WHEN CONCERTO MEETS SONG CYCLE: A STUDY OF VOCAL INFLUENCES IN ROBERT SCHUMANN'S CELLO CONCERTO IN A MINOR, OP. 129, WITH REFERENCE TO HIS DICHTERLIEBE, OP. 48

BY
KA-WAI YU

THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts in Cello Performance and Literature
in the Graduate College of the
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2011

Urbana, Illinois

Doctoral Committee:

Assistant Professor Reynold Tharp, Chair and Director of Research
Assistant Professor Christina Bashford
Professor Charlotte Mattax Moersch
Assistant Professor Brandon Vamos
Associate Professor Ann Yeung
© Copyright by Ka-Wai Yu, 2011
ABSTRACT

This thesis responds to the long-existing doubts, prejudices and mixed critical views about the value of Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* and his late music with new ideas and possibly answers. It focuses on analyzing influences from Schumann’s vocal music in the concerto. *Dichterliebe, Op. 48*, which is one of Schumann’s most successful song cycles and reflects the composer’s mature vocal style, will be used as a reference throughout the thesis, besides examples from Schumann’s other early and late vocal works.

The analysis of the concerto is divided into four main sections: structure, tonality, rhetoric, and orchestration. The first section examines how the musical material and sections/movements in the concerto are organically connected like the structure of a song cycle through studying the miniature scale of the work, cyclic recurrences of thematic material, structural unity and ambiguity, fragmentation, and possible song form in the concerto. The second part is an analysis of the concerto’s tonal and harmonic language. It looks into the irony of co-existing yet conflicting tonalities, a shift between sharp and flat keys with possible narrative associations, and a reflection of poetic intentions through the unique timing and function of the augmented 6th chord, which find resonance in Schumann’s songs.

While the first two sections address the ‘cycle’ part of the concept of song cycle, the third part of the analysis looks at the rhetorical characteristics, or the ‘song’ part of the concerto, examining how poetic ideas can be spoken and sung in a wordless instrumental work. This section further investigates the use of song motifs in the concerto that may have similar symbolic meanings in Schumann’s vocal repertoire. The final section compares the close soloist-orchestra interaction in the concerto with the intimate partnership between singer and pianist in Schumann’s songs. This section first discusses song textures found in the concerto. It is followed by a discussion of
narrative intentions of the orchestra as a narrator and musical conversations between soloist and orchestra.

The thesis concludes with some thoughts about providing cellists, scholars, musicians, and others with new ways to re-evaluate the special qualities of the piece, reconsider previous prejudices against Schumann’s late style with reference to the *Cello Concerto*, and re-create an awareness of the long-existing inter-influences between instrumental and vocal music.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my special thanks to my Doctoral committee members for their constant support and advice during my uneasy journey to complete this thesis. I deeply admire my research adviser Reynold Tharp for his inspirations and the time he has given to my analysis, transcriptions, and thesis writing and revisions. His remarkable leadership has kept me in the right research directions and encouraged me fully to enjoy my research process. I would like to thank Christina Bashford for working with me on an earlier independent study of Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* that became the backbone of my research.

I single out Brandon Vamos for his great cello teaching that helped create who I am as a confident performer and musician, and supported my artistic growth and career development. Without him, I would not be able to attempt this challenging yet exciting Doctoral Project. And I am indebted to Charlotte Mattax Moersch, for it is she who introduced me to the wonderful world of early music, and has strongly influenced my intellect as a scholar and my stylistic awareness as a period-instrument performer, which contribute to my desire to re-understand Schumann’s concerto with historical awareness through the project. I also thank Ann Yeung for her previous inspiring chamber coaching and support for my project.

I am grateful to John Wagstaff and Hsin-Yi Lin for their English translations of some of my research materials that were originally written in German. Great appreciation is reserved for the performers who prepared for and performed in my Project Recital with the greatest efforts and fine musicianship.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my beloved family, my musical and non-musical mentors, as well as friends in the USA and Hong Kong, who have given me the mental strength to complete this thesis work through their love and moral support.
To lovers of Schumann’s music
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION........................................................................................................1
1.1 Criticisms of Schumann’s *Cello Concerto*.................................................................1
1.2 Composition Background...............................................................................................3
1.3 Schumann’s Vocal Style...............................................................................................6

CHAPTER 2: MUSICAL STRUCTURE OF THE CONCERTO..................................................13
2.1 Miniature Scale of Work...............................................................................................13
2.2 Cyclic Structure..........................................................................................................18
2.3 Structural Ambiguity and Unity...................................................................................34
2.4 Fragmentation..............................................................................................................41
2.5 Song Form....................................................................................................................50

CHAPTER 3: A POETIC HARMONIC LANGUAGE...............................................................56
3.1 Dramatic Shift from Sharp to Flat Keys.......................................................................56
3.2 Tonal Ambiguity..........................................................................................................61
3.3 Use of Augmented Sixth Chords................................................................................66

CHAPTER 4: RHETORICAL CHARACTERISTICS.................................................................73
4.1 Rhetoric.......................................................................................................................73
4.2 Song Motifs................................................................................................................82

CHAPTER 5: THE SONG-LIKE ORCHESTRATION...........................................................95
5.1 Song Texture..............................................................................................................95
5.2 Narrative Associations..............................................................................................103

CHAPTER 6: FINAL THOUGHTS..........................................................................................113
6.1 Performance Interpretation of the Concerto..............................................................113
6.2 Conclusion..................................................................................................................117

BIBLIOGRAPHY..................................................................................................................123

APPENDIX A: INTERPRETIVE PERFORMANCE SUGGESTIONS......................................129

APPENDIX B: LYRICS AND TRANSLATIONS OF DICHTERLIEBE..........................131

APPENDIX C: PROJECT RECITAL HOUSE PROGRAM.................................................135

APPENDIX D: PROJECT RECITAL PROGRAM NOTES.....................................................136

APPENDIX E: TRANSCRIPTIONS OF SCHUMANN’S *CELLO CONCERTO AND DICHTERLIEBE* FOR CELLO AND STRING QUARTET.........................................................140
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Criticisms of Schumann’s Cello Concerto

Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, there have been mixed views about the value of Schumann’s Cello Concerto in A minor, Op. 129 composed in 1850. Performers, among them Frankfurt cellist-composer Robert Bockmühl, doubted the playability of the concerto. The work has often been criticized for being technically too awkward and lacking virtuosic display. Heinz von Loesch summarizes Bockmühl’s criticisms of the piece as divided into three aspects: treatment of the solo instrument, questions of performability of the cello part, and virtuosity.¹ Donald Tovey says the form of the concerto shows “little or no disposition to expand.”² The structure of the last movement of the concerto has been criticized for being too fragmentary, with a single motive being repeated throughout the movement. Joseph Kerman claims the finale’s main theme has become “an almost unbroken succession of two-bar incises, ungainly and coarse,”³ and Alfred Nieman says that this movement is where Schumann’s invention “falters.”⁴

Furthermore, some musicians seem not to appreciate the light orchestration of the concerto. In 1963, Dmitri Shostakovich re-orchestrated Schumann’s Cello Concerto with added brass instruments and harp. The concerto has also been considered musically too complex to understand. A review of the piece in 1855 by the violinist and composer Karl Böhmer (1799-1884) points out “some rather curious harmonic progressions” found in the piece and claims that it does not work.


well as a “concert piece.” Oldenburg court Kapellmeister August Pott (1806-1883) refused to have the piece performed in the court saying the piece is “disgusting, horrible, and boring.”

These doubts and criticisms of the piece, like those of many other late Schumann works, are further amplified when critics relate them to Schumann’s mental illness. According to Laura Tunbridge, many have related the composer’s illness to a darkening of mood and creative failure. Schumann’s Variations on a Theme in Eb Major ‘Ghost Variations,’ WoO 24, late songs, and the Violin Concerto are among those late works often rejected by the musical world. Claiming to protect Schumann’s reputation by preventing his ‘flawed works’ from being published, the composer’s wife Clara even destroyed Schumann’s Five Romances for cello and piano. The Cello Concerto is especially associated with such criticism because it was revised several days before Schumann’s suicide attempt in February 1854, a time when the composer was seriously disturbed by auditory hallucinations.

The question is whether the above criticisms are justified or not. If parts of the concerto are considered awkward in terms of traditional cello playing, can we overcome the difficulty with new approaches in interpretation? Perhaps the use of fragmentation in the concerto can be justified if we can find adequate musical reasons behind it. Also, is there another way to look at a concerto besides the opposition of the rich and full sound of a huge orchestral force and the solo part? Perhaps we can say that the musical quality of Schumann’s late works was not always negatively affected by his mental illness, if we can find enough musical consistency between the Cello Concerto and earlier works.

If purely instrumental form in music is insufficient, or even irrelevant to explain some of the above special qualities of Schumann’s Cello Concerto, perhaps we can explore them by comparison

---


7 Laura Tunbridge, Schumann’s Late Style (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 5.
with genres beyond instrumental music. Since Schumann was a great song composer, journalist, and writer with a deep-rooted background in literature, it is therefore natural for us to look for answers from Schumann’s songs and song cycles.

1.2 Composition Background

The concerto was written within two weeks in 1850 when the Schumanns began their new life in the Rhine city of Düsseldorf where Schumann assumed the position of Municipal Music Director. The Schumanns seemed to enjoy the life there in the beginning and were warmly welcomed by the musicians of the Düsseldorf orchestra and choir. Schumann says he was “extremely pleased and surprised” by the people there “which only desired good music.”

Clara was able to continue her concert tours in Europe which included some successful performances of her husband’s works. 1850-1851 was a prolific period for Schumann. In just four months of his tenure at Düsseldorf, he wrote the vocal and choral works of Op. 90 songs based on Nikolaus Lenau’s texts, Lieder und Gesänge, Op. 127, No. 4, and the orchestration of Neujahrslied, Op. 144; the piano works Bunte Blätter, Op. 99 and Albumblätter, Op. 124; as well as orchestral works that include sketches of the Overture to Schiller’s Bräut von Messina, Op. 100, and the well-received Third Symphony, Op. 97. It was at this happy moment when the Cello Concerto, Op. 129 was written. Clara finds the work “written in a way that is most befitting to the cello’s character” and Schumann himself remarks that “the concerto is also really quite a jolly piece.”

The first performance of the concerto with orchestra was given by cellist Ludwig Ebert and Oldenburg’s Grand-Ducal Court Orchestra in April 1860, or four years after Schumann’s death.

While everything seemed to work well for a fine start, it was not long when the situation turned sour. Schumann did not have the mentality, training, or much experience as a conductor.

---


Alan Walker says that the composer lacked the ability to express himself clearly and concisely at rehearsals, and that his baton technique was “non-existent.” The local newspaper even published an article attacking his capacity for leadership. In late 1853, the relationship with the Düsseldorf music committee and musicians worsened at a point when Schumann was forced to resign from his position. This external career crisis was aggravated by Schumann’s deteriorating mental health. According to Walker, Schumann suffered from nervous attacks in 1851, and in July 1853, Clara recalled that her husband was seized by a paralytic stroke in a terrible morning. During this difficult time, it was the friendship from violinist Joseph Joachim, and the composer’s new friend and young supporter Johannes Brahms that inspired Schumann to continue writing compositions such as the ‘F.A.E.’ Violin Sonata, the Third Violin Sonata, Piano Trio No.3, Op. 110, and Phantasie for violin and orchestra. Walker says the appearance of Brahms “brightened an otherwise dark year” of Schumann in 1853.

In this period of struggle, Schumann re-examined his Cello Concerto with the help of Frankfurt cellist Robert Bockmühl. According to John Worthen, the composer also tried out the piece with Friedrich Wilhelm Forberg and Christian Reimers. Except for changing the first movement’s tempo from a quarter note equals to 144 to 130, Schumann basically disagreed with most of Bockmühl’s revision suggestions, which were made from a virtuosic performer’s standpoint, and including the cellist’s suggested ossias. Joachim Draheim describes Bockmühl as a composer of technically demanding but musically shallow virtuoso pieces for cello. Nevertheless, the concerto was published in November 1853 by Breitkopf and Härtel despite the fact that Schumann could not find any committed performer to premiere the work.

---

The last attempt to revise the *Cello Concerto* occurred in February 1854. Schumann had serious auditory hallucinations on the seventeenth and eighteenth of that month. Clara reports about one horrible night: “The doctors put him into bed … he got up again and started making corrections in the cello concerto, feeling that this might relieve him of the interminable sound of the voices.” Laura Tunbridge quotes Clara’s report saying that after the revision, “the voices in his [Schumann’s] head were becoming friendlier.” The corrections were sent to the publisher on February 21, six days before Schumann’s suicide attempt.

The idea of writing the concerto began as a hopeful start for Schumann in Düsseldorf; went through the composer’s struggle with his career crisis, deterioration in mental illness, and troubles working with a soloist; and was completed through final revisions during his nervous breakdown that resulted in his suicide attempt. The question is whether this compositional history of hope, internal struggle, hidden anxiety, and resignation are reflected in the work itself or not. Is this work simply ‘crazy music’ written at a time when Schumann lost his mind? Or can we re-evaluate the work with new insights after many years of criticisms? In the following analysis, I would like to study the concerto in various approaches which include a focus on exploring vocal influences in the piece. By doing that, perhaps at the end we would be able to understand more deeply Clara’s following comment about the concerto: “The romanticism, the spirit, the freshness, the humor, and then the fascinating interweaving of the cello and orchestra - all this is truly thrilling. What’s more-the harmoniousness and profound feeling which fill all the songful passages!”

---

15 *Schumann’s Late Style*, p. 121.
1.3 Schumann’s Vocal Style

In order to analyze how vocal influences play a part in the concerto, the following observations of several significant qualities found in Schumann’s songs will provide the foundation for further discussion.

**Words and music** Lyrical declamation demonstrates a connection between poetry and music in Schumann’s songs. Arthur Komar points out that in Schumann’s *Dichterliebe* the musical accents correspond to the verbal meter with the right words emphasized, the punctuation is observed, and tempi match the diction.  

17 Such declamatory quality combines *Sprechstimme* or quasi-recititative style with musical lyricism in Schumann’s songs, as pointed out by Richard Miller and Jon Finson.  

18 The two ballads of *Op. 122* written in Schumann’s later years interestingly combine declamation with an orchestral-like descriptive piano part. This indeed matches what singer Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau said in an interview: “his [Schumann’s] music speaks and his words sound” in an interview.  

19 Eric Sams describes *Dichterliebe* as an “alloy of music and poetry.”

Themes of mystery can be found in Schumann’s songs. Eric Sams emphasizes Schumann’s song subjects of love, disguise, elsewhere, beyond, long ago, far away, nature, madness, and death.  

While Franz Schubert had a strong feeling for the older poets of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Friedrich Schiller, Schumann had a tendency towards contemporary poets such as Heinrich Heine and Joseph Freiherr von Eichendorff. Rudolf Felber compares Schubert’s certain objectivity with

---


Schumann’s intense subjectivity. Subtle emotions reflected in the work of these contemporary poets can be found in Schumann’s songs. According to Astra Desmond, Schumann seems to be a link between the spontaneity of Schubert and Hugo Wolf’s literary and psychological qualities.

While Schumann regards song as a higher form of poetry, he takes great liberty with text. As quoted by Sams, Schumann once said “a poem must be crushed and have its juice expressed like an orange; it must wear the music like a wreath, or yield to it like a bride.” Such liberty reflects Schumann’s personal involvement in the text of his songs.

Sams points out that Schumann’s songs mirror the composer’s life story of genesis, growth, maturity, and decline, as more than half of his output is vocal music. Sams finds Schumann’s choice and treatment of poets and poems self-expressive. The polar opposite imaginary characters of the forceful Florestan and the poetic Eusebius can be found in Schumann’s songs, often referring to the aspects of the composer’s own personality. These two characters come from the Schumann’s piano work Carnaval, Op. 9, and appear in the composer-journalist’s articles. Rudolf Felber suggests that Schumann’s songs were written in three major periods (1840-1847; 1849-1850; and 1851-1852), which closely reflect the composer’s life and musical growth. All these show a possible autobiographical quality of his songs.

Musical structure Schumann’s songs continue the standard strophic form tradition. Felber notes that Schumann’s early songs, including Dichterliebe, are based on strophic principles.

---


24 The Songs of Robert Schumann, pp. 3-4.


26 “Schumann’s Place in German Song,” pp. 340-354.

27 “Schumann’s Place in German Song,” pp. 340-354.
mentions that Schumann approaches through-composed songs with the strophic form in mind, in terms of recurrence of musical material and external structural division.\textsuperscript{28} Schumann also had a growing interest in the through-composed form, as reflected in his songs after 1849. Surprises, abrupt changes, and fragmentation can often be found in the structure of Schumann’s songs. Beate Perrey finds disintegrative forces and open-endedness in \textit{Dichterliebe}, which elevates the notion of the “Romantic fragment,” yet without losing the structure’s “integrity.”\textsuperscript{29}

Cyclic thematic recurrences connect musical ideas in Schumann’s songs. Miller finds great unity in \textit{Dichterliebe} through the cyclical character of the thematic material.\textsuperscript{30} Such cyclic structure is often related to some kinds of narration. Jonathan Dunsby mentions those being a story of states, memories, and expectations like a monodrama in Schumann’s songs.\textsuperscript{31} Sams also mentions that Schumann’s songs are integrated in a cycle through motto-themes and key sequence.\textsuperscript{32} Themes often carry symbolic meanings and inspire narrative associations in Schumann’s songs. Repetitions and transformations of these symbolic themes connect associated ideas together like a story, an important element of a song cycle.

\textbf{Harmony and thematic material} Key ambiguity is a common feature in Schumann’s songs. Miller thinks that such ambiguity helps provide a sense of longing, unrequited love, and suffering in \textit{Dichterliebe}.\textsuperscript{33} Finson also finds tonal instability in Schumann’s songs.\textsuperscript{34} He sees a dramatic shift

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{28} \textit{Robert Schumann: The Books of Songs}, p. 67.
\textsuperscript{30} \textit{Singing Schumann: An Interpretive Guide for Performers}, p. 100.
\textsuperscript{31} “Why sing? Lieder and song cycles,” p. 106.
\textsuperscript{32} \textit{The Songs of Robert Schumann}, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{34} \textit{Robert Schumann: The Books of Songs}, p. 62.
\end{flushright}
from grief to resignation from flat to sharp keys in *Dichterliebe*. Furthermore, Schumann treats dissonances with increased liberty. Frequent occurrences of diminished sevenths, eleventh and thirteenth chords, and suspensions can be found in his songs. For Desmond, Schumann extends the harmonic freedom begun by Schubert.\(^{35}\)

Certain motifs and musical intervals in the melody reflect what Schumann seems to express through the words. Sams’ *The Songs of Robert Schumann* looks into some of these motivic materials in Schumann’s songs that share similar symbolic meanings in the composer’s other musical outputs.\(^{36}\) For Felber, abrupt changes of register serve to sharpen and strengthen the dramatic expressiveness of the melody in mirroring the changing moods of the poem. He concludes that “the true artistic significance of the songs of Schumann lies in their melody - in its intensity of feeling and its directness and richness of expression.”\(^{37}\) Rhythm plays an important part in Schumann’s song material. Finson also mentions the use of polyrhythm between text, melody, and accompaniment in *Dichterliebe* creating a coexistence of conflicting ideas.\(^{38}\)

**Voice and piano** The piano part in Schumann’s songs has primary importance. Sams points out that the voice often borrows thematic material from the piano part.\(^{39}\) Komar notes that the piano part creates and maintains the atmosphere of a song, expressing the text’s mood.\(^{40}\) Schubert first raised the status of the accompaniment to a partnership with the voice in his songs. According to Desmond, it is Schumann who carried on a step further until perfect unity between the two parts

\(^{35}\) BBC Music Guides: Schumann Songs, p. 61.

\(^{36}\) The Songs of Robert Schumann, pp. 11-26.

\(^{37}\) “Schumann’s Place in German Song,” pp. 340-354.


\(^{39}\) The Songs of Robert Schumann, p. 3.

\(^{40}\) Schumann Dichterliebe: An Authoritative Score- Historical Background, Essays in Analysis, Views and Comments, p. 11.
achieved by Hugo Wolf. Vorspiele (introductions), Zwischenspiele (interludes), and Nachspiele (postludes) played by the piano alone further show the prominence of the piano part.

Schumann’s songs reflect a close connection between vocal and piano music. For Sams, songs are extension of Schumann’s piano music, expressing his own world of feeling. Miller describes Schumann’s piano postludes as “song without words.” When Dunsby talks about cyclic quality of the piano postludes in Dichterliebe, he compares them to Schumann’s piano collections in Papillons and Kreisleriana.

From the above, Schumann’s vocal style, in terms of its word-music relationship, structure, harmony and thematic material, and voice-piano connection, continues the song traditions left by Schubert. He personalizes as well as transforms the genre of song cycle with innovations and new approaches, including possible connections with piano music. He re-created the German Lied with new possibilities, which were passed on to Brahms, Wolf, Strauss, and even Mahler. The question is whether these traditions, new directions, and inspirations can be seen to be reflected in his instrumental music as well, by studying his Cello Concerto.

Late songs This category roughly refers to the vocal compositions in the period of 1851-1852, after the Schumanns moved to Düsseldorf and initial completion of the Cello Concerto. Rudolf Felber considered this two-year time the third song period of Schumann. Major songs in this last productive period include Op. 90, Op. 95, 96, 98a, 101, 104, 107, 114, 117, 135, and 138. Op. 98a is the famous cycle based on Goethe’s poems. Other famous poets featured include Friedrich

The late songs return to more a traditional structure characterized by a revival of the strophic form and its combination with a through-composed structure. There is a growing tendency to use large intervals in the vocal melody. In general, the texts used in late songs are predominantly associated to death, darkness, madness, and fears. Walsh describes Schumann’s late songs as “depressive.” Astra Desmond, among a large number of scholars and musicians, claims that Schumann’s late songs show deteriorations in quality. Nevertheless, recent scholars and singers including Laura Tunbridge and Fischer-Dieskau have attempted to rediscover the value and depth of Schumann’s late songs. John Worthen also argues that Schumann remained “entirely sane” until his nervous breakdown in February 1854, and does not agree with the preconceptions of a direct connection between Schumann’s madness and his music. According to Miller, it was through the liberty Schumann took with his poetic sources in the middle and later songs that he exerted influence on subsequent major lied writers.

**Why *Dichterliebe***? *Dichterliebe* is one of Schumann’s most successful, popular, and representative song cycles. The texts of the sixteen songs are taken from Heinrich Heine’s *Lyrisches Intermezzo* of 1822-1823, published as part of the poet’s *Das Buch der Lieder*. It was written in 1840, the same year when Schumann wrote a total of 168 songs, with great inspiration from his musical and married life. This work thus can represent Schumann’s mature style in song writing, which is

---

why it has been chosen for this paper. The lyrics of *Dichterliebe* and their translations can be found in Appendix B.

Comparing this early vocal work with Schumann’s late works will be useful in evaluating the consistency of the composer’s vocal style and its quality, which may in turn be reflected in the *Cello Concerto* as one of the late works. Reconsideration of the criticisms of the concerto as a late work will therefore be justified if such a consistency can be found. Furthermore, a comparison between the concerto and *Dichterliebe* can provide an opportunity for readdressing the criticisms against Schumann’s late songs as well.

The analysis of the *Cello Concerto* is divided into four chapters. Chapter 2 describes the musical structure of the concerto, examining how its miniature scale, cyclic techniques, structural ambiguity and unity, use of fragmentation, and possible multi-movement song form may reflect a structural framework in Schumann’s songs and song cycles. Chapter 3 covers the harmonic language of the concerto, in particular the poetic associations created by dramatic shifts from sharp to flat keys, tonal ambiguity, and the use of augmented sixth chords. Chapter 4 looks at how the rhetorical characteristics and types of song motifs found in the wordless concerto may share a musical language with Schumann’s songs. Chapter 5 is about how the orchestration of the concerto creates an intimate partnership between soloist and orchestra that echoes the voice and piano texture of Schumann’s songs and may also reflect narrative associations. Chapter 6 begins by briefly discussing the performance interpretation of the concerto in response to the analysis for the preceding chapters. This is followed by comparisons between the concerto and *Dichterliebe*, a discussion of relationships between instrumental and vocal music, reconsideration of criticisms of Schumann’s late style, and possible future directions for the ideas explored in this project.
CHAPTER 2: MUSICAL STRUCTURE OF THE CONCERTO

Susan Youens defines the nineteenth-century song cycle as “a group of individually complete songs designed as a unit.”¹ She defines three criteria which are significant in obtaining coherency in a song collection: first, connections in the text and storyline that may contribute to a unifying mood; second, the effective musical procedures to articulate the poetry; and third, a seamless combination of the first two. While the Cello Concerto does not have text like a lied, does it have the musical procedures needed to unify sections of the piece, so that it may imply a storyline to resemble a song cycle?

2.1 Miniature Scale of Work

The original title of the Cello Concerto “Konzertstück for cello and orchestra” found in the autograph score offers a starting point for understanding the structure of the work. According to Grove Music Online, “Konzertstück” refers to a work for solo instrument or instruments with orchestra shorter than a concerto, and frequently in one movement similar to the term “concertino.”² Early on in his career as a critic, Schumann already envisioned one-movement concerto form: “The Allegro-Adagio-Rondo sequence in a single movement … a type of one-movement composition in moderate tempo in which an introductory or preparatory would take the place of a first allegro, the cantabile section that of the adagio, and a brilliant conclusion that of a rondo. It may prove an attractive idea. It is also one which we would prefer to realize in a special composition of our own.”³ Joan Chissel also points out that it is noteworthy that Schumann uses the titles of “Konzertstück” (his concertos for cello, and for four horns) and “Phantasie” (for violin

and orchestra) for his concertos, and she mentions the composer’s lack of outstanding interest in the concerto form. But why did Schumann write concertos if he disliked the genre?

**Why concerto?** There are three major reasons that I think explain why Schumann wrote music in the bigger forms of symphonies, overtures, and concertos, especially later in his career. First, Schubert’s *Symphony No. 9* *The Great* inspired Schumann to embark on writing orchestral music, according to Joan Chissel. Second, composing works of larger scale would increase Schumann’s reputation as a significant and progressive composer with the growing popularity of orchestral music among the nineteenth-century public. According to Joseph Kerman, Schumann’s career after marriage has a new direction towards “professionalism,” moving away from the piano in favor of “richer and grander soundscapes.” Third, after 1850, large orchestral and choral compositions served practical needs in that the composer now had a city orchestra and choir at his service in Düsseldorf; and he had a virtuoso pianist wife Clara as well as a star-violinist friend Joachim to perform his concertos. The question is how such a concert-piece concept contributed to the musical structure of the *Cello Concerto*.

**Small scale of work** The concert-piece idea is related to the size and length of the piece, associated with a smaller scale of work closer to Schumann’s miniature music rather than the gigantic production of many other nineteenth and twentieth-century concertos. For most of his early career, Schumann focused on writing poetic miniature works including his large number of songs and piano short pieces. These short works are closer to the setting of Mendelssohn’s songs


6 Joseph Kerman’s “The Concertos,” p. 175.
without words rather than Berlioz’s grand symphonic works, Liszt’s explicit showmanship in his piano concertos and tone poems, or Wagner’s thick texture and enormous music dramas.

