

**AKADEMIA MUZYCZNA
im. KRZYSZTOFA PENDERECKIEGO
W KRAKOWIE**

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**Dichterliebe, "A Poet's Love" by Robert Schumann
- a musical and poetic search for love in the conflict of heart and mind**

Description of the art dissertation in the proceedings related to conferring the
academic degree of Doctor of Fine Arts, in the field of art: musical art

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Cracow 2022

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INTRODUCTION

"Music [...] portrays human feelings in a superhuman way, because it shows us all the emotions of our soul above our heads in incorporeal form, clothed in golden clouds of airy harmonies, - because it speaks a language which we do not know in our ordinary life, which we have learned, we do not know where and how, and which one would consider to be solely the language of angels" – Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder

How closely related and connected is art and psyche? Is it the fact of being an artist that affects a person's psyche, or quite the opposite? Maybe it is certain personality traits that make someone an artist? Many artists are people with above-average sensitivity. So what is the relationship between this sensitivity and artistic personality? Can this sensitivity result in any mental disorders or even illness? Eventually, the very fact of being an artist, the constant exposure to the criticism of reviewers and the greater or lesser appreciation of the audience, and on top of that the daily facing of any hardships of this specific profession, can lead to madness.

What is the profession of an artist - if this full of passion and profound dissonances life path can be called so? Why do art fascinate people so much, both artists and its consumers?

Art is a sensory communication between a creator and an audience in an understated, unspoken esoteric space. The more original and sensual it is, the more it wins the respect and recognition of the audience, because it evokes feelings and emotions that do not exist outside of art. Art should evoke a whole spectrum of moods in a viewer, assembling into combinations rarely seen in real life. One painting or piece of music can evoke in the audience joy, fear, hope, sadness or euphoria at the same time. Thus, in the simplest terms, art evokes emotions in the audience. Therefore, it can be compared to a conversation, a dialogue between the artist and the audience. It is a certain spectacle, a show which is performed socially.

And the same is true of the human psyche. It is difficult to concretize in a clear way what personality is. It is a consolidation of all the factors that surround us every day and affect our emotions. It is an unusual, specific combination of all the information reaching us - hundreds of details, sounds, emotions, bodily experiences, our thoughts or memories. Personality is something that guarantees that we don't get lost, standing helplessly in the face of this enormity of difficult to control and sometimes contradictory and conflicting sensations. It is personality that allows us to choose from the melting pot of impressions what is the most essential and decisive for us at a given moment, what we should direct our attention to. It is life that creates our personality, it is formed by our history, values, goals we set for ourselves, social

status, life experiences and even physical characteristics. Personality is like a sieve between our world of emotions and the outside world, through which we filter and let information out and in, linking any different spheres of our lives and sometimes different worlds. Thus, personality is, like art, a kind of space which is necessary and relevant for polemics with the world.

Great artists almost always put their entire heart and soul into their work, because this is the only way they can fully manifest their feelings, experiences and everything what excites and consumes them in life.

Alongside with the power that comes from the unequalled and unrivalled works of genius, the darker sides of artistry are also revealed. It is not uncommon for great talents to be coupled with less exceptional or noble traits. Great artists are often spoiled, hysterical about even the slightest failure, they are "nightmarish" in everyday life, focused only on themselves, selfish. Perhaps genius goes hand in hand with an unsteady, emotionally unstable chimerical personality?

Artists communicate with the world through their art, and this distinguishes them from "non-artists." When a common, average person has to face with a strong negative experience, then such a person falls into despair, frustration, suffering. An artist experiences the same, but additionally, he/she expresses own feelings through art, often creating some great, unforgettable works. An artist manifests own pain to the world through artistry, probably because he/she cannot express it otherwise. Thus, any artist is a slave to its own language, and presenting the image of his/her own intimate world to the outside world, he/she wants to be heard and accepted by millions, even though this world of the artist may be strange, eccentric or even sick.

Robert Schumann is a mysterious, unreadable man, wandering between the beauty of art and the hardships of everyday existence, a brilliant creator, an unfulfilled pianist, a master of mood and truly profound feelings expressed in his great works, especially his songs. Unfortunately, he was appreciated after his death. This is how the composer's profile may be characterized and described in a short one- or two-sentence statement.

The emotional force and form of Schumann's compositions are created by the mysticism and a certain dose of irrationality that emanates from his works. His compositions are real puzzles whose true meaning is sometimes hard to find. It is necessary to reach out to the author's inner experiences over the years of his short life.

It is not easy to judge this great composer in terms of emotional stability or lack thereof. This has nothing to do with diagnosis of disease – the intention is to draw attention to the indisputable influence of Robert Schumann's emotional conditions and capacities on his work.

It is very difficult to conceptualise where pathology begins, especially since smaller or larger deviations accompany almost every human being.

Witold Gombrowicz once wrote, “Normality is a tightrope-walker above the abyss of abnormality.”¹ Schumann often and frequently fell off the rope of normality into the abyss of madness, only to drown in it in the last months of his life. In order to discover and understand the composer, it is necessary to accept the invitation to his world, specifically to travel through his life, through the world of his psyche and finally through his work: *Dichterliebe*, “*A Poet's Love*”.

¹ Witold Gombrowicz, *Ferdydurke*, Warszawa 1937. (*Ferdydurke* by Witold Gombrowicz, translation from Polish into English: Danuta Borchardt)

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Biography: Schumann the composer - Schumann the man

"It is easy to write a biography of Schumann - it is difficult to write a biography of Schumann."² This quote by Karl Laux from a book entitled *Robert Schumann* is the most appropriate description that comes to mind when studying the life and works of the composer.

The obstacle for the traditional creation of the biography of this artist is the complexity of Robert Schumann's psyche and its complicated internal structure. There are many records of the composer in a form of diaries or letters. However, description of Schumann not only as an artist, but also as a person is not an easy task.

Robert Schumann was born on June 8, 1810 in Zwickau, a small town located in eastern Germany. The extraordinary double gift he possessed - musical and literary talent – left an unforgettable and indelible impact on world culture and art. His sensitivity and fragile personality left a sad mark on the entire life of the future composer, conductor, writer, critic and teacher. "What people cannot give me, art brings me, and all the sublime feelings that cannot be directly expressed are vocalised by my piano. When I am overcome with a grief, I think of people dear to me who are there, in my native city - they love me and I love them with all my heart. And then I think of the gardens of Eden and blooming meadows of my childhood [...] And then the silent genius of sorrow with tears of joy in its eyes descends to me, it smiles so softly that you want to cry. Ah, mother, I am too soft - I feel it strongly. And destination of every weak person is unhappiness."³ Schumann attended secondary school in Zwickau, and his first music lessons were given by his mother and Johann Gottfried Kuntsch, an organist in his hometown. The artist's beloved father, because of his fascination with literature, poetry and music, supported his interests in every way, so the young Schumann both reached for his pen, writing stories and passages of children's novels, and, with a group of young musicians, enjoyed playing concerts at the local level. The teenage Robert's imagination was captured by novels of Jean Paul Richter⁴ as well as the music of Franz Schubert, in which Schumann found himself, his tendency to express directly his inner world in music.

² K. Laux, *Robert Schumann*, Verlag Philipp Reclam, Leipzig 1972.

³ H. Swolkień, *Robert Schumann*, Warszawa 1973, page 24.

⁴ Johann Paul Friedrich Richter (1763-1825) – German writer, one of the main precursors of Romanticism in German literature of the 18th century. He became famous as the author of often-quoted (including in the fourth part of Adam Mickiewicz's *Dziady (Forefathers' Eve)*) uncanny stories about reportedly authentic searches for ghosts

From an early age, Schumann tried his hand at writing his first songs to Byron's texts, as well as he composed his first works for piano, at the same time not neglecting, but improving his technique and his virtuoso talent.

As a teenager, Schumann was interested in both politics and philosophy. While still at school, he wrote an essay "On the accidentality and nothingness of fame." What a meaningful title, given the subsequent events that took away and cancelled all hopes of Schumann for his career and fame.

Between 1826 and 1828, Robert Schumann was the president of an association of literary lovers, wrote poetry and gave lectures with suggestive titles, such as *The intrinsic affinity of poetry and music*. So it's easy to notice here the inseparable, strong correlations between music and poetry which were visible in the artist's life from his earliest years and influenced his entire work.

The composer's very strong emotionality may partly arise out of many tragic events that fate never ceased to send him throughout his life. In 1815, at the age of fifteen, he had to say goodbye to his beloved, mentally ill sister, Emilie, who died prematurely. The young composer was shocked after her death. He did not participate in the funeral rites and decided to stay home alone. Less than ten months after his sister's death Schumann suffered another painful blow. Under circumstances that remain unexplained to this day, Schumann's father died in August 1826. This event had a huge impact on the later life of the young composer. Family and friends recall this time as very difficult for Schumann. The burden of his grief and suffering was enormous - from that event he ceased any participation in family or social life and, defending an access to his inner depth, he retreated into himself forever. He remained silent, private and reserved. The only and most faithful confidant of any secrets of the young artist's soul became a diary which was written meticulously for many years. It is perfectly possible, and indeed probable, almost a certainty, that these sad and dramatic events had a major impact on the development of Robert Schumann's mental illness, the first signs of which researchers date back to 1830. The death of his beloved, closest members of family was the immediate cause of making a difficult decision about his near future. Robert Schumann, encouraged by his mother, decided to study law. He chose the University of Leipzig, however the young artist did not fall in love with either the city or the field of study. The following quote shows how reluctant the

and paranormal phenomena, as well as any solemn and mournful phrases; formerly he was the author of satirical and ironic poems. Source: https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Paul

composer was to study law in Leipzig: "Life in Leipzig follows the distressed, beaten path. I would rather already be at the devil's horns than here."⁵

During a trip to Augsburg and Munich, he personally met Heinrich Heine, and this acquaintance deeply moved him and also created in his soul a space for the declared romantic. Schumann later composed a whole series of songs to Heinrich Heine's poetry.

He spent only two semesters in Leipzig, meeting music and literary circles and taking piano lessons from his future father-in-law, Friedrich Wieck. The artist decided to continue his studies for the next four semesters in surrounded by mountains and beautiful nature town called Heidelberg, expecting and hoping it to be the time of the happiest and carefree moments of his life. One of Schumann's lecturers in Heidelberg, Professor Thibaut, a great admirer of music, confirmed the young Robert Schumann's belief in his artistic future, which resulted in new compositions and intensive work on the piano. Neglecting his law studies almost entirely, Schumann became increasingly aware of his true musical vocation. His own music engaged him completely, displacing poetry, and became a new language, more subtle, richer than the words which meaning is limited, "Music is a higher degree of poetry. The angels had to express themselves with musical sounds - the spirits with words of poetry."⁶ He made his final decision in July 1830, under the influence of the great impression which was made on him by the virtuosic playing of two brilliant violinists: Niccolò Paganini, admired at a concert in Frankfurt, and Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst, whom he had just met in Heidelberg.

Returning to Leipzig, Schumann continued to study piano and composition under the supervision of Friedrich Wieck. Together with him and several acquaintances, he founded the music journal "Neue Leipziger Zeitschrift für Musik" in 1834, renamed "Neue Zeitschrift für Musik" a year later, which aim was a combat with any musical shoddiness and bourgeois-academic narrow-mindedness. The journal was published until 1844.

That time the first symptoms of his illness became apparent, the result of which was an irrepressible, even obsessive striving for excellence and perfection. Schumann dreamed mainly of virtuosity in his piano skills. Unfortunately, over-intensive, constant practice of technique caused first reappearing injuries and, eventually, paralysis of his right hand. Neither electric treatment nor the very popular and at the time innovative homeopathy helped. To his despair, he was forced to abandon his career as a pianist and turn his talents toward composition.

⁵ H. Swolkień, op. cit. page 20.

⁶ Ibid, p. 31.

In Leipzig, Schumann also met his teacher's daughter, Clara Wieck, and they fell deeply in love. Friedrich Wieck did not accept this strong affection for many years. At approximately the same time, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy arrived in Leipzig to lead the orchestra at the Gewandhaus concert hall. A long-lasting, sincere friendship formed between two composers very quickly. This friendship lasted until Mendelssohn's death.

By that day, Robert Schumann had already begun to be tormented by depression and nagging feelings of worry. There were a number of reasons for this. The tenacity of Clara's father opposing their marriage and frequent separations from Clara as she was very successful as a pianist in Europe. In addition, Schumann's poor mental state also coincided with the death of his mother. This another family tragedy was also strongly and deeply experienced by the composer. All these factors did not have a positive impact on Schumann's mental state.

The event that undoubtedly brighten up the artist's life for a while was his marriage to Clara in August 1840. Despite the long opposition of his beloved's father, after a humiliating trial, the lovers were granted the court permission to marry. Marriage to Clara inspired and gave wings to the artist, filling Schumann's heart and mind with a new sense and meaning of life. The couple had seven children. In the period immediately after the marriage, the compositions such as piano works, string quartets, the first symphonies, but in particular the first song cycles, including *Dichterliebe*, *Op. 48*, were created very quickly. Robert Schumann was even awarded an honorary doctorate (doctor honoris causa) from the University of Jena. In 1843, thanks to the support of Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, he became a professor of musical composition at the Leipzig Conservatory. Unfortunately, together with extremely creative periods, some nervous breakdowns appeared. The effects of these breakdowns were getting worse and worse. One day, the signs of fatigue forced Schumann to give up the management of the *Neue Zeitschrift* journal and later, in 1844, to leave Leipzig and move to Dresden. The period after 1846 year was marked by Schumann's various illnesses. He complained of weakened nerves, chronic tension and dizziness. The previously acquired venereal disease also devastated the body of the composer who was fighting with any emotional issues and difficulties. With the death of his faithful friend Felix Mendelsson-Bartholdy in 1847, Schumann's health deteriorated significantly - he was having hallucinations and suffered speech disorders.

Between 1848 and 1849, Dresden became a bastion of the German revolutionary movement. When the Dresden Uprising broke out on May 3, 1849, Schumann decided to leave the city with his family. "We live here exiled by the revolution - in peace and with the increased

willingness to work, and even our thoughts go to the most important and greatest world events...."⁷

After the suppression of the revolution in 1849, the Schumanns returned to Dresden, but it was not a good time for the composer. Ignored and disrespected by the musical community of Dresden, after some negative experiences in Leipzig, where, like in Dresden, he did not find himself in the musical community, Schumann decided to seek peace inwardly, increasingly withdrawing into himself and turning off the outside world. He needed, it seemed, a more suitable environment. In September 1850, he and his wife decided to move to Düsseldorf, where he was offered the position of urban music director. "I am very happy with my present position, and if I could be sure that my physical strength would not be negatively affected by it, as the conducting is very exhausting, I would wish for nothing else," - these words Schumann recorded in his diary⁸.

Unfortunately, from as early as 1853, when Schumann regularly fell into some psychotic states and permanent indisposition, after solid charges and objections raised by the Music Association Committee, first his duties as a conductor and director were limited, and then he was forced to resign from his position. His conducting career became a thing of the past.

Schumann was too weak to walk. He was plagued by frequent trembling and floods of tears. On top of that, persistent insomnia prevented him from resting. He complained of hearing impairment, which was recorded in his musical documentation as problems resulting out of his venereal disease.

After attempting suicide by drowning in the Rhine, he was taken to the "Institution for the Treatment and Care of the Emotionally Disturbed and the Insane" in Endenich near Bonn, where he never wrote a single note again. There, in solitude and silence, he waited calmly and peacefully for his only rescue and liberation, which was death. For the rest of his life he was withdrawn, terrified and broken. He died on July 29, 1856.

Robert Schumann's genius became his own curse. His great talent and sensitivity were annihilated by a permanent, even obsessive striving for excellence and perfection. Idealism and perfectionism dominated his work, but also "triggered" the other nature, a life of constant anxiety and life in the shadow of illness. Both of these natures fought each other, and over time manifested in a form of conflicts the artist started with the world and with himself. Schumann was a highly obsessive man. From his early boyhood years, his driving force was the pursuit of

⁷ Ibid, p. 211.

⁸ Ibid, p. 215.

success. He wanted to achieve his goal first as a writer, then as a virtuoso pianist and a conductor, and finally as a composer. At the same time, together with this intense pursuit of his artistic immortality, Schumann showed a frantic fear of death and oblivion. Melancholy and inner trembling ruled his emotions, probably feeding his genetic predisposition to depression.

The figure of Robert Schumann is undoubtedly one of the most tragic which went down in history of music. His unique personality was an enigma and puzzle even to the composer's closest friends, and deep sensitivity with a feeling of a tragic fate that accompanied him throughout his life had a significant impact on his entire creative and artistic oeuvre.



