

Peter I. Tchaikovsky

String Quartet No. 3

Op. 30

URTEXT

Parts

Introduction

This new Urtext edition of Tchaikovsky's third and last string quartet came about because the writer wanted an edition for his own use of the quartet, with the measure numbers printed in each part. While adding measure numbers to a scan of the Peters edition parts, edited by Arno Hilf, the writer compared the parts with the measure numbers in the Critical Edition in order to avoid errors. This comparison revealed numerous differences between the two; the writer was surprised at the extent of Hilf's editing of the parts. Along with the numerous additional fingerings and bowings that are often seen in performers' editions, other changes struck the writer as less innocuous: changes in dynamics, numerous additional dynamics not written by Tchaikovsky, many additional articulations (especially the liberal use of accents), changes in articulations, and worse, some changes to the notes. Furthermore, there is a cut of eight measures in the Finale, not noted by Hilf.

Confronted with the magnitude of the differences, the writer decided to enhance the measure numbering exercise into a set of parts that conforms to the Critical Edition and the autograph. Comparing the Critical Edition with Tchaikovsky's autograph shows that they agree very well. There are a few editorial corrections, mostly quite minor, which the Critical Edition's editors document carefully. These have been retained. However, they did make one decision which the writer quite disagrees with:

- 1) mm. 591–599, ensemble: In the manuscript and printed score (1876), this chord here and everywhere afterward is notated as:



This notation has been changed by analogy with mm. 21 and following.

The measures in question (591-599) occur in the slow coda to the first movement, which uses the same thematic material as the slow introduction to the movement. If Tchaikovsky's notation in measures 591-599 were in some way unclear, this decision could be defended. However, Tchaikovsky's autograph is very clear, leaving no doubt that he intended for the coda to differ from the introduction. In the writer's opinion, the uniformity imposed by the C.E.'s editors is unwarranted. Therefore, the writer has changed the parts to conform to the autograph.

Likewise, the eight measure cut in the Finale in the Peters edition has been restored. The Peters cues have been removed, inasmuch as the Critical Edition score uses measure numbers.

The writer hopes that this edition can prove useful to musicians who want to use Tchaikovsky's unfiltered intentions as a basis for study and performance.

Frederick Rupert
Oak Hill, VA, USA
January 24, 2019

Sources:

Tchaikovsky's autograph, score:

<https://www.culture.ru/catalog/tchaikovsky/ru/item/archiv/kvartet-no-3>

Critical Edition, score:

http://hz.imsip.info/files/imglnks/usimg/8/8d/IMSLP07960-Tchaikovsky_-_String_Quartet_No.3_Op.30.pdf

Peters Edition, edited by Arno Hilf, parts:

[http://hz.imsip.info/files/imglnks/usimg/d/de/IMSLP519227-PMLP19315-SIBLEY1802.18275.54ce-39087009361645violin1_\(etc\).pdf](http://hz.imsip.info/files/imglnks/usimg/d/de/IMSLP519227-PMLP19315-SIBLEY1802.18275.54ce-39087009361645violin1_(etc).pdf)

