

Parallelism Between Songs and Piano Works of Robert Schumann

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Abstract

This study aims to provide another artistic lens to view Schumann's selected piano compositions of 1838 and 1839 through investigating allusion within the vocal compositions of 1840. In correlation with biographical events, and the influence of German Romantic literature, the tightened relationship between music and words in the songs containing allusions to the piano works, supports programmatic readings of the latter. These piano compositions include *Novellette No. 1 in F Major*, Op. 21; *Der Dichter spricht* from *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15; *Arabeske*, Op. 18; and the first, second, and fourth movements of *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16. There are three main parts to this study: (1.) a study of Schumann's quotation and allusion, (2.) a first case study on the '*mir beschieden*' phrase, and (3.) a second case study on Schumann's *Kreisleriana*. The first chapter contains the literature review on studies of Schumann's musical references, which displays his preference for disguising them. The following chapters contain case studies focusing on the origins and intentions of the songs' allusions to the piano works. The '*mir beschieden*' phrase as an allusion to Schubert, and the influence of German Romantic literature on Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, further supports the hypothesis, based on parallelism between Schumann's vocal and piano works, that Schumann portrays his longing for Clara and his marital desire in the piano compositions.

Abstrait

Cette étude vise à fournir une autre perspective artistique sur certaines des oeuvres pour piano de Schumann de 1838 et 1839, en enquêtant sur les allusions qu'on retrouve dans les compositions vocales de 1840. En corrélation avec les événements biographiques et l'influence de la littérature romantique allemande, la relation étroite entre la musique et le texte dans les mélodies contenant des allusions aux œuvres pour piano argumente en faveur d'une lecture programmatique de ces dernières. Les oeuvres pour piano faisant l'objet de cette étude comprennent la *Novellette n° 1 en fa majeur*, op. 21; *Der Dichter spricht* de *Kinderszenen*, op. 15; *Arabeske*, op. 18; et les premier, deuxième et quatrième mouvements des *Kreisleriana*, op. 16. L'étude comporte trois parties principales : (1.) une étude de la citation et de l'allusion chez Schumann, (2.) une première étude de cas sur la phrase "*mir beschieden*" et (3.) une deuxième étude de cas sur les *Kreisleriana* de Schumann. Le premier chapitre fait la revue des études sur les références musicales de Schumann, qui démontrent sa préférence pour le déguisement. Les chapitres suivants contiennent des études de cas portant sur les origines et les intentions des allusions aux œuvres pour piano dans les mélodies. La phrase "*mir beschieden*" comme allusion à Schubert et l'influence de la littérature romantique allemande sur les *Kreisleriana* de Schumann étayent davantage l'hypothèse, basée sur le parallélisme entre les œuvres vocales et pour piano de Schumann, que Schumann dépeint son amour ardent pour Clara et son désir conjugal dans les compositions pour piano.

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Introduction

From recycling his early unpublished songs in his piano sonatas, to the allusions to other composers' earlier vocal compositions in his piano works, lyricism is a distinct trait of Robert Schumann's piano writing. Nevertheless, it was not until February of 1840 that Schumann revisited the genre of art song and built his compositional career on songwriting, the genre he once deemed "inferior to instrumental music" and did not consider "a great art."¹ The relationship between music and words became consequently explicit in the songs of 1840. This is apparent when compared to the relationship between his earlier piano compositions and the literary works of the German Romantics, including Jean Paul and E.T.A. Hoffmann.

This research paper's main objective is to provide another artistic lens to view Schumann's selected piano compositions of 1838 and 1839 through a study of allusion within the composer's vocal compositions of 1840. In addition, the research examines how the relationship between the text and the music provides another perspective for interpreting selected solo piano compositions in correlation with biographical events and the influence of German Romantic literature. There are three main parts to this study: (1.) a study of Schumann's quotation and allusion, (2.) a first case study on the '*mir beschieden*' phrase, and (3.) a second case study on Schumann's *Kreisleriana*.

¹ Turchin, "Schumann's Conversion to Vocal Music," 401.

Chapter 1

On Schumann's Quotation and Allusion

Robert Schumann's fascination for literature, especially as an author himself, has left us insightful evidence regarding his perspective on the arts and its surrounding contexts. His publications in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* and corresponding letters with his contemporaries demonstrate his knowledge of past music literature, his awareness of the contemporary musical scene, and his often passionate comparison of music and literature. Schumann's multiple enthusiasms have led to numerous studies on his compositions and their extra-musical associations. One of them is the study of quotation and allusion in his music.

Schumann and Extra-Musical References

Prior to further investigation on quotation and allusion in Schumann's music, it is essential to clarify the relationship between Schumann and extra-musical references. Schumann often mentioned that the imaginative titles of his character pieces were realized after composing the music. For example, in a letter to Ignaz Moscheles, a celebrated pianist who inspired him to devote his life to pianistic pursuits, Schumann presented his *Carnaval*, Op. 9, emphasizing that "the inscriptions over the separate pieces were added after the music was written."² Similarly, in a letter to Henriette Voigt, where he explained the parallelism between Jean Paul's *Flegeljahre* and his *Papillons*, Op. 2, he mentioned, "I put the text to the music and not the other way around; for me, that would have seemed a foolish undertaking."³ Lastly,

² Schumann, *Letters of Robert Schumann*, 133.

³ Schumann, *Papillons* Op. 2, IV.

commenting on Ludwig Rellstab's review of his *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15 to Heinrich Dorn, his counterpoint teacher, Schumann mentioned the same process of realizing the titles afterwards:

He [Rellstab] seems to think I call up in my imagination a screaming child, and fit the notes to it. It is just the other way about, but I will not deny that a vision of children's heads haunted me as I wrote. The inscriptions arose, of course, afterwards, and are really nothing more than tiny finger-posts to the interpretation and conception.⁴

In addition to his denial of direct extra-musical references in his compositions, Schumann publicly despised thorough revelations of programmatic meaning in music, especially in literary form. In his review of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique* in 1835, he mused:

All Germany sniffed: to our minds such indications have something undignified and charlatanic about them! In any case the five principal titles would have sufficed; the more exact circumstances... would have spread by word of mouth.⁵

He further confessed that as an audience member, reading programmatic details before hearing the music "spoiled [his] enjoyment, [his] freedom," and proposed that "once the eye is directed to a certain point, the ear can no longer judge independently."⁶ Further to this, Schumann's nationalistic attitude was highlighted when sharing his view on the distinction between German and French audiences. He claimed that "Berlioz wrote for his own Frenchmen, who are not overly impressed by modesty" and that a French audience would applaud for the extensive program, since "by itself, music does not mean anything to them."⁷ Nevertheless, seeing himself as the lineage bearer of German music tradition, Schumann advocated for

⁴ Schumann, *Letters of Robert Schumann*, 133.

⁵ Schumann, *On Music and Musicians*, 211.

⁶ Ibid., 211-212.

⁷ Ibid.

Beethoven's programmatic treatment of the *Pastoral Symphony*, commenting on the extra-musical association as being "more the expression of emotion than tone painting."⁸

Furthermore, Schumann's nationalistic attitude towards music and audience perception suggests the ideal listener for his works. In a letter to Simonin de Sire on 15 March 1839, Schumann declared *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16, as his favourite amongst his latest compositions, stating "only Germans will be able to understand the title."⁹ Considering the work's connection to E.T.A. Hoffmann's fictitious character of *Johannes Kreisler*, who is well-versed in music repertoire, it is clear that Schumann intended his music connoisseurs to be well-educated in literature and aware of musical traditions. These ideal qualities for his audience, together with his view on the elaborated program for music and his titling process, correspond to Schumann's habit of disguising allusions to extra-musical properties in his compositions.

Quotations and Allusions in Schumann's Music

The study of quotation and allusion in Schumann's music has been the focal point of numerous studies, as the technique of referencing is frequently found in his music. Among the most notable examples, many of his piano compositions of the 1830s demonstrate references with various intentions. For example, the allusion to *La Marseillaise* in *Faschingsschwank aus Wien*, Op. 26, comically exhibits Schumann's political standpoint, as the French tune was banned in Vienna, the city of his residence. The quotation of Clara Wieck's composition in *Davidsbündlertänze*, Op. 6, is considered his public declaration of love. In addition to these autobiographical references, the famous quotation of *Grossvater-Tanz* in *Papillons*, Op. 2,

⁸ Walker, *Robert Schumann*, 193.

⁹ Schumann, *Kreisleriana Op. 16*, IV.

signifies the end of a dance ball depicting the concluding scene of Jean Paul's *Flegeljahre*. The theme reappears in the final number of *Carnaval*, Op. 9, representing a similar programmatic significance. However, these examples of references in Schumann's piano music are presented in a straightforward manner as musical quotations of famous tunes, with a few of these explicitly marked in the score.

Apart from these explicit references, performers and scholars have long claimed a relationship between the coda of the first movement and the final song of Beethoven's *An die Ferne Geliebte*, Op. 98 in Schumann's *Fantasie*, opus 17. This allusion to Beethoven's song is commonly recognized, as it is linked with Schumann's intention to compose the work as a fundraiser for Beethoven's monument in Bonn, which he did while physically separated from his romantic partner in 1836. Nevertheless, as Anthony Newcomb and Nicholas Marston recognized, the connection between *Fantasie* and Beethoven's song first appeared in Schumann's biography by Hermann Abert, published in 1910, 54 years after the composer's death.¹⁰ The origin of the allusion was discussed in an essay on Schumann's quotations by R. Larry Todd, which references Marston's arguments. Here, Todd develops Marston's suggestion that the theme might be perceived as an allusion to other works. Among the examples listed in Todd's essay are the opening measures of Schubert's *String Quintet* and Haydn's Symphony No. 97, along with the ending phrase of Schubert's *An die Musik*.¹¹

The discussion around Schumann's *Fantasie* demonstrates how it is extremely challenging to track down the origin of Schumann's allusions due to his preference for subtlety and complexity in his invention. Hence, it is an ambitious attempt to categorize Schumann's

¹⁰ Abert, *Robert Schumann*, 64.

¹¹ Todd, "On Quotations in Schumann's Music," 93-95.

musical allusions. The diverse approaches to such categorizations usually revolve around the intention and origin of allusions.

Classifications of Schumann's Musical Allusions

In the chapter devoted to allusion and quotation in Schumann's *Fantasie*, Op. 17, Nicholas Marston categorizes Schumann's musical allusions into two types: (1.) the allusion to other musical works, whether of Schumann or another composer; (2.) the allusion to non-musical material.¹² The reappearance of the first movement of *Papillons* in *Florestan* from *Carnaval*, Op. 9, is a straightforward example of the first type (see Example 1). The private program of Jean Paul's *Flegeljahre* for *Papillons* is perceived as the second type, together with the hidden meaning of 'Sphinx' motifs in *Carnaval* (see Example 2). The German letter note names and their pronunciation ('H' for B, 'As' for A-flat, and 'Es,' pronounced as 'S' for E-flat) provide associations to extra-material related to Schumann and his then-fiancée, Ernestine von Fricken. The extra-musical references include the musical letters of the composer's name (S-C-H-um-A-nn) and the birthplace of his brief fiancée (Asch).

Example 1: Comparison between the first movement of *Papillons* and *Papillons* in *Carnaval*:

a. Schumann, *Papillons*, Op. 2 No.1, mm. 1-8



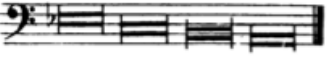
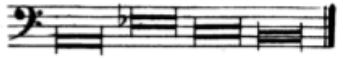
¹² Marston, *Schumann, Fantasie*, Op. 17, 34.

- b. Schumann, *Florestan* from *Carnaval*, Op. 9, mm. 19-24



Example 2: ‘Sphinx’ motifs from *Carnaval*, Op. 9

Sphinxes.

N ^o 1.  SCHA	N ^o 2.  AsCH	N ^o 3.  ASCH
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Marston further clarifies the distinction between quotation and allusion in the same chapter: “Quotation is usually thought of as stronger than allusion; a quotation is often explicitly identified, and meant to be recognized by its audience. Allusion, on the other hand, is reference of a more covert kind.”¹³ This clarification implies further categorization of Schumann’s musical references to the explicit and nonexplicit types.

The evidence suggests that Schumann preferred the more covert type of musical references in his compositions. In his acclaimed biography of Robert Schumann, John Daverio mentions Schumann’s frequent criticism towards young composers for their explicit references to compositions of the past masters. Daverio further states that the explicit type of reference

¹³ Ibid.

“violates Schumann’s own aesthetics of originality”¹⁴ and “was a sure symptom of weakness in invention.”¹⁵

In a letter on 1 December 1839, Schumann responded to Clara Wieck after she called him a ‘musical thief’ when she recognized Beethoven’s *Hammerklavier* Sonata in the opening of his unpublished Sonata in B-flat Major: “Sillyhead! If I steal, I begin much more subtly, as you yourself know from your own experience.”¹⁶ This personal correspondence between the lovers affirms Daverio’s observation of Schumann’s attitude towards explicit references in music. It is apparent that Schumann’s compositions abound in allusions to the works of other composers, but the references are often handled covertly.

