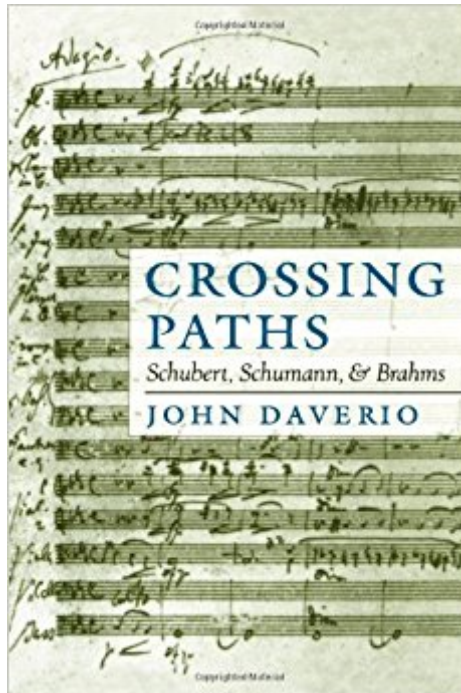


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# Crossing Paths: Schubert, Schumann, And Brahms



## Synopsis

In *Crossing Paths*, John Daverio explores the connections between art and life in the works of three giants of musical romanticism. Drawing on contemporary critical theory and a wide variety of nineteenth-century sources, he considers topics including Schubert and Schumann's uncanny ability to evoke memory in music, the supposed cryptographic practices of Schumann and Brahms, and the allure of the Hungarian Gypsy style for Brahms and others in the Schumann circle. This book offers a fresh perspective on the music of these composers, including a comprehensive discussion of the 19th century practice of cryptography, a debunking of the myth that Schumann and Brahms planted codes for "Clara Schumann" throughout their works, and attention to the late works of Schumann not as evidence of the composer's descent into madness but as inspiration for his successors. Daverio portrays the book's three key players as musical storytellers, each in his own way simulating the structure of lived experience in works of art. As an intimate study of three composers that combines cultural history and literary criticism with deep musicological understanding, *Crossing Paths* is a rich exploration of memory, the re-creation of artistic tradition, and the value of artistic influence.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"*Crossing Paths* not only brings into clear focus often shadowy musical and aesthetic connections between three major Romantic composers; it is also an invaluable compendium of decades of work by many scholars. In mapping these wide-ranging territories, John Daverio tirelessly crossed and

brilliantly bridged historical, musical, and disciplinary boundaries; his work will resound and keep his name alive for many years to come."--Music & Letters

John Daverio has left much in this ambitious book that will endure, either because it is read, accepted, and recounted, or because in sparking disagreement, he stimulates us to progress along new paths of our own."--Journal of the American Musicological Society

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John Daverio (deceased) was Professor of Music and Chair of the Department of Musicology at the School of Music at Boston University, and author of *Robert Schumann: Herald of a "New Poetic Age"* (OUP, 1997) and *Nineteenth-Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology* (Shirmer, 1993).

*Crossing Paths* deals with the confluence of three of the greatest composers of the nineteenth century, and the influence they had on each other. The interactions are absolutely fascinating. I am a decent amateur pianist and know a moderate amount of music theory. In places, this book went past my level of understanding. Nonetheless, I could glean the broad outlines, and was still able to appreciate the combined influences evident in the music of these three composers. The discussion of whether or not Brahms and Robert Schumann used code in the music to honor Clara was interesting. A lot of time was spent on the musical relationship between Brahms and the Hungarian violinist Joachim--not part of the title, but certainly another important "crossing path". However, if

one does not have a pretty solid background in musicology and music theory, I would be somewhat hesitant to recommend the book. If you have such a background, and love Romantic music, you will likely enjoy it very much.

What a great book this is. Serious research, interesting cross-referencing, and many other great qualities. I have found a few errors in the musical examples. I hope someone already communicated with OUP regarding this, but there are wrong notes, and even wrong clefs(!) in some of the examples.

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