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The Song-Cycle Frauenliebe Und-leben By Robert Schumann

Jocelyn Kaye Jensen

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THE SONG-CYCLE "FRAUENLIEBE UND-LEBEN"

BY ROBERT SCHUMANN

by

Jocelyn Kaye Jensen

Report of a recital performed in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF MUSIC

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY
Logan, Utah

1970
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Song-Cycle, Frauenliebe und-leben, Opus 42
(Woman's Love and Woman's Life)

by ........... Robert Schumann
1810-1856

1. Seit ich ihn gesehen
(Since first I saw him)

2. Er, derr Herrlichste von Allen
(He, the most wonderful of men)

3. Ich Kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben
(I cannot grasp it, I cannot believe it)

4. Du Ring an meinem Finger
(Ring on my finger)

5. Helft mir, ihr Schwestern
(Sister, be kind, help)

6. Sässer Freund, du blickest
(Sweet friend, you look at me)

7. An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust
(At my heart, at my breast)

8. Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz gethan
(Now, for the first time, you have hurt me)
Song-Cycle, Frauenliebe und-leben, Opus 42 • • • Robert Schumann (Woman's Love and Woman's Life) 1810-1856

The eight songs within this cycle are based upon the poems of Adelbert von Chamisso, written by that poet for his young bride. The romanticism of the literature appealed greatly to Robert Schumann, who, in 1840, had married Clara Wieck.

During the year of 1840, Schumann composed many of the most beautiful and sentimental art songs ever written. The poems of Heine and Chamisso served as texts for a large number of the Schumann songs. The Frauenliebe und-leben follows one woman's life, as she meets and marries the man of her dreams. The songs revolve about her expressions of love for this man, her worship for him and for the child, which she bears in his image. The depth of her hurt and frustration, as he precedes her in death, is extremely pathetic in the final song of the cycle, Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz gethan, (Now for the first time, you have hurt me).

There is, within the music of Schumann, an opportunity to view the introspective, subjective soul of a fine artist. His songs represent his own literary appreciation. His use of word images in a textual sense displayed his ability to place words to music with extreme dexterity and clarity of expression.

Seit ich ihn gesehen (Since first I saw him)

From the first moment she views this man, her eyes are blind to all others. His image is constantly before her. Any other events are now secondary to her.

Er, derr Herrlichste von Allen (He, the most wonderful of men)

As she further expresses her adoration for him, his qualities are those of tenderness and kindness. His lips are gentle; his eyes are bright; his mind is clear, and his courage is firm. His life is as bright as the stars in the heavens. Whomever he chooses as his bride, she will rejoice and weep, as long as that person is worthy of him.

Ich Kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben (I cannot grasp it, I cannot believe it)

His selection of a mate is made. She cannot believe that it is she. His words promise that he will be hers forever. Her desire is to remain in this state of joy, locked eternally in his heart. It is difficult for her to grasp that they will soon belong to each other.
Du Ring an meinem Finger (Ring on my Finger)

The ring is on her finger, representing the new fulfillment of a childhood dream. Life has greater meaning. Her purposes are to serve him and live for him each day. She presses the ring to her lips and heart, at the same moment she gives herself to him completely.

Helft mir, ihr Schwestern (Sister, be kind, help)

She pleads with her sisters to help prepare her to receive him. She wishes to banish all fear from her heart. She bids them a sad farewell, as she joyfully joins her love.

Sässer Freund, du blickest (Sweet friend, you look at me)

The sweet friend, her husband, wonders at her tears. He does not understand that her heart is so full of bliss. He rests his head upon her breast. Closer and closer he is pressed, so that he might understand. By their bed there is room for a cradle. Silently she hides her dream for a child, the image of her husband.

An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust (At my heart, at my breast)

On her heart and breast, the child rests. Only the mother who loves and nurses the child she feeds can know what it means to be happy. How sorry she is for men, who cannot feel a mother's bliss. Her joy and delight are represented in this child.

Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz gethan (Now, for the first time, you have hurt me)

Death is cruel. Her husband has hurt her for the first time by leaving her alone. The world is empty. She has loved and lived, and now there is no more life. Softly she draws back into herself. The veil falls. She is with him, her lost happiness, her whole world.
INTRODUCTION

The song cycle, Frauenliebe und­leben, by Robert Alexander Schumann was selected to be performed in recital and for purposes of this recital report.

Several objectives were to be accomplished in writing this paper. Among these was the intent to achieve a better understanding of the complete poetic and musical lyricism unique to Schumann's songs, particularly those composed in 1840, the period in which the Frauenliebe und­leben was produced. In addition, an analysis of each of the eight songs in the cycle was undertaken to enable the performer and listener to have better technical understanding of the musical ideas invoked by Schumann and utilized in his songs. A cultural, political, and social overview of the Romantic Period of music during which this composer was working was incorporated in this report. This portion was included with the purpose of adding understanding of existing attitudes and stylistic characteristics of this time in history.

The objectives generally discussed in the preceding paragraph involved research of an historical nature, supplemented by the individual dissection and analysis of each of the songs within the Frauenliebe und­leben song cycle.