Similarly, in the aforementioned essay on Schumann’s quotations, R. Larry Todd admits that the nature of Schumann’s music “spins another web of allusions and cross-references, with a second series of carnival-like masks.”¹⁷ Despite a disclaimer that such depth of the study on Schumann’s musical allusions prevents a precise method of classification, Todd suggests putting them loosely into three groups: “(1.) references to earlier historical styles and composers, (2.) references to Schumann’s contemporaries, (3.) self-quotations.”¹⁸ These three types of Schumann’s musical allusions can be perceived as the extension of Marston’s first type, the allusions to other musical works.

¹⁴ Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, 265.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Marston, *Schumann, Fantasie, Op. 17*, 35.

¹⁷ Todd, “On Quotations in Schumann’s Music,” 80.

¹⁸ Ibid. 95.

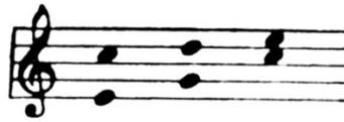
Eric Sams' Motifs and Topic Theory

Todd's final type of Schumann's musical allusions: self-quotations, is further elaborated by Eric Sams, in his book, *The Songs of Robert Schumann*. In the book, Sams devotes a chapter to his discovery of recurring motifs in Schumann's music. He lists a total of 65 distinct motifs found mainly in the vocal works of Schumann. These motifs, featuring their distinct melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic gestures, are attached to the programmatic associations directed by the text setting. Moreover, Sams often connects the motifs to Schumann's piano works of the 1830s. It was this hypothesis that provided the initial inspiration for this research project. Since Sams' work focuses on Schumann's vocal works, he touches upon the meaning of the motifs in the context of piano compositions rather sparingly, and therefore the aim of this study is to examine their application in Schumann's piano compositions.

The question remains whether these motifs and their associations, as examined by Sams, are original and exclusive to Schumann's music, no matter how inspiring they may be. For example, motifs 4, 5, and 6 are essentially horn calls, frequently found in the works of past masters and Schumann's contemporaries. Sams labels the horn call in major keys motif 4 and describes it as "a fanfare which flourished throughout Schumann's songs to express well-being, with clear overtones of the chase and open air"¹⁹ (see Example 3).

¹⁹ Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann*, 12.

Example 3: Eric Sams, Motif 4



While it is true that horn calls are commonly found in Schumann's music, it is also a signifier for similar expressions in the music of other composers. The study on musical topics of the Classical era, led by Leonard Ratner in the 1980s, exhibits horn call as a musical topic, commonly found in earlier compositions of Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven. Ratner remarks that horn calls were the signifier of the hunt, which is "a favorite diversion of the nobility,"²⁰ and that they "echoed and re-echoed throughout the countryside"²¹ throughout the 18th century. Here, Ratner's description of the horn call is very similar to the description of Schumann's horn call by Sams. However, Ratner points towards another connotation of a horn call. The descending horn call in E-flat major in the opening measure of Beethoven's *Lebewohl* Sonata, Op. 81a, represents the notion of farewell, as the self-evident wording above the horn call suggests (see Example 4). Apart from the wording, the sonata's dedication to Archduke Rudolph strengthens the connection between the horn call and the notion of farewell. It is commonly known that the dedicatee, one of Beethoven's most influential patrons, had to flee Vienna in 1809 due to Napoleon Bonaparte's attack.

²⁰ Ratner, *Classical Music: Expression, Form, and Style*, 18.

²¹ Ibid.

Example 4: Beethoven, Piano Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 81a, “Lebewohl”, 1st movement, m. 1



In comparison to Sams’ motif 6, where a descending horn passage in minor keys represents “indifference, disappointment, or resignation”²² in Schumann’s music (see Example 5), Beethoven’s horn call represents the notion of farewell while staying true to the instrument’s nature. Beethoven’s *Lebewohl* horn call is in the key of E-flat major, a standard key for the referenced instrument. The deceptive progression completed by the bass, revealed at the end of the horn call, is the only expressive element added by the composer to portray the hardship of the farewell to his young patron. Contrastingly, Sams’ motif 6, a horn call in a minor key, represents an unrealistic portrayal of the instrument’s nature.

Example 5: Eric Sams, Motif 6



²² Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann*, 12.

It is noteworthy that Sams' motif 6 is consistently observable in the key of E minor. In *Es fiel ein Reif in der Frühlingsnacht* from *Tragödie*, Op. 64 No. 3 (II), Schumann painted the death of the unfortunate protagonist couple with the recurring descending horn call in E minor (see Example 6). Similarly, the theme of death was portrayed in a similar fashion in *Lieb' Liebchen, leg's Händchen aufs Herze mein* from *Liederkreis*, Op. 24 No. 4 (see Example 7). Here, the descending horn call is combined with other notes of the chords and masks itself as a common progression, leading from cadential 6/4 to a perfect authentic cadence (mm. 15 -16). Nevertheless, after the first verse ends with the word 'Todtensarg' (coffin), the piano accompaniment confirms the previous implication of a horn call. This is achieved by stating a specific voicing comprising intervals of a sixth, a fifth, and a third, which represents the same topic but in the ascending form (mm. 17-18). Sams labels this ascending minor version of a horn call as motif 5 with the following description: "The ascending minor horn passage, however, or its melody expresses a mood of resentment, indignation, or courage in adversity (M5)."²³ It is important to note that Sams deviates from the essential intervallic features of a horn call. Instead, he allows a simple melodic ascent from the tonic to the mediant notes of a minor key to represent motif 5.

²³ Ibid.

Example 6: Schumann, *Es fiel ein Reif in der Frühlingsnacht* from *Tragödie*, Op. 64 No. 3 (II), mm. 1-2



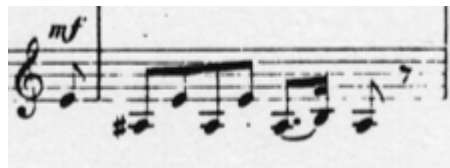
Example 7: Schumann, *Lieb' Liebchen, leg's Händchen aufs Herze mein* from *Liederkreis*, Op. 24 No. 4, mm. 14-20



In light of allusion studies, it is plausible to view Schumann's frequent usage of the horn call in E minor as a masked reference to Beethoven's *Lebewohl* horn call. With such perspective, Sams' description of his motif 6 ("indifference, disappointment, or resignation") is susceptible of being challenged or perhaps being expanded, as the texts of both songs are evidently pointing towards death, the highest form of farewell without return. After all, the horn calls in Beethoven's idiomatic key of E-flat and Schumann's expressive key of E minor share the same letter note names (see Examples 4 and 5). In the same fashion as the 'Innere Stimme' section of

Schumann's *Humoreske*, Op. 20 (1839), the connection between Beethoven and Schumann's horn calls is a romantic take on *Augenmusik*, the music intended to be seen. There is evidence that Schumann used this type of allusion, as observed by Yonty Solomon in the Sonata in F-sharp minor, Op. 11. The principal theme of the sonata's exposition alludes to Clara Wieck's *Scene Fantastique: Le Ballet des Revenants*, Op. 5 No. 4, which was composed around the same time as the sonata. According to Solomon, the theme was originally written in treble clef, and it was then rewritten in bass clef by Schumann (compare Examples 8 and 9).²⁴

Example 8: Clara Wieck, *Scene Fantastique* from *Le Ballet des Revenants*, Op. 5 No. 4, mm. 1-2



Example 9: Schumann, Piano Sonata in F-sharp minor, Op. 11, 1st movement, mm. 53-54



²⁴ Solomon, "Solo Piano Music (I)," 47.

Schumann's E Minor Horn Call

To further examine horn calls in Schumann's vocal works, the ascending form (Sams' motif 5) in E minor appears in two songs from *Myrthen*, Op. 25, *Die Hochländer-Witwe*, No. 10 (see Example 10) and *Hauptmanns Weib*, No. 19 (see Example 11). In both songs, the horn calls are preceded by an upper neighbouring motion on the dominant note (5-6-5). The synthesis of the preceding neighbouring motion on the dominant note, and the ascending horn call in E minor, results in a melodic outline similar to the principal themes of *Kind im Einschlummern* from *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15 (1838) and the *Minore I* section of *Arabeske*, Op. 18 (1839). Both of these passages are in the identical key of E minor (see Examples 12 and 13).

Example 10: Schumann, *Die Hochländer-Witwe* from *Myrthen*, Op. 25 No. 10, mm. 1-5



Example 11: Schumann, *Hauptmanns Weib* from *Myrthen*, Op. 25 No. 19, mm. 1-3



Example 12: Schumann, *Arabeske*, Op. 18, mm. 41-42



Example 13: Schumann, *Kind im Einschlummern* from *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15 No. 12, mm. 1-2



The assembly of the 5-6-5 neighbouring motion and the horn call is exceptionally clear in *Hauptmanns Weib*. In this song, the ascending horn call in the piano accompaniment part enters simultaneously at the end of the neighbouring motion in the vocal part. This compact interplay of melodies between the vocal and piano parts results in the interweaving of the ending note of the neighbouring motion and the first interval of the horn call. The result is a melodic outline 5-6-5-2-3. Sams, in his description of motif 5, calls the ascending melody from the tonic to the mediant note (1-2-3) a byproduct of the horn call, as it means to express the emotions of “resentment, indignation, or courage in adversity.”²⁵ Sams’ inclusion of the melodic gesture in motif 5’s description opens the door to a possible retrospective, programmatic interpretation of

²⁵ Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann*, 12.

the themes in pre-existing piano works, which are based on a similar melodic outline. After all, the themes from these four compositions also share the same tonality of E minor.

Die Hochländer-Witwe and *Hauptmanns Weib* respectively depict the hardship of women who suffer from the absence of their husbands through wartime death and the anxiety associated with its possibility. Despite being presented as an early wedding present for his bride on 11 September 1840, *Myrthen* was composed earlier that year, in the spring amidst the composer's legal battle to marry Clara Wieck without her father's consent. Being Schumann's former piano teacher, Friedrich Wieck had consistently disapproved of their liaison and tried to separate the lovers since the dawn of their romantic relationship in the latter part of 1835. Subsequently, Friedrich Wieck's constant interference resulted in episodes of physical separation between the lovers. Among these periodical separations, the most substantial was 18-month period of complete silence from early 1836 until the couple's reunion and secret engagement in August 1837. During this time, Schumann suffered from episodes of depression and even indulged in short-term romantic affairs. This experience resulted in Schumann's frequent reference to the theme of the lover's absence in his artistic output.

In October 1838, Schumann moved to Vienna, intending to publish his journal, *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, and eventually settle there with Clara. *Arabeske*, Op. 18 was composed in January 1839, when Schumann was already aware of the likely failures of the professional and personal goals which had brought him to Vienna while he was physically separated from Clara. Similar to the depiction of the pain caused by the lover's absence in *Hauptmanns Weib*, the "Minore I" section of *Arabeske*, which shares the same melodic outline and tonality as the song, conveys that same expressive quality of longing.

Despite Schumann's aforementioned comment on the genesis of *Kinderszenen*'s titles, it is apparent that Schumann still manages to create vivid images with such specific titles. The opening measures of the penultimate piece, *Kind im Einschlummern* (Child Falling Asleep), share an identical melodic outline and tonality with the songs from *Myrthen* and the "Minore I" section of *Arabeske*. Aligned with the hypothesis for the melodic outline in the key of E minor to represent a lover's absence by death, it is coherent to interpret the German verb in Schumann's title, *einschlummern* ('falling asleep'), with the term's other common definition as 'passing away.' Thus, *Kind im Einschlummern* possibly suggests the morbid depiction of a child dying. In addition, the fundamental rocking rhythm that permeates the piece characterizes the work as a lullaby, and it is infrequent to find a German Romantic lullaby in a minor key without a death association. Moreover, the connection between death and slumber is a common trope in German Romantic art and literature.

The hypothesis on Schumann's E minor horn call, its retrospective transformation in *Arabeske* and *Kind im Einschlummern*, and the suggestion for programmatic affiliations is generated from evidence of the composer's attitude towards musical references, his cultural environment, his admiration of Beethoven's music, and lastly, his biographical information. As previously discussed, this complex network of allusion covers various categories of references in Schumann's music. Nevertheless, the categorizations of allusions by Marston and Todd handle the question of intention sparingly.

The intentions for allusions are thoroughly discussed in Christopher Alan Reynolds' *Motives for Allusion*, published in 2003. Reynolds explores various aspects of allusions: how composers conceal their allusions; composers' intention to use allusions to assimilate or contrast the source; texting (i.e. when composers add texts to existing instrumental

music); naming (the use of musical ciphers); and the use of allusion as a tradition.

Unsurprisingly, Schumann's musical allusions are a frequent subject for inspection in Reynolds' work.

