# 7 A multitude of voices: the Lied at mid century

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To many observers at mid century, the Lied was in decline.[1] Despite the activity of Liszt, there was a period between early (Schubert and Schumann) and late (Brahms and Wolf) progenitors when no one figure was seen as leading the way. August Reißmann, in 1861, highlighted one of the dilemmas then facing the Lied – whether it had a future beyond the works of Schubert, Mendelssohn, and Schumann:

> Generally speaking, the development of the sung Lied appears to be completed in those three masters [Schubert, Mendelssohn, and Schumann], both in idea and form . . . If the Lied is not to disappear in subjective caprice, it will have to hold itself within the limits established by those masters.[2]

Twelve years later, Reißmann – as edited by Hermann Mendel – is more sanguine about the Lied's prospects, which he sees as "having grown to a broad stream, which also does not lack depth" (although he considers the "destructive frenzy of the innovators" as jeopardizing the fixed form of the Lied).[3] This said, the ever-growing number of Lieder had become a recurring concern, especially as they were seen as contributing toward the "spreading dilettantism and fashionableness in this compositional genre."[4] As Wolfgang Joseph von Wasielewski wrote in 1858, "we are by no means poor in lyrical productions in recent times – at least according to quantity. It has almost become a fashion that young composers put forward a volume of Lieder as Opus 1."[5] Wasielewski would prove accurate on both counts. The number of Lieder would swell past the point of counting just as many a composer would attempt to launch a career with an Opus 1 Lied or set of Lieder. Schubert presumably inaugurated the custom in 1821 with his Op. 1 *Erlkönig*; others who did likewise include Carl Loewe, Fanny Hensel, Robert Franz, Peter Cornelius, and Arnold Schoenberg. While many an unskilled or under-prepared composer may have found unbidden access into the professional world of music through the Lied, the genre nonetheless presented important opportunities for young composers to show their abilities in a medium that did not require large resources and was readily marketable. This is to be discerned in the Lieder of Cornelius and Adolf Jensen as well as those by women composers like Fanny Hensel, Clara Schumann, and Josephine Lang, who otherwise were unable to enter the public arena with operatic and symphonic scores. (The Lied's relationship with gender issues of the time

remains to be thoroughly examined. Above and beyond its suitability as a vehicle for women composers, the Lied appears to have been positioned as inherently female, in comparison with the various transcendental categories of instrumental music.)

The present chapter is intended to highlight the diversity of approaches to the Lied at mid century; thus no one composer's name stands at its head. It also is my intention to bring to the surface the many challenges then facing the Lied. The proliferation of songs weakened any single composer's claim to superiority just as the canonic command of Schubert and Schumann cast a long shadow engendering responses ranging from epigonism to revolution. At the same time, the Lieder of Liszt – despite their quality – appear to have had little impact. The same holds true for Felix Mendelssohn, Loewe, and Franz, none of whom were able to challenge the preeminence of Schubert and Schumann.[6]

Over and above this, at least three other factors account for the Lied's unsettled standing at this time. First, the genre was pulled to the concert hall (while remaining a fixture of the salon), thereby gradually establishing itself as a vital part of musical life in the century's second half. Secondly, while Goethe and Heine still were leading poets for song composers, such figures as Nikolaus Lenau, August Heinrich Hoffmann von Fallersleben, and Emanuel von Geibel provided new directions in German lyric poetry. Lastly, for a variety of (mostly pragmatic) reasons Lied publications moved away from individual songs to small non-cyclical collections that exploited a diversity of poets and styles. An additional tension was the conflict between advancing musical style and the conservatism of the Lied itself: Reißmann's previously cited comments on Schubert, Loewe, and Mendelssohn reflect the era's expectations. As Jürgen Thym has written, "the aesthetic requirements of the genre during the Goethe era – simplicity, singability, popularity – repeatedly were invoked throughout the century."[7] The art song was defined by a set of expectations more than a century old, as this 1849 comment by Ferdinand Simon Gaßner reveals:

> Lied . . . Music and poetry are so blended in and with each other, as in virtually no other notable type of vocal music . . . The music of a Lied naturally orients itself exactly in accordance with the mood of the poem, and if it is to be successful, it is to merge fully with the same, so that it is impossible to conceive another melody of the same value for that text. No composition demands so much exactness of expression as the modest, simple song . . . The Lied must be easily singable, readily comprehensible and of no substantial dimensions.[8]

Similar criteria were voiced by Hans Michel Schletterer more than twenty years later, in a historical assessment of Louis Spohr. Invoking standards

for German song familiar for more than a century, Schletterer begins by demanding that the Lied possess simplicity, tunefulness, and singability, to which the composer must oblige with individuality and originality. The composer's starting point must always be the poem, for it is this that sets "the narrowly delimited form of the Lied." This notwithstanding, "writing Lieder requires a special talent on the part of the composer, and even when this is present, a certain penchant and love for the subject."[9] As Schletterer continues, the composer's challenge is to find an individual path within the Lied's circumscribed parameters. Each of the composers surveyed in this chapter attempted that in her or his own way. In the countless journal reviews of Lieder, however, the most successful composer was the one who blended the elements of song into an organic entity, a prominent musical paradigm of the time.[10] In describing the works by Beethoven and Schubert in 1852, Julius Schucht provides insights into this important concept. "Words of the text are most beautifully fashioned into musical shapes," he observes. "Music and word here are so organically united that they together make up a whole . . . Every part depends on the other through the most highly organic interrelation." The process was widely seen as itself natural. As Schucht continues: "Just write every note from the holiest depths of your heart and the proper unity as well as the most attractive variety will appear on their own."[11]

Text choice was seen as key to the creation of the organically conceived Lied. The poets preferred by Schumann in 1840 remained popular beyond mid century, but in the sober climate of the 1850s, after the failed revolution, tastes were changing. The enduring popularity of such Romantic poets as Heine and Eichendorff was grounded on the aesthetics propounded by Edouard Schuré and his contemporaries, that certain poets and styles of poetry were more eminently "musical."[12] "We ever perceive in Heine that inner music of the soul, which is the true heartbeat of life."[13] If one surveys the choices of poets by mid-century composers such as Franz, Fanny Hensel, and Clara Schumann, the continuing reliance on Heine and, of course, Goethe – whose popularity would not waver throughout the century – is to be observed. Given the Lied's relative conservativeness at mid century, when originality was permitted only within firmly demarcated boundaries, it stands to reason that composers would be attracted to poems that already had yielded musical fruits in the hands of previous composers, whether in the multiple settings of Goethe's "Erlkönig" or "Mignons Lied" ("Kennst du das Land") or Heine's "Du bist wie eine Blume." Still, poetic taste varied considerably among composers. While Clara Schumann might share the literary predilections of her husband, Cornelius preferred to set his own texts. Also, a certain critique of Romantic poets, especially Heine, became observable as literary style evolved, so that Schucht could postulate, "if

you . . . now consider how the frivolous and blasé poems by Heine have been composed so many times, you have to wonder even more over the neglect of Lenau."[14] In the works of a Lied composer like Adolf Jensen, it is possible to detect a progression over time, from such Romantic poets as Heine and Eichendorff in his earliest works to an assortment of contemporary poets in later years, including Heyse and Geibel, Georg Friedrich Daumer and Joseph Viktor von Scheffel.

It was the text that drove all other components of the organically conceived song. Yet if poetic choice ranged widely, musical style (including textual declamation) varied so significantly in its details as to preclude any overall assessment, other than to reintroduce the elements of continuity and unity already identified: simplicity, singability, popularity. Even within one composer's oeuvre, the working out of these details differed or changed substantially, at times within the same collection, as for example Felix Mendelssohn's Op. 19, which ranges from the utter simplicity of No. 5, *Gruß*, to the subtly varying details of phrase length and accompaniment in No. 2, *Das erste Veilchen*. This is what makes the study of the Lied at mid century so interesting: observing how composers achieved variety while preserving the genre's time-honored constraints.

The latter also impinged on matters relating to the setting in which the Lied was cultivated, for, by and large, this was not virtuoso music that exceeded the technical reach of the amateur singer and pianist almost always available within a family or intimate social circle. Reviewers reinforced song's domesticity by assessing its performance demands, as they did for contemporaneous piano works. This is not to say that Lieder did not figure in public concerts at mid century – indeed, beyond Liszt's solo piano recitals, concerts that juxtaposed orchestral music, chamber music, solo works for piano and song remained the rule – but the Lied recital as practiced today only gradually became popular during the century's second half.[15] It also was rare that entire song cycles would be performed at this time, although we know that Liszt accompanied a full performance of *An die ferne Geliebte* sung by Ludwig Titze in 1839, in the concert hall of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde.[16] It would not be until after mid century that the Lied began to establish itself in the recital hall, an accomplishment associated preeminently with the celebrated baritone Julius Stockhausen, the first singer to perform in their entirety the song cycles *Die schöne Müllerin* (1856) and *Dichterliebe* (1861).

