
audite
ROBERT SCHUMANN
Complete Symphonic Works
HEINZ HOLLIGER
WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln
WDR THE COLOGNE BROADCASTS
Patricia Kopatchinskaja • Oren Shevlin • Alexander Lonquich • Dénes Várjon

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ROBERT SCHUMANN
COMPLETE SYMPHONIC WORKS

Symphony No. 1 in B-flat major, Op. 38 'Spring'
I. Andante un poco maestoso – Allegro molto vivace *11:17*
II. Larghetto *5:16*
III. Scherzo. Molto vivace *5:37*
IV. Allegro animato e grazioso *9:19*

recording: January 23 - 27, 2012

Overture, Scherzo and Finale in E major, Op. 52
I. Ouverture *6:26*
II. Scherzo *4:21*
III. Finale *5:59*

recording: March 19 - 23, 2012

Symphony in D minor (original version 1841)
I. Andante con moto – Allegro di molto *8:08*
II. Romanza. Andante *3:45*
III. Scherzo. Presto *6:01*
IV. Largo – Finale. Allegro vivace *5:39*

recording: March 19 - 23, 2012

Symphony No. 2 in C major, Op. 61
I. Sostenuto assai – Allegro ma non troppo *12:01*
II. Scherzo. Allegro vivace *7:03*
III. Adagio espressivo *8:26*
IV. Allegro molto vivace *8:40*

recording: January 23 - 27, 2012

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ROBERT SCHUMANN
COMPLETE SYMPHONIC WORKS

Symphony No. 3 in E-flat major, Op. 97 'Rhenish'

I. Lebhaft *8:58*
II. Scherzo. Sehr mäßig *5:40*
III. Nicht schnell *5:08*
IV. Feierlich *5:04*
V. Lebhaft *5:45*

recording: March 19 - 23, 2012

Cello Concerto in A minor, Op. 129

I. Nicht zu schnell *11:51*
II. Langsam *4:08*
III. Sehr lebhaft *8:00*

Oren Shevlin, cello

recording: April 8 - 11, 2013

Symphony No. 4 in D minor, Op. 120 (revised version 1851)

I. Ziemlich langsam. Lebhaft *10:25*
II. Romanze. Ziemlich langsam *3:57*
III. Scherzo. Lebhaft *6:45*
IV. Lebhaft *7:49*

recording: April 8 - 11, 2013

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ROBERT SCHUMANN
COMPLETE SYMPHONIC WORKS

Violin Concerto in D minor, WoO 1

I. Im kräftigen, nicht zu schnellen Tempo *16:04*
II. Langsam *7:01*
III. Lebhaft, doch nicht schnell *10:35*

Patricia Kopatchinskaja, violin

recording: February 9 - 11, 2015

Piano Concerto in A minor, Op. 54

I. Allegro affettuoso *13:54*
II. Intermezzo. Andantino grazioso *5:17*
III. Allegro vivace *11:04*

Dénes Várjon, piano

recording: Mach 4 - 7, 2015

Konzertstück for Piano & Orchestra in D minor, Op. 134

Concert Allegro with Introduction *15:51*

Alexander Lonquich, piano

recording: February 19 - 21, 2015

Fantasy for Violin & Orchestra , Op. 131 *15:49*

Patricia Kopatchinskaja, violin

recording: February 9 - 11, 2015

audite

ROBERT SCHUMANN
COMPLETE SYMPHONIC WORKS

Konzertstück for Piano & Orchestra in G major, Op. 92
Introduction and Allegro appassionato *16:03*

Alexander Lonquich, piano

recording: February 19 - 21, 2015

Konzertstück for Four Horns & Orchestra, Op. 86
I. Lebhaft *7:50*
II. Romanze. Ziemlich langsam, doch nicht schleppend *5:38*
III. Sehr lebhaft *6:17*

Paul van Zelm, Ludwig Rast, Rainer Jurkiewicz, Joachim Pöltl, horn

recording: March 4 - 7, 2015

Overture 'Manfred', Op. 115 *13:08*

recording: March 2 - 5, 2015

Symphony in G minor 'Zwickauer', WoO 29
I. Allegro (Leipzig version) *12:18*
II. Andantino quasi Allegretto *7:08*

recording: March 2 - 5, 2015

Overture 'Scenes from Goethe's Faust' *7:56*
Overture to Goethe's 'Hermann und Dorothea', Op. 136 *9:33*
Overture 'Genoveva', Op. 81 *8:22*
Overture to Schiller's 'The Bride of Messina', Op. 100 *8:13*
Overture to Shakespeare's 'Julius Caesar', Op. 128 *9:18*

recording: April 12 - 16, 2010

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PATRICIA KOPATCHINSKAJA

Violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja's versatility shows itself in her diverse repertoire, ranging from baroque and classical often played on gut strings, to new commissions and re-interpretations of modern masterworks.

Her career highlights to date have included the prestigious Swiss Grand Award for Music 2017 by the Switzerland Federal Office of Culture, and a Grammy award for Schubert's *Death and the Maiden* recorded with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra released on Alpha Classics. Kopatchinskaja's versatility knows no bounds and is documented in recent successes such as the position as Music Director for the Ojai Music Festival which included the curation of the festival and the performance and North American debut of her original staged project, *Bye Bye Beethoven*. As *artiste étoile* at the Lucerne Festival she premiered her new project *Dies Irae*. Other notable highlight was the release of her duo recital disc, *Deux* recorded with pianist Polina Leschenko and released on Alpha Classics.

Schumann's violin concerto has featured prominently in the violinist's calendar, including performances as artist in residence at the Berlin Konzerthaus, Royal Flemish Philharmonic and London Philharmonic Orchestras.

Chamber music is immensely important to Patricia Kopatchinskaja and she performs regularly with artists such as Markus Hinterhäuser and Polina Leschenko, Anthony Romaniuk and Jay Campbell. She is a founding member of the acclaimed quartet-lab – a string quartet with Isabelle van Keulen, Lilli Maijala and Pieter Wispelwey – with whom she undertook a major European tour in autumn 2015.

A prolific recording artist, the past seasons have seen a number of major releases: An album of Kancheli's music with Gidon Kremer and the Kremerata Baltica (ECM), a disc of duos entitled Take Two on Alpha Classics, and Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto with Teodor Currentzis and Musica Aeterna on the Sony label. Kopatchinskaja's release for Naïve Classique featuring concerti by Bartók, Ligeti and Peter Eötvös won a Gramophone's Recording of the Year Award in 2013, an ECHO Klassik Award and a 2014 Grammy nomination.

The recordings of Schumann's Violin Concerto and Fantasy for *audite* were released in 2016 and are now also presented in the set of Heinz Holliger's Schumann Edition with the WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln.

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OREN SHEVLIN

Oren Shevlin was born in 1969 in Oldham, England. He studied at Chetham's School of Music and the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester and completed his studies at the Guildhall School of Music, London, and at the Hochschule für Musik, Cologne, graduating both times with the highest honours. His teachers were Raphael Sommer, Boris Pergamenschikow and Frans Helmerson.

Oren Shevlin won 2nd Prize at the International Paulo Cello Competition in Helsinki in 1996 as well as at the Rostropovich Cello Competition in Paris with the 2nd Grand Prix in 2001. With his duo partner, Mariko Ashikawa, he was also a prize-winner at the ARD International Competition Munich in the category Cello-Piano Duo in 1992.

Oren Shevlin has been principal cellist of the WDR Sinfonieorchester since 1998. In addition to giving numerous solo performances with the WDR Sinfonieorchester he has also performed as a soloist with orchestras such as the Finnish Radio Symphony, Helsinki Philharmonic, Kölner Kammerorchester, Deutsche Kammerakademie Neuss, Orchestre de Paris, Orchestre National de France and the Gürzenich-Orchester Köln. As a soloist Oren Shevlin has collaborated with numerous conductors including Sir André Previn, Eliahu Inbal, Peter Rundel, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Christoph Eschenbach, Emilio Pomarico and Oliver Knussen. He has appeared several times at the Wigmore Hall in London.

Being also an enthusiastic chamber musician Oren Shevlin regularly performs with his piano trio, the Shevlin Trio. Moreover his chamber music partners have included artists such as Pinchas Zukerman, Fazil Say, Renaud Capuçon, Christian Gerhaher, and the Auryn Quartet. Oren Shevlin is a founding member of the "Kammermusik für Köln" chamber concert series.

He plays a Matteo Goffriller (1730) and a very rare John Frederick Lott cello (1850) – on which the present recording of the Schumann Cello Concerto was made.

ALEXANDER LONQUICH

Alexander Lonquich performs worldwide in the United States, Japan and Australia as well as in the most important European music centers. He is regular guest of prestigious festivals such as Salzburger Festspiele, Mozartwoche Salzburg, Edinburgh Festival, Kammermusikfest Lockenhaus, Mondsee Tage, Schubertiade Schwarzenberg, Menuhin Festival Gstaad, Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival, Klavier-Festival Ruhr, Lucerne Festival, Cheltenham Festival, Tanglewood Festival, Ludwigsburger Schlossfestspiele, Beethovenfest Bonn, Beethoven Festival Warschau, Kissinger Sommer and others.

He has been soloist of the Wiener Philharmoniker, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, the Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, the Orchestre Champs-Elysées, the Düsseldorfer Symphoniker, the hr-Sinfonieorchester and the SWR Sinfonieorchester Baden-Baden and Freiburg, to name a few. He played under the baton of conductors such as Claudio Abbado, Philippe Herreweghe, Heinz Holliger, Manfred Honeck, Ton Koopman, Emmanuel Krivine, Mark Minkowski, Kurt Sanderling and Sándor Végh.

He is also profoundly committed to chamber music and performs with distinguished artistic partners, among them e.g. Nicolas Altstaedt, Vilde Frang, Nils Mönkemeyer, Joshua Bell, Renaud and Gautier Capuçons, Veronika Hagen, Heinz Holliger, Steven Isserlis, Leonidas Kavakos, Isabelle van Keulen, Sabine Meyer, Heinrich Schiff, Christian Tetzlaff, Carolin Widmann, Jörg Widmann, Tabea Zimmermann, Ruth Ziesak, the Auryn Quartet and the Tokyo Quartet.

His performances as soloist & conductor are hailed by the international media and audiences. He appeared in this double role with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, the Camerata Salzburg, the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, the hr-Sinfonieorchester, the Münchener Kammerorchester, the Kammerorchester Basel, the Orchestra da Camera di Mantova, the Stuttgarter Kammerorchester, Gidon Kremer's Kremerata Baltica, the Mozarteumorchester and others.