For this small case study on Schumann's E minor horn call, two programmatic readings of the melodic outline are proposed for *Arabeske* and *Kind im Einschlummern*: the representation of longing for a distant lover in the first work and the peaceful death of a child in the latter. The proposed reading for *Arabeske* seems initially straightforward as Schumann was physically separated from Clara at the time. Nevertheless, as there is no sufficient evidence for Schumann's intention to compose the work for Clara, supporting evidence for this interpretation is needed to make the case more convincing. This topic of intention for Clara will be further discussed in chapter 2.

Given Schumann's preference for hiding allusions and posing riddles to his audience, it is plausible to view his E minor horn call as a concealed allusion to Beethoven's *Lebewohl* horn call in E-flat major. The *Augenmusik* approach of this allusion includes the performer as part of this riddled audience, though with the advantage of having a more explicit clue. To further the discussion on this allusion to Beethoven, in the light of Reynolds' allusion study, and given the notion of death as a profound kind of farewell, Schumann's E minor horn call serves as an assimilative type of allusion to the *Lebewohl* horn call. In addition, as Ratner considers the *Lebewohl* horn call a topic, one can view Schumann's E minor horn call as part of an allusive tradition, comparable to the tradition of the *Es ist vollbracht* allusion demonstrated in Reynolds' work.²⁶

²⁶ Reynolds, *Motives for Allusion*, 147-161.

The Connection Between the Early Songs and Piano Compositions of Robert Schumann

The relationship between Robert Schumann's vocal and piano works can be traced back to the recycling of his early songs of 1828 in the piano compositions of the 1830s. Examples include *Hirtenknabe* in *Intermezzo*, Op. 4 No. 4 (1832), *Im Herbst* in the slow movement of Piano Sonata in G Minor, Op. 22 (1833-1838), and *An Anna II* in the first and second movements of Piano Sonata in F-sharp Minor, Op. 11 (1832-1836).

Among these examples, the Piano Sonata in F-sharp Minor, Op. 11, demonstrates a more intricate kind of application. The song, *An Anna II*, makes its appearance twice in the entire sonata. The theme from *An Anna II* appears initially in the introduction to the first movement (compare Examples 14 and 15). Here, the theme is altered to conform with the double-dotted rhythmic basis of the section, with the ongoing arpeggiated triplets underneath (mm. 22-38). Sharing similar accompanying figures with the song, the second movement, labelled as *Aria*, is virtually a reworked version of *An Anna II* (see Example 16). The song's double appearance in different locations of the sonata creates a cyclical structure and lends a stronger sense of unity to the larger form.

Example 14: Schumann, *An Anna II* (1828), mm. 1-3



Example 15: Schumann, Piano Sonata in F-sharp Minor, Op. 11, first movement, mm. 22-24



Example 16: Schumann, Piano Sonata in F-sharp Minor, Op. 11, second movement, mm. 1-5



Dedicated to Clara Wieck, the principal theme of the Sonata in F-sharp Minor's first movement is derived from Clara's *Scene Fantastique* from *Le Ballet des Revenants*, Op. 5 No. 4. As the work's affiliation to Clara is explicit, the appearance of *An Anna II* in the introduction

section to the sonata's first movement possibly implies a romantic subtext. Consider the text of *An Anna II* by Justinus Kerner:

Nicht im Tale der süßen Heimat,
Beim Gemurmel der Silberquelle—
Bleich getragen aus dem Schlachtfeld
Denk' ich dein, du süßes Leben!
All die Freunde sind gefallen,
Sollt' ich weilen hier der eine?
Nein! schon naht der bleiche Bote,
Der mich leitet zur süßen Heimat.

Not in the valley of my sweet homeland,
To the murmur of the silvery spring—
But carried pale from the battlefield,
I think of you, my sweetest!
All my friends have fallen,
Am I the only one to linger here?
No! The pale messenger will soon come
To lead me to my sweet homeland²⁷

The allusion to this early song in the sonata's introduction section is quite selective. In this section, Schumann deliberately uses the music set to the first, second, and last lines of the opening verse. With the omission of the third line depicting the protagonist on a battlefield, the incomplete opening verse conveys a personal message to a lover.

It was not until 1893, sixty-five years after the date of composition, that his renowned disciple, Johannes Brahms, published *An Anna II* as a supplement to the complete edition of Schumann's works. During the sonata's creation period, *An Anna II* remained hidden from the public; hence the song's appearance in the Sonata in F-sharp Minor was not intended to be recognized by the general audience. However, given Robert and Clara's close musical relationship, it is possible that Clara knew of the song and perceived this as a confidential romantic message aimed for her.

²⁷ Translations by Richard Stokes, author of *The Book of Lieder* (Faber, 2005)

Summary

There is clear evidence that Schumann uses allusions in his music. Nevertheless, given his preference for covert references, he perfected the allusions in his compositions by disguising them. While the study on quotation and allusion in Schumann's music has been at the center of attention to music scholars, namely Larry R. Todd, Nicholas Marston, Eric Sams, and Christopher Reynolds, the complexity of Schumann's allusions, specifically on their origins and intentions, make it challenging to categorize them.

The case study on Schumann's E minor horn call undertakes a hypothesis based on the synthesis of multiple studies regarding Schumann's musical allusions, with an emphasis on topic theory and Eric Sams' motifs. The case study's result demonstrates multiple interpretations of the horn call, based on Schumann's biographical information, cultural world, and his relationship with the music of past masters. It provides an application of the thesis of this study, namely to show possible connections between the vocal works and piano works of Robert Schumann.

Chapter 2

Case Study I - Widmung and “Schumann’s most personal phrase”

One of the most memorable self-references in Schumann’s music is the phrase described in Bálint Vázsonyi’s publication on the composer’s solo piano music as “Schumann’s most personal phrase.”²⁸ The phrase appears in *Der Dichter Spricht* from *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15, the *Zum Schluss* section of *Arabeske*, Op. 18, the trio section of *Novellette No. 1 in F Major*, Op. 21, and most notably, the middle section of *Widmung* from *Myrthen*, Op. 25 (see Example 17).

As part of the list, Vázsonyi includes the opening phrase of *Kreisleriana*’s fourth movement and briefly mentions that it is “virtually built around the same phrase.”²⁹ Despite a minimal resemblance to the other examples, namely the turn and general melodic contour, the fourth movement of *Kreisleriana* lacks the harmonic progression shared between the other works. Due to the importance of harmonic progression to this case study, the fourth movement of *Kreisleriana* will be excluded from this chapter.

Vázsonyi further states that the phrase “appears in passages where the composer speaks in the first person singular,”³⁰ emphasizing its lyricism and speechlike quality. While such qualities of Schumann’s pianism are indisputable, the claim for its exclusive affiliation to Schumann is to be further investigated. This chapter is devoted to a case study on the phrase’s allusive network and its possible programmatic associations through the study of allusion similar to the ‘E minor horn call’ case study in chapter 1.

²⁸ Vázsonyi, “Solo Piano Music (II),” 71.

²⁹ Ibid., 72.

³⁰ Ibid., 71-72.

Example 17: Schumann, *Widmung* from *Myrthen*, Op. 25 No. 1, mm. 20-21



E: ii₅⁶ vii^{ø7}/V V₄⁶ - - ₃⁵

The ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase

In *Widmung*, the only vocal composition among Vázsonyi’s examples, Schumann set the discussed phrase to last two words of the line: “Du bist vom Himmel mir beschieden” (You are bestowed on me from heaven). He emphasized the word ‘mir’ (me) with a melismatic turn over the pre-dominant harmonies (ii₅⁶/5 - vii^{ø7}/V). It then proceeds to the verb ‘beschieden’ (bestowed on) with cadential 6/4’s metric stress on the second syllable, the word’s natural stress, before concluding to a half cadence. On the word ‘mir,’ the melody begins with the supertonic note and rises to the mediant note through the turn. It then proceeds to the three-syllable word ‘beschieden’ set to the tonic, mediant, and supertonic notes, with the last two notes outlining the cadential 6/4 chord progression. With reference to this text setting, the discussed phrase will be referred to as the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase for reasons of clarity.

Linguistically, the word ‘mir’ (me) indicates the first-person singular quality of the phrase. Along with the frequent appearances of the intimate ‘Du’ (you) as a second-person singular in the poem, Vázsonyi’s proposal for the phrase to be Schumann’s “most personal

phrase” is seemingly logical. Given *Widmung*’s significance as part of Schumann’s musical wedding gift for Clara in 1840, the first and second-person pronouns unmistakably represent the couple.

As previously mentioned, the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase also appears in the piano compositions by Schumann. Composed in early 1838, *Novellette No. 1 in F Major, Op. 21*, is in rondo form with a peculiar key scheme (A-B-A’-C-A’’-B’-A’-Coda). In this composition, the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase appears in both secondary sections (B and B’) in F major (m. 34) and A major (m. 99), respectively. The phrase is accompanied by ascending triplet arpeggios distributed between two hands. Observed above the phrase is a tempo indication of *ritardando* (see Example 18).

Example 18: Schumann, *Novellette No. 1 in F Major, Op. 21*, m. 34



Composed around the same time as *Novellette No. 1*, the final piece of *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15, *Der Dichter spricht*, features the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase as a keyboard chorale in the key of G major, the cycle’s main tonality. Here, the phrase functions as a concluding gesture for the beginning phrase (mm. 1-4). It is then followed by a parallel phrase in the supertonic key of A minor (mm. 5 - 8), in which the tenor part in measure 6 imitates the turn of the beginning phrase

(see Example 19). The '*mir beschieden*' phrase reappears identically in the return of the primary section with an altered consequence phrase to conclude the entire cycle (mm. 13-25).

Example 19: Schumann, *Der Dichter spricht* from *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15, mm. 1-8



Similar to the '*mir beschieden*' phrase's appearance as the conclusion for *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15, Schumann located the phrase in the concluding section of *Arabeske*, Op. 18, marked *Zum Schluss* (At the End). The accompaniment figure of this section resembles that of *Novellette No. 1*'s secondary sections. They are both consisted of upward arpeggiated figurations distributed between the hands, only differing in their note values. The *Zum Schluss* section of *Arabeske* features regular eighth notes in its accompaniment instead of the triplets in *Novellette No. 1*. Nevertheless, the accompaniment adjusts to triplets where the '*mir beschieden*' phrase begins (mm. 214). In addition, there is the tempo indication of *ritardando* attached to the phrase, similar to its treatment in *Novellette No. 1* (see Example 20). This resemblance is intriguing, since the *Arabeske* was composed only a year after.

Example 20: Schumann, *Arabeske*, Op. 18, mm. 214 - 216



Despite the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase’s consistent features regarding the melody and harmonic progression in their appearances in the mentioned compositions, they occur in different tonalities, textures, and structural positions. Table 1 illustrates these differences between the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase in *Widmung*, *Novellette No. 1*, *Der Dichter spricht*, and *Arabeske*.

Table 1: The ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase in Schumann’s compositions

	Keys	Texture	Position
<i>Widmung</i> from <i>Myrthen</i> , Op. 25	E major	Repeated chords in triplets	Middle section
<i>Novellette No. 1</i> in F Major, Op. 21	F major and A major	Upward arpeggiated figure (triplets)	Secondary sections
<i>Kinderszenen</i> , Op. 15	G major	Keyboard chorale	Concluding piece, <i>Der Dichter spricht</i>
<i>Arabeske</i> , Op. 18	C major	Upward arpeggiated figure (triplets and regular eighth notes)	Coda section, <i>Zum Schluss</i>

The '*mir beschieden*' Phrase in Schubert's Music

The '*mir beschieden*' phrase's recurrence in Schumann's compositions supports its position in Todd's self-quotations category. Furthermore, the phrase's suggestion of intimacy observed through *Widmung*'s text advocates in favour of the hypothesis that it is of Schumann's invention. Nevertheless, in Franz Schubert's Rondo in A Major for Piano Four-Hands, D. 951, there is a phrase identical to Schumann's '*mir beschieden*' in melodic and harmonic terms (see Example 21). In the four-hand rondo, the phrase occurs in the dominant key of E major and the tonic key of A major in the secondary sections, similar to the phrase's positioning in Schumann's *Novellette No. 1*. The dominant-tonic key relationship here demonstrates the sonata principle characteristic of a sonata-rondo form.

Example 21: Schubert, Rondo in A major for Piano Duet, D. 951, mm. 62-64

The musical score for Schubert's Rondo in A major for Piano Duet, D. 951, measures 62-64, is presented in a four-staff format. The key signature is A major (three sharps) and the time signature is 2/4. The score begins at measure 62. The upper staves (treble clef) and lower staves (bass clef) both feature a melodic line with a forte (f) dynamic and a sforzando (sf) accent. The harmonic line in the lower staves includes chords labeled ii5, vii7/V, and V4, followed by a 5/3 interval.

