

SONG CYCLES:  
A BRIEF HISTORY WITH EXAMPLES

A Supporting Paper  
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In Partial Fulfillment  
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by  
Perry Ness Price  
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UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

Department of Music

presents

Perry Price, *Tenor*

in

MASTER'S RECITAL

assisted by Conoley Ballard, *Piano*

PROGRAM

Vaghissima sembianza ..... S. Donaudy  
Gia il sole dal Gange ..... A. Scarlatti  
O del mio amato ben ..... S. Donaudy  
Le Violette ..... A. Scarlatti

Dichterliebe ..... R. Schumann  
    Im Wunderschönen Monat mai  
    Aus meinen Thränen spriessen  
    Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne  
    Wenn ich in deine Augen seh  
    Ich will meine Seele Tauchen  
    Im Rhein im heiligen Strome  
    Ich grolle nicht

E La solita storia del pastore  
    from *L'Arlesiana* ..... F. Cilèa

—INTERMISSION—

Cinq Mélodies Populaires Grecques ..... M. Ravel  
    Chanson de la mariée  
    Là-bas, vers l'église  
    Quel galant m'est comparable  
    Chanson des cailleuses de lentisques  
    Tout gail

In the Silence of Night ..... S. Rachmaninoff  
Sure on This Shining Night ..... S. Barber  
Tell Me, Oh Blue, Blue Sky ..... V. Giannini  
Visions ..... C. L. Sjöberg

Sunday, April 12, 1964, 8:15 p.m.  
Ezekiel W. Cullen Auditorium

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree  
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## INTRODUCTION

However carefully critics and historians outline the past and the present state of music, analyze its trends, and attempt to predict its future course, new developments are almost always a surprise. The appearance of a new musical technique or style usually seems to be both natural and inevitable. The new is then seen as an outgrowth of existing patterns and conditions. In just such a manner the appearance of the song cycle as an art form developed out of a long, pre-existing tradition.

Perry N. Price

## CHAPTER I

### SONG CYCLE, DEFINITION AND SHORT HISTORY

It is important, first of all, to set forth a meaning for the term "song cycle." Only then can one adequately evaluate the works to be discussed. The English form of the term is taken almost literally from the German term Liederkreis, sometimes seen as Liedercyclus or Liederreihe.<sup>1</sup> The term "song cycle" means "a cycle (literally), or a series of songs relating to the same poetic subject and forming one composition of music."<sup>2</sup>

As a song cycle is based upon a pre-existing text, it will be useful to investigate the relating development of poetic cycles, as a knowledge of the background from which song cycles developed will lead to a better understanding of the medium.

According to Cassell's Encyclopedia of World Literature, a poetic cycle is a "group of poems or compositions around a central theme, hero, family, object or event."<sup>3</sup> The history of poetic cycles dates back to the

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<sup>1</sup>Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, ed. Eric Blom (5th ed.; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1955), p. 962.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Encyclopedia Britannica, XII (9th ed.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1881), p: 109.

eighth century B. C. The Alexandrian grammarians referred to a large group of epic poems revolving around the battle of Troy. It comprises the eleven-book Cypria, the twenty-four book Homeric Iliad, the eleven-book Little Iliad, the Aethiopis, a continuation of the Iliad by Arctinus of Miletus, a disciple of Homer, and the Nostri, of which only the twenty-four book Odyssey remains. It is generally believed that the individual epics were joined and made cyclic by Pisistratus, tyrant of Athens.

The earliest traces of literary cycles are found in the early Greek Rhapsodies which, according to the Encyclopedia Britannica, are "oral récitation of epic poems."<sup>4</sup> In similar manner, the Old Testament stories were handed down orally and separately, and gradually formed into large cycles. The joining process began during the period of oral tradition and culminated in the later period of written tradition. Similar development took place for the many cyclic tales of Buddha, including the three-part Himayana, written before 250 B. C.

The first traces of cyclic structure in secular works do not appear until well after the death of Christ. They are found in early epic poetry on the legendary struggles of King Chonchobar of Ulster with King Ailill of

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

Connaugh. Another set of cyclic poems from this same period revolves around the tales of King Cormac macAirt and Finn macCurmaill and his son Ossian. Another and perhaps the most famous of this period is the epic Beowulf, which is traced to the seventh century Northumbrian region of Brittany. It tells the epic tales of a hero from youth to old age through a myriad of experiences. It is believed written by a Christian using Germanic history and pagan legend. A later cycle on King Eochaid Mugmedon and his family helped introduce the epic cycle to Wales, where developed a distinct style of epic poetry based on the tales of King Arthur. The cycle of Mabinogin, dating about 1135, marked a basic change in the type of tale used. The early Irish epic cycles were based on themes of heroic clans, warrior groups, or religious communities. The same thematic types were used by the French in the development of their own epic cycles during the same period. However, in the Arthurian cycles, we see the first emphasis on the individual in opposition to the community from which he comes.

The spread of epic poetry into Germanic literature brought with it a major change. For over ten centuries the transmission of poetry was by oral means, but very soon written versions of epics began to appear. It was out of this new Germanic written tradition that the major development of solo song cycles was later to emerge. In the

Germanic epic literature both the Welsh and Irish traditions appeared. The early Hildebrandslied and Waltharius poetic cycles both returned to the Irish tradition of a general enterprise rather than individualism, but the Nibelungenlied cycle was based upon individuals, and the thread of the story was built upon love rather than heroism. The same was the case of the Walfdictrich cycle, which was based upon courtly romance.

The poetic cycle tradition rapidly spread on to the Finnish, Slavonic, and Tataric literatures. The Russian school showed great tendency toward setting heroic poems to music. There were several traditional heroic song groups, most notably the cycle entitled Kiev.

A series of early Finnish ballads was gathered and made cyclic in the nineteenth century under the title Kalevala. The notable point is that by the seventeenth and eighteenth century the trend in middle Europe was toward musical setting in written form, of chosen poetic works. This trend is an extension or development of the tendency toward the unwritten, semi-musical setting which had been traditional for previous centuries.

The appeal of epic poetry spread to nearly all of the civilized world, and many special developments varying in form and content occurred. Two styles of special development in cyclic literature occurred: one is centered upon vague



basic themes and held together by an outer story, the other is a group of poems upon related subjects under a single title and appearing cyclic in form. Of the first group, most notable are the Arabian Nights, Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, and Basile's Pentemerone. Of the latter type, Dante's Vita Nuova and Petrarch's Canzoniere are notable examples.

It is of interest that there was no similar cyclic development in prose writing, although the subject matter was nearly always of the same type. It followed that by its nature, poetry lent itself to musical setting far more quickly and successfully than prose. The noteworthy exception to this was the thirteenth-century group of prosaic Greek plays, sometimes performed in musical setting, called the Cyprus Passion Cycle, depicting the events of Holy Week.

