

The Creative Art of Clara Schumann (1819-1896)

by

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Preface

Clara Schumann (1819-1896) occupied a major position in the nineteenth-century musical world. For over half a century, Clara was indisputably one of the foremost pianists of her time, and she enjoyed a fame comparable to that of leading piano virtuosi Franz Liszt (1811-1886), Anton Rubenstein (1829-1894) and Sigismond Thalberg (1812-1871). Edward Hanslick described a concert in 1856 as leaving 'an impression of pure satisfaction experienced when an ideal project is realized harmoniously'.¹ Her programmes were distinguished by an innovative and sensitive planning. In particular, she premiered new works by Johannes Brahms (1833-1897), Frederic Chopin (1810-1847) and Robert Schumann (1810-1856), as well as performances of several sonatas by Beethoven that had never been heard publicly. Thus she helped to create a wide and appreciative audience for these works. Her performing career was one of the longest sustained during the nineteenth century, lasting from 1828 to 1891 and including over 1,300 public recitals.

Clara Schumann's enormous achievements as a pianist are well known today and may be said to be the most outstanding aspect of her artistic career. She is often mentioned in music history books, first and foremost as a pianist, second as a dedicated wife of Robert Schumann, and third as the object of Johannes Brahms' lifelong affection. Her musical reputation remained that of pianist, wife, and devoted friend of Brahms until fairly recently when attention was finally focused on the fact that Clara Schumann was also a conscientious composer.

The fact that Clara Schumann's artistic talents extended to the area of composition brings to the fore an important aspect of her career and offers an added dimension for consideration in the rich life of this great artist. The life of Clara Schumann has been the subject of several biographies, the first of which was based on the reports and diaries of Clara's eldest daughter Marie, as recorded by Berthold Litzmann in 1902 and later translated by Grace Hadow in 1913 in Clara Schumann: an Artist's Life. The recent scholarship of Beatrix Borchard, Joan Chissell, Nancy Reich and Pamela Susskind has, in addition to an updated biographical research, made Clara Schumann the composer known to the world of music and has deepened my regard for this noble artist and woman. The material for this study is based on the scholarly detail of these biographies where the sources are entries from the published and unpublished diaries, letters, and inscriptions on the manuscripts and first editions in the Robert-Schumann-Haus, Zwickau and the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin. Further information on her creative work is based on research into the most recently available editions of her music.

Clara Schumann herself did not feel that she was particularly gifted as a composer. She clearly saw her talents as inferior to those of her husband and her friend Brahms. Her admission that she could not take herself seriously as a composer leads one to examine the social climate for women composers in nineteenth-century Germany.

As in the case of Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel (1805-1847), women composers were rarely taken seriously unless they also happened to be exceptional performers, in which case it was permissible to include one's

own work in recital programmes. However, reviews which contained such remarks as 'considering the composer is a lady...' ² were not infrequent. Naturally women composers often felt insecure about the quality of their work.

Clara considered herself first an interpreter and artist; second, a wife and mother; and third, a composer. Interestingly enough, she rejected the belief that, as a woman she should centre her life around motherhood and domesticity. Her concert appearances continued throughout her eight pregnancies, and when her own emotional and financial needs became greatest (during occasions of illness and death in her family), she found a solace as well as a welcome income in her teaching and performing. It is important to note that she was not a feminist in the modern sense of the word. She had little interest in women's rights or the struggle for recognition that other creative German women were beginning to launch in the mid-nineteenth century. Clara concentrated on her own career and her many obligations, never shirking any responsibility as she endeavoured to reconcile those conflicts that inevitably arise when a woman steps out of her conventional place.

This study brings to the fore the creative art of Clara Schumann and allows her compositions to share in the spotlight with other aspects of her artistic career. In order to gain an understanding and insight into this particular area of her life it is necessary to take a look at the musical currents of her time and the main influences on her art. An examination of her creative work will assess the validity of her music and place her in perspective within the framework of nineteenth-century musical life.

The house style conforms to that of the Music Department of St Patrick's College, Maynooth.

Part I

**Clara Schumann As an Artist and Musician
of the Nineteenth Century**

Chapter 1

Biographical Summary

- 1819 Birth of Clara Josephine Wieck on 13 September, the eldest of four children to Friedrich Wieck (1785-1873), pedagogue, amateur pianist and owner of a Leipzig piano firm, and Marianne Tromlitz (1797-1872), a gifted singer and performer in Leipzig.
- 1824 Mme Wieck leaves her husband, seeking divorce. Clara Wieck assigned to the care of her father. (In Saxon Law, children are the property of their father.) Clara begins formal piano lessons with her father on 27 October, soon to be followed by daily lessons in theory, harmony, counterpoint, composition, singing and violin.
- 1828 Robert Schumann (1810-1856) arrives in Leipzig and studies with Wieck.
- Marriage of Friedrich Wieck and Clementine Fechner on 3 July.
- Wieck household becomes a centre for publishers, writers and musicians for whom Clara performs.
- First public appearance in Leipzig Gewandhaus as assisting artist on 20 October.
- Writes her first piano composition Quatre polonaises op.1

- 1830 Robert Schumann comes to live with Wieck family. Clara gives first Gewandhaus concert as solo artist on 8 November.
- 1831-32 Clara and her father begin extended concert tour, travelling throughout Germany and performing in Paris.
- 1831-34 Clara composes several piano pieces opp.2-4 (published by the firm of Hofmeister: Leipzig). Performs extensively in Leipzig.
- 1835 Robert Schumann begins courtship of Clara Wieck. Clara acclaimed throughout Europe as a gifted child prodigy. Her admirers include Berlioz, Chopin, Goethe, Grillparzer (whose poem Clara Wieck und Beethoven appeared in Vienna in 1837),¹ Liszt, Mendelssohn, Paganini and Schumann.
- 1837 First concert tour of Vienna.
Schumann asks Friedrich Wieck for permission to marry his daughter. A fierce battle ensues because Wieck considers it an unsuitable match.
- 1838 After second Viennese tour, Clara is nominated to the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde and appointed Kammer

Virtuosin to the Austrian Court, an honour rarely bestowed on a foreigner, particularly one so young. The press compares her to Liszt and Thalberg.

- 1836-39** Clara composes most of her piano works and reaches op.II. Publishers include Haslinger, Diabelli and Plechetti in Vienna, and Breitkopf & Härtel in Leipzig.
- 1840** Last concert as Clara Wieck in Weimer on 5 September. Marriage of Robert Schumann and Clara Wieck on 12 September, one day before her twenty-first birthday, after winning a bitter court battle to combat her father's refusal. The couple settle in Leipzig.
- 1840-43** Composition and publication of Lieder op.12 which were subsequently issued with her husband's op.37: Gedichte aus Liebesfrühling (Ruckert).
- 1841** First concert as Clara Schumann at the Gewandhaus on 31 March.
Birth of Marie, the first of eight children on 1 September.
- 1842** Touring continues, as far north as Copenhagen.
- 1843** Birth of second child, Elise on 25 April.
- 1844** Concert tour with Robert to Russia from the 25 January

to 30 May.

Clara and Robert move to live in Dresden on 13 December.

- 1845-49** Birth of Julie (11 March 1845), Emil (8 February 1846, d. 22 June 1847), Ludwig (20 January 1848), Ferdinand (16 July 1849).
- 1850** Family leaves Dresden on 31 March for new employment in Düsseldorf when Robert was appointed music director of Düsseldorf orchestra.
- 1851** Birth of Eugenie (1 December 1851).
- 1853** Publication by Breitkopf & Härtel of many of her piano works.
Schumann dismissed as music director of Düsseldorf orchestra.
Johannes Brahms aged twenty first visits the Schumann household in September. Subsequently he becomes Clara's lifetime friend and admirer.
- 1854** Birth of Felix (16 February 1854).
Robert Schumann's mental collapse and exile to the asylum at Endenich in March where he remains until his death on 29 June 1856.
- 1854-64** Clara Schumann begins extensive concert tours to Vienna,

Prague, Budapest, England and Russia.

Resettles family in Berlin in October 1857, also acquires a summer home in Baden-Baden.

- 1870s** Series of family tragedies, including the deaths of two children, Julie (10 November 1872) and Felix (16 February 1879) also the deaths of her mother, Marianne Bargiel (10 March 1872) and father (6 October 1873).
- 1877** Clara begins work as editor of Robert Schumann's piano works.
- 1878** Resettles family in Frankfurt and becomes principal piano teacher at the Hoch Conservatory, 1878-93.
- 1883** Clara begins work as editor of Instructive Edition of Robert Schumann's piano works.
- 1891** Last public appearance in Frankfurt, performing Brahms's Variations on a Theme of Haydn op.56.
- 1896** Clara Schumann suffers a stroke on 26 March and dies on 20 May.

Chapter 2

Musical Currents of Her Time

Clara Schumann's life as a concert artist parallels the history of concert life in the nineteenth century. Her lengthy career on the concert stage spanned over sixty years, beginning with her debut at the Leipzig Gewandhaus in 1830 and closing with her last public performance in Frankfurt in 1891. This career reveals a knowledge of programming traditions, repertoire, customs, the role of women in concert life and changes in musical standards and taste. In each of these spheres Clara Schumann had a decisive influence. Her perseverance and stamina throughout these years are legendary. Her ability to study and introduce works to the public, to maintain her position and popularity despite many personal tragedies was due to her talent, determination and discipline, and in no small part to her father's genius as a teacher and his obsession with her career; this debt she always acknowledged.

Friedrick Wieck was an ambitious and avaricious father who was determined to make a concert pianist out of Clara, a goal he pursued relentlessly but with a great deal of pedagogical acumen. He also made sure that she avoided a one-sided concentration on the piano, and had her study theory and harmony with Theodor Wienlig, cantor at the church of St Thomas in Leipzig, composition with Heinrich Dorn and Carl Gottlieb Reissiger, and voice with Johann Aloys Miksch. She also learned the rudiments of violin playing. She obtained a broad and well-rounded

musical education which far surpassed the training usually given to women in her day. Clara toured extensively with her father, who proved to be a clever and efficient manager. As mentioned earlier her playing was admired and praised by the great personalities of the day. Her brilliant success brought her great fame and also considerably increased Wieck's prestige as a piano teacher. He was to remain Clara's foremost guide for many years; she willingly placed herself in his hands, and was emotionally and artistically dependent on him. Her subsequent separation from him was all the more painful.

Programming Traditions:

In the first third of the nineteenth century, the concert public expected a piano virtuoso not only to interpret the works of other composers, but also, and more importantly, to perform his or her own works. This explains why Wieck encouraged Clara to compose at an early age. Her training had given her the technical means, and she also showed a natural talent and interest. Her op.1 Quatre polonaises for piano was published by Friedrich Hofmeister in Leipzig in 1831. During the following years she wrote nothing but dazzlingly virtuosic pieces for her instrument, including the Piano Concerto in A Minor op.7.

Clara's early programmes were arranged by her father in the typical manner of those given in the 1830s by virtuoso pianists in all the major cities of Europe. Inherited from the late eighteenth century was the tradition of a diversified concert programme which would appeal to the new middle-class audiences who paid for an evening of musical entertainment. Clara's first public appearances, other than those when she played concertos, were shared concerts, at which she would alternate solo

works with a group of supporting artists, singers, instrumentalists or perhaps a small ensemble.

The tradition of playing with assisting artists is said to have ended officially when Liszt gave what is now considered to be the first solo recital, in London in 1840. Clara Schumann soon began to experiment with this concept. However, she was not able to break entirely with tradition, as audiences continued to expect a variety of performers, and Clara, like her father, always kept the demands of the public in mind. The practice of using assisting artists in the early nineteenth century resulted in programmes which comprised a mixture of many genres. A sonata or sonata movement, variations on a theme, songs, a symphony, arias, declamations, instrumental and vocal duos were all combined in the form of a musical variety show. By the middle of the century, Clara Schumann's programmes showed more integration. There was still a mixture of works on the orchestral programmes in which she was an invited artist, but on her own programmes of the 1850s and 1860s works were grouped by composer and fewer genres were presented. By 1880, Clara's programmes were shorter in length, and this allowed for greater concentration on each work.

