

A PERFORMER'S GUIDE TO ROBERT SCHUMANN'S SONG CYCLES  
– *FRAUENLIEBE UND -LEBEN OP. 42* AND *DICHTERLIEBE OP. 48*

by

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this document is to explore the text painting in Robert Schuman's art songs and how he realized the inner emotion of the poet through the piano part. A general overview of Schumann's life as both a composer and critic will be presented. The musical materials to be covered in this document are *Frauenliebe und -leben Op. 42* and *Dichterliebe Op. 48*. Schumann was influenced by the philosophers and artists of his time, and these influences are evident in his music. The composer's personal life, his aesthetics of poetry and music, the independent functions of the structural and harmonic elements, and specific performance practices will be thoroughly examined to establish the programmatic content that provides a direct connection with the music itself. This document will provide a musical analysis of two major works from the perspective of a collaborative pianist. Schumann's approach to text-painting and his exploration of the poet's inner emotion will be examined as well.

This study is a performer's guide for professional musicians to more fully realize the inner voice of the text, and it can also serve as a resource for amateurs to learn more about Schumann's songwriting genius.

## **Scope of Research**

Historical and biographical evidence will be important to this research. Just as important will be the understanding of the cultural milieu in which Robert Schumann chose the elements that make up these famous compositions. This requires a more in-depth study of Schumann's life and exploration of his musical creations, and more importantly, the style of the poets he was closely associated with at that time. The challenge of this study will be to explore the intimate relationship between poetry and music, and to understand the different characters that Schumann presented in these works.

The works that will be deeply examined are Schumann's two major song cycles composed in 1840, both of which are a reflection of the major biographical, social, and cultural influences on his compositions. This study will focus on the word-painting and how the pianist realizes the inner emotion of the text through the piano part. This cannot be achieved without analysis of harmony-related methods and performance practices, both of which are primary elements of the music itself and directly affect emotional impact of the audiences.

## **Review of Literature**

The literature pertaining to Robert Schumann and his musical works is extensive and appears in many different formats (books, articles, dissertations, etc). This study will utilize several music history textbooks which focus on Schumann's historical background, and will make use of the research of musicologists and

performers published in academic journals and dissertations, so as to provide a deeper understanding to the reader. These sources offer biographical overviews and analytical content of the relevant music. Similarities and differences of data can be gathered through comparison, and this information is of great value to this study. Although some of the materials contained in the bibliography are not mentioned separately in this proposal, all have been examined and provide relevant analyses of Schumann's musical style.

There is a great deal of information on Robert Schumann's life as well as his compositional style. This literature is wide-ranging and mainly focuses on Schumann's biography, including details of influential events in his life and how his experiences weighed on his musical aesthetic. A set of articles included in Beate Julia Perrey's *The Cambridge Companion to Schumann* (Cambridge University Press, 2007) provide essential commentary on Schumann's life and his aesthetics of music and poetry. In a number of articles, Schumann's own experiences as well as his musical works are linked to major contemporary events in music, literature, and philosophy. Schumann's song cycles based on topics of "poet's love" and "love and life" are discussed in Jonathan Dunsby's article "*Why sing? Lieder and song cycles.*"

Another valuable source is a 1997 publication by John Daverio entitled *Robert Schumann: Herald of a "New Poetic Age."* This book examines the life of Schumann, both as a man and as a composer. With a few questions in mind such as "What is Schumann's position relative to the accomplishments of other 19<sup>th</sup>-century artists?... Is it sensible to link the changes both in Schumann's style and in the direction of his

career with the social and economic configurations of the mid-nineteenth century?”<sup>1</sup>, Daverio aims to explore “more broadly historical, critical, and analytical issues”<sup>2</sup> in his book. This book contains a number of citations from Schumann’s diaries and autobiographical accounts, and these are the principal nonmusical sources which illuminate Schumann’s personality. The topics covered include his youth, his marriage, his declining health, other composers and their influence, and his own works-in-progress. Even more valuable, Daverio links Schumann’s autobiographical music to experiences or events in his personal life and his passion for literature.

Dietrich Fisher-Dieskau’s *Robert Schumann: Words and Music – The Vocal Compositions* (1988) is largely a biography of Robert Schumann, covering all his major vocal compositions – art songs, choral works, and some stage works. The most valuable aspect of this source is Fisher-Dieskau’s detailed commentary on each work, as well as the biographical background of the composer. Schumann’s songwriting aesthetics are discussed in the first chapter. In chapters 9 and 10, the author describes Schumann’s artistic nature as is reflected in *Dichterliebe* and *Frauenliebe und -leben*, and closely links Schumann’s musical language to the texts, analyzing each of these songs in detail.

Thomas Alan Brown’s book *The Aesthetics of Robert Schumann* was published in 1975. This is a source that vividly presents the life and thoughts of the great composer. The difference from the previous resources is that it provides some discussion about the two personalities of Schumann – Florestan and Eusebius, and

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<sup>1</sup> John Daverio, *Robert Schumann: Herald of A “New Poetic Age”* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 10.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

this will contribute to my study in terms of understanding Schumann's diverse approach to music. Unfortunately, it does not investigate Schumann's aesthetics of music-writing in great depth. Therefore, some other sources must be collected to obtain enough information for my research. One such source is Leon Plantinga's *Schumann as Critic*, published in 1967. Plantinga puts forward a discussion regarding Schumann's thoughts as a critic and a practical aesthetician, particularly in the chapter "Schumann's Aesthetics of Music." Plantinga points out that "Schumann paid little attention to aesthetics divorced from artistic practice," but at that time, the aesthetic thoughts of some philosophers influenced him in different ways.<sup>3</sup> In the same chapter, Plantinga mentions Schumann's belief that truly expressive music is a gift of inspiration (at least in part).<sup>4</sup>

Steven P. Scher's *Music and Text: Critical Inquiries*, published in 1992, is a collection of articles by various authors that study the relationship between music and text in a broad sense. In the article "*Poet's love or composer's love?*," the author Edward T. Cone indicates that Heine's poems are "full of personal references," and that Schumann, in *Dichterliebe*, identified himself as a poet-lover just as the main character from the *Dichterliebe* is.<sup>5</sup> Cone argues that Schumann's musical settings achieve specific concepts of both music and character that are the main components of poetic creation; examples are provided to bolster his argument, all of which are useful for my research.

Another relevant source, Rufus E. Hallmark's *Frauenliebe Und Leben*:

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<sup>3</sup> Leon Plantinga, *Schumann as Critic* (Yale University Press, 1967), 114.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 130

<sup>5</sup> Steven P. Scher, *Music and Text: Critical Inquiries*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 184.



*Chamisso's Poems and Schumann's Songs*, conducts a most extensive study on Chamisso's poetry and discusses the musical reception of *Frauenliebe und -leben*. Besides, Hallmark provides a detailed analysis and a comparative interpretation of Schumann's musical composition. This source will form the basis of my chapter of "Frauenliebe und -leben."

There is a significant amount of literature on the music of Schumann, including analytical information as well as the history behind the works. One such source is Jon W. Finson's *Robert Schumann: The Book of Songs*, published in 2007. This is a well written piece of literature with a rich analysis of Schumann's treatment of poetry and music. Each of two song cycles I am going to focus on has a certain theme: *Dichterliebe* – "Irony and the Heine Cycles"; *Frauenliebe und -leben* – "Song of Marriage." Closely related to the poet's words, the author conducts a very detailed analysis of each song in terms of the tonality, text painting, and how Schumann realizes the inner emotion of the poem. This source will form the basis for my study in terms of the text painting and Schumann's approach to realizing the poet's psychological state.

One of my goals in this study is to discuss the text painting in Schumann's songwriting, with special focus on explaining certain performance practices. Thus, aside from the literature on historical context and the topic of each individual piece, the literature specific to the interpretation is also important. One such source is *Poet's Love: The Songs and Cycles of Schumann* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1981), written by a legendary British pianist Gerald Moore. Moore gives his advice to both the

singer and pianist for interpreting Schumann's song in terms of lyrical treatment, relevant pianistic/musical techniques, and performance practice. Moreover, through a careful examination of text and music, Moore offers his understanding of how Schumann explores the poet's inner voice in his music.

Another relevant source is Richard Miller's *Singing Schumann: An Interpretive Guide for Performers* (Oxford University Press, 1999). The author draws on a number of references from other scholarly studies. In addition to the biographical information, he also quotes analytical information from various scholars and sources. This book not only offers the performer with a detailed analysis of word-painting but also provides a large-scale analysis of structural elements. The analysis method in this source is sophisticated, and is more specific and emotionally deeper than other sources.

## CHAPTER II

### ROBERT SCHUMANN: LIFE AND MUSIC

Robert Schumann, born in 1810, cultivated a considerable passion for literature and music at an early age thanks to the encouragement of his family, particularly his father, Friedrich August Gottlob Schumann. Friedrich Schumann was not only a publisher and bookseller, but also a writer who greatly influenced Robert Schumann's literary interest, which was the root of his musical philosophy.<sup>6</sup> Robert became acquainted with great poets and writers from many countries as a result of his father's guidance and his higher literary education, which enabled him to conduct his own poetic experiments.<sup>7</sup> In 1825, he founded a "literary society" with ten classmates and noted that:<sup>8</sup>

It is the duty of every cultivated person to know the literature of his own country, so it is likewise a duty for us, who already yearn to attain to higher cultivation, not to neglect German literature but to strive with might and main to acquaint ourselves with it...German literature, which has so much rich material to offer us in every field of knowledge...

Around the age of seventeen, Robert Schumann was deeply impressed by Jean Paul's novels, which had a direct impact on his romantic narrative style and musical compositions.<sup>9</sup> He believed that modeling Jean Paul's approach – for example, references to the thematic material of the previous compositions, the juxtaposition of

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<sup>6</sup> Perry, *The Cambridge Companion to Schumann*, 38-39.

<sup>7</sup> "Robert Schumann - Biography," Schumann Netzwerk, accessed Jun 16, 2021, [https://www.schumann-portal.de/Biography\\_Robert.html](https://www.schumann-portal.de/Biography_Robert.html).

<sup>8</sup> Perry, 39.

<sup>9</sup> "Robert Schumann - Biography," Schumann Netzwerk, accessed Jun 16, 2021, [https://www.schumann-portal.de/Biography\\_Robert.html](https://www.schumann-portal.de/Biography_Robert.html).

romantic irony and profound sentiment, and the meaning behind the word – improved the poetic quality of his works.<sup>10</sup>

Schumann enrolled at Leipzig University to study law in 1828, a year after his father's death, at his mother's insistent request. Nonetheless, he persisted in his musical studies. He was studying music theory and harmony with Heinrich Dorn at the time,<sup>11</sup> which provided him the opportunity to meet Friedrich Wieck and eventually became one of his piano pupils. Afterwards, Schumann devoted himself to his career as a musician.

The years 1830-40 are often considered the most romantic and thoughtful period in Schumann's musical career.<sup>12</sup> By this time, Schumann had already published a number of works for piano, and his other occupations – as a music writer, editor, and publisher – were also taking shape.<sup>13</sup> In addition, he founded a music magazine, *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, and a music society, *Davidsbündler*, in which he presented two contrasting personas in his critical writings: Florestan (characterized as passionate and extroverted) and Eusebius (characterized as thoughtful and introverted).<sup>14</sup>

The year 1840 was the most productive year for Schumann, known as “the year of song.” He wrote more than 140 lieder during this period. Song cycles and song collections account for a large proportion of his lieder output, with the most notable examples being *Frauenliebe und -leben*, Op. 42, and *Dichterliebe*, Op. 48.

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<sup>10</sup> Perry, *The Cambridge Companion to Schumann*, 41.

<sup>11</sup> Harkrader, “A Musical Poet,” 14.

<sup>12</sup> Brown, *The Aesthetics of Robert Schumann*, 9.

<sup>13</sup> “Robert Schumann - Biography,” Schumann Netzwerk, accessed June 16, 2021, [https://www.schumann-portal.de/Biography\\_Robert.html](https://www.schumann-portal.de/Biography_Robert.html).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

This was also the year he married with Clara Wieck; their relationship is generally viewed as a catalyst for his prolific output of lieder in 1840.<sup>15</sup>

Schumann's marriage with Clara took place after he won a lawsuit against Clara's father, Friedrich Wieck.<sup>16</sup> During that time, Schumann was anxious and heartsick about being separated from Clara. In anticipation of their marriage, he often expressed his distressed emotions in his vocal music; on the other hand, when he communicated with his beloved, he discovered he had difficulty writing music.<sup>17</sup> Schumann once expressed this conundrum to Clara in a letter: "It is very strange, but if I write much to you, as I am doing now, I cannot compose. The music all goes to you."<sup>18</sup> As a result, the majority of his lieder during the "year of song" were written in the months before August, when the couple obtained permission from the court and from Friedrich regarding their union.<sup>19</sup> During this tumultuous period, Schumann sought solace through poetry with themes of loneliness, love, nature, and the "duality of joy and pain." The composer portrayed these themes in his music through a variety of creative approaches; many of his sources were poems by Heine, Goethe, Byron, and other renowned romantic poets.<sup>20</sup>

From 1840 onward, Schumann's compositions were no longer confined to piano and vocal pieces. Other outstanding works in a myriad of genres, including chamber music, concertos, symphonies, overtures, and choral music, were

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<sup>15</sup> Harkrader, "A Musical Poet," 15.

<sup>16</sup> "The Life and Music of Robert Schumann," National Public Radio, last modified June 2010, <https://www.npr.org/2011/07/18/127038609/the-life-and-music-of-robert-schumann>.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> Stephen Walsh, *The Lieder of Schumann*, 7.

<sup>19</sup> "The Life and Music of Robert Schumann," National Public Radio, last modified June 2010, <https://www.npr.org/2011/07/18/127038609/the-life-and-music-of-robert-schumann>.

