THEMATIC UNIFICATION IN ROBERT SCHUMANN'S FANTASIA, OP. 17

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(School of Music)

We accept this thesis as conforming

to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

August 1988

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ABSTRACT

Many have criticized Schumann's compositional style as being incompatible with sonata form. For example, his Fantasia, Op. 17 appears to be a series of cleverly interactive themes which, by virtue of their poetic diversity and dramatic momentum, manage barely to function within the confines of a quasi-sonata form. Schumann's discomfort, some would say, is made evident by the absence of developmental sections in the outer two movements, by the invasion of literary and musical quotation, and even by the rhetorical presentations of his too lyrical themes.

Such appraisals focus on that which is absent or unusual, ignoring the inherent craftsmanship and masterful motivic manipulation exhibited throughout the Fantasia. Schumann does not explore and reveal the latent energy in a collection of motives; rather, he varies, transforms, mutates and metamorphizes a few cellular ideas into a collage of richly diversified themes, all of which bear the stamp of these "genetic" cells. Much of the musical momentum in the Fantasia derives its energy from the surface interplay of those themes; thus the engine of the form is more closely akin to variation and cyclic techniques than to those involving thematic development.

The essential purpose of this paper is to explore thematic processes in Schumann's Fantasia, these being fundamental to the language of the work. The paper also encompasses a history of the fantasia genre, an overview of Schumann's aesthetics, and a brief discussion of the Fantasia's structure.
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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

For their patience and wise counsel, I wish to give special thanks to Drs. Robert Silverman and William Benjamin, my wife, Janet, and my father, Alexander.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

From our perspective in the late twentieth century, the term "fantasia" is often perceived as a genre without structure—a virtuosic potpourri or capricious experimental composition taking harmony or musical architecture to indulgent extremes. There are many factors that have contributed to this myopic vision of the fantasia, not the least of which is the predilection of writers of textbooks and programme notes to categorize the bulk of music literature with short definitions describing only a genre's most superficial aspects. As a result, the fantasia has received especially bad press; its apparent formlessness defies categorization. Furthermore, a great fantasia's essence—its inner compositional process—is not easily described or even understood.

Also responsible for the disfavour in which the fantasia is currently held is the endless stream of so-named works emanating from the pens of lesser composers of the nineteenth century. Certainly there were great additions to the genre, such as Schubert's "Wanderer" Fantasia, Chopin's Fantasia in F minor, Op. 49, and Liszt's "Dante" Fantasia. (One might even include orchestral works like the Symphonie Fantastique and Strauss's Aus Italien in such a list.) However, far more numerous were the pedestrian works churned out for the pleasure of growing audiences. These "middle class" works, dubbed "salon" fantasias, were usually virtuosic display vehicles consisting of paraphrases or variations on
popular, operatic or original tunes. Though these works bore romantic titles and incorporated some of the more dramatic stylistic elements of the great fantasias, their inner structures consisted of loosely connected melodies, variations and episodes. Thus, the genre deteriorated due to the neglect of strongly binding inner forces of composition.

In our own century, the title became increasingly unnecessary. Composers sought to free traditional bonds, form and syntax, while strengthening contextual devices of unity—a dichotomy previously exhibited in the Fantasia. Musical parameters such as form, texture, rhythm, modality, and orchestration were subjected to novel or extreme treatments. Structures previously based on tonal logic were replaced by others based on new systems of unification: Schoenberg's dodecaphony, Bartok's linear-harmonic fusions, Stravinsky's octatonic structuring clearly showed a concern for contextual agents of unification. The spirit of the genre was continued, even though the name was not.

The fantasia as a distinct genre has flourished in eras that maintained consistent or stable musical forms; deviation from those forms under the title fantasia allowed composers to forge new architectures which greatly expanded conventional designs (such as the more rigidly defined suite and sonata). The title not only implied a maverick or experimental composition, but indicated an inventive form counterpoised by strong yet often hidden cohesive forces.

Though the fantasia genre has had only sparse representation in our century (in such works as Copland's Piano Fantasy and Vaughan Williams' Fantasia on a theme of Thomas Tallis), its stylistic dualism of outward freedom and inner cohesion nevertheless became an essential component in music from the nineteenth century on. Its fusion with the sonata archetype generated instances of extended
musical unity within diversity that helped lead the way to tone poems, unified operatic forms, and many experimental forms. Schumann's Fantasia was one such fusion work cast in the experimental forge of Romanticism.
CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE FANTASIA GENRE

Historically, the fantasia has been distinguished by four main traits: first, a divergence from the norm in matters of formal and structural design; second, an intensification of organization and unity, often brought about by clever and concealed methods; third, a pervasiveness of melancholy, meditation or despair in terms of overall mood; and fourth, a certain complexity of substance, constituting a demonstration of the apex of artistic skill, to be appreciated by experts and connoisseurs. Thus, the fantasia demanded of a composer the highest technical and artistic skills.

Although fantasia has nearly always been synonymous with imagination and extravagant invention, structurally the fantasia genre engendered a dual spirit; freedom of outer form and design counterbalanced by an intensification of inner motivic and thematic unity. Throughout its history, the genre has challenged composers to balance artfully the two aspects of its dualistic nature.

Even the earliest fantasias of the sixteenth century were, like preludes, outside the mainstream, experiments in novel structures and styles. Though the term fantasia was often used interchangeably with other genres, particularly the ricercar, it nevertheless implied a more imaginative version of those designs. For example, Leonhard Kleber's Fantasia in Fa (c. 1524) is a basic ternary form
consisting of chordal sections alternating with flourishes and imitation, "a kind of clavier canzona with prelude and postlude."¹

As the title implies, fantasias were composed "in accordance with the sovereignty of the artistic personality . . . individually determined and not bound to a fixed type."² Such external licence of form successfully existed only because the inner structural logic was so tightly wrought. Motives were of the same ilk, manipulated so as to ensure thematic stability. This monothematic aspect of fantasia composition culminated in the learned imitative fantasy of the seventeenth century, which in turn was one of the progenitors of the fugue.

There existed two basic types of sixteenth-century fantasias; the first was an imitative work, occasionally ended by a chordal section. In polythematic fantasias the soggetti (imitative subjects) were melodic and rhythmic variants of an original soggetto, often treated at different intervals of imitation.³ There frequently occurred an acceleration in the rate of voice entries toward the end of the work, a stretto-like compression of material which intensified the texture. Clearly this type was derived from the ricercar, only treated more flexibly, inasmuch as the form admitted freer style preludes and postludes.

