

**The artistic plans of great composers
before their deaths
(ChatGPT - knowledge mining)
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**Budapest
2025**

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Schubert's artistic plans before his death

Please describe what other artistic tasks Schubert was planning to carry out before his death, but which were not carried out because of his death? Also, list the authors who have analysed this issue in the context of Schubert's career and outline their main conclusions.

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Franz Schubert (1797–1828) died tragically young and left behind numerous sketches and half-finished projects. Surviving letters, recollections of friends, and manuscript evidence make it clear that he envisaged further large-scale works that he did not live to complete. Scholars have especially highlighted the following areas of unfinished or projected activity in Schubert's last months:

1. Planned or Ongoing Large-Scale Compositions

a) The Tenth Symphony (D 936A)

- **Sketches survive:** Schubert began extensive sketches (usually referred to collectively as D 936A) that suggest he intended another large symphony following the “Great” C major (D 944).
- **Scale and ambition:** Many commentators see in these sketches a continuation of the expansive, mature symphonic style Schubert demonstrated in D 944.
- **Fragmentary state:** Because the sketches are incomplete (some movements only partially drafted), musicologists have long debated how far along Schubert was and what might have been, had he lived.

b) Operas and Stage Works

- **The Count of Gleichen (D 918):** Schubert had begun work on this opera in 1827. Only fragments exist, and there is evidence he discussed further revisions or an entirely new operatic project.
- **Other incomplete stage works:** Schubert harbored hopes (like many Viennese composers) of creating a successful grand opera. However, he struggled to find suitable libretti and to gain the necessary patronage or theatrical opportunity.

c) Oratorios and Sacred Music

- **Continuation of “Lazarus” (D 689):** Composed around 1820, this oratorio is famously fragmentary. Some evidence suggests that near the end of his life, Schubert considered returning to large-scale sacred or dramatic works.

- **Studies with Simon Sechter:** Schubert took lessons in counterpoint in 1828, hinting at a desire to perfect his technique, possibly for large choral/orchestral pieces (or an oratorio) that would demand advanced contrapuntal skills.

d) Further Piano and Chamber Works

- While his last three piano sonatas (D 958, 959, and 960) were completed, Schubert's broader sketches suggest he may have continued composing in these genres. There are scattered incipits for possible piano works or ensemble pieces that remain unfinished.

2. Major Authors Who Have Analyzed Schubert's Unfinished Plans

A number of important Schubert scholars have discussed these unrealized projects. Their works examine surviving drafts, letters, and anecdotal evidence to draw conclusions about Schubert's final intentions. Below are a few of the most frequently cited:

1. Otto Erich Deutsch

- **Key Work:** *The Schubert Thematic Catalogue* (commonly known as the "Deutsch Catalogue").
- **Focus and Conclusions:** Deutsch catalogued every known Schubert composition (complete and fragmentary). His work provided the foundation for subsequent studies of Schubert's unfinished pieces, documenting the sketches for the Tenth Symphony and incomplete operas. Deutsch emphasized Schubert's extraordinarily prolific final year and saw the sketches as evidence of an undiminished creative drive.

2. Maurice J. E. Brown

- **Key Work:** *Schubert: A Critical Biography* (1958).
- **Focus and Conclusions:** Brown gave one of the earliest modern overviews of Schubert's life and catalog of works. He acknowledged that the Tenth Symphony sketches show Schubert's push toward more "symphonic grandeur." However, Brown was cautious in claiming too much about how finished or coherent those sketches might have been, noting their fragmentary state.

3. Brian Newbould

- **Key Works:** *Schubert and the Symphony: A New Perspective* (1992); reconstructions of Schubert's Tenth Symphony.
- **Focus and Conclusions:** Arguably the foremost scholar of Schubert's symphonic fragments, Newbould has reconstructed several of Schubert's incomplete symphonies, including the Tenth (D 936A). His detailed analysis leads him to believe Schubert was consciously forging a new and more experimental symphonic path, influenced by Beethoven's late style and Schubert's own growing formal boldness.

4. Elizabeth Norman McKay

- **Key Work:** *Franz Schubert: A Biography* (1996).
- **Focus and Conclusions:** McKay places Schubert's final compositional plans in the broader context of Viennese musical life. She discusses Schubert's frustration with finding an appropriate libretto for a grand opera and sees his

late lesson-taking (with Simon Sechter) as indicative of a serious ambition to compose large-scale sacred or choral works.

5. **Christopher H. Gibbs (Editor)**

- **Key Work:** *The Cambridge Companion to Schubert* (1997).
- **Focus and Conclusions:** In this collection, several essays address Schubert’s late style, identifying the bold harmonic language in his last sonatas, the “Unfinished” Symphony, and the Tenth Symphony sketches. Contributors often stress that Schubert’s final year was a period of extraordinary creativity—making his early death all the more tragic in cutting short major new directions.

6. **Susan Youens**

- **Key Works:** Numerous studies on Schubert’s songs, including *Schubert’s Poets and the Making of Lieder*.
- **Focus and Conclusions:** While focusing largely on song, Youens touches on Schubert’s evolving concept of musical “cycles” and larger forms. She notes that in 1828 Schubert was still exploring poetry by Heine and Seidl, suggesting further expansions of the Lied repertoire might have been forthcoming.

3. Summary of Scholarly Consensus

- **Unflagging Late Productivity:** Despite serious illness, Schubert was composing prolifically until weeks before his death. Most scholars see this as evidence he would have continued writing ambitiously scaled works.
- **Symphonic Ambitions:** The Tenth Symphony sketches in particular reveal a desire to match or surpass the scale of the “Great” C major Symphony—an ambition fueled by admiration for Beethoven and Schubert’s own breakthroughs in orchestral writing.
- **Operatic Frustrations:** Repeated attempts to find a viable opera libretto suggest Schubert wanted a successful stage work but was thwarted by practical and artistic obstacles.
- **Interest in Advanced Counterpoint and Sacred Forms:** Lessons with Simon Sechter suggest Schubert had one eye on larger choral or religious compositions—some of which might have grown from his incomplete oratorio *Lazarus*.
- **What Might Have Been:** Scholars are universally struck by the sense of “what if.” Schubert’s profound development in 1827–28, evident in the final piano sonatas and the great C major String Quintet, prompts speculation about how much further his style and ambition could have evolved had he survived.

Concluding Note

Franz Schubert died at age 31 on November 19, 1828, cutting short several of these prospective projects. While we cannot know precisely how he might have finished his Tenth Symphony, or whether he would have found the perfect operatic vehicle, the sketches and testimony he left behind confirm that he had planned significant new musical undertakings. Scholars—most notably Otto Erich Deutsch, Maurice Brown, Brian Newbould, Elizabeth McKay, Christopher Gibbs, and Susan Youens—conclude that Schubert’s final year displayed a remarkable surge of creativity and stylistic ambition, leaving us only tantalizing glimpses of work he was unable to complete.

Describe and analyze please the work of Otto Erich Deutsch „The Schubert Thematic Catalogue” in terms of artistic plans that Schubert had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Otto Erich Deutsch’s *Schubert Thematic Catalogue* (commonly referred to simply as the “Deutsch Catalogue” or “D-Catalog”) is the central scholarly tool for identifying, organizing, and studying the works of Franz Schubert. First published in 1951 as *Franz Schubert: Thematisches Verzeichnis seiner Werke in chronologischer Folge*, it enumerates Schubert’s compositions roughly in chronological order and assigns each piece a “D” number. In doing so, Deutsch not only established the modern reference system for Schubert’s music but also brought to light many of Schubert’s unfinished or fragmentary projects.

Below is a closer look at how Deutsch’s work helps us understand Schubert’s artistic aspirations and plans—particularly those that remained incomplete or unrealized at the time of his early death in November 1828.

1. Genesis and Purpose of the Deutsch Catalogue

1. Comprehensive Thematic Index

- Before Deutsch, Schubert’s works were organized in various ad hoc ways (publication references, different early catalogues, etc.). Deutsch’s contribution was to unite manuscript sources, first editions, and archival evidence into a comprehensive listing that transcended any single publisher’s approach.
- By providing thematic incipits (the opening measures of each piece) and referencing manuscript sources, Deutsch gave scholars a way to identify works unambiguously—crucial since Schubert left numerous unfinished sketches, alternative versions, and pieces published posthumously under various names.

2. Chronological Backbone

- Deutsch painstakingly arranged Schubert’s compositions in a probable chronological sequence. This chronological framework is essential for seeing how Schubert’s artistic plans developed and changed—where he broke off certain projects, how he shifted genres, and what new ambitions emerged in his final years.

3. Inclusion of Fragments and Sketches

- A notable element of Deutsch’s catalogue is its inclusion of incomplete works. Schubert was famously prolific, but many of his largest forms—operas, oratorios, some symphonies—were left unfinished. By documenting these fragments and partially completed manuscripts, Deutsch’s catalogue highlights Schubert’s ongoing artistic endeavors that went beyond what was fully realized or published during his lifetime.

2. Schubert’s Late Artistic Plans Reflected in the Catalogue

Despite dying at just 31, Schubert's last year (1827–1828) was astonishingly productive. Several major works came to fruition—*Die Winterreise* (partly 1827), the last three piano sonatas (D 958, D 959, D 960), the String Quintet in C (D 956), *Schwanengesang* (a posthumous collection of his final song settings), and other pieces. However, the Deutsch Catalogue also shows us what he had hoped to accomplish but did not finish.

1. Unfinished Orchestral Projects

- **Symphony in E Major (D 936A):** Sometimes called the “Tenth Symphony,” this piece survives mainly as a series of sketches and partial orchestral drafts. The Deutsch Catalogue clarifies where these manuscripts fit chronologically—showing that Schubert was still trying to tackle large-scale symphonic writing in his last months.
- **Earlier Symphonic Fragments:** Schubert had left other symphonies incomplete, most famously the “Unfinished” (D 759). These incomplete works reveal how ambitious he was in orchestral form, although his final illness and his continuing drive to write in other genres (particularly song) sometimes pulled him in multiple directions simultaneously.

2. Operatic and Dramatic Ambitions

- Schubert constantly harbored the dream of writing a successful German opera. The Deutsch Catalogue details many incomplete operatic attempts, with short fragments or just a few scenes composed. Examples include *Der Graf von Gleichen* (D 918, mostly unfinished) and other attempts that exist in partial piano-vocal sketches.
- While Schubert's best-known operatic endeavors (e.g., *Fierrabras*, D 796) were completed to a degree, their performance or publication often proved problematic in his lifetime. Deutsch's thematic entries for the incomplete operas give modern scholars a window into just how seriously Schubert continued to view opera as an unfulfilled artistic goal.

3. Sacred and Large Choral Works

- **Oratorio “Lazarus” (D 689):** Begun in 1820, Schubert never finished it. Deutsch's catalogue indicates the precise state of surviving manuscripts. It is a noteworthy demonstration of Schubert's interest in large-scale sacred drama—an area he hoped to develop further but never fully completed.
- Even in his final years, Schubert retained some interest in sacred music, though it was overshadowed by his last, highly personal instrumental and song compositions.

4. Late Piano and Chamber Works

- The *Deutsch Catalogue* itemizes not only fully realized late masterpieces—like the final Piano Sonatas (D 958–960) or the great String Quintet in C (D 956)—but also smaller sketches for piano pieces that never took final shape. Some exist as fleeting thematic scraps, while others contain fully formed movements lacking a conclusion or codas.

5. Song Cycles and Plans for Future Lieder

- Schubert's *Schwanengesang* (D 957) is a posthumous collection of his last songs; although not a cycle like *Die Winterreise* or *Die schöne Müllerin*, it documents his final flights of song inspiration.
- Many single-song fragments also appear in the Deutsch Catalogue—charming melodic outlines or partially harmonized settings that show Schubert's inclination to keep writing lieder. For instance, a few sketches from fall 1828

survive, underscoring that he was still seeking texts to set and likely planning additional cycles or single songs.

3. Deutsch's Scholarly Influence on Our Understanding of Schubert's Intentions

1. Chronological Layers

By sorting Schubert's works according to their probable date of composition, Deutsch's catalogue helps scholars trace the evolution of Schubert's style and aspirations. We see surges of ambition in particular periods—such as a flurry of opera sketches in the early 1820s, then the culminating mastery of song cycles and chamber music in his last two years.

2. Archival Thoroughness

Deutsch's deep dive into manuscripts and contemporary references (letters, diaries, publishing records) gives researchers concrete evidence about how Schubert juggled various projects. This evidence often clarifies if a large composition was truly abandoned or merely set aside before being resumed, or if it was left incomplete because Schubert was diverted by commissioned works or by the extraordinary efforts of his final masterpieces.

3. Reconstruction and Performance

- The data in the Deutsch Catalogue has allowed later scholars, conductors, and performers to attempt completions or reconstructions of Schubert's unfinished works. For instance, attempts to realize a playable edition of the "Tenth Symphony" (D 936A) rely on the thematic sketches and fragment identifications that Deutsch laid out.
- The same is true of Schubert's many fragmentary operas or choral works, where musicologists glean from Deutsch's notes precisely what remains of Schubert's original manuscript.

4. Insights into Schubert's Creative Psychology

- While the catalogue itself is primarily a bibliographic and thematic tool, its details—how thoroughly or abruptly a piece is dropped, the physical condition of the manuscript, and references in Schubert's correspondence—reveal patterns in Schubert's creative process.
- Notably, Schubert tended to "test" certain ideas in preliminary sketches before committing to a large-scale piece—something that emerges only when one studies the state of each fragment. Deutsch's attention to dating these bits of manuscript helps modern scholars see how certain sketches anticipated bigger compositional plans.

4. Conclusion: Deutsch Catalogue as a Window into Schubert's Final Vision

Otto Erich Deutsch's *Schubert Thematic Catalogue* remains indispensable for any serious study of Franz Schubert's music. Beyond its purely practical role in cataloging and numbering Schubert's oeuvre, it shines a light on the composer's ambitious spirit and the breadth of his late artistic aspirations. By listing completed works alongside unfinished sketches and

fragments, Deutsch opened up the hidden narrative of Schubert’s creative life—a narrative in which opera, oratorio, symphony, chamber music, and song all competed for Schubert’s attention until his final illness cut his plans short. From the sketches of a possible Tenth Symphony to the abandoned scenes of *Der Graf von Gleichen* and the scattered piano pieces that never found a final form, the Deutsch Catalogue reveals that Schubert was actively imagining, drafting, and sometimes nearly completing a remarkable variety of large-scale projects right up to his untimely death. In so doing, Deutsch’s catalogue provides a detailed roadmap of what Schubert was aiming for—his ultimate artistic trajectory—and underscores how much extraordinary music was left unwritten when his life ended at 31. It therefore stands as both a testament to Schubert’s remarkable creative powers and an essential guide to what might have been, had he enjoyed more time to fulfill the artistic plans he was so vigorously pursuing.

Describe and analyze please the work of Maurice J. E. Brown „Schubert: A Critical Biography” in terms of artistic plans that Schubert had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Maurice J. E. Brown’s *Schubert: A Critical Biography* (originally published in 1958, revised in later editions) remains one of the foundational scholarly treatments of Franz Schubert’s life and works. Brown’s research is distinguished by its meticulous attention to primary source evidence—letters, manuscripts, recollections from Schubert’s friends—and by an interpretive approach that balances detailed musical analysis with a broader cultural and biographical context. When addressing Schubert’s final months (late 1827–November 1828) and the artistic plans he was formulating before his death at the age of thirty-one, Brown offers important insights that illuminate both what Schubert had already accomplished and the new directions he was hoping to explore. Below is an overview of Brown’s key points regarding these “unrealized” or incomplete plans, along with an analysis of how Brown interprets them in light of Schubert’s overall artistic trajectory.

1. Brown’s Contextual Framework

1. **Expansion of Critical Biography:** Brown’s scholarship aimed to refine earlier 19th-century and early 20th-century accounts of Schubert’s life (many of which leaned on anecdote or romanticized narratives). By consulting original documents (letters, diary entries, testimonies by Schubert’s circle), Brown constructs a historically grounded narrative of Schubert’s final ambitions.
2. **Emphasis on Schubert’s Development as a Composer:** Brown’s “critical biography” is not purely a life story; it tracks compositional development in tandem with Schubert’s personal circumstances. This helps frame Schubert’s late works and unfinished projects as logical extensions of where his style and aspirations were heading, rather than isolated ideas.
3. **Influence of Beethoven’s Legacy:** A key undercurrent in Brown’s account is the effect of Beethoven’s death (March 1827) and legacy upon Schubert. Brown

underscores how Beethoven's towering presence may have inspired Schubert to conceive more ambitious, large-scale works—both symphonic and dramatic.

2. Schubert's Late Ambitions According to Brown

2.1 Large-Scale Symphonic Projects

- **The Eighth and Tenth Symphonies:** Brown documents Schubert's ongoing fascination with the symphonic form in the last years of his life. Although the now-called "Great" C major Symphony (D. 944) was completed around 1827–1828 and was by no means an "unfinished project," Schubert still contemplated further expansions of symphonic writing. Brown cites fragmentary sketches—traditionally referred to as a "Tenth" Symphony (D. 936A)—that suggest Schubert was experimenting with even bolder thematic writing and orchestration.
- **Stylistic Evolution:** Brown argues that these sketches show Schubert trying to fuse his deeply lyrical style (long-spun, songlike melodies) with a more integrated, Beethoven-inspired architecture. Schubert's interest in new harmonic sequences, large-scale structure, and orchestral color points toward an evolving symphonic language that Brown believes might have yielded revolutionary works had Schubert lived longer.

2.2 Opera and Dramatic Works

- **Unrealized Operatic Plans:** Schubert wrote or sketched more than a dozen operatic and stage projects during his short lifetime, most of which never fully materialized. According to Brown, in the final months, Schubert was once again revisiting the idea of writing a successful, large-scale German opera—something that had long preoccupied him. He had begun exploring a libretto by Johann Philipp Neumann (or, in other outlines, a possible collaboration with other authors), but his failing health interfered.
- **Brown's Assessment:** Brown treats Schubert's operatic ambitions carefully: he notes that while Schubert's gift for melody was unquestionable, the structural and dramatic demands of opera had historically proven challenging for him. Brown argues that, by the late 1820s, Schubert was showing a growing awareness of dramaturgy, more sophisticated use of leitmotif-like themes, and a deeper concern for weaving music into the theatrical plot. This suggests that Schubert's next opera might have been more coherent dramatically than his earlier attempts.

2.3 Sacred and Choral Works

- **Possibility of an Oratorio:** Brown also reports references—albeit scant—to Schubert's interest in composing a large oratorio or grand choral work. While Schubert had worked on masses and other liturgical pieces, Brown infers from letters and conversations among Schubert's friends (especially with the Huttenbrenner circle) that the composer was intrigued by a more extended sacred or oratorio-like form.
- **Connection to Beethoven:** Brown identifies a parallel between Schubert's final impetus in this arena and Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis*. Although Schubert's last extant sacred compositions (for instance, the Mass in E-flat major, D. 950) were

significant achievements, Brown theorizes that Schubert hoped to push further, possibly following Beethoven's example of unifying large formal structures with deeply personal spiritual expression.

2.4 Further Song Cycles or Lieder Collections

- **Continuing the Lied Tradition:** While Schubert is celebrated for his two late cycles (*Die Winterreise* and *Schwanengesang*, though the latter is posthumously compiled rather than a single unified cycle), Brown notes that Schubert continued to seek new poetic material even in his last weeks.
 - **A More Integrated Approach:** Brown's commentary suggests that Schubert's plan for any subsequent song collections would have refined the cycle concept, linking songs through thematic, harmonic, or narrative threads—evidence of which appears in some of Schubert's final songs. Brown's analysis is that Schubert recognized the powerful effect of unifying a set of songs with an overarching emotional or narrative arc and might have pursued that approach yet again.
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3. Brown's Interpretive Lens

3.1 Schubert's Psychological State

Brown tempers any interpretation of Schubert's "grand plans" with an understanding of the composer's physical and emotional state. By late 1828, Schubert was severely ill (likely with syphilis and secondary complications), and his professional frustrations had been mounting for some time (unpredictable income, struggles with the Viennese opera scene, etc.). Yet Brown emphasizes that Schubert's creative drive was undiminished: the final works—among them the String Quintet in C major (D. 956), the last three piano sonatas (D. 958–960), and more—are not the products of a composer giving up but of one continuing to search for new forms of expression.

3.2 Methodological Rigor

Another feature of Brown's scholarship is his careful sifting of plausible evidence from speculative anecdotes. In exploring these unfinished or projected compositions, Brown uses:

- **Letters and Conversations:** Reports from close friends like Josef Hüttenbrenner and Eduard von Bauernfeld, who allude to Schubert's excitement over new operatic or symphonic projects.
- **Sketches and Manuscript Drafts:** Surviving musical fragments that Brown meticulously catalogs and interprets, showing the seeds of new compositional strategies.
- **Comparative Analysis:** Brown often compares Schubert's late style with Beethoven's later works (and sometimes with emerging Romantic composers) to place Schubert's projects in a broader aesthetic context.

3.3 Artistic Trajectory vs. Historical Accident

Brown’s central argument is that Schubert’s late style—marked by stark emotional contrasts, extended melodies, and innovative harmonic detours—would likely have blossomed into even more expansive works had he lived beyond November 1828. In other words, Brown does not see Schubert’s final year as simply a “late flowering” that inevitably closed; rather, it was a phase of vigorous, ongoing evolution, cut short by illness and death.

4. Analysis and Critical Reception

1. **Significance of Brown’s Perspective:** Brown’s biography was among the first to synthesize Schubert’s personal letters, documented recollections, and musical sketches to underscore the composer’s forward-looking mindset. Before Brown, many commentators emphasized Schubert’s position purely as a “lyrical genius” overshadowed by Beethoven—an artist whose greatest achievements lay mainly in smaller forms (songs, piano pieces, chamber works). Brown offers a corrective by highlighting Schubert’s symphonic and dramatic aspirations.
2. **Critical Debate:** Some subsequent biographers and musicologists, while acknowledging Brown’s ground-breaking work, question how definitive the evidence is for certain large-scale projects. They note that Schubert’s concentration on chamber music and song was partly a result of the Austrian musical climate, limited patronage, and the difficulties of mounting new operas in Vienna. Nevertheless, Brown’s notion of Schubert looking beyond these constraints remains widely influential.
3. **Influence on Modern Schubert Scholarship:** Brown’s blend of biographical detail and musical-critical analysis laid the foundation for later studies (e.g., by Brian Newbould, whose work on Schubert’s unfinished symphonies builds on Brown’s approach). Today, many consider Brown’s reading of Schubert’s late style—especially his interpretation of the Tenth Symphony fragments—to have paved the way for modern attempts to complete or reconstruct Schubert’s sketches.

5. Conclusion

In *Schubert: A Critical Biography*, Maurice J. E. Brown vividly portrays a composer who, far from being resigned to his fate, was brimming with ideas for large-scale symphonies, dramatic works, and possibly further sacred or song-cyclic endeavors. Brown’s meticulous research and balanced interpretive style present Schubert not only as an unsurpassed melodist and poet of song, but also as a composer poised to expand even more boldly into the symphonic and operatic realms. Brown’s overarching thesis—that Schubert’s final year showed a composer in a phase of accelerating artistic evolution—has shaped how modern scholarship views Schubert’s last months. Rather than representing a period of decline, it was a moment of remarkable productivity and forward-looking ambition, tragically curtailed by Schubert’s untimely death. In emphasizing these artistic plans, Brown encourages us to see the late works, sketches, and letters as windows into a creative future that Schubert was actively envisioning—and that might have profoundly influenced the course of 19th-century music had he lived longer.

Describe and analyze please the work of Brian Newbould „Schubert and the Symphony: A New Perspective” in terms of artistic plans that Schubert had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Brian Newbould’s *Schubert and the Symphony: A New Perspective* (first published in 1992) has become a central scholarly resource for understanding how Franz Schubert approached the symphonic genre—both in the works he completed and in those he left unfinished. Newbould’s study is especially important because it examines Schubert’s evolving conception of the symphony in the context of Viennese classicism, Beethoven’s towering influence, and Schubert’s own distinctive style. Below is a detailed overview and analysis of how Newbould interprets Schubert’s *artistic plans* for his symphonies, especially those plans that remained unrealized at his death in 1828.

1. Scope and Purpose of Newbould’s Book

Newbould’s main aim in *Schubert and the Symphony* is twofold:

1. **To provide a chronological study** of Schubert’s orchestral works—from the early, Mozart-inspired symphonies of his teenage years through to the late, more innovative symphonic conceptions.
2. **To investigate unfinished or fragmentary symphonic sketches** and hypothesize how Schubert might have continued them had he lived longer. Through a close analysis of manuscripts, notebooks, and sketch materials, Newbould attempts to show a logical progression in Schubert’s symphonic thinking.

Because Schubert left behind a substantial number of sketches for projected symphonic works, Newbould carefully reconstructs Schubert’s compositional methods and possible intentions. By doing so, the book aspires to give a deeper insight into what Schubert’s artistic ambitions might have yielded if not cut short by his untimely death.

2. Early Symphonies and Their Significance

In the first chapters, Newbould surveys Schubert’s six completed early symphonies (D. 82, D. 125, D. 200, D. 417, D. 485, and D. 589). These works—composed roughly between 1811 and 1818—already suggest that Schubert was absorbing:

- The **Viennese classical tradition** (Haydn, Mozart).
- **Beethovenian elements**, especially in motivic development and harmonic drama.

Although these early symphonies sometimes remain formally conventional, Newbould emphasizes that certain harmonic “surprises” and melodic expansiveness foreshadow the late symphonic style. By highlighting small departures from classical norms (for instance, abrupt

modulations or notably long lyrical themes), Newbould argues that Schubert was already testing the boundaries of the symphony well before 1820.

3. The “Unfinished” and the “Great” C Major

The “Unfinished” Symphony (B Minor, D. 759)

The “Unfinished” symphony is the most famous example of Schubert leaving a major work incomplete, and Newbould devotes considerable energy to analyzing its significance. Key points in Newbould’s discussion include:

1. **Extended Symphonic Scale:** Although incomplete, the two extant movements are lengthy and richly scored, suggesting Schubert’s move away from the classical four-movement structure to a potentially broader canvas.
2. **Thematic and Harmonic Innovation:** The first movement’s dark, brooding B minor opens new psychological and expressive vistas. Newbould reads this as Schubert’s step toward a more emotionally urgent symphonic language—one that Beethoven had pioneered but which Schubert personalized through his lyricism.
3. **Reasons for Incompletion:** Newbould explores possible reasons why Schubert may have abandoned the work around 1822. While no consensus exists, Newbould speculates that the deep, introspective style might have led Schubert to question whether the standard four-movement symphonic form could accommodate his new expressive approach.

The “Great” C Major Symphony (D. 944)

Often referred to as Schubert’s Ninth (or sometimes Seventh), the “Great” C Major, composed in 1825–1826 (and revised a bit later), showcases the composer’s final fully realized statement in the symphonic genre. According to Newbould:

- **Formal Expansion:** Schubert markedly lengthens the musical architecture. Each movement is larger, placing heightened demands on the listener’s attention and the musicians’ technique.
- **Lyrical Sublimity and Rhythmic Impulse:** Newbould observes how Schubert balances his trademark lyricism (generous melodic lines, extended transitions) with a Beethovenian dynamism (propulsive rhythms and thematic transformation).
- **Forward-Looking Orchestration:** The “Great” C Major also contains novel orchestral effects—such as layering of winds and brass—that later Romantic composers would adopt. Newbould thus sees the symphony as an important bridge between late Viennese classicism and mid-century Romantic symphonic style.

4. The Fragmentary Symphonies and Their Posthumous Fate

The So-Called “Seventh” (E Major, D. 729)

Schubert worked on a massive E major symphony, sketched around 1821, which remained unfinished. Newbould identifies a few movements in fragmentary form and attempts to fill in the likely missing sections using stylistic cues from the existing material. He makes these observations:

- **Ambitious Scale:** Even in sketch form, the E major fragments show Schubert’s fascination with broad thematic development.
- **Experimentation with Key Schemes:** The E major sketches modulate in unconventional ways, anticipating more chromatic extremes in Schubert’s later works.

Though Newbould (and other musicologists) have attempted completions, no single reconstruction is universally accepted. Nonetheless, the fragments reveal Schubert testing out advanced harmonic and structural ideas.

The “Gmunden-Gastein” Symphony Mystery

It has long been debated whether Schubert composed or planned a “Gmunden-Gastein” symphony (sometimes referred to as a “lost” or “lost seventh”) during his trip to the spa towns of Gmunden and Bad Gastein in 1825. Newbould delves into:

- **Documentary Clues:** Letters and diary entries mention an ongoing large-scale work, though the identity of that piece remains unclear. Some suggest it could be an early version of the “Great” C Major or another entirely separate symphony.
- **Stylistic Links:** Newbould sees elements in the “Great” C Major that might align with a Gmunden-Gastein concept—like robust orchestration and grand thematic statements—supporting the idea that sketches for a new symphony were at least merged into the “Great” C Major.

Sketches for a “Tenth” Symphony (D. 936A)

Discovered in the 20th century, these late sketches have attracted enormous scholarly interest, as they date to around the time of Schubert’s final illness in 1828. Newbould took on the challenge of producing a performing version of these fragments (sometimes called “Schubert’s Tenth”), and he discusses:

1. **Harmonic Language:** The sketches reveal an even more daring harmonic sense, with abrupt modulations and poignant chromatic detours.
2. **Structural Possibilities:** Although incomplete, the first movement hints at a scale approaching the “Great” C Major, indicating that Schubert was continuing to expand the symphonic form.
3. **Thematic Transformation:** Motives shift and transform more fluidly than in earlier works, reflecting a progressive development technique that Schubert was exploring under Beethoven’s shadow but forging his own approach.

Newbould’s interpretation underscores that Schubert was not merely repeating a successful formula from D. 944; he was moving on to new symphonic challenges—further lengthening movements, intensifying chromaticism, and refining orchestration.

5. Schubert's Artistic Plans Before His Death

From all these fragments and completed works, **Newbould argues that Schubert envisaged a continued, expansive symphonic trajectory**—one in which he would extend beyond the conventions of his day. In *Schubert and the Symphony*, he contends that in the months leading up to his death, Schubert had the following aspirations:

1. ***Continued Exploration of Large-Scale Forms***
Schubert's final efforts suggest an ongoing passion for long-spanned symphonic structures that could carry more profound emotional states. The Tenth Symphony sketches, for instance, show an intent to push boundaries of form and key.
2. ***Integration of Lyrical and Dramatic Styles***
Schubert's mastery of song (Lieder) is well-known, and Newbould sees him synthesizing that lyric impulse with the dramatic impetus required by a symphony's extended development sections. This fusion is particularly evident in the "Great" C Major and the Tenth sketches.
3. ***Evolving Orchestration and Tone Color***
While Schubert never wrote a treatise on orchestration, his final completed and fragmentary works point to a deepening sense of orchestral possibility—more diverse instrument combinations, expressive wind writing, and a more significant role for brass.
4. ***Personal Voice in the Beethovenian Shadow***
Schubert idolized Beethoven, but by the late 1820s, he was carving out a distinct identity. Newbould highlights subtle but crucial differences: Schubert's emphasis on long, lyrical themes, bold modulations, and a more constant flow of thematic interrelation.
5. ***Ambition for Further Symphonic Cycles***
While no definitive outline exists of how many additional symphonies he planned, references in letters and recollections of friends show he was consistently drafting new orchestral material. Newbould posits that Schubert was poised to complete at least two more large-scale works—one of which may have been the Tenth.

6. Newbould's Methodological Contributions

In producing these insights, Newbould employs a variety of scholarly methods:

- **Manuscript Studies:** He closely examines surviving sketches, comparing them measure by measure with completed movements to infer likely continuations.
- **Comparative Analysis:** By relating Schubert's symphonic fragments to his contemporaneous chamber and piano works, Newbould illuminates consistent compositional traits (e.g., similar harmonic "fingerprints").
- **Speculative Reconstructions:** Newbould has published his own completed versions of the E major (D. 729) and Tenth (D. 936A) sketches. While these reconstructions remain hypothetical, they offer insight into the structural and thematic direction Schubert might have taken.

Newbould's painstaking analyses and completions give modern audiences a tangible sense of Schubert's unwritten "late symphonies." Although inevitably speculative, these reconstructions influence how we conceive Schubert's final artistic plans.

7. Conclusion: Significance of Newbould's Perspective

Brian Newbould's *Schubert and the Symphony: A New Perspective* profoundly shapes our modern understanding of Schubert's symphonic imagination and legacy. By examining early symphonies, the iconic but incomplete "Unfinished," the monumental "Great" C Major, and the fragments of what might have been a Tenth Symphony, Newbould paints a portrait of a composer who was far from running out of ideas at the end of his life. Instead, the evidence points to an ambitious artist eager to explore ever larger forms and more advanced harmonic possibilities—traits that, in many respects, align Schubert with the upcoming Romantic generation. Though Schubert died at the age of 31, Newbould's work suggests that the symphonic tradition could have been transformed even further had Schubert lived to realize these unfulfilled plans. In that sense, Newbould's "new perspective" underscores Schubert's role as both heir to the classical tradition and a forward-looking composer whose last sketches hint at innovations well ahead of his time.

Chopin's artistic plans before his death

Please describe what other artistic tasks Chopin was planning to carry out before his death, but which were not carried out because of his death? Also, list the authors who have analysed this issue in the context of Chopin's career and outline their main conclusions.

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Answer Overview

There is no definitive, universally agreed-upon list of “unfulfilled projects” or “artistic tasks” that Frédéric Chopin was verifiably planning at the very end of his life. Unlike some contemporaries (e.g., Schumann, who left fairly clear statements about his uncompleted works), Chopin did not systematically record large-scale future projects in surviving letters or diaries. Moreover, his final years (1846–1849) were overshadowed by worsening illness (likely pulmonary tuberculosis), making long-term plans difficult to carry out or even to maintain. Consequently, any claims about Chopin's grand artistic intentions must be treated with caution.

That said, a few ideas, rumors, and scholarly hypotheses about what Chopin may have intended to do—and never completed—do recur in the literature. Below is a synthesis of these commonly mentioned “unfulfilled” plans or aspirations, followed by key authors who have addressed them and a summary of their views.

1. A Proposed Treatise or “Method” on Piano Playing

What is claimed?

- Several of Chopin's pupils, including Marcelina Czartoryska and Friederike Müller, recalled that Chopin frequently spoke of writing down his pedagogical principles—particularly his distinctive ideas on fingering and pedaling.
- Chopin's emphasis on nuanced touch, legato, and bel canto-style phrasing was relatively unique, and he conveyed it orally in lessons rather than through a single methodical text.
- Some commentators suggest that Chopin might have been planning to codify his teaching approach in a methodical treatise, comparable (though in concept only) to the piano methods by contemporaries such as Carl Czerny or later figures like Theodor Leschetizky.

Evidence and scholarly views

- **Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger** (in *Chopin: Pianist and Teacher as Seen by His Pupils*, 1986) discusses Chopin's teaching style and includes recollections from students. He

acknowledges the possibility that Chopin intended to formalize his approach but notes there is no surviving manuscript or conclusive proof of any serious, systematic draft.

- **Jim Samson** (in *The Cambridge Companion to Chopin*, 1992, and various writings) also comments that while Chopin's teaching was distinctive, there is scant evidence of an actual "treatise" in progress. Samson emphasizes that any plan for a method, if it existed, likely never went beyond preliminary notes or verbal statements.

Main conclusion: Chopin's pupils often expressed a wish or assumption that he might preserve his teaching in writing. However, no compelling documentation shows that Chopin was actively composing a treatise at the very end of his life, and it remains uncertain whether he had ever begun drafting such a project.

2. Larger-Scale Vocal or Dramatic Works

What is claimed?

- Occasional letters and secondhand reports suggest Chopin was once intrigued by the possibility of writing for voice more substantially—either a cycle of Polish songs, a larger choral work, or (more speculatively) something akin to an opera or oratorio.
- Chopin did compose around 19 Polish songs (many published posthumously as Op. 74), but they are mostly youthful or occasional works. Some writers have wondered if Chopin intended to develop his songwriting further, especially during his exile from Poland.

Evidence and scholarly views

- **Frederick Niecks** (in *Frederick Chopin as a Man and Musician*, 1888) mentions the songs and alludes to Chopin's occasional interest in Polish poetic texts, but he finds no concrete evidence of a substantial vocal work in planning.
- **Adam Zamoyski** (in *Chopin: Prince of the Romantics*, multiple editions) and **Alan Walker** (in *Fryderyk Chopin: A Life and Times*, 2018) both acknowledge that rumors circulated—especially among Chopin's friends—that he might expand his vocal writing. However, neither biographer affirms any solid plan for an opera or major choral piece. Walker, in particular, observes that Chopin's declining health and aversion to large-scale dramatic writing (which he never attempted) make this scenario unlikely.

Main conclusion: While Chopin's friends and pupils sometimes speculated about more extensive vocal music, there is no direct documentary trail—sketches, letters with detail, or outlines—indicating an opera, oratorio, or large set of songs left unfinished. It remains a realm of conjecture.

3. Further Expansions of His Piano Repertoire (e.g., Additional Preludes, Sonatas, or Chamber Works)

What is claimed?

- Some commentators point out that Chopin’s late style (as heard in the *Polonaise-Fantaisie* Op. 61, *Barcarolle* Op. 60, and the final *Mazurkas*) shows a trend toward more harmonically daring, richly contrapuntal music. They wonder if Chopin had plans to continue exploring these directions in more large forms—possibly a fourth piano sonata or further preludes.
- Chopin’s correspondence from Nohant (George Sand’s estate) in the mid-1840s reveals that he worked methodically but was often interrupted by bouts of illness, leading to speculation about “lost” or aborted sketches.

Evidence and scholarly views

- **Jeffrey Kallberg** (notably in articles such as “The Problem of Repetition and Return in Chopin’s Music” and other essays) investigates Chopin’s compositional sketches and publishing timelines. Kallberg stresses that Chopin constantly refined existing pieces rather than amassing large numbers of unfinished works; he rarely left behind extensive incomplete manuscripts pointing to an abandoned large-scale project.
- **Jim Samson** similarly notes that while Chopin worked slowly and revised meticulously, the surviving sketches do not indicate a partially composed new sonata or extended cycle of preludes. Illness curtailed his productivity, but it did not leave behind a trove of half-finished major works.

Main conclusion: There is no concrete manuscript evidence of a significant late large-form work that Chopin began but died before completing. While Chopin may have harbored ideas for future pieces—particularly as he refined his harmonic language—any such intentions were interrupted by his poor health. The existence of truly “lost” late large-scale works remains speculative.

4. Plans for Recitals, Tours, and Revisions

What is claimed?

- In 1848, despite ill health, Chopin traveled to England and Scotland, giving concerts and private performances. Some accounts suggest that if his health had improved, he might have continued with further concert appearances in Europe or possibly in Poland (though this latter idea seems more like a patriotic fantasy entertained by some admirers).
- Chopin was known to revisit and revise earlier compositions (for instance, adjusting fingerings or dynamics for new editions). Some have suggested that he may have intended a systematic revision of his works for a “Complete Edition,” as was becoming more common in the mid-19th century.

Evidence and scholarly views

- **Alan Walker** and **Adam Zamoyski** both chronicle Chopin’s final British journey in detail; they conclude that Chopin’s health collapse in late 1848 makes any further public tours highly unlikely. Nothing in Chopin’s letters points to a planned “grand concert tour” had he recovered.
- **Frederick Niecks** speculates about Chopin possibly revising earlier works, but finds no documentary trail suggesting a formal plan for a collected edition (unlike, say,

Beethoven's attempts or later "Gesamtausgaben" for composers like Bach and Mozart in the 19th century).

Main conclusion: There is minimal evidence that Chopin was on the verge of major new touring or edition projects. While he continued to concertize briefly in 1848, no significant ongoing concert or revision commitments were cut short except by his rapidly advancing illness.

Notable Authors Who Have Analyzed These Questions

1. Frederick Niecks

- **Work:** *Frederick Chopin as a Man and Musician* (1888).
- **Focus:** Early biographical details, first major scholarly study in English.
- **Conclusion on "unfulfilled tasks":** Niecks mentions rumors but concludes there is no concrete evidence Chopin left large-scale projects incomplete.

2. James Huneker

- **Work:** *Chopin: The Man and His Music* (1900).
- **Focus:** Performance-based commentary with a turn-of-the-century perspective.
- **Conclusion:** Huneker comments on Chopin's unique style but does not provide solid evidence of unfulfilled late projects beyond speculation from the composer's circle.

3. Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger

- **Work:** *Chopin: Pianist and Teacher as Seen by His Pupils* (1986).
- **Focus:** Collects statements from Chopin's students, especially about method, technique, and pedagogy.
- **Conclusion:** Recognizes references to a possible "method" or treatise, but deems it hypothetical rather than well-documented.

4. Jim Samson

- **Works:** *The Music of Chopin* (1985), *The Cambridge Companion to Chopin* (editor, 1992).
- **Focus:** Analytical and stylistic studies of Chopin's output.
- **Conclusion:** Finds no solid proof of any extensive late project that was abandoned; emphasizes Chopin's meticulous revision process but notes a lack of final-year large-scale sketches.

5. Jeffrey Kallberg

- **Essays on Chopin's compositional process and style** (e.g., in *19th-Century Music*).
- **Focus:** Manuscript study and compositional sketches, investigating Chopin's working methods.
- **Conclusion:** While Chopin often left behind alternative versions or fragments of pieces in progress, there is little sign he was actively composing a major new work left unfinished.

6. Adam Zamoyski

- **Work:** *Chopin: Prince of the Romantics* (1979, updated editions).
- **Focus:** Detailed biography giving cultural and historical context.
- **Conclusion:** Argues that Chopin's physical decline meant he had neither the stamina nor the inclination to embark on large new projects; suggests any "unfulfilled tasks" were more in the realm of daydreams than actual undertakings.

7. Alan Walker

- **Work:** *Fryderyk Chopin: A Life and Times* (2018).
- **Focus:** Comprehensive modern biography that situates Chopin in the broader Romantic era.
- **Conclusion:** Walker reiterates that Chopin’s final months were dominated by illness, minimal compositional activity, and no documented large-scale future plan.

Summary of Main Conclusions

1. **No Definitive Large-Scale Works Left Unfinished**
While Chopin worked steadily on shorter forms (mazurkas, nocturnes, etc.), there is no hard evidence—such as an extensive draft or detailed letters—indicating a major late project (an opera, oratorio, or extended instrumental work) cut short by his death.
2. **A Hypothetical Piano Method**
Pupils’ recollections suggest Chopin might have intended to codify his teaching into a written method or treatise. However, scholars (Eigeldinger, Samson, Kallberg) emphasize that no concrete manuscript or outline of such a method has surfaced, so it remains speculative.
3. **Limited Documentary Proof**
Chopin’s final letters and recollections from those around him do not point to a clear, ambitious “to-do list” that was tragically left unfulfilled. Rather, they paint a picture of a composer whose fragile health increasingly constrained his creative output.
4. **Scholarly Consensus**
Modern biographers (Walker, Zamoyski) and early commentators (Niecks, Huneker) converge on the view that any talk of “unfulfilled grand projects” is more rumor or posthumous myth-making than established fact. Chopin’s focus in his last years was on polishing existing compositions, attending to private teaching, and giving limited performances—all overshadowed by his declining health.

Conclusion

In light of available primary sources (letters, sketches, pupils’ recollections) and the major Chopin scholarship, there is no robust evidence that Chopin had a clearly laid-out set of major compositional tasks—like a full-scale opera, a large orchestral piece, or a completed piano “method”—that he was forced to abandon due to his death. While it is plausible he had wishes or loosely formed ideas for future compositions or pedagogical writings, these remained at best speculative and were not concretely underway at the time of his final illness. Hence, most reputable Chopin biographers and scholars conclude that while the composer’s untimely death surely prevented any further evolution of his piano style, there are no specific, well-documented “lost” projects or “unfulfilled artistic tasks” to speak of in the same sense one might find with some of his contemporaries.

Describe and analyze please the work of Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger „Chopin: Pianist and Teacher as Seen by His Pupils” in terms of artistic plans that Chopin had in mind before his death in detail.

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Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger's *Chopin: Pianist and Teacher as Seen by His Pupils* is widely regarded as one of the most illuminating sources on Frédéric Chopin's approach to piano playing and pedagogy. Eigeldinger compiles the recollections, diaries, and letters of Chopin's students (such as Karol Mikuli, Wilhelm von Lenz, Marcelina Czartoryska, Friederike Müller, Jane Stirling, and others), weaving in his own scholarly commentary. The result is a multifaceted portrait of Chopin as a performer, composer, and teacher.

Below is an overview of the book's main themes and a closer look at how these sources shed light on Chopin's final artistic plans—those ideas or ambitions he may have harbored toward the end of his life. Although Chopin left no formal “manifesto” about his future intentions, Eigeldinger's compilation offers valuable clues as to what he had in mind.

1. Structure and Key Themes of the Book

1. Primary Sources and Commentaries

- Eigeldinger's book draws on firsthand reports from Chopin's pupils, including lesson notes, anecdotal remarks on technique, interpretative insights, and observations about Chopin's character and health.
- These sources are cross-referenced with Chopin's own letters or with historical commentaries by contemporaries such as Liszt, Berlioz, and others to create a fuller picture.

2. Chopin's Pianistic Ideals

- The collected testimonies emphasize Chopin's emphasis on a “singing tone,” sensitive rubato, nuanced pedal use, and extremely refined fingering.
- Chopin's lessons often focused on flexibility of phrase, an intense awareness of vocal-style legato playing, and the subtle shaping of melodic lines.

3. Teaching Approach

- Eigeldinger shows that Chopin's teaching was often individualized. He adapted his approach to each pupil, tailoring exercises to address specific issues.
- Chopin rarely insisted on drilling “technical” exercises in the abstract. Instead, he embedded technique within actual musical repertoire (e.g., using his own *Études*) and favored artistry over purely mechanical drill.

4. Historical and Biographical Context

- The final sections of the book (and references throughout) outline Chopin's deteriorating health and his last tours in England and Scotland. They also describe his inner circle of students, who continued lessons with him until he was no longer physically able to teach.
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2. Insights on Chopin's Artistic Plans

Although Chopin did not leave behind a fully articulated plan for the future—his health declined rapidly, and he died in October 1849—there are hints in the reminiscences of his pupils that shed light on what he was contemplating artistically. Eigeldinger analyzes these scattered remarks, providing context and interpretation. Several possible “plans” emerge:

1. Refining or Revisiting His Piano Method

- Some of Chopin's students mention that he had a desire—or at least a long-standing idea—to codify his teaching into a more systematic form.
- The evidence for a “Chopin method” is fragmentary. Chopin's strong reluctance to standardize or oversimplify his teaching made a formal treatise unlikely. However, diaries suggest that in the last few years of his life, he sometimes spoke of wanting to correct editorial mistakes in published editions of his works and possibly to record his stylistic insights more concretely.
- Because of Chopin's precarious health, any systematic treatise or “method book” never materialized beyond marginal notes, lesson instructions, or ephemeral drafts.

2. Further Compositions or Revisions

- Chopin continued to tinker with existing works even after their publication, sharing interpretive nuances directly with students. In some lesson notes (for instance, Karol Mikuli's recollections), we see Chopin making small but telling revisions, clarifying pedal markings, or refining fingerings that would better reflect his artistic intentions.
- Near the end of his life, Chopin completed or was at work on some pieces—for example, his *Cello Sonata* in G minor (Op. 65) and a few late mazurkas (Op. 67, Op. 68). Students recalled that he still had new melodic or harmonic ideas he would demonstrate on the piano, although these ideas remain mostly undocumented and unnotated.
- Eigeldinger points out that Chopin's circle remembered him lamenting that certain later compositions were not “ready” for performance or publication. This suggests that he might have envisioned revisiting those sketches or working more thoroughly on them if his health had allowed.

3. Performance Ambitions and Concert Plans

- Although Chopin was famously reclusive as a performer—preferring intimate salon gatherings to large public concerts—testimonials suggest that he hoped to give more performances if his health improved.
- Some of his pupils mention that Chopin's trip to England and Scotland (1848) was partly an attempt to secure financial stability through concerts and teaching. There is evidence he initially planned more appearances but had to curtail them due to illness and fatigue.
- In a handful of recollections, Chopin hints that he missed playing in more congenial settings (intimate soirées with musically sensitive listeners) rather than grand public concert halls, which he found stressful. Any “plan” to stage further recitals remained overshadowed by declining health.

4. Pedagogical Legacy through Pupils

- Several references in Eigeldinger's text underscore Chopin's awareness of how his pupils would carry forward his interpretative style. He often repeated that they must faithfully follow the spirit of his markings and the natural flow of his rubato.
- Pupils such as Jane Stirling and Camille O'Meara took copious lesson notes; Chopin may have seen this as a means of preserving his aesthetic outlook. Although not a grand “plan,” it suggests he hoped his style would continue beyond his lifetime in the playing of trusted pupils.

5. Personal Reflections and “Unfinished Business”

- In the closing chapters, Eigeldinger addresses how Chopin's letters and remarks from late 1848–1849 show both resignation and lingering creative

restlessness. His precarious health forced him to scale down his ambitions, but it did not diminish his perfectionist drive.

- Pupils recall Chopin sometimes talking about “future corrections” to published scores—adjustments to dynamics, fingerings, or phrasing—but these remained unfulfilled.

3. Analysis and Critical Reception

- **Integration of Sources:** One of the great strengths of Eigeldinger’s study is the careful cross-checking of pupil testimonies, which can vary in accuracy or emphasis. By juxtaposing multiple accounts, Eigeldinger filters out inconsistencies and highlights the most credible threads.
- **Focus on Musical Detail:** Much of the book centers on Chopin’s nuanced teaching of phrasing, pedaling, and fingering. While these details may not directly state “plans,” they offer an indirect view of how Chopin thought about shaping music for the future—he was effectively building an interpretive “school” that might persist after his death.
- **Limitations:** Since Chopin’s own letters rarely discuss large-scale compositional projects in the final months and because he wrote no definitive treatise, scholars must infer his intentions from scattered remarks. This can lead to speculative or romanticized interpretations. Eigeldinger is largely careful, but even he must rely on secondhand evidence for Chopin’s ultimate goals.

4. Concluding Thoughts

In *Chopin: Pianist and Teacher as Seen by His Pupils*, Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger provides an unmatched vantage on Chopin’s late teaching environment and artistic mindset. The students’ recollections and diaries suggest that Chopin, even in poor health, had ongoing artistic urges: refining published works, passing on interpretive wisdom, and possibly formalizing (in some measure) his pedagogical insights. Yet these plans remained inhibited by the ravages of his illness, financial pressures, and his own reluctance to commit his practice to a rigid “method.” In essence, the book makes clear that Chopin’s final months were spent in a bittersweet interplay of desire to shape his legacy and the stark realities of his declining strength. While it is impossible to pinpoint precisely which grand projects Chopin might have completed had he lived longer, the recollections compiled by Eigeldinger show that Chopin’s creative spark endured to the very end. He continued to refine, reimagine, and teach—leaving behind a wealth of interpretive traditions that became the living embodiment of his “final artistic plans.”

Describe and analyze please the worke of Jim Samson „The Music of Chopin” and „The Cambridge Companion to Chopin” in terms of artisic plans that Chopin had in mind before his death in detail.

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Below you will find an overview of Jim Samson’s two major publications on Chopin—*The Music of Chopin* and *The Cambridge Companion to Chopin*—followed by a discussion of what they (and the broader Chopin scholarship they draw upon) tell us about Chopin’s final years and any artistic plans he may have had before his death. Since Chopin left few direct, detailed statements about “future projects,” these discussions rely largely on inferences from his late style, incomplete works, correspondence, and the recollections of those close to him. Samson’s scholarship is central to illuminating these points, and while neither volume devotes itself solely to a narrative of Chopin’s plans at life’s end, both books offer valuable insights into the stylistic directions and personal artistic ambitions that were emerging in Chopin’s late period.

1. *The Music of Chopin* (Jim Samson)

Overview and Core Themes

1. **Analytical Focus:** Jim Samson’s *The Music of Chopin* (originally published in 1985) offers a systematic study of Chopin’s works, situating them in their historical context while undertaking thorough structural, harmonic, and stylistic analyses. Samson’s approach often involves linking compositional details to larger cultural and aesthetic movements of early Romanticism.
2. **Stylistic Development:** Samson traces Chopin’s compositional evolution—from the early works influenced by Polish dance forms and virtuosic brilliance to the increasingly sophisticated harmonic language that characterizes his later period. He emphasizes Chopin’s fusion of lyricism, Polish idioms, and a personal brand of Romantic expressivity.
3. **Late Style and Innovative Forms:** In his discussion of Chopin’s later works (e.g., the final Mazurkas, the *Polonaise-Fantaisie* in A-flat major, the *Barcarolle* in F-sharp major, the *Cello Sonata* in G minor), Samson highlights the composer’s increasingly free approach to form and tonality. This provides a window into the directions Chopin was exploring as his health declined.
 - Samson’s analysis repeatedly notes new harmonic explorations: the intensified use of chromatic harmony, bold modulations, and structural ambiguities that push (quietly, but distinctly) toward the boundaries of tonal practice.
4. **Questions of Incompleteness:** Samson devotes some commentary to the fact that Chopin’s late manuscripts and sketches sometimes exhibit a slightly looser notational approach, indicating a reliance on spontaneity or improvisational gestures. This is relevant when discussing plans that Chopin might not have been able to finish.

Insights into Chopin’s Final Artistic Intentions

- **Shift to Abstract Expression:** Samson suggests that Chopin’s late works often reveal a more abstract sense of form—pieces like the *Polonaise-Fantaisie* or the late Mazurkas display a blending of genres and freer structure. This experimentation can be taken as a clue about where Chopin’s compositional priorities lay in his last years: a heightened lyricism, but also an increasing harmonic and formal audacity.

- **Uncertain Plans:** *The Music of Chopin* does not present a single, definitive “unrealized project” in Chopin’s final weeks or months. Instead, Samson points to fragments (for instance, sketches for mazurkas or short piano works) and the incomplete nature of certain ideas. He does note that Chopin’s poor health and unsettled personal life made large-scale, multi-year projects unlikely.
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2. *The Cambridge Companion to Chopin* (edited by Jim Samson)

Overview and Structure

1. **Multifaceted Essays:** *The Cambridge Companion to Chopin* (published in 1992, with several reprints) is an edited volume gathering essays from a range of Chopin scholars. It covers Chopin’s biography, reception history, style, performance practice, and the cultural context of his music.
2. **Historical and Cultural Context:** The contributors place Chopin’s work in dialogue with the musical world of Paris, broader Romantic aesthetics, Polish nationalism, and 19th-century performance traditions.
3. **Performance Practice:** Several chapters address interpretive questions, original instruments (Pleyel pianos, for instance), and the nuances of tempo rubato and ornamentation—elements that often figure into how Chopin’s late works (mazurkas, nocturnes, waltzes) might be understood.

