Individual Pianistic and Artistic Expression in Three Piano Compositions (1822-1962)

by

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Abstract

The full thesis for this degree consists of an audio recording, a public recital, and notes to accompany the recorded and live performance. The recording includes the following works: Johann Sebastian Bach, Largo from the Trio Sonata No. 5 in C Major, BWV 529, arranged for piano by Samuel Feinberg; Ludwig van Beethoven, Piano Sonata No. 32 in C Minor, Op. 111; and Robert Schumann, *Carnaval*, Op. 9. The notes explore the literature on these works and describe the distinctive pianistic and expressive elements of each from the perspective of the performer.

Bach-Feinberg: *Largo* from Trio Sonata No. 5 in C major, BWV 529

J. S. Bach composed *Six Sonatas for Two Manuals and Pedal* (BWV 525-530) during the period 1727-1731. Bach wrote these pieces for his eldest son Wilhelm Friedemann as a tool for developing his organ technique.[1] Although today these trio sonatas are mostly performed on organ, they were originally written for a pedal harpsichord or pedal clavichord. Each sonata consists of three movements, which use the traditional three voices of the baroque trio sonata.[2] These sonatas require the right and left hands to play melodic lines independently on separate keyboards, while the feet play the bass line of the basso continuo. The Italian and German three-part polyphonic style of writing is present in each trio sonata.

The second movement from the organ trio sonata (BWV 529), *Largo*, has homophonic elements with ornamented upper voices and basso continuo that follows a steady line. Samuel Feinberg's (1890-1962) decision to transcribe this movement reflects his interest in organ works from the Baroque period, and his compositions reflect the challenge of translating these types of influences to the piano idiom. Feinberg's piano transcriptions of the Bach trio sonatas are rarely performed. They combine organ elements such as frequent changes of tone and registers with a richly textured style of piano writing.

Feinberg was a virtuoso pianist, insightful teacher, composer, and musical theorist. In his early career, his style was most markedly influenced by the 19th-century piano traditions of Chopin, Liszt, Busoni, and Godowsky. His compositional language was established at an early stage, although he later followed the footsteps of Scriabin and Prokofiev to explore the

[1] Paul Henry Lang, "Bach: Six Trio Sonatas; Concerto in G Major after Johann Ernst; Concerto in A Major after Vivaldi by E. Power Biggs and Bach" *The Musical Quarterly* 54, no.2 (1968): 264-265.

[2] Harvey Grace, "The Organ Works of Bach: V. The Sonatas for Two Manuals and Pedals" *The Musical Times* 62, no. 936 (1921): 88-93.

different sound-worlds of extended tonality and mid-twentieth-century neoclassical experimentalism. Feinberg's sophisticated compositional style is rich with contrapuntal writing, chromaticism, and vivid dynamics. His music was neglected and rarely performed in the USSR, as the communist regime suppressed the work of Jewish artists.[3] With the ascendance of Stalinism in the 1930s, Feinberg was prevented from performing his earliest compositions, which did not conform to the criteria of Socialist Realism and the demand for simplicity and traditionalism. After Stalinism (1928-1953), the composer gradually modified his early style and took an avid interest in transcription.

As the piano solo recital gained popularity from the mid-19th-century onward, many virtuoso performers and composers such as Liszt, Busoni, Godowsky, and Rachmaninoff included concert transcriptions in their repertoire. Feinberg was fascinated with the challenges of reinventing contrapuntal works from the baroque period in a transcription style of writing for piano. During Feinberg's lifetime (1890-1962), there was limited access to recordings, and transcriptions were used to convert the repertoire from organ to piano in order to be heard and performed for mass dissemination. Since Feinberg never had the opportunity to study the organ in Russia (Russian Orthodox churches are in general not equipped with organs), he initially transcribed works by Bach for his own personal use.

In light of his transcription technique and the distinct characteristics of the piano as compared to the organ, Feinberg chose to modify Bach's original with additional materials. He slightly altered the original score by adding indications of dynamics, articulation, and phrasing. The glory of Bach's original music is retained in Feinberg's piano transcriptions.

[3] Mark Fuksman, "The Toll of Time: Samuil Feinberg's Sonata no. 6" (PhD diss., Arizona State University, 2010), 95.