Illustration 1. Robert Schumann, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Robert-schumann.jpg>

1.2. Heine

German musician Robert Schumann and German poet Heinrich Heine died in the same year, 1856. Among other things, Heine's *Buch der Lieder - the Book of Songs* brought these two great German Romantics together, which resulted in dozens of songs written by Robert Schumann, twelve years younger than Heine. Among them is the *Dichterliebe* cycle. The fate of these two great artists, who share not only the year of their death, but also the illness that contributed to it, are intertwined in an interesting manner.

Heine and Schumann met in Munich on May 8, 1828. Thanks to a recommendation of his friends, the 17-year-old composer spent many days in Heine's company and stole the poet's heart and affection. Absorbed in thoughts about music, poetry, soul and dreams, and how they are all interrelated, the young artist did not hide his excitement and twitchiness related to the meeting. The impression is generated that Heine became a brilliant poet for Schumann, and the musician later created dozens of his most beautiful songs to Heine's poetry. Regrettably, this was the only meeting between these two great artists.

One of the most prominent German poets, Christian Johann Heinrich Heine, correctly Harry Chaim Heine, was born on December 13, 1797 in Düsseldorf to a Jewish family. He was initially educated in Frankfurt am Main, aiming to become an entrepreneur. He was involved in banking, later in retail trade. Due to the lack of any mercantile inclinations and talents, he did not continue his profession as a merchant. Thanks to the wealth of his uncle Salomon Heine, a Hamburg millionaire and banker, he studied at a number of universities in Bonn, Berlin or Göttingen, where he was awarded a law degree. During his studies Heine devoted himself largely to poetry, history or literature. His first poetry attempts, written under an artistic pseudonym and published in Hamburg as *Hamburgs Wächter*, were an effect of his unhappy love for his cousin Amalie. Heine's first significant work, *Belsazar*, was also created in Hamburg.

Beginning from 1822, for a further two years, Heine was involved in issues of the Jewish community. He was a member of the Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft der Juden organization. However, despite his undoubted fascination with Hasidism, he was unable to identify with it completely, since the anti-Semitic atmosphere of that time excluded him from the broadly understood cultural and social life. In 1825, he converted to Protestantism. That time Jewish affairs and issues moved to the background. This step allowed him, by breaking

out of his spiritual and social Jewish isolation, to participate fully in public and especially cultural life. Heine called his conversion "an admission ticket to European culture."⁹

In the following years, influenced in part by his travels, Heine published a number of works such as *Die Harzreise (1826) (The Harz Journey)* and the volume of poems *Dreiunddreißig Gedichte (1824)*, which includes one of Germany's best-loved poems, *Die Loreley*.

Due to his dreamy character and rather vague and unspecified approach to reality, any and all deeper relationships with women failed. These experiences had an extremely negative impact on his psyche and resulted in poems later collected and published in 1827 as *Buch der Lieder*, or the *Book of Songs*. This collection of poems brought Heine a huge success. The author was even acclaimed as the most outstanding and distinguished poet of the younger generation.

In the spring of 1831, Heine travelled to Paris, where he became a leading literary figure, meeting some of the most prominent people of the time. Soon, however, Heine's oeuvre, through its politicization and considerable formalization, sharply criticizing the German intellectual thought and literature, caused him a lot of trouble from the German censors. In 1835, the German Federal Parliament even tried to introduce a nationwide ban on the publication of all of Heine's works.

The close acquaintance with Karl Marx was also an interesting question. Reason? Communist ideology was completely incompatible with the revolution of sensuality and enjoyment professed by the poet. From this time, that is, from 1843, comes, among other works, the epic poetry *Atta Troll. Ein Sommernachtstraum (Atta Troll, a Midsummer Night's Dream)* or, published a year later, *Deutschland. Ein Wintermärchen (Germany. A Winter's Tale)*. In both of these works, Heine snappishly described relations between church, state and society in Germany.

After the death of his generous uncle, the poet fought for his inheritance. Regrettably, it was the family that was granted the right to censor his works, which later resulted in the disappearance of most of Heine's diaries.

Suffering from a venereal disease, bedridden since 1848, paralyzed, sight-losing and physically weak, after rejection of his faith in man and acknowledging God, he died in 1856. The last eight years of Heine's life were a sequence of physical and mental suffering. The poet

⁹ <https://www.biografie-niemieckie.pl/heinrich-heine>

blamed God for governance of the world in an unfair way. Heine was buried in the Montmartre Cemetery in Paris.

Heine's irony, which was characterized by looking at everything from a distance, especially in relation to any things to which any distance is difficult to maintain, namely love, death or God, was probably well read and understood by Robert Schumann. This is why he made a special effort in his songs composed to Heine's words to conceal the true meaning of this irony, giving the texts a deeper meaning through the drama and genuineness of the music he composed. Some musicologists even postulate that Schumann did not fully understand the irony of Heine, who used to say: "I create little songs out of my great pain." It is therefore surprising that just before his marriage to Clara Wieck, in probably the happiest year of his life, Schumann composed songs to Heine's lyrics about unhappiness. Perhaps, however, the composer with his music deliberately added the emotional burden to the texts in order to highlight his own opinion about the true meaning of Heine's poetry which was hidden by the poet. Schumann composed songs that were mature, emotionally empathetic and eschewed the irony or bitterness so frequent and common in Heine's texts. With music, he emphasized what was fundamental to him. After composing *Dichterliebe*, the composer sent Heine his work - the culmination of a romantic song - but did not receive any reply.

Friedrich Nietzsche wrote, "Heinrich Heine has given me the highest idea of what a lyric poet is. I have been searching in vain through all the thousands of years for an equally sweet and passionate music. He possessed that divine malice without which I can't imagine the perfect. And how Heine handles the German language!"¹⁰

Heine his high position owes to his lyric poetry, particularly the works included in *The Book of Songs (Buch der Lieder 1827, Polish edition 1880)*. Music for many of his poems was composed by Robert Schumann and Franz Schubert.

¹⁰ <https://interlude.hk/heinrich-heines-favorite-song-composer>



Illustration 2. Heinrich Heine, <https://www.germanpod101.com/lesson/intermediate-lesson-22-heinrich-heine-ich-weis-nicht-was-soll-es-bedeuten/>

CHAPTER II

2.1 Creativity and Psychopathology

"There is no great genius without a mixture of madness"

– Aristotle

Based on an analysis of the biographies of many famous people, it may be said that the connection between creativity and predisposition to mental disorders seems close and obvious. The word "creativity" comes from the concept of creation (from the Latin word "creatio" - to create), which in ancient times functioned in human consciousness as an influence of divine intervention¹¹.

The famous British poet Lord Byron used to say, "We of the craft are all crazy. Some are affected by gaiety, others by melancholy, but all are more or less touched."¹²

The first modern researcher of any links and connections between above-average talents and mental disorders was Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909), an Italian psychiatrist, criminologist and anthropologist. He noted strong correlations between affective disorders and artistic genius.

In his book, Professor Janusz Rybakowski of Poznan University of Medical Sciences presents the history of manic-depressive illness from ancient times to the present. He describes the whole spectrum of relations between manic states - "when nothing is impossible" and depressive states "when life has no sense".

For the processes of creativity, especially in the artistic field, in addition to original thinking, an adequate motivation for action and intense emotional experience of reality are essential. This is supported by psychopathological and temperamental factors associated with affective disorders, in particular bipolar affective disorder¹³.

What is "manic-depressive illness," otherwise referred to as cyclophrenia or cyclic insanity? These are polar opposite psychopathological states - mania and depression, which appear in the course of this disease in different time sequences. Therefore, the disease is called bipolar affective disorder.

¹¹ M. Batey, A. Furnham, *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology Monographs*, 2006; 132 (4): 355–42.

¹² A. Sussman, *Mental Illness and Creativity: A Neurological View of the Tortured Artist*, *Stanford Journal of Neuroscience*, 2007; 1 (1): 21-24.

¹³ J. Rybakowski, *Oblicza choroby maniakalno-depresyjnej*, Termedia, Poznań 2009.

Bipolar disorder patients all the time live between heaven and hell. They stray and wander between sadness and extreme excitement. The symptoms of this mental illness can take many forms. These forms affect thinking, behaviour and emotions, as well as they impair the effectiveness of coping with everyday life, even in the simplest situations. The disease is accompanied by impulsivity, aggression, but also sadness and extraversion, sometimes even visual and auditory hallucinations up to delirium and limited contact with the world.

It is not entirely known what is a cause of mental illness, which can develop for years without any symptoms. It is a remarkably individual matter. This is a result of many influences, traumatic experiences and a way of coping with them, family perturbations, genes and, eventually, chemical changes in the brain. Mental problems are often inherited. For example, the father of a prominent painter, Edward Munch, suffered from depression, and his sister from schizophrenia. The painter struggled with depression and neurosis, and even underwent treatment after one of his subsequent breakdowns. He regained his peace of mind in the end, but unfortunately, at the same time, lost a piece of his talent. Both of Robert Schumann's parents suffered from severe nervous attacks, and the composer's prematurely deceased sister struggled with the diagnosed mental illness. Robert Schumann, throughout his adult life, had a lot of problems arising out of mental disorders and difficult-to-manage emotional states. The key feature in his art is its direct connection to his inner feeling of the world. He very often emphasized how crucial for him was imagination and emotionality in the entire process of creation. The amazing fact is how intensely and strongly the artist's emotionality and his work were connected, and how significantly Schumann's state of mind influenced his entire oeuvre. For him, the creative process began with any complex experiences felt as a half-asleep hearing experience, and the beginnings of the majority of creative spurts were accompanied by permanent mood changes of the artist.

A source of mental disorders is an unresolved, unconscious internal conflict, often between a person's aspirations and capabilities, desires and social norms, dreams and reality. In the case of Robert Schumann, it was his dreams of a piano virtuoso career that were very quickly revised by reality. A patient is unable to function normally, sometimes failing to distinguish what is just fiction or what is the truth. In bipolar affective disorder, the patient may sometimes be extremely stimulated and active, also artistically creative, with a highly inflated self-esteem, only to jump to the opposite emotional pole in a very short time and dive into depression, sadness, lack of self-confidence and loss of all interests. After moments of stimulation always comes depression, a state of distress, when a patient notices nothing around him, only darkness,

low point, meaninglessness, inertia, stagnancy. The patient cannot sleep or think. Sadness is a winner and possess the head.

Robert Schumann, at the end of his life, was diagnosed as a patient suffering from delusional melancholia, manifesting itself in a form of frequent ups and downs of the state of consciousness. Sober and clear thinking alternated between hallucinations and delusional ideas, only to return again to a state of the relatively normal perception. All attempts of any treatment, however, were unsuccessful. Naturally, he was not diagnosed with manic-depressive illness, unequivocally and explicitly naming this disease. The first attempts to name and describe this disorder were made not earlier than in 1854, just two years before Schumann's death, however until the present day, more and more profound and precise research is being provided, revealing any unknown faces of this disease.

A healthy person is equipped with defence mechanisms which let it to function despite any frustrations and problems. These mechanisms do not exist in depression. "Hyperrealism comes where a patient is unable to retouch reality and sees the world without a protective shelter: it is as it is, it won't get better, there are no illusions about it," - explains Marcin Siwek, Ph.D., head of the Department of Affective Disorders, Chair of Psychiatry, Jagiellonian University, Medical College. -"The patient is focused on itself, on its own suffering. However, it is the depressive experience that most often is an inspiration for its creativity."¹⁴

A considerable part of the high literature is of a gloomy, pessimistic nature, and authors most often reflect the existential pain they have experienced in their own lives.

Research indicates that many patients positively assess the link between the social stigma which is bipolar disorder and its accompanying negative social and personal consequences, and the positive aspects of this disorder, such as the increased creativity and sensitivity. The poet Rainer Maria Rilke was offered psychoanalytic therapy, but he refused, saying, "Don't take my devils away, because my angels may flee too."¹⁵

The research also encourages to ask any further questions, such as whether specific psychopathological symptoms have any impact on the increased or decreased levels of creativity? Do any particular stages of illness coincide with a decrease or decline in creativity of patients?

The link between bipolar disorder and creativity is demonstrated by both detailed analyses of biographies of prominent artists and randomized clinical tests on creativity provided

¹⁴ <https://plus.echodnia.eu/radomskie/choroba-ktora-laczy-w-sobie-geniuszdepresje-i-szalenstwo/ar/11671288#!>

¹⁵ Ibid.

among people diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Interestingly, the research provided by Louis A. Sass in 2001 indicates that there is, mainly among artists, a specific relation between the presence of bipolar disorder and creativity¹⁶.

"Artists in fact are characterized by different type of creativity than e.g. engineers or mathematicians."¹⁷ "It is noted that to a large extent, in addition to creativity, artists are characterized by nonconformity, complexity of interests. They attribute great importance to intuition and independence."¹⁸

This issue is developed by Sass, by combining the correlation between bipolar disorder and creativity of artists with some specific personality predispositions such as emotionality, applying great importance to prevailing social hierarchy ("superiority felt in mania, sense of rejection in depression")¹⁹. Nancy Andreasen notes that "excessive sensitivity to surrounding stimuli might also lead artists to seek solutions to mitigate the severe mood swings."²⁰ This could explain the tendency of artists to alcohol abuse, as well as accidental often made suicide attempts²¹.

Attention should be given to combination of high creativity values only with mild to moderate psychopathological symptoms. "The highest artistic "fertility" of British writer Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), who suffered from bipolar disorder, overlapped in time with episodes of the disease characterized by mild mood swings. Severe episodes were a stage of an apparent decrease in her creativity. It can be presumed that the experiences of these periods were an inspiration for creation of subsequent works. The struggle with a relapse of that disease in 1941 led the prominent artist to suicide."²² It is obvious that not every prominent artist was mentally ill, but analysing the biographies of the most outstanding poets, writers, painters or musicians, it can be noticed that a significant number of artists were affected by bipolar affective disorder.

Professor Nancy Andreasen of the University of Iowa (the USA) observed thirty prominent writers for more than fifteen years and in 1974 announced the results of her research.

¹⁶ L. A. Sass, *Schizophrenia, Modernism, and the Creative Imagination: On Creativity and Psychopathology*. *Creativity Research Journal*, 2001, 13 (1): 55-74.

¹⁷ N. Andreasen, *Creativity in art and science: are there two cultures? Dialogues in clinical neuroscience*, 2012, 14 (1): 49-54.

¹⁸ J. Rybakowski, op. cit.

¹⁹ L. A. Sass, op. cit.

²⁰ N. Andreasen, *The relationship between creativity and mood disorders*. *Dialogues in clinical neuroscience*. 2008; 10 (2) 2: 251-255.

²¹ A. M. Ludwig, *Creative achievement and psychopathology. Comparison among professions*, w: M. Runco, R. Richards, *Eminent creativity, everyday creativity, and health*, Ablex, Greenwich, 1997.

²² J. Rybakowski, op. cit.

"As many as 80 percent of the observed artists showed symptoms of some affective disorders, and almost half of them were diagnosed with bipolar disorder. The results of the research indicate that the association between psychopathological symptoms and the level of creativity is most strongly visible in bipolar disorder."²³

Two years later, another researcher, Kay Redfield Jamison, a professor of psychiatry at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, examined 47 members of the British Royal Academy. Nearly 40 percent of them were undergoing psychiatric treatment due to violent mood swings. Arnold M. Ludwig, an acclaimed professor of psychiatry and human behaviour at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, wrote in one of his publications, "While mental disturbances may provide individuals with an underlying sense of unease that seems necessary for sustained creative activity, these disturbances are not the only source for inner tension... chronic physical ailments may give someone a heightened sense of urgency to leave a mark on the world and achieve immortality through creative greatness."²⁴

Robert Schumann had a panic fear that he might be forgotten. From an early age he had an irresistible feeling of his great future. The young artist was dominated by an absolute certainty that he would become a famous man. He was not quite aware of what he would be, but he knew that he would be famous under any circumstances. However, the artist didn't foresee what price he would have to pay for this artistic immortality. And how much he would suffer and how much humiliation he would have to take and face.

Is it possible to treat bipolar disorder as a side effect of any extraordinary sensitivity that motivates artists in their creative work? Is insanity associated with any outstanding creativity?

Aristotle in 350 BC in his work *Problemata (The Problems)* asked, "why is it that all men who are outstanding in philosophy, poetry or the arts are melancholic?" Robert Schumann was not able to reach the heights of his creative abilities during his most severe struggles with his own state of mind, however, he created most of his remarkable works while in manic states. A very interesting alternative appears here, allowing us to ask a key question: does mental disorder stimulate any outstanding creativity, or is it the practice of art that results in mental disorders?

Professor Ruth Richards, author of *Everyday Creativity and New Views of Human Nature: Psychological, Social, and Spiritual Perspectives*, specifies five mechanisms that, in her opinion, explain mutual coexistence of both phenomena.