Long before mid century, however, the case can be made that the Lied came to be regarded as a "revered national treasure," an achievement Kravitt defers to the 1870s.[17] The date seems a bit late. In comparison with the extensive study devoted to the German "ideologizing" of instrumental music during the nineteenth century, very little has been written about the national

politics of the Lied during the same period.[18] The problem, of course, was the tying of music to text, but the importance attached to organicism, as has been seen, came to the rescue. Since the Lied as poem ideally arose from the depths of the German soul and soil (unlike the operatic text), and the music of the organically conceived song arose from that text, the Lied as poetic-musical entity was a manifestation of the German spirit. Throughout the nineteenth century the Lied enshrined the legacy of the German poetic muse. Maintaining its purity became of paramount importance, as is evident in the previously mentioned definitions and descriptions of the Lied. In a very real sense, Lied composers were contributing to a national resource by providing an integrated vehicle for the display of German lyricism. The resulting "treasure" would play a not unsubstantial role in the escalating fervor over German identity. (I shall return to this point at the end of this essay.)

In examining this crucial segment of Lied history, a brief explanation may be helpful. To the extent that most investigations of the mid-century Lied focus on the high points rather than a broad survey, the one that follows will take something of a middle-of-the road approach wherein well-known figures are juxtaposed with those who are nowadays relegated to secondary or even tertiary rank, but whose music may be worthy of reevaluation or is otherwise historically important. Included will be a look at the Lieder of two women composers, whose high-quality work was neglected during their lifetimes. These composers reflect a diversity of approaches to Lied composition at mid century, with stylistic influences ranging from the so-called Berlin School (Loewe, Fanny Hensel, Felix Mendelssohn), Robert Schumann (Clara Schumann, Jensen), and "neo-Baroque" (Franz) to the New German School (Cornelius, Jensen). (*Die Neudeutsche Schule*, or New German School, is an important concept for this chapter and one that often will be mentioned. Franz Brendel coined the name at the first conference of German musicians, or *Tonkünstler-Versammlung*, held in Leipzig in 1859 as an alternative to the ubiquitous "music [or musician] of the future" – *Zukunftsmusik* or *Zukunftsmusiker*.[19] Many of the innovations associated with the school were prompted by poetic ideas. In addition to Brendel, the most active participants were disciples of Liszt from his Weimar years, including Hans von Bülow, Joachim Raff, and Cornelius.) The earliest of our composers, Loewe, made his mark on the genre with the composition of ballads, which served as models for succeeding generations. For his part, Felix Mendelssohn maintained a conservative approach to Lied composition in a style reminiscent of Reichardt and Zelter; as a result, Mendelssohn the song composer generally has attracted little attention, for he appears not to have significantly or originally contributed to the genre's development. His talented sister Fanny Hensel typically wrote in a similar style – in fact, she published several songs under his name and collaborated with him on

other Lieder, even though she was a gifted composer in her own right. The highly respected Franz excelled as a musical miniaturist who focused on the nature and mood of his texts and whose better efforts bear comparison with Robert Schumann. Clara Schumann did not write many songs, but the best of them certainly stand on the same level as those of husband, Robert. Cornelius was the New German most successful in merging the aesthetics of the Lied with "progressive" musical ideals. Finally, brief consideration will be given to a more marginal figure, Adolf Jensen, whose songs were written under the influence of Wagner, yet who never entered the pantheon of nineteenth-century song composition. This still omits such notable mid-century composers as Spohr, Karl Gottlieb Reissiger, Josephine Lang, Franz Abt, Heinrich Marschner, Carl Reinecke, Ferdinand Hiller, Theodor Kirchner, Robert Volkmann, Joachim Raff, Eduard Lassen, Alexander Ritter, Luise Adolpha Le Beau, Anton Rubinstein and Edvard Grieg. The comprehensive history of the Lied in the nineteenth century clearly still is to be written.

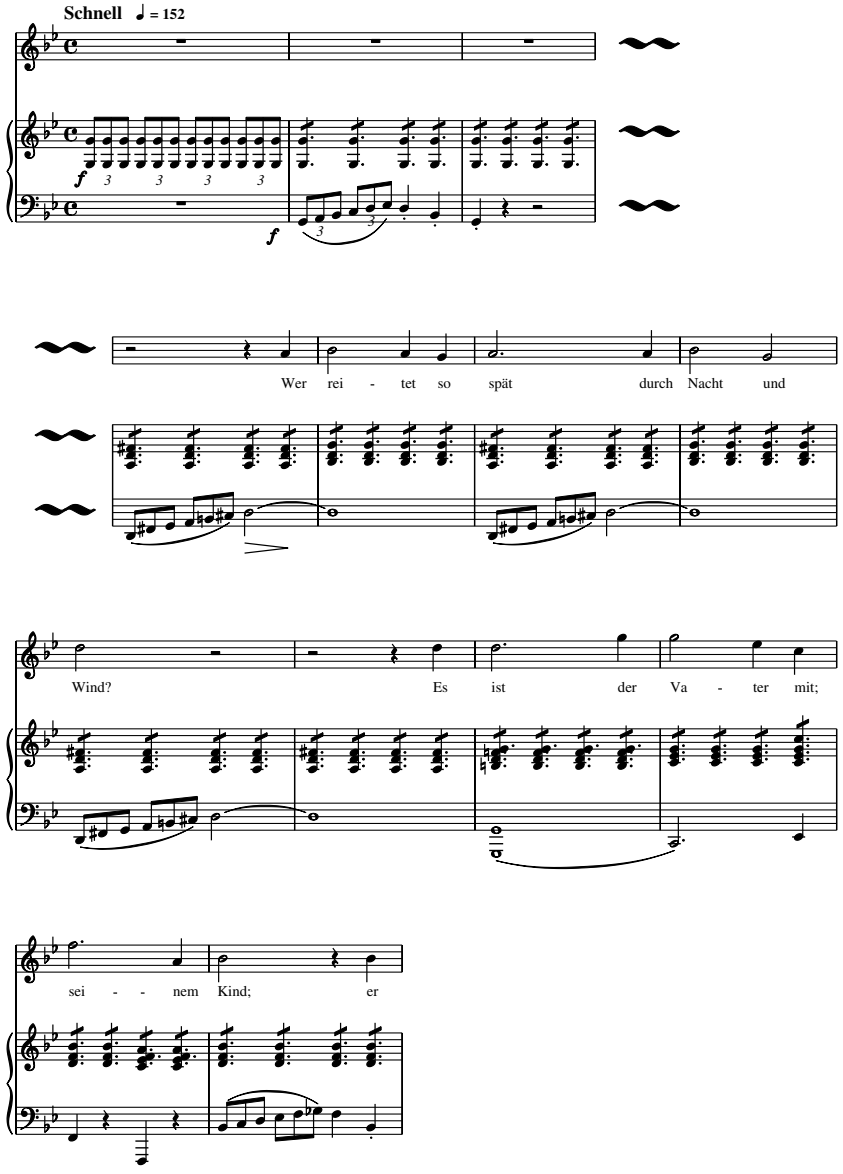
## Carl Loewe

Loewe (1796–1869), the earliest of the composers examined here, is actually a contemporary of Schubert by year of birth (born a year before), but his contributions to the Lied, or more accurately the ballad, extend beyond mid century. The author of a valuable autobiography, Loewe recently has become a topic of serious scholarship.[20] More importantly, he is recognized as a significant influence on and contemporary of Schubert and Schumann (in fact, he was compared to Schubert during his lifetime). This notwithstanding, Loewe customarily has been relegated to the sidelines of nineteenth-century musical history; in view of his contributions to the Lied and the quality displayed in his very best work, the time perhaps is at hand to reconsider his standing. Raised by a mother who entertained the youth with fairy tales, and growing up with a sister who would declaim ballads to him, Loewe's tendency toward dramatic composition was established early on, and had its first public manifestation in a collection of ballads published as Op. 1 in 1824.[21] The collection's third setting, of Goethe's *Der Erlkönig* (composed 1818), greatly contributed to Loewe's reputation as the "North German Schubert."[22] In 1820, Loewe received an appointment as music director in Stettin, where he would remain for the rest of his life, notwithstanding summer trips through Europe during the 1830s and 1840s when he would sing his ballads (to his own accompaniment) to select audiences.[23] In all, he composed seventeen oratorios, six operas, approximately 350 Lieder and 200 ballads. Thus his song output is numerically comparable to that of Schubert, although the ballad accounts for a comparatively greater percentage.

