni music in South Africa were the points of reference that I drew upon in the investigation of Grové’s creative development. This chapter, on the other hand, engages with the realisation of the considerable array of technical demands in Grové’s piano works. Strategies towards the effective characterisation of motifs as well as transparent articulation and pedalling will be formulated by closely investigating the composer’s meticulously-annotated scores.

Many of Grové’s piano works are suitable for inexperienced players, some of them conceived as educational pieces for graded examinations. Conversely, his oeuvre also includes some of the most

⁸³ These experimental pieces are unfortunately all lost now. The composer communicated this in a public interview in Bloemfontein in August 2012 (Schoeman 2012b).

challenging works in the South African piano literature. My study of technical elements therefore focuses on aspects of Grové's easier UNISA examination pieces along with his most virtuosic concert works. His pianistic oeuvre is evaluated as a holistic unit of experimentation with elements of piano technique and concert performance. The composer himself held that he had reached stylistic maturity with the *Toccata* of 1966 (Grové 1975: 69). With this in mind, I focus mainly on the piano works written after the *Toccata*, but I also make peripheral reference to his earlier stylistic periods in order to substantiate and clarify my discussions of his technique.

Grové's combination of folk music (indigenous Southern African musical elements) and particular keyboard techniques yield the potential for comparison with the Hungarian composer Béla Bartók. Although some aspects of Bartók's percussive style were posited in relation to Grové's piano music in Chapter 2, I intend to elaborate further on the connection between these respective composers, in this instance, from a technical perspective. Like Grové, Bartók wrote some very demanding piano works, including the technically difficult Concerto no. 2, Sz. 95 and Sonata, Sz. 80, but his output simultaneously reflects a deep commitment to teaching the piano as he contributed more children's music than any composer of the twentieth century.⁸⁴ He expressed the feeling that there had been insufficient material available when he started his career as a piano teacher and composer, citing as exceptions the easiest pieces of J.S. Bach and the *Album für die Jugend* by Schumann (Suchoff 2002: 13). These were the two composers to whom he consciously paid tribute in some of the titles of the later *Mikrokozmosz* (1926-1939). Judit Péteri (1977 – see discography) writes:

The art of these two masters [Bach and Schumann] can be considered the direct prototype of *Mikrokosmos*: Schumann in the construction of miniature forms, the musical depiction of fleeting moods and little scenes, and in the portrayal of the child's sphere of emotion and thought; Bach in the Baroque strictness of development in the musical material.

Bartók, along with his compatriot Zoltán Kodály, started to construct an entirely new sound in the educational genre through his association with folk music.⁸⁵ He moved away from the Western

⁸⁴ This part of Bartók's output includes *Ten Easy Pieces* (1908), the two books of *For Children* (1908-1909), *The First Term at the Piano* (1913, in collaboration with Sándor Reschofsky), the *Sonatina*, *Romanian Folk Dances* and *Romanian Christmas Carols* (1915), and finally the monumental 153 pieces of *Mikrokozmosz* (1926-39, dedicated to his son Peter).

⁸⁵ In collaboration with Kodály, Bartók published a selection of Hungarian folksongs in 1906 (Beckles Willson 2001: 78). The composers provided the melodies of the original folksongs in this publication, but added their own accompaniments. In this chapter I focus more on Bartók's pedagogical contribution, as he wrote far more

European tradition and implemented the particular structural characteristics of Hungarian, Romanian, Slovakian and Bulgarian folk songs into all of his remaining piano works. Bartók wrote that he ‘tried to write some easy piano pieces [during the early years of the 20th century]. At that time the best thing to do would be to use folk tunes. Folk-melodies in general, have great musical value; so, at least the thematic value would be secured’ (Suchoff 2002: 13-14). The construction of the melodies became the epicentre of his teaching, and when he taught his son Peter during the late 1920s and early 1930s, he made him sing intervals and folk songs for six months before allowing him to touch the piano. He explained this method through the statement that ‘one cannot be a pianist without being a musician’ (Suchoff 2002: 15). For Bartók, folk music was a cultural element to which beginners could relate, prior to physically experiencing the mechanical aspect of playing.

Aside from his activities as a composer, pedagogue and ethnomusicologist, Bartók was a renowned concert pianist and interpreter of the music of J. S. Bach and Beethoven (Suchoff 2002: 10). In this capacity he edited several publications of works by Bach, including *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier* and *Notenbüchlein für Anna Magdalena Bach*.⁸⁶ In the introduction to his edition of the *Notenbüchlein* he drew up a catalogue of articulation markings, all of which he added to Bach’s score. Fischer (2001: 95) argues that these markings apply just as much to Bartók’s own works as they do to his Bach-editions. The catalogue brought together the articulation markings that had been developed since the eighteenth century, but provided a more detailed approach to the execution of each individual form of notation. Since the implications of each symbol are carefully described by the composer, the catalogue enables performers to garner a more precise notion of how certain phrases or polyphonic lines could be characterised effectively.

In the course of this chapter, I shall evaluate Bartók’s articulation catalogue and demonstrate how Grové integrated these markings into his African piano works in particular. Grové denied that he took stylistic inspiration from Bartók’s first String Quartet (Sz. 40) in the application of *ritornelli* in his own String Quartet *Song of the African Spirits* (1993) (Muller 2007: 21). He did, however,

piano works than Kodály. One of the few important piano works by Kodály is *Dances of Marosszék* (1927), where a series of folk melodies are combined with virtuosic techniques and rhapsodic structural devices.

⁸⁶ Bartók also edited works of Purcell, Couperin, D. Scarlatti, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, Mendelssohn, Schumann and other transcriptions of harpsichord music from the 17th and 18th centuries (Suchoff 2002:13). These editions served as popular educational material at the Academy of Music in Budapest (today the Liszt Academy).

acknowledge the possible influences that Bartók's piano music may have had on his own works for the instrument (Schoeman 2012c). In 2012, he discussed the importance of articulation in his piano works with me, and also expressed his admiration for Bartók's educational Bach-editions, which he had come across while teaching at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore (Schoeman 2012b and 2012c). I found Grové's fantasy *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (1994) to be a particularly illustrative case study for delineating his meticulous use of the different articulation markings that appear in Bartók's catalogue. Grové combined several forms of touch (articulation) with elements of traditional Venda and Nguni music. He thus amalgamates two seemingly disparate fields – the pianistic traditions of Europe and the indigenous rituals of Southern Africa.

Bartók published his Bach-editions at the beginning of an era during which a number of significant treatises on the mechanics of piano playing started to emerge. Kloppenburg (1951) summarised all of the prominent piano schools and methods from the eighteenth until the late nineteenth century (from early practitioners such as C.P.E. Bach up to Ludwig Deppe). He outlined the significant aspects in the teachings of some leading piano teachers such as Hummel, Clementi, Kalkbrenner, Czerny, Moscheles, Plaidy, Wieck, Thalberg and Kullak. These pianists focused more on a well-developed finger technique, some of them using restrictive devices such as the *guide-mains* and *chiroplast* to encourage (or impose) a stationary arm position. The piano as an instrument, however, continued to evolve and so did the repertoire. Clementi's English pianos already had a heavier action than the Viennese instruments played by Mozart and Hummel. Beethoven as well as composers such as Schumann, Chopin, Liszt and Brahms later started to write works that could not possibly be played with a stationary forearm. Liszt explicitly criticised the Lebert and Stark piano school for prescribing students to keep their hands still through the use of the *Handleiter* (hand guide or leader) by Bohrer (Kloppenburg 1951: 230). As the first notable interpreter of Beethoven's large-scale *Hammerklavier* Sonata, op. 106, he became an exponent of a more orchestral approach to piano playing. His own works often include extended chord or octave sequences, leaps and tremolos that strongly attest to the piano's increasing capability of imitating the orchestra. It became apparent that the larger muscles in the body would be needed to create sufficient sound volume, and teaching approaches during the second half of the nineteenth century started to encompass these considerations. Suchoff (2002: 16-17) drew attention to three distinct schools of thought that dominated piano-teaching around the turn of the nineteenth century. Although he rather simplified the extent of Theodor Leschitzky's methods, Suchoff nonetheless identified the emphasis on a percussive touch from the writings of the Viennese pedagogue's students. Leschitzky mainly encouraged a direct keyboard touch and resilience of the arms and the hands. By contrast, Tobias Matthay's piano school in

England cultivated touch species (see Chapter 1 of this thesis) that involved the use of a supple wrist, finger cushions and a less vertical approach; this can be described as non-percussive touch (Suchoff 2002: 16). Finally, Suchoff argued that Franz Liszt's teaching combined the directly percussive approach (which would later be used by Leschitzky) and the softer tone colours that would be absorbed by the methods of Matthay. The young Bartók gained access to these traditions through his teacher István Thomán, who studied with Liszt.

In 1905, the German piano teacher Rudolf Breithaupt wrote a radical treatise on the role of arm weight and muscular relaxation, entitled *Die Grundlage der natürlichen Klaviertechnik* (Ground principles of a natural piano technique). Geörgy Sándor (1981:37) saw this as the initiation of 'the so-called modern school of piano playing', but he disagreed with Breithaupt on the point that more sound is created by the application of weight. Instead, Sándor claimed that speed of touch in combination with the force of gravity are the active ingredients of sound production, whether soft or loud. He also criticised Breithaupt's emphasis on relaxation as a primary objective during playing, and suggested instead a more balanced approach to the use of the various muscles (Sándor 1981: 37, 181-182). In 1929, another piano teacher, Otto Ortmann, attempted to define scientifically the various touch forms in piano playing. He summarised them as follows: i.) Percussive, where speed of the finger changes during attack of the key, usually slow-fast-slow; ii.) A follow-through touch, where the finger consistently presses the key down to its maximum without changing speed, resulting in a more controlled sound.

Later pedagogues such as the Russian Heinrich Neuhaus (*The Art of Piano Playing*, 1958) as well as the Hungarians József Gát (*The Technique of Piano Playing*, 1958, rev. 1965) and Georgy Sándor (*On Piano Playing – Motion, Sound and Expression*, 1981) also published their findings on the mechanics of piano playing. They examined the previous piano schools and emphasised the essential aspects of technique that are needed to study and perform the canonical repertoire for the instrument. Neuhaus (1958: 86) provided a more empirical outline of the mechanics of touch, connecting corresponding symbols to each form: the energy or force with which the key is attacked (F), the height with which the hands and fingers are lifted (h), the speed of the hand and finger when they strike the key (v), and finally the mass that is formed through the involvement of the finger, hand, arm, shoulders etc. (m). He instilled in his students a constant striving towards a balance between

these elements.⁸⁷ Gát and Sándor employed photographic sequences to demonstrate posture as well as the positions and motions (both correct and incorrect) of the arms and hands. Sándor, a student of Bartók⁸⁸, clearly divided the technique of piano playing into a number of distinct areas, and attached letters/symbols to each of the required movements. His discussions of the physiological aspects of motion in playing are easily comprehensible, where Gát's detailed analysis of the muscles and ligaments sometimes come across as being overly technical and out of touch with performance practice. Gát, however, did make several insightful observations on the contraction of muscles in executing chords and skips.

In this chapter I shall apply the ideas of Neuhaus, Gát and Sándor in my proposed strategies for the realisation of technical elements in the piano works of Stefans Grové. For structural purposes, and in order to facilitate moving from one work and style period to another, I divide this chapter into different sections. I relate the technical elements in Grové's piano music to the eight pianistic principles that Neuhaus (1958: 112-140) set out in the fourth chapter of his book, and I further substantiate and clarify my outline by drawing on certain aspects in the writings of Gát and Sándor. Neuhaus mainly used examples from repertoire of the Baroque to the Romantic periods, with brief notes on the works of his Russian contemporaries Prokofiev and Shostakovich. Sándor also focused more on the standard repertoire prior to 1950, but his book was published 23 years after Neuhaus's, and he covered a few more modern examples from the piano music of a composer such as Alberto Ginastera. These traditional ideas on piano technique do not appear out of place in a discussion on Grové, whom Izak Grové (1998: 104) described as a 'moderate modernist'. Grové did not venture into the timbral concepts of the avant-garde, and the classical approach to keyboard touch constitutes the basis of his compositional thinking. He did not adopt the prepared piano techniques of John Cage, the forearm and elbow clusters of Helmut Lachenmann or extended sound effects such as hissing, piano string glissandi and vocal noises that can be found in the later works of George Crumb. One might add that Grové had already left America by the time that some of the more daring pianistic experiments were conducted in the 1970s by composers such as Crumb, Feldman, Rzewski and Albright.

⁸⁷ From 1922 until his death in 1964, Heinrich Neuhaus was a professor at the Moscow Conservatoire, where his pupils included some of the finest pianists of the twentieth (and early twenty-first) century: Sviatoslav Richter, Emil Gilels, Lev Naumov, Eliso Virsaladze and Radu Lupu.

⁸⁸ Indeed, Sándor was one of only ten people who attended Bartók's funeral in New York in 1945.

Although articulation and pedalling also form part of traditional pianistic principles, they are such substantial focal points for Grové that I have devoted two separate sections to them in this chapter. Neuhaus does not include pedalling in his 'periodic table' of eight technical elements and instead wrote a separate supplement to the fourth chapter of his book to address this topic. As I have mentioned above, I will be principally drawing on Bartók's articulation catalogue in order to delineate Grové's use of notational forms. The final section of this chapter contains a discussion of Grové's distinct contribution to the South African repertoire of children's pieces. Although the stylistic aspects of his UNISA examination works were discussed in Chapter 2, I go on to investigate their educational value. Other technically less challenging piano works of the later *Music from Africa* series, *Glimpses* (2004) and *Obstinacy* (2007), are also included in this category. It is worth stating that many of the technical solutions in this chapter are based on my own personal experiences. Other pianists may find alternative solutions to some of the challenges posed by this repertoire. The aim of this discussion is to open a debate on how an awareness of touch species and the physiological construction of the hands can benefit pianists (both professional and less experienced) in their pursuit of the mastery of works from Grové's vast pianistic oeuvre.

2. The realisation of technical principles in Grové's piano works with reference to Neuhaus, Gát and Sándor

In this section I utilise the general ideas on piano technique of Neuhaus, Gát and Sandor in order to delineate Grové's highly personal compositional approach to the instrument. The observations of these Hungarian and Russian pedagogues facilitate the construction of an argument on the extent of his achievements within the South African context and consequently within the international arena of piano composers. Performers can benefit from the attention to technical details, and it is helpful to understand the composer's wider oeuvre before attempting to interpret a single work. Neuhaus expresses his view on the breadth of prolific composers' piano music as follows:

From the point of view of statistics or, if you will, of phenomenology, there are exactly as many technical problems as there is piano music. Not only each composer, but also the various periods of his work present entirely different pianistic problems arising not only out of their content, but also their form and pianistic writing (compare Beethoven's *Pathétique* op. 13 with the *Hammerklavier* op. 106, or Scriabin's Preludes out of op. 11 with his Tenth Sonata op. 70, or Chopin's Rondo in E flat major op. 16 with the Sonata in B minor op. 58, or with many of the études, etc.) (Neuhaus 1958: 112)

Neuhaus's statement can in this context be connected to the music of Grové, as his many piano works span a period of more than six decades and present a wealth of pianistic problems. By

studying and performing several works, it becomes easier to internalise the composer's technical vocabulary and to accumulate a broader understanding of his style. At the same time, it may also be helpful to break down the works into smaller technical details in an attempt to facilitate the mechanical process. It is in exactly this area that the eight basic technical principles in the fourth chapter of Neuhaus's *The Art of Piano Playing* can serve as guidelines to several corners of Grové's pianistic output. These principles are further substantiated and clarified by the formulations of Gát and Sándor.

2.1 The reiteration of a single note

The first technical element is the execution of a single note on the piano. Neuhaus equated this to the way an actor expresses several meanings by changing the voice during the utterance of a single word or sound (like 'Ah'). In order to obtain a large colouristic vocabulary in performance, a pianist has to experiment by playing one note in many different ways. The articulation could be adjusted from a short staccato to a long tenuto. Various types of touch species are to be employed, rendering the playing of one note a physiological experience just as much as it is an aural one. In this way, the pianist can acquaint himself with the dynamic varieties that stem from various hand and finger positions. The use of the full weight of the arm will inevitably create a different colour from when only the hands or fingers are employed. For a short brilliant sound, the fingertips are more appropriate whereas the finger cushions are helpful in achieving a softer tone. Thus, the complexity does not only lie in the use of arm and hand weight, but also in the positioning of the hands and fingers. Neuhaus also encouraged students and performers to change the fingering during their experimentation with one single note as well as to execute it by adding or omitting the pedal.⁸⁹ This could encompass more challenging concepts, such as rapidly-repeated notes, by using either the same or different fingers or through dividing the notes between the hands. Sándor came to the conclusion that there are three different motions that may be employed to play a single note: 'free fall', 'staccato' and 'thrust'. In each of these motions, the position of the fingers, hands and arms will be different. Firstly, in the 'free fall' motion (to which Sándor attached the symbol 'A') the whole arm is lifted and dropped onto the key. The shoulders should be relaxed and the fingertips have to be positioned vertically upon impact with the keys. During contact, the forearm muscles

⁸⁹ Neuhaus does not specify which of the three pedals could be used, but I would assume that experimentation with all three pedals should be encouraged. In Grové's works, the pianist has to regularly employ the sustaining, *sostenuto* and *una corda* pedals.

instantaneously fix and enable ‘the fingers to transfer the full impact of the fall to the keys’ (Sándor 1981: 108). This fixing only lasts a split-second, and the muscles are not involved in the downward fall of the arm. This is achieved purely through the force of gravity. Sándor (1981: 46) also observed that ‘the joints of the fingers and wrist should be elastic, neither stiff nor loose’. The second motion, ‘staccato’ (to which Sándor attached the symbol ‘D’), will be discussed in more detail in the section on octaves and intervallic sequences later in this chapter. For now it suffices to summarise this concept by referring to the ‘throwing’ motion of the upper arm, forearm and fingers (Sándor 1981: 94). The complete playing mechanism moves swiftly up and down, leading to a brief impact between the fingertips and the keys. Thirdly, there is the ‘thrusting’ motion (to which Sándor attached the symbol ‘E’) during which the fingers are already in position on the keys. The flexor and extensor muscles in the forearms contract simultaneously, probably in combination with a slight forward movement of the upper arms and leaning of the torso. The key is thus depressed without any lifting of the hand or arm.

Grové’s pianistic oeuvre includes several examples that strongly relate to the first of Neuhaus’s technical principles and to the three above-mentioned motions described by Sándor. Discussions on the variety of touch on one single note for the purposes of timbral variety can alternate with an investigation of the composer’s use of the repeated note technique. Grové’s study for the left hand *Tweespalt* (from *Four Piano Pieces*, 1975) relies on the thumb to produce a constant B flat. It is necessary to experiment thoroughly with tone control on this one note, as there are several dynamic fluctuations in the score. Unlike his later works, where Grové became more meticulous about the notation of pedal markings, he only singled out the use of the sustaining pedal. Even the opening passage of the work was composed in such a way that timbral layering would be essential in order to maintain the character of the single B flat. The *sostenuto* (third/middle) pedal should thus be depressed at the opening, enabling the pianist to utilise vibrato techniques on the sustaining (right) pedal. Intervallic relationships and the subtle permutations in the left-hand part will be transmitted more effectively in this way (Example 86).⁹⁰ The dynamics of the B flat should constantly be adjusted as per the instructions of the composer and the thumb needs to be repositioned in order to adhere to the demands of timbral variety. The free fall motion can be used effectively when the B flat has to be played with a sudden *forte* dynamic. An example of this can be found in bar 4 of *Tweespalt*, where the hand has to be lifted and then dropped onto the B flat after the double bar line

⁹⁰ See also Chapter 2 for a discussion of permutation techniques in the opening bars of *Tweespalt*.

Example 86: Stefans Grové, *Four Piano Pieces* (1975), Tweespalt, bb. 1-5, timbral manipulation of the upper B flat through the positioning of the thumb, vibrato pedalling (1st/sustaining pedal) as well as the sostenuto pedal

Sanguinies ♩ = 66

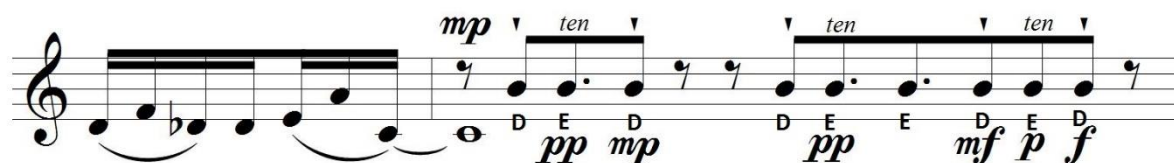
The musical score for 'Sanguinies' is written for piano and voice. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 66. The piano part is in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody is played in the right hand, with a dynamic of *p* (piano). The bass line is in the left hand, with a dynamic of *p* (piano). The score includes a section marked 'A' with dynamics *f* (forte), *p* (piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), and *pp* (pianissimo). The vocal part is written for a soloist (sost. Solo) and a first soloist (1st Solo). The soloist part is marked with a wavy line and 'etc.' (etcetera). The first soloist part is marked with a wavy line and 'etc.' (etcetera).

sost. Solo. *8^{va}* -----

1st Solo. ~~~~~ etc.

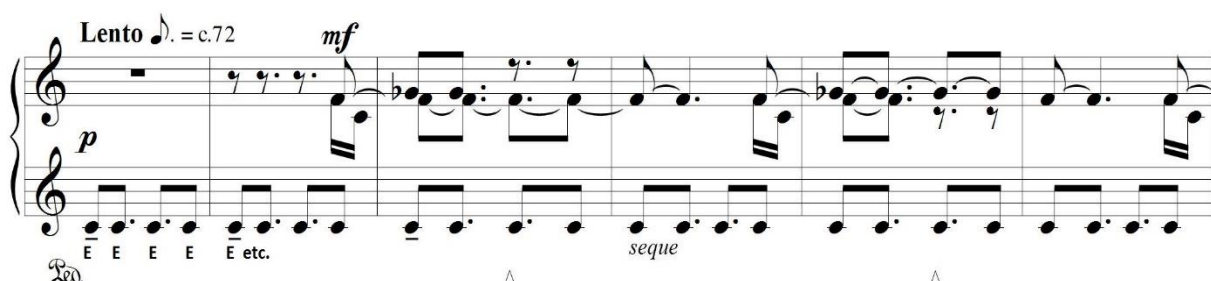
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Example 87: Stefans Grové, *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003), bb. 40b-41, different dynamics on each repetition of a single note



By contrast, Grové often constructed quiet ostinato patterns through the repetition of one note. In these instances, the performer should avoid larger physical movements (as are necessary in Example 86) in order to achieve a more homogeneous sound. In the second movement of *Haunting Music* (*Wandering through an Enchanted Forest*, 2010), a repeated C in the left hand contributes to the hypnotic character of the music. The double escapement of the piano should assist the player in being able not to release the key after it is pressed down by means of a subtle thrusting motion (indicated with symbol 'E' in Example 88).⁹¹ Non-percussive touch forms in repeated notes can lead to a potentially much softer dynamic level. This will also enhance the differentiation between the polyphonic lines in the opening of *Wandering through and Enchanted Forest*.

Example 88: Stefans Grové, *Haunting Music* (2010), first movement (*Strange Valley in the Mists*), bb. 1-6, a quiet repeated-note ostinato in the left-hand part of the second movement



The second category of the execution of a single note in Grové's works also relates to ostinato patterns, but within the context of faster tempi and a direct key stroke (i.e. not a slow or gradual attack of the key, but a fast direct action). Aggressive accents imbue these passages with a percussive tone and virtuosic character. During discussions with the composer in 2011 and 2012, he indicated to me that the aggressive ostinato patterns in his music point towards the virtuosic traits in

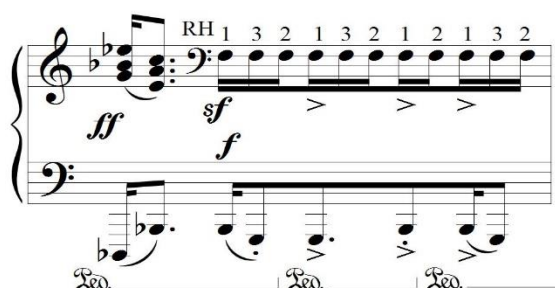
⁹¹ All of the repeated Cs in the left hand of Example 87 are executed with a thrusting motion. It may be helpful to apply more weight to the notes with tenuto markings (by applying a swift forward movement of the upper arm) in order to distinguish them from the notes without any articulation markings.

the piano literature. Liszt's music often requires a well-developed repeated note technique, but Grové suggested that he instead became aware of this effect through the works of Prokofiev, particularly his *Toccata*, op. 11. In *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90) and *Nonyana* (1994), the percussively-repeated notes are either performed with various fingers in one hand or they are divided between the hands. In Examples 89 and 90, I annotate potential fingering solutions for the repeated note passages in *Dance of the Witch Doctor* (*Songs and Dances from Africa*, no. 5) and *Nonyana*. My fingering solution of placing the thumb on the first note of each semiquaver group (Example 90) corresponds to the composer's rhythmic accents in the left-hand part.

Example 89: Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), fifth movement (*Dance of the Witchdoctor*), bb. 1-2, repeated notes divided between the hands



Example 90: Stefans Grové, *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (1994), b. 69, repeated notes in the right hand



2.2 Five-finger hand positions and ornamentation

The second of Neuhaus's principles is a pluralistic view of the execution of more than one note in succession. This can include anything from two notes up to the five notes of a single hand position. Neuhaus explained the value of Frédéric Chopin's method of acquainting the beginner pianist with the most natural five-finger hand position on the following notes (Example 91):

Example 91: Frédéric Chopin, a suggestion for a comfortable five-finger hand position (Neuhaus 1958: 84)

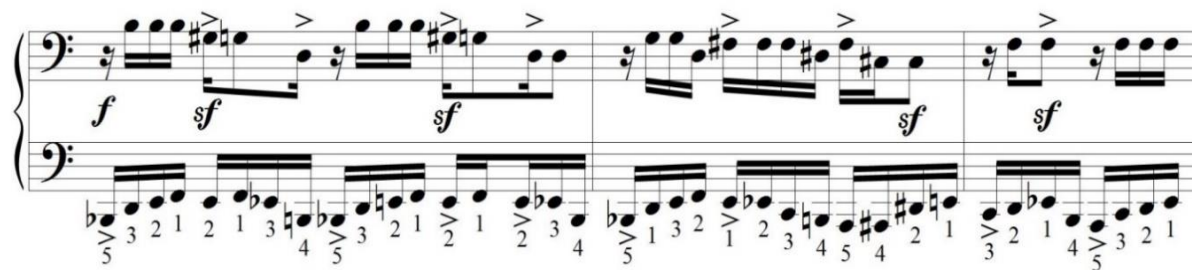


Chopin's hand position theory may at first seem complicated, as it involves the combination of black and white keys as well as whole tone intervals – concepts that are seldom introduced in piano music for beginners. In practice, however, the formula is a more comfortable position than the consecutive five white keys (C, D, E, F and G) that are often incorporated into the first piano lesson. In the latter case, the bridge of the hand is not supported by the higher keyboard topography of the black keys. The arc of the hand has to be adjusted in order to bring the fingertips in alignment, resulting in the slight overcompensation and a potential stiffness in the tendons that may impede the production of an even tone. Neuhaus regarded evenness of tone as the most important objective in the performance of a note group. Grové employed only regular finger patterns in his earliest piano works, including *Five Piano Pieces* (1945). Motivic construction became a particular priority in the *Toccata* of 1966, and this is the most significant connection between his music and Neuhaus's second technical element. Short groups of quavers or semiquavers often follow each other in rapid succession within Grové's linear toccata textures. Although the patterns are unorthodox and seldom arranged in a stepwise manner, they usually lie within a comfortable hand position. The tone control in these motifs rely upon the correct choice of fingering and the maintenance of the hand position that a formula like that of Chopin would require (where the bridge of the hand forms a supportive arc). In a similar manner, the passages are constantly modified and unexpected accents appear throughout.

By way of example, I would like to highlight selected passages from *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90) and *Nonyana* (1994). Both works were conceived as virtuosic display pieces and include several motivic passages where equal finger strength is a requirement. The *Songs and Dances* even include the subtitle, 'Seven Etudes for Piano', which may hint at Grové's subconscious awareness of technical challenges. On an interpretative level, it would be problematic to regard the short motifs in his passagework as mere finger exercises. The priority should fall on the characterisation and the evocation of the composer's intended timbre. At the same time, it is not possible to perform these etudes without understanding the underlying hand positions and structuring of each motif. By extracting such passages and practising them separately, particularly those in three of the fast

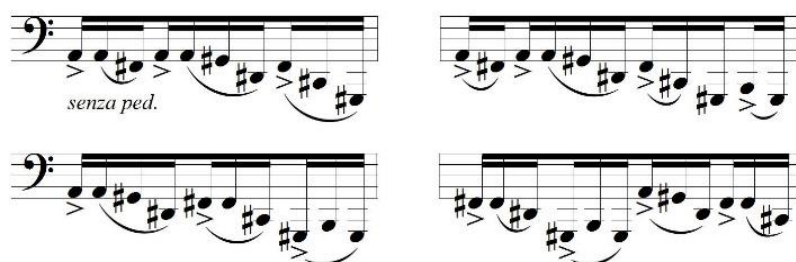
movements (nos. 3, 5 and 7), the performer can strive for a brilliant transparency. A study of the technical construction of the etudes may also instil, in the subconscious mind of the performer, certain psychological cornerstones that facilitate the potential memorisation of the pieces. In Example 92, I indicate a selected semiquaver passage from the *Greeting the New Day* (no. 3) of *Songs and Dances from Africa*. The left hand has to perform regular groups of four semiquavers (only one group includes five) containing unexpected accents. My fingering suggestions are added, and it becomes evident that the accents cannot always be performed with the stronger thumb or third finger. The five-finger hand position should be maintained here (the hand stays more or less in one position without the passing over of the 2nd to 5th fingers or the passing under of the thumb), except for a slight adjustment at the opening of the second bar.

Example 92: Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), third movement (*Greeting the New Day*), bb. 5-7a



A second example is taken from *Nonyana* (1994), where the persistent melodic and rhythmic permutation becomes apparent in the left-hand passagework (Example 93a). It can be helpful for the performer to understand these permutations, while at the same time developing strategies for the appropriate placement of the hand. The note groups are more problematic, as they include repeated notes that involve the use of the thumb and forefinger (Example 93b). In the last bar of this example, the second note group is particularly challenging due to the inevitable use of the weaker fourth and fifth fingers. In such cases, Grové provided the pianist with the opportunity to strengthen all of the fingers of the hand.

Example 93(A): Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), bb. 42-45, permutations in the left hand



Example 93(B): Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), bb. 42-45, fingering suggestions for the permutations

The image shows four measures of a piano score. The top staff is in bass clef and contains chords and rests, with dynamic markings *p*, *sf*, and *f*. The bottom staff is in bass clef and contains a continuous melodic line with detailed fingering suggestions (1-5) for the left hand. The first measure is marked 'senza ped.' and the second measure is marked 'poco a poco cresc.'. The fourth measure is marked *f*.

As Neuhaus's second technical element comprises any series of notes within the range of the five-finger hand position, he also included the study of trills and other ornaments in this discussion. Two methods of practising and performing trills are clearly outlined: a) through involvement of the fingers only, and b) through rotation of the hand and wrist (a shaking action). Neuhaus justifiably claimed that esoteric trills in the piano works of the Impressionist composers, where the sustaining pedal plays a supporting colouristic role, would be more suitably executed using the first method. When lifting the fingers alone, it is possible to stay closer to the key and even to rely on the double escapement of the instrument. Sándor classified the trill as part of the rotational motion in playing, especially when the player opts for the fingering combinations of 1-3, 2-4 or 3-5 (Sándor 1981: 128).

He advised that the fingers should be raised slightly during the trill in order to allow the forearm to transmit an 'axial throw', leading to greater clarity and brilliance.

There are very few trill markings (tr.) in Grové's piano music from the 1940s until his last complete solo work (*My Seasons*, 2012). The only instances where he applied these traditional ornamentation symbols are in his stylistic imitations of Byrd, Bach, Scarlatti and Schubert in the set *An Experience in Musical Styles*.⁹² In the Scarlatti imitation we find the regular trill sign (tr.) alongside upper and lower mordents (Example 94).

