

A Method to His Madness:
A Poetic Exploration of Works by Robert Schumann and Romanticism

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Abstract

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A cursory examination of the music of German Romantic composer Robert Schumann reveals a bewildering and borderline chaotic array of characters, contrasting fragments, irregular rhythms, and unexpected harmony changes. However, a closer look at Schumann's music shows that his pieces were carefully composed with coherent and deliberate strategies derived from German Romantic aesthetics to create an outward façade of chaos and randomness that disrupts the unity of the musical work. His manipulation of the concept of masquerade, his use of musical alter egos, the way he organized fragments into musical forms, as well as a broader examination of these concepts in the context of the Romantic era reveal deeper connections between Schumann's music and Romanticism, in particular with the concept of Romantic irony. Far from chaotic, Schumann's work is firmly motivated by German Romantic principles and oftentimes bridges the gap between Romantic literature and music.

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Introduction

Perhaps no other Romantic composer embodies the concept of the tortured, insane genius better than that of German composer Robert Schumann. From his long battle with mental illness arose some of the greatest musical works in the Romantic era. His music is filled with drama created by the rapid alternations of different characters as well as pictorial fantasies and unexpected surprises. To the casual listener though, the unprepared juxtaposition of contrasting materials, distorted rhythmic patterns, and unexpected harmonic progression of Schumann's music make it less accessible and even bewildering. Some critics go so far as to accuse Schumann for a lack of ability in writing coherent music with one theme logically flowing into the next one. Indeed, Schumann's music frequently verges precariously towards the edge of insanity. Ultimately however, it is this flirtation with madness that is at the very heart of Schumann's enduring legacy and lasting appeal.

As we set out to understand Schumann's work, one of the most pressing questions lays in making sense of the frequently contradictory, disparate, and chaotic nature of his music. This dissertation sets out to explore if Schumann has used any coherent and deliberate strategies to compose his music, as well as the significance of consistent compositional strategies both with regards to Schumann's works musically and within the context of the broader Romantic movement. As this dissertation develops, a closer examination of Schumann's inspirations as well as an analysis of his musical compositions will indeed reveal a coherent aesthetic vision and a deliberate poetic program in his music.

This exploration of Schumann's poetic vision will be broken down into several chapters. We will first examine Schumann's inspiration by Romantic literary figures such as Jean Paul and how this influenced the idea of musical masquerade within Schumann's music. Next, we will

explore Schumann's use of his musical alter egos, Florestan and Eusebius, and his fictional artistic league, the *Davidsbündler*, and how these concepts manifest in Schumann's mental state as well as his music. We then introduce the concept of fragment in a musical context as a key structural component in understanding Schumann's music. Following this discussion on fragments, we will then take a look at the broader structure and compositional process that form the foundation for the musical forms of Schumann's pieces. Lastly, we will examine how these individual concepts tie into the concept of Romantic irony within the broader context of the Romantic movement.

Ultimately, as we seek to elucidate the method behind the madness of Schumann's works, we hope to gain a deeper appreciation for his art. Schumann's work, in a sense, demonstrates many parallels and similarities to German Romantic literary concepts. This comes as no surprise given Schumann's deep admiration for the Romantic era writers. Through this literary lens, we see that the chaos and madness in Schumann's works are carefully designed and manipulated through a consistent Romantic approach. By closely examining the connections between Romanticism and Schumann's music, we see that Schumann's work then sets himself apart from other composers. Thus, the exploration of the coherent and deliberate Romantic principles of Schumann's music is important as it ultimately shows Schumann's ability to bridge the gap between literature and music through a new poetic music language that is derived from German Romantic aesthetics. And that Schumann, traditionally viewed strictly as a giant in the musical world, should be viewed as a critical figure during the Romantic era as a whole.

Chapter 1: Schumann and Jean Paul: the Initial Inspiration of Masquerade

In order to begin exploring Schumann's music, it is important to first examine the source of his inspiration. From a young age, Schumann drew inspiration from Romantic era literature, particularly that of the German Romantic writer Jean Paul. Jean Paul's writings would have a profound impact on Schumann both musically and personally. One of Schumann's first well-known pieces, *Papillons*, would be loosely inspired by Jean Paul's novel *Die Flegeljahre*. The music not only is programmatic and written in the setting of a masquerade ball, but also shows numerous instances of stylistic influence by Jean Paul. The imagery and the concept of masquerade would play a prominent role in many of Schumann's later works. The idea of masquerade, as well as how Schumann brings traditionally literary devices into the musical sphere, will be critical to a deeper understanding of Schumann's works.

Jean Paul had a profound influence on Schumann's literature, music, and mental state throughout his life. Schumann had read Jean Paul's novels since he was very young, and the young Schumann even wrote passages in imitation of his style. Passage such as "Oh friend! were I but a smile, how would I flit about her eyes! were I but joy, how gently would I throb in all her pulses! yea, might I be but a tear, I would weep with her, and then, if she smiled again, how gladly would I die on her eyelash, and gladly, gladly, be no more!" is only one out of many examples.¹ The prototype of this passage can be found in Jean Paul's *Die Flegeljahre*, in which he wrote "were I a star, I would shine upon thee; were I a rose, I would bloom for thee; were I a sound, I would press into thy heart; were I love, the happiest love, I would dwell therein."²

¹ Robert Schumann, *Jugendbriefe*, trans. May Herbert (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1888), 2.

² Jean Paul, *Walt and Vult, or The Twins*, trans. Eliza B. Lee (Boston: J. Munroe and Company, 1846), 2:32.

Obviously, this type of overly poetic and sentimental writing disappeared as Schumann matured. However, his lifelong veneration for Jean Paul never faded and indeed continued throughout his life.

Schumann's veneration of Jean Paul can be seen elsewhere as well. In his journal *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, Schumann never hesitated to put Jean Paul in comparison with giants such as Shakespeare, Beethoven, Schubert, Bach, and he would rage if his comparisons raised any objections. He endowed Jean Paul with such importance that he wrote, "if the whole world read Jean Paul, it would certainly be a better, but unhappier place—he's often brought me close to madness, but the rainbow of peace and of the human spirit always hovers delicately over all the tears, while the heart is wondrously elevated and tenderly transfigured."³ This quote from Schumann aptly summarizes the dichotomy of Jean Paul's influence on Schumann. On one hand, Jean Paul's ideas and writing would "elevate" and "transfigure" Schumann's music and provide the key to Schumann's inspiration. On the other hand, those same ideas—most notably those of masquerade and musical alter egos—would drive Schumann ever closer to madness. During his last few years in asylum, Schumann still wrote to Clara asking specifically for Jean Paul's novels. Just like how Schumann said,

I often ask myself what would have become of me if I had never known Jean Paul: in one respect at any rate he seems to have an affinity with me, for I foresaw him. Perhaps I would have written the same kind of poetry but I would have withdrawn myself less from other people and dreamt less. I cannot decide, really, what would have become of me, the problem is impossible to work out.⁴

³ Robert Schumann, *Briefe, Neue Folge*, ed. F. Gustav Jansen (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1886), 5.

⁴ Hans Koetz, *Der Einfluss Jean Pauls auf Robert Schumann* (Weimar: 1933), 21.

This seems like an exaggeration but is very true. Schumann was so deeply influenced by Jean Paul—without him, Schumann would not have become the Schumann that we know of.

Of Jean Paul's many novels, there is no doubt that *Die Flegeljahre* had the greatest influence on Schumann. This influence becomes clear when examining one of Schumann's early famous pieces, *Papillons* Op.2. This piece not only has direct programmatic connections to Jean Paul's novel, but also reflects Jean Paul's style. From Schumann's personal copy of *Die Flegeljahre*, we know that certain passages were marked and related to specific pieces in *Papillons*. When recommending the last two chapters in the novel to a friend, Schumann wrote that "I kept on turning over the last page for the end seemed like a new beginning—almost unconsciously I went to the piano, and so one Papillon after another appeared."⁵ He also wrote to his mother and told her to read the last chapter of *Die Flegeljahre* and said that "Papillons actually transforms the masked ball into tones."⁶ We can see the direct inspiration from *Die Flegeljahre*. It seems impossible to understand Schumann's music without a read of Jean Paul's novel. In this sense, *Papillons* is an excellent example of Schumann's early attempts to bridge the gap between the literary and musical worlds.

There are direct connections between the music and plots and thus make *Papillons* almost programmatic. *Die Flegeljahre* is a story of a pair of twin brothers—Walt, the sentimental and utterly unsophisticated poet, and Vult, the restless musical virtuoso and also a worldling that has no imagination. The entire novel is based on Vult's attempts to get his brother into the wicked world, and his final attempt takes place at a masquerade ball. This masquerade ball would form the basis of Schumann's *Papillons* Op.2. According to scholar Eric Jensen, in the first 10 pieces

⁵ Schumann, *Jugendbriefe*, 167-8.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 166-7.

of *Papillons*, Schumann drew specific associations to the text. To list several examples, No. 1 (see Figure 1-1) describes Walt's delight after he put on his costume, and it is related to the specific text—"When he left his chamber, he felt like a hero thirsting for glory, who draws his sword for the first time; he besought God that he might return as joyfully as he departed."⁷ No. 3 (see Figure 1-2) represents an unusual costume of a gigantic boot in the masquerade ball and it is related to the text—"he was fascinated in particular by a giant boot, sliding around and dressed in itself."⁸ We can see the direct connections between music and text.

Figure 1-1 Robert Schumann, *Papillons* Op. 2, No. 1, mm. 1-16.⁹

⁷ Eric Jensen, "Explicating Jean Paul: Robert Schumann's Program for "Papillons," Op. 2." *19th-Century Music* 22, no. 2 (Autumn 1998): 138.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Robert Schumann, *Papillons* Op. 2, ed. Wolfgang Boetticher (München: G. Henle Verlag, 1976): 3.

The image shows a page of musical notation for Robert Schumann's *Papillons* Op. 2, No. 3. The score is in 4/4 time with a tempo marking of quarter note = 120. It is marked with a '3.' at the beginning. The music is written for piano, with dynamics including *f*, *sf*, *ff*, and *p*. The piece ends with a dominant seventh chord that is reduced to a single note.

Figure 1-2 Robert Schumann, *Papillons* Op. 2, No. 3, mm. 1-26.¹⁰

Even for the pieces to which Schumann did not assign specific text, we can still clearly see the musical representation of the plot. For example, at the end of Jean Paul's novel, Vult is angry that Walt stole away his love and decides to leave home. The story ends when Vult disappears into the distance. A similar image is portrayed at the end of *Papillons* (see Figure 1-3), where the motive is reduced bit by bit until there is only one note left. After a whole measure of rests with fermata, the piece is only left with harmonies and the dynamics starts to decrease. At the very end, we have only one dominant seventh chord. Despite the *ppp* dynamics, the chord is then reduced from seven notes into only the dominant note, which is used as the pivot note and leads us to a quick tonic chord. The disappearing feature of the music is a vivid depiction of the final scene in the novel.

¹⁰ Schumann, *Papillons*, 4.

The image shows a page of musical notation for Robert Schumann's *Papillons* Op. 2, No. 12, measures 55-92. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a piano accompaniment with a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'poco', 'a', 'pp', 'ppp', and 'ritardando'. The piece concludes with a 'Fine' marking.

Figure 1-3 Robert Schumann, *Papillons* Op. 2, No. 12, mm. 55-92.¹¹

In addition to the obvious programmatic relationship between *Papillons* and the last chapter of *Die Flegeljahre*, there is also a display of heavy stylistic influence of Jean Paul's writing in Schumann's music. Unexpected digression in Jean Paul's writing finds its parallel in Schumann's music, especially in the tonal aspect. If we look through the keys in all the fragments in *Papillons*, we will find a disparate display of keys: No.1 in D major, No.2 in E flat major, No.3 in f sharp minor, No.4 in A major, No.5 in B flat major, No.6 in d minor, No.7 in f minor, No.8 in c sharp minor, No.9 in b flat minor, No. 10 in C major, and No.11 and No.12 back to D major. Schumann is definitely a pioneer in this type of kaleidoscopic key arrangement,

¹¹ Schumann, *Papillons*, 17.

as no one else before Schumann has ever mapped out so many different keys in a piece that is less than 15 minutes. The fact that one key moves into another one so quickly is an example of unexpected digression in music.

Although the unexpected digression makes Jean Paul's writing seem chaotic, there is a coherent writing style embedded. A coherent compositional style can also be found in Schumann's music. As explained by Erika Reiman in her book *Schumann's Piano Cycles and the Novels of Jean Paul*, even though "Jean Paul never allows plot, whether simple or complex to remain unadorned or uninterrupted for long enough to become boring," "unity is provided in the novels by thematic currents, character development and recurring concepts."¹² We can see that Jean Paul was able to use themes, characters and concepts to bind the whole novel together. This writing style definitely finds its parallel in Schumann's music as well. In later chapters, we will explore how Schumann would use a consistent compositional technique to tie those different keys together and use the recurrent motives to bind the set together. To a certain extent, this technique allows Schumann to better present disparate keys that disrupt the unity of the musical work.

In addition to the stylistic inspirations that Schumann took from Jean Paul, Schumann would also heavily borrow the imagery and concept of masquerade and masquerade ball from the writer. It is confirmed that Schumann was interested in the imagery of masquerade, because in addition to *Papillons* No.2, Schumann also wrote many other masterpieces in the setting of a masquerade ball: in *Davidsbündlertänze* Op.6, his imaginary warriors Davidsbündler dance together and fight against the Philistine; in *Carnaval* Op.9, Schumann hides his own identity by

¹² Erika Reiman, *Schumann's Piano Cycles and the Novels of Jean Paul*, (Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2004), 37.

masking up in the names of Chopin, Paganini, Eusebius, Florestan; in *Faschingsschwank aus Wien* Op.26, Schumann showcases the Viennese Mardi Gras during which people were allowed to dance freely in masked identities thanks to the temporary lift of the repressive laws. In journal “Die Flegeljahre, Papillons, Carnaval As Masque,” Claudette Kemper Columbus goes further and develops “masque” or masquerade into a concept, that will help us better understand Schumann’s works.

In her study, Columbus argues that masquerade implies a much deeper meaning. It would be an oversimplification to only link masquerade with the actual costume. In addition to the literal reference, it also “suggests the unknown, the presence of the sub- or suprarational.”¹³ The masquerade is only a disguise and what is behind the masquerade is “the unknown.” Taking this into consideration, we cannot limit the definition to just the facial disguises. In fact, everything can be a masquerade—a masquerade can refer to “a story or melody that masks (conceals or reveals) another story or another melody, and in which characters as well as words or notes are also masks, so that nothing is what it seems to be on the surface.”¹⁴ We can see that the significance is not about what is the masquerade or what is on the surface, but about what is behind the masquerade and what it is concealing. The masquerade then becomes an important concept to understand the significant symbolic, thematic, and literary implications in Jean Paul’s writings.

Columbus also believes that there are many masquerades in Jean Paul’s novels. Words are masquerades because they imply meanings. The same sentence can be read differently

¹³ Claudette K. Columbus, “Die Flegeljahre, Papillons, Carnival as Masques,” *An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* 10, no.1 (Fall, 1976): 70.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

depending on how each person interprets it. All the characters are masquerades of Jean Paul that represent different life stages of the same person, and thus time is a masquerade, which helps to disguise man differently in an eternal time process. Alter egos or opposite doubles, which are the “personification of two halves of one personality that cannot coalesce yet nevertheless form one life,” are masquerades, because although the doubles are exactly the opposite, they reflect different sides of only one person and thus are two different masquerades of one person.¹⁵

Categories are also masquerades—by classifying people into categories, we stereotype them and undermine their true attribute. Even the structure of the novel could be considered as a masquerade—with the Chinese box structure of one novel inside another novel, the outer one masquerades the inside one accordingly. Many of those masquerades in Jean Paul’s writing can find their parallels in Schumann’s music: Schumann’s musical alter egos, Florestan and Eusebius, are definitely Schumann’s masquerades. All the characters in *Carnaval* are also Schumann with masquerades. The Chinese box structure finds its embodiments through the use of quotations in Schumann’s music. We can find *Davidsbündlertänze* quotes *Carnaval*, *Carnaval* quotes *Papillons*, and *Papillons* quotes the *Polonaise* written in 1828. Through the use of quotation, Schumann was able to create a similar Chinese box structure with the newly composed music masquerades the quoted one. Thus, Columbus’s analysis of the concept of masquerade provides a useful lens through which we can examine Schumann’s music. A closer examination of Schumann’s many musical masquerades then reveals a deeper connection as well.