<sup>20</sup> Harkrader, "A Musical Poet," 9.

successively created.

Schumann's aesthetic selection of the text for his composition is attributed to his knowledge and appreciation of literature; his discerning and introspective nature allowed him to infuse his works with aspects of his personality.<sup>21</sup> In his lieder, Schumann often embodied the emotions inspired by the poem, and illustrated the narrator's inner voice or interactions with nature. Thus, Schumann's piano accompaniment is frequently literary and expressive, reflecting and strengthening the text while being independent of the vocal part to some extent. His most renowned song cycles, *Frauenliebe und -leben*, Op. 42, and *Dichterliebe*, Op. 48, which will be addressed in this document, are often cited as his highest achievements in German lied. They encompass all of the abovementioned poetic themes, and Schumann utilizes a number of compositional techniques to realize the intense lyrical and musical expression.

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<sup>21</sup> The Life and Music of Robert Schumann," National Public Radio, last modified June 2010, <https://www.npr.org/2011/07/18/127038609/the-life-and-music-of-robert-schumann>.

### CHAPTER III

#### FORMAL ANALYSIS OF *FRAUENLIEBE UND -LEBEN*, OP. 42

*Frauenliebe und -leben*, commonly known as “A Woman’s Love and Life,” is a cycle of eight songs with text by French-born German poet Adelbert von Chamisso. In comparison to Schumann’s other song cycles, the texts in this set of songs evolve in a more continuous and coherent manner.<sup>22</sup> This work describes the story of a woman’s love and life, from the moment she realizes her feelings for her beloved; through hearing his confession and celebrating their wedding; to the moment they become parents; and, eventually, to the grief of experiencing her husband’s death.

Schumann’s musical expression is fairly straightforward, and the collaboration of the vocal and piano lines showcases his unique creative strategies. The piano accompaniment sets the mood for the text in the brief introduction to each song, but is not limited to this aspect. Schumann elaborately develops a spectrum of emotions (such as bliss, insecurity, hope, and despair) in the piano accompaniment through tonality, harmony, intricate rhythmic arrangements, creative motifs, and text-painting. The postlude of each song is equally noteworthy, not only echoing the atmosphere of the current song, but sometimes establishing ideas for the next song. The lengthy piano postlude that concludes the cycle is fascinating and heartbreaking, recalling the woman’s journey through a lifetime of a love and loss.

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<sup>22</sup> Fisher-Dieskau, *Robert Schumann: Words and Music*, 89.

## 1. “Seit ich ihn gesehen”

*Seit ich ihn gesehen,  
Glaub ich blind zu sein;  
Wo ich hin nur blicke,  
Seh ich ihn allein;  
Wie im wachen Traume  
Schwebt sein Bild mir vor;  
Taucht aus tiefstem Dunkel,  
Heller nur empor.*

*Sonst ist licht- und farblos  
Alles um mich her;  
Nach der Schwestern Spiele  
Nicht begehrt ich mehr;  
Möchte lieber weinen,  
Still im Kämmerlein;  
Seit ich ihn gesehen,  
Glaub ich blind zu sein.*

Since seeing him,  
I think I am blind;  
wherever I look,  
him only I see;  
as in a waking dream  
he floats before me,  
rising out of darkest depths  
only more brightly.

For the rest, dark and pale  
is all around,  
for my sisters' games  
I am no longer eager,  
I would rather weep  
quietly in my room;  
since seeing him,  
I think I am blind.

This beautiful cycle begins with a song about a young woman who is smitten with a man whom she has only seen. Tragically, she has no faith in her ability to gain the man's affections. The first verse states that thoughts of the man have consumed her; she views him as a beacon in the darkness. The woman's despair and lack of confidence are depicted in the second verse. Everything around her is colorless, and she no longer cares for anything but him.

The song is written in strophic form. The piano articulation at the beginning combines staccato with slurs, which is known as portato. Combined with the piano dynamic and sparse texture, the piano evokes a sense of insecurity (Fig. 3.1.1). The woman might be scared about the intensity of her new feelings, and her heart is fragile. Her inner uncertainty is reflected in the staccato chords. Both the voice and the piano are directed to enter gently, maintaining a delicate tone.



Figure 3.1.1. “Seit ich ihn gesehen,” mm. 1-15

Vervielfältigungen jeglicher Art sind gesetzlich verboten.  
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This song is a Sarabande, a style that is in triple meter and is usually written for baroque dances. In the piano part, the first beat is frequently performed somewhat lighter, and the second beat is generally held slightly. Accents on the typically weak second beats of m. 3 and m. 19 indicate the woman’s inward yearning. Furthermore, the ritardando in m. 7 reflects her desire to hold onto this moment, for she is consumed by thoughts of her beloved.

Schumann constructs a dreamlike scene to showcase the phrase “*Wie im wachen Traume*” (“as in a waking dream”). In order to portray an intangible dream world through the piano accompaniment, the beginning of the phrase is constructed on a weak beat, and the harmonic progression of V-I-V-I-V appears to be searching for a destination. None of these chords are in root position, reinforcing the fact that the music is not grounded. A minor second followed by a leap of a fourth (A–B $\flat$ –E $\flat$ ) in the voice part also contributes to the unsettled atmosphere. This figuration is doubled in the piano’s top voice (m. 7) and inner voice (m. 9), and should therefore be emphasized by the performer. The B $\flat$ , directly above the word “*Traume*” (“dream”) in m. 9, serves as the suspension of the phrase and should not be overlooked (Fig. 3.1.1).

The purpose of melodic and harmonic dissonance in “*Seit ich ihn gesehen*” is to accentuate negative emotions. A harsh F diminished chord, played over C in the bass (m. 4), is set to the word “*blind*” within the phrase “*glaub’ ich blind zu sein*” (“I think I am blind”). The woman’s love has blinded her to all but him, but he does not know who she is, causing her great sorrow. The piano echoes the words “*tiefstem Dunkel*” (“deepest darkness”) towards the end of the first verse (m. 12), and the somber mood is amplified by a dissonant harmony: a D is held across m. 11 into m. 12, wherein it forms a minor second with an E-flat. This dissonance sounds alongside a G and B natural, forming an E-flat augmented chord with a major seventh. This tense chord conveys a sense of suffering. In the next two measures, major second intervals preserve the feeling of hopelessness. In the vocal part, Schumann uses leaps of the seventh and sixth in m. 12 and m. 28, in order to convey the woman’s yearning

on the words “*tiefstem*” (“deepest”) and “*ihn*” (“him”).

The piano postlude demonstrates the circular form of Schumann’s writing, and offers significant insight into the subject’s emotional state. By restating the insecure material of the introduction, Schumann creates the impression that she has been trapped with these thoughts for a long time.

## 2. “**Er, der Herrlichste von allen**”

*Er, der Herrlichste von allen,  
Wie so milde, wie so gut.  
Holde Lippen, klares Auge,  
Heller Sinn und fester Mut.*

He, the most wonderful of all,  
so gentle, so good.  
Sweet lips, bright eyes,  
clear mind and firm resolve.

*So wie dort in blauer Tiefe,  
Hell und herrlich, jener Stern,  
Also er an meinem Himmel,  
Hell und herrlich, hehr und fern.*

As there in the blue depths  
that star, clear and wonderful,  
so is he in my heaven,  
clear and wonderful, majestic, remote.

*Wandle, wandle deine Bahnen;  
Nur betrachten deinen Schein,  
Nur in Demut ihn betrachten,  
Selig nur und traurig sein!*

Wander, wander your ways;  
just to watch your radiance,  
just to watch it in humility,  
just to be blissful and sad!

*Höre nicht mein stilles Beten,  
Deinem Glücke nur geweiht;  
Darfst mich niedre Magd nicht kennen,  
Hoher Stern der Herrlichkeit.*

Hear not my silent prayer  
for your happiness alone;  
me, lowly maid, you must not know,  
lofty, wonderful star.

*Nur die Würdigste von allen  
Darf beglücken deine Wahl,  
Und ich will die Hohe segnen,  
Viele tausendmal.*

Only the most worthy woman of all  
may your choice favour  
and that exalted one will I bless  
many thousands of times.

*Will mich freuen dann und weinen,  
Selig, selig bin ich dann;  
Sollte mir das Herz auch brechen,  
Brich, o Herz, was liegt daran?*

Then shall I rejoice and weep,  
be blissful, blissful then;  
even if my heart should break,  
then break, O heart, what matter?

While the songs in *Frauenliebe und -leben* share certain elements in common, such as the subject, the object of her desire, and the theme of romantic love and adoration, each song in the cycle is given a unique atmosphere by Schumann. In

contrast to the uncertain and sorrowful voice of the previous song, this one is full of a more hopeful sense of longing.

“Er, der Herrlichste von allen” is written in ABA form. In the A section, the young woman extols her beloved’s virtues reverently. She lovingly describes him as “gentle,” “clear and wonderful,” “majestic,” and so on. By calling him “my heaven,” she makes it clear that he is the greatest person she has ever met.

This song could be considered a fantasy. The chords are not written in root position when she is singing the man’s praises, which suggests that this is a mental image rather than an actual one. The accompanying texture, which includes repeated eighth notes and ascending chromatic octaves in the bass (mm.2-4, Fig. 3.2.1), adds to the sense of restlessness.

Schumann creatively shows two different sides of the man by changing the melodic motion in the opening phrases. The first gesture, a broken E-flat major chord (mm. 2-3, Fig. 3.2.1), is a sweeping upward movement accompanied by a long-short rhythm that commands attention. This confident phrase represents the man’s powerful and muscular physique. In contrast, Schumann highlights the man’s softer virtues with the second theme’s text, “*wie so milde, wie so gut*” (“so gentle, so good”). The melody becomes more expressive and lyrical, with fewer leaps, which in turn provides a great opportunity to portray his gentlemanly side.

Figure 3.2.1. “Er, der Herrlichste von allen,” mm. 1-9

The pianist must pay attention to the tone color shifts of the man’s two different personalities in the four-bar interlude (mm. 17-20, Fig. 3.2.2), using greater pressure to show the man’s brawn and strength in the first theme and transitioning to a softer touch when the second theme returns.

The B section of the song features a prayer for the man’s happiness, regardless of whom he chooses as his bride. The young woman says. “He could go on his way. I do not mind simply following him and maintaining distance from him.” The imitative texture between the voice and piano (mm. 21-24, Fig. 3.2.2) is a clear example of text-painting, portraying a scene in which she watches him and walks behind him. Furthermore, the descending eighth-notes C-Bb-Ab-G and D-C-Bb-Ab not only depict their walking pace, but also the woman’s despair, which is caused by her lack of

bravery to confess her admiration. Schumann's arrangement of counterpoint and thick bass texture sounds like an organ, indicating that the woman is in a church while she prays for the man. Meanwhile, the falling chromatic octaves in mm. 29-31 (Fig. 3.2.2) seem to suggest her somber resolve of watch and follow."

Figure 3.2.2. "Er, der Herrlichste von allen," mm. 16-31

herr - lich, hehr und fern!

Wand - le, wand-le dei-ne Bah-nen; nur be-

trach - ten dei - nen Schein, nur in De - mut ihn be -

trach - ten, ri - tar - dan - do. se - lig nur und trau - rig sein do. ri - tar - dan - sein do.

Hö - re nicht mein stil - les Be - ten, dei-nem Glü - cke nur ge -

The woman is experiencing conflicting emotions in the B section, as indicated by the words – “*selig*” (“blissful”) and “*traurig*” (“sad”) within the same line. The piano manifests her unstable and unresolved feelings in mm. 37-40 (Fig. 3.2.3), with the bass and treble lines alternating between neighboring parts. More evidence of emotional text-painting is found in the climax at m. 42, which features the highest note of the song, G-flat, on the word “*Wahl*” (“choice”), referring to the man’s choice of wife (Fig. 3.2.3).

Figure 3.2.3. “Er, der Herrlichste von allen,” mm. 36-42

Pianists are permitted some independence of interpretation in the postlude. Based on an upward motion of an accented D-flat and accented F that appears in mm. 66-67, perhaps the woman is wondering if the man will look back at her and choose her. Suddenly, a German augmented sixth chord sounds on the downbeat of m. 68. This colorful subdominant, which does not resolve until the following downbeat, is a magical moment of breathless anticipation: perhaps the man finally turns and sees her. Will he, indeed, return her affections?

Figure 3.2.4. “Er, der Herrlichste von allen,” mm. 64-71

64 *ritard.*  
Mut \_\_\_\_\_, wie so mil - de, wie so gut!  
*ritard.*

68 *ri - tar - dan - do*

Directly following the augmented sixth chord is a brief imitative counterpoint (mm. 68-69, Fig. 3.2.4), perhaps representing the fact that the pair are looking at each other and conversing silently.

### 3. “Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben”

*Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben,  
Es hat ein Traum mich berückt;  
Wie hätte er doch unter allen  
Mich Arme erhöht und beglückt?*

*Mir war's, er habe gesprochen:  
„Ich bin auf ewig dein“—  
Mir war's—ich träume noch immer;  
Es kann ja nimmer so sein.*

*O lass im Traume mich sterben,  
Gewieget an seiner Brust,  
Den seligen Tod mich schlürfen  
In Tränen unendlicher Lust.*

I cannot grasp it, believe it,  
I am in the spell of a dream;  
how, from amongst all, has he  
raised and favoured poor me?

He said, I thought,  
'I am forever yours,'  
I was, I thought, still dreaming,  
for it can never be so.

O let me, dreaming, die,  
cradled on his breast;  
blissful death let me savour,  
in tears of endless joy.

The third song depicts the woman's disbelief that the man she adores shares her feelings of love. Frequent tempo changes are the distinguishing feature of “Ich



kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben,” which is composed in strophic variation form.