His recordings for EMI were awarded numerous prizes such as Diapason d'Or, Premio Abbiati and Premio Edison. Various CDs have been released by ECM Records, the latest with works by Heinz Holliger and Robert Schumann and together with violinist Carolin Widmann a CD dedicated to works by Schubert.

Born in Trier Lonquich studied with Astrid Schmidt-Neuhaus, Paul Badura-Skoda, Andrzej Jasiński and Ilonka Deckers. He started his international career winning the First Prize at the International Piano Competition Antonio Casagrande in Terni, Italy at the age of sixteen.

DÉNES VÁRJON

Dénes Várjon studied at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music with Sándor Falvai (piano) as well as Ferenc Rados and György Kurtág (chamber music). Parallel to his studies he was a regular participant of the international master classes with András Schiff. He finished his studies in 1991 with his Concert Diploma. Also in 1991 he won First Prize at the Géza Anda Competition in Zurich. First Prizes were awarded to him also in the Piano Competition of the Hungarian Radio and the Leó Weiner Chamber Music Competition in Budapest.

He is regular guest at the most prestigious international festivals such as Salzburger Festspiele, Mozartwoche Salzburg, Marlboro and Bard Festivals (USA), Schwetzinger Festspiele, Ittinger Pfingst-Konzerte, Lucerne Festival, Piano Series, Biennale di Venezia, Kammermusikfest Lockenhaus, Rheingau Musik Festival, Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival, Kunstfest Weimar, Edinburgh Festival and many others.

He has performed with orchestras such as Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin, Budapest Festival Orchestra, Russian National Orchestra, American Symphony Orchestra, Münchener Kammerorchester, Camerata Salzburg, Mozarteumorchester, Wiener Kammerorchester, Camerata Bern, Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne, Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, Hungarian State Symphony Orchestra, Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, Chamber Orchestra of Europe, Orchestre National du Capitole de Toulouse, Scottish and Australian Chamber Orchestra, Franz Liszt Chamber Orchestra, St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra and Gidon Kremer's Kremerata Baltica. He has worked with conductors like Sándor Végh, Horst Stein, Heinz Holliger, Thomas Zehetmair, Georg Solti, Ádám Fischer, Leopold Hager, Iván Fischer, Hubert Soudant, Ivor Bolton and Ola Rudner a.o.

Dénes Várjon is deeply committed to chamber music and is collaborating with artists such as Steven Isserlis, Joshua Bell, Evelyn Glennie, David Grimal, Lukas and Veronika Hagen, Heinz Holliger, Leonidas Kavakos, Miklós Perényi, András Schiff, Jörg and Carolin Widmann, Christoph Richter, Radovan Vlatkovic, Tabea Zimmermann, the Carmina, Takács, Keller and Endellion Quartets, and the Ensemble Wien-Berlin. He also appears regularly with his wife Izabella Simon in piano recitals with works for four hands and two pianos. Oboist and composer Heinz Holliger is a close longtime partner, just like clarinetist and composer Jörg Widmann.

He is professor at the Franz Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest since 1994.

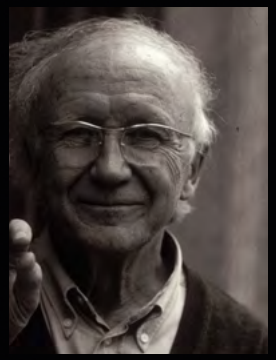
WDR SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA COLOGNE

The WDR Symphony Orchestra Cologne was formed in 1947 as part of the then North West German Radio (NWDR) and nowadays belongs to the West German Radio (WDR).

Principal conductors were Christoph von Dohnányi, Zdeněk Máca, Hiroshi Wakasugi, Gary Bertini, Hans Vonk and Semyon Bychkov. Celebrated guest conductors such as Fritz Busch, Erich Kleiber, Otto Klemperer, Karl Böhm, Herbert von Karajan, Günter Wand, Sir Georg Solti, Sir André Previn, Lorin Maazel, Claudio Abbado and Zubin Mehta have performed with the orchestra.

The WDR Symphony Orchestra tours regularly in all European countries, in North and South America and in Asia.

Since the season 2010/2011 Jukka-Pekka Saraste is the Chief Conductor of the orchestra. Cristian Măcelaru is designated Principal Conductor of the WDR Symphony Orchestra from the season 2019/2020.



HEINZ HOLLIGER

Heinz Holliger is one of the most versatile and extraordinary musical personalities of our time. He was born in Langenthal, Switzerland, and studied in Bern, Paris and Basel (oboe with Emile Cassagnaud and Pierre Pierlot, piano with Sava Savoff and Yvonne Lefébure and composition with Sándor Veress and Pierre Boulez).

After taking first prizes in the international competitions in Geneva and Munich, he began an incomparable international career as oboist that has taken him to the great musical centers on five continents. Some of the most important composers of the present day have dedicated works to Heinz Holliger.

As a conductor, he has worked for many years with worldwide leading orchestras and ensembles. The artist's many honours and prizes include the Composer's Prize of the Swiss Musician's Association, the City of Copenhagen's Léonie Sonning Prize for Music, the Art Prize of the City of Basel, the Ernst von Siemens Music Prize, the City of Frankfurt's Music Prize, the Abbiati Prize at the Venice Biennale, an honorary doctorate from the University of Zürich, a Zürich Festival Prize and the Rheingau Music Prize, as well as awards for recordings; the Diapason d'Or, the Midem Classical Award, the Edison Award, the Grand Prix du Disque, among others.

Heinz Holliger is in high demand as a composer. His opera on Robert Walser's *Schneewittchen* at the Zürich Opera House received great international acclaim. Other major works are the Scardanelli Cycle and the Violin Concerto.

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PAUL VAN ZELM

Principal Horn of the
WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln
since 2007

LUDWIG RAST

Sub-Principal Horn of the
WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln
since 1983

RAINER JURKIEWICZ

Horn player of the
WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln
since 1987

JOACHIM PÖLTL

Horn player of the
WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln
since 1982

ROBERT SCHUMANN'S ORCHESTRAL WORKS

To record and release all of Robert Schumann's works for orchestra is more than just an encyclopaedic venture. Only some of them are heard in today's concert halls, mainly the symphonies, the Piano Concerto, and more rarely the Cello Concerto, though in recent years the Violin Concerto too has been making headway. Other pieces – *Overture, Scherzo and Finale*, the concert pieces for piano, for horn, and for four horns, the overtures – are ignored or offered occasionally as rarities, and thus lack a continuous performance tradition. However, if we are to grasp the relation between Schumann's awareness of tradition and his spirit of rebellion, between his ties to history and his discovery of new pathways, it is essential to know the works he wrote in what were, for their day, experimental forms. After all, the musical thought that took shape within them also impinged on his symphonies. This is apparent in the literary motivation of form in the D-minor Symphony and the narrative underpinnings of the cathedral scene in the 'Rhenish'. These two works alone show that Schumann, when it came to confronting and conflating genres and art forms, sought solutions fundamentally different from the Lisztian symphonic poem and Wagnerian music drama. The paths he chose did not become mired in the irreconcilable gap between the 'New German School' of Liszt and Wagner and the conservative traditionalists. Yet these paths found few followers – Brahms at first, and later such younger composers as Mahler, Pfitzner and Berg.

A Symphonic Trilogy

This product, with which the WDR Symphony Orchestra Cologne is launching its Schumann series, contains the first three symphonic works that he allowed to stand and certified with opus numbers: the Symphony in B-flat major ('Spring Symphony'), *Overture, Scherzo and Finale* and the first version of the D-minor Symphony, which he reworked ten years later and issued as his Fourth although it was chronologically his second. These works were preceded by several symphonic sketches and drafts, including a 'G-minor Symphony' that was partly fleshed out and performed but never reached completion.

At roughly the same time that Schumann's dream of marrying Clara Wieck became a firm plan, he began to develop a systematic method for exploring the major genres of music. His 'year of song' (1840) was followed by a 'year of symphony' (1841) and a 'year of chamber music' (1842); it is even safe to speak of a phase devoted to opera, which, owing in part to the nature of the genre, lasted more than a year. This systematic focus did not preclude crucial influences from the outside. His discovery, study and preparation of Schubert's 'Great' C-major Symphony (the performance was entrusted to Mendelssohn) showed him how to approach and pursue this leading genre of instrumental music. Its traces – sometimes clearly manifest, sometimes subtly stitched into the fabric – are plain to hear in the sound of his works and meticulously concealed in their workmanship. The fanfare at the beginning of the First Symphony deliberately takes up the opening motto of Schubert's final work in the genre, proclaiming continuity and 'progress' with an obvious borrowing. That Schumann's motto also happens to fit a line from a poem by Adolf Böttger that he printed in his *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* points to another quality that he shared with the recently deceased Schubert: a receptiveness toward literature and its various alliances with music, from opera to the lied. By opening up the symphonic idea to literature in a manner that differed from Beethoven's solution in the Ninth, Schumann could draw on his unique pair of creative talents. It would affect both the conception and the 'tone' of at least two of his later symphonies.

The years of song, symphony and chamber music were followed, after a mental crisis, by a year of fugue (1844). The term does not mean that Schumann concentrated exclusively on these genres during the years in question only to abandon them thereafter. True, they stood at the centre of his creativity for a certain period of time; but his sharp focus on them opened up the broad spectrum that each genre had to offer and showed him paths he would later pursue. Moreover, he did so after a long period of incubation. In the case of the symphonies, it began with juvenile essays and passed through such related genres as the piano sonata (the term 'symphonies in disguise' that he applied to Brahms's sonatas was, in retrospect, a reference to his own). It then continued in what might be called 'quiet labour' only to burst onto the scene when the right moment arrived. 'Schumann worked very precisely', Heinz Holliger explains in an interview with Michael Struck-Schloen.[1] 'He often entered an incredible state of rapture when he composed and could draft the longest of works in the shortest of time spans. But they were always preceded by long and meticulous mental effort.'

[1] All further quotations are likewise taken from the interview that Michael Struck-Schloen conducted with Heinz Holliger on 23 March 2013 regarding the WDR SO's Schumann project and kindly placed at our disposal for this booklet. We are most grateful for their cooperation.

