AT THE PIANO WITH

ROBERT AND CLARA SCHUMANN



EDITED BY
MAURICE HINSON

As you grow older, converse more frequently with scores than with virtuosos.

Robert Schumann

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FOREWORD

Two of the greatest artists of the 19th century, Robert Schumann (1810–1856) and Clara Wieck (1819–1896), were married on September 12, 1840, just one day before Clara's 21st birthday. Their marriage was unique in musical history—they were drawn together and remained together not only because of common musical experience, mutual emotional dependency, and physical attraction, but because their mutual and creative needs complemented each other.

They had fought Clara's father, Friedrich Wieck, since 1837, when Robert had asked for Clara's hand in marriage. Clara and Robert were eventually obliged to take their case to court where they received a favorable ruling.

By the time of their marriage, Clara had already been acclaimed throughout Europe as a phenomenally talented pianist and composer; her admirers included Goethe, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Paganini and Schumann. Liszt considered that she had "complete technical mastery, depth and sincerity of feeling." In 1838 she was appointed to the Austrian Court as Imperial Chamber-Virtuoso, an honor rarely bestowed on a foreigner, especially one so young. During those early years Clara published a number of compositions for piano solo.

Now that they were at last together, they began a journal, the *Ehetagebuch* (marriage diary), in which they each vowed to write, alternating weekly. Clara later kept the diary alone after Robert's illness prevented his continued participation.

From early in his life, Robert was troubled by variations of mood, which could not be adequately accounted for. While outwardly depressed, he could be eloquent in his letters. After his marriage his mood changes continued, although he was extremely happy with Clara and was devoted to her. It seems clear that Clara was the dominant partner in their relationship, and although she maintained an attitude of wifely submissiveness, the fact is that Robert fell more and more under her influence. His life took on a normal daily routine, with hours set aside for composing, for a long walk, and for spending time with a small and intimate group of friends. It was probably under Clara's influence, too, that Robert tried to rise above his romantic, half-literary and lyrical nature, and to model himself on the classics, attempting to employ the larger compositional forms.

The Schumanns settled first in Leipzig (Clara's hometown), moving to Dresden in 1844 and to Düsseldorf in 1850. To her great dismay, married life posed numerous obstacles to Clara's playing and composing. Robert could not be disturbed while composing, and her time was now additionally occupied with household responsibilities and maternal duties. The Schumanns had eight children from 1841 to 1854. Nevertheless Clara managed to continue performing, even making concert tours as far as Copenhagen (1842) and Russia (1844).

Both Clara and Robert taught at the Leipzig Conservatory,



Robert and Clara Schumann. Lithograph by Eduard Kaiser, 1847.

and Clara continued to teach privately in Dresden and Düsseldorf.

In 1853 the family moved to a new house in Düsseldorf, and finally their rooms were situated so that Clara could practice and compose without disturbing Robert. In September of that year the young Johannes Brahms made his first appearance in the Schumann household.

Robert's nervous system continued to deteriorate, culminating in his collapse in 1854 and his commitment to an asylum at Endenich, where he remained until his death in 1856—leaving Clara, who was 36 years old, to care for seven children ranging in age from two to 15. A son, Emil, born in 1846 had died the following year. During this difficult time Brahms proved himself a devoted, invaluable companion; he and Clara formed an extremely close friendship that lasted until her death.

Clara performed frequently and extensively for the rest of her life. In 1857 she moved to Berlin; from 1863 to 1873 she lived in Baden-Baden; from 1873 to 1878 she again lived periodically in Berlin. In 1878 she became principal teacher of piano at the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt where she taught, played privately, travelled and received friends until her death in 1896.

Clara as Pianist

Clara received very thorough training from her disciplinarian father Friedrich Wieck, a piano teacher who also kept a circulating library and sold pianos. As a girl of eight she wrote in her diary:

> My father, who has long vainly hoped for a change of mood on my part, remarked today that I am still idle,

> negligent, unmethodical, self-willed, etc., especially in piano playing and practicing. . . He tore the copy (a set of variations by Hünten) to pieces before my eyes, and from today will not give me another lesson, and I may only play scales, Cramer's etudes, and Czerny's studies on the trill.

He must have expected the impossible from this small child. Nevertheless, she worked hard to develop her outstanding talent. When she was nine she made her first public appearance and was playing concertos by Hummel and Mozart from memory, with favorable public reaction. Her first Gewandhaus recital in Leipzig took place on November 8, 1830. Performances followed throughout Germany and in Paris. In the meantime, Robert Schumann began his piano study with Wieck. He had entered the Wieck household as a lodger, and thus into Clara's life. A few months after Schumann had reviewed Chopin's Variations on *La ci darem*, Op. 2, Clara was performing them in Leipzig in July of 1832. From the same year, with the presentation of the *G Minor Concerto* by Moscheles, dates a long series of orchestral appearances at the Gewandhaus concerts. When Chopin heard Clara on his visit to Leipzig in 1836, he remarked that she was the only woman in Germany who could play his music.

Clara was surely one of the most scholarly pianists of the 19th century and a true classicist at heart. She was dedicated to presenting the best serious literature, ranging from Bach and Scarlatti to Chopin, Mendelssohn, and Brahms, and she deplored the Liszt personality cult. One of her students, Franklin Taylor, left a fine characterization of her playing:

> As an artist, Mme. Schumann's place was indubitably in the very first rank; indeed she may perhaps be considered to stand higher than any of her contemporaries, if not as regards the possession of natural or acquired gifts, but in the use she made of them. Her playing was characterized by an entire absence of personal display, a keen perception of the composer's meaning, and an unfailing power of setting it forth in perfectly intelligible form. Those qualities would lead one to pronounce her one of the most intellectual of players, were it not that that term has come to imply a certain coldness or want of feeling, which was never perceived in her playing. But just such a use of the intellectual powers as serves the purpose of true art, ensuring perfect accuracy in all respect, no liberties being taken with the text, even when playing from memory, and above all securing an interpretation of the composer's work which is at once intelligible to the listener—all this certainly formed an essential element of her playing. It is worthwhile insisting on this, since the absence of that strict accuracy and perspicuity is too often mistaken for evidence of deep emotional intention. With all this, however, Mme. Schumann's playing evinced great warmth of feeling, and a true poet's appreciation of absolute beauty, so that nothing ever sounded harsh or ugly in her hands; indeed it may fairly be said that after hearing her play a fine work (she never played what is not good), one always became aware that it contained beauties undiscovered before. That was, no doubt, partly due to the peculiarly beautiful quality of the tone she produced, which was rich and vigorous without the slightest harshness, and was obtained, even in the loudest passages, by pressure with her fingers rather than by percussion. Indeed, her playing was particularly free from violent movement of any kind; in passages, the fingers were kept close to the keys and squeezed instead of striking them, while chords were grasped from the wrist rather than struck from the elbow. She founded her *technique* upon the principle laid down by her father, F. Wieck, who was also her instructor, that "the touch (i.e. the blow of the finger upon the key) should never be audible, but one should hear only the musical sound." The truth of that axiom is in some danger of being overlooked in the endeavor to encompass the extreme difficulties of certain kinds of modern pianoforte music.

At the age of 19 Clara was compared very favorably with Liszt, Thalberg and Adolf von Henselt (1814–1889) in an article published on April 27, 1838 in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*. The article went to great length to compare the various attributes of the famous pianists. Liszt embodied impassioned performance; Thalberg, refined sensualism in expression; Clara, irrepressible enthusiasm; Henselt, Germanic lyricism. Liszt's playing was diabolical; Thalberg's fascinating; Clara's ennobling; Henselt's exciting. As late as 1869, when Clara was 50, Amy Fay, an American student studying in Europe, was enchanted by her playing when she heard her in Berlin:

> I heard Clara Schumann on Sunday, and also on Tuesday evening. She is a most wonderful artist. In the first concert she played a quartette by Schumann, and you can imagine how lovely it was under the treatment of Clara Schumann for the piano, Joachim for the first violin, De Ahna for the second, and Müller for the 'cello. It was perfect, and I was in raptures. Madame Schumann's selection for the two concerts was a very wide one, and gave a full exhibition of her powers in every kind of music. The *Impromptu* by Schubert, Op. 90, was exquisite. It was full of passion and very difficult. The second of the *Songs without Words*, by Mendelssohn, was the most fairy-like performance. It is one of those things that must be tossed off with the greatest grace and smoothness, and it requires the most beautiful and delicate technique. She played it to perfection. The terrific Scherzo by Chopin she did splendidly, but she kept the great octave passages in the bass a little too subordinate, I thought, and did not play it quite boldly enough for my taste, though it was extremely artistic. Clara Schumann's playing is very objective. She seems to throw herself into the music, instead of letting the music take possession of her. She gives you the most exquisite pleasure with every note she touches, and has a wonderful conception and variety in her playing, but she seldom whirls you off your feet. At the second concert she was even better than at the first, if that is possible. She seemed full of fire, and when she played Bach, she ought to have been crowned with diamonds! Such *noble* playing I have never heard. In fact, you are all the time impressed with the nobility and breadth of her style, and the comprehensiveness of her treatment, and oh, if you *could* hear her *scales*! In short, there is nothing more to be desired in her playing, and she has every quality of a great artist. Many people say that Tausig is far better, but I cannot believe it. . . I send you Madame Schumann's photograph which is exactly like her. She is a large, very German-looking woman, with dark hair and superb neck and arms. At the last concert she was dressed in black velvet, low body and short sleeves, and when she struck powerful chords, those large white arms came down with a certain splendor.

By the 1870s Clara gave numerous solo recitals but she also continued to work with other artists, choosing ranking musicians who were friends and colleagues rather than "supporting" artists. She appeared regularly with Joseph and Amalie Joachim, Brahms, and Julius Stockhausen. The performers alternated solo and ensemble works and closed the program by playing together.

Though she was not the first pianist to play Bach fugues and Beethoven sonatas in public concerts, she was certainly one of the first to program such works consistently after 1840. The pattern still followed by pianists today—a work by Bach or Scarlatti, a major opus such as a Beethoven sonata followed by groups of shorter pieces by Schumann, Chopin, Mendelssohn—was pioneered by Clara.

