

Musical Spaces and Images: *Finding a New Approach to Performing Edvard Grieg's 19 Norwegian Folk Tunes op.66*

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“It is as if the most profound harmonies lie hidden in them (folk tunes), longing for the time when they will see the light of day.” (E. Grieg)

“Musingly, like the gentle caress of a faintly remembered music” (G. Crumb)

Abstract:

Edvard Grieg's rarely played 19 Norwegian Folk Tunes op.66 is one of his harmonically most original and adventurous works, anticipating 20th Century developments. There are clear indications that Grieg thought of this collection as a cycle. How can a pianist find a new and fresh artistic approach to this work and make it interesting and meaningful as a whole?

Inspired by the composer George Crumb's haunting musical imagery and treatment of the piano, this project takes a novel approach to performing Grieg's folk tunes. It investigates how the composer's evocative harmonizations can be performed with the help of metaphors, imagery and the idea of creating “musical spaces” with different shades of closeness and distance. The project experiments with an improvisatory attitude to expressive means (such as nuanced sound production, pedalling and tempo-flexibility) as a main methodological approach. The project's main challenge became to re-establish this spontaneous, open frame of mind in live performances where the body, fingers and artistic approach can “find” this sensitive approach and re-discover the intimacy of many of the tunes. The opening of Crumb's *Dream Images* from *Makrokosmos Vol.1* became a doorway to Grieg's opus where tunes could appear as an extension of the mood and atmosphere of Crumb's “faintly remembered music”. The goal of this work is to create an overall artistic concept that goes deeper into each tune's nature (as in the cow calls and lullabies), performing them within a sense of timelessness and nostalgia in the open acoustic of nature.

The project is a part of the artistic research project “*The Opener – Sharing the Performer's Process*” 2024-5, at the Grieg Academy, University of Bergen. The project combines a text and video. The text should be read first as preparation for the video of the practical presentation.

Background

The first time I performed pieces from Edvard Grieg's op.66 was in 1986 as a part of my final Master recital at Eastman School of Music in the US.¹ It was a new discovery, since I had not heard these pieces performed in my home country before nor heard any recording. I had by coincidence brought the Edition Peters score (an old score that I had inherited from a family member) with me to the US thinking it could be something to investigate during my studies. I wanted to play some Norwegian music on my final recital and Grieg was a natural choice. It was also an opportunity to present a seldom performed opus by Grieg. I chose a set of 10 tunes (of 19) as a representative selection² showing the range of musical expressions in this work. Members of the audience to whom I spoke afterwards thought the Grieg pieces were a highlight of the program, something which encouraged me to want to explore this collection further and make them more known.

After returning to Norway, I waited many years before returning to these pieces. I eventually considered playing the whole collection of 19 folk tunes as a cycle but had great doubts as to whether it would work as a whole or was at all intended to be played as a set. I started to investigate more about the background of Op.66.

It was composed in 1896 and published in 1897, and most of the tunes – except Gjendine's lullaby³ - were handed down to Grieg by his friend Frantz Beyer who had collected most of them on his trip to Jotunheimen in the summer of 1896. It can be interesting to read Grieg's own words in his letters:

*"Life is just as strange as folk songs: one doesn't know whether they were conceived in major or minor... I spent the afternoon in my room where I harmonized the many folk melodies which Frantz had sent me... It was truly festive... Some of them are incredibly beautiful. In any case I have set some hair-raising chord combinations on paper. But by way of excuse, let me say that they weren't created at the piano but in my head. When one has the Vøring Falls nearby, one feels more independent and is more daring than down in the valley".*⁴

*"How magnificent these heroic ballads are! It is as if the most profound harmonies lie hidden in them, longing for the time when they will see the light of day. In my forthcoming collection of folk songs (op.66) there are also a few that must be classed as heroic ballads... They were transcribed during the past two years as they were sung by milkmaids and cattlemen in the Jotunheimen mountains. They are characterized by the deepest melancholy, interrupted now and then by passing ray of light".*⁵

Grieg shows a lot of enthusiasm working on these arrangements and finished most of the harmonizations within his stay at Fossli Hotel by the Vøring Falls (Vøringsfossen). Since the melodies were initially handed down to the composer, the tunes were unlikely planned as a

¹ The other pieces were Beethoven's Sonata op.7, Webern's Variations op.27 and Martinu's Sonata (1954). It was a program I had great enthusiasm for, showing my range of musical interests at the time.