The First Symphony

Schumann launched his symphonic output with a compositional triptych: the B-flat major and D-minor Symphonies and, in the middle, a three-movement 'symphonette' or chamber symphony entitled *Overture, Scherzo and Finale*. The immediate impetus for his First Symphony was, besides his Schubert discovery, a 'not very good poem by Adolf Böttger'. Though he was unwilling to set it as a lied, it 'in fact triggered this "symphonic explosion". That's why the First comes so close to resembling songs without words. It has poetic correlations at every turn, beginning with the speech-rhythm of the opening motto ("*Im Tale blüht der Frühling auf*"), the primal germ-cell of the entire symphony. There are also such symbols as the "fluttering" butterfly motif in the introduction to the first movement, and the little flute cadenza that answers the horn call in the middle of the finale.' Into the main thematic complex of this finale Schumann weaves, like an interpolated memory, a dual reminiscence: his Heine lied *Lieb Liebchen, legs Händchen aufs Herze mein* and the final number of *Kreisleriana* (op. 16). The implicit atmosphere of endangered love had already suffused the melancholy dialogues of the second movement, where they are heard against a strangely tremulous backdrop. 'Another reason why the First Symphony is completely new is that it's laid out in the middle like a set of character pieces. No piece leads directly to the next, though they are all tightly related in their musical material. But each projects a different state of mind. One example where the combination and contrast is glaringly evident occurs in the transition from the second movement to the third. At the end of the Larghetto Schumann introduces the three trombones, which haven't been heard in the movement until now. They sound very soft, as if behind a veil. It's a magical moment. For Schumann, these three trombones have connotations that remained unchanged even in his final works. His diary tells us that when he returned to Zwickau from Vienna in 1839, knowing that his brother was on his death-bed, he heard the sound of three trombones in Prague while asleep at three o'clock in the morning. Later he learned that this was the very hour at which his brother died. When three trombones stand out like this, it's always in connection with this funereal character. They bring the second movement to a meditative and desperately sad conclusion. Then the Scherzo lunges out in a completely different and propulsive vein. But it's fashioned from the same motif.'

The variety of outward associations is matched by the wealth and concentration of the piece's internal connections. The First Symphony is held together inwardly by its motto, in essence a motivic rhythm. Schumann accelerates it to create the fast principal theme of the opening movement; it also forms the nucleus of the Larghetto theme, reappears like a shadow in the first trio of the Scherzo and crops up as a straightforward reminiscence in the finale, revealing that the movement's light, buoyant idea liberates the kinetic energy held fast in the motto. Developing a symphony from a primal germ-cell calls for a different mode of thought than a conception that draws its material and dynamism from diametrical contrast. 'That's what distinguishes Schumann from Beethoven. Beethoven goes from A to B in a linear progression, sometimes passing through gigantic development sections. In Schumann there's no linear development. Time and time again he returns to little cells and circles them, creating something new in the process. One might say that Schumann has everything emerge from a single monad. This places him in close proximity to Novalis and the writer-physicist Georg Lichtenberg. His spiritual wellsprings are completely different from Beethoven's.'

The D-minor Symphony

This same conception comes still more clearly to the fore in the D-minor Symphony. Here everything is constructed from four notes and their mirror reflection. They appear at the opening of the quiet introduction and form the thematic nucleus of the fast main section; they are lightly adorned for the melody of the Romance and reappear verbatim as its reprise; they are festooned by the solo violin and adopted in this form as a trio in the third movement, the Scherzo. Though the main section of the Scherzo was directly inspired by a minuet from an F-minor Symphony by Johann Wenzel Kalliwoda (a composer Schumann held in high esteem), its melodic turn of phrase exactly inverts the primal motif from the symphony's opening bars. At the beginning of the finale the motif is turned into a fanfare, as if Schumann wanted it to recall his First Symphony and the ideas the two works have in common. Two motifs – a tranquil, lilting theme in the violins and an interjection from the trombones – are especially striking because they stand out from the motion of their surroundings. They belong together like two sides of a single perception. On the one hand, they are the result of a spiralling motion that releases fresh material with centrifugal force; on the other, the violin theme is clearly obtained from the basic substance, though with a character not heard before.

Schumann develops his musical ideas so as to make them undergo a story. This is what constitutes the novelistic or narrative strain in his music. 'Narrativity', writes Martin Geck, 'does not mean that a story is recounted: Schumann had a low opinion of symphonic poems in the Lisztian vein. Rather, it means that the current of the music resembles the flow of a narrative. This has nothing to do with evenness and proportion: a real river is unthinkable without an alternation of weak and strong currents, mighty waves and tiny eddies, peaceful and agitated passages, not to mention changes of scenery along the shoreline. But it does explain his procedure of using an initial idea like a topic of conversation to sustain an entire movement'[2] – or, we should add, an entire work, as in the D-minor Symphony. Schumann adapts the form to suit this flow. Rather than having his opening movements come to an end, he merely hints at their concluding sections and opens them up, creating transitions to the next piece. The four movements elide like chapters in a novel, changing characters and setting while sustaining the musical 'plot'. In other words, it is not only the Romance, with its borrowings from Spanish narrative song, that reveals a literary bent, but the entire symphony. Its form is imbued by literature, yet the music loses nothing of its intrinsic logic.

Overture, Scherzo and Finale

In the first complete edition of Schumann's works, Clara Schumann placed the *Overture, Scherzo and Finale* not among the symphonies, but among the overtures, which usually consist of a single movement. She thereby suggested that this three-movement piece fails to reach the heights of his other multi-movement compositions, and that its internal cohesion is less compelling. Schumann himself encouraged this view by declaring that the three movements could be played separately. However, analysis reveals that they harbour a fine-knit skein of musical relations. Nor is this the only way that musical relations are created. Schumann also produces them through correspondences: the introduction outlines a dark backdrop from which the brighter hues stand out, especially in the outside movements. The work's hymnic conclusion – a 'chorus without words' – forms a definitive response to the introduction. It is prepared by a movement in which Schumann once again transforms vocal forms of expression into instrumental ones. The finale opens with the beginnings of a fugue – a form often chosen for the final choruses of oratorios – but its progress is cut short by a new idea. This rupture spares both the composer and the listener from having to endure a fugue whose subject is, perhaps, incapable of sustaining it. The interplay of simplicity (the fugue subject) and sublimity (the loftiness of an oratorio fugue) recalls Jean Paul's definition of humour, which, he claimed, resides in a game of deception between both levels. (Jean Paul was one of Schumann's favourite writers.) In op. 52 Schumann obviously explored a different species of composition than in the B-major and D-minor Symphonies: it is a *sinfonia serena*, a cheerful, ingratiating symphony in the classical sense of the term. Here he goes farther than in his First by integrating two vocal genres – lied and chorus – into the symphonic nexus.

The Scherzo is closely related to the ending of *Kreisleriana*. Here Schumann creates a counterpart to the corresponding movement in his First Symphony. The Trio, rather than being bipartite, is a brief song-like interpolation with strong motivic ties to the main section but a completely different character. As was customary for the genre, the Overture dispenses with a development section in the middle of the movement. However, the manipulation of the themes is spread across the entire piece. This might be viewed as an attempt to exploit the more concise form of the overture for the equally taught shape of the 'symphonette'. In each of his three symphonies of 1841 Schumann probed and explored different aspects of the genre. They bear witness to a multi-faceted wealth of musical thought that threatened to perish in the quarrels between the 'New German School' and its allegedly conservative adversaries.

Habakuk Traber
Translation *Dr. J. B. Robinson*

[2] Martin Geck, Robert Schumann: Mensch und Musiker der Romantik (Munich, 2010), p. 180.

ROBERT SCHUMANN'S SYMPHONIES

A peculiar contradiction has marked the reception of Schumann's symphonies. Especially after their premieres, contemporary critics praised the masterly instrumentation of these works, above all in their writing for brass and woodwinds. During the decades following the composer's death, however, orchestration was declared to be their primary weakness – and this verdict has persisted up until very recent times. Critics were quick to point out the reason: Schumann thought in terms of his own instrument, the piano, not in terms of the possibilities of the orchestra. How could this change in aesthetical verdict come about? Jon W. Finson has called our attention to the fact that Schumann, in contrast to present-day compositional practice, had relatively small orchestras at his disposal; the body of strings, in particular, was significantly smaller. Through his orchestration, he was able to help small ensembles achieve "a more solid, almost massive instrumental sound – the sound towards which Brahms and Franck also strove" (Jon W. Finson). He attained it, above all, through careful orchestration in the middle ranges. With larger string forces, however, the fine design and final crowning of the sound in the winds become weaker; one easily gains the impression of the relatively "thick" writing of which Schumann has been frequently accused. For their recordings, Heinz Holliger and the WDR Symphony Orchestra have therefore chosen the orchestral size with which the composer himself rehearsed and performed his works, thus restoring the sonic balance that he originally intended. Before the backdrop of the above remarks, Gustav Mahler's revisions of Schumann's instrumentation do not merely appear as interpretative adaptations, but also as attempts to rectify the imbalances that have arisen for the modern orchestra. They aim to show the ideas behind Schumann's works to their best advantage, once again, under altered historical conditions of performance practice.

The C-major Symphony

If one were to count Schumann's Symphonies according to their order of composition, then the two works in C major, Op. 61 and in E-flat major, Op. 97 would be the Fourth and Fifth. If we included the extensive sketch for a C-minor symphony made in 1841 and ultimately shelved by the composer, they would be the Fifth and Sixth. They are separated by four and nine years, respectively, from the works of the "symphonic year" including the First Symphony in B-flat major, Op. 38, the Symphony in D minor that was counted as the Fourth and received opus number 120 after its revision, and the *Overture, Scherzo and Finale,* Op. 52. Altered methods of production came with the composer's new creative phase. Schumann had formerly written down works, even large ones, all at once within a relatively short time. He now took more time to work out the character and arrangement of the whole, considering various alternatives that were often not only sketched, but also developed. He also spent more time revising works, both during their preparatory stages and in the aftermath of performances. For instance, he revised the C-major Symphony at least thrice prior to its publication, changing not only the instrumentation in some spots, but also making cuts in the first and final movements.

The decisive impulse for the composition of the Second Symphony (according to the customary reckoning), as with the First, came from Schubert's C-major Symphony ("The Great"), which Schumann had heard again in 1845 as performed by the Gewandhausorchester under Hiller's direction. Contemporaries, however, primarily placed it in a line of development with Beethoven's Ninth. They believed that its course of ideas – one could speak of a "plot" in the sense of a novel – led, as in Beethoven's work, from depression to triumph, from the gloomy catacombs of (spiritual) life into bright regions of existence. "The struggle of the individual subject, crowned by victory after the most complete penetration into and absolute merging with loving, spiritual universality, is also the idea of the Ninth Symphony", as Ernst Gottschald wrote in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, the journal that Schumann had earlier founded.

