

Fantastic Fragments: German Romanticism through Modern Ears

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The emergence of the fragment as a serious component of art and the increasing philosophical importance of the fantastic were not simply two concurrent trends of German Romanticism, but rather a pair of phenomena which related to and influenced the development of each other. Recent critical studies of the fantastic by Tzvetan Todorov, Brian Attebery and Rosemary Jackson allow us to reconsider this relationship in terms of three possible connections: brevity as a symbol of the Todorovian supernatural fantastic; musical asymmetry as fulfilment of Attebery's fantasy-mode; and musical incompleteness or instability as signifiers of Jackson's fantasy of desire. The lieder of Schubert and the piano and song cycles of Schumann particularly benefit from such cross-analysis. By synthesising more recent theories with the originating Romantic aesthetic and literary inspirations, including the poetic sources for the lieder themselves, a greater understanding can be obtained of how the fragment served as a powerful and effective vehicle of expression for not only the fantastic as subject matter, but also fantasy as the ultimate Romantic mode of human perception and cognition.¹

While both polarities of musical miniature and monumentality may have prevailed in the nineteenth century,² it is in the brevity of the fragment that the intensity of the fantastic is most well sustained. Todorov's *The Fantastic* proposes that the supernatural fantasy "occupies the duration of uncertainty . . . that hesitation experienced by a person who knows only the laws of nature," strongly implying that the experience is more temporary than prolonged.³ In art, the

¹ Throughout this study, my use of the terms "fantastic" and "fantasy" is synonymous, the former as either adjective or occasionally noun, and the latter as a noun only.

² Roger Kamien, *Music: An Appreciation*, 7th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2004), 307.

³ Tzvetan Todorov, *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1973), 25.

most effective way of capturing this fantastic effect might be to directly portray only that very moment itself, using the sort of incomplete form promoted in Friedrich Schlegel's *Athenaeum Fragments*. What Schlegel felt "interesting"—in this case, supernatural phenomena—would have certainly been of greater aesthetic value to Romanticism than any overarching consideration of context.⁴

This preference for the momentary fantastic over the all-encompassing context, subjectivity over objectivity, is visible in many of Schubert's lieder on supernatural themes, as well as in the poetry to which his music was set. A case in point is Matthias Claudius' two-stanza verse *Der Tod und das Mädchen*, in which the circumstances of the maiden's contact with death, whether real or delusional, is unstated, as is to some extent the conclusion.⁵ That the two characters speak only once each (the briefest form of dialogue possible) heightens the dramatic impact and immediacy of the portrayal. Likewise, Schubert's musical setting is brief—a typical performance lasts about two minutes—and structured in two parts of almost equal length, with the central fermata forming the axis of metaphysical transition. Rhetorically, this caesura (Figure 1)⁶ is the audience's Todorovian point of fantasy, a moment of aural uncertainty where musical time is suspended, as earthly time is suspended in death.

⁴ Schlegel, in Charles Rosen, *The Romantic Generation* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), 50.

⁵ "Death and the Maiden," trans. Bard Suverkrop, *IPA Source*.

http://www.ipasource.com.ezproxy1.library.usyd.edu.au/view/song/Franz_Schubert/Der_Tod_und_das_M%C3%A4dchen (accessed 26 April 2011). The standard reading is that the maiden is taken calmly by Death, but the possibility of an illusion is never specifically erased.

⁶ Franz Schubert, "Der Tod und das Mädchen" [1817], in Franz Schubert, *Franz Schuberts Werke, Serie XX: Sämtliche einstimmige Lieder und Gesänge, No. 301*, ed. Eusebius Mandyczewski (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1894–95). *IMSLP*. http://imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/f/f1/IMSLP16210SchubertD531_Der_Tod_und_das_M__dchen.pdf (accessed 18 May 2011).