Late Chopin and Future Plans as Discussed

1. **Final Years:** Several essays in the volume touch on Chopin’s final illness and the psychological toll that declining health, travel (including his trip to the British Isles), and personal upheaval (his separation from George Sand, family concerns, etc.) may have exerted on his productivity.
 2. **Mazurkas and Other Late Pieces:** Chopin’s last completed mazurkas are often given special attention by Samson and contributors such as John Rink or Jeffrey Kallberg. These analyses point to a continuing ambition to refine and personalize Polish dance idioms—he did not abandon miniatures even when exploring larger forms (as in the *Cello Sonata*).
 - In some essays, authors propose that Chopin, near the end of his life, still nurtured the idea of returning to his Polish roots in an ever more nuanced way. This might hint at further expansions or deepening of the mazurka form or other distinctly “Polish” genres, had he been able to continue composing.
 3. **Potential for New Large-Scale Works?** While there is a degree of speculation, some contributors in the *Companion* do mention Chopin’s interest in larger structures—visible in the *Polonaise-Fantaisie*, and especially in the *Cello Sonata*, which is among his few major chamber works. Nonetheless, strong documentary evidence of “the next big project”—for instance, an opera or a major symphonic piece—remains scant. Most of his surviving comments reflect an inward focus on perfecting piano-centered composition and possible expansions of his established forms.
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3. Chopin's Artistic Plans Before His Death

Key Points from Samson's Research and Broader Scholarship

- **Last Completed Works:** Chopin's final completed compositions, including the Op. 65 *Cello Sonata*, the Op. 61 *Polonaise-Fantaisie*, and late mazurkas (notably the posthumous Mazurka in F minor, Op. 68, No. 4, left incomplete), often serve as prime evidence of his evolving style. Jim Samson's analyses highlight how these works display harmonic and formal liberties unimaginable in his earlier period, indicating Chopin was continuously pushing boundaries in subtle, pianistic ways.
- **Chromatic Harmony and Textural Refinement:** One of the most significant hallmarks of Chopin's later style is his deepening commitment to chromatic lines, often woven into a more complex contrapuntal texture. Scholars suggest that these intensifying explorations might have led Chopin to further integrate polyphonic and linear elements in future works—if his health had permitted.
- **Incompleteness and Fragmentation:** Throughout both *The Music of Chopin* and *The Cambridge Companion to Chopin*, Samson (and other contributors) point to incomplete sketches or hesitant notational cues in Chopin's autograph manuscripts from the late 1840s. Such features suggest:
 1. **Health Constraints:** His tuberculosis greatly limited both his energy and the time he could devote to sustained compositional projects.
 2. **Possible Shifts in Method:** Chopin's late approach might have relied more on improvisatory spontaneity and private experimentation—plans were less likely to be systematically documented, especially if he wasn't certain he would complete them.

Speculative Aspects

- **Opera or Vocal Works:** Some contemporaries hinted that Chopin might have contemplated more extensive vocal works (he composed a handful of Polish songs), but no concrete evidence points to a developed plan for something as large-scale as an opera. Samson is careful to note that such rumors can sometimes be traced to romanticized 19th-century biographical narratives.
- **Further Piano Innovations:** Samson's writings imply that Chopin would probably have continued to refine pianistic texture, harmonic language, and perhaps attempt new blends of Polish dance forms with freer, improvisatory structures. This speculation, however, is grounded in the trajectory visible in the *Barcarolle*, *Berceuse*, *Polonaise-Fantaisie*, and late mazurkas rather than on direct documentary proof.
- **Editing & Revising:** In letters and recollections, Chopin mentioned revisiting early works (some of which had not been revised to his satisfaction). It is possible that tidying or reworking older pieces was on his mind. Late in life, though, he increasingly focused on earning money and fulfilling teaching obligations, so large-scale revisions might have remained only an idea.

Concluding Synthesis

1. **Continual Refinement:** From the analyses in *The Music of Chopin* and the broader range of essays in *The Cambridge Companion to Chopin*, it is evident that Chopin’s artistry was marked by a constant process of refining and transcending the forms he inherited (nocturne, mazurka, polonaise, etc.). His harmonic language grew steadily more complex, and his later works exhibit a depth and intricacy that strongly hint at further experimentation—had he lived longer.
2. **Absence of a Grand “Final Project”:** Neither of Samson’s publications identifies a single, large-scale masterpiece in planning (like an opera or a symphony) that Chopin was forced to abandon. Instead, the scholarship shows a composer pushing into new harmonic and structural territory even in shorter, smaller forms. There remains a sense that Chopin was working out fresh compositional ideas “on the fly,” so to speak, rather than systematically planning an entirely new genre or style.
3. **Influence of Circumstances:** Personal and health challenges shaped these late developments. The sense of urgency—and Chopin’s knowledge that he might not have long to live—can be felt in the greater emotional density of the final works. Yet the fluid, improvisatory side of his writing likewise testifies to an imagination alive and searching for new modes of expression, even up to his last months.

Overall, when focusing on “the artistic plans that Chopin had in mind before his death,” Jim Samson’s work (both in his monograph *The Music of Chopin* and his editorial role in *The Cambridge Companion to Chopin*) points us toward an image of Chopin as quietly exploring expanded harmonic and formal territory rather than explicitly laying out one grand late project. Samson’s analyses underscore that while no grand “future plan” is documented, Chopin’s late style does suggest unresolved potential—a trajectory cut short, but still illuminating the directions his music might have traveled had he lived longer.

Describe and analyze please the work of Adam Zamoyski „Chopin: Prince of the Romantics” in terms of artistic plans that Chopin had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Adam Zamoyski’s biography *Chopin: Prince of the Romantics* offers a nuanced portrait of Fryderyk Chopin’s life, artistic evolution, and the personal struggles that colored his final years. Although Chopin’s declining health constrained his ability to take on large-scale works toward the end of his life, Zamoyski’s account highlights several important threads about Chopin’s artistic intentions and the unfinished or unrealized projects that occupied his mind before his death in 1849. Below is an overview of how Zamoyski treats these late plans and what they reveal about Chopin’s evolving musical ideals.

1. Context: Chopin’s Final Period

1. **Physical and Emotional Turmoil**
 - In the last two or three years of his life, Chopin’s health deteriorated significantly, most likely due to tuberculosis. Zamoyski underscores that

constant fatigue, bouts of coughing, and general weakness limited Chopin's capacity for sustained work.

- The emotional impact of his break with George Sand (around 1847) and the turmoil surrounding her family contributed to his depression. Zamoyski details how Chopin's fragile state made it difficult for him to maintain teaching or concert engagements, let alone embark on big compositional projects.

2. Departure from Large-Scale Forms

- From a young age, Chopin wrote two piano concertos (Op. 11 and Op. 21) and a handful of other works for piano and orchestra, but by the 1840s he turned almost exclusively to solo piano music or small ensemble pieces (like the Cello Sonata, Op. 65).
- Zamoyski notes that these later works exhibit a deepening harmonic language and reflect a more intimate, introspective style—a shift away from writing in public “grand” genres. This shift shaped which new projects Chopin felt up to pursuing in his last years.

2. Late Compositions as Indicators of Future Plans

1. Mazurkas and Nocturnes

- Even as his health waned, Chopin continued to work sporadically on small-scale pieces—particularly mazurkas, a form he returned to throughout his life. According to Zamoyski, the daring harmonic progressions and rhythmic complexity in the late mazurkas (Op. 59, 63, 67–68) suggest Chopin was pushing his musical language further.
- In these pieces, Zamoyski sees an “experimentation in miniature”: Chopin was condensing the lyricism of his earlier style into an even more poetically distilled form. This indicates that, had he remained healthier, Chopin might have continued refining these miniatures as a personal “laboratory” for new ideas.

2. Cello Sonata in G Minor, Op. 65

- One of Chopin's final large-format works, the Cello Sonata (written primarily 1845–46, revised up to 1847), reveals his sustained interest in chamber music. Zamoyski emphasizes Chopin's close personal and artistic bond with cellist Auguste Franchomme.
- Although Chopin was proud to complete the sonata, Zamoyski points out that he struggled with it for a long time—an indication that composition of more extended, architecturally complex works had become increasingly difficult for him. Nonetheless, finishing *Op. 65* signaled a wish to keep exploring beyond the confines of solo piano, even while knowing his health would not easily permit another large-scale piece.

3. Unfinished or Rumored Projects

1. A Potential Piano Method or Treatise

- Some contemporaries mentioned that Chopin had toyed with the idea of assembling his teaching insights into a systematic method. Chopin's piano

lessons in Paris were famous for their specificity about touch, pedaling, and phrasing.

- Zamoyski discusses these scattered references (including notes left behind by some of Chopin's pupils and remarks in his letters), but he is careful to stress that there is no definitive manuscript or outline for such a treatise. Still, Chopin's ongoing interest in teaching—and his own refined technique—indicates that writing a method remained on his mind, even if it never took shape.

2. **Returning to Polish Themes or a Possible “Polish” Project**

- One area of speculation Zamoyski touches upon is Chopin's lifelong attachment to Polish music and culture. There were rumors in mid-19th-century music circles that Chopin might attempt a more overtly “national” work—perhaps a series of polonaises, or even something akin to a Polish-themed opera or song cycle.
- Zamoyski clarifies that there is little solid evidence for any large-scale Polish opera plan. Still, Chopin's consistent fascination with the mazurka, and the patriotic undertone of works like the Polonaise-Fantaisie (Op. 61), leave open the possibility that, had he been in better health, he might have continued to expand the folk-influenced aspects of his writing.

3. **Concert Appearances and Implicit Future Projects**

- Chopin's last public concert (1848) in Great Britain was done under duress and ill health, but it reminded him—according to some letters and Zamoyski's commentary—how much he still enjoyed performing.
- There is a suggestion that Chopin wished to give more recitals upon returning to Paris or possibly even explore staging new works for the piano. Zamoyski emphasizes, however, that Chopin's energy flagged quickly; it is difficult to know whether these were firm plans or simply daydreams of a life no longer constrained by illness.

4. **The Impact of Chopin's Declining Health on His Ambitions**

- Throughout the final chapters, Zamoyski shows how Chopin's increasing reliance on doctors, his painful coughing fits, and his inability to teach regularly sapped his motivation.
- Many projects—whether a new chamber piece, expansions of his teaching notes, or further development of his late harmonic language—remained theoretical. He lacked the stamina to realize them fully.
- Zamoyski stresses the poignancy of this period: Chopin's musical imagination was still active, as seen in his forward-looking late mazurkas, but he was physically unable to carry these ideas to larger fruition.

5. **Zamoyski's Analysis: Chopin's Legacy and Unfinished Trajectories**

In *Chopin: Prince of the Romantics*, Adam Zamoyski ultimately portrays the composer's final months as a mixture of creative desire and debilitating illness. While Chopin demonstrated continued interest in refining his intimate piano forms and possibly sharing his pedagogical

insights more systematically, his energies were scattered between poor health, financial worries, and emotional stress. By placing Chopin's letters and late sketches in context, Zamoyski suggests:

1. **Growing Harmonic Boldness**

- Even if Chopin could not embark on extensive new works, the final pieces—especially the last mazurkas—show a boldness that might have crystallized in more expansive compositions if he had been healthier.

2. **A Fragmentary Vision**

- Because Chopin's energies were fragmented, his "plans" took shape more as inklings, short sketches, and pieces of conversation with friends or pupils, rather than as definitive outlines. Zamoyski carefully parses these scraps of evidence, reminding readers to avoid overstating the completeness of any final project.

3. **The Poetic Miniature as a Late-Period Ideal**

- Chopin's continued refinement of short-form genres (mazurkas, nocturnes, waltzes) suggests that he was more attracted to perfecting poetic miniatures than returning to the large-scale concerto or orchestral forms of his youth. This was less a sign of diminishing ambition and more an indication that Chopin found the utmost intensity of expression in these smaller, highly concentrated structures.

4. **Legacy Over Grand Statements**

- By depicting Chopin's meticulous work on the Cello Sonata and the desire to impart his technique to pupils, Zamoyski frames Chopin's final artistic intentions as less about outward "grand" statements (like operas or concertos) and more about honing style, idiomatic writing for piano, and leaving behind some pedagogical legacy.

Conclusion

In *Chopin: Prince of the Romantics*, Adam Zamoyski depicts a composer caught between undimmed artistic imagination and the stark realities of terminal illness. While there is no single, clearly defined "grand project" that Chopin left unfinished, the biography details several fascinating hints about his intentions—from possibly writing a teaching method, to exploring further Polish-influenced music, to pushing harmonic boundaries in short piano forms. Ultimately, Zamoyski's account underscores how Chopin's physical decline, combined with emotional upheavals, forced him to leave many dreams unrealized. Nonetheless, the works he did complete in his final years—particularly those subtly advanced mazurkas—testify to his enduring desire to innovate and refine his art right up until the end.

Schumann's artistic plans before his death

Please describe what other artistic tasks Schumann was planning to carry out before his death, but which were not carried out because of his death? Also, list the authors who have analysed this issue in the context of Schumann's career and outline their main conclusions.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Robert Schumann's final years (especially after his mental collapse in early 1854) were marked by curtailed productivity and a series of ambitious plans he was never able to carry out. Scholars studying Schumann's life and work have identified several unfinished or only partly realized projects that he had envisioned but did not complete due to his deteriorating health and untimely death in 1856. Below is a summary of the most frequently cited "unfulfilled" artistic tasks, followed by a list of major authors who have examined these plans and their principal conclusions.

1. Unfinished or Planned Artistic Tasks

a) The Oratorio "Christus"

- **Overview:** One of Schumann's long-standing aspirations was to compose a large-scale oratorio titled *Christus*. Though he did complete a few sections that later became stand-alone works (such as the *Adventlied*, Op. 71), the grand oratorio as a whole remained incomplete.
- **Scope:** Schumann intended *Christus* to encompass key events in the life of Christ, structured in multiple parts. Only fragments survive—enough to show that he had begun serious compositional work but was unable to finish.

b) Further Large-Scale Stage Works (Operas or Dramatic Music)

- **After "Genoveva":** Schumann wrote his only finished opera, *Genoveva*, in 1848–1850, yet he continued to harbor ideas for additional stage works.
- **Goethe's "Faust":** Schumann did complete his *Scenes from Goethe's Faust* (1844–1853), but some scholars believe he had toyed with the idea of a more extensive operatic or theatrical treatment, possibly adapting more of *Faust* or another literary source. These ideas never solidified into a completed score.

c) Additional Choral-Orchestral Projects

- **Oratorios and Cantatas:** Having achieved success with large choral works like *Das Paradies und die Peri* (1843) and *Der Rose Pilgerfahrt* (1851), Schumann was deeply

interested in further oratorios. Sketches and letters suggest he contemplated biblical subjects (e.g., Joseph, Ruth) and other religious-themed compositions.

- **Revisions or Continuations:** Some existing choral-orchestral works—such as *Der Rose Pilgerfahrt*—were possibly slated for revision or expansion, but there is no firm evidence he was able to return to them before his final illness.

d) Literary-Critical Writing and Editorial Plans

- **Music Criticism:** Schumann had founded and long edited the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (New Journal for Music). Although he relinquished everyday editorial duties in the 1840s, he intermittently expressed the desire to compile or revise collections of his criticism or to undertake more systematic theoretical writings on music. His worsening mental health prevented such an undertaking.
- **Music Education Projects:** Following the model of *Album für die Jugend*, Schumann had periodically mulled over additional educational works. Draft ideas survive for further piano albums or instructional anthologies, but these too were left incomplete.

2. Major Authors Who Have Analyzed These Plans

Below are some of the leading Schumann scholars who discuss his unfinished projects in biographical or analytical studies, alongside their key conclusions.

1. John Daverio

- **Key Work:** *Robert Schumann: Herald of a “New Poetic Age”* (Oxford University Press, 1997)
- **Main Conclusions:**
 - Stresses Schumann’s lifelong ambition to create a uniquely German musical drama (opera) and large-scale sacred works, situating *Christus* within his broader aesthetic aims.
 - Argues that Schumann’s recurring mental health crises cut short a late flourishing of creativity, particularly in the realm of religious oratorio.

2. Eric Frederick Jensen

- **Key Work:** *Schumann* (Oxford University Press, 2001)
- **Main Conclusions:**
 - Places Schumann’s incomplete plans within the narrative of his final breakdown (1854–56).
 - Emphasizes that while Schumann’s productivity sharply declined, his letters and sketches reveal continued imaginative reach—he remained creatively active on paper, even if he could not fully realize his ideas.

3. Peter Ostwald

- **Key Work:** *Schumann: The Inner Voices of a Musical Genius* (Northeastern University Press, 1985; reprinted 2010)
- **Main Conclusions:**
 - Focuses on Schumann’s psychological struggles and their direct impact on his compositional output.
 - Argues Schumann’s inability to carry out his larger projects (e.g., the full *Christus*) sprang from both external circumstances (financial, logistical) and internal ones (mental illness, clinic confinement).

4. Gerd Nauhaus (Editor of Schumann’s Correspondence and Sketches)

- **Contribution:** Nauhaus has edited numerous volumes of Schumann’s letters and diaries, shedding light on unrealized project outlines and conceptual sketches that do not survive as finished works.
- **Main Conclusions:**
 - Highlights how Schumann’s epistolary references to future oratorios and operas diminished only after early 1854. Before that, he still voiced optimism.
 - Maintains that Schumann’s “paper projects” reflect a mind brimming with musical and literary ideas, abruptly interrupted by institutionalization.

5. **Leon Plantinga**

- **Key Context:** While Plantinga’s *Romantic Music* and essays on Schumann often deal with the composer’s style and critical writing, he touches on late works and plans.
- **Main Conclusions:**
 - Sees Schumann’s late unfulfilled intentions as evidence of his desire to fuse literature, drama, and music on a larger scale than in his earlier cycles and piano works.
 - Underlines the fact that Schumann’s mental and physical decline robbed him of the staying power to follow through.

3. Summary of Scholarly Perspectives

Across these studies, a consensus emerges: Schumann remained creatively ambitious into his final years, aiming to produce more oratorios, possibly another opera, and to expand his role as a critic and music educator. Yet the convergence of his severe mental illness, physical decline, and the practical demands of family life and finances made it impossible for him to bring these aspirations to fruition. The incomplete manuscripts and references in letters represent tantalizing evidence of works that might have further enriched the choral-orchestral repertoire and German Romantic opera, had he lived and remained well enough to complete them.

Key Takeaways

- **Unrealized Projects:** Chief among them was the large-scale oratorio *Christus*, additional operas or stage works, expansions of existing choral pieces, and a deeper return to music criticism or educational writing.
- **Why They Remained Unfulfilled:** Deteriorating mental health (after 1854), institutionalization, and the abrupt cessation of free compositional activity.
- **Scholarly Consensus:** Schumann’s final years still showed flashes of creative ambition; these abandoned projects illustrate both the breadth of his artistic vision and the tragedy of his decline.

In sum, Robert Schumann’s last plans—particularly for oratorios and other dramatic or sacred genres—underscore his enduring artistic aspirations. Scholars like John Daverio, Eric Jensen, Peter Ostwald, Gerd Nauhaus, and Leon Plantinga have all concluded that Schumann’s mental and physical decline curtailed a potentially significant later contribution to Romantic music, leaving several compelling sketches and ideas that remain incomplete.

Describe and analyze please the work of John Daverio „Robert Schumann: Herald of a “New Poetic Age” in terms of artistic plans that Schumann had in mind before his death in detail.

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John Daverio’s *Robert Schumann: Herald of a “New Poetic Age”* is widely regarded as one of the most insightful modern studies of Schumann’s life, works, and aesthetic ideals. In this biography, Daverio explores Schumann’s deep commitment to unifying music, literature, and broader Romantic currents—a commitment that shaped both Schumann’s early creative outpouring and his last ambitious plans. Although Schumann’s final years were overshadowed by deteriorating health and mental instability, Daverio argues that Schumann maintained a visionary concept of a “new poetic age” for music almost to the end. Below is an outline of how Daverio discusses the composer’s late-life artistic direction and the major projects Schumann envisioned before his death in 1856.

1. Daverio’s Central Argument: Schumann as a Literary-Musical Pioneer

Daverio’s primary thesis is that Schumann strove to elevate music to the same expressive and intellectual plane occupied by poetry and literature in the Romantic era. Even from his earliest piano cycles (e.g., *Papillons*, *Carnaval*), Schumann used evocative imagery, extra-musical references, and sometimes cryptic literary mottoes to bind poetry and music into a single artwork. By the time Schumann reached his later career, the urge to fuse the expressive rhetoric of literature with musical form had grown beyond miniatures into large-scale orchestral, vocal, and dramatic forms.

When Daverio calls Schumann a “herald of a new poetic age,” he is describing the composer’s lifelong conviction that music must align itself with poetic ideals—concision, imagination, interior reflection, and, crucially, narrative and dramatic possibility. From *Dichterliebe* (1840) to the dramatic oratorio *Das Paradies und die Peri* (1843) and the scenes from Goethe’s *Faust* (1844–53), Schumann aimed to demonstrate that music could enact the same kind of storytelling and imagery that words could. This motivation never disappeared and, according to Daverio, shaped his ambitions up to his final months.

2. Late Compositions and Their Aesthetic Direction

Though Schumann’s mental and physical health deteriorated in the early 1850s, he continued to compose and plan works that embodied a creative trajectory consistent with his earlier ideals. Daverio highlights the following late works as windows into Schumann’s ongoing plan for a “new poetic age”:

- **“Geistervariationen” (Ghost Variations, 1854):** Composed just before his admission to the asylum, these variations for solo piano took shape under

psychological duress. Daverio notes how, despite Schumann's distress, the piece reflects his drive to unify the introspective lyricism of earlier piano cycles with a more abstract, transcendent style.

- **Violin Concerto in D minor (1853–54) and the last Violin Sonatas (1851, 1853):** These demonstrate Schumann's continuing exploration of chamber and orchestral works with tightly integrated thematic structures—something Daverio sees as a direct outgrowth of Schumann's early fixation on cyclical, literature-inspired forms. Far from being mere formal experiments, these works sought to fuse expressive narrative with the rigors of sonata procedure.
 - **“Requiem für Mignon” (1850) and settings of literary texts (e.g., poems by Mary Stuart, 1852):** Daverio underscores that these works display Schumann's impulse to find new forms of musical drama outside conventional opera. The *Requiem für Mignon* in particular shows Schumann returning to Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*—a foundational literary source for early German Romanticism—and attempting to craft a reflective, hymn-like piece that stands on the border between sacred oratorio and secular cantata.
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3. Ambitions for Larger-Scale Dramatic and Sacred Works

One of Daverio's key observations is that even as Schumann's sanity frayed, the composer harbored substantial aspirations for large-scale productions:

1. **Further Oratorios and Dramatic Cantatas:** Schumann had found success with *Das Paradies und die Peri* and intended more oratorios or dramatic cantatas that bridged biblical or mythic narratives with the introspective subject matter favored by German Romantic poets. Daverio points to scattered sketches for works that would build on the success of *Faust* and the oratorio model.
 2. **Refining the Opera Genre:** Schumann's sole completed opera, *Genoveva* (1848–50), never received the acclaim he had hoped for. Still, Daverio notes that Schumann considered returning to musical drama despite the lukewarm reception. His dissatisfaction with *Genoveva* propelled him to explore new ways of fusing recitative, aria, and orchestral narrative—ambitions left largely unfulfilled by his final illness.
 3. **A “German Musical Society” or Artistic Community:** Late in life, Schumann imagined fostering a community of like-minded composers, critics, and thinkers dedicated to the ideal of poetically inspired music. This recalls his early editorial work at the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, but Daverio suggests that Schumann, together with younger protégés (like Brahms), hoped to establish a forward-looking circle that would champion Romantic ideals against the more radical “Music of the Future” camp (e.g., Liszt, Wagner). Though the project remained abstract, it shows Schumann's continuing desire to unite composers under a “new poetic” banner.
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4. Daverio's Perspective on Schumann's Final Plans and Decline

Daverio does not shy away from the tragedy of Schumann’s final years. Schumann’s mental fragility and eventual confinement in the asylum at Endenich (from 1854 until his death in 1856) curtailed most concrete plans for new works or collaborations. Yet Daverio insists that, right up to the onset of his most acute breakdown, Schumann was thinking expansively—dreaming of further bridging text and music, returning to large-scale vocal forms, and refining the unity of theme and structure in instrumental compositions.

Moreover, Daverio interprets Schumann’s late compositional ethos not as a break with his youthful Romanticism, but rather as its logical culmination. The “new poetic age” that Schumann constantly anticipated was never fully realized in his lifetime—partly because of illness, partly because Romantic conceptions of art were changing rapidly by the 1850s. Still, Daverio highlights how late works (and even incomplete sketches) keep testifying to Schumann’s unwavering belief in music’s poetic destiny.

Conclusion

In *Robert Schumann: Herald of a “New Poetic Age”*, John Daverio illuminates the composer’s persistent vision for reshaping music in the image of Romantic poetry and literary discourse. Schumann’s artistic plans before his death revolved around expanding the emotional and narrative possibilities of oratorios, operas, and instrumental forms—always maintaining the poetic, introspective character that marked his entire output. Although Schumann’s declining health and eventual institutionalization prevented him from seeing these final projects to fruition, Daverio argues that the composer’s last sketches and compositions are a profound testament to the ideals Schumann championed throughout his life: the merging of poetry and music in pursuit of a fully expressive, deeply human art form.

Describe and analyze please the work of Peter Ostwald „Schumann: The Inner Voices of a Musical Genius” in terms of artistic plans that Schumann had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Peter Ostwald’s *Schumann: The Inner Voices of a Musical Genius* (originally published in 1985) is as much a psychological study as it is a biographical account of Robert Schumann’s life. Ostwald, who was both a psychiatrist and a musician, aimed to illuminate how Schumann’s artistic vision emerged against the backdrop of his lifelong struggles with mental health. In doing so, he combed through Schumann’s diaries, letters, and, of course, his musical output to illustrate how Schumann’s final years—and the artistic plans he formed before his death in 1856—were shaped by his deteriorating condition. Below is an overview and analysis of how Ostwald deals with Schumann’s late artistic ambitions and the thwarted or unrealized projects that occupied Schumann’s mind in his final months and years.

1. Overview of the Book’s Approach

Psychological Context.

Ostwald frames Schumann’s creativity within the context of what modern psychiatry might

term bipolar disorder or schizoaffective traits—conditions not named as such in Schumann’s lifetime but recognizable in the historical record through the composer’s behavior and his own reflections. Schumann’s swings between periods of frenzied creativity and deep depression, combined with auditory hallucinations (which he often interpreted as heavenly or diabolical voices dictating musical themes), inform Ostwald’s thesis that the composer’s final artistic plans cannot be disentangled from his psychological and emotional state.

Documentary Evidence.

Ostwald relies on primary sources—Schumann’s letters to and from his wife Clara, his diaries, and accounts by contemporaries (including Johannes Brahms and Joseph Joachim, who visited him near the end). Through these materials, he reconstructs the hopes, fears, and ever-shifting creative impulses that guided Schumann’s final projects and sketches.

2. Schumann’s Final Years: Circumstances and Challenges

Mounting Psychological Strain (1853–1854).

Before detailing the specific plans, Ostwald carefully charts the trajectory of Schumann’s mental health in the early 1850s. This was the period during which Schumann’s auditory hallucinations intensified. He spoke of hearing angels dictating the most “exquisite” themes, as well as diabolical voices—conflicting sources of inspiration and torment.

Suicide Attempt and Commitment to Endenich (1854).

In 1854, Schumann famously attempted suicide by throwing himself into the Rhine. He was subsequently committed to a private asylum in Endenich, near Bonn. Although the immediate crisis passed, Schumann’s final two years in Endenich were marked by a sharp decline in health and sporadic attempts at composition under restrictive, hospital-like conditions.

3. Late Artistic Plans and Projects

Although Schumann’s creative energies were significantly curtailed, he still nursed plans for further compositions. Ostwald stresses that Schumann’s final ideas for large-scale works, or expansions of previous projects, often remained in sketch form or existed primarily in the composer’s imagination.

1. “Ghost Variations” (Geistervariationen).

- **Nature of the Work:** One of Schumann’s very last compositions, created in February 1854, is a set of variations for piano sometimes called the “Ghost Variations.” Ostwald highlights these variations as emblematic of Schumann’s mental state: Schumann believed that angels had dictated the thematic material to him, even though the same theme appears in earlier sketches and may have been partially derived from older works.
- **Significance:** Ostwald points to the “Ghost Variations” as both a final artistic statement and a window into Schumann’s fragmented psyche. The piece’s haunting qualities reflect his confused mental world—he was simultaneously convinced of its divine inspiration and plagued by doubts.

2. **Unrealized Opera and Oratorio Ideas.**
 - **Opera Plans:** Ostwald notes that Schumann had harbored ambitions to compose additional operatic works after his only completed opera, *Genoveva* (1850). In his letters, Schumann mentioned exploring biblical or historical subjects for potential operas, but none reached a developed stage in his last years.
 - **Oratorio Plans:** Building on his success with oratorios like *Paradise and the Peri* (1843), Schumann considered working on other large vocal-orchestral pieces. By the mid-1850s, these remained more aspiration than reality, truncated by his declining health.
 3. **Further Chamber Music and Concertos.**
 - **Violin Concerto in D Minor (1853).** Although completed in 1853, Schumann continued to revise or think about this work during his final months. Ostwald suggests that Schumann’s post-1854 mental decline prevented him from refining or promoting it further.
 - **Unfinished Sketches:** Ostwald references letters in which Schumann hints at expansions on chamber music ideas—string quartets or piano trios—but these never materialized in a fully coherent form.
 4. **Editorial and Critical Work**
 - **Neue Zeitschrift für Musik:** As a co-founder, Schumann had always intertwined composition with music criticism. Even while confined, he reportedly expressed interest in continuing editorial projects. But as Ostwald highlights, the reality of institutionalization left him only fleeting opportunities to write.
 - **Projecting an Artistic Legacy:** Ostwald also notes that Schumann, despite his fragile state, still grasped the importance of maintaining his reputation and clarifying his legacy, likely imagining he would recover enough to resume editorial duties or public engagements.
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4. Ostwald’s Interpretation of Schumann’s Late Creative Mindset

1. **Interplay Between Illness and Inspiration.**

Ostwald emphasizes that Schumann’s last projects were inevitably shaped by both mania-like surges (where he believed he could compose monumental works) and severe depressive phases. This interplay sometimes yielded flashes of productivity—for instance, the drafting of the “Ghost Variations”—but then collapsed under psychotic symptoms or exhaustion.
2. **“Inner Voices” and Self-Perception.**

The subtitle of Ostwald’s book, “The Inner Voices of a Musical Genius,” is more than a metaphor. Schumann literally reported hearing voices—divine or demonic—and Ostwald argues that these voices strongly influenced how Schumann perceived his compositional mission in his final period. He alternated between believing his creativity was divinely inspired and fearing it was a sign of madness.
3. **Tension Between Ambition and Reality.**

By referencing Schumann’s letters and the recollections of Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms, Ostwald underlines Schumann’s strong desire to undertake major

new works. In practical terms, however, Schumann's asylum confinement, the limited resources at his disposal, and his progressive mental deterioration rendered most of these dreams unrealizable.

4. **Legacy Concerns.**

In Ostwald's reading, Schumann's last letters and discussions with visitors in Endenich reveal a composer keenly aware that his final musical statements might define him. He expressed concern over how his potential future works (including the half-formed oratorio ideas) would be understood. Ostwald uses these sources to illustrate Schumann's ultimate inability to reconcile his grand artistic aspirations with his diminishing capacity for sustained, coherent composition.

5. Critical Assessment of Ostwald's Treatment

- **Strengths:**

1. **Psychological Nuance:** Ostwald's dual expertise as a psychiatrist and musician allows him to parse the complex ways Schumann's mental state shaped (and sometimes thwarted) his creativity.
2. **Rich Use of Primary Sources:** Quotations from Schumann's diaries, letters, and the reports of contemporaries are marshaled to powerful effect, providing a detailed picture of Schumann's mental and artistic world.
3. **Contextualization of Late Works:** Ostwald convincingly shows how even minor or unfinished works from Schumann's last years can illuminate the composer's overarching psychological predicament.

- **Potential Limitations:**

1. **Retrospective Diagnosis:** Some scholars caution against applying modern diagnostic labels to a 19th-century figure. Though Ostwald offers a compelling narrative, critics note that the exact nature of Schumann's mental illness may always remain speculative.
2. **Emphasis on Illness Over Craft:** Because of Ostwald's psychological focus, there are parts of Schumann's musical craft—technical details of harmony, form, orchestration—that receive less exhaustive discussion compared to strictly musicological studies.

6. Conclusion: Schumann's Final Artistic Vision

In *Schumann: The Inner Voices of a Musical Genius*, Peter Ostwald provides a psychologically rich portrait of Robert Schumann's end-of-life creative ambitions. Ostwald portrays a composer who, even as he descended into severe mental illness, continued to nurture bold artistic plans—major operas, oratorios, and continued critical writing—though most remained unrealized. The “Ghost Variations” stand as a powerful symbol of Schumann's final artistic endeavors: a last flicker of creative insight shadowed by his hallucinations and fears. By examining the diaries, letters, and scattered sketches from Schumann's final period, Ostwald demonstrates how Schumann's aspiration was to secure an enduring place in music history through large-scale works that would match or surpass his earlier achievements. In reality, Schumann's tragic decline curtailed those efforts. The book's central insight is that Schumann's mental illness was not merely a personal tragedy but an integral part of his creative identity. Indeed, those “inner voices” that haunted him in his final years were, in

Ostwald's interpretation, both a source of compositional impetus and the ultimate reason those compositions and plans remained suspended between dream and fragmentation. Overall, Ostwald's work underscores a poignant contradiction: at the very moment Schumann's illness was demanding ever-greater medical intervention, his artistic vision soared to new thematic heights—even if he could no longer fully realize those visions in practice. This tension, masterfully depicted through Ostwald's careful psycho-biographical lens, offers a deeper understanding of the composer's last ambitions and the inescapable bond between his psychological torment and his creative drive.

Describe and analyze please the work of Eric Frederick Jensen „Schumann” in terms of artisic plans that Schumann had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Overview of Eric Frederick Jensen's *Schumann* and Its Context

Eric Frederick Jensen's biography of Robert Schumann (often cited simply as *Schumann*) is widely regarded as a reliable scholarly work that examines the composer's life in meticulous detail, including his late period and final months before his death in 1856. While Schumann's mental and physical health deteriorated significantly during the last two years of his life—marked by his stay in the asylum in Endenich—Jensen sifts through biographical records, letters, and sketches of unfinished musical projects to illuminate the often-fragmentary evidence of what Schumann still hoped to accomplish.

Below is a focused exploration of **Schumann's artistic plans** before his death, as presented (or contextualized) in Jensen's biography. Although Schumann's late activities and intentions were often curtailed by severe mental strain, Jensen pieces together a picture of a composer who, in spite of his decline, remained deeply committed to furthering certain artistic ideas and broader musical visions.

1. Schumann's Final Years: Overall Context

- **Decline in Health**

Schumann's breakdown in early 1854 (culminating in his suicide attempt) led to his admission to a private asylum in Endenich near Bonn. Jensen points out that while Schumann's physical health initially stabilized, his mental state vacillated. This directly impacted any sustained work on large-scale compositions.

- **Fragmented Yet Persistent Creativity**

Despite severe bouts of depression, auditory hallucinations (hearing voices or “angelic” music), and general mental torment, Schumann had **bursts of creative energy**. Jensen describes how those episodes often fueled short sketches of works, a handful of piano variations, and lingering ideas for operatic or choral projects.

2. Late Compositions and Sketches

- **The “Ghost Variations” (1854)**
Perhaps the best-known piece from Schumann’s final year at home—**Variations on an Original Theme in E-flat major** for piano—earned the nickname “Ghost Variations” because Schumann was convinced that the main musical theme came to him from angelic or supernatural sources. According to Jensen, this set of variations reflects Schumann’s remarkable melodic gift, even if the work is relatively modest in scale. While not exactly an “artistic plan” for a future grand work, the “Ghost Variations” symbolize Schumann’s lingering will to compose during a time of psychological crisis.
 - **Choral and Dramatic Ambitions**
Schumann always kept an interest in large choral pieces and dramatic genres. Even in Endenich, he mentioned wanting to return to projects akin to his *Scenes from Goethe’s Faust* (completed in the early 1850s). Jensen points to fragments in Schumann’s notebooks suggesting he still harbored the idea of an **expanded oratorio** or an **opera**—though these remained unrealized due to his confinement and deteriorating health.
 - **Violin Concerto in D minor**
Composed around 1853 (just before his breakdown), the Violin Concerto was one of Schumann’s last major orchestral works. Jensen demonstrates how, even after 1854, there were intermittent references to a desire to revisit or polish the orchestration for potential performance. Schumann, however, had no real means to bring this plan to fruition once he was in Endenich. Still, Jensen argues that Schumann’s continuing interest in refining earlier larger works underscores his devotion to orchestral and concerto forms even in late life.
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3. Schumann’s Literary and Editorial Plans

- **Music Journalism and Criticism**
Earlier in his career, Schumann founded the influential journal *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (1834). Even though he was no longer its editor by the 1850s, Jensen notes that Schumann occasionally spoke of returning to some form of music criticism or editorial work when he recovered—partially as a way to keep championing the “New German School,” new talent (like Brahms), and to analyze overlooked works by masters such as Bach and Beethoven.
 - **Revisiting Bach and Schubert**
Throughout his life, Schumann was an ardent admirer of Bach, and he felt that the revival of J.S. Bach’s music could go even further. Jensen highlights that toward the end of his life, Schumann expressed a wish to **produce authoritative editions** or analyses of Bach’s keyboard works. Similarly, Schubert, whose music Schumann helped bring to public attention in the 1830s–1840s, remained a guiding presence in Schumann’s mind. Jensen underscores that Schumann intended to write more substantial commentary on Schubert’s symphonies and songs, reflecting his conviction that Schubert was still underappreciated.
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4. Spiritual, Symbolic, and Autobiographical Elements

- **Preoccupation with “Musical Spirits”**
Jensen addresses Schumann’s fascination with supernatural or “hidden” musical voices that he believed were transmitting themes or ideas. Schumann had always been prone to imaginative flights (manifested in his early piano cycles and his journalistic personae like “Eusebius” and “Florestan”). In Eendenich, however, these took on more troubling, hallucinatory dimensions. According to Jensen, Schumann would sometimes describe new compositions not as personal inventions but as transmissions from deceased composers like Mendelssohn or Schubert. This underscores that, despite deteriorating faculties, Schumann **continued to envision** future works—he just believed they came from an otherworldly source.
 - **Potential for a Thematic Symphony**
Although much remains speculative, Jensen’s reading of Schumann’s letters suggests that the composer still entertained the possibility of a **symphony** exploring religious or philosophical themes—perhaps in line with the spiritual revelations he believed he was experiencing. Yet no substantial manuscript or extended outline exists; Jensen thus contextualizes these references more as daydreams of a composer longing to return to large-scale composition.
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5. Jensen’s Critical Approach and Interpretations

- **Methodical Examination of Sources**
Jensen is careful to separate documented facts (entries from Schumann’s diaries, testimonies from Clara Schumann or close friends) from supposition. While it’s tempting to romanticize Schumann’s final years as a flurry of “lost masterpieces,” Jensen offers a **balanced view**: the evidence suggests that although Schumann **desired** to pursue new or revised projects, he simply lacked the consistent mental clarity to transform these visions into fully realized scores.
 - **Empathy for Schumann’s Condition**
Jensen underscores that Schumann’s final plans were made in a context of significant mental illness. The biography often underscores the tragedy of an extraordinary creative spirit trapped in an environment (a mid-19th-century asylum) with limited resources for artistic work. Yet Jensen also emphasizes Schumann’s resilience: even while hospitalized, he requested manuscripts, pianos, or writing materials in brief periods of better health.
 - **Interpretation of Unfinished Sketches**
In analyzing various scribbled themes and half-completed sketches, Jensen posits that these reflect **musical kernels**—motifs or harmonic progressions—rather than fully formed outlines. They show Schumann still testing musical ideas as a means of intellectual and emotional relief.
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6. Significance and Legacy of Schumann’s Late Artistic Plans

- **Continuity With Earlier Aspirations**

For Jensen, Schumann’s final ambitions are not isolated from his earlier career but are instead a **continuation** of deep-seated interests: championing neglected composers, exploring hybrid forms (like combining literature and music), and writing in an emotionally direct style. The difference is simply that ill health prevented the extended follow-through that we see in earlier triumphs (e.g., the *Piano Concerto* in A minor or the *Rhenish* Symphony).

- **A Window Into Schumann’s Creative Soul**

Even though many final projects went unrealized, they reveal Schumann’s unwavering quest to blend **literary, philosophical, and emotional** dimensions with his compositions. He believed strongly that music should be intellectually rich yet also intimately personal—an outlook reflected in every plan he made, right to the end.

- **Inspiration for Later Musicians**

Jensen points out that Schumann’s late works and sketches, plus the legends surrounding them, influenced composers such as Johannes Brahms (Schumann’s protégé) and contributed to the **cult of Romantic “unfinished” art** that later generations found compelling. Schumann’s lingering ambitions effectively entered musical lore, symbolizing a genius constrained by adversity yet fervently striving to create.

Concluding Thoughts

Eric Frederick Jensen’s *Schumann* devotes considerable attention to the composer’s last years, carefully analyzing correspondence, sketches, and eyewitness accounts to reconstruct Schumann’s final artistic ambitions. While his mental illness left most of these plans incomplete—or relegated them to brief sketches—Jensen illustrates that Schumann never stopped dreaming of new projects, be they symphonic, choral, or editorial in nature. In sum, Jensen portrays Schumann as a composer whose creativity persisted in flashes of brilliance until the end, even though his deteriorating health made it impossible to carry out large-scale endeavors. Through his biography, Jensen encourages us to view Schumann’s final years with both empathy and historical rigor, highlighting how those last, unrealized plans further illuminate the deeply imaginative, multi-faceted artistry that had defined Schumann’s entire career.

Mendelssohn Bartoldy's artistic plans before his death

Please describe what other artistic tasks Mendelssohn Bartoldy was planning to carry out before his death, but which were not carried out because of his death? Also, list the authors who have analysed this issue in the context of Mendelssohn's career and outline their main conclusions.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809–1847) was extremely active as a composer, conductor, pianist, and educator during his relatively short life. In the final years leading up to his death in November 1847, he contemplated or had begun several large-scale projects that remained unfinished or were never carried out. Below is an overview of the most frequently cited “artistic tasks” that were cut short by his premature death, followed by a selection of authors and scholars who discuss these plans in the context of Mendelssohn’s career—along with their main conclusions.

1. Unfinished or Incomplete Artistic Projects

a) Oratorio *Christus* (Op. 97)

- **Project:** *Christus* was to be Mendelssohn’s third major oratorio, following *St. Paul* (1836) and *Elijah* (1846). He had composed fragments—primarily recitatives and the chorus “There Shall a Star from Jacob”—but did not complete the work.
- **Significance:** After the successful premieres of *Elijah*, Mendelssohn was eager to follow up with another substantial sacred oratorio that would continue his revival and modernization of the oratorio tradition. *Christus* would likely have solidified his status as the leading oratorio composer of the mid-19th century.

b) Opera “Die Lorelei” (or “The Loreley”)

- **Project:** Mendelssohn had long wanted to write a grand German opera. In 1846–1847, he drafted plans for an opera based on the legendary figure of the Lorelei (a Rhine river siren, popularized by Clemens Brentano and Heinrich Heine).
- **Status:** While sketches and preliminary texts existed, Mendelssohn’s failing health and sudden death prevented him from moving beyond the early planning and compositional stages.

- **Significance:** An opera of this scale would have been a major statement in the German operatic repertoire, especially given Mendelssohn's deep engagement with literary sources (e.g., Shakespeare, Goethe, and the German Romantic poets).

c) Additional Vocal and Choral Works

- Some scholars note that Mendelssohn intended to write further large-scale choral compositions, perhaps in the tradition of *Elijah*, though these plans are less concretely documented than his oratorio *Christus*.
- He was also perennially occupied with occasional works for festivals, the Gewandhaus Orchestra, and court commissions. Late correspondence suggests he was discussing one or more new large choral pieces, although specifics are lacking.

d) Continued Educational and Institutional Ambitions

- Mendelssohn founded the Leipzig Conservatory in 1843 and had envisioned further curricular expansion, faculty appointments, and an even broader influence on Germany's musical education.
- His sudden death meant many of these pedagogical and structural ideas (e.g., broadening the repertoire taught, formalizing certain areas of study) remained unrealized or were developed later by his successors.

2. Authors Who Have Analyzed Mendelssohn's Unfinished Plans

A number of Mendelssohn scholars and biographers discuss these incomplete or unrealized works, often in the broader context of his final years, his professional and personal stresses, and his enduring legacy in 19th-century music.

a) R. Larry Todd

- **Key Work:** *Mendelssohn: A Life in Music* (Oxford University Press, 2003).
- **Focus:** Todd devotes significant attention to Mendelssohn's late compositional ambitions—especially the oratorio *Christus* and the planned opera—and how these illustrate the composer's unremitting work ethic and visionary scope.
- **Main Conclusion:** Todd suggests that had Mendelssohn completed these large-scale projects, his reputation (long overshadowed by certain 20th-century biases) would have been even stronger among Romantic composers. He points to the unfinished *Christus* as a crucial “what if” in 19th-century sacred music.

b) Eric Werner

- **Key Work:** *Mendelssohn: A New Image of the Composer and His Age* (Free Press, 1963).
- **Focus:** Werner's biography is one of the earliest modern attempts to reassess Mendelssohn without the anti-Romantic and anti-Semitic sentiments that clouded earlier scholarship.
- **Main Conclusion:** Werner sees the uncompleted projects—particularly *Christus*—as emblematic of Mendelssohn's continuous negotiation of his dual heritage (Jewish by

birth, Protestant by conversion). He argues that Mendelssohn's interest in large sacred forms arose from a desire to unite these cultural and religious influences.

c) Peter Mercer-Taylor

- **Key Work:** *The Life of Mendelssohn* (Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- **Focus:** Mercer-Taylor explores Mendelssohn's personal tragedies (most notably, his sister Fanny's death in May 1847) and their direct influence on his final burst of creative energy, including the *String Quartet in F minor, Op. 80*, and the sketches for *Christus*.
- **Main Conclusion:** Mercer-Taylor highlights that Mendelssohn's already fragile health, combined with the psychological blow of Fanny's death, curtailed his last projects. He views the unfinished works as deeply tied to Mendelssohn's mourning and emotional state at the end of his life.

d) John Michael Cooper

- **Key Works:** *Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy: A Research and Information Guide* (Routledge, 2011) and other Mendelssohn studies.
- **Focus:** Cooper's scholarship often addresses Mendelssohn's unfinished compositions in the broader frame of Romantic aesthetics and 19th-century cultural politics.
- **Main Conclusion:** Cooper underlines how Mendelssohn's incomplete works fit into a Romantic era that was rapidly evolving in terms of musical style and institutional structures. He contends that had Mendelssohn lived longer, his synthesis of Classic-Romantic elements would have continued to evolve in these major sacred and operatic forms.

e) Douglass Seaton (Ed.)

- **Key Work:** *The Mendelssohn Companion* (Greenwood Press, 2001).
- **Focus:** Although much of *The Mendelssohn Companion* covers a broad range of topics, several essays touch on Mendelssohn's late compositional projects and personal circumstances.
- **Main Conclusion:** Contributors to this volume note that Mendelssohn was at a creative turning point: *Elijah*'s success opened doors for more ambitious oratorio projects, and his growing confidence as a dramatic composer pointed to a serious commitment to opera—both strands cut short by his sudden death.

3. Synthesis: What the Unfinished Projects Reveal

Taken together, these scholars emphasize a few overlapping themes regarding Mendelssohn's unrealized ambitions:

1. **Artistic Growth**
 - Mendelssohn was not content to rest on past successes. The *Christus* sketches and the opera project indicate his desire to expand his expressive range and continue shaping contemporary musical life.
2. **Personal and Professional Pressures**

- Recurrent bouts of ill health, emotional strain (particularly the loss of his sister Fanny), and his full schedule of concert tours, conducting, and administrative duties at the Leipzig Conservatory combined to make large-scale new works difficult to complete.
3. **Potential Legacy**
- Had Mendelssohn finished his opera or the oratorio *Christus*, it may well have altered subsequent narratives of Romantic music. Scholars often note that Mendelssohn's early death, combined with changing musical trends, led to a period of partial neglect of his reputation—something that might not have happened if these major projects had come to fruition.
4. **Stylistic Directions**
- In the oratorios and the proposed opera, Mendelssohn shows a synthesis of Classical form and Romantic coloring. Researchers speculate he might have brought further refinements to German Romantic opera (building on Weber's tradition) or helped redefine the Protestant oratorio tradition in ways that bridged older Baroque traditions with a more Romantic idiom.

Conclusion

In sum, the most notable of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy's unfinished or unrealized projects are the oratorio *Christus* and a grand opera (commonly referenced as "Die Lorelei"), both of which he began planning during or just after the triumph of *Elijah*. Leading Mendelssohn scholars—such as R. Larry Todd, Eric Werner, Peter Mercer-Taylor, John Michael Cooper, and contributors to volumes edited by Douglass Seaton—generally conclude that these incomplete works point to a burgeoning phase of creativity tragically interrupted by Mendelssohn's early death. They also agree that his legacy might have been even more influential in the realms of sacred and dramatic music had these ambitious projects reached completion.

Describe and analyze please the work of R. Larry Todd „Mendelssohn: A Life in Music” in terms of artistic plans that Mendelssohn Bartoldy had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

R. Larry Todd's *Mendelssohn: A Life in Music* is widely regarded as one of the most comprehensive and deeply researched biographies of Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy. Todd's study not only narrates Mendelssohn's life chronologically and contextualizes the composer's milieu, but it also offers readers insights into Mendelssohn's creative mind—particularly his grand artistic designs for the future. Below is an overview and analysis of how Todd's biography presents Mendelssohn's artistic ambitions in the period leading up to the composer's untimely death in 1847.

1. Overall Structure and Focus of Todd's Biography

- **Biographical Narrative:** Todd’s biography proceeds in a largely chronological manner, beginning with Mendelssohn’s childhood, early compositional efforts, and the roles his family (especially his father Abraham and his sister Fanny) played in shaping his artistic trajectory.
 - **Balance of Context and Analysis:** Todd situates Mendelssohn’s output in the broader context of 19th-century European music life. The book shows how Mendelssohn’s responsibilities—musical director, conductor, educator, composer, and performer—consistently expanded throughout his career and deeply influenced his artistic plans.
 - **Critical Engagement:** One of Todd’s strengths is the in-depth critical analysis of Mendelssohn’s major works (e.g., the oratorios *St. Paul* and *Elijah*, overtures like *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, symphonies, chamber works, and so forth). Todd interprets individual compositions and sketches in light of Mendelssohn’s letters, diaries, and other documentation, illuminating both the artistic and personal motivations behind them.
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2. Mendelssohn’s Late Years and Personal Circumstances

- **Professional and Personal Strain:** By the early 1840s, Mendelssohn was juggling multiple positions—chief among them directing the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and helping to found (and then teach at) the Leipzig Conservatory, which opened in 1843. Todd underscores how these duties took a toll on Mendelssohn’s health, as the composer battled frequent bouts of exhaustion while also dealing with the loss of close family members (his father Abraham in 1835 and later his beloved sister Fanny in 1847).
 - **Shifting Priorities:** Despite his physical and emotional burdens, Mendelssohn continued to produce major works. Todd points to Mendelssohn’s completion of *Elijah* (premiered in 1846) as a crowning achievement but also describes how the oratorio’s revision and subsequent performances in 1847 added to the composer’s relentless schedule.
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3. Mendelssohn’s Artistic Plans Before His Death

a) Possible Third Oratorio: *Christus*

- **Fragments and Vision:** Todd carefully documents Mendelssohn’s intention to compose a third oratorio, which has come down to us only in fragmentary form as *Christus*. The surviving pieces (such as the “There Shall a Star from Jacob” chorus) suggest a subject matter that drew on biblical texts, continuing Mendelssohn’s deep engagement with sacred music.
- **Motivations:** Having already tackled large-scale religious works with *St. Paul* and *Elijah*, Mendelssohn wished to round out what Todd, citing letters and sketches, calls a sort of “sacred triptych.” From Todd’s viewpoint, Mendelssohn was deeply motivated by a desire to unite the spiritual rigor of Protestant tradition with the dramatic sweep of oratorio, echoing the models of Bach and Handel.

- **Unrealized Ambitions:** In Todd’s reading, Mendelssohn’s inability to complete *Christus* demonstrates the toll of his declining health and the cumulative stress he faced in 1847. Todd presents the narrative that, even as Mendelssohn continued revising and conducting *Elijah*, the composer intended to plunge straight into *Christus*—only to be cut short by his fatal stroke.

b) The Opera *Die Loreley* (or *Lorelei*)

- **Initial Concepts:** Mendelssohn had long held an interest in writing a large-scale opera. Early in his life, he tried his hand at the comic opera *Die Hochzeit des Camacho* (1827), but that was never fully embraced by the public or by Mendelssohn himself. In Todd’s view, the more mature *Die Loreley*, based on a German Romantic subject, was meant to reflect Mendelssohn’s growth as a dramatist.
- **Incomplete Masterpiece:** Although only sketches and fragments remain, Todd analyzes the extant music and documentary references to show how Mendelssohn was seeking a new synthesis of German Romantic lyricism, orchestral color, and dramatic narrative. Todd surmises that *Die Loreley* might have proved an important contribution to the emerging mid-century German opera tradition (contemporary to Weber’s legacy and the emerging works of Wagner), had it been completed.

c) Further Symphonic and Chamber Projects

- **Thoughts on a Sixth Symphony:** Mendelssohn composed five numbered symphonies, but Todd shows that the composer toyed with ideas for yet another symphony before his death—though these ideas never solidified into a cohesive project.
- **Chamber Music:** Todd devotes attention to Mendelssohn’s late string quartets (e.g., Op. 80, completed shortly before his death in memory of Fanny). This work’s raw intensity and pathos hint at a new direction in Mendelssohn’s chamber music. Todd posits that Mendelssohn may have planned to continue refining this more personal and emotionally direct style in further chamber compositions.

d) Educational Aspirations at the Leipzig Conservatory

- **Curricular Expansion:** As founder of the Leipzig Conservatory, Mendelssohn was deeply involved in shaping the curriculum. According to Todd, he hoped not only to foster the Bach revival (already well underway since his 1829 performance of the *St. Matthew Passion*) but also to develop a rigorous classical foundation for young composers.
- **Collaboration and Faculty:** The conservatory boasted teachers like Robert Schumann and Joseph Joachim under Mendelssohn’s directorship. Todd stresses that Mendelssohn’s vision was to make Leipzig a preeminent European center of musical excellence. Right before his death, he was still planning expansions to the school’s program and recruiting faculty, aiming to incorporate newer compositional trends alongside strict contrapuntal training.

4. Todd’s Interpretive Lens

- **Integration of Documentary Evidence:** Todd’s work is laced with references to Mendelssohn’s letters, diaries, memoirs by contemporaries, and reception history. When discussing Mendelssohn’s final plans, Todd relies especially on personal correspondence in which Mendelssohn mentions his hopes to begin or complete specific works.
- **Contextual Considerations:** Todd looks carefully at the intersection of Mendelssohn’s professional duties, family life, and health problems in explaining why certain projects remained incomplete or delayed. By detailing Mendelssohn’s mental strain during 1847, Todd argues that the composer’s ultimate collapse was partly a result of combining an intense workload with the shock of his sister Fanny’s death that same year.
- **Reassessment of Mendelssohn’s Reputation:** Older biographical traditions sometimes dismissed Mendelssohn as a “happy child genius” who wrote polished, if somewhat conservative, works. Todd’s scholarship challenges this simplistic interpretation and shows how Mendelssohn was ambitious, forward-thinking, and actively engaged in broadening musical genres like the oratorio and the symphony. Todd’s treatment of the composer’s unfulfilled plans underscores the fact that Mendelssohn’s creative direction was still evolving when he died at age 38.

5. Conclusion: Significance of Mendelssohn’s Unfinished Plans

In *Mendelssohn: A Life in Music*, R. Larry Todd presents Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy as an artist whose final years were marked by immense productivity, numerous obligations, and a striking breadth of vision. Todd draws attention to the projects left incomplete—*Christus*, *Die Loreley*, and potential new symphonic or chamber works—to demonstrate the richness of Mendelssohn’s late style and to illustrate where he might have gone artistically had he not died so young. Todd’s central thesis is that Mendelssohn was far from being a merely conservative, classically oriented composer; rather, he was a figure who absorbed tradition, enriched it with Romantic expressiveness, and—judging from his late chamber works and partially sketched compositions—was poised for further stylistic developments. These plans, in Todd’s account, reveal Mendelssohn as an artist always striving for new heights, even at a time when poor health and personal tragedy were closing in on him. Ultimately, Todd’s biography invites readers to view Mendelssohn’s final months not as a moment of diminished creativity but as a period of intensified aspiration, tragically cut short. For anyone seeking to understand the full scope of Mendelssohn’s musical life—including the intentions that never reached fruition—Todd’s meticulously researched volume provides essential context, critical interpretation, and a sympathetic portrait of one of the 19th century’s most gifted composers.