Repertoire:

For Friedrich Wieck, concerts had two purposes: to impress audiences with his own and his daughter's talents and to fill the halls by presenting what the public was accustomed to hear. From the early stages of Clara's career her father, who was an astute businessman, knew very well that only virtuosity and self-display lured the public at large; consequently her platform repertory until she was sixteen predominantly represented Czerny,

Field, Herz, Hummel, Hüntten, Kalkbrenner, Moscheles and Pixis, together with a few short pieces of her own. Many of these early works have disappeared, but if her extant works are a reliable guide, we may assume that the first piano pieces were popular crowd-pleasers, technically showy, in the style of the works she performed. But enrolment in the mid-1830s as an honorary member of Schumann's fictitious Davidsbund opened her eyes to the brave new world for which his recently founded magazine, the Neue Zeitschrift für Musik, was fighting. Within a few years, and while still under Wieck's aegis, Clara began to develop a new style. This change over not only occurs in her repertoire but also in her creative work. In her later teens she began to explore a very different kind of music in private, and even risked some of it in public. By the time her name had changed to Clara Schumann she was fully prepared to play her own part in the avowed aims of Robert's magazine: 'the awakening of interest in the forgotten past and the hastening of the dawn of a new poetic age'.¹

By 1840, the year of her marriage, concert practices had changed; it was no longer essential for a concert artist to feature his or her own music or to improvise. Moreover Clara, who never exhibited much pride in her own work, was now eager to introduce and play the music of her husband. Her own compositions, however, were not totally neglected: the programmes of many of her concerts after 1840 list at least one work by Clara Schumann, usually a short piano piece or song. The display pieces all but disappeared from her programmes, and the principal works are those written for keyboard by Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Chopin, Mendelssohn, Mozart, Schubert and Schumann.

The influence of her husband was an important factor with regard to the change in her repertoire. She loved and believed in Schumann's music, and once they were married, she felt her primary mission was to present these works to the public, particularly in as much as Robert himself could not do so. This partnership was implicit in their marriage. Moreover, her sphere of knowledge was enlarged by their common studies of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier, Beethoven's symphonies and the chamber works of Haydn and Mozart.

Their friendship and close ties with Mendelssohn also stimulated changes in her repertoire. Mendelssohn's perfectionism had raised standards of playing and programming, and his revival of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach prompted the study and performances of his works. Clara played several Bach works with Mendelssohn, firstly as the young Clara Wieck and later as Madame Schumann.²

Throughout the 1840s, Schumann's editorials and reviews in the Neue Zeitschrift affected the thinking and taste of a large number of music lovers, particularly in northern Germany, and audiences were thus better prepared for a new repertoire.

During Clara Schumann's lifetime she was often described as a 'priestess', by Brahms, Hanslick, Liszt, Schumann and many others. The appellation seems appropriate because of her consecration to her art and her devotion and quiet dignity. Because of her great prestige and lengthy career on the concert stage, Clara exerted considerable influence on repertoire and programming throughout the nineteenth century. Though she was not the first pianist to play Bach fugues and Beethoven sonatas in public concerts,

she was certainly one of the first to programme such works consistently after 1840. The format adopted by recitalists today: a work by Bach or Scarlatti, a major opus such as a Beethoven sonata followed by groups of shorter pieces by Brahms, Chopin, Mendelssohn or Schumann, was pioneered by Clara Schumann. The works she performed were generally new to audiences accustomed to opera transcriptions and flashy variations. Liszt had a wide and varied repertoire but he stopped appearing in concerts after 1848. The other great rival of Clara's youth was Sigismund Thalberg, (1812-71) but he rarely played Beethoven and never attempted Schumann; as late as 1849 he was still giving programmes consisting solely of opera fantasies and overtures. Mendelssohn and Chopin, two great composer-pianists whose musical ideals were similar to hers, died in 1847 and 1849 respectively. Of all her generation, she alone held sway on the concert stage to the end of the century.

The tradition of the assisting artist, the improvisations and the fantasies gradually disappeared from the programmes of the leading European pianists by the end of the century, and at least one Beethoven sonata was felt to be obligatory. Following the example set by Clara Schumann, concerts were shorter and less varied, permitting greater concentration on each work.

Women Artists in the Nineteenth Century:

Throughout her career, Clara Schumann ranked with the principal artists of the day. No other women achieved the eminence she did on the concert stage, nor did any other pianist, male or female, maintain a similar position for so long. She was not a feminist, and it is doubtful that she sympathized with the views of those few women who were

beginning to struggle for equal rights in nineteenth-century Germany. By comparison, she assumed her position as a musician of consummate artistry without self-consciousness.

In a discussion of women musicians of the early nineteenth century, a distinction must be made between professional musicians who, like Clara, performed in order to earn money and those highly proficient performers of the upper classes and aristocracy who, like Elizabeth Von Herzogenberg (1847-92), Henrietta Voigt (?-1839), and Fanny Mendelssohn (1805-40), received professional training but never performed for a fee. Artists such as Livia Frege (1818-91), who married into the upper middle class, were forced by convention or by their husbands to discontinue their professional activities. These women carried on significant musical lives from their names, but did not perform in public and so did not undergo the scrutiny of reviewers or strive for the attention and money of the public. As a professional, Clara Schumann competed with men on an equal footing.

The goals, desires and needs of the woman artist and musician in the nineteenth century differed in no substantial way from those that confront women today. Clara Schumann knew well the stresses and strains of the life of a concert artist, yet she confessed repeatedly that her music brought her fulfilment without which she could not live. In a letter to Brahms who had urged her to give up her strenuous life as a performer (a request from a true and devoted friend), she wrote in response: 'you regard it only as a way to make money. I do not. I feel a calling to reproduce great works, above all, also those of Robert, as long as I have the strength to do so.... The practice of art is, after all, a great part of my inner self. To me, it is the very air that I breathe'.³

Chapter 3

Main Influences on Her Art

Clara Schumann's family and friends occupied an important part of her life and subsequently represented the main influences on her art. In the early stages of her career her father, Friedrich Wieck, exercised the greatest influence on her. As both her guardian and teacher he guided and developed Clara's outstanding talents to the highest possible level which resulted in a fully rounded and accomplished musician.

There was a very close bond between Clara and her father. He was the parent of this virtually motherless girl, was also the developer of her art and provider of the self esteem that nourishes the artist. From the beginning, at a time when middle class girls were expected to learn the piano to amuse a husband but not to attract public attention, Friedrich Wieck envisaged Clara as a great musician and virtuoso performer. At eighteen, while still dependent on her father emotionally, financially and above all artistically, she firmly declared her love for Robert Schumann. Friedrich Wieck strongly disapproved of their relationship and a bitter conflict developed between father and daughter which lasted for three years. Wieck's objections became increasingly vicious and malevolent; he even attempted to undermine his daughter professionally. For Clara, the effort to break with her father engendered extreme anguish. The situation was as monumentally difficult for her as any of the later crises of her tragedy-filled life, and in fact may have served to armour her against the

impact of the devastating events to come.

Clara's marriage to Robert Schumann freed her from endless tormenting confrontations with her father, but gave rise to new conflicts. As a young wife and mother, she was in charge of the household and of the rapidly growing family. Moreover, she was the assistant, advisor and emotional support for her husband, a highly sensitive musician who became psychologically and physically unstable. She accepted these responsibilities willingly but repeatedly expressed concern about her playing and composing, which were necessarily subjected to frequent interruptions. She was initially distressed at being unable to practice sufficiently since this disturbed her husband while he composed. In addition, the numerous pregnancies - she bore eight children in fourteen years of marriage and most probably had a few additional miscarriages - thwarted many of her travel plans. She thus used every opportunity for public appearances. Schumann respected this, but saw no way of letting her develop her artistic activities to a greater extent. He did, however, repeatedly encourage his wife to compose, and insisted on having her works published. Next to her father, Robert Schumann became the greatest influence on Clara both personally and artistically.

For Clara the marriage to Robert and his music was the lodestar of her life. Throughout her long career her loyalty, energy and desire to realize his smallest intention never faltered. All this, and its sheer success in musical terms, were manifest to everyone of her contemporaries, to all her pupils, and especially to the many younger people who flocked to hear her.

It was her informed, subtle and impassioned advocacy, probably more than any other factor, that gave her husband's music its central and permanent place in romantic music during the years following his death in 1856. Indeed it is a question whether Schumann's piano music would occupy the place it does today without the start his wife gave it through her inspired playing.

The crown of Clara Schumann's art was its service to the composer. In this, if not in her avoidance of display for its own sake, she looked forward to our own day. The famous critic Edward Hanslick wrote:

she gives a perfect reproduction of each composition having first understood it in its entirety and then studied it in the utmost detail. The artistic subordination of her own personality to the intentions of the composer is, with her, a principle.¹

Schumann's death on 29 July 1856 plunged the thirty-seven year old Clara into a dismal situation. Responsible for seven underaged children, she was compelled to reactivate her career as a pianist for financial reasons. She concertized tirelessly for many years, and travelled extensively, but had to give up composing owing to lack of time. She generally travelled for three quarters of the year and allowed herself a little relaxation with her family and friends only in the summer months. Artistic satisfaction and self-affirmation gave her the strength to support this restless life for decades. Thanks to the wonderful care and support from her family and friends she managed to bear the great loss of her husband who had been the strongest influence on her life and work. It was during this time of trouble that the firm friendship between Clara and Johannes Brahms began; Brahms remained a loyal and devoted companion for the rest of her life. Through her friendship with Brahms, she made another intensive experience

of all the ups and downs in the life of a composer.

After Schumann's death, Clara explained in a letter to her children what Brahms had meant to her during those two years of Schumann's hospitalization: 'like a true friend, he came to share all my grief; strengthened the heart that threatened to break, he uplifted my spirit; brightened my soul any way he could. He was, in short, my friend in the fullest sense of the word'.² Brahms gave her his youth, his love for nature, consolation, passionate admiration, and above all, the opportunity to share the thinking and work of a creative genius.

The importance of this particular bond in their long relationship, which began in 1853 and endured until her death in 1896, cannot be overestimated. As a child prodigy, Clara had been an active member of the most elite circles of Leipzig musical life. At the age of twelve, she had introduced Schumann's works in Leipzig, Dresden, Vienna and Paris. As an adolescent she had been honored with the friendship and respect of Chopin, Liszt and Mendelssohn as well as Schumann. Clara's daughter Eugenie explained further the affects of such friendships on her mother:

She once asked me if I could at all realize what it meant to have had a friend from childhood upwards who stimulated all your noblest most artistic qualities, who in daily and hourly intercourse lavished pearls and jewels upon you; if I did not think it was natural that she felt she could not go on living deprived of such gifts, and that she clung to friends like Brahms and Joachim who could console her in some measure for what she had lost. She said she could never have borne her sorrows without the loving efforts of these friends to bring her back to music.³

As Brahms himself was a pianist of concert calibre, Clara did not become the major interpreter of his works, the role she had performed for Schumann. The championship of his music by an artist of her prestige, however, was a significant aid to the young composer. Both publicly and privately, Brahms acknowledged his indebtedness for her support, advice, criticism and friendship - even as a young man, Brahms, who had little patience with lesser musicians, recognized and appreciated her unique qualities. It was far more than friendly admiration and adoration for an older woman: he valued her professionalism and respected her work as both performer and composer.

Brahms honoured Clara by programming several of her works in the 1850s: he played her Trio op.17 on 17 December 1854 in Hamburg; he accompanied Livia Frege in a private Leipzig performance of Clara's unpublished Volksleid in January 1856; and he played her Romance op.21 no.1, in Cologne on 29 May 1856, soon after it was published. In his Variations op.9, 'On a theme by Him and dedicated to Her', he wove a theme from her Romance varié op.3 into one of the variations, symbolizing, as Schumann so often had done, the personal and musical relationship between them.

The close musical bonds continued to the end. Brahms's op.2 and op.9 were officially dedicated to her, and the autograph of op.24, the Handel Variations (presented as a birthday gift in 1861), bears the inscription 'For a beloved friend'. The late Brahms Klavierstücke opp.116,117,118 and 119 were created very much with Clara in mind, and were usually sent to

her in manuscript for trial and comment before they were finished for the printer. Thus they stand as memorials to her playing in later years, as the great Schumann works stand as memorials to the young virtuoso of her earlier years. During the difficult years of Clara's widowhood, Brahms was forever by her side and represented perhaps the greatest influence on her art. They shared a deep and true friendship and together they respected and appreciated the genius of Robert Schumann. Brahms gave great assistance to Clara in the preparation of the complete edition of Robert Schumann's music (published by Breitkopf & Härtel in 1881-1893) a task which could not have been completed without his patient, and guiding hand.