The opening is set in the key of C minor and the piano breaks through the recitative-like melody with crescendoing staccato chords, accompanied by Schumann’s tempo marking *Mit Leidenschaft* (with passion), creating a sense of exhilaration pierced with doubt. Richard Miller interprets this opening as a request from the composer for enthusiasm and powerful emotions rather than whispering introspection.<sup>23</sup> The frequent usage of secondary chords and diminished chords by Schumann is strong evidence of the intensity of emotion contained in the piece (Fig. 3.3.1).

Figure 3.3.1. “Ich kann’s nicht fassen,” mm. 1-15

Mit Leidenschaft

*f*

Ich kann's nicht fas-sen, nicht glau-ben, es hat ein Traum mich be-rückt—

8 *(p)* ritard. —, wie hätt' er doch un-ter al-len mich Ar-me er-höht und be-glückt? ritard.

The woman calms herself in the second stanza and speaks gently about the man’s confession to her. The tempo changes to *Etwas langsamer* (slightly slower), and the mood shifts dramatically. Long legato notes and a warmer tone are demanded of the pianist, which contrasts sharply with the initial bursts of shockingly strong and

<sup>23</sup> Miller, *Singing Schumann*, 88.

abrupt chords of the beginning. Schumann uses ritardando to stress the man's confession of "ich bin auf ewig dein" ("I am yours forever"), and an arc of crescendo and decrescendo to underline the lovely word "ewig" ("forever"), highlighting the woman's joy (Fig. 3.3.2). The repetition of the text, "Es kann ja nimmer so sein" ("for it can never be so") is marked ritardando and crescendo by the composer, requiring both the singer and the pianist to accentuate the second appearance.<sup>24</sup> The word "nimmer" ("never") is underscored in the same manner as "ewig," indicating the woman's struggle to believe that his confession is real, rather than a dream.

Figure 3.3.2. "Ich kann's nicht fassen," mm. 16-42

The key of the third verse from C minor to E-flat major, suggesting that the woman is gradually becoming overwhelmed by her feelings of joy, and shedding her

<sup>24</sup> Miller, *Singing Schumann*, 88-89.

doubt. Schumann exquisitely paints the text “*In Tränen unendlicher Lust*” (“in tears of endless joy”) with a sudden tempo change to adagio to alert the audience to the significance of the line. The vocal part is comprised of descending eighth notes on and around the word “*Tränen*” (“tears”) to represent tears falling down her face. Simultaneously, the piano performs long legato/sustained chords to achieve an “*unendlicher*” (“endless”) sensation (Fig. 3.3.3).

Figure 3.3.3. “*Ich kann’s nicht fassen,*” mm. 48-51

The image shows a musical score for three staves. The top staff is the vocal line, starting with the tempo marking 'Adagio' and ending with '(a tempo)'. The lyrics are 'in Trä-nen un - end - li - cher Lust.', with 'Trä-nen' enclosed in a red rectangular box. The middle staff is the piano accompaniment, marked 'ritardando' and '(a tempo)', featuring long, sustained chords. The bottom staff is the piano accompaniment, marked 'f' (forte) and '(a tempo)', also featuring long, sustained chords. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

The musical material of the first verse reappears after the woman’s joyful tears, but the forte opening dynamic is replaced by piano, signifying that the woman’s feeling of incredulity is fading away.

Before the final repetition of the text “*Ich kann’s nicht fassen*” (“I can’t grasp it”), the pianist is expected to lead up to the climax of the song with an eight-bar interlude (Fig. 3.3.4). A short motif is repeated three times, each with a larger intervallic leap than the last, which serves as a manifestation of the woman’s skepticism, as if she repeatedly asks herself, “Is this real?” The music reaches the climax with a D diminished chord to highlight the word “*glauben*” (“believe”) in m. 79, and then the woman’s dubious feelings are gradually released by falling thirds.

Figure 3.3.4. “Ich kann’s nicht fassen,” mm.61-86

In the postlude, Schumann presents a “ring” theme (the notes E-F-D-E, in a circular progression), which will be featured as a motif in the next song. The “ring” motif in the inner voice of the piano signifies the fairytale ending of the woman and her beloved (Fig. 3.3.4). In addition, while the key of this song alternates between the relative keys C minor and E-flat major, the final two measures abruptly shift to the parallel key of C major. This compromise of the tonal center of C and the major mode of E-flat implies their engagement as well.

#### 4. “Du Ring an meinem Finger”

*Du Ring an meinem Finger,  
Mein goldenes Ringelein,  
Ich drücke dich fromm an die Lippen,  
Dich fromm an das Herze mein.*

Ring on my finger,  
my little golden ring,  
devoutly I press you to my lips,  
to my heart.

*Ich hatt ihm ausgeträumet,  
Der Kindheit friedlich schönen Traum,  
Ich fand allein mich, verloren  
Im öden, unendlichen Raum.*

I had finished dreaming  
childhood’s tranquil pleasant dream,  
alone I found myself, forlorn  
in boundless desolation.

*Du Ring an meinem Finger  
Da hast du mich erst belehrt,  
Hast meinem Blick erschlossen  
Des Lebens unendlichen, tiefen Wert.*

Ring on my finger,  
you have first taught me,  
unlocked my eyes  
to life’s deep, boundless worth.

*Ich will ihm dienen, ihm leben,  
Ihm angehören ganz,  
Hin selber mich geben und finden  
Verklärt mich in seinem Glanz.*

I will serve him, live for him,  
belong wholly to him,  
yield to him and find  
myself transfigured in his light.

The fourth song in the cycle is jubilant, showcasing the woman staring at her engagement ring and singing passionately of her future with her husband. This is the moment that her childhood dreams come true, and she will no longer be alone in the world. The song is written in rondo form.

The “ring” motif first stated in the previous song, portraying the bands that will encircle the spouses’ fingers, frequently appears in octaves in the bass (Fig. 3.4.1), pointedly advertising the text “*mein goldenes Ringelein*” (“my little golden ring”). The pianist should play this motif louder and more emphatically.

Figure 3.4.1. “Du Ring an meinem Finger,” mm. 1-4

The image shows a musical score for the first four measures of the song "Du Ring an meinem Finger". It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The key signature has two flats (B-flat major), and the time signature is 3/4. The vocal line begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a fermata over the first measure. The lyrics are: "Du Ring an mei-nem Fin-ger, mein gol-de-nes Rin-ge-lein,". The piano accompaniment starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. A red box highlights a specific motif in the bass line of the piano part, which consists of an octave pattern: G2, G2, A2, A2, Bb2, Bb2, C3, C3. This motif is repeated in the subsequent measures.

It is worth nothing that, while the singer must take a breath before the “ring” phrase, the piano part contains continuous running eighth notes. Therefore, the pianist should preserve the flow but permit the breath by slightly delaying the B-flat. It is the pianist’s responsibility to make the delay subtle and beautiful.

Schumann creates a dreamlike background for the second stanza, in which the woman speaks of her childhood dream. The bassline presents a fantasy world while the inner voices perform wavelike ascending broken chords on eighth notes (Fig. 3.4.2).

Figure 3.4.2. “Du Ring an meinem Finger,” mm. 9-18

An imitative counterpoint based on ascending chromatic notes, shown in mm. 16-17 (Fig. 3.4.2), recalls a similar figure from the postlude of the second song, in which the future lovers finally see one another, at least in the woman’s dream. In this song, her wish has finally come true, as she and her true love are wed. A sudden silence is arranged in the vocal line of m. 16 (Fig. 3.4.2), serving as a dramatic

transition from the dream world to the true pledge of love depicted.

The musical texture changes dramatically in the fourth stanza (Fig. 3.4.3). The rhythmic pattern is reminiscent of the second song, reflecting the woman's nervousness about belonging wholly to her future husband. The setting of tonicization and the tempo change *Nach und nach rascher* (more and more quickly) convey the woman's inner excitement. Furthermore, the melodic outline that rises in a stepwise motion, as well as the climbing chromatic notes that support harmonic changes, heighten the enthusiasm.

Figure 3.4.3. "Du Ring an meinem Finger," mm. 25-28

In mm. 41-42 of the postlude, the top voice recalls the melody of the second stanza (Fig. 3.4.4), in which the woman recounts her childhood dreams. And the imitative chromatic figure from m. 16 and the second song reappears in the final two measures. Notably, in contrast to the previous imitative setting, the chromatic notes are played by two voices in unison at the end of the postlude, signifying that the two characters belong together and will soon be joined in marriage.

Figure 3.4.4. “Du Ring an meinem Finger,” mm. 40-44

## 5. “Helft mir, ihr Schwestern”

*Helft mir, ihr Schwestern,  
Freundlich mich schmücken,  
Dient der Glücklichen heute mir;  
Windet geschäftig  
Mir um die Stirne  
Noch der blühenden Myrte Zier:*

Help me, sisters,  
in kindness to adorn myself,  
serve me, the happy one, today,  
eagerly twine  
about my brow  
the flowering myrtle.

*Als ich befriedigt,  
Freudigen Herzens,  
Sonst dem Geliebten im Arme lag,  
Immer noch rief er;  
Sehnsucht im Herzen,  
Ungeduldig den heutigen Tag.*

When I, content,  
with joyous heart,  
lay in my beloved's arms,  
still would he call  
with yearning heart,  
impatiently for today.

*Helft mir, ihr Schwestern,  
Helft mir verscheuchen  
Eine törichte Bangigkeit,  
Dass ich mit klarem  
Aug ihn empfangen,  
Ihn, die Quelle der Freudigkeit.*

Help me, sisters,  
help me banish  
foolish fear;  
so that I, clear-  
eyed, may receive him,  
the source of joy.

*Bist, mein Geliebter;  
Du mir erschienen,  
Giebst du mir, Sonne, deinen Schein?  
Lass mich in Andacht,  
Lass mich in Demut,  
Lass mich verneigen dem Herren mein.*

You, my beloved,  
have appeared before me,  
will you, sun, give me your radiance?  
Let me in reverence,  
let me in humility,  
let me bow to my lord.

*Streuet ihm, Schwestern,  
Streuet ihm Blumen,  
Bringet ihm knospende Rosen dar;  
Aber euch, Schwestern,  
Grüss ich mit Wehmut,  
Freudig scheidend aus eurer Schar:*

Sisters,  
strew flowers for him,  
offer budding roses.  
But you, sisters,  
I salute sadly,  
departing, joyous, from your throng.



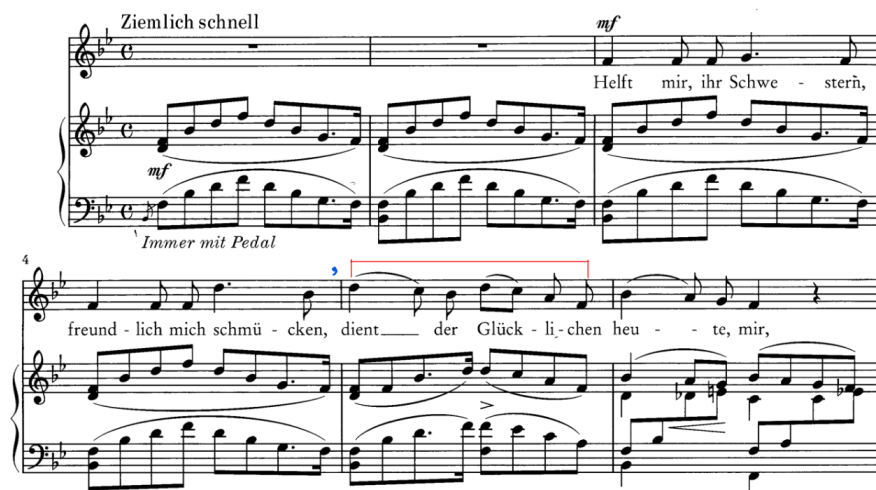
The circumstances of the woman’s wedding day are illustrated in the fifth song. The bride-to-be is preparing for the wedding ceremony with the help of her sisters. She also speaks to her sisters of her feelings of anticipation, excitement, and “foolish fear.”

The piano accompaniment features constantly moving arpeggios reminiscent of another popular Schumann song, “Widmung” (Fig. 3.5.1), which was Schumann’s dedication to Clara as a wedding gift: “You are my soul, you are my heart, you are my pain, you are my world.” In “Helft mir, ihr Schwestern,” he employs the same passionate rhythmic motif, with a supplement dotted rhythm at the top of each arc-like contour, to reflect the woman’s mood of sheer delight (Fig. 3.5.2).

Figure 3.5.1. Schumann, “Widmung,” mm. 1-2



Figure 3.5.2. “Helft mir, ihr Schwestern,” mm. 1-6



The melodic content of this song emulates a wedding march, although it is softened by the continuous arpeggiated accompaniment. Part of the melodic contour mimics the subject of Felix Mendelssohn's *Wedding March*; for instance, the vocal material in m. 5 (Fig. 3.5.2) utilizes the same descending stepwise motion and rhythmic configuration. Under the guidance of Schumann's tempo marking *Ziemlich schnell* (moderately fast), the vocal line has fewer breaks between phrases, conveying the woman's hurried and urgent feelings.

It is worth noting that when the singer takes the quarter rest between the two stanzas, the pianist needs to match the singer's silence, support the motion, and permit the singer to breathe without constraint<sup>25</sup>. It is the pianist's responsibility to maintain the flow of music while waiting for the singer's next entrance.<sup>26</sup>

The rhythmic pattern remains constant until the fourth stanza, wherein block chords transform the texture (Fig. 3.5.3). The repeated portato chords may represent the woman's pounding heartbeat while waiting for the wedding vows. The melodic outline has an upward trend, suggesting her anxiety and elation.