¹⁵ Columbus, “Die Flegeljahre,” 73.

This idea of masquerade can be clearly seen in the piece *Papillons*. The title “Papillons” alone has an implication of masquerade. “Papillons” literally means “butterfly”—“an emblem of metamorphosis, of the emergence of an elegant and beautiful being from a homely, larval state.”¹⁶ However, it would be an oversimplification if we only take “Papillons” literally. In one of his letters, Schumann was quite clear regarding his intentions of “Papillons,” as he wrote that “A bridge to the Papillons: because we can readily imagine the psyche floating above the body turned to dust—You could learn a good deal from me about this, if Jean Paul had not explained it better.”¹⁷ It could be implied that butterfly was taken as “a symbol of transformation and attainment of the ideal.”¹⁸ We can see this “symbol of transformation” aligns closely with the concept of masquerade, because by putting on a masquerade, a person is also going through a process of transformation. Taking this one step further, the idea of transformation and masquerade are also closely related to the idea of ephemera. Both the metamorphosis of a butterfly and the transformative process of donning a masquerade are inherently fleeting and temporary in nature. The connection between “Papillons” and masquerade is further emphasized through the pun that the German word “Larva” literally means “larva” but figuratively means “mask.”

In addition to the title, the music itself is also related to the concept of masquerade. The process of transformation is shown through the use of the main theme and its alteration in each fragment to represent different plots in *Die Flegeljahre*. To give an example, the rising scale of the main theme in No.1 is used in No.4 measure 11-14 (see Figure 1-4). Rather than the simple

¹⁶ John Daverio, *Robert Schumann: Herald of a “New Poetic Age,”* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 81.

¹⁷ Schumann, *Jugendbriefe*, 54.

¹⁸ Jensen, “Explicating Jean Paul,” 135.

rhythm and elegant character in No.1, it is now endowed with more rhythmic charm and thus makes the character wittier. The fact that the main theme in the first piece of *Papillons*—A, B, C sharp, D, E, F sharp, G—uses all the possible letters in music is also an excellent example of attainment of this higher ideal Schumann wrote about (see Figure 1-1). Although it might be subtle, this is the beginning of Schumann applying masquerade into his music compositions.

The image shows a page of a musical score for Robert Schumann's *Papillons*, Op. 2, No. 4, measures 1 through 48. The score is in 3/8 time and marked *Presto* (♩ = 108). It is written for piano. The score begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a first ending bracket. The music features various dynamics including *f*, *cresc.*, *pp*, *ritenuto*, *a tempo*, and *ff*. The score is divided into systems, with measure numbers 4, 8, 16, 24, 32, and 40 indicated. The piece concludes with a first ending bracket and a final cadence.

Figure 1-4 Robert Schumann, *Papillons* Op. 2, No. 4, mm. 1-48.¹⁹

¹⁹ Schumann, *Papillons*, 5.

Thus, we can see the heavy influence of Jean Paul and *Die Flegeljahre* on Schumann's *Papillons*, both programmatically and stylistically. Our analysis of *Papillons* also allows us to see and appreciate how Schumann started to bridge the gap between literature and music in his works. Lastly, our exploration of the concept of masquerade provides additional insight into understanding Schumann's works. This concept of masquerade will now help us transition into the next chapter, where we begin to see how concepts such as masquerade and Schumann's musical alter egos manifest themselves in Schumann's later works.

Chapter 2: Florestan, Eusebius and the *Davidsbündler*

Jean Paul is all the portraying himself in his works, but always in the form of two persons. He is *Albano* and *Schoppe*, *Siebenkaes* and *Leibgeber*, *Vult* and *Walt*, *Gustav* and *Fenk*, *Flamin* and *Victor*. Only a Jean Paul could have combined in himself such opposite characters—the contrasts are very harsh sometimes, not to say extreme—only he could have done it. Jean Paul always enchants, but seldom satisfies me; through all the enchantment there is a feeling of dissatisfaction, an eternal sadness...²⁰

As Schumann grew older and evolved as a composer, the ideas he had gained from reading Jean Paul and other Romantic writers would gradually take root and have a profound impact on his music as well as his mental state. In particular, Schumann would begin to divide his own personality and music into his own musical alter egos, Florestan and Eusebius. He would then take this one step further, going so far as to create entire characters within his mind that he would converse with, forming his imaginary musical society called *Davidsbündler*. These characters would form the foundation and inspiration for many musical masquerades that Schumann would wear as he composed in one of his most famous pieces, *Carnaval* Op.9. At its core, Schumann's musical alter egos and the concept of masquerades would allow him to harness creativity bordering on madness to create some of his most well-known pieces. He could masterfully bring together seemingly disparate and clashing styles and structures within a single piece. But the concept of the masquerade and Schumann's musical alter egos, with their inherently dissociative and fragmenting nature, would ultimately contribute to the breakdown of his own mental state.

Literature has always been one of Schumann's greatest sources of inspiration. A then 18-year-old Schumann was inspired by the unsettling dual personalities found in Jean Paul's *Die Flegeljahre*. For Schumann, the tension between “an idealist unable to love sensually” and “a

²⁰ Hans Koetz, *Der Einfluss Jean Pauls auf Robert Schumann* (Weimar: 1933), 21.

sensualist unable to love ideally” was an emotional flaw that he strongly identified with.

Learning from his literary model, he also developed his own musical alter egos—the Vult-like Florestan, passionate and exuberant, and the Walt-like Eusebius, thoughtful and sensitive. They appeared for the first time in Schumann’s diary shortly after his 21st birthday and Schumann referred to them as his best friends. They were not only pen names used by Schumann in his music journal, *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, but also primary characters in many of Schumann’s musical compositions.

The idea of creating musical alter egos or opposite doubles is not unique to Jean Paul or Schumann. In fact, its origin can be traced back to the nineteenth century and before. From very early on, people have already found their ways of creating doubles that share the same soul—from “Hindu reincarnates, to Kafka’s non-religious metamorphosis, to Catholic souls in heaven and hell.”²¹ This idea is further explored and expanded in literature, from Chamisso’s “The Strange Case of Peter Schlemihl” in which he played around the duality of one man and his shadow, to E.T.A. Hoffmann’s writings in which figures from childhood were reincarnated. The idea of previous existence was also often discussed, as seen in Tieck’s *Puss in Boots*, which explored the metamorphosis and interplay between human beings and animals through the main character, a talking cat. Later, the opposite doubles were expanded more inwardly with one person splitting into different personalities, which unavoidably led to even more madness. This is exactly what fascinated Schumann. We can see that the idea of creating musical alter egos or

²¹ Catherine Kautsky, "Eusebius, Florestan And Friends: Schumann And The Doppelgänger Tradition In German Literature," *American Music Teacher* 61, no. 2 (October/November 2011): 31.

opposite doubles started from without and gradually became within. With this concept, the dividing line between reality and fantasy becomes blurred.

The idea of creating musical alter egos or opposite doubles was a product of a cruel and uncaring world. In the Romantic time period, madness was not only a withdrawal from the painful everyday life and a protest for irrational social conditions and philosophy, but also a genesis of creative energy and an unpredictable medium of inspiration for artists, such as, writers, painters and musicians. This idea helped to rationalize madness, and like Kautsky said, “[it] personified memory, joined extreme personality types in one individual, imparted an aura of the supernatural to the otherwise ordinary and allowed a cautious flirtation with madness.”²² Indeed, the idea of musical alter egos or opposite doubles sparked people’s imaginations while also offered them an escape from the reality.

Although the idea of musical alter egos had a positive and creative influence on Schumann, it was also a double-edged sword. As Kautsky writes, the split “hovered over Schumann with both menace and benevolence; they allowed him to invoke his better self at the same time as they threatened his very existence.”²³ On one hand, this idea satisfied the various imaginations of Schumann. On the other hand, the split also drove him crazy and became the primary reason for his hospitalization in the last years of his life. This is definitely something agreed upon by many Schumann scholars. Jacobs said, “the withdrawing into himself, the dreaminess, which his reading of Jean Paul encouraged, were symptoms of the illness of schizophrenia to which he eventually succumbed.”²⁴ In Grove’s Dictionary, Spitta also

²² Kautsky, "Eusebius, Florestan And Friends," 31.

²³ Ibid., 34.

²⁴ Robert L. Jacobs, “Schumann and Jean Paul,” *Music & Letters* 30, no.3 (July 1949): 251.

mentioned “a certain morbid hypertension of feeling in connection with his passionate study Jean Paul” when talking about the Schumann’s ultimate mental collapse.²⁵ Jean Paul inspired the creation of Schumann’s musical alter egos, Florestan and Eusebius, and at the same time, had a fatal impact on Schumann’s mental state.

Schumann was never satisfied by just the dual personalities. By the time Eusebius and Florestan appeared, Schumann had also renamed his piano teacher Frederick Wieck, his teacher’s daughter Clara, his lover Christel and many of his other friends in his diary. All of them were firstly enlisted as characters in his projected novel, and later became contributors to Schumann’s music journal, *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*. Eventually, these doubles, together with a group of Schumann’s friends, formed the *Davidsbündler*, which not only is a bond of friends against the Philistines, but also represents the interior world of Schumann. These doubles and his imaginary music society served as the foundation and inspiration for Schumann’s music, and they became musical masquerades that Schumann would wear to hide his true self.

Some of the earliest and most literal application of Florestan and Eusebius would first make its appearance in Schumann’s *Davidsbündlertänze* Op. 6. In this piece, Schumann let his doubles take over his role of the composer and write pieces on behalf of himself.

Davidsbündlertänze is divided into two parts, and except the last piece of each part, every piece is marked with the initial “F,” “E,” or “F und E,” meaning that it is “composed” by Florestan, Eusebius, or both. Although neither “F” or “E” is marked in the last pieces of both parts, the last piece in Part I contains a statement that says “Hereupon Florestan stopped, and his lips trembled sorrowfully,” and the last piece in Part II shares a note that “Quite redundantly Eusebius added

²⁵ Henry C. Colles, *Grove’s Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 4th ed, (New York: MacMillan & Co., 1945), 4:669.

the following; but great happiness shone in his eyes the while.”²⁶ Even though Schumann omitted those references to Florestan and Eusebius as well as those idiosyncratic passages in the second edition, the importance of these doubles is undoubted. Putting on the masquerades of Florestan or Eusebius, Schumann became his doubles and completed this masterpiece.

Not satisfied with just Florestan and Eusebius, Schumann went above and beyond and incorporated many more musical masquerades in *Carnaval* Op.9. In this cycle, rather than the literal signature, Schumann used music notes to sign. Examining the entire cycle, we see that there is a section called “Sphinxes” that is inserted in the middle (see Figure 2-1). This section comprises three motives, which are not intended to be played when performing this cycle. Motive No.1 contains four notes—A-E flat-C-B, which in German is signified as A-Es-C-H. Because in German Es is often pronounced as letter S, we can then translate this motive No.1 as ASCH, which is the birthplace of Schumann’s then fiancée, Ernestine von Fricken. Similarly, motive No.2—A flat-C-B can be translated as AsCH, which is the combination of initials of Schumann’s middle name, Alexander, and last name. And motive No.3—E flat-C-B-A, can be translated as SCHA, which is again Schumann’s name. Throughout the cycle in *Carnaval* Op. 9, we will constantly see Schumann using these motives as signature to show his presence, despite all those different masquerades that he would wear.

²⁶ Peter Kaminsky, “Principles of Formal Structure in Schumann’s Early Piano Cycles,” *Music Theory Spectrum* 11, no. 2 (Autumn, 1989): 216.

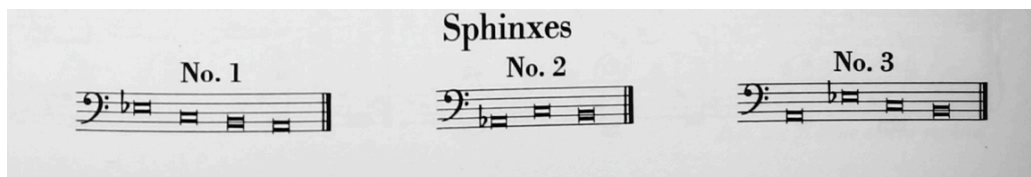


Figure 2-1 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Sphinxes,” mm. 1-3.²⁷

The first example that we will examine is the piece “Chopin.” Schumann has always been fascinated by Chopin’s music and he spoke so highly of Chopin that he—in fact, one of his doubles, Eusebius—made the famous comment that “Hats off, gentlemen, a genius.” While Chopin did not reciprocate this admiration for Schumann, Schumann showed his affection by including Chopin into his *Dauidsbüandler* and wrote the piece “Chopin” in his *Carnaval*. In this piece, Schumann appears as Chopin, the composer of nocturnes. We can see the immediate similarity of the arpeggiated left hand accompaniment and right hand melodic contour between Schumann’s “Chopin” and Chopin nocturne Op.9 No.1 (see Figure 2-2 and Figure 2-3). The ornamentation towards the end of the piece also shows the imitation of Chopin’s style in measure 10. Although Schumann takes the style of Chopin, he reinforces it with his own touch on the innovative harmonic progressions. Charles Rosen described that “Schumann’s greatest harmonic strength was in the blending or merging of tonalities.”²⁸ Here in this piece, we can see the display of many different harmonies just within the four phrases. The first phrase is rather straightforward at the beginning, with the tonic A flat major chord. However, instead of the typical E flat major chord as the dominant, Schumann uses an e flat minor chord, which immediately goes on to a F dominant seventh chord that resolves to a b flat minor chord. We can

²⁷ Robert Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, ed. Wolfgang Boetticher (München: G. Henle Verlag, 1976): 95.

²⁸ Charles Rosen, *The Romantic Generation*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 703.

see how within four measures, Schumann already takes us from A flat major to b flat minor. Schumann uses similar technique in the second phrase—instead of going to the F dominant seventh chord, he uses an f minor chord, followed by a D flat major chord, an E flat major chord and then an A flat major chord, thus forming the cadential progression of IV-V-I, and brings us back to A flat major. Using the chromatic bass line A flat-G-G flat-F, the third phrase eases us into a cadential progression into f minor. Again, in the final phrase, Schumann uses the chromatic bass line F-F flat-E flat, which ultimately functions as the dominant that leads us back to the home key A flat major. It is such a perfect blend of both Schumann and Chopin that it is almost impossible to differentiate which is the masquerade and which is the true self.

Chopin

The image shows a page of musical notation for Robert Schumann's 'Chopin' from his Carnival Op. 9. The score is in 6/4 time, B-flat major, and is marked 'Agitato'. It consists of four systems of music. The first system starts with a treble clef and a bass clef, with a key signature of two flats and a 6/4 time signature. The music is characterized by rapid sixteenth-note passages in both hands, often with slurs and accents. The second system continues this texture. The third system features a more melodic line in the right hand with a slur and a 'sf' marking. The fourth system concludes with a 'ritardando' and 'a tempo' marking, ending with a double bar line and 'D. S.'.

Figure 2-2 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Chopin,” mm. 1-14.²⁹

The image shows a page of musical notation for Frederic Chopin's Nocturne Op. 9 No. 1, mm. 1-2. The score is in 4/4 time, B-flat major, and is marked 'p espress.'. It consists of two systems of music. The first system starts with a treble clef and a bass clef, with a key signature of two flats and a 4/4 time signature. The music is characterized by a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand, both with slurs and accents. The second system continues this texture.

Figure 2-3 Frederic Chopin, *Nocturne* Op. 9 No. 1, mm. 1-2.³⁰

²⁹ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 99.

³⁰ Frederic Chopin, *Nocturne* Op. 9 No. 1, ed. Jan Ekier (Kraków: National Edition of the Works of Fryderyk Chopin, 1995), 1.