Among Clara's many friends Brahms was certainly the closest and the person to whom she always turned. However, her long-lived relationship with the virtuoso violinist Joseph Joachim (1831-1907) was also particularly close. When Robert fell ill, Joachim and Brahms were the two friends on whom Clara most depended. Soon after her husband went to Endenich in July 1854, she wrote in her diary:

He is as dear a friend as Brahms, and in him, too, I have the utmost confidence. He has such spirit and delicate perception that he understands my slightest and most subtle feelings immediately. These two, Brahms and Joachim, seem made to be Robert's friends, but he does not know them yet as I do. One learns to know one's friends in adversity.

Clara Schumann admired Joachim's playing and musicianship more than those of any other performer of her time. They often played chamber music together and the two were particularly noted for their playing of Beethoven's sonatas for violin and piano. Clara and Joachim saw eye to eye musically and the collaboration gave them - and their audiences - unending joy. She also toured extensively with his wife, Amalie Joachim

(1839-1898), a mezzo-soprano. Frau Joachim was one of the few singers - Julius Stockhausen (1826-1906) was another - for whom she played accompaniments. Amalie Joachim and Julius Stockhausen, she felt, were colleagues, not assisting artists. Clara often turned to Joachim for advice about her career, as one artist to another. Like Brahms, Joachim responded sympathetically and always with great respect for her feelings and with affirmation of his admiration for her artistry.

The great respect and deep affection that Brahms and Joachim had for Clara sustained her musically and emotionally and she was a caring and sincere friend in return. Throughout her lifetime Clara needed to have people around her and she cultivated friends and acquaintances assiduously. With her friends she played many roles: to her younger male associates such as Brahms, Joachim and Stockhausen, musicians with whom she toured and performed, she was a comrade and to male musicians of her own age or older, such as Chopin, Hiller and Mendelssohn, she was a professional colleague. Despite the devotion of her daughters, the adoring public and her male colleagues she also needed the friendship, sympathy and understanding of women. First of all her mother became a good friend, and after her death, her daughter Marie took on this role - there were many other women with whom she had a lifelong contact, among them Lida Bendemann (1821-95), Livia Frege (1818-91), Pauline García-Viardot (1821-1910), Rosalie Leser (1812?-96) and Emilie List (1818-1902). With these friends she could express her feelings about her beloved husband, her children and her life and art. Clara treasured all her friends and spent several hours almost every day of her adult life writing letters. She often received more than a hundred letters on her birthday and on New Year's Day, each was answered personally and usually at some length.

Clara was always surrounded by musicians or people who were intensely interested in music. She was forever eager to learn and expand her knowledge of music and although she was very strong minded she always welcomed the advice of those closest to her. Clara's family and friends gave her love and support throughout her life and represented the main influences on the creative art of this great musician.

Part II

Clara Schumann As a Composer

Chapter 4

The Creative Musician

For half a century Clara Schumann was doubtlessly one of the greatest pianists of her time, admired not only for her consummate technique but also for her respect of the text, the expressivity of her playing and the quality of her sonority. She was also a conscientious composer, and it is in this field that Clara reveals herself as a truly gifted musician. Her creative work was encouraged and praised by composers such as Chopin, Brahms, Liszt,¹ Mendelssohn and of course her husband Robert Schumann. Yet she herself had serious doubts about her role as a composer and seemed more comfortable in the world of the interpretative artist. The ambivalence she displayed was due in part to society's attitude towards women composers, and was certainly influenced by her position as the wife of a creative genius.

From our viewpoint she may not rank with her husband and his friends and contemporaries, but their esteem of her work was sincere. Both before and after their marriage Robert encouraged and supported his wife's work. He exchanged musical ideas with her, they studied scores of Bach, Beethoven, Haydn and Mozart together; he urged her to compose, to preserve her autographs, and to catalogue her work; he wrote to publishers on her behalf and published two of her works as supplements to the Neue Zeitschrift für Musik, the music journal he edited. After Robert's death Clara ceased composing and devoted herself to performing

piano works she respected, in particular those by her husband and by Brahms. Her time was also occupied providing and caring for her seven children as well as teaching and editing Robert's music.

Until her marriage Clara composed only works for performance at her own concerts, events that were carefully planned by her father. Almost all of the 182 recitals she gave between 1824 and 1840 included at least one work of her own. Many of these early works were modelled on the virtuoso pieces then in her concert repertoire. Therefore her first published work, a set of four polonaises which appeared in 1830 were strongly influenced by the virtuoso school of the time. By 1836 her compositions began to take on a more serious quality, for example her Soirées musicales op.6 show the influences of Chopin and Mendelssohn. Although Clara was ten years younger than these men, she was aware of the musical currents of her time. She heard and played all the music, old and new, which was performed or published in Leipzig in the 1830s. The music of Chopin, Mendelssohn and Schumann was played to her by the composers themselves and she in turn, played her own works for them.² Subsequently, the music she wrote reflected all these influences and enabled her to incorporate the various features of the new Romanticism into her works: the bravura technique; the lyrical aria-like middle sections; the miniature forms with extramusical associations; the loosening of regular phrase structure; the experiments with rhythm and meter and the use of such dance rhythms as the polonaise and mazurka. It is true to say that in the early stages of her creative activity Clara Schumann was not an original thinker nor did she have the imagination, power or creative gifts of the leading composers of the time but she was certainly accepted by them and belonged to the new Romantic school of composers

that emerged in the early decades of the nineteenth century.

The compositions of the early 1840s reflect her broadening musical horizons, owing partly to studies undertaken with Robert of contrapuntal techniques and the Classical masters. Clara's op.16 consisted of three Preludes and Fugues, and her Trio for Piano, Violin and Cello, op.17, by far her most outstanding work, was structured in the Classical tradition but filled with romantic tenderness and lyricism. After her marriage, Clara followed in Robert's footsteps and composed songs with texts by Robert Burns (in translation), Heinrich Heine, Emanuel Geibel and Friedrich Rückert. The last compositions dating from 1853, for example her opp.20, 21, 22 and 23, show a depth and originality of thought.

Clara Schumann the composer is perhaps better known today than she was in her own time. As mentioned earlier, she was always ambivalent about her creative work and it is important to remember that nineteenth-century Germany was distinctly inhospitable to any such ambitions in women. Inevitably, she herself came to believe in society's general expectations. By the time she was twenty, she had already absorbed the commonly held attitudes:

'I once believed that I had creative talent, but I have given up this idea; a woman must not wish to compose - there never was one able to do it. Am I intended to be the one? It would be arrogant to believe that. That was something with which my father tempted me in former days. But I soon gave up believing this. May Robert always create; that must always make me happy.'



Although Clara wrote this, further evidence reveals that composing definitely brought a glow of satisfaction. Shortly after completing her Piano Trio op.17 in 1846, she wrote in her diary: 'Nothing surpasses creative activity, even if only for those hours of self-forgetfulness in which one breathes solely in the world of sound'.⁴

Clara Schumann is representative of those personalities in the Arts which are rediscovered after a long period of neglect. It is through the efforts of some deeply-committed musicians that her name is gaining ever prominence. Sadly, there is still a very limited knowledge of her compositions, since even today they are very rarely heard. Clara's music, admittedly not in the same class as that of her husband, nevertheless is worthy of a closer study. Mirroring an age of great changes, it sheds light on the musical life and thought of the early decades of the nineteenth century.

Chapter 5

Work-List

(a) Published Works with Opus Numbers.

Op. 1. Quatre polonaises pour le Pianoforte.

No. 1 in E flat major; No. 2 in C major; No. 3 in D major; No. 4 in C major.

Composed: 1828-1830.

Published: Leipzig: Hofmeister, February 1831. Plate no. 1590.

Dedication: None.

Location of autograph: Unknown.

Op. 2. [6?] Caprices en forme de valse pour le Piano.

Composed: 1831-1832.

Published: Paris: Stoepel; Leipzig: Hofmeister, 1832. Plate no. 1675.

Dedication: Madame Henriette Foerster, née Weicke.

Location of autograph: Caprices 3 and 6 in Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin; Location of others unknown.

Op. 3. Romance varié pour le Piano. C major.

Composed: 1833.

Published: Leipzig: Hofmeister; Paris: Richault, Summer 1833. Plate no. 1897.

Dedication: Monsieur Robert Schumann.

Location of autograph: Unknown.

Op. 4. Valses Romantiques pour le Piano.

Composed: 1835.

Published: Leipzig: Whistling, 1835. Plates sold to Hofmeister (Leipzig) 1838; subsequent editions bearing plate no. 2307 issued by Hofmeister.

Dedication: Madame Emma Eggers, née Garlichs.

Location of autograph: Unknown.

Op. 5. Quatre pièces caractéristiques. (Piano Solo)

No. 1: Le Sabbat (A minor), No.2: Caprice à la Bolero (E minor), No.3: Romance (B major), No.4: Ballet des Revenants (B minor).

Composed: 1835.

Published: Leipzig: Whistling 1835 or 1836. Reissued with op.6 as Soirées musicales: 10 Pièces caractéristiques (Leipzig: Hofmeister 1838). Plate nos: 2148, 2308.

Dedication: Mademoiselle Sophie Kaskel.

Location of autograph: An autograph of the Romance entitled 'Andante con sentimento' and inscribed 'zu wien im April 1838' is in the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna.

Location of other autographs of other movements is unknown.

Comments: Romance, renamed 'Andante con sentimento' was published as a work composed in 1838 in Clara Schumann: Romantische Klaviermusik ii, ed. Franzpeter Goebels (Heidelberg: Willy Müller, 1977) and in Clara Schumann: Drei Kleine Klavierstücke, ed: Rosario Marciano Diletto Musicale no. 812 (Vienna: Doblinger, 1979).

Op. 6. Soirées musicales. (Piano Solo)

No. 1: 'Toccatina' (A minor), No. 2: 'Nocturne' (F major),
 No. 3: 'Mazurka' (G minor), No. 4: 'Ballade' (D minor),
 No. 5: 'Mazurka' (G major), No. 6: 'Polonaise' (G major).

Composed: 1836.

Published: Leipzig: Hofmeister; Paris: Richault, October
 1836. Plate no. 2148.

Dedication: Madame Henriette Voigt.

Location of autograph: Unknown.

Op. 7. Premier Concert pour le Piano-Forte avec accompagnement d'orchestre. A minor.

(i) Allegro Maestoso, (ii) Romanze, (iii) Andante non troppo, (iv) Finale: Allegro non troppo.

Composed: 1833-1835

Published: Leipzig: Hofmeister; Paris: Richault; Hamburg:
 Cranz, 1837. Plate no. 2169.

Dedication: Monsieur Louis Spohr.

Location of autograph: A draft of the last movement,
 orchestrated by Robert Schumann,

and a fragment of the piano part
are preserved in the Deutsche
Staatsbibliothek, Berlin.

Op. 8. Variations de concert sur la cavatine du Pirate de
Bellini. (Piano Solo)

Composed: 1837.

Published: Vienna: Haslinger, October 1837. Plate no. 7368.

Dedication: Madame Adolph Henselt.

Location of autograph: Unknown.

Op. 9. Souvenir de Vienne: Impromptu. G major (Piano Solo)

Composed: 1838.

Published: Vienna: Diabelli, 1838. Plate no. 6530.

Dedication: None.

Location of autograph: Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin.

Op. 10 Scherzo pour le Pianoforte. D minor.

Composed: by 1838.

Published: Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel; Paris:
Schonenberger, c 1838. Plate no. 5987.

Dedication: None.

Location of autograph: Unknown.

Op. 11. Trois romances pour le Piano.

No. 1 in E flat minor; No. 2 in G minor; No. 3 in A flat major.

Composed: 1838 -1839.

Published: Vienna: Mechetti; Paris: Richault, 1840. Plate no. 3391.

Dedication: Monsieur Robert Schumann.

Location of autograph: Unknown.

Comments: No. 2 was also published separately with the title 'Andante und Allegro' in the supplement of the Neue Zeitschrift für Musik in September 1839, and was later reprinted under that title by Schuberth of Leipzig in 1866 or 1867 (plate no. 4106).

Op. 12. Zwölf Gedichte aus F. Ruckert's 'Liebesfrühling' für Gesang und Pianoforte von Robert und Clara Schumann.

Three songs by Clara Schumann:

No. 2: 'Er ist gekommen'; No. 4: 'Liebst du um Schönheit'

No. 11: 'Warum willst du And're fragen'.