The recital-report offered this student and performer of music a scholarly approach to musical research, allowing a broadening of personal growth and greater respect for the works of Robert Alexander Schumann.
GENERAL STYLISTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE
ROMANTIC PERIOD OF MUSIC

Robert Alexander Schumann was born in Zwickau, Saxony on June 8, 1810. This period of time early in the nineteenth century was to be labeled by historians with the term "Romanticism."

In pursuing and identifying the stylistic trends of music in any century, one would assume that the study of actual musical compositions might provide all of the needed answers. However, more relevant to the problem would be to approach it from a view of the social, cultural, and political circumstances surrounding the particular period to be discussed.

Gerald Abraham dates the "Romantic Period" in music from 1800 to 1875.¹ This report will include general observations of some of the main characteristics of this time in the history of music.

No longer were there in the early 1830's great aristocratic patrons of the arts as had existed in previous centuries. The musician, himself, was confronted with the problem of financing his own concerts. Unless he was a virtuoso performer, it became very unlikely that his works would be heard by many others. There was also the very real possibility that he might starve while he waited to be recognized.

In the 1830's and 1840's the orchestras being used were small

and voiced according to the needs of much earlier composers.

We learn from Berlioz that few German orchestras possessed a harp, much less two harps (except at Berlin), and that hardly any had a cor anglais; on the other hand, the new valve brass instruments were winning a footing in German orchestras, he notes. At Mannheim, where there was "a very intelligent little orchestra," he was unable to give the finale of Harold en Italie because the trombones were manifestly incapable of playing their part. 2

Aside from these difficulties, philosophical attitudes were changing during the Romantic Period of music. The establishment, or that group which was the authority figure in government and society, was to become the object of a thought rebellion. New concern was being manifested for the individual man. His own personality and its freedom of expression were of absolute necessity. Obviously, those who were most affected by these attitudes were the intellectuals and the artists of the times.

The creative man generally is the conscience of any age, particularly those which generate great change. Many composers looked towards literature to provide new inspiration and expression for their music. Poets and writers became compatriots in this surge for new freedom. In fact, new ideas or what might be termed free experimentalism was accepted as one way to move in the arts, in order to avoid the norm or the expected.

The romanticist indulges in extremes. He often varies from barely perceptible movement to breathless haste. He may leap from a slow tempo to a rapid one with great alacrity or from a fast tempo to a slower one, so that many times he seems to have come to a precipitate halt without preparation. 3

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"There is obvious in the Romantic scores a predilection for complexity of texture, for massiveness of structure." ⁴

According to Howerton, the Romantic man was also concerned with his place in nature. One could visualize man alone in the mountains contemplating answers to life's "unanswerable" probes.

The painters, musicians, and writers of the times associated with one another, sharing attitudes and ideas. This tended to widen their cultural understanding, causing them to be more investigative and curious. They were reading more. Many of the composers were writers, themselves. "It was the literary tendencies of the composers that made them romantics, for wherever they looked in contemporary literature they found romantic literature." ⁵

"Liszt, Berlioz, Schumann, and Wagner were not only widely read; they mixed with literary and artistic people. They not only mixed with literary men; they were literary men themselves." ⁶

In an atmosphere of greater cultural interchange, concepts in all of the arts were enlarged. The stress upon individual importance created many artists who were the true representatives of the ideal in the Romantic man.

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⁴ Ibid., p. 157.
⁵ Abraham, A Hundred Years of Music, p. 21.
⁶ Ibid., p. 20.
ROBERT SCHUMANN WITHIN THE ROMANTIC PERIOD

Robert Schumann, because of his great subjectivity and introspective attitudes, reflects the poets' thoughts through his music.

His mind was saturated with literary rhythms and images, the characters and prose style of Hoggman and Jean Paul, the verses of Heine and Chamisso and Eichendorff. He was the first musician who can be said to have actually relived his poet's experience—in the Heine songs in particular.¹

Schumann began composing when he was seven and by the age of eleven he had written several choral and orchestral compositions. He studied law from 1828 to 1830 but in Heidelberg, he became convinced of the necessity of becoming a musician rather than a lawyer. He returned to Leipzig where he became a serious piano student. Working under the tutelage of Frederick Wieck, his dreams lead him to virtuostic ambitions.

In an attempt to extend the flexibility of the fourth finger of his right hand he devised a means of suspending it in a sling while employing the other fingers. This only led to a paralysis of the right hand in 1832, shattering all hopes of a concert career.²

There appeared no alternative for him but to turn to more creative endeavors. His compositional studies were begun with Heinrich Dorn and by 1832 his first works for the piano were completed. These included the Abegg Variations, Papillons, and the Paganini Etudes.