From the outset, the *Cello Concerto* does have the structural characteristics of what Donald Tovey describes as “terse exposition, short ruminative developments, and interludes all gathered up as quickly as possible to the business of schematic recapitulation.”7 The first movement of the concerto for instance has 103 measures of exposition compared to the 192 measures of Dvořák’s *Cello Concerto in B Minor, Op. 104*, another important nineteenth-century concerto for the instrument, and 34 measures of the intermezzo-like second movement compared to Dvořák’s slow movement that is 166 measures long!

Schumann himself clearly shows his support for quality smaller-scale works when he praises Schubert’s *C Major Symphony* for avoiding the “grotesque forms and bold proportions of Beethoven’s late works.”8 Indeed, one important feature in Beethoven’s sonata form is a well worked-out, long development section. His ‘Razumovsky’ *Quartet Op. 59, No. 1* for instance has 152 measures of development or 50 measures more than the exposition. Contrary to this ambitious structural build-up, the development of the concerto’s finale lasts for 73 measures in comparison with the exposition’s 130 measures. Beethoven’s ambitious late quartets often have more than three or four movements. His *Op. 132* has five movements and lasts for 40 minutes, compared to the 25 minutes of the three movements in Schumann’s *Cello Concerto*. Laura Tunbridge says about the concerto: “figurative solo sections replace and even take the function of ‘thematicism’; and development sections become less substantial.”9 Rather than thematic expansion, the structure of the concerto is built from short motifs, which may find echoes in the composer’s song and piano cycles. But how

---


can structural cohesion being achieved with mainly short motivic ideas? Berthold Hoeckner talks about three possible types of coherence in Schumann songs: narrative, tonal structure, and motivic recurrence.\(^{10}\) We shall look at how unity can be achieved in the work through these thematic, harmonic, and subsequent narrative qualities in the next few chapters.

**Musical expression beyond structure** Besides involving a smaller scale, Schumann’s concert-piece idea also shows the importance of musical substance over virtuoso display. The concerto uses traditional forms having a sonata-form first movement, ternary second, and a sonata-rondo finale. Many find Schumann’s turn to objective absolute music rather than his abundant subjective miniature music before as a ‘U-turn’ towards Classicism. However, deep down the subtleness, subjectivity, and inwardsness from his songs seem really to govern the structure of the concerto. Chissel points out that Schumann did not like “meretricious showmanship” in music and that was a reason why he focused on writing keyboard miniatures instead of concertos.\(^{11}\) Tovey also says about the concerto: “every feature indicates Schumann’s growing dislike of anything that could be called display.”\(^{12}\)

That does not mean the concerto in any sense lacks brilliant passage work for the solo cellist. In fact, nineteenth-century cellists including Robert Bochmühl complained about the enormous technical difficulties of the piece. But musical expression, rather than virtuosity, is the motivation and soul; Schumann says that, “Romanticism does not rest in figures or forms; it will naturally occur if the composer is a poet at all.”\(^{13}\)


\(^{12}\) *Essays in Musical Analysis, Vol 3: Concertos*, p. 185.

The precise yet effective opening four measures dramatically act as an opening curtain for the singer to come in, rather than as the orchestral exposition in a concerto. This is for instance different from Beethoven’s *Triple Concerto*, where a 76-measure long orchestral exposition has the structural function of introducing the main themes before the solo cello’s first entrance. And when Schumann’s opening motif returns in mm. 280-282, it seems to answer the concerto’s first four measures with new narrative ideas as reflected by its transformed thematic and harmonic contents, rather than to merely function as a bridge to the second movement.

With all these musically inspired structural intentions, can we still find the clarity and balance of the Classical concerto form in the piece? Abundant musical characters that are distantly associated with each other create localized fragmentation rather than a larger structure in Schumann’s songs. Can we find a similar importance of fragmentation in the concerto? Can narrative ideas drive these fragmented ideas into stories like a song cycle, which may in turn organically realize the concertino concept of three movements played without a pause in the concerto? In order to answer these questions, we shall later look into details about fragmentation, as well as the structural ambiguity and unity of the concerto.

From the above discussion of the miniature concept in the concerto, the smaller scale of work and focus on musical expression rather than structural proportion or virtuosity raise questions about possible affinities between the concerto and Schumann’s song cycles. Furthermore, the differences between Schumann’s concert-piece concept and the Classical and nineteenth-century structural principles in orchestral music unfold the existence and importance of cyclic recurrences of motifs, blurred structural breaks, and fragmentation in the concerto. In the following analysis, I will look at these aspects one-by-one in order to investigate how the piece’s structure is shaped in similar ways to Schumann’s songs.
2.2 Cyclic Structure

Among the various music procedures that unify the songs in a song cycle, recurring motifs, passages or entire songs are common. According to the Grove Music Online, recapitulation of passages from earlier songs and links between songs are prominent in Schumann’s song cycles, including *Dichterliebe*.14 Such cyclic form can be found in the *Cello Concerto* too, in which a later movement or section reintroduces thematic material from an earlier section. Major sources that mention it include Joan Chissel’s “Robert Schumann (1810-1856)” from *The Concerto* (1952), Alan Walker’s *The Great Composers: Schumann* (1976), John Daverio’s *Robert Schumann: Herald of a “New Poetic Age”* (1997), Michael Steinberg's *The Concerto: A Listener’s Guide* (1998), Eric Jensen’s *The Master Musicians: Schumann* (2001), and Larry Todd’s “Nineteenth-Century Concertos for Strings and Winds” from *The Cambridge Companion to the Concerto* (2005).15 The following is an analysis of three recurring motifs in the *Cello Concerto*.

---

14Susan Youens’ “Song cycle.”

a) The Concerto Motto

Figure 2.1: The concerto motto: mm. 1-3 from the first movement of Schumann’s *Cello Concerto*.

Harmonic and melodic versions of the motto. The motto that reappears throughout the *Cello Concerto* begins in mm. 1-3 as a harmonic progression of i-iv-i played by woodwinds and string pizzicato with the top voice outlining E-A-C, as shown in Figure 2.1. This is immediately followed by a melodic version of it when the soloist enters with a melody: E-A-(B)-C in mm. 5-7. The B acts as a passing note, continued by a falling arpeggio. The second half of this melody that follows in mm. 8-12 bears a chromatic descent that balances the rising contour of the first half of the phrase. Joan Chissel calls this orchestral motif a “germ” for the soaring cello theme starting in m. 5.\(^\text{16}\) The harmonic version of the motto sounds enigmatic, like opening the curtain for the singer who brings in the melodic version of the motto with melancholy. The various occurrences of the motto can be found in Figure 2.2.

---

**Figure 2.2:** Cyclic recurrences of the motto theme of mm. 1-12 throughout Schumann’s *Cello Concerto*, analyzed by Ka-Wai Yu.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure no.</th>
<th>Instrument(s)</th>
<th>Transformations</th>
<th>Narrative associations suggested by Ka-Wai Yu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>Solo cello and strings</td>
<td>Ornamented and expanded</td>
<td>Growing out of the introverted character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34-41</td>
<td>Full orchestra</td>
<td>Fragmented and order of notes reversed</td>
<td>Inner tension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98-100</td>
<td>Full orchestra</td>
<td>Harmonized differently (V⁶-vi⁷⁰⁹/V-V⁴/³-I in a)</td>
<td>Growing aggressiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102-104</td>
<td>Full orchestra</td>
<td>Harmonized differently (i⁶-V⁴/³-i-VI in a)</td>
<td>Growing aggressiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>125-127 and 129-131</td>
<td>Solo cello and strings</td>
<td>Motto's second half omitted; tonal instability (tonicizing in c# and bb)</td>
<td>Pre-crisis fears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>153-157</td>
<td>Solo cello and full orchestra</td>
<td>Melodic motto fragment interrupted by its harmonic version</td>
<td>Aggression turned into a fight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>159-161</td>
<td>Solo cello and strings</td>
<td>Tied-over triplet rhythm</td>
<td>A lack of forward motion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>163-164</td>
<td>Solo cello and strings</td>
<td>Non-sustaining bass line; sighing bassoons; IV to iv (m. 162)</td>
<td>First unsuccessful breakthrough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>176-183</td>
<td>High woodwinds, strings and soloist</td>
<td>Disagreement between the timing of thematic return and harmonic return</td>
<td>Coexistence of conflicting ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>266-268</td>
<td>Full orchestra</td>
<td>Harmonized differently (I-V⁴/³ of vi-vi- vii⁰⁷ of vi in F)</td>
<td>Same motto and timing, but a different story (compared with 98-100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>270-272</td>
<td>Full orchestra</td>
<td>Harmonized differently (vii⁰⁷/V-vii⁰²⁴ of ii-vii⁰⁶/V-V⁷ tonicizing in G)</td>
<td>Same motto and timing, but a different story (compared with 102-104)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>280-282</td>
<td>Woodwinds and solo horn</td>
<td>Italian augmented sixth in Bb</td>
<td>The narrator calling for a different mood (comparing with mm. 1-4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>294-296 and 297-298</td>
<td>Winds and cello/bass</td>
<td>Interrupt the F major second movement with A/a tonality</td>
<td>Dark overshadowing force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>320-322</td>
<td>Winds and cellos/basses</td>
<td>German augmented sixth in A minor</td>
<td>Conquering the tranquil second movement with darkening force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>324-327</td>
<td>Solo cello and full orchestra</td>
<td>Melodic motto fragment interrupted by its harmonic version</td>
<td>Second unsuccessful breakthrough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>345-346</td>
<td>Full orchestra</td>
<td>The overshadowing motto transformed into a playful finale main theme</td>
<td>Hidden shadows of the past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>480-482 and 484-486</td>
<td>Horns and clarinets</td>
<td>Fragmented and hidden in the background</td>
<td>The conflicting idea of hidden tension and superficial happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>685-686</td>
<td>Solo cello</td>
<td>Sustained; Neapolitan colors (Bb-F-Bb chords); agitated</td>
<td>The poetic image of longing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>699-701 and 703-705</td>
<td>Flutes and oboes</td>
<td>Transitional-like passage; thin texture</td>
<td>Distant memories</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From Eusebius to Florestan: first breakthrough  A dramatic return of the motto occurs at mm. 153-164 in first movement’s development during a tonicization of F# minor. The second half of the motto’s melodic version can be heard in the solo part at mm. 156-157. The forcefulness of this entrance is articulated by an added ‘sf’ on the B of the first beat in m. 157. Before the phrase is finished, it is interrupted by a loud ‘sf’ tonic chord from the orchestra in m. 158. The soloist brings back the motto’s melodic version again in mm. 159-161, but two loud chords again interrupt in m. 162, this time with the whole orchestra. The first chord is a major chord: IV in F# minor, which seems to be hopeful. However, the D# soon turns into D for the second one, making it a B minor chord or the subdominant. The breakthrough for a major-key tonality fails. If we group the two occurrences of orchestra chords together, they sound like the three-chord motto gesture of the very beginning. By twice interrupting the motto’s melodic phrases in this passage, the opening harmonic gesture seems to battle against its melodic version! The polar personalities of Eusebius and Florestan are important characteristics of Schumann’s vocal style as mentioned in Chapter 1. The enigmatic, inward Eusebius-like motto from the very beginning has now turned aggressively into the outgoing Florestan, leading to a fight between the soloist and orchestra.

Motto acting as the narrator  The motto’s return in mm. 280-282 is played by ‘p’ woodwinds and horn chords, and without string pizzicato. The last note of the top voice: E-A-D is a major second higher than the original motto: E-A-C. It has a tempo marking of ‘holding back somewhat’ (Etwas zurückhaltend) rather than ‘not too fast’ (Nicht zu schnell) in the piece’s very beginning. Significantly, what seems to be a V7 chord tonicizing in B major/minor in m. 279 is turned into an Italian augmented sixth of Bb major/minor in m. 280. This chord leads to a deceptive progression of V7-vi6 (mm. 281-282) instead of a stable Bb major perfect cadence. The expression marking of ‘dolce’ further articulates the transformed mood of the motto. Both the chords in mm. 1-3 and mm.
280-282 set the mood for the entering solo cello. If this motif is like a ‘curtain call’ in an opera, as mentioned in the previous section about miniature structure, it prepares for different moods of the same singer in these two occurrences. The three-chord gesture is like a narrator here. While it introduces the inward song of the soloist in the very beginning of the concerto with enigmatic chords, it becomes more personal in m. 280, showing tenderness in its ‘dolce’ chords to bring in the soloist’s love song in the second movement. Alfred Nieman says such a transformation of the opening “curtain chords” comes from a “masterly touch” by the composer.\(^{17}\) Chissel also says the passage is a “magical” transformation of the opening chords of the first movement by dissolving all strife to lead to the second movement.\(^{18}\)

**A dark overshadowing force** The motto interrupts the second movement in mm. 294-296 and 297-298. The top voice: A-D-G in mm. 294-296 has the same intervals as the one in mm. 280-282: E-A-D (perfect fourth-perfect fourth). The tonic-dominant chord progression: I-vii\(^7\)/V-V (F major) is different from previous recurrences of the motif. The next motto return in mm. 297-298 finishes with an A (A-D-A). If we consider the return of the motto in m. 294 to create tension in the tranquil second movement, it is intensified a major second higher in m. 298. This one has the harmonic progression of I-vii\(^7\)/III-III in F major, or VI-vii\(^7\)-I in A major. Even though the passage after that remains in F major, the A major tonicization attempt further associates this motto return with the tonality of the concerto’s very opening: A minor. The motto has now become symbolic. Whenever it returns, it darkens the second movement with the intensity of the previous movement. In a similar way, the piano’s wandering arpeggios of *Dichterliebe* No. 1 overshadow the

---


whole song cycle with its longing quality. The piano arpeggios in songs No. 10 and 12 for instance have a similar kind of longing quality as the first song.

A bridge to the finale The motto’s return acts as a bridge between the second and third movements. In mm. 320-322, the original notes of the E-A-C motif can be found in the top voice with an extra D# note before it. The woodwind chords suggest the texture of the motto’s harmonic version while the melodic line in flutes and clarinets bears the rhythm of its melodic version of mm. 5-7. Similarly to the transition to the second movement in m. 280, what was a stable F tonic chord in m. 319 is turned into an unstable German augmented sixth in A minor at m. 320. While the Italian augmented sixth in the earlier version goes deceptively to a vi chord in Bb major at m. 282, the augmented sixth in m. 320 goes directly to i6/4 and then root position of the A minor tonic chord in mm. 321-322. Also, the tempo marking this time is ‘somewhat more briskly’ (Etwas lebhafter), different from the holding back of tempo in the earlier version. It is the first time that the motto is marked with ‘pp’. If we consider the motto’s return in m. 280 as the orchestra’s sympathy to the soloist preparing for the solo cello’s nostalgic song, here the orchestra is indifferent and coldly brings back the overshadowing motto in m. 320.

Second breakthrough A fragment of the motto returns in m. 324. Both its pitch and harmonic contents (ii7-V7) match the version in the opening (m. 9), although the rhythm is not the same in the string accompaniment. Like mm. 153-164, this fragment is announced twice, with the second one in m. 326 like a re-emphasized statement. The ‘f-sfp’ (first time) and ‘piu f’ (second time) show a further rhetorical change from the opening motif. Between these two motto fragments, there is one loud A minor tonic chord that stands out in the texture at m. 325. Two more chords come right after the second motto fragment in m. 327, this time turning from ‘f’ into ‘p’. If we put these two occurrences of chords together, we get a three-chord gesture with the top voice of E-C-F like the motto. It can be interpreted as another internal battle between the motto’s harmonic
version and its melodic version in mm. 324-327, which is similar to that in first movement’s development section. It is like a continued mission of the unsuccessful breakthrough of mm. 153-162.

**Shadows of the motto** The third movement does not seem to quote the E-A-C motif directly. But the gesture of the opening three chords in mm. 345-346 is like the very beginning of the concerto. It has a minor sixth interval of A-F, almost an inverted version of the opening motto’s minor third: C-A in m. 7. The arpeggio idea in the third movement at m. 346 (solo cello) is also in a way similar to the arpeggio of m. 7. In m. 7, a falling arpeggio (C-A-E-C) is followed by a rising interval (C-F). Its retrograde is not unlike the pattern of a falling interval (E-D#) followed by rising arpeggio (E-G#-B-E) in m. 346. Both of these two motifs are repeated throughout the third movement. These two thematic materials in the third movement appear as a shadow of the E-A-C motif, if not directly related.

**Motto hidden in the background** In mm. 480-482, the motto returns in the horn part: E-A-(B)-C at the development of the sonata-rondo third movement. It comes as a fragment in the background, where the solo cello is playing third movement material. This is restated in mm. 484-486 by the first clarinet and horns. The motto seems to return in mm. 511-513 when solo horn and bassoons share a chord progression together: E-C-F#-G#, while the soloist is playing the finale’s thematic material. The darkening motto hides in the background of the joyous finale as in songs No. 11 and 15 of *Dichterliebe* where sadness is ironically hidden in the happy mood on the surface.

**The poetic image of longing** The ‘f’ triple-stops at mm. 685-686 in the written-out cello cadenza recall traces of the motto’s harmonic version. The last recurrence of the motto fragment happens in mm. 699-701 and 703-705. The first time it is played by two flutes alone, while the second time oboes are added. Both instances appear in a transitional passage that has a pedal point on E, the dominant of A major. With their softness and thin texture, these two returns sound like
distant memories of the motto. Such yearning quality can find resonance in the final piano postlude of *Dichterliebe*, where previous thematic materials can be found in a soft, intimate setting.

To conclude, the opening cyclic motif of the concerto is significant in several respects. Recurrences of the motif are abundant throughout the work, and occur in all movements and various transitions. On the one hand, the different recurrences of the cyclic motif are functional to the musical structure. Not only does the E-A-C motif act as thematic material of the first subject area, it functions as the bridge, transition, closing passage, and background texture in its different recurrences. On the other hand, these recurrences are more than just functional. They bring changes in harmonic and pitch content that are often dramatic yet subtle. Schumann changes what was a stable motto slightly and turns it into a destabilizing force by altering its harmonic and intervallic content. There are also subtle changes in the number, intervals, and rhythm of notes in the E-A-C motif. In certain passages Schumann condenses all versions of the cyclic motif together, such as the recapitulation, whereas he allows the motif to come simply in the background, like the one in mm. 480-482. Sometimes the recurrence is obvious, while at other times it is difficult to tell whether the material belongs to the original motif (e.g. the beginning three chords of the last movement). The presentation of these many sides of the same motif gives a storytelling quality to the concerto, perhaps showing the different moods of a character in different circumstances of a musical story. Such a narrative quality seems unusual in a nineteenth-century concerto, although it is not unlike Berlioz’s use of *idée fixe* or other recurring ideas in his *Harold in Italy*, a symphony with solo violist.
b) Recurring Arpeggio motif

**Figure 2.3:** The arpeggio motif: m. 14 from the first movement of Schumann’s *Cello Concerto.*

**Heroic motif** The quick rising arpeggio material (see Figure 2.3) at mm. 14 and 18 recurs in other places of the concerto. The harmonic content of G minor can be found in the solo melody in m. 14 after the solo cello resolves from C# to D on the second beat. But the C# non-chord tone in the orchestra does not resolve to D until the third beat, and the cellos and basses sustain an F below (sounding like a G minor seventh chord in third inversion) all the way to the next measure. The numerous recurrences of this motif are summarized in Figure 2.4 below.

**Figure 2.4:** Cyclic recurrences of the quick arpeggio motif of mm. 14 and 18 throughout Schumann’s *Cello Concerto,* analyzed by Ka-Wai Yu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures no.</th>
<th>Instrument(s)</th>
<th>Transformations</th>
<th>Narrative associations suggested by Ka-Wai Yu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>116 and 118</td>
<td>Solo cello</td>
<td>Fragmented; Italian augmented sixth chords; tighter timing; preceded by falling intervals</td>
<td>Sinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>152</td>
<td>Solo cello</td>
<td>Disjunct fragments turned into a legato melody</td>
<td>Lyricism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>176</td>
<td>Solo cello</td>
<td>Dotted rhythm; ‘g’ beginning</td>
<td>Forcefulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>272-279</td>
<td>Strings and woodwinds</td>
<td>Imitative and fragmented</td>
<td>Restless, like a storm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>346</td>
<td>Solo cello and orchestra</td>
<td>Same as 152 in intervals, but in faster dotted rhythm</td>
<td>Tension converted into a playful dance character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>692-693, 696-697 and 706-718</td>
<td>Solo cello</td>
<td>Rising arpeggio followed by additional falling arpeggio; ‘p’</td>
<td>Previous heroism replaced by calmness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The lyrical version A significant return of the arpeggio motif happens in m. 152 with a rising arpeggio of a C# major triad going from the low C# of the solo cello to a C# two octaves higher. The rhythm is slower than the original arpeggio material. Even though the heroic uprising character of the original motif is still there, this recurrence is more lyrical. After a long passage of transitional material in the development, this version leads to the return of the concerto’s opening motif tonicizing F# minor at mm. 153-155. Coincidentally, the motif in m. 152 looks exactly like the third movement’s arpeggio motif in m. 346 in terms of intervallic content, except for being in a different key and faster rhythm! Schumann lightens the energy from the heroic uprising in m. 152 and turns it into playfulness in the third movement. Such transformation of motif in the third movement is parallel to the change found in the motto, in which the three-chord gesture becomes the lively first theme of the finale at m. 345 discussed before.

Fragmented repetitions The previous recurrences of the arpeggio motif all happen in the solo cello part. In mm. 272-279, the motif is played by the orchestra instead of the soloist in the transition to second movement. This time, the motif appears to be fragmented, without a clear melodic function that connects with material before and after, as the ones in mm. 152 and 176 did. The rising arpeggio fragment is passed from one instrument to another and from one key area to another (G/g-A/a-B/b). While the versions in mm. 152 and 176 seem to be a breakthrough from transitional passages, the one in mm. 272-279 becomes a transitional passage itself. The heroic, forceful uprising is now turned into an endless search for something through the rising sequences tonicizing G, A, and B. However, Schumann soon deceives any further hope for continued rising sequences by sliding the V chord of B/b into an Italian augmented sixth in m. 280, which eventually leads to Bb major instead of a B major/minor perfect cadence.
From heroism to calm Another obvious recurrence of the arpeggio material happens in the cello cadenza near the end of the concerto. In m. 692, the solo cello plays a rising G minor arpeggio similar to m. 14. And like every other recurrence, the arpeggio (now sixteenth-note triplets) is preceded by a longer note. The clear difference between this return in m. 692 and all other returns is the falling arpeggio that follows in m. 693. Also, the previous heroism that is associated with this motif seems to be weakened by the ‘p’ dynamic marking. Only soft ‘p’ strings pizzicato can be found in the background, unlike mm. 14 and 18. Schumann seems to show that this does not happen by chance by doing it again in mm. 696-697. This time the arpeggios are thirty-second notes preceded by a tied-over long note, a version even closer to the original motif in mm. 14 and 18. While the G minor arpeggio in m. 14 is followed by a D major arpeggio in m. 18, Schumann does not repeat the same sequence. A G minor arpeggio in mm. 692-693 is instead followed by another one in D minor in mm. 696-697. The composer further transforms the idea into constant eighth-note rising and falling arpeggios in mm. 706-710; and then another version of constant sixteenth notes in mm. 714-718. The heroic material not only calms down in mm. 692-693, but it is turned into gentle waves in mm. 706-718 that drive the music gradually into the exciting coda starting in m. 722. That dramatic change in rhythm, articulation, and dynamics of the motif reflects possible narrative associations.

**c) Falling fifth Motif**

**Figure 2.5:** The falling fifth motif of m. 284 in the second movement of Schumann’s *Cello Concerto.*
The symbolic motif The falling fifth motif of the second movement plays a significant part in the concerto with its recurrences (see Figure 2.5). This motif begins the second movement, falling from F to Bb in m. 286 that perhaps resemble the inflection of the name of Schumann’s wife ‘Clara.’ It is preceded by another falling fifth from C to F in m. 284 in the solo cello part. The harmony below is a iv-I progression. The use of the minor version of the subdominant gives a kind of melancholy quality to the phrase. Recurrences of the motif are summarized in Figure 2.6.

Figure 2.6: Cyclic recurrences of the falling fifth motif of m. 286 throughout Schumann’s Cello Concerto, analyzed by Ka-Wai Yu.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures no.</th>
<th>Instrument(s)</th>
<th>Transformations</th>
<th>Narrative associations suggested by Ka-Wai Yu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>288-289</td>
<td>Solo cello and woodwinds</td>
<td>Woodwinds double the soloist's D-G#, but not its resolution to A in 289</td>
<td>Subtle disagreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>290-291</td>
<td>Solo cello</td>
<td>With added non-harmonic tones: F-(A)-(C)-Bb; duple melody accompanied by triplet pizzicato</td>
<td>Timelessness and inner tension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>292</td>
<td>Solo cello</td>
<td>Preceded by minor sixth and followed by diminished fifth intervals</td>
<td>Hidden tensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>295-296 and 297-298</td>
<td>Cellos/basses</td>
<td>Diminished fifth and minor sixth; appear the same time as the motto's return</td>
<td>The demonic force meets its angelic counterpart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>304 and 306</td>
<td>Solo cello</td>
<td>Happens in the supposedly contrasting B section; ‘dolce’ marking</td>
<td>Dual personalities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>327-338</td>
<td>Solo cello and upper woodwinds</td>
<td>F/f tonality; alternates with the motto theme</td>
<td>Conflicts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>345-346</td>
<td>Full orchestra</td>
<td>Retrograde of falling fifth interval; short eighth notes</td>
<td>From seriousness to playfulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>410-414</td>
<td>Solo cello</td>
<td>Inverted falling fifth (i.e., rising fourth); 'fp'</td>
<td>Teasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>414-417 and 422-425</td>
<td>Solo cello and woodwinds</td>
<td>Inverted falling fifth (i.e., rising fourth); 'fp'</td>
<td>Satire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>691-718</td>
<td>Strings</td>
<td>Pizzicato; ‘p’; ‘&gt;’; in various registers; supporting the first movement material</td>
<td>From a conflicting to harmonious falling motif-motto relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>722-732</td>
<td>Upper woodwinds</td>
<td>'p' falling intervals versus 'ff' solo cello arpeggios</td>
<td>Diminishing nostalgic memories give way to the story's happy ending</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Timelessness and inner tension** This falling fifth returns in mm. 290-291 with added non-harmonic tones. The first F is marked with ‘fp’ which adds strength to this restatement beginning the second half of the opening phrase (mm. 286-294). The motif is accompanied by triplet pizzicato from the violins and violas. That immediately reminds me of the tied-over triplets in mm. 159-161 in the solo cello from the first movement, which show a similar two-against-three rhythm. The kind of timelessness created by the triplet-against-duplet pattern in mm. 159-161 seems to find companion to the rhythm here in the nostalgic second movement. The harmony, on the other hand, is a V⁴/₂ of IV-IV⁶ for mm. 290-291, as different from iv-I in m. 286. The dominant-tonic progression seems to give more forward motion as opposed to the timelessness created by the rhythm. A kind of tension is created between the harmonic side and the thematic side (rhythm) that shapes the motif. In terms of narration, it speaks of a yearning song where one tries to search for something that seems to be unapproachable.

