

THE SPIRIT AND THE LETTER
SCHUBERT-LISZT TRANSCRIPTIONS

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ABSTRACT

Franz Liszt's *Zwölf Lieder von Franz Schubert*, S.558 (revised 1876), published by Anton Diabelli, is the product of a long-standing fascination with musical arrangement, and radically exemplifies Liszt's own musical interpretation of Schubert's *Lieder*. During 1837 and 1838, Liszt formed a new set of transcriptions that adhere to and depart from Schubert's songs. My research examined the symbiosis between performer, arranger, composer, and poet. Performing the transcriptions presents a fascinating multi-stage process that originates from the initial German poetry; to Schubert setting the verse for a singer and piano accompaniment; to Liszt translating the text and vocal timbre to piano writing; and finally, to the pianist's own translation of the work in performance. In engaging with the historical context of Liszt's time and the analysis of the German verse and the musical score, I also interrogated a purely textual study by recording my learning and performing process. This ethnographic, embodied mode of research is pertinent to the complex genesis of Liszt's transcriptions, which lie in the space between paraphrase and diplomatic transcription. The *Zwölf Lieder* characterise the original Lieder text whilst exploring new pianistic possibilities of colour. This interdisciplinary study considered how performance research and historical-cultural studies inform each other and lead to practical guidelines for the modern performer and interpreter. Through analysing the scores of Schubert's *Zwölf Lieder* and Liszt's piano transcriptions, the pianist mirrors Liszt's own desire to be the 'intelligent engraver' and the 'conscientious translator' in his transcribing process.¹

¹ Liszt's Preface to the Beethoven Symphonies, 1st edition (Rome, 1839), quoted in Kara Lynn Van Dine, "Musical Arrangements and Questions of Genre: A Study of Liszt's Interpretive Approaches" (PhD dissertation, University of North Texas, 2010), 11.

For my family

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INTRODUCTION

Franz Liszt's *Zwölf Lieder von Franz Schubert*, S.558 (revised 1876), published by Anton Diabelli, is the product of a long-standing fascination with musical arrangement. The transcriptions radically exemplify Liszt's own musical interpretation of Schubert's *Lieder*. During 1837 and 1838, Liszt formed a set of transcriptions that adhere to and depart from Schubert's songs. Scholars such as Jonathan Kregor have used Friedrich Schleiermacher's theory of translation to analyse transcriptions, as both translation and transcription mediate a foreign text and bring 'the reader toward the writer'.² Translation is a pertinent lens to use for Liszt's work, as his transcriptions form more than half of his piano output and constitute a unique genre: his 'Partitions de piano' or 'Piano scores'.

My research examines the symbiosis that can exist between performer, arranger, composer, and poet in the case of such transcriptions. Performing the transcriptions presents a fascinating multi-stage process that originates from the initial German poetry, connects to Schubert's Lied settings and to the duo roles of singer and piano accompaniment, extends to Liszt translating text and vocal timbre into piano writing, and finally reaches as far as the pianist's own interpretation in performance. Nearing the end of this process, performers of Liszt's piano transcriptions wrestle with a tension. Despite the presence of the original *Lieder* text in Liszt's score, they are also free to explore pianistic possibilities of timbre in their interpretations.

The transcriptions urge the performer to convey both the 'spirit' and the 'letter' of the *Lieder*, since Liszt departs from the letter of Schubert's score when furthering his own compositional goals in interpreting the spirit of the *Lieder*. Scholars such as Mark Kroll have brought to light Liszt's faithful placement of < > markings above single piano notes, and the labelling of instrumental parts in the composer's Beethoven symphonic transcriptions.³ Similarly, Thomas Christensen has analysed how four-hand piano transcriptions enabled the dissemination of chamber works in domestic spaces and among amateur musicians.⁴ Although Schubert's *Lieder* were intended for private venues in Vienna, the transcriptions extend into a distinct and fluid sphere that reflects Liszt's individual goals as a pianist-composer.

I will use a comparative musical analysis of Schubert's *Lieder* with Liszt's transcriptions in order to situate the latter in nineteenth-century pianistic writing and the accompanying trend of exploiting orchestral timbre and texture. By closely analysing the *Lieder* and transcription scores, links will be

² Jonathan Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber* (Cambridge University Press, 2010), 16.

³ Mark Kroll, "On a Pedestal and Under the Microscope: The Arrangements of Beethoven Symphonies by Hummel and Liszt," in *Franz Liszt und seine Bedeutung in der europäischen Musikkultur / Franz Liszt and His Position in the European Musical Culture*, ed. M Štefková (Bratislava: DIVIS-Slovakia, 2012), 256.

⁴ Thomas Christensen, "Four-Hand Piano Transcription and Geographies of Nineteenth-Century Musical Reception," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 52, no. 2 (1999): 256.

made to the narrative of the German verse poetry. I will then consider the extent to which Liszt retains the tonal structure of the *Lieder*, and how he includes the song text above a melodic line that is both married to and separate from the accompaniment.⁵ Intriguing examples such as ‘Ständchen’ will be considered, since here Liszt splits Ludwig Rellstab’s unbroken monologue of poetry into a duet between the soprano and tenor registers of the piano. By merging the two voices in a canon, Liszt disrupts the solitary nature of Rellstab’s verse, and provides the imaginary duet so longed for in the original poem. Finally, I will delve into how the *Lieder* transcriptions necessitate ‘musicking’, an approach that includes performance and listening as part of the meaning of the musical work.⁶

This performance-based project addresses the need for a comprehensive study of the ambiguous function for the *Lieder* transcriptions, and an analysis of how Liszt integrates vocal and textual elements in his transcribing process. It also seeks to integrate historical-cultural studies and performance research to explore a range of interpretive possibilities to the *Zwölf Lieder* transcriptions. In analysing the scores of Schubert’s *Zwölf Lieder* and Liszt’s piano transcriptions, the performer is able to mirror Liszt’s own desire to be both the ‘intelligent engraver’ and the ‘conscientious translator’ in his transcribing process.⁷

⁵ Christensen, “Four-Hand Piano Transcription,” 274.

⁶ Christopher Small, “Prelude,” in *Musicking: The Meanings of Performance and Listening* (Wesleyan University Press, 1998), 4-6.

⁷ Liszt’s Preface to the Beethoven Symphonies, 1st edition (Rome, 1839), in Van Dine, 11.

CHAPTER ONE: LISZT AS ENGRAVER AND TRANSLATOR

Transcription: the art of arrangement

Thus the sublime compositions of the old masters, once confined to the galleries of the great, or only known to the world by inadequate copies, are, thanks to the old engravers, left as an inheritance to all lovers of beauty; the engraving goes where the painting cannot go, and where the painting is silent the engraving speaks with the familiarity of a printed book.⁸

In the nineteenth century, musical transcriptions filled the space of homes with rarely-performed symphonic and orchestral music, just as engraving, lithography, and offset painting gave consumers the chance to decorate their homes with art. Franz Liszt (1811-86) passionately disseminated orchestral and vocal works through his piano transcriptions, which capitalised on the public's fascination with the virtuosic. My project will explore how Liszt acts as engraver and translator of Schubert's songs. Through the *Zwölf Lieder*, S. 558, Liszt transformed Schubert songs textually, structurally, and emotionally into new piano works of a unique genre. Finally, I will consider how the modern performer also translates the Schubert transcriptions in performance, engraving their body and interpretation onto the lettered score.⁹

Musical arrangements fall on a continuum of quantitative fidelity: they range from diplomatic, almost literal 'transcriptions' to 'paraphrases', which represent more of the arranger's work than of the original composer.¹⁰ The terms 'arrangement' and 'transcription' have been defined a myriad of ways. In the second edition of *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (2001), arrangement is either the transferral of a composition from one medium to another, or the elaboration or simplification of another work with or without a change of medium. The *New Grove* definitions are not immutable nor mutually exclusive. In the fifth edition of the earlier *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1954) transcriptions are more tailored to their new medium and less literal reproductions than arrangements.¹¹ Using manuscript terminology, a diplomatic transcription is generally accepted as one that reproduces the original work as accurately and closely as is possible.¹² For the purposes of this thesis, the term 'transcription' will be used to designate Liszt's own re-makings of Schubert's *Lieder*, since they fall between strict, diplomatic transcription and free paraphrase.

Two opposite forces coalesced in the nineteenth century and gave rise to the practice of arranging music. Amateur music-making in the home became prevalent, while audiences at public concerts

⁸ Frederick Keppel, *The Golden Age of Engraving* (New York: Baker and Taylor, 1910), 5.

⁹ Alan Walker, "Liszt and the Schubert Song Transcriptions," *The Musical Quarterly* 67, no. 1 (1981): 51-52.

¹⁰ Malcolm Boyd, "Arrangement," in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell, 2nd ed., 29 vols. (London: Macmillan Publishers Limited, 2001), 2:66.

¹¹ C. Hubert H. Parry, "Arrangement," in *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Eric Blom, 5th ed., 9 vols. (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1955), 1:223-228.

¹² Peter Beal, *A Dictionary of English Manuscript Terminology 1450-2000* (Oxford University Press, 2008), 122.

were drawn to brilliant displays of virtuosity.¹³ As the piano moved from aristocratic salons into the homes of the bourgeoisie, four-handed and solo transcriptions became a central institution of nineteenth-century socio-cultural life.¹⁴ This practice was nothing new – arranging music had extended as far back as the Renaissance. Bach transformed and reinvented Vivaldi’s string and wind concertos for harpsichord and organ, effectively ‘interven[ing] against the received idea behind a style’.¹⁵ During the 1800s, piano transcriptions proliferated in the catalogues of music publishers and advertisements in music periodicals, disseminating symphonies, operas, and songs to the musical public. François-Joseph Fétis expressed in 1829 that, ‘If it were only possible to hear the productions of the great composers by means of a full orchestra they would be very little known; the taste for music would be less common, and the progress of this art would be significantly slower.’¹⁶

Beginning in 1838, Liszt undertook the transcription of Schubert’s songs in earnest, creating close to sixty transcriptions and programming them in numerous concerts throughout Europe.¹⁷ Unlike his contemporaries such as Mendelssohn and Schumann, who worked at transcription during their apprentice years, or how Brahms coordinated the publication of his piano arrangements with larger ensemble works, Liszt developed his skills as a transcriber throughout his entire life.¹⁸ By extending the techniques of his teacher Czerny and composers such as Mendelssohn and Hummel, Liszt’s oeuvre stretched expressions of musical virtuosity. The pianist and renowned Liszt interpreter Stephen Hough suggests that Liszt’s virtuosity developed in tandem with the piano’s technical development.¹⁹

By the end of the eighteenth century, the piano had become the only solo instrument that was regularly played in public concerts. As the pianoforte became mass-produced, it was marketed to the ascendant bourgeoisie as a status symbol. In effect, piano techniques developed through a symbiotic relationship between construction advancements and the changing social role of the piano.²⁰ The piano’s construction was refined: the traditional five-octave range expanded to over six and a half octaves in the middle of the century. Mechanical developments reached a triumph in Sébastien Erard’s invention of the piano’s double escapement action in 1822, which allowed for the rapid repetition of a tone without lifting the finger from the key and more sensitive layers of pressure when

¹³ Van Dine, 1.

¹⁴ Adrian Daub, "Introduction," in *Four-Handed Monsters: Four-Hand Piano Playing and Nineteenth-Century Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199981779.003.0001.

¹⁵ Jim Samson, *Virtuosity and the Musical Work: The Transcendental Studies of Liszt* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 106.

¹⁶ François-Joseph Fétis, *Traité de l'accompagnement de la partition sur le piano ou l'orgue* (Paris: Pleyel et Cle, 1829), 1. ‘Si l’on ne pouvait jouir du plaisir d’entendre les productions des grands compositeurs qu’avec tout l’attirail d’un Orchestre, elles seraient peu connues; le gout de la musique serait moins répandu, et les progres de cet Art seraient beaucoup plus lents.’, in Jonathan Kregor, “Franz Liszt and the Vocabularies of Transcription, 1833-1865,” Ph.D dissertation (Harvard University, 2007), 7.

¹⁷ Van Dine, 68.

¹⁸ Kregor, “Franz Liszt and the Vocabularies of Transcription,” 2.

¹⁹ Classical Music Reimagined, “Sonata in B minor – Who was Franz Liszt?,” YouTube video, 01.25, posted [March 2016], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4baOaVZBpk>.

²⁰ Alan Davison, ‘Franz Liszt and the Development of 19th-Century Pianism: A Re-Reading of the Evidence’, *The Musical Times* 147, no. 1896 (2006): 34.

touching the keyboard. This expanded the piano's capacity for power, velocity, and expressive range, establishing it as the great Romantic instrument.²¹

Because of the difficulty and costs attached to travelling to concerts, Robert Schumann used Liszt's transcription to assess Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, just as E.T.A. Hoffmann had assessed Beethoven's Fifth Symphony in 1810 using a piano arrangement in a now-famous review of the work.²² Gottfried Wilhelm Fink similarly based his review of Mendelssohn's Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* on the four-hand arrangement.²³ If nineteenth-century composers familiarised themselves with the symphonic works of their friends and competitors through four-handed transcriptions, the average music consumer depended even more on these copies.

In the expansive *Men, Women and Pianos: A Social History*, Arthur Loesser charts the rise of the piano in Western culture. He classifies the piano music of 1825-75 as a 'dependency' of the opera, because operatic transcriptions, fantasies and variations formed the largest portion of music for the keyboard.²⁴ Although operatic variations had been well-established since the days of Mozart, the newer Parisian variations catered to the demands of an 'assertive moneyed crowd' by theatrically introducing the main theme after a flourish and suspenseful leading chord, a clear departure from the Beethovenian tradition of clearly stating the theme.²⁵ Loesser's book focuses on different cultural and social milieux, geographically tracing developments from Germany, Austria, England, France, and the United States. This text evades an analysis of specific compositional processes for transcribing works, but provides a useful starting point to understanding political, socio-economical, and technological changes that fuelled the centrality of piano transcriptions.

