

# 10 | Women, Song, and Subjectivity in the Nineteenth Century

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## Introduction

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the Lied provided women composers and performers with an important vehicle for self-expression, a means to assert their creativity and agency at a time when larger, more public forms of artistic expression were less accessible to them. Studying the Lied with reference to the contexts in which it was conceived, performed, and received provides crucial insights into the interpersonal relationships fostered by music-making during this period. Equally important, analysing Lieder with these contexts in mind shows how such relationships were refracted through the prism of song. Both lines of enquiry – one historical, the other analytical – unite in an effort to uncover what Aisling Kenny and Susan Wollenberg have described as the ‘personal stamp’ that female composers and performers placed on the nineteenth-century Lied.<sup>1</sup> It is this ‘personal stamp’ – this expression of female creativity and agency – which we understand in this chapter as female subjectivity.

Combining these approaches, we explore two different spaces for the expression of female subjectivity in the nineteenth century: the physical space of cultural practice – salonesque gatherings in private homes, and the creative space of cultural practice – songs that would have been heard in these gatherings. After a brief introductory discussion of nineteenth-century salon culture, we examine female subjectivity in private social gatherings, focusing on three case studies: Elise von Schlik (1792–1855), Johanna Kinkel (1810–58), and Fanny Hensel (1805–47). Then, returning to Hensel and her circle, we look at a particularly rich example of female subjectivity expressed in song: a Lied based on a poem by her sister-in-law about the passivity of women’s lives, in which Hensel seems at once to empathize with the poet’s predicament and to resist it. We focus specifically on spaces in Central Europe between the Vienna Congress (1814–15) and the middle of the century, for two main reasons. First, the geopolitical and

socio-cultural circumstances in the nineteenth-century world are so diverse that an in-depth study of a wider geographical and chronological range would be impossible. Secondly, the early nineteenth-century Lied offers fertile soil for the exploration of female subjectivity, with this era seeing a marked rise in the number of female composers, and with art song being naturally suited to the private sphere, where women were especially active.<sup>2</sup> In choosing three examples based in Berlin (Hensel), Bonn (Kinkel), and Prague (Schlik), we aim to position these women within their own individual circles, and to trace intersections among them. Ultimately we argue that, despite their confined circumstances, these women and others in their circles found ways of expressing themselves and shaping their social environments, both by meeting and exchanging ideas in physical gatherings – the space of the salon – and by communicating subtle messages through words and music – the space of song.

## Female Subjectivity and Salon Culture

Private and semi-private social gatherings offered a valuable platform for less formal cultural participation – both professional and amateurish in nature. Two problems arise, however, when examining this cultural phenomenon. First, the organizational structures and expectations associated with such gatherings vary widely and are not fully traceable today, making it challenging to examine the individual gatherings and the artistic output that sprang from them. Most sources for particular gatherings do not provide much detail regarding the music, literature, and other art forms that were conceived and heard there; some sources are missing, inaccessible, or of questionable credibility.<sup>3</sup>

Secondly, and more significant, there are no airtight definitions and terminology with regard to salon culture. In the 1980s, the term ‘salon’, in light of its French origin, was associated with regular private gatherings hosted by a female *salonnière* on a *jour fixe* and attracting a number of regular and occasional visitors.<sup>4</sup> It has since become more of an umbrella concept covering all manner of regular gatherings in private homes throughout nineteenth-century Europe, even though many other terms were used to describe this idea.<sup>5</sup> (This is, in part, why some salon researchers have recommended focusing on specific case studies, rather than seeking broad definitions that apply to every situation.)<sup>6</sup> Just as the names of these gatherings differed, so did their individual components, themes, and artistic

priorities, depending upon their location and the socio-cultural circumstances that surrounded them, as well as the financial means, personal interests, and tastes of their hosts and participants. Salons could be intimate meetings featuring conversation and spontaneous artistic performances described only in diaries or letters (if at all), or thoroughly planned performances that were covered extensively in the public media. A review published in the Bohemian magazine *Bohemia: ein Unterhaltungsblatt*, in mid-December 1838, shows the blurred boundary between the 'private' and the 'public' – between spontaneous get-togethers featuring conversation, laughter, and music on the one hand, and pre-planned events on the other hand. Moreover, it demonstrates that sometimes 'salons' could include entry fees, and even be reviewed publicly, while still being intimate and informal:

On 13 December, Professor Pixis gave his third and last musical evening entertainment of this Advent season . . . the spacious salon could barely hold the number of attendees, a good third of whom were women. Before the performance of Spohr's Quartet in A minor (Op. 75), the conversation was enriched by the appearance of the famous violin virtuoso and composer Lipinski. . . . When Professor Pixis signalled that the concert would start, the liveliest conversation was replaced by deepest silence, as one of the most agreeable and intimate compositions of Spohr's was played. . . . The audience was especially excited to hear a new composition by Mr Veit. . . . his most recent quartet (E-flat major, still unpublished) . . . Professor Pixis and his friend, Professor Hüttner, Mr Mildner and Mr Bartak, and Mr Langweil . . . continue to cultivate one of the most beautiful branches of instrumental music.<sup>7</sup>

Like Friedrich Wilhelm Pixis, Elise von Schlik, Johanna Kinkel, and Fanny Hensel added their 'personal stamp' to the social gatherings that they initiated in their homes. All three women united in their homes both salonesque conversation and deep musical experience.<sup>8</sup> All three also hosted gatherings featuring a large variety of music – both *Salonmusik* and salon music, music *for* the salon and music *in* the salon, as differentiated by Andreas Ballstaedt.<sup>9</sup> Their gatherings hovered somewhere between private and public, spontaneous and organized, ephemeral and permanent. This diversity and heterogeneity enabled women to shape their own spaces, and those they visited, in their own unique way.

