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Six Major Women Pianists:
Clara Schumann, Teresa Carreño, Myra Hess, Clara Haskil,
Alicia de Larrocha, and Martha Argerich

by

HunJu Sohn

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

Doctor of Musical Arts

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ABSTRACT

Six Major Women Pianists:
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The six artists presented in this paper hold important places in the world of the performing arts. Their outstanding talent and perseverance have brought them world recognition.

Clara Schumann, the pioneer of women pianists, performed throughout her life, receiving an enthusiastic reception by the public. Living in an era when women performers were scarce, Clara Schumann was accepted on an equal basis to any male artist. Teresa Carreño, known for her extremely passionate and bravura playing especially in her youth, captivated her audiences wherever she went. Despite a tumultuous personal life, Carreño enjoyed tremendous success in her own life time. Myra Hess led a blossoming career in England and on the Continent before having a grand success in the United States. She led the National Gallery Concerts during World War II, which brought about much appreciation from her countrymen. Clara Haskil's life was filled with ill health and World War II made it difficult for her to gain recognition; she only launched a career in
her 50s. By then, she performed with the best of orchestras and conductors, enjoying the success due her much earlier in her life.

Alicia de Larrocha, known as the Queen of Spanish Music, has performed widely since the late 1960s. She has been invited to perform much of Mozart's output besides the Spanish repertoire. Despite her success on stage, she has had to battle her personal feelings regarding the balance between a career and family. Martha Argerich's thundering excitement and devilish technical capabilities keep her at the height of her profession, yet she has had ambiguous feelings toward her career. She limits her appearances, yet her powerful magnetism overwhelms the audience and keeps them asking for more.

By many standards, women pianists' careers have evolved to a high level of social acceptance. However, today, as in the nineteenth century, many obstacles remain, and women in pursuit of a concert career are faced with the same competing—and often irreconcilable—challenges. These six pianists have risen above the challenges facing them as women artists and their names have been firmly planted in the history of piano performance.
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INTRODUCTION

Today the world may take for granted the existence of women performers. In the nineteenth century, however, when public concerts were established and professional artists began to give concerts, women participated in music-making mostly as amateurs. As education was offered to women and their talent was nurtured, professional opportunities were given to them as well. Foremost on the list of women pianists is Clara Schumann, who exceeded the boundaries of a "woman pianist" to become "a pianist"—a distinction that remains important. As time went on, women gained greater acceptance and opportunities; today they are accepted as full participants in the field of performing arts.

This paper discusses the lives and the careers of six women pianists: Clara Schumann, Teresa Carreño, Myra Hess, Clara Haskil, Alicia de Larrocha and Martha Argerich. They represent three different periods in the history of piano performance: the mid-nineteenth to early-twentieth century, the first half of the twentieth-century, and the present day. Other writers would perhaps have chosen quite different pianists altogether, and this suggests that there is a wide pool of great women pianists. These particular artists have been chosen for their importance, during and after their lifetime. They have left a mark on the history of piano performance as well as the history of music. Through studying their lives, however selectively, one hopes to have a glimpse into the daily lives of these artists and experience their joys and worries, witnessing their triumphs as well as their setbacks. At the same time, one may be able to draw a general
conclusion concerning the trend of women pianists and the evolution of their careers.

When speaking of women pianists, one cannot ignore the implications and questions surrounding women in general. Did the artists from the nineteenth century and the turn of the twentieth century have the same concerns and choices as today’s artists? How were their careers achieved? What were their accomplishments and contributions? Have the perception and reception of women pianists changed or remained the same over the centuries? Undoubtedly, society has changed remarkably since the nineteenth century. Yet, there are still relatively few women concert pianists, despite the hundreds of women majoring in performing arts at universities and conservatories. Perhaps not all the questions arising from this disparity can be fully answered. Nonetheless, this study of the lives of these six women pianists will result in certain conclusions. These pianists sustained a career in a highly competitive world dominated by males and each followed her own road to achieving fame.

The professional woman artist today is no longer hindered by prejudices set by society. She has access to a performing career and is valued as well as criticized on her merit and work alone. However, the pioneering women performers faced rigid traditions and attitudes; centuries of social practices resulted in different treatment from that of male musicians. For example, the idea that a woman could not and should not compose was so deeply embedded in Clara Schumann that not only was she doubtful of her capabilities as a composer, but she even stated that
women should not compose. Fortunately, this mentality did not affect the performing arts as much and a startling number of women artists from this period led bright, although short, careers in their young adulthood.

Public concerts began growing in popularity in the late-eighteenth century when performing halls were built and entertainment became more accessible to the general public. Up to this point, royal courts engaged artists who were often composers themselves; their livelihood depended upon obtaining such posts as court composer or as tutor to families of affluence. Virtuoso pianists were often well-known composers; Mozart and Beethoven both wrote music that they performed in public. Concerts were important venues for the composers to perform their works and for the public to familiarize themselves with the works of the masters.

As opera made its way into the public domain, so did other aspects of the performing arts, and by the early-nineteenth century, concerts became firmly established among the public. At the same time, music became an important part of the everyday life of the middle class. In earlier times, music lessons had held an important place among the aristocracy and the courts. In the nineteenth century, the well-to-do commoners also joined in the effort to educate their young in the fine arts. Parents secured music lessons for their children, particularly their daughters. Not only did the female family members provide entertainment, but music-making became an asset in marriage prospects. Music lessons, specifically that of the piano or voice, became an important part of a lady’s education and, in turn,

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2Ibid., 98.
well-known musicians, along with less well-known, made a living by tutoring these various students.

As a result of such private lessons, many ladies became thoroughly engrossed in music and some became highly accomplished performers. Some of the talented went on to further their careers, others married and stopped playing, while others went on to help develop other artists, forming circles of music lovers who supported deserving artists. Nineteenth-century society was guided by the writings of philosophers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The message was clear; women's place was to complement the world of men. There did exist quite a few exceptional women performers and composers who led a career, for example Anna de Belleville, Léopoldine Blahetka, and Marie Pleyel. However, even many of these artists left their career once they married. This may explain why there were many child prodigies. If a talent was discovered, the youth was put on stage to maximize her potential. Inevitably, these young performers would grow up, marry and stop performing. According to David Dubal, pianist and author, Leschetizky once talked of accepting no more women students since very often they gave up their career after marriage.\(^3\) Whether or not this happens to be true, it can be imagined that family and a performing career complicated lives.

In spite of these complications, Clara Schumann led a concert career while having a family. She was accepted by the public and professionals alike as not only a woman pianist but also a highly qualified musician; she led the life of a concert pianist admist the male-dominated profession.

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Clara Schumann brought about a change in recital programming that closely resembles today's format; she was also instrumental in bringing the less-familiar works of Beethoven, Schumann and later Brahms to the public. She was considered an equal among musicians, a feat especially admired for her time. In another part of the world, a personality altogether different yet just as remarkable stirred much interest. Carreño led a world-wide career in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, but today she is only known mostly to the professionals. Thanks to recent interest, there has been more in-depth information available on her career. She was a passionate and brilliant pianist, who led a flourishing career while juggling a family as well as a turbulent personal life.

During the first half of the twentieth century, while engaged in the Second World War, the British public witnessed the heroic efforts of a great pianist, Myra Hess. She saw the needs of a nation and met them with all of her energy and talent. Hess helped run the National Gallery Concerts during the war, providing music and comfort for her fellow countrymen in a time of despair and darkness. For this, and for her absolute commitment to the arts, she has been honored and remembered by the world today. Clara Haskil, the Romanian pianist, led a quiet, if not timid, existence yet her life was full of momentous efforts and profound solitude. Hess and Haskil had different personalities to be sure, but the two artists had one goal--to share their music with the world. Professional musicians believed in Haskil's extraordinary talent, yet the Second World War, her poor health, and ill-timing led to a tragic life. She was "discovered" late in her life, with only 10 years left to show the world her talent.
There have been many excellent women pianists in recent years, but none surpass the success of Alicia de Larrocha and Martha Argerich. The two artists carry a "super-star" status: de Larrocha, considered by critics as the "Queen" of Spanish music and Argerich, one of the most sought-after performers today. De Larrocha has given her life to music and her dedication can be heard in multitudes of recordings. Acknowledging the difficulties facing a woman artist, de Larrocha has persevered and delivered music for decades, through personal grievances and triumphs. Although de Larrocha may be nearing retirement, one hopes that Argerich will remain for many years to come, despite her continuing battle with cancer. Here is one pianist who with her tremendous technical speed and interpretive passion perhaps exudes even more fiery character than Carreño. Yet behind this façade lies a highly intelligent woman seeking to express her entire persona in the limited concerts she has chosen to give.

Much of the research in this paper has been based on biographies. For the contemporary artists, periodicals, reviews, and interviews served as sources. In some cases, due to the lack of systematic scholarship focused on these performers, there are only romanticized biographies. Clara Schumann's life, thanks to her important status as a pioneer of woman pianist-composer, has been thoroughly researched. The biography by Nancy Reich serves as a valuable tool. However, the lives of Carreño and Hess, as well as Haskil, have been romanticized by their biographers. It is at times difficult to discern the difference between fact and fantasy in these accounts. Much supplementary material such as periodicals, reviews and even television documentaries have been used to support the biographies. The very fact that more recent studies exist on artists, such as Carreño for
instance, point to their importance. The paper also includes first-hand information from people who at one time or another had close contact with the artists, such as Stephen Kovacevich and Michel Rossier. Some information comes directly from my own experience as a pianist.

The goal of this paper is to delve into the personal and professional lives of these important figures and to draw comparisons among them. Although much has been written about these six artists’ lives and careers as individuals, their contribution to the history of women performers has not been discussed before. By studying these six artists in chronological order, one comes to draw conclusions about the evolution in the career of women pianists in general. Through this study, the lives of women concert artists are described, offering future pianists an opportunity to look into the past artists' careers and to learn from them.

Society has gradually changed its perception of women artists. Nineteenth-century women pursuing solo performing careers in music met with widespread resistance, whereas, today, they are accepted as individuals and generally afforded the same benefits as their male counterparts. However, women's lives have remained complicated due to their biological uniqueness and their positions in society. In order to understand how they achieved their fame, it is important to look into the personal lives of these artists as well as their professional lives. The result of such a study shows that women in the performing arts are really two-career people; despite their success in the concert hall, they often have domestic responsibilities or domestic interests that demand much of them. In some cases, women artists have opted to remain single, thereby affirming their dedication to music and careers.
CHAPTER 1: Clara Schumann and Teresa Carreño

The mid-nineteenth century saw the advancement of women musicians. Although not few in number, in general they did not have lasting careers, due to social practices and conditions. There exists one pianist, however, who stands out as the pioneer of women concert pianists: Clara Schumann. She was widely recognized, and in her lifetime perhaps achieved a place of greater musical significance than her husband Robert Schumann. How did Schumann establish herself in an era when women were expected to focus their attention on things domestic, leaving careers to men? How did this artist, wife of a composer, a mother of eight, surge to such prominence?

The answer to Clara Schumann's success can be found in the careful training she received from her father, Friedrich Wieck. He recognized her talent early and, given his gift for teaching, groomed her into an accomplished young artist. Although her marriage to Robert did not meet with her father's approval and strained her relationship with him, there is no mistaking the impact that Wieck had on Clara's development. At the age of eighteen, she was highly honored with the title of Royal and Imperial Chamber Virtuosa by the Austrian emperor. In a letter to his wife, Wieck writes, "...all Vienna is saying that no artist has ever made a sensation like this."\(^1\) The years of training in piano and musicianship and the role he played as her concert and tour manager provided opportunities

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\(^1\) Nancy B. Reich, *Clara Schumann: The Artist and the Woman* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1985), 79.
for father and daughter to develop a strong relationship, which helped her maintain her loyalty to him throughout her life. Clara Schumann, referred to hereafter as Clara, was also deeply influenced by Robert. If Clara learned the techniques of performing from her father, then she learned the artistry of mature musicianship from Schumann.

Clara Wieck was born in Leipzig, on September 13, 1819. Wieck was determined to mold his daughter into a great performer and was not willing to let anything or anyone undermine his efforts—hence the many vicious fights with Robert Schumann concerning their marriage. Wieck had a clear talent for teaching and, together with Clara's innate genius, a child prodigy was nurtured. The greater objective, however, was to create a mature artist. Wieck was systematic in his approach to building an artist. He wrote: "The whole education from the earliest youth must be planned accordingly." In 1853 he added:

As a psychologist, thinker, and teacher, I have striven to work for all-round musical development, never making excess demands and always attempting to maintain the student's interest. I never stood still, learned daily as I taught, and always sought to improve.³

Although Wieck remained Clara's sole piano teacher throughout her life, she had different tutors for language, theory, harmony, composition, orchestration, and even voice and violin lessons. She started composing in her childhood, and introduced her pieces to the public by performing them and selling them through a publisher.

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² Ibid., 44.
³ Ibid., 290.
Clara benefited from Wieck's musical circle, which met at her home. Well-known musicians and music lovers congregated there and, outside of Wieck, became the primary source of Clara's social and musical contact. He assumed that Clara would depend entirely on him. He was not only her father and teacher, but also her critic, her admirer, and later, her dutiful and conscientious manager. The extent of his domineering nature can be seen through young Clara's diary, in which he wrote in Clara's stead, even referring to himself as "father."

Such dictatorial control of Clara's mental being continued until she left home, and even after that. Wieck held tight control over Clara's time from morning until night. Fortunately, she blossomed despite the regimen. As Wieck and Schumann engaged in legal battles over the rights of marriage, Clara agonized over her duties as daughter and as fiancée. She wrote such lines as "my filial love and thankfulness can never cease," "Today I was overwhelmed by melancholy as I thought of my father. I regret everything so much and yet was he not cruel? Was he not terrible? Nonetheless I feel such an inextinguishable love for him--one friendly word from him and I would forget all the pain he caused me. . . ." and "I feel so abandoned now; I belong to no one. When I see Robert, I want to cling to him."4 She wrote to Schumann: "For your sake, I will give up my father, whom I love more than anyone except for you. I will follow you without my father's consent. . . .That is a great deal for a feeling heart to do, but I trust you, my life will lie in your hands and you will make me happy."5

4 Ibid., 100.
5 Ibid., 88.
In spite of such conflicts, Clara's talent shone through as she proved to be a world-class performer. Wieck left nothing to chance and enlisted the help of his acquaintances to publish reviews of Clara's performances. This was one of the many jobs he performed as manager. When on tour, he alone was responsible for the child; all the daily essentials such as food, clothing, and lodging fell on his shoulders. In addition, he had to rent halls, publicize the events and make financial arrangements. As long as Clara was under Wieck's care, she received all the attention, love, and care she needed. Later on in life, she had to assume the managerial responsibilities for her career. She was assisted by her daughters and close friends in this burdensome task.

Clara won considerable approval from her public as a young performer. She was also one of the first pianists to play from memory and did so as early as 1837. Johann Peter Lyser, a close friend of Robert and Clara who had kept Robert aware of Clara's whereabouts during a period of separation which was forced upon by Wieck, wrote the following in February 1836: "Clara appeared--stormy reception--the audience applauded madly, the Old Man had a full money chest."