During this wave of transcriptions, Liszt began to slot works for orchestras, chamber ensembles, operatic companies, and singers into his own piano recitals during the 1830s and 40s. Programming conventions that still influence present-day performers also began to emerge.²⁶ In a Paris concert on April 20, 1840, Liszt performed a reworking of Gaetano Donizetti's drama tragico *Lucia di Lammermor* alongside his own two Schubert Lieder transcriptions, the finale of Beethoven's *Pastoral* Symphony, an etude, and a galop. Liszt's programming suggests the equal status he accorded transcriptions as compared to original compositions. Comtesse Agénor de Gasparin praised the 1840 concert as a 'triumph' to her father afterwards, emphasising the 'precision and power' of the Beethoven symphonic transcription and the sublimity of 'Erlkönig'.²⁷ Swayed by the dual benefits of dissemination and the

²¹ Samson, 71.

²² See Arthur Ware Locke and E. T. A. Hoffmann, "Beethoven's Instrumental Music: Translated from E. T. A. Hoffmann's "Kreisleriana" with an Introductory Note," *The Musical Quarterly* 3, no. 1 (1917): 127-133.

²³ Adrian Daub, "Introduction." The reviews can be found in *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 3, nos. 10–13 (August 4–14, 1835) and *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 13 (March 27, 1833): 201–204.

²⁴ Arthur Loesser, *Men, Women and Pianos: A Social History* (New York: Dover Publications, 1990), 596.

²⁵ Loesser, 595.

²⁶ Janet Ritterman: Piano music and the public concert, 1800-1850', in *The Cambridge Companion to Chopin*, ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge, 1992), 13, in Davison, 35.

²⁷ C. Barbey-Boissier, *La Comtesse Agénor de Gasparin et sa famille: Correspondance et Souvenirs 1813-1894*, i (Paris, 1902), 332-333. English translation in Adrian Williams, *Portrait of Liszt: By Himself and his Contemporaries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 129.

displays of Liszt's virtuosic creativity, critics and audiences praised Liszt's feats of transcription in musical journals, private memoirs, and letter correspondence.²⁸

Thomas Christensen examines the function and reception of four-hand piano transcriptions through the particular lens of the domestication of art and the dissolving of social boundaries in the nineteenth century. Amateur musicians could now access large-scale orchestral, symphonic, and chamber works by playing transcriptions in their own homes. In a similar movement, paintings and artworks began to be transferred from courts, churches, and museums into the parlour or bedroom.²⁹ Liszt's arrangements sent rarely-performed work into the public sphere: Beethoven's symphonies had received performances, but the size of the required ensemble inevitably limited their frequency. Likewise, Schubert's music was little known outside his circle of friends in Vienna at the time of his death.³⁰

Four-hand piano transcriptions were not the object of extensive reflection in nineteenth-century texts because they were so well-integrated into the musical, educational, and social bourgeois lifeworld. As a significant mainstay of cultural life, transcriptions were embedded in a general societal awareness.³¹ In his essay, 'The Mechanics of Sensation and Construction of the Romantic Musical Experience', Lee Blasius suggests that the prevalence of the parlour piano transformed 'Romantic listening' within the public space of the concert hall. The very physicality of touching the piano keyboard contained the essence of a 'sensate, visceral, and mechanistic' Romantic musical corporeality, colouring the previously passive listening of concert-goers.³² As their listening became more active, the behaviour of concert hall audiences also grew more attentive, mirroring the sensibility fostered by amateur musicians in the bourgeois parlour.³³

Although Christensen does not mention Liszt's Lieder transcriptions, his study of the reception of four-hand transcriptions and the effects on listeners and performers in the bourgeois parlour is significant when considering the unaddressed social function of the transcriptions. Through the Lieder transcriptions, Liszt carved out a new social function that traversed public and private spheres. The Schubert transcriptions were included in Liszt's public recitals, despite the previous practice of only performing Lieder in the intimate space of the salon or household. The transcriptions were also virtuosic enough to require skilled amateur musicians, and used as pedagogical tools for teaching the symphonies, boosting the 'sense and aesthetic understanding', 'technical ease', and 'virtuosity' of Liszt's students.³⁴ Finally, Liszt's arrangements were tied up with his own personal goals as a pianist-

²⁸ Dine, 2.

²⁹ Christensen, 255-298.

³⁰ Cristina Capparelli Gerling, "Franz Schubert and Franz Liszt: A Posthumous Partnership," in *Nineteenth-Century Piano Music: Essays in Performance and Analysis*, ed. David Witten (New York: Garland, 1997), 207, in Van Dine, "Musical Arrangements," 4.

³¹ Daub, "Introduction."

³² Lee Blasius, "The Mechanics of Sensation and Construction of the Romantic Musical Experience," in *Music Theory in the Age of Romanticism*, ed. Ian Bent (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 3-24.

³³ Christensen, 286.

³⁴ Imre Mező, "Liszt's Transcriptions for Piano of the Symphonies of Beethoven," introduction to *Ferenc Liszt: Transcriptions IV: Symphonies de Beethoven* of the NLE, trans. Erzsébet Mészáros, ser. 2 (Budapest: Editio Musica Budapest, 1991-1993), 17-

composer: to fully express the orchestral and vocal nuances within the piano's 'restricted possibilities.'³⁵ A survey of his Beethoven transcriptions in the next section will elaborate on how Liszt kept instrumental designations and crescendo markings on single notes, despite the limited timbre and percussive attack of his instrument.

In his study, Christensen also gestures towards a tactile, personalised understanding of music repertory prevalent among musicians of the nineteenth century. Using the German philosopher Theodor W. Adorno's terminology, performing a four-hand symphonic arrangement on the piano is a ritualised 'gesture of memory' (*eine Geste der Erinnerung*), a metonymy that allows the body to (re)activate the music through four hands, thereby recollecting the symphony through the duet.³⁶ Christensen flags the importance of an embodied, performance-oriented methodology – an area largely lost from modern scholarship.³⁷ Beginning with Roland Barthes' essay 'Musica practica' (1970), socio-cultural, historical, anthropological, and musicological fields began to be attuned to how the very act of playing music created meaning. This forms a useful platform for my own research on the Schubert-Liszt transcriptions. New horizons and rich discussion become available to research that puts music as practice foremost – above work-as-score, ideology, or artefact.

19:xv, in Van Dine, 13.

³⁵ Kroll, 127.

³⁶ Christensen., 283.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 294.

Reception and the transcription process

During the 1830s, pianists began to cultivate a more expressive playing style. By the close of the decade, the favoured style drew from the piano's variety of tone colours, inviting orchestral analogies.³⁸ Liszt had already outlined his compositional intent to 'follow the orchestra step by step' to his friend, Adolph Pictet in 1837 – some thirty years before his transcription of Beethoven's symphonies was fully published in 1865. In a preface written for the initial publication of his Beethoven symphony transcriptions, Liszt expresses his insistence to push the piano to its limits, perhaps even beyond its 'indefinite development of... harmonic power':

But the extension of its capabilities acquired by the piano in recent times as a result of the progress made in execution and the refinements introduced in the mechanism make it possible to do more, and better, than has been done up till now. Through the indefinite development of its harmonic power, the piano is tending to assimilate all orchestral compositions to itself. In the space of its seven octaves it can produce, with few exceptions, all the characteristics, all the combinations, all the figures of the most scholarly composition, and leaves the orchestra with no other advantages (though they are indeed immense) but those of diversity of timbres and of mass effects.³⁹

The symphonic transcriptions express Liszt's acknowledgment of the orchestra's singular ability to create mass sonorities with multiple tone colours. They also exemplify Liszt's dedication to bringing across some of the intensity of the original medium as he conceived it, as Beethoven's symphonies were played by larger orchestral ensembles in Liszt's time. Right at the outset of his Beethoven's Symphony No. 1 transcription, Liszt translates the sustained woodwinds and the *pizzicato* of the strings by an upward octave leap of two grace notes in the left hand (see Figure 2). The two lowest voices are notated as quavers in order to represent the shortness of the bass *pizzicato*.⁴⁰ Liszt's writing also aimed at the intangible through the gestural: he faithfully placed < > markings above single notes, a gesture impossible on a percussive instrument such as the piano, and labelled instrumental parts in his piano score. In his letter accompanying the manuscript sent to Breitkopf & Härtel on 28 August 1863, Liszt insisted these instrumental labels were 'essential', while conceding that it was 'ridiculous' to pretend instrumental designations transferred the timbre of the orchestra to the piano.⁴¹ Instead, Liszt identifies a further usage: the 'pianist of some intelligence' could use the labels for 'accenting and grouping the motives... adapting himself to the norm of the orchestra'.⁴² Despite the fact that his notations would not be heard by the listener, Liszt also doggedly retained upward and downward stems and upper and lower staves. His part-writing not only mirrored

³⁸ Janet Ritterman: Piano music and the public concert, 1800-1850', in *The Cambridge companion to Chopin*, ed. Jim Samson (Cambridge, 1992), 13, in Davison, 35.

³⁹ Liszt's Preface to the Beethoven Symphonies, 1st edition (Rome, 1839), in Van Dine, 11.

⁴⁰ Kroll, 125-6.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 128.

⁴² *Ibid.*

Beethoven's orchestral manuscript, but aimed at influencing the pianist's gestures as they executed what lay in the score before them.

Within Liszt's letter lies his approach to transcriptions. Liszt transformed piano works into a new genre, one which instructed pianists to take on the particularities of the original medium. Rather than an interpretation inflexibly aimed at representing the orchestra, Liszt engaged in a process predicated upon imaginative transformation (translating the timbre of *pizzicato* to a rapid registral displacement) and specific practicalities for the performer in doing so (imagining different groupings in a polyphonic texture). His instrumental designations can be likened to the song text he retains above the piano's melody in the *Zwölf Lieder*, as if the pre-eminence of the original poetry encourages the pianist to take on a singer's gestural frame of mind. Although Johann Nepomuk Hummel arranged the first seven symphonies of Beethoven for a flute, violin, cello and piano ensemble during the decade of 1825-1835, his transcriptions aim towards a genre of piano works that were playable for the general market. A comparison of Figures 1 and 2 conveys how Hummel substitutes different notes to avoid uncomfortable hand spans, whilst Liszt retains the original chordal pitch and voicing.

Adagio molto

Figure 1 - Beethoven/Hummel Symphony No. 1/I, mm. 1-2

Adagio molto

Figure 2 - Beethoven/Liszt Symphony No. 1/I, mm. 1-2

At the root of Liszt's genre creation was his relationship with the original medium. Mark Kroll conjectures that Hummel's 'wholesale changes' to Beethoven's music arise from the composer's intimate relationship with Beethoven, citing four visits to the dying composer with his wife and student between 8 and 23 March 1827.⁴³ On the other hand, Liszt held Beethoven at a distance. The composer was a quasi-mythological figure whose name was 'sacred in art', supposedly Liszt's longed-for father figure.⁴⁴ However, Kroll's study omits the fact that Liszt's transcriptions also capitalised on the individual-centred phenomenon of virtuosity and their inclusion in Liszt's public recitals. Kregor has taken the notion of the individual virtuoso further, arguing that Liszt's complex Beethoven transcriptions went against making Beethoven's symphonies more accessible. Instead, the arrangements excluded others from participating in the Beethovenian legacy and distinguished Liszt as the 'musical heir apparent', the true heir to the genius composer.⁴⁵

Liszt's transcriptions therefore mark out an 'exhilarating' path between 'commentary and tribute', transformation and the paying of respects.⁴⁶ The general proliferation of arrangements also suggest that despite the Romantic ideology of the inimitable original, the transformative process of transcription held an irresistible complexity for composers. How could one balance the transformative qualities of a new medium while remaining sympathetic to the original work's 'idiosyncrasy'?⁴⁷ By transforming Schubert's Lieder into his virtuosic 'Partitions de piano', Liszt also interrogated the 'work-concept', which packages the production of music in terms of separate works.⁴⁸ Transcriptions also had a multitude of practical functions beyond dissemination or paying tribute to the composer – they cultivated the idiom of a previous age; interpreted, critiqued, or parodied material; highlighted the idiomatic and the virtuosic; and, most practically, saved on compositional time.⁴⁹

Previous scholars have also used the Schubert transcriptions as a tool to explore generic identity – a fascinating angle, given the plural nature of the transcriptions, and the multiple layers from verse to Lied to piano transcription. Van Dine puts forward a rich exposition of how Liszt's transcriptions constitute both derivatives of song and piano compositions in their own right, a unique genre of the nineteenth-century concert piano repertoire. They lie in the liminal space between strict transcription and free paraphrase, conveying Liszt's vision of Schubert's songs, and the musical environment that he was writing in.⁵⁰ By bringing in Liszt's other transcriptions, Van Dine shows that Liszt selected and collated various songs from Schubert's cycles. Liszt departed from the original arrangement of keys, effectively altering the large-scale formal schemes of the cycles. In this way, Liszt's own

⁴³ Ibid., 136.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 135; 137. Liszt wrote '*Le nom de Beethoven est un nom consacré dans l'art*' and '*Der Name Beethoven ist heilig in der Kunst.*'

⁴⁵ Kregor, "Franz Liszt and the Vocabularies of Transcription," iv.

⁴⁶ Samson, 2.

