

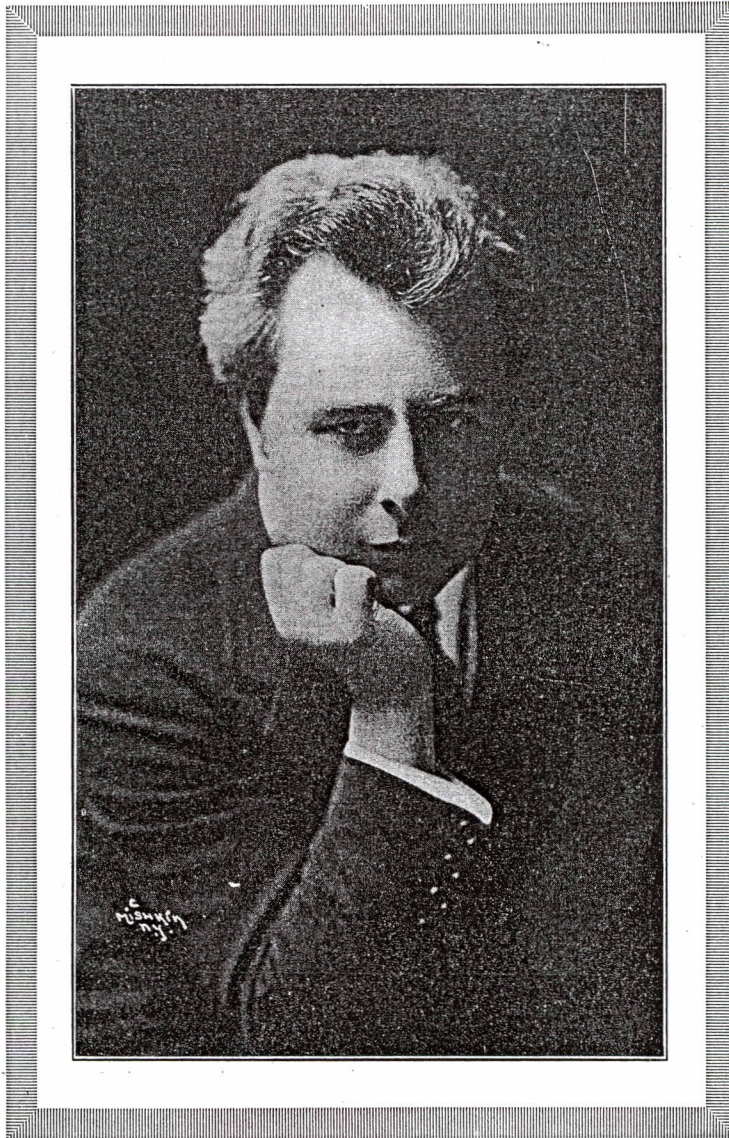
P O È M E

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By

JOSEF HOFMANN, 1876-1957.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND GLOSSARY

By EMERSON WHITHORNE

WITH FINGERING, PHRASING, PEDALING, AND INSTRUCTIVE ANNOTATIONS ON POETIC IDEA, INTERPRETATION, FORM AND STRUCTURE, AND METHOD OF STUDY

By the COMPOSER

(Old No. 802) New No. 1203

12042

POÈME

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH—JOSEF HOFMANN

Born in Podgorze, a suburb of Cracow, Austrian Poland—January 20th, 1876.

Form a clear conception of Josef Hofmann the man, one must break through that adamant wall of reserve, behind which he hides from an almost too inquisitive public. One finds in him a deeply emotional nature, a rare sincerity, and, most refreshing of all, a true enthusiasm for nature and its idealization in art. Sailing is with him a passion, be the seas peaceful or riotous; mountain climbing is an intoxication; to spend a fortnight alone on a deserted island with a tent-cloth for a roof, is for him the highest form of enjoyment. This desire for seclusion is most natural in an artist who has known the glare and plaudits of the concert room since his fifth year.

He inherited his musical gifts from both his father and mother, displaying exceptional talent at the early age of three. His mother was a soprano singer in the Cracow Opera, while his father was leader of the orchestra at that institution. When Josef Hofmann was three years old, his father decided to accept a position in Warsaw as conductor of the Imperial Opera, together with a professorship of pianoforte and musical theory at the Conservatory. Anticipating that his manifold duties would occupy all of his leisure he decided to sell his piano. The child hearing his father and mother discuss the advisability of this plan, looked pleadingly at his parents and said most sorrowfully, "Don't do that, otherwise you may regret it later". So impressed was Hofmann the elder by this childish prophesy that he promised his son he would not dispose of the instrument, and that it should be kept especially for his music studies. Soon after this incident Josef began his first piano lessons with his mother.

He made such extraordinary progress that he was able to make his first concert appearance at the age of five, when he played at the Warsaw Musical Society a program including a *Song Without Words* by Mendelssohn, a *Waltz* and *Mazurka* by Chopin, and two compositions of his own. As the young pianist could not reach the pedals, his father sat beside him and manipulated them for him. Most of this youthful playing was done by ear, while his first compositions were improvised at the piano; with his seventh year he began the actual reading and writing of music.

