Jean-Philippe Rameau

Les Cyclopes

Rameau's *Les Cyclopes* is the eighth piece from his *Suite in D major, RCT 3*, published in 1724 as part of his *Pièces de clavecin*.

Named after the Cyclopes of Greek mythology, the piece uses rapid hand alternations, repeated rhythmic patterns, and striking contrasts in sound to suggest the powerful movements of giants. Despite its short length, the work is full of drama and imagination, revealing the energetic and expressive side of French Baroque music.

Johannes Brahms

Four Ballades, Op. 10

Composed in 1854, Brahms's *Four Ballades, Op. 10* is one of his important early piano works. The four ballades are arranged in two pairs, each using parallel major and minor keys, creating a tonal connection between the pieces.

The first ballade was inspired by the Scottish ballad *Edward*, which tells the tragic story of a son who murders his father, revealed through a dialogue with his mother. The music begins with a dark and restrained theme, gradually building to a dramatic climax before returning to a calm atmosphere.

The second ballade opens with a lyrical melody, contrasting with a more intense middle section. The third, marked *Intermezzo*, creates a restless and mysterious atmosphere through its distinctive rhythms and changes in tone color. The fourth concludes in a restrained and reflective mood, with delicate interplay between voices and subtle harmonic changes creating a sense of introspection.

From dramatic conflict to quiet reflection, the four ballades reveal the depth and poetic qualities of Brahms's early musical style.