

GEOFF THOMASON – IAML CONGRESS 2018 - LEIPZIG



Warm corners, fog and cheap cotton:  
sundry journeys from Leipzig to Manchester

Leon Picard

Photographed in  
uniform during  
the First World  
War



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ROYAL NORTHERN  
COLLEGE of MUSIC

Anna Brodsky  
née Skadovsky



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ROYAL NORTHERN  
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Adolph Brodsky



*Adolph Brodsky*



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**Thomas Pitfield**







**Pitfield, Thomas Baron. “Letters from Tchaikovsky to Brodsky”. *The Listener*: 19 April 1962, pp.683-684.**

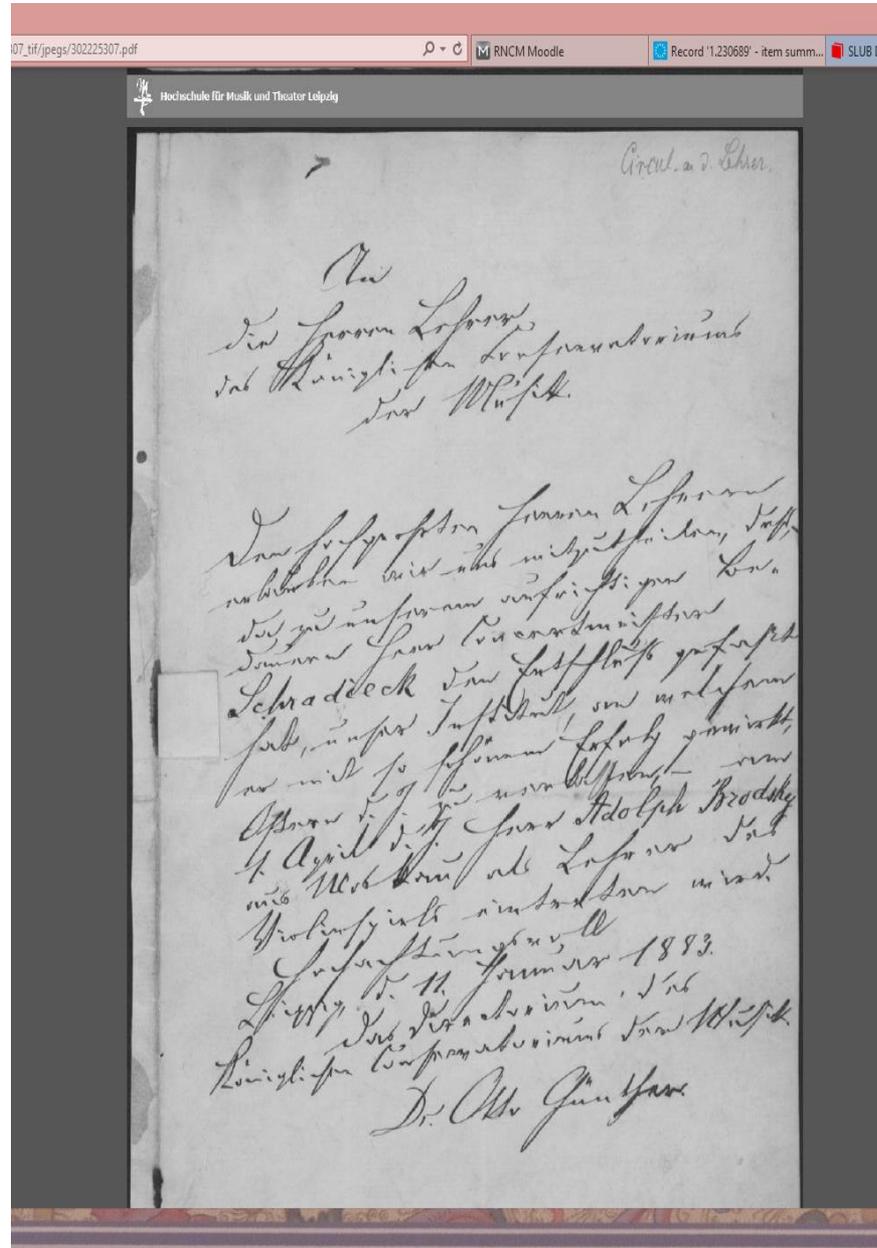
**Gaukstad, Øystein. “Edvard Grieg og Adolf Brodsky”. *Norsk Musikk Tidsskrift*: 1967, No.1 (March) / No.2 (June) / No.3 (October).**



