

Cadenza

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto No. 2 in G major, Op. 44
2nd movement

Edward Neeman

The first system of the musical score consists of two staves. The right-hand staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a triplet of eighth notes. This is followed by a series of eighth notes, some of which are grouped into triplets. The left-hand staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes. A fermata is placed over the first measure of the right-hand staff.

The second system of the musical score starts at measure 5. The right-hand staff features a melodic line with a crescendo leading to a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. It includes a triplet of eighth notes and a fermata. The left-hand staff continues with a rhythmic accompaniment. The system concludes with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and a fermata.

The third system of the musical score starts at measure 10. The right-hand staff features a melodic line with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic, followed by a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic with a marcato (*marc.*) marking. The system concludes with a decrescendo (*dim.*) dynamic. The left-hand staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

16

p cresc. *mf* *sempre cresc.*

22

più f *cresc.* *ff*

27

ritenuto *a tempo* *p dolce* etc.

Author's Note: Despite its gorgeous melodies and heavenly length, the second movement of Tchaikovsky's second piano concerto is an acquired taste for many pianists. The long orchestral interludes leave little room for the pianist to shine. While it is a pleasure to play the original version with a superb orchestra after many rehearsals, practical considerations may make it desirable to alter the balance between piano and orchestra in certain circumstances.

In his definitive recording of the complete Tchaikovsky concerti on the Hyperion label, Steven Hough offers an interesting solution: the pianist can join the orchestra for one of its interludes, taking over the solo violin and cello lines. [In the liner notes, Hough writes](#) that he feels his solution gives “a symmetry to the whole movement, lending a psychological cohesion.” I completely agree.

I have taken Hough's idea just a little farther—I have transcribed the entire orchestral part into the soloist's, allowing the pianist an extended cadenza without orchestra near the end of the movement.