Similarly, in the piece “Paganini,” Schumann puts on the masquerade of Paganini and showcases the violin virtuosity on piano keyboard. The music sounds like what Paganini would have written, but at the same time dramatically different from Paganini’s music. On one hand, the figurations show similarity to cross string techniques on a violin, which Paganini would have composed. On the other hand, the off-beat accents in the left hand add rhythmic complexity and distort the real downbeat feeling (see Figure 2-4). This kind of rhythmic displacement is a signature of Schumann. And of course, Schumann would not forget to “sign” his music—we can clearly see Sphinx No.2—A flat-C-B in measure 25 (see Figure 2-5). Schumann even wrote a *sforzando* there to remind us of his presence. In some sense, Paganini is “an interpretative fiction of an aspect of Schumann.”³¹ It is almost like looking at Schumann through the eyes of Paganini. It is Paganini, but it also is Schumann.



Figure 2-4 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Paganini,” mm. 1-8.³²

³¹ Columbus, “Die Flegeljahre,” 79.

³² Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 106.



Figure 2-5 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Paganini,” mm. 25.³³

In addition to Chopin and Paganini, Schumann also put on the masquerades of different characters from *commedia dell'arte* in this piano cycle. For example, the piece “Pierrot” is a depiction of the character Pierrot and the piece “Arlequin” is a depiction of the character Harlequin. On the surface, the music shows the characteristics of those characters. Even though “Pierrot” is written in E flat major, the piece starts with a diminished chord rather than an E flat major chord. This unsettling harmony and the relatively slow tempo match perfectly with the image of the sad and overly naive clown Pierrot (see Figure 2-6). With the bright B flat major key and more lighthearted rhythm in “Arlequin,” Schumann portrays a vivid picture of the astute servant Harlequin (see Figure 2-7). However, if we look closely enough, we will easily find the embedded Sphinx No.3. In the piece of “Pierrot,” the spelling of “ASCH”—A-Eb-C-B—is firstly introduced in the tenor line, and then again in the soprano and alto lines as the soprano line and tenor line invert with each other in the next phrase. Not to mention that a slight variation of “ASCH”—Eb-C-Bb—appears in unison in both soprano and tenor lines in *forte* dynamics right after the initial appearance of “ASCH”. The same ASCH theme is also introduced in the first phrase of the piece “Arlequin.” Although disguised in a typical Viennese waltz rhythm that is used to highlight the character of “Harlequin,” it’s impossible to miss the spelling of A-Eb-C-

³³ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 107.

B. In addition to Schumann's signatures, we can also see that in both pieces, Schumann likes to play with the rapid alternations of contrasting materials. For example, in "Pierrot," we see the initial "ASCH" motive written in contrapuntal style and *piano* dynamics is all the sudden interrupted by its variant "SCH" written in complete unison and *forte* dynamics. Similarly, in "Arlequin," the light-hearted dance rhythm that goes across the keyboard is all the sudden interrupted by the straightforward descending scale figurations written in *fortissimo*. Even though on the surface, the music speaks for Pierrot and Harlequin, we see the strong Schumannesque touch hidden underneath it.

Figure 2-6 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, "Pierrot," mm. 1-15.³⁴

³⁴ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 88.



Figure 2-7 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Arlequin,” mm. 1-14.³⁵

Pierrot and Harlequin are not the only *commedia dell'arte* characters found in *Carnaval*. The piece “Pantalon et Colombine” is also related with the characters Pantalone and Columbina. Pantalone, characterized by his greedy nature, extreme emotions, and elite social class, and Columbina, a comic servant who is usually the flirtatious slave type, take turns to appear in the piece. The hasty staccato in the A section is no doubt a representation of the lusty feature of the character “Pantalone” (see Figure 2-8). This really contrasts with the relatively slow and exaggerated legato B section that represents “Columbina” (see Figure 2-9). When the A section returns again and all the sudden gets interrupted by the reappearance of B section, which also ends abruptly after a few measures, we could sense the comic feature of the “Columbina” character (see Figure 2-10). Despite the vivid character depicted in the music, we can still easily spot the Sphinx motive No.2 in the first measure, as the first three notes of the piece spell as Ab-C-B. Here, even though Schumann shows up with the disguise of different characters from *commedia dell'arte*, if we look through the surface, we see that they are all just Schumann’s masquerades.

³⁵ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 89.

104 **Pantalon et Colombine**

Presto

5 *sf* *sfz* *sf* *sfz* *sf* *sfz*

Pedal *sf* *sf* *sf* *sf*

Figure 2-8 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Pantalon et Colombine,” mm. 1-8.³⁶

13 **Meno presto**

18 *p* *ff*

Pedal

Figure 2-9 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Pantalon et Colombine,” mm. 13-20.³⁷

³⁶ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 104.

³⁷ *Ibid.*



Figure 2-10 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Pantalon et Colombine,” mm. 29-38.³⁸

The pairings of those *commedia dell'arte* characters start to show evidence of Schumann’s fondness for the juxtaposition of polar opposites—the sad and unworldly Pierrot versus the light-hearted and resourceful Harlequin, the greedy Pantalon who is on the high social class versus flirtatious servant Columbina. This extreme contrast of personality is definitely something that Schumann resonated with, and we would often find similar juxtapositions of contrasts in his music. In later chapters, we would see that the juxtaposition of polar opposites is actually a coherent aesthetic strategy that is constantly used by Schumann to deliberately disrupt the unity of a musical work.

Of course, Schumann’s musical alter egos, Florestan and Eusebius, cannot be missed in this important piano cycle. They appear back-to-back and are in contrast in every possible way. The piece “Eusebius” is written in E flat major (see Figure 2-11). Although we are able to hear a clear E flat major key center at the beginning of the piece, we miss a stable tonic sonority because of the lacking of an E flat tonic note in the bass. In addition to the harmonic instability,

³⁸ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 105.

the seven against two between the two hands totally hides the downbeat and adds rhythmic instability to it. The “Adagio” and “Più lento” tempo markings as well as the “*sotto voce*” and “*molto teneramente*” throughout the piece further bring out the nostalgic feeling. Except the middle section where the melody line is doubled into octaves with rolling chords in the left hand, the texture of the majority of the piece is relatively thin with a single melody line and very light left hand harmonic support. The “*senza pedale*” makes an already airy texture even lighter.

The image shows a page of musical notation for Robert Schumann's "Eusebius" from his "Carnaval" Op. 9. The page is numbered 91 in the top right corner. The title "Eusebius" is centered at the top. The tempo marking "Adagio" is written above the first staff. The key signature is G minor (two flats) and the time signature is 2/4. The score consists of two systems of music. The first system (measures 1-5) includes the instruction "sotto voce" and "senza Pedale". The second system (measures 6-11) includes the instruction "rit.". The notation includes various musical symbols such as slurs, fingerings (e.g., 2, 7, 1, 3, 3, 2, 4, 3, 1), and dynamic markings like "p".

Figure 2-11 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Eusebius,” mm. 1-11.³⁹

The piece “Florestan” contrasts with “Eusebius” in every possible way. The relatively clear harmony, the slow tempo, the whispering dynamic, the thin texture, the rhythmic irregularity as well as the nostalgic and peaceful character are all exactly the opposite of those of the “Florestan” piece, which features harmonic ambiguity, agitated tempo, stormy dynamics, thick repeated chords, strong downbeat as well as restless and passionate feeling (see Figure 2-12). Even though the piece is written in g minor, it starts with a diminished seventh chord that brings out an unsettling feeling. The overall rhythmic pattern is rather straightforward. The

³⁹ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 91.

sforzando on a weak beat, the *crescendo* into *sforzando* as well as the thick repeated chords just give the piece more agitated and passionate feelings.



Figure 2-12 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Florestan,” mm. 1-6.⁴⁰

The vivid descriptions of Florestan and Eusebius cannot hide the fact that looking through the musical masquerades, we see Schumann himself. Despite the obvious differences between these two pieces, what remains unchanged is the Sphinx No.3 motive ASCH (A-Eb-C-B) that appears at the beginning of both pieces. It is more straightforward in “Florestan” as the very first four notes in the right hand melody is A-Eb-C-B. The ASCH theme is more subtle in “Eusebius.” However, even though the four notes are not exactly in the order of A-Eb-C-B, we can clearly see the melody line is circling around those four notes. In addition to the signatures, the rhythmic displacement and complexity as well as the unconventional harmonic progressions are definitely Schumann’s touch.

In addition to characters from *commedia dell’arte* and Schumann’s musical alter egos, his loves are also included in the cycle. The piece “Chiarina” is a depiction of Clara as a virtuosic pianist, and the piece “Estrella” is a depiction of Ernestine von Fricken, Schumann’s fiancée for a short period of time. Similarly, the ASCH theme presents itself at the very beginning of both pieces with the first three notes in the right hand spell Ab-C-B (see Figure 2-13 and Figure 2-14).

⁴⁰ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 92.

Even though it is the same three notes, Schumann is able to play with it, shifting different registers of the keyboard and adding different rhythm to differentiate the characters between Clara and Ernestine. Just like all the other pieces that we examined, in both “Chiarina” and “Estrella,” accents are frequently placed on the weak beats. Schumann often used this technique to achieve rhythmic displacement. We can clearly see the Schumann touch despite the vivid characters portrayed in the music.



Figure 2-13 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Chiarina,” mm. 1-5.⁴¹

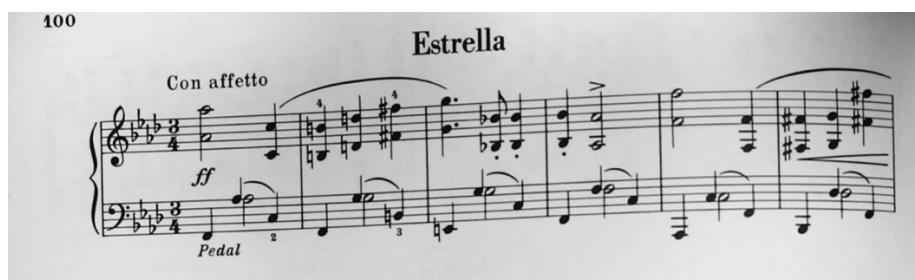


Figure 2-14 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Estrella,” mm. 1-6.⁴²

The difficulties in differentiating what is the masquerade and what is behind the masquerade become the intractable problem in Schumann’s music. Everything is interwoven together into one piece in Schumann’s music. Instead of pure imitation, Schumann internalizes those inspirations and reproduces something that is familiar while unfamiliar at the same time. The characters found in *Carnaval* Op. 9 and similar works are masquerades, but they are

⁴¹ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 98.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 100.

definitely Schumann's masquerades. As Columbus writes, masquerade "expresses a dynamic of meaning through certain constants or forms of process; it offers interpretive fictions of life not as life is parodic, imitative, but as it is syncretic and without such boundaries as beginnings and ends."⁴³ On the surface, we see vivid images of different characters. However, once we uncover the masquerades, we see the frequent rhythmic displacements, unconventional harmony changes as well as rapid alternations of contrasting materials, not to mention the reiteration of the Sphinx motives across the entire cycle. All of these are unique to Schumann. This truly blurs the boundary between Schumann and his masquerades and makes it difficult to differentiate what is the masquerade and what is behind the masquerade.

We can see the profound impact of Jean Paul and other Romantic writers on Schumann both musically and personally. The reading gave birth to Schumann's own musical alter egos, Florestan and Eusebius, and his imaginary music society, the *Davidsbündler*, which ultimately became Schumann's musical masquerades in many of his compositions. Through the examination of *Carnaval* Op.9, we can see that Schumann constantly employed masquerades as a deliberate aesthetic program to create contrasting and disparate music. At the same time of satisfying all the imaginations of Schumann, the appearance of Florestan and Eusebius ultimately led to the deterioration of his mental state. To a certain extent, this fragmentation of mental state influenced Schumann's compositional style. In the next Chapter, we will discuss the concept of fragment and its embodiment in Schumann's music.

⁴³ Columbus, "Die Flegeljahre," 79.

Chapter 3: Fragments and Schumann's Organization of Fragments

The fragmentation of Schumann's mental state might have influenced Schumann's compositional style and resulted in the musical fragments we find through many of his pieces. Ideas that Schumann gained from reading Romantic era literature certainly also contributed to fragments in his compositions. Derived from Romantic aesthetics, fragments become the principal and coherent strategy deliberately used by Schumann to create intentional chaos and disorder in his music. We will begin by examining the definition of a musical fragment using examples from Schumann's music. We will then discuss the consistent compositional techniques used by Schumann to organize those fragments and thus achieve the kaleidoscopic effect in his music.

In order to understand the definition of a musical fragment, it is important to consider its origin in literature. Charles Rosen discussed extensively about the concept of fragment in his book *The Romantic Generation*, which helps us to better understand its literary origin. The concept of "fragment" first appeared in the early Romantic period in Germany, and it quickly became the principal form of expression among young artists, philosophers, and poets by the end of eighteenth century. Friedrich Schlegel, considered as one of the possible creators of this concept, defined a fragment as follows: "A fragment should be like a little work of art, complete in itself and separated from the rest of the universe like a hedgehog."⁴⁴ A hedgehog is a perfect metaphor for fragment—"its form is well defined and yet blurred at the edges" and its "spherical shape, organic and ideally geometrical, suited Romantic thought."⁴⁵ In literature, a fragment is usually in the form of an aphoristic statement, which is derived from French maxims in

⁴⁴ Rosen, *The Romantic Generation*, 48.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

seventeenth century. A Classical fragment is often precise and concise, without losing the poetic sense. Because of its precision and concision, it might not always sound agreeable to our ears for daily speech. The Classical fragment later developed into its Romantic version, which is described as “imperfect, yet complete.”⁴⁶ In some sense, a fragment is finished in its form, but incomplete in its content, and thus it is in a closed and circular structure and the content is always up to interpretation. We can sense the tremendous contradictions within the concept of fragments, as it is both “complete” and “incomplete,” and simultaneously “defined” and “blurry.”

A concept that heavily influenced the development of fragments is the idea of ruins. Here, ruins can be understood in a literal sense and be considered as a symbol for incompleteness. Rosen’s discussion in his book again provides us with useful background information to understand the significance of this concept. Appreciation for ruins started back in Renaissance and Baroque periods of time. During those time, ruins held both moral and sacred significance. As the time went on, the cultural and artistic view towards ruins underwent a dramatic transformation. In sixteenth and seventeenth century, artists would use ruins as a creative approach by purposely incorporating it into their artworks to achieve dramatic effect. By eighteenth century however, artists took a step further. Instead of artificially including ruins for dramatic effect, they wanted to make ruins into a “natural state.” For example, in the world of architecture, buildings started to recede and blend into landscapes. Similarly in the world of art, artists were hoping to “induce a tragic sense of resignation, of melancholy” into their artworks.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Rosen, *The Romantic Generation*, 50.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 93.

The final result is that ruins became an inevitable, natural, and embraced phenomenon at the end of eighteenth century.

This appreciation for ruins led people to accept fragments, to face the indefinite, the ephemeral and the incomplete, and to embrace the chaos and disorder. Indeed, the existence of fragments provides “an unstable but successful solution to the problem of introducing the disorder of life into art without compromising the independence and integrity of the work,” and similarly in music, even though fragments are “ambiguous and disconcerting,” they “undermine the symmetry and the convention of the form without ever quite destroying them.”⁴⁸ Fragments gave artists the opportunity to induce new and different energy into their art without totally abandoning what was previously appreciated. In some sense, a musical fragment challenges the traditional without destroying it. Moving forward, we will begin to examine examples of fragments from Schumann’s music to better understand and illustrate this concept.

A musical fragment could be a piece that does not meet the expectation of a conventional harmonic progression and thus loses the sense of beginning or ending. The first song in Schumann’s song cycle *Dichterliebe*, “Im wunderschönen Monat Mai,” is an excellent example for this type of musical fragment (see Figure 3-1). In this song, the last chord in the postlude is a dominant seventh chord of F sharp minor, which indubitably demands a resolution to the F sharp minor tonic chord. However, if we look through the entire song, we can see that no such f sharp minor chord exists throughout the piece. Although it is not a surprise at all to see a song that ends with an unresolved dissonance in modern music, this is a rather bold act and Schumann was actually the first generation of composers who dared to challenge the traditional tonal function.