For the next eight years he worked unceasingly at the creation

¹Abraham, A Hundred Years of Music, p. 23.
of piano music. The results "opened a new epoch for piano literature: Carnaval, Kreisleriana, Etudes Symphoniques, Fantaisiestuecke, and the C major Fantasy."\(^3\)

Although he was engaged completely in composing, he found time in 1833 to help organize some idealistic young musicians into the "Davidsbuendler," whose chief purpose was to

\[\text{... destroy Philistinism in music and promote the highest ideals in music...} \]

One year later, he founded a music journal, the first important one in Germany—the Neue Zeitschrift fuer Musik, which he edited until 1844.\(^4\)

He became known through this journal as an excellent music critic and a great advocate for young, unknown musicians. This selflessness was obviously so innate within this man that his attitudes towards other musicians never reflected pettiness or bitterness. Instead he seemed always to see the good and to encourage with words, rather than purposefully destroy as some other writers had a tendency to do.\(^5\)

Edvard Grieg in writing of Schumann further stresses the composer's character through these words:

Schumann has, indeed, raised a most beautiful monument to himself in his unprejudiced judgment of all that was valuable among his surroundings. I need only refer to his introduction into the musical world of such names as Berlioz, Chopin, Brahms, Gade, etc. We find him in his youth so busily occupied in clearing the way for others that we are left to wonder how, at the same time, he found it possible to develop his own deep soul as he must have done in the first great creative period

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\(^3\)Ibid., p. 469.

\(^4\)Ibid.

of his life, which, however, was chiefly devoted to piano music.\(^6\)

Schumann's great capacity for emotion and love inevitably would lead him to sixteen-year-old Clara Wieck, the daughter of Frederick Wieck, his former piano instructor. The romance was destined for problems because her father was definitely against Clara's marrying any musician. The relationship became necessarily secretive. Correspondence was the binding force between the two. Finally Schumann established a court suit in order to attain the legal right to marry the woman he loved. The court action was successful for him and after four years, the two lovers were married on September 12, 1840.

\(^6\)Ibid.
THE SONG CYCLE "FRAUENLIEBE UND-LEBEN"

Literature was such a vital part of Schumann's life that the year of his marriage led him to utilize the poetry of others in the writing of his songs. His own emotions were so full and external that his creative efforts were intensified by the romantic, idealistic written words of poets like Heine and Chamisso. A man as open and honest as Schumann would have been inspired by the fulfillment of his love.

The songs of 1840, and there were approximately 140 written, would become a personal monument to Clara.

What was inevitable was that he should burst into song. The sentiments of his own love he found only partially expressed in the poems of his romantic contemporaries. He would not only give voice to their words, but he would support and enhance them with music for a piano, whose magic he had been discovering in the past ten years.¹

Schumann's songs turned the poets' words into music. Through his own introspective soul they became mirrors of strong emotionalism. His individual approach to the songs added new dimension to what had already been composed by other musicians.

If there is anything at all that Schumann has written which has become, and has deserved to become, world literature, it is surely his songs. All civilized nations have made them their own. And there is probably in our day scarcely a youth interested in music to whom they are not, in one way or another, interwoven with his most intimate ideals. Schumann is the poet, contrasting in this respect

with his greatest successor, Brahms, who is primarily musician, even in his songs.²

Several song-cycles were part of this vast creative effort by Schumann. Of these song-cycles, the Frauenliebe und-leben will occupy the central portion of the remainder of this paper. Based upon the poems of Chamisso, this group of eight songs tells of the 40-year-old poet's adoration of his 18-year-old bride.

Gerald Abraham felt that the Chamisso verses were rather mediocre and this seemed, in his opinion, to weaken some of the musical aspects of the Frauenliebe und-leben, itself. By modern standards or tastes, this observation would probably enjoy some support. But if one viewed the entire output of the songs of 1840, there would undoubtedly be individual works which stand alone as masterpieces in composition.

Therefore, casting off the aspersions on the merits of the verses of this particular song-cycle, attempts will be made to analyze those qualities which make it a stable and worthwhile piece of music literature both for performance and listening purposes.

Schumann was a true representative of the romantic man. His creative endeavors included works for the piano, voice, symphony, and chamber groups.

His sad finale to living need scarcely be mentioned, except to say that death came in an insane asylum in Endenich, near Bonn, Germany on July 29, 1856.

The deterioration of his physical and mental health led only

²The University Society, p. 213.
to the termination of his physical life. His works live on and through them, the man, himself, survives. The subjective, introspective spirit of Robert Alexander Schumann will remain through his compositions for all to hear, if not to care for positively, at least to respect as great creative efforts.
DISCUSSION OF THE POET AND TEXT
OF THE "FRAUENLIEBE UND-LEBEN"

The text of the song-cycle, Frauenliebe und-leben, serves as the foundation for Schumann's creative musical ideas. At this point within the paper, a discussion will be undertaken, which brings to light the nature and history of the poet, himself.

Adelbert Von Chamisso was a German writer and botanist. He was a highly respected member of the north German group of romantic poets. His life spans a fifty-seven year period from 1781 until 1838. The works of Goethe and Ludwig Uhland provided poetic models for his writing endeavors. He displayed an affinity for "mournful subjects,"¹ but he aimed "at freshness and popularity."² These attributes are at their best "in expressing simple human feelings as in the lyrical cycle Frauenliebe und-leben, which has become world famous set to music by Robert Schumann."³

The title of the cycle Frauenliebe und-leben (Woman's Love and Woman's Life) gives one an adequate concept of the actual textual content. Because the grouping of songs into a cycle is characteristic of Schumann, a central theme or idea permeates each individual group. This set of poems takes the most important phase of a woman's

²Ibid.
³Ibid.
life and allows the listener to view her intimate thoughts and emotions. It delves into her relationship with the man who is to become her husband, their eventual marriage, the birth of a child, and the husband's death, which leaves her totally and hopelessly alone. Her entire existence revolved about her love for this person.

