

STEPHEN HELLER

(1813–1888)

**33 Variationen
über ein Thema von Beethoven**

**33 Variations
on a Theme by Beethoven**

op. 130

für Klavier/for Piano

herausgegeben von /edited by
Ulrich Mahlert



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Stephen Heller

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Drawing by J.-J.-B. Laurens, 1854?

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Vorwort

Im Jahre 1837 rezensierte Robert Schumann ausführlich eines der frühesten Klavierwerke von Stephen Heller (1813–1888), die 1829 entstandenen *Drei Impromptus* op. 7. Der Artikel bescheinigt dem Komponisten einen „hellen feinen Kopf, Naivetät und Bescheidenheit“ – Eigenschaften, die Heller in früheren Briefen an Schumann und vor allem in seinen humorvoll pointierten musikalischen Berichten aus Augsburg bewiesen hatte. Schumann veröffentlichte diese Berichte in der von ihm redigierten Neuen Zeitschrift für Musik mit der Unterschrift „*Jeanquirit Dblr.*“ (möglicherweise eine Anspielung auf Hellers Verehrung für Jean Paul) und nahm ihn so als künstlerischen Gesinnungsfreund in seinen „*Davidsbund*“ auf. Über die Kunstrichtung, die Schumann in Hellers *Impromptus* erblickte, schreibt er u.a.: „*Ich bin des Wortes ‚Romantiker‘ von Herzen überdrüssig, obwohl ich es nicht zehnmal in meinem Leben ausgesprochen habe; und doch – wollte ich unsern jungen Seher kurz titulieren, so hieß ich ihn einen, und welchen! Von jenem vagen, nihilistischen Unwesen aber, wohinter manche die Romantik suchen, ebenso wie von jenem groben hinklecksenden Materialismus, worin sich die französischen Neuromantiker gefallen, weiß unser Komponist, dem Himmel sei Dank, nichts; im Gegenteil, empfindet er meist natürlich, drückt er sich klug und deutlich aus. Dennoch fühlt man aber noch etwas im Hintergrund stehen beim Erfassen seiner Kompositionen, ein eigenes anziehendes Zwielficht, mehr morgenrötlich, das einen die übrigens festen Gestalten in einem fremdartigen Schein sehen läßt ... Im übrigen hat er gar nichts Übermenschliches als eine fühlende Seele in einem lebendigen Körper. Dabei führt er aber auch fein und sorgsam aus; seine Formen sind neu, phantastisch und frei; er hat keine Angst um das Fertigwerden, was immer ein Zeichen, das viel da ist.*“ (R. Schumann, *Ges. Schriften über Musik und Musiker*, Leipzig⁵ 1914, Bd. I, S. 249f.).

Die meisten Aussagen dieser Schumannschen Charakterisierung können für einen großen Teil von Hellers umfangreichem Schaffen stehen. Hellers Oeuvre entstand in dem 50jährigen Zeitraum von 1829 bis 1879 und umspannt die Werkfolge opp. 1 – 158. An der überwiegenden Gültigkeit von Schumanns Kennzeichnung erweist sich zweierlei: Heller schrieb zahlreiche, heute fast durchweg vergessene Werke von beachtlichem Niveau; der „Spielraum“ seiner künstlerischen Entwicklung blieb dabei jedoch begrenzt. Der „Spielraum“: Das bedeutet zunächst die Beschränkung auf das Klavier. Heller schrieb fast ausschließlich Klaviermusik. Er folgte nicht Schumanns Ermunterung, in größeren Dimensionen und „öffentlichen“ Gattungen zu komponieren. („*Ihr Nächstes sei aber eine Sonate. Und dann durchs Quartett zur Sinfonie hinauf!*“; Brief Schumanns an Heller vom 23. 10. 1836, zit. nach R. Schütz, *Stephen Heller. Ein Künstlerleben*, Leipzig 1911, S. 85). Zum anderen meint „Spielraum“ die Affinität von Hellers Schaffen zum kultivierten Salon – einem gesellschaftlichen Rahmen, der feinfühlig Menschen vereinte, gleichzeitig die Spielregeln gebildeter Konversation vorschrieb: „sinnig“ zu sein, ohne flach oder allzu tiefsinnig zu werden. Das Niveau, der Charme und Geist dieser Salonkultur des 19. Jahrhunderts muß heute neu entdeckt, das mit Vorurteilen belastete und vollgesogene Wort „Salonmusik“ von dem einseitig pejorativen Mißverständnis befreit werden. Heller selbst litt bereits unter diesem falschen Bild von „Salonmusik“ und beklagte sich mit einer verständlichen Allergie über den Usus, seine „kurzen aber ernst gedachten Stücke mit dem Epitheton Salon zu verunstalten und zu

mißdeuten“ (zit. nach Schütz, a.a.O., S. 130f.). Aber ohne Heller unrecht zu tun, darf man doch wohl behaupten, daß die meisten seiner Kompositionen mehr als anderswo im geistvollen Salon beheimatet sind. Sie besitzen weder die Extrovertiertheit großer Konzertmusik (wie z.B. der Werke Liszts) noch die normsprengende, jedes Publikum hinter sich lassende, bisweilen esoterische Phantastik etwa von Schumanns frühem Klavierschaffen. Heller selbst äußerte folgendes über die von ihm favorisierten Werke: „*Leider sind sie sämtlich weder blendend noch gelehrt, und schmeicheln weder dem Virtuosen von Geblüt, noch dem Organisten von Erziehung. Es liegt darin bloß ein fühlend Herz, welches aber mit Gunst und einigem guten Willen betrachtet sein will, denn es spricht eine mitunter leise, etwas fremde Sprache, und ohne durchschossene Worte, da ich die groben Fingerzeige und allzu absichtlichen Witze und wohlfeilen Sentimentalitäten hasse.*“ (zit. nach Schütz, a.a.O., S. 115).