In Germany about 1740 a new type of written vocal music called lied began to develop. It was a direct outgrowth of the existing trend of setting poetry to music, which was built on centuries of oral tradition throughout Europe. The lied was a solo song, short, with specific classic forms, and with simple accompaniments held subordinate to the vocal line. At about the same time as the development of the lied in Germany, a new form of solo song developed in England and Scotland. This development was in the form of popular folk ballads. So profuse were these ballads that their popularity soon spread to Germany. This spread was

facilitated by a new interest in formal obscurity and emphasis on expressive lyricism and sonorous harmonies. This marked the advent of the Romantic period of music, one facet of which was the strong bond between music and literature. The effect of the ballad, by nature longer and formally looser than the existing lied, was phenomenal. Several early composers of German folk ballads, Rudolf Zumstedt, G. A. Burger, and Carl Loewe, were largely responsible for the popular growth of the German ballad. Soon many of the composers of the classic lied eagerly began adapting the freedom of the ballad style by modifying and expanding the classic forms they had been using. This expansion necessitated greater variety of themes and textures. Contrasts of moods and emotional content required finding new means of imposing unity. In turn the piano rose from being only a subordinate accompaniment to the important role of partner with the vocal line in enhancing and unifying the poetry. Out of this background came the composition generally accepted as the first song cycle, Beethoven's Opus 98, An die ferne Geliebte. In the strictest sense this is true, but in a broader sense this work was preceded by centuries of oral tradition and, indeed, some written examples.

According to Scholes, a song cycle is "a string of songs, related thought, and congruous musical style, capable of being sung consecutively and being felt to constitute an

entity."<sup>5</sup> Scholes goes on to say, "It may consist of the lyrics of one poet (originally intended by him as a series or otherwise) or of lyrics of various poets, but similar in thought and feeling, brought together by the composer."<sup>6</sup>

Two very early examples of this style, which are perhaps the earliest known, according to Scholes, are a set of eleven songs I Cannot Come Each Day to Woo, written by Richard Nicholson who died in 1639, and second, Four Songs included in Ravenscroft's Brief Discourse of 1614. Both of these cycles are extensions of the British school of cyclic poetry and mark an early innovation in Britain similar to the position of Beethoven's work some one hundred and sixty years later in the Germanic school. It was the Beethoven work, however, which marked the beginning of a solid chain of cycles from various German composers which is now viewed as a specific art form called "song cycle."

Beethoven's Opus 98 was followed by many important German cycles and, later, cycles by composers of many other countries. Notable among the German cycles is Schubert's Die Schoene Muellerin, containing twenty songs and called a cycle by the composer. It was composed in 1823, at the

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<sup>5</sup>Percy A. Scholes, Oxford Companion to Music (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 885.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

height of the Romantic development, and only seven years after the Beethoven cycle. Schubert also wrote Die Winterreise in 1827, and the Schwanen-Gesang, a cycle only because of the desire of the original publisher who formed the last fourteen songs written by Schubert into a group and published them collectively after the composer's death, under the title Swan-Song.

Robert Schumann, another composer of lieder, also contributed greatly to the idiom of song cycles. He had two under the name Liederzyklus (Opus 24) to poetry of Heine, and Opus 39 to poetry of Eichendorf. A third cycle, called Liederkreis (Opus 25) is entitled Myrthen. The two most frequently performed Schumann cycles today are Frauenliebe und Leben (Opus 42) on poetry by Chamisso, and Dichterliebe (Opus 48) on poetry by Heine. In addition, Schumann wrote a set of twelve songs to poetry by Kerner, which are under the collective title Liederreihe (Opus 35). This collection is often treated as a cycle, although individual songs often appear separately on programs.

Another giant of lieder composers who added significantly to the idiom of song cycles was Johannes Brahms. His Die Schoene Magelone (Opus 33) is a unified set of fifteen songs on an ancient story about the beautiful Magelone and her Knight. The story was given a poetic

setting by Ludwig Tieck in 1812 upon which Brahms set his lyric cycle.<sup>7</sup>

Of all the sets mentioned, and indeed of all that followed, Beethoven's set most faithfully meets the requirements of the title song cycle in its strictest sense. The popularity of the cycle spread to England, then France, and finally to almost every corner of the musical world.

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<sup>7</sup>Edwin Evans, Brahms' Vocal Music, I (London: William Reeves), p. 114.

## CHAPTER II

### LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

About the time that Haydn was achieving the pinnacle of fame and Mozart was placed in an unmarked pauper's grave in Vienna, a young, enthusiastic composer of twenty-one years was undertaking the journey of some five hundred miles from Bonn, Germany, to Vienna for the purpose of music study. This young man, Ludwig Beethoven, was destined to become a figure of foremost importance in the music of his day and of all time. Born in a favorable time, he inherited a style from Haydn and Mozart which was complete but very ripe for inventive change and development. This man who became the great symphonist, the giant of keyboard sonatas and string quartets of such notable quality and significance in the development of tonal expression, was also a composer of vocal music, often overshadowed by his great instrumental achievements. In the realm of song composing, Beethoven stands equal in stature to his place in instrumental music. For in this idiom, as in the larger instrumental forms, he is a foremost developer and innovator.

The cycle of six songs, An die ferne Geliebte (To the Distant Beloved), Opus 98, has the great historical distinction of being the first true song cycle.<sup>1</sup> It is not

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<sup>1</sup>See Chapter I, Song Cycle, Definition and Short History.

only the initial cycle of songs, but still remains the most perfectly unified and cohesive of the idiom. It is bonded in spirit and material as exactly as any of his nine symphonies.

Composed in April of 1816, it is set to poems by Alois Jeitteles, who was an amateur poet and full-time medical student in Vienna. His age was the same as Beethoven's, and it is probable that the two met and that the poems were given to the composer in person. Nottebohn in his book Zweite Beethoveniana describes the original song sketches, now owned by Eugen von Miller of Vienna, as a study of Beethoven's meticulous perusal of the words and of their descriptive effect, and of his powers of formal organization.

### An Die Ferne Geliebte

Beethoven composed in an expanded manner in all areas, in comparison to what existed previously. It is a natural expectation that in song writing he would have followed the same inventive pattern, as indeed he did. His creation of the first song cycle was an expansion of previous song writing, in that his cycle is in reality a single unit greatly expanded to encompass a larger text, but retaining all the unity necessary to a single, shorter song. It is this single work which is his greatest contribution to

the development of song literature.<sup>2</sup> Within the structure of the whole, each song has a unifying frame in meter, tempo, and dynamics, as well as in text.

The initial musical phrase appears in the sketchbook in many different forms. He tried varied intervals on the word "spähend" (gazes), first a drop of a third, then a fifth, then a sixth, and several times of a seventh. It is a drop of a sixth in the finished work. The two measures between the repeat of the initial eight measures have a rising motion of octave grace notes which balanced the character of the first phrase. At the return of the eight-measure phrase, the accompaniment is a combination of the two previous statements, thus building a subtle intensity and momentum, while retaining a melodious and flowing line. The two-measure intervals grow in strength, being a movement of duple rhythm in the first two, but a movement of flowing triplets before the third phrase. The triplets continue under the voice line, creating a clean and constant building of tension while not increasing the speed. In the fourth repetition, the accompaniment becomes syncopated in a sixteenth note movement, further increasing the intensity. The final interlude is of triplet movement, again continuing

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<sup>2</sup>A. W. Thayer, Life of Ludwig van Beethoven, XI (New York: H. E. Krehbiel, 1921), p. 343.



under the voice. The triplets give way after the initial measure of the final repetition to a syncopated sixteenth note accompaniment, creating a mood of agitation. Halfway through the final phrase, on the words "ein liebend Herz" (of the loving heart), the intensity reaches a climax in the tempo alteration Stringendo poco a poco, culminating in the Allegro section which rapidly ends the song almost in a fit of passion. The Allegro is built on the two-measure interlude, but extends into a cadence for the first song of the cycle.