Describe and analyze please the work of John Michael Cooper „Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy: A Research and Information Guide” in terms of artisic plans that Mendelssohn Bartoldy had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

John Michael Cooper's *Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy: A Research and Information Guide* (first published by Routledge in 2001, with possible updated editions thereafter) is one of the most comprehensive bibliographical resources on Mendelssohn. It gathers and annotates a vast body of scholarship—monographs, articles, critical editions, dissertations—covering all aspects of the composer's life, works, reception, and historical context. Although the *Guide* is primarily structured as an annotated bibliography rather than a conventional monograph, Cooper's introductory and organizational notes illuminate key points in Mendelssohn research, including issues related to the composer's final plans and uncompleted projects before his premature death in 1847.

Below is an overview and analysis of how Cooper's *Research and Information Guide* addresses (directly or via the scholarship it cites) Mendelssohn's late artistic ambitions and the projects that remained incomplete at the time of his death. The discussion summarizes relevant research threads you can find documented in Cooper's guide, alongside scholarly context on Mendelssohn's last months and creative priorities.

1. Scope and Purpose of Cooper's *Research and Information Guide*

1. Bibliographic survey

The book's primary function is to map out the major veins of Mendelssohn scholarship, providing references to:

- Biographical studies (including seminal works by Todd, Werner, Brown, and others).
- Editions of Mendelssohn's letters and diaries.
- Critical editions of his musical works.
- Studies of specific genres: symphonies, concerti, chamber music, oratorios, organ works, piano music, and lieder.
- Reception history, with attention to how attitudes toward Mendelssohn's music shifted from the 19th century to the late 20th century.

2. Introductory commentary and organization

While the heart of Cooper's volume is the carefully annotated bibliography, his introductory sections and occasional notes in each chapter (organized by genre or theme) offer concise summaries of Mendelssohn's compositional trajectory. He highlights major research questions, points to significant debates (e.g., regarding Mendelssohn's religious identity, the alleged "Victorianization" of his oratorios, and his incomplete or projected works), and indicates where future scholarship could advance.

3. Emphasis on sources and authenticity

Cooper also points readers toward primary sources—especially Mendelssohn's letters—critical for reconstructing the composer's intentions, artistic negotiations, and, crucially, the unrealized projects that preoccupied him during his final years.

2. Mendelssohn's Late Artistic Plans: Key Projects

By the mid-1840s, Mendelssohn's reputation in Europe was firmly established: he had triumphed with his *St. Paul* (1836) and *Elijah* (1846) oratorios; he served as conductor of the

Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra; and he played a central role in founding the Leipzig Conservatory in 1843. However, his health and emotional stability were severely compromised by the shock of his sister Fanny's death in May 1847. Despite the personal turmoil, scholarship (documented by Cooper) indicates that Mendelssohn had several artistic projects in various stages of conception or partial execution.

a) **The Unfinished Oratorio: *Christus***

- **Plans and structure:** Mendelssohn envisioned *Christus* as a three-part work dramatizing biblical episodes of Christ's birth, crucifixion, and resurrection. He had already set some choruses and recitatives, pieces of which were performed posthumously (and later catalogued as fragments).
- **Cooper's references:** Cooper's guide points to the letters and diaries where Mendelssohn described the thematic arcs of *Christus*, along with scholarship by R. Larry Todd and others who analyze the surviving musical sketches. Much of the academic conversation centers on parallels with the grand designs of *St. Paul* and *Elijah*, suggesting *Christus* would have been both a culmination of Mendelssohn's oratorio writing and a departure toward more succinct narrative sections.

b) **The Projected Oratorio: *Moses* (Hypothetical or Unsubstantiated)**

- **Potential subject matter:** Some sources mention Mendelssohn briefly considered *Moses* as the subject for a new oratorio. However, concrete sketches are scarce. Cooper lists references from earlier Mendelssohn biographers (e.g., works from the late 19th or early 20th century) that mention an oratorio on Moses, though current scholarship has not uncovered a substantial musical fragment.
- **Status:** Since no musically significant material has been authenticated, it remains an intriguing "what-if." Cooper's guide clarifies that interest in a "Moses" oratorio has been fueled mainly by passing references or recollections rather than firm documentation.

c) **The Planned Opera: *Die Lorelei* (Sometimes called *Loreley*)**

- **Source and libretto:** In the 1840s, Mendelssohn was in discussion with librettists (possibly Emanuel Geibel or other poets) to transform the German Romantic legend of the Lorelei into a full-scale opera. Preliminary sketches (musical and textual) exist but are fragmentary.
- **Why it was left incomplete:** Mendelssohn's busy schedule—managing concert tours, directing the Leipzig Conservatory, commissions for orchestral and choral music—slowed opera work. The sudden death of his sister Fanny in 1847 and his own declining health halted the project permanently.
- **Cooper's coverage:** Cooper's guide points to scholars who have sifted through these sketch materials. Commentary focuses on Mendelssohn's abiding interest in bringing German Romantic themes to the stage, paralleled by his earlier forays into theatrical music (*A Midsummer Night's Dream* overture and incidental music). The incomplete *Die Lorelei* is often compared to Carl Loewe's or Max Bruch's settings of the same legend.

d) **Revisions or Expansion of Existing Works**

- **Revisiting early symphonies:** Mendelssohn habitually revised his major orchestral works (e.g., the *Italian Symphony*). Although there is no definite “fourth revision” plan spelled out late in his life, Cooper references scholarship that highlights Mendelssohn’s iterative approach to composition, suggesting that further polishing of earlier works was likely.
- **Further choral compositions:** Letters from 1847 mention additional smaller-scale religious choral works (motets, psalm settings) that Mendelssohn intended for the Leipzig Gewandhaus concerts or for amateur choral societies. The extent of these ideas and sketches is unevenly documented. Cooper’s guide directs readers to letter collections (especially those published in the *Leipziger Ausgabe der Briefe*) for more details.

3. Scholarly Context from Cooper’s Guide

1. Connecting incomplete works to Mendelssohn’s aesthetic

Cooper highlights the rich secondary literature connecting these final projects to Mendelssohn’s established aesthetic: a blend of Bachian counterpoint, Classical clarity, and Romantic drama. Scholars cited by Cooper often note that *Christus*, with its mosaic of biblical episodes, would have continued Mendelssohn’s reverence for Baroque oratorio traditions (Bach and Handel), while incorporating more expansive Romantic harmonic language akin to *Elijah*.

2. The role of religion and spirituality

Mendelssohn’s devout Protestant faith (and, simultaneously, his Jewish heritage and family background) played a central role in shaping his large-scale vocal music. Cooper’s bibliography references studies that interpret *Christus* as a natural sequel to *Elijah*, potentially revealing more of Mendelssohn’s personal theological reflections. This unfinished oratorio stands out as a key to understanding how he intended to balance sacred tradition with his evolving compositional voice.

3. Ties to literary and theatrical traditions

Cooper’s included references also underscore Mendelssohn’s deep literary interests—Shakespeare, Goethe, Heine, and other canonical authors. Plans for an opera like *Die Lorelei* fit into his broader engagement with German Romantic literature. While *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* music remains his best-known theatrical foray, *Die Lorelei* points to an even larger ambition to craft a serious opera, a genre he rarely tackled to completion.

4. Influence on future scholarship

Because Cooper’s resource is a guide, not a single-author treatise, his work has encouraged subsequent Mendelssohn research to delve deeper into these unfinished compositions. Scholars have published further archival discoveries and analyses (particularly around the oratorio fragments) since Cooper’s original edition. The guide is therefore not only a snapshot of early 2000s knowledge but also a roadmap to explore newly uncovered letters and manuscripts that shed additional light on Mendelssohn’s final creative intentions.

4. Concluding Remarks on Cooper’s Contribution

- **Bridge to primary sources:** Cooper’s *Research and Information Guide* is vital for researchers aiming to reconstruct Mendelssohn’s last artistic ambitions, as it meticulously references letters, diaries, and thematic catalogs that outline

Mendelssohn's progress on *Christus*, sketches for *Die Lorelei*, and glimpses of other choral and orchestral plans.

- **Highlighting the “unfinished”:** By bringing together scattered secondary literature, Cooper clarifies which claims are firmly substantiated (e.g., *Christus* sketches, certain letters describing oratorio plans) versus those more speculative (e.g., the “Moses” oratorio).
- **Contextualizing Mendelssohn’s final months:** In so doing, Cooper situates Mendelssohn’s unfulfilled projects within a broader life-and-career narrative: a composer at the height of his fame, grappling with personal tragedy, physically exhausted from his rigorous work schedule, yet still harboring substantial artistic visions that, had he lived longer, might have further enriched the mid-19th-century repertoire.

Ultimately, while John Michael Cooper’s volume is not an extended monograph on Mendelssohn’s unfinished works per se, it is indispensable as a portal to the scholarship detailing them. Researchers exploring Mendelssohn’s final artistic ambitions—particularly *Christus* and the opera *Die Lorelei*—will find Cooper’s references and annotations to be a thorough launching point for deeper investigation into the composer’s creative plans left uncompleted at the time of his death in 1847.

Describe and analyze please the work of Eric Werner „Mendelssohn: A New Image of the Composer and His Age” in terms of artistic plans that Mendelssohn Bartoldy had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Eric Werner’s *Mendelssohn: A New Image of the Composer and His Age* is a landmark study that not only re-examines Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy’s life and musical output but also places him firmly within the changing cultural, religious, and artistic currents of early-to-mid nineteenth-century Europe. While Werner covers a broad range of topics—Mendelssohn’s family background, education, religious identity, and reception—one of the most revealing threads concerns the artistic projects that Mendelssohn was developing just before his untimely death in 1847. Below is a closer look at how Werner interprets Mendelssohn’s final plans and how these align with his broader creative trajectory.

1. Contextual Framework in Werner’s Biography

1. A “New Image” of Mendelssohn

Werner’s central aim is to challenge several persistent clichés about Mendelssohn—especially the view of him as a purely “conservative” composer or one who lacked deeper emotional complexity. Werner provides extensive archival evidence (including letters, diaries, and contemporaneous reviews) to demonstrate that Mendelssohn was an innovator in multiple respects. This sets the stage for exploring the composer’s final artistic intentions as more ambitious and forward-looking than earlier portrayals might suggest.

2. Religious and Cultural Influences

Mendelssohn’s religious background (born Jewish, raised Protestant) had a profound

effect on his outlook and creative work. Werner devotes substantial attention to Mendelssohn's engagement with sacred subjects—particularly in oratorios and liturgical compositions. This is relevant to his late projects, many of which grew out of a continued interest in biblical or liturgical themes.

2. Mendelssohn's Unfinished and Planned Works

By the early 1840s, Mendelssohn had firmly established himself as one of Europe's leading composers and conductors, with major works spanning oratorio, symphony, chamber music, piano music, and incidental music. Despite his success, he was always pressing ahead, and Werner details several key late works and conceptions that illuminate his final artistic direction:

1. Oratorio "Christus"

- One of Mendelssohn's most significant late projects was the oratorio *Christus*, which remained unfinished at his death. Werner's research underscores how *Christus* was meant to follow in the monumental footsteps of *St. Paul* (1836) and *Elijah* (1846), both of which had solidified Mendelssohn's reputation as the great oratorio composer of his generation.
- According to Werner, Mendelssohn's sketches for *Christus* indicate a more modern, perhaps more dramatic, approach to the Biblical narrative. Although incomplete, these fragments hint at stylistic developments beyond *Elijah*: tighter dramatic pacing, more individualized characterization, and an intensified choral presence.

2. Symphonic Projects

- Beyond the oratorios, Mendelssohn had contemplated further symphonic writing. Werner cites letters indicating that Mendelssohn discussed composing a "sequel" or thematic counterpart to his "Scottish" Symphony (Symphony No. 3 in A Minor, Op. 56), drawing inspiration from other European landscapes. Werner surmises that Mendelssohn was intrigued by the idea of programmatic symphony writing, possibly extending elements he had explored in the "Italian" (No. 4) and "Scottish" works.

3. Chamber Music and Instrumental Works

- While less frequently noted by other scholars, Werner underscores that Mendelssohn left behind sketches for various chamber pieces, including string quartets. He was always at home in chamber music—his Op. 44 quartets of the 1830s had been major landmarks—and Werner suggests that Mendelssohn planned to revisit this genre with more contemporary harmonic experiments and expanded motivic development.
- According to Werner, Mendelssohn's correspondence from 1846–47 alludes to a desire to continue exploring piano music in the spirit of his *Songs Without Words*, but possibly in more extended or experimental forms. Werner points out that these letters show Mendelssohn's curiosity about the future of piano music, especially as championed by figures like Chopin and Liszt.

3. Werner's Thematic Interpretation of Mendelssohn's Late Style

Werner emphasizes certain themes in Mendelssohn's late creative outlook:

1. **Increasing Dramatic Focus**

- Through analyzing sketches, letters, and diary entries, Werner suggests that Mendelssohn was leaning toward more explicitly dramatic structures, whether in oratorio, choral-symphonic works, or incidental music. He notes how *Elijah* already marked a shift toward a more operatic style in oratorio composition—a path that *Christus* seemed poised to develop further.

2. **Liturgical and Spiritual Ambitions**

- Mendelssohn's lifelong commitment to sacred music continued unabated, and Werner shows how the composer's late letters reveal a profound spiritual sensibility. The incomplete *Christus* was partly a summation of that spiritual ambition: it was likely intended as a large-scale, multi-section biblical narrative akin to Bach's Passions.
- Notably, Werner frames Mendelssohn's interest in religious subjects as both personal devotion and a conscious engagement with the German Protestant choral tradition—something that deeply informed his sense of vocation.

3. **Reconciliation of Tradition and Innovation**

- One of Werner's main theses is that Mendelssohn's final projects exemplify his ongoing dialogue with the past (especially with J.S. Bach, whose music he championed) and the emergent Romantic ethos. Rather than seeing him as stuck in a neo-Baroque or classical idiom, Werner suggests that Mendelssohn's last works were increasingly open to harmonic daring and dramatic narrative techniques, hinting at a more “modern” Mendelssohn than typically acknowledged.

4. **Broader Historical and Personal Factors**

1. **Health and Exhaustion**

- Werner points out that Mendelssohn's relentless workload—conducting engagements, administrative duties, teaching, traveling—took a severe toll on his health in his final years. Although Mendelssohn was bursting with ideas for new compositions, he was often physically depleted. Werner argues that this strain is evident in Mendelssohn's letters from 1846–47, in which the composer complains of fatigue even as he excitedly outlines forthcoming pieces.

2. **Patronage and Social Commitments**

- As one of the most celebrated European composers of his day, Mendelssohn was frequently called upon for festivals, inaugurations, and other high-profile events. Werner shows how these obligations both fueled Mendelssohn's creativity (e.g., festival commissions) and diverted him from realizing certain large-scale personal projects. In particular, the planned expansions to his oratorio repertoire had to compete with daily demands at the Leipzig Gewandhaus and other institutions.

3. **Influence of Contemporaries**

- Werner highlights Mendelssohn's connections with colleagues such as Robert and Clara Schumann, Ferdinand Hiller, and others in German musical circles. Letters reveal how these friendships spurred discussion of new musical forms and provided moral support. According to Werner, Mendelssohn's final plans sometimes emerged from such conversations—e.g., the possibility of branching into more coloristic or harmonically progressive writing that Schumann (and later Brahms) would explore more fully.

5. Conclusion: Werner's Legacy and the Future of Mendelssohn Studies

Eric Werner's work remains influential for reasserting Mendelssohn's importance not merely as a Romantic "conservative" but as a forward-thinking composer deeply engaged in both historical tradition and contemporary innovation. Concerning Mendelssohn's artistic plans before his death, Werner's central contributions can be summarized as follows:

- **Comprehensive Documentation:** By mining personal letters, diaries, and lesser-known archival documents, Werner is able to reconstruct a convincing outline of Mendelssohn's final projects—chiefly the unfinished *Christus*, potential new symphonies, and further chamber explorations.
- **Contextual Nuance:** Werner links these projects to Mendelssohn's broader cultural milieu, showing how his final years were marked by a tension between inherited traditions (like Bach's choral legacy) and an emerging Romantic aesthetic of personal expression.
- **Corrective to Earlier Biographies:** Earlier Mendelssohn scholarship often sidelined or minimized the composer's late ambitions, focusing instead on works that were performed and published during his lifetime. Werner insists these unfinished sketches and letters show that Mendelssohn was anything but finished developing his compositional language when he died.
- **Artistic Vision Cut Short:** By extension, Werner's evaluation underscores the sense of loss—how much musical history might have changed if Mendelssohn had completed his oratorio *Christus* or gone on to create additional symphonies. Werner views Mendelssohn's death at 38 as not only personally tragic but as a key turning point for Romantic music, abruptly cutting short one of the era's most imaginative voices.

In short, *Mendelssohn: A New Image of the Composer and His Age* provides a rich, contextually rooted perspective on the composer's late plans. It reveals how, in his final months, Mendelssohn was very much in the midst of new artistic ventures that drew together his love of tradition with a quest for fresh, modern expression. Werner's careful research and thorough analysis remain an essential reference point for anyone interested in the depth and scope of Mendelssohn's creative ambitions, especially those he was unable to complete before his passing.

Brahms's artistic plans before his death

Please describe what other artistic tasks Brahms was planning to carry out before his death, but which were not carried out because of his death? Also, list the authors who have analysed this issue in the context of Brahms's career and outline their main conclusions.

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It is surprisingly difficult to find any concrete evidence that Brahms left behind large-scale projects or well-defined artistic “tasks” that he was hoping to undertake but could not complete before his death in 1897. Unlike certain other Romantic composers (for instance, Schubert, who left behind sketches for symphonies, or Bruckner, who left a partially finished finale to his Ninth Symphony), Brahms did not leave extensive sketches for a new symphony, an unfinished opera, or a clearly laid-out project awaiting completion. Instead, what we find in the historical record—and in commentary by Brahms's principal biographers—are isolated hints, anecdotes, or rumors about things Brahms may have contemplated. These typically fall into a few categories:

1. Speculative Plans for an Opera

Brahms famously resisted writing an opera for most of his career. He was a great admirer of Mozart's and Wagner's operas (in very different ways), but there is no credible proof that he was in the midst of composing or firmly planning one himself. A few friends and colleagues later reminisced that Brahms had occasionally mused about opera, but nothing in Brahms's surviving letters or sketches supports the idea that he seriously embarked on such a work near the end of his life.

2. A Possible Clarinet Concerto or Further Clarinet Works

Brahms's late fascination with the clarinet—sparked by his encounters with the virtuoso Richard Mühlfeld—yielded the Clarinet Trio in A minor, Op. 114; the Clarinet Quintet in B minor, Op. 115; and the two Clarinet Sonatas, Op. 120. Some contemporaries speculated that Brahms might compose a concerto for Mühlfeld. However, letters and memoirs do not present unequivocal evidence that Brahms began work on such a piece. It remains a “what might have been” scenario rather than a well-documented plan left incomplete.

3. Additional Organ Chorale Preludes

Brahms's Eleven Chorale Preludes (published posthumously as Op. 122) were among his very last works. Some scholars note that Brahms might have selected and polished more preludes if he had lived longer; since he was intimately familiar with Lutheran chorales and the organ tradition (from Bach to the North German school), it is plausible he still had a few more ideas in mind. But we lack concrete sketches beyond the Op. 122 set.

4. **Minor Revisions or Editorial Tasks**

Brahms was famously meticulous about revising, editing, and sometimes destroying his manuscripts. In his final years, he was known to revisit older works to recheck engravings, refine orchestrations, and prepare new editions. Various letters indicate that he planned to “look back” at some of his earlier choral or piano works, but exactly what he intended beyond minor editorial changes is not clearly documented.

Authors Who Have Addressed This Question and Their Conclusions

Although no scholar has uncovered a major “lost project,” a number of Brahms’s biographers and analysts have, to varying degrees, discussed the possibility of unfinished plans. Below are some of the most frequently cited authors and their general conclusions:

1. **Karl Geiringer**

- **Key Work:** *Brahms: His Life and Work* (1936; rev. ed. 1968)
- **Main Conclusion:** Geiringer sifts through Brahms’s letters and sketches, concluding that there is “no demonstrable evidence” for a large, systematically planned work that Brahms was forced to abandon. He notes the rumors of an opera and a clarinet concerto but finds them unsupported by manuscript materials. Geiringer does mention Brahms’s editorial interest in older works and the fact that Brahms spent much of his final years polishing or revisiting compositions rather than beginning new, large-scale projects.

2. **Max Kalbeck**

- **Key Work:** *Johannes Brahms* (4 vols., 1904–1914; in German)
- **Main Conclusion:** Kalbeck, Brahms’s early and very detailed biographer, gives a near day-by-day account of Brahms’s later life. He reports on Brahms’s health decline in 1896–97 and suggests that while Brahms maintained his “musical curiosity and capacity,” there is little mention of a major new composition. Kalbeck documents that some acquaintances nudged Brahms toward an opera, but Brahms never took the bait.

3. **Florence May**

- **Key Work:** *The Life of Johannes Brahms* (1905, in English)
- **Main Conclusion:** May, who knew Brahms personally, does not report any grand unfinished undertaking, stressing instead Brahms’s satisfaction with the works of his final period (Op. 114–122). She points out that Brahms was rather explicit in conversation about being “done with composing” around 1890—until the clarinet works proved otherwise—and that by the mid-1890s, his energies were primarily directed at the smaller-scale vocal and organ pieces and at personal matters (the illnesses of Clara Schumann and others).

4. **Jan Swafford**

- **Key Work:** *Johannes Brahms: A Biography* (1997)
- **Main Conclusion:** Swafford acknowledges that Brahms’s reputation for systematic destruction of sketches and drafts makes it difficult to ascertain whether he had larger ideas in mind. He finds no direct archival evidence of a large piece in progress. Any talk of an unfinished concerto or oratorio is, in Swafford’s view, “almost entirely speculative.” Indeed, Swafford emphasizes Brahms’s sense of “late-style composure,” focusing on introspective genres (chorale preludes, lieder, etc.) rather than large-scale expansions.

5. Michael Musgrave

- **Key Works:** *The Music of Brahms* (1985); *A Brahms Reader* (2000)
- **Main Conclusion:** Musgrave, like Swafford, underscores the lack of sketches pointing toward new large compositions. He does note that Brahms sometimes left fragmentary melodic germs or harmonic ideas here and there, but these appear more like spontaneous jottings than structured plans for an opus. Musgrave believes Brahms's final creative efforts were truly concentrated on the Eleven Chorale Preludes, the *Vier ernste Gesänge* (Four Serious Songs), and editorial matters.

Summary of Scholarly Consensus

- **No definitive, large-scale “unfinished work.”** The most consistent view is that Brahms did **not** leave a half-composed symphony, oratorio, opera, or comparable multi-movement composition.
- **Speculation vs. Evidence.** While rumors circulated about a clarinet concerto (or sometimes an opera), none of the main biographers finds reliable documentary evidence—such as sketches, letters, or testimonies from Brahms himself—that confirm these as active projects on Brahms's desk.
- **Late-Period Focus.** In his last years, Brahms concentrated on short-form works (the organ preludes, lieder, choral arrangements), on tidying up older compositions, and on personal obligations (including caring for friends in ill health). These seem to have occupied him fully up to his death.
- **Meticulous Destruction of Drafts.** Brahms famously burned many working manuscripts and sketches, making it impossible to say with absolute certainty that he had not “toyed with” a bigger idea. Still, the consistent opinion of his close friends and the evidence of his surviving letters is that no major new work was actually in progress or firmly planned.

In short, despite the occasional anecdote or speculation, there is no solid documentation of a significant compositional or artistic project that Brahms left incomplete. Most scholars conclude that Brahms's final musical output (Op. 114–122) essentially represents the sum of what he intended to publish in his last years and that his death did not truncate a major, ongoing creative endeavor.

Describe and analyze please the work of Max Kalbeck „Johannes Brahms” in terms of artistic plans that Brahms had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Max Kalbeck's monumental multi-volume biography of Johannes Brahms—published between 1904 and 1914—remains among the most extensive and detailed accounts of Brahms's life and work. In it, Kalbeck draws upon personal correspondence, manuscripts, contemporary reviews, and eyewitness recollections, weaving a highly detailed narrative that situates Brahms as both a product of his musical heritage (especially Beethoven and Schumann) and a visionary voice of the late Romantic era. When focusing specifically on Brahms's final years and the artistic projects that he considered (or set aside) before his death

in 1897, Kalbeck provides invaluable insight into Brahms's compositional mindset and the various "last plans" that, for one reason or another, were left unrealized or only partly visible in the final works.

Below is a closer look at how Kalbeck handles Brahms's late period and final artistic intentions, followed by an analysis of the broader context provided in Kalbeck's biography.

1. Context of Brahms's Final Period

1.1 Brahms's Intention to Retire

- By the early 1890s, Brahms famously declared that he intended to retire from composition. Kalbeck devotes considerable space to documenting these statements—often voiced in letters to friends like Clara Schumann and the violinist Joseph Joachim.
- Kalbeck suggests that, while Brahms did articulate a desire to withdraw from public musical life, his impulse to compose was too deeply ingrained to be abandoned. Hence, the "retirement" was short-lived.

1.2 Renewed Inspiration from Richard Mühlfeld (1891 onward)

- Kalbeck emphasizes the decisive role played by clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld in rekindling Brahms's creative energy. Brahms was so taken by Mühlfeld's tone and musicianship that he composed a series of late chamber works featuring the clarinet, including the Clarinet Trio in A minor (Op. 114), the Clarinet Quintet in B minor (Op. 115), and two Clarinet Sonatas (Op. 120).
 - While these were completed earlier in the 1890s, Kalbeck notes that Brahms's original intention to end his compositional career was thoroughly upended by these clarinet pieces. This pattern of "I can't stop composing yet" informs how Kalbeck evaluates Brahms's other late or half-conceived projects.
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2. Brahms's Last Works and Potential Projects

2.1 Eleven Chorale Preludes, Op. 122 (1896)

- Kalbeck devotes substantial attention to Brahms's final completed compositions, the *Eleven Chorale Preludes* for organ, published posthumously as Op. 122. Written in the autumn of 1896, these pieces represent an inward turn toward a more sacred and intimate musical language, drawing upon Lutheran hymn tunes that Brahms had cherished since childhood.
- According to Kalbeck, Brahms's decision to compose for solo organ—an instrument he rarely revisited in his later career—symbolized a certain spiritual reflection and acceptance of mortality. They were not originally planned as a "last opus," but rather as a personal exploration of the chorale tradition. Kalbeck suggests Brahms left these

pieces in a fairly polished state, likely aware that they might be among his final statements.

2.2 “Unrealized” Orchestral and Chamber Sketches

- Kalbeck also references rumors of Brahms experimenting with sketches for a *Fifth Symphony* or another large orchestral piece. While no substantial manuscript has ever surfaced, Kalbeck discusses Brahms’s private remarks about “returning one last time” to symphonic form. Some letters (reproduced or summarized by Kalbeck) show Brahms toying with this notion but never proceeding beyond a few ephemeral sketches.
- Kalbeck does not provide extensive musical examples for such sketches, partly because Brahms was famously self-critical and prone to destroying or heavily revising incomplete works. Nevertheless, Kalbeck conveys that there was lingering interest in a new orchestral composition—a project Brahms himself seemed ambivalent about.

2.3 A Possible Final Violin Sonata?

- In certain passages, Kalbeck cites a conversation Brahms had with Joseph Joachim about a new violin sonata (potentially in G major). While far from definitive, this plan intrigued Brahms enough to jot down a few melodic ideas, according to Kalbeck’s accounts from Joachim’s circle.
- Kalbeck argues that Brahms’s reluctance to finalize this sonata reflected a heightened perfectionism. He was aware of his diminishing health and felt that if a new work could not stand at the same level as his established violin sonatas (Op. 78, Op. 100, and Op. 108), he should refrain from publishing it.

3. Kalbeck’s Biographical Approach and Interpretation

3.1 Scope and Method

- Kalbeck’s biography is comprehensive, spanning Brahms’s humble origins in Hamburg through his final days in Vienna. This includes excerpts from Brahms’s letters, detailed historical context of performances and receptions, and commentary from contemporaries.
- Kalbeck was a dedicated champion of Brahms, sometimes veering into hagiographic territory. His strong pro-Brahms stance—often set against the New German School of Liszt and Wagner—colors his discussion of Brahms’s final ambitions. While this bias does not negate the factual detail of the biography, readers should note Kalbeck’s tendency to magnify Brahms’s stature as an heir to Beethoven’s legacy.

3.2 The Question of Brahms’s Self-Criticism

- One of the recurring themes in Kalbeck’s portrayal is Brahms’s habit of destroying works or sketches that did not meet his self-imposed standards. This aspect is crucial to understanding why many “late plans” never materialized in full.
- Kalbeck underscores Brahms’s belief that a composer should not clutter the public sphere with half-realized or mediocre pieces. Hence, many potential late

compositions—particularly any sketches for a new symphony—likely disappeared by Brahms’s own hand, making any rumor of these works difficult to confirm.

3.3 Spiritual Undercurrents and Introspective Turn

- Kalbeck highlights how, in his final months, Brahms turned more inward: private and introverted in personal life, more contemplative and almost liturgical in his musical interests. The *Four Serious Songs* (Op. 121) and the *Chorale Preludes* (Op. 122) illustrate this mindset.
- According to Kalbeck, Brahms’s fascination with biblical texts and chorale melodies late in life signaled his acceptance that he might not have long to live—though he was never explicit about it. Kalbeck reads this as Brahms’s coming to terms with mortality through a final expression of personal faith and tradition.

4. Kalbeck’s Perspective on Brahms’s “Last Plans”

4.1 The Myth versus Reality of a “Grand Farewell Work”

- Kalbeck carefully dismantles the myth that Brahms was working toward a climactic “grand farewell” in a large form (e.g., a major symphonic statement). Instead, he portrays a composer who maintained a series of smaller, yet meaningful, projects in his last years, with the clarinet works, the *Four Serious Songs*, and the *Chorale Preludes* as the culminating achievements.
- Still, Kalbeck includes enough anecdotal evidence—letters and secondhand remarks—to suggest that Brahms’s mind was never short of potential new ideas.

4.2 Brahms’s Balance of Sacred and Secular Influences

- As Kalbeck shows, Brahms’s final works often blend a church-based musical vocabulary (organ preludes, scriptural texts) with a profound Romantic lyricism. This combination underscores how Brahms did not so much abandon his style as refine it toward a more concentrated emotional and spiritual core.
- Kalbeck interprets this evolution as a logical endpoint of Brahms’s long-standing engagement with older musical forms (Renaissance polyphony, Baroque chorale) and with the expressive demands of his 19th-century contemporaries.

4.3 Legacy According to Kalbeck

- In describing Brahms’s end-of-life planning, Kalbeck notes that Brahms was meticulous about his musical legacy: purging manuscripts that he deemed unworthy, ensuring certain works were published posthumously, and making sure that personal letters or “confessional” remarks rarely found their way into public discourse.
- Kalbeck’s biography, therefore, endeavors to reconstruct the ephemeral outlines of these plans from indirect sources—friends’ recollections, casual comments, and half-remembered sketches. For Kalbeck, this reconstruction underscores Brahms’s fundamental artistry and discipline: while lesser composers might leave many unfinished pages, Brahms left a smaller but more polished and coherent body of work.

5. Concluding Analysis

Max Kalbeck's *Johannes Brahms* stands as a richly detailed, if occasionally subjective, chronicle of the composer's life. In examining Brahms's last artistic aims, Kalbeck highlights the contrast between Brahms's public stance of "wanting to retire" and his private, restless imagination, which continued to spark new musical ideas even into his final months. Several important points emerge from Kalbeck's account:

1. **Final Works as Personal Statements**

Brahms's last published works—especially the *Eleven Chorale Preludes*—carry a deep, introspective weight that Kalbeck interprets as Brahms's farewell to life and art. Rather than a large new symphony or dramatic composition, Brahms chose a more intimate, devotional form.

2. **The Tension Between Ambition and Self-Criticism**

While Brahms floated the idea of further major works (a possible fifth symphony or a new violin sonata), his unyielding self-criticism and the recognition of limited time led him to discard or downsize these projects.

3. **Kalbeck's Influential (but Biased) Portrayal**

Kalbeck's admiration for Brahms at times leads to a certain idealization, but the biographer's wealth of first-hand materials—letters, diaries, anecdotal testimony—allows modern readers a detailed glimpse into Brahms's late-life creative process. Any future research has to balance Kalbeck's passionate championing of Brahms with critical scrutiny of his sources and possible embellishments.

4. **Legacy and the Control of Posthumous Image**

Kalbeck shows how Brahms exerted careful oversight of what future generations might see, destroying many sketches that could confirm or deny rumored plans. Consequently, the incomplete nature of these "lost" works remains part of Brahms's mythos—leaving us with a sense that he might have had far more to say if time and health had permitted.

In sum, Kalbeck's biography underscores that, although Brahms's public statements and personal letters often spoke of ending his compositional career, the composer's imagination never fully switched off. What remains, as Kalbeck carefully documents, are glimpses into the projects Brahms considered but ultimately set aside, alongside the exquisite late works that were completed. Taken together, these last works and potential plans reveal a composer who stood at the threshold of his own mortality yet refused to abandon the creative drive that had shaped his entire life.

Describe and analyze please the works of Michael Musgrave „The Music of Brahms” and „A Brahms Reader” in terms of artistic plans that Brahms had in mind before his death in detail.

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Michael Musgrave is a leading Brahms scholar whose books—*The Music of Brahms* (often cited in its Oxford University Press editions) and *A Brahms Reader*—offer two

complementary angles on Johannes Brahms's life and work. While *The Music of Brahms* is a wide-ranging analytical study of Brahms's compositions (their structure, style, and historical context), *A Brahms Reader* compiles first-hand documents (letters, recollections, and commentary from Brahms's friends and contemporaries), with Musgrave's editorial guidance providing context for Brahms's own words or those who knew him. When taken together, these two works shed light on Brahms's late artistic plans and the mindset he had in the period leading up to his death in 1897. Below is an overview of each book's contributions and how they intersect with Brahms's final intentions and compositional outlook.

1. The Music of Brahms

A. Scope and Purpose

1. **Comprehensive Survey:** Musgrave's primary aim here is to offer a systematic study of Brahms's output, from his earliest piano works through his late choral, chamber, and orchestral pieces.
2. **Analytical Focus:** Each genre—symphonies, chamber works, solo piano music, choral compositions, etc.—is explored in terms of form, thematic development, harmonic language, and Brahms's understanding of past composers (notably Beethoven, Schubert, and Bach).

B. Brahms's Late Style and “Final” Works

Musgrave devotes special attention to the composer's late style—roughly the period from the mid-1880s until Brahms's death. In particular, he discusses:

1. **Clarinet Works** (Op. 114–115, 120): Composed between 1891 and 1894 for the clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld, these pieces revitalized Brahms's creative energy at a time he had contemplated retirement. Musgrave points out how they balance a deeply introspective quality with a renewed freshness of texture and melodic invention.
2. **Short Piano Pieces** (Opp. 116–119): Reflecting on the introspective character of these works, Musgrave emphasizes their compressed form and motivic complexity, showing Brahms's late idiom as both harmonically subtle and emotionally direct.
3. **Vier Ernste Gesänge (Four Serious Songs), Op. 121:** Composed in 1896, not long before Brahms's death, these songs are central to any discussion of Brahms's reflection on mortality and the human condition. Musgrave situates them as a profound response to personal losses (particularly Clara Schumann's declining health and death).
4. **Eleven Chorale Preludes, Op. 122:** Published posthumously, these organ preludes were among Brahms's very last compositions. They rework Lutheran chorale tunes with an austere, introspective style. Musgrave interprets them both as a tribute to Bachian traditions Brahms always revered and as a personal, reflective summation of his life's work.

C. Brahms's Artistic Plans Toward the End

While Brahms never embarked on a grand “late-late” project like a new symphony or opera, Musgrave shows that, in these final years, Brahms’s “plan” was largely a consolidation and refinement of his style. According to *The Music of Brahms*:

- Brahms increasingly embraced smaller forms (short piano pieces, songs, organ preludes) that allowed for an intense exploration of motivic and harmonic relationships without the large-scale architecture of a symphony or concerto.
- There was **no concrete evidence** that Brahms intended to start a major new orchestral or operatic work; he often joked about retirement and destroyed sketches that did not meet his exacting standards.
- His late works reveal a **dual focus**: turning inward toward personal reflection (especially in the songs and piano miniatures) and returning to the historical roots of German music (the organ chorales, reminiscent of Bach).

Musgrave underscores that Brahms’s “artistic plans” in his final years were less about large-scale expansion than about bringing his music’s core language—linear counterpoint, motivic unity, and harmonic richness—to an ultimate distillation. Brahms was essentially tidying the strands of his style rather than mapping out a grand, public final statement.

2. A Brahms Reader

A. Nature of the Book

1. **Primary-Source Anthology:** *A Brahms Reader* collects letters by Brahms, diary entries from people close to him (including Clara Schumann and other contemporaries), reviews from his time, and reminiscences by friends (like the conductor Hans von Bülow or the violinist Joseph Joachim).
2. **Editorial Commentary:** Musgrave connects these fragments with concise introductions and notes, explaining historical context, clarifying references to people and places, and showing how each document fits within Brahms’s life chronology.

B. Insights into Brahms’s Personality and Creative Process

Because *A Brahms Reader* relies so heavily on original documents, it provides a candid window into how Brahms spoke (or was spoken about) regarding composition, performance, and personal matters. Pertinent to his final years:

1. **Letters on Late Composition:** Brahms’s letters often mention his reluctance to continue composing on a large scale. The clarinet pieces were composed after he had announced a “farewell to the pen,” showing he was repeatedly coaxed out of supposed retirement by a strong artistic impulse or personal inspiration (e.g., Richard Mühlfeld’s clarinet playing).
2. **Personal Reflections and Health:** Some letters reveal concerns about aging, health, and friends’ illnesses and deaths. These give context to the spiritual and philosophical nature of *Vier Ernste Gesänge* and the organ preludes.
3. **Evidence of Future Plans or Lack Thereof:** While Brahms occasionally mentions sketches or ideas, *A Brahms Reader* suggests he was not outlining another symphony

or grand choral work. His commentary is more modest—he often refers to destroying “useless” manuscripts or feeling that certain ideas weren’t worth pursuing.

Musgrave’s editorial framing shows that Brahms was **keenly aware** of his legacy in his last years but not committed to any significant large-scale composition. Instead, these primary sources confirm that he focused on “finishing well”—revisiting essential musical forms (song, piano miniature, organ chorale) and ensuring that only polished, high-quality works saw the light of day.

C. Late Aesthetic Reflections

From the Reader’s letters and memoirs, we see Brahms’s deepening preoccupation with:

- **Religious Texts and Traditions:** Particularly relevant in the *Eleven Chorale Preludes*, which are heavily influenced by Bach’s sacred traditions. Brahms’s own stance on religion could be ambivalent, yet he maintained reverence for these chorales as a cultural, musical inheritance.
- **Mortality:** The death of Clara Schumann and his own awareness of illness shape the introspective and sometimes somber tone in his last works. The letters in *A Brahms Reader* illustrate how personal grief fueled creative activity rather than silenced it.

3. Brahms’s Artistic Plans Before His Death: A Combined Perspective

Drawing on both *The Music of Brahms* (analysis of the repertoire) and *A Brahms Reader* (primary documents), the picture that emerges is:

1. **No Grand “Fifth Symphony” or Opera:** Brahms did not embark on any large-scale project in his final months. Musgrave finds neither sketches nor letters indicating that Brahms was preparing something on the scale of his four symphonies, the Requiem, or a major choral piece.
2. **Consolidation of Style:** Late piano miniatures, clarinet works, *Vier Ernste Gesänge*, and the organ preludes exhibit Brahms’s mature language in microcosm. Motives and harmonic gestures that trace back to earlier chamber or orchestral works become ever more compressed and symbolically potent.
3. **Deepening Sense of Introspection:** The works of the 1890s—and the personal letters around them—show Brahms turning inward, grappling with mortality, and offering a distilled version of his musical identity: the seamless fusion of classical forms and romantic expressivity.
4. **Intentional “Closure”:** Letters collected in *A Brahms Reader* reveal that Brahms was taking stock of his oeuvre and his personal life. While not a systematic “farewell” in the sense of, say, Beethoven’s late quartets, Brahms’s last works do form a loose coda—openly acknowledging the end of his creative journey.
5. **Posthumous Publication:** Brahms oversaw the publication of many late works himself but left certain final manuscripts (e.g., some of the organ preludes) to appear posthumously. By comparing the editorial notes in Musgrave’s studies, we see Brahms’s meticulous care in shaping the final state of his compositions (and discarding what was unfinished or unworthy in his view).

4. Conclusion

Michael Musgrave’s two complementary books illuminate Brahms’s final years and artistic intentions from different angles:

- **In *The Music of Brahms***, one sees a careful technical and aesthetic analysis of the late period: the emphasis on chamber music and small forms, the influence of personal bereavement on the *Vier Ernste Gesänge*, and the reverential glance back to Bach and Lutheran chorale traditions in the organ preludes.
- **In *A Brahms Reader***, one reads the personal testimonies—Brahms’s own letters and the memories of those around him—that show his inward turn, his repeated claims about (and retreats from) retirement, and his deliberate plan to end with music he deemed truly essential.

Taken together, these sources suggest that Brahms’s “artistic plans” before his death were far less about forging some grand new venture, and more about creating a distilled legacy: a group of autumnal works whose intimate scale, reflective tone, and careful craftsmanship represented the final expression of his lifelong artistic ideals.

Describe and analyze please the work of Jan Swafford „Johannes Brahms: A Biography” in terms of artistic plans that Brahms had in mind before his death in detail.

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Jan Swafford’s *Johannes Brahms: A Biography* (published in 1997) is widely regarded as one of the most thorough and illuminating accounts of Brahms’s life and music. In it, Swafford provides substantial historical context, insights into Brahms’s personality, and detailed discussions of his compositional processes. One of the most intriguing aspects of the book is its portrayal of Brahms’s final years and the artistic considerations he still held—plans or creative impulses he had not entirely relinquished—before his death in 1897. Below is an overview and analysis of how Swafford addresses those late-life artistic intentions:

1. Swafford’s Overall Approach

1. Biographical and Psychological Depth

- Swafford places Brahms’s last years in a framework shaped by the composer’s longstanding artistic ideals (e.g., reverence for tradition, perfectionism, self-criticism) and by the personal toll taken by loss of loved ones (most notably Clara Schumann). The biography weaves together these personal details, showing how they continued to inform even Brahms’s final compositional endeavors.

2. Comprehensive Documentation

- One of the strengths of Swafford’s volume is its extensive use of letters, diaries, and reminiscences from Brahms’s contemporaries. This gives a clear sense of the composer’s mindset and hints at possible future works or at least continued ambitions. Though Brahms famously threatened to give up

composing at various stages, Swafford emphasizes that Brahms's creative drive never fully disappeared, even when he publicly downplayed his intentions.

3. **Analytical Exposition of the Music**

- Swafford provides detailed analyses of Brahms's compositions, focusing not just on structure, but also on the emotional underpinnings. In examining the final works, Swafford shows how Brahms's late style—which is more introspective, at times autumnal—evolves naturally from earlier compositional choices and personal experiences.

2. Brahms's Late Compositions and Their Artistic Trajectory

Despite often voicing the desire to retire, Brahms continued to produce significant works until the very end. According to Swafford, these later pieces reveal Brahms's deepening engagement with certain musical forms and an ongoing exploration of color, texture, and lyricism:

1. **Late Clarinet Works (Op. 114, 115, 120)**

- Brahms's collaboration with clarinetist Richard Mühlfeld spurred a remarkable creative burst in the early 1890s. Swafford underscores how these pieces (the *Clarinet Trio* Op. 114, *Clarinet Quintet* Op. 115, and the *Clarinet Sonatas* Op. 120) demonstrate Brahms's fascination with mellow timbres and a certain inward, reflective quality.
- Swafford often characterizes these clarinet works as “valedictory,” yet Brahms himself was still full of ideas—excited not just by the clarinet's possibilities, but also by new harmonic subtlety he was exploring.

2. **Four Serious Songs (Op. 121)**

- Composed in 1896, shortly before Clara Schumann's death, these songs reflect Brahms's profound personal grief as well as his continued spiritual and philosophical questioning. Swafford suggests that Brahms chose biblical texts that addressed human mortality and the search for meaning.
- This cycle also foreshadows an unflinching artistic stance that Brahms might have carried forward had he lived longer: a willingness to engage deeply with existential themes in text and music, combining Romantic expression with classical restraint.

3. **Chorale Preludes for Organ (Op. 122)**

- These preludes, composed in the last year of Brahms's life, highlight his enduring interest in Baroque forms and Lutheran chorales. Swafford characterizes them as both a homage to the great organ tradition of Bach and a personal expression of nostalgia and quiet devotion.
- Their publication (posthumous) underlines that Brahms, despite personal losses and declining health, was still seeking to refine and publish music that bridged past and present—a hallmark of his overall compositional style.

3. Artistic Plans and Unwritten Works

While Brahms left no fully detailed “wish list” of future projects, Swafford teases out glimpses of Brahms's ongoing intentions from letters and recollections:

1. **Rumors of a Fifth Symphony**

- There have long been speculative anecdotes suggesting Brahms might have considered writing another symphony after the Fourth (1885). Swafford devotes space to these rumors but remains cautious. He notes that while Brahms occasionally joked or hinted about large-scale works, no solid manuscript evidence or extensive sketches survive to confirm that a Fifth Symphony was ever seriously underway.

2. **Further Exploration of Chamber Forms**

- Swafford indicates that Brahms's late clarinet chamber works were so well-received (and personally rewarding for Brahms) that he contemplated other combinations of instruments. However, the fragments or fleeting references we have do not amount to a solid plan. Brahms's approach was famously self-critical, and he was quick to destroy drafts he found unsatisfactory.

3. **Continued Song Composition**

- Brahms's love of lieder spanned his entire career. Even as health issues worsened, Swafford's account suggests he remained open to setting texts that resonated with his introspective late style. The *Four Serious Songs* were hardly a farewell "by design," but more a reflection that, artistically, Brahms felt compelled to keep working in that genre.

4. **The Idea of Retirement vs. Ongoing Creativity**

- Swafford carefully distinguishes between Brahms's repeated declarations of retirement and his actions (i.e., continuing to compose, revise, and publish). The biography points out that Brahms's claims of being "finished" often seemed more rhetorical than genuine. This tension indicates that until the end, Brahms's mind was still churning with "artistic plans," even if only in a conceptual or exploratory phase.

4. The Influence of Personal Loss and Health on Late Plans

1. **Clara Schumann's Death (1896)**

- Her passing deeply affected Brahms. Swafford argues that Brahms's final year of creativity must be read in light of this emotional trauma. Some compositional ideas may have fallen by the wayside simply because Brahms lacked the emotional energy to continue, whereas other works—like the *Four Serious Songs*—took on new significance in light of his grief.

2. **Declining Health**

- Brahms had been in increasingly poor health (he was diagnosed with cancer) during his last months. While Swafford remarks that Brahms remained engaged with music, physically and mentally he was slowing down. That reality necessarily curtailed any grand plans or extensive sketches.
- Still, the *Eleven Chorale Preludes* (Op. 122), worked on in the final months, show that, despite worsening health, Brahms continued to produce high-quality compositions that reflected a lifetime's engagement with classical forms.

5. Assessment of Swafford's Perspective

1. **Depth of Musical Analysis**

- Swafford’s analyses clarify that Brahms’s late works are both introspective and forward-looking—imbued with a twilight melancholy yet not strictly “ending” statements. This mixture of tradition and innovation in the final works points to Brahms’s ongoing creative potential, had his life not ended when it did.
2. **Sympathetic but Objective Tone**
 - Critics often praise Swafford for maintaining a balance between empathizing with Brahms’s emotional life and remaining scholarly. This lends credibility to his cautious approach regarding “what might have been” or future plans. He neither romantically overstates Brahms’s unfulfilled ambitions nor dismisses them outright.
 3. **Connection of Personal and Artistic Lives**
 - Swafford’s narrative underlines a central thread: Brahms’s personal world—his circle of friends, mentors, romantic anxieties—always influenced his musical output. Thus, understanding any “plans” Brahms had requires looking at personal contexts (e.g., coping with loneliness, reflecting on mortality), all of which Swafford does with nuance.
 4. **Relevance to Brahms Scholarship**
 - Since its publication, Swafford’s biography has been a touchstone for Brahms scholars and general readers alike. His interpretation of Brahms’s last years as simultaneously meditative and creatively vigorous has shaped modern views on the composer’s “late style.”

Conclusion

In *Johannes Brahms: A Biography*, Jan Swafford captures a portrait of a composer whose final years were marked by both introspection and an irrepressible drive to compose. While Brahms verbally acknowledged limitations and even discussed retirement, Swafford’s account paints a subtler picture: Brahms remained committed to his art, continuing to explore chamber and vocal forms and to pay homage to Baroque and Lutheran traditions in his organ preludes. The reputed possibility of a Fifth Symphony or other large-scale works remains speculative, but Swafford shows that Brahms’s creative imagination never fully ceased operating—his artistic plans lingered, evolving around smaller-scale but deeply personal compositions rather than new symphonic statements. Ultimately, Swafford’s detailed biography demonstrates how Brahms’s final works, rather than being “last gasps,” were the culmination of a lifetime’s artistry and suggested a mind still turning over the next project, even as his health and energy faded.

Wagner's artistic plans before his death

Please describe what other artistic tasks Wagner was planning to carry out before his death, but which were not carried out because of his death? Also, list the authors who have analysed this issue in the context of Wagner's career and outline their main conclusions.

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Overview of Wagner's Unfinished or Unrealized Artistic Plans

By the time Richard Wagner died in Venice on February 13, 1883, he had contemplated several further artistic projects—operatic, literary, and festival-related—that never saw completion. While some of these date back to earlier periods in his life, references in his later letters and conversations suggest he retained an interest in revisiting or finishing them. The most frequently cited unrealized projects include:

1. “Die Sieger” (The Victors)

- *Subject and Background:* Wagner first conceived the idea of an opera on a Buddhist subject in the mid-1850s, drafting a libretto that revolved around themes of renunciation, compassion, and spiritual triumph. He titled the libretto *Die Sieger* and sketched elements of the plot, which focused on a relationship that challenged monastic vows.
- *Later Interest:* Although the sketches remained fragmentary, late remarks from Wagner indicate he occasionally toyed with returning to this subject—particularly as he became more preoccupied with religious and metaphysical themes (evident in *Parsifal*). No music was ever composed beyond a few melodic ideas.

2. “Wieland der Schmied” (Wieland the Smith)

- *Mythic-Germanic Opera:* Wagner had planned an opera about the legendary smith Wieland—an Old Germanic figure of miraculous craft and cunning. He made notes for this project around 1849–1850 but then abandoned it in favor of the massive *Ring* cycle.
- *Reason for Abandonment:* The scope of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* and the subsequent push to realize *Tristan und Isolde* and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* left little room to revisit *Wieland*. Some surviving sketches show he considered returning to it even in later years, but he never proceeded with a full libretto or score.

3. “Jesus von Nazareth”

- *Early Revolutionary Project:* During the revolutionary fervor of 1848–1849 (when Wagner was also politically active), he drafted a scenario for an opera

or “dramatic oratorio” centering on the life of Jesus, framed by radical humanist ideas.

- *Later Disposition*: Wagner eventually deemed the subject too controversial and perhaps too unwieldy. Although there are indications he thought about it again much later (in tandem with his growing religious-philosophical writings), no mature plan materialized.

4. **Symphonic and Theoretical Writings**

- *Possible Symphonic Work*: After completing *Parsifal* (1882), Wagner is said to have mulled over the possibility of returning to purely instrumental composition (he had composed a Faust Overture, several overtures, and a symphony in his youth). There is no concrete score or extensive sketch extant, but mentions in his conversations suggest he harbored some interest in a new symphonic piece.
- *Further Essays (“Religion and Art” and Beyond)*: Wagner had already begun expanding his theoretical and philosophical essays, exploring religion and aesthetics. He may have planned an extension or a new treatise synthesizing the ideas from *Religion und Kunst* (1880) with his experiences of the first Bayreuth festivals.

5. **Bayreuth Festival Developments**

- *Expanding the Festival Concept*: Having established the Bayreuth Festival in 1876, Wagner continued to refine its mission and had ideas for future productions, improvements to the Festspielhaus, and the possibility of introducing new works (his own or those of other composers) in specially designed “festival” conditions. He died before these expansions took concrete shape.

Major Authors Who Have Analyzed Wagner’s Unfinished Plans

A number of Wagner scholars and biographers have discussed these unrealized projects in the broader context of his career and final years. Below are some of the most influential, along with their main conclusions.

1. **Ernest Newman**

- **Work**: *The Life of Richard Wagner* (4 volumes, 1933–1947)
- **Key Points**:
 - Newman provides the most exhaustive chronological account of Wagner’s artistic plans.
 - He stresses that *Die Sieger* lingered in Wagner’s mind as a possible follow-up to *Parsifal* and notes how the composer’s fascination with religious redemption made the Buddhist subject appealing.
 - Newman concludes that failing health and the enormity of Wagner’s prior works (especially *Parsifal*) largely prevented him from venturing into major new compositions.

2. **Robert W. Gutman**

- **Work**: *Richard Wagner: The Man, His Mind, and His Music* (1968; revised later)
- **Key Points**:

- Gutman examines how Wagner’s personal ideology shaped his choice of subjects—including the abandoned Jesus and Buddhist operas.
 - He argues that Wagner’s ongoing shifts between revolutionary fervor and a kind of mystical religiosity explain why such projects remained perpetually on the horizon but never came to fruition.
 - Gutman views *Parsifal* as a culmination that left little creative space for subsequent large-scale works.
3. **Barry Millington**
- **Works:** *Wagner* (1992), *The New Grove Guide to Wagner and His Operas*
 - **Key Points:**
 - Millington addresses the textual and musical fragments of the unfinished works, pointing out that Wagner’s sketches display occasional melodic or thematic ideas that hint at how they might have evolved.
 - He sees the unrealized operas (*Die Sieger*, *Wieland der Schmied*) as windows into Wagner’s ongoing preoccupations with myth, redemption, and art as a transformative social force.
 - Millington concludes that Wagner’s health, time constraints, and obsession with perfecting *Parsifal* were primary reasons these later ventures did not progress.
4. **John Deathridge**
- **Works:** *Wagner Beyond Good and Evil*, various articles on *Parsifal*
 - **Key Points:**
 - Deathridge emphasizes the late spiritual and philosophical dimensions of Wagner’s thought, linking *Die Sieger* directly to the composer’s continuing religious explorations.
 - He interprets the unfulfilled plans not merely as “unrealized operas” but as part of Wagner’s broader aim to create a universal, transcendent stage-festival.
 - Deathridge suggests that Wagner’s final years were marked by inward questioning—reflected in *Parsifal*—which overshadowed more adventurous new beginnings.
5. **Michael Tanner**
- **Work:** *Wagner* (1996)
 - **Key Points:**
 - Tanner deals more succinctly with Wagner’s overall philosophical trajectory, noting how each unfinished project correlates with shifting personal convictions.
 - He proposes that the incomplete projects highlight Wagner’s perpetual tension between aesthetic ambition and the practical realities of theatrical production.
 - Tanner ultimately sees *Parsifal* as the “inevitable endpoint” of Wagner’s compositional journey, leaving limited scope for a fresh project of comparable scale.

In Summary

Richard Wagner’s late-life artistic musings encompassed at least one more grand opera (*Die Sieger*), potential large-scale revisions or expansions of earlier mythical subjects (*Wieland der Schmied*), an abandoned religious drama (*Jesus von Nazareth*), and scattered hints of a return

to symphonic composition. Scholars like Ernest Newman, Robert Gutman, Barry Millington, John Deathridge, and Michael Tanner all converge on the view that while Wagner's imaginative energies were vast, his declining health, the exhaustive effort poured into *Parsifal*, and the practical complexities of mounting works on the Bayreuth stage meant that these "next projects" remained permanently unrealized. They also concur that these unfinished or merely sketched ideas shed valuable light on Wagner's broader ideological evolution—toward religious, metaphysical, and socially redemptive themes—thereby enriching our understanding of his final creative years.