⁴⁷ Charles Rosen, *The Romantic Generation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 512-17, in Samson, 106.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 226. See Lydia Goehr, "The Central Claim," in *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), Oxford Scholarship Online, 2003, doi: 10.1093/0198235410.003.0007, for a discussion of how the work-concept began to regulate musical practice around 1800.

⁴⁹ Samson, 105.

⁵⁰ Cristina Capparelli Gerling, "Franz Schubert and Franz Liszt: A Posthumous Partnership," in *Nineteenth-Century Piano Music: Essays in Performance and Analysis*, ed. David Witten (New York: Garland, 1997), in Van Dine, 98.

Schwanengesang, *Winterreise*, and *Müller-Lieder* become a subset of Schubert's cycles, standing symbiotically alongside the originals.

Jim Samson also uses the prehistory and generic development of *Étude en 12 exercices* and the *12 Grandes Etudes* to express Liszt's revisions of existing compositions. Of particular interest to my study is his formal outline of the two versions of the exercises / etudes – this kind of systematic analysis is useful in demonstrating how Liszt grafts powerful developmental episodes onto the original Lieder structure in songs such as 'Auf dem Wasser zu singen', where their classical balance is transformed into a freer set of variations.⁵¹

However, both Samson and Van Dine's studies omit a detailed analysis of how Liszt integrates vocal and textual elements in his *Lieder* transcriptions. I intend to expand Van Dine's final conclusion that Liszt's transcriptions of songs and symphonies constitute a new genre in their own right. In retaining Schubert's melody, Liszt expresses the inherent Schubertian aesthetic of melodic simplicity. However, by embellishing the melody in each reiteration of the strophic verses, Liszt conveys the limitations of his own text-less medium, as strophic song forms generate interest through the varying poetic text for each stanza.

Uncovering the fidelity of the *Zwölf Lieder* to the original Lieder settings automatically places the Lieder as the pre-eminent work. Instead of this tautological methodology, I will use Liszt's transcriptions to consider nineteenth-century reception, the work-concept, and interpretive possibilities available to a modern performer – all through the dimension of embodied, performance-oriented analysis. Although E. T. A. Hoffmann saw the piano transcription as a 'sketch reproduc[ing] a great painting', the imagination ultimately '[brought] it to life with the colours of the original.'⁵² Hoffmann himself was playing a transcription of Beethoven's Fifth while theorising the symphony in 1810 to be the most romantic of all artworks – one that took the listener into the realm of the immeasurable sublime. Perhaps in the hands of some transcribers, the transcription becomes the most romantic genre: it demands of both performer and listener that they make an imaginative leap, much like the fragments and ruins so beloved of the romantics.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 117.

⁵² E. T. A. Hoffmann's *Music Writings: Kreisleriana, The Poet and the Composer, Music Criticism*, ed. David Charlton, trans. Martyn Clarke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 251, in Christensen, 264.

Musicking Liszt's *Zwölf Lieder*: a methodology

At its core, music is a temporal art forever 'enmeshed in the moment of realisation'.⁵³ However, music scholarship often eschews the holistic practices of composing, practicing, and performing in favour of a solely textually-based theory that is fixated on the score. This began as early as C. P. E. Bach's warnings against unconscious rubato in his highly detailed treatises.⁵⁴ A strand of bourgeois ideology in the nineteenth century also elevated the composer as genius and the score as autonomous musical object, separate from worldly contingencies.⁵⁵ Weber and Beethoven requested much more than their predecessors that their social status reflect the romantic descriptions of their autonomous art, and E.T.A. Hoffman referred to instrumental music as the true 'independent art', emancipated from the extra-musical.⁵⁶ This elite musical canon promoted an almost-Cartesian duality of mind and body – adhering to the musical score became a way to resist distorting the work in performance or through the performer's subjective interpretation.⁵⁷

However, Christopher Small's notion of 'musicking' counteracts these ideologies by including the performer's contribution and the social interactions of listeners as part of the meaning of the musical work.⁵⁸ For this project, I performed four selections from Liszt's *Zwölf Lieder* transcriptions ('Auf dem Wasser zu singen', 'Du bist die Ruh', 'Erlkönig', and 'Gretchen am Spinnrade'), and focused on the corresponding poetic texts by Friedrich Rückert, Friedrich Leopold Graf von Stollberg, and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

Understanding Schubert's reading of poetry (the pre-existing literary creation to his Lieder) enables a holistic, grounded interpretation of Liszt's transcriptions.⁵⁹ My ethnographic methodology also examined my 'own backyard' – my practice and performance.⁶⁰ This enabled my discussion to go beyond assessing the quantitative fidelity of the transcriptions. Although scholars such as Creswell have cautioned against observing processes where the researcher is involved as a participant, I would argue this vested-interest research on *Zwölf Lieder* is a necessary means to carry out historical and theoretical, textually-based analysis of Liszt's recompositions. In his book, *Four-Handed Monsters: Four-Hand Piano Playing and Nineteenth-Century Culture*, Adrian Daub has also signalled how primary sources, such as reviews, letters, and journals, can be barriers to scholarly interpretation. As well as their limited relating of information, and the added aspect of how people desired their writings to be practiced and perceived, primary sources can also be clouded by nineteenth-century

⁵³ Samuel Breene, "Mozart's Violin Sonatas and the Gestures of Embodiment" (Ph.D. diss. Duke University, 2007), 13.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 6; Barthold Kuijken, *The Notation is Not the Music: Reflections on Early Music Practice and Performance* (Indiana University Press, 2013), 37.

⁵⁵ Breene, "Mozart's Violin Sonatas," 5.

⁵⁶ Lydia Goehr, "Musical Meaning: Romantic Transcendence and the Separability Principle," in *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*.

⁵⁷ Breene, 5.

⁵⁸ Small, "Prelude," 4-6.

⁵⁹ Jack Stein, *Poem and Music in the German Lied from Gluck to Hugo Wolf* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971).

⁶⁰ John Creswell, "Data Collection," in John Creswell and Cheryl Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design* (London: Sage), 114.

understandings of the autonomous musical work.⁶¹ A practice-based approach gives ‘insider’ information into the meaning of the work, a method that gleans insights not available from reading the score or other documents alone.

Instead, viewing the practice of the transcriptions as process as well as product is a fascinating way to understand Liszt’s compositional process, and the composer-performer culture of nineteenth-century pianism. The gestures of performance sustain musical communities, as performers both carry and break traditions as ‘innovators and translators’ within the social dimension of every performance.⁶² Scholars such as Elizabeth Le Guin also hold to the importance of performance in the conception of a musical work: for Le Guin, the ‘carnal’ knowledge of the performer is not only rooted in the body, but spins out into different concepts that are transferable to other works; other points of contact with the composer; and further points of contact with other composers.⁶³ In my second chapter, I will follow suit by using the Schubert-Liszt transcriptions as points of contact, comparing them to his Beethovenian transcriptions, and his reconceiving of Schubert’s *Winterreise*.

In her research on Boccherini’s works, Le Guin also asserts that she is not just the ‘hands’ or the ‘consciousness’ of the composer. Instead, Le Guin ‘become[s] [Boccherini]’ in a way, grounded in and expressed through the ‘medium of the tactile.’⁶⁴ Although incredibly evocative and compelling, Le Guin’s sentiment verges on the presentism of transhistoricity, where the interpreter projects their present onto the past. Michel Foucault and Judith Butler have interrogated the presumption that modern performers have the same immediate interactions with the instrument and the score as the composer, as they argue that our body’s relation to the world is inherently mediated and shaped by discourse.⁶⁵ By grounding my performance research in the disparity between Liszt’s physique and my own body in Chapter Three, I mitigate the effects of presentism and uncover new, creative ways of interpretation. I share Liszt’s experience of playing these transcriptions through techniques, sensations, and the ‘lines of sight’ when reading his score. However, it is impossible for me to replicate the interpretive techniques and ideologies particular to Liszt’s time.⁶⁶ Instead, I engrave my own physique and interpretation as a performer onto the transcriptions, just as Liszt was an ‘intelligent engraver’ of Schubert’s works.⁶⁷

Of course, writing about music is characterised by its inability to render what is heard into text. In Roland Barthes’ 1972 essay ‘The Grain of the Voice’, he expresses how works and performance can only ever be translated into the poorest of linguistic categories: the adjective.⁶⁸ But embodied, historically-informed research goes beyond mere descriptors of affective language. As a modern

⁶¹ Daub, “Introduction.”

⁶² Breene, 12.

⁶³ Elizabeth Le Guin, *Boccherini’s Body: An Essay in Carnal Musicology* (Berkeley, CA, 2005), 14.

⁶⁴ Le Guin, *Boccherini’s Body*, 24.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Liszt’s Preface to the Beethoven Symphonies, 1st edition (Rome, 1839).

⁶⁸ Roland Barthes, “The Grain of the Voice,” in Roland Barthes, *Image, Music Text* (Fontana Press, 1977), 179.

pianist, peeling back the various layers of Liszt's transcriptions results in the work's final translation: the performer is both musicologist and musician, completing a work while in performance.

CHAPTER TWO: A POEM ON A POEM

Text painting

In 1829, one year after Schubert's untimely death, his good friend Josef van Spaun wrote a eulogy that described how Schubert's Lieder become a poem on the original poem itself.⁶⁹ Schubert shaped the 'letter' of the German verse through the musical syntax of song, while distilling and retaining the poem's 'spirit':

Whatever filled the poet's breast Schubert faithfully represented and transfigured in each of his songs, as none has done before him. Every one of his song compositions is in reality a poem on the poem he set to music.⁷⁰

This section forms the first layer of our journey: from poetry to song. Schubert translated texts by Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866), Friedrich Leopold Graf von Stollberg (1750-1819), and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) to a Lied medium by means of creative text-painting and structural changes. In this chapter, I will explore how the Lieder settings echo the dual engraving (representing) and translating (transfiguring) practices that Liszt engaged in. I will then use a comparative musical analysis to show how Liszt has departed from or enhanced Schubert's interpretation. Lastly, I will consider Liszt's expansion of Schubert's Lieder from an intimate to public form.

In his final setting of Stollberg's works in 1823, Schubert took the central features of the 'Lied auf dem Wasser zu singen, für meine Agnes', and transfigured them in his Lied, 'Auf dem Wasser zu singen', Opus 72, D 774. Stollberg's 1782 poem muses on death with mellifluous diction and rhythm, calmly braiding aural echoes throughout its text. Despite its depiction of an expansive sunset evening, the poem is neatly framed: three stanzas are packed with three line-pairs and ending word-rhymes.⁷¹ These word-rhymes or *parola-rima* harken back to the *trobar-clus*, 'closed poetry' such as the *sestina*. Troubadours and Italian admirers such as Dante and Petrarch used these restrictive forms to display their skill. In the second stanza, Stollberg also begins to foreground the internal rhyme of his lines, as the line-pairs begin to be linked by similar semantic fields (*rot-rötlich-errötend*) within the line (see Figure 3 below). This intimately relates the line-pairs as 'variations on a stanza-theme' and places them in a *Sinneinheit*, a larger 'sense-unit' of meaning.⁷²

⁶⁹ David Lewin, "Auf dem Flusse: Image and Background in a Schubert Song," *Studies in Music with Text* (Oxford Scholarship Online, 2011), doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195182088.003.0005.

⁷⁰ Otto Erich Deutsch (ed.), *The Schubert Reader*, trans. Eric Blom (New York: W. W. Norton, 1947), 875.

⁷¹ Wolfgang Promies, "Worte wie Wellen, Spiegelungen. Zu Stollbergs Lied auf dem Wasser zu singen, für meine Agnes," in Richter, Karl, ed. *Aufklärung und Sturm und Drang* (Stuttgart, Reclam, 2006), 309.

⁷² Promies, "Worte wie Wellen," 310.

Über den Wipfeln des westlichen Haines Winket uns freundlich der <i>rötliche</i> Schein;	Presentation – initial idea Repeat of initial idea
Unter den Zweigen des östlichen Haines Säuselt der Kalmus im <i>rötlichen</i> Schein;	Continuation with cadence on A flat minor
Freude des Himmels und Ruhe des Haines Atmet die Seel' im <i>erröthenden</i> Schein. ⁷³	Continuation repeated with cadence of A flat minor

Figure 3 – conceptualising Stollberg’s poem in a musical sentence

Schubert transfers the syntax flowing over Stollberg’s tightly-enjambed lines to the piano’s continuously slurred, fluid accompaniment that carries over the singer’s phrases. Likewise, Schubert conceptualises the *Sinnenheit* aspect of Stollberg’s verse through a musical sentence. He ends each line-pair with a dotted crotchet, the longest note value of each phrase. This rhythmic pause allows the singer to draw breath, while expressing the end punctuation of Stollberg’s line-pairs. However, because the final line-pair is a repeat of the sentence’s continuation and cadence, the Lied only reaches harmonic closure at the end of each stanza (see Figure 3).

Stollberg’s poem is headed with an intimate title – the loving addition of ‘for my Agnes’ is warmer in tone than a dedication (‘An meine Agnes’).⁷³ In the mellow spirit of the poem, Schubert pervades his Lied setting with a warm, lilting dotted quaver-semiquaver-quaver 6/8 rhythm that echoes Stollberg’s shimmering dactylic metre (the dum-da-da rhythm). Gentle, rocking adjectival present participles (spiegelnden, wankende, schimmernden, wiegenden, stralenden, wechselnden) litter ‘Lied auf dem Wasser’, forming complete dactylic feet and bearing the rhythm of the poem’s whole.⁷⁴ By retaining a strict, strophic form where the score repeats three times, Schubert also arguably enacts the internally cohesive form of Stollberg’s poem. Each verse musically rhymes perfectly with the verse preceding it.