There is little modification in the five repetitions of the voice line, except for the final Stringendo. One musical variance worthy of note is on the word "lieder" (songs) in the fourth repetition, where the word is turned gracefully over a rising third in triplet motion.

The second song flows immediately out of E flat major, the key of the opening song, by repeating the chord twice followed by a simple G major chord out of which a lilting 6/8 motion begins. The short introduction to the second song begins with the eighth notes G to A to B, which are repeated in a quarter note to eighth note to quarter note, and ends with the eighth notes B to A to G. The voice enters immediately, repeating the notes of the introduction but in reverse, the second phrase followed by the first. The little introduction now appears to have been an expression

of a thought pondered upon and finally brought to expression in words, beginning with the second half or most vital part of the thought. The conception of the accompaniment and voice relationship is further realized in the little paraphrase or afterthought in the accompaniment which follows the first phrase, of two three-measure elements. This technique of paraphrasing a previous phrase was used by composers of songs prior to Beethoven. The second phrase of the voice part again is imitated, by repeating the last few notes which appeared on the words "moechte ich sein!" (would I were there!), whereupon the voice again utters the words on the same notes, emphasizing them by mere repetition. Instead of a further repeat in the piano, there is a movement to a new idea, which is derived directly from the last notes of the phrase. While the voice moves repeatedly on G's, the accompaniment in C major moves on an elongated development of the last notes of the phrase. The phrase ends with a final repeat of the words "moechte ich sein!," this time on G rather than the original D. By the use of little repetitions, the song is returned to G major for a final full statement of the melody. The repeat of the last few notes of the phrase, this time on the words "innere Pein" (inner agony), is accented by a sudden Poco adagio. A similar accenting of the repeat occurs after the final phrase.

Immediate movement into the third song begins on staccato chords in the left hand of the accompaniment, moving rapidly from G major to C minor to A flat major. The character of the third song is flighty and light, in contrast to the ponderous nature of the second song. The voice part is continually staccato and is accompanied by a similar movement in the left hand of the piano part. The right hand has a flow of triplets which seems to depict the fast-moving clouds referred to in the text. In the second stanza a variance is made by the introduction of a slow legato phrase with dotted rhythm in the accompaniment. The triplets return at the end of the second verse, this time leading into A minor. The voice continues in the staccato pattern while the piano part becomes noticeably less active. In the second stanza the voice line, marked PP, is joined by a syncopated right hand accompaniment, creating a rocking, unsettled mood. The final stanza, also in A flat minor, has a return of the triplets, this time fully stated in both hands. The final words "Ohne Zahl" (without number) are repeated over an E flat chord sustained into the beginning of the fourth song, thereby fusing them together.

The fourth song retains the A flat key, but has switched to major. The rhythm has been changed to 6/8. The tempo, Allegro ma non troppo, gives the 6/8 a definite skipping feeling, in keeping with the text. The roots of

this feeling are derived from the third song. The left hand has continuous downbeats on the first and fourth beats of each measure, adding considerably to the strong rhythmic texture. There is a return of the paraphrase technique in the accompaniment at the end of the first line of singing, reminiscent of the first song. This little phrase ends on an A flat downbeat giving way to the next phrase, which enters in a syncopated manner on the third eighth note. The second part of this song follows a similar pattern, except for a more sonorous accompaniment. The third stanza is legato, but of the same structure as the others. The syncopated last phrase is repeated immediately, but enters on the fourth eighth note instead of the third, thus resolving the syncopated pattern. The final few notes are repeated in the accompaniment and lead into the fifth song.

The rhythm changes to 4/4, but this change is not apparent to the listener because of a poco adagio introduction, which uses the syncopation in such a manner as to obscure the rhythm temporarily. The fifth song is perhaps the most openly expressive for the singer. The lines are long and flowing, befitting the poetry, and are in two segments with the second more subdued than the first. The accompaniment becomes more flowing in the second stanza, making the only musical change from the first stanza. The third stanza has a triplet introduction, reminiscent of the

earlier triplet portions of the cycle. The second part of the first line is retarded, allowing a very expressive vocal effect, and a fresh beginning for the second part of the stanza marked a tempo. This stanza, by imaginative tempo variances, gives the effect of pondering a thought within the music, again similar to the early part of the cycle. The second part of this stanza has a *ritardando*, as in the first, which leads this time into an Adagio repetition of the last phrase, now in C minor. This creates a very tentative mood which soon opens into a lyrical introduction to the sixth song.

The sixth song uses a thematic reference to the opening song, but does not fully recapitulate the melody until after a very moody section in C minor. At lento ed espressivo the original melody returns. The accompaniment is very forceful and developed. The return is poetic as well as musical, and at stringendo poco a poco is exactly like the closing of the first song. In addition, the opening key of E flat returns. At the end of stringendo poco a poco, in the place of the second song, there begins a highly developmental Coda-like section built on material of the first song. In a typically Beethoven manner, fragments of the melody are isolated and repeated, separated by new but closely related legato lines. In the final phrase, "was ein liebend, liebend Herz geweihet!" (What a loving, loving heart

empowers!), the melodic line and the full accompaniment which follows take a dramatic, soaring downward motion which is a reversal of the opening of the first song. Indeed it is a modified inversion of the opening line of the cycle. It follows the final upsurge of the voice and comes to rest on E flat, the opening note of the cycle.

### In Summary

An die ferne Geliebte follows a cyclic pattern in several respects. First of all, the text of song number one returns in part and is developed in the closing song. Secondly, the melody returns along with the text. Thirdly, there is a return to the original key in the final song. In addition to these larger cyclic aspects, there are some minute melodic and formal cyclic ideas within the work. For example, the treatment of each song is cyclic in that each of the first five songs ends with a final, strong statement of its own melody, after working through various other melodic ideas. The final song has as its ending the strong statement of the opening melody upon which a very developmental closing is built.

The cycle of keys used is of interest also as there is a definite pattern to them. The opening song is in E flat major. In the second song the key moves up a major third to G major. Both the third and fourth songs use A flat as tonic, a minor second above G and a perfect fourth

above E flat, the third to A flat minor and the fourth to A flat major, respectively. For the fifth, the key is C major, a major third above A flat and a major sixth above E flat. In the sixth song a brief beginning in C minor soon returns to the original key of E flat. This cycle of keys outlines the subdominant of the tonic E flat major.

The work as a whole is perhaps the most perfect of all song cycles. No single song properly stands alone. Each song must be approached within the perspective of the entire work.

## CHAPTER III

### FRANZ SCHUBERT

Franz Schubert was born in a suburb of Vienna on January 31, 1797, the son of a schoolmaster. Learning music at an early age from members of his musical family, he became the foremost composer of German lieder. It is he, who from the heritage of the songs of Mozart and Beethoven, brought the lieder form, by complete fusion of poetry and music, to its preeminent position in vocal music.