In the first years of touring, Clara performed works which would appeal to a spectacle-loving audience. This was done under the guidance of Wieck, who was well aware of public taste and the necessity to satisfy it in order to ensure success. Therefore, we see in the early programs show-pieces by Herz, Pixis, Moscheles, and even Clara's own virtuosic pieces, as was customary at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In the later

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6 Ibid., 74.
7 Ibid., 280.
8 Ibid., 71.
1830s, and definitely after her marriage in the 1840s, we see a remarkable trend in performing masterworks, such as Beethoven sonatas, Chopin ballades, études, mazurkas, and works by Robert. She also brought a structured order to the recital program, concentrating on the more serious composers, and was most instrumental in bringing to the public not only the works of her husband, but also those of Beethoven. She was the first to perform Beethoven’s Sonatas Op. 81a and Op. 101 for the public in Leipzig.⁹

She began touring with her father at the age of twelve and continued until 1888, when she was 68 years old. At the beginning, however, the career aspect of a concert pianist did not appeal to Clara. While on one of the tours with Wieck, Clara wrote to Schumann:

Treasures are no longer to be got by instrumental art. How much one has to do in order to [go] away [with] a few taler from a town...at 10 o’clock in the evening...I, poor thing, am just arriving at a party, where I have to play to people for a few pretty words and a cup of warm water and arrive home dead tired...and think, “Is an artist much more than a beggar?”¹⁰

Clara gave her entire life to art, although while married to Robert, she had to overcome her husband’s attitudes concerning young wives who “must be able to cook and to keep house...may not make long journeys

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right away."^{11} Generally, her marriage brought her happiness, but she wrestled with the conflicting demands of the home and the stage. Schumann wrote before their marriage: "If you are forgotten as an artist, would you not be beloved as a wife?...The first year of our marriage you shall forget the artist, you shall live only for yourself and your house and your husband. ...if I only achieve this much—that you have nothing more to do with the public—I will have achieved my deepest wish. Yet you still remain an artist. The bit of fame in the contemptible paper—I despise it."^{12}

Both agreed that Clara's playing should come second to Schumann's composing, but on many occasions she expressed unhappiness over this arrangement.

The more Robert involves himself with his art, the less I can do as an artist. Heaven knows! There are always interruptions, and small as our household is, I always have this and that to do and that robs me of my time.^{13} (May 1841)

My piano playing is getting all behind, as always happens when Robert is composing. I can't find a single hour in the day to myself. If I didn't get so behind!^{14} (June 1841)

Schumann knew that his wife sacrificed her practice time for his work. In his diary, Schumann wrote that although she may have lacked the sureness of solid technique of her younger years, she still advanced musically as well as intellectually, thus becoming a better musician. Despite her

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^{11}Reich, *Clara Schumann*, 91.
^{12}Ibid., 92.
^{13}Ibid., 110.
dissatisfaction and frustration over her practice schedule and lack of time, she still went on concert tours with and without her husband to different parts of Europe, to Russia and, later, to England, where she had great success.

Clara developed her artistry by studying the works of the masters, particularly Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schumann. These composers remained close to her heart and their works became the center of her programs after marriage. The repertoire from her younger years reflects Wieck's idea of an acceptable program, one that dazzled the audience with virtuosity.15 We find the following excerpt in her diary, one year after her marriage:

I pity the musician who has no understanding of this magnificent art [Beethoven's sonatas]. The less I play in public now the more I hate the whole world of virtuoso showpieces; concert pieces like Henselt's Etudes, Thalberg's Fantasies, Liszt, etc. have become quite repugnant to me. . . I will play them only if I need to for a concert tour.16 (August 1841)

As her understanding of music grew, so did the need to perform the music of Schumann. Her fame and concerts became the means by which his music was introduced to the public. As much as she felt compelled to perform, Clara felt it was her right as well as duty to become a spokesman of Schumann's music. Almost every recital included at least one or more of his pieces.17 She chose them carefully, programming only those which appealed to public taste, and included the bigger and heavier pieces such as

15 Reich, Clara Schumann, 262.
16 Ibid., 264.
17 Ibid., 267.
the first sonata at a later time. She became not only the performer and presenter but also the leading advocate of Schumann's music, teaching the public to appreciate the genius of his works.

It is indisputable that Schumann and Wieck were both important influences on Clara, leading one to conclude that Clara was a dependent woman. But it was Clara who became not only the main force in her family, but also the main financial provider. For instance, she earned a great deal of money from touring, and her contribution to the family's finances more than equaled her husband's salary. At one time, she had earned in two years more than Schumann's Düsseldorf salary over a four-year period, when he acted as director of Municipal Orchestra and Choir.18

In order to have time for concerts and tours, Clara was dependent on domestic help to care for her children. Eugenie Schumann, the seventh of the eight children, wrote the book The Schumanns and Johannes Brahms: Memoirs of Eugenie Schumann, in which she says, "I...knew nothing...not even bonds of family life. I had lived among strangers longer than any of my brothers and sisters."19 Due to the nature of her work, Clara was unable to spend much time with her children yet they affected her life nonetheless, extensively.

To understand Clara's inner strength, it is important to know about her personal life. Tragedy in her life did not end with the illness and death of Robert Schumann. Many of their children died before her, filling her with profound sadness and grief. Each time, she turned to her music for

18Ibid., 150.
consolation. Julie, her third child, died at the age of twenty-seven; the news of the death reached her when she was scheduled to give a concert with Amalie Joachim. Clara did not tell anyone of Julie's death and proceeded with the concert as scheduled. When her son Ferdinand died at the age of forty-two, she assumed responsibility for his widow and their six children. She resumed teaching the day after Ferdinand's funeral, because for her, "work is always the best diversion from pain."20 Her fifth child, Ludwig, lived until 1899, three years past Clara's death, but remained in a mental hospital from the age of twenty-two. This reminded her of her husband's illness and she wrote: "I have not felt such pains since the misfortune with Robert."21 Felix, her youngest, died of tuberculosis at the age of twenty-four. He suffered a great deal before his death and everyone in the family suffered with him. Yet Clara found courage in her work, and wrote to Brahms that "it was extraordinary to me that I was able to play with such freedom and strength at the concerts I gave while I was so unhappy that I could not forget my sorrow for one moment."22 Her work gave her the will to live, and she remained dedicated to it until her death.

Clara's work as a concert artist became even more important to her as she grew older. One might wonder what kind of a pianist Clara Schumann was in her mature years. Clara paid careful attention to the score and always tried to remain true to the wishes of the composers. Eugenie, for instance, relates Clara's comments from a piano lesson:

Do you think Beethoven would have taken the trouble to write all this notation, dots, ties, crotchets here, quavers there, if he

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20 Reich, *Clara Schumann*, 169.
21 Ibid., 164.
22 Ibid., 174.
had meant it to be otherwise? And don't you hear for yourself that it must be so, and could not be anything else?23

Eugenie also recalls the imagery and stories Clara used in lessons as teaching tools. She once asked her mother if she saw an image in all music. Clara replied "Yes, and the older I grow, more."24 Her playing was described as being strong but always with supple coordination, always with a beautiful sound.25

Her technique was said to have been flawless and natural, yet it was not the technical merits which captured the attention of the audience. The following excerpts are taken from reviews of her concerts.

We do not like to compare. . .but we must admit that the quiet, beautiful, correct and refined playing of Frau Schumann was more effective than the stormy extravagances of Herr Liszt.26 (Leipzig, Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung, 1841)

We have had an abundance of famous pianists here, but what have we heard? Frightful noise, cannon salvos, difficult things that merely astounded; and what touched the heart?. . .very little. . .Can we say the same about Clara Schumann? Absolutely not!. . .these works have been so vividly impressed in our hearts and memory that henceforth they will hold us captive with their sweet fetters.27 (Moscow, 1844)

There are many virtuosos who are not inferior to her in technique or general interpretation, but she distinguishes herself from all the rest through her high level of musicality,

23Eugenie Schumann, 98.
24Reich, Clara Schumann, 101.
25Eugenie Schumann, 97.
26Reich, Clara Schumann, 279.
27Ibid., 277.
which gives her performances the stamp of a divine summons.  

28 (Neue Zeitschrift für Musik, 1865)

One envisions highly imaginative playing, the sort that tells a story behind the notes, yet always conveying the intentions of the composer.

Due to the highly charged concert schedule Clara found time to teach when she was fifty-nine years of age and taught at the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt. She was in teaching there from 1878 until 1892. Joachim Raff, the director, wrote in a letter to a woman applying for a position at the Conservatory: "With the exception of Madame Schumann there is no woman and there will not be any women employed in the Conservatory. As for Madame Schumann, I count her as a man."  

29 Clara had several women students who later led professional careers, namely, Fanny Davies, Ilona Eibenschütz, and Mathilde Verne.

Wieck's dream of creating an artist was certainly realized in Clara Schumann. Throughout Clara's life, there remained within her the urgency and the need to strive toward the ideal. Music became her guide as well as her comforter. As she faced hardship, time and time again, she turned to music. She not only had the determination to continue her career, which was deeply rooted in her by Wieck, performing for almost fifty years, but she also felt a calling to make Schumann's music known and heard. Clara was perhaps strongly influenced by men with resolute ideas as well as ideals. However, she turned such influences to her own advantage, becoming not only an independent pianist, concert artist, and manager, but also a mature musician who remained successful her entire

\[28\] Ibid., 280.

\[29\] Ibid., 292.
lifetime. She set a high standard for herself and the issue of gender was seldom raised when discussing her artistry. She shaped the taste of the nineteenth-century public, steering her audience toward accepting the core of what has become today's traditional music. Indeed, she proved to be a first-rate artist, becoming the pioneer in the list of woman pianists from the nineteenth century to the present day.

While Clara Schumann was at the height of her career in Europe, a Venezuelan pianist began her career as a child prodigy. Teresa Carreño was considered one of the most popular and well-received pianists of her day. Her concerts took her not only all over the United States, also having performed for Presidents Abraham Lincoln and Woodrow Wilson, but Cuba, central Europe, Scandinavia, Russia, Australia, and Africa. She started her career as a child prodigy and continued performing until her death in 1917. Despite her importance, however, there has not been much written on her until recently. There exists a biography by Marta Milinowski (1940), a former student of Carreño who later became a professor at Vassar College, and other articles since then. Interest in Carreño has led the pianist-playwright-actress Pamela Ross to present a one-woman show in New York City, loosely based on Carreño's life.

Child prodigies were popular with concert audiences in the nineteenth century, but this particular talent became as well-known as the legendary pianists Anton Rubinstein, Liszt, and Clara Schumann. Carreño's audiences responded to her playing with the kind of frenzied enthusiasm that one might find at a popular rock concert today; they would clamor and demand to kiss her hand. On one occasion, people gathered by
the hundreds to bid her farewell at the train station.\textsuperscript{30} It was the noted composer Louis Moreau Gottschalk who wrote about the young Carreño:

Tereresa Carreño does not belong to the kind of little prodigy that we have been judging for the last twenty-five years; Teresa is a genius, let us say it at once. . .I have not the slightest doubt that she will be one of the greatest artists of our age.\textsuperscript{31}

In 1863, she performed the Mendelssohn \textit{Capriccio Brillante} from memory and she was hailed by conductor Carl Zerrahn as "the greatest prodigy which the world has known since the days of Mozart."\textsuperscript{32} Although best known as a pianist, Carreño also received vocal training and appeared on the concert stage as a singer from time to time. In addition to these performing activities, she composed and was published, the first time as early as 1867, in \textit{Le Ménestrel}.

Born in Caracas, Venezuela on December 22, 1853, Carreño received the first pianistic training from her father, Manuel Antonio Carreño. Manuel Carreño, then the Minister of Finance of Venezuela, was an amateur pianist and he took great care in developing Carreño's technique. In an interview with Henriette Brower for \textit{Musical America} in November of 1913, Carreño spoke of her early training with her father.

. . .he wrote out for me a great many technical exercises: to be exact there were 580 of them. Some consisted of difficult passages from the great composers, perhaps originally written for one hand. . .Everything must be played in all keys, and

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\textsuperscript{30}Marta Milincowski, \textit{Teresa Carreño: by the Grace of God} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940), 253.
\textsuperscript{31}ibid., 52.
\textsuperscript{32}ibid., 45.
\end{flushright}
with every possible variety of touch-legato, staccato, half-staccato, and so on. Part of my training consisted in being shown how to criticize myself. I learned to listen, to be critical of my own work; if it was not up to the mark I must see what was the matter and correct it.\textsuperscript{33}

It must be said that she was already an accomplished pianist at an early age, whether or not thanks to such structured training. Later on, Carreño received training at the Paris Conservatory; in Paris she encountered musical giants such as Rossini, Liszt, and Anton Rubinstein. Despite having received very little formal training, piano playing came naturally to Carreño. When asked later in her life about her schooling, Carreño wrote: "I learned from everything, from everybody--and I am still learning."\textsuperscript{34}

In 1862 the Carreño family was forced to flee their country due to political reasons. For the sake of launching his daughter's career, Manuel decided to settle in New York, where Carreño made her debut at the age of eight. Before this event, the Carreño family held musical evenings to which not only friends, but musicians and critics were invited. Surprisingly, such events were documented in newspapers and journals.\textsuperscript{35} One may conclude from this that Carreño was indeed a promising and impressive addition to New York's already full list of artists. The New York debut was a success and led to other concerts, including one at the White House for President Lincoln. Manuel Carreño, however, wished for his daughter to study in Paris, and he moved the family to France.

\textsuperscript{33}James M. Keller, "Teresa Carreño Returns to the Stage," \textit{Piano Quarterly} 38 (Fall 1990): 20.
\textsuperscript{34}Milinowski, 230.
\textsuperscript{35}Ibid., 29.
Because of unforeseen circumstances, it became necessary for Carreño to support her family through her concerts. Once in Europe, she traveled from France to Spain to London, taking part in many concert tours along with other musicians. It was customary for concerts to present varied types of works and feature different groups either as soloist or chamber musicians. Such ensembles would go on tour for weeks under the direction of a manager. Carreño became one of the better-known pianists of these groups. In the London Promenade Concerts, Carreño found many opportunities for performance; they were not only opportunities for artistic display but also an important source of income. In 1872, she appeared in one of the Monday Popular Concerts, a series that had featured artists such as Charles Hallé, Joseph Joachim, and Clara Schumann. The following is an excerpt from a review of January 20, 1872:

Disregarding all precedents and tradition, selecting her own tempi, and giving a reading altogether novel and unprecedented to the Sonate in D-flat, Op. 27 No.1--the newcomer created a sensation as pronounced as has been excited by any exhibition of the more experienced style of Madame Schumann, and of the more exact and refined school of Madame Arabella Goddard. . .it is useless to challenge the interpretation because it was not traditional.36

As mentioned above, Carreño appeared as a collaborator in concerts where one leading artist would enlist the help of several musicians. An example of such tours took place in the United States in 1875; Carreño and her first husband, violinist Émil Sauret, toured in California with the latest vocal superstar at the time, the Croatian, Ilma di Murska. The reviews of

36Ibid., 99.
the concerts mentioned Carreño, but she was almost completely overshadowed by the solo vocalist. One review from the San Francisco concert given at Platt’s Music Hall mentions the following: "Madame Carreño Sauret is a skillful and artistic pianiste, and her efforts were well received by the audience, and encored in each instance."37 The young Carreño worked hard to support her family, sometimes engaging in employment that may not necessarily have been artistically satisfying. Just like the pioneer female concert pianist Clara Schumann, Carreño was not only an artist but a professional, a working woman.