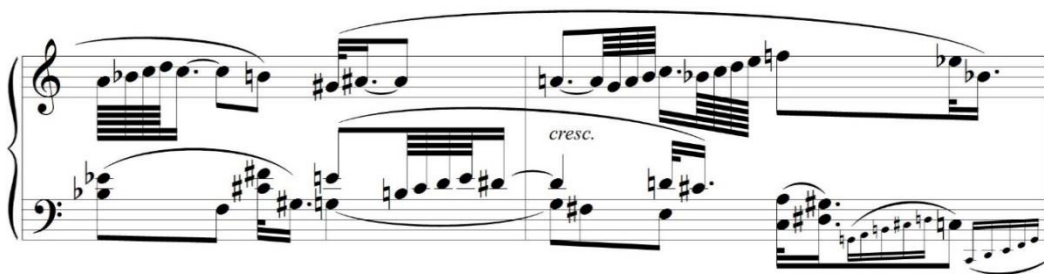
Example 94: Stefans Grové, *An Experience in Musical Styles* (ca. 1970), *Esercizio* in the style of Domenico Scarlatti, bb. 18-20



At the same time, Grové's neo-Baroque works from the 1950s include several written-out embellishments. In the *Pastorale* (no. 2 from *Three Piano Pieces*, 1951), he started to investigate the colouristic possibilities of *arabesque* figurations. The embellishments consist either of 4-5 consecutive notes or they take on the form of a written-out mordent. Example 95 includes these two forms in bb. 19-20 (Example 95a) and bb. 27-28 (Example 95b) of the *Pastorale*.

Example 95: Stefans Grové, *Three Piano Pieces* (1951), second movement (*Pastorale*), two forms of ornamentation

(A) bb. 19-20



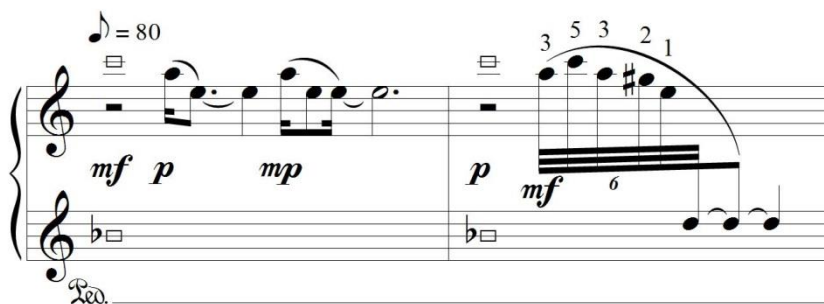
⁹² I have discussed the Schubert imitation in Chapter 2. It is also worth mentioning that Grové does not include any Classical trills or other ornaments in his Mozart and Beethoven imitations.

(B) bb. 27b-28 (right hand part)

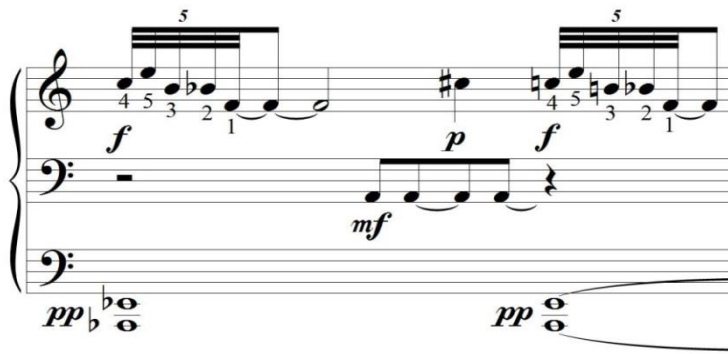


Grové also drew inspiration from the *arabesques* in Hindemith's piano works. The latter composer's *Suite 1922* for piano includes several of these *cambiata*⁹³ motifs, usually with a sextuplet rhythm. Grové employed similar figurations in the above-mentioned *Pastorale* (1951), which could be compared to the first movement of the later *Haunting Music* (2010), where permutation techniques and transpositions are used to modify the *arabesques*. In Example 96, the relationship between the *arabesques* and Neuhaus's second technical principle becomes apparent, as these figurations can each be grouped into five-finger hand positions (I have added the fingering in the example editorially to demonstrate this). Sándor's principle of the playing of a note group encompassed by a legato slur entails that the wrist and forearm should be adjusted to support each finger (Sándor 1981: 53-57). The forearm moves laterally to maintain a line between the elbow and the active finger, and the wrist moves up and down subtly for each note in the figuration to be comfortably played with the correct fingering. Performed in this way, there will be no tension when playing any note groups as the antagonistic muscles are fully supporting each other.

Example 96: Stefans Grové, *Haunting Music* (2010), first movement (Strange Valley in the Mists), bb. (1), 2 & 5, arabesques with my fingering solutions included (five-finger hand positions)

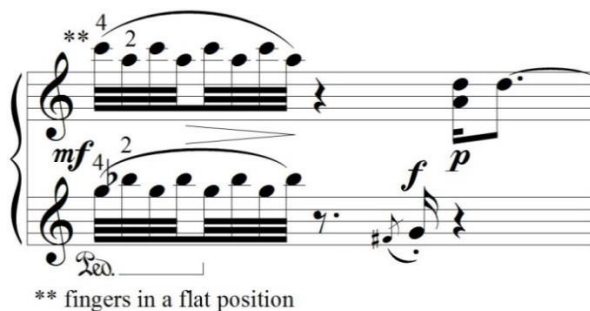


⁹³ CPE Bach (1762: 144) uses the term *Doppelschlag* to denote the *cambiata*. This terminology is probably closer to Grové's conception of the figuration, as he regarded CPE Bach's *Versuch über die wahre Art Clavier zu spielen* as a very important guideline to performance (Grové 1960: 8/Schoeman 2011).

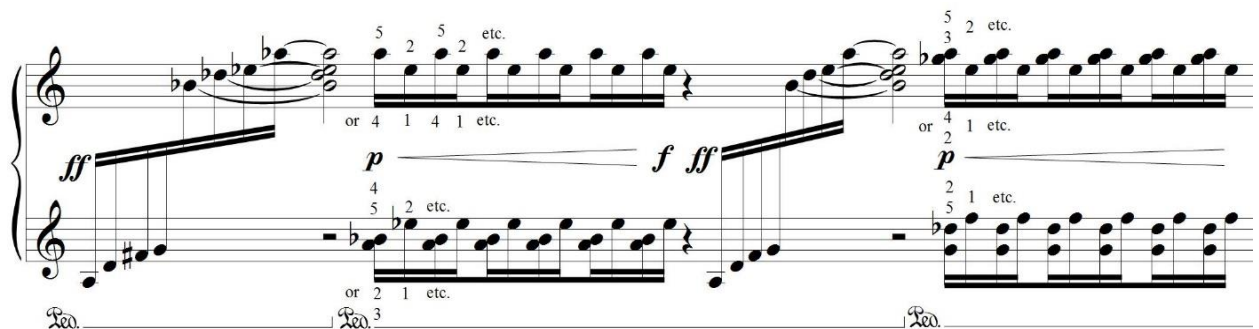


Other forms of ornamentation that appear in many of Grové's piano works include tremolo effects and acciaccaturas. As I stated in my discussion of *Glimpses* (2004) in Chapter 2, the short tremolo passages are symbolic representations of the ululation in the praise singing of Xhosa women. In reality, this is the closest that Grové came to the trills (tr.) that Neuhaus discussed. The underlying technical principles remain the same in most of Grové's ornamentation and the pianist should experiment with the hand positioning in order to obtain the desired sound effect. The tremolos in question (Example 97a) require a more Impressionistic timbral approach, and should be performed only by means of finger action and not with larger rotary movements (i.e. Neuhaus's esoteric trill theory). Grové's *Haunting Music* (2010) is a later example of a work that includes several tremolo passages. Example 97b demonstrates how he utilised not only single notes but also added major second, major third and perfect fifth intervals into the fabric of these shimmering effects. It is open to debate whether these passages should be performed by the weaker fourth and fifth fingers in a flatter position, or by the stronger third fingers and thumbs. The performer ultimately has to decide upon the most suitable sound quality, and I therefore include both fingering options in Example 97b below. Sándor underlined the principle of hand and fingering adjustments in trill and tremolo passages, adding that 'the fingers can be curved or extended, the wrist can be low or high, and a variety of finger combinations can be used' (Sándor 1981: 137).

Example 97(A): Stefans Grové, *Glimpses* (2004), fifth miniature (The masked Weaver's masquerade), b. 1, tremolo



Example 97(B): Stefans Grové, *Haunting Music* (2010), first movement (*Strange Valley in the Mists*), b. 25, fast tremolos with two sets of fingerings



As noted, acciaccaturas enjoyed increasing priority throughout Grové's piano works, particularly those of the African period. The composer did not regard acciaccaturas merely as embellishments, as they are pivotal in the creation of timbre as well as rhythmic and intervallic expression. In a pedagogical context, there is not much to be said about the benefits of playing acciaccaturas as they do not necessarily require complicated thought processes with regard to sound production. The challenging aspect of Grové's acciaccaturas is to differentiate between the distinct guises that they assume in his works. Acciaccaturas can be integrated into the melodic line, as I indicated in the brief discussion on birdsong imitation and intervallic accentuation in Chapter 2. Grové's fascination with early music practices stimulated the variation of these melodic acciaccaturas, and he often expanded them into two- or three-note appoggiaturas. Secondly, he regularly employed the left hand to play the acciaccatura in preparation of a right-hand melody note or chord. The space between the registers of the two hands usually emphasises the effect of these acciaccaturas. A third application manifests itself in the tying over of the acciaccatura to a longer note, usually accompanied by a short staccato timbre in the other hand. By way of example, I refer to the third movement (*Hobgoblin at Midnight*) from *Haunting Music*. In the middle section of this three-part structure (Example 98), Grové integrated all of these various acciaccaturas which may be separately identified in the score with letters attached to each: melodic acciaccaturas (A); acciaccaturas expanded into a two-note appoggiatura (*Doppelvorschlag*, according to CPE Bach 1762: 145 – 'B'); acciaccaturas spread between the hands (C); acciaccaturas that are tied over to the accompanying chord, with a contrasting articulation marking in the other hand (D).

Example 98: Stefans Grové, *Haunting Music* (2010), third movement (*Hobgoblin at Midnight*), acciaccaturas

bb. 41b-46a:

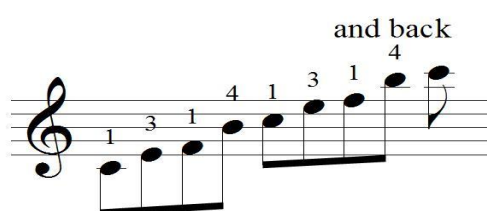
bb. 48-49:

2.3 The performance of scale passages

The third technical element that Neuhaus delineated is the performance of scales. In this category, the pianist is introduced to the flexible movements of the hand as a result of ‘turning the thumb under or passing the whole hand over the thumb’ (Neuhaus 1958: 119). My discussions of the technical strategies that may be adopted for the patterns and note groups in 2.2 pre-empted this element in some way, but I would now like to focus on the repositioning of the hand in the seventh etude (*Dance of the Wind Spirit*) of *Songs and Dances from Africa*. Neuhaus’s description focuses on the challenging scales in the Classical and Romantic repertoire, and he named Chopin’s *Prelude* in B flat minor, op. 28, no. 16 as one of the most significant examples. As Grové did not utilise traditional tonalities, there are no conventional scales in his piano music (except for brief instances in the early *Five Piano Pieces* as well as *An Experience in Musical Styles*). Nonetheless, it may be helpful to take

Neuhaus's preparatory exercises into account when playing certain passages in Grové's later oeuvre. The adjustment of stable hand positions often occurs in the aforementioned final movement (no. 7) from *Songs and Dances from Africa*. On a programmatic level, the depiction of the 'wind spirit' necessitates a seamless movement of semiquavers in order to maintain the mysterious character of the work. The correct fingering and hand position may support the performer in obtaining the required effect. Neuhaus provided a technical formula that assists the pianist in taking difficult passages apart and reconstructing them. In the following exercise he omitted certain steps of the C major scale and emphasised the shifting of the thumb (Example 99):

Example 99: Heinrich Neuhaus, a preparatory exercise for the shifting of the thumb and gradually change the hand position in the C major scale (Neuhaus 1958: 119)



Sándor devoted a substantial part of his book to the performance of passage work (including scales and arpeggios). One of the aspects of fingering that he often stressed was that the thumb should not move and play underneath the palm of the hand when shifting from one hand position to another (Sándor 1981: 58, 63, 71). In order to avoid that, he advised that the upper arms and forearms should support the hand in moving vertically and horizontally in order for the thumb to position itself next to the hand. If the thumb is excessively bent under the palm, it will not only cause tension in the muscles, but also cause unwanted accents that disturb the phrasing. Sándor also described how the alignment of the flexors and extensors in the forearm should gently be adjusted according to the particular finger that is in use (Sándor 1981: 55-57), an aspect to which I have already referred in relation to the *arabesques* in Grové's later works (see Example 96 above). The ideal would be to form an almost straight line between the elbow and the fingers. This will, of course, be affected by the height of the wrist as well as the distance of the upper arm from the torso. Slight changes should occur depending on the register of the keyboard.

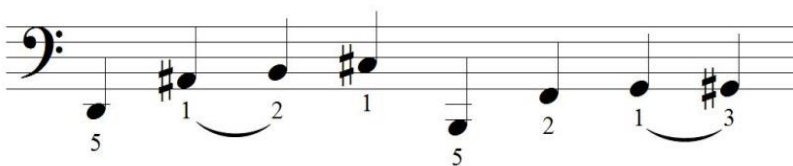
Grové's *Dance of the Wind Spirit* includes a variety of modal patterns in the left hand that can be subdivided in such a way as to facilitate the changes of hand positions between note groups. One such passage in bar 10 can be easily mastered by means of the correct fingering and a simple preparatory exercise like that of Neuhaus, whilst keeping in mind the natural hand position and the

support from the larger levers that Sándor prescribed (Example 100a).⁹⁴ This preparatory exercise may seem uncomfortable at first, as the second finger has to be placed rapidly over the thumb (from the black key A# to the white key B). This will, however, secure a fluent movement between the semiquaver groups and the hand will be able to stretch from c# to B, more easily. With the necessary lateral and vertical adjustment of the hand and arm, this movement can be executed in an organic way and without any muscular tension.

Example 100(A): Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), seventh movement (*Dance of the Wind Spirit*), bb. 10-11



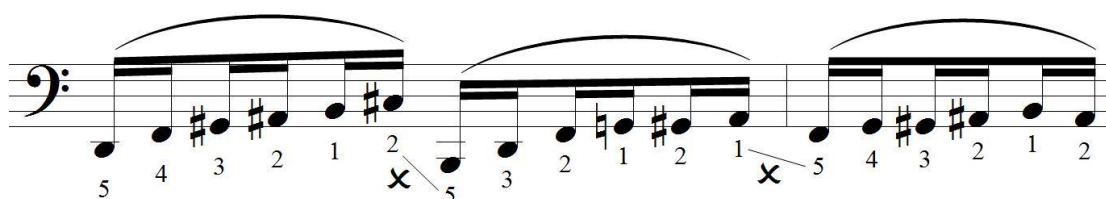
Preparatory exercise for the left hand passage of the above extract:



In Example 100b, I provide a problematic fingering that may initially appear to be more comfortable. This five-finger hand position would be recommended if the first six notes stood in isolation, but the choice of fingering results in a difficult crossing over of the second finger. The large leap between the second and fifth finger (c# to B) may cause a disruption in the flow of the music and also lead to tension in the hand.

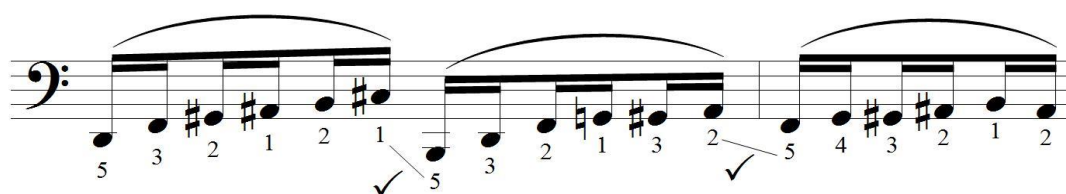
⁹⁴ This exercise is notated in crotchets, but can of course be played increasingly faster in order to prepare the hand for the crossing of the fingers over the thumb and to facilitate the large stretch between the c# and the low B.

Example 100(B): Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), seventh movement (*Dance of the Wind Spirit*), bb. 10-11a, a potentially more difficult fingering in the left-hand scale passages



The first solution (Example 100c), despite the slightly uncomfortable crossing of the second finger over the thumb (4th and 5th notes), enables a smoother transition between the note groups. Additionally, I suggest an improved fingering for the join between bars 10 and 11:

Example 100(C): Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), seventh movement (*Dance of the Wind Spirit*), bb. 10-11a, a better, more idiomatic fingering for the left-hand scale passages



2.4 The lateral adjustments of the hands in arpeggios or broken chords

Through the discussion of lateral movements of the hands in scales, Neuhaus rapidly moved on to his fourth element – arpeggios and broken chords. As with scales, the importance of evenness and flexibility is emphasised and Neuhaus prescribed etudes by Czerny, Chopin, Liszt, Scriabin, Rachmaninov, Debussy and Stravinsky as helpful materials in the pursuit of developing reliable arpeggio-playing. Unfortunately he did not specify any repertoire, except for two short examples from Czerny's *School of Velocity* and *The Art of Finger Dexterity*. In most cases, Neuhaus appeared to be sceptical about preconceived teaching and practising methods. He held that the student should fully comprehend the musical value and purpose of mastering a certain technical concept, and avoid mere mechanical exercise. With this in mind, he suggested that pianists extract examples of certain technical 'problems' from the vast repertoire and practise them separately. Similarly, Sándor also demonstrated the various motions that are required in piano playing by referring to examples from the standard repertoire for the instrument and not from studies or exercises that only serve a purely technical function, such as those of Hanon, Pischna and Czerny (Sándor 1981: 189). He wrote: 'once

you have mastered these motions [by slowly playing the short technical extracts that Sándor provided] don't bother practicing exercises any more: go right on to repertoire. The reason why I have not submitted here the usual, copious assortment of exercises ... is because they might induce mechanical practicing, which is mostly a waste of time' (Sándor 1981: 72).⁹⁵

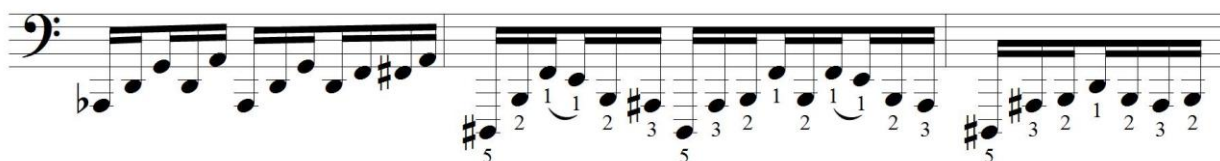
This idea can be taken a step further by comparing certain works within composers' oeuvres. Notable examples include Mendelssohn, Chopin, Liszt, Debussy, Rachmaninoff, Scriabin, Bartók and Prokofiev who all wrote etudes as well as many other works such as sonatas and character pieces. Although their etudes are intended as concert repertoire, they were often conceived to present certain technical or interpretative challenges in piano playing. These particular technical challenges intermittently appear in many of their other works as well. In terms of arpeggio-playing in Debussy's music, it would be equally helpful to practise the *Toccata* from *Pour le Piano* (1901) as it is to focus on *Les arpèges composés* (no. 11) from *Douze Études* (1915). As far as the Romantic repertoire is concerned, Chopin's Etude in C major, op. 10, no. 1 was composed in order to broaden the pianist's stretch in right-hand arpeggio-playing. There are, however, many easier examples of this technique in his *Waltzes* that would serve just as well for pedagogical purposes and would be more suitable for less experienced players.

Grové's *Songs and Dances from Africa* may well be 'piano etudes', but many of his other works include similar technical problems that could be just as beneficial to practise. His unconventional use of harmony led him not to write traditional arpeggios or broken chords, but the adaptation of the hand (and arm) in order rapidly to cover the various registers of the keyboard is an essential aspect of Neuhaus's fourth element as well as Sándor's description of scale-playing that can be attached to his works. One of the functionalities of broken chords and arpeggios, is that the hand opens up gradually and this enables the pianist to develop a larger stretch. Grové consciously applied this principle and integrated it into his motivic passage work in both *Songs and Dances from Africa* and *Nonyana* (Example 101a and 101b). Not only does the hand cover wide leaps in these examples, but it is often also necessary to move rapidly from one position to another. This results in the thumb

⁹⁵ Johann Nepomuk Hummel explicitly advised pianists to practise no more than three hours per day in his lengthy treatise on piano playing (*Ausführliche theoretisch-praktische Anweisungen zum Pianofortespiel*, 1828). He believed it to be unlikely that one could concentrate for longer and that it would induce merely mechanical and uninspired playing with little results (Kloppenburg 1951: 145).

having to transfer very quickly to another key with minimal disruption to the phrasing or the required legato articulation.

Example 101(A): Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), fifth movement (*Dance of the Witchdoctor*), bb. 20-22a



Example 101(B): Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), bb. 67-68

When attempting the execution of the legato slurs that accompany the motifs in both the right and left hand parts in Example 100b above, it is not only helpful to devise comfortable fingering solutions to obtain clarity, but also to consider the positioning of the forearm and wrist. Sándor wrote that ‘a real legato can be accomplished only by a unifying motion of the arm (that is, of the forearm and upper arm). When we see a slur ... we begin the phrase with a relatively low wrist position and end it with a somewhat higher wrist’ (Sándor 1981: 67). According to Sándor (1981: 68) this concept even overrides the usual idea that the wrist should normally be slightly lowered when the thumb is playing (due to its naturally lower position in relation to the other fingers of the hand).⁹⁶ I have added upward and downward arrows in Example 101B to indicate the positioning of the wrist in the legato passage work of both hands. Sándor used similar annotations for this purpose in many of the music examples that he included in his book. He also identified a variety of factors to keep in mind

⁹⁶ Again I refer back to the discussion of *arabesque*-motifs in Grové’s *Haunting Music* (see Example 95).

when playing legato passages, including the subtle use of the *una corda* pedal to assist in phrasing off a group (Sándor 1981: 69). Grové's legato articulation slurs will come across more effectively if each group ends a little softer than it began, thus incorporating a subtle diminuendo within each one. In the passage shown in Example 100b, this may be achieved through the constant depressing and releasing of the *una corda* pedal (indicated with u.c.), especially as the dynamic marking here is *piano*. In the opening movement of the Concerto for Cello, Piano and Orchestra (*Bushman Prayers*, 2013), Grové included an extended solo piano section that comprises a continuous series of legato quaver groups (Example 101c). Here the composer evidently used legato slurs to emphasise the motivicism in this passage between bars 15 and 25. Except for a few *sforzando* markings, there are no dynamic markings present here. The performer has to work out a strategy to build up to the louder brass entry in bar 26 systematically. At any rate, it seems necessary to experiment with the positioning of the arm and wrist to differentiate between various legato slurs in this passage.

Example 101(C): Stefans Grové, Concerto for Cello, Piano and Orchestra (*Bushman Prayers*, 2013), first movement, piano part, bb. 15-22

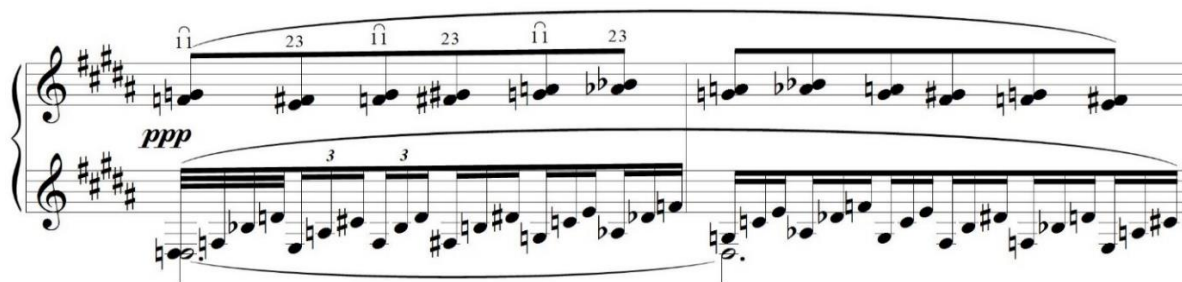
The musical score for the piano part, measures 15-22, is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 15-18) is in 7/8 time and features a continuous series of legato quaver groups. A dashed line labeled '8vb' indicates an octave transposition. The second system (measures 19-22) is in 6/8 time and continues the legato quaver groups. The dynamic marking 'sf' (sforzando) appears at the end of measure 22.

2.5 The performance of successive intervals, with specific reference to octave-playing

Neuhaus's fifth technical element encompasses the performance of all intervals: any two notes together, ranging from seconds to octaves (and sometimes also ninths and tenths for pianists with larger hands). Curiously, he did not include examples from Impressionism, a period in which composers investigated dissonant intervals such as consecutive seconds. For example, Ravel employed parallel major seconds in the third movement (*Scarbo*) of *Gaspard de la Nuit* (1905); it is not an easy task to perform these figurations with the right hand alone. Grové demonstrated an

early awareness of second-intervals by incorporating them in *Scaramouche* from *Five Piano Pieces* (1945). In contrast to Ravel, he divided the two notes of the interval between the hands and turned the parallel seconds into two simultaneous scale patterns. The speed in the Grové-extract (Example 102b) is also faster than that of the two bars from Ravel's *Scarbo* (Example 102a), making this division all the more essential. The challenge lies in performing the parallel seconds with sufficient clarity and evenness.

Example 102(A): Maurice Ravel, *Gaspard de la Nuit* (1905), third movement (*Scarbo*), bb. 448-449



Example 102(B): Stefans Grové, *Five Piano Pieces* (1945), third movement (*Scaramouche*), bb. 20-22



In the later African piano works of Grové, it is often required to play consecutive third and fourth intervals with one hand. *Yemoja*, the last movement of *Images from Africa* (1999), is one example where such passages are combined with contrapuntal textures. The challenge lies not only in clearly enunciating the intervals in the low registers of the piano, but also adhering to the short staccato articulation markings. Grové facilitated this section slightly through the use of a stable rhythmic quaver pattern (3+2+3), further accentuated by *sforzando* indications (Example 103).

Example 103: Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), *Yemoja*, bb. 33-35,⁹⁷ with fingering suggestions in the left hand

The musical score for Example 103 is written in bass clef. It features a fast, repetitive left-hand ostinato pattern. The right hand has a melodic line with some grace notes. Dynamic markings include *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *sf* (sforzando). Fingering suggestions for the left hand are indicated by numbers 1-5 below the notes. A 'ten' marking is present above the right hand's melody in the third measure.

The fingering provided in Example 103 is by no means the only solution to the difficulties of this fast motivic left-hand ostinato. In an attempt to locate a comfortable hand position, I utilise the thumb very regularly in succession. In order to increase the speed in this passage, it is therefore advisable to obtain secure control of the weaker fourth and fifth fingers and to practise only the lower notes of all the intervals with the correct fingering (of course it will also be helpful to practise only the top notes of the intervals, which will probably be easier). Example 104 indicates the lower notes of the intervals with the appropriate fingering.

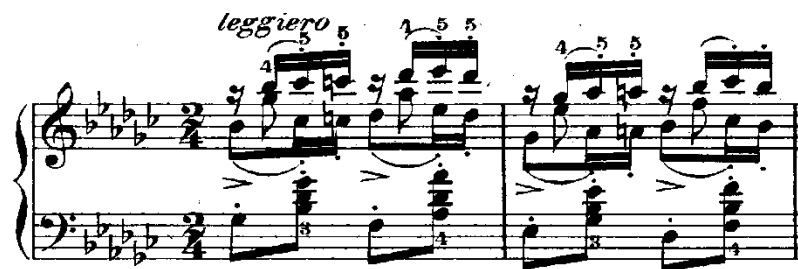
Example 104: Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), *Yemoja*, b. 33 onwards, practising formula for the intervallic passage in the left hand

The musical score for Example 104 is a practising formula for the left hand, written in bass clef. It shows a sequence of intervals with specific fingering suggestions (2, 3, 5, 2, 4, 2, 4, 5) indicated below the notes. A 'sub' marking is present below the right hand's part, which is indicated by a dashed line.

The performance of octaves is another technical area to be considered in the discussion of consecutive interval passages in Grové's piano music. It is worth considering Neuhaus's lengthy advice on practising methods and hand positioning during octave-playing, as his observations can be applied in almost every context. When referring to 'splitting up' difficult octave-sequences (Neuhaus 1958: 125), the concept of practising only the top notes with the fourth and fifth finger or the bottom notes with the thumb potentially solves the problem of achieving accuracy when the

⁹⁷ Note also the variety of acciaccaturas and the use of a two-note appoggiatura in the right hand.

Example 105(A): Frédéric Chopin, Etude in G flat major, op. 25, no. 8



The first system of the musical score for 'The Little Boat' is written on a single staff in 2/4 time. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note A4, and continues with a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand and a series of chords in the right hand, some of which are beamed together.

⁹⁸ In reality, it is more difficult to play only the top notes or bottom notes with the appropriate fingering. When coming back to playing the original text (the complete passages with octaves or intervals), it will often seem easier. The hand becomes used to the topography of the keyboard in such passages by doing these preparatory exercises.

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weight (he uses the symbol 'm' for this) and less height and lifting of the forearms ('h'). The process of dividing the octave and practising only the top notes with the fourth and fifth fingers is necessary in order to obtain accuracy and flexibility of the tendons (Example 106).

Example 106: Franz Liszt, *La Campanella* (S. 141, no. 3), bb. 122-123, with fingering suggestions



Gát's and Neuhaus's suggestions for the development of successful octave-playing can be helpful in negotiating challenging aspects in Grové's music. The first movement (*Stampftanz/Stamping Dance*) of *Songs and Dances from Africa* can be regarded as predominantly an octave etude, but not exclusively so, as the composer combined a variety of the elements that I have discussed above. It is a very strenuous work as a result of the loud sonorous dynamic levels and the leaps between octaves and single note groups. As in *Yemoja*, the left hand occasionally contributes to the intricate counterpoint of the work by means of intervallic motifs. My suggestion for these passages is to hold on to the longer octave notes in the top voice with the *sostenuto* (middle) pedal and to use the sustaining (right) pedal sparsely for the purposes of acoustic enhancement. This is all the more possible, as Grové reserved the first beat of each bar solely for the forceful striking of the *sforzando* octave, with a crotchet rest in the left hand (Example 106). The keybed is made of elastic material and when the fingers are forcefully thrown down in the *sforzando* octaves and chords, the recoil propels the hands upward again. Sándor wrote that in 'extreme fortissimo passages played at top speed the staccato action may be reduced to a purely downward active throw; the upward motion is automatically taken care of by this upward rebound' (Sándor 1981: 98). This aspect of the piano's mechanism inevitably contributes to facilitating the energetic and brilliant sound production in Grové's *Stamping Dance*. Bearing in mind that each bar in this passage commences with a *sforzando* octave, the force of gravity can also be of assistance here. Earlier in this chapter, I outlined the various motions that Sándor investigated in his book. The concept of 'free fall' (to which he attached the symbol 'A'), can easily be applied in bb. 45-51 of Grové's *Stamping Dance*. The upper and forearm should be lifted to a sufficient height and the hands and fingers should then be rapidly

dropped vertically onto the keys. The slight agogical space that is needed to lift the arm before each *sforzando* octave should provide the player with enough time to prepare the depression of the *sostenuto* middle pedal. It is advisable to take note of Sándor's photographic indications (1981: 38-41) of the correct positioning of the arm and hand during 'free fall'. Aside from indicating the fingering and use of the *sostenuto* pedal in Example 107 below, I have added the 'A' symbol to the *sforzando* octaves that are to be played with the 'free fall' motion.

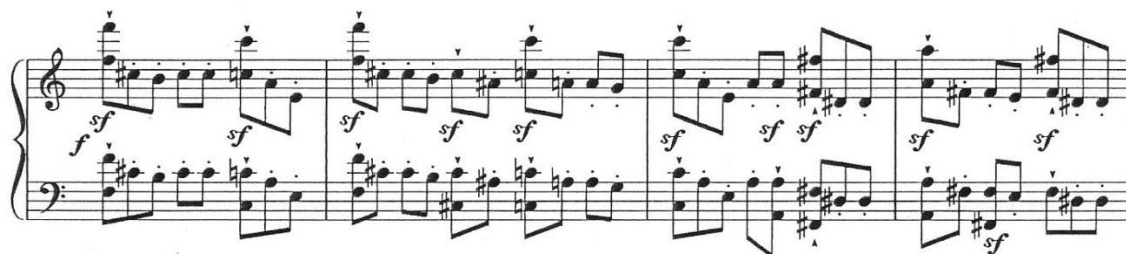
Example 107: Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), first movement (*Stamping Dance*), bb. 45b-47, left-hand intervallic passagework within a contrapuntal texture

The musical score for Example 107 is presented in a two-staff system. The upper staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It contains a series of octaves, each marked with 'A sf' (sforzando) and 'sost. ped.' (sostenuto pedal). The right hand plays a contrapuntal texture. The left hand has fingering numbers (1-5) and a '2 5' marking under the first octave. The score is divided into measures by bar lines, with a 'etc.' marking at the end of the sequence.

