Robert Schumann's Illnesses and
the Stylistic Shifts in his Lieder

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Lindsay Ann Moore
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to the required standard

[redacted]

Dr. Gordana Lazarevich, Supervisor (School of Music)

[redacted]

Dr. Harald Krebs, Departmental Member (School of Music)

[redacted]

Dr. Robin Routledge, Outside Member (Department of Psychology)

[redacted]

Dr. Angelika Arend, External Examiner (Department of Germanic and Russian Studies)

Supervisor: Dr. Gordana Lazarevich

ABSTRACT

The quality of Robert Schumann's compositional abilities in his last years of life has been called into question due to the conjecture that he died from a debilitating disease of the brain and nervous system, tertiary neurosyphilis. Drawing on correspondence, diary entries, visitors' accounts and medical records, a different conclusion is reached – that Schumann died from bipolar disorder combined with a fatal form of anorexia melancholia, and not a disease of the brain. A survey of Lieder from across Schumann's lifetime proves that there is merely a stylistic shift in his late songs, and not a decline of abilities as has been suggested by other musicologists. Songs and cycles analyzed are selections from *Myrthen* (Op. 25), *Liederkreis* (Op. 39), *Soldatenlied* (WoO), *Liederalbum für die Jugend* (Op. 79), *Minnespiel* (Op. 101), *Sechs Gedichte* (Op. 90), *Sechs Gesänge* (Op. 107), *Drei Gedichte* (Op. 119) and *Gedichte der Königin Maria Stuart* (Op. 135).

Examiners:

[redacted]

Dr. Gordana Lazarevich, Supervisor (School of Music)

[redacted]

Dr. Harald Krebs, Departmental Member (School of Music)

[redacted]

Dr. Robin Routledge, Outside Member (Department of Psychology)

[redacted]

Dr. Angelika Arend, External Examiner (Department of Germanic and Russian Studies)

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This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my grandparents,

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INTRODUCTION

Robert Schumann (1810-1856) is well known in musical circles for his contribution to the genre of the Lied during the nineteenth century. The name Schumann, however, also carries a stigma in the musical world; he is widely-known as the composer who suffered from mental disease and died incarcerated in an asylum at the age of forty-six.

There are many more fallacies circulating about the nature of Schumann's illnesses than actual medical evidence. As a result of the myths and misleading notions that surround the premature death of Schumann, his final compositions, and in particular, his late Lieder, have been relegated to the realm of the unknown. His late compositional style has been deemed to be proof of his failing mind, a gloomy and unfortunate end to an otherwise gifted musical career. Just as myths surround the compositional "decline" of Schumann's last productive years, false ideas also envelop the nature of Schumann's illness. In an effort to better understand the stylistic shift that occurred as Schumann matured, it is necessary to establish both what his disease really was, and what effect it had on his compositional abilities.

This paper evaluates the truth behind the myths of Schumann's illness from a psychiatric point of view. It offers a probable suggestion for Schumann's actual disease, Bipolar Affective Disorder Type II with hypomania, based on diaries and correspondence, accounts of visitors to the asylum in Endenich including Bettina von Arnim, Joseph Joachim and Johannes Brahms, as well as the medical reports from Dr. Franz Richarz, director of the asylum. By thorough consideration of the medical evidence available to us, this paper eliminates the suggestion that Schumann died from

tertiary neurosyphilis or an organic brain disease, instead offering the suggestion that Schumann suffered from anorexia melancholia, which can be demonstrated through the existing literature surrounding Schumann's last years of life.

A discussion of the historiographical approach to Schumann's last compositions is included, as well as a consideration of the "moral judgement" of patients with mental disease and the history of the stigmatization of the mentally ill. This stigmatization impacted the reception of Schumann's late works both in his day, by his own close friends and family members, and in the present day by musicians and scholars alike. Although it is true that Alan Walker, Jon W. Finson, John Daverio, Eric Jensen and others have made important progress in the elimination of the stigmatization of Schumann's late works, there is work yet to be done in this field.[1] Schumann's late Lieder, in particular Opus 135, have been a neglected area of study, and this thesis is intended to contribute in this specific area.

Having established that there was no debilitating mental incapacitation in the case of Schumann's illness, this paper systematically analyzes Lieder from various periods throughout his life to investigate the stylistic shifts visible in his compositional techniques. From Schumann's early Year of the Song (1840), the song cycles selected for analysis are *Myrthen* (Opus 25), and *Liederkreis* (Opus 39). *Soldatenlied* (WoO),

[1]Alan Walker has long believed that Schumann's *Rhenish Symphony*, *Manfred Overture* and *Cello Concerto* are proof of his late compositional abilities, as is noted in his correspondence with Eric Sams from 1968-1973, (Alan Walker, personal letters to Eric Sams (unpublished), Mills Memorial Library Archives, Hamilton, Canada, Box 6 F-3, 1968-1973), but Walker fails to address the late Lieder. Jon Finson acknowledges the value of Schumann's 1849 songs, in particular, *Liederalbum für die Jugend*, in his article (Jon W. Finson, "Schumann's Mature Style and the 'Album of Songs for the Young'," *Journal of Musicology* 8, no. 2, (Spring 1990), 227-250), and provides some preliminary analysis of Schumann's *Gedichte der Königin Maria Stuart*. John Daverio acknowledges that there is no decline in Schumann's late music, but he clings to the standard musicological diagnosis of tertiary syphilis in his study and also fails to discuss at any length the songs of 1850-1852 (John Daverio, *Robert Schumann: Herald of a 'New Poetic Age'* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997)). Eric Jensen's 2001 biography merely questions the syphilis diagnosis, and provides little commentary on the late songs (Eric Frederick Jensen, *Schumann*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001)).

Schumann's single song from 1845, is offered as a glimpse of the compositional style of Schumann during a depressive cycle in his life. *Liederalbum für die Jugend* (Opus 79) and *Minnespiel* (Opus 101) are considered from 1849, Schumann's "Fruitful Year." *Sechs Gedichte* (Opus 90), *Sechs Gesänge* (Opus 107), *Drei Gedichte* (Opus 119) and *Gedichte der Königin Maria Stuart* (Opus 135) are included as songs composed during Schumann's last years of Lieder composition, 1850-1852. Analysis of these songs is based on an investigation of the texts, topics and poets selected by Schumann across his lifetime, the ranges of the vocal line, the harmonies and keys, the presence of hypermetric irregularities in the songs, the use of metrical dissonance and appearances of a misalignment of the piano and voice in the songs, the appropriateness of the affective qualities of the songs, and finally, the unification of both individual songs and song groups across his compositional career.

CHAPTER 1:

ROBERT SCHUMANN'S MENTAL HEALTH AND CREATIVITY

Diagnosing the medical ailments of a figure from an earlier historical period is always a perilous undertaking, but in doing so, the present day researcher attempts to understand better the challenges and problems faced by the object of the study. There is great benefit in attempting to determine the maladies of a historical figure in order to empathize with the suffering faced by the individual in his or her time, and in order to understand how these hardships affected his or her life and works. With this principle in mind, I will endeavour to reach a conclusion about the ailments of Robert Schumann in an attempt to appreciate better his creative process and output. For several decades, musicologists have deliberated over Schumann's ailments. Most have concurred with the findings of renowned physicians Drs. Eliot Slater and Alfred Meyer, who indicated in 1959 that Robert Schumann was afflicted with bipolar affective disorder, formerly known as manic-depression, and tertiary neurosyphilis with characteristics of general paresis, a form of paralysis.[2] Slater and Meyer argued that the drastic variations in mood exhibited by Schumann, particularly in 1833 and 1844, could not be sufficiently accounted for by any diagnosis other than bipolar disorder.[3]

Historically, schizophrenia was a popular diagnosis for Schumann's illness, but this diagnosis is flawed. As Eliot Slater indicated, Schumann's symptoms are not consistent with schizophrenia:

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[2]Eliot Slater and Alfred Meyer, "Contributions to a Pathology of the Musicians: I. Robert Schumann," *Confinia Psychiatrica* 2, no. 2, (1959), 84.

[3]*Ibid.*, 92.

> ... Schumann survived repeated attacks of this kind of illness without any deterioration of personality (which was to be expected on the schizophrenic hypothesis).[4]

Since the appearance of Slater and Meyer's article, most musicologists have clung to the suggestion that Schumann died from an organic brain disease, likely general paresis, a category of tertiary neurosyphilis, or syphilis that attacks the neurological system.[5] This type of tertiary, or end-stage syphilis, is a terminal illness. However, there is insufficient evidence to suggest that Schumann died from neurosyphilis. The manner in which he died and his creative endeavours until 1855 while he was a resident in the asylum at Endenich do not necessarily correspond with a diagnosis of terminal syphilis.

An important consideration in the case against syphilis is the fact that Clara, Robert Schumann's wife for nearly sixteen years, never bore any sign of infection with syphilis. Clara lived to the age of seventy-seven with very few medical complaints. During the last decade of her life, Clara was plagued by arthritis in her arms, hands and fingers;[6] as well, she experienced some hearing difficulties, and died after having two strokes in 1896.[7] There are, however, no indications that she suffered any symptoms of syphilis at any point in her life. Clara would have been having sexual relations with her husband throughout their marriage; we know from of the birth dates of their children that the Schumanns were sexually active during 1840 through 1853-1854. Their first child, Marie, was born in 1841, and the others were born in rapid succession: Elise (1843), Julie

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[4]Slater, "Schumann's Illnesses," in Alan Walker (ed)., *Robert Schumann: The Man and His Music*, (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1972), 408.

[5]Slater and Meyer, *op. cit.*, 86.

[6]Nancy B. Reich, *Clara Schumann: The Artist and the Woman*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985), 183.

[7]Joan Chissell, *Clara Schumann: A Dedicated Spirit*, (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1983), 208.

(1845), Emil (1846), Ludwig (1848), Ferdinand (1849), Eugenie (1851), and Felix (1854). A ninth child was miscarried in 1852.[8] If Clara had been infected with syphilis, it is likely that she would have passed the disease in the form of congenital syphilis to some of her children, yet there is no concrete evidence whatsoever that Clara or any of the Schumann children were infected. Proponents of the syphilis diagnosis argue that syphilis is not infective during the secondary and tertiary phases, so Robert could not have infected Clara. This argument does not imply, of course, that Schumann would have been symptom-free; therefore, Clara would have been aware of the fact that her husband was having symptoms of the secondary stage of syphilis. One symptom is a residual "chancre" (syphilitic lesion), which appears in over one-quarter of all syphilis patients. A syphilitic lesion would have been clearly visible to Clara and likely would have inhibited their sexual activities. Other symptoms include cutaneous rashes, bodily lesions, and symptoms of meningitis.[9] On September 12, 1855, Dr. Franz Richarz, the head of the Endenich asylum, reported that Schumann had been writing down unusual statements:

> [Schumann] schrieb in letzter Zeit wieder allerlei abrupte Äußerungen melancholischen Inhalts und Reflexionen nieder z.B. 1831 war ich syphilitisch und ward mit Arsenik curirt.[10]

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[8]Slater and Meyer, *op. cit.*, 72.

[9]Symptoms of secondary syphilis include skin lesions, enlargement of lymph nodes, malaise, headaches, nausea, aching pains in the bones, fatigability, fever, anemia, jaundice and neck stiffness. See Robert Berkow (ed.) *The Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy*, 15th ed., (Rahway: Merck Sharp & Dohme Research Laboratories, 1987), 238.

[10]"Recently [Schumann] has been writing down all kinds of brief jottings and reflections of melancholy content, e.g. 'In 1831 I was syphilitic and treated with arsenic'," (translated by John Daverio in *Robert Schumann*, 484), quoted from 12 September 1855 entry in Richarz's diary, Aribert Reimann and Franz Hermann Franken, eds. *Robert Schumanns letzte Lebensjahre: Protokoll einer Krankheit*, (Berlin: Academie der Künste, 1994), 21.

While one may question why Schumann would record this statement in the first place, especially if it were not factual, at least in his own mind, the diagnosis of syphilis is not a certainty. It seems much more likely that Schumann was misdiagnosed, as he did not appear to experience the symptoms of the secondary stage of syphilis, nor did the disease infect any of his family members. The theory by musicologists that Schumann's complaint about a "painful wound" referred to a penile chancre is likely incorrect; he most likely had some type of venereal disease that was successfully cured by whatever treatment did Schumann receive.[11] The late psychiatrist Peter Ostwald argued that Schumann did not have syphilis:

> The treatment Robert described [as a cure for his syphilis] merely consisted of "having to sweat for three consecutive days on the doctor's advice." In any case, primary syphilitic lesions typically are painless, and Schumann's "wound" [mentioned in his diary of 1831] definitely was not.[12]

As well, as Eric Jensen indicates, a medical test for syphilis was not developed until 1906:

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[11]Arsenic was not used in the treatment of syphilis until approximately 1890 (it was called Salvarsan at the time); instead, the treatment Schumann received was likely mercury. Though some of the symptoms of mercurial poisoning are consistent with those Schumann exhibited, many more are not. Symptoms of chronic mercurial poisoning are "... central nervous system toxicity, including personality changes, nervousness, irritability, fatigue, deterioration in memory, difficulty in concentration, insomnia, hearing loss, constriction of visual field, and a metallic taste. Tremors often have an intentional component which may impair fine and complex movements. Peripheral neuropathy (predominantly sensory) is more common in those with organic mercury poisoning. Gingivitis, stomatitis and excessive salivation may be early signs. The most common renal effect is tubular damage, with necrosis being more common in inorganic than organic poisoning. Glomerular damage may lead to albumunuria. Inorganic poisoning may occasionally result in nephrotic syndrome." Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Department of Health, "Information Sheet on Mercury Poisoning for Doctors," Government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Department of Health, 4 January 2002, <www.info.gov.hk/dh/useful/ltod/mercury.htm> (February 8, 2002).

[12]Peter Ostwald, "Florestan, Eusebius, Clara and Schumann's Right Hand," *19th Century Music* 4, no. 1, (Summer 1980), 19.

> That Schumann thought he had syphilis is merely an indication of his belief, not proof of his infection... In Richarz's diary, many of the overt symptoms associated with the advanced stages of syphilis are noted. But his autopsy report does not give any indication of an "infectious process," such as would be associated with the disease.[13]

Although one cannot prove without a doubt that Schumann did not have syphilis, the diagnosis is superfluous. Schumann's symptoms can be explained without relying on a diagnosis of syphilis; instead, his ailments can be explained solely by the symptoms of bipolar affective disorder, which we know Schumann exhibited.

Robert Schumann's birth coincided with the dawn of the Age of Industrialization. It is important to note that the perception of his illness and the treatment Schumann received were completely congruent with the beliefs of that time, coinciding as they did with one of the most significant moments in the development of human history – the Industrial Revolution. Prior to the mid-seventeenth century, mental illness was not viewed as an illness at all, rather, as demonization or possession by evil spirits. The majority of the mentally ill were shunned as heretics, and those who were recognized as being ill were treated by exorcism.[14] Physicians of the time were not regulated and medicine was not yet considered a profession, so the care of those who were mentally ill fell into the hands of religious communities, where conditions were typically horrific. During the eighteenth century, the mentality of rationalism and the Enlightenment began to take hold of the people. As Zilboorg notes: "Mental disease, which medicine finally wrested from the clutches of superstitious sadism, began to be looked upon as the misfortunes of man as a person; the lunatic became as much an object

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[13]Jensen, *Schumann*, 329.

[14]Gregory Zilboorg, *A History of Medical Psychology*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1941), 131.

of human concern as any sick man."[15] The humanization of the treatment of the mentally ill became important during this time because the goals of liberty and equality were prominent in the minds of the people. In the late eighteenth century, several countries began imposing acts and codes for the protection of the mentally ill.[16] In 1792 and 1793 respectively, psychologists Philippe Pinel and William Tuke initiated the "moral treatment" of the mentally ill in France at Bicêtre and in England at the York Retreat. They were instrumental in the humanization of the treatment of the mentally ill by the medical community. During the crescendo of industrialization at the beginning of the nineteenth century, there was a mass dislocation of people into industrial cities and away from the solidarity of their villages. Social support networks vanished, and the vulnerable were confined to asylums operated by religious communities, originally intended to be protective, not medically therapeutic. The population in asylums increased unexpectedly. Later, many mental hospitals surfaced that were run by the simultaneously emerging modern medical community, rather than religious communities. However, the essence of moralistic attitudes remained in the approach of the doctors to the diagnosis and treatment of the mentally ill. Though Dr. Richarz's asylum in Endenich was one of the first of its kind in Germany to be run by someone with a medical rather than a religious background, the heavy morality in diagnosing patients persisted. Thus, a diagnosis of syphilis in the nineteenth century was as much a moral judgement on an individual's promiscuity than a true medical diagnosis. Schumann had a promiscuous lifestyle in his youth, which was certainly known to Dr. Richarz. Eric Jensen elaborates further on this matter:

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[15] *Ibid.*, 280.