Figure 1 Franz Schubert, *Der Tod und das Mädchen*, D531, bb. 16–24

Wie oben.
Der Tod

rühre mich nicht an, und rühre mich nicht an. Gieb deine Hand, du schönund zart Ge

pp *dimin.* *pp*

However, is it possible that the true moment of fantasy in the maiden’s “frame of reference”⁷ lies in the piano introduction, not the central pause? The similarity between the first bar of piano solo and the vocal line of Death, a dactyl rhythm which Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau interpreted as a signifier of “that secret heartbeat which accompanies the tread of death,” reveals that Death is present from the very beginning.⁸ The disjunct nature of this introduction and the agitation of the opening vocal theme with respect to tempi, texture and musical character indicate that it is not just a conventional opening serving to establish the prevailing character and tempo.⁹ Such flux allows a strong argument for the opening to be interpreted as the *real* Todorovian moment of hesitation, when death first looms, followed thereafter by the more frantic emotional reaction.¹⁰ Thus, the remainder of the song is simply the necessary explanation and magnification of the real fantasy, which has already occurred during the voiceless, static introduction, kept brief to retain maximum effect.

Another of Schubert’s settings—that of Heine’s “Der Doppelgänger”—further demonstrates the effective use of brevity to depict the supernatural fantasy, even if some have found the

⁷ I appropriate this term from the psychological principle of *gestalt* as outlined in Nancy Burns, *The Practice of Nursing Research: Conduct, Critique, and Utilization* (St. Louis, Mo.: Elsevier/Saunders, 2005), 53.

⁸ Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, *Schubert: A Biographical Study of his Songs*, trans. Kenneth S. Whitton (London: Cassell, 1976), 85.

⁹ Compare this, for example, to the introductions in Mozart’s settings of “Ridente la calma” and “Oiseaux, si tous les ans,” which indicate to the singer not only the tempo, but also the main rhythmic motif (Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *12 Songs: Medium Voice*, ed. John Glenn Paton (Los Angeles: Alfred, 1992), 9, 15.

¹⁰ On the concept of flux see Frank Thilly’s “Romanticism and Rationalism,” *The Philosophical Review* 22:2 (1913): 107–132.

composer's text-setting to be too literal.¹¹ While many studies have argued for the need to evaluate the song through its relation to other songs in *Schwanengesang*, particularly the comprehensive work of Richard Kramer,¹² it is not altogether necessary, for through Todorovian theory the fragment can be satisfactorily perceived as a self-contained, independent, fantastic moment. As Edward Cone observes, the music is rich with allusions of double-vision. In the opening, the outer voices double each other, and the descending minor second motif is horizontally doubled (transposed upwards) to form the first four-bar period.¹³ This period is in turn doubled immediately after to set the first line of poetry, and this is again doubled to set the next two lines (Figure 2).¹⁴ The extramusical suggestion of this motivic compactness, through Todorov's perspective, is that the Doppelgänger has in fact already appeared, but like the maiden in *Der Tod und das Mädchen*, the narrator remains hesitant in recounting and grasping this fact.¹⁵

¹¹ See the negative criticism of Jack M. Stein, "Was Goethe Wrong about the Nineteenth-Century Lied? An Examination of the Relation of Poem and Music," *PMLA* 77:3 (June 1962): 232–39; and compare with Richard Kurth's musical examination "Music and Poetry, a Wilderness of Doubles: Heine—Nietzsche—Schubert—Derrida," *19th-Century Music* 21:2 (Summer 1997): 3–37.

¹² Richard Kramer, *Distant Cycles: Schubert and the Conceiving of Song* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 131–33. For more detailed theories on the question of the order of songs in *Schwanengesang*, see also Richard Kramer, "Schubert's Heine," *19th-Century Music* 8:3 (1985): 213–25; and Martin Chusid, "The Sequence of the Heine Songs and Cyclicity in *Schwanengesang*," in *A Companion to Schubert's Schwanengesang*, ed. Martin Chusid (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2000), 150–60.

¹³ Edward T. Cone, "Repetition and Correspondence in *Schwanengesang*," in *A Companion to Schubert's Schwanengesang: History, Poets, Analysis, Performance*, ed. Martin Chusid (London: Yale, 2000), 82.

¹⁴ Franz Schubert, "Der Doppelgänger" [1829], in Franz Schubert, *Complete Song Cycles*, ed. Eusebius Mandyczewski (New York: Dover, 1970), 180. [Brackets added.]

¹⁵ One might even go as far to say that "Der Doppelgänger" has implications of death. In *Schubert's Theater of Song* (New York: Amadeus Press, 2009), 148, Mark Ringer makes the interesting observation that the opening motif is a variant of the *Dies Irae*, presumably suggesting that it is a quasi-retrograde of the fourth to seventh notes (D-E-C-D).