Clara and the Music of Robert

One of Clara's great achievements was to bring the work of Robert to the attention of European concert audiences. Robert's piano works began to appear regularly on programs of the leading pianists a few years after Clara first performed them. She played almost every piano work Robert had written, and premiered most of Schumann's chamber and orchestral works that had a piano part. And most significant, Robert's symphonies and many orchestral works were first presented at concerts in which Clara was the soloist and leading attraction. Almost every program she played after their marriage included at least one Schumann work—often three or four—for solo piano, orchestra, chamber combinations, or voice.

Clara and Robert seriously discussed her interpretation of his works. He gave her many suggestions about what and when to play to best effect, emphasizing the importance of making the right choices. On December 1, 1839 he wrote:

> I am totally opposed to your doing the Novellette in A [for a Berlin concert in January 1840]—that works only as part of the whole cycle and by itself is over too quickly. . . You would certainly make the biggest effect with the second, in D. That has a beginning and an end, spins itself out nicely so that the public can follow it, and the Trio also has a good melody. Don't be angry at me because I always find fault with something, but *it is not unimportant*. I am not yet so well known or recognized that one could expect the public to accept *everything* just because it is mine. Therefore, to play the most beautiful, the most clever work is not always suitable for the masses; instead, give them those things that are more charming and brilliant. . . Just for a test, play the one in E, for my sake, and the one in D later, and see which will have more effect. If you don't want to play either, then it would be best to play the Sonata in G Minor (but *without* the Scherzo), because it develops a character that is comprehensible. Think about it, because as I said, I do not consider it unimportant to have my music played in a city like Berlin. If it is not effective, I will be the one taken to account, no matter how well you play, and that does not make me unhappy, yet it does not make me happy either.

Robert's response to Clara's playing is clearly revealed in these words, written in 1838:

> I have heard you play only twice in two years. . . It seemed to me, however, as though it were the most perfect playing one could imagine; I will not forget how you played my [Symphonic] Etudes [August 1837]. The way you portrayed them, they were absolute masterpieces—the public cannot possibly understand how to value them—but there was one person sitting in the audience, and though his heart was pounding with other feelings, at the moment his whole being paid homage to you as an artist.

In an interesting exchange with Brahms, who had urged her to give up her strenuous life as a performer, she wrote: "You regard it *only* as a way to earn money. I do not. I feel a calling to reproduce great works, above all, also of Robert, as long as I have the strength to do so. . . The practice of art is, after all, a great part of my inner self. To me, it is the very air I breathe."

Clara as Composer

Clara's creative work was praised by composers such as Mendelssohn, Chopin, Liszt—as well as by the man who later became her husband, Robert Schumann. From her letters to friends, there is evidence that Clara found composing a source of great pleasure; she stated numerous times that only a composer could achieve true immortality. Yet she herself had serious doubts about her role as a composer and was more comfortable in the world of the interpretive artist. The ambivalence she displayed was due, in part, to society's attitude toward women composers and was certainly influenced by her position as the wife of a creative genius.

From our viewpoint, she may not rank with her husband and his friends and contemporaries—Chopin, Liszt and Mendelssohn, but their esteem of her work was sincere. Both before and after their marriage, Robert encouraged and supported his wife's work; theirs was a true musical union. Robert exchanged musical ideas with her, they studied scores of Bach, Beethoven, Haydn, and Mozart together; he urged her to compose, to preserve her autographs, and to catalogue her work; he wrote to publishers on her behalf and published two of her works as supplements to the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, the music journal he edited. After Robert's death, Clara ceased composing and devoted herself to performing piano works she respected. Her time was also occupied supervising her seven children, teaching and editing Robert's music.

Until her marriage, Clara composed only works for performance at her own concerts, events that were carefully planned by Friedrich Wieck, her teacher-manager-father. Almost all of the 182 programs she gave between 1824 and 1840 boasted at least one work by the young Clara Wieck. Many of these early works were modelled on the brilliant virtuoso pieces then in her concert repertoire. Her first published works, a set of four polonaises, appeared in 1831. But by 1836 her compositions began to take on a more serious quality. Her *Soirées musicales,* Op. 6 show tendencies that were also apparent in the music of Mendelssohn and Chopin; her Piano Concerto Op. 7 is remarkably effective for the work of a 15-year-old, with its dramatic momentum and control of orchestral color. Clara turned to Robert for help with this work. The compositions of the early 1840s reflect her broadening musical

horizons, owing partly to studies undertaken with Robert. Her three songs of Op. 12 (published in Robert's Op. 37) and the six songs of Op. 13 are quiet pieces with subtle nuances. The Piano Trio, Op. 17 of 1846 is her first extended composition written in the traditional four-movement form, the fruits of her studies of the chamber works of the Classical masters and her personal experience performing the trio literature of Beethoven and Schubert.

Her last compositions, from 1853, show striking originality; in particular, the songs Op. 23 are spiced with whimsical turns of melody, rhythm and harmony. In spite of her creative talents and her overwhelming successes in other musical endeavors, Clara never had serious ambitions as a composer; 19th century Germany was distinctly inhospitable to any such ambitions in women. She wrote in her diary as early as 1839: "I once thought that I possessed creative talent, but I have given up this idea; a woman must not desire to compose—not one has been able to do it, and why should I expect to? It would be arrogance, although, indeed, my father led me into it in earlier days."

Clara as Teacher

As pianist and teacher, Clara followed the education she had received from her father Friedrich Wieck. Wieck attempted to give each student what was needed for individual growth and development. He used the best of several systems. Wieck believed that every virtuoso should know how to teach. At 12, Clara began to teach her brother Alwin and continued to teach throughout her life. The experience she gained by teaching her brother under her father's guidance served her well. When Clara went off to Paris at 19, she paid her way by giving lessons in every city in which she performed.

Eugenie, one of the Schumann daughters, has left a reminiscence of piano lessons she had with her mother:

> I remember my first lesson most distinctly. It began, like all the subsequent ones, with scales and arpeggios, and the first Study from Czerny's School of Velocity followed. I played a page of it, then my mother said, "That is all right so far, but don't you think chords sound much nicer like this?" She played the first eight bars from the wrist with all the notes of equal strength, forte, yet exquisitely mellow in tone, never stiffening the wrist for an instance, and knitting the chords rhythmically together so that the simple piece suddenly took on life and character. It was a revelation to me; my feeling for beauty of touch and rhythm was stirred into life from that moment.
>
> The study was followed by the Bach Fugue in E Minor from Vol. 1 of the *Wohltemperierte Klavier*. I learned strict legato and subtle shading of rhythm in this. My mother took endless trouble with the first few bars; but when these had been mastered, the fugue became easy, and I soon learnt to play it well enough to make it a pleasure for myself.
>
> Beethoven formed the nucleus of every lesson . . .
>
> "And now we must work at some of Papa's music," she said. . . "and I would like to start you with the *Jugend Album*." So we took each of these little gems one by one in their proper order, and I remember every word the beloved teacher said about them. These pieces would teach me rhythm and characterization; underlying ideas I might supply myself. "Whatever your father did, saw, read, would at once shape itself into music. When he read poetry, resting on the sofa after dinner, it turned into songs. When he saw you children at play, little pieces of music grew out of your games. While he was writing down the *Humoresque*, some acrobats came along and performed in front of our house; imperceptibly the music they made stole into the composition. He was always quite unconscious of these inspirations; it would be foolish to think that he had used them intentionally as an incentive. He invented their titles after they were finished. These are quite characteristic, and might help in the interpretation, but they are not necessary."

When Clara accepted a position as principal teacher in the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt at the age of 59, she committed herself to her first full-time teaching position. Reports by many of her former students indicate that although Clara based her technique on Wieck's principles, she developed her own style of teaching. She accepted only advanced students and taught mainly by example. Her students took their lessons, usually two a week, in the presence of other students so that they benefited doubly.

Clara expected her students to adhere to the standards of technique and repertoire she set for herself. Scales, arpeggios, and exercises by Clementi, Cramer, and Czerny were included in every lesson, along with piano works by Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Chopin, Haydn, Heller, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Schubert, Schumann and Weber.

Here are some of the points Clara stressed with her students:

Method of Teaching

1. Adelina de Lara, one of Clara's students, said that Clara taught mostly by playing herself. If the student's playing displeased her, she would sit down and demonstrate how it should be played.
2. Clara's method of teaching was more suggestive than explanatory (Mathilde Verne, another of Clara's students).

Technique

3. Clara invariably started her students' first lessons with scales, arpeggios and exercises.
4. For technical studies Clara used Clementi's *Gradus ad Parnassus*, Cramer's studies, and Czerny's School of Velocity, of which she brought out a selected edition.
5. Clara advocated the principle of relaxation, of which her student Carl Friedberg said: "The arms fall easily at the side, as Mme. Schumann taught, but not pressed against it."

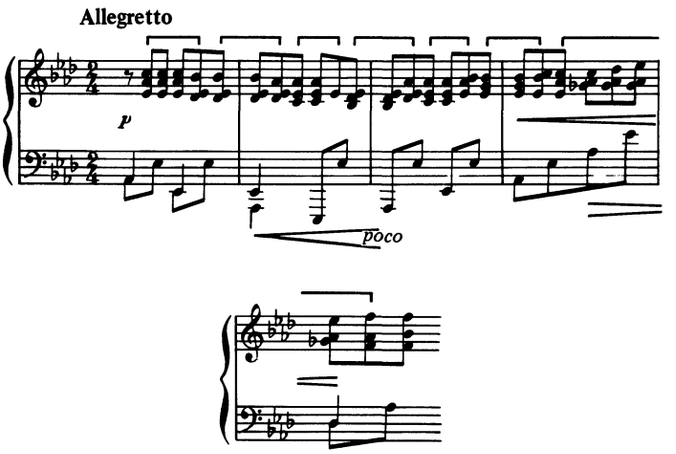
Tone and Touch

6. Her playing was distinguished pre-eminently for the beauty and nobility of her tone, and for the classic finish and grandness of her style. Her touch was deep and magnetic, and was never harsh, although powerful and satisfying (Amy Fay). The non-harshness of sound also was a major concern in Clara's teaching.