However, even as the latter still retains the character of the sound of the original, it exploits the expressive possibilities of the modern piano sound (see Examples 1 and 2):

Example 1: Opening section of Bach's Largo from Trio Sonata No.5

Example 2: Opening section of Feinberg's transcription

As the Russian musicologist Leonid Roizman noted, Feinberg's transcription of the *Largo* from Trio Sonata No 5 offers an example of his technique of rewriting with fleshed-out harmonic thickness, and thus creating a score that is closer to a fantasy on Bach's trio sonata.[4] It is interesting to compare this piece with the Busoni transcription of J. S. Bach's Chaconne for Solo Violin. In Busoni's transcription, Bach's solo piece for violin is modified into a virtuoso piano work with contrasting and dramatic organ-like sound. In Feinberg, we have a similar treatment: Bach's piece, originally written for organ in quiet and intimate character, is

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[4] Christopher J. Barnes, *The Russian Piano School: Russian Pianists and Mosco Conservatoire Professors on the Art of the Piano* (London: Kahn & Averill, 2007), 17-18.

transformed into a piano work that is motivated to sound more organ-like with its redistribution of voices, registers, and especially the pedal bass. The conventional three-line organ setting is transformed idiomatically into a modern piano sound which explores textural density and contrast.

Feinberg emphasizes the importance of the natural flow of sound in playing Bach: "With the perfect sonority of the piano," he writes, "old-style music is revealed with a precision, strength, and freedom beyond the powers of any artificial stylized presentation."[5] My interest in performing this piece stems from an interest in Feinberg's spacious and simultaneous use of distant registers. In this transcription, I intend to convey the ways in which "old-style" music is enriched by the challenge of balancing the broader timbral and coloristic elements that Feinberg's transcription exploits. My interpretation is principally influenced by Feinberg's idea of "ancient music that comes to life with a power that would astonish the original composer if only he could hear his work performed on a modern instrument."[6]

[5] Barnes, *The Russian Piano School,* 40-42.

Beethoven's Last Piano Sonata No. 32 in C minor, *Op. 111*

During the period 1820-1822, the fortepiano became an ultimate tool for self-expression and experimentation that influenced Beethoven to transform the existing sonata traditions into new and complex structures. Beethoven's late sonatas became more ambiguous, using innovative sonorities that spanned the entire breadth of the keyboard available at this time. Beethoven created a new sense of self-determination that allowed him to set new dimensions of music and form. Many nineteenth-century composers, including Brahms, Berlioz, Wagner, and Mahler, were influenced by Beethoven's individual expression and personality in music. Thus, the culmination of the so-called classical style gave an impetus for the development of romantic music in its early stages. Indeed, sonata *Op. 111* shatters the listener's expectations of a traditional classical form.

Beethoven's musical language became more personal and meditative in his late compositions. This can be observed through the composer's extended use of ornaments, sustaining pedal, and sudden accents in unexpected places in the music. Accordingly, Alfred Brendel points out that during Beethoven's late period, the "rhythmic intensity, textural complexity and extremes of dynamic expression confronted the performer."[7] Thus, the technical demands in Beethoven's later works present enormous technical challenges for successful interpretation and performance.

[7] Alfred Brendel, *Musical Thoughts and Afterthoughts* (Princeton, NJ: University Press: 1976), 70-74.

According to Philip Barford, Beethoven's personal circumstances and state of mind led him to turn his attention to his inner world. We find the composer's private statement in his late piano sonata, in which introspection took on a fundamental importance.[8] As Maynard Solomon has pointed out, "Beethoven's deafness may have been a form of magical asceticism, a rite of passage, a prelude to an ecstatic and 'holy' state from which emerged the masterpiece of his maturity."[9] Accordingly, Beethoven, as creator, chose to conclude this masterpiece by freeing himself from any formal boundaries that could inhibit his voice, his search for self-expression and his path to musical transcendence.

This work as a whole could be interpreted as starting with a first movement reflecting the suffering, turmoil and striving for life, and leading to a deep personal closure in the second movement: peace after life's tribulations. The entire sonata emphasizes the relation between the C minor beginning of the first movement and the ending of the *Arietta*, in the key of C major. The music moves from tension in the first movement to resolution in the final statement of the *Arietta,* in which the upper register of the keyboard is reached. According to Charles Rosen, the music "pushes to the limits of the keyboard and implies notes beyond the available ones."[10]

Beethoven dedicated his last piano sonata, *Op. 111*, to his pupil Archduke Rudolph. Most of the work was completed in the spring of 1822, and published in 1823. Sonata *Op. 111* was composed along with sonata *Op. 110*, and the *Missa Solemnis*. The last sonata consists of two highly contrasting movements with innovative structure. Beethoven previously had

[8] Philip Barford, *Beethoven as Man and Artist: The Beethoven Reader* (New York, W.W. Norton: 1974), 23-24.

[9] Maynard Solomon, *Beethoven Essays* (Cambridge, MA: (Harvard University Press: 1988), 95.

[10] Charles Rosen, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas: A Short Companion* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press: 2002), 117.

composed other two-movement works, such as sonatas *Op. 54*, *Op. 78* and *Op. 90.* These sonatas, however, were shorter and less ambitious in scope than sonata *Op. 111*. There were many precedents for these two-movement sonatas, including some composed by Beethoven's former teacher Haydn, who wrote nine two-movement sonatas for keyboard.