Figure 2 Franz Schubert, “Der Doppelgänger,” bb. 1–8

Sehr langsam.

Still ist die Nacht, es ruhen die Gassen.

pp

Intriguingly, both the Todorovian theory of hesitation and Cone’s analysis of duplication are demonstrated to the extreme. Even the climactic point, an altered dominant in bars 32 and 41 with the flattened second scale degree in the bass, is doubled (the latter further intensified by suspension), for the stunned narrator must behold the “object of terror” twice before acknowledging its existence in the third stanza.¹⁶ It is only when the narrator comes to accept the sight as a marvellous reality “controlled by laws unknown to us,” by addressing the Doppelgänger directly, that the music is allowed release from the trappings of ostinato, but once this point is reached, the end quickly follows.¹⁷ The song thus represents one short but tense monologue given apparent rest only by directly confronting the fantastic, and its finality is conveyed through a minor plagal cadence in the tonic major, an “Amen” from which the grieving man may move on.¹⁸

The gross imbalance of phrasing in “Der Doppelgänger” reveals another property of the romantic fragment which may be discussed in tandem with the fantastic, that of asymmetry. Classically, a “proposition” is balanced at reasonable proximity with a “response,” but the human consciousness does not necessarily function so ideally in fantasy.¹⁹ Of the twelve vocal phrases in “Der Doppelgänger,” ten

¹⁶ Michael Hall, *Schubert’s Song Sets* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 272–74.

¹⁷ Todorov, 25.

¹⁸ Hall, 275.

¹⁹ Carl Dahlhaus, “Issues in Composition,” in *Between Romanticism and Modernism: Four Studies in the Music of the Later Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 59.

might be considered to be antecedents, either ending on the dominant note or a note derived from and supported by the dominant harmony, but only the last phrase may be comfortably deemed a musical consequent, ending satisfactorily on the tonic and with a perfect cadence (the aforementioned climaxes, as altered inverted dominants, do not serve a cadential function). In accordance with the text, there is a disproportionate predominance of prolonged tension over resolution. In spite of the comforting *tierce de Picardie*, the question towards the *Doppelgänger* is, strictly speaking, never explicitly answered.

This apparent transformation of asymmetry from being a compositional fault to a musical paradigm reflects the Romantic need for music to portray the spontaneous will of Kantian philosophy, which “go[es] against our causally determined inclinations.”²⁰ In more modern terms, asymmetric fragments can in this respect also relate to Brian Attebery’s classification of the “fantasy as mode”—“a sophisticated mode of storytelling characterized by stylistic playfulness”²¹—as such fragments are deliberately imbalanced musical representations of the world which reflect the composer’s subjective, spontaneous consciousness. While Attebery’s study is limited to literature, Schumann’s cycle of *Kinderszenen* represents a prime model of the fantasy-mode in music. Consider, for example, the opening fragment, “Von fremden Ländern und Menschen.” While the beginning and concluding periods may be innocently balanced enough, the middle digression of six bars (bb. 9–14) is highly unusual, implying yet evading a modulation into the relative minor. The ascending melodic contour towards the fermata suggests an upcoming consequence, but it never arises. Instead the primary theme is coarsely reinserted, and all is well again.

Whether these scenes are interpreted as the sketchy dreams of childhood or stories *for* children, it can be observed that the principles of balance are laid aside in preference for the immediacy and

²⁰ Andrew Bowie, “Romantic Philosophy and Religion,” in *The Cambridge Companion to German Romanticism*, ed. Nicholas Saul (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 179.

²¹ Brian Attebery, “Fantasy as Mode, Genre, Formula,” in *Fantastic Literature: A Critical Reader*, ed. David Sandner (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004), 293. See also Attebery’s earlier *Strategies of Fantasy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).

playfulness of Attebery's fantasy, a "subversive treatment of established orders of thought" which were so fundamental to Classicism.²² The aggressive nature of the Schlegelian fragment, "separated from the rest of the universe like a hedgehog" in the words of Charles Rosen,²³ is a particularly useful image in relation to three episodes from *Kinderszenen*, "Hasche-Mann," "Wichtige Begebenheit" and "Ritter vom Steckenpferd," all of which end abruptly on the upbeat rather than the downbeat (Figure 3).²⁴ In each case, the musical material is drawn from the opening period, suggesting the repetition of an opening idea, but its resolution either does not exist or is left to aural imagination, and the fantasies draw attention to their own imbalance and musical isolation.