Spaun’s implication that there existed a sympathetic understanding between Schubert and ‘whatever filled the poet’s breast’ can also be rooted in biography: the gravely-ill Schubert was hospitalised for syphilis diagnosed in late 1822 or early 1823.⁷⁵ Stollberg’s text is qualified and self-questioning – the third person present subjective form of *entschwinde* in the final stanza implies that poet wishes for time would fly as it would today. This scene of a reddening (*erröthend*) sunset is a process, and thus the poet’s wish for time to disappear is at odds with his present revelling in the sunset.⁷⁶ In this way, the poem meditates on its own production, enacting the bittersweet impossibility of a timeless continuation of today into the morrow. Schubert repeats the second and third line-pairs of each stanza,

⁷³ Promies, 309.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 311.

⁷⁵ Deutsch, 875.

⁷⁶ Promies, 309.

allowing Stollberg's joyful epiphanies to break through by remarkably shifting the last line of each stanza to a major key.

Ach, es entschwindet mit tauigem Flügel
Mir auf den wiegenden Wellen die Zeit.
Morgen entschwinde mit schimmerndem Flügel
Wieder wie gestern und heute die Zeit,
Bis ich auf höherem strahlendem Flügel
Selber entschwinde der wechselnden Zeit.

Alas, with dewy wings
time vanishes from me on the rocking waves.
Tomorrow let time again vanish with shimmering
wings, as it did yesterday and today,
until, on higher, more radiant wings,
I myself vanish from the flux of time.⁷⁷

Unlike his adherence to Stollberg's form in 'Auf dem Wasser', Schubert breaks apart the four-line stanza structure of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's 1782 ballad 'Erlkönig' into a through-composed form. Schubert's 'Erlkönig', Opus 1, D 328 therefore forms a psychologised rendition of Goethe's text. Listeners are now placed as experiencing subjects as we hear the father's veiled terror, the boy's delirium, and the Erlkönig's wilful deviousness.

Edward Cone has suggested multiple ways of reading Goethe's text:

- a. One voice: narrator, who quotes the three characters – N (X, Y, Z);
- b. Two voices: interlocutor and responder, who quotes the characters – Q, A (X, Y, Z);
- c. Four voices: narrator and characters, who speak for themselves – N, X, Y, Z;
- d. Five voices: interlocutor, responder, and characters – Q, A, X, Y, Z.⁷⁸

Schubert's new, transfigured structure of 'Erlkönig' disturbed the regularity of a four-line stanza, and allowed Schubert to hauntingly characterise the poem's personas. Goethe's ballad is purposely ambiguous: he encloses the Erlkönig's speech in quotation marks, but demarcates the father's and son's words with dashes at the end of their lines. This hallucinatory bleeding of voices into the other suggests the Erlkönig is both a frightening figment of the son's imagination and an otherworldly voice in the text. The Lied medium also expands on the original poem's structure, as the music begins before the text proper. The pianist choreographs the entrance for the singer through octave triplets,

⁷⁷ Beaumont Glass, *Schubert's Complete Song Texts*, 115.

⁷⁸ Edward Cone, *The Composer's Voice* (University of California Press, 1974), 7.

before planting the listener before the stage. The Lied narrator 'squints out on the heath' before he tells the audience who is riding in the storm.⁷⁹

Schubert effectively turns the poetic text inside out by fastening on background details (a storm, a galloping horse), and making it the centre of his Lied. 'Erlkönig' opens with a terrifying statement: the *Schnell* galloping triplet octaves hammer away at the tonic, and scalar G minor figures erupt from the stark texture. This is a key that recalled Mozart's restless Symphony No. 40, and was later used in other Lieder that expressed the struggle against fate, such as 'Amphiaros' and 'An Mignon'.⁸⁰ Schubert's transformative work immediately compelled his listeners; after the public premiere of 'Erlkönig' in March 1821, critics hailed the work as a 'masterpiece of musical painting' that was full 'of fantasy and feeling'. The work received immense accolades even before Schubert was acknowledged as the *classicus auctor* of the Lied, the composer who elevated the once lowly genre to full artistic status.⁸¹

Schubert uses motivic reiteration and tonal harmony to represent seizure and appropriation in 'Erlkönig'. Although the Erlkönig is represented by the major mode rather than any definable motive, he gradually encroaches upon the father and son by systematically looting their motives. His second appeal to the son takes place in C major, appropriating and slyly touching on applied dominants without ever committing to a key. The son's plaintive, neighbouring 'Mein Vater' refrain, which shrilly rises a discordant semitone each time (see Figure 5), is finally subsumed by the Erlkönig's final exhortation. As Erlkönig's final threat, 'Ich liebe dich, mich reizt deine schöne Gestalt...' converges with the repetitive triplet ostinato, Schubert enacts the Erlkönig claiming his prey and seizing the boy.⁸² 'Ich liebe dich' transforms the neighbour note of E flat into a lengthy submediant chord, the final mocking moment before the terrifying climax (emphasis mine).⁸³ Finally, the motives of father and son converge in the song's climax, as if dramatising their tragic defeat.⁸⁴

Although Edward Cone argues that the vocal line 'enjoys an explicitness' through words and musical gestures in a way that the 'mute' instrumental part cannot, Schubert has used the powerful and explicit technique of the cessation of music as 'painting'.⁸⁵ In transforming the second word of the text ('wer reitet') into an all-pervasive texture, the listener is all the more shocked when the horse's galloping (that fearful and anxious constant commentator on the sung poetic text) comes to a standstill before the final recitative-like line (see Figure 4). The complete silence before the boy's death points forward to a modern concept of silence, invisibility, and failure hidden in the fabric of

⁷⁹ Richard Kramer, "In Search of Song," in *Distant Cycles: Schubert and the Conceiving of Song* (University of Chicago Press, 1994), 15

⁸⁰ Michael Hall, *Schubert's Song Sets* (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2003), 254.

⁸¹ Franz Schubert: *Dokumente 1817-1830*, vol. 1, ed. Til Gerrit Waidelich (Tutzing, 1993), nos. 74, 66, 96, in Christopher H. Gibbs, "'Komm, geh' mit mir': Schubert's Uncanny 'Erlkönig,'" in *19th-Century Music* 19, no. 2 (1995): 117, 120.

⁸² Robert Spillman and Deborah Stein, *Poetry into Song: Performance and Analysis of Lieder*, (Oxford University Press, 1996), 100.

⁸³ Spillman and Stein, *Poetry into Song*, 161.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 158.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

texts, as if the child's death is not immediately processed by the narrator or the listener.⁸⁶ Through the line's disembodied, *pianissimo* floating above the silent accompaniment, and its flat melodic contour, Schubert suggests that the traumatic experience of the son's death tunnels into an enclave or gap in the Lied. Perhaps even genre failure is signified here, as melody and accompaniment are native to the Lied. The mute accompaniment is commensurate to the abrupt removal of any urgency to get the child home; the father's rushed plight has been in vain. The removal of the music from under the text appeals to the 'affective and corporal' aspect of the listener's psyche in a way that the original poem cannot.⁸⁷

The image shows a musical score for Franz Schubert's 'Erkönig', Op. 1, D 328, mm. 142-148. The score is in 4/4 time and B-flat major. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more active eighth-note accompaniment in the left hand. The vocal line is recitative, with lyrics: 'er - reicht den Hof mit Müh'und Not; in seinen Ar - men das Kind war tot.' The tempo is marked 'Andante'. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'fz' (forzando) and 'pp' (pianissimo). Two yellow boxes highlight specific musical elements: one in the vocal line at measure 143 and one in the piano accompaniment at measure 143.

Figure 4 - cessation as 'painting' in Franz Schubert, 'Erkönig', Op. 1, D 328, mm. 142-148

⁸⁶ The repetition is described by Caruth as the original event 'not assimilated or experienced fully at the time, but only belatedly, in its repeated possession of the one who experiences it' (C. Caruth, 1995, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 4 in Julie Sutton and Jos De Backer, "Music, trauma and silence: The state of the art," in *The Arts in Psychotherapy* 36, no. 2 (2009), doi: 10.1016/j.aip.2009.01.009.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

Vater:

Mein Sohn, was birgst du so bang dein Ge-

Sohn:

sicht? Siehst, Va - ter, du den

Erl - kö - nig nicht?

The image displays three systems of musical notation for Franz Schubert's 'Erlkönig'. Each system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The first system is for the Father (Vater), with lyrics 'Mein Sohn, was birgst du so bang dein Ge-'. The piano accompaniment features a prominent triplet pattern in the bass line, marked with figured bass notation (131, 131, 131, 131) and dynamics like *pp* and *p⁴*. The second system is for the Son (Sohn), with lyrics 'sicht? Siehst, Va - ter, du den'. The piano accompaniment continues with the triplet pattern, marked with *f* and figured bass notation (iv, [vii⁷], iv). The third system continues the Son's line with lyrics 'Erl - kö - nig nicht?'. The piano accompaniment is marked with *mf* and figured bass notation ([vii⁷], iv). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is 4/4.

Figure 5 - motifs of characters in Franz Schubert, 'Erlkönig', Op. 1, D 328, mm. 35-45

In 'Gretchen am Spinnrade', Op. 2, D 118, Schubert also represents and transfigures Gretchen's monologue in Goethe's 1829 tragedy, *Faust*. The spinning wheel element is translated as an incessant, ostinato piano figuration, which sits atop an empty, droning bass ostinato. This becomes

an overriding feature of the Lied, both evoking the medieval tradition of women lamenting at the spinning wheel and taking the listener into Gretchen's fragile psyche.⁸⁸ At a pivotal point in Goethe's tragedy, the once-pious, once-calm Gretchen (Margarete) sits at her spinning wheel, full of inner torment over her lover. Schubert establishes a melancholy *ennui* even before Gretchen begins her confessional song, much like the pre-eminent piano accompaniment of 'Erkönig'.⁸⁹ The vii[♭]/i chord that ends her bitter proclamation, 'und ach, sein Kuß!' carries onto the *Ritornello poco riten.* piano accompaniment. In his transformation of Goethe's text, Schubert suffuses the piano accompaniment with Gretchen's pain and irresolution. He also extends the poem's circularity: the passage's resolution to the tonic only brings back the restless ostinato of the first stanza.

Both the form of Goethe's poem and Schubert's Lied reflect Gretchen's emotional circularity. The first stanza is interspersed throughout, effectively breaking the poem into three sections: Gretchen's interior distress, her idealisation of Faust, and her deep physical longing. However, in a departure from the 'letter' of Goethe's text, Schubert circles back to the first line and stamps his Lied with an unresolved sigh of longing: 'Meine Ruh' ist hin, Mein Herz ist schwer...' Like the transferral of textual semantics to musical structure in 'Auf dem Wasser', Schubert also reflects Gretchen's simple, uncontrived language in the play (so at odds with the complex monologues of Faust, Mephistopheles, and the Archangels) by phrases that are short and lamenting, obsessively fixated on the interval of a fourth.

Schubert also transfigures Friedrich Rückert's 1822 poem in 'Du bist die Ruh', Opus 59, No. 3, D 776 through a heightened sense of harmonic tension and release, and the ethos of sonority, lyric temporality and memory in his late songs. No single poem bears a title in Rückert's volume, *Oestliche Rosen*, published by Brockhaus in Leipzig. In effect, Schubert has disrupted Rückert's three *Lesen* (gatherings) and created a new Op. 59 set of four songs in 1826. Schubert translates the punctuation and syntax of Rückert's sparse diction through harmonic resolution and aural echoes.⁹⁰ Warm, diaphanous E flat major harmonies suggest pure devotion and awe (see 'Am See', D 746; 'Im Freien', D 880; and 'Litanei auf das Fest aller Seelen', D 343). The blissful entry of 'Du bist die Ruh', a perfect fifth above the tonic would be repeated much later in a similarly personal, tender aria, 'Toi, la cœur de la rose' in Ravel's opera *L'enfant et les sortilèges: Fantaisie lyrique en deux parties* (1925). Rückert's poem's second stanza binds each line together with an internally referential syntax and an ostensible lack of punctuation. In a moment of parataxis and profound simplicity, 'Ich weihe dir', refers back to the object of the consecration – 'Mein Aug' und Herz'.

Ich weihe dir
Voll Lust und Schmerz
Zur Wohnung hier

⁸⁸ Susan Youens, *Schubert's Poets and the Making of Lieder* (Cambridge University Press, 1996), 315.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ Michael Spitzer, "Axial Lyric Space in Two Late Songs: 'Im Freien' and 'Der Winterabend'." In Lorraine Byrne Bodley, and Julian Horton, eds., *Rethinking Schubert* (Oxford Scholarship Online, 2016), doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190200107.003.0014.

Mein Aug' und Herz.

I consecrate to you
Full of pleasure and pain
My eyes and heart
As a dwelling place here.⁹¹

This parataxis of Rückert's poem is translated into aural echoes: Schubert alters the first line in 'Voll Lust und Schmerz', resolving the dissonance of the verse (pleasure and pain) into the tonic, the place of rest the poet promises, 'Mein Aug' und Herz' (my eyes and heart). This chromatically-altered line also returns in the Lied's transcendental final stanza through the soft plea, 'O füll' es ganz'. By exactly repeating Bars 22-25 (see Ex. 2.4), Schubert immerses Rückert's verse with the comfort of total harmonic resolution and nostalgic echoes, as if Schubert has expanded the poet's address to their beloved into the direct connection between singer and audience.

Dies Augenzelt
Von deinem Glanz
Allein erhellt,
O füll' es ganz.

The tabernacle
Of my eyes
Illumined by your radiance alone,
Oh fill it completely!⁹²

⁹¹ Franz Schubert, 'Du bist die Ruh', in Beaumont Glass, 459.

⁹² Beaumont Glass, 460.