²³ M. Runco, *Creativity*, Annu. Rev. Psychol. 2004; 55: 657–87.

²⁴ A. M. Ludwig, *The Price of Greatness: Resolving the Creativity and Madness Controversy*, Guilford Press 1995.

- In the first mechanism disorders support creators who, feeling stimulation, create ideas for the whole work in it, later "polishing" it. This is a method of creation of W. A. Mozart or J. S. Bach.
- In the second mechanism the creativity is born out of disorders, it is a result of art therapy, and patients discover that a creative expression frees them from any accumulated emotions.
- Another, third mechanism, makes evident that depression is a cost that must be borne by a creator who creates any work. When the creator begins to create, it must isolate itself from others, be lost in the process of creation. As a consequence, family links are weakening.
- In the fourth mechanism, it is not the art itself, but any social response and public reaction for it that cause depression. If what we create is met with a negative response, or we anticipate that it will be, then we feel fear and rejection. This may directly lead to increased disorders. Robert Schumann was not considered to be genius during his life. The public preferred to admire the works of Mendelssohn or Beethoven. Only the efforts of J. Brahms and Schumann's wife Clara Wieck after the composer's death resulted in the change of the composer's position among critics and the public. Similarly, Vincent van Gogh sold only one painting during his life and, unappreciated by the world, died in poverty.
- According to the fifth mechanism, there is a factor that affects both creativity and disorders. These are genes. "Genes make some people susceptible to a mental illness. But not everyone will develop a disease, since the occurrence of mental disorders is also significantly influenced by the environment in which we grow up, and any past trauma or other stressors can "trigger" the disease," explains Professor Alexander Araszkievicz.²⁵ Secondary effects of the disease may manifest as a low self-esteem and a desire to compensate for it with any outstanding achievements, as well as excessive involvement in work. Again, Robert Schumann fits into such a rhetorical argumentation. His pursuit of perfection led to the opposite effects than the composer's intentions. His hand, overburdened by excessive practice, became injured and prevented Schumann from becoming a virtuoso pianist.

²⁵ Prof. Araszkievicz together with his wife Alicja runs in Bydgoszcz "The Centre of Health, Development and Culture „Łaźnia Miejska” (Centrum Zdrowia, Rozwoju i Kultury „Łaźnia Miejska”); <https://www.focus.pl/artykul/czygeniusz-moze-istniec-bez-szalenstwa?page=3>

Many artists creating at an outstanding, exceptional level also lead an "unhygienic" lifestyle. They become totally involved in the work they are about to create, and, losing their contact with reality, they give up, at their own request, everything that normal people live. They cut off their access to any vital energy, forget to eat, neglect relationships with their family and friends.

A patient suffers, feels anxiety and devastates its body with permanent mood swings. Long-lasting, persistent and frequent depressive states, which are very difficult to treat, push sufferers to decline in activity and professional efficiency, introversion and, ultimately, to suicide attempts.

This disease is associated with the increased, perhaps the highest risk of suicide. Vincent van Gogh, who suffered from bipolar disorder and created more than eight hundred paintings, some three hundred of which he painted in just one year during manic periods, committed suicide. Sylvia Plath, an author of the autobiographical novel about depression *The Bell Jar*, who was repeatedly hospitalized psychiatrically, finally achieved her goal after several suicide attempts, and, ultimately, her life could not be saved. John Gartner in his book *The Hypomanic Edge* describes Christopher Columbus, Steve Jobs, Ted Turner, who were struggling with bipolar affective disorder. Author of the book *Touched with Fire*, Kay Redfield Jamison, describes the strictly creative side of the disease, mentioning Mozart, Beethoven, van Gogh as some of the most prominent artists affected by manic depression. The list is longer, as this "elite group" of artists includes Virginia Woolf, Marilyn Monroe, Janice Joplin, Ernest Hemingway, Stanisław Witkiewicz or Jerzy Kosiński. All of those artists committed suicide, most likely as a result of their mental disorders. Robert Schumann, who was rescued during his suicide attempt, is another example of a brilliant artist who was unable to control his strong emotional states that completely took over his psyche.

CHAPTER III

3.1 Psyche: Master Raro, Florestan, Eusebius or Robert Schumann

The complexity of Robert Schumann's psyche can be evidenced by the fact that he used a variety of more than thirty artistic pseudonyms, referring to his inner, very different, and simultaneously occurring spheres of feeling. The most often used pseudonyms were Master Raro, Florestan and Eusebius - three separate characters with distinct personalities forming three different *ego* closed in one body and mind. The artist used these pseudonyms to present some different perspectives of his works. Florestan embodied the passionate composer, and Eusebius the independent Schumann. Master Raro acted as an advisor.

Some people might have thought they were dealing with mentally different personalities. Even the composer's wife Clara did not hide her problems with understanding her husband's strongly contrasting behaviour. The letters he wrote to her even before their marriage astound us with their antinomy. In the same lines of his letter, the composer was able to surprise with his enthusiasm and strength, only to clothe his words with coldness and distance in a minute.

The entire life of the Schumanns seems to be characterised by the polar opposite feelings. The composer's love for Clara evidently indicates a bipolar feeling. Pure, strong and beautiful passion towards an unreal, lofty person, in contact with reality changed significantly.

Certain passages of Clara's letters written during their trip to Russia may be an evidence of Schumann's negative emotional states, "Robert stays in bed. Severe condition, as he feels very weak [...]. He made himself believe that he would not get up again, that he had a nervous fever, and the like. I was in a terrible position, having to give concerts, leaving Robert in the care of our coachman."²⁶

The next two days of their trip Clara describes in a completely different manner, "Robert felt better. His joy of life returned." And again a few days later she describes her husband's mood, "Robert became apathetic – he feels pain in his joints."²⁷

The emotional amplitude and inability to control feelings was a problem for people around the composer and Schumann himself. It is difficult to live in emotional dualism and have only two feelings to everything: love and hate. Schumann struggled for the stability of his

²⁶ M. Asikainen, T. Samerek, *Chopin – Schumann. U źródeł romantycznych inspiracji*, Zeszyty Naukowe 32, Akademia Muzyczna w Gdańsku 2000, p. 49.

²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 50.

emotions and defended himself against his feelings. There was no boundary line between the outer and inner worlds - the emotional world permanently overlapped with the professional one and vice versa. The family events, emotions and feelings evoked by visits of beloved people recorded in one diary together with meticulous meals or hairdresser bills are completely surprising and astonishing. With his purist attention to clothing, menus, or the precise accuracy of any recommendations given to a hausfrau, the composer did not fit the image of an artist of the Romantic era.

It would seem that in these meticulous activities repeated every day the artist intentionally crystallized the uncontrollable emotions and fear of the unknown. In a letter to Mendelssohn, he wrote, "Any deviation from the established norms of everyday life trips me up and puts me in a mood of sick excitement."²⁸

Schumann had a feeling that this unknown something, which he was struggling against, would inevitably happen sooner or later anyway. In 1850, when the Schumanns were moving to Düsseldorf, the composer commented on the presence of two women's convents and one home for the mentally ill persons, "I care so little for the first centres. However, the latter one is not pleasant to me."²⁹

He was filled with anxiety at any mention of mental problems. This anxiety in Schumann's life was increasing systematically - from the fear of occurrence of something irreversible to a state of imminent threat, when the inevitable is about to come true. This fear dominated all of Schumann's positive feelings, "A terrifying graveyard of any annihilated dreams, a death dream with bloody phantoms, a garden where only cypresses and weeping willows grow, a silent theatre with crying figures. Oh God, this is the world!"³⁰

Such an image of reality purged the composer's consciousness of the realistic idea and pushed him into an undefined existence on the borderline of two worlds: the real and the unreal one. It is clearly apparent in the *Dichterliebe* song cycle, where carefully selected poetry and the piano accompaniment used with the perfect intention reveal this battle of the real and fantasy imaginary world in Schumann's soul.

Disillusionment with the real world allowed the composer to escape into his inner world, inner „being”, which, after all, did not limit or depress him, and in which, unlike the surrounding reality, he could feel fulfilled. The ambitions of his youth failed when, convinced of his outstanding talent, he strained his hand irreversibly what closed him the path to a virtuoso

²⁸ Ibid, p. 50.

²⁹ Ibid, p. 51.

³⁰ H. Swolkień, op. cit., p. 24.

career. It was a moment of a great disappointment, as evidenced by some passages of a letter to Clara, "[...] I felt unhappy - right here - because of my ill hand. Let me tell you that my hand is getting worse and worse. I often complained to heaven and asked: God, why did you do this to me?"³¹

Also as a composer, Schumann was out of luck. In the first half of the 19th century, the preferred light and radiant piano technique *Style Brillante* dominated all the concert halls of Europe. Schumann's work, so profound, sublime and intellectually sophisticated, did not follow the public's taste. It is therefore hardly surprising that the composer felt completely misunderstood and rejected. The situation was further complicated by the immense popularity of the composer's wife, Clara. As a world-famous pianist, she was the life and soul of European salons, and unfortunately, Schumann had to accept his role as a husband of the famous artist. The household and family was basically financially supported by Clara, and her husband, it seems, was at times simply a burden to her, as her own words may confirm, "My playing is again pushed aside, which is usually the case when Robert is composing. The whole day he cannot find a single moment for me, what make me left behind."³²

The composer's problems with finding a proper job were an effect of his progressive detachment from reality. He failed to get a position as the artistic director and conductor in Leipzig, as well as to keep his position as Kapellmeister (Band Master) of the Düsseldorf orchestra, which he took in 1850. The orchestra members did not accept their conductor's emotional instability. The artistic visions created by Schumann's suffering psyche were incomprehensible to the musicians, what resulted in some eruptions of anger and subsequent states of apathy completely inappropriate for the situation.

The composer more often was losing control of his state of consciousness and escaped into the world of composing in order not to face any setbacks and failures. Withdrawing from any emotional interactions with his surroundings, he fled from the real world into his own, more and more unreal and autistically unusual world. It is worth noting how *Dichterliebe* concentrates this composer's emotional instability and uncertainty in sixteen compositions. The ideal love does not exist in the real life, as it is only possible in the fictional, imagined in the artist's heart realm.

³¹ M. Asikainen, T. Samerek, op. cit., p. 51.

³² Ibid, p. 52.

In February 1853, Schumann experienced a non-reversible change in his life - the real and fictional worlds permeated each other mutually. Clara brought back memories, "My poor Robert suffered terribly. All the noises turned into music for him, and, as he claimed, into wonderful music, with wonderful instruments with a sound never heard on earth. But, naturally, it excited him tremendously. The doctor declared that he was unable to help him. He repeatedly said that if it did not stop, he would lose his mind. The auditory disorder had developed strongly that Robert now can hear any great symphonic works as if they were performed by a full orchestra, from beginning to end, with the last note echoing until he can hear a new piece of music in his imagination. The morning arrived, and with it a terrifying change took place. The angelic voices transformed into the voices of demons, and they were accompanied by horrible, demonic music. These voices announced him that he was a sinner and they intended to drag him to hell."³³

The composer's condition turned into a real nervous crisis. Schumann conquered with it, escaping into work, but eventually, due to his frequent states of aggression, becoming dangerous to people around him and especially to those closest to him, after an unsuccessful suicide attempt, he was admitted, at his own request, to a clinic for the mentally ill patients in Endenich near Bonn. There, in solitude and silence, he calmly awaited the only rescue and liberation, which was death.

Clara was aware of the suffering her husband was going through. She was present at his death, and recalled this moment, "with all my feelings I was giving thanks to God for finally setting him free, and as I knelt at his bedside I felt as if I had been sanctified, as if his beautiful soul had brushed past me. Why didn't it take me with it? I saw him for the last time today - I put some flowers near his head - he took my love with him."³⁴

For Schumann, music became an emanation of reflection, a multifaceted way to formulate what often could not be described in words. It gave freedom and brought together the two worlds on the borderline of which the composer lived throughout his adult life - the real world and the world deeply hidden in his psyche. That's why it's necessary to consider his compositions as personal, emotional thoughts, full of delicate little details that make his art so special and unique. It is necessary to penetrate Robert Schumann's inner world in order to completely understand his music.

³³ Ibid, p. 53.

³⁴ Ibid, p. 53.

Master Raro, Florestan, Eusebius are Robert Schumann in one, single person. These literary pseudonyms, which alternately take over one man's mind, show what kind of sensitivity structure we have to face in the case of this artist. "Illness does not create talent, but it can unleash it, intensify any creative forces, give it a stigma of an unique originality. Art created by people with mental disorders reveals to us not only the world of inner experiences of ill people, but also a part of our very intimate, private world of magic, absurd thoughts, fantasies, dreams and mechanisms to which we are sometimes reluctant to admit even to ourselves."³⁵

With the help of the behavioural parallels detected for Robert Schuman, taking into account some psychotic states such as dual personality, autism, incoherence or emotional lability, and using some biographical texts of the artist, I will provide my own analysis of the *Dichterliebe* song cycle.

3.2 Analysis of the song cycle

In the most beautiful month, May 1840, Robert Schumann started composing a song cycle, which he completed just a week later and titled *Dichterliebe* ("*A Poet's Love*"). It is a work about unhappy love, although the composer created it in a year that was very happy for him - the year of his marriage to his beloved Clara Wieck. "The subject is quite unique for the time in which it was taken up [...]. At the time of great hopes for happiness with his beloved wife the texts from the sphere of anxiety and fear were selected."³⁶ It is believed that this title was taken from a poem by Friedrich Rückert, "The love of a poet is usually hit by misfortune. Gods! Let me hope!."³⁷ But these are only speculations. However, it is beyond all doubt that the eruption of Schumann's songwriting appeared suddenly, and between February and December 1840 he wrote almost 150 songs. That time he composed all of his vocal cycles. He also wrote songs before and after 1840, but none of them can compare to those written just in 1840.

Surprisingly, Schumann's artistic "fertility" was so remarkable and immense just in one year. Its urgency and size are astonishing as well. There was certainly some impetus, perhaps "triggered" by some emotionally powerful events in the composer's life. "Oh my Clara, what bliss it is to write songs. I can't tell you how easy it has become for me, and how happy I am

³⁵ Ibid, p. 66.

³⁶ D. Fischer-Diskau, *Robert Schumann. Wort und Music. Das Wokalwerk*, Stuttgart 1981 p. 80.

³⁷ A fragment of the poem by F. Rückert from *Liebesfrühling*: „Dichterliebe hat eigenes Unglück stets betroffen, / Hohe Götter, lasset mich das Beste hoffen!”

[...] This is music that is completely different from the music that is carried first by the fingers; much more melodic and direct."³⁸

The composer, in his own peculiar way, selected texts from the cycle of 65 poems of Heinrich Heine, entitled *Lyrisches Intermezzo*, published in 1823, which later became a part of the Book of Songs.³⁹ Schumann read and interpreted Heine's texts in a very specific and personal way. The artist omitted a number of poems he did not like, and in those selected we would search in vain for the texts which are more or less erotic or drastic.

The manuscript, unlike the first edition, contained twenty completely composed songs, from which the composer selected sixteen and published them under the common title *Dichterliebe*. Between the fourth song *Wenn ich in deine Augen seh* and the fifth song *Ich will meine Seele tauchen* were two of the omitted songs: *Dein Angesicht, so lieb und schön*⁴⁰ and *Lehn deine Wang*⁴¹. In the former, we find words, "only your lips are red; but death shall soon kiss them pale" and "out will go the heavenly light that gleams from your innocent eyes." In the second song we can find a metaphor for the sexual act.

Another two of the finally removed songs from the cycle found their place between the twelfth and thirteenth songs. Just after the poignant composition *Ich hab im Traum geweinet*, according to the manuscript, *Es leuchtet meine Liebe*⁴², a ballad about a knight killed by a giant in front of his beloved as well as a scherzo/ballade song *Mein Wagen rollet langsam*⁴³ should be additionally performed.

All four additional tracks, as it is generally claimed, had no distinctive features, and it was perhaps a good thing that they were ultimately removed from the song cycle, as they would have created a redundancy.

The sixteen texts of *Dichterliebe* dramaturgically constitute a separate work created by the composer, although it was composed of poetic miniatures by Heine. Schumann selected the texts in such a way as to present a revealing conclusion on the basis of a slow-moving-plot, which, at some point, gets any additional emotional colours, but, in fact, boils down to two words: love rejection.

³⁸ A letter of the composer addressed to Clara Wieck, 1840; quoted after: D. Fischer-Diskau, op. cit., p.41.

³⁹ *Buch der Lieder*, first published in 1827 in Hamburg.

⁴⁰ Song published as op. 127 No. 2, Dresden 1854. English translation by Richard Stokes, author of *The Book of Lieder* (Faber, 2005)

⁴¹ Song published as op. 142 No. 2, Leipzig 1858. English translation by Richard Stokes, author of *The Book of Lieder* (Faber, 2005)

⁴² Song published as op. 127 No. 3, Dresden 1854.