On November 6th, 1829, Schumann enthusiastically reported his discovery of Schubert's Rondo in A Major to his then piano mentor, Friedrich Wieck. His passionate descriptions of the four-hand rondo and his experience performing it at an evening party hosted by Heinrich Probst are observed in the letter as follows:

The other day I was playing his [Schubert's] four-hand Rondo, Op. 107 [D. 951], which I consider one of his best compositions; and is there anything to compare with the thunderous calm, the great, self-contained lyrical madness, and the gentle, deep, ethereal melancholy which pervades this truly great and complete work? ... I remember playing that very Rondo at an evening party at Herr Probst's, but at the finish, both players and listeners stared at one another, rather at a loss to know what to think, or what Schubert even meant by it all ... I think nobody's compositions are such a psychological puzzle in the course and connection of their ideas as Schubert's, with their apparently logical connections. Very few composers have succeeded in stamping their individuality upon a mass of tone-pictures in the way he has done, and still fewer have written so much for themselves alone and their own hearts. What a diary is to those who jot down all their passing emotions, his music-paper was to Schubert.³¹

Although Schubert's influence on Schumann is no foreign notion in the studies of Schumann's allusions, his avowed admiration for Schubert's Rondo in A Major strengthens the hypothesis that Schumann's '*mir beschieden*' phrase may be an allusion to Schubert. It is perhaps not a coincidence that Schumann began to incorporate the Schubertian '*mir beschieden*' phrase in his solo piano music in 1838. In the following year, a Viennese-based music publisher, Anton Diabelli, decided to posthumously publish the last three piano sonatas by Franz Schubert (D. 958-960) and altered the dedication from the composer's original dedicatee, Johann Nepomuk Hummel, to Robert Schumann. This decision was due to Hummel's recent

³¹ Schumann, *Early Letters of Schumann*, 80-81.

passing in late 1837 and Schumann's public display of enthusiasm for Schubert's music. Recent scholarship speculates that the date of Schumann's encounter with the sonatas may have been in early 1838, based on the record of Diabelli's plate number and Schumann's review of the sonatas in *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* on June 5th, 1838.³² Despite Schumann's relatively unfavourable review of the sonatas, the last movement of the Sonata in A Major, D. 959, may have reignited his passion for the Rondo in A Major, D. 951, and inspired him to allude to the '*mir beschieden*' phrase in his own compositions.

Along with the shared structure of sonata-rondo form and the tonality of A major in the sonata, D. 959 and the four-hand rondo, D. 951, the principal theme of D. 959's final movement contains a phrase similar to the '*mir beschieden*' phrase in measures 3-4 (see Example 22).

Example 22: Schubert, Piano Sonata in A Major, D. 959, fourth movement, mm. 1-4



Despite the matching harmonic progression, the second half of the phrase in D. 959 (m. 4) lacks the mediant note, which falls to the supertonic note over a cadential 6/4 chord progression found in the '*mir beschieden*' phrase. Moreover, with the turn-like figure's absence from the phrase's first half (m. 3), the connection between these phrases in D. 959 and D. 951

³² Bodley, *Rethinking Schubert*, 202.

can be considered insubstantial. Nevertheless, since the main theme from D. 959's final movement is notable for being essentially a reworked version of the theme of the second movement of Schubert's 1817 Sonata in A minor, D. 537, speculation around D. 959 and D. 951's connection may be plausible.

The first theme of D. 537's second movement reveals itself as the primary source of inspiration for the main theme of D. 959's final movement (see Example 23). Due to their identical melodic resemblance, a phrase similar to the '*mir beschieden*' phrase can be observed here in measures 3-4. The inclusion of mediant and supertonic notes over a cadential 6/4 chord progression in measure 4 of D. 537 demonstrates a more credible link to the '*mir beschieden*' phrase in D. 951, thus connecting all three variants of the phrase altogether.

Example 23: Schubert, Piano Sonata in A Minor, D. 537, second movement, mm. 1-4



It is observed that the '*mir beschieden*' phrase in Schubert's piano works appears in the compositions in a rondo form, similar to Schumann's *Novellette No. 1* and *Arabeske*. In addition, these piano compositions by Schubert demonstrate a chromatic mediant key relationship, which is prominent in Schubert's music. This includes the F major secondary and C major tertiary

sections of D.951, the secondary section in C major of the E major second movement of D. 537, and the false recapitulation in F-sharp major of the final movement in A major of D. 959.

A similar key relationship can also be found in Schumann's '*mir beschieden*' compositions. In *Widmung*, the '*mir beschieden*' phrase is presented in the middle section in E major, contrasting to the tonal key of A-flat major. *Novellette No. 1* features the phrase in two keys, including F and A major in the secondary key areas. As the key of D-flat major also plays a crucial role in this composition, the key scheme of *Novellette No. 1* is reminiscent of Schubertian key relationships. This resemblance in key relationships reinforces the connection between Schubert's and Schumann's piano works.

Schubert's Songs

The discussion on Schumann's '*mir beschieden*' phrase and its relationship to Schubert's piano works align with Christopher Reynold's notion of 'texting,' described by the author as "the reuse of instrumental music as a basis of a song."³³ However, Eric Sams' observation that the phrase is further connected to Schubert's 1815 setting of Friedrich Klopstock's *Das Rosenband* challenges its inclusion in Reynold's 'texting' category of allusion. A further modification of the '*mir beschieden*' phrase appears two times in *Das Rosenband*. First, the phrase is set to the line "mein Leben hing mit diesem Blick an ihrem Leben" (with that gaze, my life became entwined with hers) in measures 11-12 (see Example 24). The possessive pronouns switch positions when the phrase returns in measures 27-28. Here, the turn of the original '*mir beschieden*' phrase is replaced with a chromatic passing tone (B natural), as the link between the supertonic note (B-flat) to the mediant note (C).

³³ Reynolds, *Motives for Allusion*, 88.

Example 24: Schubert, *Das Rosenband*, D. 280, mm. 11-12



Sams argues that Schubert is the main source of inspiration for Schumann's *Widmung*. He mentions the allusion to Schubert's *Ave Maria*, D. 839 in the postlude, and the parallel between the line "Du bist die Ruh" (You are repose) at the beginning of the middle section and Schubert's famous song with identical words as the title (D. 776). Sams supports this parallel with the fact that the text for *Widmung* and Schubert's *Du bist die Ruh* were composed by the same poet, Friedrich Rückert.

Aside from Sams' observation of common characteristics between *Das Rosenband* and *Widmung*, another modification of the 'mir beschieden' phrase is observed in Schubert's *Im Frühling*, D. 882, composed in 1826. The phrase here contains the same harmonic progression and the melodic contour similar to the phrase in D. 959 (see Example 25). Similar to D. 959, the first half of the phrase in *Im Frühling* starts with the supertonic note's repetition, which pushes the melody up to the mediant note before falling to the tonic note. Instead of pushing back up to the mediant note in the second half of the phrase, the tonic note repeats itself, similar to the phrase's treatment in D. 959.

Example 25: Schubert, *Im Frühling*, D. 882, m. 11



In *Im Frühling*, the phrase is first presented in the piano introduction section of the song (m. 2). It recurs with the entry of the second stanza (m. 11) with the text, “Wo ich an ihrer Seite ging” (Where I walked by her side). The piano then presents the phrase again during the interlude between the second and third stanzas. Next, the phrase reappears at the beginning of the fourth stanza (m. 27) with the text “Denn alles ist wie damals noch” (For all is still as it was then). Finally, after the tumultuous fifth stanza in the parallel minor key, it appears at the sixth stanza (m. 41), “O wär ich doch ein Vöglein nur” (Oh, if only I were a bird).

The texts of *Das Rosenband* and *Im Frühling* portray love in the spring season. Despite their difference in general storylines, amorous positivism in *Das Rosenband* and portrayal of love’s sorrow in *Im Frühling*, Schubert consistently set the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase to the text on a positive outlook of love in these compositions.

The investigation of the origin of the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase leads to two conclusions. Firstly, there are five versions of the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase in Schubert’s works (see Table 2). Two of these, including D. 951 and D. 959, were known to Schumann before he incorporated the

‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase in his compositions. Therefore, by recognizing Schumann’s affinity with Schubert’s works since his student years and his connection to the above-mentioned piano works by Schubert, Vászonyi’s claim of Schumann’s ownership of the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase is disputable. The ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase is evidently Schumann’s allusion to Schubert. Secondly, the text setting of the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase in *Das Rosenband* and *Im Frühling* reveals its association with the expression of love in Schubert’s music, similar to how Schumann treated the phrase in *Widmung*. It is plausible that Schumann, who was familiar with Schubert’s song output, also found the phrase’s meaning in Schubert’s songs and alluded to them, intending to convey the same expression.

Table 2: The ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase in Schubert’s compositions:

	Keys	Melodic modification
Rondo in A Major for Piano Duet, D. 951	E and A Major	Identical to Schumann’s
Piano Sonata in A Major, D. 959, 4th movement	A Major, A Minor, F-sharp Major	1. Turn replaced with the repetition of supertonic note 2. The tonic note on cadential 6/4
Piano Sonata in A Minor, D. 537, 2nd movement	E and F Major	The turn replaced with the prolongation of the supertonic note
<i>Das Rosenband</i> , D. 280	A-flat Major	Turn replaced with a chromatic passing note
<i>Im Frühling</i> , D. 882	G Major	1. Turn replaced with the repetition of supertonic note 2. The tonic note on cadential 6/4

Interpretation of *Novellette No. 1*, *Der Dichter spricht*, and *Arabeske* Through Songs

Despite the illustrated connection between Schumann's '*mir beschieden*' phrase and Schubert's compositions, there is still a lack of evidence on Schumann's exposure to Schubert's Piano Sonata in A Minor, D. 537 prior to the '*mir beschieden*' phrase's first appearance in Schumann's works of 1838. Since the sonata was posthumously published later in 1852, it is plausible that Schumann was oblivious of the connection between the sonata dedicated to him, D. 959, and the second movement of D. 537. However, the sonata-rondo structure and tonality of the fourth movement of D. 959 bear sufficient similarities to D. 951 to have caused him to associate the '*mir beschieden*' phrase with his favourite piano duet of his student years.

Having said that, Schubert's *Im Frühling* and *Das Rosenband* were published in 1828 and 1837, before Schumann first made use of the '*mir beschieden*' phrase in 1838. Although there is no confirmation of Schumann's knowledge of these two songs, there is clear evidence that Schumann was familiar with Schubert's *lieder*. In his 1843 article on German *Lieder*, he criticized Schubert's choice of poetry and his accompaniment style that "threaten the delicate life of the poem."³⁴ As early as 1828, Schumann's encounter with Schubert's most famous song, *Erlkönig*, D 328, was perhaps Schumann's earliest exposure to Schubert's compositions. Schumann's roommate, Emil Flechsig, reported his excellent ability to play the song.³⁵ Based on this, it is not too far-fetched to hypothesize on Schumann's familiarity with *Im Frühling* and *Das Rosenband*.

The appearance of the '*mir beschieden*' phrases in *Im Frühling* and *Das Rosenband*, and the allusion to Schubert in *Widmung* tighten their connection. Aside from these, their shared

³⁴ Daverio, "Schumann and Schubert," 4-5.

³⁵ Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, 47.

theme of flowers as a symbol of love furthers the evidence of their association. In light of the allusion study, these three songs provide a link to extra-musical materials sufficient for a programmatic reading of the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase in Schumann’s piano compositions. This forms a hypothesis for a programmatic interpretation of Schumann’s *Novellette No. 1, Der Dichter spricht*, and *Arabeske* through Klopstock, Schulze, and Rückert’s poems.

Widmung from *Myrthen*, Op. 25

In a letter on February 22nd, 1840, Schumann reported to Clara twenty-seven pages of vocal music, which made him laugh and “weep for joy”³⁶ while composing. These pages of songs were eventually developed into the song cycle *Myrthen*, Op. 25. It was presented as a wedding gift to Clara on the day before their wedding on September 12th, 1840. *Myrthen* is German for Myrtles, a plant that symbolizes love and marriage. Its wreath is often found in the wedding ceremony of European tradition. Although *Myrthen* is not a cycle composed with a linear storyline, in contrast with other song cycles of the same year by Schumann, the theme of love and marriage unites all 26 songs together.

The cycle begins with one of Schumann’s best-known songs, *Widmung* (Dedication). While the poet, Friedrich Rückert, gave no title to the original poem, it was published as part of a collection of love poems called *Liebesfrühling* in 1836. Rückert wrote the poem in 1823, during his early married life with Luise Wiethaus Fischer, the source of inspiration for the *Liebesfrühling* collection. The poem reads:

³⁶ Reinhard, *The Singer’s Schumann*, 124.

Du meine Seele, du mein Herz,
Du meine Wonn', o du mein Schmerz,
Du meine Welt, in der ich lebe,
Mein Himmel du, darein ich schwebe,
O du mein Grab, in das hinab
Ich ewig meinen Kummer gab!
Du bist die Ruh, du bist der Frieden,
Du bist vom Himmel mir beschieden.
Dass du mich liebst, macht mich mir wert,
Dein Blick hat mich vor mir verklärt,
Du hebst mich liebend über mich,
Mein guter Geist, mein bess'res Ich!

