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Concerto for Piano and Orchestra by Henryk Wars: Discovering a Masterpiece

Introduction

The solo concerto has had a long and distinguished pedigree that reaches back into the Baroque era, when this genre was introduced into the music literature canon. The Classical era had furnished the concerto with an enduring and carefully worked-out formal design, whilst the Romantic era ushered in the experimentation that highlighted the soloist's virtuosity and relaxed the classical-era formal layout. With the improvements in piano construction and extension of its range from just under the six octaves in the 1790s to the Erard's seven-octave grand in the 1820s[1] to just shy of seven and half octaves (or more on Bösendorfer Imperial Grands), by the end of the nineteen century the romantic virtuosos were liberated to display their strengths on concert stages and in elegant salon appearances as they performed on new and larger concert grand pianos with a more resonant sound and faster-responding mechanical action.

In addition to the traditional, Classical-era concerto with its three standard movement structure, by the early 1800s a number of one-movement concertos – often called *Koncertstück*, *Pièce de concert* or *Concertino* – also began to appear. Serving as an effective vehicle for the virtuoso display, they frequently became a useful calling card for the composer, who was often also the intended soloist.

[1] James Parakilas, *Piano Roles – Three Hundred Years of Life with the Piano* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), 50.

Some of the best-known early examples of this genre include Weber's *Konzertstück* Op. 79 (completed in 1821 just after the premiere of his *Der Freischütz*) and Mendelssohn's *Capriccio brilliant* Op. 22 (dating from 1832, just after Mendelssohn met Chopin). Chopin, too, contributed three notable examples of one-movement concert pieces to this niche repertoire, including *Variations* Op. 2, *Grand Fantasia on Polish Airs* Op. 13 and *Krakowiak* Op. 14, all dating from the late 1820s. Liszt's *Totentanz* (completed in 1849 and revised in 1853 and 1859) is yet another example of this genre.

When it comes to the one-movement concert pieces, the first movement of Schumann's celebrated Piano Concerto Op. 54 may have been the most influential example for the coming generations of composers, since it was initially conceived as a self-standing work. Schumann already wanted to write for piano and orchestra when he was only seventeen and mentioned the "beginnings of a piano concerto in F minor" in his diary.[2] A few years later, his Leipzig notebooks from 1831–1832 contain sketches of a Piano Concerto in F major. It would be, however, only after his first two symphonies (the B-flat and the D minor in its original version) that Schumann – deeply in love and recently married to the piano virtuoso Clara Wieck – between May 4 and 20, 1841 composed a *Phantasie for Piano and Orchestra* for his new bride. This version was tried out at a private rehearsal at Lepizig's Gewandhaus rehearsal on 13 August, with Clara expecting her first child, Marie, who was born at the end of the month.[3] It took four more years, after Robert and Clara moved to Dresden, when Schumann decided to turn his *Phantasie* into a full-fledged, three-movement concerto by adding a charming, intimate *Intermezzo* and an ebullient and sparkling *Finale*. A decade later, Schumann returned to the idea of a one-movement piano concerto with his *Konzertstück* in G major Op. 92 (1852) and the *Introduction and Allegro* Op. 134 (1855).

With the popularity of Schuman's Op. 54, it is worth remembering how successful – musically and formally – the first movement of this concerto is, and how well it can stand on its own as an independent musical work, exactly as it was initially envisioned by the composer. The brisk three-bar introduction gives way to the first subject in A minor that – as it turns out – provides the seeds for the musical material of the entire movement. The second subject – in

[2] Robert Layton, Ed., *A Companion to the Concerto* (London: Christopher Helm, 1988), 152.
[3] *Ibid*.

C major – proves to be another transformation of the first theme. The development starts with a ruminative *Andante espressivo* dialogue where leisurely pianistic passagework provides the background for clarinet solo recollections of the original first subject. The nocturnal atmosphere of this interlude is suddenly interrupted by an impassioned dialogue between piano and orchestra based on the opening three bars of introduction. The following *Passionato* section revisits the second subject and leads to an expected recapitulation that culminates in the lead-in to a solo *cadenza* followed by a joyous *Allegro molto* coda bringing this *Phantasie* (or *Konzertstück*) to a well-proportioned close.