Phrasing and Articulation

7. Clara was a thorough teacher in regards to phrasing and articulation. Examining some of Clara's marked scores (at Butler University, Indianapolis, IN) shows her fastidious analysis of a musical phrase. The beginning measures of Chopin's Étude in A-flat Major (Trois Nouvelles Études) shows this careful attention.

Chopin: Étude in A♭ Major. Trois Nouvelles Études



measures 1–4.

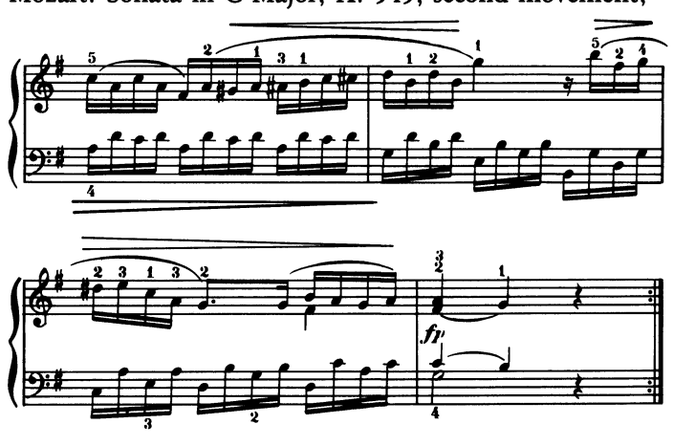
Elements of Time: Tempo, Rhythm and Rubato

8. Clara advised her students to take tempos that were not hurried nor frantic so that the intricate musical ideas in the compositions would not be lost or overlooked. She taught that the elements of time should be treated with care: tempo in moderation, rhythm as proportion, and *rubato* with graduation.

Dynamics

9. Clara did not like overstatement and would not allow *forte* and *piano* to be exaggerated into *fff* and *ppp*. Mathilde Verne reported Clara's insistence on the point that: "One can make great effect playing only *mezzo-forte*, *piano* and *pianissimo*." She also suggested that one should follow the natural rise and fall of the musical line with slight crescendo and diminuendo.

Mozart: Sonata in C Major, K. 545, second movement,



measures 13–16

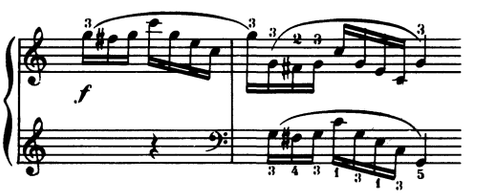
Ornamentation

10. Clara taught that trills, grace notes, and turns should be played on the beat in baroque and classical compositions. The ends of trills received careful attention.

Fingering

11. Clara made many finger markings in the scores of her student Emma Schmidt, who apparently needed such help. Clara herself possessed a pair of large, supple hands, which stretched to tenths on the keyboard. She did not recommend fancy fingering: the most basic one with the least fuss would be sufficient. In the next example, the 3–3 fingering in the leap of an octave, from G^2 to G^1, is an ingenious phrasing device. This arbitrary finger leap makes the separation of the two phrases automatic.

Mozart: Sonata in C Major, K. 279, first movement,

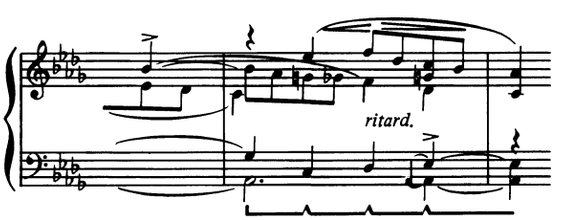


measures 55–56

Pedaling

12. Clara was not a heavy-footed pianist. Her use of the pedal was judicious and temperate. When she recommended using the pedal, she made sure the musical line would not be blurred and the sonority would not be muddy.

Schumann: Novellette in D Minor, Op. 21, No. 1,



measures 62–64

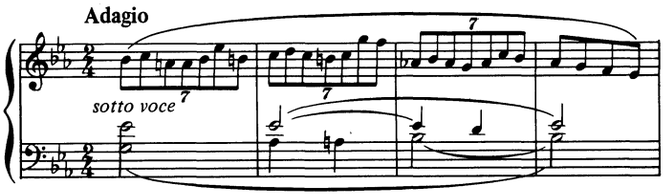
Memorization

13. Clara did not like to encourage her students to play from memory, even in public. De Lara remembered that Clara implored her not to take the risk of playing the Rubinstein D Minor Concerto without the score. Yet interestingly, Clara was one of the first pianists to play without notes in public. As her memory deteriorated she became more cautious and aware of the risks one faced in playing from memory. She told Joseph Joachim in 1858: "Just imagine, I cannot give a single concert at which I do not play one piece after the other in an agony of terror because my memory threatens to fail me, and this fear torments me for days beforehand."

Robert's Piano Music

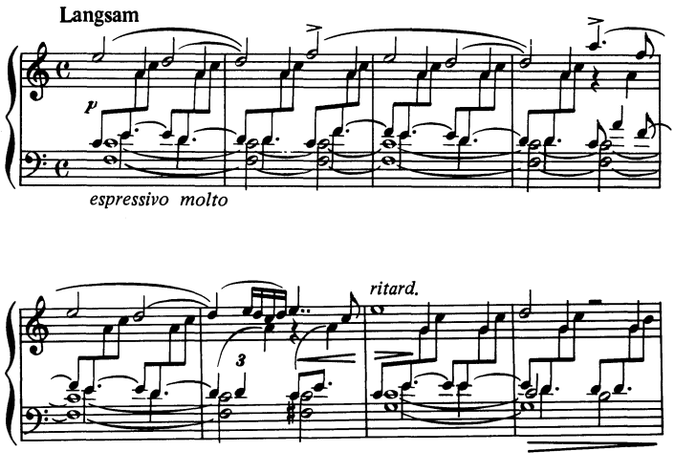
Robert's picturesque piano music is full of extra-musical inspiration such as poetry, the visual arts of philosophy. In his coloristic employment of the piano he gave us piano cycles which are unlike anything else created by any other composer. These piano cycles proved to be the perfect means for expressing himself. Robert was always able to project a sense of the *unreal* in his writing. Within two bars he can place us in the middle of a scene, tell a story, and continually interrupt it with a sigh or a phrase of innermost longing. And, somehow, the whole work, whether it is one page or 30 minutes, acquires a strange unity, and for no other reason than that all of it was projected by one spirit. There are plenty of short piano pieces—standing individually or tied together in sets—written in the last 150 years. But it would be difficult to find a "suite," lasting a good half hour and having no other unifying force than the composer's musical personality, as is the case with *Kreisleriana*. Many of Robert's piano cycles are made up of delightful miniatures, as for example *Papillons*, *Carnaval*, and *Kinderscenen*; all have seemingly self-explanatory titles reminiscent of program notes. Most of these cycles have a wide and instant appeal.

Schumann's piano music contains a unique blend of epic, lyric and dramatic qualities. There is an element in his piano texture that resembles human speech more closely than music written before or after him. A fine example of a "speaking piece" is "Eusebius" from *Carnaval*:



measures 1–4

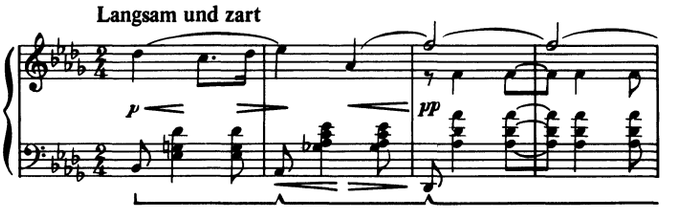
The "Epilogue" from the *Arabesque*, Op. 18, which stands almost completely outside the piece, uses one of Robert's most familiar "calling cards:" the turn and a sigh of longing and resignation.



measures 209–216

This phrase is truly designed for the piano; the *rubato* treatment it requires would never sound quite so natural on another instrument.

Schumann liked to use "open-ended" ideas and knew how to employ them successfully. The opening phrase of *Warum?* is a good example. Its opening phrase is also its ending.



measures 1–4

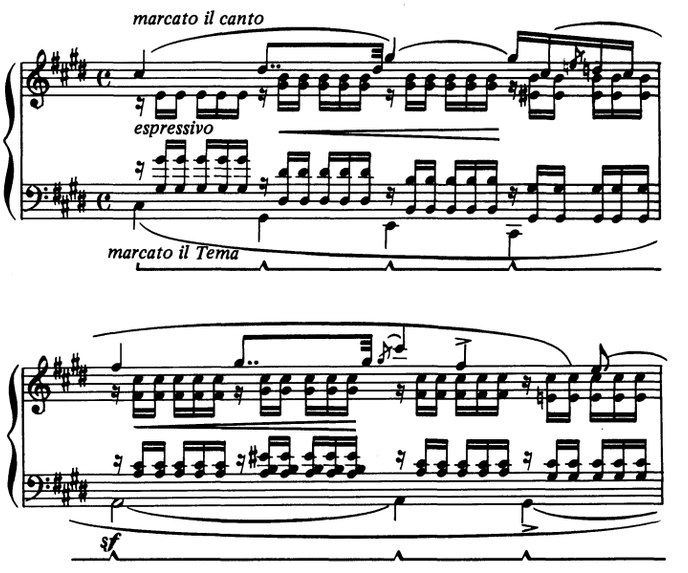
Schumann also made distinct contributions to the development of piano music in the areas of color and technical demands. In the former, he greatly expanded the means then available and opened the door to a world of unsuspected possibilities; in the latter, he pushed the limits well beyond what then seemed possible.

Interpreting Robert's Piano Music

In comparing Clara's playing with a contemporary French pianist, Anna deBelleville, Robert wrote: "The playing of Belleville is technically the finer of the two; Clara's is more impassioned. The tone of Belleville flatters, but does not penetrate the ear; that of Clara reached the heart. Anna is a poetess; Clara is poetry itself."