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<sup>25</sup> Martin Katz, *The Complete Collaborator: The Pianist as Partner*, 14.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 11

Figure 3.5.3. “Helft mir, ihr Schwestern,” mm. 27-35

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system (mm. 27-29) shows the vocal line with lyrics: "Bist, mein Ge - lieb - ter, du mir er - schie - nen, gibst du mir, Son - - ne," and the piano accompaniment. The second system (mm. 30-32) shows the vocal line with lyrics: "dei - - nen Schein, lass mich in An - dacht, lass mich in De - mut," and the piano accompaniment. The third system (mm. 33-34) shows the vocal line with lyrics: "lass mich ver - nei - gen dem Her - ren mein" and the piano accompaniment. Red boxes highlight the bass line in measures 29, 30, and 34, showing a chromatic descent from E-flat to C and then back up to F.

To portray the woman’s anticipation in “*Giebst du mir, Sonne, deinen Schein,*” the bass moves downward from E-flat to C, and chromatically steps back up to F. The unstable chords also contribute to the mood. Schumann makes excellent use of text-painting again in mm. 33-34, in which the posture of bowing is characterized through descending octaves from F to B-flat beneath the text “*verneigen*” (“bow”).

The fifth song concludes with a wedding march in the piano part, which represents the woman’s perception of the actual wedding scene.

## 6. “Süßer Freund, du blickest mich verwundert an”

*Süsser Freund, du blickest  
Mich verwundert an,  
Kannst es nicht begreifen,  
Wie ich weinen kann;  
Lass der feuchten Perlen  
Ungewohnte Zier  
Freudig hell erzittern  
In dem Auge mir!*

Sweet friend, you look  
at me in wonder,  
cannot understand  
how I can weep;  
these moist pearls let,  
as a strange adornment,  
tremble joyous bright  
in my eyes.

*Wie so bang mein Busen,  
Wie so wonnevoll!  
Wusst ich nur mit Worten,  
Wie ich's sagen soll;  
Komm und birg dein Antlitz  
Hier an meiner Brust,  
Will in's Ohr dir flüstem  
Alle meine Lust.*

How anxious my heart,  
how full of bliss!  
if only I knew words  
to say it;  
come, hide your face,  
here, against my breast,  
for me to whisper you  
my full joy.

*Weisst du nun die Tränen,  
Die ich weinen kann,  
Sollst du nicht sie sehen,  
Du geliebter Mann?  
Bleib an meinem Herzen,  
Fühle dessen Schlag,  
Dass ich fest und fester  
Nur dich drücken mag.*

Now you know the tears  
that I can weep,  
are you not to see them,  
beloved man?  
Stay against my heart,  
feel its beat,  
so that I may press you  
ever closer.

*Hier an meinem Bette  
Hat die Wiege Raum,  
Wo sie still verberge  
Meinen holden Traum;  
Kommen wird der Morgen,  
Wo der Traum erwacht,  
Und daraus dein Bildnis  
Mir entgegen lacht.*

Here by my bed  
is the cradle's place,  
where, silent, it shall hide  
my sweet dream.  
The morning will come  
when that dream will awake,  
and your image  
laugh up at me.

This song is presented in recitative style, and features the woman expressing tears of joy to her husband as she reveals her pregnancy. She tenderly expresses her intimate and personal feelings about becoming a mother, and pictures the image of their baby. The song is written in ABA form.

Schumann suggests that this song be performed “slowly, with intimate expression.” The piano part calls for a soft touch and deliberately smooth connection between the chords as the woman speaks about her pregnancy. The opening is tonally

ambiguous (Fig. 3.6.1), echoing the woman's state of emotional complexity.<sup>27</sup>

Figure 3.6.1. "Süßer Freund, du blickst," mm. 1-11

Schumann's musical arrangement reflects the depth of Chamisso's text. The word "Perlen" ("pearl," m. 8) is used to describe the woman's teardrops, and the text-painting is accomplished in the following measure with portato chords in the piano and a motif of "tears" in the vocal melody (Fig. 3.6.1). The motif of "tears," which comprises a diminished fourth followed by a minor second, appears throughout the song for different purposes. On some occasions, it alludes to specific words; for instance, "Tränen" ("tears") in mm. 25-26 and "weinen" ("weep") in mm. 27-28 (Fig. 3.6.2). At other times, it denotes certain body language. For example, when she says "come and hide your face on my breast," which could be interpreted as "give me a

<sup>27</sup> Miller. *Singing Schumann*, 91-92.

hug,” the motif represents the physical gesture of “hugging” (m. 19).

Figure 3.6.2. “Süsser Freund, du blickest,” mm. 19-30

The interlude (mm. 21-24, Fig. 3.6.2) reproduces the subject of the opening piano accompaniment, which is reiterated three times in higher registers with each subsequent repetition. It not only contributes to the expanding tension for leading up to the B section, but also implies that her husband’s reaction to the news is one of speechless, mounting joy.

In the B section of the song, the accompaniment pattern changes to heartbeat-like, consistent chordal notes as the woman directly asks her husband whether he understands her tears of joy. Schumann produces a dramatic dialogue between the woman and the man, which is achieved through the vocal line and the piano’s bassline; the man imitates the melodic contour of the woman in the bass

(Fig. 3.6.2), as if in response to the queries of his lovely wife.

At end of the song, the words “*dein Bildnis*” (“your image”) are repeated and underscored by Schumann (Fig. 3.6.3). The first instance contains large contrasting leaps in the melody (m. 53), because the baby has not yet been born, so this image is still a daydream. However, her reverie is broken by a momentary dissonant chord in m. 22. The repetition of “*dein Bildnis*” is finally assigned melodic notes in narrow range, along with a perfect authentic cadence in the piano, emphasizing the woman’s sincere wish to see her baby’s image in the real world.

Figure 3.6.3. “Süßer Freund, du blickest,” mm. 52-58

The musical score for "Süßer Freund, du blickest," mm. 52-58, is presented in two systems. The first system (mm. 52-54) shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Traum er-wacht, und da-raus dein Bild-nis mir ent-ge-gen lacht,". The second system (mm. 55-58) shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "dein Bild-nis!". The score includes markings for "ritard.", "Adagio", "p", and "pp". There are also some performance instructions like "ff" and "v".

## 7. “An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust”

*An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust,  
Du meine Wonne, du meine Lust!  
Das Glück ist die Liebe,  
die Lieb ist das Glück,  
Ich hab's gesagt und nehm's nicht  
zurück.  
Hab überschwenglich mich geschätzt,  
Bin überglücklich aber jetzt.  
Nur die da säugt, nur die da  
liebt  
Das Kind, dem sie die Nahrung giebt;  
Nur eine Mutter weiss allein,  
Was lieben heisst und glücklich sein.  
O, wie bedaur' ich doch den Mann,  
Der Mutterglück nicht fühlen kann!  
Du lieber, lieber Engel du  
Du schauest mich an und lächelst dazu.  
An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust,  
Du meine Wonne, du meine Lust.*

At my heart, at my breast,  
you my delight, you my joy!  
Happiness is love,  
love is happiness,  
I have said and will not take  
back.  
I thought myself rapturous,  
but now I am delirious with joy.  
Only she who suckles, only she who  
loves  
the child she nourishes;  
only a mother knows  
what it means to love and be happy.  
Oh, how I pity the man  
who cannot feel a mother's bliss.  
You dear, dear angel,  
you look at me and smile.  
At my heart, at my breast,  
you my delight, you my joy!

The seventh song celebrates the birth of the couple's child. The woman is holding her baby affectionately in her arms and expressing the profound happiness of motherhood. Schumann's musical setting for the song is rather straightforward: it is written in a modified strophic form, with the harmony alternating between dominant and tonic chords for more than half of the song, concisely expressing the woman's simple pleasure in becoming a new mother. The one-measure introduction features two dominant seventh chords on A; according to Richard Miller, the chords prefigure the initial leap of a fourth in the vocal theme, from sol to do (Fig. 3.7.1).<sup>28</sup> Schumann often uses this triumphant interval to engender an atmosphere of happiness.

Schumann creates constant wavelike arpeggios in the piano accompaniment (Fig. 3.7.1), representing the movement of the cradle; the baby is resting in the cradle and the woman is rocking it gently. The pianist is expected to play lightly and with

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<sup>28</sup> Miller, *Singing Schumann*, 93.



facility, promoting a childlike soundscape. The vocal melody is in gigue rhythm, which generates a happy mood and indicates the woman's pleasure in becoming a mother.

Figure 3.7.1. "An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust," mm. 1-6

The musical score for "An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust" (mm. 1-6) is presented in two systems. The first system (mm. 1-3) shows the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The tempo/mood is "Fröhlich, innig". The lyrics are "An mei - nem Her - - zen, an mei - ner Brust,". The piano accompaniment features a wavelike arpeggio pattern in the right hand and a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand. The second system (mm. 4-6) continues the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are "du mei - ne Won - ne, du mei - ne Lust. Das Glück ist die Lie - be, die". The piano accompaniment continues with the same wavelike arpeggio pattern in the right hand and eighth-note bass line in the left hand.

The texture of the piano accompaniment does not change until m. 26 (Fig. 3.7.2), at which point her baby looks up and smiles at the mother. The gentle, wavelike arpeggios give way to staccato chords in a faster tempo, suggesting that the woman is intensely enjoying the intimate interaction with her baby.

Figure 3.7.2. “An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust,” mm. 24-41

24 Noch schneller  
Mut - ter - glück - nicht füh - len kann. Du lie - ber, lie - ber En - gel du, du schauest mich an  
Presto

29 ritar - dan - do - - Langsamer  
lächelst dazu! An meinem Herzen, an mei - ner Brust, du mei - ne Won - ne, du mei - ne Lust!  
ritar - dan - do - -

35 ritar - dan - do

In the piano postlude, the arc-like shape of the top voice mirrors the increasingly languid motion of the cradle as it slows, and the music returns to a slower tempo, *Langsamer*. In the last four measures of the song, the continuous downward motion of the melodic contour accompanied by the composer’s instruction of *ritardando* suggests a scene in which the woman is gently laying her sleeping baby on the bed (Fig. 3.7.2).

## 8. “Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan”

*Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz  
getan,  
Der aber traf.  
Du schläfst, du harter, unbarmherz'ger  
Mann,  
Den Todesschlaf.*

*Es blicket die Verlassne vor sich hin,  
Die Welt ist leer.  
Geliebet hab ich und gelebt, ich bin  
Nicht lebend mehr.*

*Ich zieh mich in mein Innres still  
zurück,  
Der Schleier fällt,  
Da hab ich dich und mein verlornes  
Glück,  
Du meine Welt.*

Now you have caused me my first  
pain,  
but it has struck me hard.  
You, harsh, pitiless man are  
sleeping  
the sleep of death.

The deserted one stares ahead,  
the world is void.  
Loved have I and lived,  
I am living no longer.

Quietly I withdraw into  
myself,  
the veil falls;  
there I have you and my lost  
happiness,  
my world.

In the concluding song, the woman is mourning the death of her husband. His passing has been painful for her, and she feels as if her heart has died as well. Without him, the world feels desolate and ‘void’.

The song is written in a declamatory style with a through-composed structure. The opening D minor chord, struck with a shocking *sforzando*, sounds like a funeral bell ringing at a nearby church. The tonality of D minor evokes a mood of despair, meanwhile, falling octave bass notes in mm. 3-4 contributes to the sorrowful atmosphere of the song (Fig. 3.8.1).

Figure 3.8.1. “Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan,” mm.1-10

The image shows a musical score for the song "Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan" from Robert Schumann's song cycle. The score is in 3/4 time, marked "Adagio". It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan, der aber traf, du schläfst, du harter unbarmherziger Mann, den Todes-schlaf. Es blicket die Verlassene vor sich hin, die Welt ist leer, ist". The piano part includes several chords circled in red, indicating specific harmonic choices. The vocal line shows a falling line in mm. 7-9 and a leap up in m. 10.

In order to accentuate the text, “the deserted one stares ahead, the world is void” and convey the woman’s feelings of anguish and emptiness, Schumann crafts a falling vocal line that emulates sobbing (mm. 7-9, Fig. 3.8.1), followed by a leap up to the chromatically altered note for “void.” This D-flat is held for most of m. 10 to highlight the emptiness surrounding the grieving widow. The harsh, nonfunctional chords in the piano part, some of which are fully diminished sevenths, add to the gloomy atmosphere.

The lengthy postlude of the song cycle is a reprise of the opening song. This recurring material might imply that the woman is reliving the past with her beloved through her memories. Their love journey replays in her mind much like a movie, from the moment she recognized her feelings for him, through hearing his confession

and celebrating matrimony, to the eventual moment they became parents. All the happy recollections act as a counterpoint to the reality that he is no longer with her, and the cycle ends as it begins, on a note of uncertain sorrow.

**CHAPTER IV**  
**FORMAL ANALYSIS OF *DICHTERLIEBE*, OP. 48**

*Dichterliebe*, also known as “The Poet’s Love,” is based on the collection of lyric poems entitled *Lyrisches Intermezzo* by German poet Heinrich Heine, which consists of sixty-six poems. Schumann originally grouped twenty of Heine’s poems into a set, but only sixteen were included in the first edition.

This song cycle was composed a few months before the composer’s marriage to Clara, when he felt anxious about being separated from her. The poems portray the tragedy of a romantic relationship from its inception to its bitter end, and Schumann’s musical arrangement is therefore filled with the “duality of joy and pain.”

The most remarkable features of this song cycle are its intensity and simplicity of emotional expression. Schumann modifies some phrases of the text to fit his creative ideas, and the piano accompaniment not only conjures the mood of each poem through tonality and harmony, but also offers the appropriate word-painting to echo or mirror the text. Most of the songs in this cycle include a prelude and a postlude, all of which may be interpreted with great individuality; similarly to *Frauenliebe und -leben*, the extended piano postlude of *Dichterliebe* reviews the poet’s spiritual journey to provide a summation and a sense of closure. In addition, Schumann’s music exhibits romantic irony, which is often produced through conflicts between dream and reality, abrupt dissonances, or unexpected shift in mood.