⁴³ Song published as op. 142 No. 3, Leipzig 1858.

The entire cycle has a single-thread, monodic structure and, de facto, focuses on describing the extreme experiences of the "lyrical self." Euphoria is followed by depression, being aware of the presence of someone is followed by loss. The naturalness and directness of what is positive and filled with spontaneity⁴⁴, is correlated with the dark⁴⁵ moments that are revealed with difficulty, only in the culmination of the individual songs.

Why does Schumann choose precisely these songs from Heine's *Lyrisches Intermezzo*? These texts probably most fully reflect the composer's inner self, torn by extreme emotions, and further excited by his illness that had been making the artist's life so miserable since his early teenage years.

In *Dichterliebe* Schumann tries to capture an intangible moment, a flash, an impression that lasted for a moment and in a second was gone, passed away. A song historian R. Stricker described some of Schumann's songs, "they are like a glance, like a shout. Like a chain of moments (*l'enchaînement de l'instant à l'instant*). Each of them, for itself."⁴⁶

In the first four songs of the cycle, everything happens in the outer space. We successively go through four stages of perception of what the persona is experiencing. The first stage is a memory full of hope and enchantment, wonderful moments which are being relived. This is euphoria and poetic admiration of spring, the month of May, birds and flowers (*Mai, Vögel, Blumen*).

The next stage and the next four songs are the inner life of the poet. A drastic emotional polarization. The awareness of own feelings is met drastically with the awareness of being rejected. A tremendous disappointment, suffering of the soul and heart are statements that are repeated alternately with the word *love* (*Seele, Herz, Liebe*).

The following stage is again an escape from the hidden deeply in the soul anxiety to the outside world, ordinary daily life. Through an ironic view of events, the persona tries to cover and hide the pain and nostalgia for what has passed, and the words *girl, boy, wedding, dance with another man* (*Mädchen, ein Jüngling, Hochzeitreigen*) only emphasize the awareness of the loss of a beloved person.

The last part of the cycle are songs balancing on the borderline between reality and dream with a kind of final catharsis, in which the persona consciously parts with the unfulfilled vision of requited love. The words *wonderland, dream* (*Wunderland, Traum*) are mixed with the words *love and pain* (*Liebe und Schmerz*).

⁴⁴ See e.g. song No 1, *Im wunderschönen Monat Mai*, or No. 5, *Ich will meine Seele tauchen*.

⁴⁵ See e.g. song No. 7, *Ich grolle nicht* or song No. 8, *Und wüsstest die Blumen die kleinen*.

⁴⁶ R. Stricker, *La melodie e le lied*, Paris 1975, p. 33.

All these sixteen songs are a journey with the composer through the land of naive hope, loss of illusions, then distance and escape into an absurd oneirism, and, finally, return to the familiar daily reality.

Schumann's attitude to those moments in Heine's lyricism in which the poet uses irony is very interesting. For example, in the sixth song in the cycle entitled *Im Rhein and the last Die alten, bösen Lieder*, in which an ironic tone appears, Schumann resorts to persiflage, sarcasm and feigned pathos, which, not belonging to the uniformity of the *Dichterliebe* style, like a mask, distances the composer's true emotions from the described reality. These emotions, which the composer operates in his work, we can divide into four categories: intimacy, romantic aura, ingressiveness and evanescence⁴⁷.

⁴⁷ *Cykle pieśni ery romantycznej 1816-1914: interpretacje* under the editorship of Mieczysław Tomaszewski, Kraków, AM 1989, p. 38.

CHAPTER IV

4.1 The outside world - enchantment

Each of the sixteen compositions included in the *Dichterliebe* cycle has its own distinct form and unique characteristics, both emotionally and stylistically. The cycle may be divided into four emotional parts: intimacy, romantic aura, ingressiveness and evanescence⁴⁸, as well as into four states of consciousness: the outside world - enchantment, the poet's inner life - disillusionment, reality - ironic nostalgia, and the borderline between reality and dream, leading to the final catharsis. This is quite a rich spectrum of feelings and emotions for one song cycle.

Schumann "paints" any verbal moods very evocatively with the stylistic role of the piano, often replacing the voice in the leading narrative role with pianistic narration in songs. It is not surprising, if we remind the composer's unfulfilled pianistic desires. It would seem that the poetic text does not satisfy Schumann enough, taking into account emotions, and he, with the help of the piano, is forced to add a deeper mood story, thus entering directly into the most intimate, in the composer's own opinion, recesses of the human psyche. Intimacy manifests itself in individual songs of this cycle as an unpretentious and natural sincerity of expression. We may say, with a great deal of certainty, that *Dichterliebe* is the composer's personal confession, disclosure of his own feelings in an open, subtle and unintrusive way. Heine's poetry would not have been able to speak as strongly and deeply as the version enriched with music and proposed by Schumann as a cycle. This "intimacy of musical expression [...] is in direct relation to the composer's personal attitude towards music. The considered and transmitted in this way music reflects the persona. In this aspect, music is no longer conceivable as a craft."⁴⁹ August Gerstmeier comes to this conclusion in his monograph of Schumann's songs.

It takes Schumann only one week to compose all the songs, and he does so in May 1840. What other month could be chosen to create an emotionally powerful, romantic composition than May? It would be interesting to know whether the composer had the idea for *Dichterliebe* in his head before and waited for the arrival of May, or whether the title of the first song of the cycle is a complete coincidence. Based on numerous studies, it is known that nothing in Schumann's work was a coincidence, and it is likely that this May creation of *Dichterliebe* was inspired by the text of the composition that begins the cycle.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 38.

⁴⁹ A. Gerstmeier, *Die Lieder Schumanns*, Tutzing 1982, p. 51.

From the very first bars of *Im wunderschönen Monat Mai*, the first song of the cycle, through the fourth composition *Wenn ich in deine Augen seh*, and the thirteenth song *Ich hab im Traum geweinet*, to the final bars of *Die Alten bösen Lieder*, which is crowning the entire work, we may perceive a deep sensitivity and romantic intimacy. The composer both begins and closes his work with the sound loop full of intimate, subtle delicacy, embedded and restrained tempos, muted dynamics and natural sounds. "Schumann's intimacy is formed neither by the typically aesthetic function of the work - an autotelic value, nor by a purely expressive or appellative function, it is primarily constituted by a phatic function."⁵⁰

Focusing on the works that both poet and composer generously decorated with romantic intimacy, I will try to characterize and evaluate them in order to better understand Schumann's intentions in selection of poetry, means of expression and specific order of songs in the cycle.

Dichterliebe begins with the very innocent and simple song *Im Wundershönen Monat Mai (In the wondrous month of May)*. It is a stanza song, the simplest known type of song, where each of the poem stanzas is developed in the same musical way, and in addition, the composer uses the same type of accompaniment in the first and second stanza. In this way, the composer emphasizes the simplicity and innocence of the theme addressed in the song text. The described in the poem impeccability and freshness of the first romantic raptures is enriched here by a simple but charmingly beautiful melody. The poem depicts the theme of blooming of a lover's feelings in the wonderful month of May, when nature awakens.

*W prześlicznym miesiącu maju,
Gdy tryska kwiat z ziemi łona,
I w sercu mojem zakwitły
Pierwszej miłości nasiona...*

*W prześlicznym miesiącu maju,
Gdy ptaszę śpiewa z zapalem,
I ja mych uczuć wybrance
Wszystkie pragnienia wyznałem...⁵¹*

⁵⁰ Cykle pieśni ery romantycznej 1816-1914, op. cit., p. 39.

⁵¹ [https://pl.wikisource.org/wiki/Intermezzo_\(Heine,_t%C5%82um._Kraushar\)](https://pl.wikisource.org/wiki/Intermezzo_(Heine,_t%C5%82um._Kraushar))

H. Heine, *Intermezzo*, translation by Aleksander Kraushar. In my analysis I use the Polish translation prepared by A. Kraushar in all sixteen songs.

*Im wunderschönen Monat Mai,
Als alle Knospen sprangen,
Da ist in meinem Herzen
Die Liebe aufgegangen...*

*Im wunderschönen Monat Mai,
Als alle Vögel sangen,
Da hab' ich ihr gestanden
Mein Sehnen und Verlangen...*

Taking into account the theme, where the lyrical *ego* confesses love to a beloved person, the nature of this text is very confessional and personal.

From the very start, it is astonishing that the composer begins the entire cycle in a nonharmonic (non-chord) tone, as if he wanted to reveal the veil of mystery of some fictional reality happening outside the real world. This unreal reality is a hallmark of Schumann's oeuvre, but here, combined with the appropriately selected poetry, it is clear how strongly the composer was willing to create this illusory state of consciousness, a suspension in an unreal being, and tried to search for an ideal but non existing world. Schumann delays "embedding" this song in a particular key until the solo voice joins the songs. This tonal indecision until the solo voice begins the song is very suggestive. Could it be that the lover is unsure of what he wants to say? The song from the very start intentionally introduces a subtle emotional distress in order for the solo voice to reassure itself and a listener of the true intention of the lyrical self. "The first, third and fifth bars are dominated by the key of B flat minor, the second and fourth by F sharp minor, only in the sixth bar the vocal line is confidently managing the A major key on the text of *Monat Mai*, through the F-sharp G-sharp - a passage"⁵².

From the first notes, Schumann introduces alternately harmonic arpeggios that escalate this sense of unreality. Also, the peculiar use of the leading tone E at the ends of the phrase, which encourages the preceding tone G and F to a natural rubato (music notes example 1), gives the phrases an unforced, dreamy atmosphere, escalated by the use of the rhythmic anticipations in the piano right hand.

⁵² W. Apel, *Pitch, Harvard Dictionary of Music*, Cambridge, 1955.

Langsam, zart.

Singstimme.

Piano

Piano

Ped.

Music notes example 1⁵³. Song No. I – *Im wunderschönen Monat Mai*, bars 1-4.

Thus, Schumann subtly arranges a romantic accent before the voice even begins its phrase. The voice part is distinguished by a pleasant, even beautiful melody, and the flowing melodic line, cantilena, further emphasizes the calm, melancholy and intimate mood of Heine's poem. It is worth to note the role of appoggiatura in both stanzas, used in order to accentuate some individual words (*Herzen* – heart, *aufgegangen* – burgeon, rise, *gestanden* – confess, *Verlangen* – desire) (music notes example 2). Appoggiaturas add the lightness to the song and force a vocalist to find an additional, sort of lighter colour in his/her voice.

sprangen, da ist in mei - nem Her - zen die Lie - be auf - ge - gangen.

ritar

Music notes example 2. Song No. I – *Im wunderschönen Monat Mai*, bars 8-12.

The piano continues an arpeggiated accompaniment at a moderate tempo, however, with small, deliberately introduced dissonances, subtly but very consonantly distinguishing the

⁵³ All music notes examples provided in this paper refer to 16 songs entitled *Dichterliebe*, op. 48 by Robert Schumann. Publisher Leipzig: C. F. Peters, n.d. (1844). Plate 2867 a, b.

mood of the accompaniment from that introduced by the voice. Could it be that Schumann is announcing from the very first bars the love disappointment that is about to occur? It is interesting that in the piano part the tonality is not evidently defined for the entire duration of the song. Once it goes toward F sharp minor, then it sounds strongly as A major. The composer deliberately chooses not to place the song in a specific key until the very end, maintaining a mood of uncertainty and unreality in the accompaniment. The voice, however, moving in the key of A major from the very beginning, evidently contradicts the melancholic anxiety of the piano part.

This lack of the clear emotional identity in the song is further enhanced by the mysterious ending of the song in a kind of tonal suspension. This first of the cycle's sixteen songs, the composer ends with the words *Sehnen und Verlangen*, meaning "longing and heart-wriving (desire)," and suspends them, using the dominant: F sharp minor, before surprisingly beginning the next song in A major key. This *Sehnen und Verlangen* is now a vocal echo of the appoggiatura from the pianistic opening of the song. And just as the harmonic and melodic flow is suspended, since the composer avoids returning to the tonic, the text of the poem remains unfinished, understated. The composer does it intentionally, and the song's lack of the clear ending evokes the concept of infinity. The relentlessly and permanently flowing time turns into an undefined continuing (standing). Schumann emphasizes the mood of this suspension in some uncertainty, willing to force a public to wait for what will happen next (music notes example 3).



Music notes example 3. Song No. I – *Im wunderschönen Monat Mai*, bars 23-26.

The most interesting and unusual feature of the next song, *Aus meinen Tränen sprießen* (*Out of my tears of yearning*), is that Schumann does not give the voice a chance to finish any of the four phrases of which the song is composed. The piano finishes the first three phrases by

repeating the identical rhythmic and musical structures as in the preceding bar, only shortening the last quarter note to a sixteenth note, just to begin the new phrase from an anacrusis (music notes example 4).

Music notes example 4. Song II – *Aus meinen Tränen sprießen*, bars 1-8.

The only exception is the final sequence, where the composer allowed the voice to finish the phrase harmonically, but the piano repeats the last two notes from the voice part, and this only ends the whole song (music notes example 5).

Music notes example 5. Song No. II – *Aus meinen Tränen sprießen*, bars 12-17.

By this kind of action, the composer literally gives the piano the function of a censor of the poetry's words. Again, Schumann appears irresistibly as a pianist who does not intend to give the voice singing the words of this poem the expression of any proper intention contained in it.

*Z łez moich kwiatek wyrasta,
 Świeżuchny jak ranna rosa...
 A z moich westchnień ulata
 Słowików chór pod niebiosą...*

*Jeśli mnie kochasz aniele
Kwiatków ci moich użyczę —
A nad twem oknem — co rano
Usłyszysz chóry słowicze...*

*Aus meinen Tränen spriessen
Viel blühende Blumen hervor,
Und meine Seufzer werden
Ein Nachtigallenchor...*

*Und wenn du mich lieb hast, Kindchen,
Schenk' ich dir die Blumen all',
Und vor deinem Fenster soll klingen
Das Lied der Nachtigall ...*

We must admit that the emerging uncertainty expressed by the use of the conditional sentence *Und wenn du mich lieb hast, Kindchen* (*And if you love me, child*) is an interesting aspect. Could it be that the poet is not quite sure that his beloved has any warm feelings for him? A necessary prerequisite to bestow a singing chorus of birds and flowers on the beloved person is her love. Schumann is not certain of this love and does not allow any attentive listener to believe it entirely.

Both textually and harmonically, the song is surprisingly uncomplicated, with the accompaniment moving within an extremely narrow range of scales, the smallest of all the songs cycle. Because of this restrictive use of scales in the accompaniment, the voice and piano sound unusually unrich, taking into account the expectations of a romantic art song. The composer's unique use of means of expression reflects his sensitivity to the text and his total focus on the proper tone and emotionality of the song. This emotionality was emphasized by Schumann with a few minor „sighs” of the left hand accompaniment, expressed in a form of a descending passage in the first, fifth and ninth bars of the song (music notes example 6).

The image shows a musical score for a song. The top staff is labeled 'Sinstimme.' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Pianoforte.'. The tempo is marked 'Nicht schnell.' and the dynamics include 'p', 'pp', and 'p'. The lyrics are: 'Aus meinen Tränen sprießen, viel blühende Blumen hervor, und meine Soufzer werden, ein Nachtigallen-chor, und wenn du mich lieb hast'.

Music notes example 6. Song No. II – *Aus meinen Tränen sprießen*, bars 1-9.

A small but essential and relevant detail is the use, at one sole exceptional moment of the song, in the voice part of the rhythmic figure - a dotted eighth note – a sixteenth note is stressing the word *deinem* (*your*) in the phrase *und vor deinem Fenster soll klingen* - *and outside your window you'll hear (the song of the nightingale)*. The composer highlighted the word *yours* in order to clarify to whom the poet is addressing his love through the song of the nightingale (music notes example 5).

After the initial two songs, having a slower tempo as well as characterised by a melancholic mood and slightly expressive ambiguity, surprisingly "appears" a full of character, fast and short song *Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne* (*Rose, Lily, Dove, Sun*).

Róża i lilia, gołąbek i słońce:

To były ongi mej miłości gońce...

Już ich nie kocham — lecz kocham jedynie

Piękną, milutką, mych marzeń boginię,

Bo ona sama jest miłości szczytem...

Jest różą, lilią, gołąbkiem i świtem...

Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne,

Die liebt' ich einst alle in Liebeswonne...

Ich lieb' sie nicht mehr, ich liebe alleine

Die Kleine, die Feine, die Reine, die Eine;

Sie selber, aller Liebe Wonne,

Ist Rose und Lilie und Taube und Sonne...