Composed: 8 June 1841.

Published: (As nos. 2, 4 and 11 of R. Schumann: Gedichte aus Liebesfrühling, Op.37) Leipzig Breitkopf & Härtel, 1841. Plate nos 6596, 6597.

Dedication: None.

Location of autograph: Robert- Schumann-Haus, Zwickau.

Op. 13. Sechs Lieder mit Begleitung des Pianoforte.

- Composed: No. 1: 'Ich stand in dunkeln Träumen' (H.Heine),
Christmas 1840.
- No. 2: 'Sie liebten sich Beide' (H.Heine),
8 June 1842.
- No. 3: 'Liebeszauber' (E.Geibel), 8 June 1842.
- No. 4: 'Der Mond kommt still gegangen' (E.Geibel)
July 1842.
- No. 5: 'Ich hab'indeinem Auge' (F.Ruckert),
June 1843.
- No. 6: 'Die stille Lotosblume' (E.Geibel),
July 1842.
- Published: Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, c 1843. Plate no.
6996.
- Dedication: Queen Caroline Amalie of Denmark.
- Location of autographs: Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin.

Op. 14. Deuxième scherzo pour le Pianoforte. C minor.

- Composed: After 1840
- Published: Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1845. Plate no.
7214.
- Dedication: Madame Tutein née Siboni.
- Location of autograph: Unknown.

Op. 15 Quatre pièces fugitives pour le Pianoforte.

- No. 1 in F major; No. 2 in A minor; No. 3 in D major; No. 4 in G major.
- Composed: ? 1840-1844.

Published: Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1845. Plate no.
7215.

Dedication: Marie Wieck.

Location of autograph: Unknown except for that of the
'Scherzo' in the Robert-Schumann
-Haus, Zwickau.

Comment: Originally composed for her Sonata in G Minor
which has been published for the first time this
year (see below under 'published works without
Opus numbers').

Op. 16. Drei Präludien und Fugen für das Pianoforte.

No. 1 in G minor; No. 2 in B flat major; No. 3 in D minor.

Composed: 1845.

Published: Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1847. Plate no.
7334.

Dedication: None.

Location of autograph: All but the prelude of No. 2 are
located in the Robert-Schumann-
Haus, Zwickau.

Op. 17 Trio für Pianoforte, Violine und Violoncello. G minor

(i) Allegro Moderato (ii) Tempo di Menuetto (iii) Andante
(iv) Allegretto.

Composed: 1846.

Published: Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1847. Plate no.
7562.

Dedication: None.

Location of autograph: Robert-Schumann-Haus, Zwickau.

Op. 20. Variationen für das Pianoforte über ein Thema von
Robert Schumann.

Composed: June 1853.

Published: Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1854. Plate no.
8944.

Dedication: Robert Schumann.

Location of autograph: Robert-Schumann-Haus, Zwickau.

Op. 21. Drei Romanzen für Pianoforte.

No. 1 in A minor; No. 2 in F major; No. 3 in G minor.

Composed: 1853.

Published: Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1855 or 1856.
Plate no. 9200.

Dedication: Johannes Brahms

Location of autograph: Robert-Schumann-Haus, Zwickau.

Op. 22. Drei Romanzen für Pianoforte und Violine.

No. 1 in D flat major; No. 2 in G minor; No. 3 in B flat major.

Composed: 1853.

Published: Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1855 or 1856.
Plate no. 9201.

Dedication: Joseph Joachim.

Location of autograph: Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin.

Op. 23. Sechs Lieder aus 'Jucunde' von Hermann Rollet

Composed: No. 1: 'Was weinst du, Blümlein?', 9 June 1853.
 No. 2: 'An einem lichten Morgen', 13 June 1853.
 No. 3: 'Geheimes Flüstern', 10 June 1853.
 No. 4: 'Auf einem grünem Hügel', 16 June 1853.
 No. 5: 'Das ist ein Tag', 21 June 1853.
 No. 6: 'O Lust, O Lust', 19 June 1853.

Published: Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1855 or 1856.
 Plate no. 9202

Dedication: Livia Frege

Location of autograph: Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin.

(b) Published Works Without Opus NumbersWaltzer für Gesang und Klavier. (Text by Johann Peter Lyser)

Composed: 1834?

Published: In Lyser's Liedersammlung (1834).

Location of autograph: Unknown.

Comments: The song and its inclusion in the Lyser collection is noted in Clara Schumann's diary on 4 December 1833.

Am Strande. (Text by Robert Burns).

Composed: Christmas 1840.

Published: In the supplement of the Neue Zeitschrift für Musik, 14 July 1841, (Leipzig: Schuberth, 1867 or 1868. Plate no. 4268).

Location of autograph: Robert-Schumann-Haus, Zwickau.

Sonate für Klavier. G minor.

(i) Allegro (ii) Scherzo (iii) Adagio (iv) Rondo.

Composed: First two movements 1841; last two movements probably January 1842.

Published: Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1991. Plate no. 7445.

Dedication: None.

Comments: When the sonata was presented to Robert Schumann as a Christmas gift in 1841 it was accompanied by the message: 'The last movement and perhaps a small Andante will follow later, I think. In the meantime, I beg your kindness for these two movements.' When the last two movements were added the scherzo became the third movement. This movement was used as the last number of Clara Schumann's op.15.

Mein Stern. (Text by Friederike Serre), (Voice and Piano).

Composed: June 1846.

Published: As O Thou My Star (London: Wessell, 1848, Plate no. 6945).

Location of autograph: Robert-Schumann-Haus, Zwickau.

Impromptu.

- Composed: c 1844.
- Published: In Album du Gaulois (Paris, 1855). This was an anthology of piano works by eminent composers published by the journal Le Gaulois.

Romanze für Clavier.

- Composed: 2 April 1855?
- Published: In Clara Schumann: Romantische Klavier musik ii, ed. Franzpeter Goebels, (Heidelberg: Willy Müller, 1977) and in Clara Schumann: Drei Kleine Klavierstücke, ed. Rosario Marciano, Diletto Musicale No. 812 (Vienna: Doblinger, 1979).
- Location of autograph: Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde,
Vienna.
- Comments: The Vienna autograph, a presentation copy, is dated Christmas 1856; the words 'Liebendes Gedenken' (Loving thoughts) Clara' are inscribed at the end of the piece. It may have been presented to Brahms.

Cadenzas:

Two Cadenzas for the first and third movement of Beethoven's Piano Concerto in G major op. 58.

- Composed: 1846.
- Published: Leipzig: Rieter-Biedermann, c 1870. Plate no. 636.
- Location of autograph: Unknown.

Cadenza for the first movement of Beethoven's Piano Concerto
in C minor op. 37.

Composed: 1868.

Published: Leipzig: Rieter-Biedermann, c 1870. Plate no.
636.

Location of autograph: Unknown.

Two Cadenzas for the first movement of Mozart's Piano Concerto
in D minor (K. 466).

Compositor: Unknown.

Published: Leipzig: Rieter-Biedermann, c 1891. Plate no.
1770.

Location of autograph: Library of Congress, Washington,
D.C.

(c) Unpublished Works for Piano.

Etude,

Composed: Early 1830s.

Location of autograph: Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin.

Comments: Bound together with op. 2 nos. 3 and 6.

Concerto in F minor (one incomplete movement only).

Composed: 1847.

Location of autograph: Robert-Schumann-Haus, Zwickau.

Comments: The autograph is inscribed: 'Meinem geliebten Robert zum 8^{ten} Juni 1847 von Seiner Clara' (To my beloved Robert on 8 June 1847 from his Clara).

Romance (A minor).

Composed: July 1853.

Location of autograph: Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin.

Comments: The inscription of the cover page of the autograph reads, 'composed for my faithful Rosalie (Leser)...Clara Schumann, Dusseldorf, July 1853'.

Marsch.

Composed: 1879.

Location of autograph: Robert-Schumann-Haus, Zwickau.

Comments: The autograph bears the following inscription:
 'Composed for the golden wedding anniversary of
 Julius and Pauline Hubner, 21 May 1879'. An
 arrangement of the march for four hands in the
 Robert-Schumann-Haus, Zwickau, is in a copyist's
 hand, but signed by the composer and dated
 December 1891.

Vorspiele.

Composed: Improvisations written out, probably in 1895.

Location of autograph: Manuscript (seventeen pages), in
 copyist's hand, Robert-Schumann-
 Haus, Zwickau.

Präludium und Präludien für Schüler.

Composed: Improvisations written out c 1895.

Location of autograph: Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin.
 The Präludium may have been written
 by another hand. The Präludien für
Schüler are in the composer's hand.

Comments: The autograph was given to the Berlin Library by
 Marie Schumann in 1929.

Volkslied(Text by Heinrich Heine). (Voice and Piano).

Composed: Christmas 1840.

Location of autograph: Robert-Schumann-Haus, Zwickau.

Comments: The same text was set for voice and piano by Robert Schumann op.64, no.3b.

d) Lost Works for Piano.

Variationen über ein Original-Thema

Composed: 1830.

Comments: A performance on 8 November 1830 of a work with this title is noted in Clara Schumann's diary. Litzmann includes it in the Repertoire list for 1830.

Variationen über ein Tyrolerlied

Composed: 1830.

Comments: A performance of a work called Variationen für Clavier on 9 October 1831 is noted in Clara Schumann's diary. Litzmann also includes it in the Repertoire List for 1830.

Phantasie-Variationen über ein Wieck Romanze

Composed: 1831

Comments: A performance of this work on 26 October 1831 is noted in Clara Schumann's diary. The Wieck Romanze was probably the work for 'physharmonica' which was featured on several of her programmes

between 1830 and 1832.

An Alexis .

Composed: 1832

Comments: The work is mentioned by Litzmann, 1:57, as one of a group of smaller works for piano on which she worked in the summer of 1833.

Rondo in B Minor.

Composed: 1833 .

Comments: The completion of a rondo on a theme by Carl Reissiger is mentioned in Clara Schumann's diary on 6 June 1833.

Chapter 6

The Compositions of Clara Schumann

Clara Schumann's compositions drew a certain amount of attention during her lifetime, but were almost forgotten after her death. Today they are undergoing an unbiased re-evaluation and finding new friends among scholars, performers and public alike. Clara's compositional oeuvre came to be seen not as a mere 'appendix', but as an integral component of her personality especially after the publication of the biographies by Joan Chissell (1983), Nancy B. Reich (1985) and the most recent study by Beatrix Borchard (1991). When viewed in the context of the radical changes affecting Clara's life after her husband's death, the fact that her compositional activity ended relatively early is of no real importance.

Some of Clara's piano works were re-edited and reprinted in the 1960s and 1970s. The first 'Urtext' editions of her piano compositions were published in 1983 (ed. Joachim Draheim) and 1987 (ed. Janina Klassen). The first volume of Clara Schumann's complete edition of her songs (ed. Joachim Draheim and Brigitte Höft) contained Opp. 12,13 and 23 and appeared in Spring 1990. A new edition of the Piano Concerto in A minor op. 7 was issued as a study score (ed. Janina Klassen) and as a two-piano score (ed. Victoria Erber), also published in Spring 1990. The Piano Sonata in G minor was published for the first time in January of this year. With the exception of a few marginal or fragmentary pieces the first edition of the Sonata (ed. Gerd Nauhaus) marks the completion of

the publication of Clara Schumann's oeuvre for piano.