A second category, cultivated in England, was of a freer, more improvisatory character, marked by alternating sections, often of varying tempi and rhythms. Tempo variation was an aspect of freedom rarely cultivated in instrumental genres of the period. This new instrumental "fancy" was more dance-like than contrapuntal. Thomas Morley in 1597 directed that the composer of fantasia

taketh a point at his pleasure and wretcheth and turneth it as he list, making either much or little of it according as shall seem best in his own conceit. In this way more art be shown than in any other music
because the composer is tied to nothing, but that he may add, diminish and alter at his pleasure. And this kind will bear any allowances whatsoever tolerable in other music.4

Thus outward freedom is bound by thematic unity, a paradoxical approach that already distinguishes the fantasia as a genre.

The seventeenth-century instrumental forms, unlike the evolving vocal forms, were restricted in scope by being limited to the expression of single affections. Always an exception among instrumental forms, the fantasia remained a variegated structure which showed "the diversity of sundry men's veins upon one subject."5 Often one theme was used by a variety of composers, such as the hexachord and chromatic soggetti used by Sweelinck, Bull, and Froberger. The resultant imitative fantasies were multi-sectional, their sections based on variants of the original theme; indeed, the form became a laboratory of thematic modification and learned devices. Occasionally a fantasia would even begin with four soggetti presented simultaneously, a showcase of contrapuntal mastery, a demonstration of esoteric art. An example of this is Frescobaldi’s Fantasia Sopra Quattro Soggetti (1608). Thematic permutation and manipulation became greatly magnified in these imitative fantasias.

In England at this time another variant of fantasia style was practiced, a tripartite form beginning with imitative counterpoint, followed by a homophonic section and concluded by virtuoso passages. This style, favored by Giles Farnaby, was a continuation of many sixteenth century forms, and was stylistically related to the Toccata. Such fantasias maintained an unusually free approach to matters of form and harmony.

The predominant fantasy type of the eighteenth century was the chorale fantasia of Protestant Germany, most eminently represented by Scheidt, Tunder,
Buxtehude and J.S. Bach. This form allowed great flexibility of treatment due to its free presentation of the original chorale line by line (the paraphrase treatment unifying outward freedom). Both learned devices and idiomatic keyboard figuration were combined in an episodic form ranging from strict counterpoint to toccata style passages, unified by the chorale melody. Strict adherence to the original melody was seldom followed; instead, composers encouraged improvisational embellishment or even concealment of the original while maintaining its thematic outline. Virtuosic figures were often based on chorale fragments, as were imitative subjects which were frequently varied rhythmically. (Often bar lines were omitted.) Harmonies were adventurous, and chorale phrases were presented in a variety of textures. The tendency to incorporate outside elements into the fantasia is fundamentally constitutive of this sub-genre, which is defined in terms of the use of well known, liturgically significant tunes.

Eighteenth-century composers used the term fantasia for a variety of forms which either could not be otherwise categorized, or were significantly different versions of a common form. (For example, Telemann's keyboard Fantasias, 1733, were altered sequences of dances in a suite form.) Indeed, the genre's chameleon-like tendency to take on the structures of other forms accounts for the difficulty in definition. The majority of fantasias are in fact fusions, combining the fantasia's style with an established formal design.

From about 1650 on, Stylus Phantasticus referred to "non-imitative, capricious playing, a style of extempore playing", exhibited in the freest genres such as preludes, toccatas, capriccios, and tombeaux. As with most other forms, contrapuntal textures of the past gave way to the new homophonic style of eighteenth-century Rococo galant. Due to the attention given to new musical forms, such as preludes, sonatas and toccatas, the fantasia genre waned for a time.
During this period of great formal instability, fantasias were submerged while other, more defined compositional forms were developed.

A landmark of this period was Bach's Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue (composed between 1720-30). It was a forward-looking work that took the genre to its height, especially as regards the economy and consistency of its material. In it were present all the elements of Stylus Phantasticus. The Bach Fantasy strongly influenced many future composers, and formed the basis of a type that in the next decades would come into prominence, the free fantasia. Though it functioned as a prelude, it was of a design stylistically consistent with the Fantasia genre. Free and rhapsodic in form (like the toccatas of Buxtehude), it features tempo rubato, harmonic and rhythmic freedom, virtuoso toccata-like runs and recitative. The imitative element was completely absent.

The free fantasia of the latter half of the century achieved much greater importance in the literature than it previously held. Music making became more intimate and the performer, more a poet. The fantasia came to be a vessel eminently suited for extempore technique and Empfindsamkeit. Unity of affection was no longer one of the mandates to be applied to composition; rather, the full spectrum of human emotion became a musical montage to be captured in a single-movement instrumental work. The fantasia was an ideal vehicle for this, as its freer, improvisational style allowed the composer "to excite and to calm many affections in close succession and master the emotions of his audience."\(^7\) In the final chapter of C.P.E. Bach's Essay on the True Art of Keyboard Playing, the techniques of fantasia style are itemized. C.P.E. Bach states that "in a fantasia, the performer is completely free, there being no attendant restrictions."\(^8\) Though Bach does not prescribe methods for thematic unity, he discusses matters of key orientation, "free" rhythm, suspension of barlines, improvisational style, avoidance
of single colours, deceptive cadences, chromatic modulations, distant key areas, seventh chords, enharmonic changes, harmonic variety, chords and arpeggios, sudden and unexpected changes of affection, doubling of dissonances in the left hand and breaking of chords. The modern techniques of the preclassical school found a fitting crucible in the free fantasia. It was perhaps no mere coincidence that among the main composers who developed this esoteric form was the son of the composer of the Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue.

Another aspect which differentiated the free fantasia from other instrumental forms was its exploration of the more serious spectrum of emotions, particularly those associated with sorrowful or melancholy feelings. C.P.E. Bach's Fantasia in C minor, 1753, (from the first part of the Klavierschule) is of this tombeau character. Serious and intimate fantasias sprawled like great epic poems, musically portraying erratic successions of emotional states. These characteristics of mood coincided with structures of free, apparently unpredictable, form. Profuse harmonic complexity and deception were further features causing an instability of musical syntax that distinguished the genre as arcane (a concept supported in later works by Berlioz and Schumann).

The fantasia of the late eighteenth century also continued to be used as an introductory movement, particularly for fugues and later, sonatas. For example, Mozart's C minor fantasia (K. 475) is mated to a sonata (K. 457). Certainly, in many of Beethoven's early sonatas, such as Opp. 13, 27/1, 27/2, and 31/2, the fantasia style occurred in introductions and interpolations, generally loosening the strictures of sonata form.

Though the genre does not include developmental sections, it demands similar techniques of thematic control over its episodic structure. Among these were the
devices of thematic transformation, fragmentation, asymmetric repetition, sequence, and elaboration of harmonic patterns in idiomatic keyboard style. The genre is formally open-ended; that is, sections are continuous expansions of constituent thematic parts, cells or shapes, creating a form that is greatly determined by its content. There is, therefore, a fluid symbiosis between thematic and formal structures. In this respect, the fantasia was a unique concept, one clearly modelled on improvisation. In fact, the techniques outlined above are among the stock techniques of the improvisor. Being the closest genre to spontaneous musical creation, it was only natural that the fantasia was aesthetically embraced by Romantic composers.