Heller wurde am 15. 5. 1813 in Pest als Sohn ungarischer Eltern jüdischer Abstammung geboren. Als seine pianistische Begabung sich zeigte, ließ sein Vater ihn in Wien professionell ausbilden. Über seinen Lehrer August Halm, einen renommierten Pädagogen, kam Heller noch mit Beethoven, Schubert und Abbé Stadler zusammen. Ab 1828 versuchte Hellers Vater die Klavierkünste seines Sohnes kommerziell zu nutzen. Dem kräftezehrenden, nervenaufreibenden Konzertieren war Heller jedoch nicht gewachsen. 1830 brach er in Augsburg zusammen. Dort ließ er sich nieder und fand sein Auskommen als geschätzter Lehrer, Pianist und (bisweilen gefürchteter) Verfasser von Berichten über das lokale Musikleben. In Augsburg studierte Heller gründlich Beethovens Klaviersonaten und viele andere bedeutende Werke der zurückliegenden Epochen. Eine Reihe seriöser Kompositionen entstand in diesen Jahren. 1838 übersiedelte Heller nach Paris, ursprünglich zur Vervollkommnung seines Klavierspiels bei Friedrich Kalkbrenner, in dem Heller sein pianistisches Ideal verkörpert fand. („*Nichts wurde stark aufgetragen, dem Elegischen blieb ein Lächeln, dem Heitern verlieh die maßvolle Korrektheit einen Anstrich von Ernst. Das Feuer schlug nicht als Flamme empor, das Pathetische blieb stets durchaus verständig*“, zit. nach Schütz, a.a.O., S. 36). Wegen der unmäßigen Honorarforderungen Kalkbrenners kam es nicht dazu, daß Heller sein Schüler wurde. Auch behagte dem schüchternen Paris-Neuling wenig das verbindliche, gekünstelte Gebaren des geschäftigen Musikpublikums. Heller blieb jedoch in Paris, und zwar, mit wenigen Unterbrechungen, bis zu seinem Tode am 14. 5. 1888. Er hielt sich abseits vom Trubel des öffentlichen Musikbetriebs, verkehrte aber gern in kleinem Kreise mit ernsthaften Musikerpersönlichkeiten, darunter Berlioz, Chopin, Halévy, Alkan u.a.; mit Berlioz verband ihn eine enge Freundschaft.

Die in den Pariser Jahren entstandenen Klavierwerke Hellers verleugnen nirgends die stilistische Verbundenheit mit der deutschen Romantik (insbesondere mit Schumann) und Klassik (vor allem mit Beethoven). Gleichwohl verarbeitete Heller manche pianistische und ästhetische Anregung, die er in Paris empfing. Chopins Werke wirkten besonders produktiv auf ihn ein, und die klangliche wie harmonische Verfeinerung seines Klaviersatzes in vielen späteren Werken verbindet die deutsche bzw. französische Romantik mit der französischen Klaviermusik des *Fin de siècle* (Fauré, Chabrier, Debussy u.a.). Die damalige Wertschätzung Hellers, insbesondere in

Frankreich, ist vielfach belegt. Der 15jährige Debussy etwa spielte 1878 im Rahmen einer Klavierprüfung am Pariser Conservatoire Hellers *Variationen über „Warum“ von Schumann* op. 142; Heller selbst war als Mitglied der Jury anwesend. Noch in hochimpressionistischen Werken wie Debussys *Préludes* erkannte Alfred Cortot Einflüsse von Hellers Klaviersatz und Harmonik.

Die hier in einer Neuausgabe vorgelegten *33 Variationen über ein Thema von Beethoven* op. 130 komponierte Heller im Jahre 1871. Das Thema liegt Beethovens *32 Variationen c-moll* (1806) zugrunde. Die Zahl 33 von Hellers Variationen muß nicht, wie gelegentlich behauptet, als Anspielung auf Beethovens größtes Variationenwerk, die *33 Veränderungen über einen Walzer von Diabelli* C-dur op. 120, gesehen werden. Beethoven faßt im Finale seines c-moll-Werks zwei Variationen unter einer Nummer zusammen, so daß sich auch hier die Zahl 33 ergibt. Beethovens Anlage des Zyklus läßt einen achsialsymmetrischen Aufbau der beiden umrahmenden Moll-Blöcke mit fünf Dur-Variationen als Mittelachse erkennen. Heller verzichtet darauf, mit Beethovens architektonischem Formsinn zu konkurrieren. Nicht die Geschlossenheit einer planvollen Struktur will er primär verwirklichen; sondern er entfaltet das Variieren des Beethoven-Themas als ein gleichsam improvisatorisches Geschehen, in dem der „Esprit“ zusehends wächst und der fantasieartige Duktus immer mehr durchbricht. In der harmonischen Auslotung des Themas, in der Einbeziehung entlegener Regionen, geht Heller um einiges über Beethoven hinaus. Phantasievoll wendet er insbesondere die Technik an, einzelne Variationen nicht mit der Tonika, sondern einer anderen harmonischen Funktion zu eröffnen. Bereits in diesem Punkt ließe sich demonstrieren, daß der erwähnte, für Heller typische Charakter des Improvisatorischen keinen Verzicht auf Zusammenhang und formale Gliederung bedeutet. Neben der leicht ersichtlichen Strukturierung durch Paarbildungen und rhythmische Beschleunigungen zeigt Hellers Werk – ähnlich Beethovens Zyklus – eine sinnvolle Gruppierung der Variationen in Moll- und Dur-Blöcke. Es dominiert in Var. 1–10 c-moll, in Var. 11–16 C-dur, in Var. 17–23 c-moll, in Var. 24–27 C-dur, in Var. 28–32 c-moll und in der Finalvariation schließlich C-dur. So ergibt sich eine Gruppierung von $10 + 6 + \boxed{7 + 4} + 5 + 1$ Variationen; das Verkürzungsprinzip ist augenfällig. Aber Heller selbst weicht diese plausiblen Formproportionen auf – und kennzeichnet sie damit als sekundär –, indem er für mehrere Variationen Wiederholungen vorschreibt. Nach Var. 24 (dur) stellt er dem Spieler sogar frei, die 23. Variation (moll) zu wiederholen, wodurch die formale Zäsur des Dur-Moll-Wechsels vollends nivelliert wird. Wichtiger als architektonische Stringenz ist der in solchen Wiederholungen verkörperte „erfüllte Augenblick“, dem der Spieler sich, gleichsam improvisierend, überlassen darf. Und als musika-