[16] *Ibid.*, 571.

> Richarz completely misunderstood the nature of Schumann's illness. In general, Richarz associated mental illness with what he perceived as sinful behaviour. This was in keeping with his diagnosis of 'incomplete general paralysis' – several French psychiatrists had attributed the condition to '"moral" excesses such as alcoholism, "violent passions", or sexual overindulgence.'[17]

Therefore, the treatment Schumann received was completely congruent with the place of Endenich in time, and though he was considered to be syphilitic, the accuracy of this diagnosis is unlikely.

I am in no way suggesting, of course, that Schumann was not ill; instead, his symptoms, as recorded by both himself and Dr. Richarz at Endenich and in reports from Bettina von Arnim, Johannes Brahms and Joseph Joachim point to a definitive diagnosis, that of bipolar disorder. Type II bipolar affective disorder with hypomania (a milder form of mania) alone can explain Schumann's mood changes and variations in his productivity throughout his adult life. It seems likely that in 1854, upon throwing himself into the Rhine in an attempt to end his life, Schumann was experiencing a major depressive episode; ultimately, a depressive episode also ended his life two years later. During a major depressive episode, the depressed patient experiences anhedonia, or a loss of pleasure in all things, and a mood change, likely in the direction of guilt or emptiness. Other symptoms of depression include sleep disorders, either interruptive insomnia or hypersomnia (increased need for sleep); sadness or irritability; psychomotor agitation or retardation; fatigue; changes in appetite; extreme feelings of guilt; excessive weight loss or gain; inability to concentrate; and morbid thoughts, especially and most dangerously,

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[17]Eric Frederick Jensen, "Schumann at Endenich 2: Buried Alive," *The Musical Times*, (April 1998), 20.

suicidal ideation. Psychotic symptoms can also be present.[18] From Robert and Clara's diaries and letters, we can ascertain that Schumann exhibited all of the symptoms of depression in one way or another, in particular during February 1854 before his suicide attempt, and after his confinement in the asylum. In early 1854, Schumann complained about insomnia and he suffered fatigue and the inability to concentrate. His actions on February 27, 1854, also confirm the morbid thoughts and suicidal tendencies he was battling.

Depression may be a familial and ancestral genetic disease. It can be triggered by stress, and is suspected to be associated with a biochemical imbalance in the affected person's brain.[19] Schumann's life-long depression was likely both hereditary and stress-related. Slater and Meyer delineated the history of mental illness in Schumann's family:

> ...his father August had a nervous breakdown from which he never entirely recovered. He is said to have had attacks of giddiness, and to have had a melancholic tendency... The eldest child, Robert's sister Emilie, became mentally ill at the age of 17 and drowned herself at 19.[20]

This familial correlation is extremely important evidence of Schumann's true illness. Likewise, Schumann experienced considerable stress in his short life; the court battle against Friedrich Wieck in 1839 over his desire to marry Clara and the questioning of his financial stability weighed heavily on him.[21] He also experienced much loss during his life, including the deaths of his father and his mother, his sister and his brothers, two of

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[18]This would also include the screaming episodes Schumann experienced in the asylum, which are a symptom of the torment and intolerable feelings experienced by severely depressed patients. See American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (hereafter referred to as "DSM-IV"), *Standard Version*, 4th ed., (Washington: American Psychiatric Association, 1995), 356.

[19]*Ibid.*, 397.

[20]Slater and Meyer, *op. cit.*, 70.

[21]For further details, see Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, 182-189.

his children and his close friends Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn. This no doubt added to his stress.

A feeling of guilt is the most common symptom of a major depressive episode. Schumann experienced much guilt over earlier behaviours. While Schumann was incarcerated in Endenich, he would kneel and wring his hands.[22] He was burdened by guilt, and said that he would "burn in hell" for his unspecified "evil" behaviour.[23] Guilt is also evidenced in his early adulthood journals. The letter written to himself on June 19, 1831, chastising himself for his behaviour and his inability to complete projects, is also indicative of depression:

> Dear Robert, I beg you, produce something at last and be finished with it ... A terrible tendency to do things only half-way, to be wasteful and to seek self-destruction lies within me, which also shows in boozing.[24]

Schumann's first biographer, Joseph Wilhelm von Wasielewski, asked Dr. Richarz to contribute a medical analysis of Robert Schumann's illness and death to his biographical work.[25] If one considers that Schumann died from a major depressive episode only, and takes into account Richarz's final summary of Schumann's illness and death, the actual diagnosis is difficult to deny. In the final paragraph of his medical analysis, Richarz indicates the severity of melancholia from which Schumann was suffering:

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[22]B. Litzmann, *Clara Schumann: Ein Künstlerleben*, vol. 2,(Leipzig: Breitköpf und Härtel, 1882), 309.

[23]11 April 1854 entry in Richarz's diary, *op. cit.*, 17.

[24]Robert Schumann, *Tagebücher*, ed. George Eismann, (Leipzig, 1971), 343-344.

[25]Joseph Wilhelm von Wasielewski, *The Life of Robert Schumann*, (Detroit: Information Coordinators, 1975), 257.

> Finally, melancholy, although a mark of rare powers, hastened the death of this honored master: for while excitement in this disease, in spite of the rapid decline of the higher organic powers, disturbs their vegetative side but little, the case was here so far reversed, that the mind, and all the instincts, tastes, and habits connected with it, held out in a comparatively great degree until his death, although constantly sinking; but the common physical organs struggled vainly and laboriously against the burden of melancholy imposed upon the nervous system, and failed rapidly from lack of nutriment, thus producing death by extreme emaciation.[26]

From this account, it is quite evident that Schumann expired due to anorexia melancholia.[27] Anorexia signifies appetite loss, while melancholia addresses the origin of Schumann's appetite loss – his depression. From Richarz's diaries, we know that Schumann did not eat regularly during his stay at Endenich, often refusing food. Although Jensen believed that Schumann was one of the patients at Endenich who went on a hunger strike,[28] Richarz's diary of 13 July 1856, indicates that Schumann: "...aß ziemlich gut ... nimmt den Wein willig..."[29] This suggests that Schumann did not willingly starve himself; instead, while in a severe depressive state, he was able to eat only periodically. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau also surmised that Schumann might have suffered from smell and taste hallucinations that possibly affected his appetite in his last days, so that his self-starvation was the result of psychotic impairment, again related to

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[26]Dr. Richarz in Wasielewski, *op. cit.*, 259-260.

[27]Anorexia melancholia is the inability to eat due to depressive illness. This should not be confused with anorexia nervosa, the psychiatric disorder that causes the inability to eat due to a disturbed body image.

[28]Eric Jensen, *Schumann*, 330.

[29]"ate well ... and willingly drank wine," (my translation), from 13 July 1856 diary entry of Dr. Richarz, 23.

his depression.[30] It is also necessary to note that Richarz "considered [Schumann's] consciousness impaired but not destroyed."[31]

Eric Jensen has unearthed some disturbing accounts of the information available in Schumann's day, and of Clara's decision to keep him confined in the asylum:

> Even if Clara received information – such as Schumann's letters – which appeared to contradict or question the validity of the course of treatment adopted by Schumann's doctors, the opinions of the physicians at Endenich carried the greater weight with her. Clara now found herself in a difficult situation. Schumann appeared if not fully recovered, then much improved. He wanted to leave Endenich (which Clara may not have known) because he felt he was 'misunderstood', and, as a result, in his own eyes the treatment he was receiving was ineffectual and possibly detrimental... the greatest fear of Schumann must have been that, being perceived as 'mad', his wishes would be dismissed.[32]

As disturbing as the realization is to us today, Schumann's health was improving in 1855, yet he was never released from the asylum. It was not until he realized that he would be forced to spend the rest of his days at Endenich that major depression recurred, this time leading to severe weight loss and ultimately to death. Such an improvement in early 1855 also contradicts the diagnosis of tertiary neurosyphilis. Might his release from Endenich have prolonged his life? Although it is inconclusive, the evidence suggests an affirmative answer. Jensen noted:

> Based on his correspondence and the reports of those outside of Endenich, for a period of eight months – roughly from October 1854 until May 1855 – Schumann returned sufficiently to health to justify his removal from Endenich... More than a year after he first told Joachim of his wish to leave Endenich, Schumann likely felt abandoned. Since he was

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[30]Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, *Robert Schumann Words and Music: The Vocal Compositions*, (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1981), 215.

[31]*Ibid.*

[32]Eric Frederick Jensen, "Schumann at Endenich 1: Buried Alive," *The Musical Times*, (March 1998), 16.

> completely at the mercy of his physicians and unable to control his treatment, he may have realized that the only aspect of his existence still remaining under his control was whether to live or to die.[33]

Further, individuals with tertiary neurosyphilis are not able to compose music and write charming letters home to their families. The disease attacks their neurological system so profoundly that they are left totally unable to function, unable to think coherently, speak or move. The activities Schumann was performing, including alphabetizing the names of cities from an atlas and composing letters and music, could not have been performed by an individual who was suffering from end-stage neurosyphilis. A syphilitic diagnosis is also clearly contradicted by the January 8, 1855 notation in Clara's diary that she had received "a splendid letter from Robert ... He writes so beautifully; in the best of health he could not have written better. It is as if he were completely recovered."[34]

The auditory and visual hallucinations experienced by Schumann, particularly in February 1854, days before his suicide attempt, can also be explained by depression alone. Psychotic symptoms of depression include "depressive hallucinations in the auditory, visual and (rarely) olfactory spheres."[35]

Alternatively, hypnagogic or hypnopompic images might also explain Schumann's hallucinations. Sometimes in the earliest stages of sleep, there is a phase called hypnagogia during which individuals report experiencing dream-like imagery; hypnagogic experiences are commonly defined as hallucinatory and quasi-hallucinatory events taking place in the intermediate state between wakefulness and sleep. Similar

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[33]Jensen, "Buried Alive 2," 23.

[34]Georg Eismann, *Robert Schumann: ein Quellenwerk über sein Leben und Schaffen*, vol. 2, (Leipzig: Breitköpf und Härtel, 1956), 193.

[35]Berkow, *op. cit.*, 1518.

phenomena at the other end of sleep are called hypnopompic, that is, coming out of sleep.[36] Since all of Schumann's auditory and visual disturbances – hearing music, and angels and devils talking to him, and seeing tigers and hyenas – were nocturnal, it is highly probable that he was in a state of hypnagogia. This would also explain his musical hallucination on the night of February 17, 1854 (Schumann believed he heard angels singing a melody to him, which he scribbled down during the night, but by the morning, the angels' voices had turned to the voices of devils). S.W. Mitchell described hypnagogic hallucinations as follows: "The borderland of sleep is haunted by hallucinations... voices ... distressingly real visions seen during the praedormitium and at no other period."[37] Recent studies indicate that up to seventy-seven percent of adults experience hypnagogic phenomena regularly; hypnagogic imagery is confined neither to times of poor nor good health.[38] Among somatosensory phenomena, there are all types of visual phenomena of a peaceful and evil nature. The seeing of faces is one of the most common hypnagogic experiences;[39] the aesthetic quality of the figures and faces can range from 'transcendent beauty' to the 'hideous and terrifying'.[40] Auditory phenomena are not uncommon in hypnagogic hallucinations; Andreas Mavromatis described auditory hallucinations: "More often, voices of people out of view are heard, and less frequently music."[41] Schumann's visual and auditory hallucinations could merely have been related to pre-sleep dreaming, and his already prominent fear of death may have inspired his

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[36]Andreas Mavromatis, *Hypnagogia*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987), 3.

[37]S.W. Mitchell, "Some Disorders of Sleep," *International Journal of Medical Science* 100 (1890), 109-127.

[38]Mavromatis, *op. cit.*, 6-7.

[39]*Ibid.*, 16.

[40]*Ibid.*, 26.

[41]*Ibid.*, 34.

dream of devils and angels. Additionally, if Schumann had been composing before attempting to sleep, it is considerably more likely that he would experience musical hallucinations in the hypnagogic state. Mavromatis explained:

> For instance, listening to or performing Beethoven's music for long hours may not only, or necessarily, result in an accurate hypnagogic reproduction of the performance but may also, or instead, lead to auditory hypnagogic images of Beethovenesque compositions.[42]

Additionally, Mavromatis suggested that madness and creativity are closely linked, and he proposed that "the state of hypnagogia is their natural meeting place."[43]

However, one of Schumann's auditory hallucinations, hearing the note "A", was a long-term problem, beginning around age 35. Clara described it as "constant singing and rushing in his ears[;] every noise would turn into a tone."[44] Medical evidence suggests that these symptoms are representative of presbycusis, or the gradual loss of hearing experienced by individuals as they grow older. One symptom of presbycusis is tinnitus (a ringing in the ears) that regularly affects individuals over the age of 40.[45] Aage Møller explains the high frequency of tinnitus in those who suffer presbycusis:

> ... Complex changes in the ear and auditory nervous system are also assumed to be involved in the development of tinnitus, which often accompanies presbycusis.[46]

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[42] *Ibid.*, 51.

[43] *Ibid.*, 189.

[44] Litzmann, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, 126.

[45] Aage R. Møller, *Hearing: Its Physiology and Pathophysiology*, (San Diego: Academic Press, 2000), 459.

[46] *Ibid.*, 459.

Møller describes tinnitus as being "intermittent or continuous in nature and its intensity can range from a just noticeable hissing sound to a roaring noise that affects all aspects of life."[47] A combination of presbycusis and hypnagogic imagery seem plausible alternative explanations for the auditory disturbances Schumann was experiencing.

Depression alone cannot sufficiently explain the abrupt changes in Schumann's mood over the course of his life. Hypomania must be added to Schumann's diagnosis, forming the Type II bipolar affective disorder diagnosis, in order to characterize completely the ailments that Schumann faced. In a hypomanic state, an individual experiences grandiose ideas, works and speaks rapidly, attempts to complete too many projects at once, is unreliable, unorganized and indulges in philandering behaviour.[48] Hypomania can only be diagnosed after the individual has experienced an episode of clinical depression. Such behaviour without a previous episode of depression would not be considered abnormal. Schumann noted in his diaries that he drank excessively during his youth, and he experienced excessive guilt over this behaviour, which is indicative of hypomania. Promiscuity is another symptom of both hypomania and depression. Although Schumann was mostly elusive about his sexual relationships in his youth, there is strong evidence to suggest promiscuity in his diaries. Eric Jensen also identifies one major musical indication of hypomania in Schumann's life:

> Manic periods in Schumann's life appear less noticeably, although instances might include periods of inspired composition (such as the creation of the First Symphony op. 38 in four days).[49]

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[47] *Ibid.*, 463.

[48] DSM-IV, 397.

[49] Jensen, "Buried Alive 2," 19.

Although it is still highly debated in scholarly circles today whether Schumann did in fact use a chiroplast, a finger-stretching apparatus, (or, in his own words, a "cigar-mechanism"), if he had overused such a device, this behaviour would also have been indicative of the grandiose ideas of invincibility and the excessive behaviours of hypomania. In early May 1832, Schumann recorded the following statement in his diary, "[The] cigar-mechanism makes my third finger tolerable."[50] However, in the following month, Schumann recorded that the cigar-mechanism was not effective in healing his finger. He wrote, "the third finger seems really incorrigible," then two weeks later, "the third finger is completely stiff."[51] A common explanation for Schumann's hand injury is mercurial poisoning. Two British neurologists indicated that this belief is unsubstantiated and false:

> [Neurological symptoms of syphilis] would hardly be manifest at the age of twenty or twenty-one... Mercurial neuropathy was so rare during antisyphilitic treatment as to raise doubts on the causal relationship.[52]

In determining the actual cause of Schumann's death, another medical possibility to consider is that while in confinement at Endenich, Schumann contracted and subsequently died of tuberculosis. Dr. Richarz noted that during his last month of life, Schumann was suffering from pneumonia, which is consistent with a diagnosis of tuberculosis.[53] As well, being in a confined space such as at Endenich would increase

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[50]Robert Schumann, *Tagebücher*, 386, translated by Peter Ostwald in *Robert Schumann: The Inner Voices of a Musical Genius*, (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1985).