The explicit and implicit references to Johann Sebastian Bach appear no less significant when viewed from a present-day historical vantage point. Schumann creates them on various levels and with differing degrees of clarity. They remain rather hidden in the first movement, appearing more or less in a mediation of the second degree. The principal theme of the fast part resembles the beginning of the Second Fugue on the Name BACH in its rhythmically accentuated opening figure; like the other five pieces of his Op. 60, Schumann composed it immediately prior to the Symphony. In the second movement, the scherzo, he makes a secret of the sequence B-A-C-H in the second trio which assumes the penultimate position in the order of the movement's five parts according to the scheme A–B–A–C–A; its character is like that of a silhouette of a romantic chorale. The third, slow movement is composed in the manner of Bach; at times, the composer points out the relationship between his work and the Trio Sonata

from the *Musical Offering* and to the *Erbarme dich* aria from the *St. Matthew Passion.* Only a loose connection can be established in both directions, however; the relationship primarily exists on the level of musical language, in the representation of a romantic interpretation of Bach and at dramaturgically decisive spots in the gesture of an historical, retrospective view. The various more-or-less hidden Bach references, however, hint at a compositional awareness in which the musical past is constantly present; this presence expresses itself in various forms in the specific work at hand.

Albeit in a different way, these remarks also apply to Schumann's relationship to Beethoven. His intensive confrontation with that composer is confirmed by three observations: the unfinished, shelved C-minor Symphony, sketched alongside the corrections made to the Symphony B-flat major, very clearly took up where the last Viennese classicist left off. The fact that Schumann neither finished it nor considered publication and performance was due to the work's overly-restrictive stylistic proximity to Beethoven; this pushed his own individuality into the background. In addition, the arrangement of characters of the Second Symphony's movements is reminiscent of Beethoven; as in the latter composer's Ninth, the scherzo is the second movement, energetically continuing the insistent motion from the first movement in its recurring main section, intensifying it and creating, in the trios, forces which clearly oppose it. The slow movement is allocated a significant role in its position preceding the finale; in the logic of drama, it would represent the peripeteia, the place at which the ensuing course of events is decided. In his article about Schumann's Op. 61, Ernst Gottschald even went so far as to extol the finale as an historical achievement that surpassed Beethoven: "Ludwig couldn't yet manage it just with instruments, he had to borrow the word from the art of poetry; Robert achieves it for the first time with nothing but instruments." In both works, the finale serves "as a triumphant conclusion, quoting passages from the preceding movements and extensively varying a cantabile melody. With this," in the words of Jon W. Finson, "the parallels between Schumann's Second Symphony and Beethoven's Ninth are, of course, exhausted."

Gottschald's verdict – both his enthusiasm and his conception of categories – is a product of his time. Two decades after his death, Beethoven was considered the measure of all things musical, throughout all of Europe. Not to be measured according to him was tantamount to disqualification. Schumann's opinion that the emergence of Schubert's Great Symphony had prepared the way for symphonic music after Beethoven, and opened up new horizons, had not yet gained wide acceptance. Today, in light of our overview of music history, Schumann's relationship to the two Viennese masters is evaluated differently. Beethoven was probably more important for him as an historical standard of excellence than as a direct model.

This appears to be contradicted by the third and clearest reference to Beethoven in Schumann's score. Approximately in the middle of the finale, after Schumann recalls motifs from the first movement, the music breaks down and retreats, as if it wanted to bow out in a demonstratively unsymphonic manner. A new theme now steps in at this point. It is taken from Ludwig van Beethoven's song cycle *An die ferne Geliebte* (To the Distant Beloved) and bears the text: "Nimm sie hin denn diese Lieder" (Accept them, then, these songs). The composer had already conjured up lyrical thoughts in his Fantasy, Op. 17 and in the finale of his String Quartet, Op. 41 No. 2; he resolves the preceding conflict as if from the outside whilst declaring an homage: to his wife, Clara.

The E-flat major Symphony

Schumann's Symphony in E-flat major was, as far as the composition of the work is concerned, his last one. Its epithet "The Rhenish" did not originate with him, but with his first biographer, Eduard von Wasielewski, who was the concertmaster at the work's premiere. The epithet is appropriate, not only in terms of the story of the work's origin but also of the music's specific character. The Rhineland, where Schumann moved in the autumn of 1850 to assume the directorship of the General Music and Choral Societies in Düsseldorf, must have been in accordance with his nature and purpose. As the main witnesses of a long history, the early 19th century primarily honoured and sang the praises of Cologne Cathedral, alongside the fortresses that lined the course of the river. Its construction, begun in the 12th century, was still incomplete in 1850; its completion was propagated as a national task and mission. The Rhine, the "holy river" as Heinrich Heine (ironically) called it, symbolised both patriotism and a sense of liberty. An outcry was heard throughout Germany when France, in 1840, somewhat cheekily considered the Rhine as its eastern border. The outrage found an echo in countless suggestions for a hymn to the Rhine and to Germany. Schumann also participated in this competition but did not win. On the other hand, the Lower Rhenish music festivals, which had been held annually since 1818 in alternating towns, were amongst the pioneering institutions of a bourgeois-democratic musical life in a country which was still, politically, far removed from a free association of its inhabitants.

Schumann's unmistakeably "liberal tone" found an exemplary manifestation in numerous Lieder that he composed about and concerning the Rhine. The first movement of the "Rhenish", especially the principal theme with its expansive gestures, is rhythmically resolute, sometimes bordering on the character of a march – signs of an optimism, in sound, that wants to find its way to self-assurance. In the third movement, this élan is projected into the symphonic dimension; with Schumann, this means that it does not appear unbroken. The opening theme primarily moves in a descending direction, with the striking upsurges working against it. The rhythmic structure, sometimes bringing together two bars to form one and thus displacing accentuations, makes use of an old means of design. The first movement contains possibilities which are not exhausted in the development of its themes, but rather map out the future course of the symphony as a whole. From the proud, euphoric pathos of the beginning, the tempo slows down from movement to movement. The scherzo should be taken "very moderately". In his principal theme, Schumann combines the expressive minuet of middle-period Beethoven with the popular Ländler; instants of the tone of liberty echo in the upswings. The intermediary sections are reminiscent of the poetry of the character pieces that Schumann wrote for the piano and for chamber ensembles – one is scherzo-like, the other in the style of an old Lied. He combines and juxtaposes the themes in the stylised dance movements more intensively than otherwise. This conception reminds us of the "Novelettes" and their narrative tone, not bound to any specific content. The tender, inserted Intermezzo (as the third movement was initially called) should be played "not quickly". It closely follows the previous movement in its motifs and character.

Schumann originally indicated the tempo "Adagio" for the fourth movement, which was created out of sacred material. The theme has noble relatives: the works in E-flat major and E-flat minor from Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*, the fugue from the Piano Sonata in A-flat major, Op.110 of Beethoven (himself born in Bonn) and a Lied of Schumann's own invention (*Die wandelnde Glocke*); the apodosis makes direct use of the chorale *Jesu meine Freude* in Bach's version. What is this entrance of church music doing in the Symphony? On 12 November 1850, five days after the scoring was begun, the Schumanns visited Cologne, experiencing the solemn elevation there of the Archbishop of Geissel to Cardinal. The fourth movement of Opus 97 is the echo of this clerical festivity: the movement was originally superscribed with "In the Character of the Accompaniment of a Solemn Ceremony". Peter Gülke gave a convincing explanation: "Since he was already at work, the impression of the ceremony might have struck him like a password that had finally been found, and it therefore belonged to the inspiration for which the ground had already been prepared." The Rhine and Cologne, the Cathedral and the sound of trombones had already entered into a close symbiosis in 1840 in the Op. 48 song cycle.

The fourth movement has a special role in the plan of the Symphony. It begins with a motif made up of fourths – the intervals that formed the structural grid for the themes in the first movement. The more animated counter-motif to the sacred gesture varies an idea from the second movement. The main lines of the works are solemnly bundled up before we move on to the lively finale. Here, shortly before the symphonic home stretch, ends the permanent inward-turning of the musical processes. Here, in the penultimate act of the Symphony, the signs of a new departure are readily apparent. Powerful, festive calls in the brass hint at the new upsurge. They are prior intimations of the breakthrough which is the later goal of the Finale.

Thus the movement with the clearest programmatic background simultaneously achieves the highest intellectual concentration. The messenger of old becomes the interface that interlocks the work to form an integrated whole; as in the C-major Symphony, the retrospective view takes on the function of a peripeteia. It opens the Symphony to its conclusion. Its first theme, in the markedly hymn-like tone of liberty, harbours turns of phrase from the solemn theme of the fourth movement. Its summarising, intensifying function is not so much due to the fact that themes from previous movements are integrated into the final process with superficial clarity, but rather because it takes place as it would in a literary drama – as lines of events that come together. The "tone" is linked to the urgency of the first movement, close to the "tone of the common man" and, in a liberated form, to the solemnity of the fourth movement. This tempo modifies the previous ones: compared to the fourth movement, it is doubled and slightly accelerated, slightly faster than the scherzo and almost identical to the opening movement in its basic pulse. The transition from the fourth to the final movement provides a model for and premonition of the breakthrough leading to the final section of the finale. Gustav Mahler particularly admired this dramaturgy and orchestral realisation accomplished by Schumann.

Habakuk Traber
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audite

REMEMBERING, NARRATING

On 2 September 1848 Robert Schumann composed a piece for piano and called it *Erinnerung* [recollection], inserting the subtitle "4. November 1847". This date was the day of Felix Mendelssohn's death. His first "Song without words", the prototype of poetic Romantic piano pieces, makes an appearance in Schumann's small memorial work. Two years later, Schumann and his family moved to Düsseldorf: he had been appointed music director of the city where Mendelssohn had worked just over one and a half decades previously. On Thursday, 24 October 1850 Schumann conducted his first programme. This included Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto in G minor, Op. 25, with Schumann's wife Clara as soloist. On that day he noted in his diary: "Finished the cello concerto." He had worked on this piece, which was to appear in print in 1854 as his opus 129, for exactly two weeks. During these fourteen days, he had also studied Mendelssohn's score and Clara had practiced the solo part.

Schumann's Cello Concerto contains many recollections of Mendelssohn. It opens with three wind chords similar to those in the overtures to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Ruy Blas*. Immediately after that, the solo instrument makes an appearance over a lilting string accompaniment in the manner of Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E minor. The three movements merge into one another, as is also the case in Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto in G minor. The first theme, introduced by the soloist, almost becomes an "idée fixe" for the entire work: it dominates the first movement, reappears in the transition to the last movement and then emerges in the middle of the finale. Across various transformational stages, it comes very close to the principal theme of Mendelssohn's *Scottish* Symphony which Schumann had reviewed extensively in his *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*.