This study presents a representative cross-section of Clara Schumann's compositional output and includes a survey of the following works which may be divided into three categories:

(i) Piano Music:

- Op.3 Romance varié
- Op.5 Quatre pièces caractéristiques
- Op.6 Soirées musicales
- Op.8 Variations de concert sur la cavatine du Pirate
de Bellini
- Op.10 Scherzo No. 1 in D minor
- Op.11 Trois romances
- Op.14 Scherzo No. 2 in C minor
- Op.15 Quatre pièces fugitives
- Op.16 Drei Praeludien und Fugen
- Op.20 Variationen für das Pianoforte über ein Thema von
Robert Schumann
- Op.? Sonata in G minor

(ii) Orchestral and Chamber Music:

- Op.7 Piano Concerto in A minor
- Op.17 Trio für Pianoforte, Violine und Violoncello,
G minor

(iii) Songs:

Op.12	Three Songs
Op.13	Six Songs
Op.23	Six Songs

(i) Piano Music:

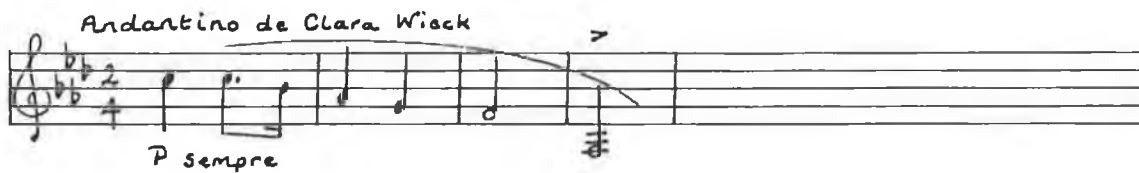
Clara's earliest compositions date from 1828, when she was aged nine. She composed at first in the spirit of all virtuoso pianists, writing glittering bravura pieces designed primarily to show off technical brilliance: polonaises, caprices, a piano concerto and the ever popular variation sets based on well-known tunes.¹ Consequently, the first period of Clara's creative activity reveals the strong influence of the virtuoso school. However, she later possessed the strength of mind to free herself completely from this influence and with what may be termed the second period of her creative activity, a period which begins roughly with her marriage in 1840, she most certainly belongs to the Romantic school.

Clara Schumann's early works for the piano have considerable musical as well as historical interest. From the beginning an extraordinary sharing and flow of ideas between Robert Schumann and Clara is recognizable. During the years 1830 to 1836, the two young musicians worked and played in such close proximity that it is often difficult to determine the origin of many musical ideas they shared. Schumann often used music and words that symbolized Clara for him, incorporating her as a spiritual influence into his work.²

Clara sometimes appeared in Robert's music by direct quotation from her works. The best known of her themes, entitled 'Quasi Variazioni, Andantino de Clara Wieck' used in the slow movement of Schumann's Sonata in F minor op.14, cannot be found in any of the autographs that survive (Example 1):

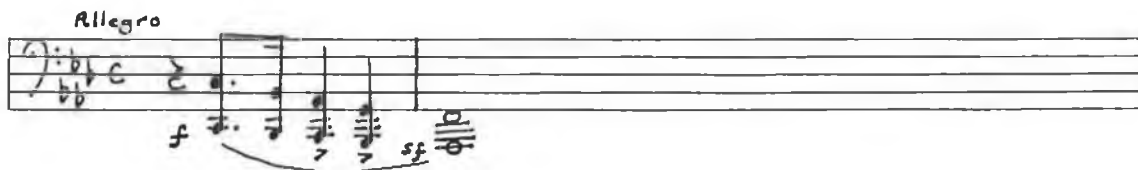
Example 1: Robert Schumann: Sonata in F minor op.14, III, bars

1-4.



However, it strongly suggests a motif outlining a descending fifth which is found in many of her works and which Schumann used more than once.³ By describing the theme as a melody by Clara Wieck, Schumann proclaimed the name of the sixteen-year-old girl to the world. The theme not only appears in the variation movement but plays a major role throughout the Sonata, beginning with the bold octaves in the opening bars of the first movement (Example 2):

Example 2: Robert Schumann: Sonata in F minor op.14, I, bars 1-2.



In using Clara's motifs Schumann seems to have taken pleasure in revealing the special relationship between these two great minds.

The Romance varié op.3 was the first of Clara's works to be dedicated to Robert Schumann. The origin of the theme makes for a complex story (Example 3):

Example 3: Clara Schumann: Romance varié op.3, 'Romanza', bars 6-9.



This theme further confirms the musical interaction between Clara and Robert. In later years Clara recalled this childhood work (written when she was thirteen), when she skilfully wove the theme from op.3 into the Coda of her Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann op.20 (Example 4):

Example 4: Clara Schumann: Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann op.20, Coda, bars 9-12.

A version of her theme also appeared in Brahms's Variations on the same theme by Robert Schumann (Example 5):

Example 5: Johannes Brahms: Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann op.9, X, bars 30-32.



The Romance has always been of special interest to Schumann scholars because Robert Schumann's Impromptus sur une romance de Clara Wieck, op.5, dedicated to Friedrich Wieck, was supposedly based on a theme in Clara's Romance (Example 6):

Example 6: Robert Schumann: Impromptus sur une romance de Clara Wieck op.5, (1833 version), 'Romanza', bars 17-20.



In his revision of the work in 1850 Schumann used a slightly different version of the theme (Example 7):

Example 7: Robert Schumann: Impromptus sur une romance de Clara
Wieck op.5, (1850 version), 'Thema', 17-20.



He also changed 'Romance' to 'Thema' and dropped the dedication to Wieck.

Although Schumann's op.5 paid tribute to the young girl and reveals that the two musicians shared ideas and inspirations, Clara's Romance varié is scarcely in a style of which he approved. The Variations contain several decorative flourishes and cadenzas in the virtuoso style of the day (Example 8):

Example 8: Clara Schumann: Romance varié op.3 bars 179-181.

However, they do affirm the orderly elegance of her thinking. Whether by accident or design, there is even a recall of the five-note falling motif (later to become so important to them both), as a means of modulating from C major to A flat major for the penultimate variation (Example 9):

Example 9: Clara Schumann: Romance varié op.3, bars 124-130

The image shows a handwritten musical score for Clara Schumann's 'Romance varié' op.3, bars 124-130. The score is in 12/8 time and consists of two systems. The first system shows a piano (p) dynamic and includes markings for 'Lento' and 'con espress.'. The second system includes markings for 'vivo' and 'ritardando'. The music features a five-note falling motif in the right hand, which is a key element of the modulation from C major to A-flat major.

During this time Clara mostly wrote in a virtuoso style, but she also penned shorter character pieces which were indicative of a deeper musical sensibility: Quatre pièces caractéristiques op.5 and Soirées musicales op.6,

both written in 1835-36. The works that make up op.5 are typical of the 'new Romantic' school. They were much admired by contemporary composers: one of the miniatures was played by Spohr in June 1836 and all of op.5 and selections from op.6 were performed for Chopin in September of that year. With Schumann and Chopin as her models Clara totally eschewed all empty note-spinning to write ten genuine 'character' pieces.

The first piece from op.5 is entitled Impromptu, Le sabbat. The tempo marking is 'Allegro furioso', and the wide leaps, reiterated chromatic appoggiaturas that provide sharp dissonances, accents on weak beats, and chromatically ascending bass passages in the middle section are all typical nineteenth-century 'demonic' touches which contribute to a supernatural effect for the rite of the witches' sabbath, a theme that intrigued many Romantic composers. The opening section of op.5 no. 2, Caprice à la Boléro, has a repeated rhythmic pattern which suggests an instrumental accompaniment to the dance. But the composer soon introduces a duple pulse within the basic triple meter and the presence of syncopation offers a welcome rhythmic contrast. The central section, 'piu tranquillo e dolce' (from bar 98) is flowing and lyrical; here the sustained melody and shifting metric patterns suggest the rhythmic inventiveness so evident in Robert Schumann's Dauidsbündlertanze op.6 (1837). The penultimate of the Quatre pièces caractéristiques, op.5 a Romance in B major, is remarkable for its daring chromatic harmonisation of the opening section, which is recapitulated in B minor. This piece forms the climax of the collection, and its role as the slow movement of the set forms an effective contrast to the rest of the pieces. Its serious mood is amplified by some unusual harmonic progressions which become intensified towards

the end (Example 10):

Example 10: Clara Schumann: Quatre pièces caractéristiques:
Romance op.5 no.3, bars /63-68.

There has been considerable confusion over this wistful melancholy Romance in B major, marked 'Andante con sentimento'. An autograph copy in the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, inscribed 'Wien 1838', led two modern editors to believe it was a newly-discovered work of Clara Schumann, and it was published by two editors in 1977 and 1979 as 'Andante con sentimento'. Evidently neither knew of op.5 no.3 which had been published well before 1838.

The final piece from op.5 Scène fantastique: le ballet des revenants, is of special interest, in its development of the same two motifs which are found in the first movement of Robert Schumann's F sharp minor Sonata op.11, dedicated to Clara. The Scène fantastique opens with a rocking motif characterised by diminished fifths (Example 11):

Example 11: Clara Schumann: Quatre pièces caractéristiques:
Scène fantastiques op.5 no.4, bar 1.

Allegro ma non troppo

Schumann used this motif throughout the first movement of his Sonata, but altered it to perfect fifths. The second motif in Clara's Scène fantastique bears a great resemblance to a fandango theme in Schumann's Sonata (Example 12):

Example 12: Clara Schumann: Quatre pièces caractéristiques:
Scène fantastiques op.5 no 4, bars 44-47.

However, this motif seems clearly to have originated with Robert Schumann. In combining the two figures he paid a compliment to the young composer he loved (Example 13):

Example 13: Robert Schumann: Sonata in F sharp minor op.11,
I, bars /53-54.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for two staves. The key signature is F# minor (two sharps) and the time signature is 2/4. The tempo marking is "Allegro Vivace". The top staff (treble clef) begins with a whole rest, followed by a series of eighth notes and quarter notes, with a fermata over the final notes. The bottom staff (bass clef) starts with a piano (p) dynamic and a quarter note, followed by a series of chords and eighth notes. There are dynamic markings of piano (p) and forte (f), and performance instructions for "Ped" (pedal) and "etc.". The score is written in ink on a white background.

Like op.5, with which they are often grouped, the Soirées musicales op.6 consist of character pieces in the 'new Romantic' tradition. Five of the miniatures in op.6 reflect the influence of Chopin and Mendelssohn; but though the overall style might be considered derivative the pieces show much skill and imagination. Schumann's influence can be discerned in the lyrical flow of the middle section of the 'Toccatina' (no. 1), but the 'Ballade' (no. 4), 'Polonaise' (no. 6) and most of all the well contrasted 'Mazurkas' in G minor (no.3) and G major (no. 5), reveal that her guiding star was Chopin.

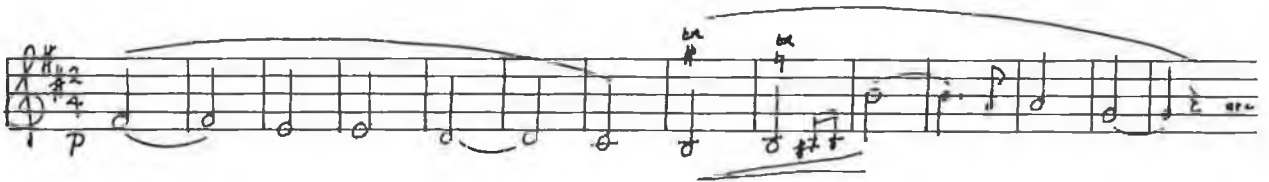
As is the case with op.5, the gem of the set is its slow movement, the

'Nocturne' (no. 2). In simple ternary form with a lilting siciliano-type middle section, it opens with a yearning melody (lavishly embellished on its return) which grow directly from the five falling notes of her motto. Schumann subsequently quoted the opening of this piece in a different key in the last of his own Noveletten of 1838, with the description 'Stimme aus der Ferne' (Voice from Afar) (Example 14a and 14b):

Example 14a: Clara Schumann: Soirées musicales: 'Nocturne' op.6 no. 2, bars 3-10.



Example 14b: Robert Schumann: Noveletten: 'Stimme aus der Ferne' op. 21, no. 8, bars 198-211.



Schumann also showed his affection for the G major 'Mazurka' by using its opening theme as the motif to launch his own Davidsbündlertänze, with the comment 'motto von C.W.' (Motto by Clara Wieck) (Example 15a and 15b):

Example 15a: Clara Schumann: Soirées musicales: 'Mazurka' op.6
no. 5, bars /1-2

Handwritten musical score for Clara Schumann's Mazurka, bars 1-2. The score is written for piano and includes the following annotations:

- Tempo:** *Con moto*
- Dynamic:** *f* (forte)
- Character:** *risoluto* (determined)
- Performance instruction:** *sempre con Pedale* (always with the pedal)
- Articulation:** *acc.* (accents) over the notes in the second bar.

The score shows a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The bass clef part features a steady eighth-note accompaniment with a pedal point.

Example 15b: Robert Schumann: Davidsbündlertänze op.6,
bars 1-2.

Handwritten musical score for Robert Schumann's Davidsbündlertänze, bars 1-2. The score is written for piano and includes the following annotations:

- Tempo:** *Lebhaft* (lively)
- Dynamic:** *f* (forte)
- Character:** *Molto von C.W.* (Molto from C.W.)
- Performance instruction:** *Pad* (pedal) with arrows indicating the timing of the pedal.