Figure 6 - chromatic resolution in Franz Schubert, 'Du bist die Ruh', Op. 59, No. 3, mm. 16-25

Schubert's Lieder operated on a dual axis of representation and transfiguration. By appealing to the corporeality of the performer, and the communication of the singer with audience, his settings also merged textual semantics and musical structure, textual psychology and musical expression. 'Auf dem Wasser zu singen' enacts the embrace of the idyllic outer world, and 'Erlkönig' sinks the listener and performer into the stuff of nightmare, as a son is wrenched from his father's arms by a demon only he can see. In casting the art song 'into its purest form', Schubert transcribed his own personal 'poem' or interpretation onto German verse.⁹³

⁹³ 'Franz Schubert hat eine Welt von Poesie in Musik verwandelt. Er hat das Kunstlied auf eine bis dahin nicht gekannte Höhe geführt und gezeigt, was alle Kunst ist: Steigerung, Konzentration, ein in die reinste Form Gegossenes.' - Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau *Auf den Spuren der Schubert-Lieder*, (Wiesbaden: Brockhaus, 1971), 9.

Lieder ohne Worte

In transcription there is no need for too much invention: a certain conjugal fidelity to the original is usually best. [...] Perhaps practicing the art of transcription (which I basically invented) for fifty years has taught me to maintain the right balance between too much and too little in this field. If you had remained in Weimar for a few more days, I would have been able to explain my thoughts on the topic with greater clarity.

— Franz Liszt to Count Geza Zichy, 1880⁹⁴

Much like Spaun's assertion that Schubert held a simpatico relationship with his poets, Liszt expressed his favour of transcribing works with a 'conjugal' fidelity, a technique that sat between tampering 'too much' or 'too little' with the original. Liszt's letter can be rooted in the nineteenth-century proliferation of visual engraving, literary translation, and musical transcription, where the executor's creativity and the work's independence were not only acknowledged but conceptually married together.⁹⁵ This section explores how Liszt's own transcriptions are characterised by his unique method of re-working and his elastic sense of reproduction. Although devoted to Schubert's simplicity of melodic line, harmony, accompanimental figuration, style, and tone, the *Zwölf Lieder* channel Liszt's new thoughts into the Lieder. In this sense, Liszt's Schubert transcriptions bear his personal stamp: they are new compositions that convey the symbiosis between composer, arranger, and performer.⁹⁶

Within two years of publishing the *Zwölf Lieder*, Liszt had tripled his arrangements of Schubert's Lieder, perhaps because they were laden with the potential for 'dramatic exposition and elaboration.'⁹⁷ The transcriptions ultimately shaped the aesthetics behind many of his major works from the Weimar years. They were also wildly popular: the public adored Liszt's arrangements, so much so that Fink established a new category in the reviews section of the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* – 'Lieder ohne Worte.'⁹⁸ Eduard Hanslick admitted Liszt's Schubert Lieder transcriptions were 'epoch-making': 'there was hardly a concert in which Liszt did not have to play one or two of them – even when they were not listed on the program.'⁹⁹ Other pianistic rivals such as Clara Wieck and Sigismond Thalberg followed Liszt's suit and adopted them into their programmes upon publication. Within a decade, this new hybrid genre spun out its own imitations, with Stephen Heller, Carl Czerny, and César Franck producing their own versions of Schubert's lieder for solo piano. Whereas Liszt's symphonic transcriptions moved from an expansive form into a smaller one for pedagogical and entertainment purposes, Liszt displayed his Schubert transcriptions on a public stage. This entailed a wider

⁹⁴ Letter to Count Géza Zichy of 3 August 1880 in Franz Liszt, *Briefe aus ungarischen Sammlungen 1835-1886*, ed. Margit Prahács (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1966), 231, in Kregor, 'Franz Liszt and the Vocabularies of Transcription', 1.

⁹⁵ Kregor, 'Franz Liszt and the Vocabularies of Transcription', 10.

⁹⁶ Samson, 74; 104.

⁹⁷ Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 76.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 76.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 75.

dissemination, and thrice transformed the original German verse in a reading tailored to the piano's musical colours and technical abilities.

Among Liszt's Schubert arrangements, the *Zwölf Lieder* are the only transcriptions where texts can be applied with any consistency.¹⁰⁰ Although Liszt required that Tobias Haslinger, the publisher of *Schwanengesang* and *Winterreise*, print the transcriptions with 'words underlying the notes', both autographs of *Winterreise* and *Schwanengesang* lack poetic texts entirely.¹⁰¹ In his *Zwölf Lieder*, Liszt also eschewed the text at times in favour of musical experimentation and dramatic exposition.

This dramatic exposition is clearly seen in 'Auf dem Wasser zu singen'. Presented with the problem of developing a strophic form without sung text, Liszt set up a freer variation form. From bar 80, Liszt takes Schubert's lilting melody, with its two-note slurs and intervallic leaps and transmutes it into a *molto agitato* melody replete with stormy left-hand arpeggios and the absence of Lied text. From bar 98 onwards, the previous uncertain circling figure disintegrates into broken octaves that move in a syncopated rhythm against the *sforzando* harmonic accents and metric downbeats (see Figures 7 and 8). The octaves merge the D natural of the Lied accompaniment with the circling figure of the voice. It is also unsingable – a *con passione*, fist-shaking statement instead of Stollberg's introspective final verse. Liszt disrupts Schubert's gentle sustaining of A flat minor until the Lied is illuminated by the major, as if flooded by the red of evening in the poetic text. What remained shimmery and wishful in the original Lied is given a definite answer in Liszt's transcription: a heroic, personal victory in A flat major over the vicissitudes of time.

This departure from the spirit of the Lied is similar to Liszt's rendering of Ludwig Rellstab's plaintive 'Ständchen' ('Leise flehen meine Lieder'), where the poet is separated from his lover. Liszt unites the tenor with his beloved by adding a faint, echoing soprano canon at the upper octave of the right hand. The two voices mimic an operatic call-and-answer duet as they float above an undulating, guitar-like accompaniment.¹⁰² In his *Lettres d'un Bachlier ès Musique*, Liszt admitted to modifying the 'inner, intimate thought' behind Beethoven's great works.¹⁰³ Liszt also translated a single poetic idea into several forms in his Mephisto waltzes and validated several versions of the same musical idea in his *Paganini Etudes*. His 'open' compositional process purportedly grasped the 'inner, intimate thought' of the original work and then did away with it, resisting the German tradition centred on the *Werktreue*.¹⁰⁴ Both 'Ständchen' and 'Auf dem Wasser zu singen' are new compositional essays: their endings luxuriate in pianistic sonority and freely depart from the letter and spirit of the original poem.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 92.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 76.

¹⁰³ *An Artist's Journey*, trans. and annotated Charles Suttoni (Chicago and London, 1989; original letters, 1835-41), 19 in Samson, 110.

¹⁰⁴ Samson, 107.

bis ich auf hö - he - rem strah - len - den Flü - gel sel - ber ent - schwin - de der

4 wech - seln - den Zeit,

Figure 7 - circling figure in Franz Schubert, 'Auf dem Wasser zu singen', Op. 72, D 774, mm. 22-25

The first system of the musical score is in 6/8 time and features a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The right hand plays a melodic line with eighth-note patterns, while the left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The dynamic marking is *sf ff con strepito*, and there is a *sf* marking on a specific chord in the right hand.

The second system continues the melodic and rhythmic patterns. It includes dynamic markings of *sf* and *rinforz.* (rinforzando) in the right hand, indicating a gradual increase in volume. The left hand maintains its eighth-note accompaniment.

The third system shows a change in texture. The right hand features chords and dyads, with *sf* markings under several notes. The left hand continues with eighth-note accompaniment, including some chords.

The fourth system begins with a measure marked with a '8' above the staff, indicating an eighth-note pattern. The right hand has a *fff* (fortississimo) dynamic marking. The left hand features chords and dyads, with some notes marked with a 'Ped.' (pedal) symbol. There are also asterisk symbols (*) in the bass line.

Figure 8 - Free variation heading to triumphant cadence in Franz Liszt, 'Auf dem Wasser zu singen', mm. 98-107

Both Liszt's transcriptions of 'Gretchen am Spinnrade' and 'Erlkönig' convey the tension between departing from the original by 'too little' or 'too much'.¹⁰⁵ In 'Gretchen', Liszt retains the soprano line in its original register, allowing the long drawn out notes to arrive a semiquaver later. In this way, the word 'Ruh' in Ex. 2.7 still occupies the full crotchet value of the original Lied. Just as his fidelity to chordal voicing in the Beethovenian transcriptions emphasised sonority and aural effect but gave way to problems of hand span and polyphonic voicing, the melody and accompaniment converging in the same register of 'Gretchen' also poses a technical problem for the pianist. The soprano line sits amidst the spinning wheel ostinato, requiring a skilled voicing to express the intimate nature of Gretchen's song.

Pas trop vite (Nicht zu geschwind)

Mei - ne Ruh _____ ist
un poco marcato il canto

Figure 9 - rhythmic displacement in Franz Liszt, 'Gretchen am Spinnrade – Marguerite', mm. 1-3

Like the climax of 'Auf dem Wasser zu singen', Liszt dramatically thickens the texture of Gretchen's melody as her longing and despair reach its peak. Figures 10 and 11 show Liszt's doubling of the voice part an octave higher. The separate bass and ostinato pattern in the left hand (likened to the clicking of the spinning wheel) merges into a heavy block chord an octave lower. Doubling is a technique oft used in Liszt's transcriptions (see the beginning of the 'Erlkönig' transcription in Figure 14), which thrive on the seven octaves available to the pianist and give climatic moments the density and power of an orchestra. Likewise, the shift of the ostinato pattern to the final two left-hand quavers in Bars 94 and 96 hurtles the pianist forward, on towards the next bar. This rhythmic dislocation ramps up the disorienting nature of Gretchen's lament, and keeps the reciprocity of spinning-wheel accompaniment and Gretchen's psyche in Schubert's setting. Liszt's marking of *legato molto appassionato* is also an expression more pertinent for a pianist, as the pianist's articulation, pedal, and shaping choices fight the natural decay of the piano. In his transcription, Liszt dramatically elaborates on the psychology of Goethe's text: Gretchen has moved from an interior self-pity to full-blown physical desire and violent longing.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵ Kregor, 'Franz Liszt and the Vocabularies of Transcription', 1.

¹⁰⁶ Stein and Spillman, 26.

Figure 10 - ostinato at climax of Franz Schubert, 'Gretchen am Spinnrade', Op. 2, D 118, mm. 93-96

Figure 11 - rhythmic dislocation and doubling in Franz Liszt, 'Gretchen am Spinnrade – Marguerite', mm. 94-96

By lifting the Schubert's Lieder out of their tonal and structural context, Liszt created twelve poetic vignettes in his *Zwölf Lieder*. Each transcription in the collection stands apart from each other – a poem that opens up in intensity and then closes without reference to the next. Liszt created a new genre through his Lieder transcriptions, just as Schumann expressed his enthusiasm for character pieces (Stücke). The Stücke call into question the very possibility of genre as they are defined by unique individuality instead of formal conventions.¹⁰⁷ In Friedrich Schlegel's *Athenaeum Fragment*, he describes pithy, self-contained 'fragments' as 'small work[s] of art... entirely isolated from the surrounding world and complete in itself like a hedgehog.'¹⁰⁸ The Romantic fragment was therefore intentionally fragmented right from its very genesis, just as Liszt's own pithy transcriptions bore their individual dramatic trajectories. The works could be slotted in with other transcriptions as in Liszt's recitals, or even performed by themselves.

¹⁰⁷ David Ferris, *Schumann's Eichendorff Liederkreis and the Genre of the Romantic Cycle* (Oxford University Press, 2000), 73.

¹⁰⁸ August Wilhelm Schlegel, *Athenaeum: Eine Zeitschrift von August Wilhelm Schlegel und Friedrich Schlegel*, vol. 2, ed. Curt Grützmacher (Munch: Rowholt, 1969), 206. "Ein Fragment muß gleich einem kleinen Kunstwerke von der umgebenden Welt ganz abgesondert und in sich selbst vollendet wie ein Igel."

'Du bist die Ruh' also stands alone as a love-song with its own trajectory, instead of its inclusion in Schubert's original Op. 59 set. In this way, Liszt's transcription process does not follow Schubert's 'zyklische Verfahrensweise', his propensity for cycle-making.¹⁰⁹ Schubert's 'Du bist die Ruh' took its key from the chromatic mediant of the preceding song in C minor, 'Dass sie hier gewesen', D 775, unlike the A flat minor key of 'Auf dem Wasser' in Liszt's collection. Liszt also created a new subset to Schubert's own *Winterreise*, D 911 by rupturing the previous harmonic pattern and creating a new tonal journey.¹¹⁰ Published in individual fascicles over two years, the twelve pieces in Liszt's *Winterreise* push the extent to which a piano arrangement can function as an entirely new composition.

Liszt heightens the original Lied's interiority in ways separate from texture or dynamic: by omitting the Lied text in Bars 45-66, Liszt weaves into his transcription a dreamy, stream-of-consciousness reflection on previous verses (see Figure 13). In comparison to the Schubert Lied in Figure 6, Liszt engraves the independent left-hand voice of Schubert's accompaniment into a simplified bass pedal held across every bar. Schubert's right-hand accompaniment is translated rhythmically into an arpeggiated left hand and melodically into the alto voice with downward stems. 'Du bist die Ruh' also hints at Liszt's penchant for dramatic elaboration while keeping with the mellow, tender spirit of Schubert's Lied. The transcription inserts a fainter voice of commentary in Bars 31-32 (see Figure 12). Like Gretchen's spinning wheel that echoes her psyche, the > marking above the diminished seventh (and its piercing register) punctuates the line, 'Treib andern Schmerz / Aus dieser Brust' ('Drive all other grief / from my breast'). Liszt adds a faint, plaintive gesture to echo the memory of 'grief' in Rückert's text, translating both the temporality of both Rückert's verse and Schubert's preoccupation with memory.