² The choice of tunes was nos.1, 2, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19.

³ Grieg had notated this tune from Gjendine Slålien herself on one of his visits to Jotunheimen.

⁴ letter to J. Röntgen, August 1896

⁵ letter to Agathe Backer Grøndahl, May 1897

cycle from the start. The vision of a specific order must have evolved gradually while working with the arrangements.

At this point, late in his career, Grieg had developed a highly personal and comprehensive harmonic vocabulary. He uses all his resources for harmonic invention - a mixture of diatonic simplicity, modal coloring with advanced augmented and chromatic chord combinations - all in the service of finding the potential for transforming the tunes into his own artistic vision. The harmonic variety and imagination in op.66 is extraordinary; there is nothing like this opus in Grieg's production or within the romantic piano literature. Grieg was breaking new ground, pointing to future composers such as Debussy, Ravel and Bartók.⁶

It seems as if op.66 still suffers from being fully understood for its unique contribution to the piano repertoire – both in Grieg's time and to our present day. It doesn't seem to fit into Grieg's popular image of works like the lyric pieces or with other more known romantic cycles of other composers. Grieg biographers Finn Benestad and Dag Schelderup Ebbe also show their reservations in the comment "*Grieg probably didn't intend to make this work for the concert hall*". Daniel Grimely comments on this in his book *Grieg: Music, Landscape and Norwegian identity*:

"(Benestad's and Schelderup Ebbes's comment seems) at first curious given the music's obvious harmonic richness and "picturesque" folk colouring. But their assessment perhaps points to a sense in which the structural rigor of Grieg's set, and the lack of contextualization or softening in its presentation, must have seemed to stretch the genre of the Romantic folk miniature to breaking point, a problem even more severe for the Slåtter..... In other words, this is a raw form of musical expression, out of scale within a nineteenth-century genre we are likely to be rather sniffy about nowadays. In that sense, among others, op.66 challenges one of the principal critical streams in Grieg's historical reception."

Did Grieg intend his op.66 to be played as a cycle?

After having studied the score and playing the pieces over many years, it gradually became clear that the tunes were placed in a particular order so that it could become a coherent collection of pieces – thus making the individual tunes – some of which are very short indeed – become part of something greater. Here are some observations to prove this point (see Ex.1):

- Four of the pieces have *attacca* written after them and thus eight tunes are connected in pairs.
- The order is arranged so that *key relationships* between the tunes are sometimes tonally logical (dominant-tonic relations): no.1 in D major leads to G minor in no.2., final chord D major in no.3 leads to G minor in no.4, final chord G major in no.4 leads to C minor in no.5, etc. (see Ex.1)

⁶ Bartók's cycle of 15 Peasant tunes, from 1914-18, follows up the idea in op.66 of collecting and arranging folk music into a coherent cycle, with sections binding tunes together – and we also find connections to Grieg's pianistic treatment of folk tunes as well. In Norway, the composer Geirr Tveitt (1908-1981) followed up Grieg's harmonic innovations with his own modal arrangements of folk tunes from the Hardanger area.

- Tunes are very often connected by *continuing in the same register*, often with the same or neighboring pitches. This, to create the possibility of seamless transitions between the tunes. (nos.1-2, 2-3, 3-4, 4-5, 5-6, 8-9, 12-13, 13-14, 17-18, 18-19). When a transition breaks with this effect, it becomes a dramatic effect, such as between nos.6 and 7 where there is a strange harmonic jump from final, surprising B-major chord in the treble in no.6 and sudden D minor melody in octaves in the bass of no.7.
- The longer, more substantial arrangements of tunes (nos. 5, 14 and 18) are placed as *strategic points*, creating a feeling of structural stations between shorter tunes. These longer arrangements (tune repeated two or three times) become gradually more expanded in length, so that no.14 is longer than no.5 and no.18 longer than no.14 (see Ex.1)
- By *combining two folk tunes* in nos. 6 (cow-call and lullaby), 15 (2 lullabies) and 17 (2 lullabies), all in ABA form, the tunes are joined into larger entities in the overall structure, thus varying the forms of presentations (see Ex.1).
- The 5 tunes in major start first with no.1 and then occur more frequently from no.10 – this makes a necessary *contrast* to the early dominating “minor-feeling” of 2-9 and adds to greater harmonic variety in the second half and towards the end of the set (see Ex.1).
- The transition between Nos. 18 and 19 becomes a *cumulative high point* of the cycle by juxtaposing dramatically the longest, most elaborate and climatic arrangement in D major with the most simple and haunting lullaby in G minor (see Ex. 5 and 6)