The first movement of Beethoven's *Op. 111* presents a concise sonata-allegro. The composer opens the work with a slow dramatic introduction, as in his C minor sonata *Op.13*. Beethoven's struggle is depicted with diminished chords in intensive and shocking double-dotted rhythms, which create sudden dynamic shifts in the opening of the movement. From the very first measures of the sonata, the listener encounters the extremes of dynamic expression in the different registers of the piano. We experience the unstable tonality of the introduction until the appearance of the allegro section from m.19, along with the three-note (do, mi, si) motive that carries a predominant role in the entire sonata as a basic melodic structure (see Example 3):

Example 3: (Do, mi, si) motive

In the allegro section that follows the introduction, Beethoven predominantly uses fugal elements through the following allegro section. The entire introduction can be viewed as a dominant suspension in preparation for the allegro section in the key of C minor. The *maestoso* section can also be perceived as an overture to the forceful allegro, leading to the contrasting lyrical second subject in the key of A flat major that lasts for a mere eight

measures. Despite its shortness, the peaceful second subject presents a climatic point in the exposition that closes with sixteenth notes in diminished sevenths from m. 58.

The three-note (do, mi, si) initial subject motive creates great tension in its various articulations during the development section. The fugal technique is one of the significant compositional methods Beethoven used in his late period to increase the dramatic effect of this movement. As Philip Barford states, this first movement allows us to "feel the music and the drama in the course of listening. Through each note, each dynamic, each phrase, and even each mark, we can envision the composer's message crafted through musical material."[11] The brief development section (m. 72) leads directly toward the recapitulation, which is emphasized by double octaves. The ending of the first movement from m. 150 can be viewed as a bridge to the next movement in C major, titled *Arietta*:

The variation technique, which became an important compositional feature in Beethoven's late period, is used in a most ethereal fashion in the second movement. Charles Rosen describes the *Arietta* as a "static form of theme and variations that are suspended over

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[11] Philip T. Barford, *Beethoven's Last Sonata* (Oxford: Oxford University Press:1954), 326.

the time."[12] Each variation leads the listener into the composer's inner world in various ways. Some of the variations build emotional intensity through their pulse-like syncopations and ornaments in different registers of the keyboard. These are typical elements of Beethoven's exploration of the instrument for expressive dynamics in his late period. Accordingly, Kenneth Drake states that during Beethoven's late period the "piano had a lack of sonority in the *forte* and *fortissimo* levels, so Beethoven frequently exploited the instrument's weakness by grasping its limitation."[13] The wide range of expressive dynamic elements made sonata Op. 111 a culmination of Beethoven's search that went beyond what musicians and audiences were expecting during his lifetime.

The spacious form of the second movement expands from an unassuming sixteen-measure theme. The *Arietta* offers a contrast due to its massive structure, along with four progressive variations that are composed with complex rhythms, a return to the theme and an extended coda. The theme of the *Arietta* sounds like a peaceful monologue and is comprised of a simple three-note (do, sol, sol) motive that floats throughout the piece in various changes (see Example 4):

Example 4: (Do, sol, sol) motive

[12] Rosen, *Beethoven's Piano Sonatas,* 446-447.

[13] Kenneth Drake, *The Sonatas of Beethoven as He Played and Taught Them* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972), 37-40.

The *Arietta* consists of four-bar phrases, each of them beginning with an upbeat. The transformation of the *Arietta* is evident in each variation, in which Beethoven employs the extreme registers of the instrument along with a textural and rhythmical buildup and contrapuntal intricacies.

In the first variation we can hear the elaboration of the original theme with increased chromatic suspensions in the left hand's rhythmical patterns. The difficulty in the first variation is to prevent the syncopated pattern from overpowering the melodic line. The second variation divides the theme between the lower and the upper voices, moving forward with constant use of syncopations in duple sixteenth notes. The steady pacing in this variation contributes to a feeling of continuity. In the third variation the meter changes to 12/32; the original motive is divided into descending arpeggios that create a feeling of syncopation with *sforzandos* on weak beats and sudden dynamic changes. This variation could easily remind the listener of the first movement with its dramatic shifts. I view the third variation as a dramatic probing gesture in its dynamic and rhythmic complexity. The energetic and rhythmic subdivision of the theme in the third variation offers great excitement to the performer. The fourth variation in 9/16 offers an extreme contrast because of its tremolo-like pattern in the left hand in the key of C major. The melodic line is suspended over a long time frame and expressed through every register without any dynamic direction that created a different eternal atmosphere.