Liszt's *Zwölf Lieder* stand alone as *Lieder ohne Worte*: they take on polyphonic voicings, place ostinati at the centre of Schubert's score, and contain entire verses without the Lied text. Liszt demonstrates his creativity and acuity as an engraver of Schubert's Lieder; it is in his transcriptions that his elastic sense of reworking is seen to the fullest.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹¹⁰ See figure of trichords in Schubert/Liszt, *Winterreise* in Kregor, "Liszt as Transcriber," 85.

Treib an - dern Schmerz aus die - ser Brust.

Figure 12 - quasi-polyphony in Franz Liszt, 'Du bist die Ruh', mm. 31-34

ben pronunziato il canto
senza agitazione

sempre dolce e legato molto

Figure 13 - absence of text in Franz Liszt, 'Du bist die Ruh', mm. 45-48

CHAPTER THREE: THE PERFORMER: THE SPIRIT AND THE LETTER

Performance practice

Liszt gazes pensively upwards into the distance, elevated well above the keys. His long torso hints at his six-foot frame, with forearms sloping sharply towards his hands. Liszt's physical stance is depicted in various iconography, such as Josef Dannhauser's oil painting of 1840, George Healy's portrait of 1868, and the drawing by Charles Renouard from 1886.¹¹¹ His bearing broke free from previous playing traditions and enabled a fuller sound through the sheer weight of the arms and the power of his upper body. As a pianist of a much more diminutive stature, I also employed this technique in powerful, virtuosic pieces such as Rachmaninov's Concerto No. 3, Op. 30 or the finale to Schumann's *Études Symphoniques*, Op. 13. These works required me to adjust my stool to a higher position than I am used to. The performer becomes a transcriber, both embodying a work and communicating it to an audience in a way inevitably removed from Liszt as composer and performer.

This chapter concerns the fourth layer of interpretation in the extended process of 'transcription'. I consider how performing these transcriptions in the twentieth century entails entering a complex environment of dialogue between the poet, Schubert's setting, and Liszt's transcriptions. I focus on the advantages and limitations of my own physicality in approaching the *Lieder* transcriptions as one example of a modern performer. In my recording analysis, I survey how the *Lieder* and transcriptions of them have been embodied across the decades. Lastly, theoretical debate and practical enquiry are used to argue that Liszt's transcriptions are not a diplomatic transcription, namely, a straight facsimile of Schubert's songs. Instead, the performer can use his or her own creative license alongside their reserves of historical knowledge to interpret his 'Partitions de piano'.

Liszt's physique

Most twenty-first-century keyboard pedagogy and practice remains devoted to the notion that pianists ought to aim for pianistic expression and interpretation beyond the physical limitations of their body. Liszt scholar Pauline Pocknell emphasises Liszt's cerebral brilliance over his physicality: 'Liszt well knew the source of exceptional musical performance on a keyboard instrument: it lay in the brain; it had nothing to do with lucky inheritance of a particular hand type. . . true musically sensitive natures would adapt their technique to their own unique bodily structure in order to produce, somehow or another, beautiful sound as conceived in the mind.'¹¹² Upon attending Liszt's performance in a mid-week concert in Vienna's Verreinssaale on 2 May 1838, the Viennese critic Heinrich Adami also adamantly concluded that Liszt's pianism existed in an ether separate from his own hands. In the

¹¹¹ These depictions can be found in Ernst Burger's *Franz Liszt: a chronicle of his life in pictures and documents*, trans. S. Spencer (New Jersey, 1989).

¹¹² Davies, *Romantic Anatomies of Performance*, 176.

Allgemeine Theaterzeitung, Adami wrote 'just as Lessing declared that Raphael would have become the greatest painter even had he come into the world without hands, so equally might this be said of Liszt as a pianist'.¹¹³

However, Liszt's hands also held fascination and unease for his contemporaries. Camille Saint-Saëns remarked, 'The fingers of Liszt were not human fingers'.¹¹⁴ In 1878, the American journalist Anne Hampton Brewster even attributed specific character traits to Liszt's fingers, perhaps addressing the anxiety surrounding mechanical virtuosity at the time. Brewster describes Liszt's 'wonderful long thumb... extend[ing] beyond the middle joint of the forefinger'; his flat and square fingers 'full of knots'; and the tremendous force of his 'little finger', whose knuckle 'seem[ed] as if made of iron'.¹¹⁵ The reference to the little finger's knuckle brings to mind the Argentinian pianist Martha Argerich, famed for the power of the little finger of her right hand. It also suggests the strength of Liszt's joints. My own hypermobile joints have required stabilisation exercises: while flexible joints may assist repeated notes on the piano, they are also prone to having less proprioception (awareness of joint position and movement), predisposing pianists to injury.¹¹⁶

Benefits and limitations

Liszt's large hands were an asset: it facilitated repetitive octaves and large chords, and his natural arm weight was more conducive to a fuller, sonorous sound. This is most significant in 'Erlkönig', as I had to gradually group the *Presto agitato* octaves, so that my hand's tension could be released through wrist gestures. Pianist Yuja Wang circumvents this obstacle by leaving out the lower left-hand thumb in sections like Bars 6-7 and 13-14, while powerfully anchoring the flighty right hand *drammatico* triplets with the held octave bass (see Figure 14).¹¹⁷ Although I did perform the octaves in 'Erlkönig' by allowing the keys to not quite reach the top of the keyboard, I previously omitted notes in the Finale of Rachmaninov's Third Concerto, which greatly assisted accuracy and tone production, and aurally sounded the same because the large cluster chords were in a rapid *Più mosso* tempo (see Figure 15). Lora Deahl and Brenda Wristen also endorse 'musically inconspicuous' omissions of notes that are doubled elsewhere in the chord within short, isolated sections of music.¹¹⁸ Unlike Pocknell's dismissal of the importance of hand type, physical adjustments were ultimately required for my interpretation of the transcriptions.

¹¹³ Ibid, 177.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ See Lars-Goran Larsson, John Baum, Govind S. Mudholkar, and Georgia D. Kollia, "Benefits and Disadvantages of Joint Hypermobility among Musicians," *Journal of Safety Research* 25, no. 3 (1994):180, doi 10.1056/NEJM19931007329150; Kristen R. Burkholder and Alice G. Brandfonbrener, "Performance-related injuries among student musicians at a specialty clinic," *Medical Problems of Performing Artists* 19, no. 3, (2004): 116+. Gale Academic OneFile (accessed June 28, 2020). <https://link-gale-com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/apps/doc/A173230622/AONE?u=learn&sid=AONE&xid=4a9a217f>.

¹¹⁷ MrOsomatsu, "Yuja Wang plays Schubert/Liszt: Erlkönig," YouTube video, 04.34, posted [15 March 2014]. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_BmRekeJ8A.

¹¹⁸ Lora Deahl and Brenda Wristen, *Adaptive Strategies for Small-Handed Pianists* (Oxford University Press, 2017), 190.

Figure 14 - octaves in Franz Liszt, 'Erlkönig', mm. 1-8

Figure 15 - note omissions in Sergei Rachmaninov, 'Finale: Alla breve', Piano Concerto No. 3 in D minor, Op. 30, mm. 1-8

Expressive physiology

Rather than producing music that was separate to his own body, Liszt's expressive physiology heightened the electric connection between giver and receiver, performer and audience – it was part of his poetry and art. The recent wave of scholarship that concerns looking and spectacle in Liszt can be traced back to Schumann's observations of Liszt's 1840 concert in Dresden:

I had heard him before; but an artist is a different person in the presence of the public compared with what he appears in the presence of a few. The fine open space, the glitter of light, the elegantly-dressed audience—all this elevates the frame of mind in *giver and receiver*. And now the demon's power began to awake; he first played with the public as if to try it, then gave it something more profound, until every

single member was *enveloped in his art*... He must be heard — and also seen; for if Liszt played behind the scenes, a great deal of *the poetry of his playing* would be lost (emphasis my own).¹¹⁹

Within Schumann's distaste for extravagant choreographic gestures is an implication that Liszt's movements added to the poetry of his playing. The notion of idealising or elevating keyboard performance through the pianist also opened the way to the long solo recitals of 'modern pianism'.¹²⁰ Although basing an interpretation on Liszt's iconography and visual descriptions would be inherently limited because of the nature of the sources (caricatures grew out of a tradition influenced by physiognomy and pathognomy, expressing an emotion or a character, and 'high art' depictions were restrained by the codes of gesture and posture), sources consistently describe Liszt as a pianist famed for his unusual stature, seating position, and compelling flair as a performer.¹²¹ The next section concerns how the performer's embodied role plays into an interpretation grounded in the aesthetic of Schubertian song, while simultaneously bringing across the new affect and expression of Liszt's transcription. The Schubert Lieder and Liszt's transcriptions 'gesture to each other; echo each other, and enlarge each other's meanings'.¹²² A historically and aesthetically informed approach leaves traces of each text in performance.

¹¹⁹ In Davies, "Franz Liszt, Metapianism, and the Hand," 178.

¹²⁰ Davies, 178.

¹²¹ Davison, 41.

¹²² Samson, 114.

A historically and aesthetically informed performance

The *Zwölf Lieder* are no longer only the Schubert songs: they are layered and filtered through Liszt, the virtuoso pianist. A critic writing in the *Courrier de Lyon* revealed Liszt's changes when accompanying Adolphe Nourrit in *Erlkönig*: 'Those scales... made the listeners tremble with terror, who else but Liszt, in order to increase their sonority, would have dared play them in octaves?'¹²³ As an accompanist, Liszt had already altered Schubert's Lieder in ways comparable to his reworkings – Liszt's embellishments as an accompanist and his own compositional style supports the classification of the transcriptions as piano compositions.

Although the transcriptions retain the simple line of a Schubertian melody, the melody itself is transposed to both tenor and soprano registers, set in contrapuntal dialogue, and placed amidst a huge variety of lush pianistic textures. In a lively debate, Robert Levin, Malcolm Bilson, and Paul Badura-Skoda assert that even Schubert's own music requires considerable personal interpretation, unlike Susan Kagan and David Montgomery, who hold more to the written letter of the score and the concept of music as reproduction. Bilson argues that early performance treatises convey the intrinsic nature of personal interpretation to a work's performance:

Leopold Mozart: One must take pains to discover the affect intended by the composer and execute it correctly. Because the sorrowful often alternates with the joyous, one must assiduously endeavour to perform each according to its manner. In a word, one must play everything in such a way that one is oneself moved by it.¹²⁴

Türk: Whoever performs a composition so that the affect (character, etc.), even in every single passage, is most faithfully expressed (made perceptible) and that the tones become at the same time a language of feelings, of this person it is said that he is a good executant.¹²⁵

Starke: Strong and weak, and all the different nuances, are for our senses as the moon is for the tides of the sea. [He then quotes the 'most esteemed music director Turk'] ... Whoever presents a piece of music so that the affect [character] in it is accurately expressed in every passage, and where the tones are turned into a language of the emotions', of that man we say, he has a good execution [Vortrag].¹²⁶

The term Vortrag has various definitions, all aiming at formal communication – it can mean lecture, discourse, rhetoric, or recital.¹²⁷ By pairing the formal connotations of Vortrag with the performance of

¹²³ G. Prod'homme, "Schubert's Works in France," *The Musical Quarterly* 14, no. 4 (October 1928): 503, in Van Dine, 88.

¹²⁴ Mozart Leopold, *A treatise on the fundamental principles of violin playing*, 2nd ed., trans. E. Knocker (London, 1951), 255-6.

¹²⁵ Daniel Gottlob Türk, *School of clavier playing* (1789), trans. R. Haagh (Lincoln, NE, 1982), 321.

¹²⁶ Friedrich Starke, *Wiener Piano-forte Schule*, Part 2 (Vienna, 1819), 15.

¹²⁷ Michael Clark and Olaf Thyen, eds., "Vortrag," in *Pocket Oxford German Dictionary: German-English* (Oxford University Press, 2009), accessed 12 July 2020, <https://www.oxfordreference-com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/view/10.1093/acref/9780191739521.001.0001/b-de-en-00003-0020187>.

a work, the treatises emphasise how central personal expression is to the exposition, as it were, of the performer's musical interpretation. Bilson extrapolates this language of emotion further into theatre by emphasising the 'meaning of ... words in proper context'.¹²⁸ A performer perfectly enunciating each word in *Macbeth* in the context of a light comedy can be likened to a performance of Mozart's 'Jeunehomme' piano concerto, K 271 that disregards performance instructions in a flat *piano* and legato interpretation – both are beautifully executed, but ultimately meaningless.¹²⁹ This type of performance practice disregards variety and affect and homogenises works into what Bilson terms a 'china-doll saccharinity'.¹³⁰ Similarly, a bare and classical interpretation to Liszt's transcription of 'Gretchen am Spinnrade' would not convey her explosion of anguish in both climaxes. Instead, the affect of the music should guide the transcription's rubato, as well as the player's own interpretative variations on the refrain.