As a ballad composer, Loewe initially showed a taste for leading poets, one likely inherited from Zumsteeg, whose influence he acknowledged.[24] In his early works Loewe set texts by noted ballad poets Goethe, Herder, and Uhland into the late 1830s, often on topics of the supernatural, whereas in later years – when poets largely had ceased writing ballads – he turned to less significant poets, including Johann Nepomuk Vogl and Ferdinand Freiligrath, whose tales center on historical figures. That his later ballads by and large did not attain the artistic level of the 1820s and 1830s may well confirm Martin Plüddemann's assessment of Loewe's strengths (and weaknesses): "His music always achieved the same heights to which the poet rose."[25] In the event, a commentator such as Max Friedländer did not believe Loewe again attained the level of his Op. 1 ballads.[26] The best works from this collection impress by their sure assimilation of the existing ballad tradition. At the century's start, the sub-genre tended toward simple strophic musical setting or else complex through-composition, as is to be seen in the works of Zumsteeg.[27] Like Schubert, Loewe negotiated a middle path that both preserved or at least worked within the stanzaic formal design of the poetry while satisfying the dramatic requirements of the narrative. The results are relatively short ballads (usually between three and five minutes – his *Erlkönig* clocks in at almost a minute under Schubert's) that nevertheless often present unified dramatic scenes, with close attention to character portrayal and advancing of the storyline. Melodies are motivic, fragmentary, and filled with dramatic touches; accompaniments are often descriptive, with the piano on an equal plane with the voice.

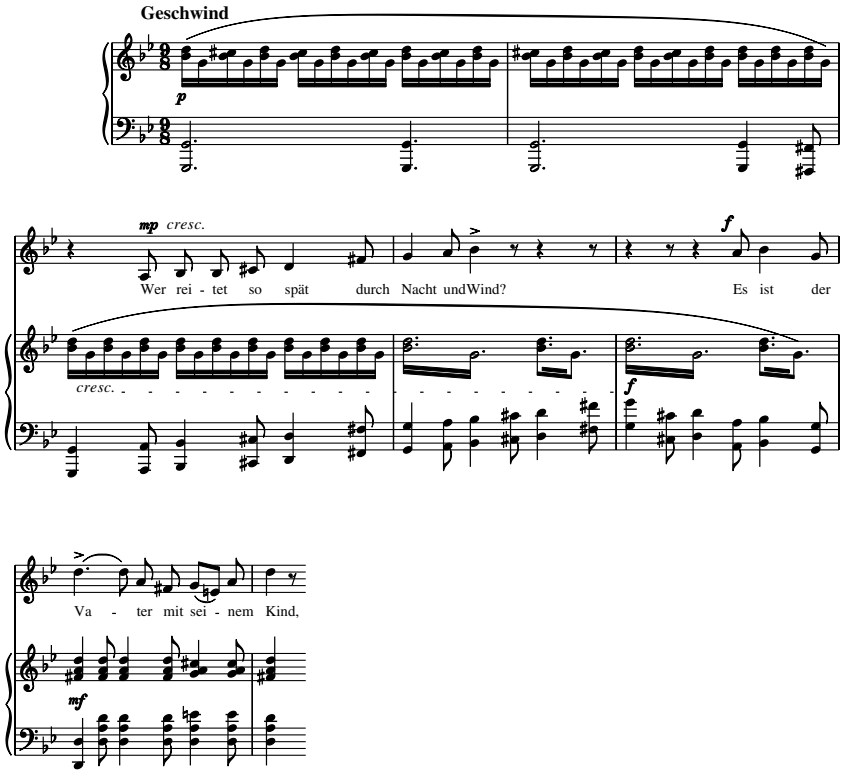
A comparison of Loewe's setting of the noted Goethe ballad "Der Erlkönig" with Schubert's illustrates the former's ability as a song composer. Schubert composed his setting in 1815, Loewe his in 1818, and the compositions are remarkably similar; Walther Dürr attributes the correspondence to a common model, in Zumsteeg.[28] Like Schubert, Loewe was fascinated by the poem's requirement that three different characters be delineated by means of music. Again much like Schubert, Loewe accomplishes this through vocal style and range; unity is maintained by a recurring, menacing trill (see Examples 7.1a and 7.1b for a comparison of Loewe and Schubert's opening measures). The two settings even share key dramatic gestures: at the Erlkönig's final statement, the music abruptly changes character as he threatens to take the child by force, and the agitated accompaniments only cease at the end, at the words "das Kind war tot." Loewe's Op. 1, No. 1 setting of Herder's "Edward" likewise is a tribute to the ability of the twenty-two-year-old; here he establishes a dialogue between mother and son that reveals the gruesome details of the son's murder of his father. For dramatic effectiveness, the impassioned exclamations of "O!" are a masterstroke unsurpassed in his later works; the unusual key of E♭ minor contributes to the

**Example 7.1a** Schubert, *Erlkönig*, mm. 1–3 and 15–24




prevailing darkness of mood. Similarly compelling ballads are *Herr Oluf*, Op. 2 (1821), *Heinrich der Vogler*, Op. 56 (1836), and *Tom der Reimer*, Op. 135 (1867). Some of the longer ballads take on characteristics of the cantata, given their proportions and sectionality. The much-lauded *Archibald Douglas*, Op. 128 (1858) extends to almost 275 measures and goes through no less than ten tempo changes and seven key changes as the protagonist

**Example 7.1b** Loewe, *Erlkönig*, mm. 1–7




voices his pleas for reconciliation and repatriation with growing desperation. Other extended ballad settings include *Die verfallene Mühle*, Op. 109, *Der gefangene Admiral*, Op. 115, and *Der Nöck*, Op. 129, No. 2, all relatively late works.

While the longer ballads tend to be sectional, Loewe did compose a ballad cycle – *Gregor auf dem Stein*, Op. 38 (1836) – an Oedipal story divided into five interrelated scenes.[29] But this work reveals Loewe's problematic position within the history of the Lied. Although arguably the last great ballad composer (despite the activity of Martin Plüddemann),[30] he cultivated the genre at a time when, on the one hand, "simplicity" was the governing guideline for the successful Lied, and, on the other, genres like the melodrama (Liszt's *Der traurige Mönch*) and the instrumental ballad (piano and orchestral) began steadily to usurp the sung ballad.[31] It is not without nostalgia for the composer and his characteristic genre that New-German song critic Emanuel Klitzsch, in 1850, reviewed Loewe's Op. 114, *Der Mönch zu Pisa*, in the pages of the *Neue Zeitschrift*: "this work is the fruit of a beautiful 'Indian summer' which we consider with a melancholy gaze."[32]

## Fanny Hensel

Heartening signs are at hand that Fanny Hensel (1805–47) at last is being accorded the status of a composer in her own right, one not in need of the deprecating (whether intended or not) prefatory remark, "sister of Felix Mendelssohn." Recent studies of her life, works, and publications of her music have established her position as one of the most significant Lied composers in the period from Schubert's death in 1828 to Schumann's *Liederjahr* in 1840, even though Hensel's Lieder largely were unknown at the time.[33] In fact, her more than 275 songs – the backbone of her compositional output – can be said to surpass in quality and diversity those of her brother (to be discussed below), for whom the Lied by and large was tangential in comparison with compositions for piano and those for larger orchestral and vocal forces. (One reason for this is that Hensel was not granted the same opportunity for gaining familiarity with large performing forces or for drawing upon their resources in performance.) Although her training was by no means inferior to Felix's – they both received first-rate instruction from Zelter and Ludwig Berger in Berlin – her father and brother strongly discouraged Hensel from publishing her music in the belief that doing so was inappropriate for a woman from their family. And yet she persisted; as she wrote to Felix in 1846: "I hope I won't disgrace all of you through my publishing."[34] That rebellious act came almost too late as her life was cut tragically short at the age of forty-two. In all, only about thirty songs appeared in print before or shortly after her death. Many more were performed in the salon of the Mendelssohn home, especially after 1831, when Hensel assumed responsibility for the *Sonntagsmusiken*, where the intellectual elite of Berlin gathered. She would find greater self-assurance as a composer only after her marriage to the open-minded court painter Wilhelm Hensel in 1829 and after the death of her father in 1835.[35] Given this succession of obstacles, Hensel was only as successful as she was thanks to her social status; the many opportunities she enjoyed were unavailable to women of lower rank.[36]

Fanny and Felix grew up surrounded by some of the finest minds of their day. At one time or another they brushed shoulders with the likes of Goethe, Humboldt, Heine, and Eichendorff, a grandfather recognized as one of Germany's foremost philosophers (Moses Mendelssohn), an aunt (Dorothea Veit) who lived with the writer and poet Friedrich Schlegel, and another aunt (Henriette) a school principal in Paris. (The models of such obviously strong-willed aunts no doubt encouraged Hensel's lifelong assertiveness.) All of this fostered intellectual curiosity and wide familiarity with the literature of past and present. Goethe, a remarkable influence in the lives of both Fanny and Felix, was the poet Hensel most often set to

music, followed by Eichendorff, Heine, Lenau, Uhland, and Tieck, as well as a fair number from the eighteenth century including Klopstock and Hölty.[37] Having literally grown up surrounded by the leading literary figures of her time, like many a Lied composer, Hensel appears to have intuitively understood that to set a poem to music is not an act of translation.[38] Slight changes sometimes are necessary, such as successively repeated lines or the creation of a textual refrain for the purpose of musical expression or formal unity (*Bergeslust*, Op. 10, No. 5); in others, she undertakes more significant alterations in order to leave a personal mark on the poetry. This was less the case with her earliest songs from the 1820s, which in their literal, strophic settings of Goethe followed in the footsteps of Zelter.