We may imagine his pride when a year later he was presented with the Köhler edition of the Beethoven Sonatas by his illustrious countrywoman, the famous actress Madame Modjeska. It was also at this time that he played, at a charity concert in Warsaw, the Schumann Variations in B-Flat Major for two pianos, being assisted by the well-known pianist and teacher, Henryk Michalowski. So deep was the impression made upon the Warsaw musical world by this performance, that a number of wealthy art lovers came forward with a sufficient guarantee for a tour of Germany.

In 1885 Josef Hofmann played for the first time in Berlin, giving four recitals at the Sing-Academie, and also appearing at the Philharmonic Concerts under the conductor Mannstaedt. Then followed long and successful tours in Germany, Holland, Scandinavia, England and France; and in 1887 he visited the United States where forty concerts were given in two and a half months. There had been no such success for a child pianist since the career of that amazing prodigy, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. However, the life was too exhausting for a child of ten years, and the "Gerry Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children" finally interrupted this American tour, whereupon the youthful artist was taken to Berlin and there his serious education was begun.

Through the generosity of an American gentleman, Mr. Alfred Corning Clark, he was able to obtain a thorough general education and resume his musical studies without material worries. For a period of six years he withdrew from public life. During one winter Maurice Moszkowski was his piano teacher. From his sixteenth to his eighteenth year he traveled once or twice each week from Berlin to Dresden to receive instruction from the great Anton Rubinstein, who then resided in the Saxon capital. Prof. Heinrich Urban of Berlin had charge of the theoretical side of his musical studies, while his general education was under the supervision of private tutors.

His first concert after this period of study occurred in Hamburg, Germany, in the spring of 1894, when he played the Rubinstein Concerto in D Minor under the baton of his famous master, Anton Rubinstein. It was a sad, yet curious coincidence that the opening concert of Hofmann's first tour, which took place at Cheltenham, England, November 19th, 1894, when he again actively resumed his concert career, was the date of his master's death at Petrohof, near Petrograd.

The year 1895 was spent in touring Germany and Austria, while the following season he made his first visit to Petrograd and Moscow, later entering upon an extensive tour of Russia which has since been followed by many other tours of that country. As an evidence of Hofmann's extraordinary popularity and success in Russia, it may be stated that in the season 1912-1913, in Petrograd alone, he gave nineteen recitals and two orchestral concerts, and in Moscow fourteen recitals and one orchestral concert, all to crowded houses.

In 1905 Josef Hofmann married an American lady, daughter of the former American Ambassador to France, Mr. James Biddle Eustis. Of this marriage there is a daughter, Josefa. When not concertizing, Mr. Hofmann divides his time between his winter home at Aiken, South Carolina, and his summer home on Lake Geneva, Switzerland.

THE ESTHETIC IDEA: This "Poem" is entirely subjective; it expresses in a lyric manner feelings of benevolence and inner contentment. Even where for moments a more sombre mood arises it should be but fleeting and not infringe upon the general mood.

FORM AND STRUCTURE: This composition, consisting of 69 measures, is in compound song-form. It begins without any introduction, with the first subject expressed in 8 measures. From m. 9 to m. 17 it is repeated in a slightly varied form. In the 17th measure begins a postlude which, in the style of a *coda*, terminates the first (simple) song-form. On the third beat of m. 23 a change from F major to F minor is made in order to prepare the way for the second song-form which extends from m. 25 to m. 38 without, however, coming to a reposeful close, but leading into the third part which is a repetition of the first part with a further enriched accompaniment. This third part starts in m. 38 and contains, for variety's sake, some alterations in harmony and construction. The 45th measure leads to a repetition which is shortened by four measures and ends in m. 49. Now follows, in m. 50 a thematic continuation terminating in m. 56, in a somewhat similar manner to the phrase, measures 17 to 23. The 57th measure is, but for the different harmony, like the 24th measure. It should suggest a pondering, musing mood which this time does not lead to the second song-form—as it did before—but to a *coda*, developed from it and ending in m. 66. Then follow six chords by way of leading to a final termination in the 69th measure.

EXPLANATION OF SPECIAL SIGNS: Every measure is provided with a number. Noting these numbers in the music, the student can easily find the corresponding reference in the text, while inversely, in reading the text he can at once locate any measure referred to, by the corresponding number in the music.

The correct use of the pedal is indicated by Ped. and *. At Ped. the pedal should be pressed down quickly, but noiselessly, while at * it is to be promptly released. It should be observed that, as a rule, the pedal is to be pressed down after the note or notes to be prolonged have been struck. The exceptions to this rule are not frequent. The editor has taken special care to mark the pedaling with the utmost precision and he advises the student to follow the markings closely. Where * and Ped. stand close together, the pedal should be released at the striking of the key and be immediately retaken before the finger has left the key.

The soft pedal is not marked, because it should serve as a means of coloring rather than of weakening the tone. It should change the quality of the tone rather than the quantity.