The early nineteenth century saw the demise of the free fantasia as a viable form (excepting the later operatic and potpourri fantasias). Along with many other eighteenth century structures, it was supplanted or absorbed by the sonata, which, though infinitely variable in detail, was fixed as to formal outline. Certainly one of the most significant developments of the early nineteenth century was the stylistic fusion of the fantasia and the sonata.

The fantasia was a form limited in architectonic consequence, its structure being loose and episodic. Though it may seem surprising that such a specifically free form was not nurtured in the nineteenth century, it must be remembered that the sonata form overshadowed all others; it offered a defined form that could potentially house a wealth of ideas in a gigantic architecture of structural logic. In the attempt to expand this structure further, elements of the free fantasia fused with the classical sonata form, resulting in musical intensification and formal expansion. Aspects of form that were so enriched included: an expansion of the development sections, among which one might include the coda and even the exposition in later works; unusual modulations and key relationships used even
in the stable exposition and recapitulation; use of more virtuosic passagework; reordering of movements from the typical fast-slow-fast; inclusion of fantasy-like sections functioning as introductions, interpolations, and recitatives; and the emotional polarization of themes, no longer just antagonistic in terms of key relationships, but also in terms of character and thematic contour. A less obvious influence of the fantasy was the tightening of thematic-motivic unification, for as forms became larger and more complex structurally, the inner mechanisms of unity had to be strengthened even between movements. The thematic conciseness of Beethoven demonstrates this.

Beethoven was obsessed with the expansion and intensification of sonata form, and evidently used fantasia elements to this end, as in the sonatas, Op. 27, both subtitled "Sonata quasi una fantasia". Their irregular theme structures and unusual ordering of movements were among the first great examples of indebtedness to the fantasia. (There were obvious uses before this, such as the "Grave" sections of the Op. 13, but Beethoven, in Op. 27, clearly showed his fealty to the fantasia by the subtitle.) The sonata Op. 27/2 was particularly influenced by fantasia elements, as evidenced by its unusual sequence of movements and the joining of two movements by the direction "attacca." Op.31/2, with its Largo interludes and recitatives, is clearly indebted to the fantasia style; and the "Waldstein" Sonata, Op. 53, shows fantasia influences in its recitative-like Adagio (more a transition than a movement) and in the expansion of the coda to a second development section, or a "final fantasia." The Fantasia, Op. 77, looks back to the free fantasia, in that it is a single movement work with contrasts of tempo and style, and much figurational writing. Finally one of the most dramatic testaments to this fantasia fusion is the choral Fantasia Op. 80. This work was an experiment which prepared him for the finale of the Ninth Symphony. In it, he used all aspects of the genre, such as cadenza, recitative, and interlude.
In his late sonatas, Beethoven used elements of fantasia style more obviously in the shaping of outward structures. Op. 110 is an amalgam of fantasia and fugue; even the inclusion of fugue into the sonata form would suggest the composer's familiarity with the eighteenth century fantasia which featured imitative sections. The uses of intruding sections—cadenzas, recitatives—and of unusual harmonic relationships are further indications of Beethoven's incorporation of fantasia elements.

To many conservative musicians and critics of the time, these influences were obvious, even epidemic. The Eroica Symphony was felt to be "in reality a daring and wild fantasia designed on a very large scale." In 1817, scholar Ernst Ludwig Gerber complained:

the fantasia, like a despot, has seized absolute power over music . . . Everything goes in all directions but to no fixed destination; . . . an endless straining after distant keys and modulations, enharmonic deviations, ear-splitting dissonances and chromatic progressions . . . Our sonatas are fantasies, our overtures are fantasies and even our symphonies, at least those of Beethoven and his like, are fantasies.

Criticisms such as these suggest that the fantasia genre exerted a powerful and widespread influence.

Thus by the early nineteenth century, the free fantasia, rather than flourishing independently, was instead incorporated by the sonata in a sometimes confusing symbiosis. The techniques associated with fantasia caused many deviations in the outward form of sonatas. The new fantasias, actually fantasia-sonatas (sonatas in Stylus Phantasticus), showed an intensification of musical
language and a freedom of imagination which once again placed the genre at the outer limits of formal experimentation.

Schubert's "Wanderer" Fantasia (1822) was undoubtedly the first great Romantic sonata-fantasia fusion. Continuing the primary aspects of fantasy style, it was revolutionary in scope and by far the most virtuosic of the composer's piano works. One theme and its permutations guide a large structure through its thematic architecture; the movements are sewn together by transitional passages, creating a work whose totality is subdivided into four movements. Each movement may also be viewed as analogous to parts of one larger movement, respectively the exposition, free development (consisting of a set of variations), recapitulation and coda. The profound slow movement is a lament in the tradition of fantasia, substituting a set of variations for the development. The third movement, a scherzo, acts as a rhythmically varied recapitulation, presented in the flat submediant so as to delay the tonic arrival in the fourth movement. The final movement, an extended coda, ends by way of a fugue followed by cascades of arpeggios driving to the final cadential harmonies. Without a doubt, the most important aspect of this work is the tightly wrought motivic-thematic design, which foreshadows the Leitmotif technique. Though there are novel elements of form, one never loses the thematic logic and drive of the work's huge design. For Schubert, this aspect would have fallen primarily in the domain of fantasia composition. In his F minor Fantasia for four hands, an extremely tight control of thematic materials is also exercised, markedly more than in many of his sonatas. The effect is one of monothematicism, which is at the root of fantasia style.

A further example in support of the view that tight motivic construction is essential to fantasia composition is Mendelssohn's Fantasia, Op. 28 (1833). Here
is a one-movement work of non-sonata construction which is unified by motivic unfolding. The choice of title is not arbitrary, but based on the tightly knit thematic design of the work.

An extreme example of fantasia-sonata fusion is Berlioz's Symphonie Fantastique (1830). The five movements are organized according to a dramatic program, and Berlioz goes to the limit in portraying the extremes of human emotion (reminiscent of the free fantasia which enraptured an audience by its epic musical drama). In this work is a thematic development that would reshape many future musical forms -- the idée fixe. This concept, which presents an entire theme in many guises throughout a work, goes beyond the previous cyclical sonata forms which used related motivic or thematic material in some or all of the movements. The recurring motto is in a sense an exaggeration of fantasia technique, namely the cleverly varied repetition of a theme throughout a work, to provide long range unity.

