

The Sonata in F Major is in four movements. The first is marked *Allegro vivace* and is noted for its repeated use of tremolo in both piano and cello as well as its full exploitation of the range of the cello. Within the first 30 bars, the soloist will play in five different octaves. There is also a clear intent on the part of Brahms to make this music in which both parties play a significant role, not merely a cello work with piano accompaniment. In the second movement, marked *Adagio affettuoso*, Brahms has created a modified song form in which to display the most delicate and sophisticated of melodies. The refinement and detailing in both cello and piano are remarkable and some have suggested that it is here that we see the composer's closest brush with the Wagnerian school of the mid/late Romantic. It is also noteworthy that Brahms employs a great deal of pizzicato, somewhat rare for a slow movement. The *Allegro passionato* third movement is a tour-de-force in which both musicians are pushed to the technical limits of their instruments. The form is both grand and complex as instruments weave among one another, dynamics ebb and flow in short bursts and the key relationships and modal modulation are fine fuel for theoretical study. No where more than here do we see Brahms love of hemiola both in the duplet figuring (bars 100ff) but in the intentional destruction of the 6/8 meter (bars 85ff). The finale of this grand sonata, *Allegro molto*, is less pretentious and somewhat playful. Here, Brahms would seem to send us off after our emotional passage of the prior movements with a straightforward and easily accessible Rondo - entertaining music which need not be complicated to be enjoyed.