Martin Cooper has been concerned that the poems were substandard and perhaps too sweet to have many outstanding virtues. During the 1840's when this cycle was set to music, Schumann's mood obviously absorbed a highly emotional and romantically charged attitude. His marriage to Clara Wieck was the center of his extremely expressive nature and from this event were to come many of the most beautiful songs ever written. Some of these songs "are perhaps the most perfect examples of fusion of music with poetry in existence, surpassed not even by Wolf's Mörike-Lieder."

Schumann brings to the lyric music that needs nothing but those words, and just those words, to give it articulate expression. Again: an examination of Schumann's songs will help to show how deeply the influence of verse had permeated his piano music. Perfectly vocal as his song-line always is, one has often to do nothing but incorporate it in a slightly recast piano part to get a characteristic Schumann piano piece—as Schumann himself did with the early songs which he turned into slow movements of sonatas.

Songs should not merely attempt to be formally beautiful. They should give birth to their own characteristic beauty which then adds dimension to the listener's imaginative spirit.

Schumann was an individual who possessed the most tender of natures. His great abilities to create were subject to his own self-

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4 Abraham, A Hundred Years of Music, p. 36.
5 Ibid., p. 37.
effacement. He placed others far above himself and yet the purity of his intentions and efforts cannot be denied. There is an abstract quality to his work which necessitates a search beyond what appears obvious in his songs.

His ability to love selflessly and so totally generates itself in this song-cycle as in few of his other works. To derive all of the intensity its composer included in it would be a monumental task for any musician. Sometimes the overly critical, skilled person loses the genuine meaning of the cycle in his attempts at analysis of a poetical effort, which seems less than adequate.

Schumann’s close affinity with literature permitted him insight into poetic structure and verse movement. The organization of lines, stanzas, and rhyme were essential elements in poetry which gave form to the music itself. His own literary works must have given him greater understanding, enabling him to utilize others’ verses with extreme dexterity in his songs.

Basically, the melody pattern of song springs from the text. The length and width of phrase, its diatonic, chromatic, or intervallic emphasis, the pace and the duration of its separate members, the dynamics—all are the result of the dictation and suggestion of the words.6

"His literary taste and affinities gave him a feeling for prosody and a sensitiveness to the atmosphere of a poem such as no previous song-writer had ever had."7

Schumann’s love of the poems of Chamisso which provide the

6Hall, p. 8.

foundation for this song-cycle gave him added impetus to create music which represented the sincerity and genuineness of his efforts. The piano accompaniment interweaves with the vocal parts throughout to bind the two and make them inseparable. The depth of the real emotion of an eternal love continually holds the cycle in place. The piano prologues and epilogues are essential, integral parts of the songs, either setting an emotional climate or providing a fitting conclusion to the text of the poems, themselves.

The choice of these poems and a new lyrical impulse brought by Schumann to the song are touches of individualism rarely seen before his time. Much of his originality rests in the humbleness of his attitudes towards the artistic aspects of composition. His own conscience led him to textual selections others couldn't understand because of the inner beauty not always discernible in utter simplicity. He was a great interpreter in the Frauenliebe und-leben of profound emotions and an intensity of sentiment which pervade each song of the cycle, becoming, in essence, the complete impact of these eight songs.

Schumann has made his way without any other propaganda than that which lies in his works; his progress has therefore been slow, but for that reason the more secure. Without attempting by artificial means to anticipate the future, he lived and labored in accordance with his own principle: "Only become an ever greater artist and all other things will come to you of their own accord." 8

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8 The University Society, p. 196.
TECHNICAL DESCRIPTION OF "FRAUENLIEBE UND-LEBEN"

A song-cycle consists of a group of songs using poetry as its basis. These poems are most often by the same poet and are usually held together by a central theme or main idea. The songs are meant to be a musical unit and they should be performed as such.

An attempt will be made in this section of the paper to analyze the Frauenliebe und-leben for its musical merit as well as its textual strengths and weaknesses.

Before the actual technical description of this particular song-cycle is accomplished, there are some interesting general characteristics of Schumann’s songs which should be pointed out. In his songs

... the pianoforte almost invariably assumes a major role. No longer does the piano merely support and form background and occasionally say a line of its own; now there is dialogue, and the voice and pianoforte intertwine; again, to the piano is assigned a whole soliloquy or a penetrating remark on the poet’s real meaning, only half-revealed through his words in the singing voice.¹

While much of Schumann’s music, including a considerable proportion of his songs, bears the traces of the naively emotional and complacent background which determined the composer’s mentality, there remains an irreducible minimum of works which have that ageless quality which is the only certain hallmark of genius. At the very centre of that core are the great songs, so that if future generations remember Schumann for nothing else he can hardly fail to be counted among the very greatest of the German song-writers.²

To be able to sing Schumann is a special faculty which

¹Hall, p. 61.
²Abraham, Schumann—A Symposium, p. 137.
many excellent singers do not have. I have heard the same singer render Schubert to perfection, and Schumann absolutely badly. For with Schubert the most of what is to be done is explicitly expressed; while with Schumann one must understand the art of reading between the lines—of interpreting a half-told tale.³

There are eight songs in the Frauenliebe und-leben, Opus 42, song-cycle. They are: I. Seit ich ihn gesehen (Since first I saw him); II. Er, der Herrlichste von Allen (He, the most wonderful of men); III. Ich Kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben (I cannot grasp it, I cannot believe it); IV. Du Ring an meinem Finger (Ring on my finger); V. Helft mir, ihr Schwestern (Sister, be kind, help); VI. Sässer Freund, du blickeat (Sweet friend, you look at me); VII. An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust (At my heart, at my breast); VIII. Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz gethan (Now, for the first time, you have hurt me).