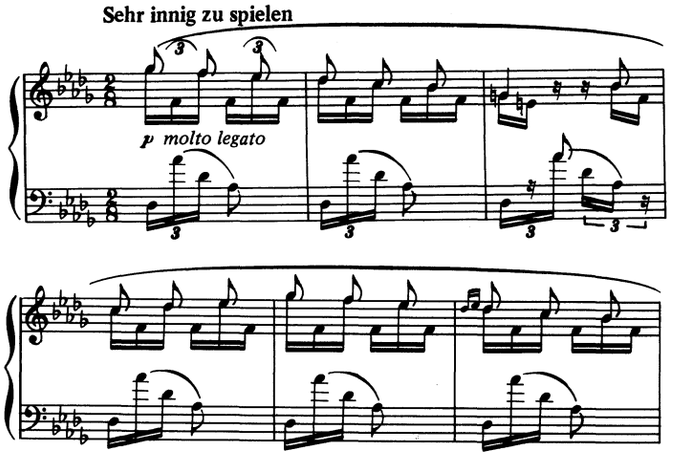
Robert made a deep and detailed study of the piano, the result of which was a new development in writing for the instrument. In his hands the piano was made to reproduce not only the polyphony of the orchestra, as in the *Études Symphoniques*, Op. 13, but a vast scale of tonal effects not previously conceived.

Variation II



measures 1–2

In "Des Abends" from *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 12, he creates a perfect impression of a quiet evening: nature at rest.

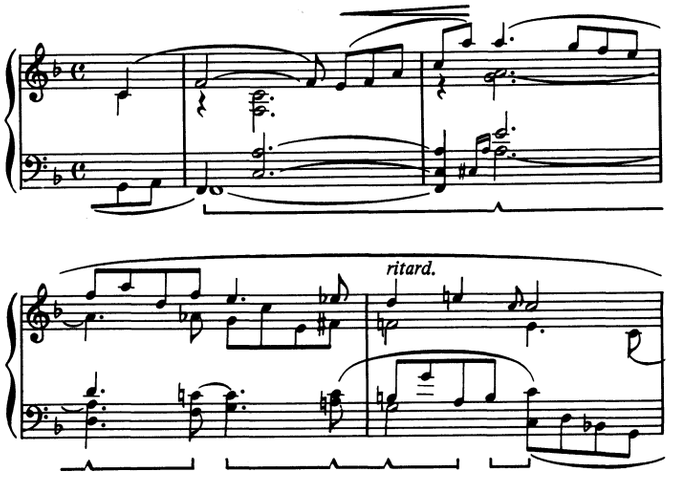


measures 1–6

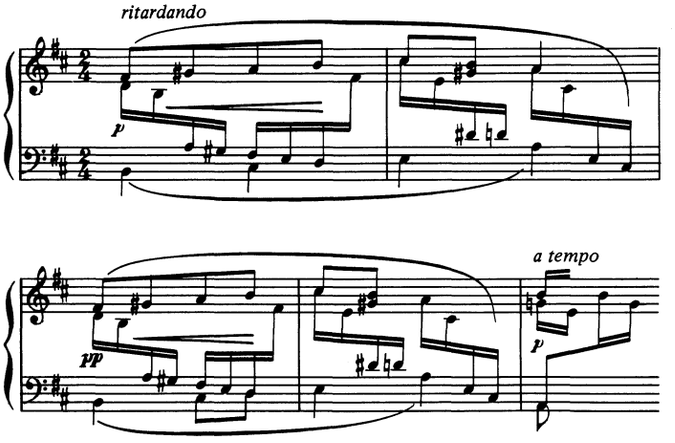
Good Schumann interpretation requires a full and round tone, a fine control capable of both a singing projection, as well as delicate nuances and subtle contrasts, together with a firm and virile touch, for even in the lyrical and tender passages there should be no trace of shyness. There must be a thoughtful approach to the question of pedaling. Schumann used the damper pedal generously but frequently did not indicate it—sometimes he indicates only *mit pedal*—with pedal. In this collection, both Clara and Robert's pedal indications are identified in footnotes and incorporated into the editorial pedal indications.

Schumann frequently used metronome or tempo marks to indicate the speeds he wanted, but many times tempos have to be altered to suit the acoustic conditions of the room. He was not always thoughtful, or even logical when indicating his tempos.

Robert noted, "Dragging and hurrying are equally grave faults." An exaggerated *ritenuto* or *ritardando* can destroy the essential character of a piece, as in "*Träumerei*" or "*Bittendes Kind*" from *Kinderscenen*, where the aim is to capture the simple and ephemeral moods of childhood.



Träumerei, measures 4–8



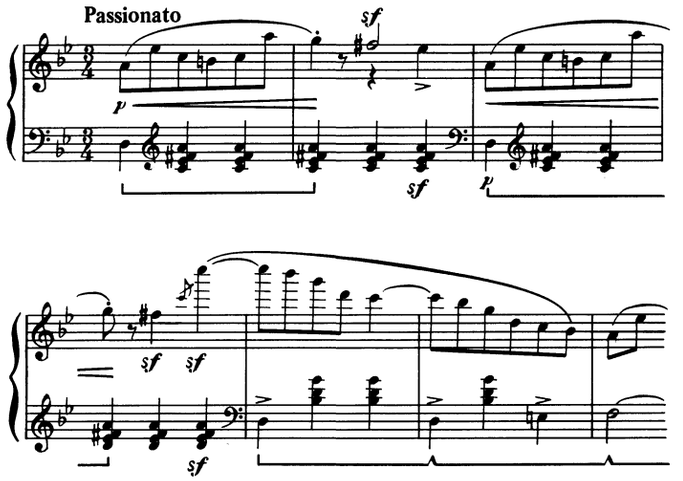
Bittendes Kind, measures 9–13

This slowing down of tempo is one of the marked characteristics of Schumann's piano compositions, and appears in many works. He frequently forgets to add "*a tempo*" after a *ritardando*. Intelligent discrimination must be used when playing these passages to avoid over-emphasis and lingering sentimentality. A fine performance should contain the correct proportion of enthusiasm and restraint.

The problem of the length of the pause between sections is very important in Schumann's piano works because so many of them consist of a dozen or more linked movements—in piano cycles such as the "Abegg" Variations, *Papillons*, *Carnaval*, *Kinderscenen*, etc. The performer must be aware that each miniature is complete in itself, with its own particular musical structure, tempo and mood. They also vary in length, and it is this richness and variety of musical imagination which gives them their appeal and fascination for both performer and audience. Too long a pause between each cameo will weaken the sense of continuity or, where the pieces are of opposing style and tempo, could weaken the contrast. Too short a pause will cause overcrowding and blur the impact. Each pause both links and separates, and has to be just long enough to allow the listener and the player to gain a complete impression of one miniature before his interest becomes involved in its equally enchanting neighbor.

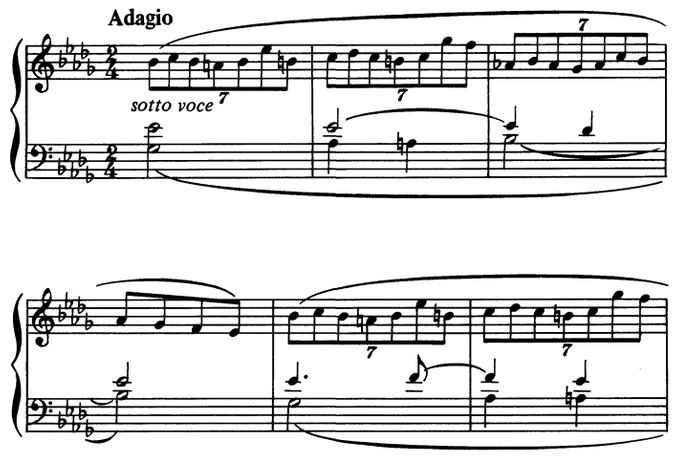
Schumann frequently used German instead of the accepted Italian for many of his musical directions, and it is not easy to understand his exact intention unless the performer has a good knowledge of German. For this reason, I have always included an English translation with the German directions. Even when Schumann used Italian, the meaning is not always clear.

To know Schumann, the performer must understand his intimate world. Robert retreated to this inner world to escape the harsh reality of everyday living. It is a fascinating world, full of striking contrasts and charged with the outpourings of pent-up emotions and passions. Here we meet his dual self: Florestan, the quick, impetuous, impatient, bouncing extrovert that he could never be in real life:



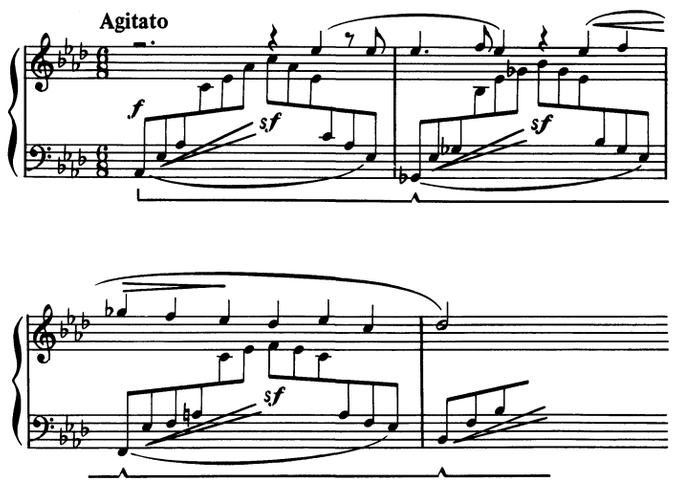
Carnaval, Op. 9, measures 1–7

and Eusebius, the melancholic, shy, rather timid dreamer, his more real self:



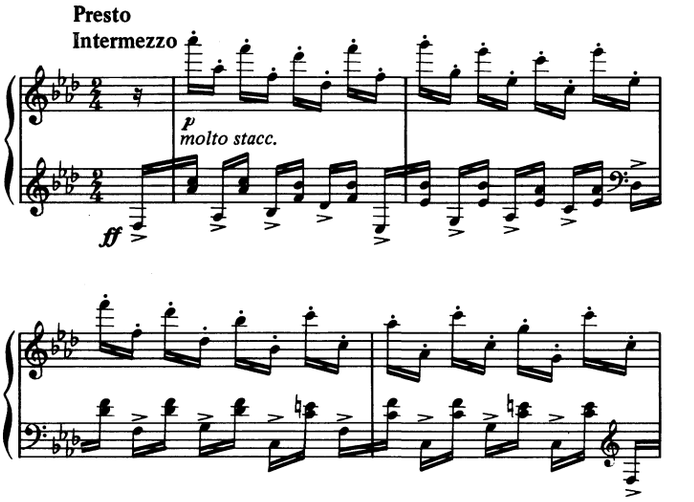
Carnaval, Op. 9, measures 1–6

We find, also, his friends and musical contemporaries, Chopin:



Carnaval, Op. 9, measures 1–4

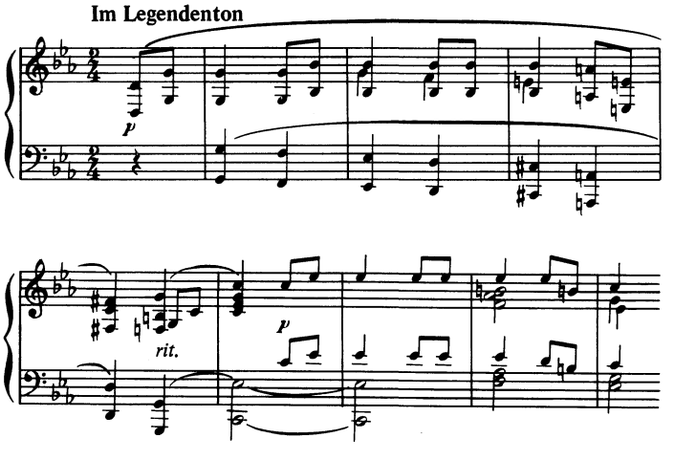
and Paganini, whose dazzling virtuosity on the violin is now transferred to the piano:



Carnaval, Op. 9, measures 1–4

It is Robert's world of make-believe, of masked balls, of Carnival and romance. It is also the world of the "Davidsbündler" (David's League), where the new enlightened generation of young musicians challenges and defeats the archaic, but still enthroned, establishment of the old musical world, the "Philistines."

To make all of this come alive, the performer should be a pianist who is thoroughly convinced of the idea that the piano can be made to express feeling. He/she should also have the musical intelligence and artistic finesse to know how and when to use each of its special effects to fulfill Robert's intentions. The fine Schumann performer must be able to identify with Robert when he said: "Music is the ability to express emotions audibly; it is the spiritual language of emotion." Robert also repeatedly emphasized the spirituality of music. "The art in art is to spiritualize matter so that everything material is forgotten," and he endowed with this quality some of his noblest compositions, as for example the "Im Legendenton" (in the style of a legend) section of the first movement of the Fantasie in C, Op. 17:



Fantasie in C, Op. 17, measures 129–136
1st movement

The outstanding Schumann interpreter must be able to get rid of his daily problems and soar with Robert in his moments of spiritual exaltation and union with God. Schumann once said: "Try to produce the same impression with a composition as that which the composer aimed at; no one should attempt more; anything beyond it is a mere caricature." This kind of performer cannot fail to make his own mark on the music he is playing, even though he sincerely thinks of himself as the vehicle through which the composer speaks. Something of himself will, in spite of everything, be interwoven in the music.

In one of Schumann's fascinating letters, he touches on one of the most complex problems in musical interpretation. He writes: "The reason why many of my compositions are difficult to understand is that they are bound up with my remote associations, and often very much so. Everything of importance in a lifetime takes hold of me, and I must express it in musical form." Thus, one of the problems of Schumann interpretation is attributed—by the man who ought to know best—to the underlying associations of his musical fantasy. In Schumann's own view, the Schumann interpreter must first grasp the character of his scores from the musical content—from the very structure of the score. Schumann grants that delving into the poetic background will stimulate the performer's thought and fancy. Yet he insists, in his writings on the subject, that it is the music that must always remain the primary concern of the interpreter. If we trace Schumann's ideas further, we see how he appreciates the 18th-century "Doctrine of Affections," with the following viewpoint on tempo:

> You know how I dislike quarreling about tempo, and how for me only the inner measure of the movement is conclusive. Thus, an allegro of one who is cold by nature always sounds lazier than a slow tempo by one of sanguine temperament. With the orchestra, however, the proportions are decisive. Stronger and denser masses are capable of bringing out the detail, as well as the whole with more emphasis and importance; whereas, with smaller and finer units, one must compensate for the lack of resonance by pushing forward in the tempo.

These remarks about tempo could have easily come from the pen of 18th-century theorists Quantz or Mattheson. And Schumann's closeness to the "Doctrine of Affections" (*Affektenlehre*) is irrefutably proven by his numerous literary interpretations of music, such as that of Carl Loewe's piano sonata, in which he sees "a green meadow and butterflies," or his vision in Schubert's marches of the "old Austrian veterans jogging along with ham and sausages on their bayonets."

Let me summarize Schumann's statements for the guidance of today's Schumann performer. Clearly, in properly projecting musical ideas of poetic or pictorial background, the interpreter should inquire into the sources of Schumann's fantasies. Yet in no way should the fantasy-provoking title of the piece be confused with an extraneous story of the music. Also, Schumann's score, being more detailed than that of his predecessors, indicates more specifically what he wants conveyed in sound. Even so, no amount of verbal indications from the composer, joined with specific musical directions, can cover the whole picture, and it is here that room is left for the personal contribution of the performer. The true Schumann interpreter, portraying the composer's world of dreams and fantasies on the piano, does more than simply outline the score. He first makes the hidden poetic idea of the work his own, then he projects the musical structure of the score as authentically as possible.

Robert and the Metronome

Schumann made considerable effort to add metronome marks to his works. In the first editions of his music he was careful to add metronome marks at the page-proof stage. In numerous manuscripts (for example *Kinderscenen*, *Kreisleriana*, and *Nachtstücke*) there are no metronome marks, though these appear later when the work was printed. In other manuscripts their provision is foreseen, thus (♩=) appears with the mark not yet added. In still others, they are indicated in pencil, probably for further checking, and then altered in the published edition.

During Robert's life there was no indication that his metronome was faulty. But within a few years of his death the rumor to this effect was being circulated. Schumann felt his own metronome was correct as is seen in a letter he wrote to the composer Ferdinand Böhme who had sent him a new quartet:

> Düsseldorf
> February 8, 1853
>
> Dear Sir,
>
> . . . the composition does you great credit, and I was very pleased at your intention of dedicating it to me.
>
> Have you a correct metronome? All of the tempi appear to me far too quick. Mine is correct. It always gives as many beats to the minute as the number on which the weight is placed. For instance, if the number is 50, it gives 50 beats to the minute; if 60—60. And, as far as I know, this is the test of correctness. Perhaps you would try your metronome in this respect.
>
> Robert Schumann[1]

As far as we know, no metronome of Schumann has survived to the present day. The possibility that Robert's metronome was defective may have first been suggested after his death by Clara. In April of 1861 she was discussing with Brahms her plan to revise Robert's metronome markings. Hans von Bülow (who was a friend of Brahms and perhaps heard it from him) seems to have been the first to make the suggestion in print. In his preface to Cramer's studies published in 1869, Bülow wrote: ". . . it is generally held that Schumann used a defective metronome for an entire creative period." Soon Bülow's suggestion became hard fact. Perhaps this idea would not have persisted were it not for the fact that in her later editions of Robert's music, Clara made extensive changes in his metronome markings, which seemed to confirm the rumor that Schumann's metronome had been faulty.

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[1]*Robert Schumann's Briefe: neue Folge,* ed. F. Gustav Jansen (Leipzig, 1886).

The one time Brahms and Clara argued was over Clara's insistence on adding new metronome marks to Robert's piano music. Brahms advised Clara to play over the works for at least a year before she added new metronome marks.

At the Piano with Robert and Clara Schumann uses Robert's metronome marks when they are available. Clara's and the editor's are clearly identified.

Robert and the "Neue Zeitschrift für Musik"

The major composers of the 19th century wrote a great deal about music. Before Schumann there was Carl Maria von Weber who was a journalist for 40 years. The prose writings of Franz Liszt come to nine volumes in the 1880–82 German edition. Wagner turned out a number of ponderous and propagandistic treatises.

Schumann felt that German musical taste in the early 1830s was in bad shape. He claimed that the concert and opera stage in Germany had been full of "foreign hackwork" since the later years of Beethoven. Robert felt the musical periodical press ought to put up resistance to this situation. And since they did not, he got together a group of "cultivated young people" and began his own journal. In June of 1833 he mentioned it for the first time:

> A group of cultivated young people, mostly music students, have formed a kind of circle around me, and I have in turn drawn it about the Wieck house. For the most part we are preoccupied with the notion of a major new musical journal. Hofmeister will be the publisher, and the prospectus and the announcement of it will appear within the next month.

On April 3rd, 1834 the first issue of the journal appeared, "published by a society of artists and friends of art," with the title *Neue Leipziger Zeitschrift für Musik* (New Leipzig Journal of Music). Towards the end of 1834 Schumann managed to gain official control of the journal and the first issue of 1835 appeared as *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (New Journal of Music), under the direction of Schumann. It remained that way for 10 years. This journal consisted of varied articles on musical subjects, reviews of published music, concerts, and occasionally books, correspondence reports from other cities, and in a separate section, advertisements. It came out twice weekly. Each issue began with an epigraph, taken from Shakespeare, Goethe, Hölderlin, Jean Paul, or some other of Schumann's favorite writers. In its style of criticism, the *Neue Zeitschrift* differed most radically from the other musical periodicals.

Robert exercised close editorial control over the *Neue Zeitschrift* for nearly 10 years, the years of his greatest productivity as a composer. He wrote approximately 1,000 pages for the journal, conducted a huge volume of correspondence on its behalf, did much of the proofreading himself, and of course during all these years articulated his ideas on music with an honest enthusiasm. He spoke out in strong support of Berlioz, Brahms, Chopin, and Schubert, as well as some lesser known composers such as William Sterndale Bennett and Ferdinand Hiller.