The score shows a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The bass clef part features a steady eighth-note accompaniment with a pedal point.

A staple diet for pianist-composers of Clara's day included works based on themes from operas by Bellini, Donizetti, Rossini and other popular Italian composers variously entitled 'Impromptu', 'Fantasia', 'Variations' and 'Reminiscences'. Clara's op.8, Variations de concert pour le pianoforte sur la cavatine du Pirate de Bellini, belonged to this category. Dedicated to Adolph von Henselt⁴ the Variations are based on Bellini's opera Il Pirate which Clara saw in 1832. They were played frequently on Clara's tour to Northern Germany in 1837, and in Vienna during 1837-38. Op.8 was published by the Viennese firm of Haslinger after her triumphant Viennese season.

Like the Romance varié op.3, this work contains many musical clichés: a grandiose introduction, diminished seventh chords, spectacular keyboard leaps, and recurring thirds, sixths and octaves. The whole piece overflows with keyboard wizardry: running scale passages in semiquavers, ascending arpeggios, thundering bass rolls, brilliant chromatic runs and a spectacular closing section marked 'Fortissimo' and 'Presto'.

The independent spirit with which Clara defied her father and even prepared to go to Paris without him is evident in the Scherzo op.10. It remains a display piece, but lacks the showy, ostentatious features of op.8.

The Scherzo is an extended movement with two contrasting trios. It is an extremely well-constructed piece, based almost entirely on ideas presented in its introduction: running quavers, modulations surrounding the dominant, chromatic chords and a dominant pedal. The dissonant clashes and lucid

textures give the piece a dramatic energy and coherence. The Scherzo was published by Breitkopf & Härtel in 1838 and as a result of its great popularity it was reprinted many times.

The Scherzo op.10 was written with the general public in mind but the Trois romances op.11 were written for herself and Robert. The three pieces are in ternary form. The first, a sighing 'Andante' in E flat minor is the most graciously pianistic in its restless semiquaver flow and functions as a prelude to the other two. The second Romance in G minor again marked 'Andante' is the most Schummanesque. When Robert saw the piece his response was particularly favourable:

In your Romance I can hear again that we are destined to be man and wife. You complete me as a composer just as I do you. Each of your thoughts comes from my very soul; indeed, it is you I have to thank for all my music. There is nothing to change in the Romance; it must remain exactly as it is.⁵

Similarities have been noted by scholars between bars 53-54 of Clara's Romance and bars 667-668 of Robert Schumann's Humoreske op.20,⁶ which was at that point unknown to her (Example 16a and 16b):

Example 16a: Clara Schumann: Romance op.11 no 2, bars 51-54.

Example 16b: Robert Schumann: Humoreske op.20, bars /667-668

The third Romance in A flat major is particularly imaginative; the first eight bars alone show a remarkable originality, carefully structured and succinctly expressed (Example 17):

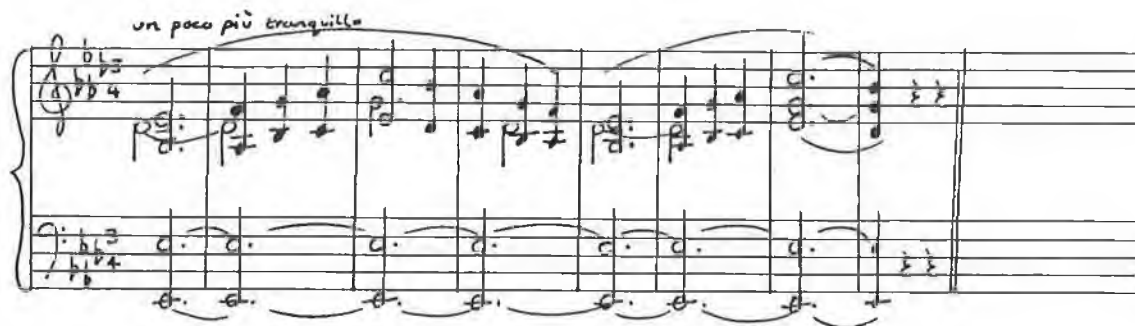
Example 17: Clara Schumann: Romance op.11 no.3, bars /1-8.

All three Romances reflect considerable talent, inventiveness, and skill.

The second Scherzo for piano op.14, in C minor reflects the influence of Chopin. It begins with a stormy arpeggiated figure entitled 'con fuoco' resembling the turbulent effect of Chopin's so-called 'Revolutionary' Etude

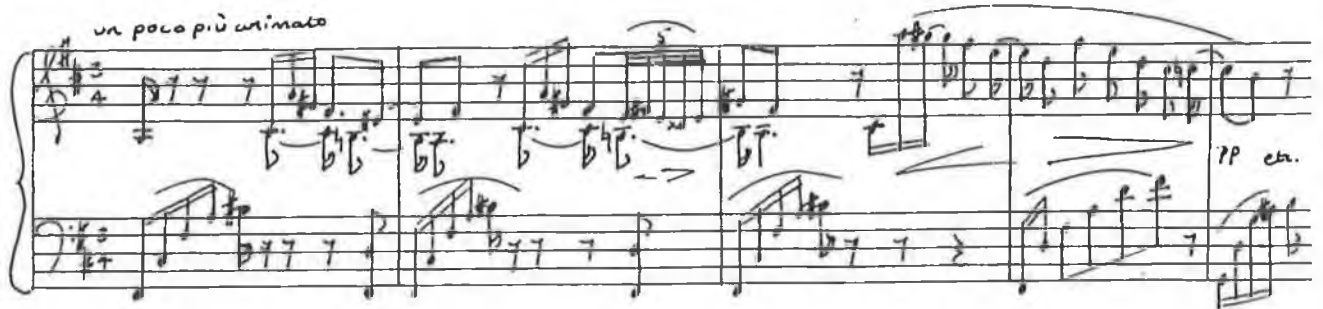
in C minor op.10 no. 12. Furthermore, the unprepared contrast of the A flat major trio section 'un poco piu tranquillo' is also as Chopinesque as its chordal texture (Example 18):

Example 18: Clara Schumann: Deuxième scherzo C minor op.14,
bars 124-131.



The Quatre pièces fugitives op.15 were published at the same time as op.14. They date back to 1840-44 and are unrelated works dedicated to Clara's half-sister, Marie Wieck, then about thirteen years old and beginning a concert career. In these pieces Clara entered Schumann's romantically pianistic world of the character piece. They are written in a similar style to that of her Romances op. 11, and no. 1 in F major 'Larghetto' and no. 3 in D major 'Andante espressivo' reveal a similarity to Schumann's style of writing with regard to the texture which is concentrated around the centre and lower regions of the keyboard with ever-increasing confidence and variety (Example 19):

Example 19: Clara Schumann: Quatre pièces fugitives:
'Andante espressivo' op.15 no 3, bars 25-29.



The autograph of the fourth piece in G major entitled 'Scherzo' is identical with the 'Scherzo' movement from Clara's Sonata which she presented to Robert for Christmas in 1841.⁷

After her marriage, Clara found herself faced with a number of difficulties. At the same time, marriage to Robert presented extraordinary new opportunities: as Robert's wife, she was constantly involved in a rich exchange of ideas; at Robert's instigation, they embarked together on numerous projects of study and composition. Clara's three Preludes and Fugues op.16, date back to 1845 and are basically the results of a joint study of counterpoint with Robert during that year. On the 23 January 1845, Clara wrote in her diary:

Today we began contrapuntal studies that gave me much pleasure, despite all the trouble, because I soon saw what I had not believed possible - I wrote a fugue and then several more since we are continuing the studies on a daily basis.⁸

These preludes and fugues may have been inspired by the Mendelssohn

Preludes and Fugues, op.35, composed in 1836-37, which were great favourites of Clara. Her own Preludes and Fugues are excellent demonstrations of her skill of writing in an entirely different style. The first Prelude in G minor includes an imaginative transfer of the syncopated melody from treble to tenor voice on its reprise, and the three-part Fugue which is worked out with great care includes a major key inversion of its spirited semi-quaver subject in the middle section (Example 20a and 20b):

Example 20a: Clara Schumann: Prelude in G minor op.16 no.1,
bars 29-33.

Example 20b: Clara Schumann: Fugue in G minor op.16 no. 1
bars 27-30.

The second Prelude in B flat major is quiet and in the style of a song without words and leads without a break into the Fugue, which is a gentle piece marked 'Andante' and cleverly reasoned out in strict four-part writing. A three bar subject features the interval of a fourth which is carefully maintained with each successive entry (Example 21):

Example 21: Clara Schumann: Fugue in B flat major op.16
no. 2, bars 1-5.

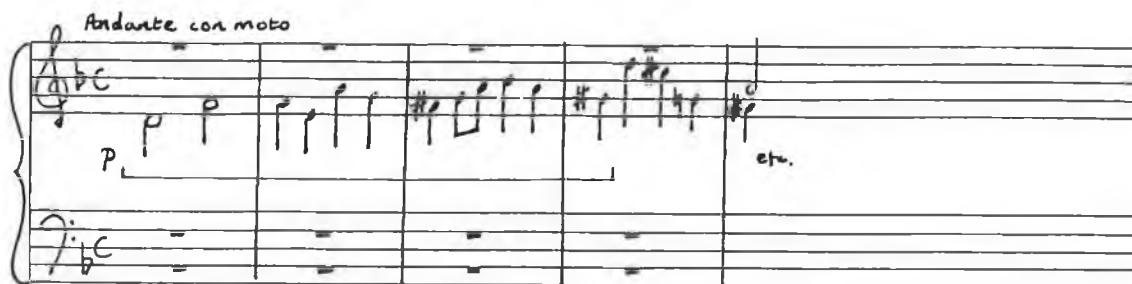
The musical score for Example 21 shows the first five bars of the Fugue in B-flat major, op. 16, no. 2. The piece is in B-flat major (two flats) and 3/4 time, marked 'Andante'. The right hand part is mostly rests, with the instruction 'sempre legato' written above it. The left hand part begins with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic and plays the fugue subject, which is a three-bar phrase starting with a half note G-flat, followed by a quarter note A-flat, and a quarter note B-flat, creating a descending fourth interval.

In the third Prelude and Fugue in D minor there is a distinct similarity between the opening theme of the Prelude and the subject of the four-part Fugue (Example 22a and 22b):

Example 22a: Clara Schumann: Prelude in D minor op.16, no. 3,
bars 1-5.

The musical score for Example 22a shows the first five bars of the Prelude in D minor, op. 16, no. 3. The piece is in D minor (two flats) and common time (C), marked 'Andante'. The right hand part begins with a piano (p) dynamic and plays a descending eighth-note scale starting on D4. The left hand part provides harmonic support with chords and single notes.

Example 22b: Clara Schumann: Fugue in D minor op.16, no. 3,
bars 1-5.



The use of pedal basses in both, with a hint of stretto in the Coda of the Fugue before the final 'tierce de Picardi', imparts a quality of noble finality to the set as a whole.

Clara did not compose again until 1853 when the family moved to a new house in Düsseldorf, with rooms situated so that she could practise and compose without disturbing her husband. As soon as the concert season was over she turned to composition and during the months of May and June she composed a number of works which represent Clara Schumann's final creative period. The Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann in F sharp minor op.20 is one of the works written at this time. Clara dedicated this work to Robert and presented it to him for his birthday on 8 June 1853, the last birthday he was to spend with his family. Based on the theme from Robert's first Bunte Blätter op.99, this same theme was used by Brahms as the basis for his set of Variations op.9, composed in the summer of 1853. Brahms wrote his Variations op.9 as a tribute to both Schumanns, and the dedication on his manuscript was a symbol of his

friendship; 'Little Variations on a Theme of His, dedicated to Her'. To strengthen the dedication further Brahms included a subtle reference to a theme from Clara's Romance op.3. This theme had already been the subject of Schumann's own Impromptus op.5 and furthermore Clara skilfully wove the same theme from her childhood Romance op.3 into the Coda of her Variations op.20 (see Examples 4, 5 and 6 above).

The simplicity of the main theme of Clara's op.20 make it ideal for variation treatment, but apart from this fact, it also embodies the falling five note motto so often used by Schumann to enshrine Clara's image before their marriage, so there was strong personal reasons for her choice (Example 23):

Example 23: Clara Schumann: Variations on a Theme by Robert Schumann op.20, bars 1-4.