lischer Hauptreiz des Werks (– ein wichtiges Kriterium für eine adäquate Interpretation) entpuppt sich immer mehr die zunehmende „Launigkeit“ in der Abfolge der Einfälle. Ab Var. 11 treten die unterschiedlichen Charaktere auf engerem Raum kontrastierend hervor, und ab Var. 21 greift Heller den beliebten Improvisationsusus auf, mehr oder weniger bekannte Werke zu zitieren (und damit dem Kenner das Kennerlächeln zu ermöglichen). Die im originalen Notentext bezeichneten Anspielungen auf Beethovensche Werke finden sich in den Var. 21 und 22: 9. Sinfonie, 1. und 2. Satz; Var. 28 und 29: 5. Sinfonie, 1. Satz; Var. 32: Klaviertrio op. 1 Nr. 3, 1. und 4. Satz. Ferner begegnen in dem Variationenzyklus (nicht anders als in vielen anderen Werken Hellers) manche weniger direkten Anklänge an die für Heller vorbildliche klassisch-romantische Klaviermusik. Var. 20 etwa erinnert an Nr. 12 aus Mendelssohns *Variations sérieuses*, während Var. 26 ganz beethovenisch beginnt – in einem Gemisch aus den Anfangstakten der *Waldsteinsonate* op. 53 und dem Klavierkonzert Nr. 4 – um dann nach dem Höhepunkt in einer Wendung abzufallen, die deutliche Assoziationen an T. 48ff. aus dem 1. Satz von Schumanns Klavierkonzert zuläßt.

Insgesamt erweisen Hellers Beethoven-Variationen, was ein ungenannter und im übrigen recht kritischer Rezensent bei der Besprechung des Werks in der Allgemeinen Musikalischen Zeitung über Hellers Schaffen befand: „*dass unter den ausschliesslich fürs Clavier schreibenden Tonsetzern aller Zeiten Stephen Heller durch die Noblesse seiner Empfindung, durch die stets meisterhafte Behandlung der Form, am meisten aber durch die delicate, vom feinsten Tonsinn zeugende Verwerthung seines Instrumentes einen sehr hervorragenden Platz einnimmt*“ (AMZ 1873, Sp. 167).

Die vorliegende Neuausgabe entspricht weitgehend der 1872 bei Breitkopf & Härtel erschienenen Erstausgabe. An einigen Stellen wurden offensichtlich fehlende bzw. irrig gesetzte Bögen, Akzente, Staccato-Punkte, Pedal- und Pausenzeichen etc. korrigiert. Möglichst erhalten blieb dabei die bisweilen kapriziöse, quasi-improvisatorische Notierungsweise des Komponisten. Heller liebt es, Parallelstellen mit kleinen, oft unauffälligen Differenzen zu notieren, in denen meist kein „System“, wohl aber ein Potential an Spielphantasie steckt. Der Herausgeber hat bewußt der Versuchung widerstanden, solche „Unstimmigkeiten“ als Versehen oder Willkür aufzufassen und sie saubermännisch zu beseitigen. Sinnvoller scheint es ihm, die ungeglättete Vielfalt von Hellers Schreibweise zu belassen; so kann der Spieler Anregungen empfangen zu einem Hellers Musik entsprechenden Vortragsstil, den der Komponist selbst auf die Formel brachte: „*höchst frei und, soweit es ein gebildeter Geschmack zuläßt, ungebunden*“. (zit. nach Schütz, a.a.O., S. 73).

Berlin, Frühjahr 1985

Ulrich Mahler

Preface

In 1837, Robert Schumann published a detailed review of one of Stephen Heller's (1813–1888) earliest piano works, the *Three Impromptus* Op. 7, written in 1829. Schumann's article attributed the composer a "fine, clear mind, naïveté and unpretentiousness", qualities which Heller had already demonstrated in earlier letters to Schumann and particularly in his sparkling and witty musical reports from Augsburg. Schumann, as editor of the "Neue Zeitschrift für Musik", published these reports in his periodical under the name "Jeanquirit Dblr." (possibly as an allusion to Heller's admiration of Jean Paul), thus admitting Heller into his "Davidsbund" as a like-minded fellow artist. Schumann described the artistic strain he found in Heller's *Impromptus* with the words: "I am thoroughly tired of the word 'Romantic', even though I have not uttered it more than ten times in my life; and yet, if I had to characterize our young visionary with one word, I would have to call him a 'Romantic', and quite a one at that! Thank God that our composer knows nothing about those vague, nihilistic excesses often mistaken for Romanticism, and nothing about the churlish, vainglorious materialism in which the French New-Romantics revel; on the contrary, he has a natural sensitivity and expresses himself clearly and intelligently. Nonetheless, when trying to understand his compositions, one can't help but feel that there is something shimmering in the background, a unique, fascinating twilight, or rather, a dawn which bathes the otherwise solid features in an intriguing light ... Otherwise there is nothing superhuman about him other than that he possesses a sensitive soul and is very much alive. He works in a precise and careful manner; his forms are new, imaginative and free; he has no fear of drawing to an end, which is always a sign of a wealth of ideas." (R. Schumann, *Ges. Schriften über Musik und Musiker*, Leipzig 1914, Vol. I, p. 249f.).