The impact of the *Neue Zeitschrift* experience on Schumann was immense. His duties as editor and critic forced him to study hundreds of compositions that he otherwise might never have known. As editor he was obliged to take notice of issues in music that extended far beyond his small part of Germany. In this way the *Neue Zeitschrift* contributed tremendously to Robert's continuing education and to the broadening of his horizons. The *Neue Zeitschrift* also helped publicize Robert's piano music since it was impossible for him to present it after his hand accident in 1832. Robert ruined his right index finger for life while experimenting with a device intended to strengthen his fingers, and thereafter always played with his finger remaining in the air. In fact, Schumann was better known, during most of his career, as a writer than as a composer. Berlioz, Chopin, and Liszt all came to know Schumann first as editor of the *Neue Zeitschrift*, and later, as the husband of the much more famous Clara Wieck.

As editor and critic, Robert finally achieved a widespread reputation and he became known as Europe's foremost spokesman for romantic music.

Robert as Critic

As a music critic, Schumann has numerous distinctions, especially his first review concerning Chopin ("Hats off, gentlemen, a genius!"), and his final review concerning the promise of the young Brahms. Some of Robert's hits were spectacular, but there were real misses when he championed such composers as Bennett, Gade, Henselt, Hirschbach, etc. His early criticism is original, imaginative and, for its time, a uniquely picturesque approach. The Chopin review, published in the *Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung* of Leipzig on December 7, 1831, concerned only the Variations for Piano and Orchestra on "La ci darem la mano" from *Don Giovanni*, Op. 2, composed in 1827 when Chopin was 17. This review, entitled "An Opus 2," tells us a great deal about the reviewer:

> Eusebius dropped by one evening, not long ago. He entered quietly, his pale features brightened by that enigmatic smile with which he likes to excite curiosity. Florestan and I were seated at the piano. He, as you know, is one of those rare musical persons who seem to anticipate everything that is new, of the future and extraordinary. . . This time, however, there was a surprise in store even for him. With the words 'Hats off, gentlemen, a genius!' Eusebius spread out before us a piece of music.
>
> We were not allowed to see the title. I turned the pages idly; there is something magical about this secret enjoyment of music unheard. It seems to me, moreover, that every composer has his own musical handwriting. Beethoven looks different on paper from Mozart, just as Jean Paul's prose differs from Goethe's. Here, however, it was as if I were being stared at oddly by strange eyes—eyes of flowers, basilisks, peacocks, maidens. In certain places it became clearer—I thought I could discern Mozart's 'La ci darem la mano' being woven through a hundred chords, Leporello winking at me, and Don Giovanni hurrying by in a white cloak. . .

Continuing in the same vein, Schumann links the variations to characters and incidents in the opera.

> The Adagio is in B-flat minor to be sure, but I [Floristan] can think of nothing more appropriate. It seems to imply

> a moral admonition to the Don. It's naughty, of course, but also delightful, that Leporello should be eavesdropping—laughing and mocking from behind bushes; that oboes and clarinets should pour forth their charming seduction and that B-flat major, in full bloom, should signal the first amorous kiss.

The review closed with Julius, the pseudonymous narrator, telling Florestan good night and observing:

> These private feelings may well be praiseworthy, if rather subjective; but obvious as Chopin's genius may be, I, too, bow my head to such inspiration, such high endeavor, such mastery!

We actually learn more about Schumann in this review than we learn about Chopin and his variations. We can immediately see the impressionable character of Robert's approach and reaction to music as well as the multi-faceted nature of his complex and elusive personality.

His notice heralding Brahms in 1853 is as follows:

> Seated at the piano, he [Brahms] began to disclose most wondrous regions. It was also most wondrous playing, which made of the piano an orchestra of mourning and jubilant voices. There were sonatas, more like disguised symphonies; songs whose poetry would be intelligible even to one who didn't know the words, although a profound vocal line flows through them all; a few piano pieces, partly of a demoniac character, charmingly formed; then sonatas for violin and piano, string quartets, etc.—all so different one from another that they seemed to flow from separate sources. And finally it seemed as though he himself, a surging stream incarnate, swept them all together into a single waterfall, sending aloft a peaceful rainbow above the turbulent waves, flanked on the shores by playful butterflies and the voices of nightingales. . .

Robert's uninhibited exuberance was inspired here by Jean Paul (Richter) and E.T.A. Hoffmann, who both made frequent excessive use of high-flown metaphor, obscure allusion, coy disguise and evasion, and ambiguous syntax. Fortunately, this tendency to rhetorical extravagance diminished over the years.

We should remember that Robert was more solidly grounded in literature than in music, and literary tendencies had been apparent from his earliest childhood. His musical training, by comparison, was superficial and haphazard. Schumann eventually became a more traditional and professional music critic than one would ever have expected from the author of "An Opus 2."

Schumann's originality as a critic is most obvious in what may be called an interpretive approach to music appreciation. He continually heard music in terms of persons, pictures, experiences, incidents, reminiscences, dreams, etc. Before his time, music criticism had been mainly concerned with craftsmanship. The critic assessed the musician's accomplishment, whether as composer or executant, in technical terms against conventional criteria of performance. Robert, more than any critic before him, listened to music and evaluated it with the ears and imagination of a poet. His wide reading and literary enthusiasm had much to do with this. This way of listening to music shortly led to a new approach to performance and to a kind of composition which was either explicitly programmatic or which assumed an "interpretive" performance.

No music critic before or after Schumann has had a better grasp of the sheer craft of composition, not even Paul Hindemith, in our own century. Indeed, it was in his craftsman's appreciation and assessment of craftsmanship that Schumann stands alone.

About the Series and this Edition

The great American composer, Charles Ives, once said: "You cannot put art off in a corner and hope for it to have vitality and substance." So it is that the music of the composers represented in this series, *At the Piano with* Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Liszt, Mozart, etc., is only a part, albeit a very important part, of their lives and times. The editor has tried to present not only a broad survey of their wonderful piano music, but to present it in a historical setting. The life and work of the composers represented are part of the fabric of general Western European cultural history, and have significance as well in such areas as evolution of the dance, folklore, and even literature, painting, sculpture, and architecture of their particular time.

This edition, *At the Piano with Robert and Clara Schumann*, is a performing critical edition aimed at helping the pianist perform the music in a stylistically acceptable manner. The collection stresses the necessity for stylistic understanding of the compositions and provides a historical and performance practice approach.

I have used the autographs, earliest editions, and the most reliable sources I could locate as the basis for this edition. Sources for each piece are listed in the notes "About the Pieces." The script in Schumann's autographs is extremely legible, with clearly indicated phrasing, dynamics and even a few pedal indications. I have identified Clara's and Robert's pedal indications in footnotes and have incorporated them into the editorial pedal marks.

Robert's metronome markings are identified. Clara did not use metronome markings in any of the pieces included in this collection.

All fingering is editorial unless otherwise indicated. Ornaments are realized either in the score or the footnotes. Indications in parentheses are editorial. Pieces are listed in alphabetical order.

The editor expresses his thanks to the libraries in Zwickau, Leipzig and Paris, and to the curator of the Wiede Collection for their assistance in the preparatrion of this edition.

This edition is dedicated to Max Camp, with admiration and appreciation.

Maurice Hinson

ABOUT THE PIECES

Works by Clara (Wieck) Schumann

Larghetto, Op. 15 *Page 16*

This piece is from the *Quatre Pièces fugitives pour le pianoforte* published at the same time as Op. 14. They date back to 1840–44 and are unrelated works dedicated to Clara's half-sister, Marie Wieck, then about 13 years old and beginning a concert career. The first three *Pièces fugitives* are character pieces similar in style to that of the three Romances of her Op. 11. The autograph of the fourth piece, an elfin-like *scherzo*, shows that it is identical with the scherzo movement of an unpublished *sonatina* presented to Robert for Christmas 1841. This *Larghetto* requires *cantabile* lines throughout with careful attention to the pedal. It is written in three-part form: **A** = measures 1–16; **B** = 17–30; **A** = 31–45; **Coda** = 45 to the end. Source: first edition published by Breitkopf and Härtel in 1845; Plate number 7215.

Mazurka, Op. 6 No. 3 *Page 18*

This piece is from the *Soirées musicales*, Op. 6, that date back to 1836. This opus is dedicated to Henriette Voigt, a Leipzig music lover and wife of Carl Voigt, one of Leipzig's wealthiest patrons. Robert dedicated his Sonata in G minor to her. The *Soirées musicales* reflect the influence of Chopin and Mendelssohn, and though the overall style might be considered imitative, the pieces show much skill and imagination. This *Mazurka* is full of chromatic turns, unexpected chords, frisky grace notes, clever rhythmic figuration, and phrase elisions. The secret of the *mazurka* rhythm is the peculiar accent on the third beat, resulting sometimes in three-quarters plus one-sixteenth. Such a performance involves a slight delay before the third beat, which gives the effect of prolonging the second beat. Take plenty of time in measure 83. Source: first edition published by Hofmeister in Leipzig in 1836; Plate number 2148.

Präludium und Fuga, Op. 16, No. 2 *Page 21*

The three Preludes and Fugues, Op. 16, date back to 1845 and are basically the results of a joint study of counterpoint with Robert during that year. Clara wrote in her diary on January 23, 1845: "Today we began contrapuntal studies that gave me much pleasure despite its difficulty; for I saw that I could write an original fugue, something I had not dreamed possible, and then I saw more, as we regularly continued our study daily." These preludes and fugues were probably inspired by the Mendelssohn Preludes and Fugues, Op. 35, composed in 1836–37, and great favorites of Clara. Clara's preludes and fugues demonstrate her excellent skill in writing in a different style. Her Prelude is quiet and in the style of a song without words. Aim for a singing *legato* line in the right-hand over a light left-hand continuous *portato*. The editor's pedaling adds color to the sonority. The *Andante* Fugue is a gentle piece in strict four-voice writing. A three-measure subject features the interval of a fourth. Strive for a *legato* without use of the pedal. Be especially careful of the division of the inner voice between the hands in measures 15–16 and 24. Source: first edition published by Breitkopf and Härtel, Leipzig, in 1845; Plate number 7334.