The tempo of this song is faster than other songs of the cycle, what enables us to have a more specific view of the importance of a detail and precision to the composer. What builds the

form of the song *Die Rose, die Lilie...* is a constant rhythmic motif. Through dynamics, articulation and the way the phrase is led the composer achieves a remarkable lightness and feeling of ephemerality. The piano is led in a sixteenth-note motion, where the left hand complements and counterpoints the solo voice (music notes example 7).

The image shows two systems of musical notation. The first system is labeled 'Singstimme.' and 'Pianoforte.' and includes the tempo marking 'Munter.' and dynamic marking 'mf'. The vocal line is in a treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The lyrics are: 'Die Ro - se, die Li - lie, die Tau - be, die Sou - ne, die'. The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment with the lyrics: 'liebt' ich einst al - le in Lie - bes - won - ne, ich lieb' sie nicht mehr, ich'.

Music notes example 7. Song No. III – *Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne*, bars 1-5.

The initial bars, full of almost mignon, "diminutively" played notes, leading the line in a motion in seconds, briefly tell of the poet's former delightful love for flowers, birds and sunshine, and of the passing of this affection just to love the best, purest, dearest, only woman. She is now the object of all his sighs. After eight bars, the childish infatuation with the world passes away, and the mature feeling not of a boy, but of a man appears. Then, the character of the accompaniment changes, and when the text of the poem declares who the beloved is to the poet *aller Liebes Wonne* (*She, most blissful of all loves*), a small accompaniment in the left hand changes from sixteenth note tone to a more "embedded" eighth-note tone, then it enters the lower, fuller tones and sequentially descends. In the final bars of the accompaniment, the right hand continues the theme initiated by the voice, and the left hand, after this sequential descent into low registers, ends this short song with an effect of "bells ringing from afar" in the bass. It

all gives the impression of a hectic, fast statement of joy and happiness. It is a flash of the moment, capturing what is elusive, a music of the moment. Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau described this song as "a brief confession of happiness expressed breathlessly."⁵⁴

Some vocalists even try to perform this short song on just one breath. They want to express a character of this song that is a little humorous and a little impossible to follow.

The form and rhythm are significant in the *Dichterliebe* cycle. Heine's quatrain, known by versification theorists as Heine's verse, which the poet used without exception in all the poems of *Lyrisches Intermezzo*, evidently inspired Schumann to create the described by me musical cycle in an analogous style. The composer based the form of the cycle on a four-phase pattern of "enchantment and disillusionment, irony and oneiricity."⁵⁵

Each of the four phases includes four songs:

1. Each first song of the next four groups is a form of introduction to the realm of spring, feelings, reality and dream, respectively.
2. Each second song of each of the four groups acts as a complement to the first song. Although they are all rather diverse in character, they harmonize as the intermedia interact with the rest of the quatrains.
3. The composer gave all the third songs an unique character. The spontaneous and expressive *Die Rose die Lilie* (No. 3), the impulsive and full of drama *Ich grolle nicht* (No. 7), the sarcastic, with a note of aggressive irony *Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen* (No. 11) and the surrealistic *Aus alten Märchen* (No. 15).
4. Each fourth song acts as an epilogue, parting with a given realm and, except the last song of the cycle, a „passage” to the next stage.

"Simple feelings are given simple tones, complex feelings are reflected more in a foreign tonality, which the ear usually hears less. [...] F sharp seems to be the furthest point, the peak. [...] Thus, we may observe in a running circle of fifths how the feelings rise and fall."⁵⁶

Wenn ich in deine Augen seh (*When I look into your eyes*) is the last of the first four songs which may be treated as a spontaneous confession.

*Gdy się w twe cudne oczy wpatruję,
Nikną wnet moje cierpienia,*

⁵⁴ D. Fischer-Dieskau, op. cit., p. 30.

⁵⁵ *Cykle pieśni ery romantycznej 1816-1914: interpretacje*, op. cit., p. 44.

⁵⁶ R. Schumann, *Charakteristik der Tonarten*, in: *Gesammelte Schriften über Musik und Musiker*, Leipzig 1854, p. 182.

*A gdy usteczka twoje całuję,
Boleść ma — w rozkosz się zmienia.
Gdy cię aniele tulę do siebie...
Rajską się poję słodyczą...
Lecz kiedy szepczesz: ja kocham ciebie
Ach! Wtedy płaczę z goryczą.*

*Wenn ich in deine Augen seh',
So schwindet all' mein Leid und Weh';
Doch wenn ich küsse deinen Mund,
So werd' ich ganz und gar gesund...*

*Wenn ich mich lehn' an deine Brust,
Kommt's über mich wie Himmelslust;
Doch wenn du sprichst: ich liebe dich!
So muss ich weinen bitterlich...*

In the first phrase of the song, after the words *Augen seh* (*your eyes*), the piano repeats like an echo, in a simple canon (round), the same melody, following the voice. This causes, once again, a sense of a certain fairy-tale-like quality so characteristic for Schumann's work, which exists only in the consciousness of the persona. Crystalline, harmonic chords dominate in the entire song, and the uniform melodic shapes of the phrases give a sense, so far unusual, of predictability, also visible in the mood of the poem, in which the poet is healed by kissing a woman's lips or laying his head on her chest.

The mood breaks down melodramatically in the words *doch wenn du sprichst: ich liebe dich!* (*But when you say: I love you!*). This is the first moment in the cycle when both the words of the poem and the accompaniment emphatically notice the existence of a particular person, implicitly a woman, as a fully conscious participant, a part of the whole affair. There is a change in the accompaniment from a very interesting antiphonal polemic with the voice to an unified in intention dialogue, in which the piano creates a delicate harmonic cushion for the voice. In addition, the composer uses an *appoggiatura* on the word *liebe* (*love*) in the voice and doubles it in the piano, highlighting this place as the culmination of the entire song (music notes example 8).

Music notes example 8. Song No. IV – *Wenn ich in deine Augen seh*, bars 12-14.

This is a meeting of two performers of the song, the voice and the piano, in which the voice has the full support of the piano, and the poet's subsequent confession that he must "weep bitter tears" - *so muss ich weinen bitterlich*, has been poignantly illustrated in the piano by the muffled, as they were trembling, chords that simulate a weeping (music notes example 9).

Music notes example 9. Song No. IV – *Wenn ich in deine Augen seh*, bars 15-21.

These chords accompany the voice throughout the song, however, in the last bars they find a literal and empiric setting in the context.

The first four songs of the cycle definitely refer, poetically and musically, to the intimate sphere of the lover's feelings. In the last words and bars of this fourth song, the spontaneous confessions of the first three ones gain density and colour.

Melancholy, tenderness, evanescence, childish naivety in understanding of emotionality, simplicity of the poetic form and brilliantly chosen freedom and truthfulness of a musical form are attributes of the first four songs of the *Dichterliebe* cycle.

The composer's emotionally trembling sensitivity and the unforced power of Heine's poetry let us go into a world which is suspended between reality and fantasy. In the individual

songs are visible, like a Fata Morgana, images that are on the one hand clear, and on the other hand they are deprived of the possibility of a real existence. These songs are like a colourful rainbow, tempting an observer with an abstract, momentary charm of colours. This is strongly emphasized by Schumann in his deliberately unfinished, suspended accompaniments, in the lightness of the phrase marked by dynamics only at a few moments which are crucial to the poetic text. These first four songs are a prelude, a substitute for the emotions with which Schumann prepares us for the next stage of the cycle.

Dichterliebe.

LIEDER-CYCLUS
 aus dem
Buch der Lieder von Heinrich Heine
 für eine Singstimme mit Begleitung des Pianoforte
 componirt und
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- 4. Wenn ich in deine Augen seh' 5 "		- 12. Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen 5 "
- 5. Ich will meine Seele tauchen 5 "		- 13. Ich hab' im Traum geweinet 5 "
- 6. Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome 5 "		- 14. Allnächtlich im Traume 5 "
- 7. Ich grolle nicht 5 "		- 15. Aus alten Märchen winkt es 7½ "
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Illustration 3. Music Book *Dichterliebe*, title page, https://s9.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/c/c9/IMSLP25011-PMLP12745-Schumann_Dichterliebe_1st_edition.pdf



Illustration 4. Manuscript: Robert Schumann "Im wunderschönen Monat Mai", https://www.omifacsimiles.com/brochures/schum_dich.html

4.2 The inner world - disappointment

In several songs of *Dichterliebe* - *Ich will meine Seele tauchen* (No. 5), *Und wüssten's die Blumen* (No. 8), *Hör ich das Mädchen klingen* (No. 10), or *Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen* (No. 12) – it can be seen probably the most typical category of emotionality for the Romantic era – romantic aura. The main features of the romantic aura is poeticalness (poetry), dreaminess, onirism - the state of suspension, withdrawal of dynamics and a certain one-sidedness of textural structure very often bring the listener into an unreal world.

Musically, among the main characteristic features, Mieczyslaw Tomaszewski specifies and lists: "withdrawal towards lower part of the circle of fifths, preference for subdominants; division of rhythmic values and their direct multiple repetition; dispersion, fragmentation, atomization of notes with their simultaneous monochronicity [...]; smoothness of harmonic changes: moving from one chord to another with the change of a single note."⁵⁷

Schumann, beginning the next group of four songs, in *Ich will meine Seele tauchen* (*Let me bathe my soul in the lily's chalice*) serves us a kind of déjà vu. Just like in the song *Im wunderschönen Monat Mai*, which begins the entire songs cycle, where the composer refrained from the clear definition of the work's tonality in the first bars, here we are also surprised by the form of a dominant chord that begins the song (music notes example 10).

⁵⁷ Cykle pieśni ery romantycznej 1816-1914: interpretacje, op. cit., p. 39.

Leise.

Singstimme. *p*

Ich will mei - ne See - - le tau - - z en in den

Pianoforte. *ppp*

Ped.

kelch der Li - lie hin - ein, die Li - lie soll klin - gend

Music notes example 10. Song No. V *Ich will meine Seele tauchen*, bars 1-5.

Does this analogy have any explanation? Perhaps Schumann is building a mood here, starting the same story over again, however on a completely different emotional level. Similarly to *Im wunderschönen Monat Mai*, the piano introduces the feeling of melancholic anxiety in the background of which we can hear a pleasant, beautiful vocal cantilena. However, unlike the first song of the cycle, which finally anchors the song in the major key - A major, here the romantic aura is enhanced by the B flat minor key.

Kielichom lilji marzqcej

Tchnienia mej duszy udzielę;

A kwiatek lilji wydzwoni

Piosnkę o moim aniele...

Piosnka ta rzewna, liljowa,

Jak całus w błękit popłynie,

Całus mi dany przed laty —

W najslodszej życia godzinie...

*Ich will meine Seele tauchen
In den Kelch der Lilie hinein;
Die Lilie soll klingend hauchen
Ein Lied von der Liebsten mein...*

*Das Lied soll schauern und beben,
Wie der Kuss von ihrem Mund,
Den sie mir einst gegeben
In wunderbar süßer Stund...*

The song is a memory of a state, a feeling, an emotion that will never return. The manifestly used past tense *den sie mir eins gegeben* (*Like the kiss that her lips once gave me*) emphasizes the irreversibility of what once was, but has already passed.

The composer clemently "mantles" the voice with an interestingly applied form of accompaniment. The song could be considered a tercet, where, in addition to the voice, two melodic lines in the piano resonate as separate entities. To one line the composer assigned the lowest and the other the highest tones. Between the two melodic lines was placed the voice line, which harmonically "mantled" sometimes only duplicates the piano's higher melodic line, but never goes above it.

It is difficult to explain why, of the more than sixty poems in *Buch der Lieder* by Heine, *Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome* (*In the Rhine, in the holy river*) was among those selected by Schumann for his songs cycle. The text is not fully relevant to the romantic theme of the rest of the poems used in the cycle. Only in the last words of the song the text turns its attention to the beloved woman. However, Schumann even here consistently escapes, in structure and mood, from the character of the first four songs of *Dichterliebe*, referring to the Cologne Cathedral - the majestic power and ceremonial magic of the German Baroque tradition. The composer builds his musical scenery on the actual historical truth that recognizes the Cologne Cathedral as the first cathedra using diatonic sequences of bells. Most likely, this was an obvious phonetic reference for the Schuman-era audience. Hence, presumably, we can hear the momentous octaves in the bass imitating the bells, which are intertwined with forms resembling the lines of Bach's "Organ Fugue." Perhaps the composer wanted in this way to emphasize more clearly and strongly the majesty of the Gothic temple - the national symbol. However, it does not change the fact that the most important message of the composer, supported only by the dignity and majesty of the cathedral, is another metaphor of the lost forever beloved person.

Gdzie Renu z licem iskrzącem

Wstęga rozwija się kręta...

Tam stoi z wieżyc tysiącem

Kolonia wielka i święta...

Tam, nad cherubów obłokiem,

Świeci Madonna ze złota,

Nieraz mi w burzach żywota

Świeciła swoim urokiem...

Madonny cudne oblicze

Zdobią kwieciste opony,

Podobne wdzięki dziewicze

Ma anioł mój ubóstwiony...

Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome,

Da spiegelt sich in den Well'n

Mit seinem grossen Dome,

Das grosse, heilige Köln...

Im Dom da steht ein Bildnis,

Auf gold'nem Leder gemalt;

In meines Lebens Wildnis

Hat's freundlich hineingestrahlt...

Es schweben Blumen und Eng'lein

Um unsre liebe Frau;

Die Augen, die Lippen, die Wäng'lein,

Die gleichen der Liebsten genau...

Heine's text refers to a particular painting located in the Cologne Cathedral, in which the poet notes the resemblance in the face of *unsre liebe Frau* (*our beloved Lady*) to his beloved. On the text *die Augen, die Lippen, die Wänglein* (*eyes, lips, cheeks*), the composer uses the

delayed word sequences with a melody identical to the piano passages that begin each phrase. This composition again sounds like a canon, reminiscent of the fourth song of the cycle *Wenn ich in deine Augen seh*, where the instrument followed the voice. But here, it is the voice that echoes the piano. The instrument leads the lost in the majesty of the cathedral and sacred image poet, and after the voice ends the melody, it is the piano that finishes the song like the naturally fading ringing of the great bells.

Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome is probably the most distinctive song from the rest songs of the cycle, both in harmony and text, as well as the melodic line led by the voice. But this is not the only factor that individualise the song described in a secret and unfathomable way. On February 27, 1854 - less than 14 years after the composition of *Dichterliebe* – Schumann takes the mysterious suicide decision. Despite being watched day and night by his wife, children or doctor, he leaves his house undetected, heads toward the Oberkasseler Brücke, a pontoon style bridge, climbs over the railing and, after throwing a wedding ring into the water, jumps off the bridge into the Rhine River stream. However, the composer is rescued by unknown men who lead him home. Thus, the Rhine River linked *Dichterliebe* to the composer both artistically and biographically, stigmatizing his life with this less momentous episode.

"Composing music to "poor" texts would fill me with aversion,"⁵⁸ – it was Schumann's motto when choosing texts for his songs.

The words often do not play the most important role in Schumann's composition and are put in second place comparing to the composer's music – the composer entrusts the piano with the essential narrative role. However, in the song *Ich grolle nicht* (*I do not curse you/bear no grudge*) the spirit of the text is intertwined extremely intensely with the experiences of Schumann. We can say that this is the most personal confession of all the songs to Heine's words, extremely rebellious and expressive in meaning.

*Nie szemrzę już — choć serce pęka moje,
Straciłem Cię — lecz gniew już przycichł we mnie,
Choć jak dyament, niecisz blasków zwoje,
Nie wnika promień w twego serca ciemnie...*

*Wiem to od dawna. Wszak Ciem widział we śnie...
I noc widziałem, co ćmi serca rany,*

⁵⁸ H. Swolkień, op. cit. p. 143.

I wężam widział, co cię gryzł boleśnie...

Widziałem luba los twój oplakany...

Ich grolle nicht, und wenn das Herz auch bricht,

Ewig verlор'nes Lieb! ich grolle nicht.

Wie du auch strahlst in Diamantenpracht,

Es fällt kein Strahl in deines Herzens Nacht...

Das weiss ich längst. Ich sah dich ja im Traume,

Und sah die Nacht in deines Herzens Raume,

Und sah die Schlang', die dir am Herzen frisst,

Ich sah, mein Lieb, wie sehr du elend bist.

Ich grolle nicht...

Heine exposed his emotions under the influence of his personal love disappointment, and Schumann used them, building the emotional structure of the song on the basis of his own experiences during the years when Friedrich Wieck disagreed with the composer's relationship with his daughter Clara. Perhaps this is why there is so much real expression and power in the accompaniment of the song *Ich grolle nicht*.