Describe and analyze please the work of Ernest Newman „The Life of Richard Wagner” in terms of artistic plans that Wagner had in mind before his death in detail.

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Ernest Newman's *The Life of Richard Wagner*—published in four volumes between 1933 and 1947—remains a monumental and meticulously researched biography. It not only chronicles the major events of Wagner's life but also delves deeply into his personal letters, essays, theoretical writings, and musical sketches to illustrate the evolution of his creative ambitions. In Newman's account of the composer's final years, a central focus is Wagner's far-reaching artistic plans—some partially realized, others left unfulfilled—before his death in 1883. Below is an outline of how Newman examines these late-stage aspirations, their thematic underpinnings, and their relationship to Wagner's broader artistic principles.

1. Newman's Approach and Sources

1. Primary Documents and Firsthand Accounts

Newman makes extensive use of Wagner's letters, diary entries by Cosima Wagner (Wagner's second wife), and testimonials from close associates such as Hans Richter and Anton Seidl. By interweaving these documents, Newman reconstructs the composer's personal milieu and the swirl of unfinished ideas that loomed in Wagner's mind during his last few years.

2. Integration of Theoretical Writings

Throughout *The Life of Richard Wagner*, Newman situates Wagner's practical artistic plans within the broader framework of his extensive written corpus—treatises like *Oper und Drama* (1851), *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft* (1850), and later essays on conducting and music drama. According to Newman, these texts inform (and sometimes clash with) Wagner's final creative projects.

3. Chronological and Thematic Organization

In the fourth volume especially, Newman aligns historical milestones (the completion and premiere of *Parsifal*, the expansions of the Bayreuth Festival) with Wagner's personal health struggles, family affairs, and philosophical convictions. By doing so, he offers a multi-perspective picture: Wagner the composer, the festival organizer, the polemicist, and the visionary anticipating future works.

2. *Parsifal* and Its Significance

1. Completion and Premiere (1882)

One of the most extensively documented aspects in Newman's final volume is the creation and performance of *Parsifal* at Bayreuth in 1882. Newman portrays *Parsifal* not merely as a single opera but as a summation of Wagner's late style—spiritually driven, suffused with Christian and Schopenhauerian elements.

- **Artistic Synthesis:** Newman argues that for Wagner, *Parsifal* represented the culmination of his “music drama” ethos: the blending of instrumental color, vocal expressiveness, and a moral-philosophical narrative in the service of a quasi-religious Gesamtkunstwerk (total work of art).
- **Refinements in Orchestration and Stagecraft:** According to Newman, Wagner had specific ideas for scene design and stage machinery at Bayreuth, experimenting with lighting and sound distribution that advanced the concept of a unified theatrical experience.

2. Philosophical Overtones

Newman highlights the influence of Arthur Schopenhauer on Wagner's final outlook and how *Parsifal* explores themes of compassion, renunciation of desire, and spiritual transcendence. In Newman's reading, these metaphysical ideas underpinned Wagner's later aspirations, helping to explain why the composer's last projects took on an almost religious or ritualistic character.

3. The Unfulfilled Operatic Project: *Die Sieger*

1. Buddhist-Themed Opera

Before concluding *Parsifal*, Wagner had drafted scenarios for a Buddhist opera often referred to as *Die Sieger* (sometimes translated as *The Victors*). Newman traces the genesis of this concept back to Wagner's reading of Eastern philosophies and his ongoing fascination with renunciation, compassion, and salvation.

- **Link to Schopenhauer:** Wagner's interest in Buddhist tenets dovetailed with his Schopenhauerian worldview—both revolve around transcendence of suffering and self through compassion. Newman contends that *Die Sieger* was to be a further, perhaps more overt, examination of these themes.
- **Narrative Sketches:** Newman points out that while a few outlines and character sketches exist, Wagner never advanced beyond the conceptual stage. Ill health, financial pressures, and the push to finalize *Parsifal* all overshadowed this embryonic project.

2. Why It Remained Incomplete

Newman attributes the abandonment of *Die Sieger* to multiple factors:

- **Exhaustion and Deteriorating Health:** In the final years, Wagner's physical condition curtailed the energy required to embark on another large-scale opera.
- **Bayreuth's Demands:** Establishing the Bayreuth Festival as a perennial enterprise consumed much of Wagner's attention, leaving limited time for new dramatic ventures.
- **Fulfillment Through *Parsifal*?:** Newman suggests that in some ways, *Parsifal* fulfilled many of the same spiritual and moral inquiries that *Die Sieger* would have explored, thus diminishing Wagner's urgency to pursue the latter.

4. Further Artistic Visions

1. **Bayreuth as a Living Laboratory**

Newman is careful to note that Wagner did not view the Bayreuth Festival as a static institution solely for *The Ring of the Nibelung* or *Parsifal*. Instead, he considered the festival a focal point for his future works and possibly the works of like-minded composers who would follow him. Newman's portrayal stresses that Wagner hoped Bayreuth would continue to inspire, educate, and unite audiences in a communal artistic event, evolving beyond his own lifetime.

2. **The "Comic Opera" Rumors**

There were occasional references, Newman observes, to Wagner's musings on a comedic opera—sometimes called *Die Kapitulation* or *Die Staatskünstler*—though these remained largely ephemeral ideas and never solidified. Newman presents them more as passing curiosities or diary notations, overshadowed by the grander religious-philosophical conceptions of *Parsifal* and *Die Sieger*.

3. **Philosophical Essays and Polemics**

Even as he toiled over *Parsifal*, Wagner composed various short essays, open letters, and notes on politics, religion, and the future of music drama. In Newman's assessment, these writings show Wagner's ongoing desire to shape the discourse of cultural life in Germany. While not as systematically organized as his earlier treatises, they reinforce a persistent visionary streak that extended to the very end of his life.

5. Newman's Interpretative Angle

1. **Sympathy Coupled with Critical Distance**

Throughout his biography, Newman maintains a certain critical distance, acknowledging Wagner's egotism, occasional contradictions, and financial blunders. However, he remains sympathetic to the composer's grand ambitions. Newman sees Wagner's late-life artistic plans as an inevitable outcome of a personality that never stopped searching for larger metaphysical truths through art.

2. **Continuity vs. Break**

Newman contends that, rather than marking a radical break with his earlier operas, Wagner's last endeavors (*Parsifal*, the sketches for *Die Sieger*, the Bayreuth expansions) are consistent with impulses seen throughout his career: the drive toward a unified music drama with mythic or spiritual themes, philosophical underpinnings, and a holistic theatrical design. The main shift was one of intensification, especially regarding spirituality and ritual.

3. **Assessing the Legacy**

In concluding chapters, Newman reflects on the incomplete state of Wagner's final projects, arguing that Wagner's importance lies as much in the ideas he set in motion (and never fully realized) as in the scores he left behind. Wagner's speculation on Eastern themes and universal compassion in *Die Sieger*—though it never materialized—was a bold step that pointed to the further global and cross-cultural expansions we now see in 20th- and 21st-century operatic repertoire.

Conclusion

In *The Life of Richard Wagner*, Ernest Newman provides a detailed, multi-faceted picture of Wagner's concluding years and the bold, if partly unrealized, artistic ambitions that occupied the composer's mind before his death. Newman's thorough use of letters, diaries, and drafts

illuminates the tension between Wagner’s practical limitations (poor health, financial woes, Bayreuth obligations) and his sweeping final artistic visions. Key among these were:

- The completion and deeply symbolic staging of *Parsifal*, representing the pinnacle of Wagner’s union of music, dramatic narrative, and spiritual inquiry.
- The unrealized Buddhist opera *Die Sieger*, which carried forward Wagner’s late moral-philosophical interests, particularly his fascination with compassion and renunciation.
- Ongoing theoretical writings and plans to make Bayreuth a forward-looking institution, championing the notion of Gesamtkunstwerk well beyond *The Ring* and *Parsifal*.

Newman’s analytical lens ultimately reveals a portrait of Wagner as a visionary who, even in the twilight of his career, never relinquished his quest to merge the spiritual, philosophical, and musical into a single, transformative theatrical experience. While ill health and time constraints prevented certain works (like *Die Sieger*) from seeing fruition, the seeds of these concepts—especially the idea of music drama as a vehicle for profound moral and metaphysical reflection—continued to echo through Bayreuth and the larger world of opera.

Describe and analyze please the work of Robert W. Gutman „Richard Wagner: The Man, His Mind, and His Music” in terms of artistic plans that Wagner had in mind before his death in detail.

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Introduction to Robert W. Gutman’s Biography

Robert W. Gutman’s *Richard Wagner: The Man, His Mind, and His Music* (first published in 1968) is widely regarded as one of the more detailed and critical biographies of Richard Wagner available in English. Gutman explores not only Wagner’s musical achievements but also his philosophical, political, and personal complexities, including Wagner’s problematic views (such as his antisemitism) and the intricate relationships that shaped his compositional output. Within this broad perspective, Gutman devotes discussion to Wagner’s final years, focusing on the composer’s unfinished or projected works and the “artistic plans” that occupied Wagner’s mind in the period leading up to his death in 1883. Below is an overview and analysis of how Gutman handles these late-stage artistic intentions.

1. Wagner’s Final Years in Context

- **Post-*Parsifal* Era:** Wagner premiered *Parsifal* at the second Bayreuth Festival in 1882. The success of *Parsifal*—and the spiritual, almost liturgical style it introduced—signaled an evolution in Wagner’s compositional approach. Gutman points out how the creation and staging of *Parsifal* were physically and emotionally draining for Wagner, and yet, despite his declining health, he was not ready to retire.
- **Impact of Personal Life and Health:** Gutman carefully contextualizes Wagner’s late projects with his precarious health (he suffered from heart troubles) and the tumultuous personal environment: disputes over Bayreuth finances, intermittent conflicts with his wife Cosima, and an ever-growing sense of his place in music

history. All these factors influenced how far Wagner could push his artistic agenda late in life.

2. Unrealized Operatic Plans

A. “Die Sieger” (The Victors)

One of the most documented of Wagner’s unrealized projects is the opera he provisionally titled *Die Sieger*, which took inspiration from Buddhist lore and themes of renunciation. Gutman examines how Wagner first conceived of this idea as early as the 1850s, then occasionally revisited it, most notably after completing *Parsifal*.

1. **The Subject Matter:** According to Gutman, *Die Sieger* was to center on a spiritual narrative—touching on the idea of a renunciation of worldly attachments—mirroring themes from Wagner’s existing works (*Tannhäuser* or *Parsifal*), but with a more explicitly Eastern or Buddhist framing.
2. **Wagner’s Evolving Spiritual Concerns:** Late in his life, Wagner was increasingly fascinated by religious and philosophical syncretism. Gutman argues that the conceptual seeds of *Die Sieger* demonstrated Wagner’s shifting focus away from purely Teutonic myth to a more universal or transcendental spiritual dimension—although always filtered through Wagner’s personal idiosyncrasies.
3. **Practical Obstacles:** Gutman notes that little more than outlines and scattered remarks exist, and he suggests that Wagner’s finances, failing health, and the demands of the Bayreuth enterprise made it nearly impossible for him to embark on such a large-scale new project.

B. A Possible Comedic Opera?

Gutman references scattered remarks in Wagner’s correspondence and diaries indicating that Wagner sometimes mused about writing a lighter stage work—perhaps even a comedic opera reminiscent of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. However, these ideas remained vague:

- **Why a Comic Work?:** Gutman theorizes that, having tackled weighty dramas and religious-heroic themes for so long, Wagner might have entertained a desire to revisit the comedic style that earned him acclaim with *Meistersinger*.
- **Lack of Development:** Nevertheless, there is no substantial documentary record of any comedic libretto or thorough sketch, leading Gutman to conclude that such a possibility was little more than a passing thought.

C. “Wieland der Schmied” (Wieland the Smith)

Earlier in his career, Wagner toyed with writing an opera based on the legendary Germanic figure Wieland the Smith. Gutman observes that the project reappeared occasionally in Wagner’s notes but never reached a draft stage late in life. By the 1870s–1880s, Wagner had become more absorbed in finishing *Parsifal* and dealing with the complexities of Bayreuth; thus, Gutman treats “Wieland” as one more idea Wagner was unwilling or unable to pursue.

3. Plans for the Bayreuth Festival

Beyond any new operas, Wagner had plans for the perpetuation and evolution of the Bayreuth Festival. Gutman emphasizes:

1. **The Festival as an Ongoing Institution:** Wagner saw Bayreuth not as a one-time event for *Der Ring des Nibelungen* but as a lasting cultural site for the “Music of the Future.” By the time *Parsifal* premiered, he was already thinking about the festival’s sustainability.
2. **Strains and Disagreements:** In Gutman’s view, these plans were continually undercut by financial difficulties and disputes among Wagner’s circle (including patrons and even family members). Despite that, Wagner hoped the festival would serve as the ultimate vehicle for “reforming” opera beyond his own lifetime.
3. **Handing Over Reins to Cosima:** Wagner’s widow, Cosima, did ultimately take charge at Bayreuth following his death. Gutman notes that Wagner had likely envisioned Cosima and their son Siegfried as the keepers of his legacy—though how fully formed his blueprint was for the festival’s future remains subject to debate.

4. Philosophical and Thematic Aspirations

A. Christianity, Buddhism, and Universal Religion

Gutman devotes considerable analysis to Wagner’s late religious preoccupations. After *Parsifal*, Wagner’s interest in universal or pan-religious themes was at an all-time high:

- **Synthesis of Traditions:** Wagner believed in a kind of all-encompassing moral or spiritual message in his final works. Gutman notes how certain letters reference Christ-like or Buddha-like figures, indicating the composer’s ambition to create a new form of “religious music drama.”
- **Legacy of *Parsifal*’s Spirituality:** For Gutman, *Parsifal* acts as the culmination of these thematic explorations. Wagner’s talk of *Die Sieger* or of any subsequent spiritual opera, even if never realized, sprang from the same impulse.

B. The Artistic Testament and Vision

Gutman interprets Wagner’s final months as an ongoing attempt to refine and canonize his own artistic ideology. He wanted to leave behind not just a body of work but a theoretical framework—artistic writings, festival guidelines, and a discipleship at Bayreuth. In this sense, his “plans” were not solely new operas but also the broader propagation of his ideas about Gesamtkunstwerk (“total work of art”) and the reformation of opera as a communal, almost ritualistic event.

5. Gutman’s Critical Perspective

1. **Wagner the Visionary vs. Wagner the Realist:** Gutman underscores the tension between Wagner’s grandiose visions and his pragmatic capacity to see them through. Late in life, failing health and financial pressures curtailed many of his projects.
2. **Moral and Ideological Contradictions:** A hallmark of Gutman’s biography is its critical stance on Wagner’s contradictions—his lofty spiritual ideals versus his prejudices and personal controversies. Gutman suggests that these late artistic plans

cannot be understood purely as aesthetic gestures; they must be viewed in light of Wagner's complex ideological world, including his nationalism and antisemitism.

3. **Legacy and Myth-Building:** Gutman also points to a certain myth-building in Wagner's final years. Wagner knew he was a towering figure in Western music and occasionally fostered an image of himself as a singular artistic prophet. Some of his last "plans," Gutman suggests, functioned partly as personal legend-making, ensuring his reputation for creative inexhaustibility even as his body was failing him.

6. Conclusion

In *Richard Wagner: The Man, His Mind, and His Music*, Robert W. Gutman offers a nuanced exploration of Wagner's ultimate artistic ambitions—those left unfinished or only barely initiated before his death in 1883. Central to Gutman's account is the tension between Wagner's unparalleled creative drive and the harsh realities (physical, financial, interpersonal) that constrained him in his final years. These tensions resulted in a collection of tantalizing but largely unrealized ideas:

- The long-cherished but never-completed Buddhist opera *Die Sieger*.
- Vague notions of revisiting comedic form, reminiscent of *Die Meistersinger*.
- Ruminations on other mythic subjects, such as "Wieland the Smith."
- Grandiose designs for the Bayreuth Festival as a permanent institution of musical and spiritual reform.

Gutman interprets these plans as extensions of Wagner's core artistic and ideological obsessions: the synthesis of the religious and the musical, the pursuit of the Gesamtkunstwerk, and the creation of a cultural legacy that would shape opera far beyond the 19th century. Yet Gutman is also clear in highlighting Wagner's contradictions—his propensity for utopian dreaming set against the obstacles of ill-health and financial constraints, and his yearnings for universal spirituality coexisting with his often divisive socio-political views. Ultimately, for Gutman, Wagner's incomplete plans before his death reveal just how far the composer wished to push the boundaries of music drama. Though fate kept many of these ideas from realization, they add another layer to our understanding of Wagner as a restless innovator who, even at life's end, was unwilling to let the curtain fall on his future artistic visions.

Describe and analyze please the work of John Deathridge „Wagner Beyond Good and Evil” in terms of artistic plans that Wagner had in mind before his death in detail.

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Overview of John Deathridge's *Wagner Beyond Good and Evil*

John Deathridge's book *Wagner Beyond Good and Evil* (first published in 2008) is a wide-ranging study that reconsiders Richard Wagner's oeuvre, his ideological contexts, and his reception history. Deathridge aims to move beyond the polarized ethical and political debates that often surround Wagner—particularly those focusing on antisemitism, nationalism, and philosophical questions inspired by Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*. Instead, Deathridge examines Wagner's musical-dramatic achievements in tandem with his writings and unfinished projects, challenging simplistic views of the composer's legacy.

In the course of the book, Deathridge addresses **Wagner’s final years** (late 1870s through early 1883) and explores the unfinished or hypothesized projects that Wagner considered but did not complete before his death. Deathridge situates these projects within the broader context of Wagner’s aesthetic, philosophical, and religious preoccupations—especially his late interest in Schopenhauerian renunciation, Christian mysticism, Buddhism, and German myth.

Below is a more detailed look at how Deathridge discusses Wagner’s **artistic plans** before his death, focusing on some of the last sketches, ideas, and projects Wagner contemplated, and how Deathridge interprets their significance.

1. Contextualizing Wagner’s Late Period

Parsifal and Spiritual Yearnings

- *Parsifal* (1882) was Wagner’s last completed music drama, premiered at Bayreuth less than a year before his death. Deathridge devotes careful attention to how *Parsifal* encapsulates Wagner’s obsession with redemption, compassion, and ritual.
- Deathridge argues that *Parsifal* is a culminating piece in which Wagner’s interest in **Schopenhauerian philosophy** (especially the notion of transcending worldly desire) merges with Christian motifs of the Grail and sacrifice.
- Thematically, *Parsifal* addresses universal salvation (beyond traditional Christian theology), pointing to an interest in broader religious frameworks, something that would become even more explicit in Wagner’s notes on other late projects.

Ongoing Revisionist Impulses

- Wagner was **never fully satisfied** with certain operas—even after their premieres, he returned to them (e.g., the revisions of *Tannhäuser* and the changing details in *Ring* performances).
- Deathridge points out that these **revisionist tendencies** show Wagner’s perpetual searching for a “total work of art,” a utopian Gesamtkunstwerk that was always just beyond his grasp. This tendency shapes his sketches for works that remained unwritten at the time of his death.

2. Unfinished or Hypothetical Projects

2.1 “Die Sieger” (The Victors)

One of the most frequently mentioned unfinished works in discussions of Wagner’s late plans is *Die Sieger*, a Buddhist-inspired music drama that Wagner envisioned on and off for decades. Deathridge highlights the following:

1. **Buddhist Source:** The plot would have centered on a story from Buddhist tradition (likely drawn from the life of the Buddha or from tales about renunciation and compassion).

2. **Themes of Renunciation:** It would extend the Schopenhauerian ideas of compassion and renunciation developed in *Tristan und Isolde* and *Parsifal*, but transposed into an explicitly non-Christian religious framework.
3. **Focus on Redemption:** *Die Sieger* would have featured characters who renounce earthly desire for a transcendent moral goal, mirroring aspects of *Parsifal*. In Deathridge's reading, this further underscores Wagner's fascination with the idea that **true salvation or true liberation** lies in "giving up" rather than "acquiring."
4. **Fragmentary Development:** Wagner produced **only tentative sketches and notes**, never a finished libretto or any fully composed music. Deathridge shows how these outlines reveal that Wagner was wrestling with a story that might have challenged the Christian underpinnings of *Parsifal*—or placed them into an even more universal context.

2.2 "Jesus of Nazareth"

Although much less developed than *Die Sieger*, Wagner also once toyed with an idea for a **drama about Jesus:**

- Deathridge suggests that these notes reflect Wagner's **radical theological** musings—wherein he tried to depict Jesus as an archetype of revolutionary compassion, paralleling some of the moral and aesthetic messages in his operas.
- There is no completed script or score, and most references to this project appear in Wagner's notebooks or correspondences. Deathridge sees it as part of Wagner's late attempt to universalize the idea of spiritual redemption—whether in Christian or Buddhist form.

2.3 "Wieland der Schmied" (Wieland the Smith)

- A Germanic mythic subject that had once been considered as part of the composer's exploration of medieval and pagan sources (similar in spirit to *Tannhäuser* or *Lohengrin*).
- Deathridge notes that **by the late period**, Wagner's interest in *Wieland* was overshadowed by more urgent metaphysical concerns—*Die Sieger* and *Parsifal*—but sketches and letters show Wagner revisited the notion periodically.

3. Deathridge's Key Interpretative Points

3.1 The "Beyond Good and Evil" Lens

- The title of Deathridge's book is, of course, a reference to **Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil***. Nietzsche famously broke with Wagner, criticizing the composer's religiosity in *Parsifal* and his moralizing stances.
- Deathridge uses the phrase "beyond good and evil" to highlight Wagner's **contradictory** stance toward morality:
 - On one hand, the late works are steeped in religiosity and moral or ethical drama.
 - On the other hand, Wagner's personal prejudices (including antisemitic writings, or his mercurial political stances) seem to stand in conflict with the universal compassion central to works like *Parsifal*.

- In that sense, the “beyond” refers to the complexity and the **inconsistency** in Wagner’s creative imagination—where lofty spiritual yearnings coexist uncomfortably with narrow social and political prejudice.

3.2 Schopenhauer’s Shadow

- Deathridge emphasizes that the philosophical impetus for many of Wagner’s final-year projects was **Schopenhauer’s** notion of suffering and renunciation.
- For Deathridge, the leftover sketches—*Die Sieger* being the prime example—strongly reflect Schopenhauer’s worldview transposed onto stage drama (the illusions of the phenomenal world, the possibility of transcendence through denial of the Will, etc.).

3.3 Bayreuth, Legacy, and the “Festival Spirit”

- Deathridge situates these planned projects within the environment of **Bayreuth**, which Wagner founded in 1876 as the ultimate staging ground for his works and aesthetic ideals.
- He observes that, while Wagner’s festival thrived with *Parsifal* as a central pillar, there was also an eye toward **future** expansions—works that might carry forth the spiritual and mythic dimension. The festival’s establishment, in Wagner’s mind, was only the beginning of a living artistic practice.
- Deathridge reads the incomplete nature of Wagner’s final projects as reflecting the ongoing tension between **Wagner’s vision** (a reformed cultural sphere, shaped by the Gesamtkunstwerk) and the **pragmatic realities** of running a festival, maintaining funding, and dealing with family politics.

4. Artistic Plans in the Shadow of Death

By the time Wagner reached his final months in early 1883, most of his “next step” artistic ideas lived only in sketches and scattered notes. Deathridge underscores:

1. **Medical & Personal Pressures**
 - Wagner’s declining health and the demands of *Parsifal*’s premiere severely constrained his ability to dive into a new large-scale opera.
2. **Philosophical Continuity**
 - The notes for *Die Sieger* (and even the ephemeral ideas on a Jesus drama) confirm a **continuous thread** in Wagner’s late aesthetic worldview: he was trying to resolve, or at least **dramatize**, the paradox of desire and renunciation, love and compassion, personal prejudice and universal salvation.
3. **Unresolved Contradictions**
 - Deathridge does not shy away from pointing out the **moral contradictions** in Wagner’s persona: in these final years, Wagner wrote both a deeply empathetic ritual drama (*Parsifal*) and occasionally expressed troubling views regarding race and culture.
 - For Deathridge, these contradictions **do not resolve neatly**, but they form the crux of studying Wagner’s late “plans.” One cannot isolate the “purely spiritual” or “purely theatrical” side of Wagner from his wider social attitudes and personal convictions.

5. Deathridge's Contribution to Wagner Scholarship

1. Nuanced Reading of Incomplete Material

- One of Deathridge's scholarly contributions is analyzing the **fragmentary evidence** of Wagner's post-*Parsifal* ambitions (letters, diaries, sketches, conversations) with musical and textual precision, rather than dismissing them as daydreams or tangential curiosities.
- He draws connections between these fragments and the music-dramas that do exist, showing how the **late ideological shift** in Wagner's thinking might have produced new angles on old themes (redemption, love, renunciation).

2. De-Polarizing Wagner

- The “beyond good and evil” approach sets out to disentangle Wagner's genuine artistic aspirations from oversimplified labeling (e.g., “Wagner the proto-Nazi,” or “Wagner the saint of Bayreuth”).
- Deathridge stresses that Wagner's final projects do not place him in a purely “holy” or purely “evil” light; they reflect the composer's complicated intellectual terrain in which spiritual universalism coexisted with socio-political bias.

3. Invitation to Further Investigation

- By framing Wagner's incomplete plans in the context of his entire late output, Deathridge encourages deeper inquiry into how these unwritten operas **might have transformed** our reading of Wagner if they had come to fruition.
- Particularly, *Die Sieger* stands as a tantalizing glimpse into a possible new religious opera tradition in the West, one that might have crossed cultural boundaries in ways rarely seen in 19th-century European opera.

Conclusion

In *Wagner Beyond Good and Evil*, John Deathridge carefully dissects Richard Wagner's final artistic yearnings—the incomplete projects, sketches, and philosophical explorations that occupied the composer in his last years. While *Parsifal* was the only fully realized late opera, Wagner had other far-reaching plans that reflected his deepening preoccupation with redemption, renunciation, and universal compassion. From the half-formed Buddhist drama *Die Sieger* to even more speculative ideas like a musical portrayal of Jesus, Wagner's unfinished visions point to his ongoing desire to probe moral and spiritual questions on the stage. Deathridge's analysis underscores the central paradox in Wagner's late thought: the composer aspired to a universal spiritual message, yet he remained ensnared by personal contradictions—both personal prejudices and the complexities of implementing his Gesamtkunstwerk. By examining these neglected sketches and ideological evolutions, Deathridge positions Wagner “beyond good and evil,” illuminating a composer whose final creative impulses may always remain partially opaque but whose legacy continues to provoke profound reflection on art, morality, and redemption.

Verdi's artistic plans before his death

Please describe what other artistic tasks Verdi was planning to carry out before his death, but which were not carried out because of his death? Also, list the authors who have analysed this issue in the context of Verdi's career and outline their main conclusions.

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Short Answer

No firm evidence exists that, at the very end of his life, Giuseppe Verdi was actively planning any new opera or large-scale composition that remained unfulfilled at his death. Although Verdi had long entertained the idea of setting *King Lear* (and indeed explored other Shakespearean projects) and carried out numerous revisions of earlier operas throughout his career, there is no reliable documentation indicating that a new major work was in progress or firmly intended in the months and years just prior to his death in January 1901. Most scholars therefore conclude that *Falstaff* (1893) stands as his final opera and the *Quattro pezzi sacri* (Four Sacred Pieces, premiered between 1898 and 1899) as his last major compositions. Below is a fuller explanation of the topic, along with a brief survey of leading Verdi scholars who have addressed this question and a summary of their main conclusions.

1. Rumored “Unfinished Projects” Near the End of Verdi’s Life

1. “King Lear” (Re Lear)

- **Longstanding Ambition:** Verdi’s interest in Shakespeare’s *King Lear* dated back to at least the 1840s. He periodically discussed the possibility of turning it into an opera, and there were even preliminary sketches or outlines at various points.
- **No Late-Life Evidence:** Although some 19th-century letters and reminiscences hint that Arrigo Boito and Verdi informally revisited the idea after *Falstaff*, there is no conclusive proof that Verdi took concrete steps toward composing *King Lear* in his last years. Most scholars now treat it as a longtime “dream project” rather than a work Verdi was actively composing or had firmly committed to finishing.

2. Revisions or New Compositions

- **Earlier Revisions:** During his mature period, Verdi often revisited earlier operas (e.g., *Simon Boccanegra* in 1881, *Don Carlos* repeatedly) or composed entirely new ones after long breaks (*Otello* in 1887, followed by *Falstaff*).
- **Final Years:** By the late 1890s, after *Falstaff* and the *Quattro pezzi sacri*, there is no concrete evidence—letters, publisher contracts, or sketches—indicating a new or revised work was underway.

3. Other Artistic or Institutional Endeavors

- **Casa di Riposo per Musicisti:** One important “non-musical” project dear to Verdi was his musicians’ retirement home (the “Casa di Riposo”) in Milan. Though he oversaw its design and endowment, its official opening took place in 1902, after his death. However, this was a philanthropic undertaking rather than an artistic or compositional project.

Given the surviving letters, diaries of collaborators (e.g., Boito, Ricordi), and eyewitness accounts, historians generally conclude that Verdi did not leave behind an identifiable unfinished composition in the sense of a partially written score or a libretto-in-progress.

2. Key Scholars and Their Conclusions

Several important Verdi biographers and musicologists have addressed the question of whether Verdi was planning more music before his death. The main consensus is that any notion of a large new project—especially a new opera—remains speculative or tied to ideas Verdi had entertained decades earlier.

1. Julian Budden

- **Major Work:** *The Operas of Verdi* (3 vols., Cambridge University Press)
- **Conclusion:** Budden meticulously traces Verdi’s compositional history through letters, sketches, and contractual documents. He finds no evidence of a late-life composition project left incomplete. While acknowledging Verdi’s lifelong interest in *King Lear*, Budden explains that after *Falstaff* and the *Quattro pezzi sacri*, Verdi essentially retired from large-scale composition.

2. Frank Walker

- **Major Work:** *The Man Verdi*
- **Conclusion:** Walker emphasizes Verdi’s repeated statements about “wishing to rest” after his final operas. According to Walker, rumors of a new opera existed in Verdi’s circle (often sparked by admirers who longed for more works), but Verdi’s correspondence does not support the idea that he actually embarked on a new piece.

3. Mary Jane Phillips-Matz

- **Major Work:** *Verdi: A Biography*
- **Conclusion:** Phillips-Matz offers an extensive biographical narrative based heavily on archival research. She underscores the fact that, while Verdi’s mind turned occasionally to hypothetical or “might-have-been” projects, there is no definitive sign—letters to collaborators, signed agreements with publishers, or partial manuscripts—that he was composing a new work at the time of his death.

4. Roger Parker

- **Notable Studies:** *Leonora’s Last Act: Essays in Verdian Discourse*, articles on 19th-century Italian opera
- **Conclusion:** Parker has explored the mythologies surrounding late Verdi and discusses how “the idea of more operas” persisted largely in the imaginations of contemporaries and fans. Any suggestion of an “unfinished” late Verdi project (particularly a Shakespeare adaptation) usually rests on earlier, often-abandoned plans rather than newly initiated ones.

5. Marcello Conati and Hans Busch (editors of Verdi’s correspondence and documents)

- **Focus:** Scholarly editions of Verdi’s letters, diaries of Arrigo Boito, Ricordi archives
- **Conclusion:** The documentary record they’ve edited/researched does not reveal any substantial sketches or negotiations for a final opera or major sacred work. Conati, for instance, points out that if Verdi had been seriously pursuing a new opera, the publisher Giulio Ricordi would likely have left a paper trail (contracts, letters), which does not exist.

3. Summary of Scholarly Consensus

- **No Definitive Unfinished Masterpiece:** All major biographers and musicologists concur that there is *no* concrete evidence of a partially composed opera, or indeed any large-scale musical work, that was cut short by Verdi’s death.
- **A Lifelong Fascination with Shakespeare:** The long-cited aspiration to adapt *King Lear* is well-documented but did not translate into active composition late in Verdi’s life.
- **Last Completed Works:** Verdi’s final substantial compositions are the *Quattro pezzi sacri* (1898–1899). In the operatic genre, *Falstaff* (1893) is his valedictory achievement.
- **Verdi’s Own Statements:** Later in life, Verdi often referred to his advanced age and diminished energies. Surviving letters to friends, publishers, and collaborators typically describe him as “closing the book” on new operas.

Concluding Note

Despite the romance that often attends the idea of an “unfinished final masterpiece,” the best available documentation shows Verdi left no such project. The notion that he was on the cusp of another opera stems largely from anecdotal reports and the ongoing fascination with how productively he rejuvenated his style late in life (notably with *Otello* and *Falstaff*). Scholarly investigations—by Budden, Walker, Phillips-Matz, Parker, Conati, and others—unanimously find that Verdi’s compositional legacy ended in a manner very much under his own control, with *Falstaff* and the *Quattro pezzi sacri* serving as fitting codas to one of opera’s most extraordinary careers.

Describe and analyze please the work of Frank Walker „The Man Verdi” in terms of artistic plans that Verdi had in mind before his death in detail.

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Frank Walker’s *The Man Verdi* (first published in 1962) is regarded as one of the foundational modern biographies of Giuseppe Verdi. It explores not only the chronology of Verdi’s life and works, but also delves deeply into his personality, his relationships, and how these influenced his music. By examining a wealth of personal letters, contemporary articles, and archival documents, Walker reconstructs a portrait of Verdi as a man who was simultaneously private, mercurial, shrewd in business, and unwaveringly dedicated to his artistic convictions.

Below is an outline of how Walker’s biography addresses Verdi’s last artistic phase and what it reveals about the composer’s intentions in his final years:

1. Walker’s Overall Aim in *The Man Verdi*

- **Biographical Approach:** Walker pays close attention to Verdi’s personal background, from his youth in Le Roncole and Busseto, to his early triumphs (e.g., *Nabucco*, 1842) and subsequent fame. He traces Verdi’s development as a composer against the backdrop of 19th-century Italian political and cultural transformations.
 - **Portrait of Verdi’s Character:** Verdi emerges as a complex figure—affectionate but capable of silences and rifts, fiercely protective of his creative independence, and deeply invested in the practicalities of publishing and staging his works.
 - **Documentary Research:** Walker was notable for incorporating newly discovered letters and lesser-known sources. He placed Verdi’s professional life (his contracts, fees, and working relationships with librettists) side-by-side with personal affairs (relationships with Giuseppina Strepponi, family tragedies, philanthropic efforts).
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2. Verdi’s Later Years in Walker’s Narrative

- **Reaching the Pinnacle with *Aida* (1871):** Although not the last opera, *Aida* famously seemed like the apex of Verdi’s career. Many assumed Verdi would retire afterward. Yet Walker recounts that Verdi remained musically active and open to new compositional challenges.
 - **Collaboration with Boito:** The decisive partnership with Arrigo Boito led to *Otello* (1887) and later *Falstaff* (1893). Walker highlights how Verdi’s friendship and mutual respect for Boito’s poetic sensibilities spurred one of the most fruitful late-career bursts of creativity in music history.
 - ***Falstaff* (1893)—An Unexpected Coda:** Walker devotes careful attention to how extraordinary it was for the 79-year-old Verdi to produce a sparkling comic opera. He shows that, in spite of advanced age, Verdi was anything but anachronistic. The style and orchestration of *Falstaff* reflect verve, originality, and a modern sense of timing and harmony.
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3. The Question of “Final Plans” Before Verdi’s Death

Despite no major operas following *Falstaff*, Walker details several strands of Verdi’s thinking and planning toward the end of his life:

1. **Revising and Refining Existing Works:**
 - Verdi had a habit of revisiting past compositions (sometimes decades after their premieres) to update orchestrations, correct perceived weaknesses, or adapt them for new productions. Examples include the repeated revisions of *Simon Boccanegra* and *Don Carlos*.

- Walker suggests that Verdi retained an active editorial mindset even in his last years; although he did not embark on large-scale projects, he was known to consider new versions or “touch-ups” if a revival brought one of his older operas back into the limelight.
2. **Sacred Music:**
 - After *Falstaff*, Verdi wrote some of his most personal and spiritual music, notably the *Quattro Pezzi Sacri (Four Sacred Pieces)*, composed and refined between roughly 1895 and 1898. Walker underscores how these works allowed Verdi to combine his deeply felt religious instincts with his matured sense of choral and orchestral writing.
 - The significance for Walker is that Verdi’s “late style” continued to evolve: the *Te Deum*, one of the Four Sacred Pieces, has a searching harmonic language and a spaciousness that anticipates 20th-century choral idioms.
 3. **Small-Scale Compositions and Charitable Endeavors:**
 - Although Verdi was not planning another opera, Walker notes that Verdi remained involved with smaller-scale musical works, especially those that could benefit performances at events in support of charities or local celebrations.
 - Crucial to Verdi’s final plans was the **Casa di Riposo per Musicisti** in Milan—a retirement home for impoverished musicians that he financed and helped design, seeing its completion just before his death. While this was not a new opera or large-scale composition, it was a major “artistic plan” in the broader sense of his life’s mission: to support the longevity and dignity of the musical arts and those who served them.
 4. **Reflections on Opera Plots and Letters:**
 - Frank Walker delves into rumors and letters suggesting that Verdi at times toyed with new ideas for operas in the late 1890s—brief explorations of possible comedic or historical plots. Nothing concrete came to fruition. Walker’s takeaway is that Verdi’s self-critical standards were so high that if a concept did not surpass previous achievements, he would not pursue it.
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4. Walker’s Analysis of Verdi’s State of Mind

- **Serenity vs. Restlessness:** Walker emphasizes that while Verdi had attained immense success and personal wealth, his artistic spirit was restless. He prided himself on “moving forward,” even in old age, which is why *Falstaff* felt so modern in its day—and remains so today.
- **Practical Realism:** Walker shows that Verdi was no wide-eyed dreamer in his final years. He was pragmatic and recognized the physical toll that launching another opera would involve (endless rehearsals, dealing with publishers, traveling to opening nights). At some point, the energy required to sustain a major project exceeded his comfort.
- **Legacy Concerns:** A recurring theme is Verdi’s intense sense of posterity. Walker relates episodes in which Verdi fussed over the correctness of his printed scores, worried about the faithful interpretation of his stage directions, and oversaw philanthropic projects aimed at ensuring music—and older musicians—received lasting respect.

5. Artistic Ambitions vs. the Reality of Aging

Walker’s central argument about Verdi’s last artistic plans is that although Verdi continued to harbor ideas (he was never one to passively “retire”), he was also quite aware of the constraints of advanced age. Thus:

- **No Grand Final Opera:** Beyond *Falstaff*, there is no evidence in Walker’s biography of major operatic sketches in process, or a desire to embark on a massive new project. “Artistic plans” often translated into smaller editorial tasks, spiritual compositions, philanthropic work, or guiding younger composers he admired.
- **Continued Refinement and Musical Legacy:** The *Quattro Pezzi Sacri* stand as Verdi’s last major statement, and Walker suggests they were, in a way, a spiritual summation—Verdi’s final testament in music, revealing a more contemplative side that he did not always show in his operatic works.

6. Concluding Assessment

In *The Man Verdi*, Frank Walker provides a meticulously documented portrait of Verdi as a determined artist who, until almost his final days, preserved an active engagement with music. While he had no firm plans for a new opera after *Falstaff*, his ultimate focus included:

- Refining or revisiting scores as needed (continuing to tinker even with older material).
- Exploring sacred music as a form of personal and artistic reflection.
- Overseeing philanthropic initiatives like the Casa di Riposo per Musicisti, which he viewed as part of his broader legacy.

Walker’s core thesis is that Verdi’s “plan” before his death was less about writing another grand opera and more about ensuring the longevity and integrity of the musical world he cherished. He achieved this through smaller sacred pieces, careful editing of past works, and moral and financial support for the future of Italian music. Indeed, in Walker’s view, these final acts cemented Verdi’s place not just as an extraordinary composer but as a benevolent, forward-thinking custodian of the art form. In sum, *The Man Verdi* offers both a richly detailed biography and an insightful lens into Verdi’s late-life intentions, showing a composer who, to the very end, blended creative passion with a pragmatic dedication to ensuring that his artistic contributions—along with those of his fellow musicians—would endure beyond his own lifetime.

Describe and analyze please the work of Mary Jane Phillips-Matz „Verdi: A Biography” in terms of artistic plans that Verdi had in mind before his death in detail.

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Mary Jane Phillips-Matz's *Verdi: A Biography* (first published in 1992) is widely regarded as one of the most comprehensive accounts of Giuseppe Verdi's life, composed after years of rigorous archival research in Italy and elsewhere. In examining Verdi's later years and his artistic plans, Phillips-Matz situates the composer's final projects within the broader tapestry of his personal life, historical events, and the evolution of his creative thinking. Below is an overview and analysis of her work as it pertains to Verdi's intentions and artistic endeavors near the end of his life.

1. Scope and Method of Phillips-Matz's Biography

1. Depth of Research

Phillips-Matz's biography is notable for its wealth of primary sources. She draws on diaries, correspondence, legal documents, and contemporary reviews, which give context not only to Verdi's major operas but also to smaller-scale compositions and plans he formulated in his last decade.

2. Chronological Structure

The book is organized primarily along a timeline, enabling readers to see Verdi's artistic output in relation to his personal milestones—his relationships, philanthropic endeavors, interactions with publishing houses, and evolving friendships with key collaborators like Arrigo Boito.

3. Focus on Verdi's Inner Conflicts

Phillips-Matz traces the complex interplay between Verdi's high standards and his frustration with the theatrical world of his time. She considers how, as Verdi aged, he grew simultaneously more reflective and more resolute in setting down exactly what he wanted from his final compositions.

2. Verdi's Later Years in Context

By Verdi's final decade (the 1890s leading into his death in 1901), his reputation was already legendary. *Verdi: A Biography* dedicates significant attention to understanding this period of his life—not only from the standpoint of external accolades but also from Verdi's own perspective, examining how he chose to spend his remaining creative energies.

1. After *Otello* (1887) and *Falstaff* (1893)

- Verdi's collaboration with librettist Arrigo Boito resulted in two final towering achievements. Phillips-Matz spends ample time on these works as milestone successes and examines their genesis in detail.
- She underscores how *Falstaff*, with its comedic flair, was a surprising and triumphant close to Verdi's purely operatic career—a reflection of a composer who was still seeking new challenges, even after decades in the limelight.

2. Philanthropic Interests and Practical Concerns

- Phillips-Matz notes that Verdi grew increasingly absorbed with civic and charitable projects, such as the construction and operation of the Casa di Riposo per Musicisti (a retirement home for musicians) in Milan.

- This philanthropic endeavor was, for Verdi, every bit as important as his last creative works. He wanted to ensure a legacy of support for aging musicians—an ambition that shaped part of his final years' plans.
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3. Verdi's Artistic Plans Before His Death

A. Further Sacred Works

1. Quattro Pezzi Sacri (Four Sacred Pieces)

- Phillips-Matz devotes careful attention to Verdi's *Four Sacred Pieces*, completed between 1889 and 1898, noting that these compositions emerged from Verdi's personal religiosity and reflective spirituality in his later years.
- She details how each piece—*Ave Maria*, *Laudi alla Vergine Maria*, *Stabat Mater*, and *Te Deum*—represents not only an exploration of liturgical form but also a refinement of Verdi's late style, showing his willingness to experiment even after his operatic career was behind him.

2. Intentions Versus Realization

- One question Phillips-Matz investigates is whether Verdi intended to compose a larger-scale sacred work (perhaps a second major requiem or an oratorio). While she discusses evidence that he toyed with ideas of religious compositions, she concludes that Verdi found more meaning in completing short, concentrated sacred forms—especially with an eye on performance feasibility and the realm of choral music.

B. Revisiting Earlier Works and Revisions

1. Refinements to Prior Operas

- Phillips-Matz shows that Verdi, even in his last years, occasionally entertained the possibility of revisiting earlier operas for revision. Although no major revision projects materialized at the very end, she highlights his ongoing awareness of performance conditions and his readiness to refine details if need be.

2. The Legacy of *Falstaff* and the Desire for Innovation

- Through extensive correspondence, Phillips-Matz captures Verdi's lingering excitement (and occasional exasperation) over new operatic experiments. Despite his advanced age, he was not closed to possibilities of further dramatic work—though nothing came to fruition after *Falstaff*.

C. Musical Style and Philosophical Outlook

1. Late Style Characteristics

- *Verdi: A Biography* highlights hallmarks of Verdi's "late style"—an increasing transparency in orchestration, sophisticated interplay of leitmotifs, and subtle structural experimentation.
- Phillips-Matz points out that the confidence in *Falstaff*'s comedic verve and the meditative qualities of the *Four Sacred Pieces* reflect different sides of the same composer determined to explore new artistic avenues even late in life.

2. **Conflicted Attitude Toward the Future**

- Phillips-Matz shows Verdi's ambiguity about Italian opera's future. He was both the defining figure of 19th-century Italian opera and a keen critic of what he felt were formulaic or sensational trends.
 - In letters and conversations documented by Phillips-Matz, Verdi worries about the direction opera might take after him but also encourages younger composers like Boito, indicating his continued investment in the evolution of the art form.
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4. **Phillips-Matz's Interpretive Lens**

1. **Balancing Fact with Empathy**

- One of the strengths of Phillips-Matz's biography is its even-handed approach. She never drifts into hagiography, but she remains empathetic to Verdi's personal trials and desires.
- Her analysis of his last plans relies heavily on direct sources—especially Verdi's letters, which she quotes extensively—helping readers grasp how Verdi felt about his emerging works and his own legacy.

2. **Discussion of Verdi's Health and Personal Losses**

- The biography also contextualizes Verdi's plans within the reality of age and health. Phillips-Matz recounts moments when Verdi's diminishing physical energy or the loss of close friends shaped the scope and ambition of his late projects.

3. **Critical Reception**

- Phillips-Matz compares Verdi's own plans to how they were received by the public and the press at the time, providing a dual perspective: how Verdi envisioned his final compositions and how they were actually greeted by the wider music world of his day.

5. **Significance and Legacy**

Phillips-Matz's *Verdi: A Biography* remains a standard reference not only for its presentation of Verdi's life and works but also for its scrupulous detailing of the late-career period. By showing how Verdi's final creative impulses meshed with his philanthropic spirit and personal introspection, she illuminates the composer as a man deeply engaged with both the external world of music-making and his own internal drive for perfection.

• **Influence on Verdi Scholarship**

Many subsequent studies on Verdi's late style and final projects cite Phillips-Matz's archival findings. Her examination of letters provides robust evidence of Verdi's ongoing curiosity about potential future compositions and the care with which he approached each new or revised work.

• **Impact on Performance Practice**

Insights from *Verdi: A Biography* regarding Verdi's intentions for the *Four Sacred Pieces* and last operas inform modern interpretations, especially about textual fidelity and orchestration details that Verdi might have wished for but did not always explicitly document in the score.

Conclusion

Mary Jane Phillips-Matz's thorough study of Giuseppe Verdi's life offers invaluable insights into the composer's artistic plans in his twilight years. By delving into letters, personal recollections, and musical manuscripts, she paints a portrait of a composer who, though aware of mortality, was still contemplating new works, new revisions, and new ways to refine his legacy. Her meticulous scholarship and balanced narrative illuminate not just Verdi's final creative ambitions—including his sacred compositions and philanthropic ventures—but also his lasting impact on the operatic tradition. For anyone interested in Verdi's later projects or the evolution of his final compositions, Phillips-Matz's biography remains an essential—and richly detailed—resource.

Describe and analyze please the work of Roger Parker „Leonora's Last Act: Essays in Verdian Discourse” in terms of artistic plans that Verdi had in mind before his death in detail.

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Overview of the Book

Roger Parker's *Leonora's Last Act: Essays in Verdian Discourse* (published in 1997 by Princeton University Press) is a collection of essays that explores Giuseppe Verdi's operas and their critical and performance histories. Parker, a leading musicologist of 19th-century Italian opera, uses a blend of textual criticism, cultural context, and performance practice to examine Verdi's compositional choices and the ways in which these operas have been interpreted (and sometimes distorted) in subsequent eras.

While *Leonora's Last Act* does not exclusively focus on Verdi's final years, it devotes considerable attention to questions of revision, textual variants, and the composer's evolving artistic priorities—concerns that are directly relevant to any discussion of Verdi's “last plans” or late creative outlook. In doing so, Parker reveals how certain changes, both authorized and unauthorized, illuminate Verdi's long-term artistic aspirations and the aesthetic shifts he embraced, especially as he grew older. Below is a discussion of how Parker's essays in *Leonora's Last Act* shed light on Verdi's late artistic visions, including the plans and ideas Verdi either considered or embarked upon before his death.

1. Verdi's Pursuit of Dramatic Truth

A central theme in Parker's work is **Verdi's constant search for dramatic and musical truth**. Even in his later years—after the premiere of *Falstaff* (1893), his last full-scale opera—Verdi continued to think about how best to unify music and drama. Parker investigates Verdi's **revision practices** in various operas, such as:

- ***La forza del destino* (1862; revised 1869):** Parker's titular essay, “Leonora's Last Act,” discusses the changes Verdi made for the Milan revision, in particular the opera's ending. Verdi's concern was to create a finale that was not only musically

coherent but also powerfully aligned with the opera's emotional and thematic momentum. The second version's emphasis on tragic reconciliation and spiritual resolution (as opposed to the more abrupt and "melodramatic" ending of 1862) underscores Verdi's late-career dedication to psychological depth.

- **Don Carlos (1867; revised in multiple versions):** Though this opera preceded Verdi's very last works (*Otello* and *Falstaff*), Parker's exploration of the different *Don Carlos/ Don Carlo* revisions mirrors how Verdi, well into his advanced years, was still rethinking musical forms, scene structures, and dramatic arcs. Verdi's willingness to adapt large swaths of the score (in collaboration with different librettists) hints at the flexibility and restlessness that would color his final projects.

In both cases, Parker demonstrates that what might appear to be small textual edits—transposing an aria, changing a duet's lyric, or removing a cabaletta—often reflect a larger artistic plan: the drive to streamline narrative, intensify emotional effect, and refine each character's dramatic trajectory. These very qualities would define Verdi's final compositions.

2. The Myth of a “Retired” Verdi

One notion Parker dispels is the idea that, after *Aida* (1871), Verdi was more or less “retired,” called back to composition only by the urgings of Giulio Ricordi and Arrigo Boito. Instead, Parker argues for a more **continuous creative process** that saw Verdi reengaging older works, exploring new textual possibilities, and considering further subjects:

- **Late Revisions and Sacred Works:** Between *Aida* (1871) and *Otello* (1887), Verdi continued to refine earlier operas and produce new pieces, most notably his *Requiem* (1874) and, later, the *Quattro pezzi sacri* (Four Sacred Pieces, 1898). Parker, in the essays dealing with textual authenticity and historical performance, illustrates how the *Requiem* in particular marks Verdi's blending of Italian operatic intensity with sacred tradition—an outcome of his lifelong pursuit of the “right” style for each dramatic or musical context.
- **Potential Projects (e.g., “King Lear”):** Although Parker's essays do not dwell at length on the “King Lear” project (a long-rumored opera that Verdi considered but never completed), they do highlight the composer's attraction to deep, psychologically complex dramas well into his final years. The *King Lear* plan, perpetually discussed but never realized, stands as a testament to Verdi's readiness for fresh challenges, even in advanced age, and is closely tied to his habit of ongoing revisionary thinking—an attitude Parker repeatedly underscores.

3. The Relationship to Performance Tradition

Throughout *Leonora's Last Act*, Parker devotes considerable space to how performance traditions—some sanctioned by Verdi, others stemming from the interpretive habits of singers and conductors—shaped the works' reception and legacy. Many of these performance practices crystallized after Verdi's death, but Parker shows how Verdi himself was conscious of leaving interpretive “flexibility” in certain places and sought a measure of fidelity to the score in others. In connecting these threads to Verdi's late artistic plans, Parker essentially shows that Verdi's forward-thinking approach (his acceptance that operas would evolve over time) is evident from the composer's own communications with conductors and publishers. This acceptance of opera as a living form resonates with the notion that Verdi himself was

never wholly “done” with his works; there was always room for rethinking, retooling, or revisiting certain gestures. Parker’s analyses thus illuminate how Verdi’s end-of-life outlook still maintained a spirit of revision and engagement rather than closure.

4. Verdi’s Stylistic Trajectory in His Final Operas

Parker’s work also provides insights into how Verdi’s final completed operas, *Otello* (1887) and *Falstaff* (1893), reflect the apex of the composer’s dramaturgical and musical evolution:

1. ***Otello*** – Parker touches upon how this opera, famous for its continuous musical flow and psychological focus, crowns Verdi’s career-long endeavor to integrate music and drama seamlessly. The shift from “numbers” to an almost symphonic approach to operatic writing had been foreshadowed in earlier revisions, showing Verdi’s ongoing artistic plan: to achieve ever-tighter musical-dramatic cohesion.
2. ***Falstaff*** – Here, Verdi’s comedic finale displays an equally modern approach: a quicksilver pace, ensemble writing that calls on centuries of comedic tradition, and a text (by Boito) loaded with wit and subtlety. While Parker’s essays do not revolve exclusively around *Falstaff*, the opera is a key demonstration of Verdi’s final creative stance: forging ahead with new modes of expression rather than resting on the laurels of older, formulaic writing.

In both operas, Parker notes, Verdi’s older revisionary practices—keen attention to textual nuance, focus on dramatic motivation, and refusal to settle for mere convention—blossom into full maturity. This evolution underscores how Verdi’s “plans” before his death were not a static blueprint but an ongoing process of refinement.

5. Contextualizing “Leonora’s Last Act” and Verdi’s Last Plans

Parker’s titular essay, “Leonora’s Last Act,” takes a granular look at how Verdi rethought the final scene of *La forza del destino*. Although it deals with a mid-career opera, it is emblematic of how Verdi approached composition even in his final decade:

- **Textual Alterations and Thematic Consistency:** Parker shows how changes in the libretto and score for *Forza*’s final confrontation (between Leonora, Alvaro, and Carlo) point to Verdi’s deeper thematic objectives. By the time Verdi tackled *Otello* and *Falstaff* many years later, he had only honed this ability to make each dramatic element cohere.
- **The Intersection of Theology and Tragedy:** The revised ending in *Forza* has a more overt spiritual component than the original. This echoes Verdi’s turn toward sacred music in his final years (the *Requiem*, the *Te Deum* from the *Quattro pezzi sacri*, etc.). Parker posits that Verdi’s fascination with redemption and grace—always present but refined in his late works—is already visible in the rewriting of Leonora’s death scene.

Thus, even though *Leonora’s Last Act* focuses on the reworking of an opera from the 1860s, the “Verdian discourse” Parker draws out illuminates Verdi’s persistent revisionary energy and how it carried through to his last days.

6. Conclusion: Parker’s Contribution to Understanding Verdi’s Late Artistic Vision

In summary, while *Leonora’s Last Act* does not present a single, unified thesis about Verdi’s final artistic projects, Roger Parker’s essays together offer a nuanced portrait of Verdi as a composer who never ceased refining his works and seeking new ways to unite text and music. Through close readings of revision histories, textual variants, and performance practices, Parker uncovers how Verdi’s late style and final ambitions grew out of a lifetime’s habit of experimentation and a refusal to let convention dictate his art.

Key Takeaways:

1. **Ongoing Revisionary Practice**

Verdi’s repeated revisions of his operas—examined in detail by Parker—demonstrate that Verdi always looked forward, even when dealing with earlier scores.

2. **Integration of Music and Drama**

Parker highlights how Verdi increasingly sought a seamless bond between musical form and dramatic content—a hallmark of *Otello* and *Falstaff*, his crowning achievements.

3. **Textual and Thematic Cohesion**

Through in-depth textual comparisons, Parker shows that what might appear minor (a changed melodic line or excised passage) often reveals broader artistic motives central to Verdi’s vision late in life.

4. **Sacred and Philosophical Dimension**

Verdi’s late-career fascination with spiritual and existential questions (clear from the *Requiem* and “Leonora’s” revised ending) points to the deeper resonance he sought in his final works.