This particular edition of the Frauenliebe und-leben has been transposed down one whole step from the original key by Schumann.

In Seit ich ihn gesehen, Schumann writes a one measure piano introduction prior to the voice's beginning and utilizes a traditional

Illustration 1. Measure 1, Piano Prelude, Seit ich ihn gesehen.

³The University Society, p. 214.
harmonic chordal move in the accompaniment from the tonic to the sub-
dominant and to a dominant seventh. The melody mirrors the piano line.

At measure five the original melody is repeated a whole step high-
er and remains rather imitative of theme A. The form is two part, with
the piano concluding a five and one-half measure epilogue to complete
the mood of the setting.

The use of sevenths in inverted form, second-inversion chords and
suspended sixths adds interesting effects to the texture of the piano.
The work should be sung quite metrically with the melody line dictat-
ing the dynamic rise and fall of the voice.

The singer's final word on "sein" rests on the tonic and the
accompaniment cadences from a dominant seventh to a tonic chord to
conclude the first song of the cycle.

Illustration 2. Measures 31 through 36, Piano Epilogue, Seit ich ihn
gesehen.

In Schumann's lieder, whether the ending repeats or com-
ments upon a principal motive or whether the close seems a nat-
ural but new extension and flowering of the poet's lines, the
epilogue is felt as far more than a satisfying musical coda.
Here is a poetic rounding out of thought and mood. The singer
must recognize it as such, for otherwise he will chafe at the
new importance of the pianoforte and its last phrases. 4

The preludes and postludes, generally considered to be typical of Schumann's song-writing as a whole, most frequently occur in the 1840 songs and are nowhere so prominent as in the Dichterliebe and Frauenliebe und-leben series. 5

Er, der Herrlichste von Allen, the second song of the cycle is introduced also by a one measure piano prelude and is concluded by a five and one-half measure piano epilogue. The accompaniment begins on a tonic D flat major chord in second inversion. Doubling the fifth makes the sound even more severe.

The vocal line makes several intervallic leaps of a minor seventh which occur throughout this song. Schumann utilizes the turn in the vocal line and according to Martin Cooper, the turn is a strong characteristic of the songs of 1840. It rarely appears after that

Illustration 3. Measure 4, Vocal Turn, Er, der Herrlichste von Allen.

time. Cooper was not able to determine whether the turn was just a pianistic habit of the fingers of one accustomed to piano

4Hall, p. 62.

5Abraham, Schumann—A Symposium, p. 100.
improvisation or of Schumann's "unconscious imitation of the operatic style." Nonetheless, it seems to be a definite characteristic of the 1840 songs.

The melody is begun on the fifth of the tonic triad. It is then developed by rhythmic rather than pitch changes. Er, der Herrlichste von Allen is in a basic A-B-A-A format; however, the final A introduces a small coda leading to the piano postlude. The work ultimately ends on a tonic triad in the piano.

Schumann is noted for his excellent enharmonic writing, examples of which are found throughout the Frauenliebe und-leben. This ability causes small shifts in the feeling of the tonal center of the songs, yet he remains cognizant of the necessity of return to the tonic. The second song of the cycle is no exception as the voice concludes on the D flat, followed by the piano which ends on the tonic, also.

It is perhaps significant that the second song of the cycle (Er, der Herrlichste von Allen) is not only the most abject in sentiment but also the least successful musically, with its square dotted rhythms and hammered accompanying chords extending uninterruptedly over four pages.

Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben, number three of the song-cycle, is written in B flat minor, the relative minor to the previous song, Er, der Herrlichste von Allen.

The voice begins on the fifth of the tonic triad. It moves quite rapidly in 3/8 time and the rhythm of the melodic line becomes the most interesting portion of the vocal part. The melody,

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6 Ibid., p. 101.
7 Ibid., p. 104.
itself, is quite restricted, but when placed with the very brief chordal figures in the accompaniment, it becomes rather fresh and free. The use of the interval of the sixth with the regular triad formations adds a subtle dissonance to the piano part.

In the final two measures the piano utilizes a sharpened (picardy) third to attain a concluding impression of B flat major.

Illustration 4. Measures 86 and 87, Sharped third, Ich kann's
nicht fassen, nicht glauben.

Throughout this song-cycle syncopation and anticipation are very important. Schumann was always trying to capture the mood; therefore, the texture within each composition changes as the particular, individual needs of that poem unfolded to the composer. At times the texture is loose and at other moments there is a polyphonic treatment of the music.