[51]*Ibid.*, 394 and 410, translated by Peter Ostwald in *Robert Schumann.*

[52]R.A. Henson and H. Urich, "Schumann's Hand Injury," *British Medical Journal*, (April 8, 1978), 900-903.

[53]Reimann and Franken, *op. cit.*, 13.

Schumann's chance of contracting this infection, which occurs by inhalation of infectious droplets.[54] Despite the modernity of the facility at Endenich and the association of the disease with impoverished settings, the possibility that Schumann contracted tuberculosis cannot be eliminated. Many wealthy aristocrats throughout the ages have contracted the disease, including Henry VII of England who died in 1509, Edward VI of England who died in 1553, Charles IX of France who died in 1574, and Eleanor Roosevelt, Former First Lady and United States Diplomat, who died of tuberculosis in 1962.[55] In 1856, the consensus among the medical profession was that tuberculosis was untreatable, so it was a very common disease in hospitals and asylums.[56]

A brief digression from the specific symptoms of Schumann's health to study the fascinating historiographical approach to his illnesses by psychiatrists and psychologists is necessary. Recent studies of Schumann's health indicate that Schumann suffered bipolar affective disorder and died as the result of self-starvation in Endenich, two years after his suicide attempt of February 1854.[57] From the viewpoint of mental health experts, syphilis did not contribute to Robert Schumann's demise. However, in musicological circles, syphilis remains the diagnosis of choice for Schumann's symptoms even today.[58] The origin of this diagnosis can be traced back to Schumann's first biographer, Wasielewski, who asked Dr. Richarz to write the first public analysis of

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[54]Berkow, *op. cit.*, 113.

[55]Sequella Global Tuberculosis Foundation, "Fact Sheet," Sequella Global Tuberculosis Foundation, 17 December 2001, <http://www.sequellafoundation.org/fact.asp> (January 26, 2002).

[56]J. Arthur Myers, *Captain of All these Men of Death: Tuberculosis Historical Highlights*, (St. Louis: Warren H. Green Inc., 1977), 53.

[57]In particular, please see Kay Redfield Jamison, *Touched with Fire: Manic-Depressive Illness and the Artistic Temperament*, (New York: Free Press Paperbacks, 1993), 146, and Patty Duke, *A Brilliant Madness: Living with Manic-Depressive Illness*, (New York: Bantam Books, 1993), 206.

[58]For instance, Jensen's *Schumann* does not dismiss the syphilis diagnosis altogether, and Daverio's *Robert Schumann* suggests that Schumann died from tertiary neurosyphilis.

Schumann's death in 1871. Though Clara Schumann thoroughly opposed the biography and Dr. Richarz's conclusions, the book was printed without her permission. Wasielewski was a personal friend of Schumann's, and understandably desired to know how his friend had died at such a young age. Wasielewski may also have been motivated to dismiss Schumann's later works because he felt they were not up to Schumann's earlier standards of composition. However, even today, many scholars justifiably feel that Wasielewski's inclusion of Richarz's autopsy results was inappropriate since he failed to obtain the consent of Schumann's widow and other family members.

The creativity of an individual is obviously affected by mental illness. Psychiatrist Anthony Storr studied the creativity of people suffering from bipolar affective disorder, in order to understand their motives in creating works of art. Storr suggested that to a person with bipolar disorder, rejection and disapproval are a matter of life and death, so the creative process becomes centred on conforming to meet others' needs.[59] Since their own needs are no longer being met, the patients tend to be unable to handle their aggressive impulses, and consequently, the creative work becomes a means of releasing that aggression.[60] Analogously, in experiencing profound guilt, artists use the creative work as a means of reparation with the world.[61]

During his most extreme depressive phases, Schumann was not able to compose, yet during his hypomanic phases, Schumann composed many pieces in a short space of time. Storr commented:

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[59]Anthony Storr, *The Dynamics of Creation*, (London: Seeker and Warberg, 1972), 76.

[60]*Ibid.*, 79.

[61]*Ibid.*, 82.

> When artists become insane, they generally cease production altogether, or else show a deterioration in their work. I showed … that Schumann's depressions tended to stop him composing.[62]

It is important to note that Storr does not suggest a decline in Schumann's compositions, but only a ceasing of production.

Analyzed collectively, the medical evidence suggests that Schumann likely did not die from tertiary neurosyphilis, but from a major depressive episode in combination with anorexia melancholia. The possibility also remains that he contracted tuberculosis during his stay at Endenich. Neurosyphilis would have caused a breakdown of his mental faculties and thus, Schumann's late works would have been the products of a diseased mind. However, bipolar affective disorder yields a different outlook; Schumann continued to compose, and his intellectual capacity was not affected by his disease. Therefore, it appears that the theory of a decline in Schumann's late works, produced by mental illness, is erroneous.

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[62] *Ibid.*, 213.

CHAPTER 2:

THE STYLISTIC SHIFTS IN SCHUMANN'S LIEDER

Several authors since Richarz have written articles and books stating that after his "Fruitful Year" in 1849, Schumann failed to write any significant pieces or criticisms. Eric Sams commented in 1969 that:

> The evidence of the songs is plain. Schumann never again reached or even approached the level of his 1840 masterpieces. The songs of 1849 are a decline; the later ones a descent, first steep, and then precipitous. It would be very surprising if the music as a whole showed a different pattern; nor does it, by general consensus. Other composers of comparable stature are believed to mature in their music; Schumann appears to deteriorate. A favoured explanation is mental illness, e.g. schizophrenia... All these data taken collectively seem to leave little room for doubt about the nature of Schumann's malady or its inevitable deteriorative effect on his creative mind.[63]

Eliot Slater also held this belief:

> ...The quality of his work in 1853 seems to have been far below his best, most probably because of the oncoming organic process.[64]

However, Jon W. Finson presents a dissenting opinion:

> Of all the numerous myths surrounding Robert Schumann's life, none has been so persistent nor so pernicious as the notion that waning compositional acuity presaged his ultimate mental demise.[65]

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[63]Eric Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann*, 2nd Edition, (London: Butler and Tanner Ltd., 1969), 276-77.

[64]Slater, "Schumann's Illnesses" in Walker, 410.

[65] Finson, *op. cit.*, 227.

Slater and Meyer, who set out to prove Schumann's decline, believe that one must be wary of dating Schumann's decline too early:

> A more profound failure is recognizable in the last two years of his life. A certain element of heavy, sometimes bombastic banality may have already appeared earlier. But such fairly late works as the *Rhenish Symphony* [1851] ... show that the general decline must not be dated too early.[66]

Musicologists over the years have suggested that because Schumann suffered a mental illness, his compositions must be indicative of his declining mental powers. However, the detection of a different style in Schumann's mature compositional works does not justify the erroneous conclusion of poor quality or mental incapacity in his pieces. As we will see, there is no evidence of mental illness in Schumann's late Lieder, but merely a shift in style as is common in the works of many composers over the course of their lives. Indications of a failing mind might include such features as an inappropriate affectual application of the music to the poetry,[67] or great disparity between the music of the voice and piano. Elements such as these are not present in Schumann's late Lieder, thereby providing evidence that his compositional abilities did not decline as he matured.

An analysis of Schumann's Lieder is the most suitable way in which to consider the changes in compositional style that occurred over the course of Schumann's lifetime. Schumann worked in many genres during his life, but he tended to compose in a compartmentalized fashion, focusing all his creative energies on several works in one

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[66]Slater and Meyer, *op. cit.*, 85.

[67]Inappropriate affectual application of the music to the poetry may consist of the use of a minor key where the text is primarily of a contented nature or a major key where the poetry is primarily depressive in quality. It may also refer to excessive dissonance in a Lied with a primarily contented nature, or other musical settings that exhibit a great disparity between the affect of the music and the topic of the poem.

genre at any given time. During his twenties, Schumann worked in the genre of the piano miniature, and at the urging of his new wife at around age thirty, he began to work on larger forms such as symphonies, operas, oratorios, and later, large religious works such as his *Mass* (Opus 147) and *Requiem* (Opus 148) dating from 1852. Since these genres were restricted to a specific time period in Schumann's life, it would be too difficult to gauge how his style changed over several decades of composition. However, Schumann composed Lieder throughout his lifetime. Eric Sams articulated it most aptly:

> Songs were among Schumann's first works, at seventeen (in 1827); they were among his last (in 1852). All his life, most of his music was associated with words, whether as texts, titles or programmes. Well over half of it is for voice; well over three-quarters is for (or with) piano. His inspiration ebbed and flowed in ten-year cycles, with crests of activity in 1840 and 1849; so each of those waves of music broke in song for voice and piano.[68]

Schumann was drawn to the genre of Lieder composition thanks in part to his father's occupation as a bookseller (the young Robert had access to volumes of literature and poetry from great writers in Germany and beyond in the walls of his own house.) He often mused over whether he would find his fame in literature or in music.[69] Therefore, Schumann's attraction to the genre of the Lied throughout his lifetime is understandable. Thus, it is appropriate for the present study to focus on the genre that reverberated across the span of Schumann's life – the solo song with piano accompaniment.

Fischer-Dieskau succinctly illustrated the contrasting styles of Schumann's Lieder over the course of his career:

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[68]Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann,* 1.

[69]See the account of his childhood friend, Emil Fleschig, of Schumann's talent for poetry in Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, 22-23.

> We encounter in his work echoes of the past and premonitions of the future; the familiar and the exotic; the simple style of folksong and the complicated counterpoint; miniatures juxtaposed with larger forms.[70]

Schumann's late style of composition can only be accurately depicted after a careful consideration of his early style. As Harold Truscott indicated, Schumann's earliest style was "happiest in a lyrical framework" while his later style tended towards larger forms.[71] Schumann's early compositions tended to be a combination of his musical and literary interests, as are exemplified by his piano miniatures with their fanciful titles and literary allusions.[72] In his early works, Schumann favoured an improvisational style of composition, first improvising musical fragments, then combining these fragments to form a musical piece.[73] In his later compositional style, Schumann moved away from using literary elements as cohesive elements in his compositions. Instead, he adopted purely musical structures as a means of holding a composition together. Schumann tended towards a homophonic texture in his late pieces, and he frequently used syncopation, cross-rhythms and other deviations from standard rhythmic patterns. By 1851, Schumann had demonstrated his mastery of the expanding and contracting musical paragraph, of compression, of larger forms and of the continuous multi-movement symphony form, as exemplified by his *Fourth Symphony*.[74] Schumann's phrasing has long been pointed to as being indicative of mental decline, yet

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[70]Fischer-Dieskau, *op. cit.,* 7.

[71]Harold Truscott, "The Evolution of Schumann's Last Period (Part 1)," *The Chesterian* 31, no. 189, (Winter 1956), 78.

[72]Margaret Doutt, "Schumann's Last Works" (Master's thesis, University of Kentucky, 1981), 8.

[73]Linda Correll Roesner, "Studies in Schumann Manuscripts: With Particular Reference to Sources Transmitting Instrumental Works in Large Forms," (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1974), 401-404.

[74]Truscott, Part 1, 83.

as Truscott wrote: "Schumann exhibited last period phrase mastery: short, clipped phrases, long-breathed paragraphs [and] rhythmic figures that casually complete the phrase."[75] Truscott summarized his beliefs about Schumann's late style as follows:

> So far from being inferior to his earlier work, it does, in fact, embody a mastery which is the highest point to which he attained, [so] that, if he had lived, it would have inaugurated a period far beyond anything he actually achieved, and that was many, many years ahead of its time.[76]

John Daverio also defended Schumann's late style of compositional writing by endeavoring to ascertain the source of the bias against Schumann's late creative works. He wrote:

> Like the relative silence surrounding them, the negative valuations of Schumann's late works frequently encountered in the scholarly and critical literature are by and large motivated by the suspicion that during his last years the composer labored under the curse of impending madness... This notion was in fact fostered by the select group gathered around Schumann during the final phase of his career: his wife, Clara (who went so far as to destroy his last completed chamber work, the Romanzen for 'cello and piano of November 1854, presumably because it evinced signs of mental decay), the young violin virtuoso Joseph Joachim, and the burgeoning compositional talent whose praises Schumann would sing in "Neue Bahnen", Johannes Brahms.[77]

The early biographers of Schumann simply accepted a "dissipation of creative power in Schumann's later compositions," and they consequently assumed that "depressive melancholy" and "droning incompetence" are audible in Schumann's last works.[78]

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[75]Harold Truscott, "The Evolution of Schumann's Last Period (Part 2)," *The Chesterian* 31, no. 190, (Spring 1957), 105.

[76]*Ibid.*, 111.

[77]John Daverio, "Madness or Prophecy? Schumann's *Gesänge der Frühe*, Op. 133," in David Witten (ed.) *Nineteenth-Century Piano Music: Essays in Performance and Analysis*, (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1997), 187.

[78]*Ibid.*, 187-88.

Margaret Doutt has suggested that Schumann's late style was a move towards classicism:

> Schumann knew that someone must bring about the blend of the classical tradition with the romantic vocabulary, and finally appointed himself to this difficult undertaking.[79]

However, Schumann's late style is not classical in its conception. Rather, he adopted a conservatism that reflected the needs of his audience, and became less artistically original. This move away from poetic eccentricity is also reflected in Schumann's criticisms and writings after 1844.[80] I intend to demonstrate how a parallel shift in Schumann's mature style led him to create more conservative compositions that were aligned with the needs of his audience.

In the following pages, I will demonstrate how Schumann's style changed as he aged and will characterize the mature style he used in his Lieder. As Jon Finson said, Schumann's style "participates directly in the new musical currents of the mid-nineteenth century."[81] Schumann incorporated archaicism, such as the use of frequent plagal cadences to suggest religiosity, into his late style. He also used dissociation of the bass and the inner voices from the melody, causing the harmonies to appear misaligned in an effort to suggest vertical space to his listeners. Frequently Schumann opted for a motionless compositional style instead of the teleological one adopted by contemporary composers; thereby Schumann overcame the temporal dimensions of music and

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[79]Doutt, *op. cit.*, 9.

[80]Lindsay Moore, "Shattering the Schumann Myth," *Fermata* 3 (October 2001), 18-30.

[81]Finson, *op. cit.*, 250.

foreshadowed the music of Richard Wagner's *Parsifal* (1882).[82] Schumann's late style is often anomalous in its use of harmonies; for example, Schumann frequently used second inversion chords.

A note of explanation should be included as to why Schumann's periods of composition have been divided as they are for the purposes of this study. As I have already noted, Sams argued in 1969 that the songs of 1849 were a decline, and the works that followed were a reflection of Schumann's mental demise. Finson countered this notion with the suggestion that the songs of 1849 were not a decline for Schumann. Therefore, this study divides Schumann's songs into four compositional periods based in part on 1849 as a watershed. The songs of 1840, universally regarded as Schumann's best Lieder, comprise the first category. A single song composed in 1845, *Soldatenlied* (WoO), is offered in the second category as the only example of a Lied composed by Schumann during a period in which we know he was suffering from an episode of severe clinical depression. The third category includes the songs of Schumann's Fruitful Year, 1849, and the final category comprises Schumann's late songs of 1850-1852. Though little chronological time passed between the composition of *Minnespiel* (Opus 101, April and November 1849) and *Sechs Gedichte von N. Lenau und Requiem* (Opus 90, August 1850), Schumann's style, intentions and poetical preferences noticeably changed during that time. I have selected two or three song cycles from each period defined above. *Myrthen* (Opus 25) and *Liederkreis* (Opus 39) are representative of Schumann's 1840 *Liederjahr*, and *Soldatenlied* (WoO) is the only song composed in 1845, during Schumann's depressive period. *Liederalbum für die Jugend* (Opus 79) and *Minnespiel*

[82]Daverio, "Madness or Prophecy?," 197.

(Opus 101) embody Schumann's style in 1849, and *Sechs Gedichte* (Opus 90), *Sechs Gesänge* (Opus 107), *Drei Gedichte* (Opus 119) and *Gedichte der Königin Maria Stuart* (Opus 135) are representative of Schumann's late song style. Songs with both a contented and depressive nature have been selected from each group of songs, though the incidence of depressive topics is certainly more prevalent in the later period.