# Royal Leipzig Conservatoire

*Acta Lehrer-  
Anstellungen und  
Abgänge sowie sonstige  
Lehrerangelegenheiten  
betreffend – gehalten  
vom Directorium des  
Königlichen  
Conservatorium der  
Musik zu Leipzig, p.147*

Leipzig. Hochschule  
für Musik und  
Theater



**My first impressions of Leipzig were not favourable. It is neither beautiful nor picturesque: it lies by the side of a small river, too low to be healthy.**



Anna Brodsky. *Recollections of a Russian home*. Manchester: Sherratt & Hughes, 1904, p.138

**Nina Grieg was seated between Brahms and Tchaikovsky, but we had only been a few moments at the table when she started from her seat exclaiming “I cannot sit between these two. It makes me feel so nervous”.**

Ibid., p.159

**I can see Brahms now taking hold of a dish of strawberry jam, and saying he would have it all for himself and no one should get any. It was more like a children’s party than a gathering of great composers.**

Ibid., p.159

**Brodsky Quartet  
concert in the  
Altes Gewandhaus,  
6 February 1884**

Mittwoch, den 6. Februar 1884.  
Abends 7 $\frac{1}{2}$  Uhr.

Im Saale des Gewandhauses.

**Kammermusik - Soirée**

von  
**Adolf Brodsky, Ottokar Nováček,  
Hans Sitt, Leopold Grützmacher,**  
unter gütiger Mitwirkung des Herrn  
**Dr. Johannes Brahms.**

**PROGRAMM.**

1. **Quartett (G-dur)** . . . . . **J. Haydn.**  
Moderato.  
Mennetto.  
Adagio.  
Presto.

2. **Sonate f. Pianof. u. Violine (op. 78, G-dur)** **J. Brahms.**  
Vivace ma non troppo.  
Adagio.  
Allegro molto moderato.

3. **Quartett (Cis-moll, op. 131)** . . . . . **L. v. Beethoven.**  
{ Adagio ma non troppo e molto espressivo.  
{ Allegro molto vivace.  
{ Allegro moderato.  
{ Andante ma non troppo e molto cantabile.  
{ Presto.  
{ Adagio quasi un poco Andante.  
{ Allegro.

*Während der Musik bleiben die Thüren geschlossen.*





Die ganze Sonate erscheint uns als das glückliche Werke eines ernststrebenden, nach Janen gewandten Tondichters. Sie schiesst nicht in das Blaue hinein wie jene Orchesterfantasie, mit der Busoni die Gewandhaushörer zu halber Verzweiflung gebracht; sie halt Mass und Ziel und erwirkt dem Componisten... aufrichtige Sympathien.

Leipziger Nachrichten: 9 February 1891

The whole sonata appears to us as the fortunate work of an earnestly striving Janus-like composer. It doesn't prattle on like that orchestral fantasy with which Busoni once brought the Gewandhaus audience halfway to despair; it has measure and purpose and secures for its composer... genuine sympathy.

Translation GT

Liebe ergebene  
 Hr. Brodsky.  
 Am liebsten würde  
 ich Ihnen schon  
 persönlich und in Person  
 danken für Ihre  
 so aufopfernde  
 Hilfe.  
 Auch ist dankend ein  
 Wort für Ihre  
 Kluge, in der ich  
 Ihre Geduld über  
 Ihnen! Tages  
 2 April 1891

in dieser mit allem Kraft  
 und Energie der unerschrocken  
 die beiden Jahren 1888  
 3<sup>te</sup>, 4<sup>te</sup> und an der 5<sup>ten</sup>  
 Jahrgang! Also ein  
 Stück mit einem  
 9mf, an dem  
 Dank der  
 Herrschaft zu  
 Die Sache ist  
 eine Sache an  
 einem Stück  
 gegen die  
 Hr.  
 Herrschaft  
 J. Brahms

Brahms to Adolph Brodsky,  
postmark 2 April 1891



...das mindestens die beiden Geigen vom 3ten, 4ten Takt an ihr *f* nur heucheln! Also umschmeicheln Sie mit einem recht schönen *mf*, er kann es Ihnen im Verlauf des Satzes durch ein schönstes *p* vergelten.

Brahms to Adolph Brodsky, postmark 2 April 1891

...the two fiddles should at least bluff their *forte* from the third and fourth bars [of the opening]. That way they can flatter with a really nice *mezzo forte* and be rewarded during the course of the movement with a beautiful *piano*.