### Elise von Schlik in Prague

Countess Elise von Schlik's fascination with music, literature, and art as well as with musical sociability was not unique within her family: her mother Philippine (née von Nostitz, 1766–1843) was an excellent pianist,

and was culturally engaged, and the composer Johann Nepomuk von Nostitz, who was both her uncle and her brother-in-law, hosted a musical salon in Prague.<sup>10</sup> The Schlik family estate reveals that Elise was a gifted painter and poet, supporter of the arts, meticulous collector of all things cultural, passionate traveller, and ambitious composer. A lithograph included in the family estate shows her beside a piano with her *Lieder* Op. 12, dedicated to Julius Schulhoff, and a sheet including text written in verse (see Figure 10.1).<sup>11</sup> It testifies to Schlik's self-perception as performer, composer, musical patroness, and poet.

Elise von Schlik held musical evenings in her home in the centre of Prague, welcoming a number of guests during the first half of the century.<sup>12</sup> Clara and Robert Schumann visited her during their stay in Prague in January–February 1847.<sup>13</sup> The Schumanns' commentary on Schlik is sparse, possibly owing to the density of contacts and events during their trip. Robert noted on 24 January 1847 that 'Clara went with Countess Schlick, many visits with the *haute volée* [high-society people]', and 'in the morning [I went to] Countess Schlick (sic), strange business, but a very friendly woman'.<sup>14</sup> Both Schumanns left an entry in Schlik's *Stammbuch* (album), and Schlik dedicated her *Lieder* Op. 11 to Robert Schumann.<sup>15</sup> The album (started by Elise's mother Philippine in 1814, and continued by Elise from 1828 to 1852) testifies to the musical and literary *haute volée* mixing in Schlik's circle.<sup>16</sup> Among those who signed it are August Wilhelm Ambros, Franz Liszt, Moritz Mildner, Friedrich Wilhelm Pixis, Julius Schulhoff, Louis Spohr, Václav Jan Tomášek, and Václav Jindřich Veit. The album embraces pieces for piano and physharmonica (a keyboard instrument fitted with free reeds), songs, and, to a smaller extent, violin compositions, extended chamber music, vocal works for more than one voice and piano, or guitar, accompaniment, and poetry. The vocal pieces are settings of such leading contemporary poets as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Heinrich Heine, but also lesser-known and regional poets, including Schlik herself. The languages are German, French, Italian, and, in one case, Czech. Besides Clara Schumann, Schlik's album includes contributions by lesser-known female composers and musicians – for example, Rosalie Spohr, Sophie Bohrer, and Theresa Wartel. Some of the contributions were created in Schlik's country residence in Kopiclno or during her travels to Carlsbad, Brussels, Ischgl, and Munich. The album's diversity reflects both Philippine and Elise von Schlik's strong artistic affinities, changes in taste and conventions between 1814 and the 1850s, and the high standing that performers, composers, and poets evidently attributed to this musical space.



**Figure 10.1** Elise von Schlik beside a piano with her Lieder Op. 12 and a sheet including verse. Image courtesy of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna

The public press did not report on Schlik's gatherings, although Schlik's and Pixis's gatherings had similar priorities – music and conversation – and to some extent attracted the same guests: Pixis himself, Spohr, Veit, and Mildner, for example. Schlik's home served as an intimate space enabling rich creative inspiration (as seen in numerous original settings in her

album), a sophisticated cultural centre for the haute volée, and a metropolitan melting-pot for visitors from different social backgrounds.

### Johanna Kinkel and the Maikäferbund in Bonn<sup>17</sup>

Johanna Kinkel was born into a bourgeois Catholic family and was financially pressured to make a living from music throughout her adult life. After an unhappy marriage and her conversion to the Protestant faith, Kinkel married the Protestant theologian, poet, writer, and professor Gottfried Kinkel (1815–82) in 1843, with whom she had four children.<sup>18</sup> Already in 1840, Johanna and Gottfried founded the *Maikäferbund*, whose artistic outputs, discussions, and social activities Johanna recorded in the handwritten journal *Maikäfer: Zeitschrift für Nichtphilister* (Journal for Non-Philistines).<sup>19</sup> At an artistic level, both Kinkels increased their productivity with the *Maikäferbund*, as the regular meetings enabled a lively exchange of ideas. It is thus not surprising that during the 1840s Kinkel set many poems which evolved within the context of the *Maikäferbund*: besides her own and her husband's poetry, these include texts by Alexander Kaufmann, Sebastian Longard, Wolfgang Müller von Königswinter, Nikolaus Becker, and Wilhelm Seibt.<sup>20</sup> Many of the songs to words by Gottfried and Johanna Kinkel conveyed socially critical content; both of them were engaged in the political upheavals during the late 1840s. It was politics that led to the closing down of the *Maikäferbund* in 1847, the group being divided between different political allegiance.<sup>21</sup>

The only female member of the group, Kinkel oversaw the *Maikäfer* journal. She contributed to it poetry, novellas, and music-historical writings; she drew vignettes for some of the journal numbers; and she sang, as Willibald Beyschlag's account reveals: 'When she [Johanna Kinkel] sang her Lieder, the most beautiful, harmonious songs of Geibel or Kinkel – not with an outstanding voice, but presented in a most thoughtful and soulful recital, then, surrounded by the twilight of the intimate room, she looked youthful and beautiful'.<sup>22</sup> The group's activities embraced the discussion of literary texts, joint poetry and prose writing, puzzles and quizzes, playful literary commentary on current affairs, recitations of poetry, drama, and songs, and joint trips into the countryside. Besides these activities typical of Biedermeier culture, the meeting's regularity, the mixed artistic interests in literature, social life, art history, and music, and the mutual artistic innovation suggest a salon-like structure. Although the term *Bund* (association) brings to mind the organizational structures characterizing *Vereine* rather

than salons, and the presence of a journal counters salonesque ephemerality, the fact that the music of Kinkel's *Lieder*, as opposed to their poetry, was never documented in the *Maikäfer* journal, either through musical scores or anecdotal references to performances, adds a salonesque feature to the *Maikäferbund*: it implies an intimacy among the members witnessing Kinkel's performances, and makes Kinkel's salonesque gatherings seem all the more spontaneous, uncertain, and ephemeral.