The song *Ich grolle nicht*, which title in Polish translation prepared by Professor Stanislaw Tomaszewski means: *I do not curse you*, consists of two, very brief textually four-verse (quatrain) stanzas. The song marks a turning point, a moment of realization that a certain stage in love has come to end. Rejection and bitterness become the turning point here and these feelings change the direction of any further lyrical story of the entire work. The song is placed at position 7, almost in the middle of the cycle. In Heine's *Buch der Lieder*, the collection of poems from *Lyrisches intermezzo*, the poem *Ich grolle nicht* gets the position 18 of 65, and thus it is situated closer to the beginning of the work. This reflects how late Schumann wanted to demonstrate the final diagnosis of the narrator's bitter truth about his beloved. Although already in the first and fifth songs in the piano accompaniment we can notice a certain doubt or uncertainty in relation to the poetic text formulated on the musical text, only in the seventh composition of the cycle, *Ich grolle nicht*, this recognition of the truth about the beloved woman fully and dramatically sounds.

Therefore, in Heine's poem, in the lover's consciousness longer coexist those tender love raptures and the contrasting rationally conscious accusations directed at his beloved. Schumann

waits almost until the middle of the cycle to make this statement, as if he wanted longer to charm and delude his heart with a vision of the lily-white, pure and reciprocated love.

I do not curse you in the translation of professor Tomaszewski, but also *I'm not angry, I'm not complaining*, or - as formulated in the beautiful poetic translations by Alexander Kraushar I used in this work - *I'm not murmuring anymore*, are the common translations of the title of the seventh song of the *Dichterliebe* songs cycle. This declaration opens and closes each stanza of the poem, strongly portraying the suffering, sorrow and grief, which force the poet to reconciliation with his fate. His inner life is torn by conflicting emotions. The image of the gorgeous beloved, full of beauty and splendour - in *Diamantenpracht (in diamond splendour)* - is compared to what is going on inside the lover, in his idea of the adored person: *die Nacht in deines Herzens Raume (the night within your heart,)*, *deines Herzens Nacht (the night of your heart)*, *die Schlang'*, *die dir am Herzens frisst (serpent gnawing at your heart)*. What stands out very clearly is the word *Herz (heart)*, repeated three times, which is the key to the interpretation of the entire text and to understanding that it is the place of the most essential feelings and values. This dark heart belonging to the beloved person is full of venom. The serpent, which in the text literally gnaws her heart, at the same time poisons it with its venom, making it worthless, dead, unable to love. We can even, with some effort, find an analogy here to the biblical Eve succumbing to Satan's temptation, but this is perhaps a far-fetched hypothesis.

The sudden transformation after this first declaration is surprising. In the fifth line of the poem the statement *Ich sah dich ja im Traume (I saw you in my dreams)* appears, which informs us that the poet learns all these dark things about his love interest in a dream. Again, an unreal, esoteric environment accompanies the poet and his love. He has known about it for a long time (*Das weiß ich längst* literally means *I have known it for a long time*). This means that the scariest thing is that the recognition of the evil that lurks in the heart of his beloved has been known to the poet for a long time and has been hidden in his own consciousness. This is evidenced by the following passage: *Ewig verlornes Lieb (love forever lost)*.

Alternating feelings of love and disdain for the beloved person inflame the lover's heart. Even in the last line of the poem, the woman is referred to as "*my love*" (*mein Lieb*), only to eventually describe her as "*pitiful and miserable*" (*wie sehr du elend bist*). However, it is not this that fills the poet with fear that the heart of his beloved is full of evil, but the fact that despite full awareness of this, the lost forever person still remains the most beloved one to him. Therefore, unfortunately, she is constantly hurting his heart. It would be best to make a kind of extraction of feelings for her, but he is unable to do so. The tone of resignation and bitterness is in great dissonance to the title as well as the often repeated declaration *Ich grolle nicht (I am*

not angry /I bear no grudge). The doubt, then, is not about the beloved, since the coldness of her heart "has been known for a long time," but about the poet himself, discovering the truth in his dreams and being unable to deal with the nightmares that torment him. So, the truth in the poet may only be found in an unreal dream? Can he confront it in reality as well?

Also, the basic musical features of the song are in apparent contradiction to the text. As Fischer-Dieskau describes, "the joyful fundamental key of C major - that is, a 'light' and 'simple' key - in the face of a dramatic, gloomy and complicated situation."⁵⁹.

Even, marching 4/4 time signature and "nicht zu schnell" ("not too fast") tempo that tempers these marching tendencies, makes the entire song very monumental. It is more like a hymn or an ode in honour of someone, rather than a painful and full of drama confession.

In the accompaniment we can hear the repeated full chords, static repetitions of thirds, that is, a tonic triad, where the highest and at the same time most audible sound is the sound that determines the mode and clearly is the major key.

Starting from the second verse of the text *Ewig verlor nes Lieb*, we can see in the song the progressions consisting of iterations in an increasingly higher register of identical or very similar melodic motifs (music notes example 11).

The image shows a musical score for the song 'Ich grolle nicht'. It consists of three staves: a vocal line at the top, a piano accompaniment in the middle, and a bass line at the bottom. The vocal line has lyrics: 'E_wig verlor - nes Lieb, e_wig verlor - nes Lieb, — ich'. The piano accompaniment features a steady, rhythmic pattern of chords in the right hand and a simple bass line in the left hand. The score is for bars 5-8 of the song.

Music notes example 11. Song No. VII – *Ich grolle nicht*, bars 5-8.

Also, the title words *Ich grolle nicht* are repeated until the end of the stanza, but they extinguish with a descending melodic motif all the tension built up by the earlier progression.

The beginning of the second stanza and the end of the entire song are the successive repetitions of the words *Ich grolle nicht*, which gives the impression of a very clear

⁵⁹ D. Fischer-Dieskau, op. cit. p. 82.

compositional intention and the creation of a refrain that confirms reconciliation with what the poem is about. In this way, by using the title words as many as six times, the composer trivializes any possible interpretations of the text, as if he wanted to hide the true meaning of the words. I do not curse you, repeated so many times, becomes an absolute negation of the literal meaning of the text.

Additionally, this is the obvious change in dynamics, specifically the gradual increase to forte in the phrase *Ich sah dich ja im Traume* (*I saw you in my dreams*) at the beginning of the second stanza. This is a musical description of the realm of dreams as the place of discovering of the true, evil soul of his beloved. Further on, the phrase leads to the actual song culmination, increasing in dynamics up to forte and again progressively raising the melody to higher registers, and at the culmination slowing down the tempo to almost chanted highest notes (music notes example 12).

Music notes example 12. Song No. VII – *Ich grolle nicht*, bars 19-30.

After this dynamic, rhythmic and emotional supremacy, the sad truth about the futility of his beloved is revived and the song no longer returns to its previous vivid tempo. What

follows is a double repetition of the phrase *Ich grolle nicht*, but it is performed more slowly, as if with some resignation and with the melody falling down to a tonic.

Two facts stand in dissonance to each other - the fact that the song sounds almost like a majestic hymn in the accompaniment layer, and the fact that vocally it is far from the implied by the accompaniment seriousness and dignity. In the culmination of the song, the composer even uses a shouting effect, using fifth leap as many as five times (music notes example 12).

Here, the composer deliberately uses a manifesto of any bad emotions, which originally in Heine's poem we will not find. Undoubtedly, Schumann chose such an interpretation of the text that allowed him to give vent to his own feelings. The song becomes a turning point in the entire cycle, where the romantic theme is clearly questioned, and the first disappointment is definitely heard in the words of the poem.

Und wüssten's die blumen die kleinen (If the little flowers knew) is the last song of the second four-part segment of the *Dichterliebe* cycle.

*Gdyby kwiateczki wiedziały
Jak serce moje strapione,
Balsam by z łez swych przyniosły,
Na piersi moje zranione...*

*Gdyby słowiki wiedziały
Jak straszną znoszę ja mękę,
Zbiegłyby do mnie — by nucić
Najmilszą moją piosenkę.*

*Gdyby choć gwiazdki wiedziały
Jak cierpi serce me młode,
Zeszłyby do mnie z niebiosów
I miałbym cierpień osłodę...*

*Ach! Nikt mych cierpień nie widzi!
Lecz ona — bóle zna moje,
Wszak ona sama rozdarła,
Rozdarła pierś mą na dwoje...*

*Und wüssten's die Blumen, die kleinen,
Wie tief verwundet mein Herz,
Sie würden mit mir weinen,
Zu heilen meinen Schmerz...*

*Und wüssten's die Nachtigallen,
Wie ich so traurig und krank,
Sie liessen fröhlich erschallen
Erquickenden Gesang...*

*Und wüssten sie mein Wehe,
Die goldenen Sternelein,
Sie kämen aus ihrer Höhe,
Und sprächen Trost mir ein...*

*Sie alle können's nicht wissen,
Nur eine kennt meinen Schmerz:
Sie hat ja selbst zerrissen,
Zerrissen mir das Herz...*

Again, the proper tonality of the song in A minor is revealed only in the second bar, and the first bar introduces the listener to the essential key. Three identically structured verses list some various elements of the natural world that can sympathize with the poet's suffering. The bouncing accompaniment reflects a flowing brook, a stream on whose current the words are arranged into phrases. We can find here some references to the song *Die Forelle (The Trout)* or Piano Quintet in A Major, Op. 114, commonly known as the *Trout Quintet*. Both works were composed by one of Schumann's most appreciated composers, Franz Schubert.

The voice is led in a pattern of the descending, quivering passages used in order to express sadness and despair, based on similarity to natural human sighs.

This three-verse wail ends quite unexpectedly in the fourth verse through a passage of modulation from A minor to D major. The composer makes a rapid change of mood and after five bars of modulation the senses wake up and with an accusation of his lover that she broke the poet's heart (*zerrissen, zerrissesn mir das Herz*). All nature, which Schumann loved so much, is unable to help the persona, because these flowers, birds and stars in the sky do not know and understand the pain accompanying the poet. This pain can only be understood by a beloved person. The piano suddenly transforms from a melancholic tremolo into the narrator,

who, after an onomatopoeic, aggressive sound on the consonants "z" "rr" and "ss" in the twice-repeated word *zerrissen* (music notes example 13), continues the emotional explosion, finishing the song with a cadence of cascading sextuplets. Additionally, he confirms the aggressive nature of the accompaniment with dotted eighth notes (music notes example 13).

Music notes example 13. Song No. VIII – *Und wüßten's die Blumen, die kleinen*, bars 27-37.

This is one of the most emotional moments in the entire songs cycle. Schumann transparently connects the two subgroups of songs, ending the category of the subjective, biased feeling with a very smooth transition into the next subgroup, this time opening the bitter poet toward an ironic perception of the emotional states that have occurred.

Und wüsstest du die Blumen die kleinen is the first of the songs in which Schumann does not maintain the order of Heine's *Buch der Lieder*. This song, placed at position eight in the poet's collection of poems, is just after the ninth song. Therefore, Schumann deliberately changes the order of the two songs.

4.3 The outside world - irony

*Toż mi dopiero huk dzielny!
Trąby i bębny brzmią w koło...
Wszak to swój taniec weselny
Ma luba tańczy wesolo...*

*Fanfary, kotły, wciąż brzęczą...
Dźwięk ten sumienie twe głuszy...
I tylko z cicha coś jęczą
Dobre aniołki twej duszy...*

*Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen,
Trompeten schmettern darein;
Da tanzt wohl den Hochzeitsreigen
Die Herzallerliebste mein...*

*Das ist ein Klingen und Dröhnen,
Ein Pauken und ein Schalmei'n;
Dazwischen schluchzen und stöhnen
Die lieblichen Engelein...*

The words of Heine's poem announce the nature of the next stage in the journey called *Dichterliebe*. This is only the ninth song of the cycle, and serenity and sentimentality of his first songs were forgotten long time ago. From the beautiful month of May and the beloved person compared to a rose or a lily, some resemblance to the lover found in the majesty of Madonna painting in the Cologne Cathedral, to the curses and a grudge, which the embittered lover refuses to bear, in the seventh song, and which actually destroy the beautiful but imaginary impression of the beloved person. What follows is a continuation of this love story, but in a completely different tone.

The song *Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen* begins the piano with a light, but dire and ominous in its tone, however, with a hint of irony, wedding Waltz maintained in a minor key. It serves as a background for a despairing vocal scenario in which the persona is a witness of the wedding of his beloved. The poet is only a suffering observer and is unable to have any contact with his old lover. The voice rises high in tessitura as the text comes to the words *trumpets blaring in (Trompeten Schmetternd darein)* and *clashing and clanging of drums (Klingen und drönen)*. These phrases provoke not so much singing them as rather reciting them in an expressive manner. In an extreme stylistic contradiction, the composer places the piano accompaniment and the struggling with, or more precisely, drowning in the joyful „oom-pah” of the waltz the voice of the poet, who frantically tries to break through the sounds of the instrument with his despair.

The right hand on the piano moves in a sixteenth-note stream from the first bar to the last, creating a looped, anxious mood. The left hand’s task is maintaining of the monotonous beat of a frenetic yet emotionally controlled waltz, resembling an emotional heart beating. (music notes example 14).

Music notes example 14. Song No. IX – *Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen*, bars 1-9.

Schumann intensifies the desperation of the unhappy lover and suspends the words *lieblichen Engelein (lovely little angels)* that end the song on the seventh (septime), allowing the piano to finish the song on behalf of the poet, who is completely in an amok.

As I already mentioned, in several songs of the *Dichterliebe* cycle we can notice a typical category of emotionality for the Romantic era – romantic aura. The main tone, the background of the entire cycle, is the tone set by the *Blumenlieder*, so called because of its romantic aura, intimacy, withdrawn dynamics or one-sidedness of textural structure⁶⁰.

⁶⁰ As an example of *Blumenlieder* may be considered the following songs: *Im wunderschönen Monat Mai* (1), *Aus meinen Tränen spriessen* (2), *Die Rose die Lilie* (3), *Ich will meine Seele tauchen* (5), *Und wüssten's die Blumen*

There are at least six of them in the *Dichterliebe* cycle and, beginning with *Im wunderschönen Monat Mai* (1), these songs solidify the realm of dreams and tenderness. They are dominated by an intimacy which is an evidence of focusing the emotions on the inner concentration, a retreat deep inside own soul. Perhaps that is why most of these vocal miniatures are created in dynamics ranging from *piano pianissimo*, *piano*, to *mezzo forte*. For Schumann the superior value is the value given by mood, probably because his own mood was changing rapidly. The best evidence of this composer's mood instability is what happens on the emotional level, especially in the second half of the cycle.

After a quivering and full of dramatic weakness narration of the song *Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen* Schumann places the next song, *Hör ich das Liedchen klingen* (*When I hear the little song*), at opposite pole of the romantic aura. How drastically it contrasts the emotions accumulated in the previous songs with this delicate, filled with sadness, almost floating in non-existence song. After a harmonically delicate introduction, the voice begins its bitter story:

*Gdy słyszę piosnkę tę smutną,
Którą mi luba nuciła,
Pierś mi z boleści nabrzmięwa
Jak gdyby strzała w niej tkwiła...*

*Tam — po nad świerki ponure,
Tęsknota myśl mą porywa...
Pierś na wspomnienie mej straty
Gorzkimi łzy się zalewa...*

*Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen,
Das einst die Liebste sang,
So will mir die Brust zerspringen
Von wildem Schmerzendrang...*

*Es treibt mich ein dunkles Sehnen
Hinauf zur Waldeshöh',
Dort löst sich auf in Tränen*

(8), *Hör ich das Liedchen klingen* (10), *Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen* (12). Also, the piano postlude of the last song *Die alten bösen Lieder* (16) maintains the nature of *Blumenlieder*.

Mein übergrosses Weh'...

The simplistic harmony and calm *langsam* tempo arrange an introspective, even meditative mood, however, the accompaniment maintains some tension and a feeling of peculiar conflict expressed through many, or more precisely thirteen delicate suspensions in bars 9-12, 19-23, 25, 27 and 29 (music notes example 15).



The image shows a musical score for a song. The top staff is a vocal line in G major, 4/4 time, with lyrics: "will mir die Brust zer-springen von wil - dem Schmer-zendrang. Es". The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment in G major, 4/4 time, featuring a descending sequence of eighth notes in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand. The score is divided into four measures, corresponding to the lyrics.

Music notes example 15: Song No. X – *Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen*, bars 9-12.

The mood of gloom is suggested by the permanently bouncing character of the accompaniment, and is continued for the most part of the song in a descending sequence imitating weeping, which additionally escalates the sadness, pain and resignation in the poet's consciousness. In addition, after the last words of the text *mein über grosses Weh* (*my overwhelming grief*), the piano quietly continues the full of the aforementioned suspensions accompaniment in a melancholic mood, and it pauses for a moment with its poignant sadness in bars 24 and 25 (music notes example 16). This can be read and understood as a lover's last look at the irreversibly lost love. After this part the descending passage of the calmly flowing notes of the accompaniment leaves no illusions about the final, sad conclusion.