After those early songs, her musical style came to contrast significantly with the relative simplicity that mark the Lieder of composers then active in Berlin; in the event, the sophistication of many of her songs warrants comparison with the best of Robert Schumann's songs. Her Lieder moved from the realm of objective, light-hearted compositions (the Op. 1 *Morgenständchen*), well suited for consumption within the *Sonntagsmusiken*, to the subjective interpretation of texts through wide-ranging melodies, varied harmonic resources, through-composed forms, and an equal partnership of voice and piano.[39]

All of these characteristics converge in *Im Herbste*, Op. 10, one of many works composed in the 1840s which, as Thym has written, show Hensel "finding her voice – one which, when necessary, is capable of skillfully fusing complex formal designs and textural variety."[40] The poem, by Geibel, features a single eleven-line stanza with a-b-a-b-c-c-d-e-e-e-d rhyme scheme. In setting it, Hensel freely treats the poem to internal repetition, as when lines 5 through 7 are climactically repeated to different music. Here the piano accompaniment takes on structural importance, for while the vocal melody is arguably through-composed, the piano's right hand, in alternation with a rising arpeggio figure, holds the song together through constant ornamentation of the vocal line. At key points in the text such as the word "ach," the piano stops altogether, in this case through caesuras on the high notes g♭$^3$ and g$^3$. Numerous other touches reveal the composer's sensitivity to the poem: the Neapolitan chords at the words "die dumpfe Klage" that all but stop the rhythmic motion or the fully diminished seventh chord at "schmerzlich." The harmonic and tonal instability throughout the song underscores the pain expressed in the text, whether the fully diminished seventh chords on accented beats, descending chromatic lines in the voice, or the unorthodox final cadence (diminished ninth chord on F♯ resolving to a G major chord). Rarely settling onto a stable key, the song moves through G minor, B♭ major, C♭ minor, C minor, and A♭ major, with a remarkable descending sequence of dominant chords a few measures before the end.

In such a work, Hensel reveals that hers was a voice of individuality, especially in the years before her untimely death. Yet the full range of that voice even now is insufficiently appreciated, as it typically was during her lifetime. Hensel at one point witnessed six of her Lieder published not under her name but her brother's. Her songs *Das Heimweh*, *Italien*, *Suleika und Hatem* (duet), *Sehnsucht*, *Verlust*, and *Die Nonne* were published under Felix's name as part of his 1827 Op. 8 (Nos. 2, 3, 12) and 1830 Op. 9 (Nos. 7, 10, and 12), respectively. Nancy Reich suggests that these songs came out under Felix's name, "not to deceive the public or because he could not compose songs, but because her 'modesty' would have been at stake."[41] Whatever the explanation, it effectively diminished Hensel's voice. Her Lieder nevertheless merit greater scrutiny both by performers and public.

## Felix Mendelssohn

Having spent his formative years in Berlin, it is natural that Felix Mendelssohn (1809–47) would be influenced by the song ideal of Reichardt and Zelter. In his parents' salon, Mendelssohn also came to enjoy the friendship and support of Goethe and other leading poets of the day. Historians of the genre often overlook his Lieder,[42] since he remained largely untouched by the songs of Schubert and Schumann[43] – his songs in fact hark back to an earlier aesthetic. For Mendelssohn, his unpretentious lyric efforts often served as gifts to friends, as a form of sociability, and not necessarily an expression of deeper subjectivity. Whatever their ultimate inspiration, Mendelssohn's some one hundred songs span a period of about twenty-five years, beginning in the early 1820s. Nevertheless, at no time did the Lied ever serve as a central point of his creative activity. Forty-eight Lieder appeared in seven collections during his lifetime, another seventeen under four posthumous opus numbers, and the remainder – largely early works – have been published only recently. Stylistically and formally, the songs can be grouped chronologically: an early phase until about 1833 (Opp. 8, 9, 19a), one of maturity between 1834 and 1845, and a late period in the last two years of his life (the last songs stand out by virtue of their depth of feeling and "characteristic" tone).[44]

A survey of the texts Mendelssohn set yields unexpected, paradoxical insights: despite Loewe's presence in the Mendelssohn household, Felix set only lyrical poetry (no ballads), and despite Goethe's close acquaintance with the family and Hensel's predilection for composing his poems, Goethe is author of only four song texts by Mendelssohn. Both observations reflect a Lied aesthetic that eschewed close interpretation of a text.[45] As he

wrote to his friend the poet Karl Klingemann, "in other poets, namely Goethe, the words turn away from music and want to maintain themselves on their own."[46] Mendelssohn's poetic texts divide into three categories: (1) those by dilettante friends such as Klingemann and Johann Gustav Droysen; (2) *Lieder im Volkston* (by and large anonymous); and (3) poems by noted figures of the past and present. This latter group falls into further categories of older and newer, Hölty and Voß on the one hand, Goethe, Heine, Uhland, Geibel, Byron, and Lenau on the other. Relative proportions are important, however: not only is Goethe all but missing, but Heine and Uhland are little represented (especially in comparison with Hensel).

Musically, Mendelssohn's Lieder embody the principles of simplicity and popularity, tending toward strophic form, modest accompaniments (which nevertheless may be illustrative, as is *Venezianisches Gondellied*, Op. 57, No. 5), and tuneful melodies, although some reflect an instrumental conception. This latter tendency is seen in such instrumental devices as melodic sequences (*Andres Maienlied*, Op. 8, No. 8) and melodies that function independently of the words (such as the strophic *Wenn sich zwei Herzen scheiden*, Op. 99, No. 5). Both lead to his keyboard "songs without words," a hybrid genre that is arguably his most significant contribution to the Lied. Even though he seems uninterested in entering into the details of poetry, Mendelssohn nonetheless constructed beautiful melodies that satisfied the needs of a public enamored of tunefulness. More than Schubert and other leading song composers of his day, he used strophic form for *volkstümlich* settings, such as in *Gruß* from Op. 19, *Sonntagslied* from Op. 34, *Volkslied* from Op. 47, and *Lieblingsplätzchen* from Op. 99. Meters and rhythms remained simple until Mendelssohn's last period, despite his frequent reliance on 6/8. The harmonic elements are not particularly adventurous, especially in comparison with Schubert and Schumann, even though Mendelssohn occasionally uses augmented triads in transitional contexts (m. 35 of *Nachtlied*, Op. 71, No. 6) and will settle into the subdominant region to darken the sound of a song (*Jagdlied*, Op. 84, No. 3). Accompaniments almost always are subordinate to the vocal part, and preludes and postludes serve no real poetic purpose. When all of these features come together in one and the same song, Mendelssohn's Lieder stand apart from those of Schubert, Schumann, Loewe, and even his sister Fanny. Gisela Müller has compared settings of the same Heine poems by Felix and Fanny, and determined that rather than allowing the text to shape his songs, "he conceived his Lieder according to pre-formed musical models that strongly neglected the texts."[47] Still, it would be wrong to characterize Mendelssohn's songs as musically unsophisticated or lacking resonance with the culture of his times.[48]

Considered by some commentators to be one of his best, Mendelssohn's setting of the Goethe sonnet "Die Liebende schreibt" (composed in 1831,

published posthumously as Op. 86, No. 3) provides an absorbing example of the degree of sophistication he was capable of investing in a song.[49] (Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, and August Bungert also set the text.) Goethe has furnished a classical sonnet, consisting of fourteen lines, organized into four stanzas with the rhyme scheme abba-abba-cde-cde. The internal scheme of individual lines poses particular problems to composers, since each begins and ends on a weak syllable with five stresses in between; Mendelssohn himself reported: "it is too insane to compose that; it is not suited for music at all."[50] At first glance, Mendelssohn's solution to the poetic structure seems simple: the two quatrains are accompanied by repeated eighth-note motion, while for the two tercets, he changes to a sixteenth-note broken arpeggio figuration in the piano, ascending for the first three lines, descending for the second three. However, the composer elides the transition between the quatrains and the tercets by introducing the new accompaniment figure three measures before the end of the last quatrain. Furthermore, and more importantly, Mendelssohn lets the text direct the tonal structure of the song. The first quatrain that describes the relationship of the lovers is squarely in E♭ major, with a modulation to the subdominant and return to the tonic. When Goethe's second stanza questions that which was established in the first, Mendelssohn moves through E♭ minor to G♭ major, a key not closely related to the tonic that represents the break in the relationship. The third stanza begins in G♭ major, but as the writer anticipates the response of her lover, the key returns to the tonic by settling on the subdominant, given that the emotional uncertainty is yet unresolved. Even though Goethe leaves the resolution open-ended, Mendelssohn settles the outcome by introducing a new 'Espressivo' theme in the left hand in E♭ major at the point where the poet asks for a sign from his beloved. Here we see Mendelssohn not only entering into the spirit of the poem, but also affecting its outcome through music.