Beethoven creates a great deal of tension with the use of long ornamental passages that begin from m. 106. The extended ornaments in the *crescendo* line from mm. 106-117 lead to the most transcendent space in the movement, in which the listener feels that the music collapses between the wide ranges of the keyboard:

These twelve measures (mm. 106-117) also serve as a modulatory section that creates instability, which is released in the retransition of the initial theme in m. 130. With graceful thirty-second note figurations from the previous variations, the melody of the theme returns in a magnificent and spiritual statement that grows organically toward the end. The density of rhythmic elements increases the tension toward the end of the work.

The final statement of the *Arietta* is introduced with a long trill in the upper register of the keyboard that dissolves into descending scales in the last few measures of the movement, in which everything is compressed again to the simple C major chord. Throughout the entire movement, the listener feels absorbed by the composer's infinite internal world (see Example 5):

Example 5: The last four measures of the Arietta

Thus, I see the greatness of Beethoven's late style related to the interaction between the various movements of the sonata in creating a feeling of unity and organic wholeness. My performance of Beethoven's sonata Op. 111 seeks to convey its emotional spirit. After listening to Op. 111, one can ultimately feel that music's "spirit dwells just beyond the limits of the technical ability of the player and the capacity of the instrument."[14]

[14] Kenneth Drake, *The Beethoven Sonatas and the Creative Experience* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press: 1994), 299.

Schumann - Carnaval, *Op. 9*

Robert Schumann fully delivers the originality of his compositional personality in *Carnaval,* Op. 9 (1834-35). The work was published by Breitkopf and Härtel in 1837, and was popularized by Franz Liszt, who performed selections from *Carnaval* in Leipzig (1840).[15] Schumann associates each movement in *Carnaval* with a specific literary or autobiographical theme or title that stimulates the performer's imagination. It can be said that the last chapter of Jean Paul's novel *Die Flegeljahre* ("The Awkward Age," (1804-5)) influenced Schumann's *Carnaval* in many ways.[16] Schumann was inspired by these literary works and created a musical masked ball with different characters and personages. The composer's invented subject of the masked ball appeared not only in *Papillons,* Op. 2 and *Carnaval,* Op. 9, but also in other later works such as *Carnival in Vienna,* Op. 26, and (as Marcel Brion notes), *Ballszenen,* Op. 109, and *Kinderball,* Op. 130.[17]

Schumann's *Carnaval*, subtitled *Scènes mignonnes sur quatre notes* (Miniature Scenes on Four Notes) consists of a set of short individual pieces that depict Schumann himself, his colleagues, and different characters from the improvised *Commedia dell'arte* (Italian comedy). This subtitle reminds the performer about Schumann's practice of including ciphers and acronyms carrying musical association in certain of his large-scale forms. According to Eric Sams, "Schumann's music contains or derives from words, whether as texts, titles, programmes or epigraphs. Mottoes turned into themes."[18] The composer manipulates four letters in different permutations as a compositional device throughout the entire cycle. The various combinations of those four notes create a special expression of unity within each

[15] Alan Walker, *Franz Liszt: TheVirtuoso Years 1811-184* (London: Faber and Faber, 1983), 351.

[16] Carl Dahlhaus, *Ninetenth-Century Music* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), 145.

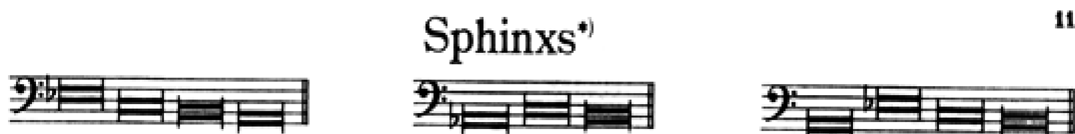
[17] Marcel Brion, *Schumann and The Romantic Age* (London, Collins: 1956), 133.

[18] Eric Sams, "Did Schumann use Ciphers?" *The Musical Times* (1965): 584-591, accessed August 11, 2014.

piece of *Carnaval*. Thus, the smaller pieces in the work collaborate between each other in a larger narrative plan.

According to the above, the enigmatic *Sphinxes*, placed in the middle of the cycle between *Réplique* and *Papillons* presents interpretative challenges. According to Peter Kaminsky, a "sphinx" is defined as "an inscrutable person who keeps his thoughts and intentions secret."[19] Kaminsky observes *Sphinxes's* strong influence in the "long-range tonal and formal structure" within *Carnaval*.[20] The notes in *Sphinxes* were not intended by Schumann to be played. Therefore, the composer's reason to include *Sphinxes* in the musical score can be understood as a reminder that the foundation of *Carnaval* is based on these few notes. Indeed, the use of those few notes can be understood as carrying a hidden function of conveying the expression and unity of the entire cycle. Schumann "casts himself as an unseen presence, a master puppeteer regulating the motion of his creations from behind the scenes."[21]

The *Sphinxes* consists of three sections of one bar each, including four, three and four notes is a square figure, without tonality, tempo or dynamic indications:



These notes are in the configurations S-C-H-A, As-C-H and A-S-C-H. Though none of the notes was intended to be played, pianists such as Sergei Rachmaninoff, Vladimir Horowitz, Alfred Cortot, Abbey Simon, and Walter Gieseking included *Sphinxes* in their recordings.