You my soul, you my heart,
You my rapture, O you my pain,
You my world in which I live,
My heaven you, to which I aspire,
O you my grave, into which
My grief forever I've consigned!
You are repose, you are peace,
You are bestowed on me from heaven.
Your love for me gives me my worth,
Your eyes transfigure me in mine,
You raise me lovingly above myself,
My guardian angel, my better self!³⁷

Aside from giving it a title, Schumann altered the poem by assembling the first four lines with the poem's final line ("Mein guter Geist, mein bess'res Ich") and setting it to return the first section's music. This compositional process results in a ternary form with an additional piano postlude (A-B-A'-Coda). The emphasis on the poem's final line conveys a sense of the spirituality of love, which might have inspired the allusion to Schubert's *Ave Maria* in the postlude. Schumann composed the middle section starting with "Du bist die Ruh" in the chromatic submediant key of E Major, juxtaposing the tonic key of A-flat Major in the outer sections.

Along with the change in accompaniment figures, this peculiar tonality shift in the middle section depicts a peaceful aspect of love. It adjusts to the slight change in the poetic meaning, which gradually points inward to the effect of love on the protagonist, differing from the preceding lines. However, as the '*mir beschieden*' phrase belongs to this section, it is presented in the same key as its first appearance in Schubert's Rondo in A Major for Piano Four-Hands, D. 951, where the phrase appears without melodic modification. Therefore, Schumann might have intentionally composed the section in a chromatic submediant key to present a recognizable

³⁷ Translations by Richard Stokes, author of *The Book of Lieder* (Faber, 2005)

allusion to Schubert. After all, the shift in tonality happens at the beginning of the section where “Du bist die Ruh” is emphasized, as Sams points out. In addition, the original poem is from a collection called *Liebesfrühling*, which shares the same ‘love in spring season’ theme as the aforementioned songs by Schubert.

There is, nevertheless, a minor discrepancy between ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrases in *Widmung* and Schubert’s D. 951. Schumann notated the turn in *Widmung* with a chromatic lower neighbouring tone (E#) instead of a diatonic one in Schubert’s D. 951. Clara later confirmed the chromatic turn herself in her edition of *Myrthen* and her arrangement of *Widmung* for piano solo published in 1873 (see Example 26). A similar notation of the turn can be observed in Franz Liszt’s solo piano arrangement of the song published in 1848 (see Example 27). The explicit spelling of the turn in Clara’s arrangement illustrates the precise alignment of the turn to the accompanying triplets played by the same hand.

This slight alteration of the turn and the difference in accompaniment texture from Schubert’s D. 951 may be construed as Schumann’s attempt to avoid explicit quotations when quoting from others, as discussed in the first chapter of this study.

Example 26: Schumann, *Widmung*, Op. 25 No. 1 (Arranged by Clara Schumann), mm. 20-21



Example 27: Liszt, *Liebeslied*, S. 566, mm. 38-39



Novellette No. 1 in F Major, Op. 21

The earliest appearance of the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase in Schumann’s compositions is in his *Novellette No. 1 in F Major*, Op. 21, which he first mentioned in his diary on January 20th, 1838. A letter to Clara on February 6th reveals that he composed *Novelletten* with her in mind. In this letter, Schumann mentions the name of an English soprano, Clara Novello, whom he had met recently and jested that he “called the entire piece ‘*Novelletten*’ because your name is Clara and ‘*Wiecketten*’ doesn’t sound good enough.”³⁸

Although the couple’s relationship had resumed after eighteen months of silence and reached its secure stage since their secret engagement in August 1837, they lived far apart as a result of Clara’s touring from mid-October 1837 to May 1838. Schumann returned to composing in January 1838 after suffering from depression, health issues related to heavy drinking, and work fatigue from his work on the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* in the previous month. Until May 1838, three substantial piano compositions were completed, *Novelletten*, Op. 21, *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15, and *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16. As evidenced in the couple’s correspondence, Clara remained the primary source of inspiration for these compositions.

³⁸ Schumann, *Novelletten Op. 21*, IV.

Besides the title's connection to the English soprano, *Novelletten* proclaims Schumann's passion for the literary works of Jean Paul as he attempted to persuade Clara to read *Flegeljahre* in a letter on February 11th. The connection between *Novelletten* and Jean Paul's literary works further supports the hypothesis of the '*mir beschieden*' phrase's association to Schubert. In the letter to Friedrich Wieck in which he praises Schubert's Rondo in A Major for Piano Four-Hands, D. 951, he remarks:

Schubert is still 'my only Schubert,' especially as he has so much in common with 'my only Jean Paul;' when I am playing his music, I feel as if I were reading one of Jean Paul's novels.³⁹

Novellette No. 1 contains seven main sections constructing a sonata-rondo form. Its key scheme features Schubertian chromatic mediant key relationship, including primary tonalities of F major, D-flat major, and A major (see Table 3). The piece begins with a robust march-like section marked "Markiert und kräftig" (marked and strong). This section features recurring rhythmic triplets, similar to the rhythmic motif found virtually in *Mit Myrthen und Rosen*, the final song of *Liederkreis*, Op. 24. With the tempo marking, "Innig, nicht rasch" (intimate, not fast), *Mit Myrthen und Rosen* speaks of love as being worthy of death - *Liebestod*, a frequent notion in German Romanticism.

Although the couple experienced no apparent deaths at the time, they were separated for eighteen months, resumed their romantic relationship, and were physically separated again shortly before the composition of *Novellette No. 1*. As a result of the disapproval of Clara's father, the couple went through much turbulence and suffering. Along with Sams' finding of his

³⁹ Schumann, *Early Letters of Schumann*, 80-81.

‘Clara’ theme in the bassline of *Mit Myrthen und Rosen*’s opening phrase⁴⁰, the rhythmic motif of *Novellette No. 1*’s main sections can be perceived autobiographically as the obstacles and sufferings in Schumann’s romantic relationship with Clara.

Table 3: Structure of *Novellette No. 1* in F Major, Op. 21

Sections	Key	Measure numbers
A	F - D-flat - A	mm. 1-20
B	F	mm. 21-48
A’	F	mm. 49-60
C	A-flat (with constant hints of D-flat Major)	mm. 61-81
A’’	D-flat	mm. 82-85
B	A	mm. 86-113
A’	F	mm. 114-125
Coda	F	mm. 126-137

The *Novellette*’s first section (A) contains a wandering key scheme foreshadowing the structural keys of the entire composition: F Major, D-flat Major, and A Major. Despite the difference in tonality between *Mit Myrthen und Rosen* (D major) and the *Novellette* (F major), both compositions begin with a chord with the same root (D major and D minor, respectively) and the same voicing, albeit a different octave, suggesting a possible parallel between these two works. Due to the similarity of rhythmic motives between both works, it is plausible to use the

⁴⁰ Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann*, 47.

text setting of the song as a tool to retrospectively interpret the earlier piano work. Consider the opening line of the text featuring a combination of iambic and anapestic rhythms:

x / x x / x / x x /
Mit Myrthen und Rosen, lieblich und hold

Schumann set the unstressed syllables of the line to the second and fourth beats, which are the weaker beats in the musical meter of 4/4 (see Example 28). Relating this to the piano introduction based on the same music, the second and the fourth beats are where the rhythmic triplets propel the music forward. Similarly, the triplets are found mainly on the second and fourth beats in the primary sections (A) of *Novellette No. 1*. In the first section of the piece, Schumann occasionally marks *Forte* specifically over the triplets to give extra emphasis on the second and fourth beats (see Example 29).

Taking the text-setting of a similar rhythmic pattern in *Mit Myrten und Rosen* as a model, these *Forte* markings are not dynamics or articulation markings for forceful emphasis but a reminder of harmonic tension for the performer. To illustrate: in Example 29, the *Forte* markings fall onto the second and the fourth beats of measure 7. On the second beat, the first *Forte* marking emphasizes the tension of the suspension in the right hand awaiting the resolution on the third beat (C to B-flat in the lower voice). A similar emphasis is on the subdominant seventh chord (iv⁴/3) on the fourth beat, only resolving to a dominant triad (V) in the next measure.

Example 28: Schumann, *Mit Myrten und Rosen* from *Liederkreis*, Op. 24 No. 9, mm. 5-6



Example 29: Schumann, *Novellette No. 1 in F Major*, Op. 21, mm. 7-8



The secondary sections (B) are labelled as *Trio* by Schumann. They appear first in F major and later in A major. Furthering the parallels with *Mit Myrten und Rosen*, the main melody of the *Trio* section shares the same outline as the song's beginning phrase. This features a triadic rise from a mediant note to a higher one, which falls step-wise to the tonic note: 3-5-1-3-2-1 (see Example 30).

Example 30: Comparison between melodic gestures of *Mit Myrten und Rosen* and *Novellette*
No. 1

- a. Schumann, *Mit Myrten und Rosen* from *Liederkreis*, Op. 24 No. 9, mm. 1-2



- b. Schumann, *Novellette No. 1* in F Major, Op. 21, mm. 21-22



The ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase appears in the secondary sections (B and B’), first in F major (mm. 33-34) and then in A major (mm. 98-99), consistently with *ritardando* markings. The appearance of the *ritardando* over the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase is the earliest instruction for tempo manipulation in the piece. This seems significant, and as a result one might avoid any tempo fluctuation before the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase occurs.

As observed from Schumann’s notation in *Arabeske* and Clara’s arrangement of *Widmung*, where the turn is deliberately notated out against the accompanying triplets (see

Examples 20 and 26), the lowest note of the turn is to be played together with the highest note of the accompanying triplets.

Schumann's habit of hiding explicit evidence for referencing was proposed to support the discrepancy between the presentation of the turn in the '*mir beschieden*' phrase in *Widmung* versus Schubert's diatonic presentation. Nevertheless, the return of the secondary section in the *Novellette* includes the '*mir beschieden*' phrase in the identical key in A major as the recapitulation section of Schubert's Rondo in A Major for Piano Four-Hand, D. 951. Two observations further explain this explicit allusion to Schubert's D. 951 in the *Novellette*:

First, Schumann mentions that he was "playing with forms"⁴¹ while composing *Novelletten*. The peculiar key scheme of the first *Novellette* causes tonal instability throughout the entire piece. Although this key scheme is ingeniously hinted at in the first primary section, there is no conventional expectation of A major at the return of the secondary section in a rondo piece in F major. With the recurring *ritardando* markings above the '*mir beschieden*' phrase appearances amidst the composition's general tonal turbulence, Schumann did not need to hide his reference to Schubert, the musical equivalent of Jean Paul, as the starting number of a cycle inspired by literature.

Second, the turn in the *Novellette* excludes the repetition of the supertonic scale degree as the starting note, unlike the '*mir beschieden*' phrase in Schubert's D. 951. Since the turn's execution in *Widmung* was thoroughly notated in both Liszt and Clara's arrangements (see Examples 26 and 27), it is evidenced for the turn to be executed from the supertonic note, similar to the phrase in D. 951. In singing *Widmung*, the reiteration of F-sharp might also be proposed as a suitable performance practice indication.

⁴¹ Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, 164.

Der Dichter spricht from Kinderszenen, Op. 15 No. 13

Kinderszenen, Op. 15, share the same origin as *Novelletten*, Op. 21. Intended as an appendix to *Novelletten*, Schumann told Clara on March 17th, 1838, that he picked twelve out of thirty miniature pieces and assembled them to form *Kinderszenen*. Other than *Glückes genug* (No. 5), *Träumerei* (No. 7), and *Am Camin* (No. 8), there is no evidence of the specific dates of composition for the other pieces in the cycle. The cycle includes one additional piece of uncertain origin. Whether it belonged to the original thirty or was newly composed after his report to Clara, the final version of *Kinderszenen* contains a total number of thirteen pieces. Although Schumann promised to Clara to finish *Kinderszenen* by the time she would arrive back in Leipzig in May 1838, the cycle remained unpublished until late February 1839, a year since he began composing it.

The titles were added to each piece after its composition, as discussed in chapter 1. Their significance as “finger-posts to the interpretation and conception”⁴² is nevertheless one of the most crucial clues for interpreting *Kinderszenen*. The final piece of the cycle is entitled *Der Dichter spricht* (The Poet Speaks). It is the only title among the thirteen pieces directly connected to Schumann’s long-term passion for literature. Thus, the appearance of the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase in *Der Dichter spricht* further supports the associations with Schubert and Jean Paul.

Among the titles in the cycle, there are only two references to specific occupations similar to the characters in *Carnaval*, Op. 9: *Ritter vom Steckenpferd* (Knight of the Hobbyhorse - No. 9) and *Der Dichter spricht* (The Poet Speaks). However, the ‘knight’ is riding on a hobby horse, portraying a child’s role-playing scenario, in contrast with the ‘poet,’ who privately speaks

⁴² Schumann, *Letters of Robert Schumann*, 133.

in the first person to audiences of all dimensions, including music readers, performers, and listeners.