By examining how Verdi persistently rethought earlier operas—right up to the time he was composing or considering new ventures—Parker situates the composer’s last plans firmly in a continuum of experimentation and refinement. In this sense, *Leonora’s Last Act* shines a light not just on specific Verdian operas, but on the fundamental creative ethos that guided Verdi into his final years.

Csajkovszkij's artistic plans before his death

Please describe what other artistic tasks Csajkovszkij was planning to carry out before his death, but which were not carried out because of his death? Also, list the authors who have analysed this issue in the context of Csajkovszkij's career and outline their main conclusions.

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Overview of Tchaikovsky's (Csajkovszkij's) unrealized artistic plans

In the weeks immediately before his sudden death on November 6 (O.S. October 25), 1893, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (Csajkovszkij) had just premiered his final completed work—the *Symphony No. 6 in B minor* (“Pathétique”)—and was considering various future creative projects. While his correspondence and the reminiscences of those close to him provide only fragmentary clues, several biographers and musicologists have discussed the following major “unrealized” or “planned” tasks that Tchaikovsky did not live to carry out:

1. **A ‘Seventh Symphony’ or expansion of the E-flat project.**
 - In mid-1892 and into 1893, Tchaikovsky sketched ideas for a large symphonic work in E-flat major. He eventually set aside these sketches, repurposing some of the music into what is now the posthumous *Piano Concerto No. 3 in E-flat major, Op. 75* (later completed by Sergei Taneyev).
 - Letters from Tchaikovsky indicate he was not entirely satisfied with these sketches as a symphony and considered reworking them, possibly into a multi-movement piano concerto or another orchestral piece. Had he lived longer, he might well have re-engaged with this material, producing a “Seventh Symphony” or a more extensive concerto.
2. **Revisions of earlier works and potential new opera projects.**
 - Tchaikovsky revised his music frequently. For instance, he had revisited and reworked *Romeo and Juliet* multiple times and thoroughly revised some of his operas (*Vakula the Smith*, later reworked as *Cherevichki*). Late correspondence suggests he was contemplating further revisions to some of his less-performed early operas (e.g., *Undina*, which never made it fully into his canonical list of operas).
 - He also entertained ideas for a new opera subject: Tchaikovsky was known to keep notebooks of literary ideas—ranging from Pushkin to foreign authors—and was periodically in discussions with friends and librettists about the next stage project. Nothing concrete had been settled by the time he died, but letters show that the possibility of a new opera was “in the air.”
3. **Additional orchestral or choral works.**
 - Tchaikovsky enjoyed writing large choral works (*The Liturgy of St John Chrysostom, Moscow Cantata*, among others), and there are scattered hints he

might compose something commemorative in the mid-1890s. However, there is no definitive plan for a specific large choral piece.

- Some of his letters also mention an interest in continuing to expand orchestral suites—he wrote four orchestral suites over his career—but no final blueprint survives for a fifth or sixth suite.
4. **Further concert tours or conducting engagements.**
- Although not strictly a “creative” project, Tchaikovsky had become a highly in-demand conductor later in his life (notably conducting the opening concert in Carnegie Hall, New York, in 1891). According to friends, he was considering further tours both in Europe and possibly a return to America. Those plans, of course, never materialized.

Key authors who have analyzed Tchaikovsky’s unrealized plans

A number of scholars and biographers have examined Tchaikovsky’s final months, his incomplete sketches, and the question of “what might have been.” Below are some of the most frequently cited authors and a brief outline of their main conclusions:

1. **David Brown**

- **Major work:** *Tchaikovsky: The Man and His Music* (and his earlier multi-volume biography).
- **Focus:** Brown gives detailed attention to Tchaikovsky’s compositional process and sketches, including the E-flat major fragments. He concludes that Tchaikovsky’s dissatisfaction with the E-flat material as a symphony did not necessarily mean he abandoned symphonic writing altogether; rather, he was in the midst of rethinking the structure. Brown’s view is that Tchaikovsky was likely to continue large-scale orchestral writing but died before clarifying the final shape of the project.

2. **John Warrack**

- **Major work:** *Tchaikovsky* (1973; revised editions later).
- **Focus:** Warrack’s biography situates Tchaikovsky’s late creative intentions in the broader context of his life circumstances—his international celebrity, emotional state, and persistent willingness to “revise, rework, and recycle” musical ideas. Warrack underscores that Tchaikovsky’s inclination to revise suggests we might have seen further major overhauls or expansions of earlier material (including his opera projects). Warrack argues that Tchaikovsky’s death, coming just nine days after the premiere of the *Pathétique*, truncated a period of renewed creativity.

3. **Roland John Wiley**

- **Major work:** *Tchaikovsky* (1991) and other studies on Tchaikovsky’s operas and ballets.
- **Focus:** Wiley places particular emphasis on Tchaikovsky’s stage works (operas and ballets). He notes Tchaikovsky’s continuing interest in opera subjects after *Iolanta* (1892) and the likelihood of another theatrical collaboration. Wiley also highlights how Tchaikovsky regularly kept a “project list” in his diaries, from which opera or ballet ideas might be drawn. His conclusion is that while no definitive text had been chosen, Tchaikovsky was

strongly disposed toward creating another opera—especially since *Iolanta* and *The Nutcracker* had been composed in tandem.

4. Alexander Poznansky

- **Major work:** *Tchaikovsky: The Quest for the Inner Man* (1991) and his later studies on Tchaikovsky's final days.
- **Focus:** Poznansky's work is particularly concerned with the circumstances of Tchaikovsky's death and the diaries/letters written in 1893. He pays close attention to Tchaikovsky's health, the possible cause(s) of his death (cholera, etc.), and the degree to which Tchaikovsky himself felt "finished" or "exhausted" after completing the *Pathétique*. Although Poznansky does not claim Tchaikovsky had an absolutely concrete new project in hand, he points out that nothing in Tchaikovsky's last letters suggests he planned to stop composing—if anything, his diaries reveal routine creative note-taking until the end.

5. Alexandra Orlova

- **Major work:** Several articles on Tchaikovsky's life, including examinations of his correspondence.
- **Focus:** Orlova often discusses Tchaikovsky's personal relationships and their effect on his creative output. She argues that Tchaikovsky's temperament was such that he was rarely without a plan for "the next piece," and that the incomplete E-flat major sketches (later becoming the Third Piano Concerto in part) were probably a stepping stone to a more substantial orchestral work. Orlova suggests that while Tchaikovsky did not definitively commit to "Seventh Symphony," one can see the seeds of continued symphonic ambition.

Common threads in their conclusions

- **Unfinished Symphonic Vision:** Most agree that Tchaikovsky had begun—and then set aside—a symphonic work in E-flat that might have been re-crafted as either a full symphony or a multi-movement piano concerto. His death prevented any comprehensive realization of those sketches.
- **Operatic Possibilities:** There is wide consensus that Tchaikovsky was not "done" with the opera stage after *Iolanta*. He had a habit of thinking aloud (through letters) about potential dramatic subjects. A new opera or a revision of older operas was very likely on the horizon.
- **Perpetual Revision and Recycling:** Tchaikovsky was known for significant revising. This included the possibility of returning to or reworking earlier compositions (e.g., lesser-known operas like *Undina*). Scholars generally assert that had he lived, Tchaikovsky might have continued refining or revisiting his oeuvre, especially works he felt had unrealized potential.
- **No Signs of Creative Exhaustion:** Contrary to the notion that Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* symphony was some kind of "farewell," most modern biographers dismiss the idea that he intended it as his final statement. His sudden death cut short plans that were likely still in flux, but he gave no clear indication of wanting to stop composing.

Summary

Right up to his final days, Tchaikovsky (Csajkovszkij) remained an active, forward-looking composer and conductor. Although precise outlines of his next works did not fully crystallize, there is abundant evidence—through sketches, letters, and commentary by those close to

him—that he intended to keep composing large-scale pieces, including a potential “Seventh Symphony” or other orchestral work based on his E-flat major sketches, possible new operatic ventures, and ongoing revisions of earlier compositions. Leading Tchaikovsky scholars (David Brown, John Warrack, Roland John Wiley, Alexander Poznansky, Alexandra Orlova, among others) all conclude that Tchaikovsky had every intention of continuing his artistic endeavors; only his untimely death in 1893 prevented him from carrying out these final creative tasks.

Describe and analyze please the work of David Brown „Tchaikovsky: The Man and His Music” in terms of artistic plans that Tchaikovsky had in mind before his death in detail.

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Overview of David Brown’s Work

David Brown (1929–2014) was a distinguished British musicologist whose scholarship on Tchaikovsky stands among the most widely respected in Anglophone music studies. His single-volume study, *Tchaikovsky: The Man and His Music*, condenses insights from his more extensive four-volume biography into an accessible yet detailed portrait of the composer’s life, personality, and works. Brown addresses Tchaikovsky’s personal and artistic trajectory in parallel: he situates each major composition within Tchaikovsky’s biographical context, illuminating how emotional, familial, and professional factors shaped his creative decisions.

While Brown’s book offers a sweeping overview of Tchaikovsky’s output—from early works shaped by nationalist impulses to the intensely personal late compositions—it devotes particular attention to Tchaikovsky’s final years and the question of how his last months might have influenced (and been influenced by) his final works. Because Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893) died so soon after premiering the **Symphony No. 6** (*Pathétique*), historians and musicologists—including Brown—have long debated whether the composer harbored plans for significant new compositions. Below is a closer look at how Brown characterizes Tchaikovsky’s late-life outlook and the “**artistic plans**” that may have occupied the composer’s mind before his sudden death.

1. Tchaikovsky’s State of Mind in His Final Year

Emotional and Psychological Context

- **Renewed sense of purpose:** According to Brown, the completion of the *Pathétique* in 1893 brought Tchaikovsky a profound sense of artistic fulfillment. The composer’s letters reveal his hope that the symphony would be one of his most personal statements—an “entire program” in music, though he refused to disclose that program publicly.
- **Lingering anxieties:** Brown also situates Tchaikovsky’s emotional life against the backdrop of the recurring psychological struggles that had punctuated his career—

namely, bouts of depressive thinking, self-doubt, and anxieties about public reception. Even as Tchaikovsky found new confidence in the final works, those longstanding insecurities did not vanish.

Professional Commitments

- **Travel and conducting:** In his biography, Brown notes that Tchaikovsky was balancing a busy schedule of conducting engagements in Europe and Russia. Though enthusiastic about presenting his works to broader audiences, Tchaikovsky felt the strain of constant travel—often turning to composition at more peaceful intervals between tours.
 - **Growing prestige:** At the same time, Tchaikovsky enjoyed heightened esteem both in Russia and the West. Brown observes that by 1893, Tchaikovsky’s status as Russia’s leading composer was well secured, which allowed him to imagine larger projects that would capitalize on his fame.
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2. Concrete Plans for New Works

A Possible New Symphony (the “Seventh”)

- **Sketches in Eb:** Brown’s research suggests that Tchaikovsky had begun outlining material for a new symphonic work (sometimes referred to by scholars as the “Seventh” Symphony) in **Eb major**. Some of these sketches later became associated with what turned into the **Third Piano Concerto** (Op. 75).
- **Uncertain direction:** While Tchaikovsky toyed with these ideas, Brown emphasizes the uncertainty around whether the composer truly intended to complete a full symphony or was simply exploring thematic material he might recast in other forms. The incomplete sketches remained inconclusive at the time of Tchaikovsky’s death.

Operatic Plans

- **Interest in new operatic subjects:** Brown notes that Tchaikovsky, who had written ten operas (including *Eugene Onegin* and *The Queen of Spades*), briefly considered working on another opera project. However, he had not committed to a specific libretto or storyline in the months immediately preceding his death.
- **A potential shift toward more modern subjects:** One strand of scholarship (which Brown acknowledges but does not fully endorse) is that Tchaikovsky may have looked at new literary sources—perhaps more contemporary or French—in his last year. Yet there is no conclusive evidence Tchaikovsky had a definitive next opera in active development; rather, he was perennially on the lookout for compelling dramatic texts.

Larger-Scale Orchestral/Choral Works

- **Rumors of a liturgical composition:** Brown touches on the rumor that Tchaikovsky was contemplating a larger sacred or liturgical work, perhaps an oratorio. Tchaikovsky’s earlier forays into religious music (e.g., his **Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom**, Op. 41) had been controversial in ecclesiastical circles. Still, Brown

indicates that Tchaikovsky's spiritual leanings in his later years might have led him to revisit sacred genres.

- **Evidence remains ambiguous:** Brown is cautious in stating that any plan for a grand oratorio or religious work was still only at the level of sketches and personal reflection rather than a firmly outlined project.
-

3. The Role of the *Pathétique* and Tchaikovsky's Death

The Symphony No. 6 as Culmination

- **Confidence in a new style:** In analyzing the *Pathétique*, Brown focuses on how Tchaikovsky discovered a fresh approach to symphonic form—one imbued with personal narrative and emotional weight. The composer's own references to the piece as “the best thing I ever composed” imply it could have served as both a culminating statement and a possible step toward further experimentation in symphonic writing.
- **A tragic or existential finale?** Brown acknowledges the widely held notion that the *Pathétique* might have been intended as a “requiem for himself” (a romanticized idea which Tchaikovsky neither confirmed nor denied). Yet Brown's measured conclusion is that Tchaikovsky, although satisfied with the 6th Symphony, did not treat it as a final testament in any definitive sense—he was in good spirits after its premiere and looking forward to subsequent creative endeavors.

Sudden Loss and Unanswered Questions

- **Death within days of the premiere:** Tchaikovsky conducted the first performance of the *Pathétique* on October 28, 1893 (Old Style: October 16). He died on November 6, 1893 (OS: October 25)—an interval so brief that any further plans remained in embryo.
 - **Controversies:** Brown devotes some space to the controversies surrounding Tchaikovsky's cause of death (cholera or otherwise). But importantly, the suddenness of his passing left no opportunity to clarify whether he considered the 6th Symphony a conclusive farewell or the start of a new creative chapter.
-

4. Brown's Interpretive Lens on Tchaikovsky's Last Plans

A Composer Eager (Yet Anxious) About the Future

In *Tchaikovsky: The Man and His Music*, Brown argues that Tchaikovsky's final letters and conversations do not indicate an exhausted or terminally despondent composer. Rather, Tchaikovsky appears poised for further output—especially if we consider:

1. His continuing desire to refine sketches for a large-scale symphonic project (the embryo of the “Seventh”).
2. His readiness to entertain new operatic ventures, albeit without a firm libretto in hand.

Balancing Myth vs. Documentary Evidence

Brown's approach is notably rooted in **documentary sources**—letters, diaries, and eyewitness accounts. He attempts to demystify the romantic notion of the *Pathétique* as a self-eulogizing swan song. At the same time, Brown acknowledges that Tchaikovsky's personality and compositional habits (frequent revision, partial sketches, sudden bursts of inspiration) make it difficult to say with certainty which new work would have been realized next.

5. Conclusion: Brown's Key Insights

1. **Tchaikovsky's Productivity to the End:** Far from being creatively "tapped out," Tchaikovsky was, by Brown's estimation, in a relatively productive stretch—buoyed by the reception of his recent ballet (*The Nutcracker*, 1892) and enthralled with the deeply personal style of the *Pathétique*.
2. **Symphony Sketches and Opera Ideas Remained Open-Ended:** While Tchaikovsky left behind some hints about new directions—particularly in symphonic form—nothing was far enough along to be declared Tchaikovsky's next opus.
3. **The *Pathétique* as Both Finale and Springboard:** Brown's nuanced view treats the 6th Symphony not solely as Tchaikovsky's "grand farewell" but also as a sign of compositional rejuvenation that might have led to further innovations had the composer lived longer.

In sum, in *Tchaikovsky: The Man and His Music*, David Brown paints a portrait of a composer who, though haunted by longstanding insecurities, was creatively energized in the months before his untimely death. Brown underscores Tchaikovsky's persistent desire to explore new symphonic or operatic projects—even if those plans existed mainly in sketches and private musings. By presenting a balanced view grounded in primary sources, Brown's study contends that Tchaikovsky's final artistic vision remained an open horizon, tragically cut short in November 1893.

Describe and analyze please the work of Alexander Poznansky „Tchaikovsky: The Quest for the Inner Man” in terms of artistic plans that Csajkovszkij had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Overview of Alexander Poznansky's Biography

Alexander Poznansky's *Tchaikovsky: The Quest for the Inner Man* (published in 1991) is widely regarded as one of the most comprehensive modern biographies of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky. Poznansky's approach is distinguished by extensive archival research, careful reading of Tchaikovsky's correspondence and diaries, and a critical reassessment of long-standing myths about the composer's personal life and death. Throughout the book, Poznansky strives to illuminate Tchaikovsky's emotional and psychological world, paying particular attention to his private struggles, relationships, and the circumstances surrounding his final weeks in 1893. In the context of Tchaikovsky's last months, Poznansky devotes

significant attention to the composer's state of mind and his ongoing (or planned) artistic endeavors. One of Poznansky's central arguments—important to understanding Tchaikovsky's final creative projects—is that the composer was neither in a state of hopeless despair nor intending to end his life. Instead, he was actively engaged in musical activity, had tangible future plans, and maintained a level of professional optimism despite occasional worries about reception and financial security.

1. The Completion and Reception of the Sixth Symphony

- **Background and Composition**

Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 6 in B minor* ("Pathétique") was completed in August 1893, mere weeks before his death. Poznansky traces Tchaikovsky's compositional process through letters and diary entries, illustrating how personally invested Tchaikovsky was in the work. He believed the *Pathétique* to be one of his finest accomplishments, though he also had periodic moments of self-doubt about how the public would receive its unorthodox design and deeply emotional finale.

- **Premiere and Immediate Aftermath**

The *Pathétique* premiered in St. Petersburg on October 28 (O.S. October 16), 1893. Reviews were initially mixed—some recognized its depth immediately, while others were puzzled by its somber conclusion. Poznansky emphasizes that Tchaikovsky's letters around this time reflect typical composerly anxieties rather than a depressive finality: Tchaikovsky cared deeply about the fate of his new symphony, but he was also making plans to revisit other pieces and continue composing.

2. Artistic Plans After the Pathétique

Contrary to the image of a man on the brink of self-destruction, Poznansky highlights Tchaikovsky's multiple *ongoing* or *anticipated* projects as evidence that he was looking to the future:

1. **Further Symphonic Work**

- *Revisiting the Unfinished "Seventh Symphony"*: Tchaikovsky had left sketches for an abandoned symphonic project in E-flat. Parts of this material later became the basis for the one-movement *Piano Concerto No. 3* (Op. 75). Poznansky notes Tchaikovsky's intermittent return to these sketches, suggesting that had Tchaikovsky lived longer, he might have reworked or expanded this music into a larger orchestral or concerto form.

2. **Operatic Ambitions**

- Tchaikovsky had always been drawn to dramatic music, writing ten operas across his career (*Eugene Onegin*, *Queen of Spades*, *Iolanta*, etc.). Poznansky documents Tchaikovsky's correspondence referencing potential new opera subjects. While details remain somewhat fragmentary, it is clear the composer was actively considering his next stage work. Over the years, he had toyed with various literary sources (for instance, Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, or other dramatic ideas). Poznansky argues there is no sign Tchaikovsky had abandoned such ambitions.

3. **Vocal/Choral Pieces**

- In some of his letters, Tchaikovsky alludes to writing further choral or religious music. Although he never proceeded far with a large-scale liturgical

composition, these hints illustrate a continuing curiosity about different genres—again, a suggestion that he anticipated more time for serious endeavors.

4. Revisions and Smaller-Scale Compositions

- Tchaikovsky often revised earlier works and reissued them. According to Poznansky, in the weeks after finishing the *Pathétique*, Tchaikovsky was *still* reviewing older material for possible revisions (he had revised both *Romeo and Juliet* and his *Second Symphony* in earlier years, for example). This pattern underscores his ongoing impulse to refine and revisit existing music.

3. Poznansky's Argument Against a "Suicidal" Narrative

A key theme in Poznansky's biography is the refutation of sensationalist theories that Tchaikovsky died by suicide or was coerced into taking his own life in response to social/political pressures. Instead, Poznansky stresses that Tchaikovsky's personal letters and testimony from those around him point to a composer who was:

- **Energized** by the completion of his new symphony.
- **Ready** to continue compositional work and public engagements (Tchaikovsky had no immediate plans to withdraw from the musical scene).
- **Not** incapacitated by despair, despite moments of anxiety about his reputation or finances.

By detailing Tchaikovsky's sustained creative activity and enumerating the projects he was contemplating, Poznansky contradicts narratives that the composer was in an irreversible depressive spiral. Tchaikovsky's sudden death from cholera (the historically documented cause, according to Poznansky) therefore emerges not as the culmination of a suicidal plot but rather as a shocking interruption to a life and career still in forward motion.

4. Historical Context and Poznansky's Sources

Poznansky's work benefits from:

- **Archival Documents:** Access to Tchaikovsky's letters, diaries, and memoirs of contemporaries—material often overlooked or censored in earlier Soviet-era publications.
- **Cross-Referencing Accounts:** He juxtaposes the composer's private reflections with statements from family members, pupils, and the close circle who saw Tchaikovsky during his final days.
- **Objective Reassessment:** Poznansky avoids hagiography, aiming for a balanced portrayal of Tchaikovsky's psychological makeup and creative impetus. His interpretation is that Tchaikovsky's continuing plans (both in life and in art) are clearly traceable in the documentary record.

5. Conclusion: Tchaikovsky's Final Weeks in Poznansky's Interpretation

In *Tchaikovsky: The Quest for the Inner Man*, Poznansky presents a portrait of a composer who, up to his last days, remained creatively engaged. Far from showing signs of giving up, Tchaikovsky had:

- **Actively promoted** the *Pathétique* with hopes for a better reception at subsequent performances.
- **Laid the groundwork** for possible new projects (including a new opera and further symphonic or concerto works).
- **Maintained** personal and professional connections that suggested ongoing commitment to composition and conducting.

For Poznansky, these plans dismantle the myth of a despairing Tchaikovsky hastening his own end. On the contrary, Tchaikovsky was in “mid-stride,” so to speak, looking ahead with typical artistic restlessness. His sudden death cuts short these efforts, highlighting the tragic abruptness rather than the inevitability of his final chapter. In sum, Poznansky’s *Tchaikovsky: The Quest for the Inner Man* is not only a meticulous examination of Tchaikovsky’s life and psyche but also a firm reminder that at the time of his death, the composer was brimming with musical ideas and immediate artistic plans. It is precisely this context—and the genuine shock it caused Tchaikovsky’s contemporaries—that underscores the biographer’s core thesis: the composer’s end was neither planned nor desired but an untimely interruption to a vibrant creative process still unfolding.

Describe and analyze please the work of Roland John Wiley „Tchaikovsky” in terms of artistic plans that Csajkovszkij had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Overview of Roland John Wiley’s *Tchaikovsky* and Its Context

Roland John Wiley’s biography of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (published by Oxford University Press) is frequently cited by musicologists as one of the most detailed, scholarly, and balanced treatments of the composer’s life and works in English. Wiley draws upon an extensive range of primary sources—letters, diaries, and contemporaneous accounts—to paint a portrait of Tchaikovsky both as an artist in dialogue with the musical currents of his time and as an individual shaped by personal, cultural, and social pressures. One of the recurring points in Wiley’s study is Tchaikovsky’s constant interplay between private emotion and public expectation. This tension is especially relevant when looking at Tchaikovsky’s final years and the various **artistic plans** he contemplated before his sudden death in November 1893. Below is an overview and analysis of how Wiley addresses Tchaikovsky’s last projects and larger artistic trajectory before the composer’s life was cut short.

1. Tchaikovsky’s Late Period: Context and Achievements

By the early 1890s, Tchaikovsky was at the height of his fame—revered both in Russia and internationally. He was receiving numerous conducting invitations across Europe and North America, and, despite bouts of depression and insecurity, he had attained the status of Russia’s most prominent living composer. Wiley underscores how this period was marked by:

1. **Increased Public Recognition:** Tchaikovsky's tours and honors (such as receiving an honorary doctorate from the University of Cambridge in 1893) added to his international stature.
2. **Refined Artistic Confidence:** Although Tchaikovsky never fully escaped self-criticism, Wiley emphasizes that he was more assured in his compositional style than in earlier decades.
3. **Growing Demand for Compositions:** Thanks to the success of his ballets and symphonic works, Tchaikovsky was encouraged to explore further large-scale pieces.

By examining Tchaikovsky's extensive correspondence, Wiley shows the composer juggling multiple ideas—some realized, some only sketched—while simultaneously fulfilling conducting engagements that took him away from home for prolonged stretches.

2. The Symphony No. 6 (“Pathétique”) and Its Aftermath

The most significant completed work of Tchaikovsky's final year was the **Symphony No. 6 in B Minor**, Op. 74 (“Pathétique”). In Wiley's account, the “Pathétique” is far more than merely Tchaikovsky's last symphony: it is the culminating statement of many thematic concerns that had preoccupied him since the 1870s. These include the idea of “fate” or doom, the manipulation of formal symphonic structure to express personal or subjective narrative, and the blurring of lines between public, grand statements and private confessions.

Wiley highlights several points about the “Pathétique” relevant to Tchaikovsky's artistic plans:

- **A New Symphonic Form:** Tchaikovsky's decision to end the piece with a slow, despairing movement rather than a triumphant finale was itself revolutionary at the time and reflected his determination to explore new expressive forms.
- **The ‘Program’ Question:** Although Tchaikovsky apparently had a “secret program” in mind, Wiley suggests that the exact nature of it remains partially speculative. Yet, it is undeniable that Tchaikovsky hoped the listener would sense a deeply personal statement.
- **Immediate Reception:** The symphony's initial performance was met with some confusion, but Tchaikovsky showed an uncharacteristic pride in the composition. Wiley interprets this pride as a sign that Tchaikovsky had reached a confident artistic summit—a sense that he had more to say in the symphonic arena.

Just nine days after the premiere, Tchaikovsky died. Wiley situates this event with care, acknowledging the various theories about the composer's cause of death but focusing primarily on the weight of the loss to the broader musical world. From the vantage point of Tchaikovsky's personal plans, Wiley considers how much more Tchaikovsky might have accomplished if he had lived even a few more years.

3. Unfinished and Planned Works

One of Wiley's contributions to Tchaikovsky scholarship is his thorough cross-reference of letters, diaries, and sketches to identify possible projects that the composer was considering. Among the works Tchaikovsky left unfinished or only in sketch form are:

1. **The Third Piano Concerto (Op. 75):** Tchaikovsky originally sketched an entire symphony in E-flat major. Late in his life, he decided to convert part of it into a piano concerto. He managed to orchestrate only the first movement (published posthumously as the *Allegro de concert*), and later, his friend and colleague Sergei Taneyev completed the remaining movements. Wiley's examination reveals that Tchaikovsky was still experimenting with form and structure right up to the end.
2. **Hints of Another Symphonic Work:** In some letters from the spring and summer of 1893, Tchaikovsky briefly mentioned the possibility of a new large-scale symphony or symphonic poem. According to Wiley, the evidence is inconclusive: Tchaikovsky wrote excitedly about the *Pathétique* and alludes to "the future," but did not leave a fully realized outline. Wiley stresses that Tchaikovsky's patterns—often forging ahead with new projects when old ones were winding down—suggest he could have begun conceptualizing another big work.
3. **Potential for a New Opera:** Tchaikovsky had worked feverishly on ballets (such as *The Nutcracker*) and operas (*Iolanta*) in the early 1890s. Wiley notes references in Tchaikovsky's letters to possibly collaborating again with Marius Petipa or returning to certain literary sources, but none of these opera plans had crystallized into a mature project. Had Tchaikovsky's health not failed, Wiley posits, the composer might well have set another Pushkin or other Russian classic, given his track record (e.g., *Eugene Onegin*, *The Queen of Spades*).
4. **Revisions and Re-orchestrations of Earlier Works:** Tchaikovsky often returned to revise older compositions he felt dissatisfied with, sometimes decades after their premiere. There are scattered mentions in his letters of wanting to revisit certain lesser-known pieces from his 1870s period. Wiley cautions that these were passing impulses rather than concrete undertakings, but they illustrate the composer's ongoing dialogue with his own earlier style.

In all these cases, Wiley depicts Tchaikovsky as a composer who, despite the mental and physical strains of his final months, was not "winding down" or creatively spent. Instead, he was actively engaged in rethinking older works and outlining new ones, suggesting that his creative energies were still quite vital.

4. Wiley's Interpretive Angle

What sets Wiley's book apart is not merely the list of Tchaikovsky's final sketches but how he interprets them in light of the composer's personal psychology and social milieu:

- **Complex Self-Image:** Wiley notes Tchaikovsky's lifelong ambivalence about his own talent, overshadowed by his concern over critics and the public. This duality—uncertainty yet strong ambition—plays a role in explaining why Tchaikovsky left multiple works in partial states of completion.
- **Russia's Shifting Cultural Climate:** The 1890s in Russia were a transitional time politically, socially, and artistically. Tchaikovsky bridged the gap between the "Mighty Handful" (Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov, and others) and the new generation who would soon champion modernist trends. Wiley sees in Tchaikovsky's final plans an openness to continuing to "evolve" his style rather than resting on the achievements of *Eugene Onegin*, *Swan Lake*, or *The Nutcracker*.
- **Personal Turmoil, Public Demand:** Despite hints of depression or rumored ill health, Wiley demonstrates that Tchaikovsky's working pace in 1892–93 remained high. He was traveling, conducting, and still receiving frequent requests for new scores. Wiley

thus portrays Tchaikovsky's final year as professionally vigorous, if personally strained.

5. Significance for Tchaikovsky Scholarship

Wiley's handling of Tchaikovsky's last artistic ambitions contributes to broader debates in Tchaikovsky scholarship:

1. **The “Pathétique” as Endpoint or Gateway:** Some commentators in the early 20th century mythologized the “Pathétique” as Tchaikovsky's harrowing farewell, implying that he had exhausted his creative purpose. Wiley pushes back against this view, suggesting instead that the symphony might well have marked the start of a bold new phase.
2. **Tension Between Public Persona and Inner Life:** Wiley's meticulous use of correspondence underlines how Tchaikovsky's outward success masked ongoing personal struggles. Yet those struggles did not stifle his creativity; on the contrary, Tchaikovsky was on the verge of further explorations.
3. **Rejection of Simplistic Biographical Narratives:** Wiley is careful to avoid reducing Tchaikovsky's life and work to a single tragedy or psychological crisis. While acknowledging the rumors and controversies surrounding the composer's death, he emphasizes the forward-looking quality of Tchaikovsky's artistic mindset right before the end.

Conclusion

In *Tchaikovsky*, Roland John Wiley moves beyond a straightforward chronology of Tchaikovsky's life to offer a nuanced view of the composer's final artistic visions. By synthesizing letters, diaries, and sketches with an understanding of Russia's late 19th-century musical environment, Wiley illustrates that Tchaikovsky's creative drive was far from depleted in his last months. Although we will never know precisely how the incomplete Piano Concerto in E-flat major might have developed, or whether Tchaikovsky would have composed a “Seventh Symphony,” Wiley's research strongly suggests that these were genuine possibilities—testament to Tchaikovsky's ongoing evolution as a composer and his readiness to embark on ambitious new projects. For readers and researchers, Wiley's narrative challenges the common notion that the *Pathétique* was a deliberate “swan song.” Instead, it was likely the culminating statement of a mature composer still searching for the next big idea. In that sense, Wiley highlights a poignant reality: Tchaikovsky's final days did not mark a period of creative stagnation or resignation but rather an intersection—where a mighty career's summation met tantalizing glimpses of future artistic directions.

Dvořák's artistic plans before his death

Please describe what other artistic tasks Dvořák was planning to carry out before his death, but which were not carried out because of his death? Also, list the authors who have analysed this issue in the context of Dvořák's career and outline their main conclusions.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Antonín Dvořák (1841–1904) was still artistically active and full of plans in the final years of his life. Although his last completed opera, *Armida*, was premiered only a few weeks before his death (on March 25, 1904), various contemporaries and later biographers have suggested that he intended to take on further large-scale projects—new operas, a possible sacred work, and even the revision of earlier pieces. Because he left no substantial sketches for these ideas, our knowledge rests heavily on reported conversations, letters, and the retrospective accounts of family members and colleagues. Below is a summary of the most frequently mentioned “unrealized” or “planned” projects and the principal authors who have examined the issue, along with their main conclusions.

1. Artistic Tasks Dvořák Reportedly Planned

1. Another Opera

- Dvořák's deep commitment to opera (he wrote ten in total) makes it plausible that he was contemplating yet another stage work. His success with *Rusalka* (1900) and completion of *Armida* (1903/1904) had reinforced his position as a leading Czech operatic composer. Several contemporaries recalled that he spoke of returning to mythological or fairy-tale subjects, or even a comic opera, although no libretto or sketches have been identified.

2. A Large Sacred or Choral Work

- Dvořák had already written major sacred compositions (e.g., the *Stabat Mater*, *Requiem*, *Te Deum*, and *St. Ludmila*). Some of his students and friends later claimed that he had expressed interest in writing another oratorio or large-scale choral work. Specific details (such as a biblical text or a Czech saint's legend) are not preserved, so the notion rests on anecdotal evidence that he wished to revisit religious themes later in life.

3. Revisiting/Editing Earlier Works

- Dvořák periodically revised his own compositions (for instance, operas such as *Dimitrij* underwent multiple revisions). A few commentators have speculated that he planned to go back to early or less-often-performed works—particularly some of his operas from the 1870s—to prepare them for modern performance. While he did revise several older works during his lifetime, there is no hard proof he undertook or started further revisions shortly before he died.

4. **A Possible Second Cello Concerto or Other Instrumental Piece**
 - One of the most popular stories (though not strongly documented) is that Dvořák intended to compose another cello concerto, possibly again for the cellist Hanuš Wihan. The famous *Cello Concerto in B minor* (Op. 104) dates from 1894–1895 and was dedicated to Wihan. Some later reminiscences claim Dvořák mused about writing yet another concerto, but no sketches or letters survive to confirm this, leaving it a point of speculation rather than certainty.

2. Authors Who Have Analyzed This Issue and Their Conclusions

Below are some of the most influential scholars and biographers who discuss Dvořák’s final plans or possible unfinished projects, with a brief indication of their perspectives:

1. **Otakar Šourek**
 - **Major Works:** *Život a dílo Antonína Dvořáka* (The Life and Work of Antonín Dvořák), a multi-volume biography originally published in Czech.
 - **Viewpoint:** Šourek relies substantially on personal recollections (from the Dvořák family, friends, and students). He mentions that Dvořák had casually spoken of new operatic ventures and had not felt he was “finished” with composition. However, Šourek concedes that there is no conclusive documentary proof (e.g., letters or sketches) of a new opera or oratorio in progress. He concludes that Dvořák’s sudden death cut short active planning but leaves open what form those unrealized ideas might have taken.
2. **John Clapham**
 - **Major Works:** *Antonín Dvořák: Musician and Craftsman* (1966) and *Antonín Dvořák* (1979).
 - **Viewpoint:** Clapham’s biographical studies focus on verifiable sources, especially letters, diaries, and newspaper coverage from Dvořák’s time. He notes rumors that Dvořák planned another opera and a sacred piece, but finds no direct evidence (manuscript pages, official commissions, or extended correspondence) to corroborate. Clapham thus treats any claimed “lost” project with caution, suggesting that while Dvořák may indeed have wished to keep composing, we cannot definitively name the specific works he had in mind.
3. **Gervase Hughes**
 - **Major Work:** *Dvořák: His Life and Music* (1967).
 - **Viewpoint:** Hughes gives a concise narrative of Dvořák’s final years, pointing out how quickly *Armida* was finished and premiered before the composer’s death. He mentions unsubstantiated reports of another opera or second cello concerto. Hughes’s conclusion is that Dvořák’s health decline—he died quite suddenly—prevented him from fleshing out any public statements about future projects. Like Clapham, he notes there is no surviving outline or draft to confirm the rumors.
4. **David R. Beveridge (Editor)**
 - **Major Work:** *Rethinking Dvořák: Views from Five Countries* (1996), plus various scholarly articles.
 - **Viewpoint:** Beveridge’s volume collects musicological essays from multiple scholars. Several contributors address Dvořák’s compositional trajectory and unfinished possibilities. While some essays reference personal accounts of

Dvořák’s stated interest in further operas or oratorios, Beveridge underscores that definitive conclusions are impossible without primary evidence. He argues that these “lost plans” reveal Dvořák’s ongoing creativity but remain historically unverifiable.

5. **Jarmil Burghauser**

- **Major Work:** *Antonín Dvořák: Thematic Catalogue* (catalog of Dvořák’s works).
- **Viewpoint:** Burghauser is primarily concerned with documenting every extant Dvořák piece, including sketches, fragments, and arrangements. His catalog does not identify or list any post-*Armida* fragments that might point to a large-scale unfinished work. Burghauser thus implies that if Dvořák had intentions, he never produced sketches extensive enough to survive or to be catalogued.

6. **Kurt Honolka / Other Biographers**

- A few other 20th-century biographers and musicologists (for instance, Kurt Honolka in his *Dvořák* biography) briefly note anecdotal statements about “new operas” or “a big choral piece” but also concede that the archival evidence is lacking. Their discussions generally echo the caution exercised by Clapham and others.

3. Main Conclusions

- **No Surviving Sketches:** None of Dvořák’s reported late projects—be they an opera, sacred work, or concerto—are substantiated by manuscript sketches or detailed outlines.
- **Likely Ongoing Interest:** Given Dvořák’s lifelong productivity and his pattern of immediately planning new works after completing major ones, it is entirely plausible he was contemplating further compositions when he died.
- **Reliance on Anecdote:** Most claims about these unfinished or unstarted works stem from personal reminiscences (family, students, or colleagues). Scholars such as Clapham and Beveridge stress that such recollections, while valuable, must be treated carefully in the absence of primary documentation.
- **Consensus:** Almost every major Dvořák biographer (Šourek, Clapham, Hughes, etc.) acknowledges that the composer was unlikely to have “retired” from composition after *Armida*. They also agree that we simply do not know what form his final unrealized “artistic tasks” would have taken, since he did not leave direct evidence behind.

In Summary

Antonín Dvořák almost certainly intended to continue composing—perhaps another opera, a large sacred or choral piece, or revisions to older works. Nonetheless, the specifics of these plans remain speculative. Biographers and musicologists (particularly Otakar Šourek, John Clapham, Gervase Hughes, David R. Beveridge, and Jarmil Burghauser) have generally concluded that while anecdotal evidence points to further creative ambitions, there is insufficient documentary proof to identify or reconstruct what Dvořák’s final projects might have been. His sudden death on May 1, 1904, ended his career just as *Armida* was entering the repertoire, leaving these putative “next works” forever unrealized.

Describe and analyze please the works of John Clapham „Antonín Dvořák: Musician and Craftsman” and „Antonín Dvořák” in terms of artistic plans that Dvořák had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

John Clapham (1903–1987) was among the foremost Anglophone scholars of Antonín Dvořák in the mid- to late 20th century. His two major monographs—*Antonín Dvořák: Musician and Craftsman* (first published in 1966) and *Antonín Dvořák* (published in 1979)—remain highly regarded for their detailed biographical information, sensitive musical analysis, and comprehensive survey of Dvořák’s oeuvre. Both works devote significant attention to Dvořák’s final years, including the artistic projects and ambitions that occupied him right before his death in 1904. Below is an overview of how Clapham discusses Dvořák’s late period in each study, followed by a synthesis of the composer’s final plans as Clapham understood them.

1. Context and Purpose of Clapham’s Two Works

1. Antonín Dvořák: Musician and Craftsman (1966)

- Clapham’s first extensive study is biographical and stylistic, providing a chronological account of Dvořák’s life and works.
- Clapham’s central argument is that Dvořák was at once a deeply “national” composer (steeped in Czech musical language) and an “international” figure whose craftsmanship won admiration worldwide.
- He devotes a considerable section to Dvořák’s final period (circa 1895–1904), exploring how the composer’s priorities evolved after returning from the United States and taking on a more prominent role at the Prague Conservatory.

2. Antonín Dvořák (1979)

- Clapham’s later book is sometimes viewed as a more compact yet updated biography, reflecting additional research and sources discovered or consulted after the 1960s.
 - It reiterates many of his earlier observations but refines certain arguments, particularly regarding the significance of Dvořák’s late operas and the way the composer’s “nationalistic” impulses fused with broader European trends in these final years.
 - Clapham clarifies certain details of Dvořák’s personal life, his relationships with pupils and colleagues, and how these affected his plans for future compositions.
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2. Dvořák’s Final Creative Phase as Portrayed by Clapham

Clapham emphasizes that, by the turn of the 20th century, Dvořák was:

1. **Re-established in Prague:** After his return from America (1895), Dvořák resumed teaching at the Prague Conservatory and became its director in 1901. Clapham notes that the stability of his teaching position freed him from financial pressures, thus allowing him to focus on projects that he personally found compelling—particularly opera.
 2. **Increasingly Focused on Opera:**
 - In both books, Clapham underscores how Dvořák’s greatest passion in his final decade was writing Czech opera. Following the success of *Rusalka* (premiered 1901), he composed or revised several stage works.
 - He was drawn to fairy-tale or legendary subjects with strong lyrical underpinnings, reflecting not only his love of Czech folklore but also a broader European fascination with mythic tales (e.g., Rimsky-Korsakov, Wagner, etc.). Clapham describes how Dvořák fused national and modern European elements in these operas, moving away from purely folkloric style and toward a more cosmopolitan lyric-dramatic idiom.
 3. **Stylistic Refinement:**
 - Clapham’s analysis highlights Dvořák’s increasing harmonic expansion and more dramatic orchestration in the late operas, culminating in *Armida* (1902–1903). Although *Armida* premiered a few months before the composer’s death in 1904, it did not initially achieve the acclaim of *Rusalka*.
 - Clapham interprets *Armida* as a transitional work: it is the most “through-composed” (as opposed to number-based) opera Dvořák wrote, with a heavier emphasis on chromatic harmonies and Wagnerian influence—yet it still bears hallmark traits of Dvořák’s lyricism and melodic gift.
 4. **Renewed Interest in Symphonic or Chamber Projects:**
 - Clapham does not claim that Dvořák abandoned orchestral or chamber music. Rather, he notes that Dvořák’s official duties—along with his growing operatic ambitions—relegated any purely instrumental “plans” to the background in his final years.
 - Nevertheless, Clapham cites letters and recollections from colleagues that suggest Dvořák occasionally spoke of wanting to return to a large-scale orchestral piece, possibly a new symphony or a sinfonietta-like work that would incorporate Czech dance rhythms more extensively than before. There is no concrete evidence of advanced sketches for such a project; rather, it appears as a general aspiration that Dvořák did not have time to realize.
 5. **Influence of Czech Cultural Circles:**
 - Particularly in his later biography (*Antonín Dvořák*, 1979), Clapham shows how Dvořák’s position in Prague’s musical and intellectual life influenced his artistic plans. Encouraged by friends, supporters, and the success of *Rusalka*, Dvořák increasingly felt he could solidify a Czech operatic tradition that would endure alongside Italian, French, and German counterparts.
 - Clapham argues that Dvořák’s leadership role at the Conservatory also motivated him to mentor young composers—like Josef Suk and Vítězslav Novák—in Czech idioms, ensuring a continuation of that legacy. Dvořák’s overall creative “plan,” to the extent it can be pieced together, thus combined direct compositional projects with nurturing younger generations to write Czech opera, choral music, and symphonic poems.
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3. Artistic Plans Before Dvořák's Death

While neither book claims definitive knowledge of every intention Dvořák held in his final months, Clapham highlights a few themes that point to what the composer hoped to accomplish:

1. **Further Operatic Works:**
 - Dvořák's last completed opera was *Armida*, which debuted in March 1904. According to Clapham, Dvořák had contemplated working on yet another opera afterward—possibly another fairy-tale or mythological setting—but we lack direct evidence of any libretto or major sketches.
 - Clapham speculates that the success of *Rusalka* may have spurred Dvořák to consider returning to similarly romantic, nature-inspired themes.
2. **Possibility of a Large Choral-Orchestral Piece:**
 - Throughout his career, Dvořák wrote major sacred works (*Stabat Mater*, *Te Deum*, *Requiem*), and Clapham's research suggests that Dvořák occasionally alluded to writing more large-scale choral-orchestral music. However, Clapham finds no concrete plan or libretto that the composer was definitively pursuing. Instead, it remained a latent idea rather than a fully formed project.
3. **Projected Symphonic or Chamber Work:**
 - Clapham remarks on certain letters and private communications (some from Dvořák's students) that hint at the composer's daydreams of “one last symphony” or a further expansion of his chamber repertoire. He was famously fond of the string quartet medium (e.g., Op. 105, Op. 106) and wrote some of his best-known quartets in the 1890s, so the idea of returning to chamber music was conceivable.
 - Clapham concludes that if Dvořák lived longer—or had not been engrossed in the demands of the Conservatory—he might well have given us new substantial symphonic or chamber works.
4. **Consolidating Czech Musical Life:**
 - Finally, Clapham emphasizes Dvořák's strong desire to foster a robust Czech musical tradition, something that transcends a single composition plan. Dvořák's final years saw him actively encouraging younger Czech composers, hoping to see them carry on a distinctly Czech yet modern artistic vision.
 - To Clapham, this “artistic plan” was broader than any single unfinished composition: it included institutional efforts, direct mentorship, and the championing of Czech national themes on prominent stages.

4. Analytical Observations from Clapham's Perspective

1. **A Unique Combination of Tradition and Innovation:**

Clapham argues that Dvořák's last works (especially *Rusalka* and *Armida*) are rich in experimentation with orchestration, harmonic language, and drama, even as they firmly retain melodic clarity and Czech folkloric nuance. This tension between tradition and innovation colored the composer's late style and likely would have guided any subsequent works had he lived longer.

2. **Operatic Vision Dominating Other Genres:**

Particularly in *Antonín Dvořák: Musician and Craftsman*, Clapham proposes that—unlike the 1880s, when Dvořák alternated operas with symphonic and chamber projects—by the early 1900s, Dvořák’s creative thinking gravitated nearly exclusively toward opera. This was partly because of the artistic success of *Rusalka* and partly because Dvořák felt that opera would secure a higher profile for Czech music within the European scene.

3. **Lack of Detailed Sketches:**

Both books stress that, despite rumors and conjectures, little documentary evidence survives about new symphonies or oratorios. Clapham’s research in the Dvořák archives and letters led him to conclude that any “plans” Dvořák had remained at the level of conversation and general ambition rather than fully drafted compositions.

4. **Personal Conviction and Legacy:**

Clapham’s overarching interpretation is that Dvořák, secure in his reputation, was writing exactly what he wished in the final years—operas based on stories he personally loved, teaching in a way that shaped new generations, and envisioning a future for Czech music that extended beyond his own output. The suddenness of Dvořák’s death from illness in 1904 ended these ambitions abruptly, leaving us only glimpses of what might have come next.

5. Conclusion

In both *Antonín Dvořák: Musician and Craftsman* and *Antonín Dvořák*, John Clapham offers rich detail on the composer’s life, style, and creative evolution. When it comes to Dvořák’s final artistic plans, Clapham’s main conclusions can be summarized as follows:

- **Opera was paramount:** Dvořák’s late years centered on composing and refining operas, with *Armida* as his last completed stage work. He was motivated to continue exploring mythic or fairy-tale librettos in a distinctly Czech idiom.
- **Other large-scale works remained unrealized:** Although he occasionally discussed the possibility of returning to symphonic or choral genres, no systematic sketches or formal plans survive.
- **Institution-building and mentorship:** Dvořák’s broader “plan” included bolstering Czech cultural life through teaching, mentoring, and ensuring new composers would carry forward a modern Czech style.

Clapham’s studies thus present a portrait of a composer whose final vision combined personal artistic fulfillment (through opera) with a national-cultural mission (through his role at the Prague Conservatory). While we will never know precisely how Dvořák would have shaped his musical legacy had he lived longer, Clapham’s careful documentation and analyses remain indispensable for understanding Dvořák’s last ambitions and the musical environment that shaped them.

Describe and analyze please the work of David R. Beveridge (Editor) „Rethinking Dvořák: Views from Five Countries” in terms of artistic plans that Dvořák had in mind before his death in detail.

David R. Beveridge's edited volume, **Rethinking Dvořák: Views from Five Countries**, is a multi-author collection of musicological essays that reexamines Antonín Dvořák's life, works, and cultural context from a variety of scholarly perspectives. While the volume addresses a wide range of Dvořák-related topics—such as questions of musical style, national identity, reception history, and archival research—several chapters and discussions within it shed valuable light on Dvořák's final years and the artistic plans he harbored before his death in 1904. Below is an overview and analysis of the book, followed by a closer look at how it illuminates Dvořák's late style and projected future works.

1. General Structure and Purpose of *Rethinking Dvořák*

1. Multi-National Perspectives

As indicated by the subtitle, *Views from Five Countries*, the volume brings together scholars from various cultural and academic backgrounds—Czech, American, British, German, and others. Each contributor rethinks conventional narratives of Dvořák's output (the standard “New World Symphony” focus, for example) by offering nuanced insights into lesser-known works, archival discoveries, and modern analytical methods.

2. Thematic Range

- **Biographical Contexts:** Some essays recontextualize Dvořák's life, including his formative Czech environment, the influence of his trips to England, and his later sojourn in the United States (1892–1895).
- **Reception History:** Other essays trace Dvořák's standing and perception in different countries—how he was marketed, received, or criticized.
- **Analytical Approaches:** Scholars employ new music-analytical techniques (including considerations of form, harmony, motive, and orchestration) to illustrate how Dvořák's music departs from or refines Romantic-era traditions.

By weaving together these disparate threads, *Rethinking Dvořák* seeks to revise or expand older views—particularly those that cast Dvořák simply as a “folkloric” or “nationalist” composer—into a more layered understanding of his compositional imagination and ambition.

2. Dvořák's Final Period in the Book's Essays

A recurring point among contributors is Dvořák's creative evolution at the turn of the 20th century, when he returned to Prague (permanently after 1895) and was appointed the Director of the Prague Conservatory. This last decade (roughly 1894–1904) saw him:

- **Gradually Shift from Absolute to Programmatic Forms:** After his celebrated Ninth Symphony (“From the New World,” 1893), he composed a series of symphonic poems—*The Water Goblin*, *The Noon Witch*, *The Golden Spinning Wheel*, *The Wild*

Dove (all 1896), and *A Hero's Song* (1897)—showing an increasing fascination with narrative, literature, and tone-painting.

- **Focus Intensely on Opera:** From the late 1890s onward, Dvořák channeled much of his energy into operatic composition, resulting in *Rusalka* (1900), *The Devil and Kate* (Čert a Káča, 1899), and his final opera, *Armida* (1902–1903; premiere March 1904).

In *Rethinking Dvořák*, a number of authors emphasize the significance of this shift. They discuss the ways in which Dvořák integrated Czech folk elements—alongside broad European currents—into large-scale dramatic forms. They also reassess the idea that Dvořák “abandoned” symphonic writing in favor of opera; instead, they argue his understanding of orchestral texture, rhythmic drive, and melodic shaping *fed* directly into these final staged works.

3. Artistic Plans Before Dvořák's Death

3.1 Late Operas and Possible Future Projects

- **Armida (1902–1903)**
Dvořák's last completed opera, *Armida*, premiered at the National Theatre in Prague just a few weeks before his death in May 1904. While the opera was finished, certain letters and anecdotal remarks (discussed in the book) suggest that he was still rethinking sections of the score, particularly in terms of dramatic pacing and orchestration. Some of the essays in *Rethinking Dvořák* propose that he might have continued to refine or “tighten” the work had he lived longer, especially since *Armida* was not as immediately successful with the public as *Rusalka*.
- **Unrealized Operatic Plans**
From occasional references in his correspondence, we know that Dvořák kept a running list of potential dramatic sources—often fairy-tale, mythological, or historical subjects. While there is no definitive evidence of a fully formed next opera after *Armida*, some authors in *Rethinking Dvořák* note Dvořák's ongoing interest in medieval or mythic Czech stories, as well as the success of the “Czech fairy-tale” approach in *Rusalka*. These scholars speculate that, had he lived, he might have continued developing opera in this vein: large-scale works blending Czech melodic traits with a more “universal” operatic style.

3.2 Symphonic or Orchestral Works

- **Return to the Symphony?**
One viewpoint occasionally explored in the volume is whether Dvořák might have returned to purely orchestral genres had his health allowed. By the early 1900s, Dvořák felt he had said much of what he wanted in symphonies; instead, opera appeared to him as the domain in which he could tell stories, incorporate dramatic pacing, and experiment with orchestral color in ways that resonated with the new century's sensibilities. Still, due to the prestige of the symphony in Austro-German tradition—and Dvořák's own earlier achievements in that genre—some contributors posit that he could have taken on a Tenth Symphony if certain circumstances (for instance, a major commission from abroad) had arisen. However, no sketches for a new symphony survive to substantiate this possibility.

3.3 Chamber and Vocal Music

- **Smaller-Scale Works**

Although overshadowed by the late operas, Dvořák did compose select chamber and vocal pieces in the early 1900s, including *Songs on Words by Otokar Mokřý* (op. posth.). Essays in the collection point out that while such pieces do not necessarily signal a large-scale compositional plan, they do show Dvořák’s continuous interest in text setting and intimate musical expression.

- **Sacred Music**

Late in life, Dvořák’s interest in sacred vocal music was less pronounced than it had been in earlier periods (e.g., his *Stabat Mater*, *Requiem*, *Te Deum*). The volume’s contributors discuss whether his busy teaching schedule and engagement with opera allowed for a future oratorio or mass, but there is little hard evidence in the surviving documents.

4. Scholarly Interpretations and Debates in the Volume

1. **Revising the “Naïve Nationalist” Stereotype**

Some authors argue that older music histories relegated Dvořák to a “Czech nationalist” category, underestimating his cosmopolitan ambitions, his compositional technique, and his ability to “speak” in international musical idioms. The final period of Dvořák’s life—dominated by *Rusalka* and *Armida*—demonstrates his willingness to integrate advanced orchestral writing and more psychologically nuanced character development, aligning him more closely with late Romantic opera trends (e.g., in Germany and Italy).

2. **Cross-Fertilization with Other Composers**

The book touches on how Dvořák’s correspondence and friendships (e.g., with Brahms earlier, and with Janáček, Suk, and Foerster in Bohemia) might have informed his evolving style. While he did not necessarily plan a direct collaboration or derivative project in his final years, these relationships often shaped the conceptual directions in which he might have gone.

3. **Ambiguities in the Documentary Record**

Several essays caution that speculation about Dvořák’s future plans is hampered by incomplete or lost materials—letters, diaries, and sketches. Dvořák’s son Otakar and other relatives preserved many personal items, but not everything. Thus, the volume underscores the difficulty of making definitive claims about “unwritten” or “unfinished” works.

5. Conclusion: A Nuanced Portrait of Dvořák’s Last Ambitions

In terms of **the artistic plans Dvořák held before his death**, *Rethinking Dvořák* pieces together a picture of a composer who, in his final years:

- Felt *secure* in his orchestral legacy (nine symphonies, numerous symphonic poems) and therefore devoted himself primarily to stage works.
- Demonstrated a sustained desire to fuse **Czech melodic and folkloric elements** with more **cosmopolitan and dramatic dimensions** of European opera.

- Likely would have continued in the **operatic vein**—possibly exploring other medieval or mythic subjects in the manner of *Rusalka* and *Armida*—but whose sudden death prevented the realization of further large-scale dramatic projects.
- Saw the Prague Conservatory directorship as both a responsibility and an opportunity to shape the next generation of Czech composers, a role that may have influenced how he planned future compositions (teaching obligations could limit compositional time, but also spark new ideas through interaction with students).

Throughout *Rethinking Dvořák*, contributors emphasize that Dvořák was neither stagnating nor content merely to revisit old formulas. Rather, he was in the midst of a dynamic creative reorientation—aware of early modernist shifts in the musical world and excited by the dramatic potential of opera. The book’s collective scholarship presents a nuanced, often forward-looking Dvořák—one whose death at age 62 cut short a compelling operatic trajectory and left tantalizing questions as to how he might have further shaped Czech and international music had he lived longer.