Hall in The Art Song expresses the opinion that Schumann is never purely strophic in form, but he has an awareness and understanding of symmetry and unity. This unity seems to be most often achieved through motivic repetitions, melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic.8

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8Hall, p. 62.
Du Ring an meinem Finger, in D flat major, number four of the cycle, is a marvelous culmination of vocal line and piano accompaniment. Everything comes about naturally, as if the effort in singing could be absolutely minimal. However, much of the success of this song rests with the compatibility of text and music.

An interesting performance marking occurs in Du Ring an meinem Finger. The word as it appears in reference to this particular song is "Innig." Two other songs in Frauenliebe und-leben possess a similar indication from Schumann: Er, der Herrlichste von Allen ("Innig, lebhaft") and An Meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust ("Fröhlich, innig").

Martin Cooper comments concerning this word "Innig", as used by Schumann.

The quality which is most typical of Schumann's songs, his most individual contribution to the development of the German Lied, is really a noble variety of this sentimentality, the lily which festering in Nur ein lächelnder Blick smells more rank than any weed. The German word for it is 'Innigkeit' and it is virtually untranslatable by any single English word. 'Innigkeit' is a variety of warm, intimate and meditative emotion, essentially self-conscious and therefore dangerously closely allied to sentimentality but saved, at least in its nobler manifestations, by a genuine childlike simplicity.9

Accordingly the "Innig" transcription by Schumann also dates the songs into that era of 1840, primarily because of the sentimentality and emotionality of his marriage to Clara Wieck.

In Du Ring an meinem Finger the voice begins the song on the third of the tonic triad. The melody is acted upon by subtle rhythmical deviations throughout. The harmonic changes remain quite traditional, with the piano accompaniment reflecting a slightly

9Abraham, Schumann--A Symposium, p. 103.
contrapuntal texture. When the second theme appears, the piano assumes a rather massive chordal movement and adds to the emphasis of the vocal line as it is building. The accompaniment eventually takes on the original contrapuntal texture, concluding the song by a four-bar epilogue, which ends on the tonic. The form is A-A-B-A, with the modifications stemming from rhythm changes. Again, the form veers away from a purely strophic setting.

It cannot be maintained that Schumann was the first to accord a conspicuous role to the accompaniment of his songs. Schubert had anticipated him as no other of his predecessors had done in making the piano depict the mood. But what Schubert began, Schumann further developed; and woe to the singer who tries to render Schumann without keeping a close watch of what the piano is doing, even to the minutest shades of timbre. I have no faith in a renderer of Schumann's songs who lacks appreciation of the fact that the piano has fully as great a claim upon interest and study as the voice of the singer. Nay; I would even venture to assert that, up to a certain point, he who cannot play Schumann cannot sing him either. In his treatment of the piano, Schumann was, furthermore, the first who in a modern spirit utilized the relation between song and accompaniment, which Wagner has later developed to a degree that fully proves what importance he attached to it.¹⁰

The broken chord, arpeggiated, piano accompaniment of Helft mir, ihr Schwestern, number five of the cycle, distinguishes it from the other members of the Frauenliebe und-leben. Its form is basically strophic.

In measure forty-one of this piece, an interesting vocal coda shifts the melodic feeling from major to minor for two measures. Schumann very simply moves the last four measures of the vocal coda into A flat major again. The remaining six measures of the song are

¹⁰The University Society, p. 215.
a rather pedantic piano part which concludes the work on the tonic. This heavier, march-like approach in the piano accompaniment is not uncommon in the Schumann songs.


Franz felt that in some instances Schumann's songs were simply added vocal lines to an already written piano solo. This could apply in this instance where the most ingenious portion of the song seems to be the vocal coda which changes the mood successfully through the quick intentional change from major to minor.\textsuperscript{11}

In this song as in Er, derr Herrlichste von Allen, number two of the song-cycle, the turn is employed in the vocal part, with, however, much less frequency.

Süsser Freund, du blickest, number six of the cycle, deviates from the previous songs, which have been discussed. After twenty-two measures in F major, Schumann modulates into the key of the sub-

\textsuperscript{11}Hall, p. 62.
dominant, B flat major. The vocal line becomes much more intense at this point. The melody reflects the depth of the text and the extent of this woman's feeling for her man. A strong, block-like, chordal piano accompaniment is employed, which succeeds in capturing and deepening the sentiment of the song.

After eighteen measures in B flat major, the music modulates and returns to F major, repeating the first theme. There are slight deviations from the originally stated theme. He adds a four measure piano postlude, concluding on an F major chord. The voice comes in on the last measure and creates a move from the ninth to the tonic. This momentary dissonance acts as an appoggiatura and is so subtle that hearing it once is almost not enough.

_Süßer Freund_ is emotionally and sentimentally charged. It conveys an almost weeping quality to the listener and brings great intensity to the song-cycle and its central theme of love.

_An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust_, number seven of the _Frauenliebe und leben_, is unique to this song-cycle. The one measure piano prelude begins with a chord of the dominant seventh.

The form is a modified strophic, with rhythmic variations adding the main melodic interest. Without these clever changes, the melody would become relatively repetitious and tedious to perform.

The accompaniment is consistent with arpeggiated, broken chords. In the final sixteen measures the piano accompaniment changes its arpeggiated figures to sharp chords, struck on the first and fourth beats of each measure. The final seven measures are a piano epilogue which cadences on the tonic as does the voice in its concluding portion of the song.
Cooper states that Schumann's use of dominant and diminished sevenths was not at all unusual. He often built entire passages on sevenths. The sixth is often placed in triads within the accompaniment. It seems to be a favorite coloristic, and harmonic device and is utilized by Schumann throughout the Frauenliebe und-leben.