The intimacy of *Der Dichter spricht* can also be perceived as a personal message to a distant lover. Hopeful for Clara's return in May, the '*mir beschieden*' phrase in *Novellette No. 1* and *Der Dichter spricht* serves to symbolize the couple's reunion in the springtime, relating to the phrase's allusion to Schubert's songs of love in spring.

The '*mir beschieden*' phrase, as evidenced in *Widmung*, Schumann's wedding present to Clara, conveys the idea of marriage. In *Helft mir, ihr Schwestern*, the fifth song of *Frauenliebe und Leben*, Op. 42, a song depicting a bride on her wedding day, a phrase shares a similar harmonic progression and melodic shape (see Example 31). In measures 29-30, on the line "Gibst du mir, Sonne, deinen Schein?", the voice exchange between melody and bass on the word 'Sonne' resembles the text-setting of the word 'Himmel' in the line "Du bist vom Himmel mir beschieden" in *Widmung* (see Example 32).

In *Helft mir, ihr Schwestern*, the voice exchange between melody and bass occurs before a melodic gesture and harmonic progression similar to the '*mir beschieden*' phrase. The only difference being the cadential 6/4 chord progression's absence. Similarly, this voice exchange is resented before the '*mir beschieden*' phrase in *Der Dichter spricht* and *Novellette No. 1*. It is plausible to view the phrase in the piano compositions with the same connotation as Schumann's wish to marry Clara.

This interpretation of '*mir beschieden*' as representing Schumann's desire for marriage at the onset of 1838 is not implausible. Especially when considering his diary entry of mid-1837,

which outlined a change in his approach to a romantic relationship. He noted, “from here on ... a change in my essential nature and genuine desire for a wife.”⁴³

Example 31: Schumann, *Helft mir, ihr Schwestern* from *Frauenliebe und Leben*, Op. 42 No. 5, mm. 29-30



Example 32: Schumann, *Widmung* from *Myrthen*, Op. 25 No. 1, mm. 19 - 21



Further ground to support the hypothesis for the poet to speak of marriage is the parallel between *Der Dichter spricht* and *Lieder der Braut II* from *Myrthen*, Op. 25 No. 12. Both compositions share a similar overall tonal structure, a chorale-like texture, the aforementioned

⁴³ Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, 157.

identical voice exchange (compare Example 33 and Example 18), and the open fifth in the right-hand part of the piano in the final measure.

Example 33: *Lieder der Braut II* from *Myrthen*, Op. 25 No. 12, mm. 1-4



Regarding the overall tonal structure, both *Lieder der Braut II* and *Der Dichter spricht* begin their initial phrases with a dominant harmony in G major, followed by a rising tonal sequence of A minor. In addition, both compositions then reach a questioning fermata with an underlining diminished seventh harmony. Lastly, after the climactic moments, the initial phrases of both compositions return with altered concluding phrases.

Despite such resemblance, *Lieder der Braut II* and *Der Dichter spricht* demonstrate different expressions in their climactic moments. *Lieder der Braut II* answers the questioning diminished seventh chord with the bride's utmost confidence in everlasting love, "Enden? enden soll sich's nie, Wenden?, noch nicht weiss ich, wie!" (End? Never shall it end, Change? I don't know how it could!). Here, the vocal part reaches the highest note of E5 on the word 'nie' (never) with a confident tonalization of the subdominant. On the other hand, in *Der Dichter spricht*, after the questioning fermata on a diminished seventh harmony, the music furthers with a

recitative whose speechlike quality perfectly befits the piece's title. The recitative melody further outlines the same diminished seventh harmony, implying a harmonic prolongation. It is then succeeded by a different diminished seventh chord, which further intensifies the atmosphere along with the melodic peak at G6. Each composition depicts a distinct image of marriage in the composer's mind during two different periods of his life. *Der Dichter spricht* was composed between February and May of 1838, when the idea of marriage was unforeseeable for the couple. The unpredictability of the relationship results in the intensification of the question. In contrast, *Lieder der Braut II* was composed two years later when the couple had already begun their legal dispute with the bride's father.

The open fifth found in the final measure of *Der Dichter spricht* is a final gesture found only in two songs in *Myrthen*, Op. 25, *Lieder der Braut I* and *II* (No. 11 and 12). Both songs of the bride share the same tonality of G major as *Der Dichter spricht*. They depict the bride's imploring her mother for approval, reflecting the couple's long struggle with Clara's father. Over the open fifth, *Lieder der Braut II* concludes with the words of imploration to the mother, "Lass mich!" (Let me!). Almost an afterthought, the song's ending does not depict a final conclusion, but a gentle plea with a lingering wish for parental approval. In addition, both *Lieder der Braut* from *Myrthen*, similar to *Widmung*, were picked from the same collection of poems by Friedrich Rückert, *Liebesfrühling*.

Arabeske, Op. 18

Having heard of Clara's success in Vienna in March 1838, Schumann planned a trip to the Austrian capital expecting relocation of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*'s offices. Arriving in Vienna in early October, he soon realized that his attempt to publish his journal there was futile.

During his 6-month stay, a few Biedermeier compositions arose, including *Arabeske*, Op. 18 and *Blumenstück*, Op. 19. In a letter to Clara on January 26th, 1839, Schumann revealed his current work on two compositions referred to as *Guirlande* (Garland) and *Rondolett*. He suggests calling them collectively *Kleine Blumenstücke* (Small flower pieces). He further describes *Guirlande* as a “variation on no theme,”⁴⁴ a description that matches the double variation structure of *Blumenstück*. Consequently, the title of the other composition, *Rondolett* (Small Rondo), implies a piece in rondo form, matching the structure of *Arabeske*. The description of *Arabeske* and *Blumenstück* to Henriette Voigt on August 11th, 1839, that “the stems and fronds [of the pieces] are so frail and delicate”⁴⁵ further supports the idea that *Guirlande* and *Rondolett* are the original titles for *Blumenstück* and *Arabeske*.

This flower theme and the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase’s appearance in *Arabeske* reinforce the notion of the phrase as a symbol of love in springtime. After all, Schumann composed these pieces while living apart from Clara in wintertime, similar to when he first used this allusion to Schubert’s song in *Novellette No. 1* and *Der Dichter spricht* a year earlier.

The ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase is found in the coda section of *Arabeske* (mm. 209-221), uncommonly marked “Zum Schluss” (in conclusion) by the composer (see Example 20). It contains primarily material from the transitional passage attached to the secondary section (mm. 89-104).

Although the section’s subtitle of ‘Zum Schluss’ is unique, a similar marking of ‘Zum Beschluss’ can be found in the penultimate portion of *Humoreske*, Op. 20, (mm. 861-951), a substantial piano work composed at the same time as the *Arabeske* (see Example 34). In addition, the main theme from *Arabeske* can be observed in the ‘Zum Beschluss’ section

⁴⁴ Schumann, *Arabeske Op. 18*, IV.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

of *Humoreske* (see Example 35). Here, the theme is presented in the tonality of B-flat major, similar to the opening phrase of Luigi Cherubini's *String Quartet No. 1 in E-flat Major*'s second movement (see Example 36), of which Schumann published a review in the previous year. Schumann's review displays Cherubini as a celebrated composer and regards his music as "the work of a master."⁴⁶ Along with the Biedermeier approach to his Viennese compositions, this allusion to Cherubini may reflect Schumann's attempt to "rise up to become the favourite composer of all the ladies of Vienna,"⁴⁷ as he wrote to Joseph Fischhof, a Viennese pianist friend, before moving there.

Example 34: Schumann, *Humoreske*, Op. 20, mm. 861-862



Example 35: Schumann, *Humoreske*, Op. 20, mm. 869-870



⁴⁶ Schumann, *Schumann on Music*, 145.

⁴⁷ Schumann, *Arabeske Op. 18*, IV.

Example 36: Cherubini, *String Quartet No. 1 in E-flat Major*, second movement, mm. 1-4



The appearance of *Arabeske*'s theme and similar marking in *Humoreske* is conceivably the byproduct of their shared date of composition. Be that as it may, the relationships between works containing the '*mir beschieden*' phrase and Friedrich Rückert's *Liebesfrühling* that have been mentioned in this study suggest a connection between the concluding section of *Arabeske* and the concluding song of *Myrthen*, Op. 25, which bears the same title as *Arabeske*'s coda section, *Zum Schluss*.

Although there is no musical resemblance between *Widmung*, the opening song of *Myrthen*, and *Zum Schluss*, the final song, both compositions share the same key of A-flat major and the same source of text. The title choice *Zum Schluss* designates the song as a cyclical conclusion for the entire work. Schumann's decision to unite the cycle through the exclusive use of Rückert's poetry is strategic. It makes up for the cycle's lack of linear narrative, in contrast with other notable song cycles with distinct cyclical structures, such as *Frauenliebe und Leben*, Op. 42 and *Dichterliebe*, Op. 48.

The musical simplicity of the song *Zum Schluss* accentuates the clarity and beauty of the poem, which again portrays marriage-related imagery and the transcendental aspect of marital

love. Consistently, *Arabeske* was conceived during a time of physical separation from Clara, similar to when he worked on *Novellette No. 1* and *Der Dichter spricht* a year earlier. This parallel to another song related to marriage further supports the proposed programmatic reading of the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase as a musical expression of the couple’s physical distance, representing the composer’s longing for the distant lover and his wish to marry Clara.

Similar to the turn’s execution in Clara and Liszt’s arrangement of *Widmung*, the repetition of the supertonic note was added by Clara in her edition of *Arabeske* published in 1887 (see Example 37). Her interpretation of the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase in *Arabeske* and *Widmung* brings the audience closer to Schubert. It is plausible for the lack of the voice exchange prior to the ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase in *Arabeske* to explain Clara’s alteration, as her addition would not entirely expose Schumann’s covert allusion.

Example 37: Schumann, *Arabeske*, Op. 18 (Edited by Clara Schumann), mm. 214-216



Lastly, Schumann’s described *Arabeske* and *Blumenstück* as compositions meant “for the ladies”⁴⁸ to Ernst Adolph Becker on August 15th, 1838. This raises a compelling question on gender narrative. Most of Schumann’s vocal works examined in this chapter for their parallels to

⁴⁸ Ibid.

piano compositions were composed for a female voice with an exclusive female narrative. This includes *Helft mir, ihr Schwestern* from *Frauenliebe und Leben*, Op. 42 and *Lieder der Braut* from *Myrthen*, Op. 25. The other songs, including *Mit Myrten und Rosen*, *Zum Schluss*, and *Widmung* itself, are supposedly gender-neutral in their narratives. Nevertheless, the suitability of the vocal range for a female voice makes them frequently sung by sopranos. While the application of female narrative to *Novellette No. 1* and *Arabeske* is plausible, the masculine form of the profession in the title of *Der Dichter spricht* speaks against this single-gender narrative.

Summary

The ‘*mir beschieden*’ phrase found in *Widmung*, *Novellette No. 1*, *Der Dichter spricht* and *Arabeske* demonstrates Schumann’s ability to, in his word, “steal”⁴⁹ the phrase from Schubert, one of the composers he most revered. The investigation of the allusion’s origin reveals the phrase’s possible association to the spring season as a symbol of love, which is emblematic of marriage in Schumann’s works. Further parallels between piano and vocal works shed light on the composer’s psychological state throughout the ups and downs of his relationship with Clara between 1838 and 1840. As the ‘*mir beschieden*’ allusion intertwines his passion for Schubert’s music and the state of his relationship with Clara, one can claim that it represents one of Schumann’s ‘most personal’ musical gestures.

⁴⁹ Marston, *Schumann, Fantasie*, Op. 17, 35.

Chapter 3

Case Study II - Kreisleriana

Schumann and Hoffmann

“In other works of mine, the titles never come to me until after I have finished the composition.”⁵⁰ Here, Schumann described his unusual approach to composing *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16, in a letter to Simonin de Sire on March 15th, 1839. Contrary to the genesis of his works with extra-musical titles, as discussed in the first chapter, Schumann had a vivid image of Johannes Kreisler as “an eccentric, untamed, witty Kapellmeister”⁵¹ before he began composing the piano work.

Kreisler is a fictitious character created as an alter-ego of the author, Ernst Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann. He is found mainly in two publications by Hoffmann, the first of which is the *Phantasiestücke in Callots Manier* (*Fantasy Pieces in Manner of Callot*), published in four volumes between 1814 and 1815. Kreisler later appears again in *Lebensansichten des Kater Murr* (*The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*), published in two parts in 1819 and 1821.

Prior to *Kreisleriana*, Schumann had once drawn inspiration from Hoffmann’s work for the titling of his Opus 12, *Fantasiestücke*. Although Schumann’s *Fantasiestücke* does not represent the details of Hoffmann’s work comprehensively, it is unmistakable that Schumann borrowed the title from the collection containing the first public appearance of Johannes Kreisler. Following *Kreisleriana*’s composition, *Nachtstücke*, Op. 23, is another evidence of Hoffmann’s

⁵⁰ Schumann, *Kreisleriana* Op. 16, IV.