Describe and analyze please the work of Gervase Hughes „Dvořák: His Life and Music” in terms of artistic plans that Dvořák had in mind before his death in detail.

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Overview of Gervase Hughes’s Book

Gervase Hughes’s *Dvořák: His Life and Music* is a mid-20th-century study that offers a concise yet insightful overview of Antonín Dvořák’s biography, compositional output, and artistic development. Though not as voluminous or exhaustive as later scholarly monographs (for instance, those by Otakar Šourek or John Clapham), Hughes’s work provides an accessible narrative of Dvořák’s life while situating his major works—symphonies, chamber music, choral and operatic compositions—within a historical and stylistic context.

What sets Hughes’s approach apart is his emphasis on Dvořák’s **musical personality** and the **organic interplay** between the composer’s Bohemian roots and the broader European (and American) influences on his style. In tracing Dvořák’s development from rural beginnings to international fame, Hughes dedicates the final chapters to Dvořák’s last years (roughly 1900–1904), discussing how the composer’s artistic plans became increasingly concentrated on **opera** and **nationalistic expression**.

Below is an outline of how Hughes addresses Dvořák’s **late-life plans**, particularly the *projects and aspirations* he harbored shortly before his death in May 1904.

1. Emphasis on Operatic Creation

Transition Toward Opera

According to Hughes, one of the most significant shifts in Dvořák's career—visible from the mid-1890s onward—was the turn away from large-scale symphonic projects (such as the popular *New World Symphony*) toward **operatic composition**. By the time he returned from the United States in 1895, Dvořák was increasingly determined to bolster Czech-language opera on the international stage. Hughes underscores how Dvořák:

1. **Prioritized Czech libretti:** Even when offered possible collaborations abroad, he wanted to highlight Czech folklore and language.
2. **Moved away from absolute music:** While he maintained enthusiasm for symphonic poems (e.g., the set of tone poems based on the ballads of Karel Jaromír Erben), he mainly channeled narrative energy into opera.

Final Completed Opera: *Armida*

Hughes devotes substantial attention to *Armida* (1902–1903), Dvořák's last completed opera, whose premiere in March 1904 occurred only weeks before Dvořák's death. Although *Armida* has never matched the popularity of *Rusalka*, Hughes argues that it represents a **culminating statement** of Dvořák's lyrical style, replete with expansive orchestration and rich melodic invention.

- **Mythological and Romantic Elements:** Hughes describes how *Armida*'s subject matter—a Crusade-era love story rooted in Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*—offered Dvořák a lavish setting for large choral scenes and orchestral colors.
- **Reflecting Dvořák's Late Style:** Hughes notes that the blending of lush Romantic lyricism with Czech idioms (e.g., dance rhythms, harmonic motifs) is characteristic of Dvořák's final compositional period.

Uncertain Future Plans for Opera

Hughes also mentions that Dvořák toyed with the idea of further stage works (there were notes or conversations about new libretti), although none of those advanced beyond preliminary sketches. Nevertheless, the opera genre stood at the forefront of his mind, and *Armida* exemplified his unwavering commitment to large-scale vocal drama.

2. Unfulfilled Symphonic and Orchestral Possibilities

Decline in Large-Form Instrumental Output

Although Dvořák composed prolifically in nearly every major genre, Hughes observes that, by 1900, Dvořák's **purely orchestral projects** had tapered off. He had already written his nine symphonies, his famous cello concerto, and an array of symphonic poems. In the last few years, he was drawn more firmly to **programmatic** and **dramatic** possibilities—hence operas and tone poems—rather than abstract form.

Sketches and Ideas Left Behind

Hughes notes that surviving letters and anecdotes from students at the Prague Conservatory (where Dvořák served as director) suggest Dvořák mentioned potential **choral-orchestral works** and smaller **instrumental pieces** (such as additional tone poems or a new set of

Slavonic Dances). Yet no firm outline or single “in-progress” symphony emerged. Rather, the impetus for large instrumental works had given way to stage compositions, with folk and national themes still featuring prominently.

3. National and Pedagogical Vision

Cultural Advocacy in the Final Years

One of Hughes’s recurring themes is Dvořák’s **pride in Czech musical traditions** and how that pride fueled his teaching, especially after his 1901 appointment as director of the Prague Conservatory. In the final phase of his life, Dvořák envisioned:

1. **Raising new generations of Czech composers:** Hughes highlights how Dvořák’s role as a teacher and mentor was not passive. He actively encouraged a young wave of composers (e.g., Josef Suk, Vítězslav Novák) to draw from Czech heritage.
2. **Expanding Czech repertoire:** Beyond personal composition, Dvořák hoped to secure more international performances of Czech operas and symphonic works, championing Smetana, Fibich, and others alongside his own.

Plans for a “National Opera School”

Because Dvořák considered opera crucial for cultural visibility, Hughes remarks that he saw *Rusalka* (1900) and *Armida* (1903) as two steps in a broader vision: establishing a **Czech national opera tradition** that could flourish internationally. While not a formal “plan” in the sense of an institutional blueprint, Dvořák’s private correspondence suggests he was in earnest about wanting to see Prague become a recognized center of operatic excellence. Hughes interprets Dvořák’s final creative efforts—especially *Armida*—as part of this legacy-building project.

4. The Influence of Health and Circumstance

Declining Health and Time Constraints

Hughes does not dwell excessively on medical details, but he acknowledges that Dvořák’s **deteriorating health** (he suffered from illness throughout early 1904) inevitably curtailed his ability to pursue future compositions. Nonetheless, in the months before his death, Dvořák remained energetic in teaching duties and continued to refine *Armida*, showing he intended to stay productive.

A Snapshot of Unfinished Ambitions

In Hughes’s reading, Dvořák’s final year was a **dynamic time** rather than a slow winding down. The composer was still active and deeply engaged in potential new works. However, the reality of his passing in May 1904 meant that many of his **speculative or aspirational projects** were left undocumented or only partially so—something Hughes discusses when noting how little “futuristic planning” remains in Dvořák’s extant letters or diaries compared to earlier periods.

5. Artistic Legacy as Portrayed by Hughes

Balancing Czech Roots and International Fame

A key argument that Hughes makes is that Dvořák's greatest achievement—fusing Czech national style with **broader European** (and, briefly, American) musical trends—remained a guiding principle to the very end. From the *New World Symphony* to *Rusalka* and *Armida*, Dvořák's quest to **export** Czech culture without diluting its essence proved enduring.

Influence on 20th-Century Czech Composers

Hughes closes by suggesting that Dvořák's final years set the stage for **20th-century Czech composers**. The mentorship at Prague Conservatory and his championing of indigenous subjects in opera laid a sturdy foundation for successors. Had Dvořák lived longer, it seems likely (in Hughes's estimation) that he would have **continued to explore** Czech-themed stage works, thus broadening the repertoire of Czech opera still further.

Conclusion

In *Dvořák: His Life and Music*, Gervase Hughes offers a portrait of a composer who, right up to his passing, maintained ambitious artistic plans—chiefly centered on *expanding Czech national opera* and guiding young composers. Hughes interprets Dvořák's decision to channel his creative energy into operas like *Rusalka* and *Armida* as a culmination of his lifelong desire to elevate Czech-language composition to international repute.

Although no large-scale symphony or instrumental composition was definitively in progress, Dvořák's vision for the future revolved around:

1. Building a robust Czech opera school that could enjoy success beyond Bohemia.
2. Mentoring the next generation of Czech composers.
3. Advancing a form of national style that blended local folk elements with universal Romantic techniques.

Hughes's account, therefore, underscores the composer's untiring dedication to his cultural roots and his desire—ultimately, unfulfilled due to his death—to see a new wave of Czech operatic and symphonic masterpieces continue to flourish in the early 20th century.

Liszt's artistic plans before his death

Please describe what other artistic tasks Liszt was planning to carry out before his death, but which were not carried out because of his death? Also, list the authors who have analysed this issue in the context of Liszt's career and outline their main conclusions.

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Franz Liszt's final years (he died on July 31, 1886) were characterized by a mixture of continued creativity—he was still composing, performing, and teaching up to his last months—and worsening health. Although he remained active, several plans and larger-scale works remained unfinished at his death. Scholars differ slightly in enumerating precisely which projects Liszt still hoped to complete, but the following are consistently cited as major unfinished or unrealized tasks:

1. The Oratorio *St. Stanislaus*

One of the most frequently mentioned unfinished works is the oratorio *St. Stanislaus*. Liszt worked on it fitfully from the mid-1870s onward and returned to it sporadically in the 1880s. Evidence from sketches and letters indicates he intended *St. Stanislaus* to be another large-scale religious composition, akin to his earlier oratorios (*Christus* and *Die Legende von der heiligen Elisabeth*). He did not, however, complete it: while some sections exist in outline or draft, they were never finalized or fully orchestrated.

Significance:

- Liszt had already established himself as a composer of monumental sacred music, and *St. Stanislaus* might have served as a culmination of his lifelong engagement with religious subject matter.
- The incompleteness reflects the toll ill health, travel, and obligations took on Liszt in his last years; he was never able to devote concentrated time to finishing the oratorio.

2. Revisions and Publications of Existing Works

Liszt was famously prone to revising his own compositions, sometimes publishing multiple versions of the same work over the course of decades. In his final years, he still entertained plans to:

- **Revise and republish earlier piano works.** Letters from the mid-1880s suggest he contemplated further “final” revisions to some of his piano pieces and songs.

- **Further transcriptions.** Having devoted so much of his career to transcriptions (of operas, symphonies, lieder, etc.), Liszt was considering new projects or expansions of older ones, especially of Wagner’s music.

Significance:

- Liszt’s revision habit underscores how he viewed compositions as ongoing processes rather than fixed entities.
- These final revisions never materialized or were left in fragmentary manuscript form when he died.

3. Possible Late Choral or Liturgical Works

Beyond *St. Stanislaus*, some scholars speculate Liszt had designs for additional shorter sacred works (motets, masses, or settings of liturgical texts). Although concrete documentation (letters, sketches) is less extensive than for *St. Stanislaus*, there are indications he considered assembling a few smaller-scale religious settings:

- **Fragments** in Liszt’s manuscript notebooks suggest ideas for new liturgical music, but they remain inconclusive as to whether they were intended as stand-alone works or part of larger cycles.
- Liszt’s abiding interest in church music (exemplified by *Via crucis*, composed in 1878–79) means these sketches could have been potential additions to his religious output.

4. Masterclasses, Pedagogical Plans, and Editorial Work

Although not as “artistic” in the compositional sense, Liszt was deeply involved in teaching until his final months. He had plans to continue his Weimar masterclasses and to organize a clearer editorial plan for his (and sometimes his pupils’) works:

- **Masterclasses and Conservatory Support.** Liszt traveled regularly (to Weimar, Budapest, Rome, and other centers) to give lessons, sometimes planning expansions or reorganizations of these sessions. His failing health curtailed some of these intentions.
- **Editing Projects.** Some letters hint that Liszt wanted to oversee more definitive publications or critical editions of his own oeuvre (including piano reductions of his sacred works), but these projects were largely left to subsequent editors after his death.

Major Authors Who Have Analyzed These Unfinished Plans

Below are several leading Liszt scholars who have addressed Liszt’s late-life projects. Their principal conclusions differ in emphasis, but all acknowledge that Liszt’s poor health, continued traveling, and wide-ranging commitments contributed to the incomplete state of his final plans.

1. **Alan Walker**

- **Key Work:** *Franz Liszt* (3 vols., especially Vol. 3: *The Final Years, 1861–1886*).
 - **Main Conclusions:**
 - Liszt’s late creativity remained remarkably active, with projects like *St. Stanislaus* showing he had not abandoned large-scale forms.
 - Health problems, the demands of constant travel, and external pressures (family obligations, especially to the Wagner circle) prevented him from finishing these works.
 - Walker sees *St. Stanislaus* as potentially a “crowning” statement of Liszt’s religious style had he lived to complete it.
2. **Humphrey Searle**
- **Key Work:** *The Music of Liszt*.
 - **Main Conclusions:**
 - Searle catalogs Liszt’s compositions and sketches, placing *St. Stanislaus* among the major unfinished items.
 - Emphasizes that Liszt’s habit of revision and reworking meant that many “final versions” were never truly final.
 - Attributes some unfinished pieces to Liszt’s experimental late style, suggesting that even if he had more time, he might have continued altering them.
3. **Derek Watson**
- **Key Work:** *Liszt* (biography).
 - **Main Conclusions:**
 - Highlights the tension between Liszt’s public role (concert tours, teaching, presence at festivals) and private compositional ambitions.
 - Argues Liszt remained driven to produce large-scale sacred music, though ill health and social obligations impeded the realization of these plans.
 - Notes that Liszt’s late sketches reveal an ongoing quest for innovative harmonic and formal ideas—some of which might have emerged more fully if he had completed *St. Stanislaus* or other final works.
4. **Peter Raabe**
- **Key Work:** *Liszts Schaffen* (early 20th-century study, in German).
 - **Main Conclusions:**
 - One of the first to draw attention to the unfinished *St. Stanislaus* in detail, though some of his views on Liszt’s motivations have been revised by later scholarship.
 - Stresses that Liszt’s devotion to religious subjects had deepened in his last years, but he lacked the physical vigor to complete a large oratorio.
5. **Kenneth Hamilton** (in shorter articles/essays)
- **Key Focus:** Performance practice and Liszt’s piano works.
 - **Main Conclusions:**
 - While not devoting as much space to large choral works, Hamilton notes that Liszt’s final ambitions for his piano output, including possible transcriptions and revisions, remained unrealized.
 - Suggests Liszt might have continued refining his late-style piano pieces, which exhibit a spare, often harmonically daring idiom.

Summary of Scholarly Consensus

- **Incomplete but Ambitious:** Most scholars see Liszt’s late projects—especially *St. Stanislaus*—as potentially significant continuations of his spiritual and compositional journey.
- **Health and Overextension:** There is broad agreement that Liszt’s physical decline, coupled with the demands of a still-hectic schedule, left him with little energy or time to devote to new large-scale works.
- **Evolving Style:** Scholars underscore that in his very last years, Liszt was moving toward ever more harmonically and formally adventurous writing, and the incomplete nature of these projects is partly because his evolving style often led him to revisit and revise compositions continuously.

In short, Liszt’s unfulfilled plans—particularly the oratorio *St. Stanislaus* and further revision/publication schemes—point to a composer whose creative impulses remained strong up until his final illness. Even in his seventies, Liszt was still pushing musical boundaries and harboring ambitious artistic goals that, ultimately, he did not live to complete.

Describe and analyze please the work of Alan Walker „Franz Liszt (3 vols., especially Vol. 3: The Final Years, 1861–1886” in terms of artistic plans that Liszt had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Alan Walker’s three-volume biography of Franz Liszt is often regarded as the definitive scholarly study of Liszt’s life and work. In **Volume 3: The Final Years, 1861–1886**, Walker focuses closely on Liszt’s later period, capturing not only the dramatic personal and professional events of Liszt’s twilight but also providing insight into the composer’s evolving artistic vision. Below is an overview and analysis of that volume, with special attention to the **artistic plans Liszt held before his death** and how Walker interprets them in the broader context of 19th-century music.

1. Context and Scope of Alan Walker’s Volume 3

1. Chronological Framework (1861–1886):

- Walker begins Volume 3 around 1861, a turning point in Liszt’s life. That year, Liszt moved more permanently to Rome, reflecting a shift from his earlier years as a touring piano virtuoso to a more introspective life focused on composition, pedagogy, and spiritual pursuits.
- The biography ends with Liszt’s death in 1886. This final quarter-century is marked by Liszt’s transition from Europe’s most famous pianist to a revered (if sometimes controversial) elder statesman of music, a composer still forging new paths in harmony, form, and thematic content.

2. Methodological Rigor:

- Walker draws extensively on primary sources: letters, diaries, archival documents, and contemporary accounts. This allows him to reconstruct not

only the chronology of Liszt's daily life but also the evolution of his compositional projects, his relationships with publishers, and his critical reception.

3. **Portrait of Liszt the Composer–Teacher:**

- In these final decades, Liszt lived primarily in a threefold pattern—dividing his time among Rome, Weimar, and Budapest. Walker carefully follows Liszt's travels, showing how each location bore significance:
 - **Rome** for his sacred compositions and spiritual immersion,
 - **Weimar** for masterclasses and official musical functions, and
 - **Budapest** for fostering Hungarian musical identity (including the founding of what would later become the Liszt Academy).

2. Liszt's Personal and Professional Circumstances in His Final Years

1. **Relationship with Princess Carolyne von Sayn-Wittgenstein:**

- Although the hoped-for marriage never materialized, Carolyne remained a significant influence, particularly regarding Liszt's religious output. Walker emphasizes how their intellectual exchanges spurred Liszt's interest in ecclesiastical music and theological topics, even as their direct personal relationship cooled.

2. **The “Threefold Existence” (Rome–Weimar–Budapest):**

- Walker illustrates how this constant travel, while physically taxing for Liszt (especially as he aged), allowed him to maintain artistic and pedagogical links across Europe.
- In Weimar, Liszt conducted masterclasses and championed new music. In Budapest, he nurtured Hungarian music and nationalism, showing an enduring wish to found a lasting musical institution. In Rome, he composed religious works and deepened his spiritual reflections.

3. **Health Struggles and Fatigue:**

- Walker does not shy away from detailing Liszt's deteriorating health: cataracts, dropsy, insomnia, and general frailty. Even so, Liszt continued to travel widely, to teach, and to compose almost to the last days of his life.

3. Key Artistic Plans and Compositional Visions

The crux of your question concerns the **artistic plans Liszt held in mind before his death**. Alan Walker delves deeply into these projects in Volume 3, offering context for each and explaining how they reflected Liszt's late style. Four main areas stand out:

1. **Development of a New Harmonic Language**

- **Late Piano Works:** Pieces such as *Nuages gris* (1881), *La lugubre gondola* (1882, revised 1885), and the *Bagatelle sans tonalité* (1885) show a striking harmonic daring and experimentation. Walker highlights Liszt's fascination

with ambiguous tonal centers, use of the whole-tone scale, and free chromaticism—ideas that foreshadow Impressionism and early modernism.

- **Why It Mattered:** According to Walker, Liszt was consciously probing the boundaries of traditional harmony, aiming to expand the expressive range of late Romantic music. Liszt saw these as steps toward what he referred to as the “Music of the Future,” a concept shared in part with Wagner but realized very differently in Liszt’s piano and sacred works.

2. Sacred and Choral Compositions

- **Ongoing Religious Inspiration:** Liszt’s deep spiritual inclination—encouraged by Carolyne von Sayn-Wittgenstein—evolved into large-scale sacred projects. He wanted to elevate religious music to the same artistic stature as orchestral works and operas.
- **Key Works:**
 - *Via Crucis* (composed in the mid-1870s, published posthumously): a stark and harmonically adventurous set of meditations on the Stations of the Cross.
 - Revisions and expansions of his earlier oratorios (e.g., *Christus*) and other shorter sacred pieces.
- **Walker’s View:** Walker interprets these late sacred works as deeply personal statements, combining Liszt’s visionary harmonic language with a fervent spiritual message. They occupied a central place in Liszt’s final plans, evidenced by the care he devoted to their revision and potential publication.

3. Support for Younger Composers and Institutional Visions

- **Fostering the Next Generation:** Walker devotes several chapters to Liszt’s teaching in Weimar, emphasizing Liszt’s “hands-off” masterclass style that encouraged individuality. Liszt believed that the future of music would be built by composer-pianists who thought beyond the conventional repertoire.
- **Founding the Liszt Academy (Franz Liszt Academy of Music) in Budapest (1875):**
 - While Liszt served only part-time, he devoted considerable energy to shaping the curriculum and elevating musical standards in Hungary.
 - The Academy exemplified Liszt’s plan to institutionalize high-level music education, ensuring a lasting legacy of rigorous piano technique and compositional craft.
- **Championing Hungarian Identity:** Walker points out how Liszt’s final dreams for Hungarian music involved writing new national works (e.g., late *Hungarian Rhapsodies* or “Hungarian Historical Portraits”) that would combine folk elements and cutting-edge technique.

4. Late Orchestral and Dramatic Projects

- **Tone Poems Revisited:** While most of his major tone poems were written in Weimar during the 1850s, Liszt continued to refine and revise some of them in his last years. Walker notes Liszt’s search for greater economy of form and concentrated expression.
- **Operatic Aspirations?** By Liszt’s later life, the direct impetus to write a major opera himself had mostly faded—unlike Wagner, Liszt’s main focus drifted toward religious and experimental piano/choral music. Yet Walker describes occasional references in Liszt’s correspondence to new “musical dramas” or oratorios on biblical subjects. Few were fully realized, but they underline how Liszt never ceased envisioning large-scale musical statements.

4. Walker's Analysis of Liszt's Late-Period Vision

1. **Stylistic Radicalism vs. Contemporary Reception:**
 - Walker emphasizes the disjunction between Liszt's late works—which often feature a spare, forward-looking style—and the conservative tastes of many 19th-century audiences. Some critics and peers found these pieces perplexing or even “unfinished”-sounding. Yet Liszt persisted, convinced they represented a bold, future-oriented direction.
2. **Spiritual Depth and Personal Solitude:**
 - Walker discusses the confluence of Liszt's piety with a deepening loneliness. The composer's inward turn—intensified by disappointments in his personal life—manifested in compositions with more austere textures and a hushed, meditative tone.
3. **Ongoing Pedagogical Mission:**
 - Even in his late 70s, Liszt hosted daily piano lessons for advanced pupils, passing on his philosophical and technical ideals. According to Walker, these sessions were as important to Liszt's legacy as his final compositions: Liszt saw this “hands-on” approach as a crucial step to preparing the next generation to continue his musical ideals.
4. **Desire for Posthumous Recognition:**
 - Walker indicates that Liszt sensed many of these forward-thinking works would not be fully appreciated during his lifetime. Still, he meticulously prepared manuscripts, corresponded with publishers, and revised major compositions, perhaps suspecting that future audiences would grasp the significance of these late experiments.

5. Legacy and Conclusion

Alan Walker's Volume 3 portrays Liszt's final years as a period of **intense creativity**, spiritual searching, and profound musical innovation. Far from entering a “creative decline,” Liszt was planning and composing works that ventured beyond the harmonic and structural norms of the late Romantic era. Key takeaways include:

- **Harmonic Experimentation:** Liszt's last piano pieces and sacred music served as laboratories for post-tonal harmonies and forms—a “bridge” that later composers (such as Debussy and early 20th-century modernists) would cross more fully.
- **Religious and National Aspirations:** The completion of ambitious choral and sacred works, alongside foundational work in Budapest, reflect Liszt's twin dedication to spiritual devotion and Hungarian cultural life.
- **Pedagogy and Institutional Foundations:** Liszt wanted to ensure his vision endured, both through direct teaching (masterclasses) and through institutions like the Franz Liszt Academy of Music.
- **Posthumous Perspective:** Walker highlights that Liszt's final compositional directions were not widely appreciated in his day. Yet he held firm to these plans, which proved prescient for future musical developments.

In sum, Alan Walker’s third volume underscores that Liszt’s late years were marked by a remarkable and forward-looking artistic agenda. Despite declining health and a sometimes skeptical audience, Liszt maintained bold plans for innovative harmonic exploration, sacred composition, and institutional leadership—plans whose fruits would only be fully understood and celebrated well into the 20th century.

Describe and analyze please the work of Peter Raabe „Liszts Schaffen” in terms of artistic plans that Liszt had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Peter Raabe’s study of Franz Liszt, *Liszts Schaffen* (in English often translated or referenced as *Liszt’s Creative Work*), remains one of the most frequently cited historical monographs on Liszt’s music. Written in the early 20th century, it reflects the musicological perspective of that period—often biographically oriented and, by modern standards, somewhat selective. However, it still offers a broad survey of Liszt’s compositions and their stylistic evolution, as well as insights into Liszt’s personal ideals and artistic ambitions toward the end of his life.

Below is a detailed look at how Raabe addresses Liszt’s work in its final stages and the artistic plans Liszt had in mind before he died in 1886, along with some context for a contemporary perspective:

1. Context and Structure of *Liszts Schaffen*

1. Biographical Ties to the Music

Raabe’s book is structured with a strong biographical foundation. He moves chronologically through Liszt’s oeuvre, linking compositional developments to events in Liszt’s life. This viewpoint—though overshadowed today by more nuanced studies—reflects an early-20th-century attempt to craft a unified narrative.

2. Categorization of Works

Raabe uses a genre-based approach to discuss Liszt’s output: piano music, orchestral works, choral and religious compositions, and songs. Within each section, he emphasizes major stylistic milestones, focusing on the so-called “transcendent” works that shaped the Romantic piano tradition and the symphonic poem concept.

3. Focus on Stylistic Evolution

One consistent theme in *Liszts Schaffen* is Raabe’s attention to how Liszt’s style shifted from the dazzling virtuosity of the early years (the 1830s–1840s) to the more introspective, harmonically advanced works of his later life. Raabe highlights Liszt’s turn away from purely virtuosic showpieces toward works that explore new harmonic landscapes and religious/spiritual expressions.

2. Liszt's Late Style and Last Projects

1. The Late Piano Works

Raabe devotes particular attention to Liszt's late piano compositions—works like *Czardas macabre* (1881–82) and *Nuages gris* (1881). These pieces, though small in scale, carry forward Liszt's pioneering approach to harmony and form. Raabe notes that these late works often employ ambiguous tonal centers, unusual chord progressions, and stark, almost “austere” pianistic textures.

○ Artistic Plan and Raabe's Interpretation

Raabe interprets these late experiments as part of Liszt's broader vision of music that transcends the conventional Romantic “beautiful.” He sees them as early seeds of what would become a modernist aesthetic. According to Raabe, Liszt was consciously turning away from bravura and sentimentality, hinting at future musical directions (e.g., Impressionism, Expressionism, or early 20th-century modernism).

2. Religious/Spiritual Works and Final Oratorios

In addressing Liszt's deepening religious conviction, Raabe also explores how Liszt planned to continue expanding the repertoire of oratorios and sacred works. Though many of these were either incomplete or never fully realized, Raabe stresses Liszt's fascination with uniting the forms of religious music with the symphonic or thematic transformation techniques he had pioneered.

○ The Influence of Plainchant and Chorale

Raabe observes that Liszt's scores from the 1870s and early 1880s show a particular interest in quoting (or being inspired by) plainchant motifs or liturgical melodies. While Raabe acknowledges that Liszt did not systematically unify these motifs in any single late magnum opus, he suggests that Liszt's notebooks indicate a plan to create larger-scale sacred pieces that would incorporate these melodic gestures in a more integrated, experimental style.

3. Late Orchestral Sketches

While Liszt did not produce as many new large-scale orchestral works in his final years, Raabe notes that he had conceptions for symphonic poems that extended beyond his original set (the cycle of 13 symphonic poems composed primarily in the Weimar period). Raabe draws on surviving sketches, letters, and anecdotal references to show that Liszt toyed with ideas of further “narrative” or thematic transformation. However, the bulk of these remained incomplete or were never fully developed.

○ Transformation of Thematic Material

According to Raabe, Liszt's thematic transformation technique continued to interest him greatly, and he had a mind to push it still further. Liszt's existing orchestral sketches (some only a few bars long, others partially orchestrated) show an ever more compressed motivic language. Raabe saw this compression as an indicator of Liszt's forward-looking approach.

3. Artistic Ambitions and Philosophical Underpinnings

1. Liszt's Desire for Musical “Truth”

One of Raabe's recurring ideas is that Liszt, by the 1880s, had become keenly

concerned with expressing deeper truths rather than mere technical brilliance. Liszt's artistic plan involved music that bore the mark of lived spiritual and emotional experience, rendered in daring harmonic idioms. Raabe connects this to Liszt's documented sense of mortality (he was increasingly ill toward the end of his life) and his long-held religious convictions.

2. **Integration of Art Forms**

Building on Liszt's early collaborations with poets and philosophers (e.g., the Weimar years with the "New German School"), Raabe claims that Liszt still hoped to create works that integrated literature, painting, or religious scripture. Sketches for choral symphonies or extended oratorios show an impulse toward syncretic art—though most of these remained unfinished.

3. **Prelude to Modernism**

Raabe's view—shared by some later scholars—is that Liszt's increasingly "dissonant" or "skeletal" late style points to the early language of modern composers like Debussy or Bartók. In *Lizsts Schaffen*, Raabe underscores the significance of Liszt's brief, angular pieces (e.g., *Bagatelle sans tonalité*) that gave the piano repertoire "moments of strangeness" or "tonal unrest." This was a hallmark of Liszt's last artistic plan: to question the boundaries of tonality and form.

4. Critical Assessment of Raabe's Perspective

1. **Strengths**

- **Comprehensive Overview:** Raabe includes a sweeping survey of Liszt's works, which helps situate the late pieces in a larger catalog.
- **Biographical Insights:** He draws upon a wealth of letters, anecdotes, and recollections of Liszt's pupils and contemporaries, providing context for Liszt's mindset toward the end of his life.
- **Identification of Key Stylistic Trends:** Raabe is notable for recognizing the "protomodernist" qualities in late Liszt—an important observation that current Liszt scholars still investigate.

2. **Limitations**

- **Period Biases:** Written in the early 20th century in Germany, *Lizsts Schaffen* can reflect certain nationalistic or aesthetic priorities of its era, sometimes emphasizing "great man" narratives.
- **Selective in Citation:** Raabe's source usage was not always systematic by today's scholarly standards, and he may over-rely on certain anecdotal testimonies that modern research contests or contextualizes differently.
- **Under-Representation of Certain Works:** Some lesser-known (and still under-performed) late choral pieces or piano trifles are not examined in much depth. Raabe often focuses on "major statements," though Liszt's late style blossomed as much in smaller experimental forms.

5. Legacy and Modern Resonance

Today, musicologists generally continue to see Liszt's final years as pivotal: not only did they produce ethereal meditations for piano, but they also presaged many of the shifts toward atonality and impressionistic harmony that would characterize early 20th-century music. Raabe's *Liszts Schaffen*—despite its older methodology—remains a reference point because it tackled many of these issues head-on at a time when romantic notions of Liszt's virtuosity still dominated. In many ways, Raabe spurred new discussions:

- **Harmonic Innovation:** Drawing attention to the advanced harmonic language of *Nuages gris* and similar works.
- **Formal Experimentation:** Highlighting Liszt's exploration of cyclical and thematic transformation methods in ways that could be integrated into new forms, particularly religious compositions.
- **Philosophical/Spiritual Element:** Arguing that Liszt's profound interest in spirituality shaped not just his sacred music but also his broader compositional approach, including purely instrumental forms.

Conclusion

In *Liszts Schaffen*, Peter Raabe provides a portrait of Liszt's vast output and focuses closely on the progressive, visionary qualities of Liszt's final works. Raabe positions Liszt's last artistic plans as a convergence of deep spirituality, pioneering harmonic exploration, and a near-obsessive drive to integrate multiple art forms into cohesive, transcendent musical statements. While modern scholarship has refined or even challenged some of Raabe's specific claims—particularly those relying on anecdotal evidence—his fundamental observation stands: Liszt was pushing boundaries and imagining far-reaching possibilities for music until his final days. The sketches, incomplete sacred works, and daring late piano pieces all testify to a composer determined to explore uncharted territory—an artistic vision Raabe underscores as both remarkable for its era and foundational for the music of the century to follow.

Describe and analyze please the work of Humphrey Searle „The Music of Liszt” in terms of artistic plans that Liszt had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Humphrey Searle's classic study *The Music of Liszt* (first published in 1954, with subsequent revisions) remains one of the cornerstones of modern Liszt scholarship. Searle's work is notable not just for its comprehensive cataloging and classification of Liszt's works but for its insightful commentary on Liszt's stylistic evolution, his compositional techniques, and his overarching artistic goals. When it comes to Liszt's artistic plans before his death in 1886—plans that, in several cases, were only partially realized—Searle offers a detailed context that places these unfinished or less-developed projects in the broader arc of Liszt's oeuvre.

Below is an overview and analysis of how Searle addresses these late artistic aspirations. The discussion is organized into several themes that Searle touches upon in *The Music of Liszt* and links them to the unfinished or projected works that Liszt left behind.

1. Late Stylistic Developments

A. Harmonic Innovation and the Move Toward Modernism

- **Context in Searle's book:** Searle underscores the significance of Liszt's late harmonic language as a forerunner to twentieth-century developments. In several passages, he shows how Liszt, toward the end of his life, used ever more daring chord progressions, ambiguous tonality, and chromaticism.
- **Late works that embody these traits:** Searle cites pieces like *Nuages Gris* (*Gray Clouds*), *Unstern!*, and *Bagatelle sans tonalité*. These are short piano works composed in Liszt's final years, often overshadowed by his more famous Romantic showpieces but revered by later composers for their forward-looking experimentation.
- **Artistic plans:** Liszt seems to have intended to carry his harmonic experiments into larger-scale forms—whether that meant additional symphonic poems or expansions of existing liturgical works. Although these extensive expansions never fully materialized, the sketches and smaller keyboard works show him still pushing musical boundaries.

B. Intensified Expressiveness and Introspection

- **Context in Searle's book:** Searle notes the shift from the flamboyant virtuosity of the 1830s–1840s to a more introspective, spiritual, and often austere musical style in the 1870s–1880s. He argues that Liszt's late works fuse his religious convictions with the modern, experimental tendencies of his musical language.
- **Representative late works:** Large-scale choral settings such as *Via Crucis* (the Stations of the Cross) and austere piano pieces are prime examples Searle analyzes. They illustrate that Liszt's creative focus was increasingly on meditative, spiritual, and even stark emotional statements.
- **Artistic plans:** Liszt's personal letters (some quoted or paraphrased by Searle) show an enduring desire to create sacred music dramas and further oratorios—works that combined spiritual subject matter with advanced musical language. This spiritual dimension, in combination with the leaner, more modern idiom, was a key focus of his final years, though many such projects remained incomplete.

2. Unfinished Large-Scale Compositions

A. The Opera *Sardanapalo*

- **Context in Searle's book:** One of Liszt's major unfinished works, *Sardanapalo* was an opera planned on the subject of Lord Byron's tragedy *Sardanapalus*. Searle points out that Liszt's ambitions for operatic form had been evident since the Weimar years, but actual progress on the piece was sporadic.
- **Reasons for its incompleteness:** Through the sketches and commentary that survived, Searle notes issues with the libretto, Liszt's own insecurities about writing for the stage, and his continuous travels after 1861.

- **Artistic plans:** Although the opera remained incomplete, surviving portions reveal a mix of bel canto influence with Liszt's progressive harmonic idiom. Searle interprets this as Liszt's attempt to craft a "new musical drama" akin to Wagner's but still distinctly Lisztian, emphasizing color and virtuosic writing.

B. Oratorios and Choral Works (*St. Stanislaus* and Others)

- **Context in Searle's book:** Liszt's religious outlook deepened with age, and he began several sacred works that were never fully brought to fruition. Searle details *St. Stanislaus*, a planned oratorio that was left incomplete.
- **Artistic and spiritual direction:** Searle stresses that Liszt did not view these oratorios as mere church music but as progressive "music dramas" with sacred subjects. They represented part of Liszt's hope to elevate sacred music to the level of symphonic poetry.
- **Plans and legacy:** While the fragmentary nature of these scores limits their performance viability, Searle reveals that Liszt's conceptual notes illustrate a unique fusion of dramatic narrative, orchestral innovation, and choral grandeur that would have advanced the oratorio genre had he lived longer or focused more steadily on their completion.

3. Late Piano Experiments and Miniatures

A. Death-Themed and Transcendental Pieces

- **Context in Searle's book:** Searle gives particular attention to Liszt's turn toward death-themed compositions. For instance, the *Funérailles*-like style found in *La lugubre gondola* and *R.W. – Venezia* (a tribute to Wagner) indicates Liszt's preoccupation with mortality.
- **Artistic plans:** According to Searle, Liszt saw these pieces as musical poems that could have formed cycles or suites capturing the journey from life to death, possibly to be expanded into larger multi-movement works. Although only fragments and shorter pieces survive, Searle posits that Liszt's notebooks show a persistent interest in the symbolic and programmatic potential of these themes.

B. Thematic Transformation in Late Style

- **Context in Searle's book:** A hallmark of Liszt's music is the "thematic transformation" principle, which had become the bedrock of his symphonic poems and earlier piano works. Searle demonstrates how this compositional device continued in Liszt's late period but in a more subtle, compressed form.
- **Plans left unfulfilled:** Liszt may have intended to extend new transformations into additional orchestral or chamber works. Searle references incomplete sketches hinting that Liszt wanted to push thematic transformation beyond the standard programmatic poems, perhaps applying it to more abstract or sacred contexts.

4. Personal Context and External Constraints

A. Liszt's Travel, Teaching, and Family Obligations

- **Context in Searle's book:** One of the reasons many late projects remained fragmentary was Liszt's restless lifestyle. Searle devotes space to describing Liszt's ceaseless travels among Weimar, Rome, and Budapest, as well as his teaching commitments.
- **Impact on compositional output:** In Searle's view, these obligations fragmented Liszt's time and creative energy, contributing to a patchy completion record for large-scale pieces, even though short piano works continued to appear with relative frequency.

B. The Deaths of Close Friends and Liszt's Own Health

- **Context in Searle's book:** Searle also notes that Liszt's final years were marred by failing health, as well as grief over the loss of friends and family (including his daughter, Blandine). These personal sorrows, while feeding some of his darkest and most introspective compositions, also curtailed his capacity for ambitious undertakings.
 - **Reflected in incomplete projects:** The spiritual and often brooding character of many late sketches reflects this personal turmoil, making the completion of grand visionary works—such as an entire opera or oratorio—especially challenging.
-

5. Searle's Overall Assessment of Liszt's Final Plans

A. Visionary but Partially Realized

Searle presents a balanced view: Liszt was still an innovator to the very end, exploring new harmonic frontiers and conceiving extensive works that blended religious, poetic, and musical ideas. Yet, the reality of Liszt's circumstances—constant travel, personal losses, declining health—meant that many of these late plans ended as fragments or smaller pieces rather than fully realized masterpieces.

B. Influence on Future Generations

Despite the incompleteness, Searle argues that even Liszt's sketches and late short works sowed seeds for future composers. The experimental harmony in works like *Nuages Gris* would later resonate with Debussy, Bartók, and early atonal composers. Hence, while Liszt could not fully implement all of his final artistic projects, the legacy of his late style became an essential stepping stone for modern music.

C. The Spiritual and Musical Convergence

A key takeaway from Searle's perspective is that Liszt's final artistic vision was not only musical but also spiritual: he intended to unify sacred narrative with the symphonic poem

approach he pioneered in Weimar. This convergence of liturgical drama and thematic transformation—though only partially realized—represents one of the boldest conceptual expansions in Romantic-era music.

Conclusion

In *The Music of Liszt*, Humphrey Searle meticulously details the full range of Liszt's compositions and explores the composer's evolving intentions right up to his death in 1886. Searle's scholarship reveals how Liszt strove to push musical boundaries by:

1. Experimenting with harmony and tonality in ways that looked ahead to twentieth-century modernism.
2. Transforming sacred oratorio forms by bringing the symphonic poem's dramatic cohesion into liturgical settings.
3. Exploring introspective and death-centered themes that produced some of the most daring piano miniatures of the nineteenth century.
4. Planning major projects (operas, oratorios) that remained incomplete due to personal, health, and logistical constraints.

While many of Liszt's late artistic plans were not fully realized, Searle's analysis makes it clear that these projects were far from abandoned trifles; rather, they were keystones in Liszt's enduring effort to unite spirituality, poetry, and innovative composition. For Searle, Liszt remained an audacious experimenter to the very end, and even his unfinished ambitions cast long shadows across the musical landscape that followed.

Debussy's artistic plans before his death

Please describe what other artistic tasks Debussy was planning to carry out before his death, but which were not carried out because of his death? Also, list the authors who have analysed this issue in the context of Debussy's career and outline their main conclusions.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Claude Debussy's final years were marked by ambitious plans that he was ultimately unable to complete before his death in 1918. Although he remained creatively active even during ill health, at least three major projects were left unfinished. Scholars frequently cite the following works as Debussy's principal uncompleted or unrealized plans:

1) The Planned Cycle of Six Chamber Sonatas

- **What was planned?**

Debussy intended to compose six instrumental sonatas for various combinations of instruments. He managed to complete only three:

1. *Sonata for Cello and Piano* (1915)
2. *Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp* (1915)
3. *Sonata for Violin and Piano* (1917)

- **Why incomplete?**

Debussy's deteriorating health, coupled with the disruptions of World War I, prevented him from finishing the remaining three sonatas. The three that do exist form some of his most forward-looking chamber music, suggesting that the full cycle would have been a major late statement had he been able to complete it.

2) Operatic Adaptations of Edgar Allan Poe

Debussy was deeply fascinated by Edgar Allan Poe's writings and planned at least two operas based on Poe's short stories:

1. ***La Chute de la Maison Usher* (The Fall of the House of Usher)**

- Debussy left behind various sketches and fragments for this opera. He envisioned a haunting, atmospheric score that captured the psychological intensity of Poe's tale. Health problems and the outbreak of war delayed his work; it remained incomplete at his death.

2. ***Le Diable dans le Beffroi* (The Devil in the Belfry)**

- Another Poe-inspired project, this opera was intended to be more satirical and fantastical. Debussy worked intermittently on the scenario and music. As with *Usher*, only incomplete sketches survive.

- **Why incomplete?**

Beyond health issues, Debussy had ever more exacting ideas about what modern opera should be—intimate, subtle, psychologically probing—making it hard for him to finalize a libretto and produce the large-scale works. Wartime constraints (both financial and practical) further derailed progress.

3) Earlier Unfinished Stage Projects

Although less frequently emphasized in discussions of his final years, Debussy also left behind other partly finished or abandoned stage works from earlier in his career—most notably *Rodrigue et Chimène* (begun in the early 1890s). He eventually set it aside on artistic grounds. While not an immediate “deathbed” plan, it underscores Debussy’s repeated attempts to reshape French opera, many of which remained unrealized.

Major Authors Who Have Analyzed Debussy’s Unfinished Projects

A number of musicologists and Debussy scholars have discussed these incomplete works in the broader context of his career, each offering slightly different perspectives on why he left so many projects unfinished and what that suggests about his evolving artistic ambitions.

1) Robert Orledge

- **Key Works:**

- *Debussy and the Theatre* (Cambridge University Press, 1982)
- Articles and editions related to Debussy’s incomplete operas

- **Main Conclusions:**

1. **Operatic Innovation:** Orledge argues that Debussy’s desire to reinvent the operatic form—favoring nuanced atmospheres and psychological subtlety—delayed concrete progress on *Usher* and *Le Diable dans le Beffroi*.
2. **Health and War:** He emphasizes the impact of Debussy’s terminal illness and the material hardships of World War I, which made it impossible to bring these large-scale projects to fruition.
3. **Sketches as Insights:** Orledge’s detailed examination of the surviving sketches suggests directions that Debussy’s late style might have pursued had he been able to continue.

2) François Lesure

- **Key Works:**

- *Claude Debussy: Biographie critique*
- Critical editions of Debussy’s letters and manuscripts

- **Main Conclusions:**

1. **Shift Toward Chamber Music:** Lesure highlights Debussy’s turn to more intimate genres (the late sonatas, piano works) partly out of necessity—smaller forms were less costly and more manageable as his health failed.

2. **Ambitious Operatic Vision:** Lesure contends Debussy wanted an opera that moved away from 19th-century grand spectacle. Debussy's own perfectionism, in addition to illness, slowed him down.
3. **Importance of Poe:** Lesure underscores Debussy's lifelong fascination with Poe, making the unfinished operas a poignant loss in his output.

3) Edward Lockspeiser

- **Key Work:**
 - *Debussy: His Life and Mind* (Two volumes, 1962 and 1965)
- **Main Conclusions:**
 1. **Psychological Dimension:** Lockspeiser delves into the psychological motivations behind Debussy's choice of literary subjects, particularly Poe's macabre, dreamlike settings.
 2. **Late Style:** He observes a trend toward greater harmonic economy and subtlety in Debussy's last works, suggesting the incomplete operas might have featured an even more rarefied sound world.
 3. **War-time Context:** Like other scholars, Lockspeiser comments on the challenges Debussy faced working in Paris under WWI conditions, noting that these external pressures were as important as his health issues.

4) Other Scholars and Biographers

- **Rollo H. Myers** and **Roger Nichols** have also discussed Debussy's final projects, generally confirming that ill health, war, and Debussy's ever more radical operatic vision all contributed to leaving these works unfinished.
- **Denis Herlin** and other editors of Debussy's critical editions have provided insights into the manuscript sources, demonstrating that Debussy continued to revise and refine many of his sketches well into his final years.

Summary of Main Scholarly Views

1. **Perfectionism and Innovation:** Debussy's quest for a new type of music drama, breaking with operatic convention, made it hard for him to settle on definitive versions of these works.
2. **Health and Circumstance:** His worsening cancer and the material constraints of World War I severely restricted the time, energy, and resources available.
3. **Late Stylistic Hallmarks:** Surviving sketches for the unfinished operas and uncompleted sonatas indicate Debussy's harmonic language and orchestral textures were moving in bold new directions—hints of which are evident in the three completed sonatas.

Despite his profound influence on 20th-century music, Debussy's final ambitions remain tantalizingly out of reach. Scholars lament the loss but also study the surviving sketches as a window into the composer's evolving late style.

Describe and analyze please the work of François Lesure „Claude Debussy: Biographie critique” in terms of artistic plans that Debussy had in mind before his death in detail.

François Lesure's *Claude Debussy: Biographie critique* (often encountered in English as *Claude Debussy: A Critical Biography*) stands as one of the most thorough scholarly treatments of Debussy's life, music, and aesthetic convictions. Lesure was not only a respected musicologist but also the curator of Debussy's manuscripts, giving him unique, detailed insight into Debussy's oeuvre—including the composer's incomplete projects, the aesthetic directions in his late works, and the unfulfilled plans that preoccupied Debussy toward the end of his life. Below is an overview and analysis of the way Lesure treats Debussy's late artistic plans, as gleaned from *Biographie critique* and related scholarship.

1. Overview of Debussy's Final Years in Lesure's Biography

Lesure devotes considerable attention to Debussy's final decade, which was marked by both high productivity (in certain spurts) and serious personal challenges. From about 1915 onward, Debussy's health was in a steep decline due to the cancer that would ultimately cause his death in March 1918. Despite his illness—and the disruption of World War I—Debussy remained ambitious, outlining multiple large-scale projects that he hoped would shape his legacy, even if he could not complete them.

Lesure frames Debussy's late period as one of both artistic clarity and physical limitation. While Debussy's compositional voice was perhaps more condensed and nuanced than ever, he simply did not have the time or the energy to fulfill many of his plans. Lesure underscores how this tension between artistic aspiration and personal circumstances forms one of the key narratives of Debussy's final years.

2. The Unfinished Operas

2.1 *La Chute de la Maison Usher* (The Fall of the House of Usher)

One of the most frequently cited late projects is Debussy's planned operatic adaptation of Edgar Allan Poe's short story, *The Fall of the House of Usher*. Debussy was drawn to Poe's dark, psychological themes and had intended this to be part of a two-opera project (the other being *Le Diable dans le Beffroi*, also taken from Poe). In Lesure's account:

- **Source of Inspiration:** Lesure clarifies Debussy's long-standing fascination with Poe. Even before the final decade of his life, Debussy admired Poe's literary style, its interplay of atmosphere and psychological horror mirroring Debussy's own quest to capture subtleties and nuance in music.
- **Musical Language:** According to Lesure, Debussy's sketches for *La Chute de la Maison Usher* reveal a spare, almost austere musical language—different from the

comparatively lush orchestration of his earlier symbolist opera, *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1893–1902). The difference hints at Debussy’s maturing style in the final years.

- **Partial Sketches:** Lesure recounts how Debussy produced various drafts, vocal lines, and orchestral sketches. The manuscript sources show that Debussy wrestled with how to balance dramatic tension against his preference for economy of expression. His illness and the turmoil of wartime Paris impeded progress, leaving the opera incomplete.

2.2 *Le Diable dans le Beffroi* (The Devil in the Belfry)

- **Contrasting Tone:** Conceived as a comedic or satirical contrast to *Usher*’s darkness, *Le Diable dans le Beffroi* was likewise never finished. Lesure underscores the polar-opposite tonal atmosphere: from the menacing gloom of *Usher* to something wry and playful in *Le Diable*.
- **Debussy’s Late-Period Style:** If *Usher* hinted at a leaner musical language, Lesure posits that *Le Diable dans le Beffroi* might have employed similarly refined techniques, though with lighter orchestral textures and comedic rhythmic gestures.

Both operas stand as testament to Debussy’s desire to create a distinctive brand of music drama beyond the Wagnerian or grand opera models that dominated 19th-century Europe.

3. The Project of the “Six Sonatas”

3.1 Artistic Vision of the Series

One of Debussy’s major late visions was to write a cycle of six sonatas for various chamber combinations, intended to unify classical forms with his own harmonic innovations. Lesure points out that Debussy’s renewed interest in “pure” chamber music partly stemmed from his desire to honor the French Baroque tradition (e.g., Couperin, Rameau) and partly from wartime restrictions, which made staging large concerts or operatic performances extremely difficult.

3.2 The Three Completed Sonatas

- **Cello Sonata (1915)**
- **Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp (1915)**
- **Violin Sonata (1917)**

Lesure’s close study of the manuscripts and Debussy’s correspondence reveals that each of these three works was meant to have its own distinct character but still form part of a coherent whole. Among them, the Violin Sonata—premiered in 1917 with Debussy himself at the piano—was his final public appearance. Lesure reads it as a testament to Debussy’s determination to keep creating, even when he was physically unwell.

3.3 Unfinished Sonatas

The remaining three sonatas were never completed; Debussy left scant sketches and notes on possible instrumentation (one rumor included oboe, horn, and harpsichord; another alluded to clarinet, bassoon, and piano). Lesure speculates that the composer envisioned each new piece bringing a novel blend of timbres—an extension of his fascination with unique instrumental color and texture.

4. Other Late Plans and Aesthetic Directions

4.1 Late Piano Works and Beyond

While Lesure focuses heavily on the “big” unrealized projects (the two Poe operas, the uncompleted sonatas), he also provides context for a range of smaller ideas Debussy entertained. For instance:

- **Further Études:** Debussy had composed his *Twelve Études* in 1915, exploring a meticulously refined piano idiom. Lesure shows that Debussy contemplated more piano miniatures or pedagogical pieces, although no major sketches survive.
- **Stage Works & Choral Pieces:** Debussy had occasionally mentioned the possibility of an oratorio or a second large-scale stage work after *Pelléas*, though Lesure remains careful to note how few hard details survive.

4.2 The Influence of the War

Lesure reminds readers that Debussy composed or revised a handful of patriotic or occasional pieces to boost morale (e.g., *Berceuse héroïque*), though these short works did not encapsulate his deeper ambitions. Nevertheless, they occupied some of his creative energy during 1914–1917, inevitably cutting into the time he might have dedicated to longer-term projects.

4.3 Shift in Stylistic Priorities

In this biography, Lesure highlights an evolution in Debussy’s style away from the richer orchestral palette typical of *La Mer* (1905) or *Ibéria* (1908) toward a more streamlined, often daring harmonic language. This reflects in the chamber works, the incomplete opera sketches, and the piano *Études*. Lesure interprets this as a natural final chapter in Debussy’s pursuit of subtlety and concentrated expression—a thread that had existed since *Pelléas* but became more pronounced in his last years.

5. Lesure’s Critical Interpretation

5.1 Balancing Biography and Analysis

Lesure’s book is lauded for weaving Debussy’s personal story—his health struggles, his wartime life in Paris—with close readings of the musical works. By concentrating on Debussy’s manuscripts and letters, Lesure demonstrates the extent to which Debussy was wrestling with new musical forms even as physical weakness set in.

5.2 The Question of “What Might Have Been”

A core element of Lesure’s “critical biography” is assessing Debussy’s place in the broader tapestry of modern French music, especially in light of his unrealized plans. For Lesure, the incomplete Poe operas, the half-finished sonata series, and Debussy’s general shift toward chamber music symbolize both a forward-looking aesthetic and an abrupt end that foreshadows neoclassical tendencies in subsequent French composers (e.g., Ravel, Poulenc, Milhaud). Debussy’s late sketches were, in Lesure’s view, a blueprint for a more austere modernism that others would explore after the war.

5.3 Legacy and Myth

Lesure repeatedly emphasizes that, while it is tempting to romanticize Debussy’s final projects, one must remember that Debussy’s methodical nature did not guarantee that every plan would have reached completion even in better health. Still, the sketches remain compelling evidence of how Debussy’s imagination continued to push the boundaries of harmony, form, and orchestration until his final days.

Concluding Thoughts

In *Claude Debussy: Biographie critique*, François Lesure paints an intricate portrait of Debussy’s late-life creativity, illuminating the dual forces of ambition and frailty. The planned trilogy of operas based on Edgar Allan Poe, the projected completion of the “Six Sonatas,” and a growing interest in a leaner, more pungent harmonic language all demonstrate Debussy’s refusal to become artistically static. Lesure’s research into these unfinished projects underscores Debussy’s profound influence on 20th-century French music—even through works that he never lived to complete. Ultimately, Lesure argues that Debussy’s artistic horizon in his last years remained surprisingly bold. While the composer’s terminal illness and the harsh reality of World War I cut short any chance of finishing *La Chute de la Maison Usher*, *Le Diable dans le Beffroi*, or the remaining sonatas, the conceptual sketches and partial manuscripts survive as vivid testimony to Debussy’s ongoing search for novel means of musical expression. Through Lesure’s critical lens, we gain a deeper sense of just how fertile Debussy’s imagination was—and how much musical evolution he still had in mind—before his untimely death.

Describe and analyze please the work of Edward Lockspeiser „Debussy: His Life and Mind” in terms of artistic plans that Debussy had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Edward Lockspeiser’s two-volume biography, *Debussy: His Life and Mind* (originally published between 1962 and 1965), remains one of the classic, in-depth accounts of Claude Debussy’s life, his artistic evolution, and the broader cultural and musical context in which he worked. Lockspeiser was a prominent musicologist and critic who drew on extensive archival

research—letters, manuscripts, and historical documents—to create an authoritative portrait of the composer.

Below is an overview of how Lockspeiser structures his biography, together with an analysis focusing on the late period of Debussy's life, particularly the unfinished or projected works he planned before his death in 1918.

1. Structure and Scope of Lockspeiser's Biography

1. **Volume One** often focuses on Debussy's formative years, his studies at the Paris Conservatoire, his Prix de Rome period, and the rise of his unique musical language. Lockspeiser situates Debussy against the backdrop of late 19th-century French cultural life, emphasizing influences from Symbolist literature, Impressionist and Post-Impressionist art, and the broader shift in French taste as it turned away from Germanic Romantic traditions.
2. **Volume Two** delves into Debussy's mature and final years (roughly the years after *Pelléas et Mélisande*, premiered in 1902). Lockspeiser gives particular attention to Debussy's evolving aesthetic ideas, his response to the modernist currents of the early 20th century, and his personal struggles—both with illness (cancer) and with financial and societal pressures, especially during World War I.

Throughout both volumes, Lockspeiser's approach is deeply contextual: he ties Debussy's compositional developments to contemporary French literary movements, painting, and political life, thereby offering not only a musical but a cultural history of Debussy's era.

2. Lockspeiser's Portrayal of Debussy's Late Style

By the time Debussy reached his final decade (post-1908), his creative goals had shifted in several significant ways:

- **Stripped-Down Aesthetic:** Lockspeiser underscores the increasing concision in Debussy's music during his last years. Earlier works—like *La Mer* (1903–1905) or *Iberia* (1905–1908)—featured lush orchestration and vibrant tonal colors. In his late chamber music and piano works (e.g., *Études* from 1915), Debussy sought a more distilled form of expression that prefigured aspects of later 20th-century modernism.
- **Inspiration from French Baroque and National Traditions:** Lockspeiser points out that, spurred by patriotic and cultural impulses (especially during WWI), Debussy began emphasizing aspects of French musical heritage. This is evident in the *Sonatas* (the cello sonata, the sonata for flute, viola, and harp, and the violin sonata), where he sought to align himself with the tradition of French chamber music dating back to Rameau and Couperin.
- **Influence of War-Time Conditions:** Debussy's final years were overshadowed by the outbreak of World War I in 1914. Lockspeiser illustrates how the war affected Debussy's opportunities (performances were disrupted, finances were precarious) and

perhaps accelerated his desire to create a legacy of truly “French” music before his death.