In his early style of 1840, Schumann used key relationships and motives to add cohesiveness to song cycles, in particular "motivic relationships between songs as a means to reinforce both poetic and musical unity."[83] The first song tended to establish for the whole cycle "particular tonal, motivic and poetic 'themes', and ... these 'themes' acquire special meaning and significance as the cycle unfolds."[84] Schumann is unique as a Lieder composer because, from the time of his earliest Lied composition, he regularly adapted the original poem to serve the music. As Sams indicated, "He treats poetry as a means to an end,"[85] often repeating the entire first stanza to form his ideal ternary A-B-A form. Schumann's harmonies are typically diatonic, with contrasting sections in a closely related key. The exceptions are significant – Schumann's choice of remote key signatures indicate complex emotions, and key signature changes represent a change in mood, while the use of chromatic melody notes tends to represent confusion or torment. The piano often imitates other instruments, and questions in the poem are usually portrayed by a

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[83]Barbara Turchin, "Schumann's Song Cycles: The Cycle Within the Song," *Nineteenth Century Music* 8, no. 3 (Spring 1985), 232.

[84]*Ibid.*, 233.

[85]Eric Sams, "The Songs," in Alan Walker (ed.), *Robert Schumann: The Man and His Music*, (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1972), 125.

dominant chord, or for more intense questions, a dominant seventh or diminished seventh chord.[86]

By 1849, Schumann's songs regularly use syncopated accompaniment (though they are present in earlier songs as well), and as Sams observed, Schumann adopts bold voice declamation, chromatic harmonies and independent piano parts. Schumann moved away from fixed ternary forms, electing to use freer formats for expressive purposes. Schumann's 1840 songs reveal the subjective world of the Romantic artist, but the later songs use an intentional simplicity and straightforward manner to make the songs more accessible to his audience.[87]

Schumann's shift to larger forms after 1840 and his rigorous study of counterpoint in 1845 heavily influenced his later style of composition.[88] It is only in his later songs that the piano and the voice are given equal status, because of the influence of his early piano compositions.[89] Schumann's later songs are said to have an economy of emotion and greater objectivity, signifying that Schumann did not allow his melancholy the free rein of his younger days.[90] Rufus Hallmark believed other musicologists have used this style shift against the older Schumann:

> Sams takes this for a failure of nerve when just the opposite may be true: all of Schumann's traditional skill is at work, but in a new vein.[91]

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[86]*Ibid.*, 127.

[87]Rufus Hallmark, *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*, (New York: Schirmer Books, 1996), 103.

[88]Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, 303.

[89]Significantly, Schumann returned to some of his earlier piano pieces in his later years and issued new versions of the pieces. Likewise, he returned to Opus 39 later in his life and adapted its order, bestowing a contented conclusion on the cycle; additionally, the later version has a unified key sequence from f-sharp minor, which resolves to the relative major key (F-sharp major) in the twelfth song.

[90]Hallmark, *op. cit.*, 108.

[91]*Ibid.*

Likewise, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau accurately commented:

> The fluctuations in the quality of Schumann's late works can better be described as the result of musical experimentation than ascribed to problems of health.[92]

Simply because Schumann's style changed as he grew older and he suffered from depressive illness does not indicate that his works are fraught with the effects of emotional and mental breakdown. The following chapter will analyze selected Schumann Lieder in detail in order to provide evidence that there is no visible decline in Schumann's late songs due to his mental illness.

[92]Fischer-Dieskau, *op. cit.*, 14.

CHAPTER 3:

AN ANALYSIS OF SCHUMANN'S LIEDER ACROSS THE YEARS

The following section will examine specific song cycles as outlined in the preceding chapter, and will consider individual songs from those cycles in an effort to prove that Schumann's Lieder did not decline in quality after 1849. A gradual stylistic transformation is evident in Schumann's songs, but as we will see, it merely reflected his psychological transformation during the last years of his life; it is not proof of a mental collapse. After a brief introduction to each of the cycles and specific songs within the cycles, I will proceed with an analysis of the major features of Schumann's stylistic changes through a series of analytical categories.

Myrthen, Opus 25

Schumann's wedding gift to his bride, Clara Wieck, was a "musical bouquet" called *Myrthen*, in the form of a song cycle containing twenty-six songs by various poets on topics of love.[93] ("*Myrthen*," or "myrtles", are flowers used in German wedding bouquets.) During the composition of his cycle in February and March 1840, Schumann often "plunged into a frenzy of composition for a few days."[94] This may be indicative of an early episode of hypomania. Virtually sixty-five percent of the songs in the *Myrthen* cycle are in a specific standard form; twenty-five percent of those are in ternary form (Nos. 1, 2, 5, 11, 19, 21, and 25), several are in rondo-like forms (Nos. 3, 8, 9, 15, and 16) and six are strophic (Nos. 13, 14, 17, 18, 20, and 22), illustrating that Schumann

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[93]Hallmark, *op. cit.*, 82.

[94]*Ibid.*, 84.

frequently wrote in a set form in his early compositions.[95] Fifty-percent of the songs have a significant piano postlude with its own melodic, harmonic, rhythmic and contrapuntal interest. The function of the postludes is to provide a release of the rhythmic tensions, the melodic tensions, or the harmonic tensions built up in the song. For instance, any remaining metrical dissonance is resolved in the postlude, the melody may be completed by the piano if the voice fails to do so prior to the postlude, or the piece may resolve any tonal ambiguity left by the vocal part. Both the key relationships and the topics of the songs in *Myrthen* give the cycle coherence. The cycle begins and ends in A-flat major, and the songs all concern the topic of love. From *Myrthen*, I have selected songs No. 7 (*Die Lotosblume*), and No. 11 and 12 (*Lieder der Braut I* and *II*) for analysis.

Liederkreis* (*von Eichendorff*), *Opus 39

Schumann composed the songs of *Liederkreis* in May 1840. The collection was not published until May 1842, and was followed by a revised version in 1850. This cycle has a lyric intensity and imparts melodic coherence. A tiny musical motive, the interval of a falling fifth, is developed over the course of the cycle, which lends unity to the songs. The motive is recognizable in various forms throughout the cycle. Schumann uses the image of "the wanderer" in all of the songs, and alludes to the ecclesiastical and the archaic through the use of plagal cadences and modal writing in the songs. The textual focus on mortality and death establishes a religious allusion.[96] The piano is thematic and comments by way of preludes, interludes and postludes, and exhibits a new independence

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[95]*Ibid.*, 85.

[96]Fischer-Dieskau, *op. cit.*, 73.

from, yet still a full partnership with, the voice. The songs I have selected for specific analysis from this cycle are No. 7 (*Auf einer Burg*), and No. 10 (*Zwielicht*) because both songs are an example of a darker style of writing in Schumann's earliest songs, and can be suitably contrasted with his later cycles.

Soldatenlied, WoO

Written during a period of severe depression, *Soldatenlied* is the solitary example of Schumann's compositional song style during a depressive period. Based on a poem by Hoffmann von Fallersleben, *Soldatenlied* was composed in August 1845 after Schumann was forced to cancel a trip to the Rhine because of his poor health. The prescriptions he was taking at the time were making him "continually ill."[97] The song was written while Schumann was in Dresden and was meant to be included in a children's song collection.[98]

Liederalbum für die Jugend, Opus 79

Schumann wrote this counterpart to his Opus 68, *Album für die Jugend*, in April through July of 1849, while he and his family were staying at Bad Kreischa to escape the revolution in Dresden. The purpose of composing this cycle was one of practicality; since his previous collection of twenty-nine piano pieces for children had sold well, the publication of a group of Lieder for children also had the potential to be financially rewarding.[99] This cycle comprises twenty-five percent of Schumann's late Lied output. Containing twenty-nine solo songs and duets in escalating difficulty, *Liederalbum* draws

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[97]The prescriptions Schumann was taking were possibly for alcoholism. See Fischer-Dieskau, *op. cit.*, 131.

[98]Stephen Walsh, *The Lieder of Schumann*, (London: Cassell and Co., Ltd., 1971), 77.

[99]Jensen, *Schumann*, 231 and 294.

on a variety of poets and uses a number of folk and folk-like texts. Nearly all the songs are strophic, and they reflect the innocence of an idealized childhood.[100] There appears to be a contradiction between the serenity of these songs and the reality of the troubled world outside the Schumanns' door. Schumann may have used the composition of these idyllic songs as a defense mechanism to block out the unpleasant events around him. Therefore, this cycle should not be considered as an artistic lapse on Schumann's part. The stylistic implications in *Liederalbum für die Jugend* touched all of his later Lieder, especially *Gedichte der Königin Maria Stuart*, Opus 135. Songs I have selected for further study are No. 13 (*Der Sandmann*) and No. 27 (*Schneeglöckchen*).

Minnespiel, Opus 101

The *Minnespiel* songs were partially composed in April 1849 during the sojourn in Bad Kreischa during the Dresden uprising. Though he began composing them in April, Schumann put these Lieder aside until November 1849 because of the revolution, turning his attention instead to his *Liederalbum für die Jugend.* Based on texts by Rückert, these lyrical songs feature topics of love. From this cycle, I chose to analyze No. 4 (*Mein schöner Stern*) and No. 6 (*O Freund, mein Schirm, mein Schutz!*) because they are darker in quality than some of Schumann's other 1849 songs, and they are thus comparable to his last songs.

[100]Sams, "The Songs" in Walker, 153.

Sechs Gedichte von N. Lenau und Requiem, Opus 90

Schumann wrote these pieces in early August 1850, believing that the poet Nikolaus Lenau had already passed away, but Lenau did not in fact die until just after their completion (on August 22).[101] Schumann had just been appointed the music director at Düsseldorf when he began composing this cycle. These were the last Lieder he composed while still living in Dresden. The songs are arranged in a coherent key sequence (from E-flat major in the first, through to an E-flat major resolution in the sixth song), indicating that Schumann adhered to his earlier methods of composition even as late as 1850. The texts concern the theme of a lost love, and over the course of the cycle the grief of the poet intensifies. The songs are melancholic, and contain many aural metaphors and contrasts of sound and silence.[102] Schumann's style recalls that of his 1840 Lieder, but he no longer composes only standard melodic patterns or four-bar phrasing. These songs have been criticized for their gloomy and pessimistic nature and the images of death that pervade them.[103] Authors who disparage these songs for their inclusion of death as a topic fail to consider that these songs were composed as a Requiem to Lenau, whom Schumann had met in his youth; it is only natural that a Requiem and accompanying songs would feature dark subject matter. Songs analyzed further are No. 4 (*Die Sennin*) and No. 6 (*Der schwere Abend*).

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[101]Ostwald, *Robert Schumann*, 235*f.*

[102]Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, 463.

[103]Walsh, *op. cit.*, 93.

Sechs Gesänge, Opus 107

Composed in late January to early February 1850, these declamatory songs are grouped together to describe different types of loneliness, though Schumann does not become as subjective as he occasionally had done in his earlier songs. He wrote these Lieder in between larger orchestral works and smaller genre projects because of the marketability of Lieder.[104] Songs selected for further analysis from this group are No. 1 (*Herzeleid*), No. 3 (*Der Gärtner*), and No. 4 (*Spinnerin*).

Drei Gedichte, Opus 119

Hallmark remarked that these three Lieder, which were composed in September 1851, hark back to the compositional approaches used by Schumann in 1840, in particular, those in *Myrthen.*[105] In these pieces, Schumann uses a standard chordal accompaniment, dotted rhythms, regular phrase structures, and simple harmonies. For further analysis, I have selected No. 2 (*Warnung*), and No. 3 (*Der Bräutigam und die Birke*) because they exhibit similarities to earlier songs by Schumann; in particular, *Zwielicht* (Opus 25) and *Warnung* are comparable.

Gedichte der Königin Maria Stuart, Opus 135

Schumann was probably drawn to these five poems by the ill-fated Mary Stuart Queen of Scots in 1852 because of the religious nature of two of the poems. During that year, he had been composing his *Mass* (Opus 147) and *Requiem* (Opus 148), and had

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[104]Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, 443.

[105]Hallmark, *op. cit.*, 104.

completed an oratorio on the subject of Martin Luther just before beginning to compose this final song cycle in December. These last solo songs, which describe the sorrows of a condemned woman, appear to imitate the simple melody-writing of Elizabethan songs, and the music closely follows the text.[106] Schumann wrote only seven songs in 1852, all but one concerning prayer or death, killing and blood. Eric Sams surmised: "So the sad story continues, with the alienated mind eerily active to the last."[107] Stephen Walsh expressed a similar sentiment:

> Significantly, four of the five songs ... are in E minor, the key of *Herzeleid* – a remarkable confession, by a composer so sensitive to key contrasts, that his mind has come to be dominated by a single mood.[108]

Surely, however, it would have been inappropriate and, indeed, proof of a failing mind, had Schumann chosen to set these despairing poems in a major key. The affect of these poems calls for a desolate, minor tonality, which is exactly what Schumann provided. The topics of the later songs can, however, be considered to be indicative of Schumann's prevailing mood in his later years. Because of Schumann's depressive illness, there can be little doubt that melancholic ideas and themes were an *idée fixe* for him and consequently appeared in his creations. This certainly explains Schumann's attraction to the poems of Mary Queen of Scots. All five songs from this cycle will be analyzed.

By 1850, Schumann began selecting the poems of obscure poets for his Lieder. Many of his early song cycles from 1840 through 1849 use as their texts poetry by

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[106]Fischer-Dieskau, *op. cit.*, 198.

[107]Sams, "The Songs" in Walker, 160.

[108]Walsh, *op. cit.*, 99.

Goethe, Rückert, Heine and Eichendorff, but in his later songs, he elected to set the poetry of lesser-known poets including Müller, Kinkel, Pfarrius and Ullrich. Eric Sams has suggested that this shift is indicative of the failing of Schumann's brain.[109] However, this is a biased and narrow viewpoint. During his editorship of *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* from 1834 through 1844, Schumann showcased the talents of contemporary, little known composers. His criticisms heralded the works of the then unknown Chopin and later the young Brahms.[110] Leon Plantinga summarized Schumann's use of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* as a vehicle for personal and collective apologetics:

> ... they [the Davidsbündler] also thought of the journal as an organ for a kind of universal brotherhood of genuine artists. Schumann and his group felt a spiritual affinity with certain composers, and to them they granted ... the support of their journal. The extent to which posterity has vindicated their journal is almost uncanny. While the other musical journals in Germany sang the praises of Herz, Thalberg, Berger, Klein, Meyerbeer and Auber, the *NZfM* was talking about Schubert, Chopin, Berlioz, Heller, and later, Brahms.[111]

Analogously, Schumann's choice to showcase the work of lesser-known poets cannot be attributed to the failing of his faculties. Perhaps Schumann felt he had exhausted the work of the major poets in his younger days, and sought inspirational verse from minor poets. Whatever the reason, Schumann cannot be faulted for exhibiting the works of these poets. He had been successful earlier in his life at revealing the works of unknown composers to the music-loving population through the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*; the same principle also applies to his choice to set the poems of lesser-known poets in his late

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[109]Sams, "The Songs" in Walker, 158.

[110]See Robert Schumann, *On Music and Musicians: Essays and Criticisms*, 1st Series, 8th Edition, (London: New Temple Press, 1880), 4, and Robert Schumann, *On Music and Musicians*, ed. Konrad Wolff, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company Inc., 1946), 252-254.

[111]Leon Plantinga, *Schumann as Critic*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), 23.

Lieder (though they did not become famous after Schumann's decision to reveal their work to the public through his Lieder).

The topics of the poems Schumann selected for his Lieder moved, broadly speaking, from love to death over the course of his lifetime (see Table 1 on page 42). The gradual stylistic transformation was related to Schumann's choice of texts, gravitating from lyrics of love increasingly toward the dark subject of death. This gradual change from light to dark topics in his text choices was a reflection of the psychological transformation Schumann underwent towards the end of his life. In his early Lieder, Schumann's concurrent life circumstances caused the subject of love to be first and foremost in his mind. The *Myrthen* cycle was composed with Clara Wieck in mind, and therefore Schumann's Lieder are naturally based on poems concerning the subject of love. Schumann's entire 1840 *Liederjahr* is known for its love songs; the vast majority of the poems he set concerned topics of love, primarily because of his impending nuptials and his blossoming love for Clara during that period. Likewise, many of Schumann's 1849 songs are based on love. As Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau suggested, the songs of *Minnespiel* were likely composed as Schumann thought ahead to his upcoming tenth wedding anniversary.[112]

In his late Lieder, Schumann became fascinated by the topics of suicide and death, as is exemplified by his decision to compose a cycle (Opus 90) to honour the poet Lenau posthumously, in his attraction to the Mary Stuart poems (Opus 135), and in his decision to set Ullrich's account of Ophelia's suicide in Opus 107, No. 1 (*Herzeleid*).