The theme of musical reminiscences goes further: before the beginning of the finale, the main themes of the previous movements are recalled in the same way as Beethoven had done in his Ninth Symphony. Schumann also referred to his own works: in the transition from the first to the second movement he quotes a song-like motif from his Piano Sonata in G minor, Op. 22, the lyrical secondary idea from the last movement. As in the Piano Concerto, the soloist looks for, and finds, dialogue partners from the orchestra; in the slow movement, this is his "alter ego", the principal cello from the ensemble, as well as his counterpart in the woodwind section, the bassoon. Schumann continues this linguistic approach to communication: formally defining passages are constructed as recitatives, as instrumental *Sprechgesang*. The composer seeks out the proximity to literature, and to the art of narration and lyrical stylisation, and not only in his songs, but also in his instrumental works, in their form as well as their diction.

The vicinity to poetry is nothing new in Schumann: from the beginning, this formed a crucial component of his musical thinking. "The aesthetics of one art are the same in another: only the material is different". Schumann noted this maxim no later than 1834, at the age of twenty-four, and he followed it in his ideal of musical poetry and in the many literary references permeating his piano oeuvre ever since his *Papillons* Op. 2. The new element in 1850 is Schumann's wealth of experience, both as a composer and as a performer, which he can utilise for his open aesthetics; new, particularly, are his partly encouraging, partly sobering and disappointing experiences with his dramatic works, notably his *Scenes from Goethe's Faust* which he produced in several bursts, and his opera *Genoveva*, based on the eponymous play by Friedrich Hebbel.

An example of these moments of theatrical consciousness is the transformation which the work's three opening chords undergo during the course of the concerto. In the first instance, they herald special occurrences: the opening main theme, then the first entry of the full orchestra leading into the secondary theme, then the transformed reappearance of the opening section, and finally, immediately before the quote from the piano sonata, the transition into the second movement. After the beginning of the finale, however, they become a component of the theme: they no longer refer to something else, but morph into the main issue themselves. Finally, the musical structure features discreet traces of sublimated theatrical thinking. In the cello concerto, not only the soloist appears as a protagonist, but, in a metaphorical sense, also the theme with which the soloist is introduced. It undergoes metamorphoses, impacts on its environment – the orchestra – at the same time reacting to it. The work focuses on interaction rather than confrontation between the individual and the collective. The stylisation of dramatic situations and developments, the differentiation of musical communication (melody, declamation and gesture) and the interlocking of the three movements far exceed what Schumann had achieved five years previously in his piano concerto which has the same layout of key structure – with one single exception: there, the finale lunges out of the slow intermezzo with a breakthrough to A major; here, the major tonality comes during the course of the finale, and when it does, it is not so much a breakthrough but a process which one can identify by its result rather than by its spectacular beginning.

The move to Düsseldorf marked a new era for Schumann: not only did the forty-year-old, for the first time in his life, take on a salaried leading role of a civic music institution, but the year 1850 also represented a caesura in his career as a composer. Until then, he had tackled all principal musical genres in a methodical approach. The years between 1840 and 1850 are generally labelled by the genres that he placed on centre stage: the song year of 1840 was followed by the symphony year (1841) and the chamber music year (1842); 1843 and 1844 were dedicated to the oratorio, in 1844 he studied the *Art of Fugue*, whilst he completed the piano concerto in its final three-movement form in 1845, and 1846/47 were mostly reserved for his opera project. In 1850 he had completed his exploration of musical genres. Schumann had reached a new level of reflection in his work; he examined his musical language and its poetic basis, he extended his intellectual inventory to include fundamental questions of aesthetics: the relationship between immediacy and stylisation, direct and indirect speech in music and – again – the question of reciprocal permeability in musical genres.

The second version of the D minor Symphony

Schumann's period of review and reflection in Düsseldorf also included revising his D minor Symphony which was the second "valid" one to be composed in 1841. At and after its première it had not met with the anticipated level of recognition. That was mostly due to the circumstances of the concert at the Leipzig Gewandhaus on 6 December 1841 – the occasion at which it was performed for the first time. It was dominated by another sensation: both Clara Schumann and Franz Liszt appeared in it, together and individually – "she, the consummate mistress, with him, who bears the name 'King of the Piano'", the *Leipziger Allgemeine Zeitung* enthused. This eclipsed everything else, including novelties written by Schumann, even though the same reviewer praisingly commented on the symphony that he was left "undecided whether the powerful invention or the mastery of instrumentation, particularly in the *Romanze* and the *Scherzo*, should be admired more". Nonetheless, the response from the press remained meagre; the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, which Schumann himself had founded in 1834 and which he had published as chief editor for ten years, printed only a short notice, whereas reviews of other works were markedly more extensive; Schumann did not want to be accused of self-publicity. Both Leipzig music publishers, Breitkopf und Härtel and C.F. Peters, decided not to publish the work for economic reasons, so it was to remain in the drawer for a decade before Schumann again took it up in December 1851 in order to write out a new score. In the process, he heavily revised the work.

He did not touch the basic structure, retaining the one movement format which nonetheless contains all four customary movement types of a symphony. However, he shifted the accents in the relationship between tradition and innovation by way of seemingly minor adjustments: he extended the transition into the finale and, before its beginning, inserted a "tension fermata" – by halting the proceedings for a moment, it heralds the appearance of something new, accentuating the structure rather than the continual flow of the work. This corresponds to another decision: in keeping with tradition, Schumann repeats the first section, which presents the themes, in the outer movements. In his first version, he had dispensed with this structural principle. The fact that he generally prescribed slower tempi matches a consistent tendency of his in the 1850s; in the symphony this also results in the urging quasi-narrative impetus being restrained and thus the revolutionary aspect of the through-composed concept being moderated.

Listening to both versions, the changes in instrumentation, particularly in the outer movements, immediately become apparent. It is probably fair to assume that the reason for these was not just a change in Schumann's sound ideals. Johannes Brahms made a pertinent comment with regard to this. He preferred the first version, concurring with Schumann's dictum of 1834: "The first conception is always the best and most natural. The mind errs, emotions do not." (The composer who, at one point, had wanted to become a poet, put these words into the mouth of Meister Raro who, as a member of the imaginary *Davidsbund*, arbitrated between the contrasting temperaments of Florestan and Eusebius as a wise and experienced authority.) When it came to publishing the D minor Symphony as part of the complete edition, Brahms wrote to Clara Schumann – who was championing the revised version – in December 1889: "I find it enchanting how the lovely work immediately appeared in charming, appropriate garb. Why did Schumann later drape it so heavily? His bad Düsseldorf orchestra may have duped him into doing that." In his instrumentation, Schumann took into account the sound and possibilities of the orchestras he knew and with whom he worked. The Düsseldorf ensemble was not exclusively made up of professionals but also of good amateurs; it seems likely that he sometimes gave an important line to several instruments as a safety measure. Brahms' comment, however, cannot be the sole explanation for the "thicker" instrumentation, not least because, in his revision, Schumann made some passages more transparent. It also does not explain why

the composer clarifies thematic references at certain points, and deleted them at others. The finale, for instance, was placed directly after an advanced developmental stage of the first movement, as though it was picking up a thread dropped earlier. In the revision, he included the soaring motif in this context, with which he opened the fast main section of the first movement following the slow introduction. With this, he emphasised the structural symphonic element, the new approach in contrast to the succeeding continuation.

Comparing the two versions, one might feel like Eusebius in the fictional dialogue of the three *Davidsbündler*, noted down by Schumann in 1834: "Two variants can often be of the same value." They were written at different times. The original composition was written during the *Vormärz* (i.e. the period leading up to the March Revolution of 1848 in the states of the German Confederation); the manner in which literary techniques are exploited for musical means is pioneering. In 1851, however, the aspirations of the March Revolution of 1848 had been quashed and scattered; life had moved on to an era of whitewashed restoration. With his concept of a work whose movements run into one another, forming a dramatic or narrative continuum, Schumann came very close to Liszt's ideal of the symphonic poem. However, in contrast to the latter, Schumann rejected a clarifying programme in words as this would constrain the music and its perception. In 1841 Liszt's tone poems were dreams of the future, for they did not yet exist. In 1851 his advocates declared them to be the music of the future. Schumann, who held Liszt in high esteem (a feeling that was reciprocated by the other composer), feared that a decision for programme music might lead to an aesthetic short circuit between the arts. The fact that, in his revision, he discreetly reinforced the traditional aspects of the genre, was also a reaction to the New German School who, at this point, set the tone in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* which Schumann had founded. However, once he had found the concept – i.e. the literarisation of musical form – he did not deem it obsolete, as is proved by the composition of his cello concerto which he completed around one year before the revision of the D minor Symphony. The references to Mendelssohn in this work also show that Schumann re-interpreted the larger-scale, multi-part forms such as the concerto and the symphony as "narrations without words", as it were, regarding them as bigger siblings of the "songs without words". According to Schumann, neither genre required explanatory literary programmes to elucidate the poetic and dramatic content.

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ROBERT SCHUMANN AND THE CONCERTO GENRES

Schumann's works for solo instruments and orchestra fall into two groups: concertos in multiple movements on the one hand, and single-movement concert pieces and fantasies on the other. Both forms were common in the nineteenth century, corresponding to different aesthetic ideals. Schumann did not take them to be antitheses excluding each other: instead, he was interested in their permeability. His Piano Concerto, Op. 54, for instance, was initially conceived as a Fantasy in one movement; it was not until he had struggled to find a publisher for the work that he considered extending it into a three-movement form. The creative constellation for the Violin Concerto was a similar one, although Schumann had planned two separate works, containing different material, from the outset: the Fantasy Op. 131 and the Concerto, which was not given an opus number. Conversely, the more freely conceived concert pieces reveal traces of the sonata form, or a condensed, even fragmented, multiple-movement form. In these works, the composer carried forward his experiences with the Fourth (which chronologically was the second) Symphony, closing the circle of exchanging ideas between different genres, in the same way as his failed attempt of a piano concerto in D minor had informed the genesis of his D minor Symphony.

From Fantasy to Concerto: Schumann's opus 54

Schumann composed his Piano Concerto in A minor in three stages with the addition of an epilogue. Stage 1: in the productive year of 1841, which also saw the composition of his Symphonies in B flat major and D minor (original version), he wrote a one-movement Fantasy within two inspirational bursts (4-20 May and 3-12 August). Following initial rehearsals on 13 August, as well as a few corrections, Schumann offered his novel work to several publishers – without success. Stage 2: further revisions between 11 and 13 January 1843, as part of his negotiations with the publishers. Later on that year, Breitkopf finally agreed to publish the work, providing that Schumann would add a second and third movement, thus completing the work according to traditional concerto format. Schumann did not fulfil this request until June/July 1845, when he composed the finale (a rondo), followed by the relatively brief slow central movement, the "Intermezzo" (stage 3). The epilogue (which came after the first performances) comprised smaller alterations and corrections in relation to instrumentation, as well as – most importantly – the transition into the finale.