Example 1: Structural overview of Grieg’s 19 Norwegian Folk Tunes op.66

1. Cow-Call (Kulokk)		<u>D major</u>
2. It is the Greatest Foolishness (Det er den største dårlighet)		g minor
3. A King Ruled in the East (En konge hersket i Østerland)		d minor
4. The Siri Dale Song (Siri Dale-visen) <i>attacca</i>		g minor
5. It Was in My Youth (Det var i min ungdom)		c minor (long)

6. Cow-Call and Lullaby (Lokk og bådnlát)	(ABA)	a minor (new key area)
7. Lullaby (Bådnlát) <i>attacca</i>		d minor
8. Cow-Call (Lokk)		d minor
9. Small Was the Lad (Liten var guten) <i>attacca</i>		a minor
10. Tomorrow You Shall Marry Her (Morgon skal du få gifte deg)		<u>A major</u>

11. There Stood Two Girls (Der stander to piker)		d minor
12. Ranveig <i>attacca</i>		a minor
13. A Little Grey Man (En liten grå mann)		g minor
14. In Ola Valley, in Ola Lake (I Ola-dalom, i Ola-tjønn)		<u>A major</u> (longer)

15. Lullaby (Bådnåt)	(ABA)	g-moll
16. Little Astrid (Ho vesle Astrid vår)		<u>A major</u>
17. Lullaby (Bådnåt)	(ABA)	g minor
18. I Wander Deep in Thought (Jeg går i tusen tanker)		<u>D major</u> (longest)
19. Gjendine's Lullaby (Gjendines bådnåt)		g minor

Challenges and questions for the performer in Grieg's arrangements in op.66

Even though Grieg had made efforts (as mentioned above) to bring the tunes together, aspects of the musical material, instrumental setting and score indications gave still some doubts as to making the tunes artistically interesting as a set. Here are some of the challenges and questions I had in the beginning of my process:

- Many of the arrangements are in a traditional four-part setting in the middle register of the piano (with the melody in the soprano part). This can be perceived as an instrumental limitation. It can also restrict the pianistic freedom of the hands and fingers (especially in the melody part) when bound to the keyboard in a choral, psalm-like style of playing. *Could the instrumental setting be a limitation for the pianist's creative possibilities, or can the performer counter-balance the settings through instrumental coloring and altering the distribution of notes between the hands to create greater freedom?*
- Harmonically, many of the arrangements follow a similar descending bass line with either a diatonic or chromatic progression of chords. *Could this make the arrangements feel too similar when played as a set or can the performer influence this concern through varying the choice of expressive means?*
- Grieg obviously thought it important to keep the original keys and registers of the tunes that Beyer notated from his sources – although Grieg does move the tunes to other registers sometimes for variation. By mostly limited himself to using the original keys when putting together the cycle, Grieg created a challenge of making contrast – since there is basically only 3 main key areas: 6 of the tunes are in G minor, 6 in D minor or major, and 6 in A minor or major – leaving one in C minor. At the same time, joint key areas help to bind many of the short tunes together to larger units, giving a sense of prolonging an atmosphere and creating continuity. *How can the performer balance the sense of variety/contrast and coherence?*
- Even though the tunes are folk-like and simple, the arrangements often have a dramatic build-up and traditional romantic swell from *p* to *f* and back to *p*. This can give the feeling of a repetitive use of extreme dynamics in shorter tunes when

played as a set (as in no.3). *How can the performer balance the choice of dynamics in an artistically sensitive and meaningful way when performing the tunes as a cycle?*

Re-discovering through experimentation

Experiencing these questions, I looked for ways of finding an artistic attitude and approach that could be more varied and interesting by experimenting with expressive means at the piano. I am usually very faithful to the indications in the score but started to feel that the interpretive indications and the somewhat rigid appearance of the score did not help me to go deeper into the music.