In the remainder of this section, I would like to focus on the various octave techniques in *Stamping Dance* and to propose my own practising methods (Example 108). As I have already mentioned, the octaves appear in combination with single notes and mostly with short staccato articulation. In summoning the stamina necessary to perform these passages, the isolated octaves can be repeated in the same way that Gát suggested with regard to Chopin's Etude in G flat. It is advisable to practise the exercises in a slower tempo and with a type of legato action (contrary to the composer's staccato articulation markings). The main focus, when attempting these preparatory exercises, should be to cultivate a sense of continuous contraction and relaxation of the muscles. Practising the methods below may be of assistance in achieving accuracy and dynamic variety. One should constantly observe how the various components of the playing mechanism – the upper arms, forearms and fingers – operate while playing. Both Neuhaus and Gát concurred that any technical passage involving larger stretches requires slow and patient training, and this axiom applies throughout Grové's *Songs and Dances from Africa*.

Example 108(A): Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), first movement (*Stamping Dance*), bb. 1-4 and 59, two passages where octaves are interspersed in between single notes

i. bb. 1-4

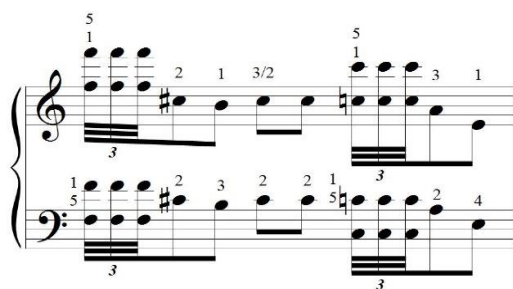


ii. b. 59



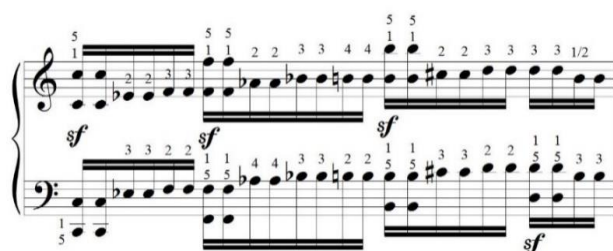
Example 108(B): Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), preparatory exercises for the first movement (*Stamping Dance*) in the style of Gát and Neuhaus (with fingering suggestions)

b. 1



etc.

b. 59



etc.

A further consideration in octave-playing is the positioning of the hands. Neuhaus and Gát fundamentally agreed about the curved shape that needs to be maintained between the tips of the little finger and thumb. Neuhaus insisted that the wrist should always be lower than the palm in order to avoid tension.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, the player should strive towards an arc or dome-shape of the inner palm for the sake of stability (Neuhaus 1958: 124). Gát (1974: 147) and Sándor (1981: 97) confirmed this by indicating that the forearm will not be able to determine the amount of control and gravity needed to play octaves and chords if the fingers are hanging loosely over the keys. Sándor included the matter of octave-playing within a discussion of staccato motion (in Chapter 7 of his book). He concluded that 'single notes, intervals, and chords all require the same throwing motion when they are played staccato' (Sándor 1981: 102). This 'throwing motion' deserves more attention here, as it complements the sequences of staccato intervals in Example 103 as well as the preparatory exercises that I have supplied in Example 108. Sándor (1981: 96) claimed that the 'throwing motion' is transferred from the upper arms (the stronger biceps and triceps) through to the last phalanges (tips) of the fingers. Thus, the arm, wrist, hand and fingers are all coordinated to carry out the motion of staccato-playing. Contact with the keys during the staccato is minimal, but before and after impact the entire arm throws the hand upward and downward. These very rapid up- and downward motions are usually of the same duration (Sándor 1981: 102). Ultimately, the positioning of the forearm depends on the topography of the keyboard. When playing octaves on the white keys, the forearm is lowered in comparison with a slightly raised position when the black keys are involved.¹⁰¹

The coda of Grové's *Stamping Dance* is a particularly pronounced example of the combination of rapidly alternating staccato octaves, single notes and chords.¹⁰² Although the staccato throwing

¹⁰⁰ I personally do not agree that the forearm should necessarily be lower than the palm. A more relaxed position might just as well stem from a relatively straight line between the arm and the hand. The essential aspect of Neuhaus's principle is that the bridge (knuckles) should be stable in order to support the fingers, especially in faster octave passages. A more problematic tension would, however, be caused when the wrist and forearm are raised too high above the hand, as this also jeopardises the control of the bridge.

¹⁰¹ Sándor regularly referred to the adjustment of the arm when playing on the black keys. He provided a photograph of the appropriate position for octave-playing in Figure 53 of his book (1981: 101), accompanied by a description (1981: 99).

¹⁰² Grové very rarely employed legato octaves. The short staccato articulation in his *Stamping Dance* renders it essential to regard the forearm and hand as one single unit, rather than to use the third, fourth and fifth fingers to create phrase between the octaves. The lateral adjustment of the hand is not necessary to join the

motion is still a factor here, the *sforzando* chords can serve as anchor points of instantaneous relaxation. A new series of motions is therefore introduced in this passage and the sixth element of Neuhaus's chapter (the playing of chords) will now come under investigation.

2.6 The playing of chords

In the section on chord-playing in *The Art of Piano Playing*, Neuhaus referred to the execution of between three and five notes simultaneously with one hand. He suggested that flexibility can only be obtained when every chord is regarded as an anchor point where the hand automatically relaxes, albeit very briefly, before continuing. In the coda to Grové's *Stamping Dance* (bb. 71-83), the complexities of octaves as well as chords consisting of three and four notes are integrated into the texture. In connection with this point, it is also helpful to refer to Gát's (1974: 145-169) discussion of the combination of octave and chord techniques, for which he provided photographic images of the correct and incorrect positions of the forearm, wrist and hand (Gát 1974: 157-159). His emphasis on the tautening¹⁰³ and releasing of the fingers during practice stands in line with Neuhaus's (1958: 129) view that 'controlled piano playing consists of a constant alternation between effort and rest, tenseness and relaxation, more or less like the action of the heart'. This tautening action provides the fingers with the necessary control to give equal importance to all the notes of the chord, or to balance them against each other: 'The dynamic shaping of chords is an important means of expression. With its aid the sounding of the chords not only becomes more beautiful but will also be clearer and more intelligible from the musical point of view' (Gát 1974: 148). Using as an example the first chordal passage from Beethoven's Piano Concerto no. 5 (where the piano enters after the initial orchestral *tutti*), Neuhaus argued that the fifth finger in the right hand should be well-developed in order to balance the melodic line at the top of the chords. In Grové's music, particularly his *Stamping Dance*, the principle of delineating one specific note within a chord becomes apparent through his meticulous dynamic markings. The performer is often required to

octaves, but the rapid tempi necessitate a stable hand position and fast reflexes of the forearm. Sándor claimed that the staccato motion also applies to legato octaves, but that the upward and downward throw is more subtle as the fingers remain closer to the keys (Sándor 1981: 99). He also described the lateral shifting of the forearms that is combined with the vertical movements during the playing of legato octaves (Sándor 1981: 100).

¹⁰³ Gát undertook extensive study of the muscular movements in the hand and arms during playing. By 'tautening' he means the fast contraction of the extensor and flexor tendons as well as the interossei and the lumbricales, i.e. the muscles that support the finger bones (Gát 1974: 145).

play selected notes with an accent or a *sforzando* and this can prove to be an arduous task in the context of fast passagework. Although this does not necessarily relate to Neuhaus's concept of the focus on top notes, the balancing of chords and the stability of the hand position comes into question just as much as they do in all the other technical elements that I have hitherto discussed. In Example 109, the interjecting chords in the coda of Grové's *Stamping Dance* are indicated with accents and *sforzando* markings mostly on the thumb of the right-hand part. During the preparation of this passage, it may be helpful to pause on each chord and to tauten and release the fingers as Gát suggests. This can contribute to ingraining the placement of the accents into the muscle memory. Sándor (1981: 19) closely investigated the alternation between antagonistic muscles (the flexors and the extensors in the forearm) during playing. He explained that the tautening action takes place when the flexor and extensor muscles have to contract simultaneously, and that it is important that they return to their original state immediately afterwards. If the contraction is sustained for longer periods, it will lead to tension as well as a shrill tone production. *Stamping Dance* by Grové contains extended passages with a *fortissimo* dynamic, in which sustained tension should at all costs be avoided. Even if this movement requires strong accents and a *martellato* character, it is still worth considering experimenting with different muscular movements in order to create a variety of colours. This will most likely imbue the work with an imaginative timbral atmosphere. The term that Sándor used to describe the tautening action is 'thrust' (to which he attached the symbol 'E'; see the introduction to this chapter as well as the discussion on the reiteration of a single note). This motion is different from 'free fall', 'rotation' and 'staccato', as there is no throwing or lifting of the arms and hands involved. The sudden contraction of the muscles take place when the fingers are already in position on the keys. It is apparent that the coda of *Stamping Dance* brings together three of the principal motions. Sándor rightly suggested that an understanding of these movements will assist the pianist in more easily solving considerable technical challenges.¹⁰⁴ In Example 109, a short extract from this coda, I include the E-symbol where the 'thrust' motion can be applied. I have already referred to the use of Sándor's term 'free fall' (the 'A' symbol), and I also indicate where this motion can be carried out. Thirdly, Sándor's staccato symbol ('D') is inserted alongside some of the octaves and single notes in this passage. The symbols

¹⁰⁴ It is also helpful to balance these various motions in the coda of *Stamping Dance* by evaluating the upward and downward movements of the wrist. Even though Sándor prescribed a similar throwing action on staccato notes, octaves and chords, I would also alternate the wrist movements here. It will outwardly appear as if the hands are shaken forward and backward on some of the consecutive octaves; this is a good way to obtain strength coupled to relaxation and flexibility in this extract.

A, E and D are only included in the right hand part, but the same principles are applicable to the left hand. In some instances it is possible to use either the 'free fall' or 'thrust'. This will depend on how fast the coda is played and on whether the performer chooses to take some liberties in the timing between the note groups. More time is needed to lift the hand for the 'free fall' motion, but a stronger *sforzando* accent would be secured.

Example 109: Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), first movement (*Stamping Dance*), bb. 71-74, the opening of the coda

The balancing of chords takes on a further dimension in Grové's *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (Music from Africa no. 23, 2003). Dense textures with alternating dynamic markings necessitate quick adjustments of tension and release in the hands. The degree of tautening and releasing of the finger and forearm muscles, as well as the speed with which this action is executed, dictates the volume of the rapidly-repeated chords in bar 24 of the work (Example 110). I refer here to the tautening and releasing of the fingers in a chord, in this instance, the f#'-d#''-g#' triad in the right hand. The next step would be to lift the wrist gradually whilst depressing the three chords, resulting in the first one being played with the finger cushions and the third one with the harder surface of the fingertip. In reality this means that the upper part of the forearm is gradually raised, not only to support the throwing action of the wrist to the fingers, but also to appropriately align the complete mechanism from the arm to the fingers when playing on the black keys – just as Sándor (1981: 61-62, 101 & 109) suggested one should do to avoid sustained and unnecessary tension. Furthermore, the quick contraction of muscles (the 'thrust', as Sándor described it) in the more stably-positioned left-hand groups can help to create the aural effect of a micro-crescendo between the three chords. The sustaining pedal markings by the composer also contribute effectively to rapidly building up the sound volume. This stands in line with Sándor's observation that 'the right pedal augments a crescendo by generating sympathetic vibrations in all the strings' (Sándor 1981: 169).

Example 110: Stefans Grové, *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003), b. 24



Finally, it is necessary to experiment with the speed of attack on each triad as well as the amount of contraction in the muscles. This could apply to the playing of any succession of notes or chords that are separated from each other (i.e. staccato or detached). Sándor (1981: 102) wrote that ‘if we want a louder sound, we make the joints more resilient or increase the distance of the throw, or we combine these actions’. The softer tone level of the first chord in Example 109 will inevitably be obtained through more economic movements of the forearm, but the eventual *fortissimo* chord should be practised with increasing speed of attack and thrusting motion for a fuller sound. In performance it is not really possible to keep all of these technical processes in mind when playing such a rapid succession of chords, but the physical preparation may lead to a subconscious balancing of fingers, hand, wrist and arm. The combination of movements of different parts of the body is a distinct technical consideration that emerges in a work such as *Dance Song of the Nyau Dance* (2003). As a complete performance of it lasts only around two minutes, the pianist has comparatively little time to present and characterise a wide range of technical complexities. The most challenging passage appears close to the opening in bars 10-14, where Grové incorporated almost the complete gamut of technical elements: reiterations of a single note, acciaccaturas, brilliant passagework, intervallic note groups and finally also the rapid succession of chords. Only with careful consideration of fingering, and flexibility of hand and arm movements can this passage be executed at the fast tempo that the composer prescribed. I would like to refer back to the Introduction to this thesis, where my personal discussions with Grové on the interpretation of the *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* were mentioned. One of the most important strategies upon which we agreed in this particularly difficult passage (bb. 10-14) was inserting more commas or *Luftpausen*.¹⁰⁵ Example 111 (see below) includes the complete section, bb. 10-16, with annotations

¹⁰⁵ I have discussed the idea of *Luftpausen* in my stylistic overview of *Yemoja (Images from Africa, 1999)* in Chapter 2.

of fingering suggestions that came up during the original discussion with Grové in 2004. I have added the extra commas, particularly at those points where sudden dynamic fluctuations take place. It is unfortunate that the publication of this work by *Verlag Neue Musik* (Berlin) includes none of these technical suggestions. Keeping in mind the recent interest that *Hofmeister Verlag* has shown in Grové's *Images from Africa* (1999), it would be helpful to performers if more information on the technical realisation of this work, together with the inclusion of fingering suggestions, were to accompany an eventual publication.

The fingering annotations in the opening of the extract in Example 111 indicate that rapidly repeated chords should be performed in a similar way to the short motif in bar 24 (see Example 110 above). In bar 10, the progression from fingertip to finger cushion represents the inversion of the wrist movement that I discussed above. What is most significant about the complete passage in Example 111 is the rapid movement of the hands needed to cover the extremely wide leaps at a very fast tempo. This leads quite naturally to Neuhaus's seventh technical principle – 'the transfer of the hands over a large distance – so-called *jumps* or *leaps*' (Neuhaus 1958: 132).

2.7 The execution of wide leaps

Neuhaus did not favour the usual terminologies 'jumps' and 'leaps', perhaps because they rather over-state the point when describing an action on the piano that is supposed to be executed with the utmost economy and subtlety. Gát provided a potentially more viable term, 'skips', which simply refers to the passing of one or several keys in order to reach another register of the instrument. Neuhaus (1958: 132) described the angle at which the hands should hit the keys during leaps in order to avoid a harsh or 'thumping sound'. When the finger does not strike the key at a perpendicular angle, the attack is no longer vertical and the fullness of the sound is compromised. The problematic sideways position of the fingers after a leap may often result in uncontrolled sound production and inaccuracies. Neuhaus regularly incorporated metaphors in his writings, in this case referring to the agility of a cat being able to land on its feet after tumbling from a high surface. Through his picturesque language he provided the pianist with a clear directive on the performance of difficult leaps, as the finger should adjust to the aforementioned perpendicular angle while it is mid-air. In that way, it will 'land' quite comfortably on the correct note accompanied by the correct sound. Where Neuhaus provided a general view on leaps, Gát entered into a more extensive exegesis of the exact technical movements. He commenced his theoretical outline with three guidelines: the suppleness of the arm during horizontal movements; the closeness of the hands to

the keys in order to secure utmost economy and accuracy; and the tone colour of the material that precedes and follows the leap. This calls attention

Example 111: Stefans Grové, *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003), bb. 10-16, performance suggestions (with added caesuras and alternative distribution of notes between the hands)

10 *ff* *p* *f*

12 *p* *f* *p* *sf* *ff*

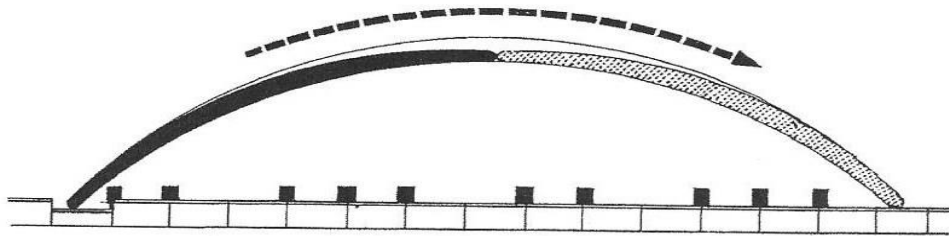
14 *p* *f* *sf* *ff* *mf* *sf* *m.d.* *m.s.*

Ped. or 124

to the simple idea that the notes connected by leaps are to govern the choice of movement. ‘Even-motion skips’ occur when both tones have the same colour and a homogeneous sound should be obtained. Such skips are therefore to be played with a curved hand and the ultimate motion is none other than a wider form of rotation (the start of the main theme of Liszt’s *La Campanella* serves as an appropriate example for this). ‘Prepared skips’ are quite different, as the initial note or chord consists of different material, either in terms of note value or articulation (Gát 1974: 179 & 182).

Grové’s *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* is not only a study in the fast repetition of chords, but also in very wide skips between registers. My personal annotations of the passage in Example 111 above encompass the strategies that are meant to facilitate these problems: the choice of fingering, the addition of *Luftpausen* (commas above the staff) and the division of material between the hands in a different way from that indicated in the printed score. The sudden dynamic shifts are encircled in selected bars, indicating why certain breathing pauses may be necessary to give the *subito forte* motifs time to resonate. Grové did not express any objections to this slightly more liberal approach, and only raised concerns when the overall rhythmic impetus would be too noticeably affected by lengthy pauses (Schoeman 2012c). Gát’s two forms of leaps both commonly occur throughout Grové’s *Music from Africa* series. In *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance*, it is important to differentiate between the even-motion skip and the prepared skip, as they both require different thought processes. It is possible to trace clear examples of these procedures in the passage of Example 111 above, but worth reiterating them in more detail. The even-motion skip relates to Gát’s primary definition of skips, namely ‘the successive sounding of two notes which are located at a greater distance from each other than the span of the hand’ (Gát 1974: 177). The following figuration (Example 112a and 112b) is nothing more than a large stretch of the hand, and Grové often requires intervals of the ninth to be played with accents. But for the smaller hand, this nonetheless constitutes a leap within a semiquaver passage. The hand should be maintained in a curved position, as Gát suggested, which may facilitate the performance of this simple rotation action. This clearly indicates the process of supination, where the player rotates the forearm towards the fifth finger (if the figure in Example 112a illustrates the use of the right hand), or pronation, where the forearm is rotated towards the thumb (if the figure in Ex. 112a indicates the left hand). Sándor warned that the wrist should be regarded as an ‘inactive connecting joint’ during the actions of pronation and supination, and that it should not move independently. He also wrote that “the fingers’ role can never be replaced by the rotating forearm” and that the ones involved in this action should still be somewhat raised before and after playing (Sándor 1981: 85). In Example 112b below, I also include

Example 112(A): József Gát, preparatory sketch of the larger hand rotation in leaps (referring to the opening of Liszt's *La Campanella*)



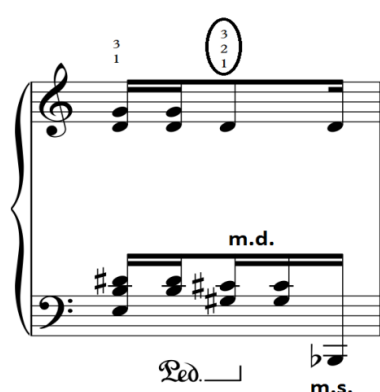
Musical notation for the bass line of 'The Rose Tree'. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The melody is written on a single staff. The notes are: F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (half). The lyrics 'The Rose Tree' are written below the notes. The first measure (F#4) has the lyrics 'The' and 'Tree' below it. The second measure (G4) has the lyrics 'The' and 'Tree' below it. The third measure (A4) has the lyrics 'The' and 'Tree' below it. The fourth measure (B4) has the lyrics 'The' and 'Tree' below it. The fifth measure (A4) has the lyrics 'The' and 'Tree' below it. The sixth measure (G4) has the lyrics 'The' and 'Tree' below it. The seventh measure (F#4) has the lyrics 'The' and 'Tree' below it. The eighth measure (E4) has the lyrics 'The' and 'Tree' below it. The ninth measure (D4) has the lyrics 'The' and 'Tree' below it. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The notes are connected by a slur. The lyrics are written in a stylized font.

Example 113: Stefans Grové, *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003), bb. 11-12, leaps between chords



As part of his seventh element, Neuhaus flagged up the question of dividing material between the hands to facilitate leaps. Not only can this radically reduce the risks of inaccuracy involved in such passages, but it can also lead to vivid characterisation as a result of the hand not being occupied in unnecessary lateral movements. Below (Example 114a), I reiterate a smaller section of Example 111, where I indicate certain notes that are to be taken over by the right hand. Concurrently with this example from *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (bar 16), I employ a similar strategy in the coda (bar 92) of *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (1994) (Example 114b).

Example 114(A): Stefans Grové, *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003), b. 16, the elimination of the leap through redistribution of material between the hands



Example 114(B): Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), b. 92, one of many left-hand leaps that are facilitated by the redistribution of material to the right hand



2.8 Polyphonic passages

The eighth and final technical element that Neuhaus described in Chapter 4 of his *The Art of Piano Playing* is the performance of polyphonic music. His views are similar to those expressed by Bartók in the preface to his *Mikrokosmos*, Sz.107, namely that the music of JS Bach should form the basis of piano studies. He wrote: 'We will begin the study of polyphony, as is proper, with the *Anna*

Magdalena Book, the two-part Inventions; then we will go on to the three-part Inventions, on to the *Wohltemperiertes Klavier*, the *Art of the Fugue* and will probably end with the preludes and fugues of Shostakovich with which at the time of writing, far from everyone is acquainted...’ (Neuhaus 1958: 134). By mentioning Shostakovich’s *Preludes and Fugues*, Neuhaus acknowledged that the keyboard counterpoint of Bach should be supplemented by repertoire from other periods. As the works of Shostakovich are designed for the modern concert piano, and not for the harpsichord or clavichord, a new set of idiomatic principles appears alongside strict contrapuntal procedures.

The dramatic gestures of early modernism and the percussive use of the instrument, initiated by pioneers such as Bartók, considerably broadened the approach to combining instrumental colours with polyphony. Grové made a substantial contribution in this area through his use of intricate textural layering coupled to a personal percussive timbre. His earliest exploration of two-part counterpoint in piano music can be found in the first and third movements of his *Three Piano Pieces* (1951). The faster etudes of the later *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90) represent a continuation of this clear two-part counterpoint, even if intervals or chords are sometimes interspersed in the respective hands for acoustic effect (Example 115).

Example 115: Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), third movement (*Greeting the New Day*), bb. 16b-18 (with added fingering suggestions)

The image shows a musical score for two staves, treble and bass. The treble staff contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes with various accidentals (sharps, naturals). Fingering numbers (1, 2, 5, 4, 3, 2) are written below the notes. The bass staff contains a similar rhythmic pattern with different accidentals. Fingering numbers (1, 2, 5, 3, 2, 1, 4, 2, 4, 3, 2, 1) are written below the notes. Dynamic markings 'f' and 'p' are present. A 'Ped.' marking is in the bass staff, followed by 'senza ped.' and a fermata-like line. The score is in a key with one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature.

One of the most important benefits of studying and performing polyphonic music is the development of independence between the fingers and hands. In Grové’s extensive oeuvre, the three slow etudes from *Songs and Dances from Africa* serve as some of the most effective short examples that encourage subtle control of the micro-elements within the respective polyphonic lines whilst maintaining a general sound colour. By writing *senza pedale* in the second piece, *A Night Song in the Distance*, he places all the responsibility on the fingers to maintain the respective textures (the human voice accompanied by a gourd-resonated bow). As an organist, Grové did not

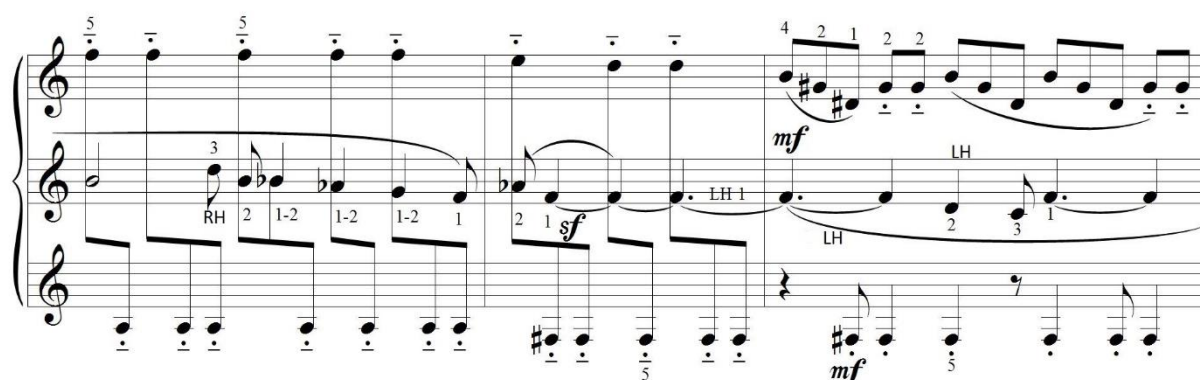
shy away from applying certain principles of performance on that instrument to the piano. It is often necessary in organ music to create a legato line by keeping the key depressed right up until moving to the next key. In certain cases, two separate lines are to be performed with one hand. The upper voice will then be played by the second, third, fourth or fifth fingers and the thumb executes the legato lower voice by sliding from one note to another. This technique is called pivoting of the thumb and it is seldom necessary in piano playing, as the sustaining pedal will mostly be utilised to sustain a legato line. In Grové's *A Night Song in the Distance*, the two textural layers need to be communicated completely without the support of the sustaining pedal, and pivoting of the thumb becomes a way to obtain legato in the middle voice notated on the second of the three systems (see Example 116).

Example 116: Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), second movement (*A Night Song in the Distance*), bb. 1-4, an example of the pivoting of the thumb in the melodic line on the middle stave

The image shows a musical score for three staves. The top staff is in treble clef, the middle in alto clef, and the bottom in bass clef. The tempo is marked 'Molto tranquillo, senza rubato' with a metronome marking of c.88. The top staff has a 'p' dynamic and a 'simile' marking. The middle staff has an 'mf' dynamic and a 'LH' marking. The bottom staff has a 'p' dynamic and a 'simile' marking. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and articulation marks.

In these slower movements it is also necessary to resort to finger and hand substitution to sustain the note values. In Example 117, I provide suggestions for rapid substitution between the thumb and second finger of the right hand in bars 15b-17 of *A Night Song in the Distance*. There is a constant underlying sense of manoeuvring the two hands in order to adhere to the legato lines in this passage. Furthermore, the performer has to adjust the position of the right hand in order to execute the combination of staccato and legato articulation, especially in bars 15b-16. Suchoff (2002: 34) described this technique as 'combined touch-forms' in his guide to Bartók's *Mikrokosmos*. It is noteworthy that Suchoff referred mostly to separate articulations divided between the hands and not between the fingers as can be seen in Grové's *Songs and Dances from Africa*. Bartók probably felt that the combination of two articulations with one hand would pose too many difficulties for less experienced players. It is also significant that he did not integrate this concept in his advanced works such as *Szabadban* (*Out of Doors*, 1926) or the *Sonata* (1926). In terms of finger

Example 117: Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), second movement (*A Night Song in the Distance*), bb. 15b-17, finger substitution, different articulations simultaneously executed by a single hand, and rapid division of material between the hands¹⁰⁶



¹⁰⁶ Grové prescribed a specific articulation for the quaver ostinato of the outer systems, namely the ‘half-shortening’ of the notes (tenuto and staccato signs combined). This articulation symbol is extracted from Bartók’s catalogue and will be discussed in more detail in section 3 of this chapter.

¹⁰⁷ The composer discussed the pedalling in *A Night Song in the Distance* (no. 2), *A Quiet Song in the Twilight* (no. 4) and *Mbira Song carried by the Night Breezes* (no. 6) of *Songs and Dances from Africa* in my interview with him on 18 January 2011 (Schoeman 2011).

extract (Example 118a), the substitution of fingers is again demonstrated along with the alternating of the middle voice between the hands. At the opening of the third bar of this example, the right-hand thumb performs the g flat' in the middle voice. With this fingering solution it will not be necessary to split the interval between the d flat in the bass line and the g flat' on the middle stave. Playing the note with the thumb also renders it easier to control the melodic contour that runs between bars 11 and 12 (middle stave – indicated with a phrase marking). The Mbira ostinato in the soprano voice should be played with a much softer tone colour, hence the prevalence of the weaker fourth and fifth fingers in my suggestion below.

Example 118(A): Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), sixth movement (*Mbira Song carried by the Night Breezes*), bb. 10-12, tone control through fingering and hand division

Example 118(B): Stefans Grové, *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-90), sixth movement (*Mbira Song carried by the Night Breezes*), b. 13, rhythmic division with an added acciaccatura

Three separate rhythmic units can be traced in the contrapuntal *Mbira Song carried by the Night Breezes*. Grové further challenges the performer's ability to portray rhythmic independence through

the addition of acciaccaturas in the soprano line. Polyrythms already appear in Example 118a, but a further example of the division between the note groups needs to be mentioned. In bar 13 (Example 118b above), the quaver quintuplet in the upper line has to be executed at the same time as the crotchet triplet in the left hand without allowing the acciaccatura to interfere with the organic voice leading. The appropriate timbre can be obtained by simultaneously playing the B flat acciaccatura and the A flat that follows it, thereby not also distorting the rhythm. The composer's crescendo marking potentially accentuates the sudden intensity of rhythmic activity.

The ubiquitous linear counterpoint in one hand that appears in several of Grové's African piano works often requires particular preparation. The composer revealed a penchant for creating contrapuntal lines in which the fifth (or upper) finger sustains a longer note value and the remaining fingers engage in semiquaver passagework. This strongly recalls Neuhaus's (1958: 135-136) advice on the performance of the Fugue in E major from the second book of Bach's *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier* on the modern piano. In the slow Bach fugues, it is desirable to sustain the longer notes for their full value and to colour other voices underneath or above in a slightly different way. These longer notes can be sustained with subtle addition of vibrato-pedalling as well as sufficient weight on the key stroke. Grové placed accents (>) on the longer upper notes of his linear toccata passages, but in accordance with Bartók's articulation catalogue (discussed in the following section of this chapter), these should not be played in a percussive manner. Grové instead tended to point towards the use of arm weight. Sympathetic vibrations of overtones and clear articulation in the left hand may enable the longer notes to resonate slightly more, imbued with a different colour from the semiquaver notes underneath (Example 119). Sándor's thrusting motion would seem the most appropriate here, as 'free fall' would make the long notes sound too loud or even uncontrolled. In the example below, the fingers are already resting on the key, so a quick simultaneous contraction of the flexor and extensor muscles would yield sufficient accentuation.





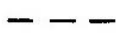





Example 119: Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), fifth movement (*Yemoja*), b. 121b, linear counterpoint, where the top notes are to be sustained



3. Grové's use of articulation

Before exploring Grové's meticulous articulation markings and his constant emphasis on transparency in his piano works, I would like to return to Bartók's educational edition of the *Notenbüchlein für Anna Magdalena Bach* by J. S. Bach (see the introduction to this chapter). This was published in 1916 by Rozsnyai (Budapest), almost ten years after Bartók started editing a large portion of the canonical piano repertoire. Victoria Fischer (2001: 95) states that his ideas had by that time crystallised into a detailed catalogue of articulation markings that would be utilised not only in the Bach editions, but consequently also in his own works. At a Bartók symposium in 1995 held in Szombathely, Hungary, Fischer justly observed that the piano pieces that are directly related to folk music included more meticulous articulation markings. The composer probably felt it was his duty as an ethnomusicologist to transcribe the *parlando-rubato* of these melodies as carefully as possible. In his original works he followed a more 'hardened, consistent and systematic' approach to notation (Fischer 1995: 291). The reasons for this may be that Bartók relied upon the discretion of advanced performers in their application of articulation, and also that Universal Edition (his publisher in the 1920s) preferred a simpler manuscript without too many details. The articulation markings of his catalogue (seen in Figure 3) from 1916 nonetheless permeated all of his piano music.

Figure 3: Béla Bartók, catalogue of articulation markings, provided in the preface to his edition of the *Notenbüchlein für Anna Magdalena Bach* by JS Bach (trans. Victoria Fischer)

	= sharp staccato (staccatissimo) implying a certain accentuation and stronger tone colour.
	= the regular staccato, whereby the sounding of the notes ranges from the shortest in value to half the value of the note.
	= portamento [portato], whereby the tones must be permitted to sound almost up to half the note value in conjunction with a certain special colouring.
	= the symbol for half-shortening (the tones should not sound shorter than half the note value).
	= the tenuto symbol above different notes signifies that they must be held for their entire note value; when above each note of a group, that we must permit the notes to sound throughout their entire note value if possible, without linking them to one another.
	= the well-known legato symbol, which we are also using, in the case of legato parts, for marking the phrase for lack of another symbol.
	= the strongest accentuation.
	= accentuation still forceful enough.
	= weak accentuation.
	= the tenuto symbol above the different tones of the legato parts signifies delicately emphasizing the tone by way of a different tone colouring.