⁴⁸ Rosen, *The Romantic Generation*, 96.

The harmony at the beginning of the song is also not what we would expect. Instead of a tonic chord, the piece starts with a half-diminished chord. We can see that the song “starts as if continuing a process already in motion.”⁴⁹ What is more, the prelude of the song appears two more times in the song, first time as an interlude between the first and the second stanza, second time at the end as the postlude. Rather than helping us to move forward, the interlude just gives us *déjà vu* of the beginning. Rather than wrapping up the whole song, because of the suspended feeling brought out by the unresolved chord at the end, the postlude naturally leads people back to the beginning. The fragment is like a circle that loops infinitely within itself. This is why Rosen described the song as “[beginning] in the middle, and [ending] as it began—an emblem of unsatisfied desire, of longing eternally renewed.”⁵⁰ From this example, we can see that a fragment in music could refer to a piece that starts in the middle and does not end properly or cannot stand alone harmonically.

⁴⁹ Rosen, *The Romantic Generation*, 96.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 41.

DICHTERLIEBE

Aus Heinrich Heines „Buch der Lieder“
 Frau Wilhelmine Schröder-Devrient zugeeignet
 Komponiert 1840 · Erschienen 1844

I

Opus 48

Langsam, zart

Singstimme

Klavier *p*

4 Im wun - der-schö-nen Mo-nat Mai, als

7 al - - le Knos - pen spran-gen, da ist in mei - - - nem

10 Her-zen die Lie - be auf - ge - gan - gen. *ritard.* *(p)*

3

14 Im wun - der - schö - nen Mo - nat

17 Mai, als al - - le Vö - - gel san - gen, da

20 hab' ich ihr ge - stan - den mein Seh - - nen und Ver -

23 lan - gen. ritard.

Figure 3-1 Robert Schumann, *Dichterliebe* Op. 48, “Im wunderschönen Monat Mai.”⁵¹

⁵¹ Robert Schumann, *Dichterliebe* Op. 48, ed. Kazuko Ozawa (München: G. Henle Verlag, 2005), 2-3.

This song is also a perfect example to show how a fragment will undermine the tradition without destroying it completely. In the previous paragraph, we noted that there is no f sharp minor chord that would provide a resolution to the dominant seventh chord. However, this does not mean that there is no resolution at all. If we look farther into the cycle, we will notice that the second song begins with an interval of A and C sharp, pitches which are ambiguous in the sense that they could belong to either a f sharp minor chord or an A major chord (see Figure 3-2). However, this ambiguity works perfectly in this situation, as it could function as a resolution of the dominant seventh chord in the previous song without destroying the A major tonality in the second song. Even within the first song, although there isn't resolution, we can see how the vocal line and piano line seamlessly interweave and constantly push each other into the next level. For example, at the end of the first stanza, the vocal line reaches a G natural, while the piano line takes a step further and pushes it half a step higher to a G sharp. We can see that on one hand, Schumann challenged the traditional harmonic expectation by making a subtle resolution and by creating more tension through the interweave of piano line and vocal line; while on the other hand, he still kept the basic tension and relaxation relationship in music.

4

II

Nicht schnell

p

Aus mei - nen Trä - nen sprie - ßen, viel blü - hen - de Blu - men her -

p >

vor, und mei - ne Seuf - zer wer - den, ein Nach - ti - gal - len - chor. Und

pp *p >* *pp* *p*

wenn du mich lieb hast, Kind - chen, schenk' ich dir die Blu - men all', und vor

pp

8

13

ritard.

dei - nem Fen - ster soll klin - gen das Lied der Nach - ti - gall.

ritard.

pp

*

Figure 3-2 Robert Schumann, *Dichterliebe* Op. 48, “Aus meinen Tränen sprießen,” mm. 1-17.⁵²

Even when a piece meets all harmonic expectations, it could still be considered as a musical fragment if it does not have a sense of a real beginning or ending and cannot stand alone

⁵² Schumann, *Dichterliebe*, 4.

musically. Compared with the first song, the second song in *Dichterliebe* has much less ambiguity in terms of its tonality (see Figure 3-2). Even though the beginning does not have a solid A major tonic chord, the key center is strongly implied, not to mention the many cadential progressions throughout the piece that confirm the A major tonality over and over again.

Nevertheless, despite the tonal stability, this song has even less sense of a beginning or an ending than the first song. Just like as we discussed above, the first note C sharp is totally a resolution of the last note in the previous song. Therefore, the beginning sounds more like an ending of the previous song rather than the birth of a new song, especially given the tradition that each song in the cycle should be performed continuously without a pause in between. And if we look at the ending of each phrase, we will find it hard to determine where the end of the phrase is. We can see that the phrase ends with the vocal line hanging in there with a fermata on an unresolved B, which is then resolved with a cadential progression in the piano part. Harmonically speaking, the phrase ends with the piano part. However, the song is clearly over when the singer finishes the last note. The ambiguity on where the end of song is makes it have less sense of an ending. As Rosen comments, the song “appears to be a separate, closed traditional structure that satisfies all the formal requirements, with a well-defined melody and V7/I cadence, and yet it makes no sense in independent performance.”⁵³ The song is complete harmonically, but incomplete musically. It fulfills some traditional expectations, while undermines others, thereby is another example of a musical fragment.

In addition to pieces that do not have a real beginning or ending, and thereby cannot stand along either harmonically or musically, a musical fragment may also refer to a phrase that

⁵³ Rosen, *The Romantic Generation*, 54.

is out of the place in a piece. This is often embodied through the use of quotation in Schumann's music. For example, the most famous quotation in Schumann's music is the quotation of *Papillons* in the piece of "Florestan" from *Carnival* (see Figure 3-3). As we have talked about in the previous chapter, it is already a shock when the piece commences with the most unstable chord, a repeated fully diminished seventh chord. The swells created by the crescendo building up into a *sforzando* afterwards adds to the unsettling, agitated and stormy character of Florestan. All these are suddenly interrupted by a sentimental fragment from *Papillons*. Then Schumann does the same thing again, but this time with a more complete quotation from *Papillons*, which is also marked with a commentary "Papillon?" in parentheses. Through the contrasts between the quotation and the original music—the disturbing fully diminished chords at the beginning versus a relatively more stable dominant seventh chord in the quotation, the "Passionato" marking versus "Adagio leggiero" markings, the unexpected accent on the second beat versus a more predictable waltz accompaniment with the emphasis on beat one, the stormy character versus the dreamy character, and so on—we can see how out of place this quotation is. This time Schumann challenges tradition by breaking the original flow of the music. However, because of the fleeting quality of this quotation, Schumann did not destroy the music completely and we can still grasp to the original music. We can thus see how quotation manifests itself as a musical fragment.

Figure 3-3 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Florestan,” mm. 1-25.⁵⁴

To summarize what we have discussed above, a musical fragment can be broadly defined as a segment that does not start or end properly, and thus could not stand alone either harmonically or musically. Or it could be a single phrase that is out of the place in music, often in the embodiment of a quotation in Schumann’s music. Through the example of the quotation, we can already begin to see that Schumann’s choice of fragment often contrasts with the surrounding materials. In fact, if we zoom out and look at how he grouped all his other fragments, we will see that juxtaposition of contrasting materials is actually the principal and coherent compositional technique that Schumann employed to organize his fragments, so that different kinds of musical effects could be achieved.

⁵⁴ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 92.

One effect that juxtaposition of contrasting fragments will bring is “self-annihilation,” which in Schumann’s language is “Sich-selbstvernichten.” A similar term is also coined by John Daverio as “Selbstvernichtung.” In this dissertation, we will also use “self-destruction” and “deliberate eradication” to refer to this musical effect. As the term implies, each fragment cancels the effect of the previous one, which would unavoidably result in the disruption of the unity of a musical work. There is no better example than *Papillons* to illustrate this effect. We will examine fragments in *Papillons* to see how each fragment contrasts with each other through different aspects of the music, including compositional styles, characters, key relationships, rhythmic patterns, dynamic levels, different register of the piano, and so on, and thereby creating this unique effect.

This effect is obvious from No.1 to No.2 through the abrupt key change and the contrasting styles of the different dances. The “Introduzione” of *Papillons* is an open-ended fragment that starts from the standard tonic but ends at the dominant (see Figure 3-4). It raises the expectation and functions as a provocative question, which is immediately answered by No.1. Picking up from the last note in the “Introduzione, No.1 is a complete, well-balanced and elegant dance that follows the traditional Schubertian Waltz pattern (see Figure 1-1). Both Introduzione and No.1 are written in D major. However, No.2 starts in E flat major and then modulates to A flat major (see Figure 3-5). The key change from D major to E flat major seems abrupt and jarring, because although E flat is just half a step higher than D, they are harmonically distant keys that are rarely put back to back in a traditional setting. However, if we take a closer look, we will see the Neapolitan relationship between the D and E flat. Even though No.2 is still a Schubertian dance, it is a fast dance written in duple meter and both hands take relatively equal roles as if they are in a conversation, which contrasts to the usual right-hand melody and left-

hand accompaniment Waltz. We can clearly see the effect of self-annihilation through the grouping of these two fragments, as No.2 really erases the elegance of the previous two fragments, replaces with the new energy and exuberance, and chafes tonally with them in an expressive way.



Figure 3-4 Robert Schumann, *Papillons* Op. 2, “Introduzione,” mm. 1-6.⁵⁵

Figure 3-5 Robert Schumann, *Papillons* Op. 2, No. 2, mm. 1-12.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Schumann, *Papillons*, 3.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

By pairing No.2 and No.3 back-to-back, Schumann creates a different kind of self-destruction effect through the portray of different characters and the employ of varied compositional technique. Rather than graceful or energetic dances, No.3 might represent the giant boot, an unusual costume of a mammoth-sized boot in the masquerade ball in the last chapter of Jean Paul's novel *Die Flegeljahre* (see Figure 1-2). The accented octaves in the lower register of the keyboard are almost like an affirmative monologue, which is stated firstly in the left hand, then is imitated in the right hand, and finally forms a canon between two hands. Hardly anything elegant or energetic, No.3 seems to produce some intentional crudeness and has more of a clownish feeling. The Baroque contrapuntal compositional technique also stands out from the writings for the two dances in the previous pieces. We can see the self-destruction effect through the character and the compositional contrasts.

The self-destruction effect unavoidably leads to absolute chaos and disorder in Schumann's music. However, if we look closely at the way how Schumann created those intentional disruptions, we can see that there are some consistent compositional strategies hidden underneath. Even though it seems that Schumann grouped pieces that are written in absolutely unrelated keys, there is some subtle connection hidden behind. For example, the A flat at the end of No.2 turns to its enharmonic equivalence G sharp, which functions nicely as the dominant of the first note of No.3, C sharp (see Figure 1-2). And the C sharp functions as the dominant of f sharp minor. This use of enharmonic equivalence and the set-up of the secondary dominant make it a nice transition from A flat major to f sharp minor. This compositional technique is frequently employed by Schumann throughout *Papillons*. We can see that Schumann uses a coherent and consistent compositional strategy to purposely create disparity and disruption in his music.

The juxtaposition of contrasting materials not only happens between fragments, but also takes place within one fragment. In some sense, it almost feels like each fragment is composed of contrasting smaller fragments, which further intensifies the self-destruction effect. Although No.4 continues in the same key and it goes back to a graceful Waltz pattern, this one distinguishes from others through a rather playful middle section (see Figure 1-4). The rhythmic excitement of the middle section tastefully contrasts with the opening Waltz, especially through the intentional emphasis on beat three instead of the usual emphasis on beat one which is expected in a Waltz. The contrasting rhythm brought out by different small fragments stands out and helps to create the self-destruction effect.

Moving from No.4 to No.5, Schumann deliberately eradicates the effect of No.4 through the exploration of different texture and rhythmic patterns. Compared with the more graceful and lighthearted No.4, No.5 is very lyrical and expressive with longer phrases and more complex texture, shown through the right hand's typical polonaise rhythm and the left hand's emphasis on the second beat. This invokes a feature found in a Bach Sarabande (see Figure 3-6). Despite the contrast, the enharmonic equivalence technique is presented again between No.4 and No.5. Turning an A sharp major chord into a B flat major chord at the end of No.4, Schumann successfully and skillfully takes us to the next piece. With the aid of this compositional technique, Schumann is able to further intensify the self-destruction effect.

(♩ = 80)

5. *Basso cantando*

5

9 *sf*

13

18 *pp*

22

Figure 3-6 Robert Schumann, *Papillons* Op. 2, No. 5, mm. 1-26.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ Schumann, *Papillons*, 6-7.

A different dynamic level is employed between No.5 and No.6 as a way to bring out the self-annihilation effect. Even though No.5 ends with a B flat major tonic chord, it seems to fade away without a real sense of closure. Therefore, No.6 is already an interruption of the previous dance. The fact that it starts with a *sforzando* on the weakest beat with a fully diminished seventh chord further adds a sense of interruption (see Figure 3-7). Just like No.4, No.6 itself has built-in self-annihilation effect through the contrasting smaller fragments organized in the structure of ABACA. Except the unexpected *sforzando*, A section also features louder dynamics as well as a broader span of the keyboard. These dynamics and broader use of the keyboard intensify the overall agitated character. The aural and visual contrasts between the A section and the waltzes in B and C sections are quite obvious, as those waltz in B and C sections feature more regular rhythmic pattern, lighter dynamics, more transparent texture, as well as a more graceful and elegant character. We can see the self-annihilation effect through the contrasts of dynamics as well as the writing styles.

Musical score for Robert Schumann's *Papillons* Op. 2, No. 6, measures 1-39. The score is in 3/4 time and G major. It features a piano accompaniment with various dynamics including *sf*, *pp*, and *ff*. The piece includes first and second endings and a tempo marking of quarter note = 152.

Figure 3-7 Robert Schumann, *Papillons* Op. 2, No. 6, mm. 1-39.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Schumann, *Papillons*, 7-8.

Through our examination of selected fragments from *Papillons*, we know that juxtaposition of contrasting fragments is a compositional technique that Schumann frequently employs to organize fragments and thereby purposely break the unity of the musical work and achieve musical effects such as self-annihilation. It is not unusual to adjunctly align contrasting materials, but it is definitely extraordinary to present contrasts in so many different ways. Compositional technique, such as the enharmonic equivalence, is used to present disparate tonalities and thereby disrupt the expected tonal unity of the work. In addition, Schumann also uses contrasts between compositional styles, characters, rhythmic patterns, dynamic levels, and different register of the piano, to create a self-annihilation effect and thereby intentionally disrupt the overall unity of the musical work. Our perception of the previous fragment begins to change as we listen to each new fragment, creating a “kaleidoscopic” effect.

Another musical effect achieved through the contrast between different musical fragments is humor. Schumann took this concept very seriously, and he believed that it was “humor” that made his compositions German and thus difficult for foreigners to understand his music. Schumann most likely learned this concept from his literary model, Jean Paul, who devoted much of his writing into “comic modes,” including “satire, irony, wit, and even the ridiculous” with a lengthy chapter dedicated to “humor.” For Jean Paul, “humor” came from “contrasts of incommensurable entities,” which to be more specific, includes “infinite contrast, implausible contradictions, trivial conclusions, higher versus lower worlds.”⁵⁹ We can see the immediate parallels between Jean Paul’s ideas of humor and Schumann’s organization of

⁵⁹ John Daverio, *Nineteenth-Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology*, (New York: Schirmer Books, 1993), 65.

fragments. In the rest of the chapter, we will continue to explore how Schumann combined contrasting fragments to achieve humor.

The most straightforward duality that would lead to humor is the juxtaposition of Schumann's musical alter egos, the introverted and melancholic Eusebius with the extroverted and exuberant Florestan. In the previous Chapter, we have already talked about how in Schumann's *Carnaval* the "Eusebius" piece contrasts with "Florestan" piece in every possible way, which is definitely an example of "infinite contrasts" or "implausible contradictions" that would lead to humor.