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[19] Peter Kaminsky, "Principles of Formal Structure in Schumann's Early Piano Cycles" *Music Theory Spectrum* 11, no.2 (1989): 7.

[20] Kaminsky, *Principles of Formal Structure*, 6.

[21] John Daverio, *"Robert Schumann: Herald of a 'New Poetic Age'* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 140-141.

Some pianists acknowledge this section with a moment of silence. Others, like Abbey Simon have played the *Sphinxes* with tremolos. Indeed, the *Sphinxes* are “everywhere and nowhere; they are the sources,” as John Daverio notes, “of the subcutaneous, ‘witty’ connection that raises *Carnaval* above the level of tune-of-the mill salon pieces.”[22]

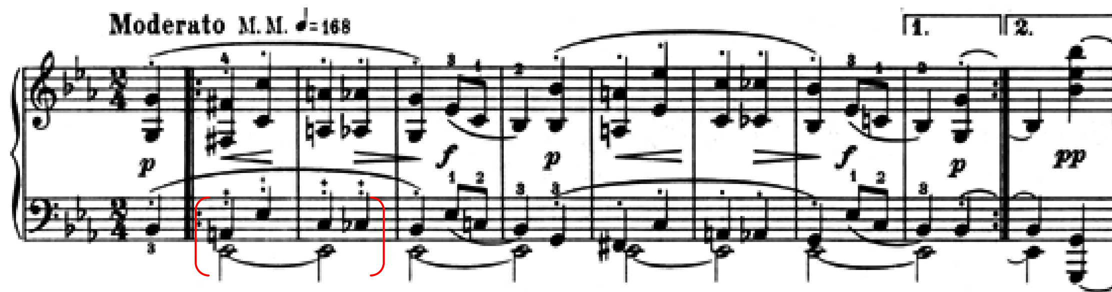
The first piece in the cycle *Préambule* opens the masked ball with dense chords in dotted rhythm in the key of A flat major. This opening movement can be viewed as an operatic overture. The ending of this opening movement will also be used to close the entire piece. In the following example, part of the previously introduced A-S-C-H cipher is intricately hidden in the bass line (see Example 6):

Example 6: (A-flat, C, C-flat) in mm.5-7

Pierrot (the following movement which is in binary form) was a stock character in *Commedia dell'arte*, which was developed in Italy in the first half of the 16th century. *Commedia dell'arte* consisted of a troupe of travelling entertainers who always wore masks to present themselves with different characteristics. In *Pierrot*, Schumann illustrates the unhappy clown in love with his beloved, Colombine. The performer observes two contrasting articulations (*staccato* and *legato*) in the main motive. Schumann’s A-S-C-H cipher is presented in the alto voice of the first three measures (see Example 7):

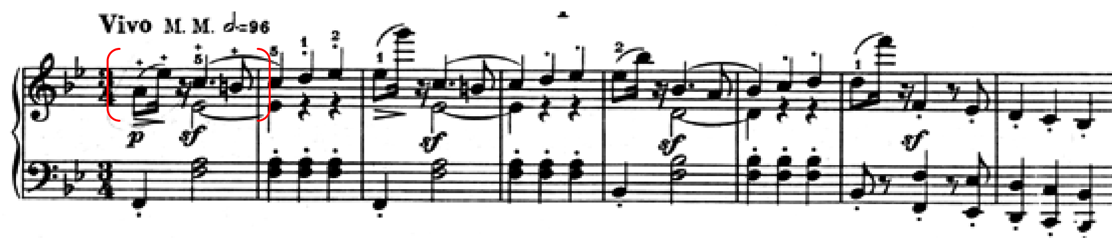
Example 7: Use of A-S-C-H

[22] Daverio, *Robert Schumann*, 142-143.