The next great example in the genre was Schumann's Fantasia, Op. 17. As an eminently knowledgeable musician, Schumann was well aware of the history and evolution of the form; he was most clearly aware of Beethoven's incorporation of fantasia into sonata, for Beethoven was above all others Schumann's primary model and the original inspiration for the Op. 17. Schumann stated that contemporary Fantasias should contain an "inner thread, which should also shine through the fantastic disorder, if it wishes to be otherwise acknowledged in the realm of art." This was one of the first acknowledgements of the "inner thread" which connects all the variegated themes of the fantasia and furthermore constitutes the condition whereby it can be regarded as "art."
This artistic manifesto was again repeated as a preface to the Fantasia, Op. 17:

Durch alle Töne tönet
Im bunten Erdentraum
Ein leiser Ton gezogen
Fur den der heimlich lauschet
(Fr. Schlegel)

(Through all the tones
In earth's bright-coloured dream
One gentle note is threaded
For him who hears in secret)

By including this quotation, the composer invites us to find and admire the clever yet often enigmatic unity of the work's thematic canvas.
CHAPTER III

SCHUMANN'S AESTHETICS AND HIS MUSICAL STYLE

Robert Schumann was in many ways the incarnation of those traits we consider "Romantic". In an early letter he remarked, "The man and the musician in me are always trying to speak at once." Schumann's music perhaps more than any other composer's appears shaped by the thoughts and events of his life. For this reason, it is fruitful to discuss events and documents surrounding the composition of certain of his works especially those, like Op. 17, with fantasia characteristics.

In a document written about 1828, Schumann reveals many aspects of his musical life:


In another passage he writes:

Constant free improvisations daily. Also, literary fantasies in Jean Paul's manner. - Particular enthusiasm for Schubert, also Beethoven, Bach less . . . Beginnings of shallow virtuosity (Herz, Czerny). On the other hand, also appearance of Paganini. - My rejection of that school and frequent disputes with Wieck.
From these fragmentary passages can be gleaned some understanding of Schumann's future musical personality. His strength in improvisation would clearly be an important determinant of the piano works written in the 1830's, in which virtuosity for its own sake would be steadfastly shunned. His relationship to literature, which in his younger years rivaled music as an interest, would permeate such works as *Papillons*, *Kreisleriana*, and the *Davidsbündlertänze*. His "lack of guidance" would ironically allow him to determine a unique course of musical development, especially in the piano cycles.

Works by Schubert and Beethoven were clearly the models that most influenced his musical language and formal ideas. Schubert's song cycles no doubt served as a inspiration for the piano cycles, and Beethoven's huge architectures and thematic designs were summits of art to which Schumann constantly aspired.

Schumann's belief in the emotional connections of music are made clear in the following passage:

Tones are the finest matter which our spirit contains... Music is the ability to express emotions audibly; it is the spiritual language of emotion, which is hidden more secretly than the soul; but one interwoven with the other dwells in the innermost region... Thus, music is the spiritual dissolution of our sensations.15

Music was a type of catharsis for Schumann, and every note held within it a specific emotional power. In the words of his literary idol, Jean Paul:

...music is the echo from a transcendent harmonious world; it is the sigh of the angel within us... it is only through music that men call to each other in their dungeons, and unite their distant signs in their wilderness.16
Music was to Schumann an outward manifestation of personality, never merely tones to be used as aural building blocks. It is this philosophical view that creates such programmatic intensity in Schumann's music, a highly romantic view that binds the composer and the man inseparably. Nowhere is this more true than in his Fantasia.

The literary associations with which Schumann imbues his works are often quite literal. Schumann constructed many of his recurrent themes using a system of ciphers whereby a correspondence was established between tones and letters of the alphabet. Themes did not merely represent various characters or moods but actually spelt them. A high degree of this kind of association found its way into many of his works, such as the three sonatas and the Fantasia, where a descending pentachord motto is used to represent Clara. In these works, and many others, therefore, collections of pitches and their transpositions are, among other things, references to external persons or ideas. In effect, the recurrence of specific pitch relations could have been "read" by Schumann, almost like a literary text.

Like other great composers, Schumann let his music speak for itself; he rarely described the processes or mechanics of his composition. But there are occasional references from his vast writings that give us insight into his methods. In a letter to Clara in 1838, Schumann writes:

I've made a concert on you--even if I didn't tell you this, this single heart's cry for you, since at the end you didn't find that your theme cropped up in all possible shapes (forgive me, the composer speaks).\textsuperscript{17}

Whether or not this "concert" refers to the Fantasia or the Sonata, Op. 14, the composer admits that he deals with ever-changing thematic shapes which are
intrinsic variations of a core theme portraying Clara herself. This system of thematic variation is a consistent feature of Schumann's designs, one that works brilliantly in his piano cycles. (Kinderscenen, for instance, is a set of variations.) The same principle pervades the sonatas and the Fantasia as a source of unifying logic, and it is this very quality of free variation which makes his large forms seem sectional and diverse in thematic shape.

In the Fantasia, Schumann's treatment of the melodic fabric lies between variation and transformation. This thought is found in a 1831 diary entry:

Whosoever has a beautiful thought, let him not worry it and caress it till it is vulgar and profound, as many composers (as Dorn) do who call this 'development.' But if you want to develop, make something out of previous commonplaces - only don't commit that mortal sin. There Beethoven, like Jean Paul, is a splendid ideal.18

Here, Schumann decries obvious developmental patterns which only lead back to the starting thought; for him, development is an inherent and dynamic growth of themes, an evolution, not a patchwork of overworked variations.

Schumann understood that forms are in constant flux and should never be seized as ultimate truths; in his words:

to attract attention today, indeed even to please, takes more than simply being honest... in short, the Sonata style of 1790 is not that of 1840; the demands as to form and content have risen everywhere.19

Schumann certainly used the Sonata form in new and often provocative ways and expected others to constantly reappraise the relationship of content and form. In 1838, he writes:
There is nothing more harmful for an artist than continued repose in a convenient form; as one grows older the creative power itself diminishes and then it is too late. Many a first rate talent only then recognizes that but half of his problem was solved.\textsuperscript{20}

Schumann never succumbed to this repose in his Sonatas, noting

You would see how numerous and new are the forms contained in them [the sonatas]. I do not think about form any more while composing, I just do it.\textsuperscript{21}

Imagination was the apex of Schumann's artistic precepts. He stated simply that "Imagination is essential, and to show it one must not be lazy."\textsuperscript{22} The process of creation is so personal, in fact mysterious, that it eludes definition save by its actual creations:

The process which makes the composer choose between this or that fundamental key to express his emotions, is as inexplicable as the creation of the genius itself, which, along with the idea, offers the form, the vessel, which securely encloses the idea.\textsuperscript{23}

Schumann was not satisfied by adherence to classical formalism or empty scholarliness. He warns, "A composition which does not offer anything to the emotions or offends the feeling, is and remains, at most, nothing more than an exercise."\textsuperscript{24} Schumann complains that the sonata form is too often a refuge to gain the intellectual praise of connoisseurs, donning its cloak too often to disguise meretricious exercises in form, and devoid of any irresistible inward impulse... On the whole it looks as if this form has run its course.\textsuperscript{25}

As his own formal constructions demonstrate, artistic impulses combine each time to forge material and form into unique structural combinations. Freedom of
imagination was a working maxim for Schumann even though he freely adapted the old forms. He attempted to capture the fantasia spirit and clearly based his practices on fantasia principles:

In free Fantasy, the highest unites in music, which we certainly miss in pieces of strict composition - the law of measure with alternating lyrical free meters... unrestraint is always more ingenious and spirited than restraint.\(^{26}\)

Schumann delivers the promise of this statement in most of his piano works, and especially the Fantasia, with its powerful "inner impulse."