After having learned all the tunes by memory, I played the pieces on-and-off for myself over many years and gradually came to free myself from the score regarding its layout and interpretive indications: I became freer with dynamics and experimented with a larger range of softer sounds, colorings of chords, free and flexible phrasing, different tempos, varied voicings and unorthodox pedalling – all with a feeling of improvising the tunes spontaneously in the moment whenever I sat down at the piano. Moments began to occur more and more often when I was drawn into the music and lost myself completely in the mood and atmosphere that seemed to become available at the tip of my fingers. These moments were like mediative occasions that overwhelmed me artistically. The earlier reservations listed above didn't seem important anymore and I started to experience an artistic potential that I had not seen before in this music.

Through this experimentation, there came a realization that could be the main direction of a new artistic approach: to create an extremely sensitive sound world where the colorful harmonies and resonances (with the help of sensitive touches and considerable use of the sustain pedal) are constantly varied and made interesting to listen to throughout. *It was the ever-changing kaleidoscopic harmonies, evoking a seductive sound atmosphere that had become the main artistic focus. It became a major challenge to re-create this frame of mind every time I sat down at the piano. My body, fingers and artistic consciousness wanted to "find" this sensitive approach to the instrument and re-discover, once again, the magic of the tunes in the present moment.*

I realized that I had started playing Grieg in a more 20th century-inspired sound world where "the quality of sound takes precedence over pitch."⁷ In this "new" sound world, the feeling of closeness and distance had become important to me when experimenting with the music. The French expression "*lointain*" (or *lontano* in Italian) – meaning distant, remote, far-off – is sometimes used (in combination with pianissimo dynamic) by Debussy as a verbal indication to the pianist to create a feeling of something being heard from a far-away space.⁸ There is also a *time distance* between us today and Grieg's opus and between Grieg and the folk tunes: There is a sense of old tunes that have been sung by many through generations in daily life in

⁷ The citation is taken from the CD booklet of the concept album HIKA (2001) with works for violin and piano. The CD repertoire goes backward in time showing the composers that influenced each other in reverse order: Crumb – Takemitsu – Messiaen – Debussy – Grieg. The booklet notes continue: "This is not to say that the determination of pitch lacks importance in these compositions, but only that other aspects of the music, such as timbre and general mood, take precedence". This could be a credo for many 20th century composers.

⁸ Examples of the use of "*lointain*" in Preludes: Vol.I – nos.4 and 9, Vol..II – nos. 2, 9 and 12.

rural settings in nature. A feeling of *nostalgia* is evident many of the tunes, recalling *past experiences and feelings*.⁹ A sense of *landscape* surrounds many of the tunes – having been sung in the seemingly *timeless, infinite* and *open acoustic* of nature; in particular, the cow calls can evoke the acoustic of echoes in the mountains by sustaining the chords in the pedal as in tunes nos. 1 and 8 (see Ex. 3 and 4).¹⁰ There is a feeling of *introversion* and *intimacy* in most of the softly sung tunes in minor (but also nos. 14 and 18 in major). The lullabies and cow-calls are especially intimate: lullabies have been sung hushed from mother to child and cow-calls are mostly sung in solitude in nature with the animal herd.

As mentioned above, we can today experience a kind of “double distance” – the tunes themselves seem even further away than in Grieg’s time. We also listen with different ears: we have experienced further harmonic developments after Grieg, from Debussy to our present time. But herein lay also a paradox: distance can become closeness if the performer plays the intimate tunes as if from a remote space: hushed dynamics can give the audience the possibility to listen more deeply and be drawn into the fragility and inner world of some of the tunes.

In this sense, I experience that the folk tunes go in and out of different *musical spaces*: Each folk tune can be heard as appearing in a certain sound space or changing between spaces and thus differ as to how near and distant they are to us in both physical and psychological ways: it is as if they are passing through time in form of distinct or vague images appearing from different places. Sometimes a tune or part of a tune can seem very far away, being hardly audible and saturated in atmospheric harmonies - sometimes the tune seems to come a little nearer – or appear to be here and now, as if right in front of us. Playing with this idea and inviting the listener into interchanging musical spaces thus became an important overall idea and artistic approach guiding the choice of expressive means.