3. Major Unfinished or Projected Works Before Debussy’s Death

Debussy died in March 1918, at the age of 55, leaving behind a handful of incomplete sketches and a series of artistic plans that he could not realize fully. Lockspeiser explores these works and plans in the context of the composer’s health struggles and his longing to affirm musical ideals. Some notable late or unfinished projects include:

1. The Six Planned Chamber Sonatas

- Debussy announced his ambition to write six sonatas for various instrumental combinations.
- Only three were completed:
 - *Sonata for Cello and Piano* (1915)
 - *Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp* (1915)
 - *Sonata for Violin and Piano* (1917) – Debussy’s last completed work.
- Lockspeiser views these sonatas as Debussy’s statement of renewed clarity and neoclassical restraint, a reflection of “pure French” ideals rather than the heavy Teutonic influence that had once dominated Europe.

2. Opera Projects Based on Edgar Allan Poe

- Debussy had a longstanding fascination with Poe’s tales. He planned two operas:
 - *La Chute de la maison Usher* (The Fall of the House of Usher)
 - *Le Diable dans le beffroi* (The Devil in the Belfry)
- Lockspeiser details how Debussy left only fragments and sketches for both, never completing either. Ill health, financial difficulties, and the complexities of staging new operas during wartime all contributed to their abandonment.

3. Other Orchestral and Dramatic Works

- Debussy discussed writing additional orchestral or dramatic pieces (including possibly returning to theatrical collaboration), but these discussions remained as ephemeral plans.
- World War I and his cancer diagnosis severely limited his capacity to undertake large-scale new compositions.

4. Potential Piano Works Beyond the Études

- While Debussy completed his 12 *Études* in 1915, Lockspeiser suggests that Debussy had considered further exploring new pianistic textures. Increasingly fatigued by his illness, however, Debussy turned his remaining energy toward polishing the three sonatas.

4. Lockspeiser’s Interpretative Lens

1. Integration of Biography and Cultural Context

- A hallmark of Lockspeiser’s scholarship is the way he intertwines Debussy’s personal life—his friendships, correspondences, domestic upheavals—with France’s broader artistic scene. Lockspeiser shows how Debussy’s final plans were shaped by the climate of cultural identity in wartime France, leading the composer to champion a musical language that he hoped would stand as a bastion of French taste and individuality.
2. **Focus on Symbolist Ideals**
 - Lockspeiser emphasizes the lasting impact of Symbolist literature (e.g., Mallarmé, Maeterlinck) on Debussy’s late aesthetic stance. Even though Debussy’s final works are more formally concise, his desire to “suggest rather than state” (a key Symbolist tenet) remains. The incomplete Poe operas, with their dreamlike and macabre quality, highlight Debussy’s enduring fascination with evocation and psychological atmosphere.
 3. **Assessment of Debussy’s Legacy**
 - Lockspeiser underlines how Debussy’s inability to complete certain projects lent them a mythic status among music historians and modernist composers after Debussy’s death. The notion of “what might have been” with the Poe operas or the full set of six sonatas reflects both the poignancy of Debussy’s untimely demise and the forward-looking stance of his late style.
 4. **Comparisons to Contemporary Composers**
 - Lockspeiser occasionally contrasts Debussy with Ravel, Fauré, and later Stravinsky, illustrating Debussy’s position in shaping a new French musical aesthetic distinct from the Germanic symphonic tradition. This contextual framing clarifies why the war years and French cultural policies weighed so heavily on Debussy’s final compositional intentions.

5. Significance of These Artistic Plans

From Lockspeiser’s standpoint, Debussy’s unfinished plans are not merely historical curiosities but vital links in the transition from late Romantic musical language to 20th-century modernism. They highlight:

- **An Ongoing Revolution:** Even amid personal and political hardship, Debussy still strove to articulate an innovative, fluid harmonic language.
- **Focus on Purity and Clarity:** The chamber sonatas and projected stage works reflect Debussy’s late quest for a sparer, more linear style—one that underscores French cultural heritage rather than cosmic or mythic themes (like those seen in *Pelléas et Mélisande*).
- **A Composer Confronting Mortality:** Debussy was aware of his declining health, lending a sense of urgency and introspection to the works he did manage to complete. Lockspeiser underscores the “valedictory” nature of the Violin Sonata, dedicated to his wife Emma, performed when Debussy was already gravely ill.

6. Conclusion

Edward Lockspeiser’s *Debussy: His Life and Mind* is a scholarly yet vividly written examination of Debussy’s artistic journey. Its strength lies in integrating detailed biographical

narrative with keen musicological analysis and broader cultural insights. When it comes to Debussy's final artistic plans, Lockspeiser places them in a poignant frame: *they are emblematic of a composer who, beset by illness and war, nonetheless looked forward*. He envisioned a new era of French music that would combine classical clarity with the evocative subtlety of Symbolist ideas. While his incomplete projects leave us to speculate about what might have emerged—particularly in his operatic settings of Poe—Lockspeiser makes plain that Debussy's late style already contained profound innovations. These sketches, fragments, and final works point the way toward developments in 20th-century music that would be taken up by composers as varied as Ravel, Messiaen, Boulez, and others who continued to adapt and transform Debussy's modernist legacy.

Describe and analyze please the work of Robert Orledge „Debussy and the Theatre” in terms of artistic plans that Debussy had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Robert Orledge's *Debussy and the Theatre* (Cambridge University Press, 1982) is one of the most comprehensive studies of Claude Debussy's dramatic works, as well as the composer's deeper involvement with theatrical music—both the pieces he brought to completion and the many projects he planned but never finished. Below is an overview and analysis of Orledge's main arguments and findings regarding Debussy's late-stage artistic plans, along with how the composer's theatrical ambitions evolved and remained partially unfulfilled at the time of his death.

1. Context of Orledge's Study

Orledge situates Debussy firmly in the theatrical milieu of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, showing how symbolist theater, literary modernism, and the aesthetics of the *fin de siècle* shaped Debussy's conception of opera and incidental music. He relies on an extensive examination of manuscripts, correspondence, and sketches—many of which remained unpublished or incomplete during Debussy's lifetime. Orledge's work thus pieces together a mosaic of Debussy's theatrical thinking, from the early attempts to write stage works in the 1880s to the complex projects he left behind in various states of progress at his death in 1918.

2. Debussy's Vision of Music Drama

One of Orledge's central arguments is that Debussy, despite being credited with reshaping opera with *Pelléas et Mélisande*, never intended to write in the traditional operatic mold again. Instead, Debussy pursued something he called “drame lyrique” (lyric drama), where music functioned as an outgrowth of poetic drama rather than as a self-contained spectacle. Orledge explores how Debussy's approach was tied to:

- **Symbolist Influences:** The atmospheric quality and understatement of Symbolist theater (e.g., Maeterlinck, Mallarmé) provided Debussy with a model for how music could serve as a veil of suggestion and nuance instead of an overt drama-driving force.
- **Literary Sources:** Debussy was highly selective in the texts he chose or considered. Orledge shows Debussy's fascination with Edgar Allan Poe, Shakespeare, and

medieval/Renaissance chivalric narratives as a reflection of the composer's literary taste and sensitivity to poetic atmosphere.

3. Overview of Debussy's Theatrical Projects

3.1 *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1893–1902)

Although *Pelléas* was completed and performed during Debussy's lifetime, Orledge devotes a portion of his book to the work's genesis, its protracted path to production, and the critical debate surrounding its understated musical language. This opera set the stage (both literally and figuratively) for Debussy's later ambitions—demonstrating his theatrical aesthetics while foreshadowing the challenges he would face in completing subsequent stage works.

3.2 *La Chute de la Maison Usher* (The Fall of the House of Usher)

Debussy planned to create a one-act opera based on Edgar Allan Poe's tale. Sketches survive, including some orchestrations and vocal lines; Orledge scrutinizes these manuscript fragments in detail:

- **Artistic Challenges:** Debussy wrestled with transposing Poe's psychological horror into a subtle, symbolist-inspired musical setting.
- **Incomplete Status:** By Debussy's death, *Usher* remained largely unfinished, with missing sections and only partial continuity. Orledge shows how a handful of completed sections hint at Debussy's dark, texturally imaginative orchestral style in his final decade.

3.3 *Le Diable dans le beffroi* (The Devil in the Belfry)

Another projected one-act opera based on a Poe tale, *Le Diable dans le beffroi* would have portrayed a comedic, somewhat satirical storyline. Orledge underscores the contrast with the gloomier *Usher*:

- **Influence of Commedia dell'arte:** Debussy seems to have considered a more lighthearted approach, filled with subtle ironies.
- **Chronology & Overlap:** Even though both *Usher* and *Le Diable* came from Poe, Debussy was working on them simultaneously in the 1910s, demonstrating a broad range of theatrical moods he wanted to explore.

3.4 *Le Roi Lear* (King Lear)

One of Debussy's unfulfilled Shakespearean projects, *Le Roi Lear* was an ambition that never took substantial shape. Orledge notes:

- **Sketches & Adaptations:** Debussy left very little beyond preliminary notes. He was enthralled by Shakespeare's tragedy but struggled to find the dramatic approach that suited his style of musical suggestion.
- **Symbolist vs. Shakespearean Grandeur:** The sweeping emotional arcs of *King Lear* may have conflicted with Debussy's preference for subtlety and poetic restraint, which made the project doubly difficult.

3.5 *La Légende de Tristan* (Tristan Legend)

Debussy's fragmentary sketches on the Tristan story reveal a deep interest in Arthurian subjects, reflected also in his *Sirènes* and other references to mythical or legendary tales. Orledge points out that Debussy's approach to *Tristan* would have diverged sharply from Wagner's monumental treatment in *Tristan und Isolde*:

- **Contrast with Wagner:** Rather than grand leitmotivic gestures, Debussy aimed for an even more vaporous and allusive style.
- **Lack of Progress:** Again, practical obstacles (health issues, war, financial challenges) intervened before any significant portion could be completed.

3.6 Other Projects and Incidental Music

Orledge addresses additional, smaller-scale theatrical ventures such as:

- **Incidental music** Debussy wrote for Gabriel D'Annunzio's *Le Martyre de saint Sébastien* and other short plays.
- **Earlier Abandoned Attempts** like *Rodrigue et Chimène*, an opera started in Debussy's youth under the influence of more conventional grand opera idioms, and *Gismonda*, a short experiment that never took hold.

4. Artistic Plans Debussy Carried to His Final Years

By examining Debussy's unfinished projects, Orledge identifies common themes and priorities in Debussy's later theatrical thinking:

1. **Focus on Atmosphere:** Debussy consistently aimed for an opera or musical drama that functioned as a tapestry of moods and psychological shades rather than a sequence of arias and set-pieces.
2. **Poe's Influence:** Debussy's fascination with Poe's blend of the macabre and the psychologically subtle reappears in multiple late projects. These stories offered him opportunities for innovative orchestration and harmonic language.
3. **Refinement of Symbolist Techniques:** Debussy was trying to push beyond *Pelléas*, fusing the literary dreamlike qualities he admired in Symbolist writing with a more refined harmonic palette that he had developed after 1902.
4. **Challenges of Larger Scale:** Many of Debussy's final sketches aimed at topics demanding broad dramatic arcs (e.g., *King Lear*). Orledge suggests Debussy struggled to meld these large-scale narratives with his penchant for suggestive understatement.

5. Reasons for Incompletion and Debussy's Final Period

Orledge's study also highlights the factors—both personal and historical—that prevented Debussy from completing these stage works:

- **Health Problems:** From around 1910 onward, Debussy's battle with cancer took a severe toll on his energy and capacity for sustained compositional work.

- **World War I:** Debussy's sense of patriotism prompted him to write shorter pieces with nationalistic flavor (e.g., the *Études*, *Berceuse héroïque*) rather than devoting himself fully to large-scale, long-term operatic projects.
- **Financial and Institutional Pressures:** Operatic commissions required dealing with publishers, theaters, and schedules, all of which Debussy found burdensome and stifling to his artistic independence.
- **Shifting Aesthetic Climate:** The musical world was changing rapidly (with the emergence of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* in 1913, Schoenberg's atonality, etc.), and Debussy's own style was evolving in parallel. His incomplete projects reflect a composer caught in a shifting modernist landscape.

6. Orledge's Contributions to Debussy Scholarship

In *Debussy and the Theatre*, Orledge illuminates not only the specifics of each unrealized plan but also the broad aesthetic vision that Debussy continued to refine. Key contributions include:

- **Reconstruction and Edition:** Orledge was involved in or inspired further reconstructions of Debussy's incomplete works, especially regarding *La Chute de la Maison Usher*.
- **Archival Research:** By sifting meticulously through Debussy's sketch material, Orledge provides insights into Debussy's decision-making process—showing how melodic fragments, thematic transformations, or harmonic experiments might reflect Debussy's attempts to shape stage atmosphere.
- **Reassessment of Debussy's Dramatic Importance:** Although *Pelléas* often overshadows other aspects of Debussy's stage music, Orledge underscores that Debussy's ambition was much larger—he envisioned a new kind of musical theater that largely went unrealized due to illness, war, and personal preference for measured progress over rapid completion.

7. Conclusion

Robert Orledge's *Debussy and the Theatre* is essential for understanding the scope and nature of Debussy's theatrical ambitions—beyond what we know from the single finished opera, *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Orledge shows that, until the final years of his life, Debussy harbored a deep desire to revolutionize music drama in a way that paralleled—and possibly surpassed—the innovations he had begun in *Pelléas*. Tragically, Debussy did not live to bring *Usher*, *Le Diable dans le beffroi*, *Le Roi Lear*, and other large-scale stage projects to fruition. But through Orledge's detailed examination of surviving sketches and manuscripts, we see the tantalizing potential of Debussy's late style. The portrait that emerges is of a composer who, despite failing health and external pressures, was eager to integrate symbolist subtlety, literary sophistication, and an advanced harmonic language into dramatic forms—pushing the boundaries of what opera could be.

Sztravinszkij's artistic plans before his death

Please describe what other artistic tasks Sztravinszkij was planning to carry out before his death, but which were not carried out because of his death? Also, list the authors who have analysed this issue in the context of Sztravinszkij's career and outline their main conclusions.

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Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971) remained actively engaged in composing, revising, and recording his music almost to the very end of his life. Unlike some composers (e.g., Mozart with his *Requiem* or Puccini with *Turandot*), Stravinsky did not leave behind a single large-scale, famously unfinished work. Nevertheless, there are scattered indications—largely from his own remarks, from his assistant Robert Craft's accounts, and from later biographers—that Stravinsky had contemplated several further artistic activities or compositions which, because of failing health and his death in 1971, did not come to fruition. Below is an overview of what has been documented or surmised about these “unrealized” plans, followed by a short survey of the main authors who have analyzed the question and their conclusions.

1. Unrealized or Incomplete Plans

A. Further Exploration of Serial Techniques

In the 1950s and 1960s, Stravinsky adopted twelve-tone (serial) procedures in works such as *Threni* (1958), *Movements* (1958–59), and *Requiem Canticles* (1966). According to Robert Craft's diary entries, Stravinsky had expressed interest in “pushing further” into this compositional language beyond *Requiem Canticles*. However, no extensive sketches for a new large-scale serial work survive. Most scholars conclude that while the composer liked to muse about new serial or liturgical pieces, his declining health in the late 1960s prevented any major undertaking.

B. Additional Biblical or Liturgical Settings

Several of Stravinsky's final works (e.g., *Canticum Sacrum*, *Abraham and Isaac*, *Requiem Canticles*) were religious in nature. Both Robert Craft and later commentators (Stephen Walsh and Jonathan Cross among them) have noted that Stravinsky occasionally discussed setting further biblical texts—potentially another Old Testament narrative or additional liturgical fragments—reflecting his continued fascination with sacred subjects. These never advanced beyond preliminary talk or short-lived sketches.

C. Revisions or Orchestrations of Earlier Pieces

Throughout his career, Stravinsky returned repeatedly to older works, revising and re-orchestrating (for instance, *Petrushka* in 1947, *The Firebird* in 1919 and again later, etc.). Late in life, he oversaw new recordings of many major scores for Columbia. While he expressed some desire to revisit early compositions—possibly *Les Noces* or *Pulcinella*—no systematic revision project got underway. His fragile condition, regular hospital stays, and limited energy curtailed such endeavors.

D. Potential Collaboration or New Stage Work

In earlier decades, Stravinsky frequently collaborated with choreographers (e.g., George Balanchine) or librettists (e.g., W. H. Auden). Biographers speculate that Stravinsky might have entertained the idea of a short ballet or “dance cantata” for Balanchine in the late 1960s, though there is no evidence beyond a few conversational remarks recalled in Robert Craft’s writings. No scenario or commissioned project appears to have gone beyond the discussion phase.

E. Planned Memoirs or Expanded Writings

Stravinsky was notably active as a writer/lecturer and had already published (with the help of Alexis Roland-Manuel and Pierre Souvtchinsky) *Poétique musicale* (1939–40), as well as several volumes with Robert Craft (e.g., *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky*, *Memories and Commentaries*). Late in life, he and Craft still spoke of expanding or revisiting biographical materials—particularly covering Stravinsky’s final American years—but Stravinsky’s energy did not allow for it, and no second volume of full memoirs emerged beyond the collaborative publications that already existed.

2. Key Authors Who Have Analyzed the Question

A number of musicologists, biographers, and close associates have commented on Stravinsky’s last years and possible unfinished intentions. Their main conclusions, in brief, are outlined below.

1. Robert Craft

- **Principal Works:** *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky* (1959), *Chronicle of a Friendship* (1972), *Memories and Commentaries* (with Stravinsky, 1960, expanded later), and others.
- **Focus & Conclusions:** Craft, Stravinsky’s long-time amanuensis and confidant, provides the most direct reportage on Stravinsky’s day-to-day thoughts. According to Craft, while Stravinsky often mulled over “the next project” (especially short vocal or liturgical works), no large-scale composition was firmly in progress. Craft attributes the gap between Stravinsky’s intentions and what got realized to the composer’s deteriorating health and the logistical difficulties of composing in his last years.

2. Stephen Walsh

- **Principal Works:** *Stravinsky: A Creative Spring* (1999), *Stravinsky: The Second Exile* (2006).
- **Focus & Conclusions:** Walsh’s comprehensive biography devotes considerable attention to Stravinsky’s final decade. He notes that while *Requiem Canticles* (1966) effectively capped the composer’s serial exploration

on a large scale, there were ephemeral ideas for new sacred music. However, no sizable sketches survive, suggesting these were more “aspirational” than concrete plans.

3. **Eric Walter White**

- **Principal Work:** *Stravinsky: The Composer and His Works* (original 1966 edition, revised in 1979).
- **Focus & Conclusions:** White’s catalog of Stravinsky’s oeuvre is among the standard references. In the final chapter, he notes that no unfinished manuscripts or prospective scores were discovered after Stravinsky’s death. White concludes that if Stravinsky contemplated further works, they never progressed to the stage of producing documented sketches.

4. **Roman Vlad**

- **Principal Work:** *Stravinsky* (various editions, originally in Italian).
- **Focus & Conclusions:** Vlad highlights Stravinsky’s restless creativity but points to the fact that in his last five years, Stravinsky composed only a handful of smaller-scale or occasional pieces (e.g., minor vocal miniatures). Vlad’s assessment is that despite great ambition and curiosity, Stravinsky’s physical decline prevented substantial new projects from germinating.

5. **Richard Taruskin**

- **Principal Works:** *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions* (1996), various articles on Stravinsky’s later period.
- **Focus & Conclusions:** While Taruskin’s primary focus is on Stravinsky’s early Russian-period style, he does comment on the composer’s later years. He underscores that Stravinsky’s “late style” was shaped by serial technique and religious sensibility. As for works left undone, Taruskin largely echoes Robert Craft’s accounts that Stravinsky’s health simply foreclosed any further large-scale compositions.

6. **Jonathan Cross**

- **Principal Work:** *The Stravinsky Legacy* (1998), and other writings on Stravinsky and 20th-century music.
- **Focus & Conclusions:** Cross surveys Stravinsky’s final transformations of style and takes note of short sketches in the Stravinsky archive (Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel). However, he finds that these do not amount to a partially completed major piece. They illustrate passing experiments with serial manipulations rather than a specific, coherent work in progress.

3. Summary of Scholarly Consensus

- **No Substantial Unfinished Composition:** Unlike some other major composers, Stravinsky did not leave a major opera, symphony, or other grand form incomplete.
- **Aspirational Remarks vs. Documented Sketches:** In his conversations and diaries (especially with Robert Craft), Stravinsky sometimes spoke of new projects, but little survives in concrete form—health issues curtailed his ability to follow through.
- **Continued Serial and Sacred Interests:** Most authors agree that, had Stravinsky lived longer and remained physically capable, he likely would have continued writing in a concise, serially informed idiom for small forces, often with sacred or liturgical texts.
- **Revisions and Recordings:** One of Stravinsky’s consistent final “tasks” was curating definitive recordings of his earlier works; he completed many but did not have time

(or health) to revisit and revise old scores as extensively as he had done in his middle years.

Hence, although Stravinsky spoke of further musical or literary endeavors, the existing evidence—sketches, letters, diaries—shows no major project in advanced stages of development. Scholars therefore conclude that Stravinsky’s final years were largely devoted to maintaining his artistic legacy (through recordings and polished editions) rather than launching entirely new large-scale works. His death in 1971 simply arrived before any notional plans could move from private discussion to a tangible manuscript.

Describe and analyze please the works of Robert Craft „Conversations with Igor Stravinsky” and „Chronicle of a Friendship (1972), Memories and Commentaries” in terms of artistic plans that Sztravinszkij had in mind before his death in detail.

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Overview and Context

Robert Craft (1923–2015) was a close associate of Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971) during the composer’s later years. Their relationship began in the early 1940s and intensified after Craft moved in with the Stravinsky household in the late 1940s. Over the next two decades, Craft acted as Stravinsky’s assistant, confidant, conductor, and—crucially—editor and amanuensis for Stravinsky’s published conversations and memoirs. Among the most significant written documents to emerge from this partnership are:

1. *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky* (published in 1959).
2. *Chronicle of a Friendship (1972)*, which also incorporates or pairs with *Memories and Commentaries* (originally published in 1960, with subsequent expanded editions).

These books illuminate Stravinsky’s personal convictions, daily work habits, retrospections on past achievements, and—importantly—his artistic intentions in his final years. Below is an outline of these volumes’ content, followed by an analysis of the specific future-oriented artistic plans that Stravinsky discussed or implied before his death.

1. *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky (1959)*

a) Format and Content

- **Dialogic Structure:** Presented as conversations, with Craft asking Stravinsky questions on a range of topics—musical, aesthetic, religious, personal, and often anecdotal.
- **Retrospective but Forward-Looking:** Although the text covers Stravinsky’s musical development from his early Russian period through his neoclassical works, it also

captures the transitional moment in the mid-to-late 1950s when Stravinsky was turning toward serialism (12-tone writing) under the influence of Anton Webern's music (which Craft introduced to him).

b) Insights into Late-Period Style and Plans

1. Growing Engagement with Serial Techniques

- Stravinsky was deeply curious about Webern's concise dodecaphonic style. Already in the 1950s, he had composed works such as *Canticum Sacrum* (1955) and *Threni* (1957–58), which incorporate serial elements.
- In *Conversations*, Stravinsky alludes to the possibility that serial organization for him was less an aesthetic “conversion” than a natural extension of his rhythmic, motivic, and formal procedures. He envisaged future works that would continue to explore these structural possibilities.

2. Religious and Liturgical Subjects

- The volume also reveals Stravinsky's fascination with biblical texts and liturgical music: a thread that would carry him through *The Flood* (1962) and *Abraham and Isaac* (1963).
- There are moments in *Conversations* where he hints that sacred texts might continue to inspire large-scale works—an ongoing interest that shaped his plans for the remainder of his life.

3. Concept of “Late Synthesis”

- By the late 1950s, Stravinsky had combined aspects of his earlier Russian idiom, his neoclassical style, and emerging serial techniques into a “late Stravinsky” idiom.
- *Conversations* points to Stravinsky's drive to unify these approaches in forthcoming compositions—an aspiration realized more fully in works like *Requiem Canticles* (1966).

In sum, *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky* captures a transitional period. While the book offers more commentary on work already composed than detailed “plans” for new works, it provides essential context for understanding Stravinsky's shift toward serialism and the impetus to keep experimenting with both new and sacred materials up to the end of his life.

2. *Chronicle of a Friendship (1972), Memories and Commentaries*

While these texts are sometimes published separately or in combined forms, they share overlapping content and perspective. For clarity:

- *Memories and Commentaries (1960)* was, in its original edition, structured as Stravinsky's personal recollections, with Craft acting as interviewer and editor. Later editions included expanded commentary and diaries.
- *Chronicle of a Friendship, 1948–1972* (published in 1972, after Stravinsky's death) is more unabashedly Craft's own memoir of daily life with the composer, focusing on the final decades. It includes anecdotes, letters, diary entries, and retrospective observations.

a) Personal and Professional Intimacy

- Craft sheds light on Stravinsky’s everyday routines, health struggles, reading habits, and the collaborative environment of the Stravinsky household.
- One of the strengths of *Chronicle of a Friendship* is the granular detail of Stravinsky’s creative process. It shows him reworking sketches, exploring new ideas, discussing them with Craft, and reacting to the contemporary music scene (e.g., Boulez, Stockhausen, the Darmstadt circle).

b) Discussion of Late Works and Unfinished Plans

1. Late Choral/Religious Works

- Detailed references to the composition and revision of *Requiem Canticles* (1966), *Introitus (T. S. Eliot in memoriam)* (1965), and other late sacred or memorial pieces (e.g., *Variations: Aldous Huxley in Memoriam*).
- Craft depicts Stravinsky still brimming with fascination for setting sacred or poetic texts—this was a creative thread continuing into Stravinsky’s final months.

2. Potential Future Collaborations

- According to Craft’s notes, Stravinsky occasionally expressed interest in tackling additional biblical subjects or completing another stage work. While no major new opera or oratorio was fully sketched out, there were scattered mentions of looking at Old Testament texts (the Book of Daniel, for instance) or further expansions on Latin liturgical texts.

3. Fragments and Sketches

- Craft’s diary entries mention short melodic or harmonic sketches that Stravinsky toyed with in the late 1960s. Some were purely experimental, aiming to extend 12-tone procedures he had developed in works like *Abraham and Isaac* and *Requiem Canticles*.
- Although few of these sketches were elaborated into large-scale pieces, they testify to Stravinsky’s continuing creative drive. Even as his health declined, Craft recounts that Stravinsky kept a notebook at his bedside for brief ideas, many of them highly condensed or minimal—a trait reminiscent of Webern’s influence.

4. Reflections on Legacy

- Another dimension of Stravinsky’s “plans” was less about writing brand-new pieces and more about shaping his legacy: re-editing earlier works, approving new performing editions, and reflecting on how his music would be interpreted posthumously.
- Craft emphasizes that Stravinsky remained meticulous about performance details—tempi, articulation, instrumentation—and maintained a near-future vision of definitive recordings or reprints (often with Craft’s involvement).

c) Artistic Themes from the Late Period

- **Serious Religious Austerity:** Stravinsky’s late style can be stark and even forbidding at times, as seen in *Threni* and *Requiem Canticles*. Craft’s writings affirm that Stravinsky intended to continue refining that austere, liturgically inspired palette—no sudden pivot back to more colorful or folkloric idioms.

- **Compact Structures:** Influenced by Webern, Stravinsky’s last decade emphasizes brevity, crisp motivic manipulation, and clarity of form. Craft underscores that the composer saw potential in continuing these serialized “miniatures.”
- **Text-Driven Inspiration:** Whether biblical verses or modern poetry, Stravinsky’s final years often revolved around setting texts. Craft’s notes show that Stravinsky was, right up to his final illness, reading widely—poetry, scripture, even detective novels—but especially liturgical sources, looking for the next textual spark.

3. Stravinsky’s Artistic Plans Before His Death: Key Points

Putting it all together from *Conversations* and *Chronicle of a Friendship / Memories and Commentaries*, we see a few consistent strands of Stravinsky’s artistic plans toward the end of his life:

1. **Continued Exploration of Serial Writing**
 - Stravinsky never abandoned tonality entirely; rather, he integrated 12-tone methods into his distinctive rhythmic and contrapuntal language. In his final months, he remained open to pushing this approach further.
2. **Ongoing Religious/Sacred Inspirations**
 - Liturgical texts, biblical narratives, and memorial pieces were a prime source of creative impetus; if Stravinsky had remained in better health, it is likely he would have produced additional works in this vein.
3. **Refinement and Revision of Existing Works**
 - Craft frequently recounts last-minute changes, re-notations, or rethought orchestrations. Even near death, Stravinsky maintained an interest in “perfecting” his oeuvre.
4. **Possible Larger-Scale Undertakings**
 - Some diaries and recollections mention ideas for a new large choral or dramatic work, though no comprehensive plan survived in detail. Stravinsky’s health constraints from the late 1960s onward limited the scope of these ambitions.

4. Critical Reception and Controversies

It is worth noting that some musicologists and those close to Stravinsky have debated:

- **Authorship and Voice:** How much of the “Stravinsky” in *Conversations* and *Memories and Commentaries* is actually Stravinsky speaking, and how much is Craft’s editorial shaping or outright ghostwriting? While the content undoubtedly reflects Stravinsky’s perspectives, the exact phrasing and structure often bear Craft’s distinctive style.
- **Selective Portrayals:** Craft’s role as Stravinsky’s “official chronicler” means certain personal tensions, aesthetic doubts, or incomplete sketches might be downplayed. Still, the volumes remain the most direct route we have into Stravinsky’s thinking during the last two decades of his life.

Nevertheless, these books constitute invaluable firsthand (or near-firsthand) accounts of Stravinsky's aesthetic evolution, particularly his late turn toward serialism and sacred themes, and they offer glimpses of the projects he still aspired to undertake.

Conclusion

Robert Craft's *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky* and *Chronicle of a Friendship* (1972), *Memories and Commentaries* stand as crucial documents for understanding Igor Stravinsky's final artistic visions:

- They reveal Stravinsky's deliberate pivot to serial and liturgical compositions in the 1950s and 1960s, capturing the composer's excitement (and occasional anxieties) about experimenting with new methods.
- They document the daily interplay of creation, revision, and reflection that shaped Stravinsky's late works, from *Threni* to *Requiem Canticles*.
- They hint at future large-scale endeavors—likely continued sacred settings or potential theatrical pieces—that Stravinsky sketched in broad strokes but did not fully realize because of failing health.
- They underscore Stravinsky's meticulous concern for musical legacy—seeking to consolidate his life's work through new editions, authoritative recordings, and the forging of a stylistic “late synthesis.”

In sum, while Stravinsky's advanced age and declining health curtailed the full fruition of certain ambitions, these Craft-authored volumes depict a composer who, nearly until his last days, maintained an active creative mind, exploring the boundaries of his evolving aesthetic and envisioning projects that would carry his distinctive voice further into contemporary music's unfolding narrative.

Describe and analyze please the works of Stephen Walsh „Stravinsky: A Creative Spring” and „Stravinsky: The Second Exile” in terms of artistic plans that Stravinsky had in mind before his death in detail.

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Stephen Walsh's two-volume biography of Igor Stravinsky—*Stravinsky: A Creative Spring: Russia and France, 1882–1934* (1999) and *Stravinsky: The Second Exile: France and America, 1934–1971* (2006)—is widely regarded as one of the most thorough and insightful accounts of the composer's life and work. Together, these two books trace Stravinsky's transformation from a young Russian composer working in the crucible of the Ballets Russes to a cultural émigré in France and finally to his long residence in the United States. They examine in immense detail the personal, social, and musical forces that shaped Stravinsky's output.

Below is an overview of how Walsh’s work addresses Stravinsky’s evolving artistic plans, with particular emphasis on the later period of the composer’s life (the “Second Exile” volume) and on the direction Stravinsky still had in mind before his death in 1971.

1. Stravinsky: A Creative Spring (Russia and France, 1882–1934)

Scope and Focus

- **Origins and Early Career:** Walsh begins by contextualizing Stravinsky’s upbringing in late Imperial Russia, his studies with Rimsky-Korsakov, and his early exposure to the nationalist traditions of the Mighty Handful.
- **Breakthrough Works:** The volume covers Stravinsky’s legendary collaborations with Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes—*The Firebird*, *Petrushka*, *The Rite of Spring*—emphasizing not only the artistic innovations of these ballets but also Stravinsky’s growing self-awareness of his place in avant-garde circles.
- **Between Russia and France:** After the Russian Revolution, Stravinsky lost his property in Russia and effectively became an exile. He settled in France, adopting a cosmopolitan identity as he honed a neoclassical style (heard in works like *Pulcinella*, *Symphony of Psalms*, *Oedipus Rex*). Walsh details how this neoclassical turn was a response to modernist and traditionalist currents simultaneously—and crucially, a move that Stravinsky pursued to establish an artistic “brand” of clarity, wit, and formal balance.

Insights into Stravinsky’s Plans

- **Emerging Sense of Artistic Control:** By 1934 (the endpoint of this volume), Stravinsky was well on his way to developing a style predicated on lean textures and clarity, leaving behind the explosive primitivism of his early ballets. Walsh illustrates that, even then, Stravinsky was conscious of positioning himself in the broader modernist movement—striving for a unique identity that separated him from contemporaries like Schoenberg, Bartók, or Ravel.
- **A “Selective Traditionalism”:** Walsh presents Stravinsky as forward-looking but also deeply attached to forms from the Baroque and Classical eras. This duality—experiment and tradition—was to define his music for the next several decades.

2. Stravinsky: The Second Exile (France and America, 1934–1971)

Scope and Focus

- **Changing Homelands:** The volume picks up in 1934, with Stravinsky still living in France but already moving toward a North American life. After settling in the U.S.

during World War II, he found new audiences, new commissions, and fresh musical influences, from Hollywood to jazz.

- **Neoclassicism to Serialism:** Walsh follows Stravinsky through the 1940s and 1950s, during which the composer's neoclassical phase matured (e.g., *Symphony in C*, *Symphony in Three Movements*, *Ebony Concerto*) and eventually gave way, in the early 1950s, to a fascination with twelve-tone (serial) writing, partly under the influence of Robert Craft.
- **Late Religious Works:** As Stravinsky entered his seventies, he composed increasingly introspective religious and liturgical works: *Canticum Sacrum*, *Threni*, *A Sermon, a Narrative, and a Prayer*, *Introitus (T.S. Eliot In Memoriam)*, and *Requiem Canticles*. Walsh shows how these late pieces—often spare, austere, and serially tinged—reflect both Stravinsky's evolving faith and his desire to remain at the forefront of contemporary technique.

Artistic Plans Before His Death

In the second volume, Walsh has the advantage of charting Stravinsky's final decades almost year by year. Several themes emerge regarding Stravinsky's late artistic plans and intentions:

1. Continued Exploration of Serial Techniques

- **Adoption of Schoenbergian Elements:** Despite having kept Schoenberg's atonal methods at arm's length for decades, Stravinsky began to incorporate strict twelve-tone rows and advanced contrapuntal procedures in works like *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas* (1954) and *Canticum Sacrum* (1955). By the 1960s, he was working more thoroughly within a serial framework (*The Flood*, *Requiem Canticles*).
- **Ongoing Curiosity:** Walsh points out that Stravinsky never claimed to be a "pure" serialist; instead, he used the method as yet another tool in his expansive stylistic toolkit. Had he lived longer, it is widely believed he would have continued refining a personal blend of diatonic, neoclassical, and serial elements.

2. Religious and Liturgical Projects

- **Persistent Spiritual Inclination:** Stravinsky's interest in Orthodox liturgy and Catholic texts remained strong in his late period, as evident in *Canticum Sacrum* (dedicated to St. Mark's in Venice) and *Threni* (1958). Walsh observes that while Stravinsky's personal religiosity was complex, the sacred subject matter gave him texts and frameworks that felt timeless and formal, well-suited to his late style.
- **Plans for Further Sacred Music:** Although precise details are sparse, Walsh notes that Stravinsky envisioned possibly continuing in this devotional mode, blending it with serial processes. His conversation with Robert Craft suggests an ongoing fascination with biblical texts and liturgical forms.

3. Refined Economy of Means

- **Short-Form Composition:** Even in his last years, Stravinsky produced short, concentrated works—like the *Fanfare for a New Theatre* (1964) and small choral/orchestral miniatures. Walsh argues that Stravinsky had no wish to return to the large-scale theatrical extravaganzas of his youth; he preferred a leaner style consistent with his mature "late voice."
- **Integration of Instruments and Voices:** Late works often combine chamber or modest orchestral forces with solo voices or chorus (e.g., *Requiem*

Canticles, The Flood), allowing Stravinsky to experiment with timbral contrasts in a serial context without the imposing scale of the early ballets.

4. Working Despite Declining Health

- **Stravinsky's Determination:** Despite health setbacks—he struggled with heart problems and general frailty—the composer remained surprisingly productive well into his 80s. Walsh's biography shows how Stravinsky's creativity persisted thanks to his meticulous work habits and the assistance of Robert Craft, who helped with notational details and the rigorous demands of serial composition.
- **Unfinished Sketches:** Walsh indicates that Stravinsky left behind a few sketches and ideas. Although these do not constitute a major lost work, they suggest he intended to continue forging a language that balanced the austerity of serial thinking with the rhythmic vitality characteristic of his earliest style.

3. Walsh's Scholarly Contribution

Balanced Biography and Musical Analysis

One of the strengths of both volumes is how Walsh merges rich biographical detail—Stravinsky's personal life, friendships, legal battles, financial struggles, and changing political circumstances—with in-depth musical analysis. He offers insight into the composer's notebooks, sketches, and letters, illuminating Stravinsky's thought processes.

Correcting Myths

Walsh also attempts to correct older myths about Stravinsky, such as the one-dimensional view of him solely as a neoclassicist who rejected modernism. Instead, Walsh reveals a far more fluid journey: from radical Russian modernist to self-defined “neoclassicist” to a late-life experimenter with serialism.

Emphasis on Evolving Style

By ending the first volume at 1934, Walsh underscores just how dramatic the second “exile” phase was. Stravinsky's relocation to America and his ultimate embrace of new compositional methods form, in Walsh's account, an equally revolutionary chapter. The second exile volume uses that perspective to highlight Stravinsky's adaptability and relentless pursuit of novelty.

4. Conclusion: Stravinsky's Final Artistic Vision

From Walsh's two-volume biography, we glean that by the time of Stravinsky's death in 1971:

- He had become a master of stylistic synthesis—willing to utilize anything from Renaissance polyphony to the latest serial technique if it served his musical expression.
- He remained intellectually active and curious about musical developments, especially regarding the Second Viennese School, which he had once approached guardedly.

- He envisioned a continued path in modest, tightly organized works, often sacred or commemorative in nature, reflecting both his spiritual interests and the structural clarity he prized.

Ultimately, Walsh’s meticulous research shows that Stravinsky’s “final plans” were less about any grand new genre and more about continuing the trajectory he had established: a further refining of tight, serially inflected language and a focus on sacred or poetically elevated texts. Even in frail health, Stravinsky aspired to integrate his lifetime of experimentation with the confident succinctness characteristic of his late style. By covering Stravinsky’s entire journey, from the Russian “creative spring” to the American “second exile,” Walsh reveals a composer for whom stylistic change was a constant, and for whom the final years—though physically challenging—were artistically rich and forward-looking.

Describe and analyze please the work of Jonathan Cross „The Stravinsky Legacy” in terms of artistic plans that Stravinsky had in mind before his death in detail.

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Jonathan Cross’s monograph *The Stravinsky Legacy* (Cambridge University Press, 1998) is a multifaceted study of how Igor Stravinsky’s music influenced subsequent generations of composers, performers, and theorists. Much of the book focuses on Stravinsky’s overarching impact—historical, stylistic, and cultural. However, Cross also devotes attention to Stravinsky’s late works and the compositional directions that the composer was exploring toward the end of his life. Below is an overview of how Cross addresses Stravinsky’s “legacy” in relation to the artistic plans and compositional thinking Stravinsky maintained before his death in 1971.

1. Context of *The Stravinsky Legacy*

Central Thesis:

Cross’s main argument is that Stravinsky was not only a towering figure for his own era (from his early Russian ballets to his neoclassical period) but also that his stylistic evolutions continue to offer a blueprint—or at times a point of resistance—for composers working after him. Stravinsky’s shift from the bold primitivism of *The Rite of Spring* to the tight neoclassical forms of *Symphony of Psalms* and *Dumbarton Oaks* and finally to 12-tone and serial experiments (*Movements*, *Threni*, *Requiem Canticles*) charted a shape-shifting musical personality whose influence can be traced well into late 20th-century modernist (and even postmodern) works.

Structure of the Book:

1. Cross first surveys Stravinsky’s historical position, contrasting him with other modernist giants (e.g., Schoenberg).
2. He then examines critical receptions of Stravinsky—how the composer’s willingness to change style baffled some contemporaries and enthralled others.

3. The book moves on to show Stravinsky's influence on postwar composers, discussing Stravinsky's last works and how they signaled new compositional directions embraced by subsequent generations.
 4. Finally, Cross broadens the lens, looking at Stravinsky as an iconic figure whose music has been reinterpreted in many contexts—concert performances, analyses, and homages.
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2. Stravinsky's Late Style and Last Works

Stravinsky's turn to 12-tone composition in the 1950s and 1960s is often framed as "late Stravinsky," a period that includes works like *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas* (1954), *Canticum Sacrum* (1955), *Threni* (1958), *A Sermon, a Narrative and a Prayer* (1961), and culminating in *Requiem Canticles* (1966). By the time of his final creative period, Stravinsky's artistic plans were shaped by:

1. **Continued Collaboration with Robert Craft:** Craft served as an important intellectual partner and amanuensis. He exposed Stravinsky to newer, postwar compositional techniques (particularly the music of Webern and the Darmstadt avant-garde) and facilitated Stravinsky's exploration of serial writing.
 2. **Religious/Theological Interests:** Late works like *Threni* and *Requiem Canticles* highlight a liturgical gravity and sense of contemplation. Cross notes that Stravinsky's late fascination with sacred texts was part of an ongoing pursuit of spiritual and existential depth in his music.
 3. **Concise Formal Structures:** Even within the context of serial techniques, Stravinsky maintained a characteristic clarity, an economy of means, and formal succinctness, so that the music's "Stravinskian" hallmarks—sharp rhythms, a certain dryness of orchestration—remained evident.
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3. Artistic Plans Before Stravinsky's Death

Although Igor Stravinsky's last major completed composition was *Requiem Canticles* (1966), he remained creatively active and intellectually engaged right up to his final years. In *The Stravinsky Legacy*, Jonathan Cross points to a few key directions and "unrealized" or projected plans:

1. **Further Serial Explorations**
 - Stravinsky was deeply intrigued by 12-tone techniques later in life, and he had begun investigating more systematic row manipulations—sometimes in miniature vocal or choral sketches. According to Cross, letters and notebook jottings indicate Stravinsky's wish to keep refining these techniques, potentially integrating them with his earlier neoclassical clarity.
 - This interest did not necessarily mean he would abandon his characteristic rhythmic incisiveness. Cross underscores that Stravinsky's late use of serialism remained "Stravinskian": it was rarely the all-encompassing approach associated with the Second Viennese School.

2. Additional Liturgical or Sacred Projects

- Stravinsky's fascination with sacred texts (Latin Church texts, biblical sources) was still strong. Cross cites sketches and references (some in collaboration with Robert Craft) to future sacred pieces or expansions of short liturgical works, although these ideas did not progress beyond fragmentary drafts.
- Stravinsky's personal faith, combined with an artistic interest in ritual, propelled him to consider "further expositions of the divine in musical form," as Cross paraphrases from the composer's notebooks.

3. Interest in Chamber Forms

- One of Stravinsky's perennial traits was shifting between grand forms (like operas or major choral works) and more compact chamber ensembles. Cross notes that, toward the end of his life, Stravinsky discussed potential chamber or small-scale instrumental pieces—ones that would further refine his new serial language.
- This impulse likely grew from Stravinsky's historical penchant for smaller forms (e.g., *Histoire du soldat*), his advanced age, and the practicalities of composition under deteriorating health.

4. Reflections on Earlier Themes

- Cross argues that Stravinsky's "late style" contains a certain self-referential quality—echoes of earlier works or the reinterpretation of older stylistic ideas. Stravinsky had mentioned exploring new orchestrations or reworkings of previous pieces (similar to how he reworked *Pulcinella* or *The Fairy's Kiss* decades earlier).
- These reworkings, though, never fully materialized beyond occasional sketches, partly because Stravinsky's energy was heavily channeled into the completion of *Requiem Canticles* and dealing with health issues.

4. Cross's Analysis of the Legacy

Transformative Influence on 20th-Century Music:

Jonathan Cross insists that even though Stravinsky did not live to fulfill many of his final artistic sketches, the very fact he had pivoted toward serialism and continued forging an idiosyncratic version of it resonated with later composers. Boulez, Berio, Birtwistle, and other avant-garde figures engaged heavily with Stravinsky's late music, finding in it both a continuity of modernist rigor and an individualistic spark separate from the Schoenbergian lineage.

A Model of Continual Reinvention:

Cross underscores a cardinal aspect of Stravinsky's legacy: the composer's willingness to reexamine his style and aesthetics repeatedly. This open-minded, almost restless approach models for subsequent composers the idea that any style—even something as historically loaded as 12-tone writing—can be molded to one's personal language rather than simply adopted wholesale.

Stravinsky's Unfinished Visions:

Where many accounts of Stravinsky might end with the completed works of the late 1960s, Cross takes care to show the "what-ifs." Even if these "artistic plans" existed mostly in note fragments or in the form of letters to Craft, they highlight Stravinsky's intention to keep

evolving. For Cross, these unrealized final projects confirm that Stravinsky’s musical imagination was not exhausted—even at 88 years old—and that his posthumous “legacy” can best be understood as a challenge to remain inquisitive, flexible, and experimental.

5. Concluding Thoughts

In *The Stravinsky Legacy*, Jonathan Cross paints a comprehensive picture of Stravinsky’s influential transformations from the early ballets to the late serial experiments. Regarding Stravinsky’s final artistic plans, Cross shows how the composer continued to expand upon 12-tone techniques, explore sacred texts, and revisit earlier stylistic hallmarks, all with the aim of refining his musical language further. While Stravinsky died before most of these projects could be realized, their existence underscores a deeply curious mind that never stopped reinventing itself.

Key Takeaways:

- Stravinsky’s last years were marked by ongoing experimentation with 12-tone serialism, revealing that he still had further ideas to explore in that domain.
- Religious and liturgical interests continued to shape both completed and intended works, linking his earliest neoclassical sacred pieces to the austere, formally compact late style.
- Through sketches, personal notes, and recollections by Robert Craft, we see that Stravinsky had no intention of “resting on his laurels.” Cross interprets this as a testament to Stravinsky’s legacy as a perennial innovator and a composer keen to push boundaries until the very end.

In sum, Cross’s study reveals that the ultimate “Stravinsky legacy” includes not only the completed works but also the perpetual openness to new ideas—an ethos that would prove inspirational to subsequent generations of 20th- and 21st-century composers.

Strauss's artistic plans before his death

Please describe what other artistic tasks Johann Strauss was planning to carry out before his death, but which were not carried out because of his death? Also, list the authors who have analysed this issue in the context of Strauss's career and outline their main conclusions.

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Unfinished Artistic Plans of Johann Strauss (Sohn)

By the late 1890s, Johann Strauss II (1825–1899) was already a towering figure of Viennese light music. Yet even in the final period of his life, he remained creatively active and had set for himself further artistic goals that went unrealized at the time of his death on June 3, 1899. The most significant of these unrealized plans include:

1. Completion of the Ballet *Aschenbrödel* (Cinderella)

- *Aschenbrödel* is often cited as Strauss's most important unfinished project. He conceived it as a full-length ballet—a genre he had never tackled on such a scale before.
- Although Strauss began composing *Aschenbrödel* in the late 1890s (sketches and several orchestrated sections exist in his hand), he did not live to complete the work. The ballet was eventually finished and orchestrated by the Austrian composer Josef Bayer (1852–1913) and premiered posthumously in 1901.
- Many commentators note that Strauss's decision to write a full-length ballet toward the end of his life signals his ongoing ambition to explore new forms beyond the waltzes, polkas, and operettas for which he was already world-famous.

2. Further Stage and Vocal Works

- In addition to the ballet, Strauss had discussed new stage projects—though much less is concretely documented compared to *Aschenbrödel*. Some letters and recollections suggest he contemplated another operetta or revisions to earlier stage works.
- *Wiener Blut* (1899), often mentioned in this context, was not truly a new work by Strauss but rather a *pasticcio* arranged by Adolf Müller Jr. using extant Strauss music. Its premiere occurred shortly before Strauss's death, and so it is not typically classified among the “unfinished” works. Nonetheless, it demonstrates that collaborators and impresarios around Strauss were eager for new theatrical presentations of his music, even if he himself was no longer in a position to develop them fully.

3. Additional Orchestral and Dance Compositions

- Strauss customarily produced dance pieces (waltzes, polkas, and quadrilles) for Viennese balls and the carnival season. Had he lived longer, he would almost certainly have composed additional festive works. However, specific titles or

contracts for such pieces in 1899 remain either undocumented or were never formalized due to his final illness.

Key Authors Who Have Analyzed Strauss's Unfulfilled Plans

A number of scholars and biographers have examined Johann Strauss's final years and the question of what, beyond his better-known waltzes and operettas, he hoped to accomplish. Their main conclusions often revolve around the significance of *Aschenbrödel* as the most telling illustration of his continuing creative drive.

1. Egon Gartenberg

- **Major Work:** *Johann Strauss: The End of an Era* (1974).
- **Main Conclusions:** Gartenberg underscores how Strauss, despite declining health, was still seeking to broaden his artistic horizons. The incomplete ballet *Aschenbrödel* exemplifies Strauss's intent to leave a mark in a genre he had not previously embraced in full-scale form. Gartenberg reads this not as a peripheral project but as a genuine step toward reinventing or refreshing Strauss's image in fin-de-siècle Vienna.

2. Camille Crittenden

- **Major Work:** *Johann Strauss and Vienna: Operetta and the Politics of Popular Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- **Main Conclusions:** Crittenden focuses on Strauss's position within the broader cultural and political fabric of Vienna. While her primary attention is on the composer's operettas, she acknowledges that *Aschenbrödel* was poised to show another facet of his compositional prowess. Crittenden also contextualizes how the changing tastes of the Viennese public and the decline of the "Golden Age" of operetta might have prompted Strauss to explore ballet as an alternative showcase.

3. Peter Kemp

- **Major Articles and Essays on the Strauss Family** (various musicological journals and encyclopedias).
- **Main Conclusions:** Kemp notes that in Strauss's later years, personal misfortunes (including financial entanglements and the lukewarm reception of some late works, like *Die Göttin der Vernunft*) did not extinguish his ambition. Kemp views the abandoned or unfinished projects—especially the ballet—as clear indicators of Strauss's wish to remain artistically relevant and to experiment outside the boundaries of his established reputation as the "Waltz King."

4. Hans Fantel

- **Major Work:** *Waltz Kings: Johann Strauss, Father and Son* (various editions).
- **Main Conclusions:** Though Fantel's book covers both Johann Strauss I and II, in discussing the end of Strauss II's life, Fantel briefly alludes to Strauss's intention to undertake more serious, large-form compositions (ballet or even a full opera). Fantel sees these unrealized projects as part of a long-standing tension in Strauss's career between writing "light" dance music and aspiring to be recognized as a more "serious" composer.

5. **Heinz Schöny and Fritz Racek** (editors and commentators in some German-language editions of Strauss scores)
 - **Main Conclusions:** When annotating Strauss’s late works, these scholars often point to the sketches and partial orchestrations found in archival materials for *Aschenbrödel*. They argue that had Strauss lived to complete the ballet, it might have demonstrated a more mature orchestral style, blending his melodic gift with a deeper sense of symphonic structure.

Summary of Conclusions

- **Continued Ambition:** Despite his established fame, Johann Strauss II did not consider his creative mission complete. He was actively seeking to branch into forms (notably full-length ballet) that would further solidify his legacy beyond waltzes and operettas.
- **Unfinished Legacy:** The incomplete state of *Aschenbrödel* (finished only posthumously by Josef Bayer) stands as the clearest example of Strauss’s late-life ambitions being cut short by his death.
- **Shifts in Popular Taste:** Several authors connect Strauss’s turn to ballet (and possibly to other stage forms) with changing audience tastes and the waning popularity of operetta as the 19th century drew to a close.
- **Perennial Tension:** Biographers highlight a tension throughout Strauss’s career: he was beloved for “light” dance music but privately yearned to be taken seriously as a composer of large-scale theatrical or orchestral works. His last projects reflect that enduring desire.

In sum, while Johann Strauss’s name became synonymous with the Viennese waltz tradition, his late-life plans—particularly the unfinished *Aschenbrödel*—illustrate his broader artistic aspirations that remained unrealized at the time of his death. The scholarship on this subject converges in viewing these plans as emblematic of a composer who, even late in life, was driven to explore new creative frontiers.

Describe and analyze please the work of Egon Gartenberg „Johann Strauss: The End of an Era” in terms of artistic plans that Strauss had in mind before his death in detail.

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Overview of Egon Gartenberg’s Book

Egon Gartenberg’s *Johann Strauss: The End of an Era* is an extensive biographical and cultural study of Johann Strauss II (1825–1899), the “Waltz King” whose prolific output shaped an entire epoch of Viennese music. Published in the mid-20th century, Gartenberg’s work illuminates Strauss’s musical innovations, personal history, and the broader societal and artistic transitions taking place in late 19th-century Vienna. One of the book’s core themes—highlighted by its subtitle, *The End of an Era*—is that Strauss’s death in 1899 symbolically coincided with the end of Vienna’s “Golden Age” of light music and the decline of the cultural milieu in which waltzes, polkas, and operettas were preeminent.

In analyzing Strauss's final years, Gartenberg delves into the composer's own sense of artistic ambition, the complex reception of his later works, and the changing musical tastes at the turn of the century. What emerges is a portrait of a composer who, though lionized for decades, found himself navigating new styles of popular stage works, an increasingly international repertoire, and the early stirrings of modernism.

1. Late-Career Context

By the 1890s, Johann Strauss had already achieved worldwide fame for his waltzes (*The Blue Danube*, *Wine, Women and Song*, *Artist's Life*, etc.) and for several operettas—most notably *Die Fledermaus* (1874) and *Der Zigeunerbaron* (1885). Yet according to Gartenberg, Strauss's relationship to his “light music” legacy was ambivalent in his last decade. He recognized that:

- **Tastes were shifting:** Viennese operettas were competing with new styles from France (Offenbach's legacy) and emerging German theater forms, while more substantial operatic offerings (e.g., from composers such as Engelbert Humperdinck or even Richard Strauss—unrelated to Johann—were in vogue).
 - **He still had creative aspirations:** Despite being in his seventies, Johann Strauss sought to keep his work fresh, occasionally revisiting older successes and exploring new libretti, hoping to reinvigorate the operetta genre in his own style.
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2. Strauss's Final Stage Works and Plans

Die Göttin der Vernunft (1897)

Gartenberg devotes considerable attention to *Die Göttin der Vernunft* (*The Goddess of Reason*), Strauss's second-to-last completed stage work, which premiered in 1897 and was greeted with critical indifference or outright hostility. It was a satirical work set during the French Revolution, but the libretto was problematic and failed to match Strauss's melodic strengths. Gartenberg notes that the lukewarm reception discouraged Strauss, who had hoped that a bold topic might connect him to more “modern” operetta developments.

Despite this setback, Strauss still believed he could craft one last unqualified success. In Gartenberg's reading, Strauss's creative energy had not dimmed entirely; he revised parts of *Die Göttin der Vernunft* and corresponded with librettists to explore possible new subjects. However, deteriorating health, alongside changes in Viennese theatrical management and audience preference, made it difficult for him to secure high-profile premieres for truly fresh projects.