### Fanny Hensel and the *Sonntagsmusiken* in Berlin

As early as 1821, Fanny Hensel's mother and father had initiated weekly concerts on Sundays in their Berlin home in Neue Promenade in order to enable their children to practise music with professional musicians. The estate the family moved into at Leipziger Straße 3 in 1825 allowed larger musical gatherings, which (following a brief pause after Felix left home in 1829) Fanny Hensel re-established in 1831 as weekly cultural events, lasting until her death in 1847.<sup>23</sup> These *Sonntagsmusiken*, in which Kinkel participated frequently during her time in Berlin from 1836 to 1839, were considered salons by earlier scholars.<sup>24</sup> However, more recently it has been argued that the activities fostered there exceeded those associated with salonesque gatherings.<sup>25</sup> The musical programmes were planned in advance by Hensel, sometimes including meticulous rehearsals, and audience numbers could reach up to 200.<sup>26</sup> Hensel's thorough organization is reminiscent of the institutionalized concerts or chamber music evenings common throughout Europe during the first half of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, a journal – titled *Gartenzeitung* (Garden Journal) and, from 1827 onwards, renamed *Schnee- und Theezeitung* (Snow and Tea Journal) – recorded activities at the Leipziger Straße residence, thus pushing against the salonesque concept of ephemerality in a similar way to the Kinkels' *Maikäfer* journal.<sup>27</sup> However, we cannot be certain that Hensel recorded everything that was performed at her Sunday 'musicales', and there may perhaps have been room for improvisation, despite all the thorough planning. Furthermore, music was performed beyond the Sunday musicales.<sup>28</sup>

Regarding the performance of music in different spaces within Leipziger Straße 3, Beatrix Borchard contrasts Hensel's intimate garden (*Garten*) with the more institutionalized Garden Hall (*Gartensaal*):

Music is conceived here [in the garden] in a way that abolishes the division between performers and listeners, in connection with the 'garden site'. In this context every

listener is, at the same time, a potential singer; music serves as entertainment in a communicative sense . . . . The Mendelssohns' garden thereby becomes a contrasting site to the public concert hall as well as to the Garden Hall.<sup>29</sup>

Borchard suggests that the intense musical experiences in the garden and the Garden House found expression in printed works, such as Fanny Hensel's four-part *Gartenlieder*, Op. 3.<sup>30</sup> Kinkel performed Hensel's *Gartenlieder* privately with her choral association, the *Bonner Gesangverein*, in November and December 1847.<sup>31</sup> It is plausible that when performing these pieces in Bonn in 1847, Kinkel remembered her experiences in the garden of Leipziger Straße 3, or the Garden Hall – yet another example of the blurring of boundaries between private and public (the *Bonner Gesangverein* gave public concerts, whereas Hensel's *Gartenlieder* featured in private performances in the Garden Hall), as well as the expressive power of song to convey interpersonal relationships, experiences, and memories.

The repertoire performed at Hensel's home was diverse. It encompassed contemporary works performed by the composers themselves or by their students, including, besides compositions by Felix Mendelssohn and Fanny Hensel, songs by Karl Anton Florian Eckert, and improvisations on works by Charles de Bériot (performed by his student Henri Vieuxtemps), and on works of Ferdinand David (performed by Joseph Joachim). Original works by contemporary and past composers were frequently programmed and performed by regular attendees – for instance, those of J. S. Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Hummel, and Moscheles, as well as piano reductions of operas and oratorios (by Gluck, Handel, Mozart, and Weber).<sup>32</sup> A few exceptions aside, Lieder were rarely documented in Hensel's programmes – perhaps they were considered too trivial or intimate to be performed before larger audiences, or, more likely, they were not recorded explicitly because, while they were an inherent part of the Mendelssohns' musical life, they were not regarded as a main attraction within the context of the *Sonntagsmusiken*.

## Female Subjectivity and Musical Style

If the actual physical spaces of these salonesque gatherings provided Schlik, Kinkel, Hensel, and others with an important venue enabling the expression of their own subjectivity, what kind of abstract creative space did the Lied offer to them? How do the lived experiences of the female composers who participated in these gatherings find expression in their music?



While questions about gender and musical style bear strongly on women's music from a variety of genres and time periods,<sup>33</sup> nineteenth-century art song is particularly fertile ground for exploring female subjectivity and musical style. Some scholars have approached this by juxtaposing different settings of the same poem by a woman and a man, to explore how a composer's gender might inform their interpretation of a poetic text. Caitlin Miller, in *Women and the Nineteenth-Century Lied*, compares Clara Schumann's and Franz Liszt's settings of Heine's poem based on the legend of the Lorelei, a supernatural creature who lures sailors to their deaths.<sup>34</sup> How, Miller asks, does each composer depict the female character in the poem, and to what extent is she treated as passive object or active subject? Miller focuses on, among other things, each composer's use of a theme to depict the Lorelei. While Liszt introduces his Lorelei theme in a stanza describing her physical appearance, thereby objectifying her and emphasizing her passivity rather than her agency, Schumann places her Lorelei theme in a piano interlude that comes directly after a line describing her most powerful action – singing the song that leads the boatman into the rocky reefs. In this way, Miller suggests, Schumann's melody symbolizes not the Lorelei's image but the thing that gives her agency – her song.<sup>35</sup>