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[112]Fischer-Dieskau, *op. cit.*, 166.

Table 1.
Texts Used By Schumann In Selected Lieder

LIED	Topic of Poem	Poet
Op. 25, No. 7, *Die Lotosblume*	Love	Heine
Op. 25, No. 11, *Lieder der Braut (I)*	Love	Rückert
Op. 25, No. 12, *Lieder der Braut (II)*	Love and longing	Rückert
Op. 39, No. 7, *Auf einer Burg*	Isolation, sadness	Eichendorff
Op. 39, No. 10, *Zwielicht*	Mistrust	Eichendorff
WoO, *Soldatenlied*	March for child	Fallersleben
Op. 79, No. 13, *Der Sandmann*	Sandman, for children	Kletke
Op. 79, No. 27, *Schneeglöckchen*	Snowdrops, love	Rückert
Op. 101, No. 4, *Mein schöner Stern*	Love	Rückert
Op. 101, No. 6, *O Freund, mein Schirm, mein Schutz!*	Love	Rückert
Op. 90, No. 4, *Die Sennin*	Farewell	Lenau
Op. 90, No. 6, *Der schwere Abend*	Farewell	Lenau
Op. 107, No. 1, *Herzeleid*	Death, suicide of Ophelia	Ullrich
Op. 107, No. 3, *Der Gärtner*	Love	Mörike
Op. 107, No. 4, *Spinnerin*	Lost love	Heyse
Op. 119, No. 2, *Warnung*	Mistrust, night	Pfarrius
Op. 119, No. 3, *Der Bräutigam und die Birke*	Wedding, love	Pfarrius
Op. 135, No. 1, *Abschied von Frankreich*	Farewell	Maria Stuart, trans. Vincke
Op. 135, No. 2, *Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes*	Love for son	Maria Stuart, trans. Vincke
Op. 135, No. 3, *An die Königin Elisabeth*	Pleading to sister, death	Maria Stuart, trans. Vincke
Op. 135, No. 4, *Abschied von der Welt*	Farewell, death	Maria Stuart, trans. Vincke
Op. 135, No. 5, *Gebet*	Prayer, farewell, death	Maria Stuart, trans. Vincke

During his depressive phases, Schumann opted to write Lieder based on depressive subject matter because it closely reflected his interests at that time, as well as his state of mind. During his depressive periods, Schumann used two different rationales in the selection of poems. First, Schumann opted to hide or escape from his depressive tendencies earlier in his life. For example, his setting of *Soldatenlied* in 1845 seems a means of escape from the depressive illness that had been haunting him for over a year; there is no hint of depression either in the text or the music of this charming children's song. Second, in his later years, Schumann became less concerned with others' reactions to his morbid interest in the topic of death, as is exemplified by his post-1849 Lieder. In his late songs, Schumann was able to dwell on the subject of death in a creative vein, which helped him come to a better understanding of his life situation and depressive tendencies.[113] His preference for poems with depressive subject matter must not be considered an indication of the loss of his faculties, but as evidence that Schumann was trying to come to terms with his dark obsessions through these poems.[114] By turning to dark poetry such as that mentioned above, Schumann attempted to come to a fuller self-realization through his art.

A second important category to consider in the stylistic shifts in Schumann's Lieder is the consistency in his melodic style. Schumann used an equal amount of

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[113]Another important factor to consider in Schumann's move towards dark subject matter is the cultural interest in death in Germany during the nineteenth century. Many artists were addressing the topic of death in their works, for example, Berlioz in his *Symphonie Fantastique*, Schubert in his *Der Erlkönig*, ETA Hoffmann in his *Der Sandmann*, and Heine in his poems from *Romanero*. Also, one of Schumann's favourite novels as a youth was Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werther*. Therefore, Schumann's move towards this dark subject matter was likely both cultural and psychological in origin, which is further evidence of Schumann's intentional, conscious participation in the *Zeitgeist* and cultural milieu of the Romantic era.

[114]Schumann was not so depressed at this point in time that his creative abilities were completely impaired. For more insight into the different levels and abilities of depressed patients, see Jerold R. Gold, "Levels of Depression," in *Depressive Disorders: Facts, Theories and Treatment Methods*, eds. Wolman and Stricker, (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1990), 203-228.

disjunct and conjunct vocal and piano lines over the course of his life (see Table 2 on page 45). For instance, the cycle *Liederkreis* (Opus 39) is unified by a recurring motivic leap of a perfect fifth (and later, a perfect fourth). *Lieder der Braut* (I) in Opus 25 exhibits a primarily disjunct vocal style, including several leaps of a perfect fourth and perfect fifth in the vocal melody, while *Auf einer Burg* demonstrates the mixed conjunct and disjunct vocal style used by Schumann in several of his early songs (see Examples 1 and 2).

Example 1. Measures 1-5, Opus 25, No. 11, *Lieder der Braut* (I).

Example 2. Measures 1-5, Opus 39, No. 7, *Auf einer Burg*.

Table 2.
Melodies Of Selected Schumann Lieder

LIED	Disjunct or conjunct vocal melody	Range and octave span (rounded) of vocal part
Op. 25, No. 7, *Die Lotosblume*	mainly conjunct	C4 – G5, 1.5
Op. 25, No. 11, *Lieder der Braut (I)*	mainly disjunct	D4 – A5, 1.5
Op. 25, No. 12, *Lieder der Braut (II)*	mainly conjunct	D4 – E5, 1
Op. 39, No. 7, *Auf einer Burg*	mixed	C4 – C5, 1
Op. 39, No. 10, *Zwielicht*	mixed	A#3 – E5, 1.5
WoO, *Soldatenlied*	mixed	C4 – F5, 1.5
Op. 79, No. 13, *Der Sandmann*	mainly disjunct	C4 – F5, 1.5
Op. 79, No. 27, *Schneeglöckchen*	mainly disjunct	D4 – G5, 1.5
Op. 101, No. 4, *Mein schöner Stern*	mainly disjunct	Eb4 – G5, 1
Op. 101, No. 6, *O Freund, mein Schirm, mein Schutz!*	mainly disjunct	D4 – Eb5, 1
Op. 90, No. 4, *Die Sennin*	mainly disjunct	E#4 – F#5, 1
Op. 90, No. 6, *Der schwere Abend*	mixed	Eb4 – Gb5, 1
Op. 107, No. 1, *Herzeleid*	mixed	D#4 – D5, 1
Op. 107, No. 3, *Der Gärtner*	mainly disjunct	D4 – E5, 1
Op. 107, No. 4, *Spinnerin*	mixed	C#4 – E5, 1
Op. 119, No. 2, *Warnung*	mainly disjunct	E#4 – F#5, 1
Op. 119, No. 3, *Der Bräutigam und die Birke*	mainly disjunct	D4 – G5, 1.5
Op. 135, No. 1, *Abschied von Frankreich*	mixed	D#4 – E5, 1
Op. 135, No. 2, *Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes*	mainly conjunct	B3 – B4, 1
Op. 135, No. 3, *An die Königin Elisabeth*	mainly conjunct	C4 – F5, 1.5
Op. 135, No. 4, *Abschied von der Welt*	mainly conjunct	D4 – F5, 1
Op. 135, No. 5, *Gebet*	mixed	D#4 – F5, 1

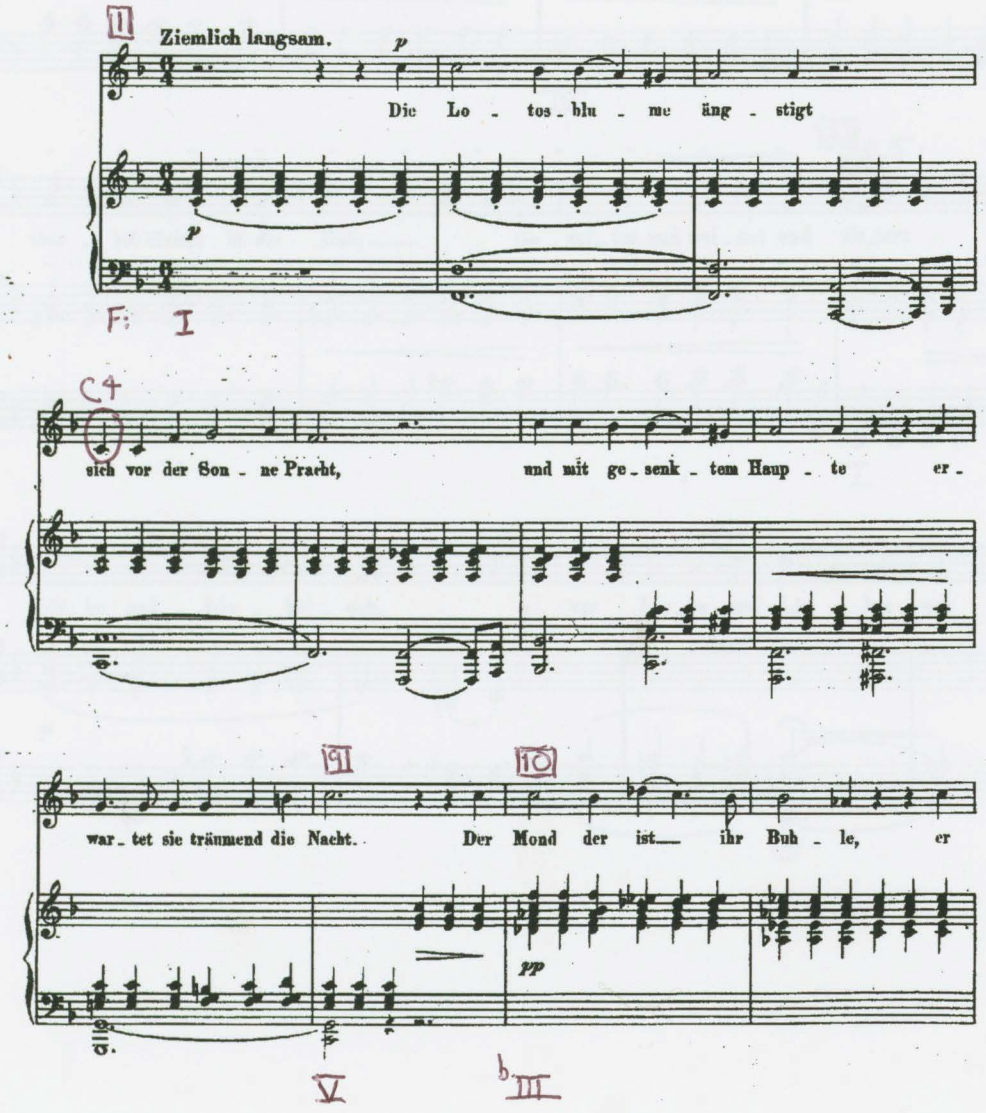
In his late Lieder, Schumann continued to write using both conjunct and disjunct vocal melodies as is demonstrated in Table 2 (see page 45). This is demonstrated by his use of recitative-like, conjunct melody writing in Opus 135, No. 2 *Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes* (see Example 3), and the mixed conjunct and disjunct style used by Schumann in Opus 135, No. 5, *Gebet* (see Example 4).

Example 3. Measures 9-18, Opus 135, No. 2, *Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes.*

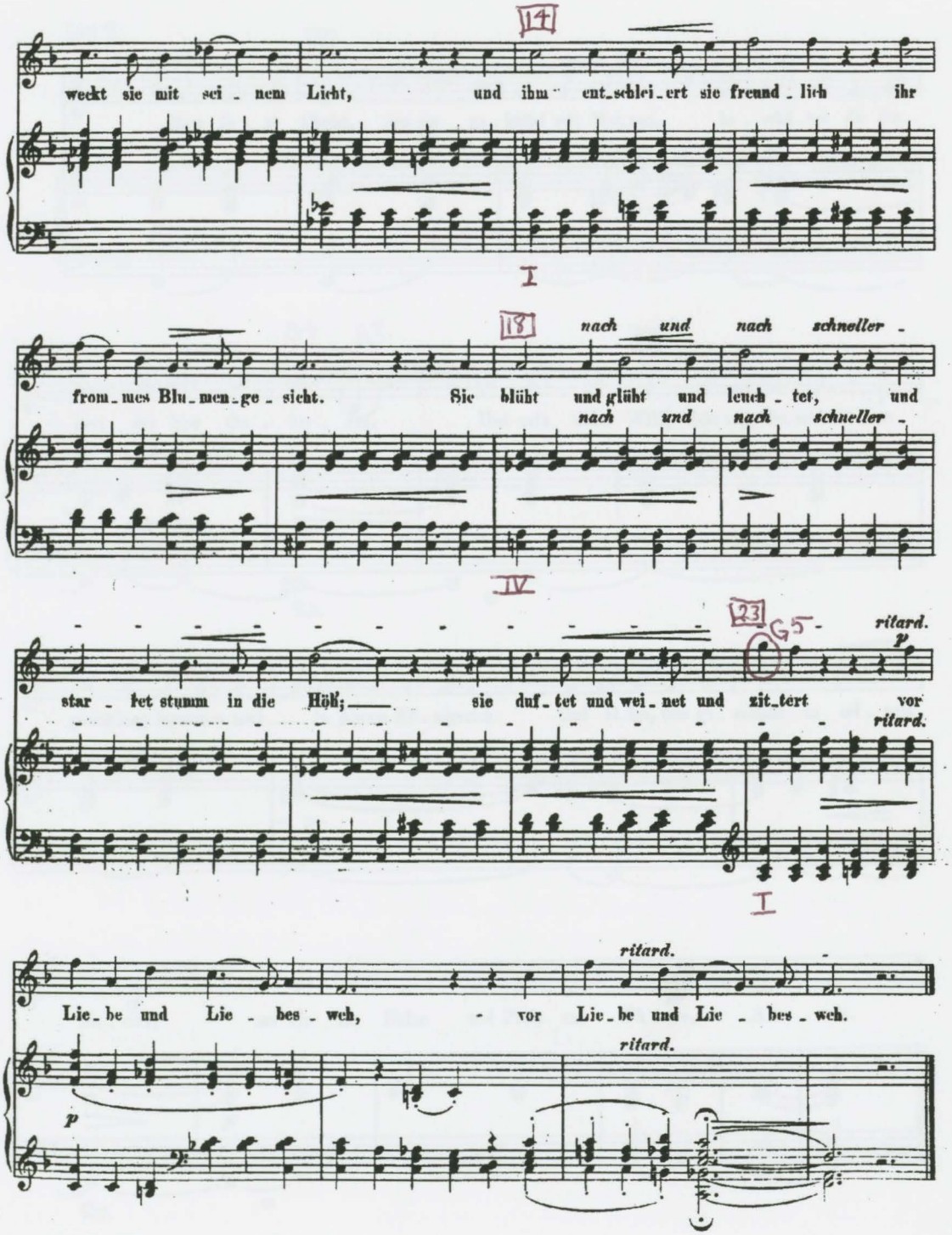
Example 4. Opus 135, No. 5, *Gebet.*

Over the course of his career, the range of the vocal melodies in Schumann's songs decreases (see Table 2 on page 45). While early song cycles such as *Myrthen* and *Liederkreis* and the middle period cycles including Opus 79 and Opus 101 tend to use vocal ranges that span approximately one-and-a-half octaves, the majority of the post-1849 songs have a range that spans only approximately one octave. For an example of the one-and-a-half octave range used by Schumann in his earlier compositional period, refer to Example 5, and for an example of the smaller range (1 octave) used in his later style, refer to Example 6.

Example 5. Opus 25, No. 7, *Die Lotosblume.*



(Example 5 continued, *Die Lotosblume*)



Example 6. Opus 135, No. 2, *Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes.*

In his later songs, it appears that Schumann was able to express his sentiments in a smaller range, having developed an array of expressive techniques over one-and-a-half decades of compositional activity. This use of a smaller range in his songs suggests that Schumann was also endeavoring to make his Lieder more accessible to amateurs. Once again, this indicates his desire to benefit from the marketability of the solo song in between the composition of other larger pieces on which he was working during this period, such as his *Third Symphony* (Opus 97, 1850) and his *Mass* (Opus 147, 1852-3) and *Requiem* (Opus 148, 1852).