The fact that these melodies are set for the piano and not sung – with a text - adds to a certain *abstraction of emotions*: the piano becomes an instrument of reflection and contemplation over past feelings and possible contexts, and the performer and listener can feel a sense of emotional participation through Grieg’s evocative harmonies, revealed in his arrangements. This is how I understand Grieg’s words from the quote above: “*It is as if the most profound harmonies lie hidden in them, longing for the time when they will see the light of day*”. The harmonic richness appears descriptive of hidden meanings rather than reflecting any personal pathos or sentimentality.

Inspiration from George Crumb’s music

I gradually became aware that these new artistic attitudes were pointing towards a former experience of performing the music of the American composer George Crumb (1929-2022). I

⁹ Many of the texts of the tunes are about some kind of remembrance or memory from earlier in life – it can be the loss of a loved one, or about the first love or looking back at an unobtainable love in younger years.

¹⁰ See Røttingen (2006) for metaphorical reflections on Geirr Tveitts *Sonata no. 29*, where the middle movement has an echo-effect of silently depressing the lower register on the piano so that they resonate freely when activated by the right hand’s theme in staccato. The movements so-called etheric theme is a citation of Grieg’s Lyric piece *Evening in the Mountains*, where this echo-effect could be applied effectively in the opening presentation of the theme in the right hand only.

performed his music in the late 1980s and 90s.¹¹ Building on Debussy's sound world and imagery, his music had a deep impact on my artistic outlook ever since and many of the musical effects and evocative emotions in his music were unconsciously appearing in the experimentations with Grieg's op.66. Crumb's score-layout is very detailed and communicative and visually inviting for the performer.¹² Here are some of the musical elements and instrumental effects found in Crumb's music that I feel have inspired my artistic concept in Grieg's op.66:

- Many of Crumb's works have unexpected citations of earlier music of e.g. Chopin, Beethoven and Bach as part of his magical sound world. This causes a special effect of well-known classical music from our musical past unexpectedly appearing from blurred, sustained pedal resonances on the piano. The musical and emotional effect is *haunting*. It is as if the old music appears out of misty surroundings and from a distant, far-away space such as in no.11 *Dream Images* from *Makrokosmos vol. I for piano* where the score's verbal description to the performer writes "*Musingly, like the gentle caress of a faintly remembered music*".¹³ These feelings is what I am trying to simulate as a general atmosphere already from op.66 no.1, Cow-call as if Crumb's citation of Chopin's Fantasy-Impromptu could have been replaced by one of Grieg's haunting folk tunes (see Ex.2).
- Crumb's music goes in and out of musical spaces with distinct musical characters (as in *Makrokosmos*). He uses descriptive imagery in the titles and verbal indications that can give vivid visual and emotional associations affecting the imagination of the performer and listener.
- Crumb uses an extreme range of dynamic indications from *ppppp* to *ffff*. These nuances where not common to notate in Grieg's time.¹⁴ This can inspire to use a greater range of gentle dynamics within Grieg's dynamics from *mf* to *ppp* (see Ex.2)
- A general characteristic in Crumb's piano music is the *blurred pedalling* in many of the pieces (also the echo-effect of holding bass notes in the middle pedal – see footnote 11), making the whole piano resonate and "vibrate". This creates a particular kind of spatial effect as if all notes are dropped stones in water, creating circular waves, mixing together different harmonies. It can also contribute to a kind of sustained, everlasting sound cluster that appears, is sustained and

¹¹ During studies in the US in 1984-6, I discovered the music of George Crumb through listening to recordings of my piano teacher David Burge and the voice teacher Jan de Gaetani – both pioneer performers of Crumb's music in the 1960s and 70s. Crumb's music immediately captivated me and had a great influence on my musical development. After returning to Norway in 1986, I started performing his main cycles for piano, *Makrokosmos I-IV* and later conducted his vocal ensemble works, *Songs, Drones and Refrains of Death* and *Ancient Voices of Children*. In 1992 Crumb was invited to the Nordlyd Festival in Bergen where many of his works were performed by students and staff at the Bergen Music Conservatory (now Grieg Academy).