It is well to understand the basic types of structures in which Schubert composed songs. Considered structurally and generally, his songs may be classified in one of three categories. The first, the strophic type, is a song in which each of the various stanzas of the poem has received an identical setting in music. Schubert's setting of Goethe's Heidenroeslein (Little Rose on the Heath) is a famous example of this type. The second, or modified strophic type, is a song in which most of the stanzas have been given identical or nearly identical musical settings, while one or two stanzas have been given either slightly or widely different treatments because of the demands of the text. A prime example of this type is Die Forelle (The Trout). The last type, through-composed, follows no particular formal pattern. The poetry dictates its plan,



thus offering the greatest freedom of expression. One other type, not as frequently used, was the scena, made up of several clear sections in differing keys. This type was closely related to both the modified strophic and through-composed types.

Schubert was a creator of melodies which were capable of expressing many emotions, while still retaining the basic simplicity of folk music. He possessed a distinctive ability to reconcile the pure musical demands of melody and harmony with the rhetorical rhythms and textual implications of the poetry. His songs have a perfection of outline and accuracy of accentuation. In addition, Schubert obviously knew the expressive possibilities of the human voice, perhaps because he was a fine singer himself, as is witnessed in many letters concerning Schubert's performance of his own songs. A letter by Spaun, a close friend of Schubert, who was present at the first hearing of Die Winterreise (The Winter Journey), wrote of his hearing the song cycle and of the performance, "They (the songs) touched me more deeply than any songs I have ever heard. He sang in a voice vibrant with feeling, the whole Winterreise cycle."<sup>1</sup>

Declamation was also an important means of emphasis in Schubert's songs. Many good examples of dramatic

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<sup>1</sup>Arthur Hutchings, Schubert (New York: Pellegrini and Cudahy, Inc., 1949), p. 76.

declamations are found in Erlkoenig, Die Wanderer, and Der Doppelganger, to name only a few.

Schubert admired the style of Beethoven from early childhood: Beethoven's great success in the expressive possibilities of modulation as a means of differentiating various sections of a poem, or differentiating between characters (Erlkoenig), or defining varying emotions. Changes from major to parallel minor and minor to parallel major are also frequent in his songs. By skillful use of modulations he was able to create and maintain musical and dramatic interest over extended periods of time. The success of Schubert's greatest song undertakings, his cycles Die Schoene Muellerin (The Pretty Maid of the Mill) and Die Winterreise, is due most assuredly to this ability.

The great moodiness and solemn overcast of Die Winterreise are believed by many to be an emotional product of the death of Beethoven, whom Schubert loved and admired. In spite of the shockingly grave mood in this cycle, little actually can be attributed to this loss, as the manuscripts of the first twelve songs are dated February 1827, at least a month before Beethoven's sudden death on March 26, 1827. It is indeed hard to find any other justification for the intense pathos except that which is inherent in Mueller's poems and Schubert's great skill with treatment of the text. It is true that the seriousness of this cycle surprised many

of Schubert's close friends. Spaun writes of Die Winterreise cycle, "The tragic and passionate tone of these songs took us aback. Schubert said: 'I am more pleased with these songs than with any others, and you will like them too.' He was right; we were soon mad about them, with their yearning pathos. . . ."2 Hiller, who also heard the cycle with Schubert at the piano and Vogl singing, writes "Voice and piano became as nothing; the music seemed to want no material help, but the melodies appealed to the ear as a vision does to the eye."3

It is well to note that Die Winterreise made use of the complete set of poems by Mueller, with no omissions, as was also done in the earlier Die Schoene Muellerin cycle. In some respects the individual units of Die Winterreise are less reliant on each other, and are more self-sufficient as songs than those of the earlier cycle. However, the story implied by the poetic cycle, as well as the prevailing mood of loneliness and dejection present in every poem, is the bond which makes Die Winterreise a cycle. The mood is expressed over and over, in a great variety of rhythms, harmonies, and melodic treatments, and thus creates a strong dramatic tension which binds the songs into a unified whole.

It is a contention by some that Schubert's condition of health prompted the mood of the work. Spaun says

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 77.

concerning Schubert's health, "We who were near and dear to him knew how much the creatures of his mind took out of him, and in what anguish they were born. No one who ever saw him at his morning's work, glowing, and with his eyes aflame, yes, and positively with a changed speech . . . will ever forget it. . . . I hold it beyond question that the excitement in which he composed his finest songs, in particular Die Winterreise, brought about his untimely death."<sup>4</sup>

Schubert found the first twelve of the twenty-four poems of Die Winterreise in an almanac called Urania, published in Leipzig in 1823. In the late summer of 1827, long after he had completed the twelve songs, Schubert came across the complete Mueller cycle in a book Poems from the Posthumous Papers of a Travelling Horn-Player. Die Winterreise was the middle section of the three-part work dedicated by the poet to Carl Maria von Weber, as a pledge of friendship and admiration. Although the second twelve poems were not added as a sequence to the first twelve by the poet, but were rather added in several intermediate positions in the total cycle, Schubert chose to add the new twelve as a unit, in sequence to the first twelve.

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<sup>4</sup>Maurice Brown, Schubert (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1958), p. 258.

Die Winterreise

The music of Die Winterreise retains the simplicity of Schubert's writing as well as the simplicity of the Mueller poetry. The poetic interest is not a psychological one, but lies rather in the depth of feeling. Dreams, frustrations, regrets, and antagonisms torture the lover on his wandering journey. The minor harmonies depict a long struggle with his feelings. The appeal is for the sympathy of the listener. The poetry is straightforward; this prompted Schubert to compose the music in the same unadorned manner. The journey of the rejected lover begins without a destination, and each song of the cycle depicts a crisis along his aimless and desolate journey.

The first song, Gute Nacht (Good Night), begins in an oppressive D minor and is a sad and plodding farewell. Schubert's piano style is similar to the Andante in C minor of the E flat Piano Trio, or the A minor section of the C major Symphony. This song is a slightly modified strophic song because it contains a shift to D major in the last stanza. As if depicting an attempt at courage, the third stanza has a slight variation of the melody anticipating the major keyed fourth stanza. However, the mood has been irrevocably set, and the short piano postlude returns to D minor.

In song number two, Die Wetterfahne (The Weathervane), the lover becomes inwardly furious. In the key of A minor, Schubert used trills to depict the wind blowing the weathervane about. He created in sound a picture of changing puffs of wind, and the excitement of the lover is heard in a series of quickly changing modulations rising through G major, A minor, B and D major, and finally back to A minor at the very end.

In the third song, Gefror'ne Thraenen (Frozen Tears), the key of F minor is used. The syncopated falling bass line depicts the heavily falling tears and their freezing in the winter cold. The effect is made very stark by cold sounding octaves at the end of the song.

The fourth song, Erstarrung (Numbness), contrary to the second song, is a moving but tragic combination of memory mingled with faded hope. The piece retains a tragic mood by its use of the C minor key. It has a nervous quality due to the constant, almost incessant triplets which depict the lover's torturing memory of the earth under the cold snow that he would have his warm tears melt. In this song Schubert created a necessary change of pace within the cycle.