Romance, Op. 5, No. 3 *Page 25*

This wistful and melancholy piece is from the larger set entitled *Quatre Pièces caractéristiques*, Op. 5, written in 1835. They are dedicated to Sophie Kaskel, a Dresden friend of Clara's. This charming *Romance*, with its poignant turns from B major to D Major, is the most original piece in this set. Stretch the tempo of the turns in measures 28, 36 and 42. They must never sound rushed. The term *diluendo* at measure 65 means "dying away into silence"—to the end of the piece. The character indication at the beginning, *Andante con sentimento* should be translated as "a quiet, peaceful tempo with feeling." Pick up the tempo in the middle section (measure 26 forward) a little bit, but return to the opening tempo at measure 52. A controlled *legato* with fairly flat fingers throughout will provide the necessary resilience and help keep the fingers in continuous contact with the keys. Source: published with Op. 6, as *10 Pièces caractéristiques*, Hofmeister, Leipzig, in 1838; Plate numbers 2148, 2308.

Toccatina, Op. 6, No. 1 *Page 28*

This character piece is from the larger set, *Soirées musicales*, composed in 1836. Robert described Clara's Op. 6 in the September 12, 1837 edition of the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* as "like the buds before the wings of color are exploded into open splendor, captivating and significant to view, like all things that contain the future within themselves." The pedal must be used with great discretion in the **A** sections (measures 1–47, and 132 to the end of the piece). It can be used more liberally in the **B** section (measures 48–131). The **A** sections must be kept light and clear, while the **B** section's greatest difficulty lies in keeping the inner undulating eighths quiet and *legato*. Be sure the right hand melody soars in the **B** section. The one bar rest at measure 158 must be arrived at abruptly, to underscore the element of surprise. Source: published by Hofmeister, Leipzig, in 1836, Plate number 2148.

Variations on a Theme of Robert Schumann, Op. 20 *Page 33*

This work, Clara's most ambitious for solo piano, was composed in May and June of 1853 and is dedicated to Robert. Based on the theme from Robert's first *Bunte Blätter,* Op. 99, this same theme was used by Brahms as the basis for his set of variations, Op. 9, composed in the summer of 1853. Following the initial statement of the 24 measure theme, *Variation 1* uses the original melody supported by a *legato* triplet accompaniment. *Variation 2* is more lively, with repeated chords, and exploits a wider range of the keyboard with some chromaticism. *Variation 3* is a chorale with some lovely inner voicings. *Variation 4*

states the theme in left-hand chords while the right hand displays brilliant scale and arpeggio figuration. *Variation 5* displays the theme in full right-hand chords over left-hand octave and scale figurations. *Variation 6* is a natural flowing four-voice canon. *Variation 7* sets forth the theme against a fleeting accompaniment divided between the hands. A *molto espressivo* section in F-sharp major leads to a return of *Variation 3* in its entirety and is followed by a *calando* coda using the same fleeting accompanimental material from *Variation 7*. This work contains flowing melodies, vivid harmonies, interesting rhythms, and some beautiful pedal effects. Its innate charm and fine construction make it an ideal work for a recital program. Source: Breitkopf and Härtel edition of 1854; Plate number 8944.

Works by
Robert Schumann

From *Album Leaves*, Op. 124

No. 1, ***"Impromptu"*** *Page 43*

Album Leaves (*Albumblätter*) is a collection of 20 pieces, some dating back to 1832. Robert prepared the set for publication in 1854. The opus was dedicated to Alma von Wasielewski, wife of a German violinist and biographer of Schumann. This "Impromptu" is similar in size and style to many of Chopin's miniatures. It was composed in 1832, before Chopin had begun his preludes. A constant flow of 16th notes is supported by a strong driving force. Similar patterns are continuously repeated and tend to accelerate. The low register of measures 17–25 makes clarity and voicing difficult. Left hand *legato* thirds and chromatic movement provide a challenge. Measures 23–26 are especially effective because of the quiet dynamics and lovely harmonies.

No. 3, ***"Scherzino"*** *Page 45*

This lively piece was composed in 1832 and was perhaps originally intended for *Papillons,* Op. 2 . The **A B A** form uses a dance-like *scherzo* to open and close the piece, and a *legato trio* with interesting cross-rhythms in the **B** section. This **B** section wanders to and from distant keys by way of chromatic modulation. Some of the technical problems involve octaves in scalar passage work, syncopation, melody and accompaniment in the same hand, and *legato-staccato* touch contrasts.

No. 7, ***"Ländler"*** *Page 46*

Syncopation, phrasing, and ties all add to the rhythmic interest of this usually stable dance form. Of the three eight-measure phrases, the second with its syncopations should flow with an inner sense of rhythm and a careful touch. Accidentals, ties and notes jumping from one staff to another make reading much more difficult than playing. Light grace-notes (before the beat) and a detached touch at the end add to the light-hearted character. The *Ländler* reflects the Schubertian dance influence on Robert. This short piece, composed in 1836, requires a variety of touches, and careful attention must be given to arpeggiated chords, syncopation, and two-note slurs. Source for *Albumblätter*: first edition published in 1854 by F. W. Arnold, Elberfeld; Plate numbers 355–358.

Arabeske, Op. 18 *Page 47*

An *Arabeske* (German), *Arabesque* (French), is an ornament characteristic of Arabic art and architecture; hence, similarly decorative or florid musical material or a composition employing such material. The infectious melody of this happy, carefree *Arabeske* (composed in 1839) almost plays itself. Nevertheless, it will be spoiled if the performer does not articulate clearly the accompaniment figure, which is divided between the hands. But do not accent the dotted eighth notes. The delicate and pianistic **A** section (measures 1–40; 104–144, 168–208) is heard in its entirety three times. Vary each repetition slightly. Use the pedal judiciously. The following *Minore I* sounds quite new, but its melody is derived from that of the beginning. The phrases again shape themselves, and the pianist only has to observe the dynamic markings with sensitivity in order to grasp the whole character of the section. The brief interlude (measures 89–104) before the return of the first part is very characteristic of Shumann's "Eusebius mood." The sign *ritard.*, so frequently used in this section, essentially means *rubato,* and applies only to the measure over which it stands. Do not ignore the reference in measure 104 to the rhythmic figure in measures 11 and 15, and give room at the end for this figure to begin engagingly the return to the first section. The *Minore II* is more fiery, in spite of the composer's tempo indication, "a little slower." The snap of the up-beat is sharpened by the 16th rest, and the figure of the accompaniment adds the same rhythmic propulsion to the exuberant upward sweep of the melody. Keep the 16ths consistently short. The poetic and reflective closing coda (measures 209 to the end), which stands almost completely outside the piece and uses new material, requires imaginative shading of its appealing melody, but gives no trouble if the many ties are carefully observed. The triplet in measure 214 occupies exactly half a measure, and will easily fall into place if it is so spaced. Make the figure of the up-beat (measure 222), which forms the final phrase, broad and eloquent. Measure 223 is not merely an arpeggio; every note must ring, and die. Delay a little before playing the final low C. This *Arabeske,* which is in rondo form (**A B A C A** plus coda), is a piece of the utmost chasteness and simplicity. Robert declared in fun that he had composed it in order to endear himself to the ladies of Vienna. He overshot his mark, since it has endeared Schumann to generations of pianists and music lovers all over the world. Source: original edition published by Mechetti of Vienna; Plate number 3130.

"Chopin" from *Carnaval*, Op. 9, No. 13 *Page 55*

This great piano cycle was composed in 1834–35. "Chopin" is No. 13 of the 22 short vignettes. The skill with which Robert parodied his much admired contemporary should not obscure the depth of feeling found in this musical silhouette. Flowing left-hand *arpeggios* provide a rich background on which the expressive melody is displayed. Tonal contrast is extremely important, and the editor suggests repeating this exquisite miniature nocturne *pianissimo*. Source for *Carnaval*: Breitkopf and Härtel, Leipzig, 1837 edition; Plate number 5813.

From *Colored Leaves*, Op. 99

No. 3 of ***Drei Stücklein*** (Three Little Pieces) *Page 56*

Colored Leaves (*Bunte Blätter*) is a collection of 14 pieces published in 1852. They include earlier pieces Robert had not included in previous sets. The opus is dedicated to Miss Mary Potts. Each piece was originally to be issued with a colored cover indicating its general mood. The "Three Little Pieces" were composed in 1839. No. 3, *Frisch* (fresh, lively), is boisterous and contains a straightforward rhythm. The technical problems include repeated chords, octaves, hand-crossings, and leaps.

No. 6, ***Album Leaf No. III*** *Page 57*

This slow, elegant waltz on the theme **A S C H** was composed in 1836. It is the earliest of all the pieces in Op. 99, since it was intended to be part of *Carnaval*, Op. 9. A beautiful tone should be used throughout, and it should be played in a light and elegant manner. Be especially careful of the left-hand leaps, *legato* octaves, and tonal control within a limited dynamic range. Source for *Bunte Blätter*: first edition published in 1851 by F. W. Arnold, Elberfeld; Plate numbers 331–338.

From *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 12

No. 3, ***Warum?*** (Why?) *Page 58*

Fantasiestücke was composed in 1837, and dedicated to the Scottish pianist Anna Robena Laidlow. The form of this delicate piece is **A B** Variation on **A**: **A** = measures 1–16; **B** = 17–30; Variation on **A** = 31–42. Subtle nuances in the characterization of the voices, as well as a good sense of *rubato,* are required throughout this refined piece. A short but compelling melodic fragment dominates the entire piece. The melodic fragment floats over a syncopated accompaniment, leaving the ends of the four-measure periods open in expectation of an answer that never comes. In measure 10, play the two grace notes before the beat. Also, play the ethereal arpeggio grace notes of measure 13 ahead of time. All of the grace notes should sound like they were melted into the line. Make a big ritard. at measure 30. Take the repeat, and the final conclusion should have an extensive *rallentando. Warum?* is an exquisite example of Robert's talent for combining the tender with the enigmatic. Source for *Fantasiestücke*: Breitkopf and Härtel, 1838, Plate number 5835 a/b.