Although he did not contribute to the mainstream of nineteenth-century song, Mendelssohn did establish a model for a conservative successor such as Carl Reinecke, whose substantial Lieder production, while lacking in individuality, nonetheless was successful in finding a public.[51]

## Clara Schumann

Few women composers have attracted as much scholarly attention as has Clara Schumann (1819–96), starting with a series of biographies, many popular or fictional (including several films), culminating in the definitive life-work study by Nancy Reich.[52] In light of her activity as a virtuoso pianist, it is not surprising that her substantial body of piano and chamber music should have initially attracted more scholarly attention than her

twenty-five songs, fifteen of which were published during her lifetime.[53] Her Lieder range in date from 1841 to 1853, and their origins are closely tied to her husband. Thus, upon Robert's encouragement, Clara wrote three songs that she presented to him as a Christmas gift in 1840. He approved of the results, encouraging her to undertake a joint composition of Rückert's "Liebesfrühling," which she completed in time for his birthday in 1841 (8 June). The resulting twelve songs featured three by Clara (Op. 12) and nine by Robert.[54] In 1842 and 1843, she again gave gifts of Lieder (respectively two and three) to Robert on his birthday. In turn, he arranged for Breitkopf & Härtel to publish a collection of six of her songs (Op. 13 in 1844). The six songs of Op. 23 (1853) also owe their origins to Robert, to the extent that he was reading the poems of Hermann Rollet and appears to have recommended them to his wife.[55]

Clara did not write much about her songs, but her attitude toward her other works is surely suggestive, as is revealed in a letter to Robert from 14 March 1840. "I cannot compose," she discloses. "It makes me at times quite unhappy, but it really is not possible, I have no talent for it. Don't think that it is laziness. And moreover now a song – that I can't do *at all*. It takes inspiration to compose a song, to comprehend a text in its full meaning."[56] In response to the Lieder from late 1840, she remarked that "while Robert is out" she spent the time "trying to compose a song (which always has been his wish), and then I in the end succeeded in creating *three*, which I will give to him for Christmas. Even if they are of no value at all, only a *really weak attempt*, I am counting on Robert's indulgence."[57] She deferred to Robert as well for the choice of poets. In her published songs she set Rückert, Heine, Geibel, and Rollet, noted Romantic poets all except for Rollet, a minor Austrian poet whose *Jucunde* Robert was reading in 1853. The extensive poetry reading in the Schumann household ensured mutual discussions of poems for musical setting.[58] However, unlike Robert, she avoided setting ballads or more complex poetic forms. As Reich has observed, she "generally chose poems of two to three stanzas on such subjects as love, parting and rejection, springtime and nature . . . Most are in varied strophic form."[59]

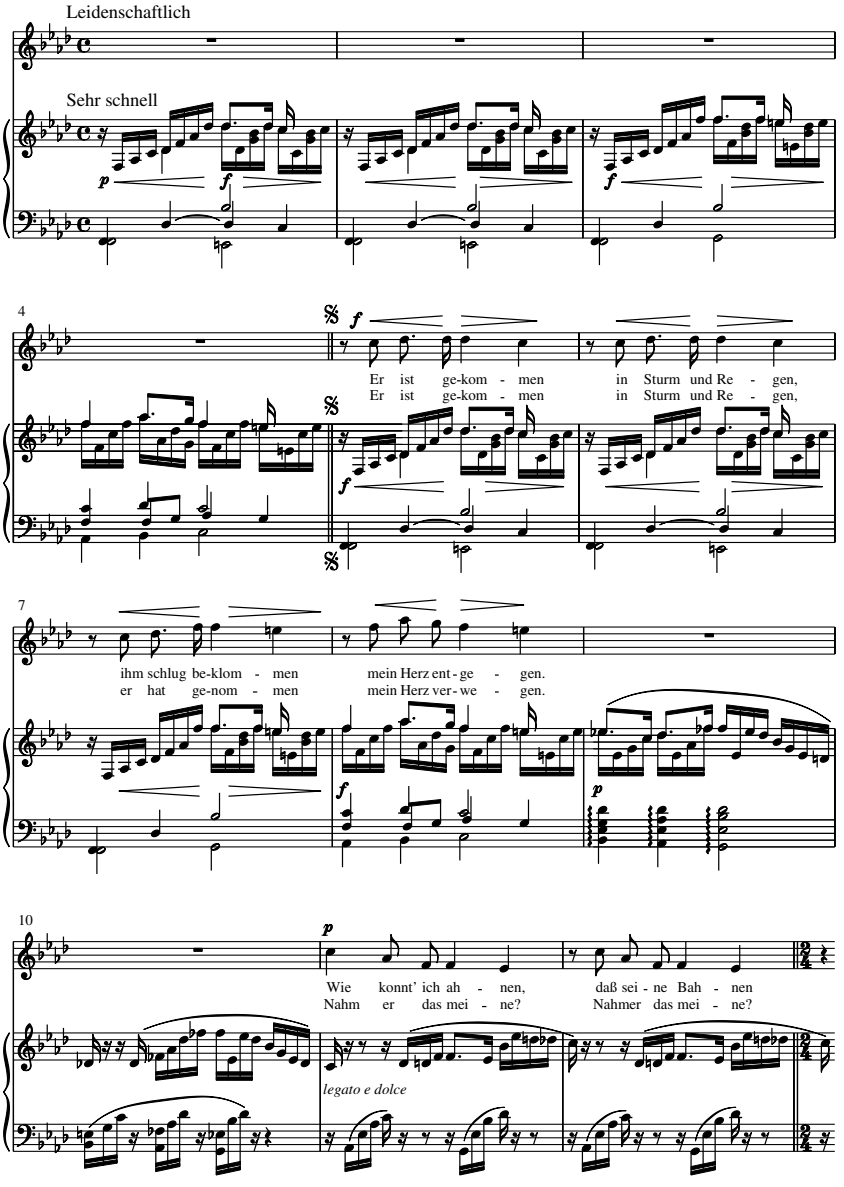
The quality of Clara Schumann's songs is quite high; typically, they feature richly varied harmonies and idiomatically conceived piano parts. For example, *Die stille Lotosblume*, Op. 13, No. 6, ends on an unresolved dominant seventh chord in A♭ major and explores the flat keys in a harmonically roving middle section. In general, the piano works well with the voice to establish moods, yet sometimes requires virtuoso performing abilities, as in *Er ist gekommen in Sturm und Regen*, Op. 12, No. 2. Her best Lieder compare favorably with Robert's, such as her three contributions to Op. 12 that for contemporary reviewers were all but indistinguishable from his works in the same set.[60]

The high achievement of the six Rollet Lieder, Op. 23, merits separate consideration. Even though the poetry is below the standard usually identified with the Schumann household, Clara shows her literary acumen by selecting the strongest of Rollet's works and introducing qualitative improvements (omission of strophes). Here she prefers strophic or modified strophic forms, but everything is diverse, depending on the text. The accompaniments range from simple to demanding, the generally diatonic harmonic palette effectively incorporates expressive dissonances, and the melodies closely reflect the character of the individual poems. What we see in Op. 23 is a composer sure of her craft, one who need not resort to length or hyperbole to make a statement. Neither Op. 23 nor her earlier collections can be considered to be cyclical, in terms of textual narrative, key scheme or thematic material (in this regard, her Lieder resemble those by Robert Franz or her husband in his later years). Twelve songs remained unpublished during her lifetime. By and large, these date from the 1840s and served as birthday and Christmas gifts to Robert. As such, they are less substantial than the published songs, even though some – such as *Am Strande* or *Das Veilchen* – are entirely effective.