Other scholars have explored how female song composers have dealt with poetic themes relating to their experiences as women.<sup>36</sup> In *The Songs of Fanny Hensel*, Susan Wollenberg studies Hensel's songs that deal with the theme of travel.<sup>37</sup> What does it mean, Wollenberg asks, for a woman composer to engage with this theme during an era in which 'the restrictions placed on women with regard to the conditions under which they could travel set up social and cultural barriers to their ability to roam the world'?<sup>38</sup> She argues that Hensel used song composition as a way to travel in her mind's eye, to imagine distant places that she longed to visit, or revisit. At the age of sixteen, on a family trip to Switzerland in 1822, Hensel wrote a letter to her cousin describing her frustration at the restrictions placed on her on account of her gender; standing on the border between Switzerland and Italy, knowing that if she had been 'a young lad of sixteen' she could have ventured over the mountains into the country that was calling to her, she felt destiny crying out, 'so far, and no further!'<sup>39</sup> Wollenberg shows how those sentiments found expression in a song Hensel wrote during her Swiss sojourn, a setting of 'Kennst du das Land', Goethe's famous poem about a young woman who has been kidnapped and longs to return to her native land of Italy.<sup>40</sup> In this song and others, Hensel not only transported listeners to faraway places but also transported herself to places she could not visit as freely as men.

Wollenberg grounds her observations fruitfully in the concrete details of Hensel's life; she shows how Hensel used music to express her relationship with the world in which she lived and composed. That world contained not just the places she visited (or longed to visit) but also the people she knew, the spaces she worked in, and the ideas and sentiments she shared with those in her circle. All of these things shaped the kind of music she created – and the same could be said of many other female composers from the nineteenth century. The space of the salon and the space of the song intersect, each casting light on the other.

### Fanny Hensel's 'Die Sommerrosen blühen'

Hensel's Lieder demonstrate revealingly how songs can reflect private networks and friendship (and other kinds of relationships); she was personally acquainted with many of the poets whose words she set. Among her songs are twenty-two settings of words by female writers, several of whom operated in spheres that intersected with Hensel's own – including Fanny Casper (wife of Johann Ludwig Casper, who wrote the librettos for Felix Mendelssohn's first four operas), the poet and intimate family friend Friederike Robert, and the poet we focus on here: Fanny's sister-in-law Luise Hensel.

Fanny married Luise's brother Wilhelm in 1829, but already seven years before that she was beginning to develop a close relationship with her future sister-in-law. Fanny set two of Luise's poems to music in 1822, a year after she met Wilhelm: 'Dahin' (There), which she retitled 'Die Linde' (The linden tree), H-U 56, and 'Will keine Blumen mehr' (Don't want any more flowers), retitled 'Die Sommerrosen blühen' (Summer roses are blooming), H-U 57.<sup>41</sup> (Because these songs were written before the Mendelssohn family moved to Leipziger Straße 3, they would not have been heard in the fully organized *Sonntagsmusiken*, but they may have been performed in the gatherings that Lea and Abraham Mendelssohn held at their Berlin home on Neue Promenade.) Both poems are about withering flowers and fading beauty – and indeed, this theme appears throughout Luise Hensel's poetry. Susan Youens, in *Schubert, Müller, and 'Die schöne Müllerin'*, mentions the poet's 'transformation of commonplace poetic imagery', specifically citing 'Will keine Blumen mehr', a poem about a woman whose brother is travelling with the army while she is left home with dying roses.<sup>42</sup> As Youens suggests:

[The summer roses] are symbolic of the unbearable passivity of women's lives, especially when compared to the freedom enjoyed by the poetic persona's brother. He can go out in the world and do battle with its forces, engage fully in its enterprises, but the ephemeral flowers, fixed in place, can only bloom, exude a sweet fragrance, and die.<sup>43</sup>

Here once more the theme of travel takes on special meaning for a woman artist who could not explore the world as freely as she would have liked. Luise Hensel wrote the poem in 1814, when her brother was fighting in the Napoleonic wars; we can sense in it her frustration at being rooted to one spot like the fading flower, unable to experience the world as her brother can (see Figure 10.2 for text and translation).

If the poem encapsulates Luise's frustration with the restrictions of womanhood, it seems to have had personal significance also for Fanny. She set the poem to music (as well as Luise's 'Dahin') in December 1822, just after returning from the family trip to Switzerland mentioned earlier. This was only two months before Wilhelm, with her permission, spoke with her parents about the couple's intention to marry, and only seven months before Wilhelm was scheduled to leave for Italy, where he would work for five years as a painter in Rome; during that absence he was

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Die Sommerrosen blühen Und duften um mich her; Ich seh' sie all' verglühen, Will keine Blumen mehr.	Summer roses are blooming And wafting fragrantly around me; I see them all dying away, Don't want any more flowers.
Der Bruder mein that ziehen Mit Königs stolzem Heer, Läßt einsam mich verblühen, Will keine Blumen mehr.	My brother went journeying With the king's proud army, He has left me to wither, Don't want any more flowers.
Die blanken Waen sprühen Weit Funken um ihn her; Das Herz thut ihm erglühen, Will keine Blumen mehr.	The bright weapons throw sparks All around him; His heart is glowing, Don't want any more flowers.
Und Silbersterne blühen Um Helm und Brustschild her, Die blitzend ihn umziehen, Will keine Blumen mehr.	And silver stars are blooming Around his helmet and breast shield, Which sparkle around him, Don't want any more flowers.
Die Sommerrosen glühen Und duften all' so sehr; Ich seh' sie all' verblühen, Will keine Blumen mehr.	Summer roses are glowing And wafting so strongly; I see them all withering, Don't want any more flowers. <sup>44</sup>

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**Figure 10.2** Luise Hensel, 'Will keine Blumen mehr': text and translation

forbidden from writing letters to Fanny, and thus could only send her drawings, and correspond with her parents. Larry Todd has noted that in setting 'Will keine Blumen mehr', Fanny 'now assumed the poetic persona, just months before Wilhelm's departure for Italy and the beginning of a new five-year separation'.<sup>45</sup> She changed the first line of stanza 2, 'Der Bruder mein that ziehen' (My brother went journeying), to 'Der *Liebste* mein that ziehen' (My *beloved* went journeying), making the biographical connection all but explicit.