Grové's fantasy *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (1994) includes most of the articulation markings that appear in Bartók's catalogue. One of the work's particularly challenging features is to differentiate between these markings and to individually characterise each one. I therefore use *Nonyana* as a case study to formulate performance strategies and to discuss the composer's application of notational forms. It has to be acknowledged that these articulation markings were by no means invented by Bartók, and that many twentieth-century composers regularly utilised them. However, the description of each marking in the catalogue is of such a meticulous nature that it may offer heightened clarity to performers. Furthermore, as mentioned above, Bartók applied these markings more extensively in his works that relate to folk music. A similar case can be made in Grové's *Nonyana*, as this fantasy is closely linked to traditional Southern African music. The distinctly indigenous melodic features, which I have discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis, are accompanied by a more detailed approach to articulation markings than any other piano work by Grové. Whether

this was a subconscious or a deliberate process, it remains a very significant aspect in the performance of a work such as *Nonyana* and warrants closer investigation.

In their writings, both Fischer (1995: 291) and Suchoff (2002: 31) differentiated between percussive and non-percussive markings in Bartók's catalogue as well as his piano works. I intend to follow a similar approach with regard to Grové's music, as I believe that this differentiation between touch forms can yield further insight into delineating the dynamic nuances. The term 'percussive' refers to a direct attack of the finger that results in an immediate sound. 'Non-percussive' signifies that the key is pressed down gradually with the weight of the finger, resulting in a softer tone colour. Suchoff and Fischer agreed upon the clarity of the division between these touch forms, although they demonstrated slightly different views on whether legato touch is percussive or non-percussive. Certainty on this point can only be reached by evaluating the context in which the legato indications appear. In the section on polyphony in Grové's music, I have investigated how legato touch should be used non-percussively to maintain cantabile lines through finger pivoting and substitution. By contrast, a percussive attack is sometimes needed in sustaining long notes in legato passages. Thus, it appears that Grové acknowledged the duality of the legato touch in his work – either as a method to maintain sounds (where the fingers substitute the sustaining pedal), or simply as a form of timbral nuancing. He never used the legato symbol as a phrase mark, but applied these markings only to indicate articulation.¹⁰⁸ In his guide to Bartók's *Mikrokosmos*, Suchoff (2002: 31) provided a broad outline of the various touch forms (Example 120):

Example 120: Benjamin Suchoff, outline of articulation markings in Bartók's music

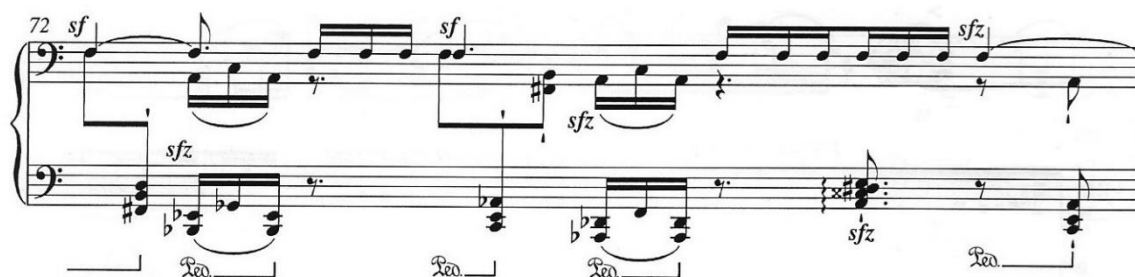


It is not clear why Suchoff omitted certain accents of the original catalogue in this initial outline, but he did go on briefly to describe the remaining symbols (Suchoff 2002: 32). The > marking possibly falls under both the 'percussive' and 'diverse' areas, as it can be regarded either as an agogic accent or a more deliberate direct attack of the finger. The strongest accents, the *sforzando* (sf) and the

¹⁰⁸ Grové also confirmed this approach to slurs (as indicative of legato articulation instead of phrasing) during our last interview in July 2013.

forceful accentuation (^), naturally fall under the percussive category. Suchoff (2002: 32) chose to translate the *sf* symbol as *sforzato* and not as *sforzando*. It seems as though he may have miscalculated Bartók's intention regarding this type of accent, placing it under non-percussive touch forms without providing a more detailed reason for this. The difference between *sforzando* and *sforzato* is essential to Grové's works. In bar 72 of *Nonyana*, both the *sf* and *sfz* indications appear in close succession. It may be assumed that the composer required a different sound approach for each, and it may be instructive to keep the original meaning of the Italian words in mind. *Sforzando* literally means gradually to strengthen or force the sound, whereas *sforzato* (the past participle in Italian) signifies a one-dimensional accent. In the short example from *Nonyana*, the longer notes carry the *sf* sign and the shorter semiquavers (or semiquaver groups) are marked with the *sfz* sign, which suggests that Grové had a more developmental gradation of tone in mind for the *sforzando* notation (Example 121).

Example 121: Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), b. 72, the differentiation between *sf* and *sfz*



Percussive articulation markings predominate in *Nonyana*, most probably to portray the aggressive dance-like character of the work. The sharp staccato (no. 1 from Bartók's catalogue) is the most commonly occurring articulation, and the action that can most effectively produce this sound could be compared to the pizzicato on string instruments. When the finger 'plucks' the key, the shortest controlled staccato can be obtained. Grové relied upon this action in activating the overtones of a silently-depressed chord (bars 8, 11, 14-16, 75-78 – see Example 122a). Secondly, the sharp staccato appears in connection with terminologies that indicate a harsher sound colour, *martellato* and *molto secco* (bars 73-78 – see Example 122b). Finally, these sharp staccatos are also combined with agogic accents (>) and Grové implied a slightly varied touch on these notes. Within the context of a *piano* dynamic level, the plucking finger staccato action should be adjusted in such a way that the finger cushion instead of the fingertip hits the key (Example 122c).

Example 122(A): Stefans Grové, Nonyana (1994), bb. 8 & 10, sharp staccatos that activate overtones

8

f *sf* *pp*

10 **Con energia** ♩ = 120 (Tempo 2°)

f *pp sub.*

f *pp*

Ped. _____

Example 122(B): Stefans Grové, Nonyana (1994), bb. 73-65, sharp staccatos connected to terms that describe tone colour

73

sfz *sfz* *martellato*

Ped. _____

75 *lontano* *p molto secco*

pp *senza ped.*

Ped. _____

Example 122(C): Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), b. 75, sharp staccatos in combination with agogic accents

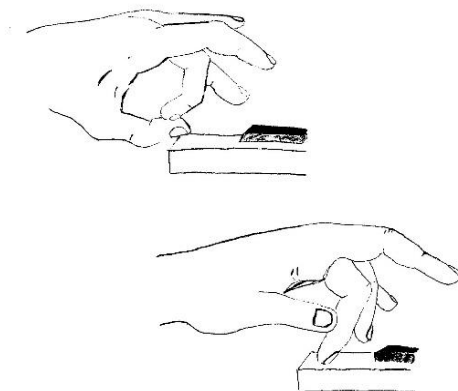


After the first performance of *Nonyana* by Vladimir Viardo in Pretoria, the pianist suggested that the sharp staccato articulation in the recitative-like passage of bars 75-77 could be more vividly characterised if the keys are flicked by the nail of the third finger, propelled by the thumb (Stanford 1996: 182). In a personal interview in August 2012 (Schoeman 2012c), Grové acknowledged this principle and compared it to the *col legno* sound of the strings in his orchestral works such as the *Raka Piano Concerto* (1996). Furthermore, the percussive effect of the nail hitting the key stands in line with the composer's intention of bringing out the overtones of the silently-depressed chord in the bass register. *Verlag Neue Musik* in Berlin also published *Nonyana* in 2007, but did not include any information on this proposed flicking-articulation (Example 123a and 123b).

Example 123(A): Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), b. 76, a passage where the keys should be flicked by using the third finger and the thumb (this flicking action is to be used only in *forte* passages)



Example 123(B): An illustration showing how the flicking action can be achieved (sketch: Ben Schoeman)



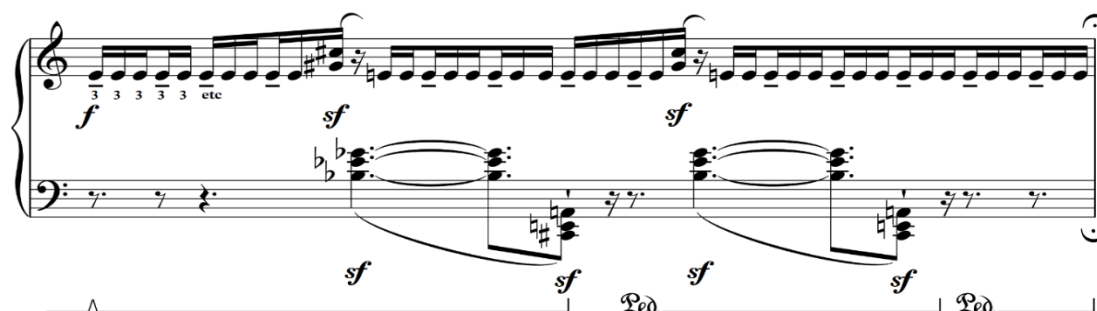
The remaining percussive articulations that are utilised in *Nonyana* are those that Bartók described as the ‘strong enough’ accents (^). In bars 48-50, another *martellato* effect is achieved through the reiteration of notes, each adorned with this strong percussive marking. The short legato markings in the left-hand figurations also indicate the percussive side of the legato articulation mentioned above. Curiously, Grové never used the regular staccato (. . .) in *Nonyana*, or most of the other African works. He preferred instead the finger staccatissimo (sharp staccatos) that can be reproduced through the plucking action. The ‘strong enough’ accents therefore take the place of a regular hand or forearm staccato, as the larger movements will provide the forceful tone that is required (Example 124).

Example 124: Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), b. 50, the ‘strong enough’ accents in combination with a percussive *sforzando* (the ‘strongest accentuation’) and *marcato* legato articulation (LH)



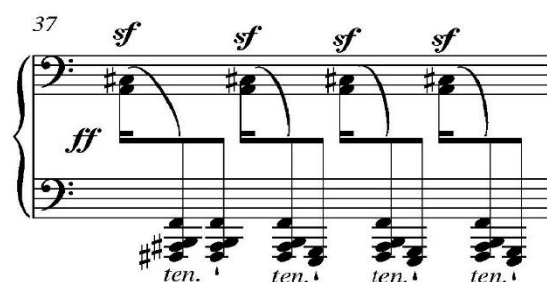
The second category of touch forms that can be investigated in *Nonyana* is that of ‘diverse’ accentuation. In Suchoff’s outline, this entails *tenuto* (-) markings, but the ambivalence of the weaker accent (>) deserves further discussion as well. I would first like to emphasise the use of the *tenuto* notation, as Grové employed this in both a percussive and non-percussive form. In the extended bar 59 of the work, the *tenuto* sign appears conjunctly with the strongest accents (*sf*), long pedal markings and an overall *ff* dynamic. It is necessary to understand that the repeated notes (e’) will already instil a sense of percussion here, but the *tenuto* indications suggest that the sound should not be too harsh in this case. The usual substitution of fingering in repeated notes does not seem appropriate, and the double-escapement of the keyboard could allow the performer to use only one finger (I have suggested the third finger in Example 125) to reiterate the note. It will then be possible to adhere to Bartók’s description in the catalogue that the notes are sounding ‘throughout their entire note value if possible, without linking them to one another’ (Fischer 2001: 96).

Example 125: Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), b. 59, tenuto markings in a percussive context, executed through the double-escapement of the keyboard



A less percussive *tenuto* articulation also forms part of the diverse touch forms in the work, and Grové often alternated the softer tones with strong accents immediately before or after them. In such instances, he preferred to write out the *tenuto* indication (*ten.*) instead of the using the corresponding symbol. This imbues the score with a greater clarity and enables the performer to garner a closer understanding of the required fluctuation of tone colours. Two effective examples can be seen in bars 37 and 78 respectively, where *tenuto* notes are to be performed with sufficient arm weight and not with the tautened fingers (see my earlier description of ‘tautening’ under chordal playing in section 2.6 above). This will pave the way for significant timbral differentiation in these passages (Example 126a and 126b).¹⁰⁹

Example 126(A): Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), b. 37, written-out *tenuto* articulation in a percussive context



¹⁰⁹ In fact, the tautening of the fingers should be reserved for the sharp staccatissimo articulations that immediately follow these tenuto notes.

Example 126(B): Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), b. 78, written-out *tenuto* markings within a slower recitative-like section



In terms of the ‘weak accentuation’ markings (see Bartók’s catalogue in Figure 3), I have already referred to the agogic value of the > symbols in *Nonyana*. Grové used this type of accentuation mostly as a non-percussive touch form, possibly even to emphasise the cantabile aspect of a certain note group. The dynamic contrasts in *Nonyana* contribute to the duality in the structure and Grové applied all the non-percussive articulation forms in the meditative passages. Weaker accentuation marks, non-percussive *tenuto* signs and longer legato groups constitute what the composer described as a ‘misterioso’ section in bars 60-63. The direct attack of the fingertip onto the key should be abandoned for a softer key-stroke using all three parts of the fingers (the bending and straightening of the proximal, intermediate and distal phalanges). As the composer again wrote *senza pedale* in this passage, it is important to keep the hands close to the keys in order to obtain sufficient control within a *pianissimo* dynamic level (Example 127).

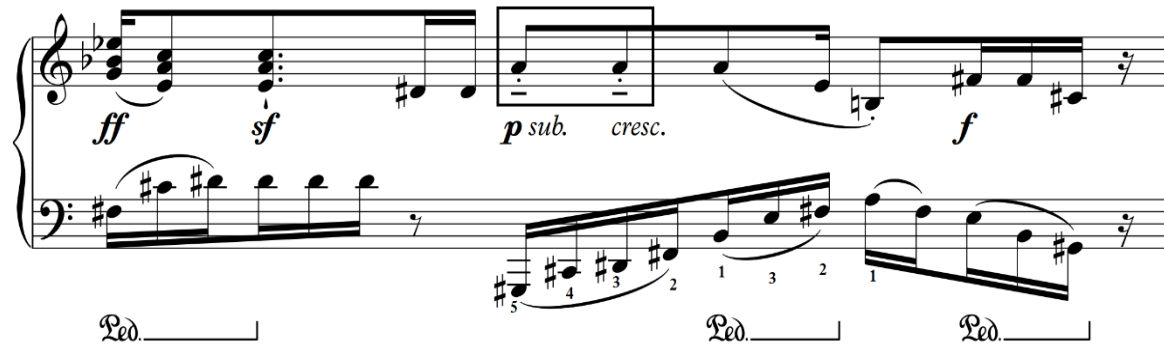
Example 127: Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), bb. 60-61, softer tenuto and weaker agogic accents



The most evident non-percussive articulations in Grové’s *Nonyana* are the half-tenuto notes in bar 66. Earlier in this chapter, the half-tenuto articulation in the quaver ostinato of *A Night Song in the Distance* (no. 2 of *Songs and Dances from Africa* – see examples 115 and 116) came under discussion. In that work, this form of articulation represents a deliberate repetitiveness of a secco tone colour, but in *Nonyana* the indication has a significant *espressivo* implication. Bar 66 of *Nonyana* (Example 128) commences with an aggressive *fortissimo* motif, marked by sharp

staccatissimo and *sforzando* articulation. This renders the sudden shift to the *piano subito* half-tenuto quavers in the second half of the bar as an important dynamic contrast.

Example 128: Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), b. 60, half-tenuto indications



Grové also started to introduce the combination of regular staccato markings and legato bows in this bar. In Example 128 above, the combination of legato and regular tenuto signs also appears. These meticulous details of non-percussive touch forms that intermittently and suddenly occur throughout *Nonyana* deserve the performer's particular attention. The rapid fluctuation between direct finger attack and the softer key-stroke renders *Nonyana* an effective yet virtuosic etude in articulation. Although a thorough knowledge is required in the performance of the percussive articulations, it remains more challenging for the performer to obtain control in the non-percussive areas. Victoria Fischer claims that many performers of Bartók's piano music emphasise the direct attack of the keys (i.e. the percussive touch forms) to the detriment of the inherently softer tone colours:

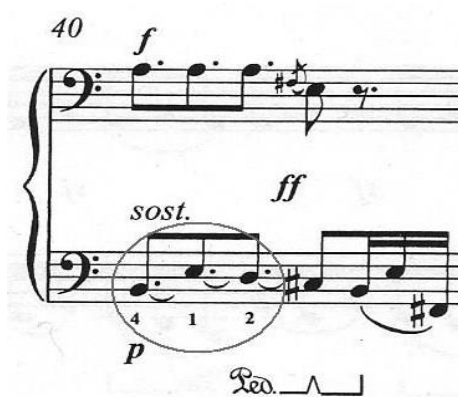
Bartók's development of the percussive character of the piano was the result of his desire to exploit the full range of its possibilities, which also encompass the non-percussive and expressive, already central to Romantic ideas of piano sonority. His articulation style includes specific types of notation intended to indicate either the percussive style or this non-percussive, expressive technique. The latter is usually signaled by the "tenuto", "portato", half-tenuto signs, and verbal instructions such as *espressivo* and *dolce* (Fischer 1995: 292).

The very same principle operates in Grové's piano music. Although I single out the representation of the various touch species in *Nonyana*, an awareness of the contrast between percussive and softer *espressivo* articulations is a vital prerequisite when playing all his works. Fischer also remarks that the non-percussive articulation markings were used by Bartók in order to attempt a closer notation of the *parlando-rubato* elements in Hungarian folk music. As *Nonyana* is a work that strongly resembles the folkloristic elements of the Venda initiation rituals for girls, Grové's use of half-tenuto

signs may be indicative of a similar type of *parlando-rubato*. This would not necessarily result in major tempo changes or a disruption of the overall toccata character, but rather in a more vocal expression within the percussive context. As Bartók correctly observed, it is not possible to notate exactly the inflections of folk singing (Fischer 1995: 297 & 2001: 97), but the articulation signs could point the performer in the direction of applying a certain sense of rhythmic freedom in such passages.

On another level, Grové took the pragmatic aspects of performance into consideration. He realised that detailed articulation notation may also encourage the performer to leave enough time for certain notes and overtones to acoustically resonate. One of his additions to the articulation catalogue is the attachment of *sostenuto* ties to notes without connecting them to other notes (Example 128). This is one example where some rubato would be necessary to adhere to the indications in the score and to allow the dotted quavers to vibrate a little longer. Grové strengthened the idea that rhythmic freedom should be applied by adding the indication ‘*sostenuto*’ to bar 40 of *Nonyana*. Similarly, Bartók’s catalogue includes vague indications such as permitting ‘the notes [in tenuto] to sound throughout their entire value if possible, without linking them to one another’ or to achieve ‘a certain special colouring’ (in portamento passages). It would not be possible to play notes to their full value and still detach them from neighbouring notes without applying a little rubato. Furthermore, the ‘special colouring’ of notes leads to a subjective and sometimes liberal approach from the performer, not only in the amount of rubato that is employed but also in the choice of touch species. The *sostenuto* ties in Example 129 (bar 40 of *Nonyana*) also imply that the left-hand notes should be sustained slightly longer than the right-hand ones, which carry no articulation signs.

Example 129: Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), b. 40, *sostenuto* ties



The final aspect of articulation in *Nonyana* that I would like to investigate is the application of finger legatissimo in combination with short staccatos. In most cases, the legatissimo articulation in Grové's work is also indicated with a *sostenuto* tie that does not connect one note to another. There is the added dimension in the legatissimo passages that single notes and chords need to be sustained for longer periods than in the *sostenuto* passage above (*Nonyana*, bar 40). As per the instructions of the composer, this is not achieved by means of the pedal; instead, the fingers are mostly responsible for maintaining the sound. I have discussed the issue of timbre in Chapter 2 (Examples 65-69), but within the context of pedagogy and performance it is worth focusing on the impact that the physical overlapping of notes has on fingering and hand positions. Grové mostly integrated these effects into slower passages with soft dynamic tone levels. On the rare occasions¹¹⁰ where he used the combination of legatissimo in the left hand and staccatissimo in the right hand in a fast toccata-like setting, it is still necessary to regard the overlapping tones as softer non-percussive key-strokes. In bars 6 and 8 of *Nonyana*, Grové, for the first time in his oeuvre, simultaneously used legatissimo and staccatissimo articulations in the respective hands. While the right hand executes a plucking action on the sharp staccatos, the left hand has to stay very close to the keys with the fingers pressing the keys down gradually (Example 130a).

Example 130(A): Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), bb. 6-7, the combination of overlapping legatissimo in the left hand and sharp staccatos in the right hand (b. 7)



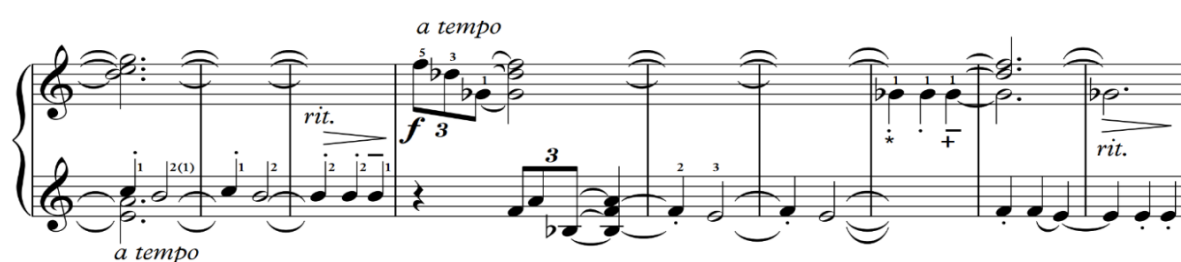
The combination of different articulations in *Nonyana* is in many ways a forerunner to the later work *My Seasons* (2012), where large subsections of the second and third movements are entirely based on this technique.¹¹¹ The extended overlapping of chords in the second part of the third movement,

¹¹⁰ The isolated examples of the combination of staccato and legato articulation between the right and left hands in faster percussive passages appear in *My Seasons* (2012), first movement, bars 21 and 28.

¹¹¹ In Examples 68a and 68b (Chapter 2), I investigated the modifications of the staccato-legato figurations in the second movement from *My Seasons* (2012), *Wandering in a white, cold Landscape*.

First Spring Rain and the Awakening of Delicate Colours,¹¹² necessitates a more percussive action in order for the sounds to keep resonating for longer. It is also of interest that Grové combined this legatissimo touch with a polyphonic interplay between the fingers of both hands. It so happens that the thumbs often execute different articulations, including regular staccatos, half-tenutos and tenutos while the other fingers hold on to tied-over chords. These contrasting touch forms are not too challenging to perform in a slow tempo, centring predominantly around one repeated note (Example 130b):

Example 130(B): Stefans Grové, *My Seasons* (2012), third movement (*First Spring Rain and the Awakening of delicate Colours*), bb. 39-47, legatissimo overlapping



In Example 130(B) above, I provide fingering suggestions that may result in an effective realisation of the articulation. The symbols * and + indicate the different uses of the thumb in bar 45, where the former denotes staccato notes to be played with the sharper tip of the thumb and the latter a softer tenuto, using a flatter position. Staccato crotchets in this section should preferably be performed with the ‘plucked’ staccato action, using the second finger.

Grové claimed this combination of legatissimo and staccato (often with both hands playing in unison) to be his own pianistic invention, and that he had not observed the colour in any other composer’s work (Schoeman 2012a and 2012b).¹¹³ Regardless of the subjectivity of this statement, it is possible to read a sense of pedagogical commitment into Grové’s fixation with the combination of

¹¹² The opening section of the third movement from *My Seasons* does not relate to the second part. It is a toccata passage, where short quaver groups activate the overtones of a silently-depressed opening chord, sustained by means of the *sostenuto* pedal.

¹¹³ Bartók did apply such combinations of articulation on a few occasions (maybe not exactly in the same way that Grové combines legatissimo and staccato articulation with two voices in unison, an octave apart). In Book 2 of *Mikrokosmos* Bartók wrote only one two-piano piece, *Triplets in Lydian Mode* (no. 55), where the right hand plays legato (*senza pedale*) and the left hand executes staccato fifths at the same time. This is appended by a short preparatory exercise later in the volume.

touch species and articulations. Grové's consistent application of the whole gamut of articulations (both his own and those found in Bartók's catalogue) resulted in a large output of piano works with a variety of touch species that has hitherto been unprecedented in South African art music.

4. Selected examples of Grové's distinctive use of pedalling

Although Heinrich Neuhaus did not mention pedalling as one of his eight basic technical principles, he provided a detailed discussion on this issue in the addendum to his chapter on technique in *The Art of Piano Playing* (Neuhaus 1958: 141-168). He systematically outlined three traditional forms of pedalling:

- First of all, the concept of 'simultaneous pedalling', which refers to methods where the depressing of the sostenuto pedal coincides with the attack of a note or chord (Neuhaus 1958: 158). This technique enhances the sound and provide the notes with harmonic colour through the sympathetic vibration of overtones.
- Secondly, Neuhaus emphasised the concept of 'retarded pedalling', where the sustaining pedal is depressed shortly after the chord or note is played in order to connect it organically to the next (i.e. to assist the pianist in playing legato). In Impressionistic music it may be plausible to delay slightly the depressing of the sustaining pedal in order to blur the harmonic changes.
- The third traditional element is the use of 'acoustic pedalling' or, as Banowetz (1985: 70) referred to it, 'anticipatory pedalling'. Here, the sustaining pedal is pressed down before the work commences in order to create a distinct timbre on the first note or chord.¹¹⁴ Neuhaus argued that both the soft colours in the opening of Beethoven's *Tempest Sonata* and the more powerful sound-projection in the opening chords of the *Hammerklavier Sonata* can benefit from depressing the sustaining pedal prior to beginning.

In a brief description of full, half and quarter-pedalling, Neuhaus claimed that the skilful control of the distance between the bottom-half and the middle of the pedal bed (similar to the key bed) would eventually surpass the necessity to use the *sostenuto* (middle) pedal to sustain notes in Classical and Romantic music. In twentieth and twenty-first century piano works this is not always

¹¹⁴ A particularly notable example is the French pianist Alfred Cortot's 1935 recording of Chopin's Second Piano Concerto (Victor 78rpm Album DM 567, 032573 - 032580), where he depresses the damper pedal a few bars before the piano first enters after the initial orchestral exposition of the work. When the double octave on D-flat is performed, there is already a harmonic background present that was activated through the overtones of the orchestra. Banowetz (1985: 70) also indicated that this method is desirable in the performance of Beethoven's Emperor Concerto, where the pianist may depress the sustaining pedal when the orchestra plays the opening E-flat major chord.

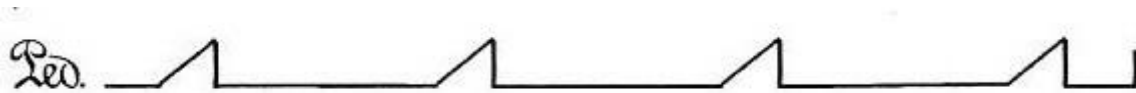
possible, as composers often rely quite heavily on the middle (*sostenuto*) pedal to sustain longer notes whilst rapidly changing harmonies by means of the sustaining pedal. Neuhaus described this as an orchestral thought process and singles out Glazunov and Szymanowski as composers who conceived their piano music by means of a multi-layered approach. They often bring together sustained bass notes whilst writing different material involving both hands in the upper register of the piano (Neuhaus 1958: 160). The only way to obtain clarity between textures is either to use rapid half-pedalling and flutter- (vibrato-) pedalling, or simply to ‘catch’ the pedal point with the *sostenuto* pedal in order to keep the passages clearly defined in another register. Ultimately, it would seem that the latter option is easier, but may not be viable due to certain pianos not being equipped with a *sostenuto* pedal. Steinway & Sons only patented the middle pedal in 1874 and many pianos of the earlier twentieth century still only have sustaining and *una corda* pedals.

Grové consistently demonstrated a meticulous approach to pedal markings in his music and utilised all the forms that Neuhaus describes in his chapter. His most important objective when it comes to the sustaining pedal, was to obtain transparency rather than legato (Schoeman 2012a and 2012b). He regarded the connecting and sustaining of notes to be achieved by articulation and finger legato, and the three pedals to have a primarily colouristic function in his piano works. In Chapter 1 of this thesis I referred to Grové’s article on his piano teacher at the University of Cape Town, Cameron Taylor (Grové 2006: 63-64), in which he described some of Taylor’s methods, referring to him as one of the musicians who had the greatest influence on his compositions. One aspect that he particularly appreciated in his teacher’s playing was his use of so-called ‘expressive pedalling’. He wrote that in Taylor’s playing, the pedalling contributed to a strong sense of textural clarity and broad phrasing, stating that ‘My piano music would have sounded differently if I had not met him [Cameron Taylor] ... he inspired the clarity that is required in my faster pieces as well as the expressive pedalling that is essential in the slow ones’ (Grové 2006: 64). Grové was seldom vague with his pedalling intentions, and he clearly notated how this ‘expressive pedalling’ should be obtained. The rapid sustaining pedal-changes in his works are often of athletic proportions, particularly in *Nonyana*, where almost every bar is adorned with a number of indications and accompanying expressive markings. In the first toccata section of the work (bars 7-74) it is often the case that each group of two or three semiquavers is accompanied by a sustaining pedal marking. This evidently provides acoustic support for Grové’s persistent motivicism in the ostinato elements of his African style. Earlier in this chapter, I already mentioned several examples of refined pedalling in my application of Neuhaus’s technical principles to Grové’s pianistic oeuvre. In addition to the vibrato/flutter technique on the sustaining pedal in *Tweespalt* (1975 – see Example 86 above) and the use of constant half-pedalling in order to

create a haze of sound in *Mbira Song carried by the Night Breezes* (*Songs and Dances from Africa*, 1988-90), there have been many references of the impact that playing *senza pedale* has on fingering and legato articulation (e.g. *A Night Song in the Distance* from *Songs and Dances from Africa*). A few further clarifications may be made here in terms of Grové's distinctive use of the three pedals.

4.1 The sustaining (right) pedal

The first aspect that comes under discussion is the slow release followed by an immediate and rapid depressing of the sustaining pedal. One of the main thematic phrases in *Nonyana* consists of the gradual release in order to eliminate certain notes of a chord and to hold on to inherent harmonies (Example 131).¹¹⁵ In the original publication of the work by UNISA and SAMRO, the composer provided only legato pedal markings, which did not seem to convey the correct sound colour. Joseph Stanford proposed a new form of notation for the gradual release of the pedal in his brief article on *Nonyana* in *Musicus* (Stanford 1996: 176):



This suggestion was taken up in the eventual publication of the work by *Verlag Neue Musik* in 2007 and the composer started implementing this marking in most of his later piano works.

Example 131: Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), b. 3, a precise indication for the gradual release of the sustaining pedal (*Verlag Neue Musik*, Berlin)

Misterioso ♩ = 100 (♩ = ♩)

¹¹⁵ The composer used the term 'wiping out' in reference to certain notes in a chord (Schoeman 2012a & 2012b). He stated that this is part of his fixation with creating transparency between textural layers. It can also be ascribed to his intention to imitate the fluctuation or hocketing in traditional reed pipe music of Venda people.

As in the music of Debussy, who seldom provided pedal indications, there are some instances in *Nonyana* where the discretion of the performer determines the appropriate pedalling that leads to the desired sound colours. Stanford provided further suggestions based on the UNISA/SAMRO publication of the score. He claims that the permutations in the left hand of the *misterioso* passage in bars 60-62 may come across more clearly by using half-pedalling instead of legato-pedalling as per the instructions of the composer. It is therefore interesting to note that any pedal markings in this passage have ultimately been replaced by the indication to play *senza pedale* in the 2007 publication. This may well be the result of the composer's idea that the differentiation of subtle touch forms would be portrayed more clearly without the added resonance of the sustaining pedal. Example 132 includes extracts from both the original publication (the one Stanford used for his article) and the more recently published version of *Verlag Neue Musik*.