Another example of this Eusebius-Florestan juxtaposition can be found in Schumann's *Fantasiestücke* Op.12. Differing from the examples in *Carnaval*, we see that Schumann did not affix each piece with specific characters in *Fantasiestücke*. However, given the obvious characteristic of each piece, listeners can easily relate them to either Florestan or Eusebius. The most obvious Eusebius piece would be the third piece of the set, "Warum?" The piece evokes a melancholic feeling on the first listen and thus makes it a natural connection to Eusebius (see Figure 3-8). This connection is further confirmed if we take a closer look at the music. The piece begins with some hesitation as if there was some reflective process occurring as Schumann gave birth to the piece. The fact that it does not reach a secure tonic chord until the third measure just gives the feeling that music unfolds without any preparations and thus endows it with some daydreaming quality. This daydreaming quality can be further seen in the rhythmic instability, which is shown through the contrast between a more straightforward rhythm in the right hand melody and an off-beat left hand accompaniment. It can also be seen through the tempo marking at the top to "Langsam und zart," meaning slowly and tenderly, and finally through the

descriptive title “Warum?” which literally translated as “Why?” All those are totally in line with the reflective and brooding characteristics of Eusebius.

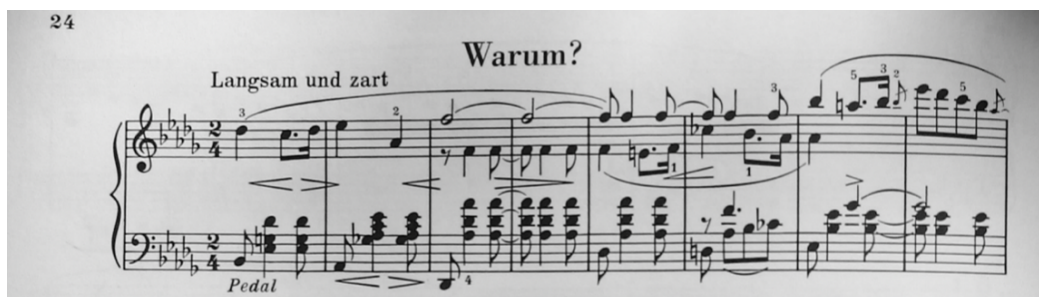


Figure 3-8 Robert Schumann, *Fantasiestücke* Op. 12, “Warum?” mm. 1-8.⁶⁰

Humor is then created by pairing a Florestan piece with this Eusebius piece. “Grillen,” the piece following “Warum?” starts with sturdy chords in both hands and straightforward rhythm (see Figure 3-9). The crescendo into a *sforzando* as well as the unexpected accents following the swell endow the entire piece with exuberance and passion. Although the piece has a B section that is relatively quiet in terms of the general dynamic, Schumann masterfully puts accents on the third beat, the weakest beat of the measure and thus conveys the agitated feeling of the music (see Figure 3-10). The C section after the return of the A section is also quite low in energy (see Figure 3-11). Similar to the B section, Schumann plays with the third beats again. This time, he ties over the third beat to the next downbeat and thus creates the syncopations, which brings out the breathless quality of the music. All these characteristics speak for the character of Florestan, which contrasts with the previous piece in every possible way. The fact that Schumann wrote “mit Humor” on top of the piece further confirms the intent for the juxtaposition between contrasting characters to create a humorous effect.

⁶⁰ Robert Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band II*, ed. Wolfgang Boetticher (München: G. Henle Verlag, 1987): 24.



Figure 3-9 Robert Schumann, *Fantasiestücke* Op. 12, “Grillen,” mm. 1-8.⁶¹

Figure 3-10 Robert Schumann, *Fantasiestücke* Op. 12, “Grillen,” mm. 17-34.⁶²

Figure 3-11 Robert Schumann, *Fantasiestücke* Op. 12, “Grillen,” mm. 61-66.⁶³

⁶¹ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band II*, 24.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 25.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 26.

With the concept of “humor” in mind, Schumann also frequently plays with juxtaposition of contrasting tonalities. For example, in *Fantasiestücke*, Schumann centers most of the pieces around D flat major or f minor, with a few exceptions departing from these two main keys. The duality between D flat major and f minor can be considered as an example of “infinite contrasts” or “implausible contradictions” that contribute to the sense of humor pervading the piece. Another example of juxtaposition of contrasting tonality would be the duality between g minor and B flat major in *Kreisleriana*. Even though these two keys are relative major and minor, they represent two dramatically different characters, the philistine cat and the idealistic Kreisler, creating different atmospheres and therefore could be considered as contrasting tonality. We can see how Schumann organized fragments through tonal duality and thereby was able to create the generally comic mood.

A more far-reaching form of contrast that would ultimately lead to humor is that of “stylistic duality,” that is, Schumann’s approach to the “interpenetration of high and low styles.” We can see the stylistic duality between triviality and sublimity through Schumann’s juxtaposition of dance or folklike music with other higher style music such as canon, and his manipulation of “lower style” music into a “higher style” setting. For example, the Finale of *Papillons* opens with the traditional *Grossvatertanz*, and after repeating this traditional tone several times, Schumann abruptly writes “Piu Lento” and slows the whole piece down into the Waltz from No.1 (see Figure 3-12). The genius of the Finale lies in how Schumann magically writes a counterpoint with the melodic material from No.1 in the right hand against the *Grossvatertanz* tune in the left hand (see Figure 3-13). The two absolutely unrelated materials miraculously fit and merge into each other. We can see how Schumann was able to set a “lower style” folk and dance music into a “higher style” Baroque counterpoint.

16

Finale

12.

9

17

Più lento

sempre f

25

mf

f

Figure 3-12 Robert Schumann, *Papillons* Op. 2, No. 12, mm. 1-32.⁶⁴

41

mf

f

48

p

Figure 3-13 Robert Schumann, *Papillons* Op. 2, No. 12, mm. 41-54.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Schumann, *Papillons*, 16.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

This stylistic duality is also shown through the juxtaposition of unpretentious simple melody with more formal complexities. For example, just as the title indicates, Schumann's *Blumenstücke* exudes simplicity and transparency in the melody and texture at the beginning. However, immediately after the simple beginning, the music continues with full four-part writing (see Figure 3-14). The simple melody and accompaniment texture offers extreme contrasts from the dense four-part writing. We can see that humor is intensified through the juxtaposition of simplicity and complexity.

The image shows a page of musical notation for Robert Schumann's *Blumenstücke* Op. 19, No. 1, measures 1 through 17. The score is written for piano and is in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It begins with a simple melody in the right hand and a simple accompaniment in the left hand. However, after a few measures, the music transitions into a dense four-part texture. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (piano, forte), articulation (pedal), and performance instructions (tension, ritardando). The piece is marked 'I.' and 'Opus 19'.

Figure 3-14 Robert Schumann, *Blumenstücke* Op. 19, No. 1, mm. 1-17.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Robert Schumann, *Blumenstücke* Op. 19, ed. Ernst Hertrich (München: G. Henle Verlag, 2004), 1.

From what we have discussed above, we can see how Schumann found a way to organize those fragments through juxtaposition of contrasting materials, which ultimately would create musical effects such as self-annihilation or droll humor. What distinguished Schumann from his contemporaries are the word “juxtaposition” and the more varied and “patchwork” quality of his music. For example, his contemporary, Franz Liszt, followed the lead of Hector Berlioz and devised the method of thematic transformation, through which theme is more logically developed and transformed to suit the various moods that music asks for. Schumann, on the other hand, uses more “witty” connections to juxtapose contrasting materials. These connections are not obvious at first sight and are not necessarily there to help with the development of the piece. According to Schlegel, “wit” is the glue that connects dramatically contrasting entities; it is a “chemical reaction” that transforms “a seemingly random juxtaposition of antithetical terms into a meaningful configuration.”⁶⁷ We can see that wit rationalizes the juxtaposition of contrasting material and helps Schumann to organize those fragments.

The omnipresence of fragments in Schumann’s music confirmed its significance for him. We can see that fragmentation is an unavoidable trend of the Romantic period. It is not only a trademark for Schumann’s music, but also an important departure from the formal more rational structures. Some critics argue that the reason why Schumann was obsessed with small-scale miniatures is that he did not know how to develop the theme and form a coherent structure. Rather than purely imitating composers from the Classical period with the hope that something innovative would be created, Schumann decided to take another route and used “fragment” as a way to stand out from his contemporaries. In the next Chapter, we will discuss how Schumann

⁶⁷ Daverio, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 72.

would incorporate fragments into musical forms that are unique to him, forms which are derived from German Romanticism and deliberately aimed at challenging the traditions and troubling the order of the musical work.

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Chapter 4: Musical Forms in Schumann's Music

Fragmentation is a Romantic compositional technique that was used by Schumann in many of his music compositions. While it was a major innovation at the time that broke from the traditional structures, the danger of fragmentation was that the music could become too chaotic to make sense of it as a whole. The genius of Schumann lies in his ability to bind all of the fragments into an entity, while also creating a piece that was greater than the sum of its individual parts. This structure was later named as a “cycle.” In addition to these cycles, Schumann’s literary background also took root in his compositions in which he would use structures found in Romantic literature. Schumann would also use fragments to purposely disrupt the traditional Classical sonata form and infuse it with new Romantic elements. In this Chapter, we will explore three different kinds of forms that Schumann used to organize fragments, through which we can see Schumann’s coherent poetic vision in his music.

Schumann used the “cycle” form to organize fragments in his small-scale works. Unlike a collection, which is “a set of independent, closed tonal movements whose integrity would not be destroyed if they were arranged in a different order or even transposed,” a cycle has “some sense of unity” that comes from “a coherent tonal and formal organization.”⁶⁸ The fact that Schumann’s piano cycles are usually in a literal cyclic structure with an ending that corresponds with its opening further intensifies the structural unity of a cycle. Throughout those cycles, we find many motivic, thematic, and harmonic cross-references between the various fragments. These cross-references not only bring out a common thread of familiarity among disparate fragments, but also have structural significance that helps to bind what seems unrelated

⁶⁸ Kaminsky, “Principles of Formal Structure,” 207.

fragments into an organic whole that is called a “cycle.” In some sense, this cycle from facilitates the way Schumann presents chaos and disorder in his music. Here we will take *Carnaval* Op. 9 as an example to see how Schumann manipulated the cross-reference technique at different levels of a piano cycle.

Motivic cross-references are found woven throughout *Carnaval* Op.9. The most straightforward example is the use of the Sphinx motives. In Chapter 2, we already discussed how the Sphinx motives are disguised under Schumann’s different musical masquerades and incorporated into different pieces in *Carnaval*. It is clear how Schumann uses this recurrent motive as a way to bind all the fragments together. In addition to the Sphinx motives, Schumann also uses many subtle motivic cross-references. For example, a fragment of the beginning motive in the piece “Florestan” also frequently appears in the piece “Coquette.” The two-note motive from F to G in “Coquette” parallels that of the second measure of “Florestan” piece (see Figure 4-1). Interestingly enough, this two-note motive is always instructed to be played *fortissimo* which contrasts with the elegant character and the soft dynamics in the rest of the piece. In some sense, this motive almost purposely demands our attention and constantly reminds us of the previous “Florestan” piece. Another fragment of the quotation from Schumann’s *Papillons* Op.2 also appears in pieces other than “Florestan.” For example, we would see the descending scale part of the quotation—Eb-D-C-Bb—appears in the top line of the chorale ending of “Replique” (see Figure 4-2). We could also see the rising scale part of the quotation shows up in the middle section of the piece “Papillons” with a chromatic twist—it appears in the tenor line with each note being emphasized by a *sforzando* (see Figure 4-3). We can see how Schumann is able to infuse all the fragments with different kinds of motivic cross-references.

Figure 4-1 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Coquette,” mm. 1-10.⁶⁹

Figure 4-2 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Replique,” mm. 9-16.⁷⁰

Figure 4-3 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Papillons,” mm. 17-24.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 93.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 95.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 96.

This kind of motivic cross-references appears not only among pieces, but also within one. The piece “Pierrot” begins with the Sphinx No.3 motive in the tenor line (see Figure 2-6). Right after the introduction of the Sphinx motive in *piano* dynamics, we see that Schumann quickly brings in another motive in measure 3 and 4 under a contrasting *forte* dynamics. This three-note motive Eb-C-Bb is clearly derived from Sphinx No.3. However, because it is used under a different dynamics, we can see the motive takes on its own life through the remainder of the piece. Throughout the piece, we can see that this new motive is repeatedly used in the alto line. It also appears as part of the arpeggiated descending of the tonic chord towards the end, and thus leads to the climax of the piece (see Figure 4-4). We can see the cross-references that have taken place within one piece. Another example would be “Florestan.” The display of opposites—the passionate and arpeggiated beginning Sphinx figure in g minor and the reflective and linear quotation from *Papillons* Op.2 in B flat major—has been discussed before. In the first half of this piece, we see the alternations between these two motives. However, after the repeat signs, these two motives interweave with each other and form a new motive. The first half of this new motive is quite contrapuntal. It has the rising scale part of the *Papillons* quotation in the alto and tenor line with a chromatic twist, which is overlapped by a descending scale part of the *Papillons* quotation in the soprano line (see Figure 4-5). This then continues with the beginning Sphinx motive. We can already start to see the significance of motivic cross-reference in the cycle, as they really help to tighten up the entire cycle.



Figure 4-4 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Pierrot,” mm. 34-50.⁷²

Figure 4-5 Robert Schumann, *Carnaval* Op. 9, “Florestan,” mm. 30-36.⁷³

These motivic referrals also have structural significance in the organization of the cycle. Upon closer examination of the most obvious Sphinx cross-references, it is interesting to note that Schumann wrote three Sphinx motives (see Figure 2-1). However, based on a table from Peter Kaminsky’s study on “Principles of Formal Structure in Schumann’s Early Piano Cycles,” we know that 19 out of 21 pieces are composed of Sphinx motives No.2 or No.3, while No.1 never appears in the music. The Sphinxes provide a thread for the audience to grasp onto while

⁷² Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 88.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 92.

listening to this kaleidoscopic cycle. In a more subtle way, they also have a structural meaning by dividing the cycle into two parts—except No.1 that employed Sphinx No.2, No.2 to No.9 all use Sphinx No.3, and the rest of the cycle use Sphinx No.2 (see Figure 4-6).

TITLE	SPHINX NO.	KEY
1. Préambule	2	A \flat
2. Pierrot	3	E \flat
3. Arlequin	3	B \flat
4. Valse Noble	3	B \flat
5. Eusebius	3 (var)	E \flat
6. Florestan	3	g
7. Coquette	3	B \flat
8. Réplique	none	g
9. Papillons	3	B \flat

10. Lettres dansantes	2	E \flat
11. Chiarina	2	c
12. Chopin	none	A \flat
13. Estrella	2	f
14. Reconnaissance	2	A \flat
15. Pantalon et Colombine	2	f
16. Valse allemande	2	A \flat
17. Paganini	2	f
18. Aveu	2	A \flat
19. Promenade	2	D \flat
20. Pause	2	V/A \flat
21. Marche	2	A \flat

Figure 4-6 Peter Kaminsky, Sphinxes and Key Succession in *Carnaval*.⁷⁴

This kind of division is further reinforced by key centers (see Figure 4-6). Part I centers around B flat major and g minor, and Sphinx No.3 is usually harmonized by dominant 7th or 9th of these two keys. Although Part II has more varieties in terms of the key centers, it still has a focus on A flat major and f minor, with one detour to E flat major and c minor in No.10 and No.11 and another detour to D flat major in No.19. Here, Sphinx No.2 is supported either by the

⁷⁴ Kaminsky, “Principles of Formal Structure,” 211.

tonic of A flat major or f minor or by the dominant seventh or ninth of E flat major, c minor, or D flat major. If we look more closely at the key relationships, it is not hard to find the descending circle of fifth—B flat major/g minor, E flat major/c minor, A flat major/f minor, D flat major. We can also see how the number of flats increases from two to five throughout the cycle, which confirms a tonal scheme. If we step back and take a look at the broader context of the piece, No.1-18 could be considered as a tonic expansion of I-II-V-I, in which No.1 functions as I, No.3-9 function as II, No.10 functions as V, and No.12-18 functions as I. With the huge tonic expansion at the beginning, No.19 taking on the subdominant IV, No.20 functioning as V, and No.21 retuning to I, the whole cycle takes on the usual I-IV-V-I progression. A strong sense of tonal progression is thus conveyed throughout the cycle.