**Rhyme scheme** The first phrase of the second movement that begins with a falling fifth interval ends with a rising fourth in m. 294, or an inversion of the beginning motif. Starting with one interval and then ending with a version of the same interval in some ways may resemble the rhyme scheme of a poem. Whether or not this movement is directly associated to a poem, it may reflect a poetic imagination.

**Face-to-face with the motto** The falling motif recurs at mm. 295-296 and 297-298 with added tension coming from the dissonant intervals of the tritone followed by a rising half-step resolution and minor sixth in the cellos and basses. They happen the same time as the return of the woodwinds chords associated with the E-A-C motto mentioned before. The return of the haunting first movement material combined with these two falling intervals brings tension to the supposedly calmer second movement. The fact that the intervals in quarter-note rhythm are played by cellos/basses pizzicato only remind us of the opening of the first movement even more.
Dual personalities The B section of the second movement begins in m. 303. However, what seems to be a contrasting section actually has material from the A section. The falling fifth can be found in mm. 304 and 306: F-Bb. It is as if one has two personalities, as similar to the coexistence of the polar personalities of Eusebius and Florestan in Schumann’s vocal and piano music. When looking at one of them, one can still find traces or shadows of its counterpart, as both originate from the same person. The A section has the marking ‘with expression’ (mit Ausdruck) whereas the B section has a ‘p dolce’ marking. Yet both are connected by the falling fifth motivic idea.

The struggle In m. 327, the falling fifth returns in the transition to third movement. Its appearance seems to be an oppositional force to the thematic materials from the first movement in mm. 320-326. However, the harmony beneath this falling fifth has turned into an i-V6 progression instead of the initial iv-I in mm. 286-287. Such an open progression: I-V does not seem to be capable of resettling back to F major. Also, the change from A to Ab in m. 327 in the bass line only adds to this pessimistic quality of this last call from the second movement, bringing F minor instead of F major. What follows is another falling fifth in m. 329 from A to D in the solo cello. Now the harmony is V6/5 of ii in F major going into V6/4 in m. 330. However, the V6/4 in m. 330 is not resolved to the tonic, but is followed by a V6/5 in A minor instead, which ends the initiative to bring back the second movement. Nevertheless, the struggle is not ended yet. Several falling intervals, including a falling minor seventh in m. 332, and falling minor sixth in mm. 336 and 338, can be found in the recitative that is dominated by material of the first movement. These conflicting materials join together in the recitative to bring the concerto to a climax, before resolving into the third movement at m. 345. This desperate recurrence of the falling motif shows a fierce struggle against the motto material. No wonder Chissell describes this last call of the second movement theme as “the composer’s reluctance to leave the introspective world where at heart he knew he
really belonged.” The soloist refuses to leave the ideal world (the song of the second movement) for reality (the E-A-C motto)!

**From seriousness to teasing** The third movement begins with an idea where a rising minor sixth is followed by a falling minor second. In a way it appears to be similar to the E-A-C motif with its three-chord gesture. On the other hand, if we see F on the second beat of m. 345 as a non-harmonic tone, then from mm. 345 to 346, we can see a rising fifth A-(F)-E. It is a retrograde of the falling fifth interval in the second movement. In m. 410, the beginning of the second subject area of the third movement in mm. 410-476 has a rising fourth interval: E-A or an inversion of falling fifth. Although the A is resolved to G# in the next measure, the shadow of the second movement is still there. This possible association with the second movement is further supported by a series of falling intervals in mm. 414-417 and 422-425: perfect fourth in m. 414, diminished fifth (mm. 415, 417, 423), perfect fifth (m. 416), minor seventh (m. 422), major sixth (m. 424), and minor second (m. 425). However, what was more related to love- the ‘Clara’ falling fifth in the nostalgic second movement- now becomes playful or even teasing, especially with the ‘fp’ marking in its fragmentary appearances. The question is whether everything is about a happy story or it reflects hidden meanings.

**Changing relationship between the falling motif and motto** Schumann once again transforms the falling motifs into something completely different yet recognizable. Like the third movement, there is a series of falling motifs in the last cello cadenza in mm. 685-722, including: minor sixth, minor seventh, major sixth, and perfect fifth. These intervals are all played by the pizzicato strings with ‘p’ and accent markings in various registers. The playful character from the third movement is now replaced by an introverted version. Interestingly, these motifs are combined with thematic material from the first movement such as the rising arpeggio in mm. 692-693 and 696-697. They

---

seem to blend into the first movement materials and accompany them. This is the exact opposite of the struggle between materials of first and second movements in the transition to third movement at mm. 320-339. These motifs can also be found in the beginning of the coda in mm. 722-733, this time with the lively continuous eighth notes of the third movement. The falling motifs in the woodwinds and first violins with ‘p’ dynamic marking are contrasted by the fast eighth notes in the strong solo cello part with ‘sempre ff’ marking. That sounds like the nostalgic memories (falling motifs) are diminishing with a final celebration (solo cello) at the end. The changing way of the falling motif’s response to the motto reflects the narrative quality of various characters reacting each other differently in the story through time.

What started as perhaps a ‘Clara’ motif and has gone through a struggle against the E-A-C motto in the transition to the last movement has become part of the playful third movement, merged with the first movement materials in the cello cadenza, and has given way to a final heroic celebration.

**Cyclic structure conclusion** From the above observations, cyclic recurrences of thematic materials are significant in the concerto. John Daverio also mentions this technique of thematic integration unifying the music by a web of motivic cross-references, sometimes subtle and sometimes explicit.²¹ First, the cyclic recurrences relate sections together and blur structural breaks of the traditional structural framework in the piece by acting as bridges. Second, on top of their contributions to the unity of the piece’s structure, the constantly transformed cyclic returns stimulate narrative associations. Third, while previous scholarship has focused on the motto’s impact by bridging the three movements together, the motto actually significantly recurs elsewhere, and there are other recurring motifs that play an important part in the narrative qualities of the work. The motto, falling fifth motif, and arpeggio motif all meet together in the cadenza, and they react to each

---

other throughout the piece like the close relationships between various characters in a story. Fourth, from my discussion on the motivic inter-relationships between the third movement and other movements, the concerto’s finale shows cyclic connections as well as narrative continuation from the previous sections. To ignore the cyclic continuity in the finale is to have an incomplete understanding of the organic whole of the concerto. That certainly includes the finale that many commentators ignore. Fifth, the little fragments recurring, transforming, and reacting to each other in various contexts and emotions are like a collection of miniature character pieces with related narrative qualities, which is close to the idea of a song cycle.

Therefore, because of the piece’s organic structural unity, narrative potential, abundance of significant recurring motifs and their reactions, and associations to a collection of songs and character pieces, the concerto is close to an intimate song cycle structure, rather than the sectional, virtuosic-oriented, and large-scale multi-movement concerto form.

2.3 Structural Ambiguity and Unity

Structural ambiguity. At first glance the concerto seems to be structurally divided into traditional forms. The sonata-form first movement is followed by a ternary second, and then a sonata-rondo finale. However, ambiguity as well as clarity in the structural divisions can be found by looking deeper into details of harmonic and thematic content in the transitions between sections.

The arrival of the recapitulation in both the first and third movements is ambiguous. It echoes the blurring of sections in Beethoven’s late music. In the first movement, the solo cello thematically arrives in m. 177 while the woodwinds and strings stress m. 176 as the thematic recapitulation. The harmonic recapitulation is however in m. 181 where the first tonic chord in root position can be found. The problem is whether we consider the passage in mm. 176-180 as part of the previous transition in mm. 165-175, or as a true thematic recapitulation despite the harmonic discrepancy. If we focus on just the cello part, the transitional passage does resolve melodically in
m. 176 like a perfect authentic cadence in C major; but the harmony beneath is an Italian augmented sixth of V in A minor. On the other hand, the woodwinds and cello part from m. 177 onwards do present a thematic return of the motto material. The harmonic return of an A minor tonic chord in root position does not come until m. 181.

A similar ambiguous sectional division can be found in the third moment (see Figure 2.7 below). The orchestral tutti passage in mm. 549-569 looks like a closing passage of the finale’s development. The conclusive, loud tutti rounds off the previous virtuosic passage of the soloist like the one in mm. 464-476 that concluded the second subject area in the exposition. However, the passage sounds like the arrival of the movement’s recapitulation, since the harmonic progression of this passage matches the finale’s very opening in mm. 345-365. The dance-like C major section that follows in mm. 569-605 also echoes mm. 365-402. The question is whether it can be called the recapitulation without the soloist for twenty measures! Does that mean there is no closing passage for the development section or Schumann simply elides the retransition and recapitulation? The vagueness of this passage looks similar to the one in first movement, and the ritornello-like alternation between the orchestra and soloist is consistent with the first movement as well. Furthermore, the concerto in fact begins without a complete orchestral exposition, so Schumann may as well begin the recapitulation of the last movement without the soloist in a similar way.
The second movement has another kind of structural ambiguity. The A section contrasts with the B section, followed by a return of A in m. 311. However, as mentioned in previous discussion about cyclic structure, the main motif of the B section in mm. 303-311 also has the falling fifth interval that is found in the A section. Also, this section is short, lasting only about nine measures and basically staying in F major, the main key of the A section. In such case, the B section is like a variation of the A. Since the return of the A section in mm. 311-319 only corresponds to the first half of the A from mm. 286 up to 293 with the last measure of the cello line resembling to mm. 302-303, this shorter section can combine with the B section to balance the longer opening section. Therefore, the B section seems to connect rather than to contrast. The question is where the contrasting section is or is there actually one? To some extent, the third beat of m. 294 seems to begin a new section with woodwinds’ recall of the concerto motto. But mm. 298-303 still seem to
belong to the A section. Such unclear formal division seems to echo the ones in the first and third movements.

The fact that the concerto has the outline of traditional structures but behaves in unusual ways stimulates our thinking about whether the formal divisions are functional or serve other reasons. John Daverio also thinks that the famous technique of blurring the border between development and recapitulation is used in the concerto, as well as Schumann’s F Major and G minor Piano Trios, and A minor Violin Sonata.22 Todd also notes how Schumann avoids structural breaks between all three movements of the concerto.23 The ambiguity about whether a passage is beginning a new section (recapitulation) or finishing an old section (closing section) appears in Schumann’s song cycles as well. The last D chord in Dichterliebe’s song No. 9 sounds like the end of the D minor song, but it lacks a strong cadence and it is indeed the dominant of the next song in G minor. Songs No. 2, 3, 5, 8, 11, 12, 14 from the same song cycle all end with a chord that seem to be the end of the song as well as a transitional dominant to the next. Harmonic connection is matched by thematic linkages. The cyclic recurrences of thematic material in Dichterliebe connect songs by neutralizing the formal divisions between the sixteen songs. The concluding piano postlude brings back materials that find echoes in other songs of the same work. As in the Cello Concerto, the connections between the songs in the cycle free the music from structural divisions. Along the same lines, the indefinite structural breaks with transformations of thematic material, harmony, and orchestration that can be found in the concerto may have a narrative logic like a song cycle.

**Structural unity** Besides the motivic cyclic returns found throughout the concerto, there are several common structural elements in all three movements that tie them together.

---


All three movements contain crisis moments where a thematic idea struggles against another one that is opposed to it in terms of musical character (bright against dark) or tonality (major against minor), in order to move to a new section. For example, in first movement's development, the second half of the E-A-C motto melodic version is played twice by the soloist in mm. 153-162, as mentioned in previous discussion about cyclic structure. Both returns of the motto are chopped off by intervening orchestra chords in mm. 158 and 162, which eventually turn the soloist’s attempt into a transitional passage in mm. 165-175 rather than a successful arrival of the recapitulation.

The crisis moment in the transition to the third movement is paralleled by the one in first movement (See Figure 2.8). The cello also plays the second half of the E-A-C motto melodic version twice in mm. 320-326, which is again stopped by tutti orchestra chords in mm. 325 and 327, as mentioned in the previous discussion about cyclic returns of the motto. The soloist’s attempt to bring back the second movement’s lyrical material in mm. 328-330 is again cut off by a recitative and cello cadenza before resolving into the third movement.

In both cases, the tension from the crisis is eventually resolved by the arrival of the next new section. However, the unsuccessful initial struggle creates a sense of crisis that further increases the tension and makes the final resolution more dramatic. Instead of just bringing in a new section, the arrival of the resolution becomes an urgent musical need as a result of the crisis moments. The sections are tied together organically in a way that is similar to storytelling.
Figure 2.8: The crisis moments in the first movement’s development section in mm. 153-162 (top) and the transition to third movement in mm. 320-327 of Schumann’s Cello Concerto (bottom).

Another kind of crisis moment can be found in the second movement. The E-A-C motto in the high woodwinds, twice attempts to overshadow the tranquil second movement song with its haunting darkness in mm. 294-296 and 297-298. This almost turns the tonality into A minor in m. 298. Unlike the crisis moments in the other two moments, the soloist this time plays a descending line like a sigh from ‘sff’ in mm. 296 and 298 that seems successfully to overcome the crisis by bringing back the second movement A theme in m. 298. But the dark moments in mm. 294-298 do correspond to the one in mm. 320-323 like an anticipation of a bigger turmoil. The latter one also becomes more unavoidable when we associate it with the earlier occurrence.
After looking at the three crisis moments in the concerto, I immediately connect them with another dramatic moment in mm. 685-688. The solo cello begins its final cadenza with a rising chromatic arpeggio material taken from the second subject of the first movement. It is heard twice in mm. 685 and 687. Like the crisis in the first movement and transition to the last, chords from the orchestra interrupt the solo line. We have the expectation for a new section’s arrival after hearing the previous two crisis moments. Again, this crisis does not lead to the ultimate resolution it needs, which is the key of A/a in order to end the concerto in home key. It instead goes to a G minor section in m. 690 that sounds transitional before gradually returning to A major from m. 698.

It is interesting to note how similar the above crisis moments are. In all these cases, a cello melodic line is interrupted twice by orchestra chords. And all these moments lead dramatically to the arrival of a new section with a different musical character, tonality, and thematic material. On the one hand, the consistency found in these crisis moments shows the inevitable structural connections between every section and moment in the concerto. On the other hand, we find narrative intentions reflected in the dramatic effects of each crisis as well as the progressive transformations of each of them. This combination of structural unity and transformation bring the various sections of the concerto together quite like a song cycle. When discussing Schubert’s Symphony No. 9 ‘The Great,’ Schumann once said that “one would have to write out the whole symphony to get an idea of its [Schubert’s symphony’s] novel character.”

Joan Chissel points out Schumann’s use of thematic metamorphosis in the concerto shows a style of compressing all three movements into one in order to achieve unity. Akio Mayeda, who recently rediscovered the sketches of the concerto in Bergamo, Italy, finds that Schumann already had in mind the idea of

---


connecting movements when he started his sketches, because the coda for the first movement was planned to be a transition to the second movement. In order to interpret the concerto, we should understand how various parts of the concerto are organically and closely associated to each other like a collection of songs in a song cycle.

2.4 Fragmentation

One might question that with all the different narrative qualities noted in the discussion of the cyclic return of motifs in the concerto, whether we can really group the various transformed material into a complete story like a song cycle.

A major difference between Schumann’s miniature instrumental music and Franz Liszt’s tone poems is that Schumann’s music urges listeners and performers to poeticize rather than written for an extra-musical element. According to Eric Sams, Schumann invented his titles to suit his music, not vice versa. While the poetic reflections from his music are often imaginary and subjective to the performers and listeners, they do not seem to require grouping his narrative ideas into a logical whole like a complete story or drama. On the contrary, scholar Beate Perrey in her book *Schumann’s Dichterliebe and Early Romantic Poetics* mentions that for nineteenth-century Romantics, there is no holistic view of the world as in the logical reasoning of philosophers such as Hegel. Instead, the fragmentary was considered the “basic condition of existence.” Perrey points out that *Dichterliebe* consists of a “fragmentation of desire” where a collection of sixteen songs expresses an individual’s emotion of love, longing, doubt, pain, fear, jealousy, curiosity, etc. in each

---


27 *The Songs of Robert Schumann*, p. 11.

song. It is a group of events put together rather than united by one emotion. As one of the leading figures in early Romantics, Schumann’s instrumental as well as vocal works reflect the use of fragmentation.

**Symbolism of fragments** In mm. 294-298, two fragments of the concerto motto interrupt the middle of the second movement’s lyrical song of nostalgia, as discussed in the previous section about cyclic structure. The fragments are shown in Figure 2.9 below. Fragments sound incomplete themselves, but they often bring symbolic meanings. And these two fragments indeed haunt the second movement with memories of the darker previous movement. Since they cut off the other half of the song in A section: mm. 299-303, the A section seems incomplete. The two contradicting thematic materials: fragments of the motto, and the chopped-off second movement A section are juxtaposed, symbolizing the coexistence of two conflicting worlds.

**Figure 2.9**: Interruptions of the motto fragments against the second movement material in mm. 294-298 of Schumann’s *Cello Concerto*.

The motto’s fragments in mm. 294-298 are like a warning signal before the fall of the second movement lyrical material into the haunting motto in mm. 320-323. Furthermore, the exact conflict between fragment of the motto’s melodic version and its harmonic version that happens in mm.

---

156-162 of the first movement’s development can be found in mm. 323-327 of second movement. It is impossible to explain exactly what the two versions of the motto recurrences might represent in terms of storytelling, but the inner struggle between conflicting ideas from the first movement is still unresolved in the second movement when we associate these groups of contradicting fragments together. There is indeed “a series of fleeting sensational-subjective images,” just as Perrey notes in her book. If we consider the main theme of the second movement a song of longing, then it has the symbolism of dreaming in an ideal world that continues despite the dark overshadowing. The motto, with its aggressiveness and haunting character, symbolizes reality.

From the discussion of fragmentation in the second movement, the symbolic meanings associated to the fragments become narrative clues for understanding the concerto. While these fragments in a way sound random or unorganized, they often group together, reappear, and respond to each other in certain ways that bring narrative associations. Perhaps these associations are left for the listeners and performers to ‘poeticize’, an important principle of the early Romantic aesthetics.

Well-organized plan behind the fragments The third movement has fragmented ideas right from the beginning. These fragments all have direct or indirect connections to thematic ideas of the previous movements. Fragments of three major thematic materials are constantly repeated and transformed throughout the movement. The first one is the three-chord gesture in mm. 345-346 that is related to the three chords in the concerto’s opening motto, as discussed in the section about cyclic return. This is immediately answered by the second fragment, a dotted rhythm followed by rising arpeggio that is associated with first movement’s quick rising arpeggio and is inversion of the solo cello line in m. 7. The third one is the second theme of the third movement that features a rising fourth interval. This material is similar to the first one with its rising leap followed by a falling half-step, while its rising fourth is also an inversion of the second movement’s falling fifth.

---

These different fragments are grouped together in different ways and can be found in Figure 2.10 below. Fragments 1 (mm. 345-346) and 2 (m. 346) are often linked together in the first subject area: the arpeggios are preceded by three chords most of the time. The pair creates a playful, youthful character by constantly playing off against each other. The more song-like fragment 3 (mm. 410-411) on the other hand is often followed by a satiric version of the second movement’s falling intervals (m. 414), as well as the playful arpeggios from fragment 2 (m. 415).

Figure 2.10: Fragments 1 and 2 in mm. 345-346 (left), and Fragment 3 in mm. 410-414 (right) in Schumann’s Cello Concerto, suggested by Ka-Wai Yu.

The interesting thing is how these groupings of fragments vary in the finale’s development section. Figure 2.11 shows how the various fragments are put together in unique groupings. Fragment 2 is played without fragment 1 in mm. 476-493. It creates tension rather than the earlier playfulness when played with fragment 1 together. The arpeggios become chromatic and the fragment is repeated in various pitch levels in sequence. Furthermore, the darker color perhaps comes from the return of the motto at mm. 484-486 that plays together with fragment 2.
Figure 2.11: The well-organized patterns of grouping fragments 1, 2, and 3 together with recurrences of the motto and the second movement’s falling intervals in the last movement (mm. 494-549) of Schumann’s Cello Concerto, suggested by Ka-Wai Yu.

Fragment 1 is back in m. 494 followed by fragment 2. However, Schumann blurs the difference between fragment 1 and 3 when the second note of the fragment is sustained with suspension, becoming legato close to fragment 3 rather than having short eighth notes like fragment 1 of m. 345. The strings play falling intervals that are also related to fragment 3. This new grouping of fragments is repeated twice in mm. 499-505 and 505-510. Three short sections of fragments are followed by a long section in mm. 511-519. This long section itself is formed by sequential repetitions of fragment 2. It has the incessant quality as mm. 467-493 and is again joined by shadows of the concerto motto in the bassoon and horn parts. We see fragments within fragments or four fragmented sections of material formed by various groupings of fragments.

A sequence of short sections followed by one longer one is repeated. Two short sections in mm. 519-524 and 525-530 are followed by a long section starting in m. 531. It is clearly a fragment 3 in m. 519 as the rising fourth replaces the previous rising minor sixth. However, while fragment 1 is played in the manner of fragment 3 in mm. 496-499, the fragment 3 is played in the manner of
Schumann shows his humor by switching the character of each fragment.

Fragment 2 is again repeated in a continuous sequence in the long section at mm. 531-549, like the other longer section in mm. 511-519. The bassoon and horn parts bring out shadows of the motto whereas the strings take the falling motifs that are related to fragment 3. The rhythm from the flute and bassoon parts further confirm the fragment 3 character of two quarter notes followed by a half note in legato. Fragment 2 now loses its dotted rhythm and becomes a heroic long sequence of arpeggios that drives the development to an end by m. 549.

Many scholars criticize the repetitions of fragments in the third movement with little reservation. Alfred Nieman, among others, claims the obsession with the arpeggio material shows compositional weakness. However, he fails to point out the interesting grouping of fragments in the movement. Schumann organizes fragments into shorter sections followed by a longer one, and then repeats the whole sequence of events with subtle changes. Jensen relates fragmentation in fast movements composed in Schumann’s late period to the composer’s mental illness. But he does not seem to find the subtle, well-organized patterns behind the seemingly repetitive fragments. Schumann expresses a sense of humor by playing around the similarity between fragments and constantly making small, yet effective changes. Besides, a close narrative continuation from the previous movements can be found in recurrences of fragmented motifs from both first and second movements that interact with those of the third movement.

Fragmentation and timelessness The cadenza in mm. 685-722 arrives as a surprise. The conclusive previous orchestral tutti not only does not lead to a celebrated flashy solo passage, but it

---


is instead followed by a reminiscence of the fragments from the first two movements. A full return of the third movement’s first subject does not come until the last 11 measures of the coda!

The cadenza starts with two fragments of the first movement’s second subject in mm. 685-688. Then we see the following fragments: arpeggio material in mm. 692-693 and 696-697 which originates from m. 14; second movement’s falling intervals played by string pizzicato; hints of the concerto motto in mm. 699-701 and 703-705 (see Figure 2.12); rhythm of the A-F#-G motif from first movement’s m. 57 in mm. 707-710 and 715-718; and the soloist plays light and continuous eighth-note staccato in 6/8 time that resembles the soft triplet pizzicato of the second movement.

**Figure 2.12:** A portion of the accompanied cadenza that features fragments of material from both first and second movements in Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* (mm. 697-703).

Instead of re-introducing the thematic materials one-by-one like many cadenzas, Schumann put multiple fragments together to unfold a transformed picture. The raindrop-like soft pizzicato of falling intervals and the dreamy, graceful triplets of the soloist bring associations to past memories. There, fragments of the motto, the arpeggio material, and the A-F#-G rhythm from the first movement become part of the memories which include the second movement materials. The conflicting nature of the materials from those two movements seems to be changed. All these fragments from previous movements recur softly and sound as if they come from a distance, where we only find vague impressions of the materials. Yet we clearly find shadows of the original
materials from the fragments. Schumann creates layers of vague but symbolic images not unlike an impressionistic painting. No wonder Daverio talks about Schumann’s influences on Debussy’s music in his book Robert Schumann: Herald of a “New Poetic Age.”33 The return of the third movement’s main idea by full orchestra and soloist in the last eleven measures sharply contrasts with the previous cadenza like reality versus dream. The final cadenza does have the timelessness that finds accordance in the idea of Romantic fragmentation where time encompasses “past, present, and future.”34

To conclude, while there are some consistencies from one fragment to another, they tend to be disrupted by abrupt shifts to the next sections. It is like trying to assemble parts into a challenging puzzle in the concerto. There are some parts that match together into segments, but the big picture is vague as segments are not always really in-line with one another. This suggests a very psychological quality where there are many ideas organized in ways that do not blend, but rather contradict each other. They may look messy on the surface, but the fragments are organized in a way that shows some vague inner intentions. That suggests Schumann’s personality as much as it is detailed, complicated, and above all poetic.

Fragmentation in the concerto puts conflicting ideas together, which creates enormous tension as the music searches for unreachable resolution across all three movements. Although many scholars have criticized the fragmented third movement for being repetitive, the music is given unique inner energy of growth through subtle changes in the constantly transforming fragments; the timing of arrival and combinations of fragments; as well as how fragments respond to each other.

Eric Jensen, like many, doubts the structural unity in Schumann’s late music. He brings out a quotation from Hazlitt, author of “On Dreams,” that during madness the mind has “slipped its


34 Schumann’s Dichterliebe and Early Romantic Poetics: Fragmentation of Desire, p. 28.
cable,” producing a jarring and incongruous design. Jensen claims that in Schumann’s case the structural design in his late works was affected by mental illness. Chissel also points out the negative view of the concerto finale’s “overly persistent rhythmic tag” that launches the cello’s entrances. Yet fragmentation can be also seen as a uniting force that connects sections in the concerto because of the symbolic meaning of the fragments that constantly reflects memories of the original motivic materials. A kind of longing quality is created by recalling the fragments of previous movements and sections. This perhaps echoes Jean Paul’s “beautiful infinity” that influenced Schumann’s “distant philosophy,” according to Berthold Hoeckner.

Fragmentation becomes an important part of the cyclic thematic return in the concerto that links all three movements together like related scenes from a story. Many Schumann scholars have pointed out the fragmented quality of the third movement. But with the above observations about fragmentation in the first two movements as well, the fragmentary third movement is indeed consistent with the first two movements. Therefore, one should not ignore the third movement’s narrative qualities, as the movement is cyclically connected to the first two with the help of fragmentation.

With fragmentation in mind, cellists should bring out variations of the same material when playing different fragments. Instead of always trying to make everything sound smooth with seamless, long, singing lines, cellists should also understand the importance of short fragments and bring out their recurrences throughout the concerto. In order to express the inner struggle found in this concerto, the solo cellist should articulate the differences between conflicting fragments in the piece. Cellists should understand the opposing position of the solo part’s second movement

35 The Master Musicians: Schumann, p. 309.
material against the orchestra’s motto fragments in the transition to the third movement; and should aim for a more harmonious relationship with the orchestra in the final cadenza as evoking the memories of the past together.

2.5 Song Form

As noted before, structural breaks within and between movements are often blurred in the concerto, and sections are further linked to each other through cyclic recurrences of themes. We can also group pieces of associated ideas together reflected by fragmentation. With these in mind, the concerto does have narrative qualities that may be similar to a song cycle. The question is whether or not we can find a structural framework that may possibly fit the thematic ideas together in a narrative song structure. Below is an observation about the possibility of viewing the concerto in a strophic form. If we consider the first subject area and other materials directly associated with the E-A-C motto of the first movement as a refrain, we can find alternations between this material and contrasting episodes throughout the piece. Figure 2.13 shows how the consideration for a song structure can be possible.