How does Hensel interpret the poetic persona's predicament and give voice to her emotions? Depending upon how we read the poem, the poetic persona could sound anywhere from despondent (as though she has given up hope of improving her situation) to decisive (as though she has resolved to renounce a life of passivity). Fanny appears to opt for the second of these: the poetic persona of her song comes across as a woman who actively rejects the 'passivity' of her situation – as well as the conventional image of femininity that signifies it – and tries, however futilely, to free herself from her confinement. While the protagonist of the poem is already given agency because it is presented from her point of view, Fanny gives her added agency; in her reading of the poem, the woman does not so much resign herself to her fate as resist it.

This resistance is conveyed above all in the realm of harmony and tonality. Hensel sets the first and last stanzas – those describing the woman's experience – to music that attempts to break free from the constraints of the tonic. Example 10.1 shows the music associated with the first stanza. The music to the final stanza is a varied repetition of the opening section. Fanny sets stanzas 2 and 3 in D major, with a related melody but different harmonies. She omits stanza 4; we can only surmise as to the reasons, but it is significant that she draws even more attention thereby to the poetic speaker. In the original poem, two stanzas describe her experience and three describe his; in the revised version they each have two stanzas. After a two-bar introduction that secures D minor as forcefully as possible (with back-to-back i–V–i progressions), she immediately touches on the subdominant, G minor. After this, she strongly tonicizes C minor (bb. 5–6), G minor (bb. 7–8), and F major (bb. 9–10). The music pulls away from D minor, not gently (or passively) but determinedly, even with a sense of strain; note especially the harshly dissonant D and C dominant ninth chords in bars 6 and 9. The journey away from D minor, however, is short-lived: the opening section ends with a clear perfect authentic cadence in the tonic and a return of the forceful i–V–i

Example 10.1 Fanny Hensel, 'Die Sommerrosen blühen', H-U 57, bars 1–13

Allegretto

Die Som - mer - ro - sen blü - hen und

5 duf - ten all' so sehr; ich seh' sie all' ver - glü - hen, ich

9 will nicht Blu - men mehr, ich will nicht Blu - men mehr.

progressions – a sign that for all the poetic persona's resistance she cannot escape the constraints placed on her.

Hensel emphasizes the woman's agency not just with the music she writes but also with her further alterations to her sister-in-law's poem, besides substituting 'Der Liebste' for 'Der Bruder' (see Figure 10.3 for the words as she set them, with the most significant changes marked in boldface).<sup>46</sup> The penultimate line of the poem is not 'Ich seh' sie all' verblühen' (I see them all withering), as in the original, but 'Ach laß sie mir verglühen' (Ah, let them die for me); what was an observation becomes an imperative. And in three of the stanzas she changes the refrain 'Will keine Blumen mehr' to 'Ich will nicht Blumen mehr'. In her revision Fanny makes the subject explicit – she gives voice to the 'ich' that was unspoken in

Die Sommerrosen blühen Und duften all' so sehr; Ich seh' sie all' verglühen, <b>Ich will nicht Blumen mehr.</b>	Summer roses are blooming And wafting so strongly; I see them all dying away, <b>I no longer want flowers.</b>
Der Liebste mein that ziehen Mit Königs stolzem Heer, Läßt einsam mich verblühen, Will keine Blumen mehr.	My beloved went journeying With the king's proud army, He has left me to wither, Don't want any more flowers.
Die blanken Waen sprühen Weit Funken um ihn her; Das Herz thut ihm erglühen, <b>Ich will nicht Blumen mehr.</b>	The bright weapons throw sparks All around him; His heart is glowing, <b>I no longer want flowers.</b>
Die Sommerrosen blühen Und duften um mich her; Ach laß sie mir verglühen, <b>Ich will nicht Blumen mehr.</b>	Summer roses are blooming And wafting fragrantly around me; Ah, let them die for me, <b>I no longer want flowers.</b>

**Figure 10.3** Fanny Hensel, 'Die Sommerrosen blühen', H-U 57: text and translation

Luise's text, making the 'lyric I' an even more active participant, who fully asserts herself.

It is therefore striking that she does not change the refrain in her setting of the second stanza – the first time we hear about the man's experience in the battlefield.<sup>47</sup> The significance of her retention of the original line here comes into even sharper relief when we consider the music for this stanza. Example 10.2 shows the middle section, which sets both stanzas 2 and 3. Where the outer sections strive to escape D minor, tonicizing a new key area every couple of bars, the middle section stays more contentedly in D major, opening with a full I–IV–V<sup>7</sup>–I progression that takes up five bars. This is music that sounds more secure and confident altogether than the music of the outer sections, with their sense of anxious striving; like the brother in the poem, and the husband in the song, it sounds happy to be where it is. Even when the music does move away from D major, the move is normative – a modulation to the dominant that prepares for a return of the opening material – rather than unexpected, like the tonal shifts in the opening section. The only real moment of surprise is the brief move to an F major chord in bar 19, which clearly references the F major key in the first section. Fittingly, it occurs when the stanza shifts momentarily to a description of the woman's state: 'Läßt einsam mich verblühen' (He has left me to wither). In this section resounding with the man's assuredness, the woman's anxiety creeps in, however briefly – her music intervenes, but

Example 10.2 Fanny Hensel, 'Die Sommerrosen blühen', H-U 57, bars 13–23

Der Lieb - ste mein that zie - hen mit Kö - nigs stol - zem  
 Heer, lässt ein - sam mich ver - blü - hen, will kei - ne Blu - men  
 mehr, will kei - ne Blu - men mehr.

is waved aside by his music, in the form of an easy modulation to the dominant. In this context, the line 'Will keine Blumen mehr' begins to take on a different meaning than in the original poem; it sounds less like '[I] don't want any more flowers' and more like '[He] doesn't want any more flowers.' Listening to the F major hesitation, and the subsequent brusque modulation, it is hard not to sense the woman's feelings of renunciation – her anxiety about being forgotten.