On the whole, Schumann's comments can be applied to a large part of Heller's extensive creative output. Heller's work catalogue spans a 50-year period from 1829 to 1879 and comprises a wealth of compositions ranging from Op. 1 to 158. Two aspects in particular prove the acuity of Schumann's observations: on the one hand, Heller wrote a large number of works of high standard which are almost all forgotten today; on the other hand, the "scope" of his artistic development remained rather restricted. The term "scope" refers here above all to Heller's limitation to the piano, the instrument for which he wrote practically all his works. He did not follow up Schumann's encouraging counsel to compose in larger dimensions and more "public" genres: ("Your next work should be a sonata – then a quartet and on to the symphony!" letter from Schumann to Heller of 23 October 1836, quoted in Schütz, *Stephen Heller. Ein Künstlerleben*, Leipzig 1911, p. 85). But "scope" also refers to Heller's affinity with the cultivated salon atmosphere of the upper classes – an atmosphere which united a community of sensitive beings, while dictating the rules of graceful and refined conversation: how to be "clever" without being banal or too profound. The charm, spirit and high level of the salon culture of the 19th century must be seen in a new perspective today; the concept "salon music" is so laden with prejudices and false notions that it has to be freed from these one-sided, negative associations. Heller himself suffered from this negative view of "salon music" and complained with understandably justifiable indignation about the practice of "disfiguring and misinterpreting" his "short but seriously meant pieces with the epithet 'salon'" (quoted in Schütz, loc. cit. p. 130f.). Without

wanting to be unfair to Heller, one must admit that most of his compositions are best suited to the brilliant atmosphere of the salon. They contain neither the extrovert character of grand concert works such as those of Liszt, nor the radically new, esoteric imaginative quality of, for instance, Schumann's early piano works, which were a challenge to every audience. Heller wrote the following words about his favourite pieces: "Unfortunately, they are neither brilliant nor erudite, and enchant neither the born virtuoso nor the erudite organist. They are merely the vehicle of a sensitive heart, which craves nothing more than to be accepted with grace and some good will, for it speaks an often hushed and at times mysterious language, without empty words. I despise cheap sentimentality, the boorish pointing with the finger, and the all too obvious attempts at witty repartee." (quoted in Schütz, loc. cit. p. 115).

Heller was born in Pest on 15 May 1813. His parents were Hungarians of Jewish background. As soon as his pianistic talent was noted, he was sent to Vienna by his father to receive a professional training. Thanks to his teacher August Halm, a reputable instructor of the time, Heller became acquainted with Beethoven, Schubert and Abbé Stadler. In 1828, Heller's father decided to put his son's talent to profit. However, Stephen was not up to the demanding and nerve-racking life of a concert pianist. He suffered a nervous breakdown in Augsburg in 1830 and decided to remain there. He earned his living as an esteemed teacher, pianist and (at times feared) author of reports on the local musical life. In Augsburg, Heller studied Beethoven's piano sonatas as well as many other important works of the past with great diligence. He composed a number of important compositions during these years. In 1838, he moved to Paris with the intention of perfecting his pianistic skills by studying with Friedrich Kalkbrenner, who was the personification of Heller's pianistic ideal. ("He never overemphasized anything, but graced the elegiac with a smile and gave to cheerful tones a touch of seriousness by dispensing an equitable portion of propriety. His fire did not lurch out in a flame, and his pathos remained coherent at all times", quoted in Schütz, loc. cit. p. 36). However, Kalkbrenner demanded such a high fee that Heller could not study with him. The shy newcomer in Paris also did not much enjoy the artificiality and ceremoniousness of the bustling Parisian music public. Nonetheless, Heller settled in Paris and remained there, with only a few interruptions, until his death on 14 May 1888. He kept his distance from the flurry of the official musical life, and enjoyed the company of a small circle of personalities in the world of music such as Chopin, Halévy, Alkan, etc. He was also a close friend of Berlioz.

The piano works which Heller wrote in his Paris years cannot disclaim a stylistic affinity with German Romanticism (and with Schumann in particular) and Classicism (Beethoven above all). But Heller also integrated into his style various pianistic and aesthetic impulses which he acquired in Paris. For example, Chopin's works exerted a particularly stimulating influence on him. In many of his later works, the refinement of his piano writing, both in sound and in harmony, casts a bridge between German (and occasionally French) Romanticism and French fin-de-siècle piano music (Fauré, Chabrier, Debussy, etc.). There are many testimonials to the appreciation of Heller's music at that time, particularly in France. For example, the 15-year-old Debussy performed Heller's *Variations on "Warum"* by Schumann Op. 142 in 1878

at the occasion of a piano examination at the Paris Conservatory; Heller himself was a member of the jury. And Alfred Cortot recognized even in the most impressionistic of Debussy's works such as the *Préludes* certain influences of Heller's piano style and harmony.

The 33 *Variations on a Theme by Beethoven* Op. 130, presented here in this new edition, were composed in 1871. The theme is that of Beethoven's 32 *Variations* in C minor (1806). The number of Heller's variations, 33, does not necessarily have to be seen as a reference to Beethoven's greatest variation cycle, the 33 *Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli* in C major Op. 120, as is occasionally claimed. Actually, Beethoven's C-minor variations also contain 33 pieces, Beethoven having combined two variations under one number in the finale. Beethoven organized his cycle in a symmetrical pattern which grouped two blocks of pieces in minor mode around a middle axis of five variations in major mode. Heller did not attempt to compete with Beethoven's architectonic sense of form. His goal was not primarily the closed form characteristic of a minutely planned structure, but rather the elaboration of Beethoven's theme in a series of improvisation-like variations in which the "esprit" gains steadily in importance and the fantasy-like character becomes more and more obvious. Heller even considerably surpasses Beethoven in the harmonic exploitation of the theme with its excursions into remote harmonic regions. He makes imaginative use of the technique of beginning certain variations not on the tonic, but on another harmonic degree. This feature in itself helps demonstrate that the above-mentioned improvisatorial character striven for by Heller did not dispense him from a certain responsibility toward unity and formal articulation. Heller's work displays not only an easily perceptible overall form achieved by pairings of pieces and rhythmic accelerations, but also an intelligent arrangement of variations in minor and major blocks, similar to Beethoven's cycle. C minor predominates in var. 1-10, C major in var. 11-16, C minor in var. 17-23, C major in var. 24-27, C minor in var. 28-32, and C major in the final variation. This yields a scheme of $10 + 6 + 7 + 4 + 5 + 1$ variations;