⁵¹ Ibid.

title in Schumann's work. The borrowed title is a replacement for the morbid original title of *Leichenphantasie* (Corpse Fantasy), composed around the time of his brother's death in 1839.

Aside from Schumann's frequent diary entries exposing his enthusiasm for Hoffmann's literary works, both men shared an uncanny parallel in their life backgrounds and artistic idealism. They were first persuaded to pursue a law degree, yet did not elect this as a profession, instead following their passion for literature and music. As projected through Kreisler, both were known for their criticisms of mainstream artistic movements. Undoubtedly, Schumann perceived Hoffmann as the embodiment of his ideal self. With this, the fictitious character's traits of eccentricity, sudden mood swings, and exemplary musical taste resonated with Schumann and further inspired his split public persona. As mentioned by Daverio, Schumann's split persona of *Florestan* and *Eusebius* are presented as one in Hoffmann's Kreisler:

Thus Schumann's substitution of the Kreisler - persona for the figures of Florestan and Eusebius marks a subtle but telling shift in his creativity: dualism now becomes a function of a single character.⁵²

Furthermore, Kreisler's appearance in *Lebensansichten des Kater Murr* expands the notion of dualism. The novel comprises a juxtaposition of two narratives, the first on the life and opinions of a literate tomcat named Murr, and the second, a fragmentary biography of Kreisler. The premise is that the editor was requested by a close friend to help publish the work by Murr, unknowing of the author's identity and the manuscript being on the papers containing his owner's biography, thus resulting in the publication of both stories in the same novel.

⁵² Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, 167-168.

The protagonists, Murr and Kreisler, are distinct opposites yet, at the same time, a unique double, as Lora Deahl described in her publication on the structural parallels between Hoffmann's *Lebensansichten* and Schumann's *Kreisleriana*:

Murr, the egotistical philistine with disreputably bourgeois tastes, the blatant plagiarist and charlatan extraordinaire, is a bizarre caricature of the sensitive Kreisler, whose untempered idealism renders him unfit for existence in the empirical world. And yet, on a deeper level, common themes weave threads of continuity between the narrative strands, for the literate pseudo philosopher cat is certainly as much of an outcast in cat society as Kreisler is in the world of men.⁵³

Besides social rejections, their storylines share other parallels, such as duels, ensemble singing, and unsuccessful romantic relationships. This satirical dualism of Murr and Kreisler exemplifies the notion of Romantic irony, an essential concept in German Romanticism. In the introduction to Anthea Bell's English edition of *Lebensansichten des Kater Murr*, Jeremy Adler mentions how the novel's dualism connected to the notion of Romantic irony:

The narrative polarity closely corresponds to what Friedrich Schlegel called 'romantic irony': a variety of dialectic by which we are tossed between opposing viewpoints, each time returning to the previous one at a higher level, until eventually, we become free, to 'float' or 'soar.'⁵⁴

In addition, Romantic irony predominates in German Romantic poems, which are the source of inspiration for Schumann's songs. Interestingly enough, the songs containing allusions to *Kreisleriana*, to be discussed in this chapter, are all musical settings of poems by Heinrich

⁵³ Deahl, "Robert Schumann's "Kreisleriana" and Double Novel Structure," 134

⁵⁴ Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*, XXV.

Heine, which are known for their irony. This can be another evidence to strengthen the connection between Schumann's songs and *Kreisleriana*.

In regard to Kreisler's musical taste, while Hoffmann's *Kreisleriana* alludes to various musical works, the compositions of four main composers: Bach, Gluck, Mozart, and Beethoven, make frequent appearances as the epitome of different aspects of music. Unsurprisingly, Schumann perceived these composers with a similar attitude and often referred to two of them, Bach and Beethoven, as the masters of German music tradition. Therefore, it is only natural to witness allusions to Bach and Beethoven in Schumann's *Kreisleriana*.

Apart from the frequent contrapuntal texture, an allusion to Bach's *Fugue in G Minor* from *The Well-Tempered Clavier Book I*, BWV 861, can be observed in the fourth movement (see Example 38). Furthermore, the introduction theme from the third movement of Beethoven's *Appassionata* Sonata, Op. 57, is alluded to in the same movement (see Example 39). Interestingly enough, Schumann chose to allude to Kreisler's favourite composers, emblematic of German music tradition, in the movement significantly located at the center of the cycle. Other than these allusions, the movement features a phrase Schumann alluded to in his songs, which is to be later discussed in this chapter (see page 71).

Example 38: Comparison between Bach's *Fugue in G Minor* and *Kreisleriana*'s fourth movement:

- a. Bach, *Fugue in G Minor* from *The Well-Tempered Clavier Book I*, BWV 861, mm. 1-3



- b. Schumann, *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16, fourth movement, mm. 12-13



Example 39: Comparison between Beethoven's *Appassionata* Sonata and *Kreisleriana*'s fourth movement:

- a. Beethoven, Piano Sonata in F minor, Op. 57, "Appassionata", third movement, mm. 5-7



- b. Schumann, *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16, fourth movement, mm. 5-6



Singing Kreisleriana - Interpreting Piano Repertoire Through a Singer's Ears

Schumann began working on *Kreisleriana* in April 1838, shortly after the creation of *Novelletten*, Op. 21 and *Kinderszenen*, Op. 15. He initially intended to dedicate this work to Clara, as he wrote to her on April 14th, 1838:

I have another whole book of new things. You and one of your ideas are the principal subject, and I shall call them 'Kreisleriana,' and dedicate them to you.⁵⁵

Schumann's wish to dedicate *Kreisleriana* to Clara was rejected by the dedicatee herself due to the fear of worsening her relationship with her father. Consequently, when Haslinger published the piece in early September, Schumann changed the dedicatee to Frédéric Chopin, a composer whose works were compared to the literary works of E.T.A. Hoffmann. This draws comparisons with the equally unusual pairing of Schubert and Jean Paul by Schumann in his early years.⁵⁶

Nevertheless, Schumann's specification of Clara's involvement in *Kreisleriana* verifies her status as one of two primary sources of inspiration for the composition, the other being Johannes Kreisler. Furthermore, this fixation on Clara aligns with the discussed depiction of Schumann's longing and marital wish in *Novellette No. 1* and *Der Dichter spricht*. Emerging during the same creative period as both compositions, *Kreisleriana* furthers the evidence to support this premise.

⁵⁵ Schumann, *Early letters of Robert Schumann*, 268.

⁵⁶ Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, 70.

The Postludes

Inspired by Eric Sams' discovery of Schumann's self-allusions in his songs, it is worthwhile discussing the allusions to *Kreisleriana* observed by Sams in songs from *Liederkreis*, Op. 24 and *Dichterliebe*, Op. 48. Which leads to a further investigation on the connection between *Myrthen*, Op. 25, and the fourth movement of *Kreisleriana*.

Sams proposes for the postlude of *Und wüssten's die Blumen, die kleinen*, the eighth song of *Dichterliebe*, Op. 48, to be an allusion to the main theme of *Kreisleriana*'s first movement. The song is set to a poem by Heinrich Heine, depicting the heartbroken protagonist expressing his anguish to the natural surroundings and seeking their consolation:

Und wüssten's die Blumen, die kleinen,
Wie tief verwundet mein Herz,
Sie würden mit mir weinen,
Zu heilen meinen Schmerz.
Und wüssten's die Nachtigallen,
Wie ich so traurig und krank,
Sie liessen fröhlich erschallen
Erquickenden Gesang.
Und wüssten sie mein Wehe,
Die goldenen Sternelein,
Sie kämen aus ihrer Höhe,
Und sprächen Trost mir ein.
Sie alle können's nicht wissen,
Nur eine kennt meinen Schmerz:
Sie hat ja selbst zerrissen,
Zerrissen mir das Herz.

If only the little flowers knew
how deeply wounded my heart is,
they would weep with me
to heal my pain.
And if the nightingales knew
how sad and ill I am,
they would make the air ring
with song to restore me.
And if the golden stars
knew my sorrow
they would come down
from the sky and comfort me.
But none of these can know my grief;
it is known to one alone,
and she it is who has
torn my heart asunder.⁵⁷

Comparing the song's postlude to the beginning of *Kreisleriana*, the two excerpts share a similar effect of a sudden rush of anxiety. The emergence of both gestures aims towards the note B-flat, followed by E and C-sharp. Along with the bass note A, they construct a tensed harmony of

⁵⁷ Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann*, 114.

dominant seventh flat ninth in the key of D minor. The identical rhythmic notation of sixteenth-note triplets in 2/4 meter furthers the similarity of these two excerpts (see Example 40).

Besides these resemblances, Schumann portrayed the eccentricity of Johannes Kreisler through the instability of the left-hand part in the opening section of *Kreisleriana*. The section's bass line avoids falling on the beat until the spinning gesture of the right hand rises to the peak at its conclusion in measure 8. The syncopated bass is a distinctive element of *Kreisleriana*'s first movement, which crucially contrasts with the stability of the bass in *Und wüssten's die Blumen, die kleinen*.

Example 40: Comparison between the beginning of *Und wüssten's die Blumen, die kleinen*'s postlude and the opening gesture of *Kreisleriana*:

- a. Schumann, *Und wüssten's die Blumen, die kleinen* from *Dichterliebe*, Op. 48, mm. 32-33



- b. Schumann, *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16, first movement, m. 1



The evidence from Schumann's diary entry, along with a copy of the earliest version of *Kreisleriana*'s first movement, suggests that Schumann initially intended the movement for Friederike Serre, the dedicatee of *Arabeske*, Op. 18, and *Blumenstück*, Op. 19. Together with her husband, Friedrich Anton Serre, the couple were initially acquaintances of Friedrich Wieck before becoming good friends of Schumann. Their help to accommodate Clara during her stay in Maxen in 1837 assisted Wieck's wish to separate his daughter from Schumann. Following Sams' advocate for the song and piano piece's "similar expressive meaning,"⁵⁸ it is plausible that their correspondences reminded him of the heartbroken pain from Clara's prolonged silence until August 1837, despite Schumann's friendly acquaintance with the Serre couple during *Kreisleriana*'s composition.

The second allusion to *Kreisleriana* proposed by Sams is in the last three measures of *Morgens steh' ich auf und frage* (mm. 43-45), the opening song of *Liederkreis*, Op. 24. The song features a phrase similar to the final measures of *Kreisleriana*'s second movement (mm. 162-165). Despite the tonal and metric discrepancy, and the lack of embellishment on the final

⁵⁸ Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann*, 115.

melodic note in the piano piece, the two excerpts share an identical melody and underlining harmonic progression of V7/V-V7-I (see Example 41).

Example 41: Comparison between the ending phrases of *Morgens steh' ich auf und frage* and *Kreisleriana*'s second movement:

- a. Schumann, *Morgens steh' ich auf und frage* from *Liederkreis*, op. 24 No. 1, mm. 43-45



- b. Schumann, *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16, second movement, mm. 162-165



This poem also by Heinrich Heine depicts the sleep-deprived protagonist longing for his lover's appearance:

Morgens steh' ich auf und frage:
Kommt feins Liebchen heut?
Abends sink' ich hin und klage:
Ausblieb sie auch heut.
In der Nacht mit meinem Kummer
Lieg' ich schlaflos, lieg' ich wach;
Träumend, wie im halben Schlummer,
Wandle ich bei Tag

Every morning I rise wondering:
Will my darling come today?
Every evening I lie down grieving:
Yet another day without her.
All night I lie awake,
sleepless with sorrow;
All day I wander about as if half asleep,
in a dream. ⁵⁹

Beginning with the tonic key of D major, the piano accompaniment, depicting the protagonist's aimless steps, wanders through various keys throughout the entire song, including F-sharp minor (vi), E minor (ii), and G major (IV). Finally returning to the tonic key in the postlude (mm. 36-45), the piano part yet further steps into dissatisfaction with a deceptive progression in measures 38 and 42. The chord progression suggests that the song could have ended with a depressive conclusion from the everlasting suffering with a sorrowful sub-mediant minor harmony. Nevertheless, the continuously wandering postlude turns into the concluding phrase alluding to *Kreisleriana*'s second movement with a positive amorous demeanour.

The second movement of *Kreisleriana* is in rondo form. The movement begins with the primary section in B-flat major marked *Sehr Innig und nicht zu rasch* (mm. 1-37) and interrupted by two *Intermezzi* in faster tempos: the first, *Sehr lebhaft*, in F major (mm.38-55) and the second, *Etwas bewegter*, in G minor (mm. 92-118). After wandering through a complex key scheme, with an emphasis on the chromatic submediant key in the transitional section (mm. 119-142), the primary subject's last appearance follows and leads to the coda section (mm. 160-165),

⁵⁹ Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann*, 37.

containing mainly the discussed concluding phrase. Nevertheless, the phrase concludes the movement without any thematic connection to the previous sections.