The composer managed to transform his concert piece into a concerto so perfectly that the reviewer of the *Dresdner Abendzeitung* commented after the premiere: "Which movement should be declared the best – we simply do not know. They are homogenous, originating from one poetic idea, and these tones could easily document a chapter in the history of a human heart!" The reason for this perfect transformation lies, first and foremost, in the original concept which is present even in the opening bars. A strong impulse, after which the soloist opens the piece with a shining beacon, a powerful cascade of chords. The orchestra responds with a vocal theme, takes it to a half cadence, after which the soloist continues it and concludes it in the manner of a song. An energetic gesture and a song without words make up the fabric out of which Schumann's piano concerto emerges.

This constellation incorporates an inner contradiction and thus a potential sense of momentum. However, the emphatic opening does not soar upwards, but in fact descends until the final gesture opposes the downward urge – another immanent contradiction. The song-like aspect tended, in large-scale instrumental works, to be reserved for slow movements or secondary themes in fast movements; Schumann, on the other hand, employs it as the first, and ultimately only, theme. For all new characters that appear – be they fast, resolute, expansive or brief – are rooted in this song without words. It appears to harbour an endless multitude of possibilities and transformations. The first four notes act as a symbol of recognition, or as a motto: C-B-A-A, the musical letters (B being "H" in German notation) of "Chiara" – Schumann's poetic name for Clara Wieck, whom he had married in 1840.

Alongside the artistic developments and metamorphoses, recollections and determined build-ups, the wordless song receives expansive passages in which it can unfold – "sung" by the clarinet with a capricious answer from the oboe, later also from the cello and the flute. Chamber music, an intimate form of joint artistry, becomes a component of large-scale form. The sphere of the song is only evoked by the soloist's cadence which Schumann wrote out in full. It resembles the great piano postludes concluding his song-cycles, such as *Dichterliebe*, Op. 48. Thus the potential of the initial thoughts develop gradually, as if progressing in concentric circles, flowing, in the first movement, into the ground plan of the classical sonata form.

Schumann continued this process in the two movements that were to follow. The "Intermezzo" resembles a romantic game of reminiscences and associations. It corresponds to a dialogue in which the partners react to each other during phases of differing lengths. Two dialogues take place: one between piano and orchestra, and the other between cello as well as clarinet / bassoon and the soloist. In this, orchestral melody instruments lead the way whilst the piano accompanies them, throwing in responses. With clear parallels to the first movement, the four motto notes lead into the finale which, according to August Gerstmeier, comes alive through the "dance-like momentum of the waltz rhythm". The first theme condenses the motto into a signal from which it derives its verve. The second theme, however, breaks away from the waltz rhythm, moving in duple rather than triple time which becomes a structural device: duple metre is supposed noticeably to assert itself over the triple metre. A similar phenomenon occurred in real dance when a waltz alternated with a polka or a galop. Schumann markedly stylises this technique, but, strictly speaking, introduces nothing entirely new. Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven frequently closed their concertos with standardised dances, often using minuets, but also polonaises or "Alla ingharesi". Schumann referred to the dance forms popular in his day. As early as May 1835 he had explained this approach in his journal *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*: "Akin to political upheavals, musical ones penetrate into the smallest details. In music, the new influence can also be noticed where it is married to life in the most sensual area – in dance […] Wit and irony also make no exception." And that is presumably how many contemporaries considered the finale of the piano concerto – the reviewer of the *Leipziger Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung*, writing about the premiere, commented on its "cheeky humour".

Difficult History: The Violin Concerto

Around a decade after writing his Piano Concerto, Robert Schumann embarked on a Violin Concerto, noting it down between 21 September and 3 October 1853. He had held the post of Municipal Music Director in Düsseldorf for three years. The source of inspiration was a musician who would soon become a close family friend: Joseph Joachim, virtuoso, composer, conductor and later also conservatoire director. On 17 May 1853 he had played Beethoven's Violin Concerto at the 31st edition of the Niederrheinisches Musikfest (under the artistic leadership of Schumann alongside two other musicians). Clara Schumann noted in her diary that Joachim had played "with perfection and deep poetry: I have never heard such violin playing". On the following day he played her husband's First Violin Sonata with her at the piano "so wonderfully that the entire work has made the impression as I have always imagined it. I do not want to think of any other violin now" (R. Schumann). This marked the beginning of the Schumanns' friendship with this artist whom they had heard almost a decade previously, when the twelve-year-old prodigy had given his debut at the Leipzig Gewandhaus.

Alongside a copy of the score of the Beethoven concerto, Joachim presented Schumann with a request on 2 June: "May Beethoven's example inspire you, from your deep artistic well, to bring a work to light for the poor violinists who, apart from chamber music, suffer a great lack of the sublime for their instrument." Two days later, he also sent his new friends a score of his *Hamlet* overture. In July, Clara Schumann dedicated her *Three Romances for Violin and Piano* to him. Between August and October, Joachim visited Düsseldorf several times. Robert composed a Fantasy for him, and later on his Concerto for Violin and Orchestra. He included Joachim's *Hamlet* overture in the October programme of the Music Association, and the Violin Concerto would have been premiered at the same time, had the management (who had fallen out with Schumann) not raised objections.

There followed a long history away from the public eye. Joachim rehearsed the concerto with two different orchestras; in January 1854 in front of Clara and Robert Schumann in Hanover, and in autumn 1857 in Clara's presence with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. He would never take it up again, and it was not included in the Complete Schumann Edition, prepared by Clara whom he assisted alongside Brahms. Later on, Joachim explained that this concerto could not be "placed on the same level as many other glorious creations [of Schumann's]. […] Unfortunately it has to be said that a certain jadedness of his mental powers is unmistakeable" in this work "written during the final months before the onset of his mental illness". When Schumann had been admitted to the asylum and during the first year after his death, they thought differently, even though – or because? – they were better informed about his condition than the publicised opinion. The shadow of illness over Schumann's late oeuvre had become a media phenomenon, lasting until the recent past.

In the meantime, many years of critical examination of his works have resulted in another opinion. Until 1848, the composer had systematically internalised all musical genres. After that, he tested new musical and dramaturgical concepts. These were often not acknowledged as such as they do not immediately become obvious, but reveal themselves only after careful inspection. This is also true of the Violin Concerto. Externally, it appears to be structured in the same way as the Piano and the Cello Concertos: three movements, interconnected through motifs, partly in a covert, partly in an obvious manner; the short middle movement, a song without words, directly transitions into the finale. However, four crucial elements distinguish Schumann's final concerto from its predecessors:

1. He experiments with different stylistic levels. The first theme is reminiscent of a Baroque overture; the second, on the other hand, is akin to a lyrical Romantic character piece. He explores stylistic contradictions in order gradually to remove them. The progression of the opening movement, featuring clear contrasts of solo and tutti passages, is redolent of the concerto form as it was used by composers from Vivaldi and Bach through to Mozart as a standard, and also as an alternative to the symphonic style. "Such a return to a concerto convention which, during previous decades, had increasingly been abandoned by ambitious *concertante* works, is a novelty for the concerto composer Schumann." (Michael Struck) He makes music history his material, the subject matter of his composition, realising it as a pole of musical and dramatic tension.

2. The core motif, appearing in various guises in all movements, is not presented in the opening idea, but only later, in the lyrically vocal second theme of the first movement; he does not make it the work's motto but introduces it in such a way that its significance only emerges during the course of the concerto by way of recollection.

3. Clara Schumann and Joseph Joachim's disquiet at the concerto was ignited mainly by the last movement, a polonaise – a dance, as in the piano concerto. However, Schumann did not opt for a swift tempo, as previously, but for a calm pace: this is contrasted with the virtuoso solo violin which, at times, soars up onto a second level of expression, threatening to take on a life of its own. This form of musical contrast and tension, endangering cohesion, was also new.

4. First and foremost, however, one fundamental quality of the work thwarted the trends of the time. It also irked many music connoisseurs in Schumann's oratorios which renounced brilliant endings and closing apotheoses. Michael Struck called it "restraint": "Without doubt, the characteristic tendency towards restraint stands in stark contrast to the aesthetic expansion which was popular during the time of the Violin Concerto's creation and apparent, for instance, in Liszt's programmatic compositions, Wagner's stage works and also certain works of the young Brahms." Any such elements in Schumann's late works which opposed dominant trends of the time were, after his death, hastily dismissed as weaknesses and signs of illness: a fateful fallacy.

The more modern reception of the work became difficult, since the Nazis orchestrated its premiere in 1937 as a political demonstration. The background: after Joseph Joachim's death in 1907, his son Johannes sold parts of his estate, including the music of the Schumann concerto, to the Prussian State Library in Berlin on condition that the work be published no sooner than one hundred years after the composer's death. Georg Schünemann, however, was able to effect an early release of the material in 1936. The concerto was printed and Yehudi Menuhin was engaged to perform the premiere in New York. However, the Nazis intervened. They would not allow a performance abroad, and certainly not with a soloist of Jewish heritage. The premiere was therefore given on 26 November 1937 at the Berlin State Opera as part of a Nazi convention (the "Gemeinsame Jahrestagung der Reichskulturkammer und der NS-Gemeinschaft 'Kraft durch Freude'"). Robert Ley (leader of the National Socialist trade union) and Joseph Goebbels (Reich Minister of Propaganda and President of the Reich Chamber of Culture) spoke at the event. The soloist was Georg Kulenkampff and Karl Böhm conducted the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. Schumann's work was presented as the "Aryan" alternative to the popular Mendelssohn concerto, in the same way as attempts were made to delete the well-liked incidental music to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* from the collective German music memory by commissioning new works. Nowadays, it should be possible to evaluate Schumann's final work with orchestra without the burden of historical ballast. The span of interpretations, within which Patricia Kopatchinskaja makes her own distinctive mark, points towards this in no uncertain terms.

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SCHUMANN'S *KONZERTSTÜCKE*

Schumann turned to the concerto genre for piano and orchestra on an almost regular basis. The beginnings were imaginary: in 1836 his Piano Sonata in F minor was published as a "Concert sans orchestre": the large-scale ensemble was not represented by a real orchestra, but was intended to be imagined alongside the piano performance. In 1839 he abandoned work on a piano concerto in D minor, leaving it unfinished, even though he had promised a swift completion. In May 1841 he began developing a Fantasy for piano and orchestra; in a slightly revised version, it was to constitute the first movement of his Piano Concerto, Op. 54, which he extended into its final form in 1845. Four years later he composed the *Konzertstück* in G major, Op. 92, echoing both the German revolution of 1848-49 and also the Piano Concerto of 1845. Finally, during his last summer at Düsseldorf in 1853, he wrote the *Konzertstück* in D minor, Op. 134, presenting it to his wife, alongside a new Klems grand piano, for her thirty-fourth birthday on 13 September. The printed edition was dedicated to Johannes Brahms who, shortly after this joyful occasion, had paid a visit to the Schumanns that was to become legendary.