It is impossible to speculate about the teaching methods or the subjects in form and analysis and composition classes given by Roman Statkowski and Henryk Melcer-Szczawiński who were Henryk Wars's teachers at the Warsaw Music Academy in the 1920s. One may only guess that Schumann's Op. 54 may have been covered in a lecture devoted to the romantic piano concerto or perhaps discussed and analyzed as one the seminal works in the nineteenth century solo concerto canon. If so, Wars's Piano Concerto written a quarter century after he completed his academic coursework would demonstrate that he absorbed his composition course experience very well indeed.

History

One of the most significant recent discoveries in the history of Polish music is the catalogue of symphonic music by Henryk Wars. Long known for many film soundtracks and countless hit songs composed in Poland during the inter-war period and in the United States in the 1950s and the 1960s, Wars was also a classically trained composer who left a substantial legacy of finely crafted, large-scale orchestral works. They were written soon after he settled in California in 1947, and quite a few years before he had a chance to redefine himself as a film composer in Hollywood. With little else to do but compose music that he may have wanted to write earlier but never had the time, during his early years in America Wars devoted most of his passion and energy to completing such large scale works as Symphony No. 1 (1948–1949), Piano Concerto (1950), *City Sketches – Orchestral Suite* (1951/1969–1974), and *Sonatina for Orchestra* (a three-movement work dedicated to the memory of Maurice Ravel), among others.[4] All of

[4] The manuscript of the work does not indicate its completion date. From indirect references and sketches one might surmise that Wars worked on this composition from the mid–1950s into the early 1970s.

these compositions are expertly scored for substantial performing forces with large string sections, double or triple winds, harp, celesta and extended percussion ensemble.

When it comes to works for piano and orchestra, one might consider what other influences might have inspired Wars when he was writing his Piano Concerto in Hollywood in the late 1940s. Since he spent his first dozen or so years of life in France, was fluent in the language and always fond of French culture, he might have looked to French literature in this genre for inspiration. Thus it is possible that Wars could have been familiar with such one-movement piano and orchestra compositions as *African Fantasy* Op. 89 by Camille Saint-Saëns or Gabriel Fauré's *Ballade* for piano and orchestra Op. 19. Another important point to consider is that, according to Wars's widow, Elizabeth, the composer had met Ravel in Paris in the early 1930s and may have taken a lesson or two with him.

Since Wars's Piano Concerto successfully combines and even, to a large extent, embodies the neo-romantic spirit of concertos by Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov, it is impossible also not to contemplate if Wars had actually studied the scores of Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto and, especially, Rachmaninov's First and Second Piano Concertos. Such Russian influences notwithstanding (and quite understandable, given Wars's studies with Statkowski), at the same time, Wars's Piano Concerto clearly pays homage to the expansive style of Hollywood epic scores from the era. It may be also possible that such works as Arthur Benjamin's *Concertino for Piano and Orchestra* (1927) – a colorfully-scored, jazzy and quasi impressionistic compilation of film music in a multi-sectional, episodic one-movement work – might have been one of Wars's inspirations. Another model was certainly provided by Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* (1924), the echoes of which resonate in Wars's Piano Concerto as we shall see. One thing, however, is beyond doubt: again, according to Elizabeth Wars, Richard Addinsell's 1941 *Warsaw Concerto* was apparently one of Wars's favorite pieces of music. As it turns out, listening to the heroic character of Addinsell's work, together with Schumann's original *Phantasie* – later the first movement of his Op. 54 Piano Concerto – proved to be by far the most direct and seminal inspirations for Wars's essay in this genre.

Analysis

Wars's Piano Concerto is a skillfully designed one-movement work with a strongly neo-romantic character, sparkling virtuoso solo part, and richly-sco-

red orchestral accompaniment. Using the traditional sonata allegro layout, Wars effectively introduces several very attractive melodic ideas and skillfully shapes them in into a successful one-movement formal design. The orchestration includes three flutes, oboes and clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trombones, percussion (triangle, cymbals, big drum, tympani), harp and strings. The overall key of the piece is F minor, with the last two sections firmly set in tonic major. Depending on the individual performance, the Concerto is about 10–12 minutes long.