**Figure 2.13: Analysis of song form characteristics in Schumann’s Cello Concerto by Ka-Wai Yu**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure no.</th>
<th>Movement</th>
<th>Tonality</th>
<th>Song form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-50</td>
<td>First (first subject)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Refrain 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-97</td>
<td>First (second subject)</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Episode 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98-131</td>
<td>First (development)</td>
<td>a-C-g-a-c#</td>
<td>Refrain 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>132-152</td>
<td>First (development)</td>
<td>bb, c, Ab/ab</td>
<td>Episode 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>153-164</td>
<td>First (development)</td>
<td>f#</td>
<td>Refrain 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>165-175</td>
<td>First (development)</td>
<td>f#-C</td>
<td>Episode 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>176-218</td>
<td>First (recap. of first subject)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Refrain 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>218-265</td>
<td>First (recap. of second subject)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Episode 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>266-282</td>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>F/f-G/g-A/a-B/b</td>
<td>Refrain 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>283-319</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Episode 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>320-327</td>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Refrain 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>327-344</td>
<td>Transition</td>
<td>(F/f)-a</td>
<td>Episode 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>345-409</td>
<td>Third (first subject)</td>
<td>a-C-a</td>
<td>Refrain 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first refrain is from mm. 1-50 where the whole first subject area is mainly based on the motto of the beginning four measures. The orchestral interlude in mm. 34-50 is derived from fragments of the motto as well. Then the first episode in the second subject area will be at mm. 50-96. The C major tonality and charming delicacy are a contrast to the intense A minor motto material.

The motto returns in the closing section of the exposition from m. 98 onwards. The first half of the development section shows a prominence for the motto material in mm. 104-131. There are numerous recurrences of both the harmonic and melodic versions of the motto as well as the quick arpeggio motif found in the first subject area. The second part of the development is dominated by the C-Bb-A idea from m. 132 that is closely related to the A-F#-G idea in the second subject area of m. 57. Therefore, I call the first part of the development a refrain and the second part a second episode.

The motto’s melodic version clashes with its harmonic counterpart in mm. 153-164, whereas the next transition passage in mm. 165-175 consists of wandering triplets that seem to originate from the second subject’s mm. 69-91. Perhaps we can call these two passages a short refrain followed by a short episode. After that, the first version of the refrain and first episode, now both in the key of A/a, can be found in the recapitulation, i.e., mm. 176-218 for the refrain and mm. 218-264 for the episode.
The closing passage after the first movement is dominated by the motto as well as the quick arpeggio motif up to m. 282. The solo cello sings its descending cantilena in m. 282 that eventually brings the music into the tranquil second movement at m. 286. That brings us to another refrain after the first movement and the whole short second movement as an episode.

As in the development section in the first movement, we can also see a division between material dominated by the motto and the non-motto material. The motto takes over in mm. 320-327, while the second movement material regains control in mm. 327-339. This is a short alternation between refrain and episode, like the transition to the recapitulation of the first movement.

The third movement begins with a three-chord gesture that is similar to the motto, as mentioned in Chapter 2. The rising arpeggios that follow are like the quick arpeggio of m. 14 on the one hand, and on the other like an inversion of the motto’s melodic version from m. 7. This arpeggio in m. 346 is exactly the same as the motif in m. 152 that is tied with the motto’s recurrence in m. 153 in terms of intervals. With its resemblance to the motto material, it is justified to call the first subject area of the finale a refrain.

The second subject area in mm. 410-464 is certainly an episode with its contrasting musical character and thematic material from the finale’s first subject. In fact, the rising fourth interval in m. 410 is like an inversion of the second movement’s falling fifth interval; and the falling intervals in mm. 414-425 are certainly related to the second movement, but are now treated satirically.

The development in the third movement is similar to the one in first movement where the first subject material is developed first. The closing section of the exposition is basically the first subject material: mm. 464-475. This can be connected with the first half of the development section as a refrain up to m. 519. The three-chord gesture and rising arpeggios dominate in this section.
Interestingly, the first movement’s motto returns in mm. 480-482 and 484-486 to meet with the third movement materials that are possibly derived from it.

The second half of the development section in mm. 519-548 replaces the rising minor sixth interval with rising fourth of the second subject. A rising fourth followed by a falling second can clearly be found in mm. 523-524 and 529-530. Also, the falling intervals in the bass line in mm. 532, 534, and 536 come together with the rising fourth the way it was in the second subject area. Therefore, I consider mm. 519-548 an episode. After that, we see another alternation between the motto-related first subject in mm. 549-613 and the contrasting second subject in mm. 614-668 that is associated with the second movement more in the finale’s recapitulation. Again, a refrain-episode can be found.

The closing orchestral passage in mm. 668-684 is basically the first subject material. This is followed by a cadenza that is based on different materials. The cadenza in mm. 685-722 begins with a cello monologue very similar to the one in the first movement’s second subject in mm. 50-52. Then we hear a predominance of the falling intervals coming from the second movement. We also find the A-F#-G idea from first movement’s second subject in mm. 707-710 and 715-718. The soloist’s triplets are like the triplets in first movement’s second subject: mm. 69-91, as well as second movement’s triplets. What we do not find as much is the motto material. In that case, a short orchestral closing passage that suggests a refrain is followed by the episode that combines second subject of the first movement with the second movement materials.

In the coda, the cello brings back rising broken-chord material that is similar to the rising arpeggios of the finale’s first subject. The piece concludes with the finale’s first subject material, so the coda can be considered a finishing refrain.

From the above analysis, the whole concerto is connected by the beginning motto. The intense motto contrasts with the more graceful second subject in the first movement, whereas the
whole second movement, with its shorter length and similarities between its A and B sections, can be recognized as an episode itself in contrast to the motto’s recurrences before and after it. In the third movement, the motto-related first subject alternates with the second movement-related second subject. The concerto could then be seen as a song, in which the three movements represent the different stanzas. While the first movement material intervenes in the second movement, the third movement contains both first and second movement materials. The contents of these ‘stanzas’ are related. The cadenza uniquely brings both materials of second subject of the first movement and the ones in the second movement together like a reunion. And the story seems to come to a complete end when the left-out third movement motto-related theme returns in the coda.

The structure of songs within song While we can look at the whole concerto as analogous to one song with alternation between refrains and episodes, we can find a similar pattern that works within each movement. Following the pattern of the exposition and recapitulation, both first and third movements’ development sections use first theme material followed by second theme material.

The second movement is preceded by the motto theme. The motto’s interruption in mm. 294-298 divides the other half of this short movement. Here we already see the alternation of motto - second movement - motto - second movement. There is much similarity between the B section (mm. 303-311) and the A section (mm. 286-303), with the B section’s falling fifth in mm. 304 and 306 mentioned in previous discussion about cyclic structure, its short length of nine measures, and F-major tonality. Also, the return of A (mm. 311-319) is incomplete: nine measures long compared with the eighteen measures of the first A. Therefore, it is not un-logical to combine these two short sections into one return of A after motto’s interruption. The first part of the next transition shows a return of the motto again. In such case, we see the motto – second movement alternation continues throughout the movement. Figure 2.14 illustrate a song form structure of the concerto’s second movement.
The graceful, lighter second theme of the first movement departs from the intense lyricism of the first theme, while the opposite happens in the finale, where the second theme has a more singing quality than the jumpy first theme. The second movement shows struggles between the motto and the movement’s main material.

The three movements can be seen as three different songs in that each of them has a quasi-song form while on a larger level they are also like three stanzas in one big song where the refrain of the motto unites them all. These two concepts are connected together like songs within a song. Perhaps this concept is not unlike the cycle within the song that Barbara Turchin describes the structure of *Dichterliebe*.

---

CHAPTER 3: A POETIC HARMONIC LANGUAGE

3.1 Dramatic Shift from Sharp to Flat Keys

One element that contributes to the organic structure of the concerto is the harmonic language. This chapter will look at three main aspects of such language: switches between sharp and flat keys that arouse narrative associations, ambiguity of tonality that shows Schumann’s dual personalities of the outgoing Florestan and introverted Eusebius, and the symbolic meanings of the augmented sixth chords in the concerto.

A dramatic switch from sharp to flat keys happens in the transition to the second movement, as shown in Figure 3.1. After the second subject area in the recapitulation of the first movement in A major, the closing orchestral passage makes its way towards B major in mm. 278-279 after tonicizing in G/g and A/a at mm. 272-277. However, the motto returns at m. 280 and unexpectedly brings an Italian augmented sixth in Bb major/minor at m. 280. The F major tonality of the second movement arrives right after that. The move from B to F not only turns five sharps into one flat, but also changes the musical affect. After the intense imitative section in mm. 272-279, its heroic uprising is turned completely to the longing flattened tonality.

Figure 3.1: Dramatic change from tonicizations of sharp keys to the one-flat F major in mm. 272-286 of Schumann’s Cello Concerto.

Jon Finson has looked for symbolic meaning in the switching from sharp to flat keys in Dichterliebe, arguing it symbolizes a change from despair to resignation.1 The song cycle starts with the ambiguity between A major and F# minor, which both have three sharps. Then we hear the relatively happy sharp, major keys for the next three songs: A, D, and G. Sharp keys continue when

---

we reach the melancholic No. 5 and 6 that are in the minor keys of b and e. While the next C major heroic ‘Ich grolle nicht’ seems to provide dedicated spirit to the poet despite inner doubts, No. 8 goes back to minor where the poet feels his pain and broken heart. D minor arrives in No. 9 that seems to correspond to the coexistence of conflicting ideas from No. 1, in which there is a sharp contrast between the exciting wedding dance and the poet’s weeping.

Both the concerto’s second movement and *Dichterliebe* No. 9 are in a key with one flat (F and d), and they both are preceded by the key of A major at the end of the concerto’s first movement and A minor in No. 8 of the song cycle. A preceding section of heroic character can be found in the concerto’s imitative tutti transition in mm. 272–279, as well as in *Dichterliebe*’s forward-moving song No. 7 with constant moving chords. The recurrence of the concerto motto at mm. 294–296 and 297–298 in the tranquil second movement can be seen as a dark force that interrupts the nostalgic song like a conflict between reality and dream. It is quite like the ironic coexistence of wedding dance and weeping in *Dichterliebe* No. 9. When the song cycle further sits on the flat-key minor mode of G minor in No. 10, the poet hears memories of his beloved one’s song in ‘Hör’ ich das Liedchen.’ The tranquil mood and yearning emotion match the character of the concerto’s second movement.

The peaceful and dreamy mood in the concerto’s F major movement created by the switch between sharp and flat keys can also be found in Schumann’s *Widmung, Op. 25 No. 1* (see Figure 3.2 below). The section starting from ‘Du bist die Ruh, du bist der Frieden’ or ‘Thou art ordain’d for me from Heaven’ of the song drastically switches the tonality from Ab major to E major, the enharmonic of Fb, turning the tonic Ab into G#, or the third of the new key. The sharp key’s arrival highlights the words related to heaven in the new section. While the switch from sharp to flat key in the concerto’s second movement brings an escape from the darkening motto to the temporary dreamland, the switch from flat to sharp key in *Widmung* is perhaps more hopeful. The
change from the previous outgoing imitative section in mm. 272-281 to the introverted F major second movement is similar to the song’s change from the Florestan-like energetic opening to the tender, Eusebius E major section. Both the key change from A to F in the concerto and from Ab to E (Fb) in Widmung moves to the bVI degree of the original key.

**Figure 3.2:** Dramatic key change from Ab major to E major in Schumann’s *Widmung*, Op. 25, No. 1.

Another significant moment created by a change from sharp to flat keys happens in the cadenza in m. 685 of the concerto (Figure 3.3). The A major closing orchestral passage after the second subject area of the recapitulation does not finish with a I\(^{6/4}\) chord in the same key for the soloist to come in. Schumann seems to follow traditional structural concepts by restating the second subject in the home key during the recapitulation, but ending the orchestral closing section on a
Neapolitan chord of A is dramatic. The three-sharp key signature still continues throughout the cadenza. However, the first four measures stay on a Bb chord (Neapolitan). That phrase in mm. 685-688 brings back the second theme material of the first movement that was originally a D minor triad. Before we finish guessing about whether Bb major or D minor is the next tonality, Schumann turns everything into another flat-key tonicization: G minor in m. 690. While the thematic materials used in this cadenza come from the previous movements, the flat key together with orchestration have completely changed the colors of the themes.

**Figure 3.3:** A shift from A major to the two-flat G minor in the cadenza of Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* (mm. 606-690).

A suitable comparison to the cello cadenza is the piano postlude of *Dichterliebe*. Just as the concerto returns to sharp keys in the third movement, this cycle switches back to tonalities of B, E, and c# in the last three songs. The previous sorrows seem to be covered up by the poet’s attempts to feel positive in songs No. 14 and 15, at least superficially. But the moment the poet finishes the vocal part of the last song about burying the coffin of the heartbreaking love, the piano plays the postlude for the last 16 measures, which brings back memories of the previous songs rather than forgetting them.

The contradiction between the voice and piano at this moment is articulated by a change from the four-sharp C# minor to five-flat Db major. With this change, the piece seems to be continuing rather than concluding. This is similar to the effect of the Neapolitan chord in the concerto’s cello cadenza. There seem to be unfinished words to be spoken when the cello cadenza brings back transformation of previous materials instead of concluding the piece brilliantly as in a typical concerto cadenza.
The previous materials of the cycle return in a different harmonic context. The I-IV-I progression that Eric Sams relates to religion or the numinous can be found in the first two measures of this postlude.\(^2\) This sublime moment actually has the same progression as both the beginning of the first and second movements in the concerto! To some extent, we can even see a large-scale iv-I plagal cadence in Db major from song No. 1: f# (gb) to this postlude: Db (see Figure 3.4). The unique colors created from this key change provide the timeless quality that can be found in the cadenza of the cello concerto. The tonality of G minor in mm. 690-697 is like a Neapolitan sixth of F major of the concerto’s second movement. The Neapolitan colors uniquely differ from the main tonalities of the whole piece (A/a, F, and C), and bring back memories of the previous thematic materials the same time. At the end of *Dichterliebe* No. 16, a strong V-I cadence finishes the cycle in Db major, similar to an exciting A-major ending of the concerto.

Figure 3.4: Two interpretations of the key relationship between No. 1 and 16 in Schumann’s *Dichterliebe*.

The switch to a flat key brings a dramatic change in the character of the music and reminiscences of previous thematic material in both the concerto and *Dichterliebe*. Indeed ‘*Andante espressivo*’ supported by regular change of bass notes in *Dichterliebe* does evoke the image of walking in a dream, resembling the slowly moving, raindrop-like pizzicato added to the cello’s soft triplets in the concerto cadenza. The timing, color, and recurrence of thematic material, as well as musical impact of the switch to a flat key are similar in both the concerto and the song cycle. Perhaps a

---

similar kind of narrative meaning of such change in the song cycle may be imagined in the concerto as well.

3.2 Tonal Ambiguity

Ambiguities of tonality can be found in the concerto as well as in *Dichterliebe*. D minor never really arrives as a significant tonality in the concerto, but there are several instances in the piece where the music seems to go to this key. The first time is in m. 50 of the concerto where a D minor triad arrives strongly on the downbeat to begin the second subject area of the first movement (Figure 3.5). The soloist’s arpeggios in mm. 50-51 continue the same chord playing a D minor rising arpeggio. It soon becomes clear that it is in C major a few measures later. A G major triad does not resolve into the tonic C until m. 57. It is misleading at first as there is no cadence at the end of the previous orchestral closing section of the first subject area in m. 49. Therefore it sounds like a new key with the big chord on the next downbeat arrival. While the main tonality of the second subject is the happy C major, its beginning with D minor influences sounds melancholic. There are many other attempts at this type of off-tonic opening in Schumann’s songs too. Examples are No. 11 and 15 of *Dichterliebe*.

In another instance, the solo cello sustains an A Major triad for six measures in the cadenza before the third movement. In m. 345, the cello ends the cadenza with its lowest D supported by a D minor triad from the orchestra to start the third movement. It again sounds like a huge arrival of D minor and we can call the A triad-D triad progression as a V-I perfect cadence. The real tonality of A minor does not make a strong stamp on the music until we hear an A minor chord in m. 349. The D minor triad becomes a iv instead that gets towards the A minor tonic through a dominant E chord in mm. 346 and 348. To me, this shows the humor of Schumann, who makes the tonality slightly ambiguous to start the light-hearted finale before returning to the home key of first movement.
The last occurrence of this D minor influence happens in m. 685 of the cello cadenza. As shown in Figure 3.5, it is no doubt that a Neapolitan chord or Bb triad in both mm. 684 and 685. However, the solo cello’s melodic material at first sounds very similar to the beginning of the second theme in first movement- rising arpeggios with the use of non-harmonic chromatic notes- and it indeed begins on the exact low D note as m. 50. At one moment, it seems that we recapture our memories, but the distant memories sound transformed as the same material is in a totally different tonality and musical context!

**Figure 3.5:** Similar material that sounds like a strong arrival of a D minor tonality from mm. 50-52 of the first movement (left) can be found in mm. 685-686 of the cadenza (right) in Schumann’s *Cello Concerto.*

The ambiguities between A major and F# minor in *Dichterliebe* reflect a contradiction between apparent and real tonalities. The vocal line in No. 1 clearly indicates that A major is the main tonality, but the piano part at first seems to be in F# minor and does not sound an A major tonic chord until m. 6. Although the vocal line finishes with an A in the last song, the harmony from the piano part does not indicate an arrival in A major, but moves to the Db major postlude instead. In an article about the cycle, Berthold Hoeckner quotes Yonatan Malin's suggestion that
"the repeated A-major cadences present at least an illusion of stability." That seems to articulate the A-f# fundamental conflict of the cycle— the coexistence of stability and hidden instability. The last piano chord in song No. 1 is an unresolved C# major triad. When we expect a F# minor tonic chord to arrive in the next song like a V-i cadence, Schumann misleads us as he did in the concerto by sliding the C# chord a third lower to go to the vocal part’s preferred key of A major in No. 2.

_Dichterliebe_ No. 9 is in D minor. Naturally we expect a tonic D/d chord to finish the song. The ambiguity is that it does end with a D major chord, but there is no V chord preceding it (see Figure 3.6). Even if we consider the last 12 measures in G minor, the last chord is only a V, not a tonic arrival. The tension of the surprise is released in the beginning of the next song when it comes to a G minor tonic like a V-I cadence. This is similar to the octave Gs played by the bassoons in mm. 52-57 that prepare for a C major triad’s arrival in the concerto. We can find the kind of drama Schumann used in the song cycle in the concerto as well. The way he holds listeners’ attention with surprise and then release is like telling a story.

**Figure 3.6**: A lack of perfect authentic cadence in D/d at the end of Schumann’s _Dichterliebe_ No. 9.

Like the two keys coexisting face-to-face in the song cycle, the tonalities of A/a and F appear together in the concerto. When the motto returns in the middle of the second movement, it is like a tonicization of A major in m. 298 where we hear a viiºº-I progression. Although the F major

---

tonality is regained by m. 300, the motto not only thematically disrupts the calmness of the second movement, but also darkens it with the A/a tonality from first movement.

On the other side of the coin, the key of F/f attempts to recover in the transitional passage to the last movement in which A minor is the predominating tonality. The i₆-V₆ progression in F minor can be found when the thematic material of the second movement returns in mm. 327-328. Even though a V₆/₄ chord in F/f at m. 330 together with the unfinished second movement theme above is chopped off by a V₆/₅ of A minor in m. 331, the attempt to tonicize in F/f is obvious together with the recurrence of thematic material that originates in the same key.

In the concerto, the interaction among the tonalities of A/a and F/f are like the contrast between dark and bright. One tonality haunts its return in the other’s appearance. But which one expresses the bright, and which one resembles the dark? It is ambiguous. On first impression, A minor seems to be the dark force that threatens the sublime F major song in the second movement. But the falling motifs in mm. 331-338 create aggressive tension that challenges against the soloist with the motto’s melodic version, and the light-hearted finale ends in A major like a release. No matter on which side we think the soloist or ‘poet’ belongs, both tonalities have the role of overshadowing the dark by the bright.

Schumann said in 1831, “Sometimes I feel as if my objective person wants to separate itself entirely from the subjective one, or as if I stood between my appearance and my being, between figure and shadow.”⁴ Both the concerto and song cycle show the coexistence of tonalities, which are often conflicting. Perhaps that is how the subjective Schumann foreshadows, converses, and disagrees with the objective one.

In a previous passage, I talked about the fact that the final Db major of Dichterliebe may be seen as a religious answer to the F# minor with the plagal cadence of gb (f#) to Db. We may also

think that Db or C# is a third of the A major triad, and that the cycle ends happily in A major, after being uncertain about its tonic in the first song. On the other hand, however, C#/Db is the fifth degree in F# minor. Ending a piece with reminiscences of the past in C# can be interpreted as an imperfect cadence also: i-V if the piece is in F# minor, as shown in Figure 3.4 of p. 60. Perhaps such unfinished interpretation echoes the unfinished C# chord in song No. 1. That shows the song’s inner conflicts being reflected in the key relationship.

In contrast to the theory that *Dichterliebe*’s final C#/Db added to the tonic A outlines a major tonality, we may interpret this as a minor tonality if we include f# as well: F#/A-C# or a F# minor triad (see Figure 3.7 below). While the concerto clearly begins at A/a, we may not totally ignore the key of F. If we put the major tonalities in this concerto together, there is a F major triad: F-A-C, as C is important as second subject area in the outer movements (Figure 3.8). The actual length of the second movement is only 34 measures long, compared with the whole concerto of 756 measures long, but perhaps its musical importance is much more than an intermezzo between the outer movements! The existence of this F major tonality perhaps resolves the haunting E-A-C A minor motto into a F major triad of F-A-C.

**Figure 3.7:** Combination of the tonalities of song No. 1 and 16 in Schumann’s *Dichterliebe* as either an A major chord (version i) or f# minor chord (version ii).

**Figure 3.8:** The connecting tonalities of the three movements in Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* that form an F major triad.
The above observations do not aim at overemphasizing the idea of dual tonalities, but reflect two contrasting natures in the music, like the Eusebius and Florestan ideas in Schumann’s cyclical vocal and piano works. As shown above, the ambiguities in tonality constantly create tension and unanswered questions throughout the music of both the concerto and song cycle. While there does not seem to be an obvious resolution or answer, perhaps it is important that performers capture such poetic, subtle, and narrative qualities of the piece through the understanding of the piece’s tonalities in order to search for their own answers.

3.3 Use of Augmented Sixth Chords

In the rich harmonic language of the concerto, the augmented sixth chords suggest significant narrative meanings in the piece. The various occurrences are summarized in Figure 3.9.

**Figure 3.9:** Dramatic use of augmented sixth chords in Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* analyzed by Ka-Wai Yu.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure no.</th>
<th>Type of augmented sixth chord</th>
<th>Contexts</th>
<th>Narrative associations suggested by Ka-Wai Yu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 and 182</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>An end to the searching melodic motto phrase</td>
<td>Hesitation and yearning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78 and 80</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>Tonicization in G minor and A minor destabilizes the enlightening C major section</td>
<td>Haunting effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115 and 117</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>The second subject material chopped-off by the quick arpeggio motif</td>
<td>Haunting effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>176 and 177</td>
<td>Italian; French</td>
<td>The expected arrival of recapitulation deceived with new harmonic tensions</td>
<td>Conflicting expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>217</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>Chopping off the orchestral interlude</td>
<td>Dramatic arrival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>280</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>Respelling V7 of B/b into an augmented chord in Bb/bb</td>
<td>Turning the struggling passage into a peaceful song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>320</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>Respelling consonant chord of F major into an augmented chord in A minor</td>
<td>Smashing the peacefulness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chord of deception—a dramatic moment that features the augmented sixth chord is the recapitulation of the first movement. As mentioned in Chapter 2, there is a false expectation that either m. 176 or m. 177 brings the arrival of the recapitulation indicated by the woodwinds and strings, and the C major arpeggio of the cello also implies m. 176 as the end of the transition instead
of the recapitulation’s beginning because it follows the G chord of m. 175 like a perfect V-I cadence of the previous section. However, an Italian augmented sixth chord in m. 176 smashes any hope for a tonic chord in either C major or A minor (see Figure 3.10). As shown in the same figure, a French augmented sixth chord instead of an A minor triad also declares that m. 177 is not the beginning of the recapitulation either. The harmonic recapitulation rather begins in m. 181 where a tonic A minor chord in root position can be found. What seemed to be a Classical concerto structure with a standard thematic recapitulation is disrupted by the two augmented chords that deceive the expected harmonic resolution with new tensions. The recapitulation, rather than a mere repetition of the exposition, seems to tell a different story right from its beginning.

**Figure 3.10:** The deceptive Italian augmented sixth and French augmented sixth chords in mm. 176-177 (last two measures of the excerpt) of Schumann’s *Cello Concerto.*

---

**Brightening quality** The F#7 chord in m. 279 (V7 of B/b) has the F#, A#, and E that are respelled as Gb, Bb and E or an Italian augmented sixth in Bb major/minor in m. 280, as shown in Figure 3.11. This chord eventually leads to the arrival of F major to begin the second movement. By going from an attempt to tonicize B major to an arrival in F major, or an augmented fourth key relationship of B-F, the inner tension created is incredibly fierce! Not only does the enharmonic switch drastically surprise our harmonic expectation, it brings the return of the motto in mm. 280-
282 discussed in Chapter 2. It cuts short the imitative loud tutti with a sudden calmness. Such a unique moment also stimulates narrative associations.

**Figure 3.11:** A brightening augmented sixth brings the transition to second movement at m. 280 (left) that is ended by a darkening augmented sixth chord at m. 320 (right) in Schumann’s *Cello Concerto.*

---

**Darkening force** While an augmented sixth chord turns the struggling passage into a peaceful song in the second movement, another augmented sixth chord brings back the dark motto back that smashes the peacefulness in the transition to third movement (Figure 3.11). Preceded by a C⁷ chord in m. 318, an F major triad arrives in m. 319 to end the tranquil second movement with a perfect cadence. However, the consonant F chord is respelled as a German augmented sixth chord of A minor in m. 320 with an added D#. In a few measures, this subtle change in the harmonic content of a chord has turned the longing song into turmoil with the return of the motto’s harmonic and melodic versions against the second movement theme in mm. 327-330 discussed in Chapter 2. Schumann could have written a closing section to roundup materials of the second movement and proceeded to the third movement. He instead introduces this dramatic transition that leads to a recitative unusual in a standard concerto form, followed by a short cello cadenza, before ending up
in a light-hearted dance in the third movement at m. 345. As a result, the third movement is organically connected to the second movement as if a story naturally goes on.

**Augmented sixth chord and hidden meanings** The second movement is preceded by the return of the motto that is initiated by an augmented sixth chord in m. 280 and is immediately followed by a return of the motto begun by another augmented sixth chord in m. 320. With such consistency in the use of augmented sixth chords, perhaps there is a symbolic meaning. The first return of the motto is preceded by a passage with the character of heroic struggling in mm. 272-279, whereas the second motto return is followed by a crisis-like uprising in mm. 320-344. In such contexts, the tranquil second movement in-between sounds like an escape to a dreamland, comparing with the dark overshadowing before and after that. The conflicting images of dream (second movement theme) versus reality (motto theme) seem to coexist in the concerto. The augmented sixth chord has a contradictory role of introducing the dream-like second movement as well as smashing it. Such conflicting images and switching between dream and reality certainly finds resonance in *Dichterliebe*.