Thema, *Ziemlich Langsam*

With regard to her use of keys, her only excursions are from F sharp minor to F sharp major, and at no time is the outline of the theme far out of earshot. In comparison with the freer variations on the same theme written by Brahms, Clara's still betray her allegiance to the older, decorative virtuoso tradition. Nevertheless the figuration is imaginatively pianistic and never mere mechanical patterning.

Following the initial statement of the twenty-four bar theme, Variation 1 uses the original melody supported by a 'legato' triplet accompaniment. Variation II is more lively, with repeated chords, and exploits a wider range of the keyboard with some chromaticism. Variation III is in F sharp major and is written in the style of a chorale. Variation IV returns to F sharp minor and the theme is stated by left-hand chords while the right hand displays brilliant scale and arpeggio figuration. Variation V displays the theme in full right-hand chords over left-hand octave and scale figurations. Variation VI is a natural flowing four-voice canon at the fifth and octave illustrating Clara's contrapuntal ability. Variation VII sets forth the theme against a fleeting accompaniment divided between the hands. A 'molto espressivo' section in F sharp major leads to a return of Variation III in its entirety and is followed by a 'calando' Coda using the same fleeting accompanimental material from Variation VII. This work contains flowing melodies, vivid harmonies, interesting rhythms and some beautiful pedal effects which combine to make it one of Clara's most ambitious works for solo piano.

The Piano Sonata in G minor, which was published for the first time this year, is a singularly substantial and ambitious work in its dimensions, aims and demands.⁹ Clara was no slave to convention and cast her first movement on the whole in a rather striking form, and even the exposition stands out for its tripartite theme. The opening motif is stated gently at first, then more energetically, a rocking phrase entitled 'Mit tiefer Empfindung' is inserted in between (Example 24a and 24b):

Example 24a: Clara Schumann: Sonata in G minor, I, bars 1-6.

Example 24b: Clara Schumann: Sonata in G minor, I, bars /7-10.

Mittlerer Empfindung

The E flat major secondary theme is derived from the main motif by inversion (Example 25):

Example 25: Clara Schumann: Sonata in G minor, I, bars 26-28.

This is followed immediately by a playful episode 'Um vieles schneller'. Less thematic in character, it seems to function somewhat like a development section before leading into the close of the main theme by a long upbeat. What might seem to be an overabundance of material in the exposition is economized in the actual development section (bars 86-123), which only fleetingly takes up the first of the two main themes in order to devote itself more exhaustively to the second. The slightly shortened recapitulation - with the secondary theme (see example 25 above) and the

spirited section in G major - is followed by a Coda in the minor mode, 'Animato,' with a short 'Andante' epilogue. This epilogue is based on the closing turn of the exposition, which is vividly highlighted by a three-fold repetition (Example 26):

Example 26: Clara Schumann: Sonata in G minor, I, bars 212-219.

The musical score for Example 26 shows a piano piece in G minor, 3/4 time. It begins with a right-hand melody in the first staff and a left-hand accompaniment in the second staff. The tempo is marked 'Andante' for the first two bars, then 'a tempo' for the rest. Dynamics include piano (p), piano forte (p), fortissimo (sf), and fortissimo (f). The piece ends with a Coda symbol.

This epilogue is succeeded immediately by a succinct and transparently worked-out 'Adagio' in E flat major that echoes the concluding motif of the preceding piece (Example 27):

Example 27: Clara Schumann: Sonata in G minor, II, bars /1-4

The musical score for Example 27 shows a piano piece in E-flat major, 3/4 time. It begins with a right-hand melody in the first staff and a left-hand accompaniment in the second staff. The tempo is marked 'Adagio con espressione e ben legato'. Dynamics include piano (p), piano forte (p), fortissimo (f), and fortissimo (f). The piece ends with a Coda symbol.

The 'Scherzo', which was published as no. 4 of Clara's op.15 is the most attractive of the four movements. Its melodic inventiveness, sprightly

mood - contrasting with the elegiac tone of the E minor Trio - and compellingly symmetrical formal design all contribute to its success. Equally effective is the lively, virtuoso 'Rondo' finale, which bears undisguised thematic references to the 'Allegro'. It reveals the composer's impressive mastery of formal design. The five sections of the movement - except for the last section, are all of almost equal length - form the classical pattern of the sonata rondo (A-B-A'-B'-A" with the key scheme G minor - E flat minor - G minor - B flat major - G minor).

On the whole, the Sonata in G minor is a singularly attractive, harmonically captivating, and pianistically demanding piece, which pays full honour to its composer. Furthermore, apart from the Piano Concerto op.7, her output before 1840 had been devoted almost exclusively to the character piece for piano. To realize a cyclical form in several movements was truly a new challenge for Clara Schumann, and there was hardly a more demanding form in the traditional domain of piano music than the Classical Sonata. The Sonata marks what is perhaps the most important breakthrough in the composer's development. Without this stage in her evolution, the Piano Trio in G Minor op.17 of 1846, which is generally and rightfully considered Clara Schumann's most wide-ranging and successful work, would be unthinkable.

(ii) Orchestral and Chamber Music:

The Piano Concerto in A minor op.7 is the only surviving orchestral work by Clara Schumann. ¹⁰ A 'Scherzo' and an 'Ouverture' for orchestra, composed in 1832 and 1833, as well as an orchestral arrangement she made of her Valses romantiques op. 4 (1835) have not survived. The sketch of

a second Piano Concerto in F minor of 1847 has remained a fragment, which ends after 175 bars in a compressed piano score. ¹¹

The Concerto was first conceived as a 'Concertsatz', a one-movement work for piano and orchestra. This work eventually became the third movement, 'Allegro non troppo', of the Concerto. An entry in Clara's diary reveals Robert Schumann's close involvement with this work: 'I finished my Concerto [on 22 November] and Schumann now wants to orchestrate it, so that I can play it in my concert'. ¹² When Schumann returned the work to Clara after completing the orchestration, she called it the finale of her Concerto, thus it is not known whether Schumann orchestrated the other movements since no manuscripts or references to his participation have been found.

The most striking aspect of the Piano Concerto op.7 is the fantasia-like design. The work cannot be attributed to any familiar category, but combines elements of the Concerto and of piano-solo works. The composition is governed not by dialogue exchanges, but by episodic sections dominated by the piano-solo, which give the work an almost improvisatory character. Clara's intimate knowledge and realistic grasp of performance practice colours the entire concept of the Concerto op.7. The artistry of the virtuoso emerges to the same extent as the young composer's self-confident and unconventional style. Representative of the pianist and her works, the Concerto also met with the wishes of the public, which expected originality and virtuosity.

Clara's Piano Concerto in A minor offers some innovative ideas, it has no

pauses between movements or cadenzas in the traditional Classical style. It is also interesting to note that Clara was not greatly concerned about the conventional inner structure of the first movement. The opening movement is in fact no more than a quasi-improvisational exposition and development, without a recapitulation. An enharmonic modulation then carries the music into A flat major for the central 'Andante', an idyllic song-without-words. The second movement is mainly for solo piano, with its main motif inverted in A major in a brief central section before the arrival of a solo cello to transform the recapitulation into a duet. The combination of piano and cello foreshadows prominent cello parts in the 'Intermezzo' movement of Robert Schumann's Piano Concerto in A minor op.54 (1845) and later a solo cello in the 'Andante' of Brahms second Piano Concerto in B flat major op.83 (1882). One of the most interesting features of Clara's Concerto is the unity she achieves: the uprising A minor motif heard from the orchestra at the outset influences the opening of the central Romanze: 'Andante non troppo, con grazia', also the 'rondo' theme of the closing movement (Example 28a, b and c):

Example 28a: Clara Schumann: Piano Concerto in A minor op.7
I, bars /1-3.



Example 28b: Ibid., II, bars 1-6.

Example 28c: Ibid., III, bars /5-8.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for piano, labeled 'Klavier'. It consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, in 3/4 time. The tempo is marked 'Allegro non troppo'. The music is in a key with one sharp (F#). The score shows bars 5 through 8. The left hand (bass clef) plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, often in pairs, with a dynamic marking 'f'. The right hand (treble clef) plays a more complex melodic line with slurs and accents. The notation is handwritten and includes various musical symbols like slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

The lively final movement is an extended sonata-rondo, with a well-sustained development of its first and second subjects. While the orchestra functions mainly as a support in the first two movements of Clara's Concerto, it plays a more significant part in the third movement where dialogues develop between the lower and upper instrumental groups and between the piano and woodwinds.

The discovery of Robert Schumann's contribution does not lessen the importance of Clara's op.7. Up until the Concerto, Clara had written only miniatures. Though a continuous growth can be observed throughout her oeuvre from op.1 onwards, the maturity of this work brings to light the skilful manner in which she could handle material on a large scale at such an early stage in her career as a composer.

Clara's Trio für Pianoforte, Violine, und Violoncello op.17 in G minor represents her only contribution to chamber music and is an outstanding testimonial to Clara's creative potential. Apart from her Sonata in G minor the Trio is Clara Schumann's only other work in four-movement sonata form. The first movement 'Allegro Moderato' contrasts a lyrical G minor main theme with a chordal second subject which in its syncopation, together with its falling line, reveals the influence of Robert Schumann's music. The development, which conceals clever contrapuntal writing in an effortless flow, is very neatly merged into the recapitulation, which ends with a recall of the first subject emphatically reasserting the home key of G minor. The second movement, entitled 'Scherzo: Tempo di minuetto' in B flat major, opens with a lively theme involving dotted rhythms in the violin part which at no point is taken over by the cello or piano part. In the 'Trio', triple time is made to sound like duple time as in the finale of Schumann's Piano Concerto in A minor op.58. The G major 'Andante' grows from a romantically aspiring melody which is reminiscent of Schumann's writing in the fall of the opening phrase

(Example 29):

Example 29: Clara Schumann: Trio für Pianoforte, Violine, und Violoncello. G minor op.17, III, bars 1-4.

After an agitated central section in minor keys, the reprise brings interesting variations of scoring, with the cello leading the way in compensation for its belated entry at the outset. The G minor finale, again in sonata-form shows Clara's craftsmanship at its peak.

The first theme may be regarded as a subtle metamorphosis of the opening phrase of the 'Andante' (Example 30):

Example 30: Clara Schumann: Trio für Pianoforte, Violine, und Violoncello. G minor op.17, IV, bars /1-4



Furthermore, in the development section the first theme is transformed in a stern 'quasi-fugal' subject which, juxtaposed with the second subject, is explored with contrapuntal skill.

Though Clara described her Trio as 'effeminate and sentimental', the work does not belong to this category. Throughout the Trio she carried out her musical ideas with great skill and ingenuity, and produced what is rightfully considered her greatest work.

(iii) Songs:

Due to Clara Schumann's fame as a pianist, those who know of her as a composer associate her primarily with piano composition. However, in

order to mainstream Clara's compositional output into music history, one must consider her as a contributor to the long line of composers of German *Lieder*.

Clara's musical education, in the hands of her father was thorough not only in the disciplines of piano, singing, theory and counterpoint but also in a systematic exposure to concert and operatic performances. Since she attended many operas and vocal concerts, Clara absorbed at an early age a style of writing for the voice. However, she became a *Lieder* composer only after her marriage to Robert Schumann in 1840. As Robert's wife, Clara was constantly involved in a rich exchange of musical and literary ideas which offered new inspiration and opportunities for her to expand her creative art to the area of song.

Between the years 1840 to 1853 Clara wrote three sets of songs which are to be found in her op.12, op.13 and op.23.¹³ Unlike Robert, Clara never set ballads, epic poetry, or folk verses to music; she chose poems of two to three stanzas on subjects of love, rejection, Springtime, and nature and set them in a strophic or modified strophic form.