A short, four-bar call to arms marked *Maestoso* introduces a dotted rhythm motive. It is grounded on the dominant pedal point C, with the top melodic line rising chromatically from C to E natural. In its function and pattern of dotted rhythms, as well as in its structural aim, Wars's *Maestoso* introduction echoes the opening of Schumann's Op. 54:



Example 1: Schuman, Piano Concerto Op. 54 (bars 1–5)



Example 2: Wars, Piano Concerto (bars 1–4)

Right after this formal opening, Wars's Piano Concerto launches into *Allegro con moto* in bar 5, marking the beginning of the movement proper by establishing the F minor tonic in the course of the first two bars with a pulsating *ostinato* orchestral accompaniment. The soloist enters at the end of bar 6 with the heroic main subject built on the urgently sounding octaves in a characteristic rhythmic pattern of two sixteenths and a dotted quarter note. The chords and repeated octaves are interspersed with fluid runs within piano's upper register and the whole fabric provides a dramatic tone that is somewhat reminiscent of the overall character of the opening orchestral *tutti* of Addinsell's *Warsaw Concerto*.



Example 3: Wars, Piano Concerto, first subject (bars 5–12)



Example 4: Addinsell, *Warsaw Concerto* (bars 5–12)

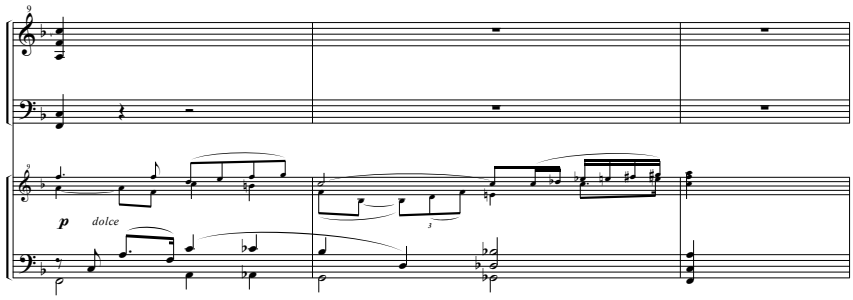
The first subject begins to migrate towards a new material (bars 15–18) and a two bar transition repeated once an octave lower (bars 19–22) that modulates and leads to a new subject in D-flat major (see bar 23, letter A). Introduced by the soloist, this second subject is based on a steadily rising stepwise quarter-note melodic line presented in two-bar phrases. Two repetitions of it follow and, once done, the orchestra takes the lead in announcing the second subject. It is again presented in two-bar phrases that receive more and more virtuosic responses from the soloist.

From bar 37 (letter B), the key is F major and a culmination leads to the short, written out solo cadenza. Following the cadenza, the new – third – subject is given exclusively to the soloist. Marked *Andante* (bar 44, letter C), it is a beutifully lyrical arrangement of Wars's hit song, *Po mlecznej drodze* [Along the Milky Way], composed in Iraq in 1942 to text by Feliks Konarski and sung by Rena Anders for the Polish Second Corps soldiers on their trek from Persia to Monte Cassino. This song was also successfully used in Michał Waszyński's 1946 feature film, *Wielka droga* [La Grande strada], with Rena Anders in the lead.



Example 5: Wars, Piano Concerto, second subject (bars 23–28)