Song No. 12 of *Dichterliebe* begins with the lyrics, ‘A sunshiny summer morning,’ that sound hopeful despite the fact that song No. 6 expresses lost love. The peaceful mood of No. 12 also seems to end the irony in song No. 11 where the poet tells a story of lost love with an ironically happy tone while hiding his sadness. However, there is hidden melancholy right from the very beginning of song No. 12. It actually begins with a German augmented sixth rather than a tonic Bb chord. This chord comes back again five times later in the song. Like the augmented chords of the concerto that bring back the motto or motto-related material every time, this German augmented sixth chord in the beginning brings back the off-beat sixteenth-note broken chords from songs No. 1 and No. 10. The first three occurrences of this German augmented sixth chord happen when the
piano is playing alone. But the fourth time occurs with the word ‘blasser’ or ‘haggard’ of the lyrics: ‘Thou sorrowful, haggard man!’ which has a haunting effect (see Figure 3.12).

The first German augmented sixth in song No. 12 seems to haunt the whole song, comparable to the ‘Tristan’-like French augmented sixth chord in m. 11 that possibly haunts the whole concerto. The happy Bb major of No. 12 is perhaps just a continuation of No. 11’s ironic tone, as overshadowed by augmented sixth chords. Sadness is hidden behind the words about the beautiful sunshine, summer, flowers, and garden, like the hidden tension in the concerto’s second movement.

Figure 3.12: The ending vocal part of Schumann’s Dichterliebe No. 12 which highlights the word ‘Blasser’ with an augmented sixth chord.

While augmented sixth chords overshadow the happy mood with sorrow, the case in Schumann’s Mein Schöner Stern is very different. The song has the lyrics, ‘Oh do not let your bright light be dimmed by the mists in me,’ which sounds a bit pessimistic at first. However, when the darker color of the text is transformed into hope as the singer asks for the help, from ‘My radiant star’ to ‘transfigure the mists into light,’ an Italian augmented sixth chord highlights the word ‘mein’ or ‘my’ (Figure 3.13). The same augmented sixth chord is used when the singer announces the words ‘My radiant star, where you already are!’ at the end. In Dichterliebe No. 12, the augmented sixth chord seems to overshadow the brightness, while in this late song the augmented sixth chord brings light to the ‘mists.’ The augmented sixth chord’s dual functions as a brightening and darkening force in these two songs is similar to the chord’s transforming effects on the motto that both begins and ends the second movement.
Figure 3.13: The ending section of Schumann’s *Mein Schöner Stern* with the word ‘mein’ highlighted by an augmented sixth chord.

Like No. 12 of *Dichterliebe*, *Mein Schöner Stern* also begins without a tonic chord. The song’s opening rising fifth interval is an inversion of the concerto’s falling fifth ‘Clara’ motif and the moving staccato eighth notes are like the moving pizzicato accompaniment of the concerto. If ‘My radiant star’ symbolizes the inflections of the name ‘Clara’, then highlighting the ‘mein’ with an Italian augmented sixth chord further emphasizes the intimacy and personal feeling of the words. Perhaps the augmented chords in the concerto also have such intimate and personal meaning to the composer, where the second movement is framed by such chords. Despite its shortness, the second movement may actually be the heart of the concerto, and the key of this movement, F major, may be more than just a third subordinated to the A/a tonality. The personal meaning of the augmented chord for the word ‘mein’ further reflects a kind of inwardness that is associated to the composer’s Eusebius personality. And perhaps this is the reason that the section in between the two occurrences of the augmented chords of mm. 280 and 320 resembles the Eusebius side, unlike the heroic and aggressive sections before m. 280 and after m. 320 that are close to the Florestan side of Schumann.

To conclude, augmented sixth chords are used in numerous dramatic moments in the concerto, where they mark the arrival of conflicting ideas and their transformations. As the chords are consistently used in similar contexts, they seem perhaps to reflect a symbolic meaning each time. Since each arrival of the augmented sixth chord is related to a return of the motto or motto-related
material as well, it articulates the cyclic structure of the piece. By creating musical tension and deceiving harmonic expectation, the chord blurs sectional breaks by connecting a new section to its predecessor as a natural resolution to the tension created by the chord. Together with the motto’s returns, the augmented sixth chords link all three movements together as a series of events that are associated to each other like a story. Furthermore, finding similar associations of the chord to inwardness in Schumann’s songs shows a resemblance of the concerto to the intimate song cycle setting, and reflects poetic associations in the wordless concerto where hidden meaning of the chords can be imagined through the lyrics of the related songs.
CHAPTER 4: RHETORICAL CHARACTERISTICS

4.1 Rhetoric

When we compare instrumental music to its vocal counterpart, one major difficulty is analyzing rhetorical characteristics, since words are used in vocal music, and not in instrumental music. How to interpret successfully the content, style, and delivery of the words in the poetry through music becomes crucial in songs.

Rhetoric originally refers to the skills associated with public oratory and the art of verbal discourse. Throughout history, a close interrelation between music and the spoken arts has been often discussed. Eighteenth-century treatises urge instrumental performers to bring out the affect or emotional state of the music as an orator would express emotions through speech. Flutist Johann Joachim Quantz in his *On Playing the Flute* of 1752 noted that “you must so to speak, adopt a different sentiment at each bar, so that you can imagine yourself now melancholy, now gay, now serious etc. Such dissembling is most necessary in music.” In his *L’Esprit de l’Art Musical* of 1754, theorist Charles Henri Blainville also mentioned rhetorical characteristics found in instrumental music: “There are also purely instrumental pieces pursued with such truth that they seem to suggest words, notions of passions, imagery or painting … a true language of sounds.” Nineteenth-century violinist and theorist Pierre Baillot claimed that, “notes are used in music like words in speech,” and Schumann’s close friend Joseph Joachim also talked about “musical sentences.”

Such long-existing tradition of rhetoric’s importance in music continued in Schumann’s compositions. Schumann once said, “The poetry should be to the singer as a bride in the arms of

---

her groom free, happy, and complete. Only then will the song realize a divine quality.”  

Without visible words or direct reference to a poem, is it still possible to express rhetorical characteristics through the concerto? Tovey finds “quiet antithetic rhetoric” in the concerto’s first movement. Alfred Nieman also says that “the intuitive lyricism of the concerto places it among the few masterpieces that command universal recognition,” pointing out the vocal quality of lyricism’s importance. Below I will attempt to investigate the possibility of comparing the concerto with the expression of words. The main focus will be given to the cello solo part while more about the orchestrations will be covered later. Figure 4.1 below summarizes various examples of rhetoric found in the concerto.

**Figure 4.1**: Significant rhetorical characteristics found in Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* according to Ka-Wai Yu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rhetoric</th>
<th>Measure no.</th>
<th>Narrative associations suggested by Ka-Wai Yu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speech-singing</td>
<td>Recitative in 331-338</td>
<td>Soloist's agitated speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Declamation</td>
<td>Strongly-articulated rising scales in 30-34 and 201-205</td>
<td>Animated speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td>Transitional motif A-F##-G in 57, 61-63, 476-478, 480-482 and 484-486</td>
<td>Self-doubt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answering</td>
<td>Strong arrival after the cello’s short wandering cadenza in 345-346</td>
<td>Self-assurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silence</td>
<td>The short breath between the orchestra's chord and the cadenza's first low D in 684</td>
<td>Speechless moment: the whole world stops, waiting for the soloist to answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td>Soloist's melody in the second movement</td>
<td>A song of longing (A Section); lullaby (B Section); vocal duet and trio (with secondary cello solo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yearning</td>
<td>Soloist's rising arpeggio with chromatic non-harmonic tones in 50-52</td>
<td>Yearning for one’s glorious past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sighing</td>
<td>Soloist's falling high D to G in 282-285</td>
<td>A nostalgic sigh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whispering</td>
<td>Cello cadenza in 690-710</td>
<td>The soloist’s intimate whisper with the string pizzicato as listeners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---


The most directly word-related style is speech-singing. Joan Chissel points out the transition passage in mm. 331-338 leading to the last movement is like an accompanied quasi-recitative for the cello, and Michael Steinberg describes it as a “gripping recitative.” As shown in Figure 4.2, tremolo strings set the background where the soloist speaks out the notes with an articulated rhythm, like a singer delivers words according to the rhythm of the ordinary speech. With the dramatic hairpins in the strings and ‘ff’ winds, it is an agitated speech given by the solo cello in ‘f’. The short cello cadenza that follows is also related to speech-singing. The soloist freely accelerates matching the descending pitches as in a monologue without orchestra.

---


The use of instrumental recitative in the concerto echoes similar ideas in Beethoven’s Op. 132 and Mendelssohn’s String Quartet, Op. 13. All three pieces are in A minor. Schumann, with his literary background, uses this vocal musical style, perhaps attempting to speak the moments like the power of words. This passage reflects a clear influence from vocal music. Schumann appears to bring such vocal elements from the string quartet to the genre of concerto here.

Alfred Nieman talks about the declamatory quality of the concerto’s opening cello melody, “the passionate, downward sweep, after the upward-rising tension of the first two bars, gives the long sentence a sustained eloquence, which, towards the end, almost approaches the declamatory character of speech.”\(^\text{10}\) The cello soloist in the concerto also has the quality of declamation in mm. 30-34 and 201-205. After two rising scales in mm. 30-31, the soloist announces each note going up in m. 32 with the use of dash articulations. After a ‘\textit{sf}’ in the top note, the descending diminished seventh broken chords bring the declaration to a strong end in m. 34. The loud orchestral tutti that follows is perhaps like an immediate response of the crowd to an animated speech.

\(^\text{10}\) Alfred Nieman, “The Concertos,” pp. 262-263.
Two important elements of speech are asking questions and answering. The transitional motif A-F#-G in m. 57 seems to have the inflection of asking a question. The motif is short and is repeated above a bass line. The dotted rhythm makes it sound like a question mark. The solo cello seems to answer itself and arrives in a cadence in m. 61. But it interrupts its answer twice with accents starting in mm. 61 and 63, sounding uncertain. The woodwinds then play the questioning motif in mm. 66-68. The cello’s ascending chromatic passages with dotted rhythm in the development of third movement sound like questions too with their rising tones: mm. 476-478, 480-482, and 484-486.

The quality of giving assurance can be found in the finale’s main theme at mm. 345-346. After a bigger leap of a minor sixth interval, the next note of the soloist moves down a half-step. A perfect fifth interval can be found between the first and third notes. The open-ended speech-like cadenza right before that in mm. 339-344 now seems to receive an answer in these two measures. Contrary to such solidly assured answers, silence is featured in m. 684. It is perhaps the only time in this concerto that the soloist can takes his/her time before playing the low D on the second beat to begin the cadenza. It is like a speechless moment in which the whole world stops, waiting for the soloist to give his/her answer with the rising arpeggios in mm. 685-686.

Singing is perhaps the most direct way to express words in music. The soloist’s melody throughout the second movement is lyrical. Joseph Kerman talks about “a lyrical cello voice” that inspires the Cello Concerto, and says the piece is driven by song, by the cello as an “inspired singer.” Alfred Nieman describes this movement as a song for the cello, and goes on to say, “Deriving from the German tradition of folk-song, its [second movement’s] feeling is quite different from that of

---

Schubert and Beethoven, its inwardness betraying the private world of the child.”  

12 The A section, mm. 286-303, with its falling motifs as well as its long and unsettled phrases, is a song of longing. The B section, mm. 303-311, is like a ‘dolce’ lullaby, with endless suspensions over a repetitive viola drone (Figure 4.3). The cello part fits the register of a tenor. The singing quality also comes from the secondary cello solo line in the baritone register that joins the lyricism of the soloist in vocal duet and trio in the double-stopped section. Larry Todd describes the second movement as a wordless duet between the solo cello and a second cello. To Todd, this is a parenthetical statement within the broader narrative of the whole. He suggests a “quasi-literary-musical digression characteristic” of Schumann is shown here.  

13 It is like a song without words.

Figure 4.3: The beginning of the lullaby-like lyrical B section (mm. 304-309) in Schumann’s Cello Concerto second movement.

As there are different ways to speak and sing words, speeches and songs can express a range of emotions. Such emotions in turn characterize the style of delivery differently. For instance, a declaration in a happy mood is not the same as the one in sad mood in terms of pitch, volume, and tone colors.

---


The second theme of the first movement has the quality of yearning that is comparable to the second movement. A deep low D in the cello in m. 50 rises up chromatically. The emptiness of the bassoons’ open octaves in m. 52 seems further to show the unreachable memory from a distance.

Sighing is close to this longing and yearning mood. The cello’s descending line from high D to G in mm. 282-285 echoes the legato articulation and descending pitch of sighing. The ‘ff’ at the very beginning further emphasizes this sigh. The sigh is further prepared by the rising high wind instruments in mm. 280-282. They set up a hopeful expectation that is deceived by the gesture of sighing. The cello melody quotes the theme from Schumann’s early work: *Piano Sonata in G minor*, further giving the sigh a nostalgic quality. I almost find this yearning echoing what Schumann himself said after a trip to Italy in 1839: “Standing thus on the very top of the mountain, recognizing nothing in the cold clouds, and gazing upon immense oceans of fog, I felt an inexpressible melancholy and thought I was the only human being on earth.”

The tutti cellos show their sympathy with their own half-step sigh in m. 285.

The soft sigh is quite similar to another style of word expression in lower volume: whispering that is soft but articulated. The cello cadenza in mm. 690-710 has this style. Soft moving notes are articulated with light staccato and smoothed by slurs. At times, accents are added to the cello part to pronounce the consonants softly as we do when whispering. The soft, accented string pizzicato perhaps shows the listener’s intimate response to the soloist’s whisper.

The opposites to such a soft-spoken way of expression are crying and mourning. The second movement’s main theme struggles against the first movement motto during the transition to the last movement, as shown in Figure 4.4 below. The tranquil falling fifth motif has become

---

desperate in mm. 327-330 with its interruptive gesture against the motto, as mentioned in Chapter 2. Unlike before, the syncopation is accented in m. 328 and there is an urgent ‘crescendo’. The falling fifth is like an outcry rather than comfort in this context. The agitated speech here is matched by the ‘marcato’ C-Bb-A motif in mm. 132-140 of the first movement. It has a similar forcefulness and keenness to move forward, demonstrated by the rising pitches and ‘crescendo’ in m. 136. Mourning and crying often happen in the same occasion. The painful falling half steps in the cello part at mm. 323-324 and 324-325 have such mourning quality. The second time is even more emotional with a delayed eighth-note entrance in m. 324’s last beat rather than quarter-note rhythm.

**Figure 4.4**: The agitated falling fifth motif that sounds like crying followed by mourning semitones in the transition to Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* finale (327-333).

Although sad, agitated moods are some of the most important moments in the concerto, we can see wonderful moments of happiness in the piece as well. Joan Chissel thinks both the first and second subjects of the last movement are characterized by a certain droll humor found in Schumann’s miniature instrumental work *Fünf Stücke im Volksston* for cello and piano of 1849.\(^\text{15}\) The

---

rising arpeggio with dotted rhythm in the main theme of the finale at mm. 346 and 348 is like a laugh. The cello and viola share the humor in the development section at mm. 506-508, 520-522, and 526-528. Tovey also describes the viola’s rising arpeggios that respond to the finale’s second subject as “gibes.” When the serious falling interval from the second movement is used in the finale’s second theme with lightened mood, the arpeggios sound like mocking at mm. 619, 621, 625, 627, and 629.

If the cello passage in mm. 569-578 seems sarcastic, it sounds heroic in mm. 569-570 with its big C major chord, like the beginning of Haydn’s Cello Concerto in C Major (Figure 4.5). But the trills with ‘gf’ in mm. 571 and 572 immediately make fun of the seriousness. The accents in mm. 573-574 articulate the satiric gesture even more.

*Figure 4.5: A portion of the sarcastic cello passage in mm. 567-572 of Schumann’s Cello Concerto.*

To conclude, rhetorical characteristics in the form of speech-singing, declaration, questioning or assuring, silence, mourning, crying, whispering, sighing, laughing, being sarcastic, as well as singing can be found in the concerto. These characteristics are often identified in songs because of the genre’s affinities to words and speaking. While any instrumental piece may carry a few of these characteristics in the music, these qualities appear constantly throughout the concerto, articulate dramatic musical moments of the piece, and connect the piece thematically as well as musically.

---

The orchestral work is completely different from the piano-voice song cycle in terms of scoring, and the key element that the concerto misses—words, is fundamental to the music of the song cycle. Yet the above observations show that the two pieces share a similar musical language that speaks to the rhetorical characteristics of Heine’s poem and Schumann’s poetic imagination.

4.2 Song Motifs

Musicologist Eric Sams, in his book *The Songs of Robert Schumann*, discusses motifs that may have symbolic meanings in Schumann’s songs. Just as Sams finds some of these motifs and their symbolic meanings in the composer’s piano music including the *C major Fantasie*, Op. 17, *F minor sonata*, Op. 14, and the *Davidische Lieder*, Op. 6, I consider some of these songs-associated motifs in the *Cello Concerto* with reference to Sams’ research. Figure 4.6 shows various song motifs found in the concerto.

**Figure 4.6:** A study of usage of song motifs mentioned by Eric Sams’ *The Songs of Robert Schumann* (pp. 11-26) in Schumann’s *Cello Concerto*, analyzed by Ka-Wai Yu.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motif</th>
<th>Song(s)</th>
<th>Symbolic meaning in songs suggested by Eric Sams</th>
<th>Concerto (measure no.)</th>
<th>Narrative associations in the concerto, suggested by Ka-Wai Yu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rising semitones in descending sequence with the lower semitone stressed</td>
<td><em>Intermezzo</em></td>
<td>Dismay and discomfort</td>
<td>64 and 232</td>
<td>Subtle hint of melancholy before the turmoil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling semitone</td>
<td><em>Warte, warte, wilder Schifmann</em></td>
<td>Acute grief</td>
<td>141-147</td>
<td>The mourners’ sigh in a funeral march-like atmosphere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double-dotted rhythm</td>
<td><em>Prelude to Die alten bösen Lieder</em></td>
<td>Giant strength or size</td>
<td>322-339</td>
<td>Rising semitones in such context sound like an outcry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide downward interval</td>
<td><em>Jung Volkers Lied</em></td>
<td>Mockery or something playful</td>
<td>414-425</td>
<td>Satiric and joking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide leap upward to a stressed note</td>
<td><em>Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome from</em></td>
<td>Longing or yearning</td>
<td>68, 70, 236, 238, 285</td>
<td>A quality of wandering and yearning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Dichterliebe</strong></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A sequence of continuous wide leaps</td>
<td><strong>Der arme Peter</strong></td>
<td>Dancing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated bass notes</td>
<td><strong>Ich grolle nicht from Dichterliebe and Widmung</strong></td>
<td>Profound conviction or a blind faith; with the help of the repeated chords or arpeggios in the piano, they give added assurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staccato notes in a tranquil song</td>
<td><strong>Morgens steh ich auf</strong></td>
<td>The quality of walking in a dream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triplet quarter notes where the time signature is 4/4 time</td>
<td><strong>Abendlied, Op. 107, No. 6</strong></td>
<td>Calmness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juxtaposition of two unrelated tonalities</td>
<td><strong>Auf das Trinkglas</strong></td>
<td>Mystery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-IV-I</td>
<td><strong>Princess in Der Gärtner and the king in Der Handschuh</strong></td>
<td>Higher things of royal or noble presence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dotted eighth-note followed by sixteenth note</td>
<td><strong>Der Soldat and Soldatenlied</strong></td>
<td>Marching spirit; manliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syncopated rhythm</td>
<td><strong>Abschied vom Walde</strong></td>
<td>Urgency and impatience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-beat rhythm</td>
<td><strong>Verratene Liebe, Op. 40, No. 5</strong></td>
<td>Agitated heartbeats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling fifth motif</td>
<td><strong>Er der herrlichste von allen</strong></td>
<td>Inflection of ‘Clara’; roses or flowers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-Bb-Ab-G-F</td>
<td><strong>F minor sonata, Op. 14; Dichterliebe</strong></td>
<td>Symbolizing Clara Schumann</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 4.6 (cont.)**
Sams notes that pairs of rising semitones in descending sequence treated as a passing or inessential notes represent pleasure, whereas when the lower semitone is stressed, they are associated with dismay and discomfort. In mm. 64 and 232 (recapitulation), there is a descending sequence of rising semitones: G#-A, E#-F#, and C#-D in the second subject area. It is as if there is a subtle hint of melancholy in the cello part before the turmoil in the development even though it is a beautiful second theme in C major.

There is also an ascending sequence of rising semitones in the beginning of the second subject area at mm. 50-51, where E-F, G#-A, and C#-D are hidden in the rising cello arpeggio (see Figure 4.7). My reading is that the rising arpeggio gesture itself is hopeful, as an attempt to leave the darker A minor first subject area. But the chromatic semitones make it sound nostalgic: struggling to search for hope from a distance. No wonder this solo is immediately answered by the horns’ E in octaves, a longing call in the recapitulation at mm. 220-225.

**Figure 4.7:** Beginning of the first movement’s second subject that features an ascending sequence of rising semitones in Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* (mm. 49-52).

A falling semitone from a flattened sixth of the scale to the fifth can refer to acute grief, according to Sams.\(^\text{18}\) Although it does not happen in the harmonic context of a flattened sixth chord, the development section in the concerto’s first movement has a series of descending minor second intervals that may be associated with a similar quality of mourning. The soloist, high woodwinds, and strings extract the semitone from the motif C-Bb-A of m. 132 and play a series of

---

\(^{18}\) *The Songs of Robert Schumann*, p. 12.
falling minor seconds in mm. 141-147: Ab-G, Fb-Eb, and Db-C. The dissonant flattened notes are emphasized, which may have a similar effect to the grief mentioned by Sams. If the ‘marcato’ march-like fragments of the C-Bb-A motif in mm. 132-140 sounds like a funeral march, then these connected falling semitones in longer melodic lines may be described as the mourners’ sigh.

Another motif having a similar symbolic meaning is the rising semitones in the recitative before the third movement. This is a complete opposite to the descending semitones in mm. 141-147. It is agitated, loud, and aggressive, as opposed to the ‘p’ sighing semitones in the first movement’s development section. In mm. 322-339, the rising minor seconds in the cello, strings, and bassoons seem to argue against the falling intervals in the high woodwinds. Double-dotted rhythm, mentioned by Sams as representing “giant strength” in Schumann’s songs, can be found in these intervals. The rising semitones in this context sound like an outcry, where conflicting fragments from the first and second movements are placed against each other. The rising minor second is turned into a falling one in mm. 338-339, when the conflicts seem to temporarily come to an end with the soloist’s short cadenza. Whether this change has a symbolic meaning or not it sounds like a big sigh. After all the ongoing struggles in mm. 320-338, it sounds like a moment of emptiness. This interpretation matches the searching character of the short cello cadenza that follows.

In Sams’ analysis, a wide downward interval can be associated with mockery or something playful. Examples can be found in the second subject of the concerto’s last movement. There are series of falling intervals in mm. 414-425 right after the more lyrical first four measures of the second subject. We can find falling seventh, sixth, fifth, and fourth intervals in this passage. Shostakovich’s re-orchestration particularly brings out such mocking character with the added

---

19 The Songs of Robert Schumann, p. 21.
piccolo. Since the motif originates from the second movement’s longing falling fifth, the treatment of the intervals here does make them sound parodic and joking. The faster tempo, scherzo-like musical context, and the ‘fp’ are added to each of these falling intervals. Schumann transforms the falling fifth motif which is similar to the inflection of Clara’s name, first into agitated arguments in forceful dotted rhythm at mm. 329-339, and then with a great sense of humor. While the concerto is united by recurrences of the same motif, its transformation certainly gives new narrative meaning to the flow of the piece.

A wide leap upward to a stressed note can mean longing or yearning and Sams find such a motif in *Dichterliebe* No. 6 ‘Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome’ (Figure 4.8). An example found in the concerto is the minor seventh leap in mm. 68 and 70 in the second subject area of the first movement (or mm. 236 and 238 in the recapitulation). The high F in m. 68 and top Bb in m. 70 are both on the stronger beat than their pick-ups, and have tenuto marking, as shown in Figure 4.8. Both motifs are preceded by transitional-like A-F#-G motif of the soft woodwinds, and are followed by a sequence of falling triplets. In such a context, the leaping seventh does give a quality of wandering and yearning, similar to what Sams mentions. Also, the passage before these two occurrences of a wide leap is the descending sequence of ascending semitones mentioned earlier. Maybe the yearning in m. 68 comes partly from the melancholic ending of the last solo phrase in m. 64.

Figure 4.8: Leaping seventh at m. 70 in Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* first movement (left) and leaping sixth for the words ‘Im Dom’ in his *Dichterliebe* No. 6 (right).

---

Another wide leap that brings the quality of longing is the rising minor seventh of the tutti cellos in m. 285, where the dissonant D is stressed on the beat from the leap and then resolved to C on the next beat. This motif seems to be a response to the sighing cantilena of the soloist in mm. 282-284. After a long section of conflict between the soloist and orchestra, the tutti cellos here significantly bring the orchestra’s sympathy to the yearning solo line for the first time. With this support from the bass line, the soloist then proceeds to his nostalgic aria in m. 286. Alfred Nieman’s comments about this passage seem to support such a view of the wide leap: “the second subject is full of Romantic imagery; the ‘longing’ minor sevenths, the appoggiaturas, and the suspensions were to become the common language of Wagner, and even early Schoenberg.”

Sams further suggests that a sequence of continuous wide leaps may be related to dancing, such as a wedding dance in Schumann’s songs. While the third movement of the concerto has a scherzo character, the sequence of rising octaves in mm. 456-460 brings the dance to a climax finishing the exposition. Similar material can be found in mm. 660-663 to bring the recapitulation to an end (Figure 4.9).

**Figure 4.9**: Dance-like octave-jumps in the finale of Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* (mm. 655-663).

According to Sams, repeated bass notes may symbolize a profound conviction or a blind faith, while with the help of the repeated chords or arpeggios in the piano, they may give added

---


The author quotes ‘Ich grolle nicht’ from Dichterliebe and Widmung as examples. The repeated triplet chords in the concerto’s second movement do look like the right hand of a song piano part, supporting the soloist and secondary cello solo together with bass notes from the cellos and basses. The low note F is repeated four times in mm. 286-289, giving assurance to both the off-beat repeated chords and the soloists. With the overshadowing return of the concerto motto between and after this beautiful second movement, the movement does sound like an escape to an ideal world. Some may also find it like Sams’ description of a “blind faith,” as we see the losing battle of the second movement theme against the motto that seems to represent the reality in mm. 320-330.