Der Lindenbaum (The Linden Tree), the fifth song, is in E major, the raised third of the preceding C minor. This is again tranquil, in contrast to the preceding song. It possesses a very simple and memorable melody. The lover

speaks of the peace he might find under the limbs of the linden tree, where many a happy moment had been spent. The use of the broken sixths gives a somewhat tentative mood. The sudden turn to minor suggests the coldness of the wind as it whistles through the limbs of the tree. The abrupt C naturals in the phrase "der Hut flag mir vom Kopfe" (The hat flew off my head) and the lowness of the phrase "ich wendete mich nichte" (I did not turn back) paint a sorrowful tone picture of a man almost in a trance, not caring for anything. There is a hopeful resolution in the return of E major out of minor, and an apparent anticipation of spring.

Out of this brief optimism breaks a renewed flood of great sorrow. The sixth song, in E minor, Wasserflut (Flood-water), possesses a powerful melodic line spanning two octaves in arpeggio movement. The accompaniment in contrary action is rigid and chordal. It gives an impression of a wild, passionate outburst and a hope of returning to the home of the loved one. The song wanders through A major and then to F sharp minor and is further intensified by the repetition of the last line.

The movement prevalent in Wasserflut comes to rest in Auf dem Fluss (By the River). The trudging accompaniment moves in such a way as to suggest an endless dull pain in the heart. This pain is verbally expressed in the last

stanza. Again, key changes from E minor to E major in a middle section and a return to the minor in the last section create a restless, homeless feeling. The funereal feeling is created by a suggestion of funeral drums in the accompaniment. The funeral is for the dead love, whose epitaph the lover inscribes in the icy covering of the river. The intensity of the emotion finds a further expression in the wide range of the voice line, low A sharp to high A, nearly two octaves.

The eighth song, Rueckblick (Looking Back), is set in G minor with shifts to G major. The accompaniment is an urging, almost tripping motion over an alternately diatonic and chromatic bass, suggesting the lover's rushed escape from the city. There is an alternating rushed, then passive, feeling of indecision to finally leave the past forever. At the change to G major, the movement is solidly forward, but a return to C minor at the end brings a return to the hesitation.

There is a passage of time suggested between Rueckblick and the following Irrlicht (Will-o'-the-wisp), for the lover's surroundings have changed, intimating the continued travels of the lost lover. In the bare, cold key of B minor we sense that he wishes to follow the ravine of the river to its, or his own, inevitable end. Schubert has created a lighter, will-o'-the-wisp effect in the opening



bars and combined this with vocal phrases which seem to echo, by repeated rhythms, off the ravine walls. The wandering mood is retained by the shifting harmonies to B major and then to the remote key of C major.

Again, in Rast (A Halt), a passage of time is suggested, and the traveler is halted briefly in agonizing repose in a small hut. The voice line again soars over a wide range, with many wide skips, representing a return of the moods of Wasserflut and Irrlicht. Schubert must have felt a particular closeness to the lines "Fuehlst in der Still erst deinen Wurm Mit heissem Stich sich regen!" (Now in repose begin to feel the worm That grawing stirs within you!) because of the knowledge he had of his own failing health at the time. The setting of this piece in C minor seems particularly heartrending and stark.

The mood shifts somewhat in the eleventh song, Fruelingstraum (A Dream of Spring), beginning in A major and ending in A minor. In a rather light-hearted manner the 6/8 melody suggests the unusually happy dreams of the lover. The final Langsam section depicts the mixed emotion of his awakened reality and the gentle repose of his dreams. The answer does not occur until the final chord which suddenly possesses an agonizing C natural, making a shift to A minor, and a return of the cycle's predominate mood.

There is a languor in the music of Einsamkeit (Loneliness), set in B minor, which Schubert has captured from the spirit of the poetry. The lover's inner torment is intensified by the contrasting calmness and serenity of the day. Schubert alternates a calmness in measures one and two with the suddenness of a storm in measures three and four, which stirs the lover's heart and mind. There is a particular note of pathos in the ending phrase where Schubert makes use of a Neapolitan sixth.

Song number thirteen, Die Post (The Post), presents the first cheerful calling of the post horn on broken E flat chords. The mood is a happy removal from the tone of the cycle. The cyclic unity continues, however, in a jaunty march-like rhythm similar to the opening song and recurrent in the third song. This prevailing mood of solemn marching forward, cleverly concealed here in the gaiety of Die Post, is what makes Die Winterreise cyclic. It is interesting to note that this gay song is the first song of the second portion of the cycle, begun some eight months after the first portion. The song is a welcome musical break in the series of lamentations, a fruitful indulgence which makes the cycle emotionally balanced and bearable. In actuality, the post horn is pathetic to the hearer, the lover, whose vain hopes for a love letter are a useless fancy. In this light, the gaiety is but a parody. The cyclic hint occurs in the tonal

shift from E flat major to E flat minor midway through the song.

Der greise Kopf (The Gray Head) is a musical climb, within C minor, of a thirteenth (an eleventh in the voice) depicting the rising hopes of coming old age and the subsequent release of the grave, but comes tumbling back to the reality that youth has not yet gone. The melodic phrase, rhythmically erratic, is a pyramid in form. The climb is in dotted rhythm and becomes tumbling triplets.

The fifteenth song, Letzte Hoffnung (Last Hope), in E flat major, depicts the inevitable fall of a particular leaf in the dead of winter. With this leaf, the lover identifies his hopes; and when it falls dead, his hopes also die. The falling two-note figures depict the falling leaf. At the midpoint, the accompaniment quavers. The quavering relinquishes the falling motif, this time heavily accented as the leaf's flutter to the ground is traced through the E minor scale. In the last stanza the lover's last hopes fall, repeating in a similar fashion, the music depicting the falling of the leaf.

From this point the lover becomes consumed with the present, no longer preoccupied with the past. In Im Dorfe (In the Village), the next song, the village watchdogs howl in a low, subdued manner, evident in the short, almost growling accompaniment phrases. In D major for the most

part, the song possesses a slow awakening of both physical and philosophical senses of the lover. He realizes, in a slow, sad melody of resignation, that he can no longer partake of man's happy dreaming.

In Der stuermische Morgen (The Stormy Morning), song number eighteen, the morning breaks in stormy passion, bitterly pleasing the lover who can feel less of his inner storm fighting the throes of the weather. Schubert used this opportunity to break forth with a greatly animated musical expression in D minor. Syncopation, cleverly scattered accents and tied notes, and triplets used against duplets, create a believable storm in sound. The voice line is very jagged and full of skips and diminished sevenths, anticipating the impending loss of mental security.

The remaining songs serve as a step-by-step development of the deranged mind, brought on by mental anguish.

The nineteenth song, Taeuschung (Illusion), makes a poetic and musical reference to the earlier song Irrlicht. Earlier the lover followed the will-o'-the-wisp in a resigned but still somewhat defiant manner. In his deranged state, he now follows the wisp of light in a carefree, almost irresponsible manner. The setting of A major seems bright, but in reality is a false and superficial gaiety.