One of the more obvious and important features of early Romantic style was the association with the extra-musical, in particular the literary. In a self-characterization, Schumann professes that "his talent as a musician and writer stands on the same level."\(^{27}\) The question of equality aside, the dual aspect of his creativity results in an interplay of musical structures with literary elements which in turn produce compositions of multilevel significance. His works of the 1830's are particularly distinguished by this enrichment; pieces like the "Abegg" Variations and Carnaval derive theme, form, and plot from arrangements of letters and their implied significance.

Literary associations may not be essential to understanding the music, but they have a definite effect upon the form and course of material. The cellular motifs that unify the Davidsbündlertänze and Carnaval, for example, are musical depictions of personality types. Several of his large works, including the Fantasia, were also originally titled with a reference to his stable of imaginary characters.
Schumann understood that extra-musical associations operate at the subliminal level:

In what way incidentally the sketches originated whether from the internal to the external or vice versa, does not matter and no one can decide. Usually composers themselves do not know; one [composition] originates like this, the other like that; often an external picture points the way, often a sequence of tones conjures up [any external picture]. If only music and independent melody remain, one should not brood but enjoy it.28

He considers all influences to be operative and actively involved in the process of composition. He continues:

Yet outward accidental influences and impressions should not be underestimated. Unconsciously, along with the musical image [Fantasia] an idea continues to operate along with the ear, the eye; and this, the ever active organ, perceives among the sounds and tones certain contours which may solidify and assume the shape of clear cut figures. The more the elements contain within themselves thoughts and forms produced by tones related to music, the more poetic or graphic expression the composition will have; the more fantastically or acutely the musician perceives in general the more his work will uplift and captivate. Why should the thought of immortality not occur to Beethoven in the midst of his improvising [Fantasia].

Schumann does not, surprisingly, work from a prefabricated idea or picture; the general impression guides, but the musical formation dictates specific constructions. As he says of Kinderscenen: "I do not deny that while composing, some childrens' heads were hovering around me, but, of course, the titles originated afterwards and are indeed nothing but delicate directions for execution and interpretation."29

In other words, programmatic music to Schumann is not meant to be visual portrayal, but rather a musically translated impression of an image (as the
Phantasiestücke so brilliantly illustrate). As such the program does not control inner thematic processes, but acts in a creative symbiosis with thematic and formal logic. This multilevel aesthetic approach is exceedingly prominent in his Fantasia.
CHAPTER IV

BACKGROUND TO THE FANTASIA, OP. 17

In much of Schumann's music, and especially the Fantasia, Op. 17, there seems to be a tenuous unity imposed by the composer's will upon a plethora of diverse material. Evocative and lyrical, dramatic and energetic, his structures are spun-out kaleidoscopes of melody and colour, more akin to a daydream than a plan with marked direction. Motivic relationships in the larger works are vague or unapparent. For these reasons, these works are often criticized for not exhibiting the musical growth and development so crucial to the sonata aesthetic.

Up to the mid 1830's, Schumann's greatest compositional success was achieved in the piano cycle. This was the instrumental counterpart of the song cycle, a genre with which the composer was intimately familiar. In the piano cycles subtle manipulations of thematic material connected individual character pieces and integrated them within a larger structure by virtue of their thematic relationships. In his sonatas, Schumann used the variation techniques cultivated in his piano cycles: primary thematic shapes were reiterated to unify the movement; musical anagrams were often the basis of themes; and quotations or allusions imbued works with an extra-musical plot, often a Floresten-Eusebius dialogue of two states of mind.
subscription to a romantic aesthetic embracing melodic and harmonic freedom. In
these large works he attempted to alloy romantic rhetoric to classical form. His
sonatas struggle at every juncture for more freedom: the composer starts, then
unexpectedly pauses; he leads one's expectations and then deceives them; he uses
harmonic progressions which are vague or meandering, and extends lines in long
sequences. His romantic lyricism strains in its containment within an epic form.

This new amalgam presents problems, however, for both listener and
performer. The form, rich in melody and gesture, often seems to lack purpose of
the sort that results from the syntax of the archetypal sonata, which was
generally clear in the areas of development and tonal goals. This aspect even
seems implicit in the title Schumann ultimately chose for the work in question
here. The composer's fantasy, his imagination, is indeed the primary tool of his
craft, one which creates a work seemingly spontaneous and indivisible.

The fourth large-scale work of the period, the Fantasia, is arguably the most
experimental, the most poetic and least structurally compromising. It evinces
Schumann's musical eccentricity, his improvisational style (which ranges from
parlando-rubato style to full "orchestral" sonorities), his literary associations and
his song-like melodic structures, all at once within a quasi-sonata format.

Originally titled "Ruins, Trophies, Palms. Grand Sonata for the Pianoforte
for Beethoven's monument," it was a work intended to raise funds for a Beet­
were programmatic references to Beethoven's life. Upon publication, however,
these titles were omitted, the work was renamed Fantasia, and a dedication to
Liszt was added. Though the work has a great indebtedness to Beethoven in form
and theme, it is an equally passionate autobiographical glimpse of Schumann.
Fusing Beethoven's tribulations with his own, Schumann created a deeply associative testament.

Written at a time when Clara's father forbade her to meet or communicate with Robert, the Fantasia became a vessel for Schumann's thoughts of despair and hope:

I have besides finished a Fantasia in three movements, which I had sketched out, all but the details, in June 1836. I think it is more impassioned than anything I have ever written—a deep lament for you. [17 March, 1838]

If the first movement was, then, a musical depiction of Schumann's frustrated passion, the second was likely the imagined triumph over his circumstances (both personal and musical, this movement being a virtuoso display of classical formalism), and the third, a hymn to the bliss he ultimately sought. This conjecture as to the programmatic motivation behind the work perhaps accounts for the distinctive emotional character of movements and their unusual ordering.