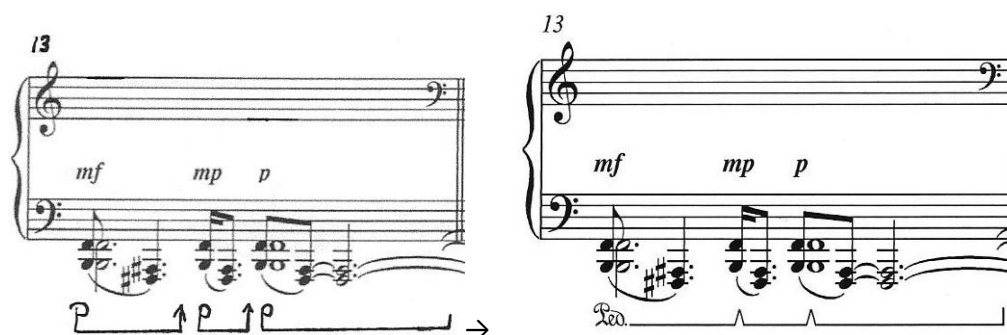
Example 132(A): Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), bb. 60-61, the 1995 UNISA/SAMRO publication with sustaining pedal markings

Example 132(B): Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), bb. 60-61, the 2007 publication with the indication of *senza pedale* (Verlag Neue Musik, Berlin)

Stanford (1996: 176) makes a further suggestion with regard to bar 13 of *Nonyana*, where a slight adjustment of the pedalling projects the intervals more clearly to the listener. He claims that it

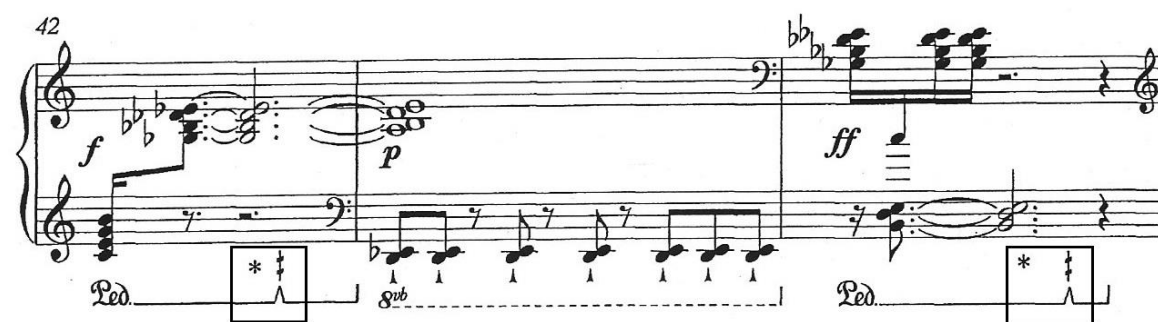
would be helpful to make short breaks in the legato pedalling¹¹⁶ and to apply ‘simultaneous pedalling’ (see Neuhaus’s description) on the iambic rhythm – the semiquaver and dotted quaver. This also brings more clarity to the rapid dynamic changes that appear in this bar, especially within the very low tessitura of the piano. Example 133 presents both Stanford’s suggestion (1996: 176) and the eventual adoption of this pedal marking in the 2007-edition.

Example 133: Stefans Grové, *Nonyana* (1994), b. 13, Stanford’s solution of simultaneous pedalling and the eventual inclusion of this idea in the 2007 edition of *Verlag Neue Musik*



The rapid depressing of the pedal after slowly releasing it also became incorporated in *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003). A novel effect can be produced in connection with this technique, as the audible and rapid lifting of the dampers from the strings may result in a percussive pedalling sound. The tempo of the passage in Example 134 is also very fast, which necessitates an accelerated response of the right foot in transmitting the sequence of timbral inflections.

Example 134: Stefans Grové, *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003), bb. 42-44, a more rapid depressing of the pedal after slow release



¹¹⁶ This refers to the quick release of the sustaining pedal, approximately one quaver earlier than the composer indicated in the 1995 edition.

In this instance, Grové devised a different pedalling notation to indicate the faster speed of depressing the sustaining pedal after slowly releasing it in bars 42 and 44 of *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance*:

*** Lift the pedal slowly and then $\frac{1}{2}$ depress it rapidly**

4.2 The *una corda* (left) pedal

Grové demonstrated a very personal view of the *una corda* pedal in his works, the most significant example of which appears in the first movement of *Images from Africa (Morning Music, 1999)*. In this work, Grové relied upon the shifting action of the hammers when the left or *una corda* pedal is depressed (see the end of Chapter 2). Joseph Banowetz aptly outlines the mechanism and the effect of the shifting *una corda* on grand pianos:¹¹⁷

As the left pedal is depressed, the entire set of hammers shifts slightly to the right, so that on the majority of notes, two instead of three strings are struck. The quantity of sound is certainly reduced, but of much greater significance is the alteration of tone quality that results from the hammer's striking with a less-impacted, softer part of its surface. Also of great importance is the setting up of a light vibration in the unused string, as the hammer strikes the other two strings. This creation of partials lends a veiled tone to the overall sonority (Banowetz 1985: 110).

Throughout Grové's *Morning Music*, the *una corda* pedal is employed only in *crescendo* and *forte* passages (Example 135). A louder, slightly muffled sound effect is thus obtained when the softer part of the hammer felts hit the strings with sufficient force. Grové became involved in breaking down the traditional view of the *una corda* as a 'soft pedal' and discouraged performers from relying on the device as a 'crutch' to help play *piano* or *pianissimo* passages. He often stated that finger control should ultimately be relied upon in regulating the dynamics, and the pedals merely contribute in an acoustical way (Schoeman 2012b & 2012c). This does not preclude the performer's discretion to apply *una corda* pedalling, particularly where sudden dynamic fluctuations appear in many of the works.

¹¹⁷ On modern upright pianos, the *una corda* may also be used to obtain a softer sound, but not by means of the softer damper felts. The hammers do not shift to the right as they do on a grand piano; they only move closer to the strings. The shorter distance before the impact of hammer on the string therefore weakens the sound. This is the reason why upright pianos are not really suitable for concert performances. The common conception of the *una corda* as a 'soft pedal' probably originates from this mechanism.

Example 135: Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), first movement (Morning Music), opening, una corda pedalling indication coincident with crescendo and forte

4.3 The *sostenuto* (middle) pedal

In Example 135 above, Grové, for the first time in his oeuvre, developed a new pedalling strategy that has had a major impact on the overall colour and the emphasis of repetitive intervals – the silent depression of a chord maintained by means of the *sostenuto* pedal. The second and third movements of *Images from Africa* are also based on this colouristic principle, and ultimately Grové applied the technique in the opening of the third movement from his last piano work *My Seasons* (2012). As I mentioned in my earlier summary of Neuhaus’s remarks on pedalling, the *sostenuto* pedal is not readily available on all pianos; all the above-mentioned examples were written for an appropriate concert instrument. The performer should take care when silently depressing the chords in order to avoid the accidental sounding of notes, and also to lift each damper sufficiently with the *sostenuto* pedal. This may take a little longer in performance, but once the lifting of all the necessary dampers has been secured, the pianist will be able to direct full attention to the fast passagework and the variety of articulation markings. Example 136a demonstrates the opening of *Twilight Music* (the second movement) of *Images from Africa* (1999). In this case, the silent chord consists only of black keys, while the passagework takes place only on the white keys. *Invocation of the Water Spirits* (the third movement) of *Images from Africa* is written for the left hand alone, but the right hand is nonetheless required to depress some of the notes of the initial silent chord. This silent chord also carries considerable harmonic importance, as it includes two dissonant intervals – the major seventh and the tritone (Example 136b). These intervals are activated throughout the movement by means of overtones. The final example comes from *First Spring Rain and the Awakening of delicate Colours* (the third movement) from *My Seasons* (2012). Here it is possible to identify a series of four notes that have to be pressed down individually and silently before the *sostenuto* pedal is depressed (Example 136c). There seems to be slight ambiguity in terms of the notation in Grové’s handwritten manuscript, as the first silent note b has both a sharp and a flat sign written in front of it. In Example

136c I have supplied both, and it would also be possible to silently depress both the b flat and b# during a performance of this piece. It is unfortunate that I could not clarify this with the composer before he passed away in May 2014.

Example 136(A): Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), second movement (*Twilight Music*), bb. 1-3

Example 136(A) is a musical score for the second movement of *Images from Africa* by Stefans Grové. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is marked "sotto voce" and "pp" (pianissimo). The piano accompaniment is marked "pp staccatissimo" and "simile". The score includes a "Sost. ped." (Sostenuto pedal) section and a "Senza ped." (Senza pedal) section. The key signature is B-flat major, and the time signature is 4/4.

Example 136(B): Stefans Grové, *Images from Africa* (1999), third movement (*Invocation of the Water Spirits*), bb. 1-3

Example 136(B) is a musical score for the third movement of *Images from Africa* by Stefans Grové. It features a piano accompaniment. The score is marked "p" (piano), "pp" (pianissimo), and "f" (forte). It includes a "Sost" (Sostenuto) section. The key signature is B-flat major, and the time signature is 4/4.

Example 136(C): Stefans Grové, *My Seasons* (2012), third movement, opening, silently-depressed note series

Example 136(C) is a musical score for the opening of the third movement of *My Seasons* by Stefans Grové. It features a piano accompaniment. The score is marked "pp" (pianissimo) and "molto staccato". It includes a "sost. ped." (Sostenuto pedal) section. The key signature is B-flat major, and the time signature is 4/4.

5. Grové's piano music for less experienced players

J. S. Bach and Domenico Scarlatti are two prominent Baroque composers who wrote large quantities of keyboard works for less experienced players. Neuhaus and Sándor drew upon several technical principles from these composers' more virtuosic piano works in their writings. They did not, however, include examples from the didactic pieces such as Bach's *Two-Part inventions*, *Six Little Preludes* and *Little Preludes from the Clavier-Büchlein for Wilhelm Friedemann Bach* or Scarlatti's easier keyboard sonatas. Yet the basic technical principles that govern the performance of these composers' keyboard music are equally applicable to their elementary works as to their advanced ones. Following the advent of Bartolomeo Cristofori's pianoforte (further developed by Gottfried Silbermann and others) in the eighteenth century, a new set of technical principles was developed by composers such as Clementi, Haydn, Mozart and subsequently Beethoven, Hummel and Schubert. Beethoven's student Carl Czerny unleashed a wealth of methods for the training of the fingers and honing the pianist's ability to play fast octaves and scales. The German pedagogue Friedrich Wieck heavily criticised these technical methods in the first edition of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* in 1834 and spoke out against the so-called 'empty virtuosity' of Kalkbrenner and Liszt (Deahl 2001: 28).¹¹⁸ As a leading pedagogue of his time, he focused on the ideals of the Enlightenment philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the educational personages Johann Pestalozzi, Johann Basedow and Johann Hebart. Four key concepts of Wieck's pedagogy were extracted from the writings of Hebart (Deahl 2001: 29), namely that of *Klarheit* (breaking the object into its smallest teachable elements), *Umgang* (relating those objects to each other), *System* (arranging the facts into a unity), and *Methode* (testing the student for application of knowledge). The balance between these concepts shone through the works of Wieck's student, Robert Schumann. When Schumann composed his highly successful *Album für die Jugend*, op. 68 in 1848, a new era of children's music commenced.¹¹⁹ The *Album* contains a large variety of effective character pieces in which the musical-developmental aspect comes to the fore instead of the focus on mechanical exercises of piano technique. Schumann's profound observations of childhood

¹¹⁸ Wieck also wrote a damning critique (Deahl 2001: 31) of the 'unnatural' technical strengthening devices such as Herz's dactylion and Logier's chiroplast (see my discussion of these devices in Chapter 1 of this thesis).

¹¹⁹ Schumann's earlier work *Kinderszenen*, op. 15, depicts the world of the child in a poetic way, but was not written for less experienced players. *Album für die Jugend* was truly conceived as functional music.

experiences and events are illustrated in this work and he set a new pedagogical thought process in motion that would ultimately have far-reaching implications. Dmitri Kabalevsky, one of the most prolific Russian composers of imaginative character pieces for less experienced players wrote in his posthumously-published book *Music and education: a composer writes about musical education*:

You have to be at the same time a composer, an educationist and a teacher [to be able to write successful children's music] ... The composer will ensure that the music is good and lively, the educationist will ensure that it is educationally reasonable. As for the teacher, he must not lose sight of the fact that music, like any art, helps children to see the world and nurtures their education by developing not only their artistic tastes and their creative imagination, but also their love of life, of mankind, of nature and their country; it arouses their interest and a feeling of friendship towards the peoples of other countries (Kabalevsky 1987: 120).

This statement strongly relates to the illustrative and metaphorical aspects of Schumann's *Album für die Jugend*. Further phrases such as students' 'love of ... their country' and 'interest ... towards the peoples of other countries' may hint at the ever-growing fascination of twentieth-century composers with folk music. A further element of the children's music tradition is the use of programmatic titles. The literature-orientated Schumann justified this concept by equating music to poetry, arguing that the addition of titles may enhance the clarity of expression and understanding rather than detract from the listener's own imaginative conclusions of a work (see 'Scores' in the Source List, Schumann 1981: III). The external influences of language and art have, as previously mentioned, had considerable bearing on Stefans Grové's later oeuvre. As an ardent admirer of Schumann, two of his own piano pieces resemble that composer's stylistic influence: firstly, the UNISA Grade 1 exam piece *A Simple Evening Song* (1981), and secondly, *Novelette in the style of Schumann* from his *Experience in Musical Styles* (1975). His five miniatures, *Glimpses* (2004), specifically portray a kinship with Schumann's *Album für die Jugend*, as the movements are respectively dedicated to members of his (Grové's) family.¹²⁰

In his dissonant examination pieces, Grové consciously challenged the less experienced pianist by moving away from conventional tonalities and clearly-defined metres. He thereby succeeded in producing works that serve as vehicles for his personal artistic expression, but that do not contain technical elements that would be too difficult to overcome within the educational context.¹²¹ The

¹²⁰ When Schumann's *Album* was published in 1849, the personal dedications to his children were omitted in order to internationalise the works.

¹²¹ I prefer to utilise the terminology 'music for less experienced players' rather than 'children's music'. It is often the case that not all beginner pianists are children. In the more rigorous training programmes of Russia

pieces are mostly sparsely-textured and the plethora of tone colours may encourage young musicians to draw inspiration from them. A few minor exceptions may be brought into this discussion, in which Grové appeared to have slightly lost touch with the idiomatic aspects of piano playing. I have earlier discussed the uncomfortable chordal construction of the *Short Toccata* (UNISA, Grade 5 – see Chapter 2 of this thesis). Inexperienced performers would often rely upon clear time signatures and bar lines to memorise or to acquaint themselves kinaesthetically with the motivic underpinnings of a piece. These devices do not appear in Grové's atonal or dissonant examination pieces. In his *Toccata* (1966), he had already completely discarded bar lines as indications of fixed time signatures.

By the time he composed the UNISA examination pieces, he had already stopped performing as a pianist and taught only composition.¹²² At a superficial level, the poetic character of Schumann's *Album* may well have influenced Grové's music for less experienced players, but I would like to emphasise the technical implications of Wieck's first pedagogical key concept, namely *Klarheit* (breaking the object into its smallest teachable elements). The traditional eight technical principles of Neuhaus alongside Sándor's perspectives on motion in piano playing remain effective measures in discerning the essential building blocks in any sector of Grové's pianistic output. In his music for less experienced pianists, he restricted himself to basic techniques and underlined each one by means of meticulous forms of notation. Throughout the following discussions, I shall emphasise certain technical characteristics that appear in almost all of Grové's individual elementary piano works.

5.1 Reiterated pitches

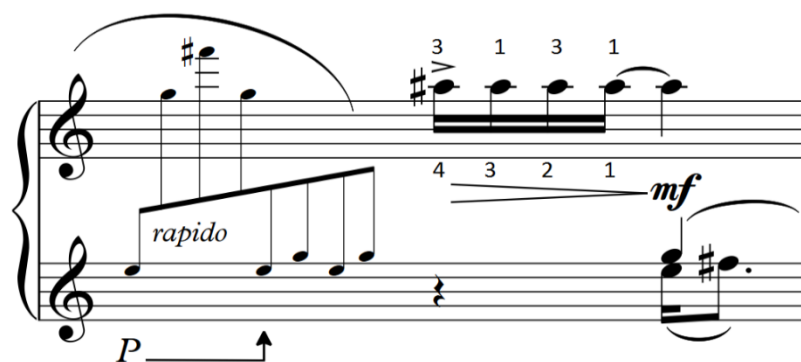
The reiteration of a single note is a pervasive feature in many of Grové's piano works. In the more elementary pieces, such as the fifth miniature from *Glimpses* (2004), the repeated-note passages are limited in scope. Only four repetitions are incorporated thus it may be most expedient to use the conventional 4-3-2-1 fingering or simply to alternate between the stronger third finger and thumb

and Hungary, the terminology 'children's music' probably refers to the first step in a pianist's professional development.

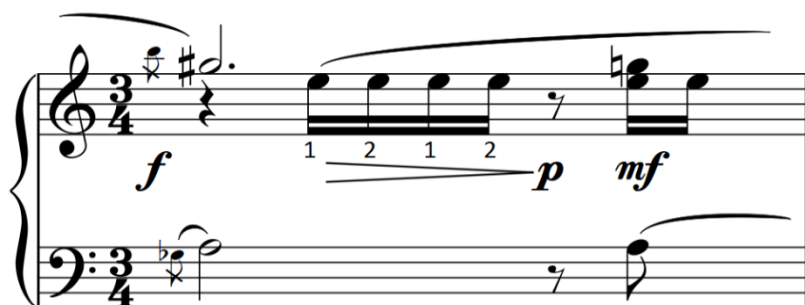
¹²² This is a very different scenario from children's music composers such as Bartók and Kabalevsky who both taught the piano throughout their professional careers. In South Africa, however, there are no pianist-composers of international standing who combined their creative careers with performing and teaching. Leading figures such as Arnold van Wyk, Hubert du Plessis, and more recently, Peter Klatzow, Roelof Temmingh, Hendrik Hofmeyr, Michael Blake, and Alexander Johnson all taught music theory and composition at tertiary institutions. All of these composers have been trained as pianists, and it is notable that they seldomly engaged in piano teaching.

(Example 137a). When it comes to a softer dynamic, the thumb and second finger may also oscillate given the double-escapement of the keyboard (Example 137b).

Example 137(A): Stefans Grové, *Glimpses* (2004), fifth miniature, b. 5, repeated notes with a louder tone colour and agogic accent



Example 137(B): Stefans Grové, *Glimpses* (2004), fifth miniature, b. 2, repeated notes with a softer tone colour, requiring fingers (possibly thumb and second finger) to remain closer to the key



5.2 Ornaments and note groups

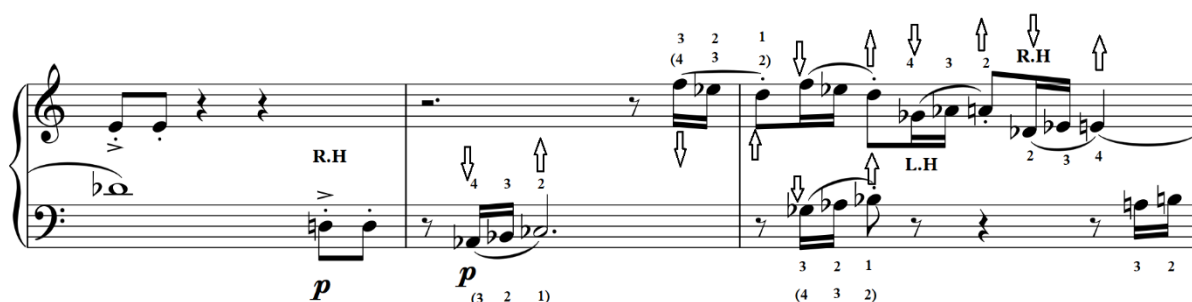
The first ornament in Example 136a above hints at Neuhaus's second technical principle, namely that of ornamentation and note groups. This *arabesque* in bar 5 of the fifth miniature from *Glimpses* is not dissimilar to the embellishments that are integrated in Grové's advanced virtuosic works such as *Haunting Music* (see the discussion of *arabesques* in section 2.2 of this chapter). As the title *Masked-Weaver's Masquerade* suggests, the piece principally takes the guise of a birdsong imitation. Two further figurations contribute to the variety of embellishments in this work: a short tremolo (bars 1, 3 and 8) and acciaccaturas in both the left and right-hand parts (Example 138).

Example 138: Stefans Grové, *Glimpses* (2004), fifth miniature, b. 1, tremolo and acciaccaturas



Note groups within the maintained five-finger hand position are among the significant elements of Grové's motivic style. The UNISA Grade 4 piece, *Cock-fighting*, consists almost entirely of three-note groups. For the sake of consistency, and in order not to confuse the Grade 4 candidate, it may be helpful to play each group with the same 3-2-1 fingering. In such instances, it is of vital importance not to over-accentuate the heavier thumb notes. The student has to be encouraged to use the softer side angle or a shorter and lighter fingertip articulation of the thumb. Alternatively, *Cock-fighting* may be regarded as an exercise in optimal sound control of the second, third and fourth fingers. The more advanced candidate will be able to obtain an adequate brilliance of articulation without having to rely on the stronger thumb. In Example 139, I have provided both fingering solutions (1-2-3 and 2-3-4) for the note groups in *Cock-fighting*. Furthermore, these figurations can be executed more effectively if the pianist becomes aware of the appropriate wrist movements in legato groups. In order to illustrate the correct positioning of these joints, I include upward and downward arrows that are similar to the annotations of Sándor.

Example 139: Stefans Grové, *Cock-fighting* (UNISA, Grade 4, 1981), bb. 7-9



Neuhaus's third and fourth principles (scales and arpeggios) can in some ways be connected to Grové's keyboard compositions for less experienced players. The integral role of passagework falls

under the heading of hand positions that consist mostly of two, three or four semiquavers within his linear toccata passages. The third movement of *Glimpses* is a short study in *leggiero* passagework (Example 140). A few sudden *forte* outbursts, usually allocated to the right hand, deliberately disturb the sequence of short motifs. In the continuous *pp* passages, it is important to place less weight on the thumb in order to avoid the accentuation of finger patterns. In Example 140, I provide a fingering solution that may enable the pianist to sustain a consistent hand position and achieve the utmost regularity in the semiquaver passagework. Even if these semiquavers are not accompanied by legato slurs, they still form part of groups that are to be played with single unchanging hand positions. Sándor wrote about this concept in his chapter on five-finger groups, scales and arpeggios. He explained that an upward motion of the wrist is more comfortable when a group ends on the fourth or fifth fingers, and the downward adjustment of the wrist is more suitable when groups end on the thumb. As with Example 139, I have added arrows in Example 140 to indicate these wrist movements in the passage work, in this case, in the third miniature of Grové's *Glimpses* (2004), which is dedicated to the composer's son, Christopher. There are a few points in this miniature where it is not necessarily advisable to have a lower wrist position on the thumb. Sándor made provision for such exceptions and included photographic demonstrations (Sándor 1981: 68). He nonetheless came to the conclusion that 'the relative height of the wrist at the ending of the group is a little lower than it would be if the phrase had ended on the fifth finger' (Sándor 1981: 68). This can already be seen at the ends of bars 2 and 3, where the thumb fingering appears at the end of a group covered by a single hand position:

Example 140: Stefans Grové, *Glimpses* (2004), third miniature, bb. 1-2, semiquaver passage, requiring the maintenance of hand positions

Vivace ♩ = 116

Pour Christopher

The musical score consists of two staves. The right hand (treble clef) plays a series of semiquaver groups, often slurred together. The left hand (bass clef) plays a continuous semiquaver passage. The score includes dynamic markings: *pp* (pianissimo), *f* (forte), *m.s.* (mezzo-soprano), and *m.d.* (mezzo-dolce). Fingering numbers (1-5) are indicated above and below the notes. Wrist movement arrows (upward and downward) are placed above the right hand's groups to indicate the direction of the wrist at the end of each group. The score is in 2/4 time and features a key signature of one flat.

5.3 The performance of more than one note together (intervals)

The combination of two notes, whether it be seconds, thirds, fourths, fifths or octaves, is a further technical aspect found throughout Grové's oeuvre. In the earlier discussions of thirds and fourths in *Yemoja* and rapid octave sequences in the *Stampftanz* from *Songs and Dances from Africa*, I devised strategies to overcome considerable technical difficulties. In the UNISA Grade 7 examination piece, *Obstinacy* (2007), Grové simplified intervallic sequences by reducing the numbers of notes and by placing rests in between short motifs. Even in passages of alternating thirds, a concept first employed by Bartók in no. 129 of *Mikrokosmos*, the hands remain in a similar position on the keyboard. Grové reserved the wide registral leaps for the more virtuosic works such as *Nonyana* and *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance*. In Example 141, three intervallic varieties in *Obstinacy* are identified.

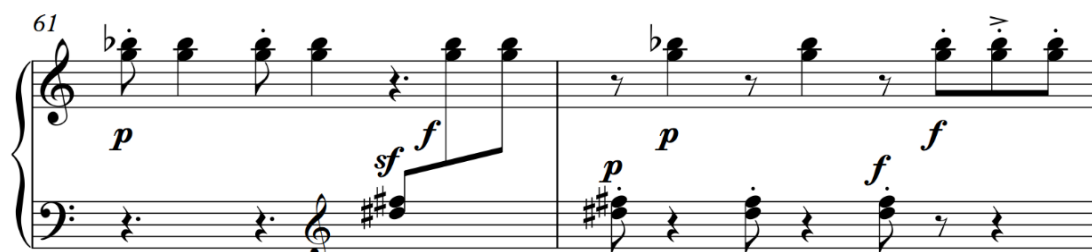
Example 141(A): Stefans Grové, *Obstinacy* (UNISA, Grade 7, 2008 syllabus), bb. 19-21, octave motifs



Example 141(B): Stefans Grové, *Obstinacy* (UNISA, Grade 7, 2008 syllabus), alternating major seconds, major and minor thirds and perfect fourths



Example 141(C): Stefans Grové, *Obstinacy* (UNISA, Grade 7, 2008 syllabus), bb. 61-62, repeated thirds and alternating thirds



5.4 Chords and Leaps

I would again like to return to the finger-tautening strategies of József Gát in discussing the chordal passages of Grové's elementary pieces. Two significant examples that can be singled out are *A Sad Song* (Grade 1) and the *Short Toccata* (Grade 5), in which the former contains simple major and minor triads and the latter a wider variety of inversions along with quartal harmonies. A focused arc-shaped hand is required to control the wide dynamic varieties amongst these chords in *A Sad Song*, where the softer touch species should be investigated in order to secure economy of movement.¹²³ The unidiomatic sequence of chords in *Short Toccata* can be overcome by a slower choice of tempo (the metronome marking is crotchet = 100, which needs to be decreased in future publications). Here, the characterisation ultimately relies upon the short articulation. Grové implements a Bartókian form of notation, whereby some of the chords are rolled upwards or downwards, depending on the direction of the arrows (see Example 142b). The clarity of the rolled chords also relies upon a slower tempo and the tautening of the fingers. Again, it is possible to provide the hand with anchor points throughout the piece by briefly resting on certain pivotal chords in the bass line and preparing for any skips or leaps by tautening and releasing the fingers. The plucking staccato action (discussed earlier in section 3 on articulation) on the roll chords may also result in *Luftpausen* between the notes. These brief pauses between the roll chords would ultimately contribute to a greater sense of accuracy in performance.

Example 142(A): Stefans Grové, *A Sad Song* (UNISA, Grade 1, 1981), chords played within the double-escapement



¹²³ The hand should not be lifted high above the keys. The double-escapement may be an effective tool in this regard.

Example 142(B): Stefans Grové, *Short Toccata* (UNISA, Grade 5, 1981), a rapid chordal passage (with roll chord indications)



5.5 Polyphony

Grové's academic interest in the development of early music practices, as well as his scholarship on the Cantatas and other church music of JS Bach, nurtured his awareness of polyphonic textures, and this became inseparable from his compositional technique. In the elementary graded piano pieces for UNISA he maintains the appropriate simplicity, but the concepts of textural layering and voice-leading remain constant features throughout. Again, it is possible to differentiate between the practices of independence between the fingers and those of the hands. In the Grade 1 piece, *Three Birds Sing*, intricate polyphony is constructed through the two voices in the right hand and a contrasting ostinato in the left hand. While the top G remains constant and the dynamic changes apply mostly to the lower right-hand voice, it becomes important to be able to change the position of the fifth finger in order to imbue a different colouring on each of the reiterated notes. A sufficient amount of experimentation and repositioning of the hand is required to obtain the necessary balance between the voices. This level of tonal gradation may not necessarily be expected from a Grade 1 candidate. Regardless of students' level of expertise, teachers may always consider it valuable to point out the timbral layering in such passages.

Example 143: Stefans Grové, *Three Birds Sing* (UNISA, Grade 1, 1981), bars 1-6, voice-leading in the right-hand part



Longer note values that are interspersed within semiquaver textures have been discussed in the earlier section on polyphony in *Yemoja* (2.8). In the fourth movement of *Glimpses*, Grové's writing

necessitates a similar technical approach and he specifically states in an accompanying note that ‘the sustained tones [should be held] for their full value and accentuate[d] gently with the dynamics *mf* and *p*’. In contrast to *Yemoja*, the tempo indication of this miniature is a slower *Andantino*, providing the less experienced performer with sufficient time to project the longer note (dotted quaver tied to a quaver) clearly and to control the *molto legato* semiquaver pattern underneath.

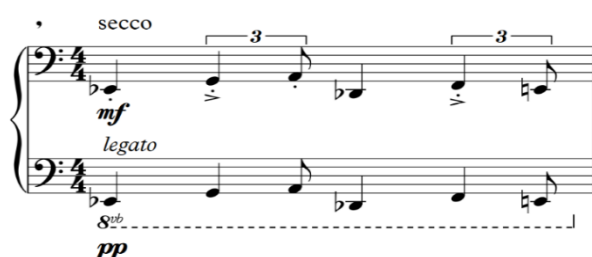
Example 144: Stefans Grové, *Glimpses* (2004), fourth miniature, textural layering in the opening



5.6 Articulation and Pedalling

Grové’s application of articulation notation in his piano music reached an apex in the virtuosic fantasy, *Nonyana* (1994). In all of the more elementary piano works he maintained a similar intensity in his indications. Only in the three duet pieces from 1981 did he employ longer legato phrase markings, but in the general context of his works the slurs are only intended to accentuate the brief usage of the softer key-strokes. Unlike his advanced works, Grové did not often resort to the very short staccatissimo markings (v) in the more elementary UNISA examination pieces. He thus demonstrates an awareness that the less experienced player has potentially not yet mastered the plucking action required for such a touch form. Instead, he often relies on the regular staccatos (. . .) and half-*tenutos* to contrast with the short legato slurs. In the first movement of *Glimpses*, he consciously starts to introduce the simultaneous legato-staccato technique in two unison octave passages (bars 4 and 8). In the following extract (Example 145), the combination of articulations appears conjunctly with the use of weaker accents (>). As per the instructions in Bartók’s catalogue, these accents should be performed with arm weight rather than a short direct finger attack. In a passage such as this, it is also important to evaluate the context of the accents and to consider their agogical implications (perhaps modifying the tempo slightly in a *parlando-rubato* fashion) instead of playing them percussively.

Example 145: Stefans Grové, *Glimpses* (2004), first miniature, bar 4, legato-staccato articulations



Grové evidently prioritised the role of the fingers in creating different timbres in his UNISA examination pieces. He nonetheless required players to be acquainted with the activation of overtones and the function of the dampers. The clearest example of this is the Grade 1 piece *Night Music from a Far Eastern Country* (Example 146a). It is not necessarily easy for a Grade 1 candidate to be able to depress a chord silently and to firmly hold it for the entire duration of the 25 bar-piece (of which three sections have to be repeated), as it requires a large amount of concentration.¹²⁴ Through the execution of the work, the performer will soon realise that the overtones and general sound colour will go astray if the chord is not maintained with sufficient strength. The regular staccato articulation also contributes to the timbral nuance, and the haze of sound (a result of the silently-depressed chord and staccato crotchets) may encourage a consistency of touch – both the percussive as well as the gradual non-percussive forms. A similar instance appears in the piece *Harmonics* from Bartók's *Mikrokosmos*, Vol. 4. Sándor (1981: 173) suggested that the keys of the silent chord (in Bartók's *Harmonics*) can be pressed down and then caught by the *sostenuto* middle pedal, thereby producing 'an eerie and strangely beautiful sonority'. In the works by both Grové and Bartók, this can at most be regarded as a suggestion and not as a necessary prerequisite. As I mentioned previously, many pianos are not equipped with a middle pedal. Grové's *Night Music in a Far Eastern Country* is also quite simple and of short duration. It is therefore not essential to have the sustaining pedal available to add further colouristic dimensions. By the same token, these might be seen as examples encountered relatively early in a pianist's development for the use and function of the middle pedal to be experimented with. One of the differences between these pieces is that Bartók included a few sustaining pedal markings. He also added a few percussive *sforzando* B major chords in a lower register in order more effectively to activate the overtones of the silently-depressed opening chord (Example 146b).

¹²⁴ This is particularly the case when the Grade 1 candidate is of a young age. The concentration span of an adult will be long enough to obtain the required effect with relative ease.