The A major changes ironically to G minor for the next song, Der Wegweiser.

Indeed, Der Wegweiser (The Signpost), should drop in key, for it represents a degradation of the lover's senses. His mind is now so fully affected that he wanders in much the same manner as a wanton criminal, seeking refuge. He is aware of two possibilities: one, that he can no longer live as other men, and secondly, that he cannot but search for a natural end to his woe. He is a broken man who would but find a refuge, there to await death and release. The voice line has been set in such a way that as the song evolves, the phrases become less and less balanced, more and more like the mutterings of the mentally unbalanced. The accompaniment has been arranged in a way as to fully support this feeling. It moves all around G minor, but does not come fully to rest in G minor until after the voice line is only mutterings. The inner voices of the accompaniment move chromatically toward each other, coming to rest in G minor simultaneously with the voice settling on G in an inevitable resolution of the tragic mood. An interesting cyclic occurrence is the tonal shift from G minor to G major.

In Das Wirtshaus (The Inn) the mood becomes peaceful in a tragic way. Because of the insistent minor which has prevailed, the drop to F major in this song is far less bright than it would appear in a different, more happy

setting. The point of pity which borders on the macabre is the seeming rejection, even by death, of the distraught lover; whereupon he wanders onward in utter dejection as the accompaniment falls away to an almost defiant F major chord. Schubert made frequent use of sevenths, which in his day must have made the song sound much less reposed than it does today.

The repose is short lived, however, for in Mut (Courage) a new burst of musical and poetic life comes forth. Schubert took an almost defiant courage and transformed it into a pseudo-triumph. In truth, the triumph is only violent desperation. The G minor beginning shifts to G major and once again shifts back to the minor, as in Der Wegweiser.

In Die Nebensonnen (The Mock Suns) the frenzied violence settles to melancholy, a collapse which follows a violent outburst. Schubert has depicted this loss of energy by confining the melodic sweep to four bars, in its initial range to a fourth and rising finally to a sixth. There are almost no skips, and the few that occur are utterly unobtrusive to the smooth melodic line. He has cleverly written the F minor accompaniment entirely in the bass clef, for both hands, thus confining the movement and energy. It seems poetically sure that the three suns to which the lover refers

are the suns of his love's face, the sunlight of hope, and the sunset of death.

A strange and irrational turn of events, after the fact, is all that Schubert needed to complete the cycle. In the twenty-fourth and last song, Der Leiermann (The Hurdy-Gurdy Man), the lover, now completely distraught, has become a hopeless beggar. It is a matter of point of view as to whether the lover is actually the Hurdy-Gurdy Man, or whether the last two lines of the song are the questions of the lover. The song could be interpreted either way. Schubert has set the last phrases in patter-like eighth note movement, interspersed with the cold, meaningless, unrelated two-measure tune of a hurdy-gurdy, built on open fifths. At the very end the bright E major chord simply falls to a single A minor chord. That is the simple, unadorned ending to some sixty-six pages of music.

### In Summary

The work is not cyclic in the same manner as the Beethoven work. There are momentary cyclic references in the music, such as the musical allusion prompted by the text in the nineteenth song, to the musical affects of the ninth song. There is also a return to G tonic in the twentieth and twenty-second songs, which first appeared in the eighth song. There is a development of the parallel octave idea in the

fifteenth song, first presented in the third song. In the thirteenth song, Die Post, which marks the beginning of the second group of songs, there is a march-like rhythm which first appeared in the first and third songs.

Schubert used an interesting key relationship built on triads and seventh chords, which follows a formula used often by Schubert in instrumental music, as well as vocal music. If one lists in order the keys of the twenty-four songs, one can clearly see the following chords outlined: D-F-A-C, A-G-E, C-E-G, G-B-D, C-E flat-G, D-F-A, and F-A-C-E flat. In the first twelve songs there are three divisions: the first through fourth songs being based on the notes of the D-F-A-C chord; the fourth through eighth songs based on notes of the C-E-G chord; and the eighth through the twelfth songs based on notes of the G-B-D chord. To link the three groups Schubert used songs based on the notes of an A-C-E chord. The A is Tonic of song two, the E is Tonic of song six, and the C is Tonic of song ten.

The pattern for the second twelve songs is less obvious. The keys of songs thirteen through sixteen are based on Tonics of C and E flat of a C-E flat-G chord. The keys of songs seventeen through nineteen are based on Tonics D and A of a D-F-A chord. The twentieth song supplies the missing key of G, and the twenty-first song supplies the missing key of F. The twenty-second and twenty-third songs



are again based on G and F Tonics respectively; and the final song, the twenty-fourth, is based on the Tonic A, the Dominant of the D minor key of the first song.

In spite of the return of some musical ideas and the profusely interlocked key structure, it is in the poetry, the life-to-death cycle of the lover's spirit and will to live, and Schubert's profound ability to sustain a single, sombre mood that we find the unity which makes Die Winterreise a cycle.

## CHAPTER IV

### ROBERT SCHUMANN

"Few poets or composers have been able to express with equal power both the bright and dark aspects of human passion."<sup>1</sup> This descriptive passage refers to Schumann's setting of Heine's poetry, Dichterliebe (Poet's Love), Opus 48, which tells of the loneliness of love which has been poisoned by sorrows and secrecy.

Schumann had a tremendous feeling for the musical values of words. He is often considered along with Schubert and Wolf as the most successful reflector of poetry in music. An earlier cycle on poems of Chamisso, Frauenliebe und Leben (A Woman's Life and Loves), Opus 42, tells of the joys and trials of wedded love. The Eichendorf cycle, Liederkreise (Song Cycle), Opus 39, was possibly written shortly thereafter, and this in turn was followed by the Heine cycle of sixteen songs.

#### Dichterliebe

The Dichterliebe cycle, completed by June of 1846, shows a striking difference from the Beethoven cycle. Schumann's "material is seldom 'developed' in the classic

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Haven Schauffler, Franz Schubert (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1948), p. 375.

sense, but it is continually remoulded. It is a variation form of writing."<sup>2</sup> He used his accompaniment with strong psychological intent. His accompaniments were often independent of the vocal line, but were highly developed and frequently more important than the voice in the creation of the mood. Schumann chose the first four of Heine's seventy-five poems and chose the other twelve to make up the sixteen songs of his cycle from among the remaining poems.

The songs flow together with complete tonal unity. In the very opening of the first song, in A major, Im wunderschönen Monat Mai (In the Wonderously Beautiful Month of May) the suspensive mood in the melodic piano line gives way to the entrance of the voice line. The opening phrase of the voice carefully avoids using any note twice. When the phrase is repeated, it creates a kind of tension which continues to build in the subsequent phrases. Again a repetition makes the mood more intense, and the voice line is literally suspended and continued in the accompaniment. The motive of the introduction and interlude is again repeated in the piano postlude, leaving a suspended, inconclusive mood which finds resolution in the immediate entrance of the voice line of song two. The second song, also in

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<sup>2</sup>Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, ed. Eric Blom (5th ed.; New York: St. Martin's Press, 1955), p. 623.