Moreover, creativity and flexibility were inherent in both vocal and instrumental nineteenth-century performance practice. The most distinguished performers composed. Accompanists would have improvised introductions to the Schubert's songs that omitted them. Numerous introductions in the posthumous publications of Schubert's songs have been traced back to his improvisations. These introductions were necessary additions for editions targeted primarily for dilettantes.¹³¹ Schubert's admission that he performed 'as one' with baritone Johann Michael Vogl, famed for his theatrically extroverted embellishments, meant that Schubert was aware of, if not complicit with Vogl's liberties with his score.¹³² Schubert agreed to embellishments in the same spirit as how he tailored songs to a singer's or player's personal abilities.¹³³ Despite the lack of originality in Gustav Schilling's reformulations and plagiarism of earlier works, his list of possible embellishments performers could add to the printed text can be taken as wider practice for Schubert's time.¹³⁴ The concept of performing an unadorned melody with ornamentation extended well into the Viennese Classical style, despite Schubert's radical transformation of Mozartian musical language.¹³⁵

Walther Dürr asserts in the foreword of each volume in the *Lieder Series IV* of the *Neue Schubert-Ausgabe* that embellishments intensify the musical affect that is 'probably only possible... in the songs: inner agitation (but also lively images)... portrayed in hurrying passagework, resignation, melancholy and sadness in expressive ornamentation.'¹³⁶ In this way, the historical rules governing Schubert are already flexible: they can be read as a general 'one does thus, provided that the emotion

¹²⁸ Malcolm Bilson, "The Future of Schubert Interpretation: What Is Really Needed?," *Early Music* 25, no. 4, (1997): 717.

¹²⁹ Bilson, "The Future of Schubert Interpretation," 717.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ Refers to the Washington manuscript and the Diabelli edition of Die Forell, Op. 32, D 550, in Robert D. Levin, "Performance prerogatives in Schubert," *Early Music* 25, no. 4 (1997): 723+. Gale Academic OneFile accessed May 13, 2020, <https://link-gale-com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/apps/doc/A20167563/AONE?u=learn&sid=AONE&xid=372c42d0>.

¹³² Bilson, 717.

¹³³ Levin, "Performance prerogatives," 723+. See debate between David Montgomery, Robert Levin, and Walther Dürr, "Exchanging Schubert for Schillings."

¹³⁴ David Montgomery, Robert Levin, and Walther Dürr, "Exchanging Schubert for Schillings," *Early Music* 26, no. 3 (1998): 534, doi:10.2307/3128721.

¹³⁵ Robert D. Levin, "Performance prerogatives."

¹³⁶ At this point Dürr shows Vogl's ornamentation of 'Antigone und Oedip', D 542. He points out that it was dedicated to Vogl as part of Op. 6 (along with Memnon and Am Grabe Anselmos). See also Walther Dürr and Andreas Krause, eds., *Schubert Handbuch* (Kassel, 1997), 107-11.

and sense of a piece, the performance situation, the special taste of the performers demand nothing else'.¹³⁷

On the other hand, Schubert's friend Leopold Sonnleitner wrote in 1860 that Schubert did not allow 'the slightest arbitrary intervention' or 'giving way of tempo' if he did not mark any hesitation, acceleration, or free performance in his score.¹³⁸ However, Sonnleitner's statement can be understood in terms of what he intended his 1860 audience to believe about Schubert's performance practice. It also adheres to a certain *Komponistentreue*, faithfulness to the composer's performance as the most valid interpretation of the work. Instead, Turk writes in 1789 (and Starke also repeats in 1819) that a good Vortrag includes expression of the prevailing character and a proper feeling for every passion and emotion expressed in the music, as well as facility in playing; secure rhythm; knowledge of thoroughbass and the piece of performance; clarity in execution; and proper ornamentation.¹³⁹ The two tenets that emphasise personal interpretation form the basis for aesthetically informed performance.

Historically informed performers such as Christopher Prégardien with Andreas Staier find the space to give their personal interpretation. Emphasising both clarity of execution and passionate characterisation, Prégardien takes his performance of 'Erlkönig' with Michael Gees in 1992 at an unrelenting tempo. The transparent texture foregrounds the left-hand gesture of the piano, giving the pianist space to colour each register. Prégardien's tempo choice also affords him different phrase shapings, a cuttlingly clear articulation, as well as sneering, exaggeratedly closed and unrounded vowels ('*willst*' du *mit mir gehen*') during the Erlkönig sections (emphasis mine). In the second Erlkönig exhortation, 'Willst finer Knabe..', Gee's sparse pedalling and rhythmic left-hand bass evoke the dancing daughters, and ricochet against Prégardien's articulate melody. However, the tenor also places a tenuto on 'und *wie*-gen und *tan*-zen und *sin*-gen dich ein', effectively relaxing his initial tempo in the interest of expressing the Erlkönig's prevailing deviousness in this passage. Prégardien also uses an unsupported, upper-chest sound in order to give a wailing quality to the final cry of the child before his death, sliding between the perfect fifth of 'ge-tan!' to evoke despair and lack of composure. In Prégardien's personal interpretation, 'Erlkönig' can breathe as a living, passionate work of art.¹⁴⁰

Historical performance treatises open up the possibility of an aesthetically informed performance that is stamped with the performer's own personal expression. This freedom of interpretation works alongside historically informed musical taste, which falls 'within the strictures of style' and is rooted in documented localised practices.¹⁴¹ In this way, the performer can therefore end this piece with the virtuoso affect of Liszt's transcription, while maintaining the rocking and lyricism of the original Lied. To commit only to the shimmering, reflective nature of the original Lied would be then out of 'taste' for

¹³⁷ Montgomery, Levin, and Dürr, "Exchanging Schubert for Schillings," 534.

¹³⁸ Leopold Sonnleitner, in *Erinnerungen seiner Freunde*, ed. O. E. Deutsch (Leipzig, 1957), 98, in Bilson, 718.

¹³⁹ Starke, *Wiener Piano-forte Schule*, Part 2, 15, in Bilson, 719.

¹⁴⁰ Bilson, 721.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

Liszt's transcription, which aims at a new unique genre between character piece, Lied tribute, and virtuosic poem.

Embodying the transcriptions

In his essay 'Musica Practica', which appeared in the French literary journal *L'Arc* in 1970, Barthes calls the music of performance a 'muscular music', one that demands the muscles to adjust and move 'as though the body were hearing – and not 'the soul'.¹⁴² He contrasts performing music with the technical perfection of virtuoso recordings ('sound music'), which increasingly move music into the sphere of 'receiving' rather than 'doing.'¹⁴³ For Barthes, only the image of the deaf Beethoven composing his symphonies invokes the sense of music as a 'tangible intelligibility', a mysterious *praxis* that married ideas and sound.¹⁴⁴ In this section, I survey the recordings of the transcriptions to build up my own *praxis* of Liszt's arrangements that conceives his transcriptions as new, creative re-compositions. I then explore various ways of emotional communication for pianists performing the Liszt transcriptions, who lack a singer's intimate, direct address to the audience. Lastly, I explore the allowances and the obstacles that physicality poses to musical intention in performance.

Liszt freely departed from the letter of Schubert's score while maintaining a self-proclaimed 'conjugal fidelity' to the Lied composer. A certain freedom is therefore available to the performer in interpreting Liszt's creative reworkings. In previous chapters, we established that the performer of these transcriptions enters a layered environment, where they are inevitably pulled away from textual literalism because of the very nature of the transcriptions. Daniil Trifonov's layered interpretation of 'Auf dem Wasser zu singen' also harkens back to Stollberg's poem and the original Lied affect by beginning with a shimmering, archaic sound, articulately layering each voice with Liszt's new marking: *con delicatezza*. But his recording also communicates Liszt's wild and heroic vision for his transcription: with each reiteration of the verse, Trifonov also loses his restraint in tempi and dynamics until a fiery climb to the transcription's end. In contrast, Jorge Bolet and Idil Biret take a slightly more leisurely tempo, allowing the interior nature of the poem and the music's inner chromatic voices to come to the fore. This is especially apparent in the passage from Bar 73 onwards, where the tenor and alto voices sing together in diminished thirds (see Figure 16). Rather than viewing these disparate recordings as on a continuum of quantitative fidelity, the performer can act as transcriber: rooting their interpretation in the intimate thought behind the poetry, Lied, and piano transcription, and taking the liberty of personal and dramatic expressivity.

Liszt's own free 'paraphrasing' of Schubert's Lied can be understood as an extension of Schubert's own style of composition.¹⁴⁵ Schubert himself embellished themes when they recurred but left the ornamentation after repeat marks to the performer's discretion.¹⁴⁶ Similarly, Liszt's freely adds virtuosic passagework, and a written-out ornamentation of the melody in 'Auf dem Wasser'. This

¹⁴² Roland Barthes, "Musica Practica," in *Image, Music Text* (Fontana Press, 1977), 149.

¹⁴³ Barthes, "Musica Practica," 153.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 149.

¹⁴⁵ Levin, "Performance prerogatives."

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

allows the performer to push and pull the tempi in the improvisatory section from bars 86 onwards, which are marked with an absence of text and the expression *molto agitato*. Liszt clearly departs from the mood and text of both Lied and poem by his ebullient and triumphant *fortississimo* final cadence in bar 106 (see Ex. 2.6).

bis ich auf hö - he-rem, strah - len-den Flü - gel
sel - ber ent - schwin - de der wech - seln-den Zeit,

cresc. molto

Figure 16 - chromatic inner voices in Franz Liszt, 'Auf dem Wasser zu singen', mm. 73-76

In this transcription, the growth of each A flat major harmonic arrival (bars 26-29, 52-55, 77-80, 103-6) suggests a dramatic trajectory: Liszt initially uses *forte* as a mere colouring (*fp*), then a climactic 'con passione' in the third stanza, and finally attains – and stays in – A flat major in the final cadence of Bar 106. From the final improvisatory section in Bar 110, the listener is bathed in the tonic harmony as the transcription snowballs in volume for thirteen bars until the *smorzando*. Liszt has done away with the thinner Lied accompaniment, which responds to the singer by coming out of their texture and sound (see. Figure 8). The pianist is therefore free to transcribe a different dynamic arc upon the Lied transcription, one predicated upon Liszt's new harmonic rhythm and his ecstatic tremolos (see Wagner-Liszt, *Isoldens Liebestod*, 'Tristan und Isolde'). For example, the pianist Idil Biret shapes the left hand harmonic chords in a way that is reminiscent of the rocking boat in stanza one of the poem ('Mitten in Schimmer der spiegelden Wellen gleitet, wie Schwäne, der wankende Kahn' – Amid the shimmer of the mirroring waves, the rocking boat glides like a swan). Through pianistic embodiment, she transfigures Schubert's Lied into a dramatic composition that freely enacts its own memory by recalling the previous mellow rhythm of the Lied and the imagery of Stollberg's poem.

In another departure from the original Lied, soprano Jo Sumi's version rearranges 'Auf dem Wasser zu singen' for a piano trio, produced by Christopher Alder. The constant, slurred semiquaver pattern is passed between the piano and the violin in alternate bars until Bar 3, where the violin enters a half-bar canon with the piano. These two voices overlap each other, until meeting again two bars before the singer's entry. Sumi's chamber trio arrangement is a paragon of the complexity of transcription: in rearranging the work, the hypnotic accompaniment is effectively broken into a dialogue of two voices. However, it also lends an intimate and relaxed communal feel to the performance, as if the bourgeoisie had gathered in the dressing room and decided to improvise on Schubert's song.¹⁴⁷

This departure from the 'letter' of Schubert's score calls even more for the personal interpretation of affect and expression endorsed by historical treatises. Some performance approaches recall a Lied aesthetic, such as using the accompaniment to create the illusion of a melody line growing in-between notes in 'Du bist die Ruh', a feat impossible on the piano. Others can consciously depart from the Lied's presence in the transcription. For example, in the 'ben pronunziato il canto' section beginning Bar 45 of 'Du bist die Ruh', maintaining a flowing metre would convey the lack of breath needed for Lieder text, and also introduce a more cohesive phrase and melodic line (see Figure 13). This distribution of tones is a Lisztian idiom, as the registral sonorities of the piano build up a warm and layered harmony (see 'Benediction de Dieu dans la solitude' from *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, and 'Après une lecture de Dante', from *Années de pèlerinage, Deuxième année, Suisse*).

Within every performance is also the friction between physicality and the full realisation of one's own musical intentions. The vocabulary of movement can enhance expressivity and the communication of musical intent. However, in realising their musical intentions, performers also build on (or struggle against) the very physicality that enables them to play. Liszt was himself well-aware of the gap between physicality and musical intention, and his virtuosity was a means of closing this gap. Although the journals of Liszt's students centre on his behaviour and interpretation during teaching, rather than his specific approach to technique, there is unequivocal evidence of how he fully revised his technique in 1831, even before hearing violinist Nicolo Paganini in 1832.¹⁴⁸ The Swiss noblewoman Caroline Boissier took notes for her daughter Valérie's lessons for a now-famous lesson diary:

Then one day, being unable to express with his fingers all the feelings which weighed upon him, he re-examined himself point by point and found that he could not perform trills nor octaves very well, nor even certain chords. Since then he studied his scales again, and little by little completely changed his touch. Formerly, when attempting to express certain tone energetically, his hands stiffened, but now he

¹⁴⁷ Franz Schubert, 'Auf dem Wasser zu singen,' Op. 72, D 774, Jo Sumi (soprano), Clara-Jumi Kang (violin), Klaus-Dieter Barandt (cello), Christopher Park (piano), Deutsche Grammophon 00028947638810, 2010, compact disc.

¹⁴⁸ Davison, 34.

has banished all stiffness from his playing; from the wrist, he tosses his fingers upon the keys, at times with force and at times with softness, but always complete suppleness.¹⁴⁹

This complete suppleness allowed Liszt to express ‘all the feelings which weighed upon him’, his own musical intent conveyed through his touch. In the same way, performing entails a constant revision of technique in practice, in order to communicate more easily one’s musical vision (which is also fluid and changing). To take a small example, it is the slow, savouring nature of ‘Du bist die Ruh’ that challenges the pianist to create their most beautiful sound, whether it is through a muscled arm, the ‘clutch of the finger-tips’, or the subtle ‘pad of the fingers’ (which Barthes asserts is rarely heard).¹⁵⁰ As well as engaging my fingertips in order to bring across *Lento sostenuto* nature of the melody in the Lied, and the simplicity and timelessness of Rückert’s poem, I could avoid involuntary bumps in the melody by imagining a note singing to its very end, and training my ear to hear which volume would follow the previous note. Likewise, it was helpful to simplify the mechanics of my performance and practise a simple melody with harmonic shifts beneath it.