## 1. “Im wunderschönen Monat Mai”

*Im wunderschönen Monat Mai,  
Als alle Knospen sprangen,  
Da ist in meinem Herzen  
Die Liebe aufgegangen.*

In my wondrous month of May,  
when buds were bursting open,  
then it was that my heart  
filled with love.

*Im wunderschönen Monat Mai,  
Als alle Vögel sangen,  
Da hab' ich ihr gestanden  
Mein Sehnen und Verlangen.*

In my wondrous month of May,  
when the birds were singing,  
then it was I confessed to her  
my longing and desire.

The focus of the first song in the cycle is the poet's declaration of love. The poet confessed his desire and longing to his beloved in the height of springtime, when “the flowers were blooming and the birds were singing.” The text indicates the poet's delightfully loving mood, but Schumann does not create a musical setting consistent with the poet's attitude. The tonality of the piano part is somewhat ambiguous, vacillating between F# minor and A major. If F# minor can be considered indicative of a depressing atmosphere, and A major indicative of a happy atmosphere, Schumann proposes an internal struggle between depression and happiness in his music, as demonstrated by the alternating keys. Perhaps this uncertain tonality implies that the poet's love may not be rewarded at the end of the song cycle.

The introduction of this song features unexpectedly dissonant harmonies. A non-harmonic C-sharp pickup opens the song and is suspended over B minor chord in m. 1, eventually settling on B during the second beat (Fig. 4.1.1). The C-sharp in the top voice and the D natural in the bass form a strong dissonance, which is repeated multiple times and is inconsistent with the pleasant mood of the text.

Figure 4.1.1 “Im wunderschönen Monat Mai,” mm. 1-6

The image shows the first six measures of the song "Im wunderschönen Monat Mai" by Robert Schumann. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. It is marked "Langsam, zart." and "p". The piano accompaniment consists of a continuous upward arpeggiated line in the right hand and a more rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. The vocal line begins with the lyrics "Im wunderschönen Monat Mai, als".

The piano accompaniment provides several instances of text-painting in addition to the background harmonies. Schumann employs the piano to depict the sounds of nature such as flowers and birds, alluding to Heine’s comparison of the poet’s enthusiasm to “the burst buds” and “the singing birds.” For instance, in m. 7, the bouncing melodic contour – B skips to D and then immediately drops to F-sharp – underneath the phrase “*Knospen sprangen*” (“buds burst”) reflects the growth stage of the flower, which can also be considered an apt metaphor for the sprout of the poet’s love (Fig. 4.1.2). Another successful portrayal of the text is seen in mm. 9-12 (Fig. 4.1.2), wherein the voice is given ascending stepwise notes and the piano is assigned a continuous upward arpeggiated line under the words “*meinem Herzen*” (“my heart”) and “*Liebe aufgegangen*” (“love risen”), accompanied by crescendos, emphasizing the blossoming of the poet’s love. The same figuration in the second stanza (mm. 20-23) underlines the poet’s “longing and desire.”



Figure 4.1.2 “Im wunderschönen Monat Mai,” mm. 7-13

The image shows a musical score for the first two stanzas of the song. The first system (measures 7-13) features a vocal line with the lyrics "al - le Knos - pen spran - gen, da ist in mei - nem" and a piano accompaniment. The second system (measures 10-13) features a vocal line with the lyrics "Her - zen die Lie - be auf - ge - gan - gen." and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes a *ritard.* marking and a broken C-sharp dominant seventh chord at the end of the piece.

All of the musical components from the first stanza are repeated in the second stanza. The song ends on an unresolved broken C-sharp dominant seventh chord (Fig. 4.1.3). The absence of cadential closure conjures a sense of unfinished business, allowing the vocalist to transition into the second song. Schumann’s use of unresolved harmonies and the half-cadence ending fully echo the poet’s desire and longing for love.

Figure 4.1.3 “Im wunderschönen Monat Mai,” mm. 23-26

The image shows a musical score for the final part of the song, measures 23-26. The vocal line has the lyrics "lan - gen." and the piano accompaniment includes a *ritard.* marking. The piece concludes with a broken C-sharp dominant seventh chord, indicated by a red box containing the letters "C#7" and a red asterisk.

The pianist should keep the fingers close to the keys at the beginning of this song in order to evoke a tender, smooth tone, making the arpeggios float instead of

playing them as on a percussion instrument.<sup>29</sup> Schumann permits the piece to be played with rubato;<sup>30</sup> the performer should preserve perfect rhythm in the first half of each measure and add slight improvisatory rubato in the second half.

## 2. “Aus meinen Tränen sprießen”

*Aus meinen Tränen spriessen  
Viel blühende Blumen hervor;  
Und meine Seufzer werden  
Ein Nachtigallenchor:*

From my tears burst  
many full-blown flowers,  
and my sighs become  
a nightingale chorus.

*Und wenn du mich lieb hast, Kindchen,  
Schenk' ich dir die Blumen all',  
Und vor deinem Fenster soll klingen  
Das Lied der Nachtigall.*

And if you love me, child,  
I'll give you all the flowers,  
and at your window shall sound  
the song of the nightingale.

The poet expresses his expectation of a loving response from the girl he adores in the second song. The mood of longing in the previous song continues in this one.

“Aus meinen Tränen sprießen” consists of four phrases and in AABA form. In the first two phrases, the poet states that his tears turn into “full-blown flowers” and his sighs turn into “a nightingale chorus,” which may be interpreted as the transformation of negative thoughts into positive ones. Therefore, Gerald Moore indicates that the downward stepwise motif of the piano accompaniment (mm. 1-2, Fig. 4.2.1) should include light and airy qualities, inspired by the “flowers” and “nightingales,” rather than dwelling on the “tears” and “sighs.”<sup>31</sup> The tonal center of A major effortlessly captures the poet’s hopeful tone. In addition, each phrase

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<sup>29</sup> Moore, *Poet's Love*, 3.

<sup>30</sup> Miller, *Singing Schumann*, 102.

<sup>31</sup> Moore, *Poet's Love*, 3.

concludes with elaborate text-painting, in which the downward thirds with short-long rhythm emulate birdsong (mm. 3-4 and 7-8, Figure 4.2.1).

Figure 4.2.1 “Aus meinen Tränen sprießen,” 1-17

**Nicht schnell.**

Aus mei - nen Trä - nen sprie - ßen viel bli - hen - de Blu - men her - vor, und mei - ne Seuf - zer wer - den ein Nach - ti - gal - len - chor. Und wenn du mich lieb hast, Kind - chen, schenk' ich dir die Blu - men all, und vor dei - nem Fen - ster soll klin - gen das Lied der Nach - ti - gall.

The musical material changes in the third phrase, where the descending chromatics in the piano obfuscate the tonality (mm. 9-10, Fig. 4.2.1). This arrangement reveals the poet’s nervousness as he asserts, “If you love me, I will give you all.” The subsequent staccato chords (mm. 11-12) indicate that his statement of

affection is exceedingly careful. The poet's caution is eased by the jaunty dotted rhythmic arrangement in m. 13, after which the music returns to its original blithe atmosphere.

### 3. "Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne"

*Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die  
Sonne,  
Die liebt' ich einst alle in Liebeswonne.  
Ich lieb' sie nicht mehr; ich liebe alleine  
Die Kleine, die Feine, die Reine, die  
Eine;  
Sie selber; aller Liebe Wonne,  
Ist Rose und Lilie und Taube und  
Sonne.  
Ich liebe alleine  
Die Kleine, die Feine, die Reine, die  
Eine.*

Rose, lily, dove,  
sun—  
all once I blissfully loved.  
I love them no more, alone I love  
one who is small, fine, pure,  
rare;  
she, most blissful of all loves,  
is rose and lily and dove and  
sun.  
Alone I love  
one who is small, fine, pure,  
rare.

In the joyous third song, the poet tells his beloved that she is the source of all the beauty in nature, exemplified by his comparison of her to flowers, a dove, and the sun. He asserts that his love for her transcends his passion for the natural world.

Schumann creates the music in a simple linear fashion, both in harmony and rhythm, which is in line with Heine's straightforward statement in his poem. The constant sixteenth notes sound like the poet's confident steps (Fig. 4.3.1), as if he is striding through in the garden. Similar to the manner in which the piano sometimes represents the sound of nature in the previous two songs, the countermelody played by the piano's left hand in "Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne" sounds as if the beauty in nature is responding to the poet's call. In terms of the interpretation, the pianist must produce a crispy sound through somewhat dry articulation, in order to

show the poet's passion and excitement.

Figure 4.3.1 “Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne,” mm. 1-7

Munter.

Die Ro - se, die Li - lie, die Tau - be, die Son - ne, die liebt' ich einst al - le in

Lie - bes\_won\_ne. Ich lieb' sie nicht mehr, ich lie - be al - lei - ne die Klei - ne, die Fei - ne, die

The image shows the first seven measures of the song. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Munter.' The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 2/4. The lyrics are: 'Die Ro - se, die Li - lie, die Tau - be, die Son - ne, die liebt' ich einst al - le in' and 'Lie - bes\_won\_ne. Ich lieb' sie nicht mehr, ich lie - be al - lei - ne die Klei - ne, die Fei - ne, die'.

A musical sigh with *ritardando* distinguishes the last, most significant word of the text, “*Eine*” (“the one”), highlighting the poet’s profound love (m. 16, Fig. 4.3.2).

Figure 4.3.2 “Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne,” mm. 16-22

ritard.

Ei - - ne!

ritard.

Edition: Bären

9207

The image shows measures 16-22. Measure 16 is highlighted with a red box and contains the lyrics 'Ei - - ne!' with a *ritard.* marking above it. The piano accompaniment in the bass line features leaping octaves and staccato chords. A red box in the piano part at the end of measure 22 highlights a chordal third. The edition is by Bären and the number 9207 is visible.

A bassline is added in the piano postlude, and the leaping octaves underscore the last two firm staccato chords (Fig. 4.3.2), in which the poet’s faith love is rewarded: she is mine! Furthermore, the top note of the last chord is a chordal third, which causes an imperfect authentic cadence, creating a sense of incompleteness.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Suurpää, “Schumann, Heine, and Romantic Irony,” 18.

#### 4. “Wenn ich in deine Augen seh”

*Wenn ich in deine Augen seh',  
So schwindet all' mein Leid und Weh';  
Doch wenn ich küsse deinen Mund,  
So werd' ich ganz und gar gesund.*

*Wenn ich mich lehn' an deine Brust,  
Kommt's über mich wie Himmelslust;  
Doch wenn du sprichst: ich liebe dich!  
So muss ich weinen bitterlich.*

When into your eyes I look,  
all my sorrow flies;  
but when I kiss your lips,  
then I am wholly healed.

When I recline upon your breast,  
over me steals heavenly bliss;  
but when you say: it's you I love!  
Then bitter tears must I shed.

In the fourth song, which is set in a 3/4 waltz rhythm, the poet expresses all his ardent sentiments about love. The melodic contour and accompaniment structure are similar to the second song. The difference is that, in the second song, the poet conveys his expectation of his beloved's responses, while in “Wenn ich in deine Augen seh’,” the poet is elated by her reciprocity, including her healing kiss, and the words “it's you I love.”

Several composition methods are used by Schumann to highlight the above keywords. To indicate the significance of the poet's beloved's gaze, Schumann emphasizes the words “*deine Augen*” (“your eyes”) with dotted rhythms and a relatively higher note, and builds an imitative arc-shape of the melody in the piano accompaniment, underscored by the arc-like crescendo and decrescendo (mm. 1-2, Fig. 4.4.1). The pauses in m. 3 echo to the poet's statement of “my sorrow flies.”

Figure 4.4.1 “Wenn ich in deine Augen seh’,” mm. 1-8

Langsam.  
*p*  
 Wenn ich in dei - ne Au - gen seh', so  
 schwin - det all mein Leid und Weh; doch wenn ich küs - se dei - nen  
 Mund, so werd' ich ganz und gar ge - sund. Wenn

At the words “when I kiss your lips,” the tonality modulates to F major, which conveys a jubilant atmosphere. Schumann underlines the poet’s happiness at the prospect of his true love’s kiss by using the successive crescendos to drive the music to the song’s highest note thus far, F natural (mm. 5-6, Fig. 4.4.1), on the word “*Mund*” (“mouth”).

The dramatic climax occurs in m. 13 (Fig. 4.4.2), wherein the poet’s beloved tells him, “I love you.” Perhaps the poet felt some nervous anticipation, because

Schumann uses a stressful G-sharp diminished seventh on the word “*sprichst*” (“say”) to break his excitement. The diminished harmony continues in a downward arpeggio with *ritardando*, prolonging the tension until the woman’s confession of love. This arrangement maintains the poet’s melancholic view of love: despite his bliss at her healing kisses, as a consequence of their mutual affection, the poet must “*weinen bitterlich*” (“weep bitterly”).<sup>33</sup> The sudden silence in the vocal line (m. 13) also implies the shift in his mood from joy to introspection.

Figure 4.4.2 “Wenn ich in deine Augen seh’,” mm. 12-21

The image shows a musical score for the song "Wenn ich in deine Augen seh'". It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first system (measures 12-14) shows the vocal line with the lyrics "lust; doch wenn du sprichst: ich lie - be dich! so muß ich". The piano accompaniment features a prominent G-sharp diminished seventh chord in measure 13, circled in red. The second system (measures 15-16) shows the vocal line with the lyrics "wei - nen bit - ter - lich." The piano accompaniment features a downward melodic contour in measure 15, circled in red. The third system (measures 17-18) shows the piano accompaniment with a *pp* dynamic marking and a *ritard.* marking. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Schumann skillfully paints the poet’s weeping with a downward melodic contour from C to G in mm. 14-16, and the word “*bitterlich*” is also underlined by extending the melodic note B natural.

<sup>33</sup> Miller, *Singing Schumann*, 105



The rhythmic motif in the postlude hearkens back to the opening accompaniment material, reminding the listener of the poet's bliss while the staccato chords illustrate his bitter tears. Non-harmonic D natural notes in m. 17 and m. 19 further emphasizes the poet's angst (Fig. 4.4.2).