Arlequin is another character from *Commedia dell'arte* with a cunning personality who always causes trouble. In Schumann's music, *Arlequin* is associated with a lively waltz spirit, big intervallic leaps, and dotted rhythm, in contrast to *Pierrot's* moodiness. We observe the containing A-S-C-H cipher in the melody (see Example 8):

Example 8: Use of A-S-C-H



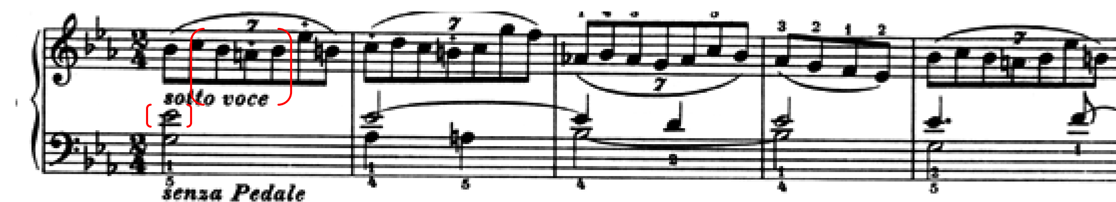
The next movement, *Valse noble*, is dance-like, with a flowing tempo and emotional intensity. The composer's special indication in m.13, *molto teneramente* suggests a moment of sudden shift with a more intimate sound. The modified A-S-C-H motive opens the melody of the waltz in the first two measures (see Example 9):

Example 9: Modified A-S-C-H (A, E-flat, B-natural, and C)

Schumann's personal life is clearly reflected in the two contrasting characters, *Eusebius* (an introvert) and *Florestan* (an extrovert), who appear next. According to Eric Sams, the device of those contrasting characters can be found in fiction. "In all his works Jean-Paul projects his own personality, and each time it is in two contrasting characters."[23]

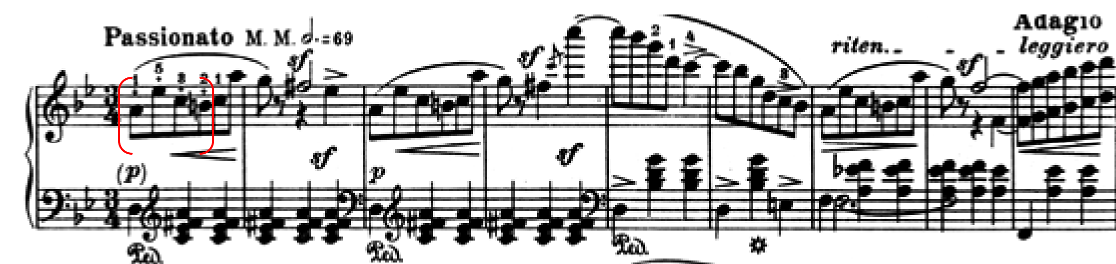
Eusebius depicts Schumann's introspective and dreamy personality with slow tempo in smooth flow and expressive melody. The S-C-H-A permutation of the cipher is hidden between the left and right hand in the first measure (see Example 10):

Example 10: S-C-H-A (E-flat, C, B-flat, A-natural)



In contrast to *Eusebius*, *Florestan* offers a sudden rhythmic motive in waltz pattern, moving from the low to the high range of the keyboard along with accents on the second beat. These irregular accents reflect the passionate and eccentric side of the composer's personality. In this movement, Schumann also quotes from his earlier work, *Papillons*, Op. 2. In this movement the A-S-C-H motive is embedded in the ornamental melodic line (see Example 11):

Example 11: Use of A-S-C-H



[23] Eric Sams, "Why Florestan and Eusebius?" *The Musical Times* (1967):131-134, accessed August 12, 2014.

Coquette represents a girl with a light and flirtatious character. In Schumann's music the playful girl is presented with wide skips, sixteenth rests, with *forte* interruptions in every few measures. *Coquette* is answered by *Réplique*, which quotes the material from *Coquette* with a short variation and development section. In the following example, A-S-C-H appears in the melodic line (see Example 12):

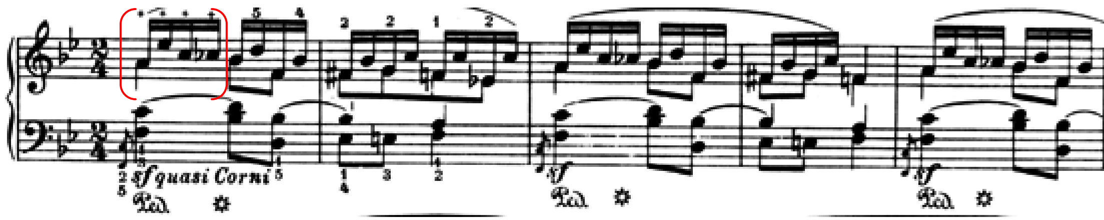
Example 12: Use of A-S-C-H in m.4

After *Réplique,* the silent *Sphinxes* appear in the score. Their notation (Schumann uses the old mensural notation of the Medieval period) evokes a historical distance that is suggestive of silence.