Furthermore, Sams also mentions a “walking in a dream” quality for staccato notes in a tranquil song. The string triplets in the second movement are not marked ‘staccato’, but the fact that they are pizzicato may in a way resemble the piano staccato. With the dream-like quality of the concerto’s second movement, the strings playing pizzicato beneath the melody do seem to walk the soloists (including the secondary cello solo) through a longing journey towards the ideal world! Associated with this tranquil mood is the lullaby or cradlesong quality of the prolonged bass notes in Schumann’s songs. The B section of the concerto’s second movement: mm. 303-306 has prolonged bass notes on F the tonic up to the third beat of m. 306. With the gently moving viola eighth-note part and the peaceful double stops of the soloist above it, there is indeed a comforting quality that is not unlike a cradlesong. It fits the context in which the soloist avoids going back to reality, feeling comfortable in the beautiful dreamy world of the second movement.

The calmness of the second movement can also be found in the triplet quarter notes in mm. 159-161 where the time signature is 4/4 time, similar to the calmness that Sams talks about in

---

24 The Songs of Robert Schumann, p. 17.
Abendlied, Op. 107 No. 6. The tied-over triplet quarter notes in the concerto lack the momentum to go forward in the development section. The soloist seems to enjoy the comforting second half of the motto’s melodic version in m. 159-161, right before the orchestra’s interruption with the harmonic version of the motto in m. 162 which brings the soloist back to the wandering reality in m. 165. While the Abendlied begins with continuous moving triplet quarter notes, the triplets are later tied over in several passages as in the concerto’s version, including the postlude of the song (see Figure 4.10). It is as if the poet does not want to leave the comforting evening song, with the non-forward moving tied-over triplets.

**Figure 4.10:** Tied-over triplet quarter notes appear in the postlude of Schumann’s Abendlied, Op. 107, No. 6 (top) and mm. 159-161 of his Cello Concerto (bottom).

When two unrelated tonalities are juxtaposed, Sams suggests it gives the idea of mystery with the sharp change of harmony, as in Schumann’s song *Auf das Trinkglas.* One instance in the concerto that show hints of conflicting tonalities is mm. 294-298, where the motto is return in the woodwinds attempting to bring back the tonality of A/a in the F major second movement. There is a progression of vii to I in A major in mm. 297-298. Although the soloist manages to return to F

---

26 *The Songs of Robert Schumann,* pp. 18-19.
major through a vi chord of F major in m. 299, in the previous measures a kind of mystery can be found out of the tranquil, calm second movement A section.

Sams also discusses the symbolic meaning of certain harmonic progressions found in the songs. I-IV-I often refers to higher things of royal or noble presence. Both the first and second movements of the concerto begin with such a progression. The very beginning three chords of the concerto come in solemnly. Since this I-IV-I may include a religious quality from the plagal cadence, the concerto seems to be destined to be haunted by the motto right from the beginning.

Figure 4.11: I-IV-I (or i-iv-i) progression in the very opening of Schumann’s Cello Concerto (left) and mm. 303-305 from the B section of the piece’s second movement (right).

In the second movement, the I-IV-I progression is associated with a kind of comfort that contrasts with the harmonic instability in the previous section. Great tension is created by the quick tonicizations of G/g (mm. 273-274), A/a (mm. 275-277), and B/b (mm. 278-279) in the transition to the second movement. The I-IV-I progression in the beginning of both A and B sections, gives assurance that the music is finally stabilized in F major (see Figure 4.11). The arrival of the second movement seems to be an escape from the conflicts in reality as shown in the first movement, the religious quality of the I-IV-I progression does give it a kind of heavenly character that differs from the darker motto symbolizing the reality. Sams also notes that IV-I progression alone is associated to singing. This suits the song-like second movement that indeed begins the falling fifth ‘Clara’ motif of the song with an iv-I progression in mm. 286-287.

There are also several rhythmic characters in song motifs mentioned by Eric Sams that can be found in the concerto. The rhythm of a dotted eighth-note followed by sixteenth note has a

---

marching spirit that is described by Sams as suggesting manliness in Schumann’s songs.\textsuperscript{29} The third movement of the concerto is indeed developed from repetitions and transformations of the first subject’s fragments that have this rhythm followed by rising arpeggios, e.g. m. 346. Compared to the song-like second movement, the scherzo-like finale does have a strength characterized by such dotted rhythms. The more outgoing Florestan quality here is contrasted with the inward Eusebius quality of the previous movement. Tovey also mentions that this finale has the manly and rugged qualities of the poet Browning’s style.\textsuperscript{30}

The syncopated rhythm that Sams refers to a kind of urgency and impatience can be found throughout the concerto in the accompaniment of the motto.\textsuperscript{31} The string accompaniment in mm. 12-20 is in syncopated rhythm all the time, which creates the unsettling background moving the soloist forward with a sense of urgency. The off-beat rhythm can be related to “agitated heartbeats” according to Sams.\textsuperscript{32} It is used throughout the beginning string accompaniment of the concerto. Moving eighth notes in mm. 4-12 and 21-25 all begin after an eighth rest in each measure. The bass line has off-beat quarter notes in mm. 9-11 and 19-25 too. Without a clear downbeat in each measure from the accompaniment, the soloist plays his agitated aria with anxiety rather than comfort, constantly moving rather than being grounded. However, when the bass line is finally on the beat in mm. 26-33, this now gives assurance to the soloist’s heroic climb up the scales.

Lastly, Sams categorizes several motifs that may symbolize ‘Clara’, the name of the composer’s wife. The symbolism of the falling fifth motif of the second movement that is similar to the inflection of the name ‘Clara’ is mentioned in Chapter 2. But there are more materials found in

\textsuperscript{29} \textit{The Songs of Robert Schumann}, p. 21.

\textsuperscript{30} \textit{Essays in Musical Analysis, Vol 3: Concertos}, p. 185.

\textsuperscript{31} \textit{The Songs of Robert Schumann}, p. 21.

\textsuperscript{32} \textit{The Songs of Robert Schumann}, p. 21.
the concerto that may be associated with the symbolism of Clara as well. Sams in particular studies Schumann’s piano music and finds similar motifs between it and Schumann’s songs. Whereas the F minor sonata has the motif of C-Bb-Ab-G-F like the C major Fantasie motif of A-G-F-E-D, the Dichterliebe has the similar motifs of D-Eb-F-Gb-Ab or B-C-D-Eb-F.

In the first movement of the Cello Concerto, I find the falling motif of Bb-A-G-F-E-D in mm. 15-16 and F-E-D-C-B-A in mm. 19-20 in the cello part that are a transposed version of the F minor sonata motif. Song No. 8 of Dichterliebe actually has the motif of E-D-C-B-A like mm. 19-20 of the concerto. No. 5 of the same cycle has the motif of E-D-C#-B-A#, which is the same as the cello motif if we count the G# of the second beat in m. 20. These two cello motifs that enter after the quick rising arpeggios in mm. 14 and 18 have a melancholic and sympathetic flavor with their legato descending line, so perhaps they may be associated with the beloved of the composer. The first piece of Schumann’s Fantasiestücke, Op. 73, originally for clarinet and piano, opens with the exact motif of F-E-D-C-B-A-G# as the one in the concerto in similar rhythm (Figure 4.12). Often played by cellists, this miniature work, starting in the same key, has the lyrical color of the concerto.

Figure 4.12: The symbolic motif of F-E-D-C-B-A-G# appears in Schumann’s first of the three Fantasy Pieces, Op. 73 (left) and mm. 19-20 of his Cello Concerto (right).

Furthermore, the descending cello cantilena in mm. 282-285 also has the motif of D-C-Bb-A-G, or the same as A-G-F-E-D in the exposition. This phrase has a nostalgic quality as a quotation from Schumann’s G minor sonata, and now it also recalls memories of the exposition motif. The

---

timing of this phrase further unfolds its possible relation to the ‘Clara’ symbolism. After the restless orchestral closing section of the first movement, this phrase stands out as a descending sigh after the rising high woodwinds in mm. 280-282. Not only does the high register of this cello melody give it a sublime quality, it is also a link to the song-like second movement that actually begins with a falling fifth motif perhaps representing Clara. The cello cantilena and the falling fifth ideas associated with ‘Clara’ appear together at this moment, as reflected by the dramatic harmonic change from B major in m. 279 to F major to m. 286, which has prepared the arrival of the longing second movement.

With the above observations, many of the song motifs mentioned in Eric Sams’ book can be found in the Cello Concerto. There are clearly affinities between common song motifs and the ones in the concerto in terms of melody, rhythm, and harmony. Some of the song motifs can be directly related to the concerto, and others are reflected in Schumann’s piano music that shares motivic material with the concerto.

One may argue that thematic resemblances between materials in various compositions by the same composer is natural, and does not necessarily reflect similar meaning between the compositions beyond their shared musical language. However, it is important to note the above observations also find affinities in the motifs’ narrative quality in the concerto and songs. The symbolic meanings reflected by similar motifs from the songs suit the timing, structural, and harmonic context of their occurrences in the concerto. In other words, poetic images can be reflected in the concerto and spoken through Schumann’s songs. While these poetic reflections may be subjective and imaginary without words, they can be more easily understood through looking at the similar qualities in Schumann’s songs.

Many cellists complain about the difficulty of understanding the constantly changing musical characters of the recurring motifs in the concerto. Some of them simply criticize the piece as the ‘crazy’ music of late Schumann with its extreme polarity of personalities. Perhaps they should look
at the coexisting Florestan and Eusebius characters in Schumann’s vocal as well as instrumental music and his early as well as late works that reflect the use of symbolic motifs. One short cello phrase in mm. 18-20 of the concerto for instance already shows an outgoing character (Florestan) from the quick arpeggios, followed by the inward F-E-D-C-B-A-G# motif (Eusebius) mentioned above. The original bowing in the manuscript has the notes slurred together in this inward motif. But a majority of cellists ignore this by separating all of them for bigger sound. The original bowing will express the melancholic sigh of the Eusebius character better by keeping the slur. Separating the slur would break the subtleties of the melancholic phrase. The above observations will be useful for cellists to look further for new insights into the musical difficulty of the piece.
CHAPTER 5: THE SONG-LIKE ORCHESTRATION

As early as in 1839, Schumann had the idea of an organic combination of the orchestra and soloist in a concerto setting: “the genius who will show us a brilliant new way of combining orchestra and piano, rather than merely looking on, should be able to interweave its numerous and varied characters throughout the scene.”¹ While Schumann has been often criticized for his orchestration, Brian Schlotel defends the composer saying “his [Schumann’s] orchestration is usually a good deal more effective in performance than he is ever given credit for” and that “Schumann’s orchestration is appropriate to the type of music he was writing.”²

In order to explore the validity of these comments, I will focus on the various textures created by the use of orchestra that show similarities with Schumann’s song texture, and then address how some of these unique treatments of orchestra by Schumann may be associated with narrative ideas.

5.1. Song Texture.

a) Salon Music: Chamber Music Effects in the Concerto

Like many other nineteenth-century composers, Schumann wrote much music intended for performances in an intimate chamber setting, including his songs, piano pieces, and chamber music. With the lightness of the concerto’s orchestration, Schumann creates delicate textures and refined tone colors similar to chamber music.

**Vocal duet in the second movement** In mm. 286-319, trumpets and timpani are excluded, soft string pizzicato is featured, and in the places where woodwinds play, their parts are usually not doubled. The use of the orchestra as a chamber ensemble is demonstrated in the second movement.

---


There is a secondary solo melodic line played by the principal cellist of the orchestra throughout the second movement (see Figure 5.1). Joseph Kerman points out that there are prominent secondary soloists in nineteenth-century concerto repertoire, as in the cello solo in Brahms’ *Second Piano Concerto*, the solo violin and cello in Tchaikovsky’s *Second Piano Concerto*, and the solo flute in Dvořák’s *Cello Concerto* that might be influenced by the idea of secondary soloist in this Schumann concerto.³ Michael Steinberg also talks about the influence of the idea of a secondary soloist on Brahms.⁴

**Figure 5.1**: Texture of Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* second movement (mm. 287-291) that features a secondary cello soloist.

This lyrical line interacts with the soloist’s melody as in a vocal duet. It moves with the soloist in thirds or sixths (m. 293); supports the harmony where the tutti cellos and basses leave off (m. 289); plays against the tied-over or two-against-three notes of the soloist (m. 287); and creates suspensions with the solo line (mm. 308-309). This multi-functioned secondary melodic line brings new light to the solo line, which often plays alone against the full orchestra in the first movement.

In the middle section of the ternary second movement: mm. 303-311, we can even hear a vocal trio


when the soloist plays double stops, often in thirds, sixths, and suspensions supported by the principal cellist of the orchestra. This double-stop passage is described as a “triumph of Schumann’s instrumental imagination” by Donald Tovey.\textsuperscript{5} The way Schumann uses the secondary soloist to answer the soloist’s double-stops is certainly imaginative.

\textbf{Resonance in the late songs} Schumann’s song \textit{Mein schöner Stern, Op. 101, No. 4} has a texture that is similar to the second movement of the concerto, as shown in Figure 5.2. It has the texture of main solo line (voice), moving eighth notes (piano right hand), and a clear bass line (piano left hand). There is a melodic line in the piano part that resembles the secondary solo cello in the concerto. This voice begins in the last beat of m. 3 in the piano left hand in a similar tenor-baritone register as the principal cellist of the orchestra in the concerto. Like the secondary soloist in the cello concerto, the piano doubles the voice in thirds. In mm. 14-16 of the song, the piano has the same notes as the vocal line. It imitates the voice in various registers, such as the soprano register in mm. 9-11. In places where we cannot hear the secondary voice independently, it can be found in the tenor register doubling the bass line, e.g., mm. 25-31. These functions of the lyrical voice in the piano match the ones of the secondary solo line in the concerto’s second movement.

\footnote{Donald Tovey, \textit{Essays in Musical Analysis, Vol 3: Concertos} (London: Oxford University Press, 1936; reprt. 1972), p. 186.}
Figure 5.2: Opening texture of Schumann’s *Mein schöner Stern*, Op. 101, No. 4.

We can further our understanding of the song by looking at its text written by Rückert. Perhaps the secondary piano melodic line is the ‘radiant star’ mentioned in the song’s text, supporting the vocal line throughout the song. That role suits the secondary cello line in the concerto also that supports the soloist throughout the second movement. It is like a ‘radiant star’ that gives brightness to the soloist.

**Chamber texture and the dreamland** The concerto has a textural resemblance to the song and its poetic imagination of a dream-like heavenly world. Tovey says the qualities of the violoncello are exactly those of the “beloved enthusiastic dreamer whom we know as Schumann.” No wonder

---

Laura Tunbridge points out that the use of harp in the concerto’s re-orchestrated version by Shostakovich (Figure 5.3) actually makes the second movement sound too “luxurious.” With the richness and beauty from the harp’s sound, the distant and unreachable ideal world where tension is hidden, almost becomes too comfortable, beautiful, and real. Wolfgang Niemöller says that Shostakovich replaces the delicate timbral refraction of the original with a more theatrical and massive sound, putting in “Romantic rustlings of the harp.”

Figure 5.3: Shostakovich’s re-orchestrated version of Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* second movement (mm. 286-288) with added harp.

---


The ambiguity of the secondary soloist In mm. 294-296 and 297-298, the woodwinds reintroduce the E-A-C motto which interrupts the tranquil song of the second movement, as mentioned in Chapter 2. This is accompanied by cellos/basses pizzicato in a quarter-note rhythm that resembles the very opening of the concerto. The second time is supported by vii\(^o\)-I in A/a, or the key of the first movement. It momentarily haunts the second movement with darkness. While the soloist is supported by the secondary cello solo and pizzicato strings in the second movement, the soloist is unaccompanied in mm. 296 and 298. The secondary soloist and string accompaniment are not back until m. 299.

If the secondary cello solo really acts like a ‘radiant star’, why is it not there to support the solo cello in the motto’s two returns? Perhaps this secondary voice comes from an imaginary voice rather than a ‘real’ one. The motto’s return is like a wake-up call to leave the longed-for ideal world of the second movement for reality, and the soloist is actually struggling alone in reality despite the beautiful imaginary duet. In that case, the use of the secondary solo line from mm. 285 up to 294 actually adds to the contradiction between the ideal and real worlds.

The lightly-orchestrated coda It is surprising for the concerto to end with a coda that begins lightly without full orchestra. Strings alternate their ‘p’ entrances with woodwinds in mm. 722-737. A solo horn joins a few measures later and there is no trumpet. Timpani join softly in m. 742. Even when these instruments are playing, their materials are short and non-sustained, which can hardly cover the cello even in its low register. We have a final grand ‘ff’ tutti only in the last eleven measures.

Once again, this shows us the intimate intentions of Schumann’s orchestration. Shostakovich’s re-orchestration of the concerto with added trumpets in the first and third movements may add more excitement, but such change breaks the delicate chamber texture created by the composer. Clear differences in orchestration can be found in Figure 5.4 comparing the
Shostakovich’s version with Schumann’s original. No wonder Tunbridge says that Shostakovich’s thickening of the concerto’s texture may arguably make the piece sound more like his own style. The chamber texture in the concerto is similar to the intimate song setting rather than gigantic orchestral sound.

**Figure 5.4**: Shostakovich’s thicker orchestration in mm. 46-48 (left) compared with mm. 43-48 of Schumann’s original version (right) in the Cello Concerto first movement.

b) Constant Change of Texture

Dramatic texture changes can be found in Schumann’s songs as well as in the concerto that may reflect narrative associations.

**Dramatic textural change and the cello’s cantilena** The high woodwinds are gone by the fourth beat of m. 282, and none of the string instruments are in their high registers. There is thus a complete turn from the hectic imitative orchestral section in mm. 272-281 to this distant song. The fact that the cello melody is taken from Schumann’s early work *Piano Sonata No. 2 in G minor*, further adds a kind of nostalgic quality to the cello line. Just within seven measures in mm. 279-285,

---

9 *Schumann’s Late Style*, p. 123.
Schumann transforms a full orchestra tutti into a wind quintet; and then to a string quintet including the soloist, using solo double bass and no second violins (see Figure 5.5). Whether the composer is paying tribute to Schubert with his famous cello quintet we do not know. But he certainly captures the intimacy and lyricism of Schubert here. In sympathy with the soloist’s descending melody, the tutti cellos play a beautiful rising minor seventh in m. 285 from E to the appoggiatura D and then resolve it to C. The oppositional relationship between the orchestra and soloist is replaced by harmony for the moment.

**Figure 5.5:** The texture of wind and string quintets before the arrival of the second movement in Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* (mm. 280-286).

The dramatic change in texture in the concerto is not unlike the switch from songs No. 9 to 10 in *Dichterliebe.* The restless No. 9 has incessant sixteenth notes in the piano right hand with left hand chords. The sixteenth notes move in sequences similar to mm. 272-279 of the concerto. The busy piano part does not seem to match the slower, more discontinuous vocal part. In song No. 10, the continuous sixteenth notes in sequences are replaced by slow off-beat sixteenth notes (mm. 1-4) in the high register of the piano, like the woodwind instruments in mm. 280-282 of the concerto. The full texture of No. 9 switches to a much thinner texture in No. 10. The first four measures have
a string quartet-like texture and have wider intervallic space between the voices. The simplicity of phrase and intimacy of setting may be matched with string pizzicato like the concerto’s second movement.

5.2. Narrative Associations

a) Orchestra as Storyteller

The constantly changing orchestral color is a key to the structure of the piece and prepares moods preparing for the soloist’s entrances, a role that the piano certainly plays in many of Schumann’s songs. Schumann’s song cycles inherit the cyclic construction from the composer’s early piano works. The piano assumes a leading role in highlighting cyclic recurrences of thematic ideas in Schumann’s songs. The following discussion will look into the orchestra’s similar contribution to the cyclic structure of the concerto.

Schumann’s orchestral accompaniment is closely related to what is happening thematically in the concerto. Often a return of the theme means a return of the accompaniment figure that is associated with it. The syncopated rhythm in the string inner voice that accompanies the solo cello motto in mm. 5-34 can be found throughout the piece whenever the motto returns, as in mm. 125-131, 153-161, and 163-164. Such close association between orchestration and the return of thematic ideas can be found in Schumann’s songs as well. The rising arpeggio accompaniment of *Dichterliebe* song No. 1 returns in No. 10, 12, and 16 together with cyclic return of the thematic material.

b) Piano Preludes, Interludes, and Postludes

While the orchestra often acts as a narrator in the concerto, it is often touched by the soloist’s story. It introduces the protagonist- cello into the story with prelude-like passages; it summarizes, responds, and even exaggerates what the soloist has to say in interludes; and it concludes the un-ended story of the soloist in postludes. These roles seem to be similar to the piano’s roles in Schumann’s songs.
Prelude: precise and significant introduction Piano introductions in Schumann’s songs provide short yet significant preparation for the vocal part that is about to come. A similar function is given to the orchestra in the concerto. The orchestral introduction of the concerto is only four measures long. As opposed to a standard eighteenth or nineteenth-century concerto sonata-form first movement where the soloist’s exposition comes after the orchestral exposition, the solo cello enters in m. 5. Mendelssohn’s Violin Concerto also has a similar timing for the solo violin’s entrance, but Schumann’s version is more thematically and harmonically significant. The complete motto of the concerto (E-A-C) can already be found in these four opening measures. This short introduction is like what Michael Steinberg says: “an opening of the curtain for the inspired singer.”\(^{10}\) Alfred Nieman also notes that the opening orchestra chords prepare for the cello’s narrative.\(^{11}\) The three-chord gesture is concise yet thematically and harmonically prepares not only for the beginning soaring cello melody, but perhaps the musical story of the whole concerto as well! In a way, this is similar to Dichterliebe’s No. 10 where the first four bars of the piano introduction outlines the singer’s melody in the top voice and provides the same harmonic progression beneath that will be used in the singer’s entrance at m. 5.

Interlude: recapitulation comes without the soloist in the finale The first subject returns in m. 549 in the concerto’s finale. This section in mm. 549-569 is almost the same as m. 345-365 thematically and harmonically except that the soloist is resting. The soloist does join in and play the C major second part of the recapitulation of the first subject area in mm. 569-605, which is almost the same as mm. 365-402. This recapitulation of the first subject area without the soloist sounds like an orchestral interlude to windup the development. The dual qualities of recapitulation and transition of this passage in a way echo the coexistence of thematic recapitulation and the ending of

---

\(^{10}\) The Concerto: A Listener’s Guide, p. 412.

the transition in m. 176 of the first movement. Besides, this purely orchestral version of the first subject responds to the previous virtuosic passage dominated by the soloist as in a Baroque ritornello form. This is consistent to the solo-tutti alternation pattern in the first movement. When scholars criticize this movement as inferior to the previous two movements, perhaps they should look at the consistency in orchestration between the movements, including this passage.

Postlude: the concerto’s cadenza and *Dichterliebe*’s final piano postlude All sixteen songs in *Dichterliebe* end with a piano solo. Except for No. 2 and 14, all postludes in the cycle have substantial length, melodic interests, harmonic importance, and above all great musical and narrative impact. The choice for an accompanied cadenza in mm. 685-722 of the concerto reflects Schumann’s aim for musical expression more than technical display for the soloist (Figure 5.6). The important role given to the orchestra in the concerto cadenza is similar to the piano’s importance in the postlude ‘Die alten, bösen Lieder’ of *Dichterliebe* in which the piano alone instead of the singer ends the whole song cycle (Figure 5.7).

**Figure 5.6**: Texture of the accompanied cadenza in Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* (mm. 704-709).
There are several other aspects that further show similarities between these two sections. Both the concerto cadenza and the piano postlude of *Dichterliebe* include reminiscences of thematic ideas, colors, and textures from previous sections and movements. Just as the arpeggios, tied-over rhythm, and top voice in the piano postlude remind us of the texture from song cycle’s No. 1 ‘Im wunderschönen Monat Mai’ and No. 12 ‘Am leuchtenden Sommernorgen’, we find a similar story in the concerto cadenza where materials from both the first and second movements return. The use of string pizzicato in playing the falling motifs here reminds us of both the instrumentation in the second movement as well as the E-A-C motto in the very beginning of the first movement. The string quintet texture of the concerto from m. 690 seems to echo the second movement. When the wind instruments join in later at m. 699, they play softly with ‘p’ or ‘pp’. As a result, there is a kind of intimate texture that is not unlike the piano solo at the end of the song cycle without the voice. The raindrop-like falling intervals of the plucked strings in the concerto are quite like the falling arpeggios of the piano postlude’s inner voice at similar registers. The high woodwinds starting from
m. 699 of the concerto trace long phrases in a way similar to the piano is top voice in the song cycle’s postlude as well.

Steinberg argues that Schumann wants to keep the momentum going by not interrupting the music’s continuity with a cadenza created by the soloist.\textsuperscript{12} Alan Walker mentions that the accompanied cadenza in this concerto influenced Elgar to do the same in his Violin Concerto, “where the same thing happens in the same spot.”\textsuperscript{13} John Daverio thinks that no works represent Schumann’s desire to fuse virtuosity and musical substance as much as his written-out cadenza for the Cello Concerto, the Concert-Allegro for piano and the Phantasie for violin.\textsuperscript{14} Daverio points out the possible influence of this on Brahms’ Second Piano Concerto, Op. 83 and his Double Concerto, Op. 102.

c) Orchestration and Words

One important quality of Schumann’s songs is the priority given to the declamation of words. Not only does the voice enunciate the words clearly, the piano in the songs often brings out the meaning of the words. Perhaps orchestration in the concerto articulates musical ideas in a similar way.

Dynamic contrast Quick switches in dynamics and orchestration can be found in the concerto. The exposition of first movement ends at m. 96. With the scale-wise running notes from the cello in mm. 92-93 and a ‘crescendo’ with tutti orchestra in m. 95, a ‘f’ is expected in m. 96 to resolve the V\textsuperscript{7} chord. However, the ‘p’ dynamic with staccato quarter notes from woodwinds and strings deceives it with a V\textsuperscript{6} chord in A minor, rather than C major, now excluding horns and trumpets. The eighth-note triplets in the second violins and violas marked with ‘marcato’ only seem to mock the surprise. Such unexpected quietness lasts only for two measures and is then interrupted

\textsuperscript{12} The Concerto: A Listener’s Guide, p. 413.


by a loud tutti recurrence of the E-A-C motto in mm. 98-99 bringing the brass instruments back. Schumann then repeats the same \( p/chamber \) - \( f/tutti \) sequence in mm. 100-103 right before the soloist’s beginning of the development section: m. 104. This quick switch between two oppositional sounds seems to show a kind of internal struggle. It adds instability to the music as if turmoil is about to come. The fact that it happens right before the soloist’s entrance in m. 104 reflects the role of the orchestra as a narrator, preparing for the next section that is in fact tonally unstable.

**Vocal cadenza** The passage in mm. 339-345 of the concerto is like a long cadenza sung by a desperate opera singer. Unlike Beethoven’s *Op. 132* where the recitative is resolved into the last movement directly, the soloist in the concerto connects to the last movement with this cadenza. It is marked ‘*schneller und schneller*’ or ‘faster and faster’, ‘*accelerando*’ marking that organically pushes the solo line into the faster tempo of the last movement. If we see Beethoven’s use of recitative in his string quartet as a dramatic effect and functions as a bridge to the last movement, Schumann’s version of combining recitative with vocal cadenza seems to be related to a storytelling quality in addition to its function of linking the second and third movements together.

**d) Musical Conversation**

The relationship between the voice and piano in Schumann’s songs is often like two people in conversation. Sometimes they agree with each other, and sometimes they may even argue with each other. Sometimes one part might answer or continue what the other left off, while sometimes one interrupts the other by chopping off the other’s unfinished musical sentence. At times, the piano part might become a narrator. Such voice-piano relationship can be found between the soloist and orchestra in the concerto also.