the process of reduction thus becomes easily noticeable. However, Heller mitigates the rigour of these formal proportions, thereby proving them to be of secondary nature, by prescribing repetitions for several variations. In variation 24 (major) he even leaves the performer free to repeat variation 23 (minor), thereby completely eradicating the formal caesura of the major/minor alternation. More important than architectonic stringency in these repetitions is the realization of the "consummate moment" in which the performer can abandon himself to rhapsodic freedom. Most performers will undoubtedly find the greatest appeal of this work (- an im-

portant criterion for an appropriate interpretation) in the growing whimsicality of its ideas. Starting at variation 11, Heller opposes the various characters in a contrasting manner within a limited space, and at variation 21, he takes up the popular improvisatorial technique of quoting more or less well-known compositions (which provokes the smile of complicity on the connoisseur's lips). The references to Beethoven's works indicated in the original music text are found in var. 21 and 22: Ninth Symphony, first and second movements; var. 28 and 29: Fifth Symphony, first movement; var. 32: Piano Trio Op. 1 No. 3, first and fourth movements. Moreover, Heller's variation cycle, as well as many of his other works also contains less direct references to the piano music of Heller's ideal musical eras, the Classic and Romantic periods. For example, var. 20 recalls the twelfth of Mendelssohn's *Variations sérieuses*; var. 26 begins in a thoroughly Beethovenesque strain, a mixture of the opening bars of the *Waldstein Sonata* Op. 53 and the Piano Concerto No. 4, and, after reaching its climax, continues in a manner clearly reminiscent of bars 48 ff. from the first movement of Schumann's piano concerto.

On the whole, one can agree with the anonymous and quite critical reviewer of Heller's Beethoven Variations in the "Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung" who found "that Stephen Heller occupies an outstanding position among the composers of all times who have written exclusively for the piano, thanks to the nobility of his feelings, the consistently masterful treatment of form and above all to the delicate handling of his instrument, an unmistakable sign of innate musical culture" (AMZ 1873, col. 167).

The present new edition closely follows the first edition published by Breitkopf & Härtel in 1872. At several points the editor corrected obviously missing or falsely placed slurs, accents, staccato dots, pedal and rest signs etc. However, the at times capricious, improvisation-like notation of the composer was maintained as much as possible. Heller loved to notate parallel passages with slight, mostly inconspicuous modifications, which owed their origin less to a "systematic" intent than to an abundance of interpretative imagination. The editor has consciously resisted the temptation to consider these "irregularities" as mistakes or arbitrary alterations and to remove them in an overzealous striving for propriety. He thought it best to leave the untrammelled colourfulness of Heller's writing as is. The performer is thus open to impulses for a performance style appropriate to Heller's music, a style which the composer termed "extremely free and, in as much as a cultivated taste can allow, unfettered" (quoted in Schütz, loc. cit. p. 73).

Berlin, Spring 1985

Ulrich Mahler

33 Variationen über ein Thema von Beethoven

Stephen Heller op. 130
herausgegeben von Ulrich Mahler

THEMA
von
Beethoven

Allegretto

f

ten. 5 ten. ten.

p

VAR. I

f

Allegro

Ad. *

Ad. * *Ad.* * *Ad.* *

ff *p*

8.....

1 2 1

Ad. * *Ad.* * *Ad.* *

VAR. 2

Musical score for Variation 2, consisting of two systems. The first system includes a piano staff with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a bass staff with a *Qw.* marking. The second system includes a piano staff with a sforzando (*sf*) dynamic and a bass staff with *Qw.* and *Qw.* markings. The key signature is two flats and the time signature is 3/4.

Più vivo

VAR. 3

Musical score for Variation 3, consisting of two systems. The first system includes a piano staff with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a bass staff with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second system includes a piano staff with a sforzando (*sf*) dynamic and a bass staff with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The key signature is two flats and the time signature is 3/4.

Molto vivace

VAR. 4

Musical score for Variation 4, consisting of two systems. The first system includes a piano staff with a sforzando (*sf*) dynamic and a bass staff with a sforzando (*sf*) dynamic. The second system includes a piano staff with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a bass staff with a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. The key signature is two flats and the time signature is 3/4.

First system of musical notation. The upper staff (treble clef) contains a melodic line with dynamic markings *f* and *p*, and a *ritard.* instruction. The lower staff (bass clef) contains a bass line with a *cresc.* marking and a *p* marking.

VAR. 5

Second system of musical notation, labeled **VAR. 5**. It features a complex rhythmic pattern in the upper staff (treble clef) and a more rhythmic bass line in the lower staff (bass clef).

Third system of musical notation. The upper staff (treble clef) has a melodic line with *cresc.*, *f*, and *p* markings, and a *riten.* instruction. The lower staff (bass clef) has a bass line with *f* and *p* markings.

Lento, con espressione

VAR. 6

Fourth system of musical notation, labeled **VAR. 6**. The tempo is *Lento, con espressione*. The upper staff (treble clef) has a melodic line. The lower staff (bass clef) has a bass line with *Rit.* markings and asterisks.

Fifth system of musical notation. The upper staff (treble clef) has a melodic line. The lower staff (bass clef) has a bass line with *Rit.* markings and asterisks.