On 23 June 1841, Robert Schumann wrote to his publisher Friedrich Kistner: 'My wife has composed some very interesting songs, which have inspired me to compose a few more from Ruckert's Liebesfrühling. Together they form a very nice whole, which we should like to publish in one book'.¹⁴ The songs were eventually sold to Breitkopf & Härtel (not Kistner) and Robert's wish was fulfilled. The collective work bore the following title: 'Twelve poems from F. Ruckert's Spring of Love for Voice and Piano by Robert and Clara Schumann, op.37/12'. In his

author's copy, Schumann noted which of the twelve pieces were written by whom. This however, cannot be inferred from the print, which led to some confusion at the time. Clara's contributions are no. 2, 'Er ist gekommen'; no. 4 'Liebst du um Schönheit' and no. 11, 'Warum willst du And're fragen?' which make up her op.12. Stylistically, they blend together seamlessly, and yet they disclose an individual character, particularly in the opulent sound and, at times, unmistakable virtuosity of the piano accompaniment, which shows the hand of the pianist (See Example 31):

Example 31: Clara Schumann: Er ist gekommen in Sturm und Regen (F. Rückert) op.12 no.2, bars 1-4.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for Clara Schumann's piece 'Er ist gekommen in Sturm und Regen' (op. 12 no. 2), bars 1-4. The score is in G major, 3/4 time, and marked 'Sehr schnell'. It features a piano accompaniment with a treble and bass clef. The right hand plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand plays a steady bass line. Dynamics range from piano (p) to forte (f). The score is written in ink on aged paper.

Clara's op.13 was composed at various times between 1840 and 1843. This collection consists of six songs set to texts by Emanuel Geibel (1815-1884), Heinrich Heine (1799-1856) and Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866). The dedication was to Queen Caroline Amalie of Denmark which reflected the composer's appreciation of the warm hospitality extended to her on her

visit to Copenhagen in 1842. All the songs have a deeper romantic glow than those of op.12, possibly because they were initially written for her husband. The last of the six songs, an A flat major setting of Geibel's 'Die stille Lotusblume', is the most memorable with its rhythmic irregularities, poignant melodies and subtle word-painting such as when moving into deep, mysterious flats for the swan's song ('er singt so süß, so leise') and ending on an unresolved dominant seventh in response to the poem's last unanswered question (Example 32a and 32b):

Example 32a: Clara Schumann: Die stille Lotusblume (E. Geibel)
op.13 no.6, bars /30-33.

Voice

pp Er singt so süß, so lei - - se und will im Singenver-gahn. etc

Piano

pp etc

Example 32b: Ibid., bars /40-47.

innig *rit.*

O Blu - - me, weisse Blu - me, kannst du das Lied ver - stehen? ———

rit.

pp

Ped.

Clara Schumann's last collection of songs were composed in the Summer of 1853 and published the following year by Breitkopf & Hartel as her op.23 which consists of six songs set to texts by Hermann Rollet (1819-1904). Though the texts are simple and rather sentimental, the settings are not. The piano and vocal lines in op.23 show greater independence and the accompaniments have greater rhythmic variety and flexibility than those of the earlier songs. Some of the songs, for example no. 1; 'Was weinst du, Blumlein' and no. 5 'Das ist ein Tag, der Klingen mag', display a playfulness and even a joyousness, rarely found in the music of Clara Schumann. The latter of these two songs, is typical of the Romantic poetry of the first half of the century, the song glorifies and tries to imitate the sounds of nature. Clara's lively setting of the text is through-composed, and integrates the piano accompaniment so thoroughly with the voice part that one can scarcely tell where one leaves off and the other begins. Likewise, tone painting occurs equally well between the voice and the accompaniment, especially in lines 5 and 10 of the poem. 'Der Jager blast in's Horn' sounds, indeed like a hunting call, and the concluding phrase, 'Das ist ein Frühlingslied' provides a dramatic conclusion, with its crescendo and its melodic high note sounding on the most important word, 'Frühlings' (Springtime), (Example 33a and 33b):

Example 33a: Clara Schumann: Das ist ein Tag, der Klingen mag
(H Rollet) op.23 no. 5, bars /17-18.

Handwritten musical score for Clara Schumann's 'Das ist ein Tag, der Klingen mag' (Example 33a). The score shows the vocal line and piano accompaniment for bars 17-18. The vocal line starts with a forte (f) dynamic and the piano accompaniment starts with a forte (f) dynamic. The piano accompaniment features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The vocal line has a melodic line with a high note on the word 'Horn.' The piano accompaniment has a melodic line with a high note on the word 'Horn.' The score is in G major and 3/4 time.

Example 33b: Ibid., bars /39-45.

Handwritten musical score for Example 33b, bars 39-45. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts with a forte (f) dynamic and has a slur over the first two measures. The lyrics are "das ist ein Früh - - - lings - lied." The piano accompaniment includes a bass line with a "Ped" (pedal) marking and a treble line with various dynamics like mf and P. The score is written in a clear, legible hand.

On the whole, Clara's piano accompaniments are elaborate as one might expect from a pianist, but they do not overpower the voice. For example, in 'Er ist gekommen' op.12 no. 1 and 'Geheimen Flüstern', op.23 no. 3, the piano parts are particularly effective: by creating a setting and mood or delineating a character or emotion, they work with voice and text to produce a memorable experience.

Clara Schumann's op.23 date from the Summer of 1853 and no new works appeared the following year; on Robert's birthday in 1854 he was in the Endenich asylum. Clara's troubles with Robert and, following his death, the necessity of supporting seven children overshadowed any desire to

compose. In addition, Robert's death removed one of her principal reasons for composing. After 1853 she never returned to composition.

CONCLUSION

Clara Schumann was not only the most famous female pianist of her time, but also a highly-gifted composer, whose unjustly forgotten works are an important contribution to a better understanding of the Romantic period.

As a composer, Clara represented the work of a virtuoso pianist, particularly in her rich and inventive treatment of the piano. In her early works she used the brilliant upper register of the piano to the full. Clean and simple melodic ideas were enveloped in cross-rhythms and syncopation, and in an endless variety of accompanimental figures - chordal, arpeggiated, counter-melodic, broken-chord figures suggesting counter melodies that are never explicit - which gave them a rich, diffuse, romantic light.

From our viewpoint, it is true to say that Clara Schumann was a gifted and creative person. Her music, admittedly was not in the same class as that of her husband and due to this fact she was always keenly aware of her limitations as a composer. Nevertheless she spoke more than once of the joy of creative fulfilment. She felt that both creation and interpretation represented the total expression of her musicianship. It is obvious from her own writings that she deeply felt the creative instincts of a composer:

'There is nothing greater than the joy of composing something oneself, and then listening to it'.¹

Composing gives me great pleasure...When I can work regularly I feel once more really in my own element. A quite different feeling comes over me, lighter and freer, and everything seems to become brighter and cheerful. Music is a large part of my life, and when I do without it, it is as if I were deprived of bodily and mental vigour.²

Clara Schumann was a true musician and eternally grateful for the art that was to sustain her through a lifetime of triumph and tragedy. She dedicated her life and spirit to music and was exceptionally gifted in every aspect of her art. It is unfortunate that her creative output is limited to scarcely more than thirty pieces. However, those pieces selected for this study show remarkable inventiveness, artistic craft and subtle originality. Furthermore, they reveal the mind of a great artist and certainly deserve a place in the familiar repertory of nineteenth-century music.

Notes

Preface:

1. Edward Hanslick: Music Criticisms 1846-99,
trans. & ed. Henry Pleasants
(London: Penguin, 1963) 48

2. Berthold Litzmann: Clara Schumann: an Artist's Life,
trans. & abr. by Grace E. Hadow
(London: Macmillan, 1913) i, 96

Part I Clara Schumann As an Artist and Musician of the
Nineteenth Century

Chapter 1: Biographical Summary

1. On 9 January 1838, the Wiener Zeitschrift für Kunst published a poem entitled Clara Wieck und Beethoven, written by Franz Grillparzer (1791-1872), Austria's leading dramatic poet. Grillparzer's response to Clara's performance of Beethoven's Piano Sonata op.57, the 'Appassionata', reflected the wild enthusiasm the young pianist aroused in Vienna. A translation of the poem is in Joan Chissell: Clara Schumann: a Dedicated Spirit, (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1983) 54.

Chapter 2: Musical Currents of Her Time

1. Joan Chissell: Clara Schumann: a Dedicated Spirit, (London; Hamish Hamilton, 1983) xii

2. For example, she played Bach's Concerto in D minor for Three Claviers with Mendelssohn and Rakemann on 11 September 1835, and again with Mendelssohn and Hiller on 30 October 1843. On 19 December 1861, she gave the first performance of Bach's Concerto in C Major for Three Claviers with Moscheles and Reinecke.

3. Berthold Litzmann, ed.: Clara Schumann, Johannes Brahms: Briefe aus den Jahren 1853-1896 (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1927; Eng. trans., abr., 1927/R 1972)i, 599

Chapter 3: Main Influences on Her Art

1. Edward Hanslick: Music Criticisms 1846-99, trans. & ed. Henry Pleasants (London: Penguin, 1963) 48

2. Joan Chissell: Clara Schumann: a Dedicated Spirit (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1983) Appendix III

3. Eugenie Schumann: Memoirs of Eugenie Schumann
(London: Heinemann, 1927, repr. by Eulenburg, 1985) 152
4. Berthold Litzmann: Clara Schumann: an Artist's Life
trans. & abr. by Grace E. Hadow
(London: Macmillan, 1913)ii, 321

Part III: Clara Schumann As a Composer

Chapter 4: The Creative Musician

1. Liszt heard Clara in Vienna in April 1838 and wrote glowingly about her in a letter that appeared in the Parisian Revue et Gazette musicale and was republished in the Neue Zeitschrift: 'Her compositions are really very remarkable, especially for a woman. There is a hundred times more ingenuity and true sentiment in them than in all the fantasies, past and present, of Thalberg'. This quotation is taken from: Nancy B. Reich: Clara Schumann: the Artist and the Woman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985) 210.
2. Frederic Chopin visited Clara in Leipzig on 27 September 1835, and again on 12 September 1836.

3. Nancy B. Reich: Clara Schumann: the Artist and the Woman
(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985)
229
4. Ibid., 228

Chapter 6: The Compositions of Clara Schumann

1. The Bellini Variations op.8 based on an air from a Bellini Opera; the Souvenir de Vienne op.9 based on Kaiser's anthem.
2. The literature on this aspect of Robert Schumann's work is extensive: see for example Eric Sams: 'Schumann and the Tonal Analogue' in Robert Schumann: the Man and His Music, ed. Alan Walker (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1972) 398-405.
3. Clara's motto theme, the falling figure of five notes can be found in numerous works by Robert Schumann, for example: Carnaval op.9, Sonata in F Minor op.14, Sonata in G Minor op.22, Fantasia in C op.17, Novelletten op.21.
4. Adolph von Henselt (1814-89), German pianist and composer.
5. Berthold Litzmann: Clara Schumann: an Artist's Life, trans. & abr. by Grace E. Hadow (London: Macmillan, 1913)i, 311

6. Joan Chissell: Clara Schumann: a Dedicated Spirit,
(London: Hamish Hamilton, 1983) 67
7. The Sonata in G minor was published for the first time in
January of this year.
8. Berthold Litzmann: Clara Schumann: an Artist's Life,
trans. & abr. by Grace E. Hadow
(London: Macmillan, 1913)ii, 131
9. For background information on the Sonata in G minor see
Chapter 5: Work-list (b).
10. For background information on the Piano Concerto in A minor
op.7 see Chapter 5: Work-list (a).
11. For background information on the second Piano Concerto in
F minor see Chapter 5: Work-list (c).
12. This quotation is taken from the preface to the study score of
Clara Schumann's Piano Concerto in A minor op.7, ed. Janina
Klassen (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1990).
13. For background information on her songs opp.12, 13 and 23
see Chapter 5: Work-list (a).

14. Nancy B. Reich: Clara Schumann: the Artist and the Woman
(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985)
249

Conclusion:

1. Berthold Litzmann: Clara Schumann: an Artist's Life,
trans. & abr. by Grace E. Hadow
(London: MacMillan, 1913) i, 410
2. Ibid., ii, 36

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Abstract**The Creative Art of Clara Schumann (1819-1896)**

This thesis considers the creative art of Clara Schumann and places her in perspective within the framework of nineteenth-century musical life.

It is divided into two parts each consisting of three chapters. Part I considers Clara Schumann as an artist and musician of the nineteenth-century. This begins with a biographical summary (chapter one), followed by a discussion on the musical currents of her time (chapter two), and an examination of the main influences on her art (chapter three).

Part II deals with Clara Schumann as a composer. This begins with an outline of the creative musician (chapter four), followed by a Work-list (chapter five), which supplies background information including details of composition, publication and location of the autograph of the relevant work. The final chapter surveys the compositions of Clara Schumann under the following headings: piano music, orchestral and chamber music and songs, which offer a representative cross-section of her works. The conclusion identifies significant features of her compositional idiom and highlights the importance of her creative art.