There are important changes in Schumann's harmonic and tonal practice across his lifetime that must be considered. In his earliest songs, Schumann tended toward the use of major keys, appropriate to the expression of the affect of those songs (see Table 3 on page 52). As we have seen, most of Schumann's early Lieder focus on topics of love; it is therefore appropriate that they are written in major keys. This trend continued in Opus 79, as twenty-two of the twenty-nine Lieder, or seventy-six percent of the songs in this collection, are written in major tonalities. The choice of major keys for these pieces is appropriate, considering the subject matter as well as the audience and performers for whom they are written. As Schumann matured, his key selection for his songs tended toward minor tonalities. Stephen Walsh has criticized Schumann's late songs because he feels the frequent use of minor keys reveals an obsession towards morbidity.[115] However, these minor keys appropriately reflect the affect of the poems, because Schumann's subjects in his late Lieder often concerned death and suicide. Schumann's

[115]Walsh, *op. cit.*, 98.

Table 3.
Keys And Modulations In Selected Schumann Lieder

LIED	Key of song	Modulations within the song
Op. 25, No. 7, *Die Lotosblume*	F major	F: I – V – bIII – I – IV – I
Op. 25, No. 11, *Lieder der Braut (I)*	G major	Not applicable – brief tonicizations only
Op. 25, No. 12, *Lieder der Braut (II)*	G major	Not applicable – brief tonicizations only
Op. 39, No. 7, *Auf einer Burg*	E minor/A minor (ambiguous)	e: i – VI – iv – i – VI – I // ambiguity with a: v – III – i – v – III – V
Op. 39, No. 10, *Zwielicht*	E minor	e: i – #vi – v – i
WoO, *Soldatenlied*	C major	C: I – V – I
Op. 79, No. 13, *Der Sandmann*	A minor	a: i – III – i
Op. 79, No. 27, *Schneeglöckchen*	E-flat major (ambiguity with C minor)	Not applicable – brief tonicizations only
Op. 101, No. 4, *Mein schöner Stern*	E-flat major	Not applicable – many brief tonicizations, tonally unstable
Op. 101, No. 6, *O Freund, mein Schirm, mein Schutz!*	G minor – ends in G major	Not applicable – brief tonicizations only
Op. 90, No. 4, *Die Sennin*	B major – ends on V of G-sharp minor or I of D-sharp minor	B: I – iii – I – iii – V – (V/vi) // ambiguity with $d^{\#}$: VI – i – VI – i – III – I
Op. 90, No. 6, *Der schwere Abend*	E-flat minor	e^{b}: i – III – i
Op. 107, No. 1, *Herzeleid*	E minor	E: i – VI – iv – i
Op. 107, No. 3, *Der Gärtner*	D major	D: I – V – ii – I – V – I
Op. 107, No. 4, *Spinnerin*	B minor	Not applicable – brief tonicizations only
Op. 119, No. 2, *Warnung*	B minor	Not applicable – brief tonicizations only
Op. 119, No. 3, *Der Bräutigam und die Birke*	G major	Not applicable – brief tonicizations only
Op. 135, No. 1, *Abschied von Frankreich*	E minor	e: i – III – i
Op. 135, No. 2, *Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes*	E minor	Not applicable
Op. 135, No. 3, *An die Königin Elisabeth*	A minor	a: i – III – i – iv – i
Op. 135, No. 4, *Abschied von der Welt*	E minor	e: i – III – i
Op. 135, No. 5, *Gebet*	E minor	e: i – iv – i

key choices are an external reflection of the melancholic state of his mind after 1849; they are not proof of a mental collapse.

The types of modulations in Schumann's Lieder remain constant throughout his compositional career. He tends to modulate to closely related key areas, using common chord and sequential modulation. In his early songs, Schumann more frequently uses modulations to reach chromatic key areas; for example, in Opus 25, No. 7, Schumann reaches the key of bIII and in Opus 39, No. 10, a goal of his modulations is #vi. However, in his later songs, in particular, Opp. 107, 119 and 135, diatonic keys are the goals of Schumann's modulations; most frequently, he modulates to closely-related key areas, especially the relative major key in his tonic minor songs, as is seen in the frequent modulations to III from a tonic minor key in Opus 135 (see Table 3 on page 52).

It is also important to note that in Schumann's late songs there are fewer modulations than in his earlier songs. An example of the frequent modulations employed by Schumann in his earlier songs can be seen in *Die Lotosblume* (see key analysis in Example 5 above), which modulates from F major to C major (V) in measure 9, then to A-flat major (bIII) in measure 10, back to the tonic in measure 14, followed by a brief excursion to B-flat major (IV) in measure 18, and a return to the tonic at measure 23. In contrast, Opus 135, No. 4 (*Abschied von der Welt*) modulates less frequently (see Example 7). In *Abschied von der Welt*, E minor is firmly established in the earliest bars of the song. In measures 19-21, the first true modulation to G major (III) occurs; it is achieved by a reinterpretation of the initial A minor harmony (a typical common chord modulation). After only a few measures (in measures 24-26), the A minor harmony is

Example 7. Opus 135, No. 4, *Abschied von der Welt.*

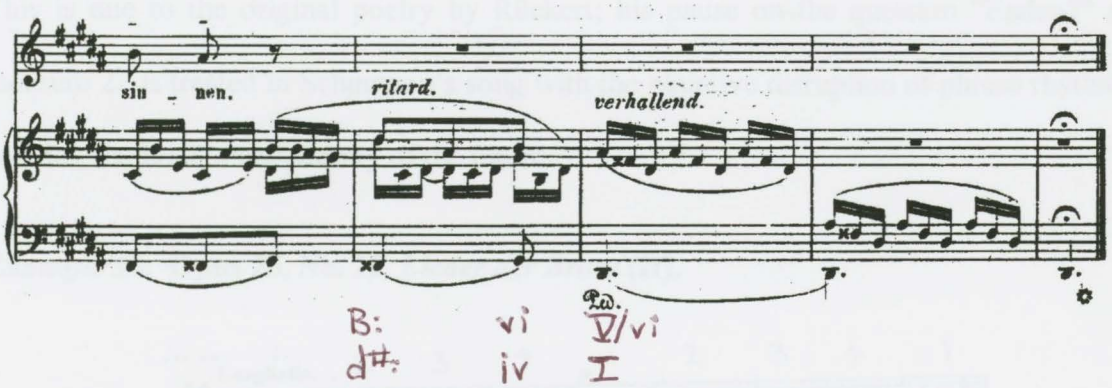
(Example 7 continued, *Abschied von der Welt*)

again reinterpreted to lead back to E minor. Despite the comparable lengths of Opus 25, No. 7 and Opus 135, No. 4, there are significantly fewer modulations present in the latter. Most of Schumann's late songs similarly illustrate his use of less frequent modulation (see Table 3 on page 52), likely due to the single affect (that of resignation), in particular, in the texts of Opus 135, *Gedichte der Königin Maria Stuart.*

In his later songs, Schumann intentionally uses less tonal ambiguity than in his earlier ones. For example, musicologists have long argued about the tonality of his early song, Opus 39, No. 7 (*Auf einer Burg*), namely, whether it is A minor or E minor. Karen Hindenlang presented the most logical explanation for the tonality of this piece when she revealed that the modal influence of E-Aeolian is of primary importance in this song. The ambiguity of key occurs as a result of Schumann's avoidance of the tonic throughout most of the song, except the brief A minor passage in measures 17-21. The key is only truly clarified in the next song when the final E major chord of *Auf einer Burg* acts as the dominant to the A minor tonal centre of *In der Fremde* (II).[116] A later song that demonstrates a rare excursion into the realm of tonal ambiguity is *Die Sennin* from Opus 90, composed in 1850. The ambiguity between the keys of B and D-sharp is striking, and the tonic key is especially vague in the final five bars (see Example 8), although the D-sharp ambiguity was introduced in measures 5 to 6, where a cadence from A-sharp (V) to D-sharp (I) is quite prominent (see Example 9). The rarity of tonal ambiguity in Schumann's late songs, however, is demonstrated by an absence of this type of vagueness in Opp. 107, 119 and 135.

[116]Karen A. Hindenlang, "Eichendorff's *Auf einer Burg* and Schumann's *Liederkreis*, Opus 39," *Journal of Musicology* 8, no. 4 (Fall 1990), 582.

Example 8. Measures 41-45, Opus 90, No. 4, *Die Sennin.*



Example 9. Measures 4-7, Opus 90, No. 4, *Die Sennin.*

The phrase rhythms in Schumann's songs remain consistently regular across his compositional career (see Table 4 on page 59). Schumann preferred to use regular hypermeter[117] in his songs in all of his compositional periods. Example 10 demonstrates Schumann's use of mainly regular, 4-measure hypermeter in the early song *Lieder der Braut* (II). There is only one irregularity in the song, at measure 22, where a cadential six-four chord, a harmony usually associated with a strong beat, occurs at a weak point

[117]According to William Rothstein, hypermeter is "meter at levels above the notated measures. That is, the sense that measures or groups of measures organize into hypermeasures, analogous to the way beats organize into measures... Rothstein defines hypermeter as the combination of measures according to a metrical scheme, including both the recurrence of equal-sized measure groups and a definite pattern of alternation between strong and weak measures." Jay Tomlin, "Rhythm and Meter in Tonal Music: A Bibliography and Glossary of Terms," Indiana University, 5 May 2000, <http://www.music.indiana.edu/som/courses/rhythm/illustrations/hypermeter.html> (February 12, 2002). For further information, see William Rothstein, *Phrase Rhythm in Tonal Music*, (New York: Schirmer Books, 1989).

within a hypermeasure, leading to a momentary ambiguity of hypermetric functions. This is due to the original poetry by Rückert; his pause on the question "Enden?" at measure 22 is treated in Schumann's song with the plaintive disruption of phrase rhythm, echoing the bride's uncertainty of the future.

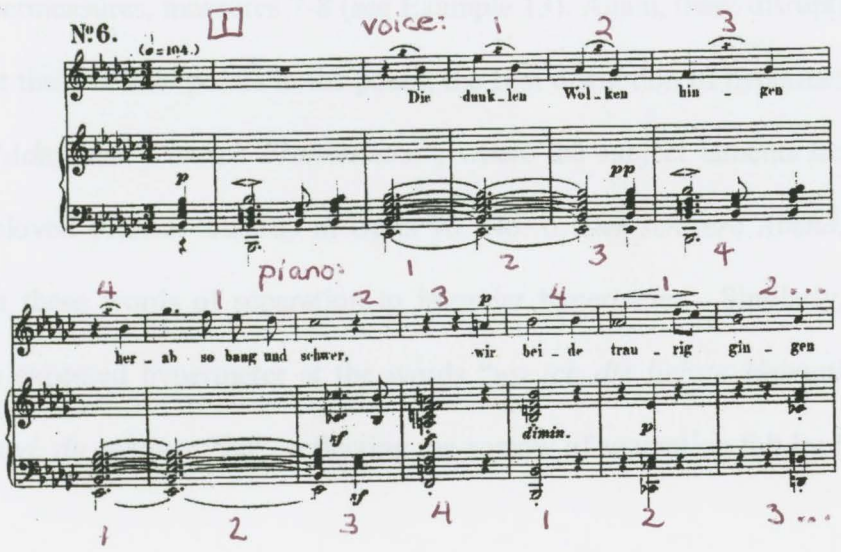
Example 10. Opus 25, No. 12, *Lieder der Braut* (II).

Table 4.
Hypermeter In Selected Schumann Lieder

LIED	Hypermeter
Op. 25, No. 7, *Die Lotosblume*	Regular, 2 and 4mm
Op. 25, No. 11, *Lieder der Braut (I)*	Regular, 2 and 4mm
Op. 25, No. 12, *Lieder der Braut (II)*	Mostly regular, 2 and 4mm (excepting second inversion chord disturbance at m. 22 "enden")
Op. 39, No. 7, *Auf einer Burg*	Mostly regular, 4mm (excepting adjacent downbeats at mm. 17-18)
Op. 39, No. 10, *Zwielicht*	Mostly regular, 2mm (excepting 7 bar introduction, and "extra" bar at m. 32)
WoO, *Soldatenlied*	Regular, 2 and 4mm (with the exception of m. 9 "extra" bar)
Op. 79, No. 13, *Der Sandmann*	Regular, 2mm; irregular on 4mm level
Op. 79, No. 27, *Schneeglöckchen*	Regular, 2 and 4mm
Op. 101, No. 4, *Mein schöner Stern*	Regular, 2 and 4mm (except "extra" bars at 18-19)
Op. 101, No. 6, *O Freund*	Regular, 2 and 4mm (except "extra" bars at mm. 10-11, 24-25, 38-39)
Op. 90, No. 4, *Die Sennin*	Regular, 2 and 4mm (except "extra" bars at mm. 11-12)
Op. 90, No. 6, *Der schwere Abend*	Regular background, but sounds irregular
Op. 107, No. 1, *Herzeleid*	Mostly regular (2 mm) with adjacent downbeats at mm 13-14 and 24-25.
Op. 107, No. 3, *Der Gärtner*	Regular, 2mm
Op. 107, No. 4, *Spinnerin*	Regular, 2mm
Op. 119, No. 2, *Warnung*	Regular, 2mm (excepting mm 9-10, 18-19 and 25-26.)
Op. 119, No. 3, *Der Bräutigam und die Birke*	Mainly regular, 2mm
Op. 135, No. 1, *Abschied von Frankreich*	Regular background, but sounds irregular
Op. 135, No. 2, *Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes*	Mainly regular, 2mm with occasional adjacent downbeats
Op. 135, No. 3, *An die Königin Elisabeth*	Regular except for adjacent downbeats at mm 9-10 and 18-19.
Op. 135, No. 4, *Abschied von der Welt*	Mainly regular, 1-2mm
Op. 135, No. 5, *Gebet*	Mainly regular, 3mm, then 2 mm

In later songs, such ambiguity sometimes becomes pervasive in individual songs, always due to the text Schumann was setting. A striking example of misaligned hyper-downbeats can be seen in Opus 90, No. 6, where the piano and the voice fail to line up in hypermetric structure. The first piano hyper-downbeat (resolution to a tonic harmony) occurs in measure 2, but the first vocal hyper-downbeat also created by the resolution to a tonic, does not occur until measure 3. Four-measure hypermeter results without clear two-measure hypermeter because of the misalignment of the voice and the piano parts (see Example 11). The irregular hypermeter is used in the song because of the melancholic text in this song; a couple's separation is the subject of Lenau's poem, and several pastoral images ("*Die dunklen Wolken*", "*So heiss und stumm, so trübe und sternlos war die Nacht*") act as metaphors for the sadness of the lovers. Example 12 shows a hypothetical aligned version in which the four bar hypermeter is perfectly regular; however, the lack of irregular hypermeter fails to reflect the sadness and torment of the lovers, and therefore, Schumann consciously used irregular hypermeter in this song to express clearly the depressive topic of the poem.