## 5. "Ich will meine Seele tauchen"

*Ich will meine Seele tauchen  
In den Kelch der Lilie hinein;  
Die Lilie soll klingend hauchen  
Ein Lied von der Liebsten mein.*

My soul will I bathe  
in the lily's chalice;  
the lily shall breathe  
a song of my beloved.

*Das Lied soll schauern und beben,  
Wie der Kuss von ihrem Mund,  
Den sie mir einst gegeben  
In wunderbar süsser Stund'.*

The song shall tremble and quiver  
like the kiss her lips  
bestowed on me once,  
in a sweet and lovely hour.

The fifth song is full of amorous excitement, in which the poet desires to plunge his soul into "the lily's chalice" in order to experience intimate communion with "the lily." Heine's depiction of the shape of a lily as a chalice combines the ever-present theme of nature with religious iconography, and given the notion that "the lily" represents the poet's sweetheart, it affirms his veneration of her. The song is written in strophic form.

Dense arpeggios in the piano accompaniment not only resemble the waves of baptismal water, but also visually embody the words "*schauern und beben*" ("tremble and quiver"), both of which convey the poet's anticipation (Fig. 4.5.1). The tonality, on the other hand, is in a minor key, suggesting the previously mentioned sorrowful mood; the feeling of sadness is probably related to the uncertainty of his

relationship with his beloved. In terms of technical interpretation of the swinging arpeggios, the pianist should pay attention to the pedaling and use a light touch in order to create smooth, floating phrase shapes.

Figure 4.5.1 “Ich will meine Seele tauchen?,” mm. 1-7

The musical score consists of three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The tempo and dynamics are marked 'Leise.' and 'p'. The piano accompaniment features a steady arpeggiated pattern. Handwritten blue annotations below the piano part indicate the following chord progression:  $C\#\text{°}7$ ,  $F\#\text{Mm}7$ ,  $Bm5$ ,  $E\text{°}7$ ,  $AMm7$ ,  $DM7$ ,  $GM7$ , and  $C\#\text{°}7$ .

Schumann’s frequent use of the circle-of-fifths harmonic sequence in this song, which often begins with a diminished seventh chord that produces tonal instability, may also reflect the poet’s uncertainty. For instance, the chord progression in mm. 1-2 and mm. 3-4 is  $C\#\text{°}7 - F\#\text{Mm}7 - Bm5$  (Fig. 4.5.1), and the following measures feature  $E\text{°}7 - AMm7 - DM7 - GM7 - C\#\text{°}7$ . These sequences of seventh chords perpetuate a feeling of restlessness and motion without resolution.

In the postlude, the vocal line passes the melody to the piano's lowest voice; therefore the pianist is expected to highlight the bassline (Fig. 4.5.2). The falling chromatic and stepwise motions of top voice in mm. 18-19 depict the poet's feelings of depression, and the melody gradually fades away in the following measures, implying that his sweetheart is becoming distant.

Figure 4.5.2 "Ich will meine Seele tauchen," mm. 14-22

The musical score consists of three systems. The first system (measures 14-16) shows the vocal line with lyrics "ge-ben in wun-der-bar sü-ber Stund:" and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a bassline in the left hand. The second system (measures 17-19) shows the vocal line with a red box highlighting measures 17-19 and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a bassline in the left hand. The third system (measures 20-22) shows the vocal line with a "ritar-dan-do" marking above measure 20 and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a bassline in the left hand.

## 6. “Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome”

*Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome,  
Da spiegelt sich in den Well'n  
Mit seinem grossen Dome,  
Das grosse, heilige Köln.*

In the Rhine, the holy river,  
mirrored in the waves,  
with its great cathedral  
is great and holy Cologne.

*Im Dom da steht ein Bildnis,  
Auf gold'nem Leder gemalt;  
In meines Lebens Wildnis  
Hat's freundlich hineingestrahlt.*

The cathedral has a picture,  
painted on gilded leather;  
into my life's wilderness  
friendly rays it has cast.

*Es schweben Blumen und Eng'lein  
Um unsre liebe Frau;  
Die Augen, die Lippen, die Wäng'lein,  
Die gleichen der Liebsten genau.*

Flowers and angels float  
about Our Lady dear;  
eyes, lips, cheeks  
are the image of my love's.

In the sixth song, the poet depicts a painting of Madonna in the Cologne Cathedral; the Madonna, who is surrounded by numerous flowers and angels, bears a similar appearance to his lover. The poet compares his lover to the Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven, which exemplifies the depth of his love and veneration.

Schumann's musical arrangement in terms of the text-painting is fascinating. The stepwise melodic line evokes a Baroque hymn, while the thick, accented octave bass is reminiscent of the pedal of a church organ, reaffirming the setting of the Cologne Cathedral. The Rhine River is portrayed as a series of downward arpeggios with a lilting, long-short rhythmic pattern (Fig. 4.6.1). The second stanza is given a gentler dynamic and thicker texture with the lilting Rhine motif presented in octaves and the downward arpeggios becoming narrower, circular gestures (mm. 17-21), drawing the audience's attention to the holy picture of the Virgin Mary.

Figure 4.6.1 “Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome,” mm. 1-23

*Ziemlich langsam.*

Im Rhein, im hei-li-gen Stro-me, da spie-gelt sich in den  
Welln, mit sei-nem gro-ßen Do-me, das  
gro-ße hei-li-ge Cöln. Im Dom da steht ein  
Bild-nis, auf gol-de-nem Le-der ge-malt; in mei-nes

Before the third stanza enters, Schumann presents a twisted interlude with consecutive diminished seventh chords accompanied by a descending melodic motion in the bass, which seems to herald a heartbreaking moment (mm. 28-30, Fig. 4.6.2).

Figure 4.6.2 “Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome,” mm. 24-31

The image shows a musical score for the song "Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome" (mm. 24-31). The score is in G major and 4/4 time. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Lebens Wildnis hat's freundlich hinein gestrahlt." and "Es schweben".

The extended postlude recalls the opening material, but a variety of potential interpretations are possible. The downward movement of arpeggios here, for instance, depicts the poet kneeling before the image of the Virgin Mary in Cologne Cathedral piously. Furthermore, nine measures of the downward-stepping octaves and falling melodic contour foreshadow the dark and somber atmosphere of the next song (Fig. 4.6.3).

Figure 4.6.3 “Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome,” mm. 40-58

40 *ritard.*  
glei-chen der Lieb-sten ge-nau.

46

52 *ritar-dan-do*

## 7. “Ich grolle nicht”

*Ich grolle nicht, und wenn das Herz  
auch bricht,  
Ewig verlor'nes Lieb! ich grolle nicht.  
Wie du auch strahlst in Diamanten-  
pracht,  
Es fällt kein Strahl in deines Herzens  
Nacht.  
Das weiss ich längst.*

*Ich grolle nicht, und wenn das Herz  
auch bricht.  
Ich sah dich ja im Traume,  
Und sah die Nacht in deines Herzens  
Raume,  
Und sah die Schlang', die dir am  
Herzen frisst,  
Ich sah, mein Lieb, wie sehr du elend  
bist.  
Ich grolle nicht.*

I bear no grudge, though my heart  
breaks,  
loved one forever lost! I bear no  
grudge.  
However you may gleam in diamond  
splendour,  
No ray falls into the night of your heart.  
I've known that long.

I bear no grudge, though my heart  
breaks.  
For I saw you in my dream,  
Saw the night within your  
heart,  
And saw the serpent gnawing at your  
heart,  
Saw, my love, how pitiful you  
are.  
I bear no grudge.

This seventh song is full of disappointment, due to the fact that the poet's

lover has betrayed him. Repeated percussive chords with heavy accents in the piano accompaniment contribute to the mournful mood and internal tension. Richard Miller points out that the inner emotion of the poet is one of regret and pain, rather than outwardly-directed rage and destruction.<sup>34</sup>

The poet declares at the beginning of the song, “I bear no grudge, though my heart breaks.” To accentuate the word “*Herz*” (“heart”), Schumann uses a prolonged A-flat accompanied by a non-harmonic half-diminished seventh chord on the piano. This dissonance and chromatic alteration build maximum tension for the dark text of the poem (m. 3, Fig. 4.7.1).

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<sup>34</sup> Miller, *Singing Schumann*, 108.



Figure 4.7.1 “Ich grolle nicht,” mm. 1-18

The text “Ewig verlor’nes Lieb” (“loved one forever lost”) is repeated in a higher register, emphasizing the poet’s heavy heart as he recognizes the end of the relationship. At the same time, the unsettling sequence of seventh chords and the descending octaves in the accompaniment enhance the mood (mm. 5-8, Fig. 4.7.1). The displeasure of the poet is heightened when he realizes the fact that the beauty of his beloved cannot conceal the darkness within her soul. Schumann amplifies the

intensity and discord of the scene by writing forte octaves on the second beat to combat the accentuated downbeats (mm. 12-16, Fig. 4.7.1).

The word “*Herz*” is stated five times in this song (mm. 3, 16, 21, 25, and 27), the interval of the melodic leap increasing with each successive repetition, leading to the pinnacle at the final repetition of “*Herzen*.”<sup>35</sup> Furthermore, falling harmonies in the piano accompaniment contrast with upward leaps in the vocal melody in mm. 22-27 (Fig. 4.7.2), generating conflict that amplifies the poet’s sensation of discomfort and distress at his beloved’s betrayal.

Figure 4.7.2 “*Ich grolle nicht*,” mm. 19-28

The rhythmic texture remains constant until the end of song, and the incessant eighth-note chords denoting the poet’s unresolved stress. Although he continually

<sup>35</sup> Agawu, “Structural ‘Highpoints’ in Schumann’s ‘Dichterliebe,’” 7.

claims that “I bear no grudge,” this statement belies his grief and disappointment as the last three forte shock chords demonstrate (Fig. 4.7.3).

Figure 4.7.3 “Ich grolle nicht’,” mm. 35-36



## 8. “Und wüßten’s die Blumen, die kleinen”

*Und wüssten’s die Blumen, die kleinen,  
Wie tief verwundet mein Herz,  
Sie würden mit mir weinen,  
Zu heilen meinen Schmerz.*

If the little flowers knew  
how deep my heart is hurt,  
with me they would weep  
to heal my pain.

*Und wüssten’s die Nachtigallen,  
Wie ich so traurig und krank,  
Sie liessen fröhlich erschallen  
Erquickenden Gesang.*

If the nightingales knew  
how sad I am and sick,  
joyously they’d let sound  
refreshing song.

*Und wüssten sie mein Wehe,  
Die goldenen Sternelein,  
Sie kämen aus ihrer Höhe,  
Und sprächen Trost mir ein.*

And if they knew my grief,  
the little golden stars,  
from the sky they’d come  
and console me.

*Sie alle können’s nicht wissen,  
Nur eine kennt meinen Schmerz:  
Sie hat ja selbst zerrissen,  
Zerrissen mir das Herz.*

But none of them can know,  
one only knows my pain;  
for she it was who broke  
my heart, broke my heart in two.

The poet informs the flowers, the nightingales, and the stars of his sorrow and suffering in this song, which sustains the anxious tone of the previous song. The disheartening mood of lost love pervades this song, in which the melodic line and

piano accompaniment repeatedly descend (Fig. 4.8.1).

Figure 4.8.1 “Und wüßten’s die Blumen, die kleinen’,” mm. 1-5

Und wüß - ten's die Blu - men, die klei - nen, wie  
tief ver - wun - det mein Herz, sie wür - den mit mir

The song is structured in strophic form, and the first three stanzas share the same musical material in both the voice and the piano parts. The flowers, nightingales, and stars are represented by the fast, fluttering accompaniment, which changes depending on the content of the verse. The series of tonicizations in the fourth stanza, A minor – D minor – F major – A minor (mm. 24-32, Fig. 4.8.2), highlight the text “she it was who broke my heart,” although the melodic and rhythmic components remain consistent with the previous stanzas.

Figure 4.8.2 “Und wüßten’s die Blumen, die kleinen’,” mm. 24-37

The song reaches a climax at m. 31 with the repetition of the text “*Zerrissen mir das Herz*” (“broke my heart in two”). The suspended C natural distinguishes the painful word “*Zerrissen*,” portraying that heartrending moment (Fig. 4.8.2). The subsequent chromatic components in both the voice and the piano parts enhance the uneasy atmosphere.

The piano pattern eventually changes in the agitated postlude (Fig. 4.8.2). The

large leaps in the triplets appear to mirror the poet's wounded heart. The arc-shaped phrases, accompanied by crescendos and sforzandos, sound like a storm of distraught emotions, increasing the sense of hopelessness and anger.

## 9. "Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen"

*Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen,  
Trompeten schmetter'n darein;  
Da tanzt wohl den Hochzeitsreigen  
Die Herzallerliebste mein.*

What a fluting and fiddling  
and a blaring of trumpets!  
There, dancing her wedding dance  
will be my dearest love.

*Das ist ein Klingen und Dröhnen,  
Ein Pauken und ein Schalmei'n;  
Dazwischen schluchzen und stöhnen  
Die lieblichen Engelein.*

What a clashing and clanging,  
drumming and piping;  
and sobbing and groaning  
of delightful angels.

A joyous wedding scene is depicted in the ninth song. This is the wedding day of the girl whom the poet adores, but unfortunately, he is not the groom.

All of Schumann's musical arrangements derive from the poem itself. The cheerful waltz rhythm and the busy piano accompaniment present a wedding dance, yet the tonality is in D-minor, which engenders a sense of melancholy and irony (Fig. 4.9.1). The pedal point of the piano accompaniment sounds like percussive drums beating his broken heart, the tight rhythm of the repeated chords seems to laughingly mock his experience, and the constant sixteenth notes unnerve him.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Moore, *Poet's Love*, 17.