Example 146(A): Stefans Grové, *Night Music from a Far Eastern Country* (UNISA, Grade 1, 1981), bb.1-5



Example 146(B): Béla Bartók, *Harmonics* from *Mikrokosmos*, Vol. 4, S. 107, BB. 105, no. 102, bb. 1-6

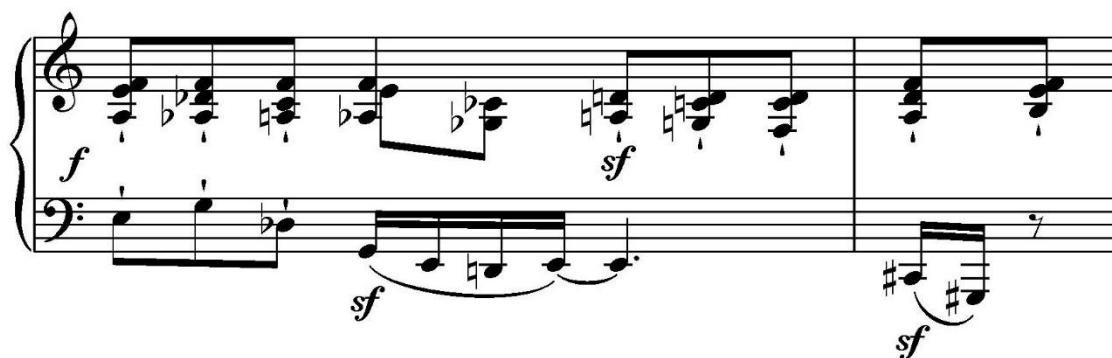


6. Conclusion

In this chapter I systematically defined a set of technical principles in Grové's substantial output for the piano. Not only did the composer develop a very personal stance in relation to standard elements of piano technique, but he also expanded on traditional notation and internalised these techniques in such a way that he ultimately forged a highly subjective yet idiomatic instrumental colour palette. The methodological approaches of Bartók, Neuhaus, Gát and Sándor have strongly influenced my suggestions for facilitating the technical aspects of Grové's works. I have extracted methods for practising octave passages from their writings, but also drawn upon fairly self-explanatory concepts such as the use of more than one finger to perform repeated notes. These were, however, applied only in selected examples from Grové's wide oeuvre and my formulations will hopefully be of use to pianists who encounter similar technical challenges in other works. At the same time, I attempted to be as comprehensive as possible and to explore a wide variety of significant areas of his output.

It is worth mentioning that there are several passages that appear in Chapter 2 of this thesis that have not been included in the above discussion on technique. *Yemoja*, for example, is quite a long work and includes not only interpretative challenges, but also many difficult passages of fingerwork.

Neuhaus's principle of evenness alongside Sándor's description of wrist movements within smaller note groups could certainly apply here. I have excerpted one example of complicated consecutive intervals in bars 33-35 of *Yemoja* (see Example 102), but there are also several passages that consist of consecutive triads. One such example appears in bars 55-56 in the right hand (see Chapter 2, Example 58b, no. iii; I include this example here as well for ease of reference):



Grové added a staccato marking to each of the triads which necessitates both the ability to move rapidly and seamlessly between the chords, and to execute a plucking finger staccato action in order to achieve the required sound colour. As in the extended passage from *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* in Example 110 (bb. 10-16), in *Yemoja*, the composer often combined several technical principles within the context of rapid passages with a fast metronome marking. This merging of technical challenges and specific articulation markings is an aspect that has gained increasing importance in Grové's piano works. A gradual development of more meticulous forms of notation as well as articulation and pedal markings can particularly be traced through his large-scale works of the 'African' period. The longer movements from *Songs and Dances from Africa* contain several of Neuhaus's principles in their basic form and the experimentation with novel timbres was still the main priority at that point in Grové's compositional career. In *Nonyana* (1994) and *Images from Africa* (1999), he started implementing a more sophisticated writing style for the instrument, which he maintained throughout the last fifteen years of his life, both in his solo works and his chamber music. Only in the very last works, *Piano Thoughts* (2010) and *My Seasons* (2012), did he move away from the overtly virtuosic approach of the larger fantasies such as *Nonyana* and *Yemoja*. The forms of notation adopted in these late works consequently became more sparse and undefined. Whether this was an intentional process or a mere trace of old age is unclear. The composer's handwriting may be indicative, as the clear calligraphy of the earlier *Images from Africa* and *Glimpses* gradually became fainter (see Appendix 4).

Grové was the only South African composer of his generation to have extensively engaged with the seldom-embraced duality of writing both large-scale works for concert pianists and simpler, more concise pieces in order to prepare less experienced players for the considerable technical and interpretative challenges later on. In order to comprehend this duality in Grové's piano music fully, it is helpful to investigate the physical effect of the two basic touch species that he embraced, including the non-percussive stroke (whereby the key is gradually depressed) and the direct percussive touch (where the fingertip depresses the key directly into the key-bed). A very scientific approach to the physiology of piano playing remains a rarity, and the theoretical treatises of Ortmann, Matthay and Gát are often regarded with a degree of scepticism by pianists and teachers (Gustafson 2007: 90 & Margulis 2010). Spontaneity in performance can certainly be compromised by an overly scrupulous attention to touch species and a prescriptive attitude to exactly which part of the hand and finger is used to realise an articulation marking effectively. My suggestions throughout this chapter are, however, to be applied mainly in the preliminary stages of performance preparation. Bartók's articulation catalogue provided Grové with the notational framework in delineating these touch species. The clear definition of each marking (see Figure 3) illustrates the implementation of a mechanical process during practice. However, it will often happen in performance that these processes will become internalised and that the player will no longer focus on the smaller details and exact touch species.

The preliminary attention to detail will merely contribute to a greater clarity of articulation and a transparency of texture, qualities that were most dear to Grové (Schoeman 2012a and 2012b). He constantly emphasised the importance of the relationship between his works for string and wind instruments and those for the piano. His experience of having played the flute and the viola prompted him to implement legato slurs in his piano works and to discard longer phrase bows, which he regarded as vague. The danger that ensues from his sometimes overly meticulous approach is that the broader contours of the works will not come across clearly. The large-scale fantasies such as *Yemoja* in particular will then sound fragmented and, to an untrained ear, its constituent sections may come across as a chain of disparate musical artefacts. This may be seen as a further justification of why a stylistic and structural analysis, such as I attempted in Chapter 2, brings a greater sense of overall perspective. By cultivating an awareness of the structural significance of the motivic units and knowing how they develop throughout the remainder of a work (and even throughout Grové's oeuvre), the performer can develop strategies on how to colour or nuance each of them in order to delineate the overall architecture of the music.

In Chapter 2, I outlined three separate toccata styles in Grové's works. The linear toccata element, where one note is sustained with continued semiquaver passagework underneath, appears repeatedly in *Yemoja* as well as several of the later works. Upon mastering the clarity of the sustained note and the required evenness in the passagework in structural element B from *Yemoja* (see Example 56 in Chapter 2), for example, the performer may apply this experience and knowledge to the later *Glimpses*, *Haunting Music* and even the works for piano and orchestra.

I have not engaged with the concept of memorisation in this chapter. Sándor (1981: 192-197) devoted a chapter of his book to this subject, but did not enter into an extensive exegesis. He merely outlined the four types of memorisation processes: visual, acoustic, motoric and intellectual. These processes can apply to almost any type of music, but they can be particularly helpful in activating a strategic approach to the preparation of contemporary works. Even if one performs with the score, it often remains challenging to remember the correct counting and to coordinate the visual information with the correct physical movements. The very fast metronome markings in some of Grové's works, for example *Songs and Dances from Africa* or *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance*, dictate that the pianist has to develop a fluent awareness of the motoric underpinnings. This is why slow repetitive and mechanical practice, with the help of preparatory exercises such as those of Neuhaus, Gát and Sándor, can contribute to the kinetic memory and assimilation of rhythmic patterns.

Grové assured me during several of our discussions that he did not find it particularly necessary for his music to be memorised. On the contrary, he felt that memorised performances could jeopardise the strict adherence to his markings as well as the accuracy of articulation and pedalling. He did, however, confirm that a structural analysis would assist the performer delineating the broader contours in larger works (as I have explored above with regard to *Yemoja*). This all forms part of what Sándor described as 'intellectual memory', strengthened by 'understanding form and harmonic structure, by organizing the material and determining where climaxes, low points, dynamic fluctuations, ornaments, pedal effects, and modulatory processes take place'. Sándor claimed that in this way, 'we reinforce our memory and allow it to contribute its share to a flawless performance' (Sándor 1981: 195).

CHAPTER 4

A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF STEFANS GROVÉ'S PIANO WORKS IN RELATION TO CANON FORMATION AND CURRICULUM DESIGN IN SOUTH AFRICA

1. Introduction

This concluding chapter expands upon elements that were investigated earlier in the thesis for the purposes of defining Stefans Grové's position within a potential canon of South African piano music. One of the reasons for describing such a canon would be to address the dearth of written documentation on this subsection of the tradition of Western art music (music that had its origins in European traditions) in that country. Placing composers and their piano works within a larger collective context can hopefully contribute towards a closer understanding of their individual achievements as well as their creative environment.

In her book *Gender and the Musical Canon*, Marcia Citron initially extracts the modern meaning of the word 'canon' from a clerical or theological context, where it often refers to a certain dogma or 'an authoritative list of books accepted as Holy Scripture' (Citron 1993: 15). These types of canons represent collectives of materials that 'act as models, instruct, [and] represent high quality' (Citron 1993: 15). This understanding of 'canon' has radiated to various other fields. In a musical context, Citron concludes that canons mainly comprise repertoires and disciplines – the works as well as the categories they fall in and through which they are studied. She furthermore suggests four 'categorical configurations' that play a part in exploring canonicity: genre, historical factors such as periodisation, but also the concepts of 'creativity' and 'professionalism' (Citron 1993: 18). The latter two are harder to define accurately and objectively. To stay within the parameters of this documentation on Grové's pianistic output, I would like to focus mainly on the first two categories. Citron (1993: 19) asserts that 'the process of the formation of a canon whether a repertoire or a disciplinary paradigm involves a lengthy historical process that engages many cultural variables'. She furthermore claims that canons 'self-perpetuate' and that changes can only occur over extended periods of time, 'reflecting an ideological shift' (Citron 1993: 19). This means that the basic parameters of canons can stay the same for a long time, even if certain components vary slightly over the years. It is with this in mind that I would like to turn to Stephanus Muller's list of the first generation of composers who were born in South Africa, received their initial training in that country

and later gained national and even international prominence through their works (Muller and Walton 2006: 2): Priaulx Rainier (1903-1986), Rosa Nepgen (1909-2000), Blanche Gerstman (1910-1973), Arnold van Wyk (1916-1983), Hubert du Plessis (1922-2011), Stefans Grové (1922-2014), Stanley Glasser (born 1926) and John Joubert (born 1927).¹²⁵ With the exception of Joubert and Glasser, who have spent most of their professional careers in England and have now ceased their compositional activities, all of these composers have passed away.¹²⁶ They form a distinct group of musicians from a particular historical era (all born before the Second World War), and therefore it is only now starting to become possible to make pronouncements on whether their contributions were canonical – both in South Africa or elsewhere. The ‘historical process’ in this case, would refer to a variety of factors such as the socio-political background in which they lived and worked. When taking into account that the careers of these composers, particularly Grové, spanned over a lengthy period of time, it is certainly possible to trace ‘ideological shifts’ that would impact the so-called canon of which they form part. The overall aim is to single out the above-mentioned generation of composers in order to observe whether their work led to the development of a canon, a model that served as inspiration to the younger generations.

In terms of structuring this chapter, I return to the two broader canonical components that Citron circumscribes (1993: 22): repertoire and discipline. To delineate ‘repertoire’ will be to refer to the piano works of Grové and his contemporaries. The concept of ‘discipline’ will be explored through a closer study of the historical context, the role of educational and other institutions as well as the available documentation on the subject. These two components will be discussed throughout the following three premises that represent the general functionalities of South African piano music. First of all, I conduct a brief survey of the music that was written for the concert stage, namely those works for professional concert pianists. This investigation partly relies on Chris Venter’s entry ‘Pianoforte Music’ in the *South African Music Encyclopaedia* (Malan 1986d: 15-58), but also on further research that was conducted over the past thirty years. Although a historical study has been carried out in Chapter 1, this investigation of canon formation moves more towards a contemporary sphere that involves Grové and other South African composers who were mostly active during the

¹²⁵Significantly, all these composers wrote for the piano and this aspect of their work will be the focal point of this chapter.

¹²⁶ Priaulx Rainier left South Africa for England at the age of seventeen (1920). She eventually became a British citizen. Like Glasser and Joubert, she can thus rather be classified as a British composer.

second half of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century. The second premise relates in many ways to the first as it also involves virtuosic works, but differs from it in that the emphasis falls more on cross-cultural elements. In Chapter 2 of this thesis, I have explored how Grové combined several aspects of Western construction techniques with indigenous elements, predominantly from Southern Africa, in his *Music from Africa* series. In this final chapter, Grové's contribution will be evaluated alongside other composers who have followed similar procedures. A part of this investigation will entail how this process of engaging with indigenous elements had already started during the early twentieth century in Eastern Europe and eventually made its way to South Africa. The third and final canonical premise is the collection of educational piano works by composers from that country. In this section, as well as the previous ones, the works of the above-mentioned generation will be the focal point. There are, however, several other teachers and pianists of that generation who composed works for less experienced players that will also be included in the discussion. Again, it is possible to trace further developments in the canon of educational piano music by peripherally referring to some of the younger-generation composers. The current educational backdrop and integration of these educational works into national curricula will also come into consideration.

Citron convincingly reifies the existence of a 'professional-commercial coalition' in the disciplinary aspect of canonicity (Citron 1993: 20). Even if canons are not formed by one individual or at a specific moment in time, there is still a group of people that take control of how materials are distributed and thus cloaked with canonical status. The 'professional' canon-makers are those influential academics, teachers, performers, managers and directors who decide which collections of works are worth studying and heard by the public. The 'commercial' side is represented by the publishers of curriculums, anthologies and recordings. For them, marketability plays a significant role in deciding whether to publish and distribute materials, but they also rely upon the expertise of professionals to guide them. The impact that societal figures and academics such as Jan Bouws, Erik Chisholm, Anton Hartman, Jacques Malan, Chris Venter and Charlie Weich (and even the composers themselves, through their writings and advocacy) had on the formation of a South African canon will be interrogated in this chapter. I shall also look at specific events and concert opportunities that shaped the careers and consequently the canonical status of these composers. Apart from this, there is also a discussion of the various state and private institutions that promote art music. In Chapter 1, I have investigated the role of music departments at universities and the Department of Music Examinations at UNISA in the establishment of a national educational system for pianists. I have touched upon the commissioning of piano works for examinations, and how Grové became a

prominent example of a local composer who contributed to the syllabus. In this chapter, I shall take that discussion further by determining how UNISA, through examinations and music competitions, influenced both the development of an educational as well as a concert performance canon of South African piano music. Statistical research by the local education specialists Elizabeth Oehrle (1993) as well as Jacques de Wet, Anri Herbst and Susan Rijdsdijk (2005) assists me in delineating the *status quo* of instrumental training in state schools. Furthermore, the latest National Curriculum Statement (2011 – hereafter the NCS) of the Department of Basic Education will be utilised to garner a closer perspective on how piano students are prepared for entrance into universities and also to ascertain the position of South African art music within the state educational sector. Citron (1993: 25) described the major impact of anthologies on the formation of canons, and it is through this lens that I broadly observe the influence of the NCS, publications by UNISA, the commissions and publications of SAMRO, as well as recordings and musicological studies on the production and study of art music repertoires in South Africa.

2. An exploration of a South African canon of piano music

In 1935, Charlie Weich, the music critic of the newspaper *Die Burger*, arranged a concert for young South African composers at the *Oranjeklub* in Cape Town (Malan 1986d: 431). Blanche Gerstman and Arnold van Wyk performed their own music on this occasion and they were praised by critics. According to Venter (Malan 1986d: 31), this ushered in a new era of South African piano music. In Chapter 1 of this thesis, I have discussed earlier figures such as Roger Ascham, Horace Barton, Sydney Rosenbloom, Colin Taylor, William Henry Bell and Erik Chisholm who came from Britain to establish teaching practices in South Africa and composed large quantities of piano music. This discussion included the activities and compositions of older pedagogues such as David and Maarten Roode and Petrus Lemmer. The small output of piano works by these latter three musicians is subordinate to their contribution in the area of Afrikaans art song.¹²⁷ However, the young Van Wyk and Gerstman demonstrated a different approach. Although they were still honing their craft through those early works they performed at the *Oranjeklub*, the contents of their music already illustrated a serious interest in the more complex developments in European art music. They were

¹²⁷ See the brief outline in Chapter 1 of this thesis of how the Afrikaans art song was a by-product of the two Afrikaans Language Movements, the first of which the composer and organist JS de Villiers was involved in. Another prolific composer of Afrikaans art songs who has not featured in this thesis was Stephen Le Roux Marais. His songs are still performed with regularity in South Africa.

the first musicians born in South Africa to demonstrate the potential to establish more significant compositional careers.¹²⁸ The *Oranjeklub* concerts were repeated frequently during the next fifteen years, eventually also providing exposure to other young composers such as Hubert du Plessis, Stefans Grové and John Joubert.¹²⁹ In 1952, Erik Chisholm founded the South African chapter of the ISCM and encouraged local composers to take part in the organisation's initiatives. This in turn led to works by Grové and Van Wyk being performed at overseas conferences in Salzburg and Haifa.¹³⁰ Many years later, Grové referred to the support he received from Chisholm as well as Anton Hartman, Head of Music at the SABC:

Hartman, who conducted the SABC Orchestra, realized the necessity of encouraging young composers by commissioning mainly orchestral works and also performing those. Chisholm, who hailed from Scotland, was equally enthusiastic about the music of the young composers and performed a large number of works annually at the University of Cape Town (Muller 2007: 25).

These composers who made their debut in Cape Town were all awarded scholarships to further their studies abroad. Van Wyk left the country in 1939 to study at the Royal Academy of Music in London. He gained success when his *Five Elegies* for string quartet were performed at Myra Hess's National Gallery concerts, Henry Wood conducted his Symphony no. 1 during a BBC broadcast (the same work was later also performed by Sir John Barbirolli at the Cheltenham Festival), and Olive Zorian played his *Saudade* for violin and orchestra under the baton of Sir Adrian Boult at a Promenade Concert in the Albert Hall (Muller 2008: 65, 67 & Muller 2014: 308, 317). Gerstman, Du Plessis and Joubert later also went to study in London by means of Performing Rights Society Scholarships (Malan 1986b: 91; Thom 2011: 6; Malan 1986c: 58). Grové was the only South African composer of that generation to further his studies in the United States. As mentioned before, Joubert did not return to South Africa, but the other composers all eventually made their way back to their native country. Gerstman became a lecturer of harmony and counterpoint at the Universities of Cape Town

¹²⁸ Arnold van Wyk's early unpublished manuscripts, including the Quintet in F-sharp minor that was performed at the 1935-concert at the *Oranjeklub*, are all catalogued in Muller's book *Nagmusiek* (2014: 654-656), in volume 1 under the section 'Juvenilia'. It was during a follow-up concert of Van Wyk's music at the *Oranjeklub* in 1938 that a representative of the Performing Rights Society was sufficiently impressed to offer the young composer a scholarship to study at the Royal Academy of Music in London (Muller 2014: 170).

¹²⁹ Du Plessis, Grové and Joubert received training from William Henry Bell. See the Introduction to the thesis (footnote no. 2) as well as Chapter 1 (page 73).

¹³⁰ See Chapter 2, p. 106.

and Pretoria, but she also took up the position of principal double-bass player in the Cape Town Municipal Orchestra. Aside from their compositional and academic activities, Van Wyk, Du Plessis, Grové and Joubert were all pianists who gave several concerts in their youth years. It is therefore not surprising that they produced a great deal more for the instrument than Gerstman, who only penned a few character pieces and one substantial suite, *From the Christmas Stocking* (undated – Venter 1986d: 37; Roos 1979: 19). Joubert gained prominence in England through his many religious choral works, but he also wrote three Piano Sonatas (opp. 24, 71 & 156) and a Concerto for piano and orchestra (op. 25). Another relatively early piano work, which is often performed during examinations and competitions in South Africa, is his *Dance Suite*, op. 21 (1958, published by Novello).

Of all the South African composers mentioned above, Van Wyk's pianistic oeuvre has so far attracted the most attention from academics. Howard Ferguson (Klatzow 1987) and Chris Venter (Izak Grové 1984) provided broad overviews of his rather concentrated output of five solo piano works.¹³¹ Matildie Thom completed a master's thesis on the composer's late piano works (2006), focusing particularly on the three-movement suite *Tristia* (1968-1978) and the character piece *Ricordanza* (commissioned in 1974 for the SABC Music Competition, and subsequently revised in 1979 and 1983). Thom converted her analysis of *Ricordanza* into an article, entitled 'Arnold van Wyk's *Ricordanza* as a musical memoir' (2008). In her dissertation at the University of Iowa (2014), Grethe Nöthling delineated aspects of performance in Van Wyk's earlier piano works, including *Pastorale e Capriccio* (1948, revised 1955), *Night Music* (1955-1958) and *Four Piano Pieces* (1965). The first more comprehensive biography of Van Wyk (in the form of a novel) was written by Stephanus Muller and published in 2014. The title of the book, *Nagmusiek*, is derived from Van Wyk's piano work *Night Music*. This is the composer's longest and most complex work for the instrument, and Muller engaged in an extensive analysis. Particular emphasis has been placed on the use of sonata structure in the longer central section of the work. Muller (2014: 141-147) also devoted a chapter of his book to Van Wyk's pianism ('What about touching a pijano [sic]?'), referring both to recordings and reviews of the composer's playing, mostly of standard piano works by Schubert and Chopin. In 1963, Van Wyk made a commercial recording of his own *Night Music*. Muller (2014: 147) observed that the composer did not demonstrate sufficient technical skill to tackle the faster virtuosic passages in the

¹³¹ Van Wyk also composed *Three Improvisations on Dutch Folksongs* (1942) and *Poerpasledam* (1944) for piano four hands. His two-piano works include a *Rhapsody* (1939), *Quasi Variazioni* (1970-1971) and *Rumba – Die vierperdewa* (1956, revised 1978).

work. The slower parts, however, were performed with a delicate touch, a large colour palette and a more meticulous sense of detail. Judging on Van Wyk's recordings, Muller concluded that the composer evidently followed a liberal performance approach to his own markings. However, Van Wyk was more precise when it came to editorial matters, and he revised each piano work several times before publication. The earlier works such as *Pastorale e Capriccio* and the piano duet work *Three Improvisations on Dutch Folksongs* were published by Boosey & Hawkes (these publications are no longer in print). Although the last work *Ricordanza* was also later engraved by the Arnold van Wyk Trust and distributed by Boosey & Hawkes, Van Wyk's remaining piano music has not been published internationally. Muller included a full score of *Night Music* at the back of his novel from 2014, and this will hopefully enable a larger audience to gain access to this music.

Du Plessis was another composer of whom selected works were published by international companies, including his *Prelude, Fugue and Postludium* for piano, op. 17 (1958) and *Seven Preludes*, op. 18 (1964) (both printed by Novello publishers). Du Plessis's pianistic oeuvre is larger than Van Wyk's, incorporating nine solo works (Thom 2011: 6).¹³² He also spent much time revising each one and in 1992, SAMRO published three of his earlier scores, *Four Piano Pieces* (Op. 1), *Four Piano Pieces* (Op. 28), and the Piano Sonata no. 2 (Op. 40). Although selected analyses of individual movements from his piano works have appeared in UNISA's *Musicus* journal (for example Paxinos's discussion of *Elegy*, op. 1, no. 3 in 1975), Du Plessis's art songs have elicited more attention from academics in South Africa. The available scores indicate that most of his piano music is highly virtuosic. Du Plessis wrote in the introductory notes of the SAMRO score that the Sonata no. 2 had been dedicated to Scriabin, a composer he admired and whom he claimed to have been influenced by since the start of his career. In addition to this, the *Four Piano Pieces*, op. 28 each pay homage to composers such as Fauré (no. 1), Ravel (no. 2) and Chopin (no. 3), both in their titles and contents. These aspects underline the Romantic and Impressionistic tendencies in Du Plessis's piano works, such as the use of widely-spread diatonic chords, chromatic harmonic progressions, as well as parallel fifths and seconds (much like Ravel's *Gaspard de la Nuit*). Du Plessis often performed concerts on the harpsichord, and this explains the fact that he also paid homage to Couperin in his *Four Piano Pieces*, op. 28 (no. 4). A few recordings of Du Plessis's piano works have been produced, including Benjamin Fourie's interpretation of the Piano Sonata no. 1, op. 8 (recorded for Claremont GSE – see 'Discography' in the Source List).

¹³² Du Plessis wrote two large-scale works for piano four hands, including a Sonata, op. 10 (1954).

It is worth noting that Grové had only started writing his most significant piano music by the time that Van Wyk passed away (1983) and Hubert du Plessis stopped composing altogether (1991).¹³³ At the time when most of Grové's contemporaries were writing for the piano, he had been more active at composing chamber and orchestral music. One should also keep in mind that he was, unlike the other composers, largely self-taught until he reached his twenties. Rörich (1987: 79) remarked upon Grové's relatively slow compositional development as follows:

This does not concern him: on the contrary, he believes that time brings its own benefit and enrichments. The compositional idiom which he has forged in his mature works is as much the product of his life-long and thorough-going assimilation of and experimentation with the craft of music as it is of a natural ability to compose. The time he has spent mastering technique has been essential to the development of what he considers his own compositional voice.

Biographical circumstances, stylistic and technical features as well as extra-musical influences (literature, imagery and cultural constructs) in Grové's piano works have been evaluated throughout this thesis in order to provide documentation on a relatively unknown field. Almost no published articles or chapters on Grové's complete piano music, especially in English, could be located. Venter's encyclopaedia entry (Malan 1986d) is one exception. Although this outline includes some information about Grové's early piano works, it is a generally outdated source that can only contribute to defining the contents and parameters of a potential canon. It is worth noting that Grové was the only South African composer of his generation to produce works both during the apartheid era as well as the twenty-year period following the first democratic elections in 1994. He also taught several composers of the younger generation and this renders him a transitional figure within the area of South African art music. Similar to Van Wyk and Du Plessis, only a small percentage of Grové's piano music has been published. *Verlag Neue Musik* in Berlin included *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (1994) and *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003) in their *New African Music Project*. These two works were previously also published by SAMRO and UNISA, alongside the earlier work *Songs and Dances from Africa* (1988-1990). Grové's larger set *Images from Africa* and the piano works written during the last ten years of his life only exist in handwritten form, obtainable from the archives of SAMRO and DOMUS. Only a few commercial recordings of his piano music have been produced, including Benjamin Fourie's rendition of *Songs and Dances from Africa* (Obelisk Records) as well as Andrew Cruickshank's version of *Nonyana* (Claremont).

¹³³ Muller and Walton 2006: 3.

The remaining South African composers born during the early twentieth century have produced little music for the piano. Priaulx Rainier, who gained much success through performances of her Cello Concerto by Jacqueline du Pré at a Promenade Concert in the Albert Hall (1964) and her Violin Concerto by Yehudi Menuhin at the Edinburgh Festival (1977), completed only two works for the piano (Malan 1986d: 160-162). Her *Barbaric Dance Suite* (1949) was published by Schott and will be discussed briefly in the next section of this chapter. The slightly younger Rosa Nepgen, who was married to W. E. G. Louw (a prominent Afrikaans writer and poet), mainly focused on the composition of art songs throughout her life. One of her piano works, *Fantasia and Fugue* (1937-1938), can be found in the DOMUS archive in Stellenbosch. Her style includes elements of nineteenth-century bravura and this also radiated to some of the piano parts of her songs (Venter in Malan 1986d: 37). Stanley Glasser, similar to John Joubert, was born in Cape Town and later made England his permanent home. In 1954, Glasser completed his *Three Pieces* for piano in dodecaphonic style, a rare occurrence in South African keyboard music. The pieces are written mostly in two-part counterpoint, and this accentuates the linear twelve-tone approach. Occasionally, they include chordal passages in which the twelve-tone series, as well as its inversions and retrogrades appear in a vertical format (Venter in Malan 1986d: 49).

When observing the careers and works of all these composers, it becomes clear that only a few of them engaged more consistently with the piano. Grové's oeuvre for the instrument is by far the largest. However, he never revised any works and this enabled him to spend time writing new music. Evidence of Grové sometimes overlooking editorial mistakes by not revising his works can be found when there is more than one publication of certain pieces. His *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance*, for example, includes a misprint in both the editions of SAMRO and *Verlag Neue Musik*.¹³⁴ The other two prolific pianist-composers Van Wyk and Du Plessis spent much time on revisions and even structural changes, thus producing smaller quantities of piano works.

In terms of canonicity, it is possible to assert that Van Wyk, Du Plessis and Grové have received more attention from academics, performers, institutions and the public. This, coupled to the fact that they were awarded honorary doctorates and special awards from the Academy of Arts and Sciences in South Africa, established them to be at the forefront of the compositional profession in their

¹³⁴ The top note of the last octave interval in the third group of bar 54 should be a b-flat'' (not a b-natural'') – I have confirmed this with the composer in 2012.

country.¹³⁵ Another result, is the inclusion of their works on the UNISA examination syllabuses. Although I shall return to educational piano pieces later in this chapter, it is worth mentioning that the technically-advanced works discussed so far have been part of the Grade 8 and Licentiate syllabuses of UNISA for many years. The fact that syllabuses change every four years confirms that if a work remains on the list continuously, it usually reveals a degree of ‘popularity’ (Citron 1993: 21). The longevity of a work’s popularity also mostly indicates that its characteristics resonate with the values of different generations, cultures and changing fashions – in effect, such a work has ‘immutable traits’ (Citron 1993: 22). This is one of the reasons why I chose to investigate particularly the music of the older generation of South African composers. Their canonical status is attached to their works having ‘passed the test of time’.

During the 1960s, UNISA commissioned and published Arnold Van Wyk’s *Four Piano Pieces*, which are still prescribed for Grade 8 (the first movement, *Dumka – Hommage à Epétopoïret*) and Performer’s Assessment (the fourth movement, *Toccata*). Since the 1970s, Van Wyk’s *Pastorale e Capriccio* has been permanently included in the Licentiate and subsequently the Performer’s Assessment syllabus as well. In 2016, his complete *Night Music* (a longer work of approximately 26 minutes) as well as *Ricordanza* have also been added. This may have been a result of rekindled interest in Van Wyk’s work after the publication of Muller’s book and also the centenary celebrations of the composer’s birth in 2016. Du Plessis is also represented in the syllabus through his *Four Piano Pieces*, op. 1 and *Four Piano Pieces*, op. 28 (for the Grade 8 examinations a candidate can choose one movement from either one of these two sets). Two pieces from Du Plessis’s *Seven Preludes*, op. 18 (nos. 5 and 7) can be presented as part of the Performer’s Assessment. Finally, Grové’s *Toccata* (1966) has been included in the Grade 8 syllabus for over thirty years. *Nonyana* has also proven to be a popular choice during former Teacher’s Licentiate examinations and it is yet again included in the 2016-syllabus of the Performer’s Assessment. Since 2012, candidates may also choose to present any two movements of Grové’s *Images from Africa*. Finally, I turn to his seven etudes for piano *Songs and Dances from Africa*. This work was completed in 1990 and then prescribed for the preliminary rounds of the UNISA International Piano Competition in 1992. It was

¹³⁵ Van Wyk received honorary doctorates from the University of Cape Town (1979) and the University of Stellenbosch (1981). Du Plessis received an honorary award from the Academy of Arts and Sciences (1963) and an honorary doctorate from the University of Stellenbosch (1989). Grové received honorary doctorates from the University of the Free State (1986) and the University of Pretoria (1996), the honorary lifetime achievement award from the Academy of Arts and Sciences as well as the Chancellor’s Medal from Northwest University in Potchefstroom (2012).

almost immediately included in the Teacher's Licentiate list and later in the Performer's Assessment syllabus (two contrasting movements can be chosen – one song and one dance movement).¹³⁶ Since the inception of the UNISA International Music Competitions in 1982, the list of South African concert works has grown exponentially.

Many competitions worldwide follow the custom of commissioning works from composers of the country where the event takes place to be studied and performed by candidates. During the first three UNISA Piano Competitions, the works of Van Wyk, Du Plessis and Grové were chosen to serve as set pieces during the first rounds. This custom has continued until the present day, and many younger-generation composers have also written commissioned works for the competition. Pianists from many nationalities perform these works, and they are also published by UNISA (or in some cases SAMRO). Table 3 below includes all the works by South African composers that were commissioned for the preliminary stages of the UNISA International Piano Competitions (1982-2012). Many of them have also been included on the UNISA Examination syllabuses. Grové's *Toccata* as well as his *Songs and Dances from Africa* were added to the syllabus shortly after the competitions in which they were prescribed. It is possible to assert that the collaboration between the UNISA Competition and the UNISA Examinations' Department plays a considerable role in canon formation. Not only do these institutions generate new music, but the works' entrance into the standard repertoire of the country is secured through publication and distribution to pianists and teachers. The most promising candidates from each of the UNISA Grade 8 and Performer's Assessment examinations are invited to participate in national and overseas scholarship competitions, and SAMRO awards prizes for the best renditions of South African works during these events. Some of the composers mentioned in Table 3 have thereby gained considerable national popularity and their compositions are regularly performed at competitions or regional eisteddfodau for young professionals or students at schools and universities.