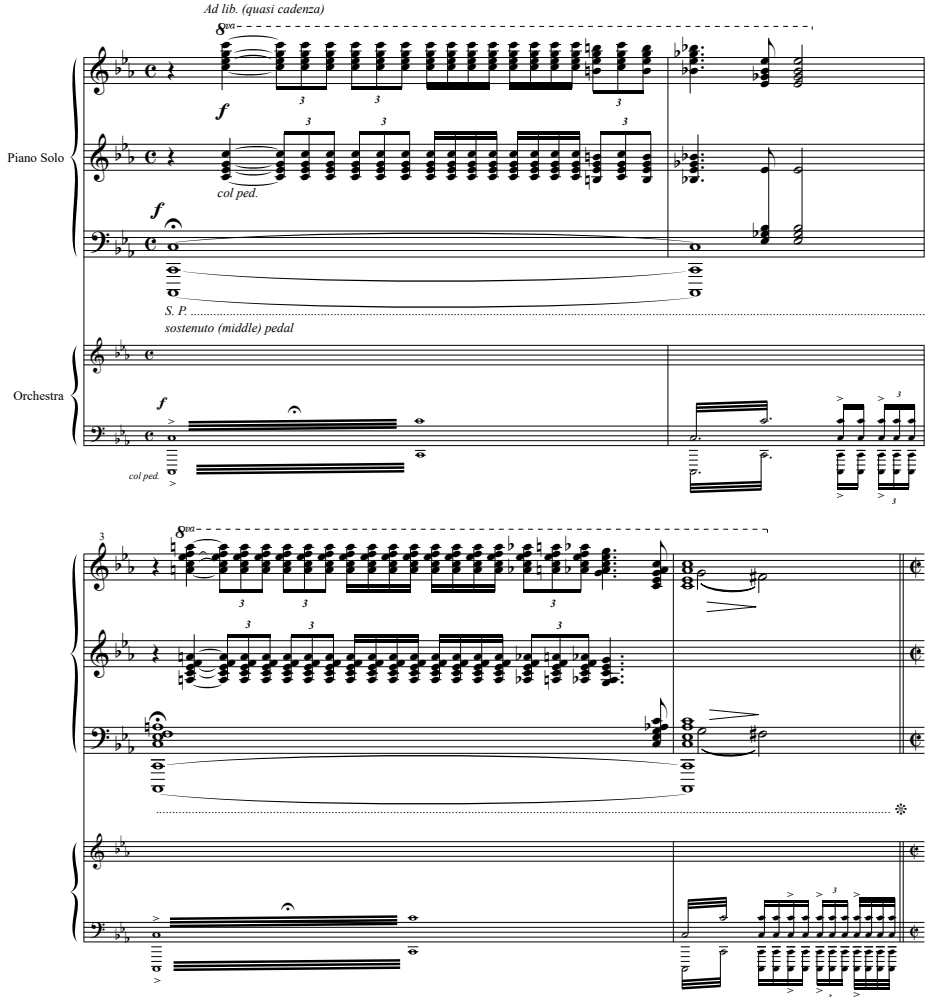


Example 6: Wars, Piano Concerto, third subject (bars 44–54)

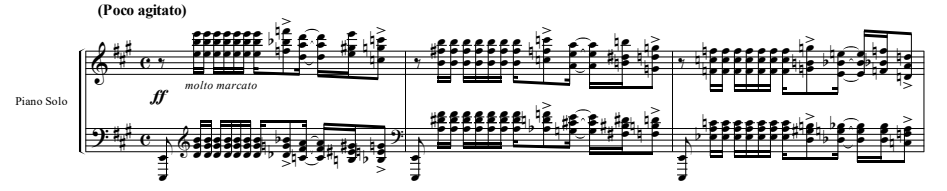
The orchestra takes over the third subject in bar 52, with clarinets and English horn initially carrying the melodic line. Two bars later all woodwinds join in and, as the texture and emotion build up, the upper strings voice the melodic line in concert with the upper woodwinds.

Following a brief climax, the tension subsides and there is a deft key change with a modulation from F major to A minor in bar 59. A lovely and wistful variation of the third subject appears in bar 60, when cellos have a chance at the melody against an arpeggiated piano accompaniment. The soloist then announces another variant of this melody in a steadily declining line until the entire section dies out on the key of E major in bar 70.

The development begins with a slow, *Doloroso* section (bar 71). With the cellos and basses holding the pedal point E, the soloist has an episode of chords with a rhythmic pattern reminiscent of the opening piano solo in Addinsell's *Warsaw Concerto* and of a section in Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* that receives a more elaborate and extended treatment in Wars's Piano Concerto:



Example 7: Addinsell, *Warsaw Concerto*, bars 1–4



Example 8: Gershwin, *Rhapsody in Blue*, bars 68–70



Example 9: Wars, Piano Concerto, bars 71–85

Wars's leisurely opening of the development section could also have been inspired by the mood present at the beginning of the development in Schumann's Op. 54 (the A-flat major episode marked *Andante espressivo*, where woodwinds and piano carry out the melodic dialogue):



Example 10: Schumann, Piano Concerto, first movement (bars 156–167)

Just as Schumann's dreamy *Andante espressivo* suddenly gives way to *Tempo I Allegro* and the development proceeds apace, so too does Wars: with the *Allegro con moto* designation in bar 86, the *Doloroso* section fades out and tempo primo returns with the development being swiftly launched. Moving in two-bar phrases and featuring densely chromatic harmony, Wars builds a quick climax that leads to a fermata at the end of bar 93. His procedure for arriving at this point and the chordal textures given to the soloist are quite similar to what Rachmaninov used in the development of the first movement of his Piano Concerto No. 1:



Example 11: Wars, Piano Concerto, development, bars 90–93



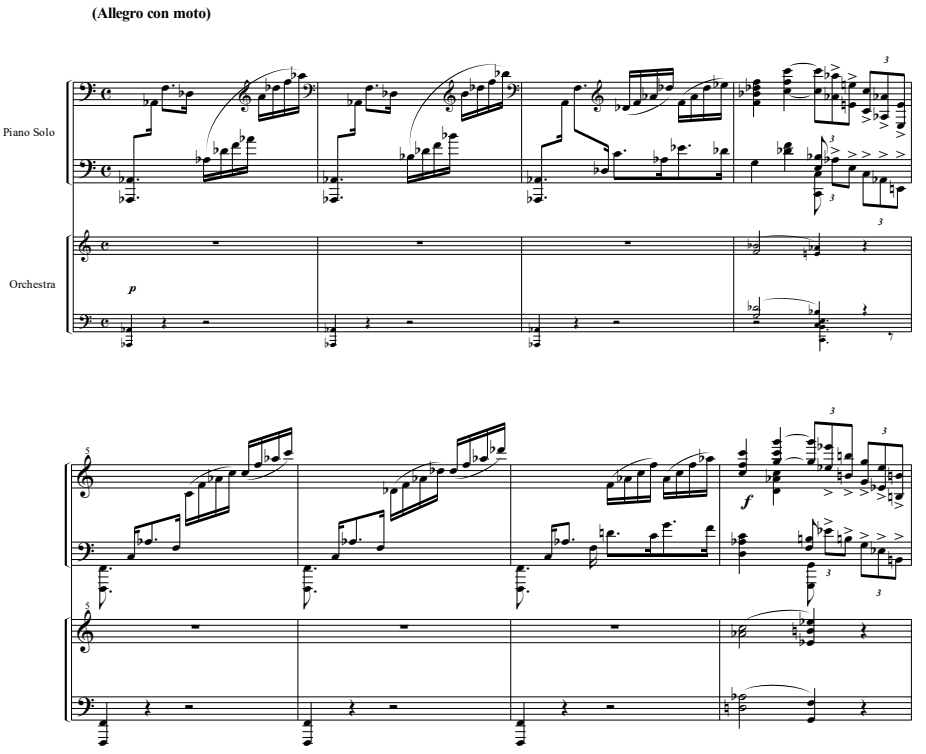
Example 12: Rachmaninov, Piano Concerto No. 1, development, bars 153–158

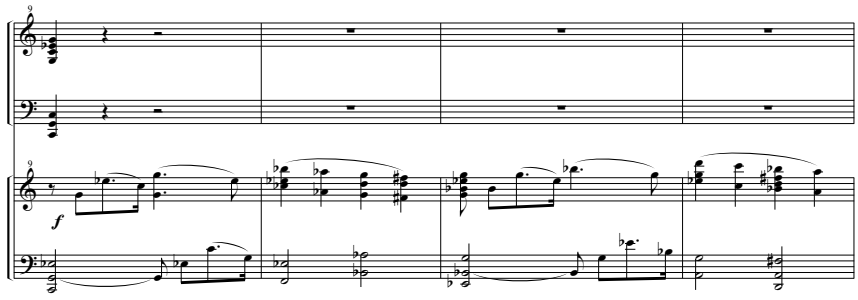
The first subject from the opening *Allegro con moto* returns in bar 94 with the marking *Tempo primo*. This time the subject is in C minor and the soloist has two statements of it. In bar 102, three trumpets take over the first subject, whilst the soloist has decorative figurations based on the changing harmonies. Within kaleidoscopic key changes, woodwinds chime in with the main subject in bar 106, reaching a culmination when the main rhythmic feature of the first subject is presented in a *stretto* by woodwinds and horns in bars 108–109.



Example 13: Wars, Piano Concerto, development, bars 105–108

In a deft formal pivot, right at that point, the entire orchestra drops out, with only cellos and basses providing a harmonic grounding: first on the A-flat and later on the F whilst piano presents a clever variation of the opening *Maestoso* motif:

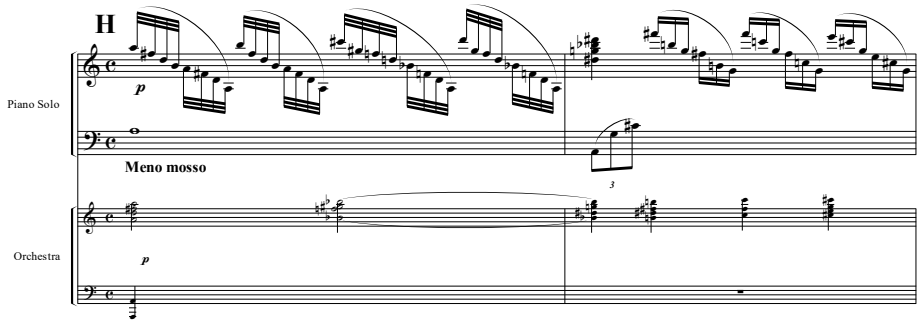




Example 14: Wars, Piano Concerto, development, bars 110–121

Another surprise follows here for, as soon as the piano finishes its two four-bar variations on the opening *Maestoso*, the orchestra takes over in an impassioned and extensive *tutti* statement beginning in bar 118. The expressive motif that first appeared as the counterpoint within the orchestral accompaniment had proved quite suitable for a variety of different subjects (see cello line in bars 28–30, horns in bars 38–41, and upper strings in bars 52–54). It is now liberated and appears in all of its soaring glory for the entirety of this *tutti* that ends in bar 129.

Several modulations finally reach a pedal point A within a palpably present key of D major that makes its appearance in bar 130 with a soloist reentering center stage. As it turns out, now the Concerto's second subject (originally in D-flat major in the exposition) is presented in a more ornamented piano passagework. This is the only subject that the composer had not yet touched in the development.



Example 15: Wars, Piano Concerto, bars 130–131

Just like in the exposition, the orchestra eventually becomes a partner in the dialogue with the soloist (bars 138–148), but rather than leading into the cadenza (as in the exposition), another surprise is engineered: the soloist returns with the first subject against the four bars of orchestral pedal point on G followed by 10 bars of the biggest culmination of solo piano and orchestra built on the pedal point C:



Example 16: Wars, Piano Concerto, development, bars 149–162

This equivalent of the tumultuous *cadenza* for the joint forces of piano and orchestra leads to a triumphant return of the third subject, the "Milky Way" theme, in a section marked *Andante maestoso*, firmly anchored in F major, the tonic major of the Concerto. This section's orchestration employs all the bells and whistles of a late romantic orchestra whilst the soloist is kept very busy with the richest textural embellishment of the same tune, trying perhaps in vain to gain the upper hand over the orchestra's hefty textures. The treatment of the material is quite similar here to Addinsell, where the lyrical second subject returns in a climactic return:



Example 17: Addinsell, *Warsaw Concerto*, bars 196–200



Example 18: Wars, Piano Concerto, bars 163–166

The original "Milky Way" tune was an eight-bar melody. Here, however, Wars extends its length to fifteen bars with the result of achieving a more grounded sense of recapitulation in the home key. A short and sparkling ten-bar coda marked *Allegro brilliante* swiftly concludes the work with effective piano passages, whilst the orchestra – especially the upper strings – once again return to opening first subject of the Concerto.



Example 19: Wars, Piano Concerto, coda, bars 178–182

Structural Layout

Exposition – Bars 1–70

Introduction: bars 1–4

Key: F minor
Meter: 4/4
Tempo: *Maestoso*
Remarks: prominent dotted rhythm; harmony based on pedal point on C

First subject: bars 5–18

Key: F minor; modulation towards A-flat major (Dominant of D-flat major)

Tempo: *Allegro con moto*

Remarks: rhythmic pattern of two 16th notes followed by a dotted quarter note

Transition: bars 19–22

Tempo: as above

Remarks: new material; 2-bar phrase repeated an octave lover; harmony based on the A-flat^7 chord that prepares the key for the second subject

Second subject: bars 23–30 (piano); in dialogue with the orchestra 31–36

Key: D-flat major

Tempo: as above

Remarks: Dialogue with the orchestra leads to the establishing of F major (bar 37, letter B)

Transition: bars 37–42

Key: F major

Tempo: as above

Remarks: an extension of the second subject material that leads to a C major^7 chord and a fermata

Cadenza: bar 43

Key: C major

Tempo: no marking

Remarks: notated without bar lines; solo piano passagework prepares the entry of the next subject

Third subject: bars 44–51 (solo piano), bars 52–59 (solo orchestra)

Key: F major

Tempo: *Andante*

Remarks: melody taken from Henryk Wars's song, *Po mlecznej drodze* [Along the Milky Way]. After orchestral culmination of this subject in F major (bars 55–58), a quick modulation to A minor (bar 59)