A major, is almost a meditation on the text. It is a pledge of love, coming out of tears. The musical lines are straightforward, with simple cadences at the end of each phrase of text. The final cadence, again in A major, prepares for the third song by leaving a suspended mood in tone.

Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube (The Rose, the Lily, the Dove), song three, is an ecstatic patter song in D major. Schumann has captured the spirit of one who is overwhelmingly happy in love. From the pickup note of A to the final punctuating V-I cadence in D major there is a mood of lightness of spirit mingled with depth of feeling. This depth of feeling stems from the solid and stable bass line which moves in a constant progression of eighth notes. The lightness is created by the syncopated sixteenth notes which open the song, eventually joined by the steady eighth note bass, and by the rapid and excited sixteenth note voice line, sometimes rising, sometimes dipping, and sometimes remaining relatively stationary. The ritardando and crescendo over the words "ist Rose und Lilie" (is rose and lily) gracefully accent the following "und Taube, und Sonne" (and dove and sun), as does the ritardando on the repeat of "die Eine" (the only One) at the end of the voice line. At this point the piano resumes the lightness which continues to the final V-I cadence.

Following the D major cadence of song three, song four begins directly in the G major chord, out of which a slow and simple voice line emerges. There is a striking similarity in the line of song four to the first line of song number two. The accompaniment overlaps in a chordal repeat of the first line, as though it were a mirrored thought, and the voice in turn overlaps a further repeat of the melody. A carefully placed crescendo on the word "deinen" (your) accents carefully the word "Mund" (mouth) in the phrase "doch wenn ich kuesse deinen Mund" (yet when I kiss your mouth). This leads to the highest point of the song in the subsequent phrase "so werd' ich ganz und gar gesund" (so again, I am complete and whole). The song dwindles in excitement from this point to the end. A ritardando of "Ich liebe dich!" (I love thee!) is a tender effect preparing a return to the original tempo at "so muss ich weinen bitterliche!" (then must I weep bitterly!), which leads into a calm postlude for the piano.

The fifth song, Ich will meine Seele touchen (I want to plunge my soul), begins rapidly on B, the third of the final chord of number four. Schumann captured the poet's thoughts of a lover whose emotions overflow with desire. The accompaniment continues the soaring melody after the voice ceases, and a slow ritardando to the final B minor chord occurs.

The sixth song, in E minor, Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome (In the Rhine, in the Holy Stream), describes first the Cathedral at Cologne in a pompous and strong rhythmic manner of falling dotted notes, and secondly, the beautiful painting of the Virgin, still in the rhythmic pattern, but with very subdued dynamics. The description of the beautiful painting still retains the rhythm which remains unbroken until the last phrase, where it becomes broken in poetic reference to the poet's love. The E minor lends a feeling of predestined tragedy to this otherwise happy picture in words and music. Again, Schumann continues with a postlude of falling dotted notes which predict the hopelessness of the songs to follow.

Song seven, in C major, Ich grolle nicht (I do not complain), tells repeatedly that the poet would not complain though his heart breaks, because he has seen in a dream the wretchedness of his loved one's heart. On the terrifying phrase from out of the dream, "Und sah die Schlang' die dir am Herzen frisst" (and I saw the darkness in your heart), Schumann captured in accented melodic line the anguish in the poet's heart. It is important to note that the highest note of this phrase (A natural in the edition for high voice) is also the melodic peak of the cycle. The music of this song is a constant surging to this point of melodic outburst by means of a relentless march of bass half notes and

constant quarter notes in the treble. The bass half notes become a diatonic scale downward during the passionate vocal phrase quoted above. The intensity of the song subsides only after the passion is released in that phrase and the calm resignation in the final "Ich grolle nicht!" is expressed. The tension is also greatly increased by the use of dissonances on key words. The mood is continued in the postlude, without the underlying half note march, and ends with a simple V-I cadence, the strongest point of resolution in the cycle thus far.

Song number eight, Und Wuessten's die Blumen (And were the Little Flowers to Know), continues in the C major key of Ich grolle nicht. The mood is flighty but not without restraint, brought about by the rhythm pattern of the melody. The restraint is prompted by the poet's longing search for some bit of hope and consolation. At the poet's realization that only one (the beloved) knows his sorrow, the music comes to a sudden halt on an F major chord. The short but very significant eighth rest prepares the broad ritardando on the last phrase, "zerrissen mir das Herz" (has torn my heart), which closes the tragic vocal line. Immediately the piano postlude returns to the former tempo and comes to a cadence in A minor whereupon a coda-like one-measure extension falling an octave in A minor arpeggios depicts the poet's falling hopes.

Das ist ein Floeten und Geigen (That is Flutes and Violins), song number nine, again continues the A minor key of the preceding song. There is a basic mood of happiness, but again as in song six the minor key lends a tragic mood. Another way Schumann created a mood of uneasiness in this song was by the abrupt drop from B flat to C in the voice at the ends of the first phrases of the two stanzas. The voice ends in a temporary feeling of F major. After the extended postlude, filled with accidentals, the F major turns out to be the lowered third of the D major ending of the song, which in turn becomes the dominant of the key of the following song.

In song ten, written in G minor, Hoer ich das Liedchen Klingen (When I Hear the Little Song), the poetry is a painful recollection of the little song once sung by the poet's beloved. On the word "Brust" (Breast) Schumann placed a B natural, thus mockingly giving a brighter sound to the painful text, perhaps suggesting the happy release from pain which would occur if in fact the heart would burst. The turn of the phrase "mein uebergrosses Weh'" (My all too great torment) in downward dotted notes to the tonic gives the effect of hopeless resignation. In the piano postlude the rhythmic, upward movement in the inner voices gives the illusion of the welling up of tears and



heartaches. This mood finally subsides in a downward return to a solemn, almost hopeless, G minor chord.

Song eleven, Ein Juengling liebte ein Maedchen (A Youth Loved a Maiden), is in E flat major. In character with this less related key, the melody takes on an impersonal, somewhat gay mood. It was the changed character of the text which prompted Schumann to do this. This mood soon changes, however, with the accented F at the beginning of the phrase "der ihr in den Weg gelaufen" (Who happened to come her way), referring to the one who has taken his place in the beloved's heart. From this point the poet refers to himself only in a pathetic manner accentuated by the ritardando stretched over the last phrase "und wem sie just passiret dem bricht das Herz entzwei" (And he to whom it happened, it breaks his heart in two). The brief postlude in the piano accompaniment ends on a V-I cadence in E flat major followed by three repetitions of the tonic chord.

Out of the E flat major the twelfth song, Am Leuchtenden Sommer Morgen (On a Shining Summer Morning), enters in B flat major. The memorable melody carries an air of triumph; somehow, even in his sorrow the poet is able to find peace among the flowers of the garden, which tell him not to be angry with their sister (his beloved). On the last lines of the last stanza the key momentarily changes to G major during a poetic reference to the beloved, but

returns to B flat when the poetry again refers to the poet in the line "du trauriger, blasser Mann" (You sorrowful, pale man). An extended postlude again continues the mood of the final phrase. It is important to note this section in the work because it recurs in a developed form at the conclusion of the cycle.