From what we discussed above, we know that Schumann explored the cross-reference technique at a different level in the sense that those cross references would provide not only the motivic connections and unity throughout the cycle, but also its overall formal structure. This compositional technique allows him to overcome the danger of fragments being too random and chaotic and emerge with the formal structure that binds all the fragments into an organic whole. To a certain extent, it facilitates him to combine contradictory and disparate fragments into one piece. Furthermore, with the aid of the overall tonal plan, the entire cycle emerges as even more tightly bound. We can see that cycle form, in a sense, allows Schumann to purposely disturb the unity of the music work, without totally destroying it. This compositional strategy is not only employed in *Carnaval*, but also used in many other music works by Schumann. We can thereby see the use of coherent compositional strategy in Schumann's music. In addition to the "cycle" form, Schumann's literary background also contributed to his way of organizing fragments into musical forms that are unique to himself. Learning from German Romantic author E.T.A.

Hoffmann and his novel *The Life and Opinions of Kater Murr, with the Fragmentary Biography of Kapellmeister Kreisler on Random Sheets of Scrap Paper*, Schumann magically interleaved two opposing types of fragments and created a “Double Novel” structure in his *Kreisleriana* Op.16.

In order to better understand this interleaving technique and “Double Novel” structure, we first examine *Kreisleriana*’s literary inspiration. There is no doubt that they were inspired by Hoffmann’s master work, *The Life and Opinions of Kater Murr, with the Fragmentary Biography of Kapellmeister Kreisler on Random Sheets of Scrap Paper*, in which the autobiography of Murr the cat is conflated with the biography of Johannes Kreisler. The story is that Murr the cat ripped up the biography of Johannes Kreisler and used its back as blotting papers to write his own autobiography. The whole book needs to be navigated by words “scrap paper” and “Murr continues” in order to make any sense out of it. Weaving multiple storylines in a book is hardly a unique concept. What makes *Kater Murr* special is the way these story lines are threaded together. In the story, Murr the cat writes the back of random pages from all throughout Kreisler’s biography. Therefore, instead of two storylines interwoven with each other, each section in Hoffmann’s book would start randomly in the middle of the sentence and end abruptly without any signs. Despite the confusion regarding how each section starts and ends, the autobiography and the biography are still somewhat chronologically organized and thus makes sense for readers. This kind of simultaneous dual story lines is what we call a “Double Novel” structure.

The tension of this unique structure is furthermore intensified by the clashing character traits of Kreisler and Murr the cat. Murr the cat is known as an “egotistical philistine with disreputably bourgeois tastes, the blatant plagiarist and charlatan extraordinaire,” which

ironically contrasts with Kreisler, “whose untempered idealism renders him unfit for existence in the empirical world.”⁷⁵ This kind of dualism unavoidably resonates with the alter egos idea that Schumann was very fond of. When commenting on the story of Kreisler and Murr the cat, Deahl said that “a profoundly pessimistic irony is engendered by jarring structural oppositions paradoxically converging into an underlying unity and dispelling the illusion of hierarchy, privilege, and difference.”⁷⁶ We can see that the most appealing aspect of Hoffmann’s novel is the tension brought out by the juxtaposition of opposites. Schumann was obviously inspired by these two dramatically contrary characters and the tension brought out by the unity of the polar opposites, and composed his masterwork, *Kreisleriana* Op. 16.

The presentation of polar opposites and the “Double Novel” structure are clear in Schumann’s *Kreisleriana*. In the structure of Hoffmann’s novel, this piece has two contrasting lines interleaving with each other. We can clearly see that No.2, 4 and 6 are centered in B flat major and No. 3, 5 and 8 are written in its relative minor, g minor. Although No.2, 4 and 6 are all centered around B flat major, the key center is only implied, as a firm B flat major cadence is frequently eschewed and phrases often end with a F dominant seventh chord (see Figure 4-7). The emphasis on F dominant seventh chord and the ambiguous tonality are maintained throughout all three sections. In addition to the uniform tonality, the slow Adagio tempo, the lyrical and flowing character, linear and legato lines as well as the focus on the middle mellow registers also help to build up connections among these three separated sections (see Figure 4-8 and Figure 4-9). In contrast to the B flat major sections, No. 3, 5 and 8 are dramatically different:

⁷⁵ Lora Deahl, “Robert Schumann’s ‘Kreisleriana’ and Double Novel Structure,” *International Journal of Musicology* 5 (1996): 134.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

the tempo is fast; the character is more energetic and agitated; phrases are shorter and choppier; the whole sections appear to be more rhythmic than lyrical; not to mention that the writing of these sections involve the entire span of the keyboard (see Figure 4-10, Figure 4-11 and Figure 4-12). Harmonically, as how No. 2 sets the example for the succeeding B flat major sections with the avoided cadential figurations and emphases on F dominant seventh chords, No. 3 also sets the example for the following two g minor sections. The opening i-ii6-V7-i sets the harmonic progression that is used repeatedly in all g minor sections. This tonic-subdominant-dominant-tonic progression undisputedly and securely confirms the g minor tonality, which creates a sharp contrast from the vague tonality in B flat major sections. We can see that Schumann related certain fragments together through the key centers, harmonic progression, the writing style, as well as the characters portrayed. As we start to apply the alter egos idea and Hoffmann's "Double Novel" structure to *Kreisleriana*, we can elucidate the coherent aesthetic principles embedded in his music. Firmly inspired by his literary models, Schumann deliberately employed "Double Novel" structure as well as the alter ego idea to disrupt the unity of the musical work.

168

Sehr innig und nicht zu rasch

The image shows a page of musical notation for Robert Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16, No. 2, measures 1-8. The score is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. It features a piano introduction with a 'Pedal' marking. The right hand has a melodic line with triplets and slurs, while the left hand has a rhythmic accompaniment with triplets and slurs. Dynamics range from piano (*p*) to fortissimo (*ff*). The score is numbered '168' in the top left corner and includes the tempo instruction 'Sehr innig und nicht zu rasch'. The piece is marked with a '2.' in the upper left of the first system. The notation includes various fingerings, slurs, and dynamic markings.

Figure 4-7 Robert Schumann, *Kreisleriana* Op. 16, No. 2, mm. 1-8.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 168.

Sehr langsam M. M. ♩ = 66

4. *p*
Pedal

ritardando

cresc.

p

Linke
pp
Pedal

ritardando

Figure 4-8 Robert Schumann, *Kreisleriana* Op. 16, No. 4, mm. 1-12.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 182.

188

Sehr langsam M.M. ♩ = 84
Durchaus leise zu halten

6. *pp*

Pedal

4 *Im Tempo*

pp *ritard.*

f *ritard.*

Figure 4-9 Robert Schumann, *Kreisleriana* Op. 16, No. 6, mm. 1-6.⁷⁹

176

Sehr aufgeregt

3. *p*

Pedal

5

Figure 4-10 Robert Schumann, *Kreisleriana* Op. 16, No. 3, mm. 1-9.⁸⁰

⁷⁹ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 188.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 176.

184

Sehr lebhaft

5.

pp

Pedal

Figure 4-11 Robert Schumann, *Kreisleriana* Op. 16, No. 5, mm. 1-10.⁸¹

194

Schnell und spielend

8.

pp

Die Bässe durchaus leicht und frei

Pedal

Figure 4-12 Robert Schumann, *Kreisleriana* Op. 16, No. 8, mm. 1-8.⁸²

⁸¹ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 184.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 194.

In addition to the interplay between two contrasting characterizations, Schumann also used keys to frame the piece, which parallels Hoffmann's use of an editorial frame for his novel. The key centers are in a series of thirds, which help to tie the outer movements together with the rest of the piece. No.1 is in d minor, down a third to B flat major in No.2, and again down a third to g minor (see Figure 4-13). The ending is the opposite—the first half of No.7 is in c minor, up a third to E flat major in the second half of No.7, and again up a third to g minor in No.8 (see Figure 4-14 and Figure 4-15). By examining the keys, we can see that the pieces are balanced and symmetrical. This harmonic correspondence between the beginning and ending functions similarly to that of Hoffman's editorial frame functions for a novel. It also perfectly resonates with the title, as "Kreis" in German means "circle." In some sense, No.7 seems to be out of phrase because it breaks the pattern of alternations between B flat major and g minor. However, if we look at the tonal structure of this piece, we will see that the c minor section is later followed by a B flat major chorale section, which then goes up a fourth to E flat major, the relative major of c minor. This fourth relationship between B flat major and E flat major is not a coincidence. We can also find similar fourth relationship between c minor in No.7 and g minor in No.8, as well as between d minor in No.1 and g minor in No.8. The overall tonal plan in this piece is impressive—the whole piece is bound together through alternation of keys as well as the inner relationship of thirds and fourths between keys. Although No.7 seems to be out of place at the very beginning, multiple connections are created because of this movement. Just like the tonal schemes in Schumann's piano cycles, we can see how different fragments are once again bound tightly together through the overall harmonic plan. Therefore, we can see that the overall harmonic or tonal plan is a coherent compositional strategy that Schumann deliberately uses to present disparate and chaotic fragments together.

1. *Äußerst bewegt*
f
Pedal

Figure 4-13 Robert Schumann, *Kreisleriana* Op. 16, No. 1, mm. 1-8.⁸³

190
 7. *Sehr rasch*
f
Pedal

Figure 4-14 Robert Schumann, *Kreisleriana* Op. 16, No. 7, mm. 1-8.⁸⁴

⁸³ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 164.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 190.

89 Etwas langsamer

98 *p*

107 *ritard.* *ritard.* *ritard.*

Pedal *

Figure 4-15 Robert Schumann, *Kreisleriana* Op. 16, No. 7, mm. 89-116.⁸⁵

We can see that Schumann learned from E.T.A. Hoffmann and brought a literary structure into music. Disparate and chaotic fragments are presented together in a unique musical form not only through the interleaving technique but also through an overall tonal plan in which the beginning corresponds with the ending. Just like Deahl described, *Kreisleriana* is indeed a “miraculous paradox of unity emerging from the interrupted discourse and diversity of the movements.”⁸⁶ Once again, Schumann successfully proved to us the possibility of incorporating contradictory and chaotic fragments that disrupt the unity of the music work into a unique musical form.

⁸⁵ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band III*, 193.

⁸⁶ Deahl, “Robert Schumann’s ‘Kreisleriana,’” 136.

In his diaries, Schumann differentiated between “kleine Stücke,” that is, small-scale works, and “größere Stücke,” that is, large-scale works. For him, the former emphasizes on the “interaction of the fragments as a totality,” where the meaning emerges less from the individual fragments than from the combination of all the fragments; while the latter highlights the “heterogeneous totality,” in which each miniature was self-sufficient on its own and at the same time could fit into a coherent whole.⁸⁷ At the beginning of this chapter, we talked about musical forms that are used in his small-scale works, such as “cycle” and “Double Novel” form. In the rest of this chapter, we will move on to Schumann’s large-scale works and use the first movement of *Fantasie* in C major as an example. Schumann not only showed us “heterogeneous totality” in his large-scale work, but also showed the possibility of incorporating fragments into the traditional sonata form. Although the foundation of this movement lays in the Classical sonata form, Schumann was able to deviate away from it and endow it with new Romantic elements so that he was able to stand out from the shadow of his Classical predecessors.

Fantasie in C major is both an homage to Beethoven and the old Classical form and Schumann’s attempt to innovate the old traditional form and transform it into something that is unique to himself. When writing to his potential publisher for *Fantasie* in C major, Schumann wrote “Florestan and Eusebius heartily wish to do something for Beethoven’s monument, and have written something toward that end under the following title: Ruinen. Trophaeen. Palmen. / Große Sonate f. d. Pianof. / Für Beethovens Denkmal.”⁸⁸ Schumann’s homage to Beethoven is shown through the use of the traditional Classical form and the use of a quotation from Beethoven’s song cycle, *An die ferne Geliebte*, at the end of the movement. Schumann

⁸⁷ Daverio, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 56.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 20.

particularly chose this song cycle as a way to express his longing for Clara, because *An die ferne Geliebte* is translated as “the distant beloved.” Schumann’s genius lies in his ability to internalize the traditional and transform it into something that is original to himself. We will see how he manipulated the structure of the traditional form and approached Beethoven’s quote, through which he was able to highlight the “heterogeneous totality” and innovate upon the old traditional form.

Structurally speaking, the most interesting part of the first movement is a section titled as “Im Legendenton.” Without this section, the whole movement would be just like the first movement of a standard sonata. The odd part lies in the location of “Im Legendenton”—this well-defined and self-contained fragment is placed right in the middle of the recapitulation, in the development of the first theme. The low-energy level of this section brings the preceding music to a grinding halt, and then after hundreds of measures of unfolding, the recapitulation continues as if nothing had happened. Although it seems out of place at the beginning, it is hardly random that Schumann inserted this section at this specific place. To better understand the reason behind this seemingly random insertion, we need to first take a look at the concept presented by Arabeske.

Arabeske is a crucial concept in order to understand the rationale of the randomness in the section “Im Legendenton.” From John Daverio’s journal, “Schumann’s ‘Im Legendenton’ and Friedrich Schlegel’s Arabeske,” we learned some useful background information regarding the concept of Arabeske and its application in music. Arabeske was originally used to refer to the frame of a painting. However, it is later transformed from a purely ornamental feature to an integral part of the main painting, and even has some allegorical implications. It now refers to a deliberate cleft in modern art, which is usually there to make a point. In his collections of

fragments, Friedrich Schlegel formulated a few important ideas around the concept of Arabeske and discussed its application to literary form—in a more limited sense, Arabeske refers to “humorous, witty, or sentimental digressions that intentionally disturb the chronological flow of a narrative,” and in a broader sense, it refers to “a seemingly chaotic diversity through a deliberately concealed logical process.”⁸⁹ From these quotes, it can be implied that in the world of music, Arabeske is a digression or a fragment which purposely disturbs the original music flow. It seems to be there out of blue but actually has some hidden connection with its surrounding material.

In order to better understand the application of Arabeske in music, we will digress and take a look at Schumann’s own *Arabeske* Op. 18. The digression of the a minor section is a perfect example (see Figure 4-16). The music before the a minor section is very gentle and lyrical and mostly written in soft dynamics. The interruption of the digression is thus quite obvious, as it begins in *forte* and has more poignant character. However, we can clearly see the motivic connections between the two sections through the use of similar rhythm and ornamentation. We can see the embodiment of Arabeske here, as the digression looks random on the surface but in fact has connections with the previous music.

⁸⁹ John Daverio, Schumann’s “Im Legendenton” and Friedrich Schlegel’s Arabeske, *19th Century Music* 11, no. 2 (Autumn, 1987): 151.

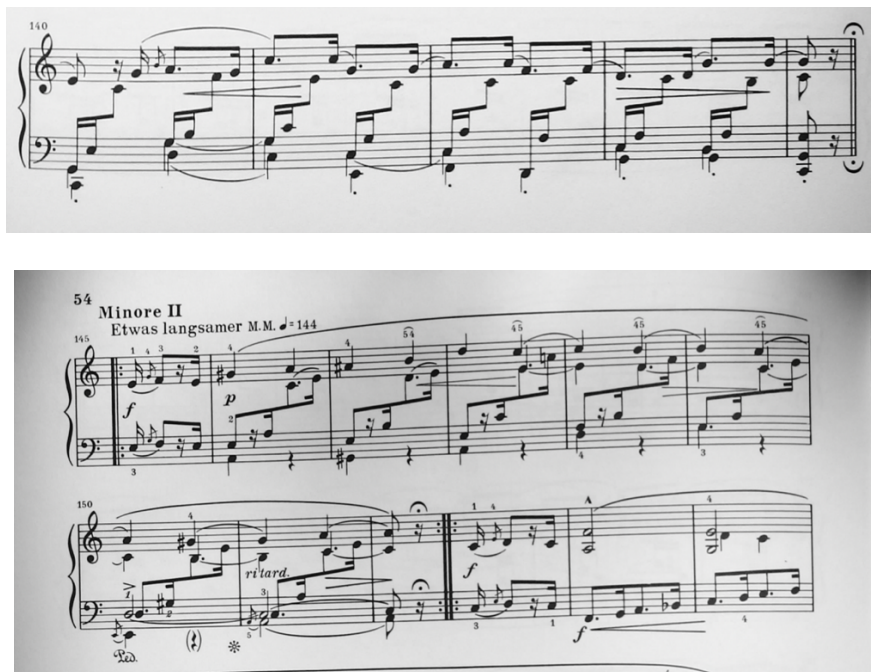


Figure 4-16 Robert Schumann, *Arabeske* Op. 18, mm.140-154.⁹⁰

Like the example of *Arabeske* Op.18, “Im Legendenton” shows similar aspect of the concept of Arabeske. It is such an evocative and dreamy digression that interrupts the original flow of the piece. The dynamic level in this section is one of the lowest in the entire movement and it is especially dramatic given that the preceding and following material are both written in *fortissimo*. The calm and peaceful character of the “Im Legendenton” also contrasts with the turbulent gestures of the first theme. With more brief and blocked phrases and with quicker arrivals to the cadences, the writing of this section is also different from that of the rest of the movement, which features more extended phrases and frequently avoided closures. From the contrasts between “Im Legendenton” and its surrounding materials, we can see how it disturbs the original flow of the music, especially given that the section is inserted between the

⁹⁰ Schumann, *Klavierwerke Band II*, 53-54.

development of the first theme in the recapitulation. “Im Legendenton” is definitely like a musical daydream that breaks the momentum of a standard sonata form.