Third subject variation: bars 60–63

Key: A minor

Tempo: as above

Remarks: piano figuration accompanies the cello line that is a variation of the third subject

Transition: bars 64–70

Key: modulations towards E major
Tempo: *Calmo*
Remarks: largely a solo piano passage with minimal accompaniment; main melodic feature taken from the first bar of the third subject

Development – Bars 71–162

Introduction: bars 71–85

Key: A minor with pedal point on E
Meter: 3/4 (reverts to 4/4 at bar 82)
Tempo: *Doloroso*
Remarks: Basically a chordal solo piano soliloquy with the lower strings holding a pedal point E

Development proper: bars 86–162

Section 1, bars 86–93:
Key: Beginning on E dominant^{7}, changing keys throughout; see descriptions of developed material below
Meter: 4/4
Tempo: *Allegro con moto*
Remarks: new material that modulates and leads to a culmination and a fermata in bar 93 on the G dominant^{7} harmony

Section 2: bars 94–109:
Key: C minor
Tempo: as above
Remarks: development of the first subject with the melodic material given to the piano (bars 94–101) and then to the orchestra (bars 102–109)

Section 3: bars 110–117:
Key: D-flat major, moving to F minor in bar 114
Tempo: as above
Remarks: development of the subject from the introduction; the first variation (4 bars) is in D-flat major, the second variation is in F minor

Section 4: bars 118–129:
Key: modulations from C minor trough a variety of keys (E-flat major, G minor, C minor, F minor to B-flat major[7])
Remarks: extended orchestral *tutti* uses a melodic figure that first appeared as accompaniment to the second subject in the exposition

Section 5: bars 130–148:
Key: D major (sustained by pedal point A)
Tempo: *Meno mosso*
Remarks: piano re-enters with a variation of the second subject from the exposition. Dialogue with the orchestra commences in bar 138. Material is treated similarly to the exposition sequence in bars 37–42

Section 6: bars 149–162:
Key: C major (with a G pedal point)
Tempo: as above
Remarks: solo piano features first subject from the exposition (bars 149–152) with the remaining portion of this section building up jointly with the orchestra to the biggest climax of the piece at the fermata in bar 162

Recapitulation – Bars 163–187

Third subject: bars 163–177

Key: F major
Tempo: *Andante maestoso*
Remarks: this is the apotheosis of the "Milky Way" theme with a thick chordal embellishment of the melody and full orchestral accompaniment. In comparison with its original appearance in the exposition, the theme is extended (see bars 171–177)

Coda: bars 178–187

Key: F major
Tempo: *Allegro brilliante*
Remarks: piano passagework embellishes the first subject from the exposition in upper strings (bars 178–181) and the remaining measures provide an effective close.

Conclusions

Completed in 1950, Wars's one-movement Piano Concerto is an excellent addition to the repertoire of shorter works for piano and orchestra. Written idiomatically for the pianist, it is also richly scored for a large late romantic orchestra. Whilst it offers some technical challenges for the performers, it is also a very effective work that easily finds favor with the audiences.

The formal layout of the Concerto is quite successful, with proportional scaling of various formal components that gracefully add to a satisfying final outcome. A well-designed exposition with a short introduction and quick presentation of the first two subjects gives way to a brief cadenza – actually more of a "lead-in" passage – and the introduction of the Concerto's chief highlight – it's lyrical third subject. Based on one of Wars's most famous songs, the inclusion of this material may have inspired Wars to consider giving his work the title of "Milky Way" or "Starlight" Concerto, as evidenced in various sketches for the work held in the Henryk Wars Collection at the Polish Music Center, USC, in Los Angeles. The solo piano intonation of this tune is taken up by the orchestra and nicely rounded up in an extended buildup.

Just as in Schumann's Op. 54, the development begins with a plaintive piano solo with a minimal orchestral accompaniment and, again just as in the first movement of Schumann's Piano Concerto, it features a sudden tempo change to "tempo primo" at the beginning of the development proper.

Echoing Chopin's treatment of the sonata form, where the recapitulation returns with the second subject (as in the first movement of the F minor Piano Concerto or the B minor Sonata, for example), Wars uses only the first two subjects from the exposition in the recapitulation, saving the biggest climax of his Concerto for the triumphant return of the third, "Milky Way," subject in a sweepingly romantic, fully orchestrated apotheosis marked *Andante maestoso*. The *Allegro brillante* coda – where the orchestra touches on the first subject that is ornamented by the soloist's passagework – succinctly summarizes this short and thoroughly romantic work.