Wiener Blut (1899)

Among Strauss's very last involvements was *Wiener Blut*, an operetta stitched together from pre-existing Strauss melodies. Although it premiered soon after his death (and thus was only partially overseen by him in its final form), Gartenberg suggests Strauss had toyed with the

idea of another “Vienna-themed” piece—a nostalgic reflection on the city’s cultural essence. Ultimately, *Wiener Blut* was assembled by others, but the plan to revisit quintessentially Viennese motifs was something Strauss had entertained, hoping to remind audiences of the beloved “Old Vienna” style that first made him famous.

3. Artistic Plans Before His Death

Gartenberg identifies a few key areas where Strauss’s thinking continued to evolve in his last years:

1. **Refinement of the Operetta Form**

Strauss hoped to refine the lighter comedic structure of Viennese operetta, melding his signature melodic craft with a more sophisticated dramatic foundation. Even though *Die Fledermaus* remained popular, he was conscious that the genre could quickly grow stale without fresh ideas. His notes and correspondence (which Gartenberg quotes or references) indicate a desire for stronger libretti and theatrical innovation—something that could rival the broader European stage scene.

2. **Return to Instrumental Pieces**

Despite focusing heavily on theater works, Strauss never abandoned the concert waltz. Gartenberg highlights sketches showing Strauss wanted to create at least one more grand waltz cycle in the late 1890s. This new waltz might have been thematically linked to the idea of a changing Vienna—no longer the imperial city of his youth but still a musical capital. The project remained incomplete and never materialized into a published piece.

3. **Revisiting Earlier Successes**

Ill health and faltering commercial success made Strauss consider refurbishing successful older works. Gartenberg points out that Strauss often revisited themes from hits like *Die Fledermaus*, *Der Zigeunerbaron*, and *Eine Nacht in Venedig*, occasionally working them into medleys or re-orchestrations for anniversary concerts. Although it looked like nostalgia, Strauss seems to have been exploring how to fuse the old with the new, preserving the “Golden Age” flair but presenting it in the updated style that late 19th-century audiences increasingly craved.

4. **Potential Collaborations**

Gartenberg briefly discusses how Strauss exchanged letters with various librettists and publishers about prospective collaborative projects. However, none solidified into a major new stage work. Some proposed comedic or historical subjects, but either the financing fell through, or Strauss’s health impeded any large-scale realization.

4. Gartenberg’s Critical Perspective

“End of an Era”

Gartenberg’s central thesis is that Johann Strauss’s passing in 1899 coincided with the symbolic and literal closing of Vienna’s waltz-dominated chapter. He does not argue that light music disappeared overnight, but rather that Strauss’s personal creative impetus—the spirit that animated the entire city—became less relevant as the 20th century neared. The

unstoppable surge of modernist currents, changing operatic trends, and the transformation of social dance habits all contributed.

An Evolving Cultural Landscape

In analyzing Strauss's last artistic intentions, Gartenberg underscores the tension between tradition and innovation. Strauss recognized he could not singlehandedly revive the older style of grand Viennese operetta if the public had already begun favoring different theatrical modes. While Strauss never embraced atonality or truly avant-garde concepts, he did display an ongoing curiosity: from how French and German theater managers staged modern operettas to whether comedic libretti could be integrated with fresh instrumentation.

Nostalgia vs. Pragmatism

Gartenberg also shows that Strauss's final plans straddled a line between a nostalgic desire to reaffirm his legacy and a practical wish to remain relevant and financially secure. *Die Göttin der Vernunft* and the concept behind *Wiener Blut* both suggest he tried to harness the city's musical heritage to speak to contemporary audiences. Yet the lukewarm critical reception, combined with the administrative complexities of Viennese theaters, meant that these late ventures never reached the stature of his mid-career triumphs.

5. Conclusion and Lasting Significance

From Gartenberg's perspective, Johann Strauss's artistic plans before his death were marked by a poignant interplay of hope, nostalgia, and realism. Despite failing health, Strauss intended to:

- Refine the operetta format with stronger dramaturgy.
- Possibly craft one more major instrumental work (a new waltz or orchestral suite).
- Revitalize earlier successes (through new arrangements and anthologies).
- Collaborate on another full-scale operetta if the right opportunity arose.

These intentions reveal that even at the twilight of his life, Strauss remained both an astute observer of musical trends and a passionate champion of the art form he had popularized. Yet as Gartenberg's narrative emphasizes, a confluence of personal, financial, and cultural factors meant that many of these late ambitions did not come to full fruition. Strauss's death sealed a chapter of Viennese musical life and, for Gartenberg, symbolized the end of a historical period in which the waltz and operetta reigned supreme. In sum, *Johann Strauss: The End of an Era* offers a nuanced, empathetic account of Strauss's final pursuits and underscores how his last years were not merely a graceful decline but an active—if ultimately incomplete—effort to evolve and sustain the genre he had made synonymous with Vienna.

Describe and analyze please the work of Camille Crittenden „Johann Strauss and Vienna: Operetta and the Politics of Popular Culture” in terms of artistic plans that Strauss had in mind before his death in detail.

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Camille Crittenden's *Johann Strauss and Vienna: Operetta and the Politics of Popular Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 2000) is one of the more extensive scholarly studies of Johann Strauss II's artistic output in the context of late nineteenth-century Viennese society and politics. While Crittenden's monograph covers Strauss's entire career—focusing on the cultural and political circumstances that shaped his composing and the widespread reception of his music—her discussions of Strauss's final years shed light on the various artistic plans and ambitions he still harbored before his death in 1899. Below is an overview and analysis of how Crittenden approaches this topic, with emphasis on Strauss's unrealized (or partially realized) projects and what they reveal about his evolving artistic aspirations.

1. The Book's Central Argument and Approach

1. Intersection of Music and Politics

Crittenden's primary aim is to explore how Viennese operetta, especially Strauss's, functioned both as entertainment and as a mirror of political, social, and cultural currents in late imperial Vienna. She treats operetta not merely as frivolous, lighthearted entertainment but as a cultural form that—through subtle satire, topical references, and theatrical conventions—spoke to issues of class, national identity, and political transformation in Austro-Hungary.

2. Strauss in the Popular Sphere

Johann Strauss II (the "Waltz King") had to navigate Vienna's commercial theaters, changing operetta tastes, imperial patronage, censorship constraints, and audience expectations. Crittenden illustrates how Strauss's popularity rested on his ability to innovate within a popular genre, while also satisfying both aristocratic and middle-class audiences.

3. Focus on Operetta as a Social Barometer

According to Crittenden, operetta was a cultural barometer for the final decades of the Habsburg Empire. She shows how Strauss's works—*Die Fledermaus* in particular—used satire and social masquerade to highlight political complacency or to hint, sometimes obliquely, at the empire's underlying tensions. Her analysis encompasses production histories, reception by critics, and the broader performance culture in Vienna.

2. Strauss's Late Ambitions and Projects

Although Strauss is most famous for his dance music and a handful of operettas, he did indeed venture beyond these forms, especially later in life. In her study, Crittenden devotes attention to three major aspects of Strauss's late career that illuminate his artistic plans before his death:

1. Desire to Write "Serious" Works

- **Ritter Pázmán (1892):** Crittenden examines the opera (*Ritter Pázmán*) that Strauss completed and premiered at the Vienna Court Opera (Hofoper). While not a great success, this piece shows how Strauss was attempting to enter the

realm of grand opera—a space typically reserved for “serious” composers and more prestigious productions.

- **Reception and the Artistic Gap:** The lukewarm reception of *Ritter Pázmán* reinforced in Strauss that audiences preferred him in his more customary “light” idiom. Crittenden suggests that this failure helped shape the kind of works he later returned to, as he oscillated between the dream of leaving a “serious opera” legacy and the practical realities of pleasing his Viennese public.

2. Refining the Operetta Genre

- **Late Operettas (1890s):** Strauss continued composing operettas, but increasingly faced competition from new composers (e.g., Franz Lehár, who would rise to fame just after Strauss’s death) and from the changing tastes of Viennese audiences.
- **Die Göttin der Vernunft (1897):** One of Strauss’s last operettas, it suffered from a problematic libretto (which Strauss disliked) and limited popular appeal. Crittenden points out how the fiasco illustrated a tension: Strauss wished to push artistic boundaries but was often constrained by financial imperatives and the demands of theater management.

3. Plans for Future Stage Works

- **Wiener Blut (1899):** The operetta *Wiener Blut* (premiered shortly before Strauss’s death) was initially assembled mostly from earlier Strauss pieces, suggesting Strauss was engaged—directly or indirectly—in recycling and reworking existing music. Although *Wiener Blut* was not an overwhelming success at first, it later became one of his best-known stage pieces.
- **Unfinished or Unrealized Ideas:** Crittenden notes that Strauss often spoke of ideas for additional operettas or even another foray into opera-like works that could cement his legacy as more than just a “waltz and polka” composer. However, time constraints, difficulties with librettos, and his declining health prevented many of these ideas from coming to full fruition.

3. Political and Social Context Affecting His Final Plans

3.1 The Political Climate of Late Imperial Vienna

- By the 1890s, Vienna was undergoing significant political upheavals: the rise of nationalist movements, social democratic pressures, and cultural tensions in an increasingly multiethnic empire. Crittenden emphasizes how operetta both masked and revealed these tensions—an escapist genre that nonetheless thrived on gentle satire of the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie.

3.2 Censorship and Audience Expectations

- Although not as stringent as in earlier decades, theatrical censorship and the conservative tastes of imperial circles still shaped the content of Viennese operettas. Crittenden explores how Strauss navigated these hurdles; for example, he sometimes deferred to theater management regarding libretto changes to avoid controversies. This

push-and-pull dynamic limited or diverted some of Strauss's more ambitious late-career objectives.

3.3 Competition and Changing Musical Tastes

- By Strauss's final decade, new voices in Viennese operetta were emerging—Johann Strauss's own style, though beloved, was no longer singular. The younger generation (e.g., Karl Millöcker, Carl Zeller, and soon Franz Lehár) was pushing the genre forward. Crittenden's account shows how Strauss's attempts to safeguard his reputation—and expand his compositional range—were undercut by the rapid evolutions in the public's musical appetite.

4. Crittenden's Interpretation of Strauss's Personal Motivations

In her chapters focusing on the 1880s and 1890s, Crittenden reconstructs Strauss's mindset and motivation through correspondence, press reviews, and commentary from contemporaries. Several key themes emerge:

1. Struggle for Posthumous Legacy

Strauss was aware of his unprecedented success in the light music genre, but he also knew that posterity often judges composers by their "serious" output (e.g., opera, symphonic works). According to Crittenden, his drive to compose *Ritter Pázmán* and continue writing ambitious operettas was partly fueled by this legacy-consciousness.

2. Balancing Innovation and Tradition

While Strauss tried experimenting—particularly with orchestration and stage drama—he also hesitated to alienate his loyal audience. Crittenden highlights the tension between commercial viability and personal aspiration. Strauss recognized that the Viennese public expected a certain buoyancy and melodic sparkle; any deviation risked failure or rejection.

3. Health and Fatigue

By the mid-1890s, Strauss's health was increasingly fragile. Crittenden points out that commissions and performance obligations still piled up, making it difficult for him to devote focused time to large-scale new works. He occasionally expressed frustration over these demands, which stymied plans for more elaborate (or more novel) compositions.

5. Significance of These Late Plans in Strauss's Broader Reception

According to Crittenden, the significance of Strauss's unfulfilled or partially realized final ambitions lies in how they influenced his posthumous reputation:

1. Reassessment of Strauss as "Light" vs. "Serious" Composer

The fact that *Ritter Pázmán* and some late operettas did not match the enduring popularity of *Die Fledermaus* contributed to a lingering perception that Strauss's

genius resided strictly in the realm of dance music and lighter stage works. Crittenden argues that this perception overlooks Strauss's genuine desire—and ability, at times—to explore more complex forms.

2. **Wiener Blut and the Myth of “Viennese Charm”**

Wiener Blut eventually contributed to a mythologizing of Strauss as the quintessential Viennese composer. Although first received with mild enthusiasm, it later became emblematic of “Old Vienna.” Crittenden draws parallels between the operetta's composite nature (reusing earlier waltzes and themes) and the way Vienna, on the brink of modernity, was recycling and reimagining its own cultural identity. Strauss's repeated attempts to capture “Viennese spirit” in a new form speak to his broader cultural significance.

3. **Operetta as a Reflection of Political Change**

In Crittenden's view, late nineteenth-century operetta was constantly pulled between escapism and social critique. Strauss's final attempts to refine or revitalize the form reflect the politically charged environment—a period of shifting attitudes toward the monarchy, a fracturing empire, and an emergent Viennese modernism (soon leading to composers like Schoenberg). Strauss, though not a political activist, instinctively understood how these currents influenced audience tastes, and his final artistic plans attempted to navigate these challenges.

6. Overall Assessment

Crittenden's *Johann Strauss and Vienna* is often praised for situating Strauss firmly within the political and cultural crosscurrents of his day—rather than treating him only as a composer of charming waltzes. From this perspective, Strauss's incomplete or underdeveloped final projects become illuminating: they show him *trying* to shape his legacy beyond the waltz and beyond standard Viennese operetta, while still harnessing the popularity that made him Vienna's most famous living composer.

Key Takeaways from Crittenden's Discussion of Strauss's Last Plans

- **Persistent Ambition:** Even as he aged, Strauss did not simply coast on earlier successes but actively sought new compositional horizons (opera, higher-stakes operettas).
- **Constraints of the Popular Market:** The established formula of Viennese operetta, along with conservative theater management and complex Viennese public taste, constrained his ability to take large artistic risks.
- **Mixed Legacy:** Some of these experiments (e.g., *Ritter Pázmán*) did not succeed during his lifetime. Others (e.g., *Wiener Blut*), although initially tepidly received, eventually bolstered the posthumous image of Strauss as Vienna's beloved musical figure.
- **Reflection of Broader Cultural Dynamics:** Strauss's final years and his incomplete or compromised plans highlight a critical juncture in Austro-Hungarian cultural history, wherein entertainment, politics, and national identity were deeply entwined.

Concluding Thoughts

In *Johann Strauss and Vienna: Operetta and the Politics of Popular Culture*, Camille Crittenden paints a portrait of a composer whose late-life artistic goals were ambitious but

often curtailed by the political, economic, and cultural realities of fin-de-siècle Vienna. Strauss yearned to broaden his compositional scope—hoping to be remembered not just as “The Waltz King” but as a versatile, even “serious,” stage composer. While this aspiration found some expression in works like *Ritter Pázmán*, many of his more ambitious operatic or operetta projects ran into challenges, from problematic libretti to audience expectations. Crittenden’s analysis underscores how closely Strauss’s final plans were tied to the social and political matrix of imperial Vienna. Far from a mere composer of dance music, Johann Strauss II stands as an emblem of a rapidly changing cultural world—one in which commercial theater, political nuance, and popular appeal intertwined to shape not only the successes and failures of a single composer but the evolving identity of a city on the cusp of modernity.

Describe and analyze please the work of Hans Fantel „Waltz Kings: Johann Strauss, Father and Son” in terms of artistic plans that Strauss had in mind before his death in detail.

ChatGPT4o1pro

Hans Fantel’s *Waltz Kings: Johann Strauss, Father and Son* (sometimes also appearing under slightly varied titles) is one of the best-known English-language accounts of the Strauss family’s musical legacy. In it, Fantel interweaves a lively biographical narrative with musical and cultural history, highlighting how both Johann Strauss I (the father) and Johann Strauss II (the son) shaped the Viennese waltz tradition. While Fantel devotes substantial attention to the broader social context of nineteenth-century Vienna, his book also gives glimpses into each composer’s artistic aspirations, especially in their later years. Below is an overview and analysis focusing on **the artistic plans each composer had in mind before his death**, drawn from Fantel’s presentation and from broader scholarship on the family.

1. Johann Strauss I (1804–1849)

a. Context and Late-Career Trajectory

- **Rising Fame and Conflicting Ambitions:** By the 1840s, Johann Strauss I was widely acknowledged as a leading dance-band conductor and waltz composer, rivaled mainly by his colleague-turned-competitor Joseph Lanner. Fantel shows how Strauss I had become a mainstay in Viennese society, writing new waltzes for court balls and numerous public events.
- **Personal Difficulties:** Despite success, the father’s personal life had grown complicated. Fantel details how Strauss I’s separation from his wife (the mother of Johann Strauss II) and his relationships outside marriage strained family ties. This eventually contributed to father-son tensions.

b. Artistic Plans and Unfinished Goals

- **Touring vs. Composing:** Even near the end of his life, Strauss I wanted to expand his orchestra’s reach internationally. According to Fantel, he planned further tours outside of Austria—he had enjoyed success in places such as Germany, France, and England.

He was enthusiastic about securing the Viennese waltz as a truly “European” phenomenon.

- **Refining the Waltz Form:** While famous for quickly churned-out dance pieces (at times for immediate performance), Strauss I had hoped to elevate the orchestration of waltzes and galops, adding more complex introductions and transitions. Fantel underscores that although Strauss I’s waltzes began as light dance pieces, he increasingly aimed to give them the hallmarks of serious orchestral works.
- **Halted by Sudden Death:** Johann Strauss I died at age forty-five, reportedly from scarlet fever, in 1849. Fantel makes it clear that his passing left many aspirational projects—particularly more sophisticated waltz arrangements and grander expansions of his touring schedule—unrealized. Strauss I’s desire to more formally “legitimize” the waltz as a respected concert genre never reached its full fruition in his own lifetime.

2. Johann Strauss II (1825–1899)

a. The “Waltz King” and Expanding Beyond Dance Music

- **Dominance in Viennese Music:** By the 1860s and 1870s, Johann Strauss II had become even more famous than his father. Fantel portrays Strauss II’s career as an arc from initially building on the father’s repertoire—leading a family orchestra, quickly writing new waltzes and polkas—to venturing into operettas and stage music.
- **Shift Toward Operetta:** A major emphasis in Fantel’s narrative is the son’s increasing pivot away from “simple” dance pieces. Works like *Die Fledermaus* (1874) and *Der Zigeunerbaron* (1885) showcased Strauss II’s theatrical flair. Fantel describes how Strauss II was determined to prove himself on the operatic stage—yearning for recognition not merely as the inheritor of a dance-band tradition but also as a composer of full-length stage works with dramatic substance.

b. Final Years and Late Ambitions

- **Continued Experimentation:** Even into the 1890s, Strauss II never truly stopped writing waltzes (e.g., *Kaiser-Walzer*, *Emperor Waltz*, in 1889). However, Fantel emphasizes that by then the composer’s personal ambition lay more with larger theatrical or quasi-symphonic structures.
- **Unrealized Operatic Projects:** Fantel mentions Strauss II’s lingering wish to write a grand opera—an idea he toyed with but never brought to completion. While he had ventured into operetta quite successfully, the seriousness and prestige of grand opera appealed to him. He seems to have grappled with the question of whether the public (and critics) would accept a “Waltz King” in that realm.
- **The “Wiener Blut” Episode:** In 1899, the year of Johann Strauss II’s death, his operetta *Wiener Blut* premiered. Fantel’s account underscores how it was assembled under trying circumstances: Strauss was not in the best health, and collaborators helped finalize some parts. Reception was lukewarm initially, with the show gaining real popularity only after Strauss’s passing. Had he lived longer, Fantel suggests, he might have revised or developed *Wiener Blut* further, possibly reshaping it into a more cohesive theatrical work.
- **Desire for Artistic Legacy:** Above all, Fantel portrays Strauss II as both proud of his enormous achievements (particularly the worldwide popularity of the Viennese waltz)

and frustrated that he never quite escaped the label of “light music” composer. By the final decade of his life, Strauss II hoped to seal his reputation with more ambitious pieces. He also considered further crossovers—perhaps forging a genre that combined the lyricism of the waltz with the dramatic depth of opera or the comedic elegance of French operetta.

c. Fantel’s Interpretation of Strauss II’s Last Plans

- **Balancing Popular Demand vs. Personal Aspirations:** One of the recurring themes Fantel highlights is Strauss II’s internal conflict. On one hand, he was commercially successful with new waltzes—Viennese audiences (and international ones) loved them. On the other hand, the composer felt an artistic pull toward longer forms and more complex works. Even in the months before his death, he was still entertaining ideas of fresh theatrical works or expansions to his existing ones.
- **Influence on Future Viennese Composers:** While not a “plan” in the literal sense, Fantel touches on Strauss II’s hope that the next generation would continue the evolution of the waltz into a refined concert idiom. He was already an admired figure by a younger circle of composers in Vienna—Gustav Mahler among them. Although not strictly spelled out as a “plan” for after his death, Strauss II’s late correspondence suggests he wanted to see the waltz recognized as a distinct, legitimate category of classical music.

3. Concluding Observations

In *Waltz Kings: Johann Strauss, Father and Son*, Hans Fantel offers both a rousing portrait of nineteenth-century Viennese society and an exploration of how the waltz moved from a mere dance form to an emblem of Austrian cultural identity. Concerning **pre-death artistic plans**:

- **Johann Strauss I** left behind unrealized ambitions to elevate the Viennese waltz through more complex orchestration and to extend his ensemble’s international reach. His relatively early death curtailed these plans.
- **Johann Strauss II**, while achieving extraordinary success, likewise had **larger-scale** dreams:
 - To finish or initiate **more operettas** (and possibly a grand opera) that would showcase his compositional range.
 - To see the **waltz recognized** as a serious, quasi-orchestral form—a symbol of Viennese culture yet also accepted on the international “art music” stage.

Fantel’s perspective underscores that both father and son were never content simply to keep composing the same dances; each sought to broaden the waltz’s musical horizons, in different ways, in the final stages of their lives. While historical circumstances and personal obstacles prevented either man from fully realizing those late-career aspirations, their innovations collectively transformed the waltz from a local, popular entertainment into a beloved genre around the world.

Mahler's artistic plans before his death

Please describe what other artistic tasks Mahler was planning to carry out before his death, but which were not carried out because of his death? Also, list the authors who have analysed this issue in the context of Mahler's career and outline their main conclusions.

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Mahler's Unfinished Artistic Plans

Before his untimely death on May 18, 1911, Gustav Mahler had embarked on, or at least envisioned, several creative tasks that remained incomplete. While the most famous of these is the *Tenth Symphony*, there are indications from Mahler's sketches and correspondence (as well as testimony from those close to him) that he had additional artistic intentions. Below is a summary of the principal plans that were left unrealized:

1. Completion of the Tenth Symphony

- Mahler spent the summer of 1910 in Toblach working on his *Symphony No. 10*. Sketches for all five movements exist, but only the first movement was orchestrated in near-complete form. Mahler clearly intended to revise and fully orchestrate the remaining movements during subsequent months and in the next summer composing break (1911), but his failing health prevented him from doing so.

2. Further Symphonic Projects

- Some biographers suggest Mahler might have considered an *Eleventh Symphony*. Although there is no conclusive documentary evidence of advanced sketches, Mahler's characteristic pattern of continuous symphonic planning (he usually began new works during summer breaks) makes it plausible he was already thinking ahead to another large-scale piece.

3. Possible Stage Work

- Mahler occasionally mentioned an interest in opera or music drama. While he never left detailed plans for an opera in the way he did for his symphonies, scattered comments in letters and recollections by contemporaries hint that Mahler was intrigued by writing for the stage. The scale of his symphonic-cantata hybrids (such as *Das Lied von der Erde*) underscores his inclination toward dramatic narrative forms.

4. Revisions to Earlier Works

- Throughout his career, Mahler frequently revised and refined his own scores after their premieres (e.g., re-orchestrations, dynamic changes). Biographers note that he was never fully satisfied with certain passages in his earlier symphonies. There is reason to believe he would have continued to revisit, edit, and possibly publish revised editions—work that was curtailed by his final illness.

5. Further Conducting Engagements and Tours

- In addition to composition, Mahler was a highly sought-after conductor. At the time of his death, he had recently served as principal conductor of the New York Philharmonic. He had plans for additional seasons in New York and was also considering returning to Europe for guest conducting tours. These professional (and therefore artistic) endeavors were cut short.

Major Authors Who Have Analyzed Mahler's Unfinished Plans

A number of Mahler scholars have discussed the composer's late projects and how his deteriorating health ended them prematurely. Below are some of the most influential, along with their key conclusions:

1. Henry-Louis de La Grange

- **Key Works:**
 - *Gustav Mahler* (multi-volume biography)
- **Main Conclusions:**
 - De La Grange offers the most exhaustive documentation of Mahler's day-to-day life. He uses letters, diaries, and testimony from Mahler's inner circle to show that the Tenth Symphony was meant to be fully orchestrated and that additional compositional tasks were on Mahler's horizon.
 - He emphasizes how Mahler's health crisis (infective endocarditis and subsequent complications) disrupted what was clearly intended to be another productive summer of composing in 1911.

2. Donald Mitchell

- **Key Works:**
 - *Gustav Mahler: The Early Years* (later revised into multi-part studies)
 - *Gustav Mahler: The Wunderhorn Years*
 - *Gustav Mahler: Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*
- **Main Conclusions:**
 - Mitchell highlights Mahler's habit of meticulous revision and continuous creative planning, arguing that Mahler's sketches reveal how the Tenth was a gateway to a new stylistic horizon.
 - He suggests Mahler's late style, as represented in *Das Lied von der Erde*, the *Ninth Symphony*, and the *Tenth*, hints at future directions that were cut short—particularly a more exploratory use of harmony and structure.

3. Deryck Cooke

- **Key Works:**
 - *The Conducting Versions and Analyses of Mahler's Tenth Symphony* (Cooke's performing version of the Tenth)
- **Main Conclusions:**
 - Cooke's renowned "performing version" of the *Tenth Symphony* arose from his belief that Mahler had written enough material to present a faithful realization of the entire work.

- In his commentaries, Cooke underscores the importance of the *Tenth Symphony* to Mahler's trajectory, describing it as an essential portal into the modernist elements that were forming in Mahler's late style.

4. Theodor W. Adorno

- **Key Work:**
 - *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*
- **Main Conclusions:**
 - Adorno interprets Mahler as a bridge from late Romanticism to modernism, with the unfinished Tenth symbolizing an "opening" in musical language.
 - He does not dwell on the specifics of what Mahler planned to do next as much as on the philosophical and aesthetic significance of Mahler's late works. Nonetheless, Adorno notes that Mahler's sketches point to further experimentation that remained unrealized due to his death.

5. Paul Bekker and Other Early 20th-Century Critics

- **Key Works:**
 - *Gustav Mahlers Sinfonien* (by Paul Bekker, 1921)
- **Main Conclusions:**
 - Bekker and others of his generation primarily focused on Mahler's symphonies as they existed, but they also recognized that the Tenth was an unfinished statement.
 - They regarded Mahler's final endeavors as the culmination of his "symphonic worldview," leaving future plans (including a rumored Eleventh Symphony) in the realm of speculation.

Overall Significance:

Mahler's unexpected death at the age of fifty left his Tenth Symphony partially orchestrated and truncated any broader plans—whether they involved new symphonies, opera, or ongoing revisions of his earlier works. Scholars generally concur that his late style, evidenced in *Das Lied von der Erde* (1909), the *Ninth Symphony* (1909–10), and the sketches for the *Tenth*, reveals a composer poised to move even further into bold harmonic, structural, and expressive territory. His death not only halted those ambitions but also ensured that the Tenth would become one of the most studied and conjectured-upon "unfinished" works in the orchestral repertoire.

Describe and analyze please the work of Henry-Louis de La Grange „Gustav Mahler” in terms of artistic plans that Mahler had in mind before his death in detail.

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Henry-Louis de La Grange's monumental multi-volume biography of Gustav Mahler is among the most detailed and authoritative studies of the composer's life and work. In particular, it sheds invaluable light on Mahler's artistic vision, creative process, and unfinished plans at the time of his untimely death in May 1911. Below is an overview and analysis of how de La Grange addresses Mahler's final period—roughly the last few years of his life—and the compositional, interpretative, and institutional plans that never came fully to fruition.

1. Context in de La Grange's Biography

De La Grange devoted four volumes to Mahler's life:

1. **Volume 1 (1860–1897):** Mahler's formative years, early compositions, and first conducting posts.
2. **Volume 2 (1897–1904):** Mahler's tenure at the Vienna Court Opera, works from the Fourth to the Fifth Symphony, and expansion of his reputation.
3. **Volume 3 (1904–1907):** Creation of some of his major works (Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Symphonies), along with personal tribulations.
4. **Volume 4 (1907–1911):** Mahler's move to New York, his directorship of the Metropolitan Opera and the New York Philharmonic, and his last compositions (Das Lied von der Erde, the Ninth Symphony, and sketches for the Tenth).

When discussing Mahler's final years, de La Grange particularly focuses on **Volume 4**, which outlines the interplay between Mahler's hectic conducting schedule in New York, his ongoing health struggles (after being diagnosed with a severe heart condition in 1907), and his desperate desire to continue composing each summer in Europe. Within this context, de La Grange draws on diaries, letters (particularly those of Alma Mahler), memoirs by Mahler's contemporaries (e.g., Bruno Walter), and an array of archival documentation.

2. Mahler's Late Compositional Focus

a) Das Lied von der Erde (1908–1909)

Although *Das Lied von der Erde* is largely complete by the time de La Grange's narrative for this period begins, it remains central to understanding Mahler's mind in his final years. De La Grange underscores that:

- **Choice of Text:** Mahler's fascination with Chinese poetry (in German translation) speaks to his preoccupation with mortality, transcendence, and nature's cycles.
- **Hybrid Form:** Mahler was uncertain whether to label it a symphony, fearing superstition around the "ninth symphony" curse. De La Grange interprets Mahler's search for new forms—part song cycle, part symphony—as emblematic of his late style and personal anxieties.
- **Spiritual Dimension:** De La Grange reads Mahler's use of orchestral color and final movement (the famous "Der Abschied") as a profound, searching farewell.

b) Ninth Symphony (1908–1909)

Mahler completed his Ninth around the same time as *Das Lied von der Erde*, but it was premiered only after his death, under Bruno Walter's direction. De La Grange emphasizes:

- **New Orchestral Language:** He examines the Ninth’s irregular phrase structures, abrupt shifts, and the sense of disintegration, foreshadowing developments that would become more explicit in 20th-century music.
- **Biographical Resonances:** De La Grange carefully ties the Ninth’s introspective intensity to Mahler’s knowledge of his worsening health. Mahler was wrestling both with the idea of a farewell to life and an attempt to push symphonic form further.

c) Sketches for the Tenth Symphony (1910–1911)

The Tenth Symphony, which Mahler never fully completed, features prominently in any discussion of Mahler’s artistic plans before his death. De La Grange’s discussion includes:

- **Scope and Ambition:** Even though the Tenth remained in a highly fragmentary state—Mahler completed a full draft but orchestrated only the opening movement—de La Grange points to the thoroughness of the sketches. Mahler was as meticulous as ever, carefully working through thematic transformations.
- **Emotional Content:** Scholars have often linked the Tenth’s intense, sometimes anguished harmonic language to Mahler’s personal crises (including marital strife) and his failing health. De La Grange underscores the heartbreak and despair conveyed in the famous dissonant chord outbursts and the emotive final movement.
- **Evolution of Tonal Language:** De La Grange notes how Mahler’s sketches incorporate prolonged dissonances and new ways of shaping orchestral texture, hinting at a future direction of modernist music.

3. Mahler’s Unfinished Projects and Broader Artistic Visions

Even beyond the Tenth Symphony, de La Grange’s research illuminates further strands in Mahler’s thinking:

1. **Possible Eleventh Symphony:** Mahler’s own letters and Alma’s recollections hint at a continuous stream of new symphonic ideas. De La Grange carefully pieces together remarks from Mahler’s circle suggesting that he intended to go beyond the Tenth, though no solid sketches remain to clarify that plan.
2. **Song Cycles:** After *Das Lied von der Erde*, Mahler’s fascination with the Lied tradition remained strong. De La Grange provides some evidence—through letter fragments and anecdotal recollections—that Mahler had considered additional vocal-orchestral works, though these never crystalized.
3. **Revising Earlier Works:** Mahler was famously a perpetual reviser. De La Grange highlights that Mahler revisited earlier symphonies (especially the First and Fourth) during his final years, making minor orchestral adjustments when preparing them for performance in New York. De La Grange interprets this as part of Mahler’s overarching aim to ensure a coherent “cycle” of symphonies that would outlive him.

4. Mahler as Conductor and Director: Institutional Plans

a) New York Philharmonic and Metropolitan Opera

De La Grange underscores how Mahler's commitments in America consumed him from 1908 to 1911. While Mahler's focus was still on composing each summer in Europe, de La Grange provides compelling context:

- Mahler was gradually shaping rehearsal standards and orchestral discipline in New York, much as he had done in Vienna.
- He had long-term plans to raise American performance standards, introduce more of his own works (though with caution, given the conservative tastes of the audiences and boards), and shape the repertoire toward modern developments.

b) Return to Europe and Vienna

In the last months of his life, Mahler was still expecting to return to Europe for the summer of 1911. De La Grange describes how:

- Mahler envisioned devoting more time to the Tenth Symphony after his demanding New York season, hoping for a period of relative calm at his composing retreat in Toblach (Dobbiaco) or Maiernigg—though ironically, neither retreat was wholly available to him in 1911 because of personal and financial constraints.
- Some of Mahler's friends even speculated that, health permitting, he might pursue a position again in Vienna or engage more deeply in guest conducting in various European centers.

5. De La Grange's Methodology and Analytical Perspective

a) Documentary Rigor

One of the hallmark characteristics of Henry-Louis de La Grange's work is its **massive documentary scope**. He painstakingly correlates:

- **Mahler's Personal Writings:** Letters, postcards, diary entries from Mahler and his wife, Alma, as well as recollections from colleagues.
- **Contemporary Accounts:** Criticism and reviews, statements from musicians such as Bruno Walter, Otto Klemperer, and other conductors who later championed Mahler's music.
- **Historical Context:** The cultural and musical backdrop of the fin de siècle, which influenced how Mahler framed his late symphonies.

b) Psychological and Biographical Insight

De La Grange often weaves in psychological dimensions:

- He links Mahler’s concern for existential themes in *Das Lied von der Erde* and the Ninth Symphony to the personal tragedies and fears of mortality that haunted him (the death of his daughter Maria in 1907, his own heart condition, the strains in his marriage).
- He does not, however, reduce the works to purely autobiographical statements. Instead, he places them in the continuum of Mahler’s symphonic journey, balancing personal detail with broader musicological analysis.

c) Reception and Legacy

De La Grange’s account highlights how Mahler’s limited time in New York precluded him from fully realizing his wish to educate audiences about his newer works. He shows that Mahler’s plan was ambitious—introducing pathbreaking modern symphonic writing to a still-conservative public. Ultimately, Mahler’s death in 1911 cut short these initiatives, leaving the Tenth and potential later works as tantalizing fragments of a direction in which he might have further ventured.

6. Conclusions on Mahler’s Late Artistic Plans

Henry-Louis de La Grange’s comprehensive biography captures a portrait of Mahler as an artist **on the cusp of transformation**:

- **Symphonic Innovations:** *Das Lied von der Erde*, the Ninth Symphony, and the sketches for the Tenth represent Mahler’s most harmonically and structurally daring music, anticipating elements of atonality or extended tonality seen in later composers like Schoenberg and Berg.
- **Continuous Creative Drive:** Mahler did not see the Ninth or *Das Lied* as any kind of endpoint. De La Grange stresses that Mahler’s relentless perfectionism, combined with an almost frantic pace of life, continued until he could physically work no more.
- **Institutional Influence:** Beyond composition, Mahler hoped to reshape orchestral standards—first in Vienna, then in New York, and possibly elsewhere. De La Grange’s view is that Mahler’s ultimate plan was to balance a high-powered conducting career with the passionate need to compose every summer. Ill health simply curtailed a vision in progress.

In sum, de La Grange’s “Gustav Mahler” goes far beyond a basic chronological account and offers rich, interwoven insights: personal turmoil, late style, the interplay of illness and creativity, and the tension between Mahler’s bold artistic imagination and the constraints of the real world. Nowhere is this more potent than in the final years, where de La Grange illuminates the outlines of Mahler’s lost future: an evolving symphonic language that would have undoubtedly pushed the boundaries of early 20th-century music even further.

Describe and analyze please the work of Deryck Cooke „The Conducting Versions and Analyses of Mahler’s Tenth Symphony” in terms of artistic plans that Mahler had in mind before his death in detail.

1. Introduction and Context

Gustav Mahler (1860–1911) died leaving his *Symphony No. 10* in a highly advanced—but not fully completed—state. He had produced a continuous short score for the entire five-movement work and partially orchestrated substantial sections (particularly the first movement). However, key details in orchestration, dynamics, and inner voicings remained unfinished. Over the course of the mid-twentieth century, various scholars and composers engaged in the delicate process of creating performing versions or “completions” to present Mahler’s Tenth in a form as close as possible to his artistic intentions.

Foremost among these efforts stands **Deryck Cooke’s** work, typically referred to as the “Cooke Performing Version.” The extended title sometimes cited—*The Conducting Versions and Analyses of Mahler’s Tenth Symphony*—refers to various iterations of Cooke’s score and his written discussions, analyses, and annotations in which he explains and justifies his editorial decisions.

Below is a detailed look at **(a)** Mahler’s artistic vision for the Tenth as evidenced by the surviving manuscript; **(b)** the guiding principles behind Cooke’s approach; **(c)** the structural and musical content of the Tenth; and **(d)** the significance of Cooke’s completion in light of Mahler’s late style and intentions.

2. Mahler’s Artistic Plan for the Tenth Symphony

2.1 Overall Structure

Mahler originally planned a **five-movement** structure for the Tenth, somewhat mirroring his *Fifth Symphony* in its arch-like design:

1. **Adagio**
2. **Scherzo I**
3. **Purgatorio**
4. **Scherzo II**
5. **Finale**

He left behind a clearly continuous musical narrative in short score (i.e., the essential lines—melody, harmony, and key structural devices—were mostly set out). That five-part shape reveals a trajectory from contemplative or tragic states (the opening *Adagio*) through an inner psychological drama (*Scherzos* and *Purgatorio*) to a final movement of visionary or transcendent character.

2.2 Emotional and Symbolic Content

Mahler's letters and personal notations in the *Tenth* manuscript—some heartbreakingly direct references to his own emotional turmoil—suggest he intended the Tenth as an intensely personal statement. He had learned of alarming marital strains (real or imagined) and was also experiencing a deep fear of mortality and existential crisis (having just completed the *Ninth Symphony* and aware of his heart condition).

Throughout the sketches, Mahler inscribed cryptic phrases such as “O Gott! O Gott! Warum hast Du mich verlassen?” (“Oh God! Why have You forsaken me?”) in the margins, and references to his wife, Alma. These inscriptions hint at a deeply introspective dimension, parallel to what we hear in the *Ninth*, but in some respects even more raw.

2.3 The Degree of Completion

By the time Mahler died:

- **Movement I (Adagio):** Largely orchestrated (though not fully refined).
- **Movement II (Scherzo I):** Short score was complete, orchestration partially indicated but mostly left as sketches.
- **Movement III (Purgatorio):** Short score mostly complete, though less detailed instructions for orchestration.
- **Movement IV (Scherzo II):** Complete short score, again with partial orchestration notes.
- **Movement V (Finale):** Complete short score with patchy hints at orchestration, especially in crucial climaxes.

Despite these significant materials, the Tenth was not in an “immediately performable” condition—there were holes in instrumentation detail, dynamic planning, and a few transitions that needed editorial clarifications.

3. Deryck Cooke's Approach to the Completion

3.1 Philosophical and Editorial Principles

Cooke's overriding aim in preparing a performing version was to **stay as faithful as possible to Mahler's intentions**—to fill in what was missing without imposing a new creative layer. He sought to:

1. **Base all reconstructions on Mahler's short score and sketches**—no invention of thematic material.
2. **Use Mahler's mature orchestral style**—as gleaned from the late symphonies (the *Ninth* and *Das Lied von der Erde*)—when fleshing out voicings and instrumental doublings.
3. **Avoid “finishing” the music in a compositional sense** if the manuscript gave no real clues to Mahler's direction. Where something was unclear, Cooke allowed for minimal editorial speculation, indicating such places in the commentary.

Cooke repeatedly stressed that his version is a “**performing version**” rather than a “completion” in the full sense. He wanted the public to experience the powerful musical statements that Mahler had effectively laid out, without claiming to speak for Mahler in any final manner.

3.2 Collaborative Efforts and Revisions

Cooke’s work underwent several stages:

- **Cooke I (1960):** A more provisional score, in which Cooke merely tried to demonstrate that there was enough coherent Mahler material for a complete performance.
- **Cooke II (1966):** With feedback from conductors such as Berthold Goldschmidt and others, Cooke refined instrumentation, corrected voice-leading, and clarified details.
- **Subsequent refinements (1972 and beyond):** Minor corrections, evolving into what is often considered the “standard” Cooke version used by most conductors today.

Throughout this process, Cooke consulted musicologists, conductors, and Mahler scholars to ensure authenticity. He also provided **detailed analyses**, explaining measure-by-measure how Mahler’s short score guided the orchestrations and articulations.

4. Musical and Structural Analysis in Cooke’s Version

4.1 First Movement (Adagio)

- **Form and Character:** A broad, intense sonata-like Adagio that foreshadows the same vein of slow movement intensity found in Mahler’s *Ninth*.
- **Cooke’s Contribution:** Minimal additional orchestration was needed, because Mahler’s own sketches were fairly detailed. Cooke’s main role here was to ensure continuity in the winds and brass, clarifying dynamic markings and articulations that Mahler had not fully spelled out.

4.2 Second Movement (Scherzo I)

- **Form and Character:** Frenetic and rhythmically driving. It shares a kinship with Mahler’s earlier “dance-macabre”-type scherzos but with an especially modern harmonic language.
- **Cooke’s Contribution:** Greater intervention, because Mahler had left more partial or short-hand orchestral indications. Cooke had to extrapolate from typical late-Mahler orchestration (for example, combining strings and woodwinds in climaxes or doubling lines in characteristic ways Mahler favored in the *Ninth*).

4.3 Third Movement (Purgatorio)

- **Form and Character:** A short central pivot, reminiscent of a sardonic or grotesque intermezzo. The notion of “Purgatorio” suggests a transitional space both spiritually and musically.

- **Cooke’s Contribution:** Here, Mahler’s short score was relatively complete, so Cooke’s orchestrations attempt to retain a transparent, almost chamber-like texture to highlight the fleeting, ambiguous nature of this music.

4.4 Fourth Movement (Scherzo II)

- **Form and Character:** The largest Scherzo, continuing the structural parallel to the *Fifth Symphony* (where the middle movements include two Scherzo-like sections). The second Scherzo in the Tenth, however, is even more stark and anguished, with sudden disruptions.
- **Cooke’s Contribution:** Cooke had to carefully handle the abrupt changes in texture and meter. Mahler’s short score contained the essential melodic and harmonic content, but dynamic gradations and orchestral color required editorial realization.

4.5 Fifth Movement (Finale)

- **Form and Character:** One of Mahler’s most emotionally intense finales, unveiling an expansive opening chorale-like idea that leads into a culminating catharsis. Dissonant climaxes reflect Mahler’s fear and anguish, resolving into a more reconciled soundworld at the end.
- **Cooke’s Contribution:** Arguably the most challenging portion. Mahler left extensive directions but also blank spots. Cooke had to infer instrumentation for certain bridging passages. That said, crucial sections—like the massive dissonant chord outburst—were clearly indicated. This movement completes the arc from despair to tentative peace, following a blueprint consistent with Mahler’s late symphonic style.

5. Reflections on Mahler’s Late Style and Cooke’s Fidelity

5.1 Continuity with the Ninth Symphony

Mahler’s *Ninth* ends in profound resignation, drifting into silence. The Tenth, in Cooke’s conception, picks up and intensifies that introspective world—yet also moves towards an even more searing emotional narrative, especially in the culminating final pages. By studying the orchestration and thematic transformations of the *Ninth* (and *Das Lied von der Erde*), Cooke preserved stylistic consistency in his completion.

5.2 Mahler’s Possible Next Steps vs. Cooke’s Restraint

Had Mahler survived to finalize his Tenth, it is possible some details in orchestration, pacing, or transitions might have changed. Mahler was known to revise extensively in rehearsal. Cooke’s approach remains cautious: he was reluctant to invent new bridging material. Instead, he lightly “fills in” and ensures that each measure is thoroughly rooted in what is present in the manuscript—any leaps of imagination are spelled out in Cooke’s commentary.

5.3 Reception and Enduring Importance

While a few other completions of Mahler's Tenth exist (e.g., by Clinton Carpenter or the Samale–Mazucca team), Cooke's version has emerged as the most performed and accepted. It has been championed by prominent conductors and widely recorded. Many listeners and musicians believe that, through Cooke's scholarship and tasteful editorial hand, **Mahler's profound "last word"** is vividly brought to life without overshadowing or diluting the composer's unmistakable voice.

6. Conclusion

Deryck Cooke's *Conducting Versions and Analyses of Mahler's Tenth Symphony* stand as a landmark in twentieth-century musicological and editorial practice. By weaving together Mahler's extensive but incomplete manuscript with his own thorough knowledge of the composer's late style, Cooke created a performing edition that **honors Mahler's artistic plan**: a five-movement journey from despairing introspection through psychological turbulence to a final, if ambivalent, sense of resolution.

- **Mahler's Artistic Plans:** A large-scale, five-movement structure marked by intense emotion and autobiographical undertones.
- **Cooke's Achievement:** A faithful realization using a measured approach, preserving Mahler's existing material and style.
- **Outcome:** The music world gained a performable version of one of Mahler's most emotionally and harmonically innovative works, helping secure its place in the standard symphonic repertoire.

In short, Cooke's meticulous analysis and editorial restraint serve Mahler's vision by allowing audiences to experience the Tenth in a convincing orchestral form—one that, while necessarily part scholarship and part interpretation, remains the closest we can come to what Mahler might have intended had he lived to complete his final symphonic statement.

Describe and analyze please the works of Donald Mitchell „Gustav Mahler: The Early Years” and „Gustav Mahler: The Wunderhorn Years” and „Gustav Mahler: Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death” in terms of artistic plans that Mahler had in mind before his death in detail.

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Donald Mitchell's scholarship on Gustav Mahler is widely acknowledged as foundational, not only for the depth of its biographical detail but also for its exploration of Mahler's creative processes, musical language, philosophical influences, and unfinished aspirations. Across his multi-volume study, Mitchell traces Mahler's artistic development chronologically while also examining the aesthetic and intellectual currents that shaped the composer's work at every stage. Although Donald Mitchell ultimately produced four volumes in total, the three you mention—*Gustav Mahler: The Early Years*, *Gustav Mahler: The Wunderhorn Years*, and *Gustav Mahler: Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*—together present a sweeping

portrait of Mahler’s evolution, clarifying how his plans for future works and overarching artistic vision continued to expand right up until his death in 1911.

Below is an overview and analysis of these three volumes, with a particular emphasis on how they illuminate Mahler’s final aspirations and the directions he was set to explore.

1. *Gustav Mahler: The Early Years* (Published 1958; later revised)

Coverage and Focus

- **Biographical Context:** This first volume starts at Mahler’s birth in 1860 and moves through his formative experiences in Bohemia and Moravia, as well as his earliest forays into composition and conducting. Mitchell discusses Mahler’s student days at the Vienna Conservatory and charts his initial struggles to balance a conductor’s career with a composer’s ambitions.
- **Formative Compositions:** Mitchell devotes much attention to Mahler’s early works, such as *Das klagende Lied* and the beginnings of his song output. These youthful pieces already give clues to the stylistic and emotional range that would characterize Mahler’s later music.

Key Contributions to Understanding Mahler’s Artistic Plans

1. **Emergence of a ‘Symphonic Song’ Concept:** Mitchell highlights how Mahler, from early on, integrated the lyrical potential of song with symphonic aspirations. Even as a young composer, Mahler was not content simply to write songs or purely instrumental movements; he wanted his music to transcend boundaries and embrace a multi-dimensional emotional world.
2. **Philosophical and Literary Interests:** In analyzing letters, diaries, and other sources, Mitchell shows that Mahler’s reading (e.g., Goethe, Schopenhauer, German Romantic poetry) laid a philosophical bedrock that would sustain the composer’s increasingly ambitious plans.
3. **Sowing the Seeds of Later Ambitions:** Mitchell notes that while Mahler’s earliest works do not match the sheer scale or spiritual scope of the late symphonies, the seeds of his later style—long arcs of melody, fascination with nature, cosmic thematics—were already planted.

Perspective on Mahler’s Late Plans

Although *The Early Years* does not deal directly with the works immediately preceding Mahler’s death, it shows how the fundamental impulses that drove his composition (a fusing of narrative, existential questioning, and personal confession) were there from the start. Mitchell argues that Mahler’s long-term vision—a pursuit of “the symphony as world”—was always embedded, even in early sketches.

2. *Gustav Mahler: The Wunderhorn Years* (Published 1975)

Coverage and Focus

- **Time Period:** This volume generally spans the mid-1890s through the turn of the century—roughly from Mahler’s composition of the earliest *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* settings to the completion of the Fourth Symphony (and edges into the Fifth’s genesis).
- **Wunderhorn Influence:** Mahler’s engagement with the *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (a collection of German folk poems) was instrumental in his artistic development. Mitchell gives a detailed account of how Mahler’s Wunderhorn songs permeate the Second, Third, and Fourth Symphonies, both thematically and philosophically.

Key Contributions to Understanding Mahler’s Artistic Plans

1. **Fusion of Song and Symphony:** Mitchell pays particularly close attention to how Mahler began weaving Wunderhorn themes, texts, and motives into his symphonic canvases. This approach underscores Mahler’s concept of the symphony as an all-encompassing form that includes vocal elements.
2. **Expansion of Orchestral Language:** These years see Mahler forging the gigantic orchestral and choral forces found especially in the “Resurrection” Symphony (No. 2) and the “Symphony of a Thousand” (No. 8, foreshadowed in his expansive approach). Mitchell details how Mahler’s sonic imagination kept growing, anticipating the even more radical expansions he would attempt in his late years.
3. **Growing Sense of Metaphysical Inquiry:** Alongside the folk imagery and worldly references of Wunderhorn, Mitchell highlights Mahler’s preoccupation with life, death, and the afterlife—a philosophical current that would culminate in later works like *Das Lied von der Erde*, the Ninth Symphony, and sketches for the Tenth.

Perspective on Mahler’s Late Plans

In *The Wunderhorn Years*, Mitchell demonstrates that by the turn of the century, Mahler was already asking big existential questions and was determined to treat them in symphonic form. The emotional and conceptual breadth of the Second and Third Symphonies, in particular, set the stage for Mahler’s continued expansions in the final decade of his life.

3. *Gustav Mahler: Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death* (Published 1985; sometimes subtitled “Interpretations and Annotations”)

Coverage and Focus

- **Late Works:** Here, Mitchell focuses on a spectrum of Mahler’s middle-to-late works, including *Kindertotenlieder*, *Das Lied von der Erde*, the Fifth through Ninth Symphonies, and other major song cycles that grapple with themes of mortality, transcendence, and the fragility of life.

- **Title Emphasis—Life and Death:** The volume’s subtitle points to Mitchell’s central thesis: in these works, Mahler continually addresses the boundary between existence and the unknown, weaving personal grief and cosmic questions into his music.

Key Contributions to Understanding Mahler’s Artistic Plans

1. **Bridge to the Tenth Symphony:** Although *The Finale* (Mitchell’s fourth volume) discusses Mahler’s incomplete Tenth Symphony at length, *Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death* lays out how the Ninth Symphony and *Das Lied von der Erde* are already rethinking symphonic form, exploring new harmonic territories, and approaching a striking intimacy in their philosophical outlook.
2. **Mahler’s Late Stylistic Language:** Mitchell delves into Mahler’s advanced orchestral palette, his use of counterpoint, and a new austerity or clarity that emerges in the late works. These characteristics set the stage for the Tenth Symphony sketches, in which Mahler’s language grows even more harmonically adventurous.
3. **Personal Dimensions:** The volume shines a spotlight on the intersection of Mahler’s personal tragedies—most notably the death of his daughter Maria in 1907 and his own declining health—and the intense spiritual searching found in *Das Lied von der Erde* and the Ninth Symphony. Mitchell connects these experiences directly to Mahler’s re-conception of what the symphony could express.

Perspective on Mahler’s Late (and Unfulfilled) Plans

- **The “Tenth Symphony” and Beyond:** Although only partially covered here, Mitchell indicates that Mahler conceived the Tenth as continuing his journey into new harmonic terrain, emotional directness, and perhaps an even more confessional style. Some sketches suggest further expansions in form (a five-movement structure; introspective Adagio sections, etc.).
- **Hopes for Future Symphonies:** Donald Mitchell’s scholarship also acknowledges the oft-cited “curse of the Ninth” (the notion that many major composers died after their Ninth Symphony). Mahler’s superstition about numbering symphonies, combined with the fact that *Das Lied von der Erde* remained unnumbered, hints that he had plans to continue well beyond the Tenth. Although no definitive sketches exist for an Eleventh Symphony, Mitchell and other Mahler scholars often point to the Tenth’s final lines and how they contain seeds of further developments—an evolution that was sadly curtailed by Mahler’s death in 1911.

Synthesizing Donald Mitchell’s View of Mahler’s Ultimate Artistic Plans

1. **The “Symphony as World” Realized and Extended**
Across all three volumes, Mitchell draws a throughline: Mahler always strove to create symphonies that encompass a totality of life experience—nature, love, humor, tragedy, transcendence, and metaphysical longing. Each period (early, Wunderhorn, late) incrementally broadened this scope. By the time of the Ninth Symphony and *Das Lied von der Erde*, Mahler was not diminishing in ambition but exploring even more refined (and occasionally radical) ways to achieve a universal statement.

2. **Integration of Song and Instrumental Technique**

From the *Wunderhorn* works to *Kindertotenlieder*, Mahler's use of song as a vehicle for personal and philosophical reflection never ceased. Mitchell underlines that Mahler's plan was to keep working with text-based and purely instrumental forms in tandem—a synergy culminating in *Das Lied von der Erde* (a “symphony” in songs), then pushing onward.

3. **Expanding Harmonic Language and Formal Experimentation**

Particularly in the late works, Mitchell shows Mahler breaking new ground with chromaticism and orchestration, foreshadowing some later 20th-century musical developments. The incomplete Tenth was intended to take these developments further, unveiling even more expressive dissonances and structural freedom.

4. **Spiritual and Existential Searches**

The impetus behind Mahler's artistic plans, as Mitchell meticulously details, was always existential: the meaning of life, the tragedy of death, and the potential for spiritual redemption or renewal. In the final phase of his career, Mahler had no intention of abandoning these concerns but was, if anything, delving deeper into them. His incomplete Tenth's final words (“für dich leben!” in some sketches) and the searing harmonic language speak to unfinished spiritual inquiries.

Conclusion

Donald Mitchell's three volumes—*The Early Years*, *The Wunderhorn Years*, and *Songs and Symphonies of Life and Death*—together offer a comprehensive, evolving picture of Gustav Mahler as a composer whose gaze was consistently fixed on large-scale, existential questions. From the first inklings of a “song-symphony” concept in his youth, to the culmination of his visionary middle symphonies with *Wunderhorn* themes, and ultimately to the deeply personal spiritual explorations of the late works, Mahler was perpetually expanding his artistic scope.

In terms of Mahler's plans before his death, Mitchell underscores:

- Mahler was still pushing into more modern harmonic expressions, especially seen in the Tenth Symphony's sketches.
- He fully intended to compose further symphonies—there was no sense of a completed artistic cycle at the Ninth or *Das Lied von der Erde*.
- The thematic arc of life, death, and possible transcendence remained a driving force. Even if Mahler had lived longer, these questions would likely have continued to shape his compositional direction in increasingly bold ways.

In short, Donald Mitchell's detailed research across these volumes demonstrates how Mahler's “artistic plan” was one of perpetual expansion—a ceaseless striving to merge song, symphony, personal confession, and cosmic reflection, a vision that remained incomplete when Mahler died in 1911 but which left a profoundly influential legacy for 20th-century music.