Wilhelm forgot neither his sister Luise nor his future wife Fanny. In 1829, one year after Wilhelm's return from Italy, he and Fanny were married: he was a stalwart and supportive presence throughout her life. Together they hosted and visited social gatherings in Berlin, had their son Sebastian, and inspired each other creatively. Wilhelm was a gifted painter and poet, and his poems were the basis for many of Fanny's vocal works.

Among them is the fourth of her *Gartenlieder*, Op. 3, mentioned previously, a setting of Wilhelm's poem 'Morgengruß' (Morning greeting). The manuscript is dated 6 July 1846, Wilhelm's birthday, and adorning the upper left quarter of the first page is a beautiful painting of flowers.<sup>48</sup> This represents the blooming plant of the poem, which beholds the morning's radiance – a visual image that supplements the song's verbal and sonic images. Yet viewed in light of Fanny's earlier composition about wilting summer roses and the stifling passivity of womanhood they symbolize, the flowers of this later song seem almost like a counter-image, reclaiming floral imagery for a different purpose, and a different meaning. Here the flowers suggest a shared domestic space: the literal space of the Garden Hall, as well as the garden situated adjacent to their home, but also the metaphorical space where their creative spheres (music, poetry, and painting) merged.

### Conclusion

If there is one thing that binds together these salons and songs, it is that these spaces and the Lieder conceived and performed in them gave many women a voice. Poetry and song gave them an outlet to convey complex emotions (as in the case of Luise and Fanny Hensel's 'Die Sommerrosen blühen'). They enabled them to express aspects of their personal relationships through mutual inspiration (as in Kinkel's and Hensel's Lieder to words by their husbands), dedications (as in Schlik's songs), or the promotion of someone else's work within a more or less intimate circle (as in Kinkel's case with the *Maikäferbund*). They were used as gifts for close friends and acquaintances, as with Schlik's album, or more intimate companions, as in Hensel's 'Morgengruß'. If song itself provided space for the expression of female subjectivity on creative levels, the salon did the same on administrative levels: Fanny Hensel planned her *Sonntagsmusiken* meticulously, and decided what would be performed within them. Kinkel sang her own songs within the intimate context of the *Maikäfer*. Finally, Schlik collected an album that testifies not just to her musical skills but also to her ability to nurture sociability across different societal strata and cultures. In the space of the salon, these women had a level of agency that they could not have had in the fully public sphere.

As we have suggested throughout this chapter, salons and the songs heard in them were other than uniform and consistent. They resist all-encompassing definitions and are not easily summed up with simple binary



oppositions such as public versus private, formal versus informal, or pre-planned versus spontaneous. The differences between individual salons and individual songs that would have been performed in them sometimes seem to outweigh their similarities. Some songs heard in these salonesque gatherings were published, while others were not; some salons required a subscription or entrance fee, while others – including the examples discussed here – did not; some songs and salons were covered in the media, while others were not; some drew only a handful of people, while others numbered over a hundred; and some composers and poets wrote purely for private reasons – emotional, social, or otherwise – while others, especially during the *Vormärz* and around mid-century, wrote with an eye towards larger, and possibly politically minded, audiences. Kinkel certainly did so. Because of the Kinkels' controversial courtship and marriage in the early 1840s, and their political engagement later, many of Kinkel's songs were in one way or another politically coloured.<sup>49</sup> The relationship between songs and the broad marketplaces where they were consumed, and the contribution of song and salonesque culture to identity formation and politics during the nineteenth century (projects beyond the scope of this chapter) would be rich areas for further study. So would the various ways that salon culture changed in the second half of the nineteenth century, as salons belonging to members of the nobility – like Schlik's – disappeared, while middle-class salons continued, and as women took on more public and professional roles in the performance of song. There is room for further studies of salons, songs, and subjectivity in regions of the world beyond those covered here (such as England, Greece, Italy, Scandinavia, or the United States). We hope to have sparked interest in these and other topics and, even more, to have demonstrated the importance of approaching them with a combination of musicological and music-theoretical thinking – with an eye towards who inhabited the nineteenth century's vital and vibrant worlds of female creativity, and an ear towards what was heard in those spaces. These worlds, hidden for far too long, deserve to be explored with all the historical and analytical tools at our disposal.

## Further Reading

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- Kenny, Aisling and Susan Wollenberg, eds. *Women and the Nineteenth-Century Lied* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015).
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- Xepapadakou, Avra and Alexandros Charkiolakis, eds. *Interspersed with Musical Entertainment: Music in Greek Salons of the 19th Century* (Athens: Hellenic Music Centre, 2017).

## Notes

1. Aisling Kenny and Susan Wollenberg, 'Introduction', in Aisling Kenny and Susan Wollenberg, eds., *Women and the Nineteenth-Century Lied* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 8.
2. See Marcia J. Citron, 'Women and the Lied, 1775–1850', in Bowers and Tick, eds., *WMM*, 224–48.
3. See Mirjam Gerber, *Zwischen Salon und musikalischer Geselligkeit: Henriette Voigt, Livia Frege und Leipzigs bürgerliches Musikleben* (Hildesheim: Olms, 2016), 24; Melanie Unseld, *Biographie und Musikgeschichte: Wandlungen biographischer Konzepte in Musikkultur und Musikhistoriographie* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2014), 119; and Anja Bunzel, 'Johanna Kinkel's Social Life in Berlin (1836–39): Reflections on Historiographical Sources', in Anja Bunzel and Natasha Loges, eds., *Musical Salon Culture in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2019), 13–26.