Throughout the Fantasia the musical themes unfold concomitantly with dramatic elements. We know from Schumann's writings that themes represented specific events, moods, people, and times for him. For instance, two themes are dated "30.11.36 and wallowed blissfully in it when I was sick" and "29 April 38, since no letter came from you." In a letter to Clara he asks:

Tell me what occurs to you when you hear the first movement of the Fantasia? Doesn't it stir many memories? The melody

![Musical notation](image-url)
is my own favorite. Are you not the 'note' in the motto? I almost believe you are. In other words, the musical depiction of Clara is in Schumann's own mind so strongly evocative that, half daydreaming, he wonders if the association and the music are not one and the same.

The first movement exhibits numerous structural anomalies. The strongly contrasting themes usually present in a sonata's first movement are replaced by long, lyrical melodies interrupted only occasionally by a short second subject and transitional sections. The form is filled with dramatic changes in tempo and style and with deceptive turns, where themes suddenly dissolve or unexpectedly appear. In fact the thematic material undergoes development immediately, causing a formal ambiguity. The opening emphasizes the dominant side of the tonality, and the tonic key of C major is not decisively established until the coda. The usual development section, normally marked by much modulation and motivic manipulation, is replaced by a set of variations with episodes; frequent intrusions or quotes from other sections of the movement appear in this section. The recapitulation begins parallel to a point well into the exposition, with the "wrong" pitch, A-flat, replacing A as a tone of melodic inception. The coda, which structurally balances the unrepeated introduction, is the full statement of a Beethoven quotation only suggested before, as if too important to be fully revealed until the end.

The second movement is a technical tour de force, kindred in spirit to the march of Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 101. This movement, in the heroic key of E-flat, is a rondo form, arranged very much like a Scherzo-trio: A (rondo theme), B (episode), A,C (trio), B' (second half), A, B" (first half), Coda. Notable is the way in which the second section (mm. 22 to 91) is foreshortened at its return.
(mm. 161 to 192) and is then followed by the rondo theme and just prior to the virtuosic coda, the segment of the second section which was excised.

The third movement is an abridged sonata form (a form favored by Schubert) consisting of a full exposition followed by its recapitulation and a coda; the development section is absent. It is in the style of a long "Träumerei," a dreamlike soundscape of themes in a flux of formation and evaporation. The conception of this movement is reminiscent of the variations in Beethoven's Sonata Op. 109, spacious and spiritually suspended. Much of the material clearly originates in the first movement, though in this movement the two themes constantly alternate and avoid strong cadences. Even the harmonic plan is tentative, consisting of tonal areas separated by ambiguous thirds. (The overall plan is C, A-flat, F, D-flat, B-flat, C.) The home key is exultantly reached in the coda, with a cathartic finality at both the emotional and structural levels.

It is a striking feature of the work that both its primary themes are quotations (recalling both fantasy and variation traditions). Both appear in the opening of the first movement. The first phrase—a descending pentachord in measures 3-9, which Schumann also used as the pervasive motto and variation subject in the F minor Sonata—was written by Clara Wieck herself and symbolizes her. (Schumann declares her authorship in the variation movement of the F minor sonata.) That phrase concludes with a Beethoven quotation—an extract from the song cycle "An die ferne Geliebte"—consisting of an ascending three-note upbeat leading to a partially filled in 6\3 chord delineated in a characteristic rhythm (mm. 14-17). The text from which this quote is derived reads: "Accept, then, these melodies I sang for you, my love"; this theme is Schumann speaking in the first person.
According to Eric Sams, many of Schumann’s thematic configurations resulted from a encipherment of letters. If the names Clara and Robert are musically represented according to his system of cryptography, the resulting melodic shapes are startlingly close to the contours of the Fantasia’s two main themes. The "Clara" motto is marked by a descending scale figure (mm. 3-9). The "Robert" motto is an arpeggio theme which is very similar to the Beethoven quotation contour.

EXAMPLE 1: One Possible Deciphering System as Conjectured by Eric Sams.

*each note may be read as natural, sharp, or flat; the "white" note letter name may also be inflected (eg. C = B-sharp)

By cleverly basing his themes around these skeletal contours, Schumann achieved both dynamic contrast and the strongest kind of personal association.

The themes of the Fantasia are treated in such a flexible way that only constituent features of each are continued, loosely binding the structure and creating a dreamlike progression that always manages to gravitate around familiar ideas (which will be elucidated in the following chapter). Schumann’s choice of material is purposeful, and though his style seems the antithesis of Beethoven’s motivic working-through, it maintains cohesion while allowing for great fluidity and unpredictability. This improvisational flow from theme to theme yields a lyrical quality quite befitting the appellation Fantasia.
Though the music reflects the impression of free association, this is compensated for by a subtlety of thematic coherence. Themes are linked by common features which may more easily be viewed as genetic cells; these recur in various forms and combinations, generating a seamless thematic progression. In place of the development of a few concise motives, thematic shapes are varied and arranged into free flowing designs that depend much upon an inherent dramatic impulse.

One of a performer's most difficult tasks is to acquire a view of a large-scale composition that at a single glance encompasses the entire structural vista of the work as well as the relationships between the sub-structures that lie within. It is toward such a vision of the Fantasia's thematic canvas that we proceed.
CHAPTER V

THEMATIC ANALYSIS

First Movement

Although the concept of thematic development is as old as music itself, and that of musical cyclicity was well-established by Schumann's time, the degree to which those techniques pervade the Fantasia was unprecedented in a large-scale keyboard work prior to its composition.

The entire work is based upon two melodic quotations. The first of these, written by Clara (see p. 28), consists of a melodically stationary dotted upbeat, followed by a descending pentachord which partially turns back upon itself.

EXAMPLE 2: The Clara Source Theme, I, mm. 2-9.

The second is a quotation from Beethoven's song cycle "An die ferne Geliebte" that begins with a syncopated anacrusis succeeded by a partially filled-in 6/3
chord delineated in a characteristic rhythm. Although alluded to from the outset, it only appears complete in the Coda of the first movement.

EXAMPLE 3: Beethoven Quotation in Introduction and Coda, First Movement.

The following examples illustrate the ingenuity with which Schumann manipulated, transformed, and combined the two themes in the work.

As earlier noted, the two quotations are joined in the opening thematic statement. At the same time, the persistent accompanying figure (A-G-F-D) not only presages the initial pitches in the right hand, but also delineates the interval of a fifth that forms the basis of the Clara quotation. In other words, Schumann immediately begins moulding the musical materials he has selected, even at the accompanimental level.