Figure 4.9.1 “Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen,” mm. 1-10

The image shows a musical score for the first ten measures of a piece. It is written in 3/8 time and B-flat major. The tempo is marked "Nicht zu rasch." and the dynamics range from piano (*p*) to mezzo-forte (*mf*). The score consists of two systems. The first system shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment for measures 1-5. The vocal line begins with a rest, followed by the lyrics "Das ist ein". The piano accompaniment features a flowing eighth-note melody in the right hand and a bass line with chords in the left hand. The second system shows measures 6-10. The vocal line continues with the lyrics "Flö - ten und Gei - - - gen, Trom - pe - ten schmet - tern dar -". The piano accompaniment continues with similar textures, ending with a *f* dynamic marking.

Schumann creates a private and special moment for the text “*Dazwischen schluchzen und stöhnen*” (“between the sobs and moan”) towards the conclusion of the vocal portion. The melodic note of the word “*Schluchzen*” (“sob”) remains on B-flat (m. 59, Fig. 4.9.2) instead of the step up to C natural in the first stanza (m. 26), clashing with the doubled C in the bass and underlining the poet’s despair.

Figure 4.9.2 “Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen,” mm. 57-84

stöh-nen, da-zwi-schen schluch-zen und stöh-nen die  
Lieb-li-chen En-ge-lein.

*dimin.*  
*pp*

In the postlude, Schumann offers the top voice of the piano three measures of new material – wave-like arpeggios. The ascending and descending arpeggios represent the ups and downs of emotion presented in the previous eight songs (mm. 65-68, Fig. 4.9.2), followed by a repetition of the piano’s introduction that maintains the hopeless atmosphere. Perhaps the poet is still in a state of agitation, unwilling to



accept the fact that his beloved has married another. The descending chromatic octaves in the last five measures of the postlude reinforce his sentiments of anguish and sorrow (mm. 80-83, Fig. 4.9.2).

## 10. “Hör’ ich das Liedchen klingen”

*Hör’ ich das Liedchen klingen,  
Das einst die Liebste sang,  
So will mir die Brust zerspringen  
Von wildem Schmerzendrang.*

When I hear the song  
my love once sang,  
my heart almost breaks  
from the wild rush of pain.

*Es treibt mich ein dunkles Sehnen  
Hinauf zur Waldeshöh’,  
Dort löst sich auf in Tränen  
Mein übergrosses Weh’.*

Vague longing drives me  
up to the high forest,  
where my immense grief  
dissolves in tears.

The tenth song of the cycle depicts a poet who is still mired down in hopeless love even though his lover has married someone else, and the song she used to sing is still able to evoke his feelings of longing. He is filled with utter despair, which drives him to weep in the woods. The despondent atmosphere of the previous song carries over to this one.

“Hör’ ich das Liedchen klingen” begins with descending arpeggios in the tempo of *Langsam* (slowly), which portray the poet’s teardrops. The sixteenth-note rests bring a sense of space between tears, as if he is attempting to control his sobs by taking deep breaths (Fig. 4.10.1). Gerald Moore identifies the four-measure introduction as the song his beloved sang, which is the impetus for his heartbroken ruminations.

Figure 4.10.1 “Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen,” mm. 1-6

The image shows a musical score for the first six measures of the piece "Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen." The tempo is marked "Langsam." (Slowly) and the dynamic is "p" (piano). The score is in 3/4 time. The top staff is the vocal line, and the bottom staff is the piano accompaniment. The lyrics "Hör' ich das Lied - chen klin - gen, das" are written below the vocal line. The music features a melodic line with tied notes and slurs, and a piano accompaniment with a similar rhythmic pattern.

In terms of pianistic interpretation, the performer should pay close attention to the syncopated tied notes, and strive to create a mournful legato across the tied melody in the top voice.

Schumann adds a fourth voice to the postlude, increasing the weight of despair. The melodic outline of the entire postlude displays a downward trend, whereas the inner voice of mm. 23-25 provides a chromatically ascending passage (Fig. 4.10.2). The poet's “*übergrosses Weh*” (“overwhelming grief”) is reflected in the tension between these two voices.

Figure 4.10.2 “Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen,” mm. 19-30

The image shows a musical score for the piece "Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen," measures 19-30. It consists of three systems of music. The first system (measures 19-22) shows the vocal line with the lyrics "ü - ber - gro - ßes Weh." highlighted in a red box. The piano accompaniment features a "4th voice" label. The second system (measures 23-26) shows a "chromatically passage" label. The third system (measures 27-30) shows a "ritard." marking. The score is in G major and 3/4 time.

In m. 26 (Fig. 4.10.2), the altered rhythmic pattern and the wandering sixteenth notes in downward motion conjure an image of the poet running toward the deep forest, while his lover’s song fades away.

## 11. “Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen”

*Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen,  
Die hat einen andern erwählt;  
Der andre liebt eine andre,  
Und hat sich mit dieser vermählt.*

*Das Mädchen nimmt aus Ärger  
Den ersten besten Mann,  
Der ihr in den Weg gelaufen;  
Der Jüngling ist übel dran.*

*Es ist eine alte Geschichte,  
Doch bleibt sie immer neu;  
Und wem sie just passieret,  
Dem bricht das Herz entzwei.*

A boy loves a girl,  
she chooses another;  
the other loves another  
and her he weds.

The girl, out of spite,  
takes the first man  
to come her way;  
the boy’s badly hrt.

It is an old, old story,  
remains though ever new,  
and he to whom it’s happened,  
his heart is broken in half.

In this song, the poet narrates a sarcastic story somewhat similar to his own: a boy fell in love with a girl who was in love with another guy, while he, ironically, adored a different girl. This web of emotions culminates with the first girl marrying the first boy she meets. The poet uses this story to scorn his former lover, asserting that it was irrational for her to leave him, but in truth, he was the only one who was wounded.

The piano part sounds like a clumsy impression of dance music, produced by syncopations (accents in the wrong places) in the top voice and a bouncing bass line with irregular rhythm (Fig. 4.11.1). The poet's jealousy is reflected in this arrangement's unsettled and ironic atmosphere, while his contempt is conveyed by the frenetic motions in the bass.

Figure 4.11.1 "Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen," mm. 1-5



The text-painting is mostly seen in mm. 19-23 (Fig. 4.11.2). Schumann repeats the ascending bass line to replicate the man's walking motion for the text "the first man who comes her way." The following three portato chords are meant to illustrate the words "*übel dran*" ("badly hurt").

Figure 4.11.2 “Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen,” mm. 15-24

The image shows a musical score for the first system of 'Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen' (mm. 15-24). It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts at measure 15 with the lyrics 'Das Mädchen nimmt aus Är - ger den er - sten be - sten'. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The second system (mm. 20-24) continues the vocal line with lyrics 'Mann, der ihr in den Weg ge - laufen; der Jüngling ist ü - bel d'ran. Es'. The piano accompaniment includes a diminished seventh chord under the word 'bricht' in the second system, which is highlighted with a red box. The vocal line in the second system has a red box around the word 'bricht' and a red line under the notes 'ri - tar - dan - do'.

The music reaches its apex in the final vocal phrase (mm. 29-32, Fig. 4.11.3), with the poet describing how the sorrow of losing a loved one has crushed his heart. The vocal melody moves up a half step from a suspended D-flat to D natural, reflecting the poet's envious feeling. Schumann arranges a number of complex harmonies to enhance the poet's mood. Moreover, a diminished seventh chord accentuates the word “*bricht*” (“breaks”).

Figure 4.11.3 “Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen,” mm. 29-33

The image shows a musical score for the second system of 'Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen' (mm. 29-33). It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts at measure 29 with the lyrics 'wem sie just pas - sie - ret, dem bricht das Herz ent - zwei.' The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The vocal line in the second system has a red box around the word 'bricht' and a red line under the notes 'ri - tar - dan - do'. The piano accompaniment in the second system has a red box around a diminished seventh chord and the word 'a tempo'.

The postlude, unsurprisingly, revisits the opening material. Richard Miller advises the pianist to play the postlude in a straightforward narrative manner, with no

rubato or ritardando.<sup>37</sup>

## 12. “Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen”

*Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen  
Geh' ich im Garten herum.  
Es flüstern und sprechen die Blumen,  
Ich aber wandle stumm.*

One bright summer morning  
I walk in the garden.  
'Flowers whisper and speak,  
But I walk silently.'

*Es flüstern und sprechen die Blumen,  
Und schau'n mitleidig mich an:  
Sei unsrer Schwester nicht böse,  
Du trauriger, blasser Mann.*

Flowers whisper and speak,  
And gaze at me in pity:  
'Be not angry with our sister,  
sad, pale man!'

The twelfth song of this cycle describes a scene in which the poet wanders alone in the garden on a “beautiful summer morning,” still troubled by his grief, while the flowers around him pity his hopeless situation and try to comfort him.

The evocative motif in the accompaniment is reminiscent of the tenth song, wherein the poet is immersed in misery over the loss of his lover. In “Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen,” Schumann uses the piano arpeggios to symbolize sunshine falling from the sky in the first stanza and whispering flowers in the second, exhibiting his customary romantic stylings (Fig. 4.12.1).

Figure 4.12.1 “Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen,” mm. 1-2



<sup>37</sup> Miller, *Singing Schumann*, 111.

Schumann occasionally employs certain unexpected harmonies to convey a special underlying message. For instance, rather than a general tonic, the song opens with a German augmented chord (Fig. 4.12.1), countering the romantic atmosphere produced by the descriptive piano motif, signifying the poet’s desperate state. Notably, the same augmented chord is employed to underline the words “*blasser Mann*” (“pale man”) at the end of the vocal phrase (m. 18, Fig. 4.12.2).

To reinforce the mood of the text, the tonality modulates to the distant key of G major in m. 17, and the tempo marking changes to *Langsamer* (slower) (Fig. 4.12.2); the major tonality fosters a delicate and tender ambiance. In the poet’s reverie, the flowers speak to him with soothing words, attempting to distract him from his negative thoughts.

Figure 4.12.2 “Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen,” mm. 15-20

The image shows a musical score for the song "Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen" by Robert Schumann, measures 15-20. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The tempo marking "Langsamer" is written above the first system. The lyrics are: "schaun mit lei - digmich an: Sei uns - rer Schwe - ster nicht bö - - se, du trau - figer, blas - - ser Mann". A red circle highlights the piano accompaniment in the second system, specifically the chords under the word "blas - - ser Mann", which are augmented chords.

The poet’s hopeless mood spirals out of control in the postlude, with climbing syncopated lines in the upper voice – C to F and B-flat to F in mm. 23-26 (Fig. 4.12.3). The top voice seems to have been inspired by the syncopations at the conclusion of

the tenth song. Later, in m. 27- 28, a falling motion followed by a postponed cadence depicts a scenario in which the poet feels unable to move forward.

Figure 4.12.3 “Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen,” mm.21-30



It is important to highlight that the pianist must be deliberate while dealing with the arch of crescendo and decrescendo “< >”. In Schumann’s writing, the “<” typically signifies crescendo and an expectation to pull the tempo back slightly, whereas the “>” means decrescendo and a slight increase in tempo.<sup>38</sup> The musical material at the top of the arch is frequently stressed and should be played with a slightly tenuto.

<sup>38</sup> Poli, *The Secret Life of Musical Notation*, 9.



### 13. “Ich hab’ im Traum geweinet”

*Ich hab’ im Traum geweinet,  
Mir träumte, du lägest im Grab.  
Ich wachte auf, und die Träne  
Floss noch von der Wange herab.*

I wept in my dream,  
I dreamt you lay in your grave.  
I woke, and tears  
still flowed upon my cheek.

*Ich hab’ im Traum geweinet,  
Mir träumt’, du verliessest mich.  
Ich wachte auf, und ich weinte  
Noch lange bitterlich.*

I wept in my dream,  
I dreamt you were leaving me.  
I woke, and wept on  
Long and bitterly.

*Ich hab’ im Traum geweinet,  
Mir träumte, du wär’st mir noch gut.  
Ich wachte auf, und noch immer  
Strömt meine Tränenflut.*

I wept in my dream,  
I dreamt you loved me still.  
I woke, and still  
my tears stream.

The thirteenth song, “Ich hab’ im Traum geweinet,” depicts the poet’s three dreams, all of which made him wake up crying: the death of his lover, the story of betrayal, and the fantasy that his beloved still cherishes him. The feeling of despair haunts him even in the dream.<sup>39</sup>

The song is written in modified strophic form. The recitative vocal line mournfully opens the song. In the first two stanzas, the piano responds to the vocal part; this is significant because, rather than simply providing harmonic support, the instrument engages in a dialogue with the voice (Fig. 4.13.1). The pianissimo staccato chords evoke a funerary atmosphere.

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<sup>39</sup> Agawu, “Structural ‘Highpoints’,” 13.

Figure 4.13.1 “Ich hab’ im Traum geweinet,” mm. 1-11

The musical score consists of three systems. The first system (mm. 1-2) shows the vocal line starting with 'Ich hab' im Traum ge - wei - net'. The piano accompaniment is in the right hand, with a dynamic marking of *p*. The second system (mm. 3-4) continues with 'mir träumte, du lä - gest im Grab. Ich wach - te'. The piano accompaniment includes a dynamic marking of *pp*. The third system (mm. 5-6) concludes with 'auf, und die Trä - ne floß noch von der Wän - ge her - ab. Ich'. The piano accompaniment includes a dynamic marking of *p* and a *ritard.* marking. Red boxes highlight the interval of a second in the vocal line for the words 'ge - wei - net' and 'Trä - ne'.

Schumann introduces a motif of the poet’s “tears” in this song, similar to that of word “*Herz*” in the seventh song. The words “*geweinet*” (“wept”) and “*Träne*” (“tears”), which feature often in the poem, are represented by two notes that form an interval of a second (Fig. 4.13.1). Another text-painting arrangement is shown in mm.5-6 (Fig. 4.13.1) and mm. 16-17, wherein the descending scale G $\flat$ -F $\flat$ -E $\flat$ -D $\flat$  (in both the vocal line and the inner voice of the piano) is intended to depict the descriptive words “*lägest*” (“lying”) and “*verliessest*” (“leaving”), full of unhappiness.