**Short dialogues between the cello and orchestra** The cello’s rising arpeggio enters alone in m. 50 like a monologue to begin the second subject area of first movement. The bassoons answer three times in mm. 52, 54, and 56. They are together with string instruments at the second and third
times. The cello plays another phrase in mm. 57-65 with a quiet strings-accompaniment, which is perhaps associated to the rhetoric of questioning discussed in Chapter 4. Then in m. 65 rising scale materials bring in the woodwinds to join the conversation while the soloist rests. The cello rejoins in m. 68 jumping to its high register that seemingly responds to the high woodwinds. After the cello plays two expressive, short ‘f’ phrases tonicizing in G minor (mm. 78-80) and A minor (mm. 80-81), the high woodwinds come back in their light ‘p’ version in mm. 82-83. In response to the winds, the cello melody from m. 84 onwards returns to the relaxed triplet rhythm without the tension from mm. 78-81. In this second subject area, the woodwinds are either playing soft or are silent whenever the soloist enters, and the soloist is often resting when the orchestra takes over the melody.

Such solo-tutti alternation not only finds resonance in Baroque concerti grossi, but also in Schumann’s vocal music. No. 13 of *Dichterliebe* has a close dialogue between the voice and the piano. In the first half of the song both the voice and piano enter alone alternatively. The text is about the alternation between being dreamy and awake. Perhaps, the cello-orchestra alternation in the second subject area of the first movement of the concerto does represent a similar conversation between two different worlds. If the ‘f’ mourning cello line in mm. 78-81 is a reflection of reality, then the high woodwinds with the transitional A-F#-G motif in mm. 82-84 that follow is like a voice from heaven, free of tension. The long melodic lines of the soloist in the exposition have the narrative quality of longing for an ideal world when compared with the orchestra’s material that is predominantly fragmented and rhythmic, perhaps reflecting reality. Schumann puts them in alternation. Such subtle conflicts are not unlike the ironic tone found in Heine’s poems, which the music of *Dichterliebe* reflects.

**Interruptions** The concept of concerto has the aspect of contrasts and sometimes arguments between soloist and orchestra. However, the interruptions between orchestra and soloist are often face-to-face in the development section of the *Cello Concerto*, or happen intensely within a short
period of time compared with the larger sections of orchestra-soloist alternations in many standard concertos. Also, many of these interruptions in the concerto are aggressive, where solo cello interrupts before the end of a phrase played by the orchestra.

As in the beginning of the second subject area in m. 104, the solo cello begins the development section with a rising arpeggio melody. The orchestra intervenes at m. 107 with a G minor chord. The violas and second violins play the dark, chromatic triplets from the orchestral closing section of the exposition that destabilize what is supposed to be brighter second subject material in C major. The cello interrupts the orchestra in m. 108 to finish its climbing arpeggio gesture from mm. 104-106 with ‘f’.

The soloist’s restatement of the E-A-C motto in mm. 153-157, as mentioned in the section about cyclic structure (Chapter 2), is interrupted by the orchestra’s ‘f’ chords. Another attempt from the soloist in mm. 158-160 shows the soloist’s eagerness in finishing its melodic line after the previous stormy section. While a tied-over triplet rhythm in the cello part reduces the forward motion of this melodic line, a ‘crescendo’ moves the theme forward. Again, the orchestra intervenes in m. 162 with ‘f’ chords, this time with added flutes.

A losing battle of the motto shown by orchestration The soloist then proceeds to play the motto one more time in mm. 163-164. But it only leads to a transitional passage from mm. 165-175. In this last statement of the motto, both the bass line and violas disappear, unlike the previous two times. Strangely enough, there is the combination of solo cello, violins, and bassoons in mm. 163-164. The bassoons with their thirds (C#-A) slide down to another third (A-F#) like a sigh. The lonely cello, as indicated by the sighing low bassoons, seems to be pessimistic about this last entrance of the motto right from the beginning of the phrase.

A sequence of narrative events We can see a sequence of responses from the soloist after each orchestral interruption. It starts out with a strong restatement of the E-A-C motto in m. 153;
then it lacks forward energy in m. 159; and after the minor triad’s triumph over the major key in m. 162, the soloist’s entrance is lonely and hopeless, which finally leads to a transitional passage. The soloist seems to get lost from its struggle. The reactions between the soloist and orchestra in this passage show not only the importance of the two forces’ coexistence, but a kind of narrative sequence of events.

The soloist’s impatient interruption The closing orchestral section of the first subject area lasts for only thirteen measures in the recapitulation, compared with sixteen measures in the exposition. From m. 205 up to the first beat of m. 217, the orchestral passage is exactly the same as the one from m. 34 to the first beat of m. 46 despite differences in harmonization. Measure 217 is different from m. 46 with the progression of i-Italian augmented sixth in A minor compared to the vi-IV in C major at m. 46. The cello’s entrance on the second beat of m. 218 seems to chop-off what is unfinished thematically in the orchestra if we compare that with the ending of the orchestral thematic idea in mm. 46-50. While the cello comes in with the second subject as interruption in m. 50, the interruption is more impatient in the recapitulation.

Agreement and disagreement The violins play their first major-key version of the E-A-C motto in mm. 172-173 supporting the G major broken chords that the solo cello plays. The violins play the same motto in G chord again in mm. 173-174 which seems like a reassurance for the cello’s broken chords in the same harmony one more time. However, what seems like an ensemble in harmony between the orchestra and soloist is gone in m. 176. The cello plays leaping arpeggio material related to m. 14 from the lowest C of the instrument to arrive on A, the tonic of the concerto two octaves higher in m. 177. The ambiguity of the first movement’s recapitulation is discussed earlier in Chapter 2. While the soloist seems to announce the arrival of the recapitulation at that measure, both the strings and woodwinds disagree. The soloist is the only one who plays a ‘f’ when everyone else in the orchestra is playing ‘p’. The E-A-C motto of the woodwinds actually
begins in m. 176 instead of the soloist’s version in m. 177. The strings seem to support the woodwinds by playing the syncopated accompaniment symbolizing the return of the beginning.

In a way, after the conflicts between the orchestra and soloist in an extended section from the beginning of the development section to m. 164, the string section does seem to fall in line with the cello part. But the disagreement on where the beginning of the thematic return is perhaps shows that the cello and the orchestra once again belong to two different worlds. It seems that after all the wandering in mm. 165-171 the soloist is able to find his way again, but is lost once more in m. 176. In fact, the real harmonic return is not until m. 181 where we finally find an A minor tonic chord in root position. The different timings of the soloist’s thematic return, the orchestra’s thematic return, and the harmonic return, create ambiguities.

**Conclusion** The orchestration in the concerto shows a close relationship between the soloist and the orchestra that echoes the inseparable voice-piano connection in Schumann’s songs. The chamber music texture brings the concerto closer to the intimate setting of the songs than a larger nineteenth-century symphonic work, and constant textural changes bring similar subtleness of the song texture. On the other hand, these kinds of textures, unique orchestral colors, and organic interactions between the soloist and orchestra also reflect narrative associations. The orchestra becomes a story-teller by articulating cyclic returns and transformations of thematic materials. Its introductions, answers to the soloist, and concluding sections have affinities of the piano preludes, interludes, and postludes in Schumann’s songs. Lastly, the soloist-orchestra interactions are like conversations, interruptions, and arguments. These narrative ideas are reflected and brought out through the textures and orchestration found in the concerto, quite like how words from the poet are delivered through the singer-pianist partnership in the performance of a song cycle.
CHAPTER 6: FINAL THOUGHTS

6.1 Performance Interpretation of the Concerto

The above analysis of the concerto provides us with new directions for understanding the piece which in turn open possibilities for cellists interpreting the concerto, bringing the spirit of the thesis to life. Some detailed interpretative suggestions can be found in Appendix A. Below is a short discussion on re-interpreting the concerto’s tempi, performance practice and articulations, and the relationship between analysis and performance.

**Tempo** Many modern performers tend to play fast movements too briskly and drag slow movements too much. Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-1788) reminds us to prevent an allegro from getting hurried or adagio from being dragged.¹ American musicologist Neal Zaslaw points out that “the enlargement of voices, instruments and concert halls has led to slower tempos and greater emphasis on the particular beauties that can arise from powerful, sustained tone in such tempos,” and many performers are “sacrificing concision to discursiveness.”² Figure 6.1 below compares approximate metronome markings of several recordings of the concerto by notable cellists. Both Lynn Harrell and Steven Isserlis begin the concerto’s finale faster than Schumann’s tempo suggestion. Shostakovich even changed Schumann’s tempo from a quarter equals to 114 into 144 in his re-orchestrated version.³ The humor, playfulness, and lightness mentioned previously in the orchestration of the movement will be lost if an extremely fast tempo drives the music into the tension of a military march in the style of Shostakovich.


Figure 6.1: Comparison between selective cellists’ tempo interpretation (in approximate metronome markings) and the composer’s original metronome markings in Schumann’s *Cello Concerto*, prepared by Ka-Wai Yu.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tempo per quarter beat</th>
<th>Robert Schumann's marking</th>
<th>Pablo Casals</th>
<th>Jacqueline Du Pré</th>
<th>Lynn Harrell</th>
<th>Steven Isserlis</th>
<th>Janos Starker</th>
<th>Pieter Wispelwey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First movement (mm. 5-12)</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second movement (mm. 286-290)</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third movement (mm. 345-358)</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Du Pré’s, Starker’s, and Casals’ tempi are much slower than the composer’s metronomic suggestion in the concerto’s first movement. Wispelwey’s tempo is closest to a quarter note equals to 110 which is still quite a distance from Schumann’s 130. The off-beat string accompaniment related to the song motif that symbolizes agitated heartbeat clearly indicates a sense of urgency rather than being static. The music seems to be about foreseeing crisis rather than enjoying tranquility. The rhythmic variety found throughout in the cello part also shows that there is so much the soloist wants to express endlessly. Therefore, even though the suggested quarter note equals to 130 metronomic marking is very challenging, one should not play too much slower than that in order to fully articulate the ongoing intensity.

In the second movement, none of the above cellists’ tempi are even close to the composer’s original marking of a quarter not equals to 63. Many of them certainly try to sing the song-like

---

4 *Cello Concerto / Stücke Op 8* (CD: Channel Classics Nl, 1998), Pieter Wispelwey (cello), Paolo Giacometti (conductor), Australian Chamber Orchestra and Netherlands Wind Ensemble; *Pau Casals: Schumann* (CD: Sony Classical, 1994), Pablo Casals (cello), Eugene Ormandy (conductor) and Prades Festival Orchestra; *Schumann: Cello Concerto; Piano Concerto; Introduction & Allegro appassionato* (CD: EMI Classics, 1992), Jacqueline Du Pré (cello), Daniel Barenboim (conductor) and New Philharmonia Orchestra; *Schumann, Hindemith: Cello Concertos* (CD: RCA Victor Red Seal, 1995), Janos Starker (cello), Dennis Russell Davies (conductor) and Bamberger Symphony Orchestra; *Schumann: Piano Concerto, Cello Concerto* (CD: Decca, 1974), Lynn Harrell (cello), Neville Marriner (conductor) and The Cleveland Orchestra; and *Steven Isserlis Plays Schumann* (CD: RCA Victor Red Seal, 1996), Steven Isserlis (cello), Christoph Eschenbach (conductor) and Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Neuss.
movement with full expression. Yet it is important to find the ‘right’ expression. On the one hand, the character of longing for new lights similar to Schumann’s song Op. 101 No. 4 discussed in Chapter 5 will be lost if the music loses its continuity in searching for the ideal dreamland. On the other hand, a faster tempo will provide the music with the flow to articulate the character of the piece, where the soloist is expressively singing his/her longing but at the same time moving-on for the unreachable twilight. Moreover, it is hardly possible to breathe properly between long phrases like a singer if the tempo is too slow, thus obscuring the rhetoric of singing in the movement.

**Performance practice and articulations** Many cellists replace Schumann’s written-out accompanied cadenza with their own unaccompanied ones. This practice unavoidably breaks the cyclic continuity of the piece. Schumann’s original cadenza has great narrative significance to the concerto as a whole and organically connects the whole concerto together. A replacement of the original cadenza by a soloist’s own will also break the original one’s unique texture and colors coming from Schumann’s orchestration.

Modern string players tend to perceive continuous vibrato as a necessary component in sound production. Many see the concerto’s second movement as an opportunity to sing the song-like melody with wide, constant vibrato. Certainly, vibrato adds color, richness, and expressive qualities to the tone. However, too much vibrato may turn the distant escape from the reality that is mentioned in the analysis of the second movement’s delicate chamber texture, into a luxurious and extroverted world.

With the concerto’s rhetorical characteristics in mind, instead of focusing on playing everything square and precisely, cellists should take time, slide, breathe, declare, and look for other qualities that are associated with what a singer does when necessary, in order to present the narrative qualities of the piece. While modern string playing often focuses on producing an even tone from the frog to the tip in order to create ‘seamless’ phrases, it is important to bring out the structural
irregularities, awkward shifts of emotions, and speech-like accents in rhythm and melody. There are many moments where the cellist should speak like a singer’s declaration of words in recitatives. Articulating these irregularities, abrupt changes, and coexistence of conflicting fragments will be important to present the contrasting characters of Eusebius and Florestan found in Schumann’s music. Instead of criticizing the concerto as ‘crazy music’ of Schumann’s late period and trying to smooth things out, cellist should articulate the constantly transforming poetic images found in the concerto. For instance, the sharp differences between the longing falling fifth in the second movement and the teasing falling intervals in the finale’s second subject can be exaggerated to bring out coexistence of conflicting ideas found in the concerto as well as in Dichterliebe.

**Analysis and performance** Cellists should study Schumann’s songs and the composer’s other miniature instrumental pieces in order to understand the intimate texture and other song-related qualities that speak the music and sing the song without words in the concerto. One instance is the vocal-like phrases that should be analyzed by the cellists with reference to Schumann’s songs. While many pianists see analyzing the structural and harmonic plan of a work as an indispensable part of learning the piece, not as many cellists talk about these two important aspects in a similar way. From the analysis of the cyclic structure, structural ambiguity and unity, tonal scheme, and augmented sixth chords, Schumann’s unique use of harmony and structure has indeed shaped the piece with poetic images, transformations, and associations that should be discovered by cellists.

Cellists also need to understand the close interactions between the soloist and orchestra in the concerto. They should understand the concept of chamber music texture, conversations and arguments between the two forces, unique blending of instrumental colors, the importance of orchestral interludes and the accompanied cadenza, among others, that can find resonance in the voice-piano texture of Schumann’s songs.
6.2 Conclusion

New understanding of the concerto The analysis in the thesis has proposed that Schumann’s Cello Concerto shows significant influences from the composer’s songs and vocal style. Structurally, cyclic techniques bridge all three movements in terms of thematic ideas as well as narrative associations, as in the sixteen connected songs of the Dichtheilbe cycle. Also as in a song cycle, the coexistence of structural ambiguity and unity in the concerto organically links series of narrative events together free from rigid definitions of structural breaks. Fragmentation stimulates poetic imagination by linking together conflicting but also associated fragmentary materials in the concerto. Instead of relating this unique concerto structure to a larger symphonic scale of work, the discussion of the miniature ‘concert piece’ nature of the work and the possible regrouping of sections of the concerto into the song form bring the subtly connected sections closer to the small-scale vocal setting of the German Lied.

Harmonically, the ambiguities in tonality in the Cello Concerto articulate a sharp ironic tone like that of Heine’s poems in Dichtheilbe, where an outcome of events is contrary to what was expected. The coexistence of dual tonalities in the concerto suggests the subtle switches between the introverted Eusebius and outgoing Florestan polar characters found in Schumann’s piano and vocal music. The changes between sharp to flat keys in the concerto parallel similar changes in Dichtheilbe. The fact that the timing, content, and impact of such changes of the concerto resemble those in Dichtheilbe further reflects narrative associations between the two works. Besides, augmented sixth chords highlight cyclic returns and transformations, and stimulate poetic ideas through looking at similar use of the same chords in Schumann’s songs. All these harmonic and tonal qualities match the organic structure, supporting a song cycle interpretation of the concerto technically and musically.
Rhetorical characteristics identified in the *Cello Concerto* further confirm the piece’s ‘song’ or vocal qualities. Various instances of rhetorical qualities that appear in songs, including sighing, whispering, crying, mourning, speaking, declaring, questioning, answering, joking, and singing, can be found in the wordless concerto. Furthermore, not only can these rhetorical characteristics be seen on the surface of the concerto, these qualities are also linked together in a similar way as Schumann’s *Dichterliebe* in terms of timings and narrative impacts. Furthermore, Schumann’s song motifs can be found in the concerto. Rhetorical characteristics are spoken, sung, and presented in the concerto in a similar musical language to the vocal output of the same composer.

Now that the ‘song’ and ‘cycle’ ideas can be found in the concerto, it is the orchestration of the piece that brings close interaction between the orchestra and soloist merging the two ideas in a texture that has great affinities to the voice-piano relationship in Schumann’s songs. The salon-like chamber texture echoes the miniature scale in the piece to create the same intimacy as the song cycle genre. The constant textural changes bring subtlety to the concerto as much as the dramatic switches of texture between songs in the *Dichterliebe* cycle. These unique textures may further reflect narrative intentions that make the storytelling idea of the song cycle indispensable from the concerto. The orchestra, like the pianist in Schumann’s songs, acts as a narrator that announces cyclic transformations and shows its sympathy to the soloist by setting the mood, responding to various musical contexts in the concerto, and concluding the unfinished story of the soloist in sections similar to piano’s preludes, interludes, and postludes in songs. Schumann’s orchestration brings these wordless instruments to engage in conversational soloist-orchestra interactions that are similar to how words are presented in dialogue-like passages between the voice and piano in songs.

Rediscovery of vocal-instrumental connections With the connections between concerto and song cycle shown in Schumann’s *Cello Concerto*, perhaps the long history of close vocal-instrumental music correspondence can be re-examined. By speaking the words through the concerto’s rhetoric
and having orchestral colors that bring the intimate vocal music alive, we see an inseparable whole between instrumental and vocal music. The piece can be seen as a continuation of the tradition of instrumental adaptations of vocal music from the Renaissance viol consort music to Schubert’s chamber works in the nineteenth century, the articulations of Baroque and Classical period instruments that echo singers, the influences of operas in Mozart’s instrumental music, as well as Beethoven’s idea of merging human voices with instruments in his *Ninth Symphony*. The study of the vocal influences in the *Cello Concerto* not only reminds instrumentalists the importance of re-understanding instrumental repertoire with the spirit of vocal music, but also refreshes singers to be once again aware of the orchestral colors of the piano part found in Schumann’s songs.

**Reconsideration of criticisms of Schumann’s late style** After looking again at Schumann’s late works, we can see affinities between the concerto and Schumann’s *Dichterliebe* which reflect great consistency in terms of musical depth, poetic associations, compositional skills, and creativity between the composer’s most popular early song cycle and the concerto written in his late period. Schumann’s masterful craftsmanship in the concerto’s structural architecture, harmonic subtleties, rhetorical qualities, and highly imaginative orchestration seem to be obvious in spite of previous criticisms and prejudices. Is it really justified to criticize the work simply because it is one of Schumann’s late works? And since the concerto also shares similarities with Schumann’s late songs such as *Op. 90*, No. 2 and *Op. 101*, No. 4, is it fair to criticize Schumann’s late songs in the same way?

The argument for criticizing Schumann’s late works has often been based on the claim that because the composer was out of his mind, his music written at the period was ‘crazy music’. According to Stephen Walsh, Wolf’s songs are the work of a madman, but this only helps define the word “madman” and is not necessarily valid in evaluating Wolf’s songs.\(^5\) In the same way, it is

---

important to be clear that it is not the same thing to judge a ‘mad’ Schumann, and to judge his late works themselves. John Worthen argues that fear of madness could be traced back to Schumann’s life in the 1830s, thus challenging the exclusive association of Schumann’s late style with madness. Rather than being an obstacle to Schumann’s creativity, this fear was an inspiration for the composer’s early song Der Spielmann in 1840. Worthen further argues that “there is no longer any reason to think that Schumann’s music was affected by psychological disorder or mental instability.” In fact, Schumann wrote some of his late works when he was probably in a relatively calm mental condition. Clara reported that the concerto calmed Schumann down, and that the demonic voices had turned “friendly” when the composer edited the concerto few days before his suicide attempt.

On the other hand, it is perhaps the constant struggle against his depression that created enormous inspiration for the late Schumann to compose master works; the need to express his personal struggle and the depth to explore extraordinary ideas would not have been so vivid and personal. Beethoven gave thanks after his illness composing the masterful late quartet work Op. 132 with a thanksgiving hymn in Lydian mode. Fryderyk Chopin was dying in England when he wrote the Cello Sonata in G minor, Op. 65 in 1846 which proved to be one of his last master works. After regaining consciousness from his dangerous operation in 1918, the first theme Edward Elgar would write was his Cello Concerto in E Minor’s first theme. Why do scholars not see Schumann’s Cello Concerto as a masterpiece written by an inspired composer who struggled bravely against his mental

---


7 Robert Schumann: Life and Death of a Musician, p. 389.

8 Laura Tunbridge, Schumann’s Late Style (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 121.
illness? Worthen notes that “he [Schumann] has gone on writing his own lucid music, in spite of what his voices said.”

Personal turmoil often inspires great works.

The question is what really makes Schumann’s late works awkward and difficult to understand? Laura Tunbridge points out that late works themselves are often explained as “untimely meditations, according to which view history had yet to catch up with the artist’s achievements …. Some, such as Ibsen or Beethoven, produced more intransigent late works not appreciated by their contemporaries but now considered to be their most profound and technically far-reaching.” Indeed, Schumann’s Cello Concerto has the unique, unprecedented qualities of his late style that points the genre of concerto towards the future. Technical challenges and musical difficulties of the concerto should not be an obstacle for us fully to appreciate the work’s musical value. As Alfred Nieman notes, “True, there are certain awkwardnesses, but Schumann can hardly be blamed for effectively separating the great cellists from those who are merely good.”

It is up to cellists, musicians, and scholars to decide whether they continue the criticisms of the nineteenth century, or move forward to explore the futuristic beauties of this Schumann’s late concerto with new understanding of the work and its vocal influences. In 2010, Schumann’s works were played everywhere to celebrate the composer’s bicentennial. There were thousands of performances of complete song cycles, his complete early piano works, and all four symphonies. However, it was probably difficult to find a concert featuring all the late songs, late choral works, his Requiem, his strongly criticized Violin Concerto, or overtures, or a performance of the Cello Concerto without using a gigantic orchestra.

---

9 Robert Schumann: Life and Death of a Musician, p. 389.

10 Schumann's Late Style, p. 5.

**Future directions**  As one of the most important nineteenth-century cello concertos written since those of Haydn and Boccherini, Schumann’s *Cello Concerto* has left a legacy of a fine fusion of poetic subtleties with traditional structure; a bold harmonic language that serves the narrative intentions; rhetorical characteristics that combine lyricism with declamation from the vocal genres; and colorful orchestration that parallels the conversing voice-piano relationship and texture from songs. John Worthen points out that Schumann was the first major composer to have written a cello concerto since Haydn.\(^\text{12}\) Tovey further notes that the concerto has been “brought to light in the present day by consummate musicianship and sense of beauty on the part of a leader among those violoncellists who refuse to confine the possibilities of their instruments to the obvious.”\(^\text{13}\) All these characteristics have certainly influenced the nineteenth and twentieth-century cello concertos of Saint-Saëns, Dvořák, and Elgar, as well as the *Double Concerto* of Brahms. Indeed, Schumann’s unique integration of the genres of concerto and song cycle featuring a soloistic vocal line with the orchestra in an intimate setting, would influence Mahler and Richard Strauss, among others, who indeed continued the path and wrote song cycles for solo voice(s) and orchestra in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Joan Chissell, in her *The Master Musicians: Schumann*, quotes Schumann’s view about having his works recognized by other people: “for it is not praise that causes his exultation, but joy that what he has felt himself finds harmonious echoes in men’s hearts.”\(^\text{14}\) Perhaps twenty-first-century musicians, scholars, and music lovers should put away unnecessary prejudices against Schumann so that some of the composer’s most valuable works can speak to their hearts again.

---

\(^{12}\) Robert Schumann: *Life and Death of a Musician*, p. 315.


BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Bibliography


2. The Composer


3. Schumann and Literature


4. Schumann’s Concertos


5. History of Cello Concertos


6. Historical Background of Schumann’s Cello Concerto


7. First performances, Early Receptions and Publications of the Cello Concerto


8. Interpretation of the Cello Concerto


9. Shostakovich's Re-orchestration of the Cello Concerto


11. Schumann’s Vocal Style


---. “Schumann’s Song Cycles: The Cycle within the Song.” *19th-Century Music*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (Spring, 1985), pp. 231-244.


12. Rhetoric in Music


14. Musical Scores

*Cello Concerto in A minor, Op. 129*


Schumann’s Songs


15. Audio Sources

Cello Concerto in A minor, Op. 129


Great Cello Concertos (CD: Sony, 1989). Yo-Yo Ma (cello), Jose Luis Garcia (conductor) and English Chamber Orchestra.

Pau Casals: Schumann (CD: Sony Classical, 1994). Pablo Casals (cello), Eugene Ormandy (conductor) and Prades Festival Orchestra.


Schumann: Piano Concerto, Cello Concerto (CD: Decca, 1974). Lynn Harrell (cello), Neville Marriner (conductor) and The Cleveland Orchestra.

Steven Isserlis Plays Schumann (CD: RCA Victor Red Seal, 1996). Steven Isserlis (cello), Christoph Eschenbach (conductor) and Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Neuss.
The Unknown Shostakovich. (CD: Chandos-9792, 2000). Alexander Ivashkin (cello), Valeri Polyansky (conductor) and Russian State Symphony Orchestra.

Dichterliebe, Op. 48

Robert Schumann Lieder (CD: Teldec, 1991). Peter Schreier (tenor) and Christoph Eschenbach (piano).

Schumann: Dichterliebe (CD: Deutsche Grammophon, 1997). Fritz Wunderlich (tenor) and Hubert Giesen (piano).