Sixth system of musical notation. The upper staff (treble clef) has a melodic line. The lower staff (bass clef) has a bass line with *Rit.* markings and asterisks.

Listesso tempo

VAR. 7

pp

First system of musical notation for Variation 7. It consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff contains a complex melodic line with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The bass staff provides a rhythmic accompaniment with chords and single notes. There are several dynamic markings, including *pp* at the beginning, and repeat signs with first and second endings indicated by asterisks and the letters 'Rw.'.

Second system of musical notation for Variation 7. It continues the melodic and rhythmic patterns from the first system. The treble staff has a flowing sixteenth-note melody, while the bass staff has a steady accompaniment. Dynamic markings and repeat signs are present throughout the system.

Third system of musical notation for Variation 7. The treble staff features a melodic line with some rests and slurs. The bass staff continues with its accompaniment. A change in dynamics is indicated by a *p* marking. The system concludes with a repeat sign and first/second endings.

Fourth system of musical notation for Variation 7. This system shows a more active treble staff with chords and sixteenth-note patterns. The bass staff remains accompanimental. Dynamic markings include *p* and *pp*. The system ends with a repeat sign and first/second endings.

Allegro con fuoco

VAR. 8

First system of musical notation for Variation 8. It consists of two staves: a treble staff and a bass staff. The treble staff has a melodic line with accents and slurs. The bass staff has a rhythmic accompaniment with chords and single notes. Dynamic markings include *f* (forte) and *pp* (pianissimo). The system concludes with a repeat sign and first/second endings.

First system of musical notation. Treble clef, bass clef. Key signature: two flats. Time signature: 3/4. Dynamics: *f*. Accents: *^*. The system contains two measures of music.

Second system of musical notation. Treble clef, bass clef. Key signature: two flats. Time signature: 3/4. Dynamics: *ff*, *p*. The system contains two measures of music. A first ending bracket is present in the second measure, with a repeat sign and a double bar line. The first ending is marked with a '2' and a '1' below it.

VAR. 9

Third system of musical notation, labeled 'VAR. 9'. Treble clef, bass clef. Key signature: two flats. Time signature: 3/4. Dynamics: *p*. The system contains two measures of music.

Fourth system of musical notation. Treble clef, bass clef. Key signature: two flats. Time signature: 3/4. Dynamics: *cresc.*. The system contains two measures of music.

Fifth system of musical notation. Treble clef, bass clef. Key signature: two flats. Time signature: 3/4. Dynamics: *ff*. The system contains two measures of music.

Listesso tempo

VAR. 10

p

cresc.

ff *riten.*

Andante

VAR. II

soave *p* *ten.* *ten.*

p *3* *Red.* * *Red.* * *Red.* *

ten.

* *Red.* * *Red.* *

riten. *smorz.* *rallent.*

* *Ad.* * *Ad.* *

VAR. 12 *Andante* *ten.* *p* *rubato*

Ad. * *Ad.* *

ten. *f* *3* *3* *3*

Ad. * *Ad.* *

p

Ad. * *Ad.* * *Ad.* *

ritard. *smorz.* *pp rallent.*

Ad. * *Ad.* * *Ad.* * *Ad.* *

Allegro scherzando

VAR. 13

Lo stesso tempo

VAR. 14

Andantino

VAR. 15

First system of musical notation. Treble clef on the upper staff, bass clef on the lower staff. The music includes eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' above it. Dynamics include *p* and *pp*. The bass line consists of chords and single notes. There are asterisks and 'Rw.' markings below the staff.

Second system of musical notation. Treble clef on the upper staff, bass clef on the lower staff. Dynamics include *pp* and *riten.*. The music features eighth notes and chords. There are asterisks and 'Rw.' markings below the staff.

Allegro con fuoco

VAR. 16

Third system of musical notation, labeled 'VAR. 16'. Treble clef on the upper staff, bass clef on the lower staff. Dynamics include *f*. The music is more rhythmic and complex. There are asterisks and 'Rw.' markings below the staff.

Fourth system of musical notation. Treble clef on the upper staff, bass clef on the lower staff. Dynamics include *ff*. The music is highly rhythmic. There are asterisks and 'Rw.' markings below the staff.

Moderato

VAR. 17

Fifth system of musical notation, labeled 'VAR. 17'. Treble clef on the upper staff, bass clef on the lower staff. Dynamics include *f* and *p*. The music is slower and more melodic. There are asterisks and 'Rw.' markings below the staff.

Sixth system of musical notation. Treble clef on the upper staff, bass clef on the lower staff. Dynamics include *pp*. The music is very soft and melodic. There are asterisks and 'Rw.' markings below the staff.

Più moderato

VAR. 18

Lento

VAR. 19.

VAR. 20

Allegro strepitoso

First system of musical notation. Treble clef on top, bass clef on bottom. The key signature has two flats. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes. A *cresc.* marking is present above the treble staff. Dynamics include *f* in the bass and *Qw.* with asterisks in both staves.

Second system of musical notation. Treble clef on top, bass clef on bottom. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes. Dynamics include *ff* in the bass and *p* in the treble. *Qw.* and asterisks are present in both staves.

VAR. 21
(Anklänge
der 9ten Sinfonie)
Nº 1

Third system of musical notation. Treble clef on top, bass clef on bottom. The tempo marking *Assai lento* is centered above the treble staff. The music features a melodic line in the treble and chords in the bass. Dynamics include *p* in the treble and *pp* in the bass. *Qw.* and asterisks are present in both staves.

Fourth system of musical notation. Treble clef on top, bass clef on bottom. The music features a melodic line in the treble and chords in the bass. Dynamics include *pp* in the treble and *p* in the bass. *Qw.* and asterisks are present in both staves.

Fifth system of musical notation. Treble clef on top, bass clef on bottom. The music features a melodic line in the treble and chords in the bass. Dynamics include *pp* in the treble and *ff* in the bass. *Qw.* and asterisks are present in both staves.