Music notes example 16. Song No. X – *Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen*, bars 22-25.

After such an overwhelming sadness, the composer decides to take another extreme step and invites the listeners to perhaps the most ironic moment in the entire song cycle. The lively and flirtatious accompaniment of the less than four-bar introduction introduce a strange mood of some disorientation, especially after the deeply sad tones of the preceding song. Only the text of Heine's poem *Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen* (*A boy loves a girl*) makes it easier to understand the lively and cheerful rhythms that Schumann used in the introduction:

*Młodzieniec kocha dziewczynę,
Ją — inny chłopiec rozmarza...
Lecz chłopiec ten — inną kocha
I staje z nią u ołtarza...*

*Dziewczę zaślubia na przekór,
Byle którego młokosa,
Co się nawinął pod rękę...
Młodzian szle żale w niebiosy...*

*Stara to, stara historia,
O nowej niezmiennie treści,
A gdy się komu przytrafia,
Serce mu pęka z bóleści...*

*Ein Jüngling liebt ein Mädchen,
Die hat einen andern erwählt;*

*Der andre liebt eine andre,
Und hat sich mit dieser vermählt...*

*Das Mädchen nimmt aus Ärger
Den ersten besten Mann,
Der ihr in den Weg gelaufen;
Der Jüngling ist übel dran...*

*Es ist eine alte Geschichte,
Doch bleibt sie immer neu;
Und wem sie just passiert,
Dem bricht das Herz entzwei...*

The whole story told in the song is light and the syncopated accompaniment further emphasizes its sarcastic nature. The conclusion in the last verse, however, comes down to a sad moral. A boy loves a girl, but the girl loves another man, and this man marries another woman. The desperate girl marries the first met young man, and the boy, who still loves her, has his heart broken in half. Another amorous disappointment, but this time spread broadly, because here the sufferers are more than just one person. Whether it is only the Romantic era or the composer's own life experience that determines such a selection of poems - the reflection is evident. For Schumann love clearly must coexist with suffering. There is no other option. The sad punch line leaves an ironic bitterness, after which a relaxation of thoughts is necessary, a cooling off, which the composer immediately introduces in the next song, *Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen (One bright summer morning)*.

While studying in Leipzig, Schumann longed for a bygone, happy childhood and nature, a forest full of elves, fairies and gnomes, where every singing bird magically predicts the future. In Leipzig, he felt a longing to commune with nature, which was reflected as notes in his diaries, "since flowers live and sleep, they probably also dream like children and animals. All living beings, therefore, dream."⁶¹

This quote from the composer's notes perfectly illustrates the atmosphere and emotions placed in the last of the four songs in the category of an ironic expression of the subconscious.

A bright morning and a castle town (village) full of flowers whispering to the poet, speaking to him with regret and asking him not to be angry with his beloved. They describe the poet with the words *du trauriger blasser Mann (You sad, pale man)*. How many reflections of

⁶¹ H. Swolkień, op. cit., p. 23.

Schumann's inner life in this song! A beautiful sunny day, a garden and the poet seeing himself through the eyes of flowers as a sad and pale man. A depressive showcase of his own existence.

*W ogrodzie kwitły liście majowe,
Poranek świecił gorący,
Kwiateczki wszystkie wiodły rozmowę,
Ja jeden byłem milczący...*

*I chyląc główki przed wiatru wiewem,
Szeptaly dając mi rady:
„Do naszej siostry nie pałaj gniewem,
„Młodzieńcze smutny i blady...”*

*Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen
Geh' ich im Garten herum.
Es flüstern und sprechen die Blumen,
Ich aber wandle stumm...*

*Es flüstern und sprechen die Blumen,
Und schau'n mitleidig mich an:
„Sei unsrer Schwester nicht böse,
Du trauriger, blasser Mann...*

Schumann used a wide range of mediums of expression in order to musically intensify the mood of the text. In the accompaniment, the composer used the constant accentuation of the first note in each of the sixteenth-note groups to create a consistent pulse, on which the defined in dynamics *piano* and *pianissimo* voice is led throughout the song.

Often the fugacity of Schumann's music is manifested, in addition to its lightness, in a form of the high register of the voice and piano. For example, the song *Und wüssten's die Blumen* (No. 8) seems suspended on higher vibrations, not touching the ground, influenced by the fact of the virtually non-existent low registers, with mainly *piano* dynamics. Likewise in *Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen* song, about whose final notes Gerald Moore⁶², a distinguished

⁶² Gerald Moore (1899-1987) – an accomplished British accompanist, who worked with such artists as D. Fischer-Dieskau, Elisabeth Schumann, Hans Hotter, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Victoria de los Angeles and Pablo Casals.

British accompanist, wrote, "These notes should not so much be sung as breathed, pluffed with the last sound."⁶³

The composer ends the song in an interesting way. After the last sad words of the flowers, determining the vocal part of the song, the piano romantically transforms into the narrator and sketches in what is no longer found in the text. The whole song is not long, but one third of the composition is this piano postlude, which, due to its expression and beauty, could also be the end of the entire cycle.

Schumann, due to the applied change in the ratio between the piano accompaniment and singer, is considered the creator of a new type of songs. The piano accompaniment in the *Dichterliebe* cycle not only forms a mood through creation of the secondary harmonic phenomena, but is a full-fledged partner, sometimes even dominating the solo voice. Starting from the second tetrad (tetractys) of the cycle, the composer uses the piano as a narrator that completes and ends emotionally almost every song (music notes example 17).

⁶³ G. Moore, „*Poet's Love*” and *Other Schumann Songs*, London: Hamish Hamilton 1981. p. 36.

ritard.
trau - riger blas - ser Mann!

Music notes example 17. Song No. XII – *Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen*, bars 19-30.

H. J. Moser describes it this way: "Schumann ends the singing on the mostly unresolved notes, only to the piano assigning this resolution. Thus, a musician brings to a conclusion the statement of what the poet has barely mentioned, then it becomes silent."⁶⁴ These piano postludes are the completion of what the text failed to express. We could therefore venture to say that in Schumann's songs it is the piano that has the last word.

⁶⁴ H. J. Moser, *Das deutsche Lied seit Mozart*, Berlin, Zürich, 1937. s. 165.

4.4 The outside world – a dream or reality?

After the extremely romantic and simply beautiful postlude crowning the twelfth composition of the cycle, the composer introduces a new structural form with *Ich hab im Traum geweinet* (*I wept in my dream*) song.

In this song, as in the fourth piece of the cycle, Schumann again expresses the drama of the text in an antiphonal form, but he also introduces a very „raw” structure dialogue between the singer and the piano. This last four-song part of the entire *Dichterliebe* cycle consists of the songs which are on the borderline between reality and dream with a kind of final catharsis, in which the persona consciously parts with the unfulfilled vision of reciprocated love. This thesis is confirmed by the symptomatic use of the words *land of happiness/wonderland* (*Wunderland*), *dream* (*Traum*), which alternate with the words *love* (*Liebe*) and *suffering/pain* (*Schmerz*).

The poetic text, filled with pain and anxiety, for the most part sang *a capella*, is paused by some short piano responses that emphasize the sepulchral and dramatic sense of the text (music notes example 18).



Music notes example 18. Song No. XIII – *Ich hab' im Traum geweinet*, bars 4-8.

There is a turn to the unreal events that happen partly in reality and partly in dreams.

Plakałem we śnie, o luba ma!

Śniłem: żeś w grobie leżała,

Zbudziłem się — i jasna łza

Po moich licach spływała...

Plakałem we śnie, o luba ma,

Niewierną widziałem Cię w snach,

*Zbudziłem się — ale ból trwa,
Boleść skąpana we łzach...*

*Plakałem we śnie, o kwiatku mój,
Śniłem — że miłość mą znasz,
Zbudziłem się — ale lez zdrój
Oblewa ciągle mą twarz!...*

*Ich hab' im Traum geweinet,
Mir träumte, du lägest im Grab.
Ich wachte auf, und die Träne
Floss noch von der Wange herab...*

*Ich hab' im Traum geweinet,
Mir träumt', du verliessest mich.
Ich wachte auf, und ich weinte
Noch lange bitterlich...*

*Ich hab' im Traum geweinet,
Mir träumte, du wär'st mir noch gut.
Ich wachte auf, und noch immer
Strömt meine Tränenflut...*

In the fifth and sixteenth bars, the composer emphasizes the meaning of the words *lägest* - *she lays (in the grave)*, and *verliessest* - *you were leaving me (unfaithful to me)*, respectively, using the harmonic flat (lowering a note by a half step (semitone)) on these words, giving them an even more symptomatic in the sadness character. However, on the words *Ich wachte auf* - *I woke up*, the composer raises a note by a half step (semitone) (sharp), giving the word a brief, more optimistic colour, associated with the fact of awakening and contrasting with the depressive sleep that preceded this awakening.

Only in twenty-fifth bar we may notice the integration of two participants of the dialogue, i.e. the voice and the piano, leading directly to the musical and emotional culmination. All is complemented by a characteristic rhythm and emotion which are obviously maintained in the *pianissimo* dynamics. It is noteworthy that for the first time in the entire *Dichterliebe*

cycle it is the voice line that dominates the piano, controlling the tonality of the song, while the accompaniment plays a supporting role.

As in the previous composition, in the next one - *Allnächtlich im Traume* (*Nightly I see you in dreams*), the text visualizes the lover's disillusionment with the differences between the dream and the reality. In the dream, the beloved still loves him passionately and gives him a cypress flower, but when he suddenly wakes up, the flower disappears and her tender words are lost in oblivion.

*W sennem cię widzę marzeniu,
Blady, znędzniały, jak trup...
I z łkaniem — długo tłumioném
Do twoich rzucam się stóp...*

*Patrzysz się na mnie boleśnie,
Twarzyczka śmieje się twa —
Lecz widzę jak po twych licach
Powoli toczy się łza...*

*Szepczesz mi z cicha słóweczko
Wianuszek dajesz mi z róż...
Budzę się — ale bez wianka
A słówko — znikło mi już...*

*Allnächtlich im Traume seh ich dich,
Und sehe dich freundlich grüßen,
Und laut aufweinend stürz ich mich
Zu deinen süßen Füßen...*

*Du siehst mich an wehmütiglich,
Und schüttelst das blonde Köpfchen;
Aus deinen Augen schleichen sich
Die Perletränenröpfchen...*

*Du sagst mir heimlich ein leises Wort,
Und gibst mir den Strauß von Zypressen,*

*Ich wache auf, und der Strauß ist fort,
Und das Wort hab ich vergessen...*

The composer uses the paused short statements of the voice, as if the poet could hardly speak and sound the individual words. This is probably a result of an affection that accompanies the spoken phrases. Therefore, the melodic line of the voice is not led as smoothly as in other songs, and the overall "flow" of the piece is less constant. Schumann initially uses appoggiaturas five times in the song in order to musically emphasize particular syllables, which he clearly cared to underline (music notes example 19).

The image displays a musical score for the song "Allnächtlich im Traume" by Robert Schumann. It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line (Singstimme) and a piano accompaniment (Pianoforte). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 2/4. The first system shows the vocal line starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic and the lyrics "All - nächtlich im Traume seh' ich dich und". The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a more active bass line. The second system continues the vocal line with lyrics "sehe dich freundlich, freundlich grüssen, und laut aufweinand stürz' ich mich zu". The piano accompaniment includes a change in time signature to 3/4. The third system begins with a *ritard.* marking and the lyrics "dei - nen süs - sen Füßen. Du siehest mich". The piano accompaniment features a more complex, flowing texture with arpeggiated figures.

Music notes example 19. Song No. XIV – *Allnächtlich im Traume*, bars 1-14.

Aus alten Märchen (From olden tales ...) is the longest of all the songs of the cycle and the most unlikely, if we take into consideration the theme. The text describes a wonderful, utopian land where the poet is free from all sorrows and worries.

Dziwnie piękna bajeczka

W uszach moich wciąż dzwoni...

I śpiewa mi i gwarzy,

O czarownej ustroni...

Gdzie kwiateczki wzdychają,

W świetle gwiazd tajemniczem,

I na siebie się patrzą,

Rozkochanych obliczem...

Gdzie drzew starych chór śpiewa,

Jasność świeci słoneczna,

Gdzie szmer źródeł tak dźwięczy

Jak muzyka taneczna...

Jakże byłbym szczęśliwym

Gdybym tam się mógł dostać,

Rzucić ziemskie siedlisko

I ptaszyny wziąć postać!

Ach! Ów kraj czarodziejski

Duszę moją porywa...

Lecz gdy jutrznia nadchodzi,

W mgłę się szarą rozplywa.

Aus alten Märchen winkt es

Hervor mit weißer Hand,

Da singt es und da klingt es

Von einem Zauberland...

*Wo große Blumen schmachten
Im goldnen Abendlicht,
Und zärtlich sich betrachten
Mit bräutlichem Gesicht ...*

*Wo alle Bäume sprechen
Und singen, wie ein Chor,
Und laute Quellen brechen
Wie Tanzmusik hervor ...*

*Und Liebesweisen tönen,
Wie du sie nie gehört,
Bis wundersüßes Sehnen
Dich wundersüß betört!*

*Ach, könnt ich dorthin kommen,
Und dort mein Herz erfreun,
Und aller Qual entnommen,
Und frei und selig sein!*

*Ach! jenes Land der Wonne,
Das seh ich oft im Traum;
Doch kommt die Morgensonne,
Zerfließts wie eitel Schaum ...*

The first part of the song is as many as sixty-four bars of a story about the wonders of a fantasy land that the persona dreams of, in which he would like to live. The next twenty bars tell of the lover's release from problems in this wonderful enclave of happiness. At the very end, unfortunately, dawn comes and with the morning beams and first rays of the sun interrupts this dream of the land of wonder, which like foam goes flying, melts away in the brightness of the day.

At the point where the poet complains that the dawn comes, i.e. in ninety-sixth bar, the accompaniment, until this moment following the line of the voice stylistically and melodically, becomes more "solid". Instead of short eighth notes and dotted quarter notes, long dotted half notes appear, and on their basis the voice with the stretched note values, brings the poet back

to the sad reality of the real world. Everything *goes flying like foam in the morning beams* (*zerfließt's wie eitel Schaum*) and fades away.

How far from here emotionally to the first, seemingly carefree songs of the cycle! What a dramatic transformation in the understanding and definition of happiness, love, the world! The soul and heart of the lost and very unhappy poet did not reach the awaited, expected state of allayment, solace and joy, but plunged into sadness, lost in desires and went down on a shallow reef of helplessness.

Supporting his lost hopes of reaching happiness with dreams, the poet with resignation concludes his journey through all the emotional states he has experienced throughout the *Dichterliebe* song cycle. Musically, Schumann perfectly portrayed Heine's text, but he also showed his own understanding of love, which, unknowingly, always, even in the year of his own marriage to his beloved woman, cannot be a happy and fulfilled love.

The final song of the cycle, *Die alten, bösen Lieder* - old, bad songs in a literal translation or, as Alexander Kraushar poetically translates it in his Romantic translation, „*Przebrzmiał wiek marzeń* (*"The age of dreams has passed"*), and especially the text of the poem used, is an emanation of this desperate transformation throughout all sixteen songs.

*Przebrzmiał wiek marzeń daleki,
Pieśni zapalne i dumne
Pogrześć potrzeba na wieki...
Przynieście kamienną trumnę!*

*Tam złoży myśl ma dziecinna
Wszystko co dusza prześniła...
Lecz trumna — większą być winna
Niż Heidelbergska baryła...*

*Niechaj postać wyruszą
I wielkie sprowadzą mary...
Mary te — długie być muszą,
Dłuższe niż Reński most stary...*

*Sprowadźcie także olbrzymów,
Silnych jak mur kamienicy!*

*Niech wezwą w pomoc pielgrzymów,
Z sieni Kolońskiej kaplicy...*

*Mary te — orszak mój wierny
Do morskiej spuści mogiły...
Gdyż dla tej trumny niezmiernej,
Piaskowej zbrakłoby bryły...*

*Wiecież dla czego wybrałem
Tak wielką trumnę z kamienia?
Tam — miłość swą pochowałem
I wszystkie moje cierpienia...*

*Die alten bösen Lieder
Die Träume schlimm und arg,
Die laßt uns jetzt begraben,
Holt einen großen Sarg...*

*Hinein leg ich gar Manches,
Doch sag ich noch nicht was;
Der Sarg muß sein noch größer
Wies Heidelberger Faß...*

*Und holt eine Totenbahre,
Von Brettern fest und dick:
Auch muß sie sein noch länger
Als wie zu Mainz die Brück...*

*Und holt mir auch zwölf Riesen,
Die müssen noch stärker sein
Als wie der heilige Christoph
Im Dom zu Köln am Rhein...*

*Die sollen den Sarg forttragen
Und senken ins Meer hinab,
Denn solchem großen Sarge*

Gebührt ein großes Grab...