Translation GT

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Signed photograph  
From Tchaikovsky  
to Adolph Brodsky,  
23 November 1891





Ya uzhe davno znal ot Damrosha o tvoem angazhemente i odobryal tvoe peshenie perevatsya v Ameriku. Ubezhen, chto ti tam prevoskholno ustroinisy i budesh dovolen vo vsekh otnosheniyakh. No ne budesh li ti pervoe vremya nemnozhko oskovat o teplom ugolke, nasizhennom v Leiptsige.

Tchaikovsky to Adolph Brodsky, 19 October (OS) 1891

I have long known through Damrosch about your appointment, and approved your decision to move to America. I am convinced that you will settle there favourably, and that you will be satisfied from every angle. But will you not fret a little about the warm corner you made in Leipzig?

Translation Maria Briggs

**I knew very little of Manchester, hardly more than I had learnt from my geography. In my imagination it figured as a large smoky place where cotton was very cheap, and where people could not possibly care for music or have any idea what really serious music meant.**

**Anna Brodsky. Recollections of a Russian home, p.201.**



**Manchester in 1889**

**Manchester City Libraries**

**Brodsky Quartet  
Concerts -  
Programme for  
the season 1911-12**



ASSOCIATION HALL, MOUNT STREET,  
MANCHESTER.

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Wednesday, November 1st, 1911.      Wednesday, January 31st, 1912.  
 „      November 29th, „      „      February 28th, „  
 „      December 20th, „      „      March 20th, „

—❧—

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98	2	9	149	18	8	101	4	7									
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ROYAL NORTHERN  
COLLEGE of MUSIC



In association with Mr. Brodsky and Mr. Fuchs [Siloti] introduced to the Manchester public Tchaikovsky's extremely remarkable trio in A minor... The performance of this most interesting work was quite masterly... The performers did not always follow the printed indications of tempo... but, seeing that two out of the three executants... besides being performers of world-wide reputation, were intimate personal friends of the illustrious composer, it may be surmised that they had good reasons for what they did. The trio was heard throughout with evident interest...

Manchester Guardian: 17 December 1897, p.7

**Das is allerdings ein Beweis, dass Sie sich in Manchester wohl fühlen. Ja, man lernt sich trösten! Hier in Leipzig ist man so weit gekommen, das man behauptet, der verfluchte Kohlenstaub sehr gesund sei! Jawohl, wenn man eine so pessimische Weltanschauung huldigt, dass das Allegesundete ist, in der Erde versteckt zu liegen!**

Grieg to Adolph Brodsky, 16 November 1895

**This is a sure sign that you are enjoying being in Manchester. Yes, we learn to console ourselves! Here in Leipzig we've got so far as believing that the damned coal dust is very healthy! Really, if you subscribe to such a pessimistic outlook, then it's even healthy to lie down and hide in the ground!**

Translation GT

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**Zuletzt eine Bitte: dass Sie während unserer Manchester Aufenthalt den verfluchten “Fog” Reisepass geben!”**

Grieg to Adolph Brodsky, 3 September 1897

**Finally a request: that during our stay in Manchester you send the damn “fog” packing!**

Translation GT

**RNCM Archives**



Ich habe es meiner Frau im Voraus gesagt, dass Sie die Stellung in Manchester nicht annehmen, sonst hätte ich mich persönlich schon früher an Sie gewendet...Aber 10,000 Mark für 36 Wochen, 12 Stunden wöchentlich, könnten wir Ihnen bieten...Ich glaube aber in England wäre ein grosses Feld für Sie. Die Reisen sind sehr kurz und Sie könnten überall spielen ohne Ihre Stunden zu vernachlässigen, ja sogar meistens nach den Concerte auswärts, wieder am selben Abend nach Hause kommen. Liverpool is z.B. nur  $\frac{3}{4}$  Stunden von Manchester mit der Bahn zu erreichen...

Adolph Brodsky to Busoni, 20 May 1896

I told my wife beforehand that you wouldn't take up the position in Manchester, otherwise I would have turned to you earlier myself... But we can offer you 10,000 Marks for 36 weeks, at 12 hours a week...I also think England would be a great place for you to be. Travelling distances are very short, and you could perform all over without abandoning your teaching hours, and even after most of the out of town concerts you could be home the same evening. Liverpool for instance can be reached by rail from Manchester in only three-quarters of an hour...

Translation GT



**Grüsse aus der  
Musikstadt  
Manchester an die  
Musikstadt Leipzig!**