It was not that Schumann invented new and poignant dissonances. He merely used the familiar ones very boldly and with little consonant respite. His consonances are often brief and the resolutions frequently fall on unaccented beats... We may put it that although Schumann made no great contribution to the harmonic language, his norm of consonance—i.e., the degree of dissonance he could accept as pleasant and normal—was considerably in advance of that of the average musician of his day.¹²


The concluding song in this song-cycle is Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz gethan.

The text evidently indicated to Schumann that even a modified strophic form could not properly fulfill the intent of the poet's words. He repeats the first melodic theme only once and this contains rhythmic changes. The remainder of the song was written in

¹² Abraham, A Hundred Years of Music, p. 50.
durchkomponiert form or more commonly known as through-composed. The method allowed a completely free following of the poem.

It is similar to a view of one's thinking process, supercharged with the impact of the husband's death. The accompaniment is emotional and binding with sustained chords throughout. The minor key maintains the cloud hanging over the woman's own thoughts of life and death.

The simplicity of the vocal line allows the singer added leverage in conveying a depth of emotional conclusion. The return to A flat major and the repetition of the music of the first song of the cycle, Seit ich ihn gesehen, characterizes the final piano epilogue. "By repeating the music of the first of the eight songs, Schumann suggests the widow in her grief turning back through the years to picture her hero as when first his image filled her dreams."\(^{15}\)

\(^{13}\) Hall, p. 65.
CONCLUSION

A degree is a culminating point for anyone involved in the process of gaining an education. There have been many hours of work in various areas of the field of music, which have given this writer greater preparation for teaching in secondary schools. These studies were necessary to attain better instructional methods.

Participation in performance groups led this student to understand varied kinds of choral music. Each one demanded different approaches, in order that certain stylistic characteristics could be determined. From the Mass In G by Poulenc to the Messiah by Handel, the programs rendered were educational and extremely helpful.

Private instruction in voice and piano added new dimensions to a rather limited, individual repertoire. The study of the Robert Schumann song-cycle, Frauenliebe und-leben, provided an opportunity to delve into many aspects of Schumann's life. These included a glimpse of the motivations, which led to the composition of the songs within this particular group. The findings from the research attempted were the basis for a large portion of this recital-report.

Music theory and literature courses were comprehensive and informative. They were primarily responsible for efforts in creativity, ending in several individual choral and piano compositions. The tools of education are partially responsible for developing the student's originality. The efforts of many instructors have instigated the need to attempt new avenues for self-expression.
All of these studies have given this student greater confidence to return to the public schools with renewed enthusiasm and knowledge. As a secondary school teacher, one becomes involved in music curriculums, which are varied and complex. The work towards the completion of the degree of Master of Music gave additional, necessary experiences for educating young people.

There can be no end to the learning process. Through the writing of this paper and the preparation of a recital, inspiration was gained to continue to attain greater proficiency as a performer and an instructor of music.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX
Robert Alexander Schumann

7 Op. 41 [Adalbert von Chamisso]

Frauen = Liebe und Leben

(1)
Seit ich ihn gesehen,
Glaub ich blind zu sein;
Wo ich hin nur blicke,
Seh ich ihn allein;
Wie im wachen Traume
Schwebt sein Bild mir vor,
Taucht aus tiefstem Dunkel,
Heller nur empor.

Sonst ist Licht und Farbe
Alles um mich her,
Nach der Schwester's Spiele
Nicht mehr begehre ich,
Möchte lieber weinen,
Still im Kämmerlein;
Seit ich ihn gesehen,
Glaub ich blind zu sein.

(2)
Er, der Herrlichste von allen,
Wie so mild, wie so gut!
Holde Lippen, klares Auge,
Heller Sinn und fester Mut.

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

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

Nur die Würdigste von allen
Darf beglücken deine Wahl,
Und ich will die Höhe segnen,
Segnen viele tausendmal.

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

(3)
Since first I saw him
I think myself blind;
wherever I look
I see only him.

As in a waking dream
his image floats before me;
in blackest darkness
it stands out the more brightly.

All else around me
is without colour and light;
I take no more pleasure
in my sisters' games;
I would rather weep quietly
in my little room;
since first I saw him
I think myself blind.

He, the most wonderful of men,
how tender he is, how kind!
Gentle lips, bright eyes,
a clear mind and firm courage.

As that star shines brightly and gloriously
in the deep blue,
so he shines in my heaven,
bright and glorious, exalted and remote.

Follow your course –
I will only gaze on your brightness,
look at it humbly
and be happy and sad!

Do not hear the silent prayer
I offer up for your happiness;
you must not know this lowly handmaid,
my glorious, distant star!

Only the worthiest
may be made happy by your choice,
and I will bless her
many thousand times.

Then I will rejoice and weep,
then I am happy, happy;
Even if my heart should break –
break, heart – what does it matter!
Ich kann's nicht fassen, nicht glauben,
Es hat ein Traum mich getäuscht;
 Wie läßt er doch unter allen
Mich Arme erhöht und beglückt?