Before the third stanza, the piano rhythmic pattern changes to a more stable state and the melodic theme first arises in the piano part (mm. 22-24, Fig. 4.13.2). The prolonged tonic chord (C# minor) and the arch of crescendo and decrescendo

maintain an air of grave sadness.

Figure 4.13.2 “Ich hab’ im Traum geweinet,” mm. 20-38

The most desperate moment comes in the final phrase, “*Strömt meine Tränenflut*”

(“my tears stream”), driven by sustained chromatic chords accentuated by rhythmic stress in mm. 29-31 (Fig. 4.13.2).

#### 14. “Allnächtlich im Traume”

*Allnächtlich im Traume seh' ich dich  
Und sehe dich freundlich grüssen,  
Und laut aufweinend stürz' ich mich  
Zu deinen süssen Füssen.*

*Du siehest mich an wehmütiglich  
Und schüttelst das blonde Köpfchen;  
Aus deinen Augen schleichen sich  
Die Perletränenröpfchen.*

*Du sagst mir heimlich ein leises Wort  
Und gibst mir den Strauss von  
Cypressen.  
Ich wache auf, und der Strauss ist fort,  
Und's Wort hab' ich vergessen.*

Nightly in my dreams I see you,  
see your friendly greeting,  
and weeping loudly, hurl myself  
at your sweet feet.

You look at me wistfully,  
shaking your little fair head;  
from your eyes steal  
tear-drops of pearl.

A soft word you whisper me,  
and give me a bouquet of  
cypress.  
I wake, the cypress is gone,  
and the word forgotten.

The fourteenth song is also a description of the poet's dream. In one particularly fascinating passage of the poem, his beloved gives him “a bouquet of cypress” in the dream, but “the cypress is gone” when he wakes up, implying that the poet is ready to bid farewell to his lost love.

This song follows the same strophic form as the previous one. However, unlike the mournful minor key of “Ich hab' im Traum geweinet,” the tonality of “Allnächtlich im Traume” is firmly fixed in B major throughout the piece, bringing intense color and passion that may indicate a mixture of fondness and regret; perhaps the poet is moving beyond pure sorrow.

The downward tendency of the melodic notes implies sadness, while the energetic intervallic leaps offer a brighter color. The abundant rests in the melodic line appear to convey a calm mood,<sup>40</sup> implying that the poet is finally shedding his intense, unpleasant emotions (Fig. 4.14.1). The piano part not only provides harmonic support but also doubles the vocal melody in the treble line, which contrast its role of echoing

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<sup>40</sup> Moore, *Poet's Love*, 22.

the funeral ambiance in the previous song.

Figure 4.14.1 “Allnächtlich im Traume,” mm. 1-13

1 *p* All-nächtlich im Traume seh' ich dich, und se-he dich

6 freundlich, freund-lich grüßen, und laut auf-weinend stürz' ich mich zu

10 *ritard.* dei-nen sü-Ben Fü-Ben. Du

## 15. “Aus alten Märchen”

*Aus alten Märchen winkt es  
Hervor mit weisser Hand,  
Da singt es und da klingt es  
Von einem Zauberland;*

A white hand beckons  
from fairy tales of old,  
song there is, and sounds  
of a magic land,

*Wo bunte Blumen blühen  
Im gold'nen Abendlicht,  
Und lieblich duftend glühen,  
Mit bräutlichem Gesicht;*

Where gay flowers bloom  
in golden evening light,  
and, sweet scented, glow  
with bride-like faces.

*[Und grüne Bäume singen  
Uralte Melodei'n,  
Die Lüfte heimlich klingen,  
Und Vögel schmetternd drein;*

(And green trees sing  
old, old melodies,  
stealthy breezes murmur,  
and birds warble;

*Und Nebelbilder steigen  
Wohl aus der Erd' hervor,  
Und tanzen luft'gen Reigen  
Im wunderlichen Chor;*

and misty shapes rear  
from the earth,  
and dance airy dances  
in strange throng;

*Und blaue Funken brennen  
An jedem Blatt und Reis,  
Und rote Lichter rennen  
Im irren, wirren Kreis;*

and blue sparks blaze  
on every leaf and twig,  
and red fires race  
in mad wild circles;

*Und laute Quellen brechen  
Aus wildem Marmorstein.  
Und seltsam in den Bächen  
Strahlt fort der Widerschein.]*

and loud spring burst  
from living marble, and  
strange in the brooks  
the reflection shines.)

*Ach, könnt' ich dorthin kommen,  
Und dort mein Herz erfreu'n,  
Und aller Qual entnommen,  
Und frei und selig sein!*

Oh, could I but go there,  
there gladden my heart,  
from all pain removed,  
blissful and free.

*Ach! jenes Land der Wonne,  
Das seh' ich oft im Traum,  
Doch kommt die Morgensonne,  
Zerfließt's wie eitel Schaum.*

Oh, that land of joy,  
in dreams I see it often,  
but, come morning sun,  
it's gone like foam.

This song depicts a fairyland of many colors and fantastic images to which the poet longs to travel in his dream, freeing himself from his suffering and heartbreak.

“Aus alten Märchen” builds upon the mood of the previous song, indicating that the poet may be willing to give up on the hopeless relationship, as well as his beloved.

As the poet describes the dazzling wonders of his dreamland, the song starts in

the bright key of E major with a cheerful, lively rhythm in 6/8. In m. 17, the homophonic piano accompaniment is altered to echo the text of the second stanza (Fig. 4.15.1). The short staccato notes in a thin texture present a lighthearted atmosphere, aptly conveying the image of “flowers blooming in golden evening light.” A similar arrangement is constructed in the fourth stanza to present the vitality and passion of the “blue sparks” and “red fires.” According to Gerald Moore, it is imperative for pianists to show articulation clarity and rhythmic accuracy in order to properly convey the effervescent staccato sounds.<sup>41</sup>

Figure 4.15.1 “Aus alten Märchen,” mm. 15-24

The most dramatic passage occurs in the sixth stanza (mm. 57-68, Fig. 4.15.2), where Schumann employs a series of sustained seventh chords to herald the coming climax – G-sharp major minor seventh, A-sharp major minor seventh, and B major minor seventh. The increasing intensity of the passage is well-suited to the text “springs burst loudly from living marble.”

<sup>41</sup> Moore, *Poet's Love*, 24.

Figure 4.15.2 “Aus alten Märchen,” mm. 58-74

The musical tone shifts abruptly in the final two stanzas, as the poet expresses his desire to be “blissful and free” in the “land of joy.” The musical content is an augmented opening theme with a rhythmic arrangement that suggests two beats per measure (mm. 69-103, Fig. 4.15.2). Following Schumann’s instruction of the tempo *Mit innigster Empfindung* (with most inward feeling), a peaceful and bittersweet sensation arises.

The piano postlude revisits the lively, childlike melody of the opening. The lengthy chords in the last four measures appear to depict the gradual dissolution of the fragile foam dream as the poet slowly awakens (Fig. 4.15.3).



Figure 4.15.3 “Aus alten Märchen,” mm. 99-113

99 *ausgew.*  
Schaum, zerfließts wie ei - tel Schaum. *a tempo*

106

## 16. “Die alten, bösen Lieder”

*Die alten, bösen Lieder,  
Die Träume bös' und arg,  
Die lasst uns jetzt begraben,  
Holt einen grossen Sarg.*

*Hinein leg' ich gar manches,  
Doch sag' ich noch nicht was;  
Der Sarg muss sein noch grösser,  
Wie's Heidelberger Fass.*

*Und holt eine Totenbahre  
Und Bretter fest und dick;  
Auch muss sie sein noch länger,  
Als wie zu Mainz die Brück'.*

*Und holt mir auch zwölf Riesen,  
Die müssen noch stärker sein  
Als wie der starke Christoph  
Im Dom zu Köln am Rhein.*

*Die sollen den Sarg forttragen,  
Und senken ins Meer hinab;  
Denn solchem grossen Sarge  
Gebührt ein grosses Grab.*

*Wisst ihr, warum der Sarg wohl  
So gross und schwer mag sein?  
Ich senkt' auch meine Liebe  
Und meinen Schmerz hinein.*

The bad old songs,  
the dreams wicked and bad,  
let us now bury them—  
fetch a big coffin.

Much will I lay in it,  
though what, I won't yet say;  
a bigger coffin must it be  
than the Vat of Heidelberg.

And fetch a bier  
and planks firm and thick;  
the bier must be longer  
than the bridge at Mainz.

And twelve giants fetch me,  
who shall be even stronger  
than St Christopher the Strong  
in Cologne Cathedral on the Rhine.

They shall bear off the coffin,  
and sink it in the sea;  
for such a big coffin  
belongs in a big grave.

Do you know why the coffin  
should be so heavy and big?  
I would put my love in  
and my sorrow too.

In this concluding song of the cycle, the poet expresses his desire to bury the grief of his past (including the “bad old songs” and dreams) in the grave. The text calls for giants stronger than the statuaries of the “Cologne Cathedral on the Rhine,” ironically recalling the sixth song, in which the poet compares his beloved to the Virgin Mary in Cologne Cathedral.

To echo the poet’s forthright declaration, Schumann composes a piece of forceful, direct music. The brief introduction not only sets the tone for the opening vocal melody, but also serves as a bugle call announcing the end of the poet’s story of love (Fig. 4.16.1).

Figure 4.16.1 “Die alten, bösen Lieder,” mm. 1-5



The long-short-short rhythmic pattern in the piano’s bassline evokes the footsteps of the giants, showing Schumann’s descriptive skill (Fig. 3.16.1). In the third and fourth stanzas (mm. 16-35), the bassline is given a thick texture and upward arpeggiated movement (for instance, mm. 16-17, Fig. 3.16.2), reinforcing the poet’s determination to bury his past love.

Figure 4.16.2 “Die alten, bösen Lieder,” mm. 15-24

In the fifth stanza, the musical tone adopts a darker tone fit for a funeral. To depict the text “they shall bear off the coffin and sink it in the sea,” Schumann accentuates the weak beat notes, and each measure includes a harmonic transition from minor to major. These unstable rhythms and harmonies represent the coffin, full of the poet’s desperate history, sinking deeper into the sea (mm. 36-39, Fig. 4.16.3). The word “*hinab*” (“down”) is underlined by half-step neighbor tones G#-G. The phrase eventually comes to a close on an A-sharp diminished seventh chord with sforzando and fermata, implying that the poet’s sadness has at last been interred into the depths of the grave.

Figure 4.16.3 “Die alten, bösen Lieder,” mm. 34-43

The image shows a musical score for two systems of music. The first system, starting at measure 34, features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Dom zu Cöln am Rhein. Die sollen den Sarg fort-tragen, und senken ins Meer hin-". The piano accompaniment includes several chords with accents and a bass line with a downward arpeggio. The second system, starting at measure 39, continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "ab; denn sol-chem gro-ßen Sar-ge ge-bührt ein gro-ßes Grab." The piano accompaniment features a prominent chord in the left hand circled in red, and the bass line continues with downward arpeggios. The score is in G major and 4/4 time.

The postlude of this song cycle is quite long, and the musical material is similar to that of the twelfth song, including ascending suspended notes in the top voice, downward arpeggios, and sober basses (Fig. 4.16.4). Perhaps this is the poet’s recollection of wandering in the garden, speaking to and being healed by nature. The melismatic setting in mm. 59-60, which exhibits Schumann’s romantic expression, does not conclude the song cycle as expected. Instead, Schumann crafts a lengthy coda, in which the hovering figuration is repeated, suggesting that the poet is pondering his past deeds, unable to fully let go of his personal history.

Figure 4.16.4 “Die alten, bösen Lieder,” mm. 53-67

**Andante espressivo.**

The image displays a piano score for the piece "Die alten, bösen Lieder" from mm. 53 to 67. The score is written in a key signature of three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor) and a 4/4 time signature. It consists of five systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The tempo and mood are indicated as "Andante espressivo." at the beginning. The first system (mm. 53-54) features a melodic line in the right hand with slurs and accents, and a bass line with a fermata. The second system (mm. 55-56) continues the melodic development. The third system (mm. 57-58) shows a more complex texture with sixteenth-note patterns in the right hand. The fourth system (mm. 59-60) includes a "ritard." marking and a fermata. The fifth system (mm. 61-62) concludes the passage with a final cadence. Various performance markings such as "fz.", "ritard.", and "fz." are present throughout the score.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

Robert Schumann's ability to gracefully articulate the intent of the poets whose texts he used in his music is attributed to his knowledge and appreciation of literature. His literary sensibility also contributes to his poetic imagination, making his music distinctive and interesting.

In Schumann's song cycles *Frauenliebe und -leben*, Op. 42, and *Dichterliebe*, Op. 48, the piano accompaniment is the most notable aspect, because it not only serves as the mood-setting background, but also provides the musical flow and the literal meaning of the poem through exquisite text painting. These structural and aesthetic aspects elevate the piano accompaniment to a level of importance equal to that of the vocal line.

When performing these two song cycles, the pianist is expected to exemplify widely divergent emotions. Understanding the structure and elements of the music such as melodic contours, chromatic alterations, and obvious dissonances, is of the utmost importance. These mood-based and technical requirements contribute to the portrayal of each poem's meaning and nuance. In addition to interpreting the various images and emotions in the poem, a successful performance necessitates that the pianist pay attention to the singer's breath; the goal is to maintain the flow of music while permitting the singer to breathe. Mastering the collaborative, technical, and artistic processes needed to perform Schumann's exquisite song cycles requires skill

and effort, but the reward is a poignant and engrossing illustration of the cycle's narratives through the union of voice and piano.

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