Aside from the obvious speeding up of the Beethoven motive in mm. 17-18, the first significant instances of thematic development occur with a rhythmic variation of the introductory theme in mm. 20-21 and a trill from the upper note in m. 22, the latter establishing a neighbour-note tendency recurrent in the Fantasia. A second stage occurs almost immediately when, in m. 24-25, the descending scale-wise pattern is changed to falling thirds, resulting in an expansion of the melodic shape.
Schumann's ingenuity in creating thematic transformation is strikingly evident in the intensely lyrical passage beginning at m. 41. The melody, hereafter referred to as the second Clara theme, is evolved from elements of both quotations, and is the primary theme of the exposition. In the antecedent phrase, the Clara quotation in mm. 42-44 is introduced by a chromatic neighbour-note figure, which first appeared as a fragment of countermelody in the left hand of m. 24. The consequent phrase (mm. 45-48) consists of the expanded form of Clara's theme just referred to (mm.23-25). The anacrucial leap of a fourth from A to D in mm. 41-42 has great significance because: a) that interval characterizes the Beethoven quotation, and another link between the two sources is thereby established; b) it introduces an important theme group which first appears in m. 33 and subsequently forms the basis of the large developmental section beginning at m. 129; and c) it is the culmination of a sequence of rising fourths occurring in mm. 33 and 37, so that the second Clara theme is introduced as a natural outgrowth of that gesture.

EXAMPLE 5: Preparation of the Anacrusis figure at I, mm. 41-42.
An even more subtle process is in evidence in the phrase beginning at m. 33. As shown in the following example, the melodic shape of that phrase is a varied retrograde or, in Rudolph Reti's words, an "interversion" of the Beethoven quotation. It is accompanied by an obvious variant of the Clara theme in the bass line.

EXAMPLE 6: Derivation of Secondary Theme, mm. 33-37, from Beethoven Quotation.

The 6/3 chord, embellished in mm. 53 and 55, provides a similar subliminal link to the Beethoven quotation immediately preceding it in mm. 49-52. To underscore this reference Schumann highlights and reiterates the essential notes of the Beethoven quote in the hemiola-like passage beginning at m. 58 ff.

EXAMPLE 7: Melodic Underpinning of I, m. 58 ff.
Performers may be puzzled by the arcane accents in mm. 54ff. Aside from the obvious reference to the inverted Clara motto, they prepare for the "minimostinato" bass line of mm. 69-73, which accompanies the upper two voices, the latter singing the Beethoven quote in imitation.

EXAMPLE 8: Inverted Clara Theme in the Bass of I, m. 53 and 69.

The momentum of the work, which begins to be reduced by the many ritardandi in mm. 71-76, reaches a low point with the dreamy Adagio at m. 77, in which the Clara motto is stated in retrograde in the upper voice and inverted retrograde in the two lower voices.

EXAMPLE 9: The Clara Motive at I, m. 77 ff.
The D major chord, which boldly intrudes upon the Adagio dream at m. 82, seems distant from the thematic sources of the work. However, the familiar A-D interval in m. 83 ultimately leads to a fragment of the second Clara theme in mm. 90-93, which in turn leads, by means of the now-familiar four descending accented notes (mm. 95-6), to a restatement of m. 19 ff.

EXAMPLE 10: Influence of the Second Clara Theme in I, mm. 82-96.

The "Im lebhaften Tempo," (m. 105 ff.) is another transitional section, apparently new on the surface, yet clearly formed out of the second Clara theme.

EXAMPLE 11: Motivic Derivation of I, m. 105 ff.

Grafted to the derived motive is the dotted rhythm of the three opening repeated notes; this presages the return of the maestoso opening. At mm. 117-118, the
dotted rhythm of these outbursts changes into offbeat syncopes, precipitating the climactic return of the first Clara theme.

As already mentioned, the development section begins with material derived from the Beethoven quote, similar to that found in m. 34. Interestingly, the consequent phrase ends with a reference to the Clara theme. A reversal of the opening order of statements is thus effected.

**EXAMPLE 12: Derivation of the Development Section Theme, m.136 ff.**

At times, Schumann envelops familiar material in new contexts to produce effects which are totally unexpected. For instance, the episode at m. 157 is clearly derived from the Beethoven theme; yet the change of a single note and a significant shift of harmonies produce a vastly different mood from that hitherto associated with the quotation.

**EXAMPLE 13: The Beethoven Quote at I, m. 156 ff.**
At m. 181, the expanded Clara theme is heard virtually intact, but over the harmonically static sixteenth-notes there is a "Rückblick" effect that sharply contrasts with more passionate utterances of that material.

EXAMPLE 14: The Expanded Clara Theme at I, m. 181 ff.

\[ \text{EXAMPLE 14: The Expanded Clara Theme at I, m. 181 ff.} \]

Toward the conclusion of the development section, the interval of the fourth, originally an element in the Beethoven quote, assumes increasing importance as an independent entity. Beginning at m. 194, it occurs four times, always in a sharp rhythmic snap.

EXAMPLE 15: Isolation of the Rising Fourth at I, m. 195 ff.

\[ \text{EXAMPLE 15: Isolation of the Rising Fourth at I, m. 195 ff.} \]

The rising fourth finally serves as the interval of approach (E-flat to A-flat) to the climax of the entire section (m. 212).
EXAMPLE 16: Climax of Development Section.

![Musical notation image]

This transposition is then echoed in the codetta of the development (mm. 216-17). This brief section (also beginning with the interval of a fourth) is a registrally expanded reiteration of the theme which opened the development.

EXAMPLE 17: Expanded Development Theme, I, m. 216 ff.

![Musical notation image]

After so much thematic manipulation, it is understandable that Schumann chose to transplant most of the exposition without alteration into the recapitulation, expediently eliminating four measures in order to place as much of it in the hitherto forestalled tonic key as possible. The Coda (m. 295 ff.) juxtaposes the finally complete Beethoven quote with material derived from Clara's theme.
Second Movement

The themes of the second and third movements continue to be generated by the two basic cells already presented. Though the cyclical links between movements are not immediately apparent, these two cells are entrenched in these movements and account for the cohesion of the entire Fantasia.

The second movement is the most classically wrought of the three, a March in scherzo form that is distinctly Beethovenian. Its motion is propelled by incessant dotted rhythms, originally heard as an anacrusis to the Clara theme of the first movement (m.2). The opening theme grows out of the Clara motto, altering it by the use of thirds leaps.

EXAMPLE 18: Derivation of Opening Theme of Second Movement from the Clara Theme.

At a deeper level, the second Clara theme, which constitutes the primary thematic shape of this movement, may be traced in the bass and tenor line.
As previously noted, this thematic contour is an amalgamation of elements from both the Clara and Beethoven quotations, and as such seems particularly apropos as the material of the middle movement. The second Clara theme is further alluded to in the inner melody of mm. 9-10 and 13-14, where it acts as a springboard to the rising second half of the phrase.

EXAMPLE 20: Allusion to the Second Clara Theme in the Inner Voices of II, mm. 9-10.