The *Konzertstücke* for Piano and Orchestra

Externally, the two *Konzertstücke* resemble each other: both begin with a slow introduction, passing into a fast main section. In concrete terms, however, they represent complementary contrasts. In the G major work of 1849, piano and orchestra are woven together into a companionship of opposites; in the D minor piece of 1853, on the other hand, the piano dominates, whilst the orchestra takes on an accompanying role and provides answers, and single instruments enter into dialogues with the pianist.

Opus 92 does not include a cadenza for the soloist, whilst in opus 134 it is in an exposed position, achieving vital intellectual integration, thus accentuating the central role of the piano part. The "Introduktion" to the "Allegro appassionato" in G major has an extensive conception, beginning in chamber-like fashion as something between a song without words and a musical fantasy on nature, building up towards a scherzo-like episode in the woodwind, pausing with an impression of an instrumental recitative before the passionately fast main section breaks forth. The short introduction to the *Konzert-Allegro*, op. 134, opens in the manner of a serenade; the pizzicato background of the strings sees the piano emerge with an eloquent vocal quality, a "quasi parlando" that Schumann only employs in instrumental works, and never in songs – an "as if" in the purest Romantic spirit. The tempo gradually increases to a "lively" principal metre that refers back to concise figures from the introduction without infringing upon their character or pace: imperceptible transformations of metres which he had erstwhile praised in Schubert's Great C major Symphony. The introductions to both works begin as though the music had been playing for a while. Schumann avoids the definitive launch. Over a hundred years later, the aesthetics of fragments referred to this observation. The fast section of Op. 92 opens with the bright tone of the Op. 76 marches, which Schumann had composed three months previously as a reaction to the 1848 revolution. This roll call releases two forms of vocal themes. The first one combines short motifs into an extensive arch, reminiscent of the piano concerto. The second one begins in the bass register and assumes – like the second march of Op. 76 – a ballade-like tone. The contrast between two expressive characters forms the basis for the *Konzertstück*: signal and melody, appeal and (abstract) singing. However, they do not only determine the fast main section, but also the slow introduction over the rushing broken chords of the piano. The melody is established by the clarinet, whilst the horn responds with a signal. This appears again and again in its original form, providing a sense of structure. Brahms evoked this piece shortly afterwards in his First Piano Concerto, paying homage to Schumann.

The contrasting features are emphatically developed and discussed in the main section. But under which premises? The appeal, opening the Allegro section as an amplification of the signal, does not emerge from the grounding power of a home key but instead sets out searching it – in so doing, it does not arrive at the nominal foundation of the work, G major, but at E minor. The ballad theme is also introduced in this key. Although Op. 92 opens and closes in G major, its "official" key, the crucial developments are rooted in E minor, moving into remote corners. The tonality of the work would need to be described as a form of tension between G major and E minor; the two keys behave like two "souls", joined together by virtue of being related to one another, but each of a different spirit, boiling down to defiance and melancholy on the one hand, and dream and nostalgia on the other. The dialectic form of the sonata, whose main features are just recognisable, enabled Schumann to compose a contradiction without having to resolve it.

In contrast to Op. 92, the regulatory gravitational pull of the home key remains uncontested in Op. 134, whose form as a whole adheres more closely to Classical models. The short introduction transitions imperceptibly into the main section by way of acceleration. Here, Schumann formulates two contrasting themes, rounding off the main segments with a distinctive "coda". He dedicates most space to the vocally conceived second theme which – as well as the hymn-like closing idea that often avoids the main beats of the march motif – provides the possibility of "breaking through", leaving behind the minor-key atmosphere of the beginning. This is achieved after the cadenza, the virtuoso concentration and reflection of all that has occurred until that point. The impending sense of exultation is strangely reined in by the instrumentation. In both *Konzertstücke* Schumann makes use of stimuli provided by other genres. Whilst the "Allegro appassionato" of Op. 92 resembles a dramatic scene, Op. 134 transforms the concerto overture, as Beethoven and Mendelssohn employed it, into a genre with a solo part.

The *Konzertstück for Four Horns*

Historically, the two works for piano and orchestra correspond to two further *Konzertstücke* in which Schumann turned to other instruments. Close to opus 92, and therefore the sense of departure of 1848-49, is the *Konzertstück for Four Horns and Orchestra*; and shortly after Clara's birthday present, between 2 and 7 September 1853, Schumann composed his *Fantasy*, Op. 131, one of the two works for solo violin and orchestra which he dedicated to his new friend, Joseph Joachim.

Schumann witnessed the German revolution of 1848-49. In contrast to Richard Wagner, he did not go on the Dresden barricades, but solidarised with the battle for freedom and against poverty, especially when the uprisings flared up again in May 1849 as the democratic powers felt cheated of the concessions which they had been promised. In 1848 he composed three *Deutsche Freiheitsgesänge* for male choir; in the middle one, in which the sound of the horns informs the vocal writing, the text talks about the colours black, red and gold: "Freedom is the nation, / is equality for all to rule. / Freedom is the auctioning / of thirty princes' caps. / Freedom is the republic, / and the republic

once again. / Gunpowder is black, blood is red, golden flickers the flame." In 1849 Schumann greeted the "republican spirit" with his *Four Marches*, Op. 76. On 10 April 1849 he wrote to his friend Ferdinand Hiller: "I was very diligent during that time, it was my most fruitful year – it seemed as though the external storms drove people more into their interior." One month previously, on 11 March, he had completed a work with which he expressed his sense of elation and his aesthetic drive: the *Konzertstück for Four Horns and Orchestra*, Op. 86. The horn as an instrument of the great outdoors, able to ring, but also to "sing": the Romantics had been taken in by it. Furthermore, the newly developed valved horn offered hitherto unheard of possibilities, as composers and players were no longer restricted to using one single set of harmonics.

Formally, opus 86 differs from the other *Konzertstücke*. It consists of three movements connecting directly into each other; the middle and last movements are tightly linked to one another via a transitional passage. This compressed concerto format in three movements places the piece alongside the Cello Concerto, Op. 129, completed one and a half years later. It also exemplifies Schumann's aim of achieving an openness between, and permeability of, genres, as well as demonstrating the renewal of traditional forms according to his poetic ideals. It has been said that with his piece for horns Schumann had intended to revive the genre of the concerto for multiple solo instruments. That is only partially true. The horns make up a homogenous collective, appearing as one instrument which, similar to the piano, is capable of polyphony. A quartet, however, never attracts the sort of personality cult as can an individual: the substance thus increases in value. Nonetheless, individuals can stand out in a group of four, and the composer makes careful use of this possibility. In addition to that, the character of the horns demands that the work be developed from their sound: the instruments provide the primary material of the piece, as it were.

Schumann develops the first movement from a signal-like appeal and a *cantabile* response – with numerous nuances and reminiscences. The "Romanze" – the title refers, as in the D minor Symphony, to the genre of the Spanish narrative song – moves between elegy and comforting song; gestures of upsurge are scaled back by way of melody, structure (through a strict canon) and colour (by bringing in the first trombone). The finale, expressing a sense of liberalism that is interwoven with motivic memories, features an enraptured passage, a short moment of pausing and remembering, before the piece moves onto the home straight. At the first performance it was met with much applause: Schumann had his finger on the contemporary pulse.

The Violin Fantasy

On 30 August 1853 Robert Schumann completed his *Konzertstück* Op. 134, and three days later he started writing the *Violin Fantasy*. He chose almost the same layout: a slow introduction preceding a fast main section which, following Classical sonata form, treats two (mildly) contrasting themes in three segments, an exposition, a development and a recapitulation. Shortly before the closing section, a cadenza provides the soloist with an opportunity to shine entirely on their own. As in the Piano Concerto, it is written out, thus not giving complete freedom to the performer. As previously in the *Konzertstück* Op. 92, Schumann anchors the Fantasy in the polarity of two related keys, A minor, and its relative major, C. At first glance, the situation seems to be simpler in the later work: the introduction is cast in A minor, the main section in C major. However, closer inspection reveals that the minor key continues to take effect. In the second theme of the lively section it exerts a strong gravitational pull. The development of the themes almost entirely bypasses the swift, determined main idea; instead, the secondary theme blends with the theme of the introduction. This creates a structure in which the opening song without words, with its strange, periodic form, almost reminiscent of short prose, represents the force that attracts the events around it. The budgetary main idea, the first theme of the fast section, manages to assert itself with its tonality and atmosphere, but not with its form.

This work also retains its ambiguity – in fact it is laid down as a principle in the introduction. The orchestra performs a song without words, the solo violin responds with a form of recitative featuring virtuoso and expressive elements before adding some figuration to the return of the instrumental song. Schumann is – at least in his concertante works – no dialectic composer who presents contrasts in order to elevate them into a higher unity. Instead, he allows them to remain, co-exist and enter into conflict – as the two souls in his heart whom he had called Florestan and Eusebius in his youth.

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Translation: *Viola Scheffel*

audite

BETWEEN SYMPHONY AND DRAMATIC PRELUDE: ROBERT SCHUMANN'S OVERTURES

This release of Robert Schumann's orchestral works concludes audite's cycle with the WDR Sinfonieorchester under Heinz Holliger. Issuing it as a supplement, adding, for the sake of completeness, the composer's less notable works, would not have done justice to these compositions. The overtures represent an essential element in Schumann's œuvre – independent of the history of their reception. The fact that these works, apart from the overtures to *Genoveva* and *Manfred*, hardly feature in today's concert life, is mainly due to changed conventions in programming since the mid-nineteenth century. The long-standing verdict on Schumann's late oeuvre has also played its part in the marginalisation of the overtures: all except for the *Genoveva* overture have three-digit opus numbers which have been associated with works allegedly overshadowed by Schumann's late illness.

Exploring the overtures can play a vital part in revising this prejudiced view. Seen in relation to the symphonies, they take a similar position as do the *Konzertstücke* in relation to the concertos: a poetic form of reflection and addition. Alongside the larger scale works, they form that alliance of contrasts that was so typical of the Romantic age. The strong urge towards the distance, into nature, towards freedom (or a deity) corresponded to the desire for intensity and concentration as well as the courage to remain fragmentary, the view into the distance equating to an inner examination. As is also the case with the concertos and *Konzertstücke*, Schumann is not interested in dissociating the genres from each other, but instead in tracing their similarities and connections. This is exemplified by the "Symphonette", Op. 52, in three movements, composed between the first and final versions of his Fourth Symphony and headed *Ouvertüre, Scherzo und Finale*.