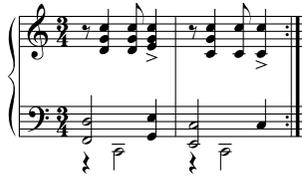
Figure 3 Robert Schumann, (top to bottom) "Hasche-Mann" bb. 19–21; "Wichtige Begebenheit" bb.23–24; "Ritter vom Steckenpferd" bb. 23–24



²² Ibid.

²³ Rosen, 48.

²⁴ Robert Schumann, *Kinderszenen* [1838], ed. W. Thomson (Melbourne: Allans, 198-?), 10, 13, 16.



The asymmetry of the fantastic fragment is by no means limited to phrase structures, but can apply also to harmony. Witness, for example, how both of the fragments explicitly depicting children—“Bittendes Kind” and “Kind im Einschlummern”—are deceptively denied of their expected endings through harmonic alteration. In the former, this is done simply through the addition of the minor seventh, suggesting the possibility of a shift into the subdominant key area, while in the latter, a 6/4 suspension on the tonic minor is first prolonged by fermata, then its harmonic function somewhat forgotten as a bass “A” note loosely declares a “tonal” ending (a case of “*Pianist im Einschlummern*”?). One can choose, as Thomas Alan Brown does, to justify these endings as harmonic continuations on to the next piece, but there is no specific prohibition for playing them individually, as fragments with unbalanced open-endings.²⁵

To briefly draw a connection between fantasy and Schumann’s asymmetry in the larger scale of the fragment cycle, it is necessary to pinpoint a limitation in Attebery’s “fantasy as mode” definition. The fantasy of Romantic art, from E. T. A. Hoffmann’s *Kreisleriana* to James Joyce’s *Ulysses*,²⁶ not only has the potential of being “*a* position on the world as well as *a* means of portraying it,”²⁷ but in fact a simultaneous incorporation of many positions and many portrayals of the fragmented self-consciousness. This pluralistic approach is the writing style of choice for Schumann in his *Zeitschrift für Musik*, and

²⁵ Thomas Alan Brown, *The Aesthetics of Robert Schumann* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1968), 114. If it is acceptable to perform “Träumerei” separately, often as an encore, it is only fair to say the other scenes may also be performed separately as well.

²⁶ Beate Perrey, “Schumann’s Lives, and Afterlives: an introduction,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Schumann*, ed. Beate Perry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 14; Christopher A. Strathman, *Romantic Poetry and the Fragmentary Imperative: Schlegel, Byron, Joyce, Blanchot* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 105.

²⁷ Attebery, 295 [italics added].

consequently also a major factor of his composition and philosophy.²⁸ Whereas *Kinderszenen* might be various fantasies narrated by a single storyteller, another of Schumann's important cycles, *Carnaval*, is a single fantastic event, narrated by multiple identities. Scenically unified, as John Daverio mentions, through the encrypted pitch-cells of the "Sphinxes," the fragments are by character and texture in conflict with each other.²⁹

The frenetic asymmetry of *Carnaval* must be understood in terms of the composer's unique treatment of rhythm and meter, an area which occupies many studies on Schumann including that of Harald Krebs.³⁰ The influence of the author Jean Paul on Schumann lies not only in the use of the "masked ball" as a programmatic idea, but also Schumann's use of metrical dissonance as a vehicle for paradoxical fantasy, whereby "the law of measure [unites] with alternating lyrical free meters."³¹ This treatment of rhythm is directly linked to the contradiction between the famous binary pair of "Eusebius" and "Florestan," to which this study will be limited. Although "Eusebius" is marked by highly unorthodox cross-rhythms, such as the vertical simultaneity of septuplets with two crotchets (bb. 2–3) or the horizontal juxtaposition of pentuplets with triplets (bb. 9–11), its relation to the meter is fairly benign (Figure 4).³² This may be fluid dreaming, but by all accounts submissive and unthreatening to the bar line.

²⁸ See, for example, the interaction of Florestan, Eusebius, Jonathan and Raro in Schumann's "A Monument to Beethoven: Four Views," in *The Musical World of Robert Schumann*, ed. & trans. Henry Pleasants (London: Victor Gollancz, 1965), 91–96.

²⁹ John Daverio, "Piano works I: a world of images," in Perrey, *Cambridge Companion*, 65.