*Er ist gekommen* is considered one of Clara's best songs. Following Rückert's poem, the music divides into three strophes. The restlessness, passion, and uncertainty of the first two strophes are expressed in the rushing accompaniment (Example 7.2), the prominent half-step in the fragmented melody, the surging dynamics, and the F minor tonality. As the text in each of the first two strophes moves from the literal depiction of the storm to the emotional states of the man and woman, the music lyrically settles into A♭ major. After the second strophe, repeated to the music of the first, there occurs one final return of the stormy opening material, and then the mood changes to the calm after the protagonist's affirmation of love (marked 'Ruhig'). A♭ major prevails, the voice moves in large rising arches, and the piano is less active. This section also draws on melodic material previously heard in the B phrases. The piano postlude adds a significant commentary: references to the opening attempt to establish themselves and thus introduce uncertainty at the moment of resolution, a move thwarted by the song's lyrical ending. The overall form reveals an inventive type of modified strophic form with a scheme of A B A B A C, C being a distant version of B.

Critical reaction to Clara's Lieder was mixed, depending on the source. Not surprisingly, the AmZ, with its "conservative song ideal,"[61] embraced a song such as *Er ist gekommen*,[62] while Robert's NZfM wrote more favorably about her lyrical work.[63] Writing about Op. 12, Robert himself, in a letter dated 23 June 1841, declared: "Together we have composed a number of Rückert's songs, which relate to each other like questions and answers . . . I

**Example 7.2** Clara Schumann, *Er ist gekommen in Sturm und Regen*, Op. 12, No. 2, mm. 1–13




think the songs will have to arouse interest. They are almost all in a light and easy style and written with real heart."[64] And her songs did spark interest, given that they were greeted with a degree of commercial success during Clara's lifetime – they remained in publishers' catalogues throughout the century. In 1872, Franz Liszt published three in transcription (Op. 12, No. 11; Op. 13, No. 5; and Op. 23, No. 3), long after their original publication.

Although Liszt's important article about Clara does not specifically mention her songs, he identifies her talent in "continuous, mystical reflection on that which is sublime, beautiful, ideal."[65] As is the case with today's scholars and performers, Liszt recognized the value of her contributions. With the valorization of her piano music, it is hoped that her songs will find a similar position both in performance and study.[66]

## Robert Franz

Esteemed by Schumann and Liszt in his day, Franz (1815–92) remained little known even in his native country until the Halle Händel-Haus began promoting his music in the 1980s.[67] This continued with the centenary of his death in 1992, which inspired a comprehensive *Festschrift* with articles about his music and its reception.[68] It has been argued that his almost exclusive dedication to the Lied is one reason why listeners are unaware of his music; the point makes sense, especially since, in contrast to the symphony and opera, the Lied generally has been considered a lightweight genre. A few of his Lieder nevertheless have survived in the repertories of a handful of singers, such as *Widmung* (Op. 14, No. 1) or *Gute Nacht!* (Op. 36, No. 5), but the majority await revival. Whether or not this occurs is an open question, given that recent commentators have faulted his textual "literal-mindedness," overall "sameness," and "lack of passion."[69] Yet if for no other reason than that he offers an alternative to Schubert and Schumann at mid century, Franz is deserving of another look. As the composer himself noted in 1871, "my music generally has its basis less in Schubert and Schumann than in Bach and Händel."[70] The remark nevertheless pinpoints another possible weakness; it seems that Franz venerated a bit too thoroughly the music of the past, one in turn inspiring a conservative approach seen as out of touch with the times in which Franz lived.

Largely self-taught, Franz did study music in Dessau with Friedrich Schneider (1835–37). Early acquaintance with the music of Bach, Handel, Haydn, and Mozart, folk music, and the Protestant chorale resulted in lifelong influences.[71] Franz spent most of his relatively uneventful life in Halle, occupying positions as organist, director of the *Singakademie*, and finally music director at Halle University (where he received an honorary doctorate in 1861). An important milestone was Robert Schumann's favorable review of his Op. 1 in the *Neue Zeitschrift* of 1843, which helped bring Franz's name before a wider public.[72] Thus began his career. Unfortunately, Franz already had begun to lose his hearing in 1848; by 1867 he was completely deaf, which forced him to give up performing a year later. He continued to compose until at least 1884; in later years, he also suffered from a nervous

disorder. Throughout his life, Liszt – who recognized Franz's talent and always treated him with respect – helped at key moments, including publishing a laudatory article in 1855, republishing it in book format in 1872 (upon Franz's request), and making generous donations to the Robert Franz Fund.[73] In 1848, Liszt transcribed thirteen of his Lieder for piano.[74] Franz valued this support, telling Liszt's associate August Göllerich in 1885, "I have him to thank for everything."[75] Thym argues that Franz "was unwilling to take sides" in the battle between the New German School and the conservative camp.[76] This may be true publicly, where he did not want to besmirch his benefactor Liszt, but privately, with Joseph Joachim and Clara Schumann, Franz took a stand against the music of the New German movement.[77] It is indicative that in his conversations with Waldmann, Franz does not mention Liszt's music, but rather his noble spirit.[78]

In all, Franz published over 280 Lieder between 1843 and 1884, usually in groups of six. Despite a creative life lasting more than forty years, his songs resist division into stylistic periods, even though the earliest tend to be more innovative and adventurous (Opp. 1, 2, 5, and 10).[79] Characteristically, he avoided anything that could be called "pathos," "sentimentality," or "sensuality." Instead, as Franz declared, he favored "chasteness."[80] Songs were not to awaken a listener's passions, but rather to promote "peace" and "reconciliation" through what Thym identifies as "warm, gently passionate sentiments, often tinged with feelings of nostalgia and melancholy."[81] Exceptions exist, above all such earlier songs as the dramatic *Ja, du bist elend* (Op. 7, No. 6, a Wagner favorite) or *Gewitternacht* (Op. 8, No. 6). Noted as "the lyricist and master of miniature painting," Franz may be said to represent the flipside of the coin from Loewe.[82] Thus he avoids the ballad and other dramatic forms, his songs are brief, and he rarely uses piano preludes or postludes. While his taste in poets was wide-ranging, he preferred such figures as Heine (more than sixty settings), Goethe, Mörike, Rückert, Eichendorff, Lenau, Geibel, and Burns, or befriended poets such as Wilhelm Osterwald (fifty-two). Despite the number of musical settings of one poet, Franz only published eight collections of songs to poems by the same author, and among them only the *Schilflieder* (Op. 2) is truly cyclical.

Franz himself best summarized his word–music relationship: "I have composed feelings, not words."[83] Moreover, "musical content is essential [to a Lied], not the emphasis on this or that word."[84] It could be said that he engaged in "mood painting" rather than "tone painting." For Franz, a mystical relationship exists between a poem and the music: "the text not only inspires the composition, but the latter already mysteriously resides hidden in it. It goes without saying that I am only speaking of poems that really long for music, consequently roam the world as a 'half being' until they have found their completion in notes."[85] While Franz suggests a Romantic

unity of word and tone in this statement, the belief that each text had an ideal musical setting led both to a "literal-mindedness" in his musical settings of poetry and to a failure to understand the paradoxes of word–music relationships in Schubert and Schumann.[86] As already suggested, the composer's "basic mood" ruled out the possibility of his being able to set more complex texts – unity and clarity were key. Commenting on his own Lieder, Franz stresses how a generating motive at a song's start prepares for all that follows. Given this privileging of melodic unity, it is not surprising that Franz would prefer strophic or ternary forms. "I do not compose the text as it gradually unfolds," he noted. "Rather I illuminate it from [its] essential point. Once that has been discovered and has found its musical formula, presented as a motive, everything else will then take care of itself."[87]