¹³⁶ In Chapter 2 and 3 I provide detailed description of colouristic, motivic and technical aspects of *Songs and Dances from Africa*. Movements 1, 3, 5, and 7 are the faster dances, whereas movements 2, 4, and 6 are the slow song-like pieces.

Table 3: The list of South African compositions set for the UNISA International Piano Competitions (1982-2012) and their integration into the UNISA Examination Syllabus. Institutions that commissioned the works are indicated in brackets where applicable

Competition and year	Composer and work	UNISA Examination syllabus on which the work appears
1 st UNISA International Piano Competition, 1982	Arnold van Wyk (1916-1983): <i>Toccata</i> (last movement) from <i>Four Piano Pieces</i> (1965) (UNISA)	Performer's Licentiate. The first three movements (<i>Dumka</i> , <i>Scherzino</i> and <i>Romanza</i>) have been set for Grade 8 and Teacher's Licentiate between 1981 and 2012. The <i>Toccata</i> is currently in the Performer's Assessment syllabus (2012)
2 nd UNISA International Piano Competition, 1984	Hubert du Plessis (1922-2011): No. 7 from <i>Seven Preludes</i> , op. 18 (not commissioned by UNISA, but published by Novello)	Teacher's Licentiate
3 rd UNISA International Piano Competition, 1986	Stefans Grové (1922-): <i>Toccata</i> (1966) This work was not commissioned, but printed for the competition by UNISA	Grade 8 (formerly this was also included in the Grade 7 syllabus, but the advisory committee realised that the work is too difficult for this level)
4 th UNISA International Piano Competition, 1988	Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph (1948-): <i>Virtuoso I</i> (1987) (UNISA)	Grade 8
5 th UNISA International Piano Competition, 1990	Hans Roosenschoon (1952-): <i>Fingerprints</i> (1989) (UNISA)	Performer's Licentiate and Performer's Assessment (2016)
6 th UNISA International Piano Competition, 1992	Stefans Grové: Any two works from <i>Songs and Dances from Africa</i> , Music from Africa no. 5 (1988-1990) (UNISA printers, commissioned by composer)	Teacher's Licentiate and Performer's Assessment (2016)
7 th UNISA International Piano Competition, 1994 (from this year onwards competitors have the possibility to choose one from two commissioned South African works)	Peter Klatzow (1945-): Any work from the suite <i>From the Poets</i> (1992) (SAMRO) Alexander Johnson (1968-): <i>Jazz-Impromptu</i> (1993) (UNISA)	Both the works by Klatzow and Johnson are currently in the syllabus for the Performer's Assessment (2016)
8 th UNISA International Piano Competition, 1996	Andrew Cruickshank: <i>Toccata</i> (1995) (UNISA) James Wilding (1973-): <i>Etude</i> (1995) (UNISA)	Neither of these works have appeared in the UNISA syllabus
9 th UNISA International Piano	Robert Fokkens: <i>Running Out</i>	The Hofmeyr work has appeared in the Grade 8 syllabus (2002) and the

Competition and year	Composer and work	UNISA Examination syllabus on which the work appears
Competition, 2000	(1999) (UNISA) Hendrik Hofmeyr (1957-): <i>Kalunga</i> (this later became the fourth movement of the composer's <i>Partita Africana</i> , 2009) (UNISA)	Licentiate/Performer's Assessment Syllabus (2016)
10 th UNISA International Piano Competition, 2004	Stefans Grové: <i>Dance Song for the Nyau Dance</i> , Music from Africa no. 23 (2003) (Commissioned by SAMRO) Andile Khumalo (1973-): <i>Spatial</i> (2003) (SAMRO)	Neither of these works have been included in the UNISA syllabus
11 th UNISA International Piano Competition, 2008	Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph: <i>Partials and Pedals</i> (2007) (UNISA) Surendran Reddy (1962-2010): <i>Toccata for John Roos</i> (2007) (UNISA)	Performer's Assessment (2016) – both works
12 th UNISA International Piano Competition, 2012	Peter Klatzow: <i>Dazzle</i> (2011) (UNISA) Graham Newcater (1941-): <i>Toccata</i> (2011) (UNISA)	These works are currently being considered for future inclusion on the syllabus

To return to a discussion of a canon consisting of technically-advanced works by South African composers from the earlier generations, I would like to add that except for Van Wyk, Du Plessis and Grové, almost none of their other contemporaries have featured in either the UNISA examination syllabus or in the repertoire list of the International Music Competition. Only one work by John Joubert, the *Dance Suite*, op. 21, has consistently been included in the Licentiate and Performer's Assessment list (2016). In the next section, the historical neglect of the music of black composers both in musicological research and in national curricula in South Africa will be investigated briefly. When it comes to the position of women composers in the art music circles of the country, there is no clear evidence of exclusionary practices (intentional or not). This brings us to Citron's observation (1993: 20) that in the field of literature during the twentieth century, the 'mostly white, male and middle class' professoriate tended to be the main canon-making group. It would be fair to say that the largest proportion of composers discussed above, as well as the concert organisers and the public that attended concerts, were white South Africans from a middle class background. Although I would not like to enter into an extensive discussion on the social imbalances of the country, it should

nevertheless be kept in mind that Western art music has not been practised in South Africa for very long (especially when compared to many European countries). The pool of composers who received adequate training and produced substantial quantities of music appeared to be quite small during a large part of the twentieth century. It is therefore not surprising that those white male composers who studied abroad and returned to their country after achieving recognition, gained the most attention from academics and the concert-going public.

3. South African piano works with influences of indigenous traditional music

Three musicologists who have focused on the historical spread of Western art music in South Africa are Jan Bouws, Jacques Malan and Socrates Paxinos. Their research spans over several decades and culminated in a series of publications. Malan's *South African Music Encyclopedia* (1979, reprinted after revisions in 1986) is the only one of these sources that endeavoured to investigate the introduction of Western art music in black, coloured and Indian communities in the country. The apartheid government in South Africa created separate education departments for the various population groups and it is clear that Western art music curricula were only seriously implemented in white schools. Chris Walton largely holds Anton Hartman, Head of Music at the SABC, accountable for excluding black, coloured and Indian schools from initiatives to nurture the appreciation of Western art music among young South Africans (Walton 2004: 70). Hartman commissioned works from several white composers and, as principal conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra of the SABC, he gave the first performances of music by Stefans Grové, John Joubert, Graham Newcater and others. However, he did not similarly recognise the talents of two dynamic black composers, Michael Moerane (1904-1980) and Benjamin Tyamzashe (1890-1978). Moerane was an uncle of Thabo Mbeki, who succeeded Nelson Mandela as president of South Africa in 1999. With his orchestral work *Fatse la heso* (*My Country*, 1941), Moerane became the first black music graduate in that country.¹³⁷ *Fatse la heso* received praise in Europe and was performed by the BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Clifford Curzon in 1944 (Percival Kirby in Malan 1986c: 253 & Du Plessis 1973: 54-55). In South Africa, Moerane's music remained forgotten until 2005 when it was revived by the University of Pretoria Symphony Orchestra after Chris Walton had discovered the score at the library of Rhodes University in Grahamstown. Tyamzashe made a significant contribution to church music in the Eastern Cape by composing hymns with Xhosa words (Huskisson 1992: 147). It is

¹³⁷ Moerane enrolled for a BMus in 1930, but the degree was only completed in 1941 (Malan 1986c: 253).

lamentable that musicians like Moerane and Tyamzashe did not receive adequate compositional or instrumental training while still at school. Except for Moerane's orchestral work *Fatse la heso*, these composers produced almost no other instrumental music.

In an academic context, Jan Bouws exacerbated the exclusivity of Western practices by completely omitting any reference to black musicians in his three publications (1957, 1972 and 1982). In his book *Suid-Afrikaanse Komponiste van Vandag en Gister* (South African Composers of Today and Yesterday, 1957) he discussed only the music of Afrikaans-speaking composers, with the exception of Charles-Etienne Boniface and John Joubert. Chris Venter (Malan 1986d: 26) stated that 'no black composers [in South Africa] have so far (1968) produced serious piano music in which their own traditions blend with Western ones. Music ethnology is still a young subject in South Africa and white composers are rather ignorant of traditional black music; this, in turn, has some way to go before it can be developed as cultivated art music by black musicians themselves'. This scenario is gradually starting to change and in recent years, three young black South African composers, Bongani Ndodana-Breen, Andile Khumalo and Neo Muyanga, have written solo and chamber works for the piano. In the area of performing arts there is still a severe lack of training in communities that were disadvantaged during the apartheid era. From 2012, the piano syllabus of UNISA included a new list of works from the Ghanaian-American pianist William Chapman Nyaho's series *Piano Music from Africa and the African Diaspora* (2008). This series is dedicated to composers mainly from the Northern part of the African continent. Caroline Rae (2009: 149-150) gave a favourable review particularly of the piano works by JH Kwabena Nketia (Ghana) and Akin Euba (Nigeria). It is the first time in history that the compositions of black composers have been included on the UNISA syllabus.

Notwithstanding these inequalities and imbalances, it is possible to trace a gradual development of white South African composers attempting to garner a better understanding of black indigenous music and to integrate this into their personal style. Some of the composer-pianists who were active in that country during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century drew inspiration from indigenous cultures. Only the descriptive titles and not the musical content of their works, however, seem to provide testimony of this. One of the earliest examples of a European musician attempting to depict her South African surroundings through her compositions is Alice Hart (Malan 1986b: 169-170), a British pianist who lived and worked in Durban (I have referred to her in Chapter 1 of this thesis). Her *South African Kaffir Dance* (1896) portrays no elements whatsoever of the Zulu music that she must have heard in the Natal Colony. She typically wrote Victorian salon music with strong rhythmic inflections that are supposedly meant to symbolise the impetus of a tribal dance. The

pianist Bosman di Ravelli visited the former Zulu king Dinizulu during the early years of the twentieth century. He attempted to gain a closer perspective on indigenous music and subsequently wrote three piano works, entitled *Zulu Funeral Chant*, *Zulu Wedding Chant* and *Zulu Night Chant* (all dating around 1910). In one of his articles on the history of Western art music in South Africa, Stefans Grové (1990: 42 – see Chapter 1) observed that these pieces bear no relation to any actual characteristic of Zulu music and they include a few repetitive ostinato patterns. The ethnomusicologist Hugh Tracey (1903-1977) arrived in South Africa from his native England in the 1920s and immediately became fascinated by indigenous cultures. He started travelling throughout Southern and Central Africa to record the music in hundreds of different villages. Composers of Western art music became aware of his research around 1949, when his recordings were commercialised by the Gallotone record label (Barz 2013: 134). The English composer William Walton extracted an African melody from one of Tracey's recordings of the Congolese guitar player Jean Bosco Mwenda and included it in his *Johannesburg Festival Overture* (1956, written for the city's 70th anniversary). At more or less the same time, two South African composers Priaux Rainier and Neil Solomon, both former students of the South African College of Music (SACM) and winners of the Overseas Scholarship of the University of the Cape of Good Hope (later UNISA), experimented with African folklore in their piano compositions. Rainier's *Barbaric Dance Suite* (1950) and Solomon's *Sonatina* (of which the three movements are entitled *Dance Song on an African rhythm*, *Slow song* and *Drum dance*) both incorporate some elements such as ostinato rhythms and pentatonic harmonies that are supposed to emulate indigenous musical aspects. The works of Walton, Rainier and Solomon are on a technically different level from the early salon pieces of Hart and Ravelli, but they are nonetheless firmly rooted in the early modernist European tradition. Indigenous African elements are integrated in a pastiche-like manner and can easily be separated from the real fabric of the music. This rather superficial approach to cross-cultural relations in Western art music only really started to decline in the late 1970s when Kevin Volans (b. 1949), a native of Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal, embarked on field trips and started transcribing traditional music. Volans was already a composition student of Stockhausen in Cologne when he developed a real interest in black African music. He claims that he was in principle raised as a European in South Africa and that this interest developed only after he had left the country. He states the following:

I had no contact with African music at all except that I used to walk home from school every day and hear Zulu guitar music and people singing and sitting on the street. I'd walk past all these people playing African music and go home and play Chopin (Taylor 1995: 511)

Volans achieved international recognition when his String Quartet *White Man Sleeps* (1986) was recorded by the Kronos Quartet. The work was originally written for two re-tuned harpsichords, viola da gamba and percussion. Volans imitates the sounds and tonality of indigenous music by prescribing the re-tuning of Western instruments according to scale patterns from the *lesiba* music of Lesotho, panpipe music from Venda, *nyungwe* music from Mozambique and San hunting bow music. In an earlier work, *Mbira* (1981 – later withdrawn), Volans had previously made use of re-tuned harpsichords to portray the Shona thumb piano (mbira) music from Zimbabwe. In order to obtain a new sound, Volans placed much emphasis on the exact choice of Western instruments:

The inflexible and standardised sound of the modern, industrialised piano and orchestra seemed totally inappropriate for African music. Too bland, too inflexibly Western. The easily re-tuned, somewhat percussive and unique sound of handmade harpsichords seemed ideal (Volans n.d.).

This may explain why he has, to date, composed relatively few piano works in an African vein. In his two more recent sets of piano studies, *3 Rhythmic Etudes* and *3 Structural Etudes* (2003), he employs some of the ‘ground rules’ that he set up before composing his African-inspired works during the 1980s. These rules include ‘shifting downbeats, the largely non-functional harmony, the open forms, the extremely fast tempi of some music, the non-developmental use of repetition, contrasting and irregular patterning’ (Volans n.d.).

In 1992, Stefans Grové’s seven-movement piano cycle *Songs and Dances from Africa* was prescribed as the commissioned work of the UNISA International Competition – see Table 3 above. This was the first substantial and widely-performed South African piano work to incorporate specific indigenous elements, which I have discussed in both Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis. In contrast to Volans, Grové did not shy away from attempting to create an indigenous sound world by simply making use of the existing colouristic possibilities of a Western instrument in this, and all his subsequent piano works. The piano is not re-tuned or mechanically modified, but instead relies on the performer’s technical expertise to create the variety of required sounds. Grové related that his ‘construction techniques are predominantly Western’ and that the ‘indigenous elements are integrated into the very fabric of the music’ (Schoeman 2012a). Stephanus Muller constructed an analogy by comparing Grové’s *Sonate op Afrika Motiewe* for violin and piano (1984) to Picasso’s *Les Femmes d’Alger* (1907), an early modernist painting that displays female figures wearing stylised African masks. Muller argues that ‘the conceptual rudimentariness of the African artifact is perhaps more of an energizing authority than an obsession with primitivist societies of a distant past’ (Muller & Walton 2006: 18). This is a potential counterargument to the usual accusation that artists are committing an act of

plundering by drawing inspiration from African art (Taylor 1995: 515). Muller postulates quite the opposite idea, namely that the African artefact can expressively enhance the European art work without necessarily creating a scenario where the latter dominates the former. This stands in line with what Volans says in the programme notes to his *White Man Sleeps*:

By introducing some strictly non-Western aspects of African music into the European concert repertoire I hoped to gently set up an African colonisation of Western music and instruments and thus preserve some unique qualities, albeit in a new form. It was a bit like introducing an African computer virus into the heart of Western contemporary music (Volans n.d.).

The African works of Grové and Volans could therefore arguably be seen as transfigurations of elements from indigenous culture. Even though Chris Walton also contemplates the neo-colonial implications of Grové's 'Afrocentrism', he finally comes to the conclusion that 'the justification for the act of appropriation must surely reside alone in the aesthetic value of the resultant musical artefact' (Muller & Walton 2006: 69).¹³⁸ Where Volans created a distinctive timbre by transcribing Southern African music for Western instruments, Grové went a step further. He internalised the principles of indigenous materials and fabricates generic melodies that are completely original, but nonetheless sound African (Izak Grové 1998: 103; Muller & Walton 2006: 58).

One might argue that this creation of generic folk melodies by Grové was nothing new. In Hungary, Bartók adopted a similar method in his piano works after 1904. The four volumes of *For Children* are exact transcriptions that Bartók made of Hungarian and Slovakian folk melodies between 1908 and 1909. He later even withdrew six of the pieces, as he felt that they were inaccurate transcriptions or not authentic folk music examples. After *For Children*, he started to emulate folk songs in his original compositions by attempting to capture their 'general spirit and style' (Fischer 2001: 100). In his book *Music in the Balkans* (2013), Jim Samson discussed numerous other examples of twentieth-century Eastern European composers who integrated elements of folk music into their works. Josip Štolcer Slavenski (1896-1955) was active both in Croatia (Zagreb) and Serbia (Belgrade). From 1913 he studied with Bartók and Kodály in Budapest and assisted them transcribing field notes. Samson (2013: 370) therefore believes that he thus 'had the best of models for a modernism forged from

¹³⁸ The word 'appropriation' has often been used pejoratively in reference to the works of white South African artists. The painter Maggie Laubser received criticism for her depictions of rural black workers in her canvasses from the 1930s. Grové, as one of the leading South African composers who developed a synthesis between Western structural techniques and elements of indigenous music, is often regarded as a musical representative of this 'act of appropriation'.

traditional agrarian repertoires'. The titles of some of his seminal piano works implied a strong nationalistic sentiment: *Sa Balkana* (1910-1917), *Yugoslavian Suite* (1921), and *From Yugoslavia* (1916-1923). The latter work is particularly based on traditional music, as it includes songs from Šumadija and Croatian Zagorje (Samson 2013: 374). He also integrated an original pentatonic Međimurjean song into his String Quartet, and this was later also recycled in the substantial Symphony *Balkanofonija* (Samson 2013: 374). In Bulgaria, Pancho Vladigerov (1899-1978) was a leading composer of piano music. He commenced his engagement with Bulgarian folk music materials through his orchestral work *Vardar* (1928 – Hlebarov 2001: 850), based on a well-known hymn by Dobri Hristov alongside further Bulgarian dance melodies (Samson 2013: 355). Samson claims that the association with the hymn by Hristov had led Vladigerov in the direction of Russian styles and this might have resulted in his Third Piano Concerto bearing a close resemblance to Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto no. 3. In his *Sonatina Concertante*, op. 28 as well as the later *Improvisation and Toccata* (1941), both for piano, he amalgamated neo-classicism and nineteenth-century pianistic devices with direct references to Bulgarian folk songs.¹³⁹ In Romania, the two leading composers of piano music were George Enescu (1881-1955) and Dinu Lipatti (1917-1950). Lipatti was a renowned pianist, who gained compositional success particularly through his virtuosic *Three Romanian Dances* for two pianos. Samson compares the compositional development of Enescu and the Polish composer Karol Szymanowski, with specific reference to their embracing of elements of indigenous music in their countries during the 1920s (Samson 2013: 393). For Szymanowski, elements of traditional Polish Tatra (Góral) music were like 'jewels' that he could superimpose onto the fabric of his music in order to create an exotic colour. Enescu followed a more integral approach in which indigenous folk music elements enhances his own existing mature style and portray 'familiar symbolic values' (Samson 2013: 294). In this way, Enescu is very similar to Grové as he also developed his approach to folklore gradually until it became a more explicit attribute of his style. One could even argue that with composers such as Enescu and Grové, the awareness of folk music lay dormant and at some point found a natural way in which to manifest itself in their works. This stands in line with Barz's description of how Grové regarded the inclusion of so-called indigenous elements in William Walton's *Johannesburg Festival Overture* as superficial.

¹³⁹ Vladigerov lead the way for several younger Bulgarian composers such as Petko Stainov, Lyubomir Pipkov, Philip Koutev, Vessilin Stoyanov, Marin Goleminov and Dimitar Nenov, who all integrated indigenous Bulgarian musical elements in their compositions (Samson 2013: 356).

My argument is that Grové applied similar procedures than Bartók and other Eastern-European composers did, but within a different context and engaging with very different indigenous materials. As early as 1952, Grové had discussed the problems of trying to integrate Afrikaner folk melodies into Western art music compositions (Izak Grové 1998: 97-98) in his article 'Probleme van die Suid-Afrikaanse Komponis' (Problems of the South African Composer). He claimed that the Afrikaner folk songs lack a distinctive character, reflecting too many characteristics of eighteenth-century Western-European folk music (Grové 1952: 74). In the same article, he acknowledged the rhythmic potential that the indigenous music of black people possesses and predicted that this could have a potential impact on Western art music in South Africa. The prediction would only come to fulfilment some thirty years later, partly because the more advanced ethnomusicological research by Tracey, Blacking and David Rycroft came only at a later stage.¹⁴⁰ Apart from the fact that the local government of the time would not approve of a synthesis between the indigenous and the Western (Izak Grové 2013: 142), Grové at any rate left the country for America before he could investigate this in more depth. His desire for further education and his interest in the European-American art music traditions therefore brought him compositional maturity, but delayed his discovery of a unique artistic identity that would only manifest itself after he officially embraced Southern African indigenous elements in 1984 (Izak Grové 2013: 143).

After Grové there were only a few of the younger-generation South African composers who actively investigated indigenous elements. Few of these musicians followed Grové's timbral approach, which emphasises the more percussive possibilities of the piano through various forms of articulation.¹⁴¹ His own student, Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph integrated indigenous melodic material into her orchestral works such as *Fanfare Festival Overture* of 1986 (Van Graan 2009). In recent years she has conducted further research into a variety of indigenous cultures, including the singing of the *Ngqoko Women's Group* from the Eastern Cape. Similar to Grové, Zaidel-Rudolph realised that the exact timbres of these women's overtone (split-tone/throat) singing cannot be reproduced on the piano (Zaidel-Rudolph n.d.). However, she continues to draw inspiration from the indigenous sound colours by employing a variety of harmonics and pedal points in her recent works, of which *Partials*

¹⁴⁰ Blacking's book *Venda Children's Songs* was only published in 1967. Hugh Tracey conducted intensive field work between the 1920s and 1950s, but his research only became documented when he opened the International Library of African Music in Roodepoort in 1954 (the year after Grové left for the USA).

¹⁴¹ In the Introduction to the thesis I refer to Grové as a follower of the percussive piano tradition of Bartók, with reference to Mervyn Cooke's chapter on modernism in piano music (1998).

and Pedals (2007) is one example (see Table 3 above). For other composers such as Roelof Temmingh, Peter Klatzow, Hans Roosenschoon and Hendrik Hofmeyr, the experimentation with indigenous elements constituted only a temporary phase in their general stylistic development. Roosenschoon and Klatzow maintained a Romantic approach in their piano writing and the Afrocentric elements in their orchestral works are performed by indigenous instruments such as marimbas and *timbila*¹⁴² from Mozambique.

A brief investigation can also be conducted on how this cross-cultural awareness of South African composers of art music plays a specific role in the educational frameworks of the country. Only 17 years after the end of the apartheid era (1948-1994) did the National Department of Education in South Africa devise a comprehensive National Curriculum Statement (NCS)¹⁴³ that placed the three areas of Western Art Music (WAM), Indigenous African Music (IAM) and Jazz on an equal footing. For the purposes of this evaluation, I discuss the Further Education and Training (FET) phase in secondary education in particular. This phase covers the Grade 10-12¹⁴⁴ curriculum at all high schools in the nine provinces of South Africa.¹⁴⁵ The revised NCS includes a module in Grade 11 that covers music of the twentieth-century,¹⁴⁶ with specific reference to art music composers of South Africa (NCS 2011: 36). The biographies of composers, their stylistic characteristics and the application of theoretical elements in their works (rhythm and metre, pitch and melody, dynamics, texture, instrumentation and timbre) are analysed throughout the third term. One of the key study

¹⁴² *Timbila* is the plural of *mbila*, a wooden gourd-resonated xylophone that is tuned to the heptatonic scale. Roosenschoon's large orchestral work *Timbila* (1985) was one of his last works to engage with indigenous sounds (Izak Grové 1998: 91).

¹⁴³ The abbreviations NCS, WAM and IAM are standard in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement of the Department of Basic Education, Republic of South Africa (2011).

¹⁴⁴ In order to clarify the use of terminologies, it is worth placing the education system in South Africa next to that of the USA. Both countries use the term 'grade' to define a school year, and the usual age of Grade 10-12 learners is sixteen to eighteen. In South Africa it is customary to refer to 'Grade 10' instead of 'tenth grade', which is common practice in the USA.

¹⁴⁵ The nine provinces that were instated after the first democratic elections in 1994 are as follows: Gauteng, the Free State, KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape, the Western Cape, Limpopo (initially the Northern Province), the Northern Cape, Mmapumalanga and the North-West Province.

¹⁴⁶ Three further case studies are evaluated in this module: Debussy's *Voiles* (from *Préludes*, Book 1), Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* (1913), and Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* (1924). No additional information or references to bibliography and sources on these works are included in the NCS statement.

aspects is the identification of indigenous elements in the music of these composers. Yet, Grové and Volans, the two composers whose works demonstrate the most consistent engagement with traditional musical practices from various parts of Southern Africa, are not included on this syllabus. The following names do appear (NCS 2011: 36):

- Mzilikazi Khumalo
- Peter Louis van Dijk
- SJ Khoza
- BB Myataza
- Arnold van Wyk
- Peter Klatzow
- MM Moerane
- Hubert Du Plessis
- LP Mohapeloa

The Department does not provide additional explanation or justification for the methods used to compile this list of South African composers. The list is not in alphabetical order, which may possibly indicate that the process of compilation may have been unsystematic. It is also not clear why the full names of white composers have been listed, whereas only the initials of the black composers are printed. Some of the black composers on the list are referred to in Percival Kirby's entry 'The Bantu¹⁴⁷ Composers of South Africa' in Malan's *South African Music Encyclopaedia* (1986a: 85-94) as well as writings by Yvonne Huskisson (1969 and 1992). When taking these and other sources into account, one comes to realise that the names of black and white composers do not appear in chronological order in the NCS. Michael Moerane (1904-1980), Joshua Mohapeloa (1908-1981) are, for example, from an earlier generation than Mzilikazi Khumalo (b. 1932), Peter Klatzow (b. 1945) and Peter Louis Van Dijk (b. 1953). The question might arise, as to whether the syllabus was compiled in order to bring more exposure to the music of less-familiar composers. A clearer methodology in the compilation of this syllabus would clarify the Department's intentions in expanding the curriculum to embrace South African art music, but the NCS contains no further information on this aspect. Earlier in this chapter, I have referred to the revival of orchestral music of

¹⁴⁷ The word 'bantu' (black person) was used during the Apartheid era and is now no longer in use.

Michael Moerane. Although Mohapeloa and Myataza were significant exponents of the Black choral music tradition, it is surprising that their prolific contemporary, Benjamin Tyamzashe, was not included in the Department's list of South African composers.¹⁴⁸ None of the younger generation composers feature in the syllabus either, particularly those who wrote for the piano and incorporated elements of South African jazz and traditional styles in their music: Hendrik Hofmeyr, Surendran Reddy, Isak Roux, Bongani Ndodana-Breen, Alexander Johnson and Hans Huysen. It is also noteworthy that the female composers of South Africa have been overlooked in the compilation of this list. Aside from Priaulx Rainier and Blanche Gerstman, the younger composers such as Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph and Clare Loveday have produced a larger, more diverse output than many composers that do appear.

It is certainly true that the new curriculum (NCS) incorporates aspects that were previously excluded. The music of black composers starts to attract more attention from educators. Furthermore, the works of South African art music composers have seldom appeared in school syllabuses.¹⁴⁹ Citron (1993: 22) writes:

In the past twenty years [and one could add the period since Citron's book was published], with attention to ethnicity and the inception of a postmodernist climate, several groups have noted their exclusion from particular canons. This results from a growing awareness of the cultural constructedness of canons, and thus it is natural that disenfranchised groups, motivated by self-interest but also concerns for a more balanced view of human culture, function as agents of canonic deconstruction.

The curricular changes in the FET phase, despite the selected shortcomings that I discussed here, therefore have the potential to modify the existent art music canon in South Africa. These modifications reflect the ongoing musicological discourses in the country that advocate the amalgamation of the diverse cultural practices in a more balanced curriculum.

¹⁴⁸ It has not been possible to find any information on the music of SJ Khoza.

¹⁴⁹ Hubert du Plessis's *Elegie*, op. 1, no. 3, was briefly included in the 1974 music curriculum of schools in the former Cape Province (Paxinos 1975: 40).

4. An educational canon that involves South African piano music for less experienced players

Earlier in this chapter I have referred mainly to piano works by South African composers that are of a virtuosic nature. Even if they form part of UNISA's performance syllabuses, these works were not written for educational purposes. Through having been performed frequently, the concert works of particularly Van Wyk, Du Plessis and Grové may be regarded as standard repertoire in South Africa. However, there is a large number of educational piano pieces that have also become popular and thus contributed to a teaching canon of South African music. Educational pieces are not too virtuosic, as Citron (1993: 27) claims, to be easily disseminated by the broader public. Before I investigate these educational piano pieces, I shall firstly endeavour to provide a concise background of current piano-teaching practices in the country.

During the apartheid era in South Africa, a national education system was developed that did not embrace the cultural diversity of that country. De Wet, Herbst and Rijdsdijk have observed that 'The Western-oriented music syllabus was of little relevance to a large proportion of South African children' (2005: 263). Indeed, the entire curriculum in primary and secondary schools before 1994 reflected Western art music traditions while making no provision for the indigenous cultures of Southern Africa (Oehrle 1993: 255). After the first democratic elections in 1994, particularly in the transitional period when new task teams for the development of a renewed and balanced curriculum were appointed, elementary instrumental training became a neglected area for study. In 2005, De Wet, Herbst and Rijdsdijk conducted statistical research on instrumental training in primary schools in the Western Cape Province of South Africa. They came to the conclusion that of the 51 percent of music teachers who had answered their questionnaire, only a relatively modest proportion had studied the piano in the course of their own education:

- 52 percent had studied the piano at college or university level
- 53 percent had studied the piano at school, of which only 10 percent studied the instrument for five to six years, 13 percent for nine years and 5 percent for twelve years

These statistics identified the limited extent to which many classroom teachers at schools were equipped to undertake the task of training learners¹⁵⁰ with even the most basic keyboard skills. The

¹⁵⁰ The National Department of Basic Education employs the word 'learner' for primary and secondary school students.

piano was the most popular instrument among the teachers surveyed, and it became apparent that only five percent of respondents had studied or received exposure to indigenous South African instruments such as the mbira and the kalimba. Gourd-resonated and mouth bows did not feature in the statistics at all, as most teachers had never heard of these instruments before. It has therefore become apparent that during most of the apartheid era, as well as the ten years that followed (1994-2005), the curriculum in primary and secondary schools did not take into account the societal role of indigenous music and very few South African traditional instruments were introduced in classrooms (Mngoma 1990: 122). Western instruments did not receive due attention either, and De Wet, Herbst and Rijdsdijk (2005: 277) argue that this may be the result of the unrealistic demands of the revised National Curriculum Statements (1997 and 2002), issued by the National Department of Education. The 2002 Curriculum Statement included music as a subsection of a larger subject, Arts and Culture. The fact that teachers did not appear to demonstrate sufficient instrumental knowledge points towards the need for greater definition in the syllabus for Arts and Culture being taught at teacher training colleges. As many of these colleges closed down after 1994 and a select number merged with the major universities, there has been a steady decline in instrumental music specialists who are able to instruct students in classroom music (group teaching) as well as private instrumental studies. As many of the primary and secondary school teachers have not received training in all the areas that are encompassed by the subject (music, visual arts, drama, dance), most of them tended to focus only on the areas in which they gained exposure or felt most confident (De Wet, Herbst and Rijdsdijk 2005: 265).