INTERPRETATION: All indications of phrasing, dynamic shadings, pedaling and kindred matters should be closely observed and carried out. This will greatly aid the student in gaining a proper insight into the spirit and structure of the piece. A certain amount of freedom may be granted the student, but not until he has fully complied with the annotations given here and has assured himself of a punctiliously exact reading of the notes.

The *tempo*—about $\text{♩} = 76$ to 84—should be yielding to allow full freedom of expression. Beware, however, of exaggeration. As the composition is polyphonous throughout, the player should forget that he has a right and left hand; he should regard his ten fingers as one playing organism and give due prominence to the melodic outlines, imitations and other main or counter parts irrespective of the hand in which they may occur.

Since all the parts and part-leading are plainly indicated in the score it is needless to call further attention to them. If the student gives proper consideration to the annotations and the polyphony of the composition he will easily find his way through the entire contents of it. As a last warning it may be restated that this composition is polyphonous and that no greater injustice could be done it than to interpret it in a monophonous manner.

GLOSSARY

NAMES

Podgorze,	pronounced,	Pód-gor-shā.
Cracow,	“	Crä-cow.
Hofmann,	“	Höf-män.
Henryk Michalowski,	“	Hĕn-rĭk Mē-hā-lōf-skē.
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart,	“	Wōlf-gäng Ä-mä-dā-us Mō-tsärt.
Moszkowski,	“	Mósh-kóv-skē.
Heinrich Urban,	“	Hĭn-rĭkh Oor-bän.
Modjeska,	“	Mód-jĕs-kä.
Mannstaedt,	“	Män-shtĕt.
Rubinstein,	“	Roo-bĭn-shtĭne.

TERMS

andantino,	pronounced,	än-dän-tĕe-nō, a little slower than <i>andante</i> ; generally misinterpreted as quicker than <i>andante</i> .
cresc. (crescendo),	“	crĕ-shĕn-dō, increasing in tone.
ma espressivo,	“	mā ĕs-prĕs-sĕe-vō, but expressively.
più forte,	“	pĕ-oo fōr-tĕ, more strength, louder.
dim. (diminuendo),	“	dĕ-mĕ-noo-ĕn-dō, diminishing in tone.
calando,	“	cä-län-dō, becoming softer and slower.
tranquillo,	“	trän-quĕel-lō, quietly, calmly.
poco rit. (ritenuto),	“	pō-cō rĕ-tĕ-noo-tō, a little detained.
a tempo,	“	ä tĕm-pō, in time.
ma meno mosso,	“	mā mā-nō mōs-sō, but less movement.
tempo primo,	“	tĕm-pō prĕ-mō, original time.
allargando,	“	äl-lär-gän-dō, growing broader.
portamento,	“	pōr-ta-mĕn-tō, gliding from one tone to another.
dolce,	“	dōl-tshĕ, softly, sweetly.
lento,	“	lĕn-tō, slowly.
molto,	“	mōl-tō, much.
coda,	“	cō-dä, a musical sentence added at the end of a composition to make a more complete and effective termination.

Edited by the Composer

JOSEF HOFMANN

Andantino $\text{♩} = 76-84$

The musical score is written for piano and bass. It consists of four systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked 'Andantino' with a quarter note equal to 76-84 beats per minute. The score includes various dynamics such as *p* (piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), *f* (forte), *dim.* (diminuendo), and *cresc.* (crescendo). Performance instructions include *f ma espressivo* and *callando*. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below notes. There are also some markings like '1-5' and '(4)' below notes. The score is divided into measures numbered 1 through 17. There are some asterisks and 'Led.' markings below the staves, possibly indicating recording or editing notes.

18 *mp tranquillo* *rit.* 19 *dim.* 20 *p a tempo* 21

* * * * *

22 *poco rit.* 23 *pp* 24 25 *p a tempo ma meno mosso*

* * * * *

26 *rit.* 27 *a tempo* 28 *espressivo* 29 *a tempo mf*

* * * * *

30 31 *p* 32 *poco rit.* 33 *a tempo*

* * * * *

34 *espressivo* 35 *mf* 36 *cresc.* 37 *allargando*

* * * * *

Tempo I

38 *f* 39 40 *f*

41 42 *cresc.* 43

44 *p* 45 *rit.* 46 *portamento* *a tempo*

47 48 *cresc.* 49

50 *mp* 51 *dolce dim.* 52 *poco rit.*

RECITATION QUESTIONS

1. Give the date and place of Josef Hofmann's birth.
Ans.

2. What position did his father occupy in Cracow, and later in Warsaw?
Ans.

3. At what age did Josef Hofmann make his first public appearance?
Ans.

4. Who were his pianoforte teachers?
Ans.

5. What is the form of this composition?
Ans.

6. Give a brief sketch of the Form and Structure.
Ans.

7. Describe the character of the composition.
Ans.

8. Why must great attention be given the part-leadings?
Ans.

9. Define *andantino*, *calando*, *tranquillo*, *allargando*, *lento*.
Ans.

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