Although the “Im Legendenton” section seems to be out of place, this section actually fits within the design of the whole movement. If we look closely enough, we can see motivic connections between “Im Legendenton” and the transition passage connecting the first theme and second theme (see Figure 4-17 and Figure 4-18). Even though they are written in different keys and with a drastically different atmosphere and character, the contours of the melodies are almost the same but for a slight twist on the rhythm. Another motivic connection exists between “Im Legendenton” and the quotation of Beethoven’s *An die ferne Geliebte* at the end of the movement (see Figure 4-19 and Figure 4-20). Similarly, even though each passage is written in different keys, the melodic contours of both are almost identical. We can see the connections between “Im Legendenton” and the rest of the piece through these motivic connections. Rather than technical inability, Schumann intentionally inserted this fragment in an awkward place to break away from the traditional sonata form, disrupting the expected structure and endowing the piece with new Romantic touch that is unique to Schumann.

Im Legendenton $\text{♩} = 72$

129 *p* *Pedal* *ritard.* *p* *Pedal*

135 *ritard.* *mf* *Pedal*

Figure 4-17 Robert Schumann, *Fantasia* Op. 17, 1st movement, mm. 129-142.⁹¹

34 *ritard.* *ff*

37 *ritard.* *ff*

40 *ritard.* *ff*

Figure 4-18 Robert Schumann, *Fantasia* Op. 17, 1st movement, mm. 33-40.⁹²

⁹¹ Robert Schumann, *Fantasia* Op. 17, ed. Ernst Hertrich (München: G. Henle Verlag, 2002), 9.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 4.



Figure 4-19 Robert Schumann, *Fantasie* Op. 17, 1st movement, mm. 157-160.⁹³



Figure 4-20 Robert Schumann, *Fantasie* Op. 17, 1st movement, mm. 295-299.⁹⁴

The musical form of this first movement definitely took root from the sonata form in Classical period, which is one of the ways in which Schumann showed homage to Beethoven. However, rather than strictly following the traditional sonata form, Schumann made a bold move by incorporating the unique “Im Legendenton” into the form. From the motivic connections with its surrounding material, we know that the “Im Legendenton” section is meticulously and deliberately designed by Schumann and is part of the plan to innovate the Classical tradition. In

⁹³ Schumann, *Fantasie*, 10.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

addition to “Im Legendenton,” another interesting aspect of this first movement of *Fantasie* in C major is the Beethoven’s quotation at the end. Just like the “Im Legendenton” section, this quotation also purposely breaks the flow of the music and creates some confusion, which can be explained by the concept of Arabeske.

This Beethoven quotation is another example of Arabeske. On one hand, the quotation seems quite random when it comes up at the end. On the other hand, we can see the connection between the quotation and the variation of the first theme, as both melodies have the contour of up a third, down a fourth, and then followed by stepwise motions (see Figure 4-20 and Figure 4-21). Not to mention the motivic connections between the quotation and the “Im Legendenton” section that we talked about before. Just as Rosen described, “the phrase of Beethoven is made to seem like an involuntary memory, not consciously recalled but inevitably produced by the music we had just heard,” the quotation seems to be out of place but is in fact carefully prepared by everything that we hear before.⁹⁵

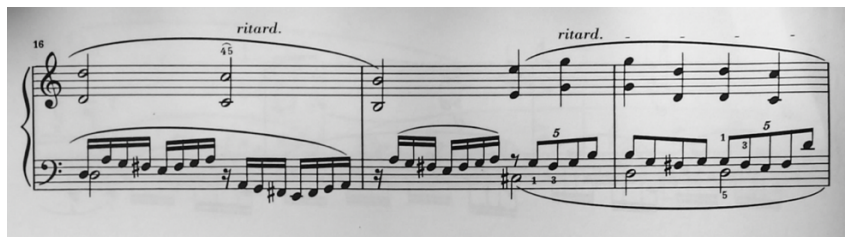


Figure 4-21 Robert Schumann, *Fantasie* Op. 17, 1st movement, mm. 15-18.⁹⁶

⁹⁵ Rosen, *The Romantic Generation*, 112.

⁹⁶ Schumann, *Fantasie*, 2-3.

Looking at the context surrounding this Beethoven quotation, we see that Schumann carefully positioned this quotation within *Fantasie* in C major. This quotation comes from the last song in Beethoven's song cycle, *An die ferne Geliebte*, and it is written in E flat major. The previous song in the cycle ends in c minor, as a gloomy ending to the joyful C major "Es kehret der Maien." And this exact quotation appears at the beginning of the last stanza and functions as a bridge to the end. Contrary to the original context, in Schumann's music this quotation is set in C major, which is approached by a section in E flat major. Also, rather than an open-ended phrase that has a connecting function, this time the quotation provides a closure to this huge movement. With all those motivic connections, it almost seems like everything that happened before the last page was paving the way for this quotation. When we finally hear it at the end, it is endowed a new effect that has never existed in its original context. Instead of simply a reminiscence of another composer, the quotation becomes more like a summarization. The quotation appears as a resolution of everything preceding it rather than a reference to an existing source. The extraordinary genius of Schumann lays in his ability to completely transform the original quotation. Rather than Beethoven's theme, it has now become Schumann's theme. We can see how much thought Schumann had put into the incorporation of this quotation, and how the piece as a whole was carefully and meticulously designed. The seemingly haphazard placement of this quotation belies the calculated, precise compositional process on the part of Schumann.

Through the examples of "Im Legendenton" and Beethoven's quotation at the end, we can see that Arabeske is a compositional strategy that is deliberately and consistently employed by Schumann as a way to purposely interrupt the unity of the musical work. Although there are indeed motivic connections between the quotation and the rest of the piece, its appearance also

unquestionably undermined the traditional sonata form and transformed it into something original to Schumann. With a relatively standard sonata form, interrupted by a digressive fragment in the middle, and ultimately ending through a Beethoven quotation, the “heterogeneous totality” that Schumann preferred in a large-scale work is definitely achieved in this first movement of *Fantasie* in C major. Schumann was able to overcome the inherent chaos of a fragment and magically incorporate it into a larger musical form. The artistic synthesis of these fragments into a traditional Classical sonata form is Schumann’s way of stepping out from the shadow cast by his Classical predecessors.

From what we have discussed above, we can see that Schumann was deeply inspired by his literary models as well as German Romantic aesthetics and developed musical forms that could hold together disparate and chaotic fragments. Schumann not only showcased his ability to organize fragments in small-scale works so that all the fragments are bound tightly together into an organic whole, but also demonstrated his capability to blend fragments on a large scale, transforming a traditional sonata form into something that is uniquely Romantic and Schumannesque. In the next chapter, we will broaden our examination of Schumann’s works to see how it will fit into the bigger Romantic trend of the history, particularly within the branch of Romantic irony.

Chapter 5: Romantic Irony and its Embodiments in Schumann's Music

We will now widen the scope of this dissertation to examine Schumann's work as it fits in with the broader context of the Romantic era. In particular, we will see how Schumann's music frequently reflects or parallels the important concept of Romantic irony. We will first explore the definition of Romantic irony, through which we see how Schumann is able to apply many of them into music and further see the connections between Romantic irony and concepts that we have discussed in previous chapters, such as masquerade, Schumann's musical alter egos and fragments. By closely examining these connections, we can begin to appreciate Schumann's work within the broader context of the Romantic era. We find that his work sets him apart, as he is able to span the gap between both literature and music by bringing in a traditionally literary concept of Romantic irony into the orbit of music.

Because there are many overlaps between the concept of Romanticism and the concept of Romantic irony, we will first take a look at the concept of Romanticism. Originating from literature, "Romanticism" got its name from the genre *Roman*, which according to Schlegel, is a "fantastically formed and generically ambiguous artwork."⁹⁷ In a sense, *Roman* is a poetic fantasy that is not confined to certain form or specific content. Jim Samson particularly explained the application of this literary idea to the field of music in his article "Romanticism" that is used in Grove Music Online. In his article, he mentioned that E.T.A. Hoffmann emphasizes the importance of individual creativity and predicts that music "could convey emotions and arouse the 'intuitive knowledge of the world.'"⁹⁸ We can see that Romanticism

⁹⁷ Daverio, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 4.

⁹⁸ *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Romanticism," by Jim Samson, accessed February 24, 2022, <https://doi-org.offcampus.lib.washington.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.23751>.

changed how music is perceived and confirmed that instrumental music, with its pure abstract tones, can convey emotional content and have suggestive meaning just as music that has a text attached to it. At the same time, the fact that music needs to convey emotions and suggest external meanings implies the thought process that is involved while composing music. This thought process further suggests the presence of consciousness, which is in fact one of the central ideas of Romantic irony.

Other scholars' ideas regarding Romanticism also directly point to the concept of Romantic irony. In agreement with Hoffmann, Daverio further summarizes that Romanticism was often related with "unremitting individuality of expression, the recovery of a chivalric past, the cultivation of the marvelous or fantastic in literature, a delight in insoluble contradictions, the mystical union of subject and object, yearning for the infinite."⁹⁹ In addition to these, he also made a point that Romanticism is primarily "self-critic and reflective."¹⁰⁰ Following Daverio's points, Hall argues that "a romanticization of music produces new sites for critical, self-reflective listening through the construction of dissonant, self-destroying musical works."¹⁰¹ Those ideas regarding the Romanticism of music, such as, self-consciousness and self-reflection, the presence of insoluble contradictions, the combination of objective and subjective, and the paradox between the construction and the self-deconstruction are also in line with the central theories of Romantic irony.

The direct definition for Romantic irony was predominantly formulated through Friedrich Schlegel's writings. Although Schlegel was given the full credit for terming "Romantic irony,"

⁹⁹ Daverio, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 2.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Mirko M. Hall, "Friedrich Schlegel's Romanticization of Music," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 42, no. 3 (Spring 2009): 414.

he rarely used it and neither did he ever give a clear definition for it. The majority of our understanding of Romantic irony came from those aphoristic fragments in which Schlegel alluded to, rather than clearly elucidating, his ideas. Based on those fragments, we know that “irony is the ‘clear consciousness of eternal agility, of infinitely full chaos,’ a capricious appearance of self-annihilation, a playing with the contradictions of form and practice, the introduction of the fortuitous and the unusual, a flirtation with unlimited caprice.”¹⁰² Therefore, we can see that Romantic irony involves a presence of consciousness and ample contradictions. It is an interactive display of the conscious and the subjective as well as the capricious and the fortuitous, and often comes with self-annihilation as a result.

To summarize what we have discussed above, Romantic irony contains multiple components and parts. These components include the idea of self-consciousness and self-reflection, the idea of self-creation followed by self-annihilation, and lastly the tension that arises from insoluble contradiction. All of these are essentially the unity of polar opposites and thus would unavoidably result in tremendous dialectic tension, which is also a key component of Romantic irony. When examining Schumann’s music, we can see many embodiments of Romantic irony as well as the connections between Romantic irony and concepts that we have explored in previous chapters. We can see that Romantic irony goes beyond just a literary device that Schumann borrowed from his literary models, and is instead an integral part of his music. It is a coherent and deliberate compositional strategy that is used in many of Schumann’s music works. As we move forward, we will look at Schumann’s thoughts on Romantic irony. We will then examine how self-consciousness and self-reflection, the idea of self-creation followed by

¹⁰² Rey M. Longyear, “Beethoven and Romantic Irony,” *The Musical Quarterly* 56, no. 4 (October 1970): 649.

self-annihilation, and insoluble contradiction manifest themselves within different aspects of Schumann's works.

Although Schumann had never written anything directly related to Romantic irony, he had talked about similar topics that were in line with the central ideas of Romantic irony. For example, when he compared other music with his music, he said "The former may be a flower. The latter is a poem; that is, belongs to the world of the spirit. The former comes from an impulse of crude nature; the latter stems from the consciousness of the poetic mind."¹⁰³ The "consciousness of poetic mind" in this statement are almost identical to the self-consciousness that Romantic irony calls for. Schumann also emphasized the importance of self-reflection by saying that "anything that happens in the world affects me; politics, for example, literature, people' and I reflect about all these things in my own way—and these reflections then seek to find an outlet in music."¹⁰⁴ We can see that daily life provided inspirations for Schumann; however, it is his reflection on those inspirations that helped to formulate the music. From these quotes, we know that self-consciousness and self-reflection are definitely crucial for Schumann's music output. Therefore, even if Schumann has never directly indicated the use of Romantic irony in his music, he was probably very aware of the central ideas of Romantic irony.

We can also see direct connections between central ideas of Romantic irony and those of the concepts discussed in the previous chapters. The concept of masquerade as covered in the first chapter is centered on the inconsistency of what is on the surface and what is hidden underneath. This incongruence is in line with the insoluble contradiction upon which Romantic

¹⁰³ Robert Schumann, *On Music and Musicians*, ed. Konrad Wolff, trans. Paul Rosenfeld (New York, 1969): 260.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

irony rests. As we have discussed before, the obsession with masquerade has a lot to do with Schumann's confusion about his own identity. More importantly, these masquerades are what make his pieces distinctly unique and Romantic in nature. On a personal level, Schumann's masquerades are self-reflective as musical explorations of his own mental psyche. At the same time, Schumann's use of the masquerade is oftentimes self-referential and meta, in the case of imaginary characters such as Florestan and Eusebius, or referential when paying homage to composers such as Chopin, Paganini and Beethoven. The tension and interplay between what is Schumann and what is the masquerade endow his music with a sense of quasi self-consciousness, and is an example of Romantic irony. Hence, the concept of masquerade is also closely related with the self-reflection and self-consciousness that are at the kernel of Romantic irony.

The key elements of Romantic irony, self-consciousness and self-reflections, are also shown through the use of quotation in Schumann's music. It is hardly random that Schumann used certain quotations at specific places, as we know that he "was not in the habit of quoting himself (or others) by accident."¹⁰⁵ Therefore, the use of quotation is definitely a conscious decision. Even more than that, for Schumann the use of quotation could even be an encoded message. For example, in the first movement of Schumann's *Faschingsschwank aus Wien*, Op. 26, he quoted the French National Anthem, the *Marseillaise* (see Figure 5-1). At the time, Schumann was separated from Clara, who just embarked on a tour to Paris. Therefore, this quotation could be a musical greeting to Clara. The quotation was also Schumann's way of challenging the Austrian censors, who banned the playing of French anthem at the time. Another

¹⁰⁵ Dill and Schumann, "Romantic Irony," 176.

example of quotations that shows Schumann's consciousness would be the quotation of Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte* in the first movement of *Fantasie* in C major, which is clearly his homage to this Classical giant and at the same time expresses his longing for Clara. We can see that Schumann's quotations almost always have encoded messages embedded, and are accordingly evidences of self-consciousness and self-reflections accordingly. Therefore, we can see the embodiment of Romantic irony through the use of quotation in Schumann's music.