Time after time, critics either applauded or disagreed with the individuality of her playing, but they never disagreed over her flawless technique or the power, the drive, and the intensity of her artistry at the keyboard. Perhaps as a result of lack of extensive formal training, her youthful playing demonstrated a disregard for the text, changing tempi and dynamics at will, adding notes for effect and the thrill of the moment rather than considering the work as a whole. Once, she held onto a trill in the Paganini-Liszt Campanella for so long that one critic wrote, “Probably the words of the German poet, 'In moderation the master shows himself,' have not yet been translated into Spanish.”38 When she visited Russia for the first time, in 1891, her execution of a trill was again discussed. “Great excitement was created by a trill which lasted about half an hour, more beautiful pianistically than musically.”39 On another occasion, Grieg, who admired her playing, complained in the following manner:

38 Milinowski, 197.
39 Ibid., p.212.
...the devil is in these artists who always want to improve on everything. In the first measures she pleased to play more slowly in the passages so that the tempo went Heidi! And in the finale she suddenly took the second theme much more slowly. There should be a penalty for such things. And on top of it she acted so proud; that was the worst of it.  

Gradually, these traits gave way to more mature and thoughtful playing. In 1880, she performed in Chicago, and a critic wrote:

Carreño has so much improved of late that one would scarcely recognize the passionate but somewhat reckless pianist of days gone by. Certainly the fire of genuine ambition has touched her gift of genius, and she now adds to her talent a scholarly thought and method which will undoubtedly send her to the front of the first rank of pianists.

Carreño's career rose to great heights, yet from early on her personal life was tumultuous. She was married four times, three of these with musicians. Her first marriage, with Sauret, dissolved while she was in the final months of her second pregnancy. Due to Carreño's busy touring schedule, their first child, Emilita, was at that time staying in England with a friend, Mrs. Bischoff. The circumstance revolving around the fate of her first child is unclear to this day, but the fact remains that Emilita was given for adoption to Mrs. Bischoff with the promise by her natural parents not to contact her again. This, according to Pamela Ross, the pianist-actress

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40 Ibid., p. 205
41 Ibid., p. 130.
performing a one-woman theater piece on Teresa Carreño, became an emotional conflict which remained with the artist throughout her life.\textsuperscript{42}

In 1876, she entered into a common-law marriage with an Italian tenor, Giovanni Tagliapietra, with whom she had shared many concerts. They made their home in New York and she continued to support her family by joining one of the many companies which were often a haphazardly organized group of musicians. Many of these concerts featured "light" music as well as circuses and prize fights in order to attract an audience. Carreño even took part in the concerts of the Casino of New York City purely for economic reasons. Concerts took her from coast to coast and into Canada. Although Carreño was in demand, averaging 150 concerts a year, she was in search of artistic satisfaction. Her friends urged her to go to Germany to be approved by "people who understand music," but this was not financially feasible.\textsuperscript{43}

Finally, a loan of $5000 from a friend made her trip to Germany a reality, and in 1889, Carreño prepared herself to encounter the audiences of Berlin. At about this time, she also severed ties with her second husband. Whereas elsewhere she had always shared a concert with other artists, in Germany she was the only soloist presented at the concert. She performed the Grieg Concerto with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, under the direction of Gustav F. Kogel; she also performed the Symphonic Etudes of Schumann and the Polacca of Weber-Liszt. The début was considered a success despite differences in opinion over the "correctness" of the interpretation.

\textsuperscript{42} Keller, 19.
\textsuperscript{43} Milinowski, 134.
With complete and blinding technical virtuosity, and strongly sculptured sense of rhythm, Frau Carreño combines spiritual freedom and independence of interpretation. . .Everything about this woman. . .is tailored to extraordinary measure, and therefore I understand that many of her listeners are repelled by the power of this presence, which has nothing feminine, and yet again nothing unbeautiful or unnatural in its artistic expression. . .she stands out as a Brünnhilde.44

Grandiose as the effect of her playing are also its faults, but I would be a Philistine indeed for this reason to indict our guest before the forum of the academicians. The style of her offerings still needs schooling; yet with all her exaggerations we welcome her as a sounding protest against that affected lifelessness.45

From here on, she was referred to as the "lioness of the keyboard" on many occasions. In 1890, she performed the Grieg Concerto with Hans von Bülow, who wrote the following on behalf of Carreño:

[She] is a phenomenon, an exotic one, a young Kundry. I call her benedicta in nomine Apollonis, for she sweeps the floor clean of all piano paraders, who after her coming, must take themselves elsewhere. Wherever she is heard she is engaged for a second, yes, even a third time. I recommend to you this enrichment in new sensations.46

Max Reger also sang her praises: ". . .the newest star, decidedly the best among the pianists of today."47

44Ibid., 194.
45Ibid., 197.
46Ibid., 198.
47Ibid., 211.
It was in Germany that she met Eugène d'Albert, the famous pianist, whom she later married. According to her biographer, the gradual change toward mature playing, and the abandonment of the excesses she so enjoyed, were the result of d'Albert's influence. From this partnership, she seems to have learned to appreciate fully the serious works of music, such as Beethoven's concerti and sonatas, putting aside the old favorites of Gottschalk and Rubinstein. The typical concert programs of the 1880s and 1890s included works from Beethoven to Schumann and Liszt.48 But this marriage did not last any longer than the others. D'Albert asked for a separation in 1894, just four years after their marriage.

Among Carreño's many tours were several visits to Russia, the first tour taking place in 1891, followed by others in the 1890s. In Russia she was highly praised and appreciated, and was privy to meeting great contemporary musicians, notably Cui, Tchaikovsky, Alexander Siloti, and Anton Rubinstein, with whom she had had a few lessons in 1868.49 The power and bravura, the passion and singularly strong personality which exuded from the pianist, must have captivated the Russian audience. When she toured Russia in 1898 and 1899, local papers of St. Petersburg and Moscow both compared Carreño with the world's finest of stars.50 Carreño seems to have made the deepest impression on Boleslav Yavorskii, the pianist, composer and music theorist who published books and memoires. Carreño is frequently mentioned in his writings and in one draft of his *Ofertepianoj tek hniko* (*Piano technique*), he places the pianist

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48Ibid., 392.
50Milinowski, 122.
alongside of Liszt, Chopin, and Rubinstein, asserting that the memory of Carreño's playing would remain forever.  

While Carreño had matured significantly by the 1890s, a review from 1896 indicates that she had not lost any of the passion that set her apart from the rest.  

Frau Carreño belongs to those volcanoes that are still in full eruption. . . She loves freedom, loves to jump and tear around without rein like the horse of the prairies. Instead of exhausting itself in the course of the evening her power progressively increases. She grows constantly wilder, more passionate.  

She returned to the United States in 1896 for a successful tour. Boston welcomed her and set its seal of approval with many glowing reviews:  

She returns to us more stately of presence, more imposing of manner, than when she was here last, and at the same time a more deep serious, and matured artist, ranking with the best in her art.  

Madame Carreño has reached a position where criticism is superfluous. In the matter of technique, in the largeness of style, adaptation of means to end, fine taste, and self reserve, she is the finished artist.  

Among the few virtuosoal triumphs which this generation is likely to remember might be cited the first concerts given here

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51 Ibid., 123.  
52 Ibid., 248.  
53 Ibid. 259.  
54 Ibid.
by Rubinstein, Bülow, d'Albert, and Paderewski. To this short list it is now our pleasure to add Teresa Carreño.\textsuperscript{55}

Each year thereafter was filled with concert tours. In 1908, fame took her from Finland to the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, then back to Europe, which lasted a year. With such a strenuous touring schedule, one wonders when the artist could retreat to a more peaceful environment for time alone as well as with her children. During the long absences when the pianist was on tour, as with Clara Schumann, the children were raised by friends or servants. It was during the summer, when Carreño took the time to recuperate from the rigorous schedule of the concert season, that she would spend the most time with her family. Even during vacations, she would find time to continue her activities by teaching. The reasons for working during vacation were twofold: one for economical reasons, and the other, to remain active. "I just long for a good rest, and yet, I presume, that if I got it, I would not know what to do with my life, after having worked all my life as I have."\textsuperscript{56} Her fame attracted many students.

You will find here if they all come, twenty pupils of mine. How is this for a rest? It is not much of a rest, you will say, and I know it; but we could not have been able to afford the trip here and the hiring of the Villa, and in one way we have a rest, for we all can enjoy this beautiful air and I know that we need not worry about the expenses connected with our being here.\textsuperscript{57}

\textsuperscript{55}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{56}Ibid., 265.
\textsuperscript{57}Ibid., 345.
Probably the most famous of her students was Edward MacDowell. She had taught him in his childhood and remained close to him throughout her life. It was Carreño who performed his compositions and made them known throughout the world. Just as Brahms had sent his most recent works for comments to Clara Schumann, MacDowell, too, had sent his new works to Carreño, but mostly with the hope that she would present them in concert. Indeed, many works of MacDowell were dedicated to Carreño and many of his pieces became a staple of her repertoire. Her fame was such that other composers sought her approval of their work. Amy Beach approached Carreño and kept her ties with the pianist perhaps with the great hope that Carreño would perform her pieces; however, this never came to be.\textsuperscript{58}

Carreño reached the height of her career when she was in her mid-thirties and kept her status by continually touring all over the world. However, one naturally wonders how Carreño came to marry so many times. Divorces were uncommon in those days, and Carreño must have had a difficult time when her numerous marriages became the topic of gossip. The strain of the heavy concert schedule must have been a contributing factor to the failed marriages, not to mention the hardship of uncertain finances. She had hoped to find strong support in these relationships, but her partners themselves seemed to have wanted and needed the same.

Her fourth marriage, to the brother of her second husband, Arturo Tagliapietra, whom she had known for decades, lasted the remainder of her life. He was not only faithful to her but also became her travel companion.

\textsuperscript{58}Brian Mann, “The Carreño Collection at Vassar College,” \textit{Notes} (June 1991): 1074.
and manager, and a willing stepfather to her four children. As she wrote
to a friend about Tagliapietra,

You have seen enough of my life to know for yourself how
lonesome I, in reality, was, and how empty my poor heart, and
can fully understand me. That I am happier than I ever
dreamed of being is but a short and poor description of my
feeling. . .possessing a true, loyal and noble heart—who will
help me through the few years I may have to live. . .and who
will share with me my troubles as well as my joys. This
Arturo will do as my husband.59

Carreño performed until the last moments of her life. She was on
tour in the United States and Cuba in 1917 when she fell ill; shortly after,
she died in New York. She had performed nearly all her life, first as a
phenomenal child prodigy, then for some time as a member of touring
groups, then as a true artist. Carreño's playing held immense power, both
in sound and intensity. According to Walter Niemann, her playing
combined "extreme exploitation of force, masculine sense of sculpture in
the modeling of the tone, with the utmost lightness and elasticity in the
working of the entire play mechanism."60 Carreño who felt so much for
music wrote these encouraging words to her son, Giovanni Tagliapietra:

Be a true, honest, real artist, and this can only be achieved by
hard and continued work. Nobody knows this better than your
mother. Art is such infinite joy to the artist and such a
generous repayer for all the work we have to perform and all
the sacrifices we bring to it. . .no one but an artist knows.61

59 Milinowski, 288.
60 Ibid., 391.
61 Ibid., 333.
She took delight in her concert career throughout her life, just as she had in the beginning. For her, the simple act of giving through music returned to her not only ample artistic satisfaction, but also an independent position that allowed her freedom to do as she wished.\textsuperscript{62} It is apparent that both as an artist and as a woman, Carreño possessed a strong personality, at times extreme, and it was this very passion and intensity that gave her success on the concert stage. By most accounts, one quickly senses the carefree spirit Carreño possessed. Her legacy lies in this very spirit, which knew no limitations nor boundaries. Carreño cherished her individuality, her career, and her family, just as Clara Schumann had before her. Carreño traveled all over the world and, through her powerful personality, as a pianist and as a woman, won over the hearts of her public. She was innovative and versatile, used her many talents when and where necessary, and even sang and conducted in concert. Today, there has been renewed interest in this grand and colorful pianist; in her native land, Caracas, Venezuela, they have dedicated the Teresa Carreño Arts Center, where big productions of operas and ballets are presented. Although still known to relatively few musicians and music-lovers, Carreño deserves to be brought back to the fore, as she remains a unique artist, fearless and forthcoming, in the history of pianists.

\textsuperscript{62}Ibid., 334.
In the first half of the twentieth century, the uncertainties and hardship brought on by the World Wars especially affected those in Europe. Those artists starting out their careers were not exempt. Luckily for Myra Hess, she already had a notable career launched by the early twentieth century. An established artist before the Second World War, she became even better known through her association with the National Gallery concerts held during the war. Not only was she well-known in her native England and Holland, but Hess had a huge following in North America through the American tours she made. Some of her playing can be heard today, thanks to the piano roll recordings from the twenties and thirties. Hess has left us with the impression of a strong-willed musician, whose determination to succeed in a male-dominated performing field brought fame not only to herself, but also to her native country.

Born in London on February 25, 1890, Hess studied under Tobias Matthay at the Royal Academy. Hess called Matthay, "the greatest inspirational teacher I know of." While the public may debate whether Matthay made Hess or Hess, Matthay, the answer was settled in Hess' mind:

The turning point in my career came. . .when I began to study with Tobias Matthay, whom I consider the greatest inspirational teacher I know of.\textsuperscript{2}

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\textsuperscript{2}Ibid., 26.
My teacher... had a deep spirituality... He always looked for beauty in everything... he said the most important thing is the meaning of the music.  

Hess' playing came to exemplify what was the core of Mathay's teaching: the importance of muscular relaxation in the hands as well as the arms and shoulders; the need for intense concentration on the music; the importance of warmth and fullness of tone, at the same time playing with clear articulation; always having a straightforward musical purpose; and preference for the beautiful rather than for the merely brilliant.  

Perhaps one of the most powerful performing preparation tools that Matthay imparted to his students was reading the score in silence before a concert. The object was to have the music fresh in one's ears and to keep the mind alert. Denise Lassimonne, Matthay's ward, wrote:

No one fulfilled this principle more faithfully than Myra and it is perhaps one of the fundamental reasons why her performances of works she played innumerable times... always retained their freshness.  

On November 14, 1907, Hess made her debut with the New Symphony Orchestra at the Queen's Hall. The orchestra was led by Thomas Beecham, then virtually unknown. For this debut, she had to rent the hall and engage both the musicians and the conductor, an expensive endeavor. The program opened with Mozart's Symphony in C major (K.338), followed by Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 4 in G major. Then

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3 Ibid., 241.
4 Ibid., 21.
came Charles Wood's *Symphonic Variations on an Irish Air*, after which Hess returned to the stage for Saint-Saëns' C minor Concerto, Op. 41, followed by a group of solos including a selection of Chopin and Brahms. The long program concluded with D'Indy's "Wallenstein." A few months later, in January of 1908, Hess gave a solo recital in the London Aeolian Hall. This performance was followed by an all-Beethoven recital, a month later.

Many outstanding musicians spoke of Hess' gift in her younger days. Joseph Szigeti commented:

I was still groping my way in the (to me) new realm of Beethoven's language, whereas Myra Hess, though barely out of...school, moved in this world with the assurance and stylistic conviction of a veteran...her playing already had a mellowness, an intimate graciousness (I am tempted to call it "sweet reasonableness") which I have never since encountered in any young virtuoso. ...6

Sir Henry Wood, with whom Hess performed at London's Promenade Concert first in 1908, wrote in his memoir: "Myra Hess has never lost the fascination she exerted over her audiences then...Her musicianship has matured—who does not in thirty years?—but she was the great artist, even then."7 Despite such recognition, Hess was not sure if she would be able to earn a living as a performing artist. In 1914, she told a friend: "This year I am twenty-four, and if I don't soon make a reputation for myself I may never have a career at all."8

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6Mckenna, 38.
7Ibid., 39.
8Ibid., 36.
Perhaps one of the most dramatic decisions Hess made at the beginning of her career concerned marriage. She had male friends, but when the question of marriage came up she chose career over marriage. This decision may seem severe especially for a woman of her era, yet, just a generation before, women were discouraged from continuing their career once married. Hess was convinced that marriage would hinder her artistic pursuits and this led her to give up important relationships and to remain alone the rest of her life. Hess told a close friend that by the time she was thirty, she had ruled out marriage completely. Later, in 1938, she explained her decision.