The following movement, *Papillons* (butterflies), opens with a pattern of sixteenth notes in fast tempo. The open fifth in the left hand marked *quasi Corni* can be imagined as a moment of capturing the butterflies that are described in Jean Paul's *Die Flegeljahre.* The piece contains two sections with a simple rhythmic and harmonic structure. John Daverio describes *Papillons* as a hidden "mask," and "theme of metamorphosis" that finds a beautiful expression in Schumann's *Carnaval*.[24] The A-S-C-H pattern is in the first group of sixteenth notes (see Example 14):

Example 14: Use of A-S-C-H

[24] Daverio, *Robert Schumann, 83-84.*



A.S.C.H. – S.C.H.A: Lettres Dansantes (The Letters Dances) is presented with grace notes in a form of light waltz in the initial few measures. A-S-C-H represents Schumann's fiancée's hometown at that time. S-C-H-A are the only letters which can be found in Schumann's name (SCHumAnn) that are used in the piece to transmit a musical meaning. According to Erica Reiman, The A-S-C-H and S-C-H-A ciphers are barely recognizable, but rather are "rearranged freely to suit the piece at hand" (see Example 15):[25]

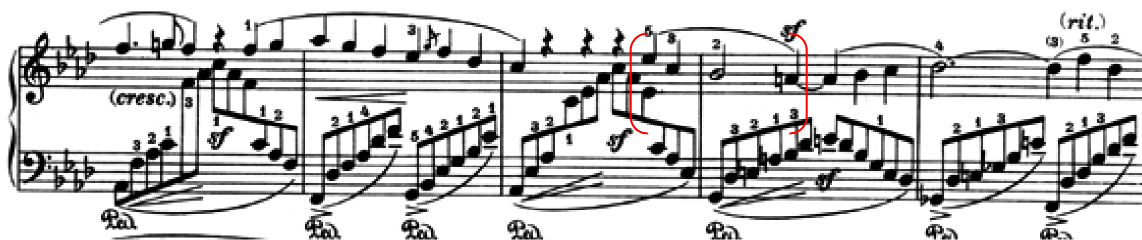
Chiarina is another name of Clara Wieck, the daughter of Schumann's piano teacher whom he later married. Marked with passion, this movement is in binary form with accents on both the first and the third beats of each measure, which possess rhythmical instability and dramatic contrast. The As-C-H cipher is clearly presented in the opening of this movement (see Example 16):

Example 16: As-C-H (A-flat, C, B-natural)

[25] Erica Reiman, "Schumann's Piano Cycles and the Novels of Jean Paul: Analogues in Discursive Strategy" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1999), 164-165.

Chopin can be seen as an homage to Schumann's admired colleague, the Polish composer Frédéric Chopin. Schumann described Chopin as "a man who early in his career developed an individualistic, persuasively expressive style."[26] The movement communicates inspiration with a sentimental expression, reminiscent of the smooth left-hand patterns and lyrical melodies of Chopin's nocturnes. Chopin's *rubato* style of playing, as well as his *bel canto* ornamentations, are depicted in m.10, where Schumann writes grace notes in the upper register. In the following example, A-S-C-H is hidden between the accompaniment and melodic line (see Example 17):

Example 17: A-S-C-H (A-flat, E-flat, C, B-flat) in mm.3-4



Estrella represents Ernestine von Fricken to whom Schumann was attracted during the time he composed *Carnaval*. Schumann's fiancée is represented with a passionate waltz developed in symmetrical four-measure phrases adorned with chromatic patterns and accents in both melody and accompaniment. In the following example (18), we observe the As-C-H cipher in octaves:

Example 18: As-C-H (A-flat, C, B-natural)

[26] Leon Plantinga, *Schumann as Critic* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1976), 234-235.

Reconnaissance can be imagined as a recognition scene in the masked ball between Ernestine and Schumann. This section is technically demanding for the performer: the composer employs staccato marking in the left hand with continuous sixteenth notes in the right hand's thumb and lyrical melody in the upper voice. The As-C-H motive is clearly presented in the beginning of the following example (19):

Example 19: As-C-H (A-flat, C, B-natural)

With *Pantalon et Colombine* Schumann returns to the representation of *Commedia dell'arte* characters. In the opening of the movement, we hear a sixteenth-note pattern with irregular phrases combined with dense chords that can be imagined as a quarrel between the two characters. The listener feels a certain relief in the middle section with the introduced *meno presto* marking, smooth phrases and *legato* articulation. The As-C-H cipher can be observed in the melodic line (see Example 20):

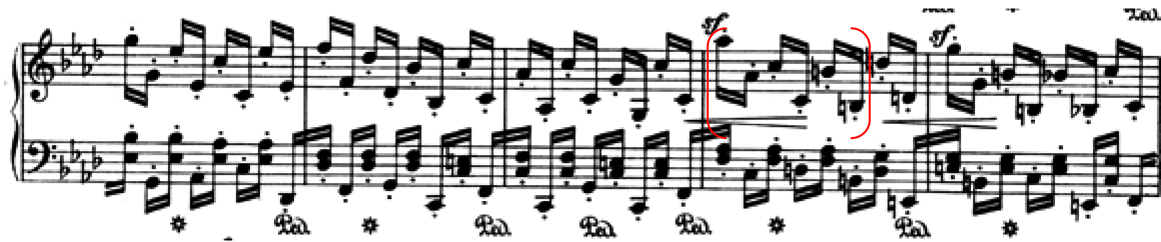
Example 20: As-C-H (A-flat, C, B-natural)