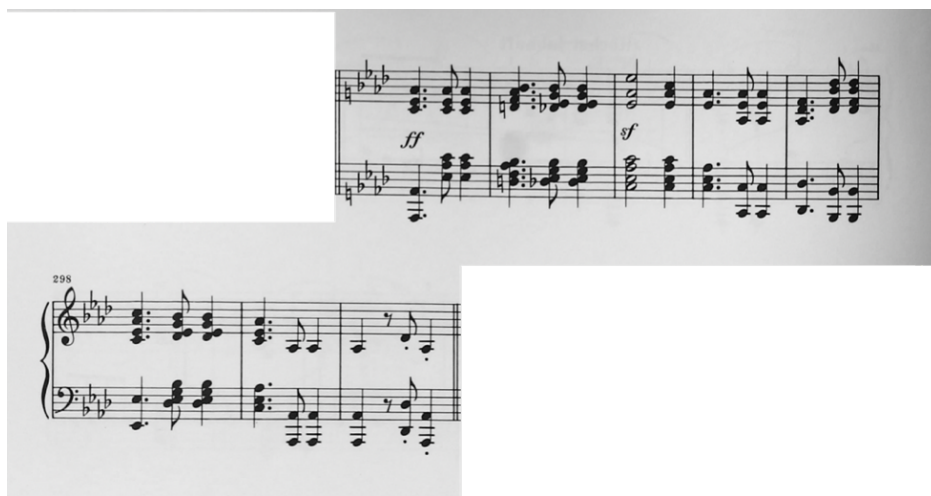


Figure 5-1 Robert Schumann, *Faschingsschwank aus Wien*, Op.26, No.1, mm. 293-300.¹⁰⁶

In addition, self-consciousness and self-reflection are also expressed through the use of descriptive titles, headings, and mottos. As we already discussed in previous chapters, the title “Papillons” is a symbol of transformation and ephemera and an implication of the concept masquerade. We can clearly see the thought process of Schumann when choosing this title. Another example of descriptive title that exhibits self-consciousness would be *Faschingsschwank aus Wien*, which is literally translated as “Vienna Carnival” and also has

¹⁰⁶ Robert Schumann, *Faschingsschwank aus Wien*, Op.26, No.1, ed. Ernst Herttrich (München: G. Henle Verlag, 2004), 9.

“ASCH” and “SCHA” embedded in the word “Faschingsschwank.” From the discussion from the previous chapter, we know that the notes of the three Sphinx motives in *Carnaval* could be translated as ASCH and SCHA. We then see the clear connection between these two pieces. Knowing Schumann’s compositional habits, it is probably not a coincidence that both his *Carnaval* and his “Vienna Carnaval” make use of those two mottos. Because of the consciousness involved in picking those titles and mottos, we can see the embodiment of Romantic irony in Schumann’s music.

As we discussed above, Romantic irony is oftentimes achieved by destruction of an initially-created illusion. In some sense, quotation itself is an illusion, which is immediately “destroyed” by the original music. The rapid alternation between quotation and the original music further creates dialectic tension, another important component of romantic irony. The *Papillons* quotation in the piece “Florestan” from Schumann’s *Carnaval* provides an excellent example. As we have considered in the previous chapter, the piece “Florestan” begins with the most unstable chord, a repeated fully diminished seventh chord, which is suddenly restricted by a sentimental fragmented quotation from *Papillons*. Then Schumann does the same thing again, but this time with a more complete quotation from *Papillons*, which is also marked with a commentary “Papillon?” in parentheses. Particularly in this case, the dreamy quotation creates an illusion, which is immediately destroyed by the return of the stormy initial music. We can see the self-creation and self-annihilation that Romantic irony often calls for through the use of quotation. Relating to the discussion we had earlier regarding the use of quotation, we know that quotation is indeed a perfect embodiment of Romantic irony as it not only is a presence of consciousness, but also creates the effect of self-creation and self-annihilation.

The destruction of the initially-created illusion is also shown through the relationship between those descriptive titles and headings and Schumann's music. A good example would be the piece "Grillen" in *Fantasiestücke*. "Grillen" is literally translated as "Whims." However, the marking "mit Humor" makes the whole piece self-ironic, as if Schumann is mocking his own whims at this point. Those verbal expressions are moments of consciousness, as if Schumann stepped out of his own composition and became a commentator of his own work. On one hand, they help us to understand what was in Schumann's mind. On the other hand, those expressions almost intrude, contradict, and complicate the idea of the original music. The music creates an illusion which was then destroyed by the Schumann's written performance directions.

Similar situations can be found in Schumann's art songs as well, where music creates an illusion which is then destroyed by the lyrics. For example, the music of the eleventh song in Schumann's song cycle *Dichterliebe* is quite bright and upbeat almost like a folksong (see Figure 5-2). The piece almost comes off as a comic parody because of the intentional use of banal materials such as the incisive and intentionally ugly use of the repeated notes in the last few measures of the vocal line (see Figure 5-3). The sense of humor is further brought out if we consider the sharp contrasts between this song and the previous and preceding songs. However, if we look at the lyrics of the song, we know that the poem is about a tragic story of unattainable love. In some sense, the music creates a comic illusion which is immediately destroyed when the tragic vocal part appears. In addition, we can see that the significance of this song lies in its portrayal of tragedy in a humorous setting. This kind of insoluble contradiction also makes the piece an embodiment of Romantic irony.

22

XI

mf

Ein Jüng-ling liebt ein

mf

6

Mäd - chen, die hat ei-nen An - dern er - wählt, der An - dre liebt' ei-ne

Figure 5-2 Robert Schumann, *Dichterliebe* Op. 48, “Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen,” mm. 1-9.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ Schumann, *Dichterliebe*, 22.

20 ri - - tar - - dan - - do
Mann, der ihr in den Weg ge - lau - fen, der Jüng - ling ist ü - bel dran. Es

25 ist ei - ne al - te Ge - schich - te, doch bleibt sie im - mer neu, und

29 ri - - tar - - dan - - do
wem sie just pas - sie - ret, dem bricht das Herz ent - zwei.
ri - - tar - - dan - - do a tempo f

Figure 5-3 Robert Schumann, *Dichterliebe* Op. 48, “Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen,” mm. 20-33.¹⁰⁸

Rather than a unique effect of quotation or descriptive titles, the destruction of the initially-created illusion is in fact omnipresent in Schumann’s music. When thinking about the characteristics of Schumann’s music, the first thing that came to mind is usually the rapid alternations of contrasting materials. Just as Alfred Einstein pointed out, Schumann’s “mastery of a new realm of magical sound” is created by “more rapid alternation between intimacy and brilliance, between softness and sharpness” so that a “kaleidoscopic form” is achieved.¹⁰⁹ From our discussion regarding the organization of fragments, we know that juxtaposition of

¹⁰⁸ Schumann, *Dichterliebe*, 23.

¹⁰⁹ Dill and Schumann, “Romantic Irony,” 186.

contrasting material is the primary principle through which Schumann organized his fragments. By placing contrasting materials back-to-back, Schumann is able to create musical effects such as self-annihilation. This self-annihilation musical effect is exactly the same as self-creation followed by self-deconstruction that is called for in Romantic irony. We can see that rather than just a literary device Schumann borrowed from his literary models, Romantic irony is not only an integral part of Schumann's music, but also the foundation of the formal structure in Schumann's music.

The self-creation and self-annihilation pairing is also obvious in the example of Schumann's musical alter egos, Florestan and Eusebius. Romantic irony can be described as “[seeking] to shift art away from emotional expression...and thereby remove it from sentimentality and pathos; it demands circumspection and sobriety.”¹¹⁰ This is such an accurate description of the relationship between Florestan and Eusebius. The sharp contrasts between the two characters break the flow of the music and create tension in the music. Eusebius deliberately delivers an exaggerated sentimentality. The appearance of Florestan then breaks this sentimentality and destroys the illusion created by Eusebius. This almost has the same effect as the use of quotation, but on a larger scale. We can see that the presence of Florestan and Eusebius in Schumann's music is an embodiment of Romantic irony. From what we have discussed in the previous chapters, we know the significance of these two musical alter egos for Schumann. This further proves the foundational influence of Romantic irony in Schumann's music.

¹¹⁰ Dill and Schumann, “Romantic Irony,” 191.

Elaborating further on the example of Florestan and Eusebius, we can also see the presence of the insoluble contradiction that Romantic irony oftentimes calls for in these two musical alter egos. There is no better example than the contradiction between the passionate and exuberant Florestan and the sentimental and thoughtful Eusebius. If we look closely at Schumann's music, it is not hard to find that in Schumann's music, the sentimental Eusebius piece is almost always followed by a Florestan piece. To name a couple of examples, in Schumann's *Carnaval*, the piece "Eusebius" is immediately followed by "Florestan," and in Schumann's *Fantasiestücke* Op.12, a Eusebius-like piece "Warum?" is once again immediately followed by a Florestan-like piece "Grillen." From our discussion in the previous chapters, we know that Eusebius and Florestan pieces are in contrasts in every single aspect of music, including the harmony, rhythm, dynamics, tempo, and character. By placing the two pieces back-to-back, Schumann is able to intensify the obvious contradiction between the two characters and thus present the Romantic irony accordingly.

In fact, sometimes Florestan alone is an embodiment of the Romantic irony. As we have discussed above that quotation is the most evident example of Romantic irony, it is quite fascinating to see that in both *Carnival* and *Davidsbündlertänze*, Schumann quoted himself in the pieces that are titled with Florestan or with Florestan's signature. Also, in Schumann's journal, *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, articles that discussed irony were often "written" by Florestan. This seems odd at the beginning, given that all of the characteristics of Florestan—"vehement, enthusiastic, fiery"—are almost the opposite of irony, which includes "consciousness, control, distance."¹¹¹ However, this is hardly a coincidence. When Schumann described Florestan, he said

¹¹¹ Dill and Schumann, "Romantic Irony," 191.

“Florestan often tends to stop suddenly at the moment of fullest enjoyment, perhaps in order to preserve the whole freshness, vigour, and fullness of this moment in his memory.”¹¹² The ability to “stop suddenly at the moment of fullest enjoyment” is a sign of self-control, or a “conscious restriction of the enthusiasm.” The conscious restriction and self-control already showed parallels to the central ideas of Romantic irony. In fact, Romantic writers or poets have never rejected enthusiasm. What makes the art Romantically ironic is the subsequent control of the initial enthusiasm. Just as Dill argued that the Florestan pieces “contain their own corrective, a corrective to enthusiasm,” these pieces have the capability of showing both the enthusiasm and the “corrective to enthusiasm.” The fact that Florestan could present both enthusiasm and the control of the initial enthusiasm shows a high level of self-awareness, and is exactly why the character of Florestan is an embodiment of Romantic irony.

In summary, we see different embodiments of Romantic irony exemplified within Schumann’s music. The concept of masquerade closely follows the principles of Romantic irony, as it is centered on the inconsistency of what is on the surface and what is hidden underneath, which is in line with the insoluble contradiction that Romantic irony focuses on. The concept of masquerade itself also illustrates the self-reflection and self-consciousness that are critical to Romantic irony. We can see the use of quotation would show presence of self-awareness, the self-creation and self-annihilation effect and insoluble contradiction. The obvious contradictory aspect of Schumann’s Florestan and Eusebius would not only lead to the self-creation and self-annihilation effect, but also result in tremendous dialectic tension. The use of descriptive titles, headings and texts would be evidence of self-consciousness and also would present some

¹¹² Dill and Schumann, “Romantic Irony,” 187.

incongruences that would lead to self-creation and self-annihilation as well as dialectic tension. In fact, quotations, Florestan and Eusebius, descriptive titles and headings are also crucial in the understanding of other concepts such as Schumann's musical alter egos, fragments, and Schumann's musical forms, as we have frequently used them to discuss those concepts in the previous chapters.

Other previously covered topics, such as Schumann's musical alter egos, and fragments are also closely tied to Romantic irony. We have already discussed how Florestan and Eusebius are perfect examples of Romantic irony. When we discussed Schumann's organization of his fragments, we highlighted the juxtaposition of contrasting materials, which also shows parallels to Romantic irony in the sense that by stacking contrasting materials back-to-back, Schumann achieved the self-creation and self-annihilation effect, the insoluble contradiction as well as dialectic tension. The parallels between Romantic irony and masquerade, Schumann's musical alter egos, and fragments are undeniable. We can also see the fundamental role that Romantic irony takes on in Schumann's music.

Ultimately, the elucidation of how Romantic irony is woven throughout the tapestry of Schumann's work allows us to fully appreciate Schumann's place in the pantheon of Romantic artists, musicians, and writers. We can see the strong literary inspiration in many of Schumann's pieces, with examples including *Die Flegeljahre* and *Papillons*, and E.T.A. Hoffmann's works and *Kreisleriana*. On a deeper level however, we can see what makes Schumann's works special are not just their musicality, or their connections to Romantic literature. Schumann is special because he incorporates traditionally literary devices, such as fragments and quotations, and even structures of literary works, such as Chinese box structure and Double Novel structure, into his music. He further takes Romantic irony and Romanticism, and makes them integral parts of his

music as well. In doing so, we can see that Schumann bridges the gap between literature and music. By deliberately applying compositional strategies derived from German Romantic aesthetics into his music, Schumann uses a coherent poetic music language and intentionally creates chaos and madness in his music. Schumann in this sense is a dominant figure not just in music, but at the same time by applying literary principles is a dominant figure in Romanticism as a whole.

Conclusion

A cursory glance through Schumann's music might seem to show the work of a madman. At once chaotic, disorganized, contradictory, and ambiguous. However, as our discussion has shown, Schumann is intentional in his chaos, and there are calculated and consistent compositional strategies derived from German Romantic aesthetics. As we explored each aspect of Schumann's music, we were able to identify the coherent aesthetic vision and deliberate aesthetic program embedded.

From our discussion on the influence of Jean Paul and Schumann's *Papillons* Op.2, we begin to see how Schumann took inspiration from literature and how it played a role in his music. Our exploration of the concept of masquerade reveals the inconsistency between what is on the surface and what is behind the masquerade and provides additional insight into understanding Schumann's work. In addition to programmatic and stylistic inspirations from Jean Paul's novels, Jean Paul also had profound impact on Schumann's mental state in the sense that Schumann started to split into his musical alter egos, Florestan and Eusebius. What is more, he went further and created an entire music society, the *Davidsbündler*, in his imagination. These characters became the musical masquerades that Schumann would wear while composing his *Carnaval* Op.9. The numerous characters through which Schumann ventriloquized confirmed the consistent use of the concept of masquerade in his music. We saw deeper connections between Schumann's music and literature when fragments became the major compositional style of Schumann. Despite the inherently disorganized and chaotic feature of fragments, Schumann was able to incorporate them into musical forms that could intentionally present the chaos and madness in an expressive and poetic way.

As we broadened our examination of Schumann's works into the overall Romantic environment, we realized the deeper connections between Schumann's music and the Romantic trend, in particular the concept of Romantic irony. We see not only the embodiment of Romantic irony in his music, but also the deeper connections between Romantic irony and all other concepts that we have discussed. Therefore, rather than simply a literary device that Schumann borrowed from his literary models, this concept provides the critical foundation for Schumann and is an integral component of his music. Because of his ability to bridge the span between music and literature and his employment of a poetic music language that is derived from German Romantic aesthetic, Schumann really set himself apart from all other composers.

Schumann's genius did not lie in his madness—it lay in his ability to harness that madness to imbue his pieces with an energy that has stood the test of time. It lay in his ability to compose with a poetic language that comes from outside purely musical thought. It lay in his ability to take his music to the very precipice of self-destruction, and stop just short. In a sense, for Schumann it can be said that in the many, there is one, and in the one, there is many. His music could somehow unite together a bewildering array of characters, clashing fragments, jarring rhythms and unexpected harmonies even as his own mind fractured and splintered under the weight of his mental illness. As we look back on history, we can see that Schumann was able to create an unparalleled and inimitable style unlike anything seen before. Ultimately, the tantalizing and provocative paradoxes presented in his compositions offer great enrichment to those who study, teach, perform and listen to his music.

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