Do I believe that a woman could be married and carry on such a career as mine? I don't know, but I think it depends on the woman. . .I'm afraid I would be too earnest about marriage, and in this business there is only one thing one can be really earnest about. That is playing the piano. One sacrifices a great deal, but there are compensations.9

The life of an artist, to Hess, held "semi-religious" connotations, and she believed one had to be entirely dedicated to the arts.10

While on tour with Aldo Antonietti, a violinist with whom she most likely might have considered marriage, she was introduced to the Van Riemsdijk family. Junkheer Van Riemsdijk, director of the Rijksmuseum, heard the concert of Hess and Antonietti, and felt Hess' talent would develop "into something." At the end of the tour, Myra was invited into the Van Riemsdijk home and from that moment on, the two parties formed a life-long friendship.

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9Ibid., 116.
In February 1912, while Hess was staying with the Van Riemsdijks, she was asked to substitute for one of the soloists who was to appear with the Concertgebouw and its conductor, Willem Mengelberg. Hess' Holland debut took place on February 10, 1912, in the large hall of the Concertgebouw. Hess played Schumann's Concerto and the audience received the performance warmly. Some of the Dutch listeners thought Hess' performance was comparable to that of Clara Schumann. The reviews were excellent, and Hess became an overnight success away from her native land. She was again soloist with the Concertgebouw in January, 1913, in both Amsterdam and the Hague, and recitals followed in Hilversum, Bussum, and Utrecht. She returned to Amsterdam a week later to hear a performance of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* conducted by Mengelberg, but she received another call to substitute for Carl Friedberg, who was ill, and performed with the Hague Orchestra.

Around the time of World War I, many performance opportunities were presented to Hess. By 1920, she was performing almost one hundred concerts a year. The following year, she had three sold-out recitals in London in one month. Between 1918 and 1920, she made fifty-four appearances with orchestras throughout England. Her fame reached America with the help of her new management, Ibbs and Tillett, one of the most prestigious managements in the world at the time. It was John Tillett who inquired into sending Hess overseas to America. According to Marian C. McKenna, Hess' biographer, nothing was more difficult than to interest an artist's agent in a woman musician around the 1920s. However, Annie Friedberg, an arts manager in America who, among her artists, also managed the young Vladimir Horowitz, finally decided to book Hess on an
extensive tour, laying aside her rule of never hiring an artist without first hearing him/her. As early as 1920, American music journals were mentioning Hess' first overseas concerts to be held in 1922. Hess, herself, was unsure about touring America, as she had heard of the country's reputation:

America has two reputations. The one is that you (America) have no judgment about matters of high art, and that nothing can succeed here except the sensational...I made up my mind I was not the sort of artist to succeed here—not sensational enough.\(^{11}\)

Perhaps her suspicion was based on fact, for Harold Schoenberg described the 1920's concert scene as

the hey day of the great romantic pianists...who swept their audiences off their feet rather than wooed them. These pianists (Backhaus, Busoni, Lhevinne, and Rachmaninoff) were a law unto themselves.\(^{12}\)

Hess' New York debut took place on January 17, 1922 in Aeolian Hall. There were only sixty-six people in the audience but H. E. Krehbiel, the critic for the *New York Tribune*, wrote:

...it can fairly be questioned whether an audience composed of such experienced and discriminating music lovers as that one was ever stirred to such a pitch of excitement.\(^{13}\)

\(^{11}\)Mckenna, 80.
\(^{13}\)Mckenna, 80.
The presence of the two most important critics, H. E. Krehbiel and Richard Aldrich, more than made up for the lack of a substantial audience. Krehbiel went on to say:

She is every inch an artist; every fibre in her comely and well poised body is musical. Her knowledge, instincts, technical skills are of the highest order. She possesses not only fancy but the higher gift which is imagination.\textsuperscript{14}

Aldrich, on the other hand, was struck by the simplicity and direct approach of Hess' playing:

Miss Hess is a strongly individual artistic personality, self-possessed, reposeful, but she is one devoted wholly to expounding the music she plays and who takes no thought of injecting her personality into it or of making display of her powers as a performer.\textsuperscript{15}

With such reviews, Annie Friedberg was more than satisfied and considered the debut a huge success. Despite the success, Hess was subject to review on the basis of her sex, which she did not appreciate. She believed that her playing should be taken not as a woman's or a man's but as a musician's. The \textit{New York Post} noted that Hess had the biggest success of any pianists "of the fair sex since Guiomar Noavaes thrilled this town."

A critic for the \textit{Herald} wrote that "Miss Hess is one woman who does not play like a man. It is not essential to the health of art that every woman should play like a man."\textsuperscript{16} Much later, at the Edinburgh Festival, in the

\textsuperscript{14}ibid.
\textsuperscript{15}McKenna, 82.
\textsuperscript{16}ibid.
summer of 1956, her playing of Beethoven's "Appassionata" Sonata elicited the following remark: "She may well be the exception proving the rule that women should not tackle Beethoven."17

It was clear from the first American tour that Hess was completely accepted and had captured the heart of her public. This admiration by Americans lasted her entire life. According to her star-student who is now a world-renowned pianist himself, Stephen Kovacevich, her success in America was astounding and the public truly loved her artistry.18 He went on to say that he felt Hess' popularity was even stronger in the U.S. than in England. Hess may have come to America at the right cultural moment. America was no longer in the shadow of Europe, and in 1925, Deems Taylor wrote:

The old days, when Europe's authority on matters musical was unquestioned, when a musical announcement from Berlin was news and a musical announcement from Chicago was a joke--those days are gone forever.19

New York, Boston, and Philadelphia had first-rate conductors like Damrosch, Monteux, and Stokowski. America had its star system, perhaps influenced by Hollywood, and even the smallest towns would demand a Kreisler or Paderewski or else not attend the concerts.20 This attitude, although fought off in the major cities, seems to have left its mark and may explain the huge discrepancies found in artists' fees even today, as well as

17Ibid., 243.
18Kovacevich interview.
19Mckenna, 84.
20Ibid., 85.
the seasonal roster at various organizations which do their best to acquire at least a couple of "big" names.

The acceptance of Myra Hess on the American concert stage marked the beginning of a new era, according to Harold Schoenberg. She stepped on the stage at a time when the "romantic" school of playing dominated the arts scene. To Schoenberg, Hess represented a new school with her clarity of sound, textual accuracy, delicate color, and classical proportions.\(^{21}\)

Hess' unfolding career paralleled major technological developments, especially the use of radio and phonograph. She was heard on the radio by 1936, and was one of the most popular performers in the BBC studio. She also made Duo-Art piano rolls, joining a groups of artists who also recorded for Duo-Art such as Paderewski, Grainger, Cortot, Novães, Siloti, and Backhaus. Among the composers she recorded were Rachmaninoff, Brahms, Debussy, and Szymanowski. In 1927, Hess signed a contract with Columbia Records which kept her occupied for the next five years. She told a reporter:

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\ldots \text{one finds out curious things about one's playing in making records, but from the standpoint of self criticism it is invaluable } \ldots \text{It is a cruel sort of mirror suddenly to have your rhythm handed you in a parcel.}^{22}\]

Although she came to detest the technical details and the numerous test recordings needed to ensure a satisfactory outcome, Hess, by popular demand, continued to make recordings.

\(^{22}\)Mckenna, 106.
We have a picture of a very hard-working person, who attributed her discipline to her Jewish heritage, and who knew from a very early age that she was destined for a career and made the necessary sacrifices to ensure that nothing would stand in its way. At the same time, she had a strict sense of what type of an artist she wanted to be. Once established, she was known to wear only simple, dark dresses for concerts. Even at the urging of her manager, she would not add the more popular pieces on her recitals; only the heavy, serious and meaty pieces, the ones closest to her heart, were performed.

By 1939, she had completed fifteen tours of America and was invited to return many more times after that. In spite of the success, Hess referred to this period as a dark and uncertain time in her life. She no longer looked forward to upcoming tours and felt she was in an inescapable depression. If the war had not set in at the time to change everyone's life, including that of Hess, her career might have developed quite differently; it would be hard to say with certainty what could have become of this true artist.

Owing to the bombing of London, there were no more evening concerts, such as the Proms. Only the National Gallery Concerts and a few others remained. The National Gallery Concerts, established in 1939, ran daily at lunch time in the heart of London throughout war time. Hess set up the program and played at least once a week on the series. She seemed to have enjoyed the new role of impresario despite the fact that it limited practice time at the piano. Her programs were varied and her schedule, strenuous. A week's worth of recitals included a Debussy and Mozart program, and challenging works such as the Brahms F minor Sonata,
Schumann's *Carnaval*, and Beethoven's Piano Sonata Op. 111. When asked about her practice during this period, she answered:

You ask if I practice? Precious little...at least not the practicing I like to do, but the Lord seems to be with me, and when music is needed as never before, the inspiration seems to be forthcoming when one actually gets to the concert. For months, and even now, at times it is almost impossible to sit down in cold blood and practice 'passages and notes'.

Hess was hailed by many as the person responsible for keeping classical music alive in this difficult time. In return for her devotion and services, Hess was recognized by many distinguished organizations. Perhaps the most important came from King George VI, in June 1941, when he bestowed on her the order of Dame Commander of the British Empire (D.B.E.)--the female equivalent of knighthood. This was for her "lasting service to British music, and to world musical achievement." At the end of 1941, it was announced that she would be the 48th recipient of the Royal Philharmonic Society's gold medal award, presented to composers or musicians for distinguished service to music. Recipients included Arnold Bax, Beecham, Wood, Kreisler, Rachmaninoff, Toscanini, and Vladimir de Pachmann. Arabella Goddard had been the only other woman recipient.

Once the war was over, the National Gallery concerts came to a close and Hess began to finalize plans to return to America for a tour. Her long-awaited return to the American stage took place on October 12, 1946. John Steinway was there that Saturday afternoon and described the

atmosphere, electric with excitement and anticipation. The audience overflowed to the point that the Fire Department had to be called in to clear the passage ways. There was a standing ovation as soon as she made her entrance, making the reception surpass that of any of the big stars of the twentieth century, including Paderewski, Rachmaninoff, and Heifetz. Perhaps this was the public's way of acknowledging not just her artistry but also the contributions she had made to her country and to music during the war. Her program consisted of Bach's G major French Suite, Beethoven's Sonata Op. 110, and Brahms' F minor Sonata.

Olin Downes, who witnessed the concert, felt it was impossible to put into words the high artistry and mysticism Hess presented throughout the program. The public welcomed her with the same devotion as before the war. Hess, however, admitted feeling differently from the earlier tours:

Perhaps I shouldn't say it but it has been something of an effort to get back in the routine of giving concerts. All through the war I had so little time to think about myself and my playing that it is difficult to concentrate on it again. At the same time I learned to do in an hour what I had formerly considered the work of several days.24

During the 1949 season, Hess started to use scores while performing on stage and this confused and shocked the critics. Downes, who until this moment had nothing but praise for Hess, started writing critical reviews. Some say this was related to her use of printed music in performance. Hess must have been nervous about the response to this practice, as is shown in a letter to Helen Wright, a former pupil of Teresa Carreño:

24Ibid., 218.
Thank goodness, everyone seems to think I have played nice. . .excepting the New York critics, and as far as I am concerned they can drown in their baths. . .I was a little apprehensive about the reaction over here, but no one I care about seems to mind or even notice it.25

Soloists were expected to perform from memory, a vogue which became an unbreakable rule around the 1880's. In 1837 when Clara Schumann introduced the "Appassionata" in Berlin without music, Lescheitzky maintained that she was the first pianist in history to do so.26

The last five years of Hess' life were plagued with illness. She had a mild heart attack in 1960, which forced her to stop in mid-season. After another stroke, she never recovered complete motor and neurological functions. In spite of her illness, she performed in two or three concerts subsequently. Hess spent the little work time she had in teaching. Two of her most important students were Kovacevich and Yonty Solomon. Her health did not return, and she died in London on November 25, 1965.

Hess dedicated her life to furthering the cause of music, especially in her native land, at a time when there was an urgent need for this. Along with Clifford Curzon and Cutner Solomon, she is remembered as the pianist who led the way into a new school of playing during a time when bravura playing took precedence over all else.27 By devoting her entire life to the world of music, she not only won the hearts of her audience but also earned their life-long reverence.

25 Ibid., 227.
26 Ibid., 176.
27 Schoenberg, The Great Pianists, 422.
Clara Haskil, the Romanian pianist, also experienced the World Wars, and strived for a career during the same time as Hess, although with many disheartening results. She was born in Bucharest, on January 7, 1895, to a store owner and his wife, Isaac Haskil and Berthe Moscona. Clara Haskil was the second of three daughters, all of whom led professional musical lives in their adulthood. Having lost their father at a very young age, Clara and her sisters were brought up by their mother's family. The uncles assisted financially and one in particular, Avram Moscona, even took charge of the musical education of Clara, eventually taking her to Vienna and then to Paris for her studies. Haskil had a natural talent which was phenomenal; those who knew her marveled that from the first moment she would learn a piece, the music would be already in place. Over and over again, she was able to play note for note, complicated pieces which she had heard only once. In the later years, due to her life style and her ill health, she could not practice on a regular basis; even so, with months of absence from the piano, she succeeded in giving concerts to great acclaim.