From m. 22, until the return of the main theme (m. 92), the second Clara theme is contrapuntally and sequentially varied. In m. 50 ff., an interesting variant of the Beethoven quotation is stated.
EXEMPLARY 21: Variant of Beethoven Quotation in II, m.50.

The work has so far used such thematic references throughout. With only two basic shapes alternating to produce larger phrases and sections, the listener accepts a process of alternating variants as the logical mechanism behind the unfolding thematic design; however, the cleverness with which Schumann manipulates the two thematic shapes often serves to conceal their derivations.

The melody of the middle, or trio section (Etwas Langsamer) is a varied retrograde inversion of the Beethoven quotation.

EXEMPLARY 22: Derivation of the Trio Theme, II, m. 114 ff.
This theme unfolds as a touching dialogue, first presented in the tenor, then in the high soprano range. The syncopated rhythm refers back to the first-movement presentation of the quotation (m. 14). A lower chromatic neighbour note serves to introduce the theme, as if this missing portion of the second Clara theme had been saved for this moment. The remainder of the section consists of more variants on the varied Beethoven shape, and gradually returns to a slightly altered version of the first episode, corresponding to mm. 40-91.

The coda is a joyous (and technically harrowing) version of the second Clara theme. The retrograde inversion of the Beethoven quote is appended to this, creating a climactic finish (m. 252 ff.).

Third Movement

The sublime third movement is a thematic analog to the first, as it uses shapes closely derived from first movement themes. The melodies have lost their urgency and are drawn out into long chains of sequences and repetitions. A stoic acceptance pervades the music, as if the themes had reached their final destiny.

Although not immediately apparent, the chordal introduction at once contains both themes. The Clara motif is implied by the downward motion of the bass (C-A-F), and the melodic fragment A-G in the fourth bar echos the pitches which began the first movement (coming perhaps closest to being the "single note"). The Beethoven theme pervades the accompanimental fabric of these first four bars, with its 6\3 chords derived from the skeleton of that quote. Schumann convinces us of the relevance of this relationship at m. 5, where the chord
members E-G-C form the first complete melody, the beginning of which is a retrograde of the Beethoven quote. Not surprisingly, the bass countermelody is formed out of the Clara theme.

EXAMPLE 23: Thematic Derivation in m. 1 ff. of the Third Movement.

The Clara theme is featured in m. 15 ff., and suspended dreamlike over a dominant harmony. In m. 16 is an altered version of the second Clara theme from the first movement. The course of this melody seems to have no terminus; instead it is extended sequentially and melts into a transitional passage (mm. 25-29) modelled on a transition from the first movement (m. 53 ff).

After a return of the introductory broken chord figure at mm. 30-33, the most important theme of the movement appears. In outline it is a transformation of the Beethoven quotation.
This rising theme, with its lied-like accompaniment, has a quality of redemption from the struggle of the work, an introspective resolution of the Beethoven figure. Surprisingly, it is an incomplete statement, being interrupted after two measures by the familiar broken chords (mm. 34-37).

Finally, at mm. 44-47, a winding variant of the Clara motto serves to balance the phrase preceding the interruption.
The melody continues to be spun out until, at m. 52 ff., it is simplified to a descending scale (note the comparison with I, mm. 11-17).

EXAMPLE 26: Third Movement, mm. 52-55.

This is in turn treated imitatively and then combined with the rising Beethoven variant of m. 54. Interestingly, this Beethoven variant becomes the pattern for a long rising series of sequences, and the passage culminates in the Clara variant (embellished with upper neighbour-notes) which, in effect, serves to balance the melodic design.

EXAMPLE 27: Thematic Derivation of III, mm. 68-71.
The whole of the exposition (mm. 15-71) is then transposed and repeated (with four measures, corresponding to mm. 38-42, and the introduction to m. 14 omitted—a plan of recapitulation similar to that of the first movement). At its conclusion appears the final occurrence of the Beethoven variant, this time complete in a four bar design and clearly established in the tonic.

EXAMPLE 28: Derivation of III, mm. 123-126 from the Beethoven Quotation.

This sublime statement is like a catharsis, the fulfillment of a thematic design begun in the sonata's passionate introduction.

The accompanimental figure of the opening returns, this time excitedly, "faster and faster," replacing the original harmonic motion C, A, F, G with C, A7, D-flat, G7, a cadential intensification by use of the Neapolitan chord. At mm. 135-137 is a joyous fragment of the Clara theme, A-G, then E-A-G, the expanded form, which also recalls the coda of the second movement.
EXAMPLE 29: Derivation of III, m. 135 ff. from the second Clara Theme.

The music thus ends on the very pitches with which it began, and tonally melts into a tonic C major chord with a sense of finality that has seldom been surpassed in the literature. One hint of melancholy sounds in m. 139, when the tenor voice moves from A to A flat -- a reference to the diminished version of the Clara theme in the first movement (m. 28 ff.). As the final C major chords sound, they still echo with the residues of the two thematic cells.

One last relationship remains to be explored -- that between the two quotations which generate this expansive fantasia. Though their surface qualities form distinct entities, at a deeper level they complement one another. If the opening statement of the first movement is examined, several relationships become evident.
First, in the consequent phrase of the opening passage (mm. 14-17), both themes are welded into a single gesture, a descending scale from B to B. The Beethoven segment neatly completes this shape by an elision with the rising portion of the Clara fragment. Second, the triadic structures are a root position triad and first inversion triad respectively (different vertical formations of one pitch set). Third, the Clara theme is perfectly balanced in contour by the Beethoven theme, as a kind of retrograde inversion. In effect, the two quotations share many features in their separate designs. In a very real sense they have emanated from a single gesture, one which permeates the Fantasia with a subtlety rarely equalled in the post-Beethoven large-scale piano repertoire.


3 Ibid., 1: 8.


6 Ibid., 2: 6.

7 Ibid., 2: 8.


9 Schleuning, The Fantasia, 2: 15.

10 Ibid., 2: 15.

11 Ibid., 1: 5.


14 Ibid., p. 2.


16 Ibid., p. 13.

17 Abraham, Schumann, A Symposium, p. 5.

18 Ibid., p. 9.


20 Ibid., p. 153.

21 Ibid., p. 153.

22 Ibid., p. 65.
23 Ibid., p. 29.

24 Ibid., p. 66.


27 Abraham, Schumann, A Symposium, p. 3.


29 Ibid., p. 178.

30 Walker, Robert Schumann, The Man and His Music, p. 62


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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Recital Hall
Monday, August 22, 1988
8:00 p.m.

*LECTURE RECITAL

Rudy Rozanski, piano

Fantasie, Op. 17

R. Schumann
(1810-1856)

- INTERMISSION -

Lecture: "Thematic Unification in Robert Schumann's Fantasie, Op. 17"

*In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree with a major in piano performance.