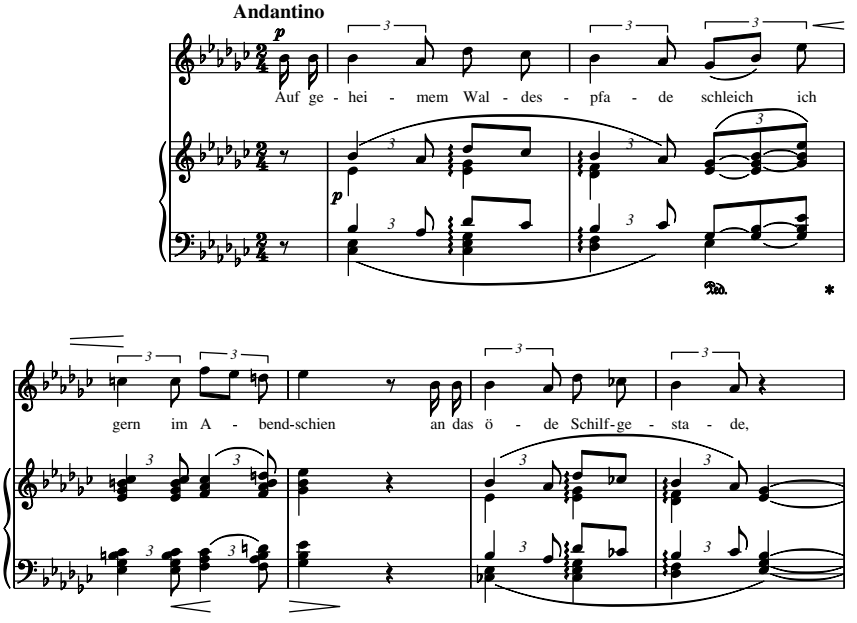
Franz's aversion to heterogeneity and his investment in the organicist metaphor carry over into all aspects of his songs. A work's harmonic structure should function as a "skeleton" rather than as a collection of unrelated juxtaposed harmonies.[88] While most of his Lieder stick close to the tonic (in part because of their brevity), he does introduce touches of harmonic color. Thus a song like *Aus meinen großen Schmerzen*, Op. 5, No. 2, which begins in F major, passes through A major, and ends in D minor, all within twenty measures. The notion of interrelationships applies as well to language and music, voice and accompaniment, for "the parts, from which a song is put together as an independent artistic whole, must determine each other, that words and music, voice and piano complete . . . each other in such a manner that one cannot exist without the other."[89] As the scholarly literature frequently has emphasized, the accompaniments can take on the character of a chorale setting, which may reinforce religious imagery (*Widmung*, Op. 14, No. 1) or may archaicize (*Bitte*, Op. 9, No. 3). In such cases his interest in past music, particularly Bach and Handel, comes more obviously to mind. Other Baroque influences include polyphonic textures (*Kommt Feinsliebchen heut?*, Op. 25, No. 4), imitation (*Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag*, Op. 28, No. 2), and sequence (*Für Musik*, Op. 10, No. 1).

In rounding out this section, it will repay our effort to briefly consider the five *Schilflieder*, Op. 2, dedicated to Schumann and considered by many to be his best songs.[90] The only set of Franz's songs that is a true cycle (by narrative, key, and mood) and one of only eight of his opus numbers devoted to one poet, the *Schilflieder* occupy a unique position within Franz's work. Franz even changed the order of Lenau's poems to lend the whole greater dramatic shape. He moved *Auf geheimem Waldespfade* to the beginning because, as he noted, it gave the cycle a "swelling" and diminishing of sounds from nature.[91] Emotionally, "the lyrical I" increases in despair, only to diminish in intensity, attaining what Franz called "quiet resignation" at

Table 7.1

| Incipit | Form | Tempo | Meter and key |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Auf geheimem Waldespfade* | a b a$^1$ | Andantino | 2/4 E♭ minor |
| *Drüben geht* | a b c | Andante con moto | 4/4 G minor / B♭ major |
| *Trübe wird's* | a a$^1$ | Allegro maestoso | 4/4 C♯ minor |
| *Sonnenuntergang* | a a a$^1$ | Allegro agitato | 2/4 F♯ minor |
| *Auf dem Teich* | a b b$^1$ | Andantino | 2/4 C minor / E♭ major |

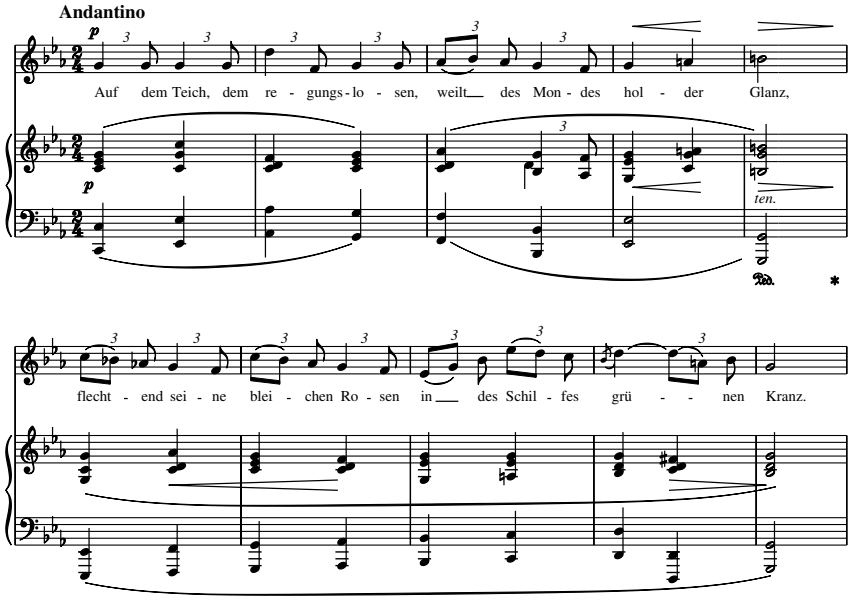
**Example 7.3a** Robert Franz, *Schilflieder*, Op. 2, No. 1, *Auf geheimem Waldespfade*, mm. 1–6




the end.[92] Table 7.1, adapted from Waldura, shows the collection's overall unity and cyclic structure.

Example 7.3 compares the beginnings of Nos. 1 and 5, to reveal the similarities in *Grundbestimmung*; in the former the "softest whisper of tearful lament," in the latter "quiet resignation." The way Franz establishes this mood at the start of *Auf geheimem Waldespfade* is ingenious: a gently undulating melodic line alternates with triplets and duplets, supported by an elliptical harmony (A♭ minor – G♭ major – B♭ minor – E♭ minor, the tonic) mitigated by suspensions (7–6, 9–8, 6–5). His Lieder are filled with this type of subtle detail, although most not as pronounced as Op. 2. Even so, they depend on "individuality of invention, care of execution, and close adherence to the sense of the poet," as Gustav Engel wrote of Franz's style in 1856.[93] His is a voice that deserves to be heard.

**Example 7.3b** Robert Franz, *Schilflieder*, Op. 2, No. 5, *Auf dem Teich*, mm. 1–10




## Peter Cornelius

Curiously, the "progressive" Liszt circle in Weimar in the 1850s brought forth no significant composers of symphonic music (other than Liszt himself and Joachim Raff, who left Weimar in 1856), but rather composers of Lieder, operas and, as might be expected, piano works. The most talented song composer among the New Germans, Cornelius (1824–74), was well prepared for a career in writing for the voice, growing up in a family of stage actors.[94] Like other young people of his era (e.g., Robert Schumann), Cornelius immersed himself in German literature at an early age, including novels and short stories by Jean Paul and E. T. A. Hoffmann and the poetry and plays of Goethe and Schiller. His primary activity as song composer took place between 1852 and 1856, a period that brought forth more than half of his total production of approximately eighty Lieder. After the composition of his comic opera *Der Barbier von Bagdad* (1855–58), Cornelius had several more good years of Lied composition (1859, 1861–62), but after that, he all but discontinued song, favoring instead works for choir and small vocal ensemble.

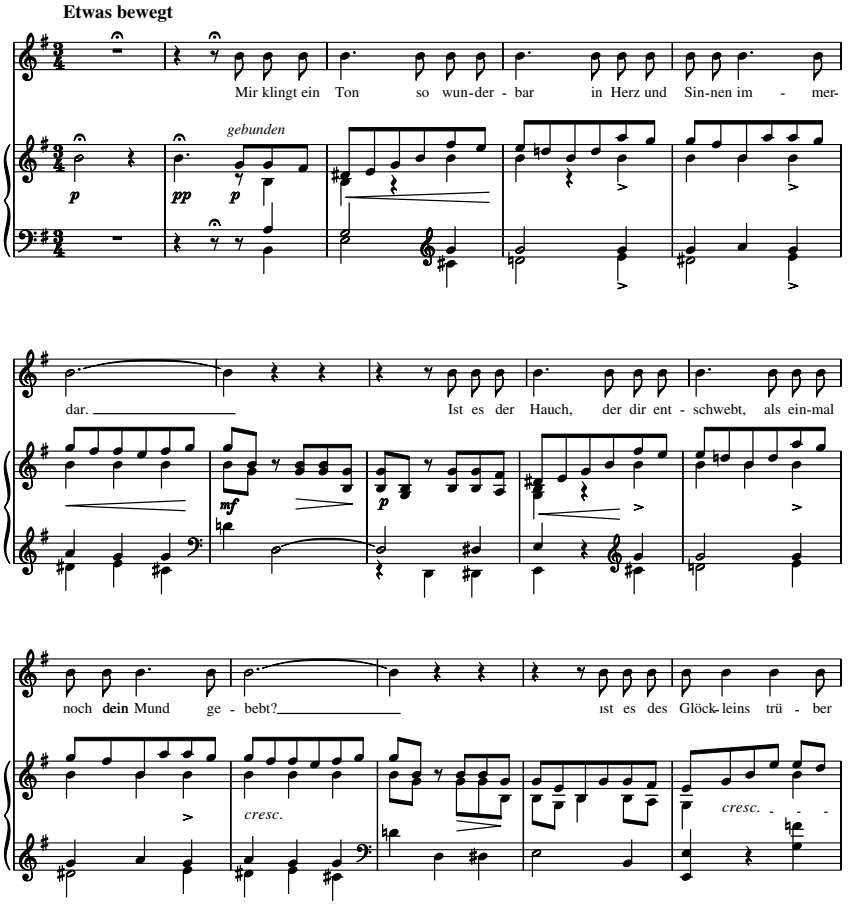
Cornelius set an assortment of older and newer poets in a selection that gives him an individual profile: Goethe, Schiller, Hölderlin, Bürger, Platen, Hebbel, his friend Heyse all inspired musical composition, whereas Eichendorff and Heine barely appear. Moreover, unlike other Lied composers of

his day, Cornelius developed a strong talent as poet, and often set his own poems to music.[95] What is remarkable is the high quality of poetry set by Cornelius, whoever the poet. His selection of texts and forms also stands apart. As has been recognized, Cornelius departed from Romantic traditions of nature lyrics, at least in their darker or more mysterious aspects.[96] His songs tend toward introspective portraits (as in the cycle *Trauer und Trost*, Op. 3) or religious reveries (the cycle *Vater Unser*, Op. 2 and *Weihnachtslieder*, Op. 8). He avoided longer structures like the ballad in favor of shorter lyric poetry or older forms like the ode and sonnet, and introduced irregular metrical patterns and rhyme schemes.