Valse allemande continues to depict the spirit of the masked ball until the wild interruption of *Paganini* leading back to a reprise of the *Valse allemande*. The As-C-H cipher is included in the first few measures (see Example 21):

Example 21: As-C-H (A-flat, C, B-natural)

Schumann makes a reference to Paganini's great virtuosity, which challenges the performer. This movement can be viewed as a transcription, in that Schumann's writing utilizes the big jumps and intervallic leaps of the virtuoso violin playing in both the right and left hands of the piano performer. This movement drives forward without rest to an eccentric ending in the lower register of the keyboard. In the following example, we observe the As-C-H motive in octaves (see Example 22):

Example 22: As-C-H in mm. 4-5

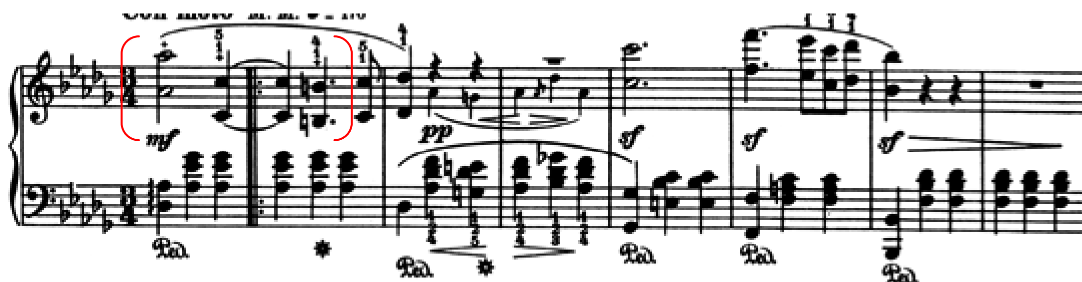


The title of the next piece *Aveu* (Avowal) can be imagined as the most genuine expression of love between two people. The listener feels this intimate moment in the music's simple texture and melody with repeated intervallic patterns, rests and anticipation. The As-C-H cipher is presented in the first measure of the following example (23):

Example 23: As-C-H (A-flat, C, B-natural)

Promenade brings back the attention of the listener to the ballroom dance. The main melody is doubled with a series of octaves in the upper voice along with short and contrasting phrases that can be imagined as a quiet dialogue between two people dancing in the ballroom. These contrasting phrases within the original theme make it difficult to maintain balance in voicing and interpretation. The As-C-H cipher is doubled in octaves in the first two measures (see Example 24):

Example 24: As-C-H (A-flat, C, B-natural)



Pause quotes a passage from the opening *Préambule* and moves forward to the finale of Schumann's *Carnaval*: *Marche des 'Davidsbündler' contre les Philistins*. In this movement, the composer symbolically presents an imaginary battle between the society of Schumann's musician friends the *Davidsbündler* and the *Philistins* who represent old-fashioned and conservative traditions. This movement is the longest piece in the cycle. The *Davidsbündler* defeat the *Philistins* at the end of the piece, which is expressed with excitement and triumph in *sempre stringendo* marking.

The main challenge in this movement is to sustain the climax and to manage the increasing intensity and volume toward the triumphant finale. The As-C-H cipher can be clearly seen in the top voice of the first measure in the following example (25):

Example 25: As-C-H (A-flat, C, B-natural)

The entire *Carnaval* can be interpreted as a musical representation of an imaginative masked ball, where, by dressing up, people adopt different personalities and characteristics. Each character in *Carnaval* "alternates too quickly for an audience to follow along without being startled at every moment."[27] Thus, Schumann uses a *Carnaval* scene to make a statement about the individuality of people that might disrupt the social norms that were common during the composer's time. According to Marcel Brion, "For the Romantics the carnival became the prophetic voice of tortured humanity, seeking behind the mask its own essential nature."[28] Accordingly, *Sphinxes* can be viewed as hidden keys for uniting with cipher-motives each individual piece of the cycle. On the other hand, the different character of each movement in *Carnaval* creates challenges for the performer in searching for the right tempo, sound effect, and in keeping this work united. The diversity of moods and emotions in each piece mirrors Schumann's own individual life.

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[27] Daverio, *Robert Schuman*, 141-142.

[28] Marcel Brion, *Schumann and the Romantic Age* (London, Collins: 1956), 133

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