Number thirteen begins on B flat, the tonic of the previous song. This is the dominant of E flat minor, the key of this song entitled Ich hab' im traum Geweinet (I have Wept in my Dreams). The opening phrase, which is for voice alone, is reminiscent in a minor key of the opening of song number two. The accompaniment, also tragically reminiscent of song two, enters only after the voice, in a chordal, recitative-like style. It serves a dramatic purpose in punctuating the unaccompanied vocal line. The dynamic level is very subdued with only a brief crescendo accenting "Ich wachte auf, und ich weinte" (I awakened, and I wept) and a ritardando over "noch lange bitterlich" (for a long time bitterly). The accompaniment at this point takes on a nature of a dirge, overlapping the voice part, which is again built on the opening lines of this song. At the point in the text "Mir traeumte, du waerst mir noch gut" (I dreamed you were still fond of me), Schumann has changed the C flat of the key to C natural, signifying a ray of hope which is still existent. This hope is short lived, however,

as the vocal line, conforming to the text "Ich wachte auf, und noch immer stroemt meine Traenenflut" (I awakened, and the flood of my tears yet streamed), takes on a relentless movement on repeated D flats up to E flat on "Traenenflut" (flood of tears). A chordal cadence to A flat major is followed by a seemingly long one-and-a-half measure rest. This is followed by a chordal cadence to E flat minor, another long rest, and another V-I cadence in E flat minor. By inserting long rests Schumann seemed to accentuate the hapless plight of the poet.

The song Allnaechtlich im traume (Every night in my dreams), number fourteen, suddenly changes in key to B major, and with the change comes a mood of ecstasy prompted by the poet's dreams of a repenting love. As the poet flings himself at his beloved's feet, the music takes the lowest note in melody line in the cycle, a low A sharp. Again at the reference to the beloved's teardrops, the music goes to low A flat. The music returns to a tragic mood at the phrase "Ich Wachte auf, und der Strauss ist fort, und's Wort hab' ich vergessen" (I awakened and the bouquet is gone, and the word I have forgotten). This phrase is made dramatic by a large crescendo and decrescendo. A musical reference is made to the recitative style of song thirteen.

After a short prelude the fifteenth song Aus alten Maerchen (From Ancient Fairy Tales) begins. The E major key

and a lilting 6/8 melody make this recollection of the poet's dreams of a beautiful, enchanted land a rather gay-sounding song in comparison to most of the rest of the cycle. A point of significance comes at the sforzando "Ach! koennt ich dorthin kommen, und dort mein Herz erfreu'n" (Oh, could I only go there and there rejoice in my heart). At this longing phrase, the mood is triumphant except for the nagging syncopation which taints the mood, making peacefulness unattainable. The text, "Ach! jenes Land der Wonne, das seh'ich oft in Traum, Doch kommt die Morgensonne, zerfliesste wie eitel Schaum" (Oh that land of delights, I often see in my dreams, but with the morning sun it melts like empty foam), which ends this song portrays the utter pathos built by the mood of the entire cycle. The irregular phrasing lengths cause an uneasy feeling of wandering. At the emphatic repeat of the final line, the Adagio brings the voice to a point of finality by a falling melodic line ending on the tonic. Schumann added further emphasis to these final words by changing the accompaniment to whole measure chords in contrast to the accompaniment which had moved with the melodic line throughout the rest of the song. At this point there appears a literal recollection of the dream, when after a short rest he recapitulates an altered form of the opening bars of the song, then gay, now mournful, in its fragmented setting. The movement of the music slowly

reduces until the final V-I cadence is reached, and three measures of slow, repeated tonic chords are sounded.

Again, and perhaps most strongly of all, Schumann expresses the final song Die Alten, boesen Lieder (The Old, Wicked Songs) in a minor key, this time in C sharp minor. The opening chord is trumpet-like, followed by the strong descending unison C sharp, G sharp, C sharp chords. Each is accented by a preceding sixteenth note and by written accents on the double-dotted quarter notes which fall on the beat. The voice line follows the same pattern except that the eighth notes replace the sixteenth notes. The accompaniment takes up a steady eighth note movement with accented quarter notes in the bass on the first and third beats of each measure. The text throughout tells of the poet's will to bury his sad and wicked songs in a coffin. As the plodding motion continues, there is a stark reversal of the descending opening line at the text "Der Sarg muss sein noch groesser" (The coffin must be larger still). The melody continues descending until the next reference to the coffin, "Auch muss sie sein noch laenger" (It must be even longer), at which point the ascending line is repeated one step higher. The step higher was prepared by an E sharp immediately leading to the F sharp first note of the phrase. The melody goes to F double sharp, which functions as a leading tone to the music of the final poetic reference to

the size of the coffin. Immediately, as the narrative tells of the bearing away of the coffin, the melody takes on a funereal character, with a minimum of the preceding dotted rhythms. The accompaniment at this point is made up of plodding half note movement which persists until the end of the phrase "denn solchem grossen Sarge gebuehrt ein grosse Grab" (for such a large coffin a large grave is due). At this point the accompaniment takes on a syncopated eighth note and a quarter note rhythm reminiscent of song number four. The low tessitura of the voice line and the thick harmonies in the chordal accompaniment slowly increase the intense heaviness which culminates in the section marked Adagio. The text now expresses complete hopelessness. From the D sharp minor chord on the last word, which moves to a G sharp major and immediately to D flat major, the song moves smoothly into the Andante espressivo for the piano alone. This is an elaborated but peaceful recapitulation of the postlude material of song number twelve, which recalls the peaceful summer morning walks in the garden during which the flowers took pity on the poor poet and brought rays of happiness to his troubled soul. The limpid closing section ends in D flat major, a minor third higher than the original statement in song twelve, possibly intimating the poet's final attainment of peace.

### In Summary

Schumann's melodies are neither recitative nor cantabile in style, but combine both styles in a dramatic declamation of the text. The piano postludes play very important expressive relationships to the songs and the cycle as a unit. The songs Dichterliebe are cyclic in form for several reasons. There is a chromatic relationship throughout the entire work. The third, fourth, and sixth songs are all related by a perfect fourth to the keys of the immediately preceding songs. The relationship between the sixth and seventh songs is a minor sixth. The seventh song contains the highest melodic point of the cycle. The fourteenth song contains the lowest melodic point, representing a melodic cycle in units of seven songs. The first and second songs are in A major. The eighth and ninth songs are in A minor. This represents a cyclic key relationship, again in units of seven songs. The tenth song is related by a minor seventh to its preceding song, the eleventh song by a minor sixth to its preceding song, and the twelfth by a perfect fifth to its preceding song. This shows, by units of six songs, a return to diatonic relationship between songs, the first deviation being between songs six and seven. The key of the final song is the third of the key of song one, representing the poet's attainment of

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 .     q     a     .     .     .  
 p     k     p     .     .     p

peace. Schumann used the key of C sharp major, thus keeping a direct diatonic relationship to the beginning of the cycle.

There are several cyclic thematic ideas also of great importance within the cycle which are worthy of note. Already mentioned are the high and low melodic points in the seventh and fourteenth songs respectively. There is also a melodic reminiscence of song two in song thirteen. On a smaller scale, songs two and four relate melodically as do songs thirteen and fourteen.



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