4. Andreas Ballstaedt, 'Salonmusik', in Ludwig Finscher, ed., *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 2nd ed., 29 vols (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1994–2008), viii, Sachteil, 856; see also [www.mgg-online.com](http://www.mgg-online.com).
5. Gerber, *Zwischen Salon und musikalischer Geselligkeit*, 17, and Anja Bunzel and Natasha Loges, 'Introduction', in *Musical Salon Culture in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 1.
6. Sabine Meine and Manuela Schwartz, 'Einleitung', *Die Tonkunst: Magazin für klassische Musik und Musikwissenschaft: Thema: Der Musiksalon* 1 (2010); and Sabine Meine and Henrike Rost, eds., *Klingende Innenräume: 'Gender' Perspektiven auf eine ästhetische und soziale Praxis im Privaten* (Würzburg: Königshausen and Neumann, 2020).
7. A. M., 'Das dritte Concert des Herrn Prof. Pixis', *Bohemia: Ein Unterhaltungsblatt*, 18 and 21 December 1838. 'Am 13. Dezember gab Herr Professor Pixis die dritte und letzte musikalische Abendunterhaltung im gegenwärtigen Advente. Kaum konnte der geräumige Salon die Anzahl der Zuhörer fassen, von denen ein gutes Drittel Damen waren. Was die Conversation vor dem Beginn des Spohr'schen Quartettes in A-moll (op. 75) besonders belebte, war das Erscheinen des berühmten Violinvirtuosen und Compositeurs Lipinski, und es verbreitete sich in der Gesellschaft die heiterste Stimmung, als man erfuhr, dass Herr Lipinski nicht . . . durchreisen, sondern uns durch ein Concert erfreuen werde. . . . Als Herr Professor Pixis das Zeichen zum Anfange gab, trat an die Stelle der lebhaftesten Unterhaltung die tiefste Stille; denn es wurde eine der gemüthlichsten und innigsten Compositionen Spohr's aufgeführt. . . . Besonders gespannt war das Publikum auf eine neue Composition des Herrn Veit . . . sein neuestes Quartett (Es-dur, noch Manuskript). . . . Herr Prof. Pixis und sein Freund Prof. Hüttner, Herr Mildner und Herr Bartak, und Herr Langweil . . . fahren fort, einen der schönsten Zweige der Instrumentalmusik zu kultivieren.'
8. Further on this salonesque ideal of deep musical experience and conversation see Jennifer Ronyak, *Intimacy, Performance, and the Lied in the Early Nineteenth Century* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2018), 81.
9. Ballstaedt, 'Salonmusik', 855 and 860.
10. Jana Sekyrová, *Eliška Šliková: Život neprovdané šlechtičny v první polovině 19. století*, diploma thesis (Jihočeská univerzita, České Budějovice 2006), 13–15.
11. The Schlik family estate (Rodinný archiv Šliků) is archived at the State Regional Archive in Zámorsk, Czech Republic. The lithograph is found under inventory number 878, box 116, fasc. 20.
12. Sekyrová, *Eliška Šliková*, 18.
13. See Anja Bunzel, 'Clara and Robert Schumann's Circles in Dresden: "I Take the Liberty to Request from You an Invitation . . . to Your Musical Matinée"', in Joe Davies, ed., *Clara Schumann Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 13–31.

14. Robert Schumann, *Tagebücher*, ed. Gerd Nauhaus (Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1987), vol. 2, 412. 'Klara mit der Gräfin Schlick viele Besuche in der haute volée', 'Früh zur Gräfin Schlick, curiose Wirtschaft, aber sehr freundliche Frau'.
15. See inventory number 316 v.64, box 32, V.
16. Held by the Juilliard Manuscript Collection and fully digitized: <https://juilliardmanuscriptcollection.org/manuscript/album-schlick-family-prague/> (accessed 6 August 2020).
17. Kinkel's maiden name was 'Mockel'; after her first marriage her surname was 'Mathieux'. In order to avoid confusion, we refer to her as 'Kinkel' throughout this chapter.
18. For a comprehensive biography see Monica Klaus, *Johanna Kinkel: Romantik und Revolution* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2008), 123–4.
19. For the *Maikäfer* journals see Ulrike Brandt-Schwarze, Astrid Kramer, Norbert Oellers and Hermann Rösch-Sondermann, eds., *Der Maikäfer: Zeitschrift für Nichtphilister*, 4 vols (Bonn: Stadtarchiv, 1982–5).
20. For a full account of Kinkel's songs to poetry that evolved as part of the *Maikäferbund*, see Anja Bunzel, *The Songs of Johanna Kinkel: Genesis, Reception, Context* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2020).
21. Klaus, *Johanna Kinkel*, 115.
22. Quoted in Bunzel, *The Songs of Johanna Kinkel*, 12.
23. See Cornelia Bartsch, 'Lea Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1777–1842): "In voller geistiger Lebendigkeit"', in Irina Hundt, ed., *Vom Salon zur Barrikade: Frauen der Heinezeit* (Stuttgart: J. B. Metzler, 2002), 61.
24. See, for instance, Petra Wilhelmy, *Der Berliner Salon im 19. Jahrhundert (1780–1914)* (Munich: deGruyter, 1989), 146; and Verena von der Heyden-Rynsch, *Europäische Salons: Höhepunkte einer versunkenen weiblichen Kultur* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1992), 152.
25. Beatrix Borchard and Cornelia Bartsch, 'Leipziger Straße Drei: Sites for Music', *Nineteenth-Century Music Review*, 4/2 (November 2007), 119–38, at 120.
26. Beatrix Borchard mentions audience numbers of up to 150 but explains that this was rather exceptional (Borchard and Bartsch, 'Leipziger Straße Drei', 121); Sebastian Hensel, as noted by Lorraine Byrne Bodley, mentions that the space could sit up to 200 people ('In Pursuit of a Single Flame', 54). Hans-Günter Klein, however, states that Hensel's *Sonntagsmusiken* were often attended by 120 to 130 participants ( ". . . mit obligater Nachtigallen- und Fliederblütenbegleitung": *Fanny Hensels Sonntagsmusiken* [Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2005], 16).
27. See Borchard and Bartsch, 'Leipziger Straße Drei', 123. On intersections between salonesque culture and media landscapes see Anna Ananieva, 'Medien und Praktiken der eleganten Welt: Annäherungen an einen urbanen Lebensentwurf des 19. Jahrhunderts', in *Zirkulation von Nachrichten und Waren: Stadtleben, Medien und Konsum im 19. Jahrhundert* (Tübingen:

- Universitätsbibliothek Tübingen, 2016), 11–24; and Astrid Köhler, ‘Zur Topografie urbaner Geselligkeit: Badeorte, Salons, Zeitschriften’, in *ibid.* (25–30).
28. See Klein, “ . . . mit obligater Nachtigallen- und Fliederblütenbegleitung”, 16, 22.
  29. Borchard and Bartsch, ‘Leipziger Straße Drei’, 123. Bartsch argues similarly in ‘Lea Mendelssohn Bartholdy’.
  30. *Ibid.*
  31. Johanna Kinkel, *Notizen den Gesangverein betreffend*, unpublished, n.d., ULB S2400, 75.
  32. All conclusions regarding repertoire at Hensel’s home were surmised from Klein, “ . . . mit obligater Nachtigallen- und Fliederblütenbegleitung”.
  33. For three impressive examples focusing on nineteenth-century instrumental music, see Matthew Head, ‘Genre, Romanticism and Female Authorship: Fanny Hensel’s “Scottish” Sonata in G Minor (1843)’, *Nineteenth-Century Music Review*, 4/2 (2007), 67–88; Citron, *GMC*, 145–59 (discussing Cécile Chaminade’s Piano Sonata in C Minor, Op. 21, first movement); and Jeffrey Kallberg, *Chopin at the Boundaries: Sex, History, and Musical Genre* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 49–61 (on Clara Schumann’s Notturmo, from her Op. 6 *Soirées musicales*, and Fanny Hensel’s Notturmo in G Minor, H-U 337).
  34. Caitlin Miller, “Und das hat mit ihrem Singen, Die Lore-Ley gethan”: Subjectivity and Objectification in Two Heine Settings’, in Kenny and Wollenberg, eds., *Women and the Nineteenth-Century Lied*, 233–50.
  35. For two other comparative studies, see L. Poundie Burstein, ‘Their Paths, Her Ways: Comparisons of Text Settings by Clara Schumann and Other Composers’, in *Women & Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture*, 6 (2002), 11–26; and Sanna Iitti, *The Feminine in German Song* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 109–48.
  36. This approach can offer a kind of counterbalance to scholarship that has considered how male song composers have handled these themes; the debates surrounding Robert Schumann’s *Frauenliebe und -leben* come to mind. See Ruth Solie, ‘Whose Life? The Gendered Self in Schumann’s *Frauenliebe* Songs’, in Steven Paul Scher, ed., *Music and Text: Critical Inquiries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 219–40; Kristina Muxfeldt, ‘*Frauenliebe und Leben* Now and Then’, *19th-Century Music*, 25/1 (2001), 27–48; Laura Tunbridge, *The Song Cycle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 51–5; Victoria Hart, ‘Equals in Love: *Frauenliebe und Leben* Reconsidered’, DMA diss. (University of California Santa Barbara, 2004); and Rufus Hallmark, *Frauenliebe und Leben: Chamisso’s Poems and Schumann’s Songs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 2014.
  37. Susan Wollenberg, ‘Songs of Travel: Fanny Hensel’s Wanderings’, in Stephen Rodgers, ed., *The Songs of Fanny Hensel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 55–74.

38. *Ibid.*, 56.
39. Adapted from Françoise Tillard, *Fanny Mendelssohn*, trans. Camille Naish (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1996), 108–10. See also Sarah Rothenberg, ‘Thus Far, But No Farther: Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel’s Unfinished Journey’, *Musical Quarterly*, 77/4 (1993), 689–708.
40. H-U numbering refers to the catalogue of Hensel’s works in Hellwig-Unruh, *Fanny Hensel geb. Mendelssohn Bartholdy: Thematisches Verzeichnis der Kompositionen* (Adliswil: Edition Kunzelmann, 2000).
41. Neither song has been published; the manuscripts are available via the digital collection of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv: ‘Die Sommerrosen blühen’ ([https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN72189903X&PHYSID=PHYS\\_0041&DMDID=DMDLOG\\_0004](https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN72189903X&PHYSID=PHYS_0041&DMDID=DMDLOG_0004)); ‘Die Linde’ ([https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN72189903X&PHYSID=PHYS\\_0040&DMDID=DMDLOG\\_0003](https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht?PPN=PPN72189903X&PHYSID=PHYS_0040&DMDID=DMDLOG_0003)) (accessed 20 August 2020).
42. Susan Youens, *Schubert, Müller, and ‘Die schöne Müllerin’* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 40.
43. *Ibid.*
44. Authors’ translation. The poem was published in 1869 in Christoph Bernhard Schlüter, ed., *Lieder von Luise M. Hensel* (Paderborn: Verlag von Ferdinand Schöningh, 1869).
45. R. Larry Todd, *Fanny Hensel: The Other Mendelssohn* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 67–8.
46. Fanny Hensel makes several other small changes, less significant than those discussed in this chapter. She exchanges the second line of the first stanza (‘Und duften um mich her’) and the second line of the final stanza (‘Und duften all’ so sehr’). And whereas Luise modifies the first line of the final stanza so that it differs from first line of the poem (it uses the verb ‘glühen’ instead of ‘blühen’), Fanny keeps them the same.
47. Why she changes the refrain again in the next stanza, which continues to describe his experience, is not entirely clear; perhaps she picked up on the fact that only in the second stanza is ‘Der Liebste’ the grammatical subject of the sentence. More than any other stanza in the poem, this is truly his stanza.
48. The autograph has been digitized by Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv: <https://digital.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/werkansicht/?PPN=PPN779294270> (accessed 20 August 2020).
49. See Bunzel, *The Songs of Johanna Kinkel*, 63–4 and 132–3.  
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