Already at the age of three, Haskil played pieces by ear; she could reproduce what her older sister played on the piano without any problem. On one occasion a vocal teacher at the Bucharest Conservatory played a Mozart Sonatina for Haskil, who, not having heard it before, played it back and even transposed it for him. She started to play the piano at home, then in 1901 took lessons with a Mme. Zenide, who favored strict discipline and technical work, a regimen which Haskil did not appreciate. "Why hands
separate when I can play them already together?" retorted the young student.28

Avram Moscona quickly took the matter of Haskil's musical training into his own hands. A certified physician who chose not to practice medicine, he had the time to look after his niece whom he believed deserved and required professional training. Although Haskil's mother did not wish to be apart from her daughter, the young pianist left for Vienna in April of 1902, with a scholarship from the Queen of Romania. In Vienna, Haskil formed her first substantial and close relationship with a teacher, Richard Robert. Robert, a virtuoso pianist and sought-after professor, also taught, among others, Rudolf Serkin and George Szell. Clara Haskil had a close rapport with Robert and his wife, who did not have children and seemed to adopt the young pianist. Not much is written on her early studies in Vienna, but it is clear that she made phenomenal progress and was nourished with the core of classical music.29 As written in the Spycket biography, a student from Robert's studio, Thea Leischner, described Haskil's progress as "astounding."30 In the few years Haskil studied with him, she made her debut performance with much success. The critics unanimously marked Haskil as a musician far beyond the title of prodigy. At the same time, Haskil heard Joachim and Franz von Vecsey in concert and became immensely attracted to the violin, a situation that prompted her to study the instrument. Later in her life, when she collaborated

29 Spycket, 25.
30 Ibid.
extensively with Arthur Grumiaux, they apparently were able to exchange instruments, the pianist playing the violin and vice versa.\textsuperscript{31}

Haskil remained in Vienna for three years under the guidance of her beloved teacher, but alone with her uncle, away from her mother and two sisters. From Vienna, Moscona decided to take Haskil to Paris to further her education. This distanced her even more from her family and native country. The years in Paris were completely different from the ones in Vienna, where her talent had been recognized, and where Haskil had been fortunate to study with a caring and influential teacher. In Paris, Haskil came to study with a teacher who had begun his post at the Conservatory the same time as the student herself: Alfred Cortot. He was young, not as interested in teaching as one would have hoped, and his time was limited due to his own performance schedule. At the beginning of their relationship, in 1907, there was not much contact between the teacher and student, nor did the teacher have much respect for his student. Cortot found Haskil to be lacking in substantial training, with "much to learn."\textsuperscript{32} It took a few years before Cortot came to appreciate and support Haskil as a student and an artist. When Haskil finally won the Premier Prix for her studies in 1910, Cortot wrote in his congratulatory letter, "I'm happy to see all your work rewarded."\textsuperscript{33} Haskil turned to Joseph Morpain, a piano teacher, for support; he taught her and remained close to Haskil throughout her life. In the last years of Haskil's life, when Cortot was credited with

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., 42.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid., 40.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 45.
her training in Paris, she wrote a long letter to Morpain to acknowledge his importance in her career.\textsuperscript{34}

It was while she lived in Paris that the scoliosis which haunted Haskil the rest of her life became visible. From the photos of the artist later in life, we see a tall, thin and often frail woman, with her back bent. In 1914, Avram Moscona took her to Bereck where she spent four consecutive years in therapy, wearing a body cast which only allowed some freedom in her arms. In the four years she spent in this small town, Haskil had little contact with the music world and she remained very much alone. Due to the cumbersome body cast, regular practice was impossible. To make matters worse, Haskil lost her mother at the end of 1917 to cancer. The four years which happened to parallel the First World War were not only physically difficult but must have been morally taxing as well. She was never to mention the years in Bereck, and one can only imagine that they formed one of the hardest periods in her life. According to Michael Stegemann, this traumatic period left Haskil a different person, with insecurities and doubts that formed the very basis of her attitudes towards her playing later on in her life.\textsuperscript{35}

Despite having to deal with ill health and the death of her mother, Haskil was fortunate to meet music lovers who used their influence to bring her a few intermittent concerts. One special patron was the Princess de Polignac, who was the friend and supporter of many known musicians, such as Gounod and Fauré, and who had artists such as Arthur Rubinstein, Horowitz and Stravinsky play in her musical circle. Despite the many

\textsuperscript{34}Ibid. 246.

years spent in Paris, it was in Switzerland where she made her first mark. Through the help of many local people who had important connections to musical societies, Haskil did obtain a few concerts to keep her from completely losing contact with the concert stage.

Wherever Haskil performed, she was immediately accepted as a special artist. This is apparent in the following excerpts: the first account, written by Charles Koëlla of a concert in Lausanne on November 10, 1920; the second, a review from *Journal de Genève*, on April 15, 1921.

Leaning over the keyboard, removed from the audience, living only for herself, she seems to become one with the instrument. And the instrument becomes music and beauty. She has all the qualities, perhaps excessively. At times her overworked nerves are unable to retain the ardor of her temperament, and she takes off with crazy speeds.\(^{36}\)

A wondrous mind, capable of a rare, powerful memory and rapid concentration, Clara Haskil personifies the most absolute level of musical vocation, the most complete devotion... to the cause of music. ...Her modesty is proverbial; this modesty is not vanity in disguise: it is truthful, sincere, without any calculation. ...As one of them [the masters of the piano who came to the recital] said: "Music came to visit us."\(^{37}\)

Haskil's back, which had given her no further trouble since the time she left her treatment in Bereck, began to give her pain again in 1923, along with other health problems, such as bronchitis and indigestion. A possible return to the horrors of the back brace and memories of the four long years at Bereck must have come back to haunt her. Yet, throughout

\(^{36}\)Spycket, 71.
\(^{37}\)Ibid., 73.
her life, while dealing with her health and her loneliness, she had to remain strong and never gave up on the possibility of a real career. Haskil lived for music and despite the lack of concerts, she must have believed in her capacity to give and be welcomed by the public.

In 1924, a patron of music, Mme. Gélis, organized a tour of the U.S. for two of her close acquaintances, the singer Rose Armandie, and Clara Haskil. From the New York journal, the Musical Courier, we find the following assessment.

To say that Ms. Haskil plays with all her (soul) heart may seem ridiculously sentimental, there is however no other nor better way to express it. She seems to be searching for the inner and constantly deeper meaning of thoughts and sentiments found in the mind of the composer, through his music. Her playing reveals a huge and sympathetic understanding of human impulsions, of all the passions, successive desire, joy and sorrow, hope and despair that inspired the composition of the works she interprets. To hear Ms. Haskil interpret Schumann, Chopin, Ravel, is to be close to the revelation of the nature of these men, of the motives that made them write--and that made them write the way they did. It is no longer a simple concert, rather an intimate communion with genius.\(^{38}\)

Despite such a review, the tour did not bring great success; however, another tour was planned for the year after. In the winter of 1926, Haskil returned to the U.S. to give concerts with the Philadelphia Orchestra, where she performed with Stokowski. He was so taken with her playing that he wrote a letter on her behalf to his manager, Richard Copley, recommending Haskil for a concert with his orchestra in New York. As

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\(^{38}\)Ibid., 82.
was the case for the next three decades, such recommendations fell on deaf ears.

Even when she was unknown, Haskil met and at times performed with musicians of the highest of caliber. In 1926, when Pablo Casals came to play three concerts in Switzerland, Haskil was engaged to collaborate with him. She also performed with world-renowned artists such as Eugène Ysaye and George Enescu. One artist with whom she performed on a regular basis was Arthur Grumiaux. Together they recorded the complete set of Beethoven Violin and Piano Sonatas as well as several Sonatas by Mozart. This partnership lasted the duration of Haskil's lifetime. One review of their recording highlights their common points of interest: "These two musicians, neither cut out for mass audience appeal, were drawn to one another as friends and as collaborators."\(^{39}\)

In the next three decades, there were concerts few and far between, although they were mostly successful. Great musicians such as Casals, Stokowski, Dinu Lipatti, and Nikita Magaloff were enamored with her playing and were supportive of her during these years of inactivity. Yet still it took a long time, around thirty years, before Haskil became world-renowned. The biggest obstacles were the Second World War and her health. Although World War I helped bring women into the work force,\(^{40}\) war in general confined artists to his/her native countries. In addition, Haskil's Jewish heritage endangered her life and she had to flee Paris to take refuge in Switzerland. Here she was disconnected from the life she


had known, even from music itself.\textsuperscript{41} The two unfortunate elements, war and health, worked hand in hand to disrupt Haskil's life.

Besides these unavoidable circumstances, perhaps it was her extremely simplistic and clear approach to music-making that contradicted the musical taste of the period. Once a conductor asked Haskil whether her approach to Mozart was "rococo or perfumed." She answered back enraged, "I don't use perfume... I don't play Mozart, neither rococo nor perfumed--I play what he wrote and that is all!"\textsuperscript{42} Such was her approach to music in general and this transparency and sincerity, which may have detracted at first, is what finally brought the name of Haskil onto the world scene.

Another possible element that thwarted her career was her personality. Although her music was direct and simple, Haskil herself was very complicated, according to Michel Rossier, a very close friend. Haskil hated compliments, perhaps because she felt they were "insincere."\textsuperscript{43} The pianist said about herself, "Unfortunately, an extreme shyness, an inborn timidity made me afraid to meet people; and everyone used to say of me, 'She comes in creeping along the wall.'"\textsuperscript{44} The conductor L. de Vocht said of Haskil, "What a beautiful musician, but how unfortunate she is so unsociable."\textsuperscript{45} Rossier, a Swiss patron of the arts, formed a close relationship with Haskil when she came to Switzerland during the 1940s, and he remained her confidante and acted almost as her personal manager,  

\textsuperscript{42}Spycket, 209.
\textsuperscript{43}Ibid., 171.
\textsuperscript{44}Bernard Gavoty, Clara Haskil (Geneva, Switzerland: René Kister, 1963), 17.
\textsuperscript{45}Spycket, 91.
advising her and accompanying her to different musical events. In an interview given on October 6, 2000 in Vevey, Switzerland, he spoke of her complex and even secretive personality. Although she and Rossier had daily contact, it was three years before Haskil mentioned her two sisters to him.\textsuperscript{46}

The "inborn timidity" may have been the reason for the stage fright that stayed with her throughout her life. In many instances, Haskil would write about her obsession with her nerves. Sometimes she would walk on to a concert, as if "going to the guillotine."\textsuperscript{47} More often than not, Haskil believed the worst about her playing. Once after having performed with Ansermet, she believed him to be "furious" with her. However, such was not the case. Ansermet felt secure performing with Haskil, and he invited her to play with his orchestra on several occasions.\textsuperscript{48} Off-stage, though, she lacked confidence in her playing.

This lack of self-confidence led her to commit certain unthinkable acts. Even in times when concerts were scarce, if she did not feel good about a concert, she had no qualms about cancelling at the last moment. Infrequent performances makes each concert a grandiose event, even if the venue is to play for the local public in a small town. On one occasion,\textsuperscript{49} Haskil decided to cancel a performance with an orchestra the very morning of the concert. Although she was finally persuaded to carry on the concert, the conductor did not hire Haskil again. Rossier confirmed that Haskil often had to be coerced into playing the concerts that she wished to cancel.

\textsuperscript{46} Michel Rossier. interview with author, Vevey, Switzerland, 6 October 2000
\textsuperscript{47} Spycket, 74.
\textsuperscript{48} ibid., 72.
\textsuperscript{49} In the biography by Spycket, the author does not mention the date.
at the last minute and that this reputation preceded her among concert organizers, resulting in fewer invitations to perform.\textsuperscript{50}

The abundance of insecurity may also be traced back to her childhood, during which one sees much sacrifice on the part of the young child. At the age of seven she was forced to leave her only parent to go to Vienna, then to leave her "second family" to go to Paris. In Paris, she grew up in a world of adults, with little contact with children her own age; it was her uncle who schooled her. This uncle also had a difficult and complicated character. Having obtained his medical degree, Avram Moscona lost confidence in his abilities and stopped practicing medicine. He believed strongly in Haskil's talent, but he was unaware of the different needs of a phenomenal but very young pianist. He could not help her build her confidence, which in turn would have helped her face the public. Late in her life, Haskil remarked that "Looking back on a life as episodic and eventful as mine, and in spite of precious friendships, the dominant feeling I have is one of solitude. In my youth, and even in the world of music, I always felt that I was alone."\textsuperscript{51}

Haskil held the highest of musical standards, but she felt she did not always meet them. While the public and her friends spoke of great success, often she described her playing as "piggish."\textsuperscript{52} At the same time, she felt misled by certain people, and this must have made her bitter after a while. As was often the case, great concerts generated a fervent excitement, yet the next morning "the thousands of promises" made by the organizers

\textsuperscript{50}Rossier, interview.
\textsuperscript{51}Gavoty, 15.
\textsuperscript{52}Spycket, 159.
became in reality "too vague to speak of."

She wrote in 1924, "Despite the insistence of Mme. B. and my success in Brussels, they did not hire me." It is little wonder that she detested what seemed to her false compliments and promises. Imagine the disappointments, when history repeats itself not once or twice but year after year. Fortunately, despite the doubt, disappointment and ill health, she persevered, due in large measure to those friends around her who believed in her genius.

How often did she perform? In the early 1930's she played only about ten concerts a year, mostly in Switzerland. She continued to play and meet other musicians through different patrons' musical circles. On September 27, 1939, Haskil wrote to her dear friend, fellow Romanian Dinu Lipatti:

My sister is at Rennes with the orchestra [National Orchestra which Jeanne her sister had joined], she tells me they have decided that no foreigners will play at the radio--what to say? What to do? What activity to start? Wasn't my sister wise? Aren't I stupid. You can't disagree with me! Tell me where to go--where is my home. Nowhere--perhaps in the other world. Here, all my concerts have been canceled--there remains one in Vevey, in December and another in Lausanne in January.

Curiously enough, when concerts were few in coming and she might have turned to teaching to support herself, Haskil did not feel capable of acting as professor. Even later, when she was well known, young musicians would come to her for advice and she would talk with them, yet

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53 Ibid., 171.
54 Ibid., 79.
55 Ibid., 119.
she could not act the part of the "teacher." According to Rossier, the hardship she had faced in her life tainted her views and she could not enthusiastically encourage young musicians.

Throughout these difficult years, Haskil's friends sustained her in more than one manner. One might say that for close to fifty years, she led the life of a vagabond; she had little family around her, and her music and a handful of close friends were her only support. Thanks to such friends, she was always given lodging, and they supported her financially as well as professionally. When she suffered from headaches and eye problems in 1942, and it was discovered that she had a tumor pressing on the optic nerve, which needed to be operated on, it was her friends who collected the money necessary for the operation. Rossier was instrumental in obtaining Swiss citizenship for Haskil, which allowed for easy access to the rest of Europe during and after the Second World War. Such friends remained Haskil's supporters throughout their lives, even after her death.

In the interview, Rossier mentions the contract Haskil had with the BBC in 1947 as an important turning point in Haskil's career. Due to the war, people had lost contact with each another. Some of the public who had known Haskil may have not known the whereabouts of the artist. Thanks to the BBC broadcast, which had high listenership around Europe during the war, the name of Haskil circulated. In 1950, she obtained a set of tours in Holland, where she was already well-known. This time, there were three trips, of 22 concerts; the tour brought about more rave reviews. In 1951, concerts picked up at a faster pace. The four concerts she gave at

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56 Ibid., 149.
57 Rossier interview.
La Scala in Milan had an "absolutely crazy success," according to the artist. Although Haskil had studied at the Paris Conservatory, up to this time the French public and critics gave her very little recognition. All this changed in December 1951, when she performed at the Salle Gaveau; this time, Mlle. Gélis, a very close friend, did everything in her power to alert the critics and create as much publicity as possible. The public came and so did the critics. As one review notes,

"Her playing is all refinement, with a limited dynamic range that gives however the illusion of being wide thanks to a dosage of contrasts. . . She does not stand out by the means of strength, but with character; she does not shine, she radiates, she spreads the very grace of music."

In 1952, she gave around 70 concerts, one of which was the Beethoven 4th Concerto with von Karajan in Vienna. She wrote her sister Jeanne on October 29, "The success at Vienna was triumphant. After the first movement, the entire audience (2000 people) clapped for 3-4 minutes. Karajan said . . . he never saw such a success of a soloist in Vienna. I am asked back for next season and even for June. An important person from Columbia has heard me and would like to have me record with them. . . ."

Finally, in her mid-fifties, Haskil received her deserved recognition.