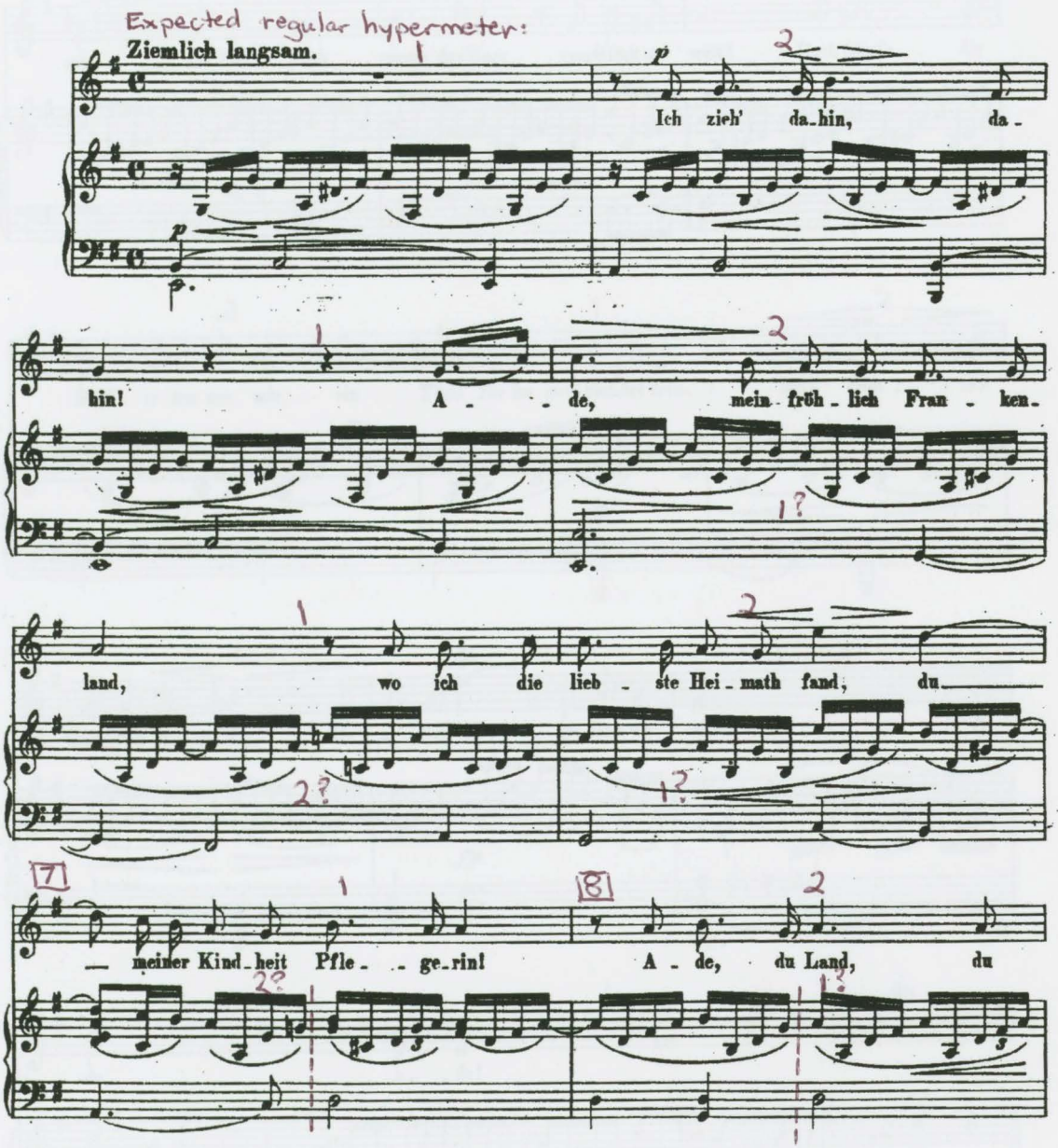
Example 11. Measures 1-12, Opus 90, No. 6, *Der schwere Abend.*



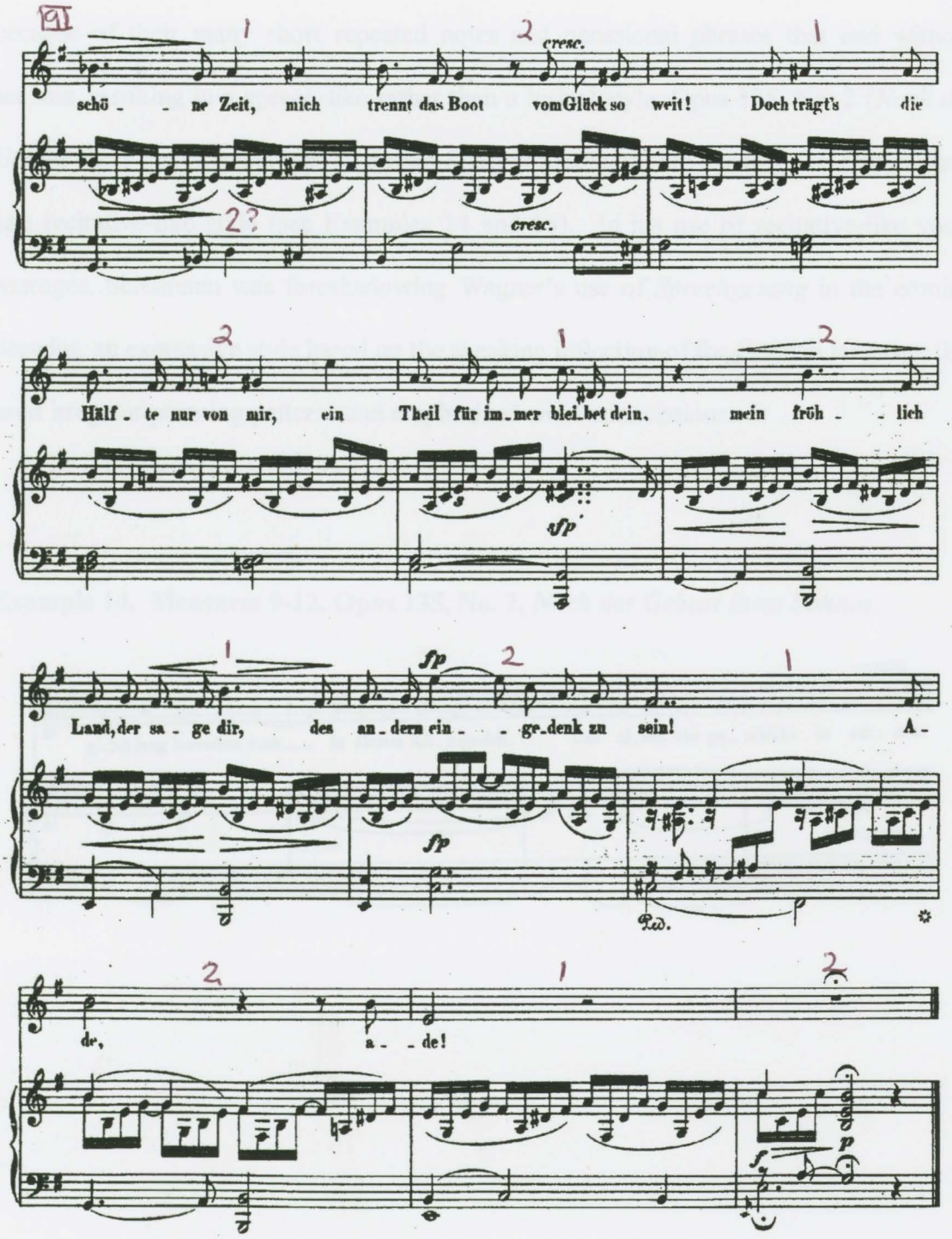
Example 12. Hypothetical aligned version of Opus 90, No. 6.

Opus 135, No. 1 also features ambiguity that is noteworthy. At some points, there is a clear two-bar hypermeter; for instance, the similarity between measures 1 and 3 allows the pairing of bars 1-2 and 3-4 to sound appropriate. The two-measure groups, however, are not consistent. For example, because of the vocal anacrusis, measure 4 sounds like a strong downbeat, thus disrupting the hypermetric regularity. The arrival of the dominant harmony (of III) and the retention of that harmony in measure 8 also create confusion; the resulting accent in the middle of measure 7 causes a conflict with the expected hyperbeats at the beginnings of measures 7 and 8. Furthermore, measures 8-9 group together on the basis of their similarity, resulting in a conflict with the expected two-bar hypermeasures, measures 7-8 (see Example 13). Again, these disruptions are due to the text at these crucial points in the poem; the first disruption of hypermeter occurs at the works "*Ade, mein fröhlich Frankenland*", where the subject laments her separation from her beloved France. Just as in Opus 90, No. 6, *Der schwere Abend*, Schumann elects to set these words of separation to irregular hypermeter. Similarly, Schumann disrupts the expected hypermeter at the words "*wo ich die liebste Heimath fand*" and "*Ade, du Land, du schöner Zeit*", reflecting the sorrow of separation felt by Mary Queen of Scots.

Example 13. Opus 135, No. 1, *Abschied von Frankreich.*



(Example 13 continued, *Abschied von Frankreich*)



In his later songs, Schumann intentionally opted to use recitative-like patterns to expand expressive possibilities. These recitative-like melodies are referred to as such because of their many short repeated notes and occasional phrases that end without accents, resulting in a speech-like rather than a lyrical style. Opus 135, No. 2 (*Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes*) and No. 3 (*An die Königin Elisabeth*) are examples of Schumann's late recitative-like style (see Examples 14 and 15). In his use of recitative-like vocal passages, Schumann was foreshadowing Wagner's use of *Sprechgesang* in the coming decades, an expressive style based on the speaking inflection of the German language that used irregular phrasing patterns and emphasized word enunciations.

Example 14. Measures 9-12, Opus 135, No. 2, *Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes.*

Example 15. Measures 3-8, Opus 135, No. 3, *An die Königin Elisabeth*.

One of Schumann's constant stylistic characteristics is misalignment of various kinds (see Table 5 on page 66). Misalignment, a type of metrical dissonance, usually occurs when the piano and the voice establish groups of the same duration, but state them in non-aligned fashion.[118] Schumann uses misalignment in both the early songs (see Example 16 and 17), and in the late songs (see Examples 18, 19 and 20). Schumann's use of misalignment was intentional and stylistic; the appearance of misalignment in the early songs often symbolized strife or disagreement, such as "*Krieg im tück'schen*

[118]Metrical dissonance is "according to Krebs (1987), a situation in which the pulses in two metrical levels are not well aligned, either because the duration of the pulses in one level is not an integral multiple or division of the duration of the pulses in the other level, or because the pulses in one level are displaced by some constant interval from those in the other level," from Jay Tomlin, "Rhythm and Meter in Tonal Music: A Bibliography and Glossary of Terms," Indiana University, 5 May 2000, <http://www.music.indiana.edu/som/courses/rhythm/illustrations/metrical_dissonance.html> (February 9, 2002). For further information, see Harald Krebs, "Some Extensions of the Concepts of Metrical Consonance and Dissonance," *Journal of Music Theory* 31, 99-120.

Table 5.
Misalignment In Selected Schumann Lieder

LIED	Misalignment
Op. 25, No. 7, *Die Lotosblume*	No
Op. 25, No. 11, *Lieder der Braut (I)*	No
Op. 25, No. 12, *Lieder der Braut (II)*	No
Op. 39, No. 7, *Auf einer Burg*	Yes (mm. 9-18)
Op. 39, No. 10, *Zwielicht*	Yes (mm. 2, 6, 9, 27-32)
WoO, *Soldatenlied*	No
Op. 79, No. 13, *Der Sandmann*	No
Op. 79, No. 27, *Schneeglöckchen*	No
Op. 101, No. 4, *Mein schöner Stern*	Yes (pervasive)
Op. 101, No. 6, *O Freund, mein Schirm, mein Schutz!*	Yes (pervasive)
Op. 90, No. 4, *Die Sennin*	No
Op. 90, No. 6, *Der schwere Abend*	Yes (pervasive)
Op. 107, No. 1, *Herzeleid*	Yes (mm. 15-16)
Op. 107, No. 3, *Der Gärtner*	Yes (mm. 1-4)
Op. 107, No. 4, *Spinnerin*	No
Op. 119, No. 2, *Warnung*	No
Op. 119, No. 3, *Der Bräutigam und die Birke*	No
Op. 135, No. 1, *Abschied von Frankreich*	No
Op. 135, No. 2, *Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes*	Yes (mm 5, 7-9, 11-12)
Op. 135, No. 3, *An die Königin Elisabeth*	Yes (mm. 1-17)
Op. 135, No. 4, *Abschied von der Welt*	No
Op. 135, No. 5, *Gebet*	No

Frieden" ("in treacherous peace plotting war") in Example 16, and similarly the words "*Eingewachsen Bart und Haare und versteinert Brust und Krause, sitzt er viele hundert Jahre oben in der stillen Klause*" ("Beard and hair matted together, breast and ruff turned to stone, there he has sat for hundreds of years in his quiet cell") reflect a sense of despair and sadness that Schumann set to misalignment in his song.

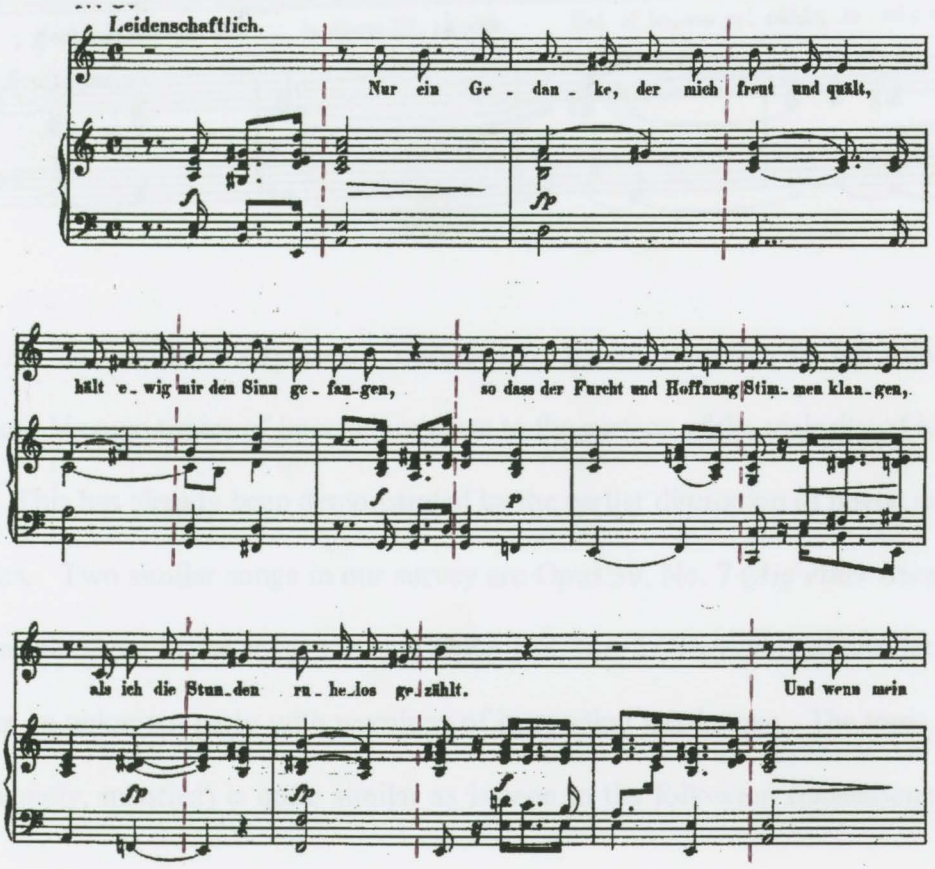
Example 16. Measures 28-36, Opus 39, No. 10, *Zwielicht.*

Example 17. Measures 6-24, Opus 39, No. 7, *Auf einer Burg*.

Examples 18-20 illustrate misalignment in the late songs. Example 18 shows pervasive misalignment by a small amount of time (one eighth-note), which reflects the strife faced by the subject of the poem (despite the subject's friend who acts as a support). In Examples 19 and 20 (measures 7-9) the entire texture is misaligned against the notated bars by a larger amount, namely, a half-bar, again reflecting the resignation in the texts of Opus 135.

Example 18. Measures 42-53, Opus 101, No. 6, *O Freund, mein Schirm, mein Schutz!*.

Example 19. Measures 1-8, Opus 135, No. 3, *An die Königin Elisabeth.*



Example 20. Measures 1-12, Opus 135, No. 2, *Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes.*

As he matured, Schumann continued to be introspective in his selection of poems, and his own topics of interest are close to the surface of the majority of his poetic choices. This has already been demonstrated by the earlier discussion of poetic selections and topics. Two similar songs in our survey are Opus 39, No. 7 (*Auf einer Burg*) where there is no dialogue in the song text, and Opus 119, No. 2 (*Warnung*) where the narrator addresses an unknown party with warnings of impending misfortune. The topic of these songs (namely, mistrust) is quite similar as is seen in the following translations by Eric Sams:

***Zwielicht* (Twilight), Opus 39, No. 10, Eichendorff**[119]

> *Twilight is about to spread its wings, the trees stir and shiver, clouds drift by like oppressive dreams; what does all this dark mystery mean?*
>
> *If you have a pet deer let it not graze alone; hunters are about in the woods sounding their horns, voices echo here and there.*
>
> *If you have a friend in this world, trust him not at this hour; his eyes and lips may be smiling but in treacherous peace he is plotting war.*
>
> *Whatever now goes tired to rest will rise again tomorrow; but many things can be lost in the night for ever, so keep awake, be on your guard.*

***Warnung* (Warning), Opus 119, No. 2, Pfarrius**[120]

> *The day is declining that offered light and freedom; be silent, little bird, you are singing yourself into death.*
>
> *The night winds stir, the leaves tremble in fear; your song betrays you to your enemies that listen therein.*
>
> *The burning eyes of the screech-owl glower their menace through the branches; be silent, little bird, you are singing yourself into death.*

A comparison of the dissonance, hypermeters, misalignments in the piano and voice, and unifying features reveals that Schumann treated both poems in a similar manner and entered equally into the affect of these poems. The presence of dissonance and local chromaticisms are also comparable; Schumann consistently uses minor second and major seventh pitch dissonances, for example, in *Zwielicht* in measures 11, 15, 27, 29 and 31 (see Example 16 above), and in *Warnung* in measures 3, 4, 6 and 21-24 (see Example 21).