Both *Morgens steh' ich auf und frage* and the second movement of *Kreisleriana* feature an aimlessly wandering journey, which concludes with the extraneous phrase. Thus, it is plausible to draw an extra-musical parallel between both compositions and interpret the piano piece through Heine's poem. Based on this parallelism, the concluding phrase of *Kreisleriana*'s second movement proposes another possible autobiographical reading.

The evidence reveals the initial creation period of *Kreisleriana* to be when the couple lived far apart, ranging from March 19th until the first days of April. The concluding phrase of *Kreisleriana* plausibly reflects Schumann's anticipated relief from an intense longing for Clara, as their long-awaited meeting in May 1838 (after their 6-month physical separation) would soon be a reality. Sams' description of the underlining chained dominant sevenths as "Schumann's expression of affection in music,"⁶⁰ assigned as motif 64, further supports this premise.

In addition, the primary theme of *Kreisleriana*'s second movement features a gesture similar to a theme from *Ende vom Lied*, the final piece of *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 12, the piano work inspired by Hoffmann mentioned above (see Example 42). Aside from being in the same key of B-flat major, both themes project the same melodic outline of 5-6-5-3-1. Although Schumann intended *Fantasiestücke* for Anna Robena Laidlaw, his short-term romantic interest, the piece was composed in mid-1837 towards the end of his 18-month separation from Clara. He later told her of *Ende vom Lied*'s programmatic meaning in a letter on March 19th, 1838:

⁶⁰ Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann*, 22.

everything ultimately dissolves into a merry wedding – but my distress for you came back at the end, and the wedding bells sound as if commingled with a death knell.⁶¹

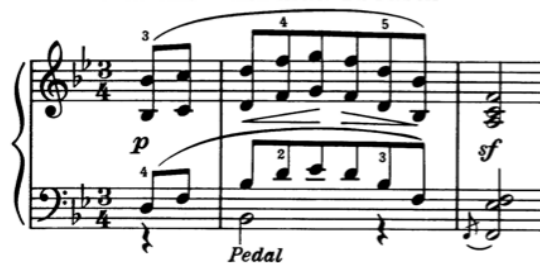
Along with the parallel to *Morgens steh' ich auf und frage*, Schumann's programmatic description of *Ende vom Lied*, and its melodic resemblance to the primary theme of *Kreisleriana*'s second movement, supports the hypothesis that Schumann composed the latter with an intention to express his longing for Clara and his desire to marry her.

Example 42: Comparison between *Ende vom Lied* and *Kreisleriana*'s second movement:

- a. Schumann, *Ende vom Lied* from *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 12, m. 25



- b. Schumann, *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16, second movement, mm. 1-2



⁶¹ Schumann, *Fantasiestücke* Op. 12, V.

Furthermore, the musical realization of the wedding bells and a death knell at the end of *Ende vom Lied* share a similar rhythmic pattern with *Zum Schluss* from *Myrthen*, Op. 25 (see Example 43). Aside from this, the titles of both compositions also share a similar meaning. Despite the literal meaning of *Ende vom Lied* as ‘the end of the song,’ it usually means ‘the end of the story,’ comparable to the meaning of *Zum Schluss* (in conclusion). With all these parallelisms, *Zum Schluss*’s portrayal of marriage-related imagery and the transcendental aspect of marital love discussed in the second chapter further advocate this interpretation.

Example 43: Comparison between *Ende vom Lied* and *Zum Schluss*:

- a. Schumann, *Ende vom Lied* from *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 12, m. 85-88



- b. Schumann, *Zum Schluss* from *Myrthen*, Op. 25, mm. 1-2



Heine's Lotosblume and Hoffman's Chiara

In the second chapter, *Kreisleriana*'s fourth movement was excluded from the list of Schumann's compositions containing the '*mir beschieden*' phrase due to its obscure resemblance in harmonic progression. Nevertheless, the movement was included in Vászonyi's original list to support his premise on the speechlike quality of Schumann's piano music. This research on allusions to *Kreisleriana* in Schumann's songs reveals that the 'speaking' quality observed by Vászonyi in the opening phrase of *Kreisleriana*'s fourth movement is perhaps due to its parallelism to a song from *Myrthen*, Op. 25.

The opening measure of *Kreisleriana*'s fourth movement contains a musical gesture with identical voicing and harmonic progression to a passage in *Die Lotosblume*, the seventh song of *Myrthen*, Op. 25. They both contain a voice exchange between the top and bottom voices with the pitches A, B-flat, and C attached to the pivotal notes in the middle voices of F and E-flat. The voice exchange and the pivot notes result in a harmonic progression of V4/3 progressing through a passing note of B-flat to V6/5 and back (see Example 44).

With *Kreisleriana*'s appoggiatura in the top voice on the third beat, the gesture shares identical pitches to a passage in *Die Lotosblume* set to the text: "Sie blüht und glüht und leuchtet, Und starret stumm in die Höh" (She blooms and glows and gleams, and gazes silently aloft).

Example 44: Comparison between a passage in *Die Lotosblume* and the opening gesture of *Kreisleriana*'s fourth movement:

- a. Schumann, *Die Lotosblume* from *Myrthen*, Op. 25, mm. 17-20



- b. Schumann, *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16, fourth movement, m. 1



Despite the likeness in pitches and their tempo similarity (marked *Ziemlich langsam* in *Die Lotosblume* and *Sehr langsam* in *Kreisleriana*'s movement), the eccentricity of Kapellmeister Kreisler breaking from social norms is again portrayed by the rhythmic instability in the opening measure of *Kreisleriana*'s fourth movement. The simpler approach to the similar passage in *Die Lotosblume* may be perceived as part of Schumann's quest to compose for the

mainstream audience as a means to gain financial stability. This would act as proof of his competence to the court in order to marry Clara in 1840.

Schumann again borrowed the text from Heinrich Heine's poem, similar to the other songs with the allusions to *Kreisleriana*. Nevertheless, the poem set to this song does not represent first-person narration like the other two, but the narrator's perspective instead. The text reads:

Die Lotosblume ängstigt
Sich vor der Sonne Pracht,
Und mit gesenktem Haupte
Erwartet sie träumend die Nacht.

The lotus-flower fears
The sun's splendour,
And with bowed head,
Dreaming, awaits the night.

Der Mond, der ist ihr Buhle
Er weckt sie mit seinem Licht,
Und ihm entschleiert sie freundlich
Ihr frommes Blumengesicht.

The moon is her lover,
And wakes her with his light,
And to him she tenderly unveils
Her innocent flower-like face.

Sie blüht und glüht und leuchtet
Und starret stumm in die Höh';
Sie duftet und weinet und zittert
Vor Liebe und Liebesweh.

She blooms and glows and gleams,
And gazes silently aloft—
Fragrant and weeping and trembling
With love and the pain of love.⁶²

The text to the phrase alluding to the beginning of *Kreisleriana*'s fourth movement describes the physical reaction of the lotus flower when she meets the moon at night, who is her awaited lover. Schumann portrayed the flower's sensual excitement in response to the moon by the accelerating tempo from measure 18. The lotus flower's excitement then peaks in measure 24, at the beginning of the poem's ultimate line, which gradually calms the mood down until the song's final measure.

⁶² Translations by Richard Stokes, author of *The Book of Lieder* (Faber, 2005)

Parallel to Schumann's biographical information, there is clear evidence that he composed *Myrthen* from February to May 1840 amidst his court battle for Clara with Friedrich Wieck. The three main characters in Heine's *Die Lotosblume* could symbolize the actual people involved in the ongoing lawsuit: the sun as Friedrich Wieck, the lotus flower as Clara, and the moon as Schumann himself. Eric Sams' proposal of the 'Clara theme' set to the poem's opening line further supports this symbolic representation (see Example 45).⁶³

Example 45: Schumann, *Die Lotosblume* from *Myrthen*, Op. 25, mm. 1-3

In Hoffmann's *Lebensansichten des Kates Murr*, Master Abraham Liscov, the owner of the tomcat Murr and the mentor of Johannes Kreisler, takes a role to maintain balance in Kreisler's hectic life. He once rescued an attractive Gypsy girl of "at least sixteen years old"⁶⁴ named 'Chiara' from abusive confinement by a magician, Severino. Master Abraham later fell in love with the girl and married her. The parallelism between the musical and literary works goes beyond the general storyline and is even evidenced in the girl's name. By the time Schumann composed *Kreisleriana*, the Italian derivative of Clara's name was already announced publicly

⁶³ Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann*, 57.

⁶⁴ Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*, 129.

once as ‘Chiarina’ in his *Carnaval*, Op. 9, albeit in the diminutive form. As Schumann worked on *Carnaval* since 1833 and centred the piano cycle around his former lover, Ernestine von Fricken, it is only appropriate for him to use the youthful derivation of Clara’s name.

Lastly, as mentioned in the brief discussion on Romantic irony, with Sams’ findings and this inclusion of *Die Lotosblume*’s allusion to the fourth movement of *Kreisleriana*, there is an apparent relationship between Schumann’s *Kreisleriana* and the poems of Heinrich Heine. All three poems used in Schumann’s songs containing allusions to *Kreisleriana* are selections from Heine’s *Buch der Lieder* (Book of Songs), published in 1827. This publication, which compiles earlier published poems by Heine, has earned the poet a wide reputation, particularly among great composers, including the late Schubert.

Two of these, *Und wüssten’s die Blumen, die kleinen* and *Die Lotosblume*, are selected from the same subcollection, *Lyrisches Intermezzo*, which was the main source of inspiration for Schumann’s *Dichterliebe*, Op. 48. In Arthur Komar’s publication on *Dichterliebe*, he mentioned that “the general mood of the *Lyrisches Intermezzo* is one of unrequited love - sometimes nostalgic, otherwise bitter.”⁶⁵

Komar added that this subcollection from *Buch der Lieder* was autobiographical. They were composed based on Heine’s experience of rejection from his cousin, Amelie, who ended up marrying another suitor in the same year. Komar further noted that although Schumann’s relationship with Clara was intrinsically stable, the intense legal battle with her father was perhaps the cause for Schumann’s attention to Heine’s sorrowful poems. During the lawsuit, Schumann’s compositional outlet included two substantial vocal works based exclusively on Heine’s works, including *Liederkreis*, Op. 24, and *Dichterliebe*, Op. 48. In Komar’s words, these

⁶⁵ Komar, *Schumann: Dichterliebe*, 4.

two Heine cycles “were composed in the anxious months prior to the eventual favorable court ruling in August, 1840.”⁶⁶ Hence, the observed parallelism between Schumann’s Heine songs and *Kreisleriana* further supports the premise that Schumann composed the first, second, and fourth movements of *Kreisleriana* with his longing for the distant Clara.

Summary

Despite the title’s evident connection to Hoffmann’s literary work and Schumann’s unusual approach to composing with a vivid image of Johannes Kreisler in mind, Schumann did not provide a programmatic reading of his *Kreisleriana* to the audience due to his preference for covert references. Nevertheless, as evidence suggests, Schumann’s relationship with Clara was another primary source of inspiration for the creation of *Kreisleriana*. Produced from the same creative period as *Novelletten* and *Kinderszenen*, *Kreisleriana* was also composed during the physical separation of the couple. Viewing the allusions to *Kreisleriana* in Schumann’s songs through the literary works of Heine and Hoffmann further support the interpretation of these piano compositions as autobiographical works.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

Conclusion

‘Zum Schluss’

The study of quotation and allusion in Schumann’s music exhibits the composer’s preference for covert references in his works. The concealed nature of allusions used in Schumann’s compositions has caused difficulty among scholars, resulting in diverse interpretations, however, with similar objectives to trace their origins and comprehend Schumann’s intentions for their usage.

The inseparable connection between music and words in his *lieder* of 1840 provides another artistic lens to interpret the piano compositions of 1838 and 1839, as they are frequently alluded to in the vocal works. Further investigation of these references reveals their obscured origins and intentions, with Schumann successfully disguising them under different masks.

The *‘mir beschieden’* phrase in *Widmung*, *Novellette No. 1*, *Der Dichter spricht*, and *Arabeske*, emerged from Schumann’s affinity with Schubert’s music. The finding of the phrase in Schubert’s compositions reveals its association with the spring season as a symbol of love. Along with Schumann’s biographical events, the *‘mir beschieden’* phrase in Schumann’s compositions is proposed to represent his longing for Clara and his marital desire.

Through reviewing Eric Sams’ discovery of allusions to *Kreisleriana* in Schumann’s songs, three movements from the piano work further illustrate similar intentions with different musical gestures, as they emerged from the same creative period as *Novellette No. 1* and *Der Dichter spricht*. Nevertheless, this projection of intimacy toward Clara is disguised by the work’s explicit association with Hoffmann’s work, which also hints at the composer’s concealed intention.

In conclusion, this study demonstrates contextual connotations of Schumann's allusions through his biographical information and his affinity for German Romantic literature, including novels and poems. I hope this research inspires Schumann's performers to look further into the composer's relationship with German Romantic literature and ignite a spark of interest in Schumann's vocal works amongst pianists.

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