¹² The limitations Grieg had of notating his music in the conventions of the 19th century (especially an innovative work like op.66), makes one wonder what he would have done if he had the possibility of notating less rigidly and more freely, e.g. as in some of Debussy's preludes.

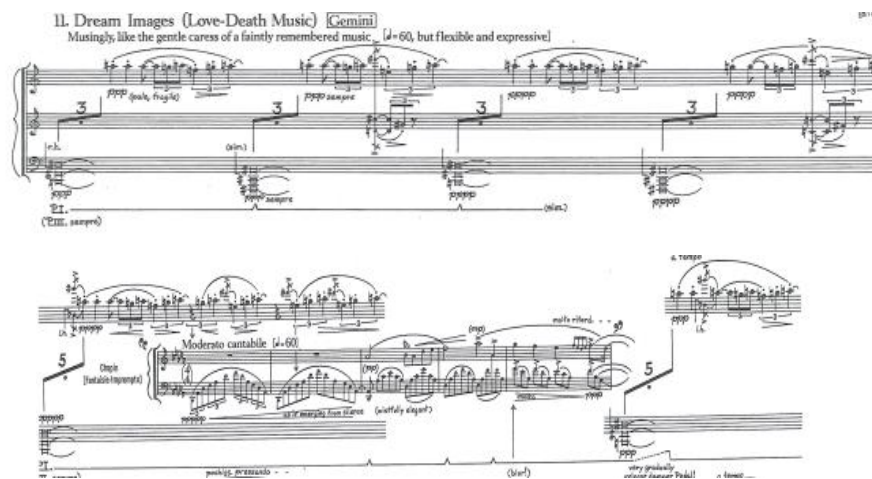
¹³ This movement opens with sonorous triads in tenths in the bass (B major and F# major). This is a striking similarity to the opening of op.66's first cow-call with a tenth in the same register in D major.

¹⁴ Grieg's contemporary Tchaikovsky uses up to five and six *p*'s in the clarinet and bassoon parts before the development section in the *Pathétique Symphony's* first movement!

eventually disappears in the distance. Only the memory of the sound is left (see Ex.2)

- In these continuous pedal-resonances, there can be a sense of timelessness, where rhythm and pulse has disappeared, and resonating “rests” are written in as “time bubbles” in seconds. The performer must wait (and listen to the resonance in pedal) before going on. These “reflective commas” in the music are like traditional fermatas but are often longer and more controlled in length by the composer. But they also must be felt organically.¹⁵ Grieg uses some fermatas on chords and rests. It could be possible to use this effect more extensively in op.66. (see Ex.2)

Example 2: George Crumb: Makrokosmos vol. I for amplified piano (11th movement, opening)



Example 3: op.66 no.1 Cow-call (opening, b.1-5)



Example 4: op.66 no.8 Cow-call (opening, b.1-5)



¹⁵ Crumb once told me that these seconds are not dogmatic and must be decided in the context of a performance according to the acoustic and musical feeling.

Example 5: op.66 no.14 (opening, b.1-5)



Artistic considerations and concept

As follows, I sum up my general artistic concept and approaches to Grieg's op.66:

- General focus on creating a *sound world* which tries to “*soften*” the instrumental setting and focus more on extensive *varied coloring* within the given material and lay-out.
- Wider range of nuanced dynamics in the voicing within *mf-mp-p-pp-ppp*. Lower dynamics (*f-ff-fff*) are to be played in a more *rounded and sonorous* (not brutal!) in this folk music setting. The quality of sound should show harmonic-aesthetic quality rather than be taken literally as in no.18, where the last version of the tune in *f* and *ff* can e.g. imitate a string orchestra in sound quality so as to not become pompous or over-dimensioned.
- Important to find and emphasize *magical harmonic and atmospheric moments* with all expressive means possible (touch, voicing, taking time, pedalling). Special atmospheric high points of timeless spaces are cow-calls nos. 1¹⁶ and 8¹⁷, and bell-like no.14¹⁸ and haunting harmonic moments in nos.17, 18¹⁹, and 19²⁰. (see Ex.3-7)