³⁰ A discussion of Krebs' quasi-algebraic annotation of rhythmic layers is beyond the scope of this essay, but can be found in the second chapter of Harald Krebs, *Fantasy Pieces: Metrical Dissonance in the Music of Robert Schumann* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 22–61.

³¹ Rufus Hallmark, *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Schirmer Books; London: Prentice Hall International, 1996), 93; see also Robert Schumann's quotation in Brown, 66.

³² Robert Schumann, *Carnaval, opus 9* [1835], ed. W. Boetticher (München: Henle, 1977), 11–12.

Figure 4 Robert Schumann, “Eusebius,” bb. 2–3(a); 9–11(b)

Figure 4 consists of two musical excerpts, (a) and (b), from Robert Schumann's "Eusebius." Excerpt (a) shows measures 2-3, featuring a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with accompaniment. The treble staff has a seven-measure slur over the first two measures. Excerpt (b) shows measures 9-11, featuring a treble clef staff with a melodic line and a bass clef staff with accompaniment. The treble staff has slurs and fingerings (3, 5, 3) over the first three measures.

By contrast, “Florestan” threatens to subvert the constructs of meter. From the very onset, the authority of the conventional 6-layer in the bass (Krebs’ terminology for a meter with six pulses) is undermined in the fifth pulse by a melodic *sforzando*, then in the sixth pulse by both a melodic accent and bass *sforzando*, and these consistently occur throughout. There is even internal conflict within the bass as the prospect of hemiola, a common device employed by Schumann, is hinted at but never fulfilled in entirety, consistently resorting back to standard triple meter (Figure 5).³³ But while such metrical dissonance is lacking in “Eusebius,” “Florestan” also equivocally lacks that cross-rhythmic flexibility which is brought to use in his counterpart. The two oppose yet complement each other, and only together do they fulfil that contradictory mode of thinking which in Early Romanticism was necessary for “fully exploring the human mind.”³⁴

³³ Brown, 127; Schumann, *Carnaval*, 12.

³⁴ Beate Julia Perrey, *Schumann’s Dichterliebe and Early Romantic Poetics: Fragmentation of Desire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 34.

Figure 5 Robert Schumann, “Florestan” bb. 14–18

A third property of the Romantic fragment (or a set of two closely-related qualities) remains to be discussed: incompleteness and instability as signifiers of the German *Sehnsucht* (longing) concept, of which modern equivalent may be found in Jackson’s notion of fantasy being a literature of desire.³⁵ In addressing this aspect, it is useful to consider fragment poetry such as Coleridge’s *Kubla Khan*, a dream with “a beginning and middle but no end.”³⁶ Noting the Freudian association of dreams with wish fulfilment, it can be seen that Coleridge’s “sunny pleasure dome with caves of ice” is representative of a longing for a utopia which is physically and socially impossible.³⁷ This *Sehnsucht* is therefore also Jackson’s fantasy, an expression of desire for that which is forbidden by the limits of the established cultural order, and which therefore disintegrates quickly.³⁸

While desire in dreams need not be romantic in nature—the dream element of *Kinderszenen* and *Carnaval* has already been implicated—romantic love is surely the most prolific form of desire-fantasy, and it is an area of musical specialty shared by both Schubert and Schumann. Their most famous song cycles, *Winterreise* and

³⁵ Andrew Bowie, “Romanticism and Music,” in *The Cambridge Companion to German Romanticism*, ed. Nicholas Saul (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 246–49.

³⁶ Marjorie Levinson, *The Romantic Fragment Poem: A Critique of a Form* (Chapel Hill & London: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 103.

³⁷ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Kubla Khan* [NetLibrary eBook] (Champaign, Ill.: Project Gutenberg, n.d.), *eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)*, EBSCOhost (accessed 20 March 2011). See also Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams [1899]*, trans. A. A. Brill (Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, 1999), OvidSP (accessed 30 May 2011).

³⁸ Rosemary Jackson, *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* (London; New York: Methuen, 1981), 2.