With the exception of one youthful work[3], the overtures were composed from 1847: well after the "year of the symphony", 1841. Except for the *Julius Caesar* overture, all were written with particular musical stage works in mind. The *Genoveva* overture opens the eponymous opera after Friedrich Hebbel. The overture to Lord Byron's *Manfred* is followed by another fourteen numbers relating to the dramatic poem by the British poet. Schiller's *Bride of Messina* was, for some time, considered for a possible second opera following *Genoveva*; before discarding the project, putting it to the test, Schumann wrote an overture, but left it at that. Goethe's epic poem *Hermann und Dorothea* was a "favourite of the composer" (Peter Jost): he considered working it into an opera, then a *Singspiel*, and finally a "concert oratorio". However, none of these plans came to fruition. Composing the overture in August 1853 represented the completion of Schumann's *Scenes from Goethe's Faust*; in this, he followed a piece of advice from Franz Liszt. He began working on the overture to Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* eleven days after completing the overture to Schiller's *Bride of Messina*. The former was not intended to be used in a theatrical, but instead a musical, context. On 17 January 1851 Clara Schumann noted in her diary: "Robert is working incessantly. Now he is writing an overture to *Julius Caesar*. He was so enthused by the idea of writing overtures to several of the most beautiful tragedies that his genius once again is bursting with music." He was intending to produce works for use in concert – the type of concert overtures which harked back to Beethoven and which had found their first Romantic master in Mendelssohn.

The question as to whether an overture should be an autonomous work or serve as a prelude to a play was left open: Schumann avoided strict boundaries. Against the tradition of the time, he composed his overtures before, rather than after, the music accompanying the play[4]. In them, after reading the respective literary work, he summarised his impression of the character and atmosphere of the dramatic material for the first time – irrespective as to "whether the overture was intended to offer an image of the entire work or simply to introduce". It was his aim to hit the "pitch" of the play in question, and/or to approach it by way of "introductory musical activity". For each overture, Schumann determined anew the relationship between "plot formation" on the one hand and transit function with regard to the literary piece on the other. In the overture to *Hermann und Dorothea*, the main theme, a mixture of melancholy and hope wrought together in two parts, leads into the *Marseillaise*; for, according to Schumann, the piece "was originally conceived for a Singspiel based on a Goethe poem whose first scene portrayed the withdrawal of French troops."[5] During the course of the piece, the two contrasting characters keep approaching each other in close proximity, giving the impression of one emerging from the other. At its first appearance, however, the

[3] Overture with chorus, Op. 1 No. 3.

[4] The Scenes from Goethe's Faust, written during several stages, are a special case: originally, Schumann had not planned an overture – the performances at the Goethe celebrations of 1849 comprised only vocal-instrumental movements.

[5] Hermann und Dorothea, in a series of nine poems, each headed by the name of a muse, tells the story of Hermann, the son of an innkeeper, who falls in love with Dorothea, a woman from a trek of refugees fleeing the French revolutionary forces, whom he eventually marries, despite initial paternal opposition.

Marseillaise abruptly stops, as though a window were being closed, making the music from outside inaudible – this device was also used by Alban Berg in the third scene of *Wozzeck*, when the jealous Marie slams her window shut during the parade and the military music falls silent.

Schumann had the *Genoveva* and *Manfred* overtures published as independent pieces as well, without including the subsequent stage works; the first performance of the opera was preceded by a premiere of the overture as part of a concert given by the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. In it, the "spirit" and the most important forces of the opera have been sublimated into music in such a manner that they become emotionally explicit, even if one is not familiar with the subject matter[6]. The slow introduction, a masterpiece in instrumentation, is associated with the world of intrigue and evil in the opera. The "passionate" main section does not simply contrast this with the world of the good. Instead, its first theme becomes the guiding thread, running through the entire opera, mirroring Genoveva's interior life. The second theme in the horns points towards rescue through her husband's arrival, towards hunt, as well as freedom and salvation.

The *Manfred* overture outlines two poles between which Byron's tragedy is set. Three syncopated chords represent the opening signal. The piece that they evoke is framed by two slow sections. The first one presents as a fragile unit the ideas which become separated in the main section. The shorter closing section extracts from the first one the essential elements as reminiscences before coming to a final ending. The main section is made up of two large-scale thematic complexes. The first one is characterised by anacruses in triple time, syncopations and a falling, dotted finish; the second one is longer, has more pronounced subdivisions and features variants of expressive chromatic writing. Here, the two protagonists face each other, each in character: Manfred, demanding life's greatest riches, challenges the world and the gods, whilst his sister Astarte, whom he loves as his refined female counterpart, is eventually broken by the unconditionality of their incestuous relationship. Their themes approach each other, meeting mostly by virtue of their rhythms. This occurs in the particular manner with which Schumann reinforces his ideas: almost every motif, except for the transitional phrases, is repeated. This technique seems akin to writing whilst continually using exclamation marks. The themes are connected via a form of primeval substance out of which, and against which, they emerge. The pain motif, a central element, is repeated in a circular and slowing fashion and closes the main section in written-out agony before giving way to the concluding reminiscences. It is made up of the notes A, B flat and C flat, symbolising Astarte, Byron (who had created Manfred as a projection of his self) and the four spirits who appear before Manfred in the opening and closing scenes.

In his overtures to Schiller's *Bride of Messina* and Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, composed in close proximity, Schumann followed a similar principle but arrived at entirely different formal solutions. In both cases he grasped the main affects and positions of the dramas. In Schiller's tragedy, hostility and jealousy are contrasted with reconciliation and love[7]. The contrasts are exposed as early as in the introduction: agitation and irritability on the one hand, sadness and restraint on the other. In the fast section, they are developed in two thematic areas, an angrily catastrophic main theme, and a wistful and lyrical secondary theme. Out of these, Schumann fashions an exemplary symphonic movement that feeds on staging contrasts. What normally appears as an afterword in this case becomes a grave statement: the closing section is determined by the first theme alone, and its tempo and its aggressiveness are heightened. In the end, catastrophe emerges as the victor. From the psychiatric facility at Endenich, Schumann sent the original score of the work (written in 1850/51) on 5 May 1855 to his wife as a birthday present for Johannes Brahms, also including his last letter to her which contains no signs of mental illness. In it, he makes ambivalent mention of "our beloved" (Brahms); the overture to a drama about a *ménage à trois* in which only the "bride" survives was to prove a knowing gift.

On the first manuscript sheet of his *Julius Caesar* overture Schumann noted all the important stages of the drama – reference points for the musical progression? Or a visualisation of the essentials for the musical work? The overture treats the heroic in its solemnly majestic and hopeful, mobilising manner both as a funeral march and as a restrained festive march along with appropriate fanfares, interspersed with chorale-like fragments. Thus a musical form is developed and presented in its inherent contrasting tendencies. In Schumann's oeuvre, this overture has two relatives: the Marches, Op. 76 for the revolution of 1848/49, and the *Solemn ceremony*, the fourth movement of the Third Symphony, written immediately before the Schiller and Shakespeare overtures.

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[6] Genoveva is the wife of Count Palatine Siegfried who joins the "holy war" against the Saracens, entrusting the stalwart Golo with his wife. Golo falls in love with Genoveva, who rejects him; plotting revenge, he claims that Genoveva's child was sired by the cook. Siegfried orders both to be killed. The henchmen, however, are convinced of Genoveva's innocence and abandon her and her baby in the forest. Both survive. Siegfried meets them whilst hunting and learns the truth. Genoveva dies only a few weeks after the happy ending.

[7] The adversarial brothers Manuel and Cesar have just made peace with one another as they both fall in love with the same woman, each unaware of the other. As Cesar finds her in an intimate embrace with Manuel, he jealously stabs his brother to death. It emerges that their lover is their sister whom they had never met. Neither she nor their mother can dissuade Cesar from atoning through committing suicide.

In the *Faust Scenes*, the conception of the oratorio achieves what is normally effected by an overture, i.e. a focus on moments in the plot and development that are perceived as crucial. Schumann selected sections from Goethe's work that clarify the tragic action up to Gretchen's and Faust's salvation. In so doing, he does not create a sequence of actions but rather a constellation of ideas and situations which do not necessarily demand an instrumental introduction – as a summary of two powers that would make little sense. The motivic references in the overture (which was composed after the main body of the work) to the vocal pieces are loose. Instead, Schumann focussed on two things: developing small motivic cells, leading them into opposing directions, and the great line of metamorphoses and the breakthrough from minor into a major-key atmosphere.

Schumann conceived all his overtures according to the outline of the Classical sonata form, with or without a slow introduction. He uses the ability of this musical form to create contrasts which then enter into battle in a multitude of concrete structures. The overtures were written in proximity to the Third and the revision of the Fourth Symphonies. With the former, they share an openness towards non-musical ideas; the common ground with the latter is that literature represents the source of inspiration. In the case of the D minor Symphony, looking towards the art of words resulted in a novel form; in the overtures, it influenced their atmosphere and progression. They therefore embody the final stage of Schumann's exploration of the symphonic form and its means of musical characterisation.

The beginning of this process was marked two decades previously by the Symphony in G minor. Schumann completed two movements; a scherzo exists as a fragment, and initial sketches were made for a finale. The opening movement was performed three times in public – in Zwickau, Schneeberg and Leipzig – and revised after each occasion. The second movement was never played, although it had been completed. At the Zwickau premiere, a thirteen-year-old pianist and composer was also on stage: Clara Wieck; Schumann's mother even then reportedly commended her son to the young girl as a future husband. This work of the twenty-one-year-old presents ingenious traits alongside technical facility. In its quasi spatial and rhythmically refined conception, the opening theme boldly moves at the peak of Romantic thinking. The secondary theme is looser in its shape, almost like a montage of formulae – a clear contrast to the main thought, but somewhat unspecific with regard to the contrapuntal tricks of the middle section. The second movement can hardly be described as slow, although it takes this place. Its fluid metre is heightened to a scherzo-like character in the central section; the regular scherzo would have needed to respond to this. The young Schumann created tempo conditions which can be found in the two final symphonies by Schubert which Schumann, at that time, did not know. However, this spiritual kinship does explain the tremendous effect emanating from his discovery of Schubert's C major Symphony: it freed Schumann to embark on his own symphonic path. His overtures became a complementary, reflecting, counterpart of the symphony genre.

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front cover: 'Abend' Caspar David Friedrich
page 29: 'Auf dem Segler' Caspar David Friedrich
music publisher: Sinfonie g-Moll (Zwickauer Fassung)
von Robert Schumann (Hrsg. Matthias Wendt)
mit freundlicher Genehmigung von
SCHOTT MUSIC, Mainz
art direction and design: AB•Design

audite

e-mail: info@audite.de

LC 04480