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

O laß im Traume mich sterben,
Gewiegt an seiner Brust,
Den seligsten Tod mich schürfen
In Tränen unendlicher Lust.

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

Ich war in ausgeträumet,
Der Kindheit friedlich schönen Traum,
Ich fand allein mich, verloren
Im öden, unendlichen Raum.

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

Ich will ihm dienen, ihm leben,
Dir angehören ganz,
Hin selber mich geben und finden
Verklär't mich in seinem Glanz.

Da Ring an meinem Finger,
Mein goldenes Ringelein,
Ich drücke dich fromm an die Lippen
Dich fromm an das Herz mein.

Helft mir, ihr Schwester,
Freundlich mich schmücken,
Dient der Glücklichs heute mir,
Wendet geschäftig
Mir um die Stirn
Noch der blühenden Myrte Zier.

Als ich befriedigt,
Freudigen Herzens,
Sonst dem Geliebten im Arme lag,

I cannot grasp it, I cannot believe it;
a dream must be deceiving me.

How, out of all the others,
could he have honoured and blessed me?

I thought I heard him say:
'I am yours for ever.'

I thought – but I must be still dreaming,
for surely it could not be.

O let me die in this dream;
cradled against his heart
let me drink in most delicious death
with tears of unending joy.

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

The peaceful, blissful dream of childhood
had ended,
and I found myself alone, lost
in a dreary, limitless waste.

Ring on my finger,
you taught me;
you opened my eyes
to the limitless, inexhaustible value of life.

I will serve him, live for him,
belong wholly to him;
I will give myself to him and find myself
transfigured by his brightness.

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

Sisters, be kind, help
to adorn me,
serve me today in my happiness.

Busily twine
about my brow
the blossoming myrtle.

When, up till now, I lay, satisfied
and with joy in my heart
in the arms of my love,
Immer noch rief er,
Sehnsucht im Herzen,
Ungeduldig den heutigen Tag.
Helft mir, ihr Schwestern,
Helft mir verscheuchen
Eine törichte Bangigkeit,
Daß ich mit klarem
Aug ihn empfange,
Helft mir, ihr Schwestern,
Helft mir verschwinden
Eine tönchene Bangigkeit.
Daß ich mit klarem
Aug ihn empfange,
Heutigen Tag.
Helft mir, ihr Schwestern,
Helft mir verschwinden
Eine törichte Bangigkeit,
Daß ich mit klarem
Aug ihn empfange,
Helft mir, ihr Schwestern,
Helft mir verschwinden
Eine törichte Bangigkeit.
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Aug ihn empfange,
Helft mir, ihr Schwestern,
Helft mir verschwinden
Eine törichte Bangigkeit.
Daß ich mit klarem
Aug ihn empfange,
Hier an meinem Bette
Hat die Wiege Raum,
Wo sie still verberge
Meinen holden Traum;
Kommen wird der Morgen,
Wo der Traum erwacht,
Und daraus dein Bildnis
Mir entgegen lacht.

(7)
An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust,
Du meine Wonne, du meine Lust!
Das Glück ist die Liebe, die Lieb ist das Glück,
Ich hab's gesagt und nehm's nicht zurück.
Bin überglücklich aber jetzt.
Nur die du säugt, nur die da liebt
Das Kind, dem sie die Nahrung giebt;
Nur eine Mutter weiß allein
Was lieben heißt und glücklich sein.
O, wie bedau' ich doch den Mann,
Der Mutterglück nicht fühlen kann!
Du lieber, lieber Engel, du
Du schaust mich an und lächelst dazu!
An meinem Herzen, an meiner Brust,
Du meine Wonne, du meine Lust!

(8)
Nun hast du mir den ersten Schmerz getan,
Der aber traf.
Du schlafst, du harter, unharnherz'ger Mann,
Den Todesschlaf.
Es blicket die Verlasse vor sich hin,
Die Welt ist leer.
Geliebet hab ich und gelebt, ich bin
Nicht lebend mehr.
Ich zieh mich in mein Innes still zurück,
Der Schleier fällt,
Da hab ich dich und mein verlorнес Glück,
Du meine Welt!

HERBERT ALEXANDER SCHUMANN

Hier by my bed
there is room for a cradle,
which may silently hide
my blissful dream.
The day will come
when the dream comes true
and your image
smiles up at me.

(7)
At my heart, at my breast—
you my joy, my delight!
Happiness is love, love happiness—
I have said it and say so still.
I thought myself boundlessly happy,
but now I am happier still.
Only a mother who nurses
and loves the child she feeds,
only a mother can know
what it means to love and be happy.
How sorry I am for men
who cannot feel a mother's bliss!
Sweet angel,
you look at me and smile!
At my heart, at my breast—
you my joy, my delight!

(8)
Now, for the first time, you have hurt me,
but this hurt is cruel.
Hard, pitiless man, you are sleeping
the sleep of death.

Left all alone, I gaze before me;
The world is empty.
I have loved, I have lived,
and now I have no more life.
Softly I draw back into myself;
The veil falls.
There I am with you and my lost happiness—
you, my whole world!

VITA

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Recital Report: The Song-Cycle *Frauenliebe und-leben* by Robert Schumann

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