In 2011, with the new revised NCS for the FET phase (secondary education), a more generous allocation of two lesson hours per week in music performance at all schools has been implemented. The lesson plans make provision for five areas of instrumental study: performance of solo repertoire, ensemble playing, technical work, improvisation and sight-reading/sight-singing. Students have the opportunity to study a new set of pieces for the first three terms¹⁵¹ of each year (Grade 10, Grade 11 and Grade 12) and a programme of at least three works has to be performed for assessment annually. A further dimension is added to these studies, in that learners who are specialising in WAM may also perform either solo or ensemble works on indigenous South African instruments, or expand their repertoire into the area of Jazz (both international and South African). This will of

¹⁵¹ In South Africa, each academic year has four terms. Primary and secondary school terms usually run from: January until the end of March; late-April until the end of June; middle-July until early September; and late-September until early December.

course be dependent on the opportunities that these learners might have to study with a specialist teacher in each of these areas, and schools may not always have the financial resources or the appropriate instruments for these purposes. Despite these changes, it would appear that the NCS does not make provision for the implementation of instrumental training at a young enough age. Learners only start with lessons in Grade 10, and this may be too late to for a student to obtain the sufficient level for entrance into a university music department or the higher UNISA examination grades. Although the Department of Basic Education might argue that general exposure and high standards in assessment would lead to greater practical skill, albeit not at the most advanced level of difficulty, this aspect of the curriculum does not necessarily prepare young musicians for the demands of conservatoire studies at universities in South Africa (or abroad). There is a need for further investigation of the earlier integration of the international music education methods of Kodály, Jacques-Dalcroze and Orff and their amalgamation with both the traditions of WAM and IAM in South African education (Van Niekerk 1997: 17; 40-42). The incorporation of instrumental training during the early school years may eventually lead to more advanced instrumental studies by the time that learners reach the intermediate phase (Grade 4-9). Furthermore, the question of high standards in instrumental playing are also compromised through the Department's recommendations for the required performance levels in the FET stage¹⁵²: elementary (Grade 10), intermediate (Grade 11) and advanced (Grade 12). For the 'elementary' stage, the Department recommends a practical level as low as UNISA Grade 2. The student is then expected to progress to UNISA Grade 4 standard by the time he or she reaches Grade 11 ('intermediate' level); for Grade 12, the Department does not specify what level of expertise 'advanced' should represent. The lower formal standards of instrumental playing in secondary schools have inevitably impacted the entrance level of university music departments. Prior to 2009, the entrance requirements for instrumentalists were equivalent to UNISA Grade 7. This has now been lowered to Grade 5 or 6 (depending on the university). A disparity between the instrumental standards at secondary schools and the professional music industry seems ultimately to affect learners between the ages of 16 and 18. Many of the young musicians who aspire to a professional career in music, and who intend to participate in national music competitions, currently have to resort to expensive private tuition in order to prepare for the considerably higher musical demands outside their school environment.

¹⁵² (NCS 2011: 19, 25, 29, 33, 41, 45)

Even if general instrumental training in state schools had been insufficiently broad up to 2005, there were (and still are) a variety of large education bodies that assess, nurture and develop talented young musicians. The South African Society of Music Teachers (hereafter SASMT) took the first steps during the early 1980s to instil a greater awareness of music in the classroom as well as more specialised private tuition in townships and previously disadvantaged communities throughout the country. Jeffrey Brukman (2013/14: 2), the current President of the SASMT, referred to one of his predecessors Douglas Reid's statement in 1984 that 'it must be our purpose to educate our students to their full potential so that in achieving this they will recognise, understand, appreciate and be sympathetic to all music in our country and elsewhere'. SASMT and UNISA have already collaborated since the 1940s in attaining independence from the ABRSM in London and to embark on training local musicians to become examiners and composers of music for the examination syllabuses (Paxinos 1994: 113, 116-17). This collaboration has intensified in the post-apartheid era to support the training of instrumentalists in previously-disadvantaged and impoverished communities. UNISA's Music Foundation, for example, founded outreach programmes in the schools of Soshanguve, near Pretoria. The Cape Philharmonic Orchestra is currently hosting similar activities in the Western Cape Province and the Odeion School of Music of the University of the Free State conducts outreach programmes in the Botshabelo area near Bloemfontein.¹⁵³ In the predominantly white suburbia of Pretoria, Johannesburg and Cape Town, three national high schools for the arts have played a leading role from the 1980s onwards to bring all the arts disciplines – music, dance, visual arts and drama – together and to encourage learners to engage across the arts. Institutions such as the National School of Arts in Johannesburg, the Pro Arte Alphen Park High School in Pretoria, the Hugo Lambrechts Music Centre in Parow and the Beau Soleil Music School near Cape Town provide gifted instrumentalists with scholarships to receive specialist training, often from visiting university professors.

Despite the disparity between the levels of instrumental tuition in state and private educational sectors, the UNISA Music examinations remain effective barometers of a national standard of performance. UNISA also provides materials to students of all backgrounds, and many of the theoretical and technical supplements are easily-accessible through online resources. The new UNISA syllabus of 2016 combines old and new works for less experienced players by local

¹⁵³ Several string and ensemble projects were founded from the late 1980s onwards. These initiatives include Buskaid in Soweto, the Houtbay Music Project in Cape Town, the Keiskamma Project near Knysna and the former STTEP of the Performing Arts Council of Transvaal (PACT).

composers. It is possible to trace the development of the educational piano pieces by South African composers over four articles that appeared in *Musicus* (Joubert 1979; Roos 1979; Paxinos 1994; Van der Spuy 2008). These articles not only provide historical information on the activities of several South African teachers and pianists, but also a comprehensive overview of the many piano works that appeared on the UNISA examination syllabus. Some of the composers I discussed in the first two premises of this chapter, and many other practitioners have contributed to an ever-expanding collection of educational piano works. First of all, I shall clarify this by looking at the educational syllabus, i. e. those works ranging from Pre-grade 1 to Grade 7.¹⁵⁴

Stefans Grové, whose educational music has been discussed in both Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis, is currently (2016) represented only by two of his easier pieces: *A Simple Evening Song* (Grade 1, 1981) and *Obstinacy* (Grade 7, 2007). His three pieces *Wind Bells in the Night*, *The Bells* and *Waltz of the Elephant* (all from 1981) are still included in the Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 syllabuses respectively. It would, however, also be possible to utilise several other movements and miniatures from his oeuvre in the UNISA syllabus. Paxinos (1994: 164) claimed that the short duration of pieces often secured their popularity among examination candidates. In this regard, the five miniatures of Grové's *Glimpses* (2004) would each be effective examination pieces for Grades 5 or 6. Each piece is only a page long, and even a combination of two would be suitable for inclusion on the syllabus. Judging on the overall standards of repertoire currently prescribed for the Grade 7 examination, the combination of all five miniatures from *Glimpses* would also not be too challenging for candidates. Furthermore, the slow movements from both *Images from Africa* (1999) and *My Seasons* (2012) are of an appropriate length and standard for inclusion on the Grade 6 and 7 syllabuses. One of the more distinctive challenges for a Grade 6 candidate would be to perform the second movement from *My Seasons* completely without sustaining pedal. Conversely, *Twilight Music* and *Invocation of the Water Spirits* of *Images from Africa* could introduce Grade 7 candidates to the use of silently-depressed chords maintained by the *sostenuto* (middle) pedal. The latter two pieces may pose some logistic challenges, as candidates do not always have access to an instrument with a middle pedal. Finally, I refer back to Grové's pieces for less experienced pianists that have already appeared in the UNISA syllabus since 1981, but are not currently in circulation. These works are sometimes recycled, even if they have not been included in the syllabus for a number of years. The reason for this is that the syllabus changes every four years and it is only natural that the Examinations' Department would

¹⁵⁴ The UNISA grade system is quite similar to that of the ABRSM and Trinity Laban examinations in the UK.

prefer to alternate works, particularly in the lists for the lower grades which generally attract a larger number of entries.

In 1975, before UNISA started commissioning examination pieces, Grové's contemporary Hubert du Plessis composed *Ten Piano Pieces for Children and Young People*, op. 41 (1975). This is his only technically less-challenging piano work and the seventh movement (*Kwêla*) makes use of indigenous melodic material as heard by penny-whistle players in various parts of Southern Africa.¹⁵⁵ Du Plessis also investigated the music of the Cape Malay population, and this culminated in his *Slamse Beelde* for choir, clarinet, harp and string orchestra, op. 21 (1959). Some rhythmic and melodic elements of the *Ghoema*-song tradition of the Cape Malay people have then also made their way into the faster movements from the *Ten Piano Pieces for Children* (particularly nos. 8-10).

None of the easier piano pieces that Arnold van Wyk composed in his youth are currently in the public domain. Most of his piano music is written for more advanced players, but the second and third movements of his *Four Piano Pieces* (1964) have previously been included on the Grade 7 UNISA syllabus (Paxinos 1994: 171). Of Blanche Gerstman only the short piece *Nerina* was prescribed for Grade 4 in the 1970s (currently included in the Grade 5 syllabus, 2016), and no works of John Joubert (except a few for piano duet), Stanley Glasser, Priaulx Rainier or Rosa Nepgen have ever featured on the UNISA syllabuses for the lower grades (Pre-grade 1-7).

Aside from the more established and internationally-recognised composers born before the Second World War, there were, as I mentioned above, several teachers and examiners from the same generation who felt confident enough as amateur composers to write piano works for less experienced players. Adolph Hallis, whom I discussed in Chapter 1, was a concert pianist and a renowned pedagogue in Johannesburg. His two pieces, *Wee man in the dusk* (Grade 5) and *Old Vienna* (Grade 6 – currently included in the 2016 syllabus), were already written and inserted on the syllabus well before UNISA started commissioning works from composers in 1978. Aside from works for the lower vocal grades, Petrus Lemmer as well as David and Maarten Roode (Grové's maternal uncles – also discussed earlier in this thesis) produced a series of character pieces that were incorporated in the lower grades for piano and piano duet. Lemmer's *Berceuse* (Grade 7) has been included on the latest syllabus of 2016. Douglas Reid (born 1936) is also one of the older-generation composers who recently started writing works for the syllabus, including *Rain Dance* (first included

¹⁵⁵ Paul Simon integrated *Kwela* elements into his album *Graceland* (1986).

in the Grade 2 list in 2008). Chris Lamprecht, a former head of the Music Department at the University of Pretoria and his sister Marthie Driessen both contributed a large number of short pieces for the lower grades.

The two pedagogues who wrote the largest number of piano examination pieces were Hennie Joubert and Pierre Malan. They were both also examiners for UNISA (Joubert was the Director of the Department between 1967 and his death in 1986) and thus were very much involved in promoting their examination pieces throughout the country. Joubert often arranged special workshops during which he would perform all the prescribed works from the Baroque to the Contemporary to teachers from remote areas (Paxinos 1994: 163). A number of European musicians who immigrated to South Africa early in their careers, were involved in the activities of the Examinations' Department at UNISA (Van der Spuy 2008: 108, 112; Roos 1979: 25). Three musicologists and teachers from the Netherlands, Paul Loeb van Zuilenburg, Klaas van Oostveen and Arie van Namen, have all contributed various short piano pieces for the lower grades. Van Zuilenburg is particularly well-represented on the 2016 syllabus.

In 1991, Paxinos conducted a statistical study of the popularity of examination pieces for Grade 1-4. He concluded that those pieces chosen more often by candidates all met a certain set of criteria. First of all, composers often integrated some of the technical features that were prescribed for a certain examination. Those pieces with comfortable passage work, not falling too far outside the regular five-finger hand position, would contribute to a young or inexperienced candidate's sense of security in the examination. A further factor that candidates often relate to, is the appearance of a recognisable melody in an examination piece. Paxinos thus found that Pierre Malan produced the most popular material by integrating Afrikaans folk songs into his pieces for the lower grades (Paxinos 1994: 165). Younger-generation composers such as Alexander Johnson and Isak Roux (whose *Dr Kwela – Mr Ragtime* appears to be a popular choice from the 2012 and 2016 syllabuses for Grade 6) have mostly based their elementary pieces on tonally-inclined melodies. Further factors such as a traceable harmonic idiom, music that is not too chromatic or dissonant, the use of classical form structures and (as I have mentioned before) the relatively short duration of pieces are often the most influential reasons for the popularity of examination pieces.

Ultimately, it is not only the popularity of examination pieces that places them into an educational canon. The printing and distributing of materials is equally important, as examination albums are not only used privately by candidates and their teachers, but also in schools. The NCS merely stipulates the various study areas of South African music, but it is not accompanied by a detailed anthology.

Here UNISA's printed examination albums are of significant value in the education of Western art music in South Africa, as they include the contemporary works of local composers, but also of many significant representatives from other style periods. Anthologies wield considerable power in canonicity (Citron 1993: 24-25), as they also contribute to the central corpus of material that is actually presented in classes. Although this does not happen often due to financial constraints, anthologies should regularly be modified to reflect changes in societal values. To this end, the SAMRO Foundation¹⁵⁶ has in 2010 commenced with a project to print albums entitled *SAMRO Music Scores for Young Children*. The principal aim of this project is to commission at least twenty composers to write works from Pre-grade 1 to Grade 6, and to encourage 'young South African musicians to perform new works by local composers'.

5. Conclusion

In this overview of South African piano music, I have predominantly focused on the works from the twentieth century, written by composers born in that country before the Second World War. Through this process it has been possible to trace various types of canons. Firstly, there are the larger-scale virtuosic works that have contributed to establishing the reputation particularly of composers such as Arnold van Wyk, Hubert du Plessis and Stefans Grové in concert halls countrywide and abroad. Then there are technically less-challenging works written for educational purposes that are prescribed for examinations and youth music competitions. The number of educational pieces is much larger than that of virtuosic works. This seems to stem from the fact that, during a large part of the twentieth century, there was only a comparatively small number of professional composers who received an intensive training both in South Africa and abroad and subsequently acquired the skill to write large-scale complex music of an international standard. Educational examination pieces are not necessarily easy to produce, but less compositional experience and training is required to produce them.

Grové's music formed part of the broader discussion on canonicity in this chapter. His large contribution to piano literature has been placed alongside the work of his contemporaries. I have established that he was the only composer of his generation who wrote works that can be classified under all three the functional canonical premises that I have investigated in this chapter: virtuoso concert works, works with indigenous influences, and works for less experienced players that are

¹⁵⁶ <http://www.samrofoundation.org.za/samro-archive.php>

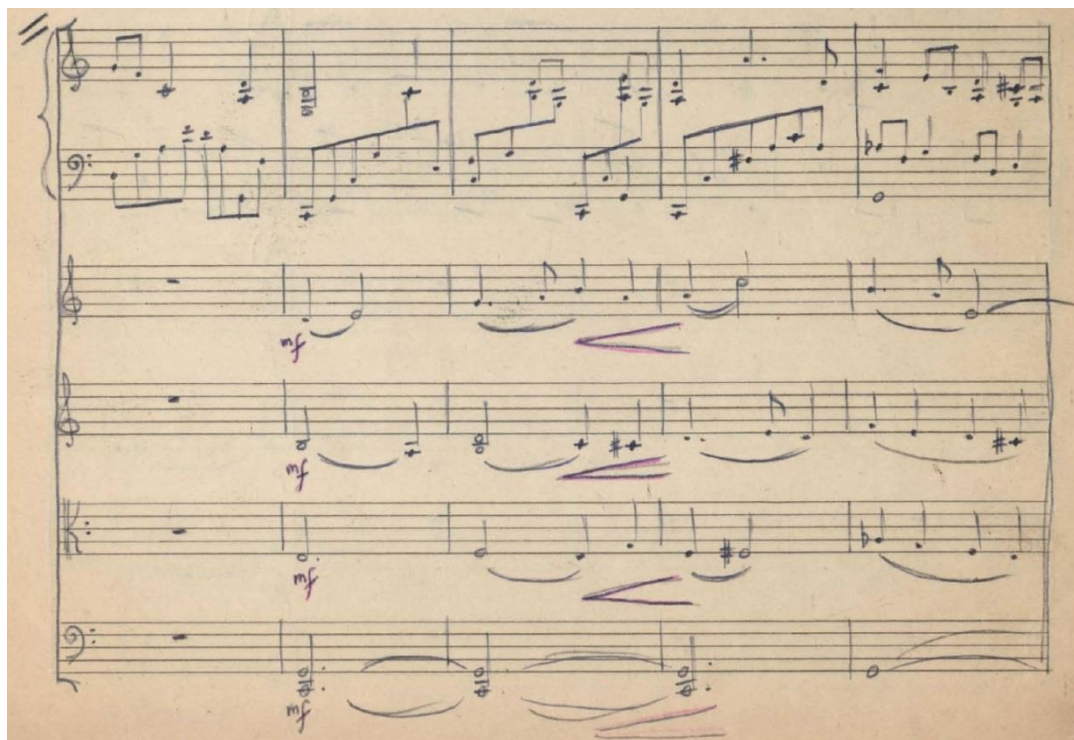
included in the UNISA examination syllabuses (Pre-grade 1 – Grade 7). The catalogues of Paxinos (1994: 166-167), Hinch (2004) as well as Muller and Walton (2006) confirm that Grové also wrote the largest number of examination pieces for wind instruments. Although Grové does not appear in the curriculum of the National Department of Basic Education (NCS), his works have consistently been prescribed for examinations and competitions throughout the country. He also influenced his students Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph, Alexander Johnson and Christopher James, among others, to write works that fall into the three functional premises mentioned above.

Grové's advanced piano works such as *Songs and Dances from Africa*, *Nonyana* and *Images from Africa* have a more solid position in the canon. Some of his educational pieces (such as *Three Birds Sing*, *Cock-fighting* and *Short Toccata*) are possibly too dissonant to appeal to the younger pianists, especially when taking Paxinos's statistics of the 1990s into account. The fact that his name does not appear in the NCS may point towards the changing social priorities of government departments. However, the modification of curricula and the emphasis on the work of younger generations at institutions such as the National Education Department, UNISA and SAMRO should be seen as laudable. These changes counteract Aaron Copland's earlier fears that unchanging canons leave 'a minimum of wall space for the showing of the works of new composers, without which the supply of future writers of masterworks is certain to dry up' (Copland 1952: 27).

In this chapter, I have only briefly touched upon the public's role in canonicity. Thom (2011: 8) wrote of Grové's contemporary Du Plessis that 'his music is almost never performed' and that 'musicologists have long berated the South African public for this neglect, but without great effect'. Grové will hopefully not suffer the same fate. The many awards and recognitions he received, several dissertations and articles on aspects of his music, and special symposia and concerts devoted to his work are all factors that attest to the fact that he was very much respected in academic circles. However, the conservative concert-going public in South Africa has shown a degree of hostility to his work (see the late style discussion at the end of Chapter 2). Grové attempted to bridge a gap between himself and the public through his extensive programme notes. He could also, to some extent, exert some influence on the public taste through writing concert and compact disc reviews as well as articles. When he was still lecturing in Baltimore in the 1960s and early 1970s, Grové invited his friend Elliott Carter to the Peabody Conservatory to give lectures to students on metric modulation (an aspect of the American composer's work Grové greatly admired – Walton 2007: 24). When Carter's String Quartet no. 1 was rejected by the public, he adopted the following view:

From that point on I decided that I would write whatever interested me, whatever expressed the conceptions and feelings I had, without the concern for an existing public. Now I'm aware that these attitudes can lead to 'disastrous' results, that you can have terribly angry people and terribly angry performers on your hands – and I have. I'm aware of this when I write my pieces; but I've decided that the fun of composing ... is to write pieces that interest me very much. I don't expect them to be very successful when they're played (Edwards 1971: 36).

The above statement by Carter applies in many ways to Grové's defiance as a composer, to his application of a linear and a more modern compositional approach amidst the dense Romantic textures and neo-tonal tendencies of his South African contemporaries (Du Plessis 1973: 73; Izak Grové 2013: 141). However, the creative energy that he radiated until the very end of his life has inspired many musicians to continuously explore his imaginative sound world. Shortly before his death he stated: 'I am also certain that the rhythmic vitality in my music is appealing to young performers and it makes me very happy that many of my works are often performed by young musicians' (Schoeman 2012a).

Stefans Grové: *Fantasy* for piano and strings (1939), bb. 1-10

Appendix 2

Stefans Grové: *Kettingrye* (Chain Rows) for large orchestra (1978), bb. 289-298

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Flute

Oboe

Clarinet in C

Bassoon

Horn in C

Horn in C

Trumpet in C

Trombone 1

2

Trombone 3

1

2

3

4

Timpani

Organ

Pedals

(Heavy reeds)

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

Contrabass

à 2

div.

f

ff

arco

div.

5

4

6

8

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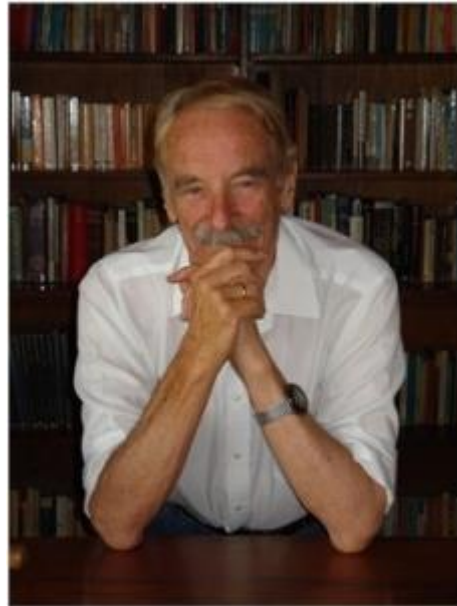
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Appendix 3



An interview between Ben Schoeman and Stefans Grové, published on 23 July 2012 (the composer's 90th birthday) – see Schoeman 2012a.

COMPOSER STEFANS GROVÉ AT 90

Ben Schoeman: Prof. Grové, you are celebrating your 90th birthday on 23 July and are looking back on a long and colourful career as a composer. I would like to go back to the beginning and ask you why you decided to become a composer. Did you ever consider a career as a performing artist, or were you mainly interested in composition?

Stefans Grové: It was not really a choice, but more of a vocation. I come from a very musical family. My mother was a piano teacher and two of my Roode uncles were professional musicians, and also my sister. It was therefore a necessity for me to become a musician. I started with piano, then the organ and many years later also studied the flute and viola. However, the piano was my first instrument and I was deeply impressed with my mother's incredible ability to sight-read. Together we often sight-read the symphonies of Haydn. These circumstances led to my interest in improvisation. My uncle, David Roode, was very strict and always said that I should practise the piano and prepare for my lessons before I could improvise. It was through improvisation that I became interested in composition, as I experimented on the piano and then wrote down these musical ideas. Throughout my youth and even during my university studies in Cape Town, I remained an autodidactic composer. My first major teacher was Prof. William Henry Bell (at the South African College of Music). He was very British in his outlook, while I was more interested in the French Impressionists. I knew early on that I wanted to be a composer, as I did not enjoy practising. I was not a bad pianist, but I did not want become a performer.

BS: Upon evaluating your extensive oeuvre, it is interesting to see that you have composed more than thirty piano works. As a pianist I find these compositions particularly fascinating. I met you for the first time in 2004, when I took part in the 10th UNISA International Piano Competition. Your *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* was the commissioned work in the first round. I know that many composers find it difficult to write for the piano. How do you experience this?

SG: Of all the instruments that I learnt to play I am most intimately acquainted with the piano and it remains my most beloved instrument. The older I get, the easier it becomes to compose for the piano. My most recent compositions, *My Jaargetye/My Seasons* (2012) and the Piano Quintet (2012), contain pianistic elements that I have never used before. These works are informed by my orchestral writing and I use techniques such as the simultaneous use of legato and staccato. I have not seen this in any other piano music – it seems to be my own compositional property.

BS: I would like to refer to a discussion we had in February this year, when we talked about the interpretation of Mozart's piano music. It is often necessary to use different articulation in the left and right hands respectively in order to bring clarity to the polyphonic lines in this music. Would you say that you have been inspired by this principle? I know that you have a great admiration for the music of JS Bach. Does your emphasis on articulation correspond to your appreciation of early music?

SG: I use the combination of staccato and legato in a slightly different way. The right and left hand usually plays an octave apart and in unison. With this new technique I am creating a distinct sound colour, but it is also an expressive tool in my music. I have often used this in orchestral works, where one group of instruments plays staccato and another legato. This results into a transparent texture and also accentuates certain melodic lines. I find that meticulous articulation on the piano is very important to me, particularly because of the fact that I played the flute and the viola. Many composers only make use of phrase bows, whereas I almost exclusively use articulation bows in my scores.

BS: Apart from articulation, do you have specific views on other aspects of piano playing?

SG: I am an enemy of the excessive use of the sustaining pedal. Many of my piano works have to be performed without pedal. I use it only in slower, more expressive passages or movements. One sound colour that I am particularly fond of, is to hold a series of chords with the left hand and then to gradually release the pedal in order to create a variety of overtones until the sound dies away.

BS: Do you also make use of the middle pedal (*sostenuto* pedal)?

SG: Yes, very much so. I find the third pedal very helpful when it comes to creating transparency in my piano music. There are many examples of this in the new piano work *My Jaargetye* (2012). In the third movement (*First Spring rain and the awakening of delicate colours*) a plethora of colours and overtones is created by holding the opening silent chord with the third pedal.

BS: You mentioned that this third movement of *My Seasons* is written in two parts, a fast introduction and a more introspective section. The introduction symbolises the first Spring rain and the slower part that follows symbolises the many colours that appear after the rain. Would you say that visual images often influence the structure or timbres in your music?

SG: I am a composer of programme music and my works are mostly based on things that I have seen, heard and read. These images stimulate my imagination and I convert them into musical ideas. Dreams are also becoming very important stimuli. I often hear musical material in my dreams and this is very helpful when I start to compose the next day. When the organist Gerrit Jordaan was preparing to perform my *Afrika Hymnus* No. 1, we met at the Rieger Organ in the ZK Matthews Auditorium in order to discuss the work. The night before the scheduled meeting I dreamt that Gerrit was playing very kaleidoscopic music on the organ. When I asked him what he was playing, he said that it was my *Afrika Hymnus* No. 2 (which had not yet been composed). This might only have been a dream, but this transparent music stayed in my mind and was a great inspiration when I started composing the second *Afrika Hymnus*.

BS: These dreams almost sound like visions and it reminds me of your description of the so-called 'Damascus'-moment in your career. In 1984 you heard an African melody being sung by a pickaxe

worker in Pretoria and started to integrate this melodic material into the Violin Sonata that you were working on at the time...

SG: Yes, I regard my conversion to Afrocentrism as a 'Damascus'-moment. Just as St. Paul started a new religious way of life after his epiphany on the road to Damascus, have I started a new creative phase after hearing the African melody that I incorporated into my Violin Sonata. I can refer to the words of Jean Cocteau: 'The more a poet sings from his family tree, the more genuine his song will be'. I have composed predominantly Western music before 1984, but I finally decided that my music should reflect the continent on which I live. When I was still a student, a concert devoted to my compositions took place in Amsterdam. One critic praised my work, but he also added that he found it surprising that there was no sign of Africa in my music. This disturbed me for many years and I constantly pondered the possibilities of fusing my Western craft with my South African roots. I can finally describe my style as a synthesis between African stimuli and Western structural principles.

BS: There is a distinct spiritual element in your music-making and for many years you were the organist of the Lutheran Paulusgemeinde in Arcadia, Pretoria. You also add the words 'Jesu Juva' (may Jesus help me) at the end of your scores. Do you experience religious inspiration when you compose?

SG: Only in my church music. In my secular music I am inspired by other aspects, including traditional African music that no longer exists. The ethnomusicologist Hugh Tracey's recordings of traditional music were particularly important to me. The current African generation have broken away from traditional music – they are not familiar with it anymore. I am stylistically intertwined in history and my aim is to highlight this traditional music. I am a historian who is giving a speech on how things used to be. UNISA is in possession of the complete collection of Tracey's recordings of indigenous South African music. His descriptions of South African music inspired me and *Dance Song for the Nyau Dance* (2003) and *Nonyana, the Ceremonial Dancer* (1994) are rather based on Tracey's texts than on traditional music itself. It was possible for me to derive some tendencies in African music by listening to these recordings, e.g. the descending melodic lines, as well as question and answer motifs.

BS: Could you tell me more about your recent compositions and current projects?

SG: I am currently experiencing a surge of creative energy. I have recently completed a new symphonic poem for the Cape Philharmonic Orchestra (commissioned by SAMRO). It is called *Figures in the Mist/Gestalten in die Newel* and is based on Khoisan culture. It consists of six movements, each of them illustrating an aspect of San lifestyle. The first movement depicts the birth of light (this is based on an old Khoisan legend). The remaining five movements portray elements such as the warm sun on the dessert, the stars in the night, rock paintings and finally also a wild hunting scene. The orchestration is very delicate and I often use the xylophone in combination with other instruments. My aim is to create a sense of transparency, but also to exploit the soloistic qualities of the various instrument groups. This can also refer to the simultaneous use of staccato and legato articulation that appear in my recent piano works. I have just finished the new piano suite *My Jaargetye*, as well as the piano quintet *A Venda Legend*. These works were written for you [Ben Schoeman] and the Odeion String Quartet. I am also very anxious to start working on my Concerto for Viola and Orchestra, which will be dedicated to Jeanne-Louise Moolman. Many of the colours and melodic ideas in these works have appeared to me in my dreams.

BS: You started composing in an 'African' style at a relatively late stage – this reminds me of Matisse, who changed his style later in his creative career in e.g. his *Gouaches Découpées*, or of Hans-Georg Gadamer, who started a new creative phase close to his retirement - after his book *Wahrheit und Methode* had been published. You have already mentioned that you are experiencing a creative

surge – was your Damascus moment responsible for this, or was there something else that sparked this creative energy?

SG: In 2003 I was appointed as the Composer-in-Residence at the University of Pretoria. This was a definite highlight for me and inspired me to write many new compositions.

BS: Do you find it upsetting when a new work only receives one performance? Is this typical of the times that we are living in?

SG: I would rather say that this is a typically South African phenomenon. There seems to be a cultural indifference here and it already started in 2000 when all the provincial arts councils and symphony orchestras were closed. Amidst this apparent indifference, there are some positive moments. I received a telephone call this morning from the Northwest University who decided to award me their very first Chancellor's Medal for my contributions in the area of music. I am also very pleased that many of my works are performed in other parts of the world. My String Quartet (*Song of the African Spirits*) will soon be heard in Australia and in the USA.

BS: It is also wonderful that DOMUS (Documentation Centre for Music) and the Odeion School of Music are hosting a Symposium on your works at the University of the Free State...

SG: This Symposium will take place in Bloemfontein between 10 and 12 August (2012). It will include concert performances of my works (including two world premiere performances), and several academic papers will be presented as well. I am greatly looking forward to this event.

BS: You are one of South Africa's most important music critics and have written many compact disc reviews for UNISA's journal *Musicus*. Do you have favourite pianists of the present day or the past, and did any of these artists have an influence on your music?

SG: I do enjoy the clarity in Murray Perahia's playing and then I also appreciate the many colours in Walter Gieseking's Debussy-playing. These two pianists exemplify important elements in my piano works, namely clarity in the percussive and articulated passages, as well as poetry and colour in the more introspective movements. I also appreciate the very transparent and *cantabile* playing of Sergey Rachmaninov.

BS: In conclusion, what do you regard as the greatest success of your career?

SG: Musicologists have described my style as immediately recognisable and said that I have a distinct compositional voice. The reason for these statements may be the way in which I combine African impulses with Western structural principles. I am also certain that the rhythmic vitality in my music is appealing to young performers and it makes me very happy that many of my works are often performed by young musicians.

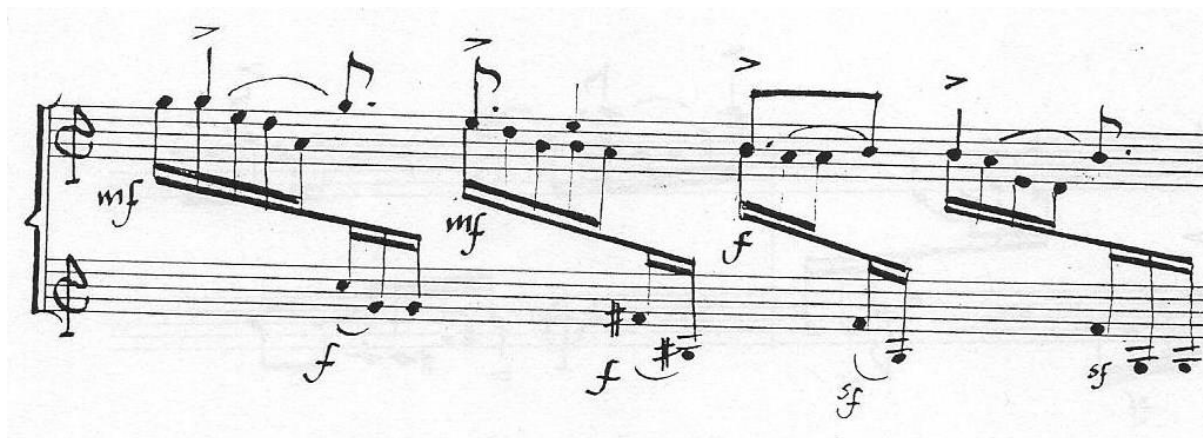
Appendix 4

Stefans Grové: *Images from Africa* (1999), *Yemoja*, bb. 149-158

Handwritten musical score for the piece "Yemoja" by Stefans Grové, measures 149-158. The score is written on five systems of staves, each with a treble and bass clef. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The dynamics range from *p* (piano) to *ff* (fortissimo). There are several instances of "ten" (tension) markings above notes. The score is annotated with handwritten circles and boxes around specific notes and chords, and dashed lines with "8v" indicating octave transpositions. The notation is complex, featuring many accidentals and ties.

Appendix 5

Stefans Grové: *Images from Africa* (1999), fifth movement (*Yemoja*), b. 121b



Stefans Grové: *My Seasons* (2012), second movement (*Wandering in a White, Cold, Landscape*), bb. 42-46



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