16. Video Sources


Schumann’s Lost Romance (VHS Tape: Bullfrog Films, 1997). Steve Ruggi (director) and Steven Isserlis (cellist).
## APPENDIX A: INTERPRETIVE PERFORMANCE SUGGESTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement</th>
<th>Measure no.</th>
<th>Performance suggestions</th>
<th>Narrative associations suggested by Ka-Wai Yu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>14, 18, 185 and 189</td>
<td>The septuplet rhythm of the quick arpeggios should not be changed into four sixteenth notes followed by triplets</td>
<td>Sharp heroism; virtuosic vocal coloratura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>6, 8, 17, 24 and 25</td>
<td>Accents should be articulated</td>
<td>Pain and sighing quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>The opening cello melody</td>
<td>Observe the soft ‘p’ dynamics indicated by the composer</td>
<td>Introvert personality: too much to express but can hardly speak them out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>Keep the original slur</td>
<td>Melancholic sigh of the Eusebius character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>26-29, 30-34, 197-200, and 201-205</td>
<td>Slight tempo freedom</td>
<td>Delivering an agitated speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>52, 54 and 56</td>
<td>Slight ‘diminuendo’ from the dissonant C toward the resolution B</td>
<td>Sighing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>59, 61, 63, 229 and 231</td>
<td>Accents should not be ignored</td>
<td>Self-interruption of the soloist; hesitating character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Developm ent section</td>
<td>Different versions of the C-Bb-A motif should be brought out distinctively</td>
<td>Inner disagreement, tension and instability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>165-175</td>
<td>Do not slow down too much</td>
<td>Wandering moment; constantly searching without finding the way</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>The ‘sf’ should be strong</td>
<td>Forcefulness of the soloist to arrive; articulate the ambiguity of the recapitulation’s timing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Whole movement</td>
<td>The rhythm of two against three should be brought out</td>
<td>A sense of timelessness for the dream-like aria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>296 and 298</td>
<td>Articulate the marking of ‘sf’</td>
<td>Forceful struggle of the soloist against the motto’s return</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>303-311</td>
<td>The suspensions in the double-stop passage should be brought out</td>
<td>Harmonic dissonance and resolution reflect a feeling of yearning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>‘Tempo I’ should be observed</td>
<td>Unfolding the contradiction between the co-existing first and second movement materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>323 and 325</td>
<td>Distinguish the difference between the quarter-note pickup in 323 and the eighth-note one in 325</td>
<td>The second motto return is more desperate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>367, 368,</td>
<td>The trill should be emphasized</td>
<td>Sarcastic laughs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>372 and 373</td>
<td>Bring out the cello-first violins and cello-woodwinds interactions</td>
<td>Conversations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>476-493</td>
<td>Sequences of rising and falling sixteenth arpeggios should not be played too short</td>
<td>Connect to each other as a long melody with charm, rather than discontinued and repetitive dry fragments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>430-434, 439-443, 634-638 and 643-648</td>
<td>The triplets of the solo part should be soft, but with the dots articulated</td>
<td>A moment of whispering</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix A (cont.)
APPENDIX B: LYRICS AND TRANSLATIONS OF DICHTERLIEBE

*Dichterliebe* by Heinrich Heine

I.

Im wunderschönen Monat Mai,
as alle Knospen sprangen,
da ist in meinem Herzen
die Liebe aufgegangen.

Im wunderschönen Monat Mai,
as alle Vögel sangen,
da hab' ich ihr gestanden
mein Sehnen und Verlangen.

II.

Aus meinen Tränen sprößt
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.

III.

Die Rose, die Lilie, die Taube, die Sonne,
die lieb' 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 Bronne,
ist Rose und Lilie und Taube und Sonne.
Ich liebe alleine
die Kleine, die Feine, die Reine, die Eine!

IV.

Wenn ich in deine Augen seh',
schwindet all' mein Leid und Weh!
Doch wenn ich küs
deinen Mund,
so werde 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.

V.

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'!

VI.

Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome,
da spiegelt sich in den Wasser
mit seinem großen Dome
das große, heilige Köln.

Im Dom da steht ein Bildhauß
auf goldenem Leder gemalt.
In meines Lebens Wildniß
hat's freundlich hineingestrahlt.

Es schweben Blumen und Eng'lein
um unsre liebe Frau;
die Augen, die Lippen, die Wäglein,
die gleichen der Liebsten genau.

VII.

Ich grolle nicht, und wenn das Herz auch bricht,
ewig verlor'nes Lieb! Ich grolle nicht.

Und wenn die Nacht in deines Herzens Nacht,
das weiß ich längst.

Ich grolle nicht, und wenn das Herz auch bricht.

Und wenn die Nacht in deines Herzens Nacht,
das weiß ich längst.


VIII.

Und wüßten's die Blumen, die kleinen,
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,
ersienen Sternelein,
sie kämen aus ihrer Höh,
sprüchen Trost mir ein.

Die alle können's nicht wissen,
nur Eine kennt meinen Schmerz;
sie hat ja selbst zerrissen,
zerrissen mir das Herz.

IX.

Das ist ein Flöten und Geigen,
Trompeten schmettern darein.
Da tanzt wohl die Hochzeitreigen
die Herzen liebsten mein.

Das ist ein Klingen und Dröhnen,
ein Pauken und ein Schalmein;
dazwischen schluchzen und stöhnen
die lieblichen Englein.

X.

Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen,
dass einst die Liebste sang,
so will mir die Brust zerspringen
vom wilden Schmerzendruck.

Es treibt mich ein dunkles Sehnen
hinauf zur Waldeshöf,
dort löst sich auf in Tränen
mein übergroßes Welt.
XI.
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 passieret,
dem bricht das Herz entzwei.

XII.
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 uns'rer Schwester nicht böse,
du trauriger, blasser Mann.

XIII.
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,
im Traum geweinet.
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.

XIV.
Allnächtlich im Traume seh' ich dich,
und sehe dich freundlich grüßen,
und lautaufweinend stürz' ich mich
to deinen süßen Füßen.

Du siehest mich an wehmütiglich
und schüttelst das blonde Köpfchen;
aus deinen Augen schleichen sich
die Perlkunftentröpfchen.

Du sagst mir heimlich ein leises Wort,
und gibst mir den Strauß von Zypressen.
Ich wache auf, und der Strauß ist fort,
und's Wort hab' ich vergessen.

XV.
Aus alten Märchen winkt es
hervor mit weißer Hand,
da singt es und da klingt es
von einem Zauberland;
wo bunte Blumen blühen
im gold'nen Abendlicht,
und lieblich duftend glühen
mit bräutlichem Gesicht;
Und grüne Bäume singen
uralte Melode'n,
die Lüfte himlich klingen,
und Vögel schmettern drein;

Und Nebelbilder steigen
wohl aus der Erd' hervor,
und tanzen luftigen Reigen
im wunderlichen Chor;

Und blaue Funken brennen
an jedem Blatt und Reis,
und rote Lichter rennen
im ihren, warten Kreis;

Und laute Quellen brechen
aus wildem Marmorstein,
und seltsam in den Bächen
strahlt fort der Widerschein.
Mit innigster Empfandung
Ach! könnt' ich dorthin kommen,
und dort mein Herz erfreu'n,
und aller Qual entnommen,
und frei und selig sein!

Ach! jenes Land der Wonne,
das seh' ich oft im Traum,
doch kommt die Morgensonne,
zerrißt's wie eitel Schaum.

XVI.
Die alten, bösen Lieder,
die Träume böse 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,
wie's Heidelberger Faß.

Und holt eine Totenbahre,
von Bretter fest und dick;
daß sie sein noch länger,
als zu Mainz die Brück'.

Und holt mir auch zwölf Riesen,
die müssen noch stärker sein
als wie der starke Christoph
im Dom zu Köln am Rhein.

Die sollen den Sarg fortragen,
und senken ihn's Meer hinab;
denn solchem großen Sarge
gehührt ein großes Grab.

Wüßt ihr warum der Sarg wohl
so groß und schwer mag sein?
Ich senke' auch meine Liebe
Und meinen Schmerz hinein.
English translation from Sir Robert Randolph Garran’s
Schubert and Schumann: Songs and Translations

I.
In beautifullest month of May,
When all the buds were breaking,
Within my heart a wonder---
Was love also awaking.

In beautifullest month of May,
When all the birds were trilling,
I told her my heart’s secret, My yearning and my thrilling!

II.
My tears all turn to flowers,
And blossom in beautiful vales;
My sighs are changed to music
Of many nightingales.

And if thou wilt love me, darling,
All the flowers to thee belong,
And the nightingale at thy window
Shall sing to thee her song.

III.
The rose and the lily, the sun and the dove,
I loved them all once with the bliss of love.
I love them no more, I love but her only,
The holy, the lowly, the lovely, the lonely;
Herself the fount of every love---
The rose and the lily, the sun and the dove.
I love but her only,
The holy, the lovely, the lonely, The only!

IV.
When into thy dear eyes I gaze,
Then grief departs and pain delays,
And when thy very mouth I kiss,
I am made whole with perfect bliss
And when I lean upon thy breast,
Steals o’er my heart a heavenly rest;
But if thou say, thou lov’st me---
I fall to weeping bitterly.

V.
I will dip my soul and wreathe it
In the lily’s chalice there;
The lily shall sweetly breathe it
In song of my fairest fair.

The song shall thrill and shiver
As shiver’d and thrill’d the kiss
She gave me once, sweet giver,
In a wonderful hour of bliss.

VI.
In Rhine, Our holy river,
Is mirror’d there in the wave
High holy Köln a-quiver,
With high cathedral nave.

Inside there is a painting,
On gilded leather limn’d;
On me, forlorn and fainting,
Its friendly radiance stream’d.

Mid flowers and angel-creatures
Our Lady sits above;
The eyes, the lips,
The lips, the features,
Are wondrously like my love.

VII.
I’ll not complain, though break my heart in twain,
Love ever lost to me,
Love ever lost to me, I’ll not complain,
I’ll not complain.

Where thou dost gleam, ablaze with diamonds bright,
There falls no beam upon thy heart’s deep night.

I knew it long.
I’ll not complain, though break my heart in twain.

In dreams I saw thee plain,
And saw the night within thy heart’s domain,
And saw the serpent there that eats thy heart,
Saw how unhappy, O my love, thou art.

I’ll not complain, I’ll not complain.

VIII.
And O if the flowers but knew it,
How deeply hurt is my heart,
They’d weep with me to rue it,
And heal my cruel smart.

And did the nightingales know it,
How sad and sorry am I,
They would, for a hapless poet,
Their soothing song lift high.

And if they knew my story,
The little stars of gold,
They all would come down from glory,
And bid me be consoled.

They cannot know it—’tis token;
One only can know my pain;
And she herself has broken,
Broken my heart in twain.

IX.
There’s flute and fiddle a-skirling
And trumpets’ blare and din;
In wedding dance is whirling
The heart of my heart within.

There is a shrilling and droning
Of kettle-drum and horn;
Where my good angels mourn.

X.
When I hear others singing
The song my darling sang,
I feel through my torn heart winging
A deadly arrow-pang.

Then up to the forest mountains
Dark longings bid me go,
And there is loosed in fountains
My overbrimming woe.

XI.
A lover loves a maiden,
Who long for another has sigh’ed;
That other loves another
And carries her home for his bride.

The maiden weds in anger
The first, the likeliest one
Who falls in her way to woo her;
Her lover is woebegone.

It is such an old old story,
Yet bides it ever new;
And he who last came by it,
His heart is broke in two.

XII.
A sunshiny summer morning
All through my garden I stray;
There whisper and prattle the flowers,
But I go dumb alway.

There whisper and prattle the flowers,
And me in pity they scan;
“Be not unkind to our sister,
Thou sorrowful, haggard man!”

XIII.
In dream I lay a weeping,
I dreamt, in the grave thou didst lie.
I waked again, and the tear drops
Still ran from my streaming eye.

In dream I lay a weeping,
I dreamt thou forsookest me.
I waked again, and awaken’d
Awhile wept bitterly.

In dream I lay a weeping,
I dreamt thou wert kind to me still.
I waked again, and yet ever
Streams down the deep tear-rill.

XIV.
Each night-time in dreamland thee I see,
And see thy friendly, friendly greeting;
And weeping loud I humble me
Before thy feet, my sweeting.

Thou gazest on me sorrowfully,
And shakest, shakest thy fair head chiding;
The tear-drop pearls are sliding.

Thou speaks me softly one word alone,
And giv’st me a bunch, a bunch of cypress;
And the word — I have forgotten.

XV.
From realms of ancient story
Beckons a snow-white hand;
There’s singing of the glory
Of some far wonderland,

Where giant flowers are yearning
In golden even-light,
And tenderly upturning
Bride-faces exquisite;

And green trees all are singing
Their ancient melodies,
The birds’ clear notes are ringing,
And softly sights the breeze;

And cloudlets, light as feather,
Lift slowly in the air,
And dance along together
Their wondrous dances there;

And blue sparks brightly flicker
On every leaf and spray
And ruddy gleams still flicker
About the tangled way;

And laughing leaping fountains
From rugged marble break,
And wondrously the mountains
Are mirror’d in the lake.

Ah! Ah!
Ah, could I but come thither,
And there my heart renew,
Bid all my anguish wither,
Be free and happy too!

Ah, that fair land of seeming,
Where oft in dreams I roam!
The morning sun comes gleaming,
It melts away like foam.

XVI.
The olden songs and ugly,
The dreams of spite and hate,
Now let them all be buried;
Bringing me a coffin great.

There’s much to lay within it,
But what, I tell to none;
The coffin must be bigger
Than Heidelberg’s big tun.

And bring me a bier for the coffin,
Of planking thick and strong;
The great bridge o’er the river
At Mainz is not so long.

And bring me now twelve giants,
Who needs must be stouter all
Than Christopher the sainted
In Köln’s Rhine-Minster tall.

They shall the coffin carry
And sink it beneath the sea;
For such a mighty coffin
A mighty grave must be.

And know ye, why the coffin
Must be so deep and wide?
I laid my love within it,
And all my grief beside.
APPENDIX C: PROJECT RECITAL HOUSE PROGRAM

DOCTORAL PROJECT RECITAL

Ka-Wai Yu, cello
Sun-Young Shin, violin
Hyunjung Choi, violin
Maureen Murchie, viola
Benjamin Hayek, cello

Smith Memorial Hall
Memorial Room
Sunday, March 27, 2011
3:00 pm

Dichterliebe, Op. 48
Transcribed for cello and string quartet by Ka-Wai Yu

I. im wunderschönen Monat Mai
II. Aus meinen Tränen sprühen
V. Ich will meine Seele tauchen
VI. im Rhein, im heiligen Strom
VIII. Und tiefere's die Blumen, die kleinen
X. Hör’ ich das Liedchen klingen
XII. Am leuchtenden Sommernachtern
XVI. Die alten, blassen Lieder

Cello Concerto in A Minor, Op. 129
Transcribed for cello and string quartet by Ka-Wai Yu

Nicht zu schnell
Langsam
Sehr lebhaft

This recital is given in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts in Cello Performance and Literature. Ka-Wai Yu is a student of Professor Brandon Vamos.
APPENDIX D: PROJECT RECITAL PROGRAM NOTES

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

Dichterliebe, Op. 48

The song cycle Dichterliebe, Op. 48 (“Poet’s Love”) was written in 1840, the year known as Robert Schumann’s ‘Year of the Lied’, in which the composer wrote a total of 168 songs with lyrics by poets Goethe, Eichendorff, Heine, and Rückert, among others. Dichterliebe is one of the most well-known song cycles written by Schumann besides his Frauenliebe und leben, Op. 42 and Liederkreis, Op. 39. It was inspired by Heinrich Heine’s Lyrisches Intermezzo of 1822-1823, a collection of 66 short lyric poems. While Schumann composed a total of twenty songs for the poems, only sixteen of them appeared in the first edition of the cycle published by Peters (Leipzig) in 1844. Although most frequently performed by the male voice, the work was dedicated to soprano Wilhelmine Schröder-Devrient.

The sixteen songs of Dichterliebe tell a story of unrequited love and longing, creating a drama that has autobiographical significance. Schumann struggled to marry prodigy pianist Clara Wieck despite the objection from Clara’s father. The cycle was composed months prior to the eventual victory in favor of the marriage in August 1840, after a severe court battle fought between Schumann and Clara’s father. The stresses and roadblocks of a tough romance led Schumann to turn to poetry and song, which seemed to become an inspiration for some of Schumann’s most successful vocal compositions.

The typical irony of Heine’s poems can be found in the Lyrisches Intermezzo as well as reflected in Schumann’s Dichterliebe. The natural, sensitive poetical affections of Heine’s poems are spoken in Schumann’s declamatory settings, sung in his lyricism, and expressed in a harmonic language that features liberty with dissonances and tonal ambiguities. Schumann adapts the words of the poems to his needs for the songs and reflects his personal involvements in the text. Dichterliebe is therefore an integral artistic work apart from the Lyrisches Intermezzo. While the 16 songs in Dichterliebe are tied with cyclic returns of thematic materials, they do not necessarily follow one another in the chronological order of narrative events. This performance features eight song selections from the cycle.

I. Im wunderschönen Monat Mai expresses the poet’s yearning for his beloved one in the month of May. Tonal ambiguity in the song reflects doubts and hesitations, where the A major tonality of the solo cello disagrees with the F# minor string quartet accompaniment. While II. Aus meinen Tränen sprießen clearly stays in A major portraying the more optimistic feeling of the poet, the unresolved ending of each solo phrase sounds questioning rather than assuring. V. Ich will meine Seele tauchen seems to be a song of urgency with shivering 3-second notes in the quartet pushing the chromatic solo line forward. VI. Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome has constant imitations between each part like waves that
drown the poet’s lost love. The descending solo line in VIII. Und wüßten’s die Blumen, die kleinen expresses sadness in lost love, where the sneaky, soft 3second notes reflect the poet’s inner struggle. X. Hör’ ich das Liedchen klingen brings back longing memories of the first song, but in a dreamy atmosphere now reflected in the wider spacing of pitches. XII. Am leuchtenden Sommernorgen has a transparent texture, slow tempo, and narrow register in the solo part that seems to portray the poet’s yearning from a distance. The emotionally intense opening of the C# minor last song XVI. Die alten, bösen Lieder has a heavy texture that may reflect the burden of the poet’s unrequited love. When the intensity is released in the ‘Adagio’ section, the accompaniment however, tells its own story without the resigned soloist. The quartet plays an extended postlude alone that brings back memories of previous songs in the enharmonic key of Db major, as if the longing is returned but transformed.

Cello Concerto in A Minor, Op. 129

Nicht zu schnell
Langsam
Sehr lebhaft

Schumann composed his Cello Concerto in A Minor, Op. 129 during a two-week period in October 1850, shortly after moving with his wife Clara from Dresden to Düsseldorf where he had accepted the post of city music director. Despite being cautioned by his friend Mendelssohn about the city’s notorious mistreatment of musicians, Schumann seemed to enjoy the life there in the beginning and was warmly welcomed by the musicians of the Düsseldorf orchestra and choir. 1850-1851 was a prolific period for Schumann. Just four months of his tenure at Düsseldorf, he wrote his Op. 90 songs based on Lenau’s texts, the piano works Bunte Blätter, Op. 99 and Albumblätter, Op. 124, sketches of the Overture to Schiller’s Braut von Messina, Op. 100, and the well-received Third Symphony, Op. 97. It was at this happy moment when the Cello Concerto, Op. 129 was written.

While everything seemed to work well for a fine start, it was not long when the situation turned sour. Schumann’s lack of experiences and mentality as a conductor and his frequent irritability created a rift with the musicians that would eventually cost his job. External career crisis was aggravated with Schumann’s deteriorating mental health. Schumann had serious auditory hallucinations in February 1854. His wife Clara reports about one horrible night: “The doctors put him into bed…he got up again and started making corrections in the cello concerto, feeling that this might relieve him of the interminable sound of the voices.” This revised version of the concerto was sent to the publisher on February 21 or six days before Schumann’s suicide attempt to throw himself into River Rhine.

The concerto was not inspired by a particular performer, although Schumann had unsuccessfully worked with cellists Robert Bockmühl, Wilhelm Forberg, and Christian Reimers on the piece. One possible inspiration for this composition came from a special affection the composer reserved for the cello throughout his life. When a finger injury in 1832 ended his professional career as a pianist, he enjoyed for a short time with the cello as a musical outlet saying ‘I will take up the violoncello
again which besides is very useful for symphonic composition.’ Though Schumann never mastered the instrument, his familiarity with it is evident in the work.

The concerto was published by Breitkopf & Härtel in 1854, but was not given its first public performance until June 1860. Schumann refers the concerto as a “concert piece for the cello with orchestral accompaniment.” The miniature scale and light orchestral texture of the work certainly reflect such concept in which the orchestra at no time overpowers the soloist. While the soloist is given every chance to display a full tone and technical virtuosity, virtuosity is always subordinated to the musical expression. Schumann proposed a string quartet-accompanied version of the concerto to his publisher in 1853 but was rejected. Today’s performance of the transcribed concerto for the intimate chamber setting of cello and string quartet may help performers and audience re-capture the spirit of the composer’s ‘concert piece’ intention.

The Cello Concerto is composed of three interconnected movements to be performed without a break. The opening three pizzicato chords carry the cyclic motif of E-A-C that would recur throughout the concerto like a motto. Unlike the traditional concerto structure of having an extended orchestral exposition, the soloist enters right after a four-measure introduction of the accompanying quartet. The soloist states the intense first theme derived from the motto that is growingly declamatory. Following a strong orchestral interlude, the C major second theme arrives with a more animated character. In the development section, rhapsodic material is further developed and the first theme re-appears in various tonal areas, followed by the recapitulation in the original key.

A return of the opening motto acts as a subtle connection that bridges the intense first movement with the lyrical F major second movement. This ternary-form slow movement has a pastoral duet beautifully shared between the soloist and a secondary solo line played by the lower strings (originally written for solo of the accompanying orchestra’s principal cellist). Some of the most imaginative moments in the concerto can be found in the lullaby-like middle section that features suspensions from cello double-stops. Another motto return brings in a transitional section that ends the tranquil second movement. Then, an agitated recitative arrives and is then followed by a short cello cadenza, before resolving into the finale.

The playful sonata-rondo finale begins with a humorous gesture of three staccato chords followed by rising arpeggios. The second theme continues the light-hearted character with a more lyrical tendency. The lively development section shows constant passing around of the thematic fragments between the soloist and string quartet. The concerto is finished up with an accompanied cadenza that recalls materials of previous movements and a brilliant coda.
Gut Strings and Playing without Endpin

Today’s performance features the use of a mixture of gut and non-gut strings. While steel and metal strings have been used since the nineteenth century, evidence has shown that the use of pure gut strings and a mixture of gut core with windings of other materials such as tungsten and aluminum remained popular until the first half of the twentieth century. Gut strings have the delicate and refined sound qualities that provide nuances for an intimate chamber music setting, which fits today’s quartet-accompanied version of the concerto. The less metallic and more nasal sound of gut strings has affinities to human voice more than steel and metal strings, a condition that facilitates an instrumental re-creation of the poetic voice found in *Dichterliebe*.

The endpin was invented for acoustic enhancement and comfort in cello playing. The performance practice of playing without an endpin, however, was still common in the nineteenth century. As shown in the figure below, Christian Reimers, who was Principal Cellist of Schumann’s Düsseldorf orchestra and played through the *Cello Concerto* for the composer, did not play with an endpin. Holding the cello between the legs without the use of endpin undoubtedly mutes the resonance of the instrument slightly. While it would be a challenge for a cellist to do this against a huge orchestra in large concert halls, this practice would work well for nineteenth-century chamber music making, in which performances were often held in a small room. The use of such practice in today’s performance may recapture the spirit of cello playing in Schumann’s time.

APPENDIX E: TRANSCRIPTIONS OF SCHUMANN’S CELLO CONCERTO AND DICHTERLIEBE FOR CELLO AND STRING QUARTET

The Transcriptions

The transcriptions of Schumann’s Cello Concerto and songs I, II, V, VI, VIII, X, XII, XVI from Dichterliebe for cello solo and string quartet are an integral part of my doctoral thesis “When Concerto meets Song Cycle: A Study of Vocal Influences in Schumann’s Cello Concerto in A minor, Op. 129, with reference to his Dichterliebe.”

There are several important reasons for the importance of the transcriptions. First of all, the transcription of the concerto produces an edition originally imagined by the composer. According to Joachim Draheim in his “Das Cellokonzert a-Moll op. 129 von Robert Schumann: neue Quellen und Materialien,” Schumann proposed a string quartet-accompanied arrangement of the concerto to his publisher Breitkopf and Härtel in November 15, 1853 but was rejected. Since this intended quartet version has not been realized yet in publication and performance, more unknown musical qualities of the piece including those related to vocal influences intended by Schumann, can be unfolded through my attempt. The transcription allows cellists, scholars, musicians, and others to experience the chamber setting of the concerto mentioned in the thesis, a context closer to lieder than to grand symphonic works. The string quintet texture takes a step further to sing the song without words and to speak the musical poem of the concerto which then can be compared with a similar intimate setting of voice and piano found in Schumann’s German Lieder and song cycles.

The transcription of songs I, II, V, VI, VIII, X, XII, XVI from the Dichterliebe for cello and quartet allows a closer look at the affinities of Schumann’s song cycle music to cello music in a chamber setting. By replacing the vocal part with the cello, it opens our imagination about how vocal music ideas can be interpreted by the cello, which might be related to the Cello Concerto. Just as Schubert’s rearrangement of his own song material creates the famous chamber works of Piano Quintet in A Major ‘The Trout’, D. 667 and String Quartet in D minor ‘Death and the Maiden,’ D. 810, I will extend the standard cello repertoire by transcribing Schumann’s Dichterliebe for cello and string quartet in a similar way, enabling us to examine connections between vocal and cello repertoire.

Last but not least, a recital of the transcriptions combines scholarly research with performance realization. As a performer, the project recital shows how my new understanding of the concerto through research can influence, inspire, and re-create my interpretation of the concerto in performance. In turn, my performance in the recital will provide ample opportunity to justify the practicality of my discussion of vocal influences in the concerto.

In terms of performance practice, it was common in the nineteenth century to have piano concertos arranged for piano and string quartet such as Chopin’s piano concertos in salon concerts. There was a tradition of arranging Mozart’s operas for chamber ensembles as well. Performing Schumann’s Cello Concerto with string quartet will re-create for the audience the intimacy and chamber sound world that one would hear in Schumann’s time, which in turn may be a reflection of vocal influences. A recital of instrumental music played with vocal influences in mind and vocal music adapted by the instrument will let audience evaluate the connections between vocal and instrumental music, a key point in my project.
Cello Concerto in A Minor, Op. 129

Robert Schumann (arr. Ka-Wai Yu)

Nicht zu schnell \((q = 130)\)

Violoncello

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

Vc.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Vc.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Vc.
281
Langsam ($\text{j} = 63$)

Mit Ausdruck

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

287

p dolce

p dolce

p dolce

p dolce

arco

pizz.

pizz.

pizz.

pizz.

163
Etwas lebhafter

Tempo I

ritard.

Schneller
Schneller und schneller

Sehr lebhaft ($q=114$)
Dichterliebe, Op. 48
I. Im wunderschönen Monat Mai

Heinrich Heine
Robert Schumann (arr. Ka-Wai Yu)

Langsam, zart
II. Aus meinen Tränen sprießen
V. Ich will meine seele tauchen

Leise

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{pizz.} & : \quad \text{p} \\
\text{arco} & : \quad \text{pp} \\
\text{pizz.} & : \quad \text{PP}
\end{align*} \]

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{arco} & : \quad \text{pp} \\
pizz. & : \quad \text{pp}
\end{align*} \]

196
VI. Im Rhein, im heiligen Strome

Ziemlich langsam
VIII. Und wüßten's die Blumen, die Kleinen
X. Hör' ich das Liedchen klingen

Langsam

[Music notation]

42

[Music notation]
62

65

ritard.

pizz.

sf

arco

arco
XII. Am leuchtenden Sommermorgen

Ziemlich langsam
Langsamer

sul tasto e meno vibrato

pp

sul tasto e meno vibrato

pp

sul tasto e meno vibrato

pp

sul tasto e meno vibrato

pp
XVI. Die alten, bösen Lieder

98 Ziemlich langsam

103