Due to the long years of anonymity, once Haskil achieved the fame and success she would question whether it would be taken away from her. This happened even when she was performing with world-renowned conductors such as Kubelik, Monteux, Ansermet, Celibidache, Szell, and

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58 Spycket. 193.
59 Ibid., 196.
Giulini. "I have to go to Israel and, before and after, concerts as it is the case every year--Germany, Italy, England, etc. . .Luckily I am still busy. I keep asking myself for how much longer."60

The success continued. In the fall of 1956, she performed in New York and Boston. In Boston, she performed the Beethoven 4th Piano Concerto with Charles Munch and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Munch wrote, "In remembrance of the first and so moving triumph of my dear friend Clara Haskil . . .in the United States. . .Hoping to make 'music' with her very often--and [I] hope to hear her sonority and to be deeply moved by her sincerity."61 Everywhere she performed, thundering success and adoring public, and rightfully, more engagements followed her. The hardship of travel aggravated by her poor health finally caught up with her, and for the next couple of years Haskil was forced to cancel concerts. Fortunately, in 1959, she regained her strength and performed again, with the best conductors: Otto Klemperer, Constantin Silvestri, Carlo Maria Giulini, Colin Davis, Joseph Keilberth, and Roberto Benzi. She was also able to continue her special collaboration with Arthur Grumiaux.

Although Haskil had continual health problems, her death came by a tragic accident. She fell head first at a train station, fracturing her skull. She died in a nursing home, the next day, on December 7, 1960.

Today, Haskil is known to the public as an important Mozart player, despite the fact that in her younger years, she performed Romantic works as well as modern. It may be difficult to imagine that she was asked to perform Rachmaninoff's Second and Brahms' Second Concertos in her
younger days. It was only in her mid thirties that she began performing
Mozart Concertos in public. By the time her fame caught up with her,
Haskil was named the Mozart champion. "The orchestra and the press have
in a way declared me to be the deputy of Mozart on earth," she wrote after
a concert in Salzburg in 1952. 62 The transparency in her playing, the
respect she held for compositions, the balance she achieved when
performing with orchestras and instrumentalists alike, were all elements
which put her in a class of her own. At the same time, there was the
pulsation and inner flow which remained an integral part of her
performance throughout. 63 As Gavoty writes, "In all honesty, I cannot
compare her with anyone else." 64 Although Haskil's playing suited
Mozart's writing well, according to Rossier, it was a marketing tool used
by record companies and concert organizers to promote Haskil as the
authority on Mozart. 65 This limited access to a single composer disturbed
the artist and, had she been asked to play a Brahms concerto, Rossier
believes she would have accepted happily. Haskil did not perform much
Chopin, but she still practiced his works and the works of others in the
privacy of her home.

Today, there remain only a few who still remember the playing of
Clara Haskil. Fortunately, we have examples of her playing on disk. The
bulk of her recordings date from the 1950s onward. She has recorded the
repertoire which made her famous, notably, Mozart's Concertos, some of
Mozart's Violin and Piano Sonatas, Beethoven's Complete Violin Sonatas,

62 Stegemann, 45.
63 ibid.
64 Gavoty, 6.
65 Rossier interview.
Beethoven's Concertos No. 3 and 4. Haskil did not hold a large repertoire, probably because she was obliged to move from place to place, and her failing health limited time for practice. When she finally had a name, Haskil spent almost all her time on the road. As she said herself, "One's career, you know, is a traveling bag heavy with musical scores, full of railway stations, concert halls and faces."\(^{66}\)

She reached the height of her career only in her fifties. It is most unfortunate that fame came when she was at the end of her life, despite the best efforts of herself and others. Haskil was frail in body, alone in the world, and had a personality which discouraged flattery and all that was superficial. However, the perception that she was fragile may only be in reference to body. In spirit, she had perseverance, resilience, and deep faith in her talent. For Clara Haskil, her music and only the truest of friendship, which withstood the trial of time and ordeals, mattered. She had no possessions in the world besides her music. Therefore, it was even more urgent that the world discover her talent. Although she did not care to teach others, her legacy can be felt in today's artists, especially "Mozart pianists" such as Murray Perahia, Mitsuko Uchida, and Maria-João Pires, the latter whose playing has been compared to that of Haskil.\(^{67}\) Luckily for the history of performing artists, Haskil was discovered, even if late in life.

\(^{66}\)Gavoty, 15.
CHAPTER 3: Alicia de Larrocha and Martha Argerich

Among contemporary pianists today, two infinitely different performers have been chosen for the purpose of this paper: Alicia De Larrocha and Martha Argerich. The two pianists, one from Spain, the other from Argentina, have led impressive careers, but for different reasons. The contrast in their personality is also reflected in the repertoire they have chosen to play.

When one thinks of Spanish piano music one name immediately comes to mind, Alicia de Larrocha. Discovered world-wide comparatively late in her life, in the 1960s, de Larrocha has steadfastly maintained her place as the queen of Spanish music. She was born to a musical family on May 23, 1923 in Barcelona, where her mother and aunt had studied piano with Granados. Her aunt, who encouraged and taught de Larrocha from the time the child was three, remained a strong influence throughout de Larrocha’s career. It was the aunt who brought de Larrocha for lessons at Frank Marshall Academy, where she herself taught. At first, Frank Marshall felt that de Larrocha was too young to start lessons, but along with an assistant he began teaching the girl. In an atmosphere close to that of a family—the Marshalls treated de Larrocha as the child they never had, as did Robert with Clara Haskil—she grew up without any pressure to make a career, although she started to perform little by little in front of small groups of people. She made her public debut at the age of 5, and later, at the age of eleven, was a soloist with the Orquesta Sinfonica de Madrid in Mozart's Coronation Concerto. De Larrocha was given the opportunity to
perform in her youth, but was not overwhelmed with a taxing concert schedule as one sees in some other cases. She attributes the wisdom of controlling her early years to her musical family, who were all too aware of "the marketplace," as de Larrocha refers to a concert career.\footnote{David Dubal, \textit{Reflections from the Keyboard: The World of the Concert Pianist} (Summit Books, 1984), 135.}

De Larrocha speaks of Marshall with much sentiment and love. Besides the aunt who nurtured de Larrocha throughout the artist's life, Marshall remained her central teacher until the time of the Spanish Revolution. De Larrocha reminisces that:

he was very flexible. He understood the most current trends and ideas in music and had a musical vision he adapted to each pupil. He never said, 'Do this way because I say so.' His approach was to offer advice, but suggest that a student follow it only if the musical result was right and convincing. This way he developed the personality of each pianist. Anything is possible if the end result is musical.\footnote{Olga Llano Kuehl, "Alicia de Larrocha," \textit{Clavier} (April 1982): 14.}

Marshall took over the Granados Academy when the young composer/pianist Enrique Granados passed away in an accident. He seems to have been a conscientious teacher who based de Larrocha's training on Bach, Mozart, Scarlatti, and Schumann, the latter two the favorite of Granados, and made up extension exercises as well as adapted Czerny exercises to strengthen the unusually small hand. Although de Larrocha is considered the modern-day champion of Spanish music, her early training
was based entirely on the Classics. It was not until much later, at age 15, that she was allowed to study Spanish music.³

Much has been said of de Larrocha's hand and its size. Although born with a small hand, through extension exercises and "creatively" rearranged notes, she has performed the grandest of the piano repertoire, including the Rachmaninoff Piano Concerto #3 and Brahms Piano Concerto #2. "I have always done stretching exercises; and my fifth finger seemed to grow even after I matured... At any age a pianist can work at improving his stretch." However, she adds that typically, "A pianist should not be obsessed with the hand... instead he must concentrate on the music."⁴

Marshall had contact with important musical figures and introduced them to the Academy. De Larrocha met several leading musicians, notably Arthur Rubinstein, a close friend of Marshall, as well as Wilhelm Kempf, Emil von Sauer, and Joaquín Turina. As a child, de Larrocha played for Rubinstein, who spoke highly of her and remains her "idol" even to this day. As mentioned earlier, she made her orchestral debut at the age of eleven performing the Mozart Coronation Concerto with Enrique Fernández Arbós. As is well known, de Larrocha has recorded as well as performed the bulk of Mozart sonatas and concertos throughout her well-established career. The love for the Classics was planted early in her training.

De Larrocha suffered, as did all Spaniards, during the Spanish Civil War. Already before the war, she had become Marshall's assistant teacher

⁴Llano Kuehl, 14.
at his Academy, but Marshall had to flee the country for it was dangerous times for all leading figures. Many of her relatives and friends were killed during this horrifying time; she worked on her own but alongside her faithful aunt, to whom she turned for occasional advice. After the Civil War de Larrocha started to concertize around Spain, but World War II kept her from performing in the rest of Europe. Only in 1947 did de Larrocha perform elsewhere in Europe, in cities such as Paris, London, Edinburgh, Geneva, Lausanne, and Brussels. In 1950, de Larrocha married Juan Torra, a pianist and teacher from the Academy. Torra's encouragement of his wife's career is one important factor that helped sustain de Larrocha in her profession. When Marshall died in 1959, the couple took over the direction of the school, and de Larrocha still remains head of the institution.

De Larrocha made her U.S. debut with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in 1954, under the baton of Alfred Wallenstein. The year after, de Larrocha made her New York debut at Town Hall. Curiously enough, between 1955 and 1965 she performed very little, both in Europe and in the U.S., while producing several recordings which also reached the States. It was the spread of her recordings in the U.S. which later led to her success in America, as music lovers and critics alike familiarized themselves with Spanish piano music and its champion. Thanks to her recordings, Herbert Breslin, a New York publicity agent, arranged for a tour for de Larrocha in 1965. From henceforth, she became a world-renowned concert artist. When de Larrocha performed in New York in 1966, Harold Schoenberg wrote that she was "pianistically flawless, with
infallible fingers, brilliant sonorities, steady rhythm, everything. "5 Months later, the same well-known critic wrote, "She knew just when to introduce a touch of rhythmic variety, just when to color an otherwise bleak phrase, just when to adjust to a solo passage in the orchestra. . . . She is a wonderful pianist, and more: she is an artist."6

De Lara moves that she never sought a career, certainly never one of such stature as she carries today. The rise to fame was as much a surprise to her as to others. "I never in my life thought about, nor expected to be in this concert life that takes me continually from one place to the other. I was born into a musical family with music around all the time. That was my life, but I never sought to have all this. What I really enjoy is being by myself, practicing, analyzing, listening. That is my life; that is music."7

Today, in her late 70s, de Lara has maintained her status as one of the most well-known artists in the world. The Spanish government has honored her with the Medall of oro for artistic merit from Barcelona, and the Gold Medal from the Spanish National Assembly. Unquestionably the champion of Spanish music in the present day, she is also recognized for her work with Mozart's output, having completed a recording of all the sonatas and now working towards the completion of the concertos. Despite all the honors de Lara says, "I have never heard a single record about

which I could say 'O.K., this is it.' I am a typical Gemini with two people inside of me who are always fighting."\(^8\)

De Larrocha has performed Spanish music with dignity, fervor, and passion, as well as love, as perhaps only a Spaniard could express. She is convinced that Spanish music demands the same artistry as playing any other music. "There are many Spanish musicians who do not play Spanish music well. It is important to know the character of the people, and from the people, you will understand the music."\(^9\) Critics and the public have been truly appreciative of her performance of the Spanish repertoire. Even as far back as 1955, when she debuted in New York, she made her mark with Spanish music. As Kolodin notes in the *Saturday Review*, April 30, 1955, "Miss de Larrocha played the music of such composers of her native Spain as Granados, Albeniz, and Surinach with crisp rhythm, stylistic assurance, and the kind of flexibility in melodic statement that is hard for an outsider to simulate."\(^10\)

De Larrocha feels a natural bond to Spanish music and plays it with authority. Especially at the time of de Larrocha's American debut, Spanish music became a vehicle with which to propel her career. De Larrocha performed Manuel de Falla's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* at Carnegie Hall with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1966. In the same year, she performed the four books of Albeniz's *Iberia* Suite in New York. In 1967, she gave a commemorative recital for the 100th anniversary of Granados's birth at Carnegie Hall, devoted entirely to his works. Throughout the

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8Montparker, 8.
9Ibid.
years de Larrocha continued to produce Spanish programs not only in concerts but through recordings, for which she has won several Grammy Awards: two for separate recordings of Albeniz's *Iberia*, and for Granados' *Goyescas*, which also won the Grand Prix du Disque.

The following record reviews point to the high regards critics held for de Larrocha's playing: the first, of Granados' *Goyescas* and *Escenas románticas*; and the second, of Soler sonatas.

The playing has the widest range of feeling and color and conveys a special kind of passionate spontaneity. . .other pieces offer immense variety of characterization and the recital ends with an exciting Zapateado to show the sparkling precision of the pianist's natural virtuosity.\(^{11}\)

Each sonata [of Soler] is carefully planned in terms of its dynamic scale, contrast pattern, ornamentation growth, and needed variety of articulation. . .de Larrocha finds rhythmic syncopation in the most wonderful places: Her pointillistic texture allows miraculous tiny details to be shot into relief. In R. 89. . .she vivaciously and cinematically seems to change pianos from one phrase to the next. In R.88 de Larrocha takes over the field with a demoniac momentum. Her most fascinating performance might be R. 90, in which she controls an unbelievable number of simultaneous sound levels.\(^{12}\)

Besides the Spanish repertoire, de Larrocha has performed and recorded much of the Romantic literature, including Chopin and Schumann as well as Ravel and Fauré. A review of a performance of the Ravel Concerto in G major drew the following comments. "De Larrocha played


with utmost simplicity and, as a result, with utmost eloquence the miraculous Adagio. . .This is not to say that the outer movements didn't snap, crackle, and pop with their wonted electricity."13 De Larrocha has also made numerous Mozart recordings and is asked time and time again to perform Mozart Concertos; she has been asked back to the Mostly Mozart Festival at Lincoln Center over many decades. When de Larrocha performs Mozart, one marvels at the clarity of sound, the absolute solidity of her timing and presence, and the feeling that she alone could, if needed, carry on the performance. It is a picture of complete self-reliance, quite different from that of Uchida, for example, for whom Mozart concertos represent the most intimate of chamber music-making.14

Carol Montparker, who writes for Clavier magazine and interviewed the artist, had this to say of the Mozart Concerto K. 595 in B-flat, performed at the Mostly Mozart Festival in 1995:

Her Mozart had everything from beautifully shaped phrases and lustrous melodic lines to difficult passages that she performed with seeming nonchalance, but with no detail sacrificed. The only puzzlement was that her face and body hardly reflects the joy that is apparent in her playing. . .the music had the requisite gladness, drama, and congeniality. De Larrocha's approach is modest and direct, with no guile, affectation, or razzle-dazzle.15

Certainly, what one seems to appreciate the most in de Larrocha's playing is her clarity and control of the tones and passages, as well as her preference for simplicity of line, over complications and display of

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15Montparker, 7.
emotions. At times, however, the public and the critics alike have judged this efficient handling of passages as bordering on complacency. The following excerpt from *Gramophone* explains this in some detail.

These are well-organized Mozart performances. De Larrocha is a vastly experienced artist who has clearly given careful attention to tempo, texture and ornamentation, and the result is always pleasing. So, on the whole is the clear and dryish piano sound. . .[but] this issue is also not very exciting. . .De Larrocha while aiming at impeccable style, has lost the spontaneity needed to bring the music fully to life. De Larrocha's playing is unfailingly clean and secure. . .[yet] there is something missing, and the neutrality of the recorded sound contributes to this impression.16

David Frost, a record producer who has worked closely with de Larrocha, explains the different approach she takes when playing Mozart as opposed to Spanish repertoire: "She likes to analyze, particularly when she's playing Mozart. In Spanish music she allows herself to go with the flow."17 Every artist uses his/her intuition, knowledge, and background in presenting different works. De Larrocha's outlook on Mozart seems to be that of Classic elegance.