No. 4, ***Grillen*** (Whims) *Page 60*

This piece uses a *sonata-rondo* form: **A** = measures 1–16; **B** = 16–44; **A** = 44–60; **C** = 60–96; **A** = 96–112; **B** = 112–140; **A** = 140–156. Emphasis on the linear forward motion will avoid the ponderous, bombastic quality that often mars this work. It requires good chord playing and large hands are helpful for performing this capricious, funny piece. The **C** section features a rhythmic syncopation typical of the composer, and offers a welcome contrast to the buoyant vitality of the surrounding material. In spite of the opening short staccato chords, their top line should be an easy melody for the listener to follow. An analysis of measure 15 shows that only the outer voices (of the fast moving three chords) move in octaves. A type of humor permeates this piece, and an imaginative performance is greatly dependent upon a variety of colorful touches.

From *Kinderscenen*, Op. 15

No. 5, ***Glückes genug*** (Perfect Happiness) *Page 63*

Kinderscenen dates back to 1838, and Robert intended these scenes to be reflections by adults, for adults. Robert said the titles were "merely hints as to treatment and interpretation." "Perfect Happiness" expresses a kind of naive contentedness. Hands shift quickly, with the right hand playing sustained and moving notes, with the melody on top, and the agile left hand moving between 8th and 16th notes. Altered notes throughout the piece help to create a bouncy, happy character. An important dialogue between the hands demonstrates the contrapuntal nature of the piece. Careful phrasing is also required. Robert was careless about appropriately shortening the final measures of this piece when an incomplete measure occurs at the beginning. Source for *Kinderscenen*: the second printing of the first edition, Breitkopf and Härtel, 1839. Schumann made corrections for this second printing.

No. 7, ***Träumerei*** (Dreaming) *Page 64*

To achieve the expressive and flexible phrasing of this popular piece, the melodic lines and harmonies must not be blurred by the damper pedal. A large span would be helpful in executing the sustained and moving intervals of a 10th. The counterpoint of the occasional secondary melody is of interest and can complement the top melody. Clear inner voicing and tonal control are necessary to create an expressive performance.

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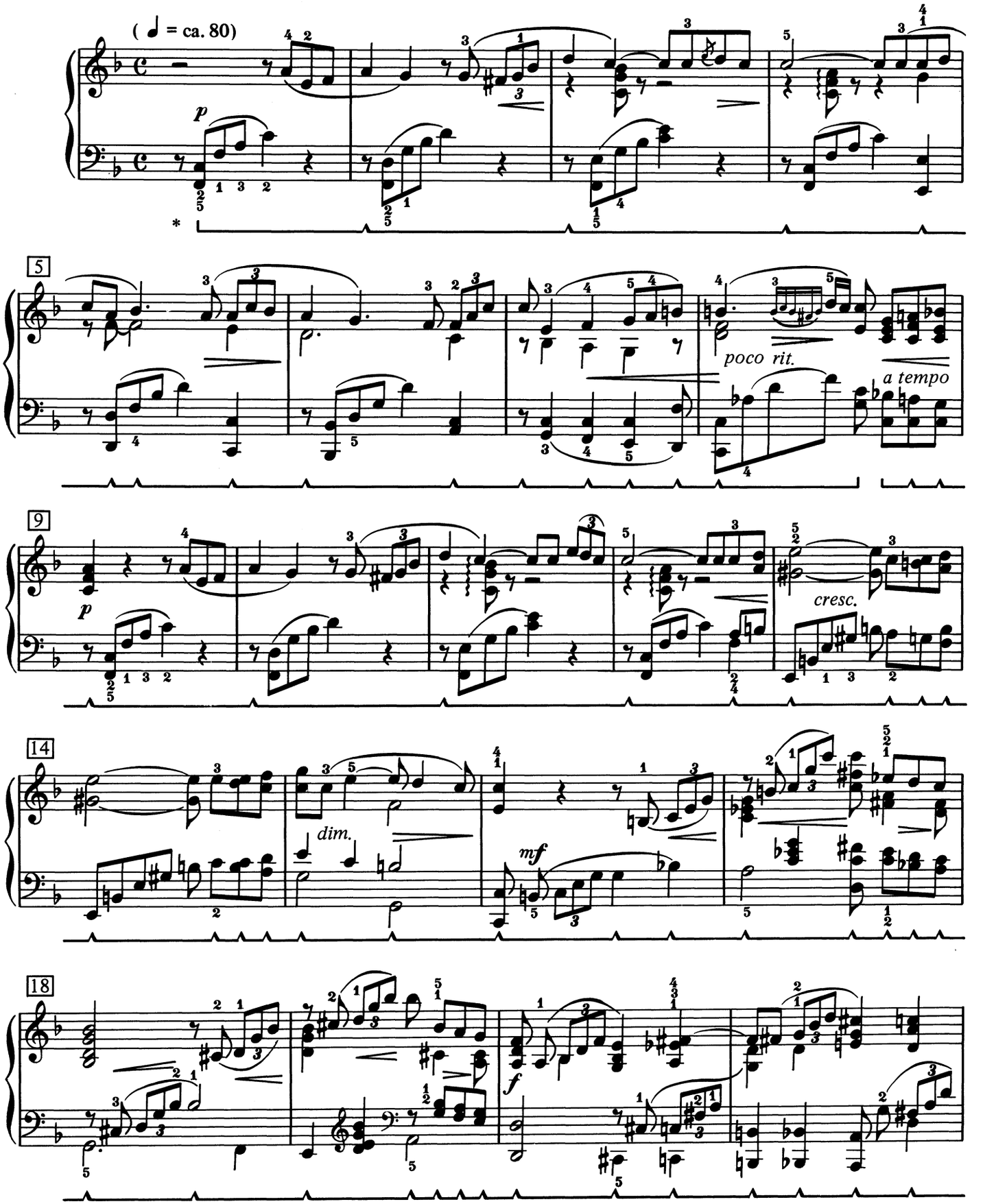
Larghetto

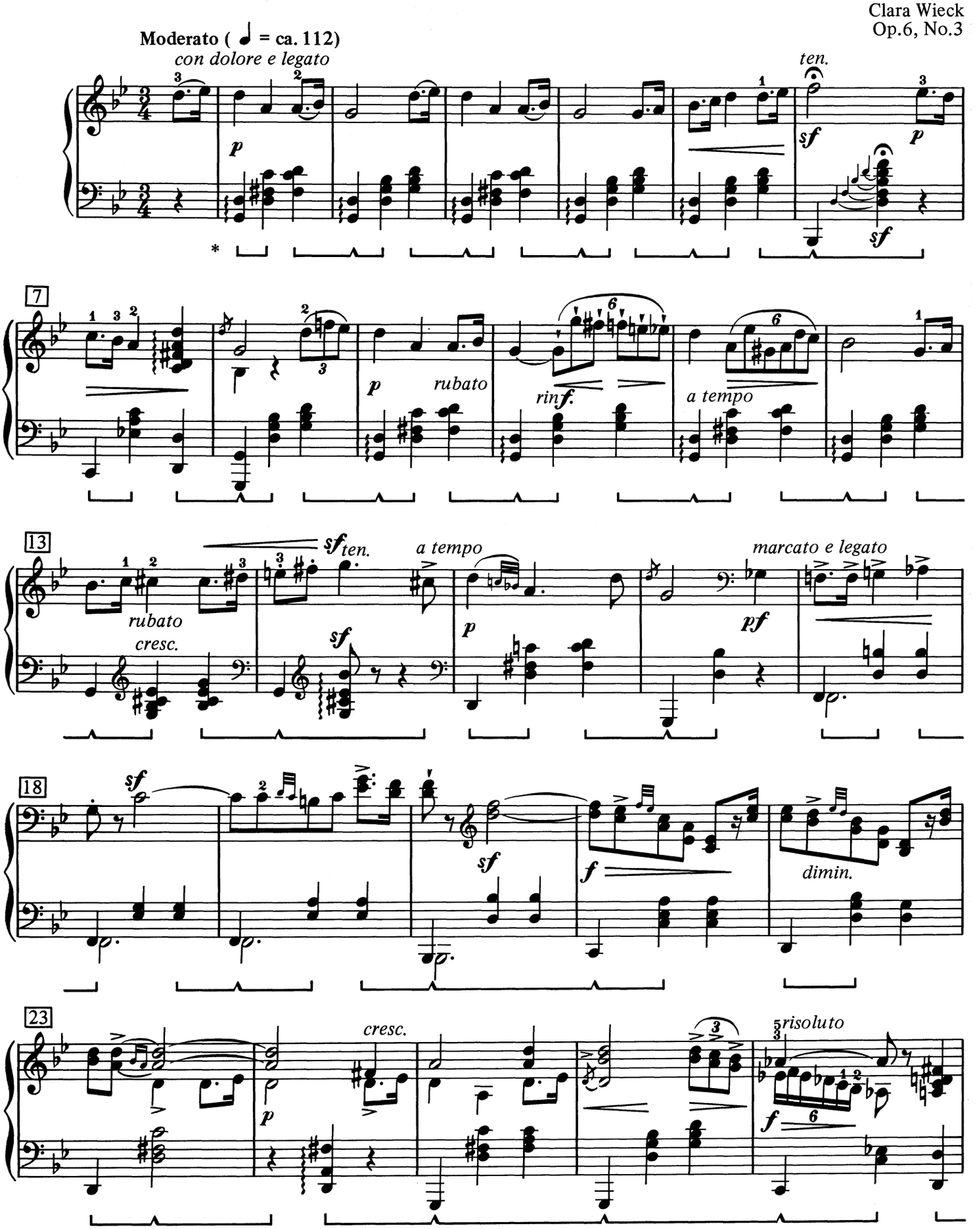
Clara Schumann
Op. 15



* Clara indicated pedal at measures 40, 45 & 46. The metronome mark above is editorial.

Mazurka

Clara Wieck
Op.6, No.3



* At measure 1 Clara states *sempre con pedale.* Her other pedal marks are at measures 6, 14, 24, 30, 43–46, 63–65, 68, 71–74, 76, and 83–85.