Dichterliebe respectively, bear similar dream episodes in which requited love is fantasised then banished. Schubert's "Frühlingstraum," like *Kubla Khan*, is a fantasy of "earthly paradise" and romantic reciprocation, but one which in its perfection is illusory. Youens notes that "it is rare in *Winterreise* to find a passage of any length that is almost entirely diatonic" like that of the first fourteen bars, and its unbridled tonic major bliss is, in the context of the entire cycle up to this point, highly irregular—of the preceding songs, only "Der Lindenbaum" begins in major tonality.³⁹

Such folksong-like balance, simplicity and positivity are the hallmarks of a musical edifice built on the foundations of fantastic desire, and like Coleridge's Xanadu, a rude awakening forces abruptly its destruction.⁴⁰ Where one expects a new stanza with the same music in A major, a verbally and harmonically unstable episode issues instead in the "Schnell" passage, cycling rapidly through the foreign key areas of E minor, D minor and G minor. (Note again the important structural function of the fermata as the aural suspension and framing of time.) When the key is finally stabilised, it is in fact A minor, establishing the signature Schubertian juxtaposition of tonic major and minor which symbolises Müller's trademark opposition of "the illusory world of beautiful, bright dreams [and] the real world of banal, wretched, naked reality."⁴¹ By Jackson's definition, this is indeed emblematic of fantasy, for through repetition of the major-minor alternation, the real is constantly interrogated by its difference with the unreal.⁴²

The conclusion of "Frühlingstraum" is worth special mention, as it is an inverse of the *tierce de Picardie* concept, ending in minor tonality a work beginning in the tonic major. This is psychoacoustically much less satisfying and portrays the emptiness of Jacksonian unfulfilled desire with remarkable lucidity. Additionally, Schubert's "anti-naturalistic" spacing of the final chord, which includes a minor third

³⁹ Susan Youens, *Retracing a Winter's Journey: Schubert's Winterreise* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1991), 211–15.

⁴⁰ Raymond Monelle, *The Musical Topic: Hunt, Military and Pastoral* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 251.

⁴¹ Hans Heinrich Eggebrecht, quoted in William Kindermann, "Schubert's Tragic Perspective," in *Schubert: Critical and Analytical Studies*, ed. Walter Frisch (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 65.

⁴² Jackson, 4.

in the low piano register (Figure 6),⁴³ creates a singular grumbling effect far removed from the idyllic sentiments of the opening.⁴⁴ With the emptiness of this concluding chord, the listener's desire for synthesis of the musical and poetic dichotomies presented is revealed to be as forbidden as the dream onto which the traveller grasps.⁴⁵

Figure 6 Franz Schubert, "Frühlingstraum," b. 88



The equivalent fragment in Schumann's *Dichterliebe*, "Ich hab' im Traum geweinet," takes the Jacksonian/Freudian trope one step further, as Heine's poem draws the connection between oneirological dreaming (of the dead beloved) and metaphorical dreaming (of dead love).⁴⁶ The fragmentary incompleteness of the dream is especially underscored by the nearly complete separation of vocal and piano parts, the latter which Perrey observes is "strikingly sparse."⁴⁷ Neither are their alternations particularly stable, as any regularity established in the first six bars is quashed by a doubling in the frequency of interchange in bars 7–9, intensified by accentuation (Figure 7).⁴⁸ The result is that the melody is rendered contextually ambiguous and in constant want of harmonic support, while the accompaniment is lacking the emotional intensity and engagement of the voice and its

⁴³ Franz Schubert, "Frühlingstraum" [1828], in Franz Schubert, ed. Mandyczewski, 93.

⁴⁴ See footnote 19 of Chapter Three in David Schwarz, *Listening Subjects: Music, Psychoanalysis, Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997), 177–78.

⁴⁵ Youens, 215.

⁴⁶ Linda Phyllis Austern, *Music, Sensation, and Sensuality* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 67. Austern suggests that the third stanza is not a "real" dream, but rather disillusionment in consciousness.

⁴⁷ Perrey, *Schumann's Dichterliebe*, 144.

⁴⁸ Robert Schumann, *Dichterliebe* [1840], ed. Arthur Komar (New York: Norton, 1971), 46.

lyrics. In an abstract sense, the desire of voice and piano for each other is left unconsummated.