In recent years, de Larrocha has felt the pressure of career growing heavier and heavier. According to a *New York Times* interview of 1995, de Larrocha still gives more than 40 concerts and recitals a year, even though, she claims her hands are shrinking. "I used to reach a tenth, now,

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a ninth, with some difficulty."\(^{18}\) She has even admitted to being on the verge of collapse. As she noted the same year, "Picture a lemon that has already been squeezed for all its juice, and then someone still wants to squeeze to get more; that lemon is me. This year I have more concerts than ever because of concerns that I will retire."\(^{19}\)

Indeed, de Larrocha has faced a great mountain of difficulties not only as a concertizing artist but specifically as a woman concert artist, and has carried the burden of guilt for having had a family as well as a flourishing career. De Larrocha goes so far as to say that "I never felt like a good mother or a good wife, I've never felt like a good anything, because doing many things means you're not doing any one of them right."\(^{20}\) De Larrocha feels she has not fulfilled her duties as a mother and that brings her great pain. Even recently, she recalled the time when her son was one month old and she had to make a tour of South America. One can imagine this is but one of several occasions when such difficult departures may have been necessary. However, one does not always have control over concert schedules; refusal of an engagement, especially at the beginning of one's career, is practically unthinkable.

The sacrifices one must make, especially as a woman artist, are overwhelming, yet, if one is to survive in the music world, choices must be made. De Larrocha, a Spaniard for whom the sense of duty as a mother must be especially great, feels she has neglected her children in their upbringing, something which "a mother has to do," in her opinion. Indeed,

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\(^{19}\) Montparker, 7.

\(^{20}\) Dubal, 137.
her response to the question, "Why is it so difficult for a women to have a career?" states her beliefs strongly. It is "because our position in social life and our responsibilities are very, very big and very important, and we have so many responsibilities."\(^{21}\)

Who, then, assisted her with the family? Throughout her adult life, it was her husband who had supported her, managed her and their family. It is only too clear that she was deeply in love with him and appreciated him profoundly. "He gave order to my life. Without pressuring me, he organized my programs, itineraries, schedules, and all my affairs. After 14 years without him, I am still lost."\(^{22}\) It is not difficult to understand that she canceled the first part of her fall tour when her husband fell gravely ill in 1982.\(^{23}\) It was rumored that his death put her in a deep depression. One can only speculate that it is music that helped her carry on. As she said in an interview, "If I play it's because I need it for myself."\(^{24}\)

In many ways, de Larrocha has had a "natural" or what one may call a "normal" life, at least until her name became widely known in the 1960s. She had "fallen in love" with her husband, she had children, and she did not expect to have a huge career. Almost with naïveté she thanks her lucky star--and her husband.

I think it was a matter of luck. Luck because I never did anything to get all the things I have. And I fell in love, and I got married. I did not think about whether it was good or bad for my music. That's all. And it happens that my late husband

\(^{21}\)Ibid., 138.
\(^{22}\)Montparker, 9.
\(^{23}\)Llano Kuehl, 14.
\(^{24}\)Dubal, 137.
was a fantastic husband, and he was the one who was pushing me. Many things I didn't want to do because of my children. I wanted to stay at home with my babies, and he was really the one who helped me with the home problems and the children's problems—even musical problems, because I am quite a lazy person, and there are programs to think about, letters to write. He always did those things. It's just luck. And then there were people who were interested in me—I don't know why—but things were coming my way. I was just surprised—surprised, that's all.25

Today, one feels that de Larrocha is at the threshold of retirement. She maintains her regal posture as she keeps up a demanding career yet perhaps the drive within, that which had been full of spontaneity, sparkle and color, may be gradually diminishing with the coming of age. She guards the name and the stature, yet one senses a great disillusion towards this grand career which has taken her all over the world. "The rest is not music. This life of touring is business. And there are moments when I am disgusted by the way that art and music are turned into a way for everyone to make money."26 However true it may seem at times, she can still forget about "the rest" when she is led by the music and its sounds when performing. As Donald Henahan wrote in the New York Times in 1991, "She has reached a point in her artistic development and in her career that any musician would envy. Attention no longer needs to be drawn to her virtuosity, long since a given in her profession—that she is known as a Granados specialist would alone testify to that. Furthermore, like Arthur Rubinstein, Rudolf Serkin, and a few others, the tiny Spanish artist has

25Dubal. 136.
26Montparker. 7.
drawn a fond audience that hangs on her every phrase." 27 When de Larrocha retires, the public will remember her for the prime years when she performed Spanish music, bearing its mystery, passion, and exoticism, and for the crystal clarity she brought to her performances of the Classics.

Whereas de Larrocha had a late start in her career as a concert pianist, Martha Argerich was in her mid-20's when she created a furor by winning the 1965 Chopin Competition. Today, Argerich holds an enviable place in the world of pianists as one of the most sought-after concert artists. Certainly the name Martha Argerich is closely tied to that of the Warsaw Chopin Competition, for she had made an everlasting impression at this particularly important and coveted event, leading some to claim that no greater pianist had ever been heard in the competition. She was already known to her native Argentina as a phenomenal talent at the age of eight; Argerich was surprising everyone around her with her virtuosic tendencies, which seemed to spring forth naturally from her. Eugene List, who had been on tour in Argentina, heard the young Argerich and was astonished by her natural abilities at the piano. "Even then, she showed the sort of facility that was to make her a living legend. Already she spun off octaves like single notes." 28 Today, she is among the top pianists worldwide. Her intense temperament and talent which was encouraged by a strict training has led to a successful career in which her presence is craved by the public the world over.

Argerich was born on June 5, 1941 in Buenos Aires, to two foreign-service professionals. Argerich must have been a lively and talented child,

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for she was attending a kindergarten with a competitive program at the age of two-and-a-half. It was at this school where her musical talent was discovered. One day, one of her older classmates dared that she could not play the piano. Without any qualms, or any training, the two-and-a-half year old went to the piano and played one of the tunes that their teacher had been playing in their class.

Strangely, perhaps for the public, Argerich has insisted that she does not welcome this profession nor the adoration of the public, which demands more of her appearances. In her own words, she says, "I love very much to play the piano, but I don't like to be a pianist." In fact, the life of this brightest of bright artists seems to suggest a career born out of encouragement from outsiders, rather than from the artist herself. The conflict which is deeply rooted has always been with her and surfaces throughout her career. However, despite it all, she has managed to maintain one of the most important places in the world of performing arts, and the public and the media cannot get their fill to this day.

Argerich started lessons with Ernestine C. de Kussrow, who taught her students to play by ear. Leaving de Kussrow after two years of study, the young student encountered her first important teacher, the well-known Italian pedagogue, Vincenzo Scaramuzza. Argerich acknowledges his genius as a teacher but admits that she did not always follow what he had to say. Although Argerich notes that Scaramuzza's "teaching style was very Italian, very much oriented towards cantabile, breathing, of course weight, and also anatomical things," it seems his methods of teaching did not lie well with the talented student, who recalls being very intimidated, to the

point of being almost brought to tears.\textsuperscript{30} Argerich made her professional debut in 1949, at the age of eight, in a Buenos Aires concert hall, where she played Mozart's Piano Concerto in D Minor and Beethoven's Piano Concerto in C Major.

Later on, Argerich also took lessons with world-renowned pianists, namely Nikita Magaloff, Benedetto Michelangeli, Stefan Askenase, and Madeleine Lipatti, the widow of the celebrated Romanian pianist and teacher, Dinu Lipatti. In an interview with Jura Margulis, the young concert pianist, for the Call Project in April 1997, Argerich states that she felt misunderstood by Lipatti when the teacher told her, "You don't want people to love you, you play like you're on a drowning boat in the midst of a terrible storm." Argerich took refuge in a remark by Nikita Magaloff to Lipatti: "Madeleine, you can't make a race horse trot."\textsuperscript{31} One can easily understand and sympathize with the artist when she is told to tame the core of her artistry for the sake of the "love of the public."

The first and perhaps the only teacher she loved and respected completely for his teaching as well as his playing was Friedrich Gulda. Gulda was a teacher who nurtured independent thinking, perhaps one of the reasons why Argerich admired him so much. She recalls his teaching as being "democratic," for he would record her lessons then afterwards ask her to critique her own playing.\textsuperscript{32} One can imagine that through such training she came to learn to think for herself, to be able to express herself, and to trust her decisions. Gulda was very aware of her capabilities and


\textsuperscript{31}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{32}Elder, "Martha Argerich." 23.
challenged her to use her full potential. Noticing that she was not as productive as usual, he asked her to learn Gaspard de la nuit of Ravel and the Abegg Variations of Schumann in five days; she was able to accomplish this difficult feat without any hardship.

Already at the age of 16, Argerich won both the Busoni and the Geneva International Competitions. The wisdom behind entering and winning competitions at a young age has been questioned by many musicians. Some believe students ought to be allowed to expand their repertoire, to have the freedom to grow musically and personally and not to be hindered by professionalism before a certain age. If one wins an international competition, he/she is thrown not only into a sudden onslaught of concerts, which in themselves are exhausting and frighteningly lonely, but also into the business side of the musical world. In the music business, unfortunately, the sanity of the performer is not always taken into account. Argerich undoubtedly showed brilliance and the capability to dazzle an audience even before the age of sixteen. Through winning international competitions, she was put on the road to exhibit her amazing talent.

Perhaps as the result of much too much exposure at an early age, for some three years between the age of twenty and twenty-three Argerich hardly touched the piano. In the midst of this crisis, Argerich married the conductor Liang-Sheng Chen. But shortly before their daughter was born, in 1964, the couple separated and later divorced. Her only reported music-related activities during this period were a few lessons taken over one and a half years in Italy with the reclusive Michelangeli, with whom she worked
on one piece. So deep was her concern that Argerich even considered looking for another career during this bleak time, that of a secretary.

Unlike the other five artists, Argerich has repeatedly said that she did not want a career as a concert pianist. She would have simply wanted to play the piano, rather than to make a career of it. The immense pressure applied by the family and the dense concert schedule went against the artist's wishes. The peculiar tension between the love she had for playing the piano and the strains of a professional life may have led to the crisis mentioned above. In the artist's own words she has mentioned that she felt "empty": "I wasn't enjoying [my career] either as an artist or a person."33 This one dark moment in Argerich's life hints at the emotional strain she must have felt as she was growing up. "When you have been all your life put into a frame of being a pianist, of being a musician in spite of yourself, it is unfair for the rest of your personality."34

Gieseking heard Argerich play when she was 8 years old and told her parents to "leave her in peace."35 But her parents did not heed Gieseking's advice. Argerich's mother urged her to enter the Queen Elizabeth competition in 1964, one month after Argerich gave birth to her first child; this was a time when Argerich had hardly played the piano for a period of three years. Curiously, Argerich described one childhood incident when she pushed her mother away from the piano, an instrument which Argerich jealously guarded as her own; she referred to the incident as the time when "our conflicts. . .began. . ."36 This phrase may allude to

33Batistick, 29.
34Elder, "Martha Argerich," 23.
35Ibid., 22.
36Ibid.
the fact that their conflicts continued in later years. In any case, one can draw the conclusion that had it not been for the mother, Argerich might have pursued another career. Argerich told Jura Margulis in her interview that her mother "always wanted the best," and that "she was not herself a musician, but she knew what was the best thing to do." Upon viewing the artist's life, one can see that Argerich has understood and accepted the "best wishes" of her mother.

In the midst of this hopeless period during which she wandered away from the piano, Argerich was guided by two people who gradually helped her find the desire and the confidence to play again. It was in Brussels in 1964 when she entered the Queen Elizabeth Competition that Argerich met Stefan Askenase and his wife. Argerich took lessons from Askenase, but she refers to Askenase's wife as the person who helped her come out of her crisis. According to Argerich, Mme. Askenase "had something very special, like a sun." With the help of the Askenases, Argerich started performing again and the next year, early 1965, won the first prize at the Chopin Competition. Since then, Argerich has regularly performed concerts, except for a period recently in the mid 1990s when she was suffering from life-threatening melanoma.

What entices the public and media alike to such frenzy over this artist? Argerich limits the number of concerts, leads a personal life that she keeps carefully hidden especially from the journalists. Argerich is an artist whom the world describes as a "fireball." She has also been described as "incendiary," "electrifying," and even "crazed," and with

37 Batistick, 28.
38 Ibid. 29.
strong phrases such as "blow-torch incandescence," "leonine energy," "hell-bent fervor," "vertiginous, fire-spitting bravura," and "raw passion." If one takes, for example, her famous rendering of Prokofiev Third Piano Concerto with the Berlin Philharmonic and Claudio Abbado, it is the relentless energy and absolutely unshakable technique which jolts the listener.\textsuperscript{39} Her octave passages are legendary and she uses the electrifying touch at the tip of her fingers to light up the imagination of the performer and listener alike.

On her phenomenal technique alone, colleagues and critics have written a great deal. Andre Previn told the \textit{People} interviewers in April 7, 1980, "Martha has one of the most astounding techniques that I have ever heard, and that includes Vladimir Horowitz. She has a total grasp of what she's playing and she's phenomenally exciting to hear."\textsuperscript{40} Horowitz himself was impressed by her gifts, and may have been bewitched by her incredible natural talent, as is the rest of the world. "Argerich has no limits," Richard Dyer, a music critic for \textit{The Boston Globe}, declared in a review of her rendition of Prokofiev's Third Piano Concerto at Tanglewood, on August 24, 1998. Dyer wrote that "she pounces on the keyboard like a cat--she is blindingly quick, unerring in aim and leap. Her playing has dynamism, precision, variety of articulation, and mordancy; musically speaking, it is straightforward but never mechanical."\textsuperscript{41} The renowned pianist and the father of her third daughter, Steven Kovacevich,
states very matter of factly, as the whole world seems to agree, that Argerich "has an ease that is simply beyond comprehension."42

Just as there has been much talk of Argerich's virtuosity, there has also been criticism for the lack of control in her tempo and power. The precision of the incredibly fast fingers at times loses its head, spurting at a speed that may seem unacceptable to many; at times, she give the impression that she is no longer in control of her nerves. The combination of the everpresent intuitive musicality and the unlimited technical facilities at times verges on what Anthony Tommasini refers to as a style that is "undisciplined, flighty, chaotic, hyper kinetic, [and] unstable."43 Such comments have surfaced from time to time, as they did at the Edinburgh Festival, when a review characterized her playing as "smoke without fire."44 In the fall of 1979, Harold Schoenberg reviewed a performance of the Mozart Concerto in C, K. 503, and called it "rather superficial"--a statement that clearly upset the pianist. Certainly there have been countless admirers, but also those who agree with the following statement. "I confess I blow hot and cold and find myself sometimes admiring her more than I like her."45 Despite such comments from critics, one cannot dismiss the importance of the overwhelming technical wizardry which brought Argerich to the concert stage and has kept her there for over thirty years. The very "faults" one might find in some of Argerich's performances are the very assets which have become her signature and perhaps the overwhelming reason for her popularity.