The genesis and the emotional context of this composition are closely connected to Wars's wartime odyssey from Warsaw to Lwów/Lviv, through Russia, Persia, Iraq, Palestine and Italy, to his final settling in America. The composer's role as music director of the Polish Parade ensemble attached to General Anders's Army also played a role in the origin of this Concerto. Just

as Wars decided to incorporate one of his great tunes, "Po mlecznej drodze" (as sung during the war years by Rena Anders, the general's wife, and the leading soloist in the Polish Parade musical ensemble), he must have also been aware of Richard Addinsell's music for the 1941 British film, *Dangerous Moonlight*. This film was, after all, a World War II drama about a Polish concert pianist who gives up performing to become a pilot in a Polish squadron attached to the Royal Air Force, and Addinsell's lushly romantic and passionately tender score is an important component of this now forgotten film. The plot of *Dangerous Moonlight* is also quite similar to the 1946 film *La Grande strada*, where Rena Anders plays a nurse, tenderly caring for a Polish soldier gravely wounded in the battlefield. The film's – and Rena Anders's – signature song, "Along the Milky Way" woven into the score by Henryk Wars accompanies practically the entire picture.

The original version of Wars's Piano Concerto was first performed at the Hollywood Bowl in the late 1950s by pianist and composer Harry Sukman (1912–1984), who was also Wars's friend and student. This version of the Concerto was brought by Wars to Poland in 1967 and, together with his orchestral suite, *City Sketches*, was performed and recorded at the Polish Radio studio in Warsaw. After returning to Los Angeles, Wars introduced several changes to the orchestration and form, adding new material to the *Andante maestoso* section and rewriting the closing section of the work. Along with his other orchestral compositions, the final version of the Concerto was discovered by the composer's widow, Elizabeth Wars, in the late 1990s. Together with Henryk Wars's other orchestral works – *Maalot*, *City Sketches* and Symphony No. 1 – the Concerto was world-premiered in June 2005 by the Łódź Philharmonic Orchestra led by Krzesimir Dębski. Along with all other orchestral compositions and sketches, the manuscript score of the Piano Concerto has been donated by Elizabeth Wars to the Polish Music Center at the University of Southern California. It is now part of the Henryk Wars Collection and has been used for several performances and a CD recording of the Concerto since its 2005 world premiere. The outwardly romantic tone of this work – paying homage to harmonies favored by Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov and the successful melding of the late romantic and jazz chordal structures – especially in the "Milky Way" subject and the *Doloroso* section that was inspired by Gershwin – makes this Concerto a very attractive addition to the concert repertoire. Whether coupled in performance with other works from

the *Koncertstück* genre or presented *sui generis*, it is hoped that this recently discovered masterpiece will find a growing circle of performers and prove attractive to audiences all across the globe.

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Summary

Henryk Wars has been long known for many film soundtracks and countless hit songs composed in Poland during the inter-war period and in the United States in the 1950s and the 1960s. But he was also a classically trained composer who left a substantial legacy of finely crafted, large-scale orchestral works. They were written soon after he settled in California in 1947, and quite a few years before he had a chance to redefine himself as a film composer in Hollywood. During his early years in America Wars devoted most of his passion and energy to completing among others such large scale works as Symphony No. 1 (1948–1949), Piano Concerto (1950), *City Sketches – Orchestral Suite* (1951/1969–1974), and *Sonatina for Orchestra*.

Aim of this study is to present Wars's Piano Concerto – a skillfully designed one-movement work completed in 1950, with a strongly neo-romantic character, sparkling virtuoso solo part, and richly-scored orchestral accompaniment.

The author of the study analyzes in detail the formal layout of the work, indicates the composer's inspirations (mostly Schumann and Addinsell, also Chopin, Gershwin and Rachmaninov) and shows that using the traditional sonata allegro layout, Wars effectively introduces several very attractive melodic ideas and skillfully shapes them in into a successful one-movement formal design. Wars's one-movement Piano Concerto is an excellent addition to the repertoire of shorter works for piano and orchestra. Whilst it offers some technical challenges for the performers, it is also a very effective work that easily finds favor with the audiences.

Keywords: piano concerto form, Richard Addinsell, Henryk Wars