Figure 7 Robert Schumann, “Ich hab’ im Traum geweinet,” bb. 1–12

The image shows a musical score for Robert Schumann's song "Ich hab' im Traum geweinet". It consists of two systems of music. The first system (measures 1-8) shows the vocal line starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic and the piano accompaniment with a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic. The second system (measures 9-12) continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment, with a *ritard.* (ritardando) marking over the piano part. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

Like Florestan and Eusebius, the functions of Jackson’s fantasy—the pleasure of manifesting desire and the pain of expelling it—are a quintessentially Romantic binary pair, seemingly contradictory yet necessarily coexistent.⁴⁹ Such tension lies at the core of Heine’s ironic style, which simultaneously draws from a single observation both negative and positive emotional reactions. Unlike the obliging dreamer of “Frühlingstraum” the poet of “Ich hab’ in Traum geweinet” must weep even during his dream as he realises that the mental re-enactment is forbidden (for he cannot forget the beloved nor experience her love). In bars 22–24 of Schumann’s setting, the piano adopts the vocal melody for the first time and continues to support the voice as it finally finds coherence, presenting not disparate fragments of thought but an emotional outpouring of one overarching melody.⁵⁰ Mimicking reality, as Austern interprets, this “breaking into tears” can be met only with a bar of awkward silence (b. 34), where “restraint, self-suppression, numbness” return.⁵¹ The

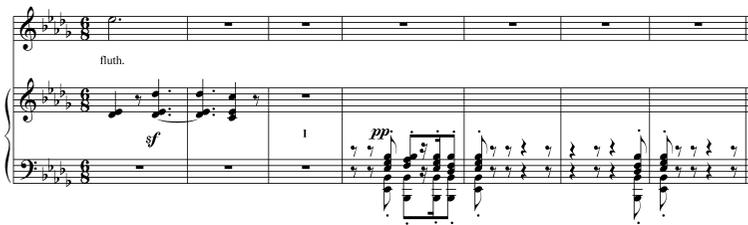
⁴⁹ Jackson, 2.

⁵⁰ Deborah Stein and Robert Spillmann, *Poetry into Song: Performance and Analysis of Lieder* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 89.

⁵¹ Austern, 67–68.

return of the original piano motif in bar 35 gives hope perhaps of a final stanza of closure, some reassurance of the singer's stability following the moment of catharsis, but the voice remains in silent, inconsolable, lamentation (Figure 8).⁵² Where Heine leaves the reader in suspense through the deliberate incompleteness of his fragments, Schumann leaves the listener in brooding unpredictability, unable to experience that consolation which Schubert's "Der Doppelgänger" invokes. The desire for synthesis is vanquished, yet again.

Figure 8 Robert Schumann, "Ich hab' im Traum geweinet," bb. 32–38



Is fragmentation the only available form of musical expression for the fantastic? Certainly not, as the fantasies of Berlioz's symphony and Wagner's operas demonstrate. Yet the Romantic fragment evidently has the potential to convey both the programmatic and abstract qualities of the fantastic to an unsurpassed level of immediacy. As a questioning of Classical symmetry and order, it is a versatile framework that can capture the brevity of the supernatural, the incompleteness and instability of unfulfilled love, as well as the pure, even childish, joy of unpredictable, paradoxical storytelling. Contemporary studies of the fantasy verify the importance of the fragment to Schubert and Schumann, as well as the various writers from whom they drew their inspiration, and from this knowledge it is not too far-fetched to consider miniatures of more recent eras, as avant-garde as those of Webern and Boulez, to be but the continuation of a fantastic tradition which has its roots in the Romantic aesthetic.

⁵² Schumann, *Dichterliebe*, 47.

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ABSTRACT

The fantastic as a literary phenomenon has been justified and modernised in recent decades through key studies including Todorov's *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (1973), Attebery's *Strategies of Fantasy* (1992) and Jackson's *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* (1981). Such advances in modern-day critical inquiry provide vast new analytical opportunities which have only gradually begun to permeate into the musicological field. While much research has already been undertaken to connect German Romantic musical fragments with their contemporary aesthetic or philosophical inspirations, for example Schlegel and Jean Paul, this essay aims to provide additional alternative perspectives on the associations between fantasy and the fragments of Schubert and Schumann, utilising more recent critical ideas to interpret the three key properties which characterise the fragment: musical brevity, asymmetry and incompleteness. Throughout these comparisons, modern fantasy tropes do not replace Romantic conceptions, but rather provide an additional path of interpretation which reinforces their merits. Through such a synthesis, one may obtain a clearer insight into how the fragment served as a powerful and effective vehicle for the Romantic fantasy.

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