In his Lieder, Cornelius folds features inherited from Schumann and the New Germans into a personal interpretation. Most of his songs are short, unified settings cast according to modified strophic design, although beneath their apparent simplicity lies a deeper motivic, harmonic, and formal complexity. Chromatic lines and harmonies reveal Lisztian and Wagnerian harmonic practices (*Auftrag*, Op. 5, No. 6). The melodic line – essentially lyrical – flows in short phrases that closely match the text's declamation (*An den Traum*, Op. 3, No. 4). Working to unify a song, the accompaniment also supports the text's changing modes while introducing harmonic fullness (*Ein Ton*, Op. 2, No. 3). As Thym has observed, Cornelius's advanced musical (and poetic) language presages the practices of Wolf and Schoenberg.[97] In his union of word and music, Cornelius ranks among the finest of nineteenth-century Lied composers, a reality that makes his current neglect inexplicable. Cornelius, unlike Franz or Liszt, followed in Schumann's footsteps in grouping songs into thematically unified cycles. The cycles are: *Vater Unser* (Op. 2), *Trauer und Trost* (Op. 3), *Rheinische Lieder*, *Brautlieder*, *Weihnachtslieder* (Op. 8), *An Bertha* (Op. 15). Based on the available evidence, it appears that Cornelius wrote a cycle's poetry before turning to the music.

At least one of Cornelius's cycles deservers a closer look. *Trauer und Trost*, composed in late 1854, sets six poems written earlier that year. The poetry describes the emotional journey of a man whose beloved has died, moving from grief in the real world to solace in a realm of dreams that assure her immortality. The sequence of poems establishes this narrative,[98] one Cornelius underscores through the cycle's key scheme: E minor (Phrygian-inflected) – D major – E minor – B minor – G major – E minor (Phrygian-inflected). The lament of *Trauer* is noteworthy for its expressive yet unorthodox harmonies. The first song also presents two harmonic/melodic ideas that connect the cycle. The first is the recurrence of the pitch B, the second the tension between the key of E minor (or simply the pitch E) and its Phrygian neighbor F, a tonal relationship that takes on significance in the first and last songs, where it creates a "frame."[99] The arpeggiated four-note descending melody of *Angedenken* evokes the memory process, but even more striking is the

**Example 7.4** Peter Cornelius, *Trauer und Trost*, Op. 3, No. 3, *Ein Ton*, mm. 1–15




song's tonal instability: six of its twenty-nine measures are rooted in D major and it begins on an E minor chord. Perhaps the most noted (and notorious) song by Cornelius is No. 3, *Ein Ton*, in which the voice intones its text throughout on the single pitch B. This idiosyncratic gesture allows for hope to enter through the piano accompaniment, which creates melodic and harmonic interest (Example 7.4) while representing the external sounds to which the voice refers (the voice internalizes the tone by the end of the song). The right hand of the piano picks up the B in *An den Traum*, where the roles are reversed as the voice requests release through dreaming. The grieving one discovers that his beloved takes substance through Lieder in *Treue. Trost* brings the various musical elements together: as the dream takes on certainty in eternity, Cornelius provides a simple, chorale-like accompaniment. The B is much less prominent and, even though the key returns to the Phrygian-inflected E minor of the first song, the message of solace and hope is tonally affirmed in the last measures by a final cadence on E major.

The care Cornelius paid to poetic and musical elements in his cycles recalls the work of Robert Schumann. However, Cornelius applied the advances of the New German School to the Lied, above all in the realm of harmony, where he pointed the way to later developments. Liszt's Lieder may have surpassed those of Cornelius in formal and harmonic innovation (the "Tristan" chord in *Ich möchte hingehn*), but Cornelius was more successful in integrating the New-German advances into the traditional Lied, whereby his songs retained at their core the simplicity and singability that characterized the best works in the genre throughout the century.

## Adolf Jensen

Adolf Jensen (1837–79) is emblematic of the mid-century Lied composer who recognized Robert Schumann as *spiritus rector*,[100] although Liszt and Wagner tempered the older composer's influence. Of the works to which the composer assigned an opus number, more than half are Lieder – a count yielding 175 songs. Jensen's poets were mainly Eichendorff, Geibel, Heyse, Scheffel, and Roquette, a selection that reflects a shift from his earlier preferences for Goethe and Heine.[101] While his settings of eleven songs from the Hafis (Persian) and fourteen songs from the *Spanisches Liederbuch* of Heyse and Geibel may reflect the late nineteenth-century fascination with exotic material, Jensen's thirty-five songs to texts by English-language poets (Shelley, Burns, Moore, Scott, Tennyson) are unique among German composers.

Jensen's style combines several different directions of Lied composition at mid century. His subtle timbral effects (bordering on the Impressionistic), preference for details of tone painting, and adoption of Wagnerian harmonic devices (including ninth and half-diminished seventh chords) create a bridge between Schumann and Wolf. Independent chromatic lines, imitative devices, and generally polyphonic textures bring him closer to Brahms. It was above all his "cloying" vocal lines and "sweetly" chromatic harmonies, in support of the texts, that caused some contemporaries to dismiss Jensen for sentimentality bordering on the effeminate. As Riemann observed: "his numerous collections include a fullness of musically poetic expression, its sensitivity often is elevated to the level of the feminine, the salon."[102]

Other Lied composers during the third quarter of the nineteenth century who followed in the footsteps of Robert Schumann include Theodor Kirchner (1823–1903) and Robert Volkmann (1815–83), neither of whom are much remembered for their songs. Whereas Jensen attempted to reconcile New-German and conservative approaches in his Lieder, these

successors of Schumann did not really advance beyond his ideals and style. Among the New Germans during the same period, it was Eduard Lassen (1830–1904) and Alexander Ritter (1833–96) who – after Liszt and Cornelius – cultivated the Lied most prominently, even though their songs did not have the same influence.

## Conclusion

As this survey of selected song composers at mid century has sought to establish, the genre was not in imminent danger of disappearing, despite contemporaneous predictions to the contrary. In many ways this is ironic, as there existed no single voice to carry on after Schubert and Schumann, and their increasing ascendancy made it all but impossible to fill such a role. Each composer followed her or his own voice, shaped by a variety of approaches to Lied composition, whether that of Schumann, the Berlin School, the New German School, or some other set of influences (such as Bach and Handel in the case of Franz). Despite the principles of simplicity and singability (and each composer's attempt to satisfy those requirements), this diversity reflected a time of change. While the majority of newly composed Lieder remained intended for domestic consumption, the continuing canonization of works by Schubert and Schumann fostered the genre's move into the concert hall. As mentioned above, baritone Julius Stockhausen would not sing a complete song cycle in public until 1856, first with *Die schöne Müllerin* and again in 1861 with *Dichterliebe*. Not everyone greeted this development with praise and it was not until the 1870s that the Lied became a staple of concert life. By that time, what determined the genre's triumph may have been not so much a matter of aesthetics as it was an issue of politics. With the establishment of the German Empire in 1871, the need to flaunt national pride sometimes came at the expense of musical concerns. At times such pride could turn ugly. As Wolf would discover, a performance of his *Heimweh* during which he was serving as pianist "was made the occasion of a pan-German demonstration." At the song's concluding line – "Grüß dich, Deutschland, aus Herzensgrund" (I greet thee Germany, with all my heart) – mayhem broke out at Vienna's Wagner Verein, much to the composer's outrage.[103] This was not the last time the Lied would be conscripted for such purposes. This, too, is another story – one yet to be completely told.