42Morrison, 16.
44Morrison, 16.
There are other aspects of Argerich's pianism, however: the moments of peace and elegance in her playing, as well as interpretations which are altogether personal. Dermott Clinch, for example, reviewing her rendition of Prokofiev's Third Concerto in 1998, emphasized Argerich's facility for direct interpretation:

Argerich plays like she is supposed to, pointedly, energetically, idiosyncratically, but with an added sense of fun. Prokofiev's stop-start rhetoric is done favors, one episode shown the door while another of an entirely different class is ushered in with perfect suavity. The fluting, beautiful, angular tunes are tickled from the piano without the usual dollop of sentiment. And Argerich revels in Prokofiev's ironic candy-floss.46

In another review, we see the critic concentrating on other qualities besides her "proverbial temperament and agility."47 Bryce Morrison writes the following in the Musical Opinion from 1980:

On this occasion, [the Chopin e minor Concerto], her imaginative delicacy seemed no less memorable than her legendary verve and aplomb. To hear Miss Argerich's rubato blowing through the music's basic pulse like a gentle breeze and illuminate in a wholly novel yet authentic way the first movement's second and third subjects, was to be made aware of the most remarkable fantasy and freedom.48

48 Ibid., 194.
What is musically important for this artist who has so many facets to offer her listeners? In an interview with Dean Elder in 1979, Argerich offers her thoughts on interpretation:

I think interpretation is trying to liberate what one is unconscious about. When one can let go some things one doesn't know are there—the unexpected things and the surprises in the performance—that's when it's worthwhile. This is also what I appreciate in other performers. When they are masters of their means of expression, this doesn't exactly interest me. That interests me in a teacher, but in a performer I am interested in what happens behind or in spite of the things the performer consciously wants to do. Maybe I am a little bit of a voyeur you know, that way. But this is what I love.49

To an artist for whom "freedom" remains the most important ingredient in music-making,50 the listener has been privy to her extravagant use of this term in concerts. In a review of a later performance of the Chopin e minor Concerto, Clinch points to this very facet of the artist:

Technical breakdown seems inconceivable; the danger is rather an authentic musical one—the essential thrill of live music—that the performer might, on a whim, decide on a different performance altogether. It will still be Chopin. It will still be the First Concerto. But it will be Chopin as Martha Argerich wants him tonight, now. She will flip the next bar in any direction she cares.51

50 Batistick, 29.
In a world where, more than ever, pianists are fighting to build a career, Argerich has the "luck" of the highest public demand. As Herbert Barret, her former New York manager, once observed, "We could book her 365 days a year if only she would play that many concerts." 52 Bryce Morrison mentions the following statement of another of Argerich's managers: "While others devote their lives to trying to build a career, Martha has deliberately set out to destroy hers; a task in which she has, thankfully, failed!" 53 This remark may refer to the frequent cancellations imposed by Argerich, such as three times with Leonard Bernstein. 54 For many artists, one cancellation would automatically deny them a re-invitation. That Argerich would be asked back time and time again: this testifies to the high regard in which she is held by the public. She, like de Larrocha, says, "I don't like the profession. And when one plays, of course, it is important to practice. But the profession itself--the traveling and the way of life--all this has nothing to do with playing or with music, absolutely nothing! This is what I do not enjoy about being a concert pianist." 55

It is safe to say that Argerich lives the life of a "protected" artist, one often surrounded by family and friends. Once asked why she stopped giving solo recitals, her response was "because of loneliness" 56—the same reason that led to the three years of immobilization in her early years. Today, she mostly prefers playing concerti and chamber music, a decision

52 Ibid., 20.
53 Morrison, "One in a Million", 13. the author does not mention the name of the particular manager.
54 Ibid., 13.
55 Elder, "Martha Argerich," 22.
56 Morrison, "One in a Million", 13.
which insures companionship. However, on March 25, 2000 she performed a solo concert, a benefit for the John Wayne Cancer Institute, where she had received treatment for the past several years. The second half of the concert consisted of chamber music. Whether she will continue to perform solo recitals, only time will tell. Most likely not, as the important reason for stopping solo playing altogether was due to the rigors of a lonely life, an aspect of her profession she does not accept.

Just as we saw was the case with other artists, the friendship and devotion of those who are close to Argerich seem to remain her life-source. Argerich is often surrounded by a group of friends when performing and at times travels in an entourage when on tours. Cellist Mischa Maisky, who has played with Argerich for over twenty years, is one of her very close friends. He states the following about Argerich's gift and her attitude towards the music business.

She's among the very greatest living musicians yet her true potential remains untapped. For me she operates at, say, 25-30 per cent of her capacity. Yet I admire her for it. She is unambitious, doesn't care a jot about fame and fortune, loathes the very notion of "stardom." All she wants is to be allowed to lead her life as she wants, to do things in her own time and not to be harangued and pressured. Her three daughters matter supremely to her and her "cancellations" are not merely whimsical but are provoked by a last minute sense that things are not right, by an intuition that she will play below her best form.57

For this wondrously talented artist, who in her own words would perhaps have opted for another profession had she had the opportunity to

57 Ibid.
choose, life has presented her with many twists and turns. Argerich's three daughters are from three different partners. Today, she has close ties with her children. Two of her daughters, along with Argerich's granddaughter, were found close to her as she spent one week at the Verbier Music Festival this summer. She has anguished over reviews of her performances, a reaction common to many performing artists, and is weary of journalists' speculations about her life and career. Thus she is reluctant to give interviews. Her life was threatened by a serious illness. Although thankfully she is in remission today, the future is uncertain.

Argerich, a woman of monumental talent and intelligence, has made considerable sacrifices in order to carry on her career. She has made choices in her personal life and in her career so that the person and the pianist may continue to co-exist. The allure and mystery in her playing as well as her persona captures the listener, and these qualities carry on her fame and will continue to do so.
CONCLUSION

The lives of the six female artists presented in this paper give us some perspective on the evolution of women pianists in general. The six pianists represent a span of concert performing by women from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. By comparing and contrasting their lives, we can examine whether there are significant differences from one era to another. How did these particular women begin their career and pursue it? In what way does their decision to have families or not affect their lives? Have the social expectations of women concert artists changed since they first appeared on the stage?

Most of the nineteenth-century women concert pianists began as prodigies. The career span of most women pianists at this time lasted from childhood until the time of marriage, when, usually, performing activities stopped. As a result, they had little time to cultivate their careers and had to maximize the performing time during their childhood. In the case of each artist presented in this paper, a close family member was instrumental in helping dedicate their lives to music at an early age. Their talent was then carefully nurtured with a clear goal in mind, which was to become a world-known artist. Friedrich Wieck, who was certain of his daughter's future in the music world, gave all of himself to realize this dream. Carreño was also taught by her father, who had a keen interest in his daughter's education and career. Ultimately, the joint efforts made by the child, parents, guardians, teachers, and the innate talent which withstood all else, brought the performers to their pinnacle.
After the prodigy years came the real test to sustain their careers. Again, adults surrounding the artists were key in helping develop the artist's career. By means of concerts, reviews, and efforts of managers, the artists spread their name. Even at this early time, publicity was important and artists relied on positive reviews and advertisements to ensure a good turnout at concerts. The artists also traveled far and wide to the major European cities and, later, to other continents. Traveling conditions were difficult in the nineteenth century, with each trip being a lengthy ordeal involving coaches and trains as well as boats. Women, unlike men, had to be accompanied by a chaperone, which often added to the difficulties of arranging the voyage. Nancy B. Reich writes that musicians in the nineteenth-century even toured by "carriage, camel and elephant." On the one hand, travel was time-consuming and exhausting; on the other, the distance forced upon the artists gave them a chance to recover from the concerts. It also allowed time to write letters, enjoy the scenery, and step back from the rush of the concert schedules.

The early twentieth-century pianists, Hess and Haskil, also gained early recognition for their talents. As children, their talent showed that they were destined for life on the concert stage. In the case of Haskil, drastic measures were taken from the beginning; she left her mother to study in another country at the young age of seven. Again, the control of those around the artists is evident, for discipline in the life of pianists such as these must start young. When the talent was so great, the determination to nurture was just as great.

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As pianists in the first half of the twentieth century, Hess and Haskil lived during a time of chaos. Due to the war that engulfed all of Europe, concertizing proved to be difficult for most, but Hess, of Jewish descent, was fortunate to hold British citizenship. At first, Hess organized concerts to ensure continuous visibility. Then during the Wars, she was able to surpass the difficult conditions and find a way to continue performing. Haskil unfortunately was an exile all of her life. As a Jewish Romanian, she had to flee Paris before German occupation, and she lived in Switzerland, where she later attained citizenship, the rest of her life. In addition to the stresses of war-torn Europe, her numerous health problems and her painstakingly shy personality resulted in a slow start to her career. Yet one must remember her perseverance and the fact that she never completely gave up playing. It was not until after the Second World War that she was "discovered" and she enjoyed a career, which should have been hers many decades earlier.

Both artists benefited from the rise of the recording industry, which had a slow start at the turn of the century; these recordings managed to capture and send the contribution of these artists around the world. Tours to different continents were mandatory to gain worldwide recognition, but traveling still took much time and was especially difficult for Haskil, who wrote constantly of her fatigue. Nevertheless, artists partook of as many concerts abroad as they were able.

Hess and Haskil both favored the serious repertoire which suited their musical personalities. Even their dress code resembled one another; on stage and off, they embodied modesty, as they lived only for their music. Perhaps in the case of Haskil, her appearance had something to do
with the difficulty in starting a career. Her class-mate and friend Youra Guller, who was known for her physical beauty, had gained much success early in her life. Rossier mentioned in his interview that the critics' exaggerated comments on Haskil's appearance pained Haskil to the point that she did not like to be photographed. Yet despite their perhaps drab appearance and, in the case of Haskil, an ill-at-ease stage presence, once they were "discovered" the public thronged to hear the great and extraordinary performances.

Today, prodigies remain great spectacles for the public. As prodigies, artists are given a chance to draw attention to themselves; then it is up to those around the young artists to give the necessary support for a lasting career. Once youth wears off, twentieth-century musicians rely greatly on competitions to kick-start their careers. It was by this method that Argerich became a success overnight, but not everyone attempted to advance their careers through the same route, and for de Larrocha, this meant a much slower start of a career.

De Larrocha became known in the United States, which later led to her world-wide success, thanks to her recordings. Contemporary artists have had the help of the media and the recording industry to build up their careers on a much larger scale than performers in the previous generation. The impact of the artist is multiplied a thousand-fold by the recording industry. In fact, one often sees a joint effort made by management and recording companies in building careers today. Obviously, record sales aid in spreading the name of the artist, which in turn will help sell concert tickets and make the name better known worldwide. De Larrocha and Argerich both have an extensive output of recordings.
The role of the manager as a critical component to an artist's career successes has also grown enormously since the nineteenth century. Clara Schumann's father saw to her professional needs in her early career, taking charge of the concerts, reserving the hall and piano, and arranging the ticket sales. Hess also benefited immensely by her association with the well-known managerial firm, Ibbs and Tillett. Today, concert managers are sought-after by up-and-coming musicians. It is believed that such management can help start a career and ensure high quality engagements. Indeed, today, a concert career is inconceivable without the representation of management. Since artists are no longer directly in touch with the concert series, but communicate with the system through the management firm, they are perhaps more protected, allowed more time for themselves. At the same time, the musicians may be more vulnerable since an outside force takes charge of their lives. Some established artists, such as Argerich, do keep a tight rein on the number of concerts they accept. At the start of her career, she was giving over 150 concerts a year. Now, considering her immense stature and demand, Argerich gives relatively few concerts. Mitsuko Uchida is another contemporary pianist who also limits her public concerts in order to allow time to learn new music and to rest.

In today's society, more and more, concert artists become stars and idols. This helps the business aspect of music-making thrive. Artists have their own following; according to a *New York Times* article, Uchida's concerts have been regarded as "rock concerts for the intelligentsia."^2

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Argerich is said to have a "cultlike devotion" among concert goers.\textsuperscript{3} Perceptions of women artists may have changed somewhat as artists themselves emphasize their personality through external means, such as their dress code or expressing themselves forthrightly in interviews. Some choose not to reveal their personal thoughts or their personal lives to the public, thereby guarding and maintaining their mystery. Artists today do not live among laymen; they are put on a pedestal high above the public, thus making for a climate in which the public values brief encounters with them. Artists protect themselves from too much exposure and guard their time and space jealously.

The second question concerns the delicate balance between career and family. In the nineteenth-century, women were expected to marry and to stop their professional activities. Robert Schumann certainly agreed with the philosophy of the time that a wife should remain at home to take care of the family, and Clara Schumann was well aware of the limited time she would have for playing once married. Nevertheless, she was still frustrated with the lack of time available to her while she was married to Robert. Had it not been for the tragic illness and death of her husband, one wonders whether she would have had such a long and prosperous career.

Carreño also had demands upon her that came with having a large family; in her case, this was further complicated by several marriages and divorces. The two artists wrote about the little time they had for their families. Since they were often gone on tours for weeks at a time, they did not tend to the everyday chores of motherhood, and they relied on family

members, friends and servants to care for their children and see to their
education. Perhaps this arrangement brought them uneasiness at times, but
in order for them to continue to work, there was no other possible way.
Family brought them love but also remained a heavy burden. Both Clara
Schumann and Carreño had strong convictions that their lives belonged in
the music world. They also faced practical necessities such as having to
support a large family. In the end, both of these artists were accepted as
"equals" among musicians; they helped pave the way towards independence
and freedom for future women musicians.

Balancing family with a career in any time or period has proven
difficult; the desire of and opportunity for women to have careers have led
to changes in family structures, thus adding to women's professional
successes. In the early twentieth century there was a marked decline in
birthrates,\textsuperscript{4} perhaps because more women were choosing to have a career
over a family. Hess and Haskil, representatives of this era, did not marry.
Hess made a conscious choice in favor of music. Her fear that marriage
would jeopardize a career was so strong that she even advised Stephen
Kovacevich against marrying, saying she was afraid a family would take
\textit{his} time away from the piano.\textsuperscript{5} Haskil committed her whole life to music.
In a television documentary, the close friend of Haskil, Michel Rossier, re-
emphasized that music for Haskil was everything, especially since in her
life she had so little else.\textsuperscript{6}

\textsuperscript{4}Marcia Citron, \textit{Women and Music}, ed. Karin Pendle (Bloomington: Indiana University

\textsuperscript{5}Stephen Kovacevich, interview by author, Verbier, Switzerland, 28 July 2000.

De Larrocha had her husband who took over her responsibilities as mother, allowing her to concentrate on her career. Although her husband took the burden of motherhood off her shoulders, de Larrocha spoke repeatedly of the role of the woman pianist, emphasizing the heavy responsibility falling on this sex, perhaps as opposed to the other. One thing is clear—the psychological strain on pianists who are also mothers is not easy to relieve. Although choices must be made, the feeling of guilt for not having given 100 percent to one's families weighs heavily on those who choose a concert career.

This study has shown that the concerns of the woman performer from the nineteenth century to the twentieth century and beyond remain basically the same. Women artists have been confronted with the same basic choices, face the same dilemmas, and resolve similar problems. Obviously, the nineteenth-century women had a fundamentally different outlook on their status in society. Yet, we still read about the difficulties contemporary artists face as they juggle domestic life and career. Some make the decision not to marry and instead devote their life to their career. Others make do the best they can, as they go through childbirth, sometimes divorce, and later turn to reflect on their lives. However harsh it may seem, this is the reality of the concert career, and all who enter it have to accept it and be ready to persevere. This parameter also extends to those male artists who face choices between career and family.

These six pianists have contributed much to the future of women pianists. They serve as models for those who are embarking on a career today. Clearly, in order to become a concert artist, one must dedicate one's life to the cause from a very early age. There are the preparations,
studies, career decisions, and personal choices to be made. While this applies to both female and male musicians, societal expectations concerning the role of women bring about remarkable differences between the careers and personal lives of women and men. Altogether, the six artists have given their lives for the purpose of sharing their innate talent with the rest of the world, at the expense, sometimes, of their personal lives. One can go on to say that they can be seen as revolutionaries because they overrode those long-standing expectations and became the premier world-class artists.
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