Wißt ihr, warum der Sarg wohl

So groß und schwer mag sein?

Ich legt auch meine Liebe

und meinen Schmerz hinein...

The declamatory style of the song arranges from the very beginning the musically specific character of the piece, which is in a complete symbiosis with the words of the poet-lover, who would like to bury, drown a coffin in the sea with the help of twelve giants. What he would like to close in this coffin is not told until the last sung phrase of this song, which ends the entire cycle. This last sung phrase, which the poet has "clothed in" the adagio character and tempo, is a sorrow-filled confession that reflects the intensity and magnitude of the pain that the loving poet has accumulated in his heart. It's not only the pain that the poet wants to get rid of, but also love: *Ich senkt' auch meine Liebe und meinen Schmerz hinein (I put my love and sorrow and all my pain inside)*. The poet intends to get rid of them and put them in a coffin, which, with the help of these twelve giants, he wants to carry and throw into the sea, since the coffin, which is filled with his love and pain, is large and extremely heavy.

The piano accompaniment perfectly reflects the mood created by the text, not only harmonically, but also through the technical solutions used by the composer. The three-bar introduction sounds like a fanfare announcing the final summary, evaluation of everything presented in the cycle. The strongly embedded tempo of the song and the regular figure in the accompaniment "carry" the text in the form of a formal message, interrupted only stylistically, in order to emphasize the words, by three progressions. The first of these is in sixteenth bar with an anacrusis in fifteenth bar on the words *der Sarg muss sein noch grösser (The coffin must be still greater)* (music notes example 20).

was. Der Sarg muss sein noch grö - ser wie's Hei - delber - ger Fass. Und

Music notes example 20. Song No. XVI – *Die alten, bösen Lieder*, bars 15-19.

Another message is in twenty fourth bar with an anacrusis in the bar number twenty three on the words: *auch muss sie sein noch länger* (*must/a bier/stretchers⁶⁵/be even longer*) and the last one in thirty second bar with an anacrusis in thirty first bar, where the poet describes how strong the giants must be to lift the huge coffin: *they must be brawnier than in his Rhine cathedral Cologne's St. Christopher - Als wie der heilige Christoph (im Dom zu Köln am Rhein⁶⁶)* (music notes example 21).

fest, auch muss sie sein noch län - ger als wie zu Main die Brück. Und (...)

sein, als wie der star - ke Chri - stoph im Dom zu Cöln am Rhein, die

Music notes example 21: Songs No. XVI – *Die alten, bösen Lieder*, bars 23-27 and 31-35.

⁶⁵ Author's note.

⁶⁶ Author's note.

These three progressions sound themselves like successive fanfares. However, they do not announce a triumph, but have an alarming and informative function, aimed at creating the right mood before the final disclosure of the bitter truth. After the final third progression, the composer changes the character of the accompaniment to one that is even heavier and embedded to a quarter-note marching rhythm. This correlates perfectly with the text *Die sollen den Sarg forttragen* ([They must] bear it [the coffin] out and sink it) in the bar number thirty five. Another major transformation in the piano accompaniment already occurs in the thirty ninth bar, when the text describes how a large tomb, in this case the depths of the sea, is needed for such a huge coffin. The piano is embedded heavily on half-note values for the next three bars, which are further accented, followed by the five-bar preparation for the vocal conclusion, full of syncopated quarter notes flowing quietly (music notes example 22).

The image shows a musical score for two systems. The first system (bars 35-43) includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Rhein, die sollen den Sarg fort-trä-gen, und sen-ken in's Meer hin-ab; denn". The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes in the right hand and half notes in the left hand, with a "Ped." marking and an asterisk "*" at the end. The second system (bars 44-48) continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "sol-chem gros-sea Sar-ge ge-büht ein gros-ses Grab." The piano accompaniment continues with half notes in the left hand and quarter notes in the right hand, with a "sp" marking at the end.

Music notes example 22. Song No. XVI – *Die alten, bösen Lieder*, bars 35-43.

In the last sung four bars, in the tempo marked as *adagio* and *piano* dynamics, the vocal line is composed in such a way as to rise the expressive force to an unreal, even esoteric level with the help of the accompaniment. The composer also deliberately suspends the last sung note on a septim, and the fact that the voice ends its line before the culmination in a cadence gives

rise to doubts that the poet – lover - composer - Schumann actually has closed his pain and his love in a coffin and threw it into the depths of the sea (music notes example 23).

The image shows a musical score for the song 'Die alten, bösen Lieder' by Robert Schumann. The score is in G major and 4/4 time, marked 'Adagio'. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: 'senkt auch meine Liebe und meinen Schmerz hinein!'. The piano part consists of a series of chords and arpeggiated figures that create a sense of drifting away.

Music notes example 23. Song No. XVI – *Die alten, bösen Lieder*, bars 48-52.

The rest of the journey to the end of the song is continued only with the piano in an extremely important postlude. The tempo changes from *adagio* to *andante espressivo*, and the time signature changes from 4/4 to 6/4. It is quite understandable why Schumann ends the cycle with a long piano postlude, as his primary medium used to express any emotions is the piano. The last fifteen bars of the cycle are an obvious emanation of Schumann's love for the instrument.

In his distinctive postludes, the composer did not feel bound by the expression which in many cases was imposed by the text. He maintained the mood of individual songs, often using the melodic lines of the voice in the postludes, but he also released in them an autonomous reflection of correlation, often even complementing the artistic content of a given poetic work.

Musically, the postlude following the last song of the *Dichterliebe* cycle is dominated by a beautiful melodic line presented in two sections. The first six bars are characterized by a certain rhythmic irregularity and an arpeggiated illustration of the drifting away emotion accumulated in the entire cycle. These are followed by a short but completely autonomous postlude section, in which the composer introduces a different modus, tempo and style to contrast them strongly enough to mark its individual characteristic and stylistic importance in the cycle. It is like a seventeenth song closely connected to the sixteenth one, but completely independent of it. It takes the listener to a world of understatements as well as unreal and unfulfilled dreams, and unspeakable emotions. It is the quintessence of the work of Robert

Schumann, a complete artist, but also a very sensitive, vulnerable man, not fully understood even by himself.

SUMMARY

Schumann's personality is a set of unusual, unique traits, which, combined with musical genius that nature gave him, resulted in the explosion of talent, however with a defect in the form of mental disorders. The paramount feature of Schumann's oeuvre was the inseparable connection with his subjective, inner perception and understanding of the world. The composer stressed more than once that feelings and imagination constitute an inseparable part of the creative process, and emotionality is closely linked with his work.

By the end of 1833, the composer was undergoing a nervous breakdown. He was plagued by hallucinations, delusions and suicidal ideas, which he called in his diary "the most terrible melancholy."⁶⁷

The time when the composer's creative work reached its fullest form, when he created the staggering number of compositions, was a time of the relative stability in his life. The three-year period from 1840 to 1842 was full of his most outstanding vocal, chamber and symphonic works. It was also perhaps the happiest period in Schumann's life, just before his marriage and during the first years of his life together with Clara Wieck. Unfortunately, his state of mind significantly limited, and by the end of his life, made any artistic work virtually impossible. And regardless of whether it was composing, conducting or other activities in the field of fine arts.

In 1844, the composer suffered a very serious nervous breakdown, which completely disabled him from work. He did not compose a single piece for several months.

The 1850s brought the complete mental crisis, and hallucinations dominated his ability to perceive the reality. Schumann was no longer able to write down anything but the compositions that permanently sounded in his head. The constant noise transformed into music, which later turned into horrible, demonic voices, and these voice, he claimed, wanted to take him to hell.

Schumann's relationship with his emotionality was most fully manifested in his vocal works - the songs. The vocal lyric poetry is an example on which basis we may observe the surprising, extraordinary complexity of the composer's psyche, which is often visible and reflected in the extreme feelings expressed in the course of a single song.

⁶⁷ R. Schumann, *Dzienniki (Tagebücher)*, volume (band) 1, 1827–1838, edited by Georg Eismann, Leipzig 1971, p. 421.

Schumann's illness and the circumstances under which he stayed in Endenich are shrouded in a mystery. Just a few information can be found in the composer's diaries in relation to this subject. Clara Wieck, or more precisely her diaries, may offer us a rescue and support. Berthold Litzmann's biography of Clara Schumann contains her notes from February 21 to 26, 1856, approximately six months before the composer's death. Litzmann claims to have gained access to the diary from the Schumanns' eldest daughter, Marie⁶⁸.

We may come to some interesting conclusions on the basis of the diaries. Clara claims that Robert Schumann always considered himself a "villain" who could hurt his wife, "He always said that he was a villain and should always read the Bible [...] At night he often had moments when he asked me to leave him because he could hurt me! [...] Suddenly at 9:30 a.m. he got up from a sofa and wanted his clothes. He said he had to go to an asylum because he was no longer able to use his senses and could not know what he was doing at night."⁶⁹

In 2006, the medical records from the clinic on Schumann's treatment were officially published. The diagnosis was: "melancholia with delusion." Later, by an unknown hand, it was added: "paralysis."⁷⁰ However, neither doctors nor musicologists were entirely sure about the credibility of this material. The autopsy results also indicated "paralysie générale" - general paralysis⁷¹. However, no therapy for palsy or paralysis was practiced at the mental clinic where Schumann stayed. Only some therapies for melancholy with delusions were provided. No coercive measures were used against patients at the clinic, but in Schumann's case, there is an information in the documents that he was put in a straitjacket several times⁷².

In their daily notes, Schumann's doctors noted the frequent ups and downs of the artist's mental state. He was plagued by alternating sober thinking and hallucinations, as well as delusional states. Two years before his death, the composer was already living practically in self-insight, despite the fact that he was allowed to walk around Bonn in the presence of a guard, or that he played chess and dominoes⁷³.

On May 5, 1855, the composer wrote his last letter to his wife, announcing another, more detailed one, but this intention was not realized.

⁶⁸ B. Litzmann, *Clara Schumann. Życie artysty. Według pamiętników i listów*, vol. 1, Leipzig 1902, preface.

⁶⁹ B. Litzmann, *Clara Schumann. Życie artysty. Według pamiętników i listów*, vol. 2, Leipzig 1905, p. 298.

⁷⁰ B. R. Appel (edit.), *Robert Schumann w Endsich (1854-1856). Dokumentacja medyczna, zaświadczenia listowe i współczesne raporty*, Verlag Schott, Mainz 2006, illustration, p. 497.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, illustration p. 401

⁷² *Ibid*, illustration 96

⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 32.

Schumann often talked to himself and to some imaginary people. He suffered from the memories of his immoral behaviour in the past and the noticeable changes caused by syphilis.

For medical reasons, Clara Schumann was denied visits to Endenich from the very beginning. Only two days before his death, when the end of the composer's lifetime was evident, she was allowed to meet her husband.

The unique combination of the immense talent and sensitivity combined with mental illness resulted in the creation of most of Schumann's musical works, which we still admire today. The artist believed that interpretations of any work should be closely linked to what the composer wanted, without an unnecessary ornamentation or intervention in the overall, designed from the outset shape of the work. He claimed that an interpreter of works of any outstanding composers is responsible for the appropriate reproduction of what the creator wrote, and technique should only serve this task. Any attempt to change or overinterpret what has already been created is nothing more than a caricature.

The analysis of all sixteen songs included in the *Dichterliebe* cycle gives us the impression that every phrase and note written has a strict sense, weight and purpose, which the composer deeply analysed and applied to his work, hoping to be interpreted exactly as he planned by all subsequent generations playing and singing his works. Transparency of the form, sensitivity to the style and modesty in relation to the means of expression used, and at the same time their incredible power are characteristic for the described Robert Schumann's song cycle. The happy Schumann, who wrote this cycle in the year of his marriage to Clara Wieck, and the unhappy poet we meet after analysing the work, are the great mystery of *Dichterliebe*. The four parts of the cycle: intimacy, romantic aura, ingressiveness and evanescence do not include even a brief moment of joyful rapture and ecstasy, happiness, not to mention the euphoria that comes from love to another person. We may get the impression that Schumann selected from Heine only the poems which fit into his understanding of emotionality, and we must remember that this emotionality was in imbalance.

Perhaps Schumann and Heine have another secret that they never shared with the world and took with them to the grave? Surprising was the fact of their rough relationship as well as Schumann's admiration for Heine's works and the dozens of songs composed to his poetry. Heine's irony in treating the strong words and attention devoted to difficult issues was not recognized by Schumann, and in *Dichterliebe* the composer interprets the theme of betrayal, sorrow, grief and suffering more gravely and deeply, giving them a fundamental aim of the entire composition. Schumann's artistic reflection of Heine's poetry gives no room for any positive conclusions which can be drawn from the warm affection to another person. In his

case, any strong feeling has no chance for happy moments. These amorous raptures are always accompanied by a shadow of failure, disappointment and rejection.

It is interesting that in the cycle of sixteen songs about love the one and only song does not quite fit into the overall work. *Im Rhein*, since I mean this song, links the cycle to a sad event in Schumann's life, which took place more than a decade after the song was written. Schumann attempted to commit suicide by jumping off a bridge into the Rhine River. But one fact is particularly mysterious. The suicide attempt was preceded by taking off and throwing a wedding ring into the river. This act was followed by Schumann's ultimately unsuccessful suicide attempt. Why the artist took off his wife's wedding ring, we will never know.

When interpreting each of the songs of the *Dichterliebe* cycle, we may get the impression of unbelievable lack of time to express in the interpretation all the feelings we would like to describe with voice. Each song seems to be too short for a full interpretation. Therefore, we must, according to Schumann's own instructions, trust the composer and only perform what he wrote in the notes. From the very beginning of each of the sixteen songs, it is necessary to strongly emphasize the emotional character and direction of the leading of the phrases.

Many young singers at the beginning of their voice training journey choose songs from the *Dichterliebe* cycle as some of the first songs they perform. It is important to keep in mind all deep content and all circumstances surrounding the creation of these works. Any incorrect interpretations certainly do not reflect the intentions of Schumann and also of Heine during the creation of poetry and, later, music and the song cycle.

Both artists lived a life full of emotional volatility and struggled, each in their own environment, for social recognition, acceptance and happiness. Both, due to Schumann's fault, are the creators of an unique work, the *Dichterliebe* song cycle. Both died in the same year, suffering from the same illness, which in a sad but special way crowned their common fate. They left many artistically distinguished works, among which the song cycle *Dichterliebe*, Op. 48, shines with its charm and expressive power.



Illustration 5. Clara Schumann and Robert Schumann, <https://interlude-cdn-blob-prod.azureedge.net/interlude-blob-storage-prod/2019/09/clara-schumann-and-robert-schumann.jpg>

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MUSIC NOTES EXAMPLES

4.1 The outside world - enchantment

1. Song No. I – *Im wunderschönen Monat Mai*, bars 1-4.
2. Song No. I – *Im wunderschönen Monat Mai*, bars 8-12.
3. Song No. I – *Im wunderschönen Monat Mai*, bars 23-26.
4. Song No. II – *Aus meinen Tränen sprießen*, bars 1-8.
5. Song No. II – *Aus meinen Tränen sprießen*, bars 12-17.
6. Song No. II – *Aus meinen Tränen sprießen*, bars 1-9.
7. Song No. III – *Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne*, bars 1-5.
8. Song No. IV – *Wenn ich in deine Augen seh*, bars 12-14.
9. Song No. IV – *Wenn ich in deine Augen seh*, bars 15-21.

4.2 The inner world - disappointment

10. Song No. V *Ich will meine Seele tauchen*, bars 1-5.
11. Song No. VII – *Ich grolle nicht*, bars 5-8.
12. Song No. VII – *Ich grolle nicht*, bars 19-30.
13. Song No. VIII – *Und wüßten's die Blumen, die kleinen*, bars 27-37.

4.3 The outside world - irony

14. Song No. IX – *Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen*, bars 1-9.

- 15: Song No. X – *Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen*, bars 9-12.
16. Song No. X – *Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen*, bars 22-25.
17. Song No. XII – *Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen*, bars 19-30.

4.4 The outside world – a dream or reality?

18. Song No. XIII – *Ich hab' im Traum geweinet*, bars 4-8.
19. Song No. XIV – *Allnächtlich im Traume*, bars 1-14.
20. Song No. XVI – *Die alten, bösen Lieder*, bars 15-19.
21: Song No. XVI – *Die alten, bösen Lieder*, bars 23-27 i 31-35.
22. Song No. XVI – *Die alten, bösen Lieder*, bars 35-43.
23. Song No. XVI – *Die alten, bösen Lieder*, bars 48-52.