Allegro di molto

VAR. 22
Nº 2

pp p

cresc.

8.....

ff p p

Lento, maestoso

VAR. 23

mf

cresc. f 13

12 8 *f* *ten.*

VAR. 24 *p* *Lo stesso tempo*

Ad. * *Ad.* *

f *Ad.* * *Ad.* *

f *ff* *Ad.* * *Ad.* * *Ad.* *

p **Nº 23 D. C**
ad libitum

Allegro

VAR. 25

The first system of musical notation for 'VAR. 25' is in 3/4 time. It features a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The tempo is marked 'Allegro'. The first measure is marked with a dynamic of *mf*. The music consists of eighth-note patterns in both hands, with slurs and accents. The system concludes with a fermata over the final notes. Below the staff, there are markings: 'Ad.' under the first measure, an asterisk under the second measure, and 'Ad.' under the final measure.

The second system continues the piece. It maintains the eighth-note rhythmic pattern. The system ends with a fermata. Below the staff, there are markings: 'Ad.' under the first measure, an asterisk under the second measure, and 'Ad.' under the final measure.

The third system shows a change in dynamics. It begins with a fermata and a dynamic of *f*. The music continues with eighth-note patterns. The system ends with a fermata and a dynamic of *ff*. Below the staff, there are markings: 'Ad.' under the first measure, an asterisk under the second measure, and 'Ad.' under the final measure.

The fourth system concludes the piece. It begins with a dynamic of *dim.* and a fermata. The music continues with eighth-note patterns. The system ends with a fermata and a dynamic of *p*. Below the staff, there are markings: 'Ad.' under the first measure, an asterisk under the second measure, and 'Ad.' under the final measure.

Allegro con grazia

VAR. 26

pp

First system of musical notation for VAR. 26, first system. It consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) in common time. The music features a series of chords and arpeggiated figures. The dynamic marking *pp* is present.

f *p*

Second system of musical notation for VAR. 26. It continues the two-staff format. The music includes a *f* dynamic marking followed by a *p* dynamic marking. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Lo stesso tempo

VAR. 27

p ten. *ten.*

First system of musical notation for VAR. 27. It features a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with accompaniment. The dynamic marking *p* is present. The word *ten.* (tension) appears above the treble staff. There are asterisks and a *Q.w.* marking below the bass staff.

ten. *ten.* *cresc.*

Second system of musical notation for VAR. 27. It continues the two-staff format. The word *ten.* appears above the treble staff. The word *cresc.* (crescendo) appears above the bass staff. There are asterisks and a *Q.w.* marking below the bass staff.

f *dimin.* *riten.*

Third system of musical notation for VAR. 27. It continues the two-staff format. The dynamic marking *f* is present. The word *dimin.* (diminuendo) appears above the bass staff. The word *riten.* (ritardando) appears above the bass staff. There are asterisks below the bass staff.

Allegro vivace

VAR. 28
(C moll Sinfonie)
Nº 1

First system of musical notation for Var. 28. It consists of two staves (treble and bass clef). The tempo is marked 'Allegro vivace'. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The time signature is 3/4. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *pw.* (pianissimo). There are also asterisks (*) under some notes.

Second system of musical notation for Var. 28. It consists of two staves. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *p* (piano). There are also asterisks (*) under some notes.

Third system of musical notation for Var. 28. It consists of two staves. Dynamics include *ff* (fortissimo), *dim.* (diminuendo), and *p* (piano).

First system of musical notation for Var. 29. It consists of two staves. The tempo is marked 'Molto vivo'. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *p espress.* (piano espressivo). The tempo changes to 'lento' and then 'Allegro vivo'. The marking 'a Capriccio' is present.

Second system of musical notation for Var. 29. It consists of two staves. The tempo is marked 'Allegro vivace'. Dynamics include *p* (piano) and *f* (forte).

First system of a musical score. The treble clef staff contains a melody with dynamics *p*, *f*, and *p*. The bass clef staff contains a bass line with dynamics *Ad.*, ** Ad.*, *Ad.*, ** Ad.*, and ** Ad.*. The tempo marking *riten.* is placed above the treble staff.

Second system of a musical score. The treble clef staff contains a melody with dynamics *p* and *mf*. The bass clef staff contains a bass line with dynamics *p* and *mf*. The tempo marking *vivo* is placed above the treble staff.

Third system of a musical score. The treble clef staff contains a melody with dynamics *f* and *vivo*. The bass clef staff contains a bass line with dynamics *riten.* and *ritard.*. The tempo marking *poco lento* is placed above the treble staff.

Fourth system of a musical score. The treble clef staff contains a melody with dynamics *p*. The bass clef staff contains a bass line with dynamics *p*. The tempo marking *animato* is placed above the treble staff.

Fifth system of a musical score. The treble clef staff contains a melody with dynamics *p*. The bass clef staff contains a bass line with dynamics *Ad.*, ** Ad.*, ** Ad.*, and ** Ad.*. The tempo marking *rallent.* is placed above the treble staff.

Allegro impetuoso

VAR. 30

f

Ad. * *Ad.* *

piu f *rinforz.*

Ad. * *Ad.* * *Ad.* * *Ad.* *

8.....

ff *f* *p riten.* *p* *pp*

Ad. * *Ad.* *

Andante quasi Allegretto

VAR. 31

p

cantando

The first system of the musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. Both staves are in the key of C minor (two flats) and 6/8 time. The music features a complex rhythmic pattern with many beamed eighth and sixteenth notes. There are several long slurs spanning across measures, indicating a continuous melodic or harmonic line. The notation includes various accidentals and dynamic markings.

Allegro

VAR. 32
(Trio in C moll)

The second system of the musical score continues the piece. It begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic marking. The notation is dense with many beamed notes and slurs. The bass staff has a more rhythmic accompaniment, while the treble staff carries the main melodic line. The key signature remains C minor and the time signature is 6/8.