Looking at the translation from Lied to piano transcription also entails a consideration of the different bodily writings of singer and pianist. The pianist who sits with their side profile facing the audience loses a scope of theatricality available to the singer, who addresses their audience with their voice as their own instrument, and inscribes their body with ‘highly emotional messages’ that cannot be written or articulated verbally.¹⁵¹ Jessye Norman’s visual portrait of ‘Erlkönig’, conceptualised by Peter Kogler, exemplifies of this bodily writing.¹⁵² During the Lied’s piano introduction, the camera has panned to Norman’s searching face, as if she has already taken on the narrator’s psyche: ‘Wer reitet so spat durch Nacht und Wind?’ This is a gesture prevalent throughout the interspersed piano solos: Norman is already preparing for her next persona and setting up the next mood. Throughout the video, the rotating platform and the vivid, projected light installation add layers of unease unavailable to a pianist facing away from the audience. The camera zooms up on the soprano’s face at the exact moment of the word ‘Gesicht’, remaining there as her eyes roll up at the exact moment the frightened child has a vision of the Erlkönig.

As a site of trauma explored in previous chapters, the ending of ‘Erlkönig’ can merge visual associations with physical gesture, or what Le Guin terms the ‘self-consciousness attendant upon the near inevitability of being seen’.¹⁵³ Earlier in the Lied, Norman cups her hands with terror when revealing the central characters (‘Es ist der Vater mit seinem Kind’ – it is the father with his child); mimes a caress at ‘den Knaben wohl in den Arm’ (the boy in his arms); and motions with urgency (‘Willst finer Knabe, du mit mir gehn?’ – Fine lad, won’t you come with me?). She also jolts at the

¹⁴⁹ Auguste Boissier, “Liszt pedagogue: a diary of Franz Liszt as a teacher, 1831-32,” in *The Liszt Studies: Essential Selections from the Original 12-volume Set of Technical Studies for the Piano*, selected, ed. and trans. Elyse Mach (New York, 1973), xix, in Davison, 38.

¹⁵⁰ Barthes, “The Grain of the Voice,” 189.

¹⁵¹ Peter Brooks, “Body and Voice,” in Mary Ann Smart, *Siren Songs* (Princeton University Press, 2000), 120.

¹⁵² Texmex0303, “Jessye Norman – A Portrait – Erlkönig (Schubert)”, YouTube video, 03.59, posted [March 2008], <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8noeFpdfWcQ>.

¹⁵³ Le Guin, 35.

piano accompaniment's sudden *fortissimos* and slyly sidles into the camera's view during the Erbkönig section. Her movement is commensurate to the Lied's structure: Norman embodies the Erbkönig's seizure of the child by tensing backwards in pain, writing it on her body.¹⁵⁴ The empty, detached nature of the recitative line ('war tot') is the only moment Norman breaks her intense eye contact. Similarly, the pianist can 'act' in the Lied's denouement. In the unison 'war tot' and the almost ruthless perfect cadence at the end, a closed, hunched-over stance conveys the inevitability of death; a sudden opening-out in the final perfect cadence stamps Liszt's transcription with terror and finality.

Barthes uses the term, the 'grains' of music (the body in the voice as it sings, or the limb 'as it performs'), in order to understand the uneasy relationship between the music and the materiality of the body 'speaking its mother tongue'.¹⁵⁵ However, it is in performance that imagination and the materiality of the body speak directly to each other. I found it helpful to conceive of the *leggiero amorosamente* left-hand triplets in the Erbkönig's second exhortation by using my body. By imagining the passage being led by the outer fingers of both hands, I was able to lighten the texture that may have clouded the shimmer and lively melody, redirecting my physical movement to communicate the dancing, diabolical glee of the Erbkönig's speech. Similarly, Liszt disbands the repetitive triplets of Schubert's accompaniment through hysterical violent climbing octaves of 'Erbkönig' in Bars 76, 96-97, and the section from Bar 123 before the *il più presto possibile*. I found it helpful to use a practice technique that inversely used the 'grains' of my limbs in order to dictate my sound: by rotating with an 'infinity' motion from the fifth finger of the right hand to the thumb, I would use natural arm weight in order to secure my accuracy, strengthen my finger attack, and produce the 'fat', piercing sound I needed.¹⁵⁶

Removing the 'grain' of the voice can also prove a barrier to emotional communication: much like Bilson's bemoaning of the *piano* and legato performance of Mozart's *Jeunehomme* concerto, Kiri Te Kanawa's recording of 'Gretchen am Spinnrade' maintains her beautiful, warm tone throughout the Lied, as if a placid expression of Gretchen's stream of consciousness.¹⁵⁷ However, the quiet desperation of Elly Ameling's more classical shaping brings out the pleading and almost rhetorical appoggiatura quality of the melody. In this way, part of a performer's interpretation concerns which parts of physicality to express and to hide. For example, the pianist is constantly fighting against the percussive nature of the piano, which decays immediately. In contrast, the weight of the arm, the tactile touch of the fingertips – these both serve to create a sonorous and beautiful tone.

However, delaying certain notes in a musical phrase as a pianist is to add 'breath', as it were, to one's physicality. I found it helpful in my practice to listen to Fischer-Dieskau's crescendo phrasing of the line: 'Freude des Himmels und Ruhe des Haines / atmet die Seel im er rötenden Schein' (The soul breathes the joy of heaven and the peace of the grove in the red glow) in 'Du bist die Ruh', despite

¹⁵⁴ Peter Brooks, "Body and Voice," 125.

¹⁵⁵ Barthes, "The Grain of the Voice," 182.

¹⁵⁶ This 'infinity' motion is expanded on in Rae de Lisle, *Fit 4 Piano* (self-pub., Apple Books, 2019), 76, ISBN: 9780473493790.

¹⁵⁷ Bilson, 717.

the absence of dynamics in the original or in Liszt's transcription. He also delays the production of the consonant for each word, in order to build anticipation. Although 'Auf dem Wasser' freely departs from Schubert's score, retaining the spaciousness of a singer's delivery not only enacts what Adorno's termed a ritualised 'gesture of memory' (*eine Geste der Erinnerung*) of the Lied, but it also emotionally communicates the expansiveness of the song's embrace.¹⁵⁸

The freedom of personal interpretation advanced in historical treatises liberates the performer of the *Zwölf Lieder* to form their own Vortrag of Liszt's re-compositions – a creative, multi-layered approach that comes into a dialogue of poet, composer, arranger, historical, and modern interpreters. Like Liszt, who consciously departs from the original works in his transcriptions in order to communicate his own musical reading and to further his goal of stretching to the piano to its absolute limit of orchestral sound and virtuosic feat, the performer can also feel at liberty in reconceiving Liszt's transcriptions as piano compositions - his unique 'Partitions de piano'. Although inevitably distanced from Liszt and his own physique and interpretation, this performance approach is grounded in the memory of the previous layers of Lied and poem. Returning to Barthes, the mysterious, unknown praxis that Barthes champions can be transferred to myself as a performer: I transcribe my interpretation onto a transcription; I write my body onto a lettered score.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ Christensen, 283.

¹⁵⁹ Barthes, "The Grain of the Voice," 185.

CONCLUSION

Franz Liszt's *Zwölf Lieder von Franz Schubert*, S. 558 evidences the creative potential of the piano transcription. Their complex genesis and their ambivalent generic identity and function gave way to a myriad of performance interpretations. I used textual and musical analysis to explore how 'Auf dem Wasser zu singen', 'Gretchen am Spinnrade', 'Erlkönig', and 'Du bist die Ruh' were translated from medium to medium: from the original poetry, to song setting, and the final transformation of the Lied into piano transcription. Small's term of 'musicking', provided a lens for understanding how the twentieth-century pianist adds his or her own voice into a layered dialogue. The modern pianist effectively mediates between composer and transcriber, inserting their own interpretation into the spectrum of both historical and modern performance interpretations.

This personal expression is not only an inevitable part of any performance, but in fact desirable: various historical treatises promote a personal Vortrag of a work, dedicated to the affect of the music. Individualised musical expression is also in keeping with Liszt's own compositional goals: Liszt's *Zwölf Lieder* transcriptions capitalised on the individual-centred phenomenon of virtuosity. As stand-alone 'fragments' with their own dramatic trajectories, they were slotted in Liszt's recital programmes and performed to great acclaim.¹⁶⁰ Tailored to the piano, they disseminated a previously-intimate genre into the wider public consciousness. The transcriptions also cast the Lieder out onto the stage – the new realm of the virtuoso pianist. In response to the piano's technical improvements towards the sensitivity of touch, the breadth of range, and the power of sound, Liszt stretched the piano to its limits, imagining an orchestral sound beyond its seven octaves.

Liszt's composition style was characterised by openness and transformation in his symphonic, operatic, and Lieder transcriptions, as well as his revisions of earlier compositions.¹⁶¹ Through Liszt's expansion of Lieder such as 'Auf dem Wasser' and 'Gretchen am Spinnrade' to virtuosic heights, and his entire passages of text-less verses in 'Du bist die Ruh', Liszt expressed his singular vision of Schubert's song and his elastic concept of reproduction. His *Zwölf Lieder* transcriptions were compositions in their own right, lying closer to free paraphrase than strict transcription. It is their very liminality that makes the transcriptions so fascinating: Liszt's faithfulness to the letter and spirit of Schubert's score and his creative revisioning stand side by side, just as the twin concepts of the virtuoso performer and the individual, autonomous work form polarising practices of the nineteenth century.

By contrast, Schubert's numerous Lieder settings operated on a dual axis: Schubert represented but also transfigured the German verse, bringing together disparate forms of textual semantics and

¹⁶⁰ Schlegel, *Athenaeum: Eine Zeitschrift von August Wilhelm Schlegel und Friedrich Schlegel*, 206.

¹⁶¹ Letter to Count Géza Zichy of 3 August 1880, in Kregor, "Franz Liszt and the Vocabularies of Transcription," 1.

musical structure. When setting songs to Goethe's 'Erlkönig' or 'Gretchen', Schubert brought a background element of the text and made it the heart of his Lied, either through a musical, obsessive *ostinato*, or towards dramatic and structural ends. He also translated subtleties of syntax and punctuation to his reading of Rückert's 'Du bist die Ruh', and Stollberg's 'Auf dem Wasser zu singen', transforming the system of verbal language and structure to tonal structure and melodic imitation.

Despite the stubborn devotion of twenty-first-century keyboard pedagogy and practice to the concept that music-making should be separate from the performer's physicality, my final chapter explores how the modern pianist can inscribe their own body onto a lettered score. At the centre of Liszt's Schubertian transcriptions was his own musical presence and relationship to the original medium: the transcriptions originate from a composer of unusual stature and compelling flair as a performer. In this sense, my ethnographic reflections in my recording survey, practice, and performance are inevitably distanced from the composer's own musical intentions. However, analysing my own performance offers creative solutions to personal expression. I found greater freedom in tempi and rubato for characterisation, considered note omissions for aural sonority, analysed the intersections of pianist and singer in my physical communication on the stage, and further dramatised my readings of the Lieder as stand-alone works.

Lastly, this project focuses on how music has framed, transformed, and taken apart the original poetic text. This is not limited to the intersection of text and music, in fact, the cross-relationships between drama, painting, and fiction (and ballet-opera reciprocities) in early-nineteenth century art also convey how music can be embodied, and the myriad of ways music itself can be framed. The ballet-pantomime of the late 1820s coded art and the highly-popular *tableau vivant* of the eighteenth century into its own discourse, just as Liszt's transcriptions were historically indebted to the rhythm, gesture, and sound of poetry. The mime integrated cross-art references: the movements of the *danseuse* were interpreted as 'the attitudes and contours of Correggio, Albano and Guido...' and acted as transitions between framed moments, as if a 'dissolving views' in a panoramic exhibition.¹⁶² Inter-disciplinary research leads to further avenues of music and materiality in historical study. It suggests that neither visual art nor music is pre-eminent, just as Liszt's transcriptions held the original work and the subsequent creative arrangement in equal regard.

Following a process of music-making (from inspiration, to notation, to performance) is a dynamic mode of enquiry that interrogates the creative process, the historical attitudes, and the acuity of each artist in each stage of the transcriptions' metamorphosis. By translating Schubert's Lieder to the medium of the piano, Liszt advocated the individual affect and effect of every musical work.¹⁶³ The performer is therefore at liberty to explore the echoes, memories, and correspondences with the

¹⁶² *Lady's Magazine*, 31 March 1829, in James Q. Davies, "Dancing the Symphonic: Beethoven-Bochsa's *Symphonie Pastorale*, 1829," in *19th Century Music* 27, no. 1 (University of California Press, 2003): 36. Historically, acting treatises and dance manuals modeled themselves on influential studies of painting. Charles le Brun's *illustrated Méthode pour apprendre à Dessiner les Passions* (1734); Jean-Philippe Rameau's acte de ballet *Pigmalion* (1748) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau's monodrama of the same name (1770) carried forward the general obsession with the love-interest as an artwork (or sculpture).

¹⁶³ Preface to the Beethoven Symphonies, 1st edition, Rome, 1839.

previous stages of the transcriptions. In forming their own personal Vortrag, performers inscribe their own physicality onto the score.

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