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[119] Sams, *The Songs of Robert Schumann*, 103.

[120] *Ibid.*, 270.

Example 21. Measures 19-29, Opus 119, No. 2, *Warnung*.

A minor key tonality is used for both songs (E minor for *Zwielicht* and B minor for *Warnung*), two measure hypermeters permeate both songs, and metrical dissonance in the form of misalignment (syncopation on the eighth-note level) appears in both. The use of a dotted eighth- and sixteenth-note pattern at the end of *Zwielicht* is comparable to the augmented version of the same rhythmic patterns at the end of *Warnung* (measure 27). Further, the similarity between the fall of a diminished seventh on "*hüte*" in *Zwielicht* (see Example 22), and the descent of a jarring tritone on "*du singst*" in *Warnung* is striking (see Example 21 above). The dissonances on "*hüte dich*" ("be on your guard") and "*du singst dich in den Tod*" ("you are singing yourself into death") are particularly appropriate because of the warnings by the narrator in both of the texts, the first, to be on guard, and the second, to the bird to avoid singing itself to death.

Example 22. Measures 37-41, Opus 39, No. 10, *Zwielicht.*

Both songs fall to a note almost one octave lower than the notes in the previous two to three bars before the end of the song (see measures 26-27 in Example 21 above, and measures 39-40 in Example 22 above), and in both songs, despite their different keys, the voice ends on the note B. It is significant that Schumann treats these texts similarly despite an eleven-and-a-half year gap in the dates of their composition; such similarities provide evidence that Schumann's brain and creative faculties were as healthy in 1851 as they were in 1840.

Whether the affects used in the songs are appropriate or not remains a subjective issue (see Table 6 on page 74). In all of the songs surveyed, the affects in the music, including the mode selected by Schumann, the style of melody and the use of dissonant harmonies, the use or lack of irregular hypermeter and the use or lack of misalignment in the song, reflect the sentiments in the poem. In the setting of these poems, Schumann demonstrates that he had a firm grasp of the historical context of these songs. He foreshadows the fall of Mary Stuart in the first two songs, and then demonstrates her emotional state in the final three songs as she becomes resigned to her fate. This reveals that Schumann was aware of Mary Stuart's biography, and the choice of E minor as a unifying key for the cycle is determined by the tragic situation rather than being indicative of a collapse of his creativity owing to mental illness.

Table 6.
Affect In Selected Schumann Lieder

LIED	Affect appropriate?
Op. 25, No. 7, *Die Lotosblume*	Tender – yes
Op. 25, No. 11, *Lieder der Braut (I)*	Pleading – yes
Op. 25, No. 12, *Lieder der Braut (II)*	Plaintive – yes
Op. 39, No. 7, *Auf einer Burg*	Brooding – yes
Op. 39, No. 10, *Zwielicht*	Dark – yes
WoO, *Soldatenlied*	March – yes
Op. 79, No. 13, *Der Sandmann*	Childlike – yes
Op. 79, No. 27, *Schneeglöckchen*	Delicate – yes
Op. 101, No. 4, *Mein schöner Stern*	Dark – yes
Op. 101, No. 6, *O Freund, mein Schirm, mein Schutz!*	Dark – yes
Op. 90, No. 4, *Die Sennin*	Sad – yes
Op. 90, No. 6, *Der schwere Abend*	Dark – yes
Op. 107, No. 1, *Herzeleid*	Suicide – yes
Op. 107, No. 3, *Der Gärtner*	Joy – yes
Op. 107, No. 4, *Spinnerin*	Sadness – yes
Op. 119, No. 2, *Warnung*	Mistrust – yes
Op. 119, No. 3, *Der Bräutigam und die Birke*	Cheery – yes
Op. 135, No. 1, *Abschied von Frankreich*	Farewell – yes
Op. 135, No. 2, *Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes*	Prayer in difficult situation - yes
Op. 135, No. 3, *An die Königin Elisabeth*	Pleading – yes
Op. 135, No. 4, *Abschied von der Welt*	Resigned – yes
Op. 135, No. 5, *Gebet*	Resigned – yes

Regardless of the date of composition, all of Schumann's song cycles and song groups are unified in their use of keys and make harmonic sense, if not within the song itself, such as *Auf einer Burg*, then in the larger relationship to other songs (see Table 7 on page 76). All of Schumann's song cycles and groups of songs are unified with at least one similar element, such as the topic of love in *Myrthen*, a consistent poet as in *Sechs Gedichte von Lenau*, the key as in the Opus 135 songs, or a recurring intervallic motive as in *Liederkreis* (Opus 39). The fact that his late songs exhibit such unity is evidence that Schumann was coherent in his compositional abilities (specifically, skilled in manipulating tonal relationships) even as late as December 1852. Much has been written in the past about the unifying features of Schumann's songs and song cycles through Opus 119.[121] Therefore, I will devote the next section to a consideration of the unifying features of the songs in Opus 135 only (refer to Table 7 on page 76). The first song (*Abschied von Frankreich*) sets the tonal centre of E minor for the cycle as a whole. Both songs 1 and 2 briefly allude to the key of A minor (measures 6-7 and 12-13 in *Abschied von Frankreich*, and measures 5-6 and 11-12 in *Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes*), and this key becomes the tonal centre of the third song, *An die Königin Elisabeth*. At the opening of the two final songs, which are both written in the key of E minor, Schumann takes pains to resolve the A minor harmony into E minor (at measures 1-3 in *Abschied von der Welt*, and measures 1 and 4-5 in *Gebet*). It is obvious that the tonal structure of this cycle, albeit simple, was carefully planned. All Lieder in Opus 135 are in common time

[121]For instance, see Hallmark's analysis of *Myrthen* on pages 82-90 (*op. cit.*), Turchin's analysis of *Liederkreis* on pages 233-242 (*op. cit.*), Finson's analysis of *Liederalbum für die Jugend* on pages 228-250 (*op. cit.*), Fischer-Dieskau's evaluation of *Minnespiel* in his book on pages 152-154 and 166-167 and *Sechs Gedichte von Lenau* on pages 181-184 (*op. cit.*), and Hallmark's evaluation of *Sechs Gesänge* on pages 108-109 and of *Drei Gedichte* on page 104 of his book (*op. cit.*).

Table 7.
Unification Of Selected Schumann Lieder

LIED	Song unified?	Cycle unified?
Op. 25, No. 7, *Die Lotosblume*	Rhythm, phrasing	Topic (Love); Key (A-flat to A-flat) over course of cycle
Op. 25, No. 11, *Lieder der Braut (I)*	Piano introduction, rhythm	
Op. 25, No. 12, *Lieder der Braut (II)*	Piano introduction, rhythm	
Op. 39, No. 7, *Auf einer Burg*	Rhythm	Key (F-sharp minor to tonic major) over cycle; Poet; Recurring Motive (P5 and P4 leaps)
Op. 39, No. 10, *Zwielicht*	Contrapuntal imitation	
WoO, *Soldatenlied*	Rhythm	Not applicable
Op. 79, No. 13, *Der Sandmann*	Strophic, piano material	Topic (collection of children's Songs)
Op. 79, No. 27, *Schneeglöckchen*	Strophic, piano material	
Op. 101, No. 4, *Mein schöner Stern*	Piano material, recurring motive (P5 leap)	Key (G major) over course of songs; Poet
Op. 101, No. 6, *O Freund, mein Schirm, mein Schutz!*	Piano material, syncopations	
Op. 90, No. 4, *Die Sennin*	Piano material, rhythm	Poet; Key (E-flat major) from first song to Requiem
Op. 90, No. 6, *Der schwere Abend*	Piano material, rhythm	
Op. 107, No. 1, *Herzeleid*	Piano material	Topic (Lost Love)
Op. 107, No. 3, *Der Gärtner*	Rhythm	
Op. 107, No. 4, *Spinnerin*	Piano material	
Op. 119, No. 2, *Warnung*	Piano material	Poet; Key (G major) over course of songs
Op. 119, No. 3, *Der Bräutigam und die Birke*	Rhythm	
Op. 135, No. 1, *Abschied von Frankreich*	Melody (recurring motives)	Recurring motive (descending lines of a 5^{th} and leaps of a 5^{th}); Poet; Key (E minor); Topic (death); Common time meter in all songs
Op. 135, No. 2, *Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes*	Melody (recurring descending lines)	
Op. 135, No. 3, *An die Königin Elisabeth*	Rhythm, melody (recurring descending lines)	
Op. 135, No. 4, *Abschied von der Welt*	Melody (recurring descending lines)	
Op. 135, No. 5, *Gebet*	Melody (recurring P5 motives)	

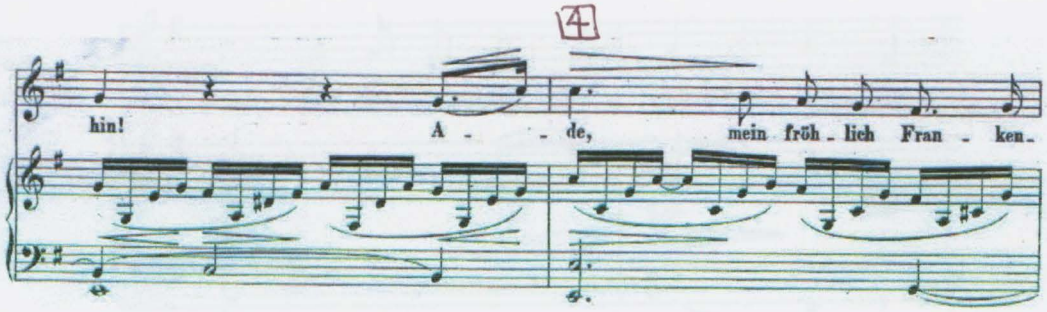
and use irregular phrasing. Schumann uses descending fourth and fifth motives in the Opus 135 cycle. In the second song (*Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes*), the leap of a fifth in the melody appears as a unifying compositional device, in particular in measures 2 and 8 (see Example 6 above).[122] Song No. 3 (*An die Königin Elisabeth*) incorporates a recitative-like accompaniment and declamatory style that echoes that of *Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes*. Schumann maintains a dotted eighth-note, sixteenth-note figuration throughout, an accompaniment pattern that occurs frequently in all of his stylistic periods, indicating once again that he did not abandon his compositional faculties in the face of depressive illness. While Schumann uses unifying descending piano motives in the fourth song (*Abschied von der Welt*), semitonal relations continue to dominate the song in the melody as is seen in the frequent semitonal steps from C to B, F-sharp to G and E to D-sharp (see Example 7 above). These predominantly descending chromatic dyads are comparable to those found in the final song of the cycle, *Gebet*, for example at the very beginning (C-B), and in the descent of the piano from G through E-natural in measures 8-9 (see Example 23).

Example 23. Measures 8-9, Opus 135, No. 5, *Gebet*.

[122]Fischer-Dieskau, *op. cit.*, 199.

Additionally, Schumann uses a declamatory vocal style and chordal accompaniment, which echoes that of earlier songs in the cycle such as *An die Königin Elisabeth.* In No. 5 (*Gebet*), Mary Stuart's resignation is complete.[123] The closing cadential pattern mimics that of No. 3.[124] As mentioned above, a significant melodic unifying feature in Opus 135 is the recurrence of descending leaps in the voice part, and descending lines often filling in a fifth. Such descending gestures are prominent in measures 4, 6, and 7 in *Abschied von Frankreich* (see Example 24), in measures 1-3, 7-8, 9-10 and 14-16 in *Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes* (see Example 25), in measures 1-2, 5, 6-7, 8-9, 13-14, 16, 17-18, 24-26, and 27-28 in *An die Königin Elisabeth* (see Example 26), measures 1-2, 4-5, 8-9, 13, 15, 23, 24-25, 28-29, 30-31 and 32-33 in *Abschied von der Welt* (see Example 27), and in measures 2-3, 4-5, 7-8, 14, 15-17, and 18-21 in *Gebet* (see Example 28).

Example 24. Measures 3-4, Opus 135, No. 1, *Abschied von Frankreich.*



[123]Fischer-Dieskau, *op. cit.*, 199.

[124]Doutt, *op. cit.*, 17.

Example 25. Measures 1-3, Opus 135, No. 2, *Nach der Geburt ihres Sohnes.*

Example 26. Measures 1-2, Opus 135, No. 3, *An die Königin Elisabeth.*

Example 27. Measures 4-5, Opus 135, No. 4, *Abschied von der Welt.*

Example 28. Measures 1-3, Opus 135, No. 5, *Gebet.*

In conclusion, we have discovered through this methodical analysis of selected Lieder that Schumann's style did change to a certain extent as he matured. However, this study has provided evidence that, through the consideration of song features including poet and subject choice, melody, harmony, rhythm, and unifying features in the songs, although Schumann's style did change, there is no decline in Schumann's late songs.

CONCLUSION

As we have seen, there are many fallacies circulating about the nature of Schumann's illnesses, most of which are not based on medical evidence. This study has shown, from a psychiatric point of view, that Schumann suffered from neither syphilis, nor schizophrenia, nor any other debilitating disease of the brain. A conclusion about Schumann's actual disease, Bipolar Affective Disorder Type II with hypomania, is based on diaries and correspondence, accounts of Schumann's visitors, as well as the existing medical reports and information. In Chapter 1, thorough consideration of the medical evidence available eliminates the false notions surrounding Schumann's death, instead suggesting that Schumann suffered from depressive illness throughout his lifetime, and that, in the end, anorexia melancholia took his life.

A discussion of the historiographical approach to Schumann's last compositions in Chapter 2 shows the sources of the belief that Schumann's last works represented a decline of his compositional abilities. A consideration of the history of the stigmatization of the mentally ill also gives evidence that Schumann's last works were unjustly criticized due to his depressive illness. This stigmatization has impacted the reception of Schumann's late works for nearly two centuries, although in the past few decades, some scholars have recognized musical value in Schumann's late works.

A systematic analysis of Schumann's songs demonstrates the stylistic shifts and stylistic similarities visible in his compositional techniques in Chapter 3. Songs from Schumann's *Liederjahr* (1840), 1845 (during a depressive phase in his life), 1849 (the "Fruitful Year"), and his last compositional years, 1850-1852, were considered. No evidence of mental illness or deterioration of style was noted in the texts, topics or poets

selected by Schumann. The melodic irregularities and ranges, the harmonies and keys, the presence of chromaticism and phrasing irregularities in the songs, the use of misalignment, the affective nature of the songs and finally, the unification of both individual songs and song groups across his compositional career also show no evidence of a decline in Schumann's compositional abilities. Two important features of Schumann's late songs have been noted in the analyses above. One is a change in style that took place in Schumann's late songs, especially in the tendency toward recitative-like melodies in Opus 135, a shift in choice of subjects and poets, and a polarization towards minor keys in his late Lieder. The second is an undeniable continuity of style that unifies Schumann's early and late song writing periods; Schumann's use of mixed conjunct and disjunct styles throughout his various periods is notable, as well as his use of mainly regular hypermeter, the unification of the cycles themselves, the use of misalignment which remained consistent in his Lieder, and the unfailingly appropriate affect of the songs in relation to the poetry. The shift in style was merely that – a shift in style, indicative of a shift in compositional style, and not a decline in ability or mental health. The continuity in Schumann's writing provides evidence that Schumann did not deteriorate as a composer and in fact remained the same creative personality that he had been earlier in his life, despite his affliction with bipolar disorder.

Schumann's late songs have been unjustly excluded from the repertoire for too long. It is now time to break the silence surrounding his late compositions, and to reveal the older, mature Schumann to the musical world.

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VITA

Surname: Moore Given Names: Lindsay Ann

Place of Birth: Brantford, Ontario, Canada

Educational Institutions Attended:

University of Victoria	2000-2002
McMaster University	1996-2000

Degrees Awarded:

B.Mus. (Honours)	McMaster University	2000

Honours and Awards:

University of Victoria Fellowship	2000 to 2002
Dean's Honour List, McMaster University	1996 to 2000
Dr. Harry Lyman Hooker In-Course Scholarship	1997 to 1999
Leona Allerston Ryan and Gordon Henry Stevens Memorial Scholarship	1998 to 1999
School of Art, Drama and Music Scholarship in Music	1997 to 1998
Dundas Scholarship	1996 to 1997
Ontario Scholar's Award	1996
Elva Kendall Newlands Award for English	1996
Governor General's Medal	1995
Sherwood Secondary School Teacher's Award	1995

Publications:

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Author: [redacted]

Lindsay Ann Moore

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