The third system of the musical score continues the complex rhythmic patterns. It features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes with frequent beaming. Slurs are used extensively to connect notes across measures. The dynamic level remains high, consistent with the *f* marking from the previous system.

The fourth system of the musical score introduces a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic marking. It features prominent triplet markings (indicated by a '3' over a group of notes) in both the treble and bass staves. The treble staff has a more active melodic line with many slurs, while the bass staff provides a steady accompaniment with triplets.

The fifth and final system of the musical score on this page features a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. It continues with triplet markings in the treble staff. The overall texture is more delicate due to the change in dynamics. The piece concludes with a final cadence in the bass staff.

Allegro non troppo

VAR. 33

The musical score for Variation 33 is written for piano in a 3/4 time signature with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo is marked 'Allegro non troppo'. The score is divided into four systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes a 'Q.w.' marking in the bass staff. The second system continues the piece with a 'Q.w.' marking in the bass staff. The third system features a crescendo (*cresc.*) leading to a forte (*f*) dynamic, with a 'Q.w.' marking in the bass staff. The fourth system returns to a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes 'Q.w.' markings in both the treble and bass staves. The score is punctuated by asterisks (*) at the end of the first, second, and fourth systems.

First system of a piano score. It consists of two staves, treble and bass. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The music features a complex, rhythmic pattern with many beamed notes and accents. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is present. A fermata is placed over the final measure of the system. The word "Ped." (pedal) is written below the first measure, and an asterisk (*) is placed below the final measure.

Second system of the piano score. It continues the complex rhythmic pattern from the first system. A dynamic marking of *f* is present. A fermata is placed over the final measure. The word "Ped." is written below the first measure, and an asterisk (*) is placed below the final measure.

Third system of the piano score. The rhythmic pattern continues. Dynamic markings of *f* are present. A fermata is placed over the final measure. The word "Ped." is written below the first and third measures, and asterisks (*) are placed below the second and fourth measures.

Fourth system of the piano score. The rhythmic pattern continues. A dynamic marking of *p* (piano) is present. A fermata is placed over the final measure. The word "Ped." is written below the first and third measures, and asterisks (*) are placed below the second and fourth measures.

First system of musical notation. Treble and bass staves. Treble staff starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a slur over a series of chords. Bass staff starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a slur over a series of chords. A piano (*p*) dynamic marking appears in the treble staff later in the system. A *rit.* (ritardando) marking is present in the bass staff. A star symbol (*) is located below the bass staff.

Second system of musical notation. Treble and bass staves. Treble staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a slur over a series of chords. Bass staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a slur over a series of chords. A forte (*f*) dynamic marking appears in the bass staff later in the system. A star symbol (*) is located at the end of the system.

Third system of musical notation. Treble and bass staves. Treble staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a slur over a series of chords. Bass staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a slur over a series of chords. A forte (*f*) dynamic marking appears in the bass staff later in the system. A *rit.* (ritardando) marking is present in the bass staff. A star symbol (*) is located at the end of the system.

Fourth system of musical notation. Treble and bass staves. Treble staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a slur over a series of chords. Bass staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a slur over a series of chords. A forte (*f*) dynamic marking appears in the bass staff later in the system. A *stringendo* marking is present in the bass staff. A *rit.* (ritardando) marking is present in the bass staff. A star symbol (*) is located at the end of the system.

Fifth system of musical notation. Treble and bass staves. Treble staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a slur over a series of chords. Bass staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a slur over a series of chords. A forte (*f*) dynamic marking appears in the bass staff later in the system. A *vivacissimo* marking is present in the treble staff. A *rit.* (ritardando) marking is present in the bass staff. A star symbol (*) is located at the end of the system.

Allegro scherzando

The musical score is written for piano and consists of five systems of staves. The first system begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 3/4 time signature. The tempo is marked "Allegro scherzando". The first system includes two staves with dynamic markings of *p* (piano) in both hands. The second system features a first ending bracket labeled "1." in the treble staff. The third system includes a second ending bracket labeled "2." in the treble staff. The fourth system contains dynamic markings of *cresc.* (crescendo), *f* (forte), and *p* (piano) in the bass staff. The fifth system concludes with a *p* (piano) marking in the bass staff. The score is characterized by rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and various chordal textures.

First system of musical notation, featuring treble and bass staves. The music consists of chords and melodic lines. A *cresc.* (crescendo) marking is present above the treble staff.

Second system of musical notation, featuring treble and bass staves. The music continues with chords and melodic lines. A *f* (forte) marking is present above the bass staff.

Third system of musical notation, featuring treble and bass staves. The music continues with chords and melodic lines. A *f* (forte) marking is present above the bass staff.

Fourth system of musical notation, featuring treble and bass staves. The music continues with chords and melodic lines. A *p* (piano) marking is present above the treble staff, and a *dolce* (dolce) marking is present above the bass staff.

Fifth system of musical notation, featuring treble and bass staves. The music continues with chords and melodic lines. A *più f* (più forte) marking is present above the bass staff.

First system of a musical score. The upper staff (treble clef) features a series of chords with some melodic movement. The lower staff (bass clef) contains a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. A dynamic marking of *ff* is present in the third measure of the lower staff.

Second system of the musical score. Both staves show a continuation of the piece with various chordal textures and rhythmic patterns. Dynamic markings of *ff* and *f* are used throughout the system.

Third system of the musical score. The texture is dense with many chords. Dynamic markings of *ff* are present in the second and third measures.

Fourth system of the musical score. It includes a first ending bracket in the upper staff. A *rit.* (ritardando) marking is placed at the beginning of the system. Dynamic markings of *ff* are present.

Fifth system of the musical score, concluding the page. It features a first ending bracket and a final cadence. Dynamic markings of *ff* are present. The system ends with a double bar line and a final chord.