¹⁶ This piece opens with a D-major chord in the bass and cow-call (B-A, F#-A) in the treble, resonating in pedal, clearly inviting us to a mountain landscape. Frants Beyer has written in his comments that this tune was sung to him half spoken, and caringly/lovingly to the cow called Rosko: Rosko – Rosko – come now. The tune is harmonized with diatonic chords on pedal point D. There is a sense of improvisatory singing freely in nature - without a sense of pulse or bar lines. After the opening two bars in pedal (notated by Grieg), it is possible to keep the pedal from bar 3 and let everything resonate until harmonic change to B-major. This can work if the tempo is slower, and dynamics are extremely soft. The *crescendo* (bars 12-14) only needs to be very slight and everything is like in a distant dream-world and gradually waking up to the real world in the following tunes (see Ex 3).

¹⁷ This cow-call can be seen as the most striking musical moment in the cycle. It builds on the sustained D in the bass kept by pedal in no.7. The call is like a cry in space – time stands still until it starts moving almost unnoticeably in colorful Dorian mode harmonization followed by a chromatic descent while the call repeats the E and D (bars 5-13). When the opening returns in a lower register it is as if we have moved from far distance to something closer and grounded – as if the cow call now is here and now in our own space – the last bars (in *pp*) recall the far-away feeling one more (see Ex.4).

¹⁸ This setting recalls the story of bells sounding after a mother had lost her child in the mountain lake - the mother, Eli, hoping that the bells sounding will break the power of the underworld and bring her boy back. But she never found her boy again. The tune is saturated in bell-like accompaniment. This is, like no.5, one of the longer pieces and dissolves as if it ascends to heaven in high register tremolos after a final, improvisatory statement of the tune as part of wide range arpeggios between the hands (see Ex.5).

¹⁹ No.18 is the longest and most elaborate of all the tunes. It is a high point in the cycle, reaching a feeling of homecoming in a heartfelt psalm-like D-major setting with *Adagio religioso* as main tempo indication. The theme is first presented in four-part chords in a simple, direct way, then transformed on to a cello-like version in the tenor voice which seems to express the innermost emotions of the tune. Finally, the tune is gloriously stated in massive chords with octave appoggiaturas in the bass, a reminiscence of the Piano Concerto's slow movement. After a tremendous climax, the tune also now climbs to the upper register and dissolves peacefully. This arrangement is a good example of a tune going through different musical spaces (see Ex.6).

²⁰ This extraordinary lullaby could not be placed any other place than in the end. The simplicity of the tune – also emphasized by the tempo indication *Allegretto semplice* – is hauntingly expressive. After all we have been through, this lullaby's static dynamics and expression does not create any musical motion anymore - it seems

- Use varied and *quasi-improvisatory phrasing* to avoid metric rigidity in the tunes that naturally seem open to this treatment (cow-calls, lullabies, tunes in minor-keys, no.18, etc.) adding rubato in the form of subtle use of local ritardando, accelerando and fermatas. The more dance-like metric tunes (for example nos.10 and 16) will then become even more rhythmically contrasting.
- Tempos are chosen so that interesting harmonic details become audible. A slower tempo can let dissonances (for example 2nd and 3rd beat in bar 1 of no.11) or expressive suspensions in inner voices (for example tenor voice in opening of no.2) resonate, even though difficult to bring out. Hearing such details demand sensitive listening of both performer and audience.
- Pedalling: *una corda* pedal should be used as much as needed to create nuances in lower dynamics (also depending on the piano's voicing and ability to respond to a soft touch of the fingers). Sustain pedal should be used extensively in a nuanced way as an important source of instrumental coloring. Pedal can change between clarity of harmony, overlapping between chords (to create extreme legato – quasi strings) and mixing chords in echo-effect (quasi Crumb) as in nos.1 and 8.

Example 6: op.66 no.18 (ending, bars 57-64)



Example 7: op.66 no.19 (opening, b. 1-4)



suspended in time before it simply goes to rest, but in a somewhat uneasy peacefulness. It's as if this lullaby takes the essence of all the other lullabies and tunes in minor and concentrates the expression into fewer notes within a fifth G-D and the lower leading tone F-sharp – not unlike the theme in Grieg's *Ballade op.24*. (see Ex.7)

Sources

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