

CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC "G.F. GHEDINI"  
PIANO DEPARTMENT

CHILDHOOD IN THE MEMORIES OF ROBERT SCHUMANN

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# ABSTRACT

Schumann, like all composers of the Romantic Era, saw in the sensitivity of the child a privileged position, capable of pushing the observation of reality towards distant horizons, into the territories of the imagination.

In the year 1838 the German composer wrote, in a letter, to his would-be wife Clara:

Here is perhaps an unconscious response to what you told me one day, that I look like a child to you. In short, I felt like I had wings and so I wrote about thirty funny things: I chose twelve and entitled them *Kinderszenen*. They will bring you joy, but you will have to forget that you are a virtuoso. They are all self-explanatory and in the most basic way possible.<sup>1</sup>

In reality, the pieces selected by Schumann in the *Kinderszenen* are thirteen, and those "rejected" then went on to form the *Bunte Blätter Op.124*. Simplicity is the key to understanding and also accessing this masterpiece, as the themes are simple and immediate and the harmonic modulations, even though elementary, are never taken for granted. What dominates from the first "scene" to the last is an oasis of peace, a family hearth full of delicacy.

The collection begins with a very sweet theme, *Von fremden Ländern und Menschen*, the "once upon a time" of fairy tales, which is immediately followed by a *Kuriose Geschichte*, in which two opposite melodic themes alternate: the first more energetic while the second is more delicate. Then follow the more playful and happy scenes, *Hasche-Mann*, *Bittendes Kind*, *Glückes genug*, *Wichtige Begebenheit*; but at the heart of the piano cycle we find the immortal *Träumerei*, the inexpressible game, except through the eyes of a child and of an age that never sets. And here, in this famous composition, each of us feels what he wants to hear: joy, melancholy, pain, poetry, enchantment. This is followed by *Am Camin*, symbol of a Haus-Musik celebrated near the hearth; then the big boy still shares the day with the child playing on a rocking horse *Ritter vom Steckenpferd*, then accompanying him in the scary stories *Furchtenmachen*, reaching the edge

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<sup>1</sup> A cura di CARLO DE INCONTRERA, "Il Cielo ha versato una lacrima – Robert e Clara Schumann, lettere 1832-1840", Stampa: Stella Arti Grafiche – Trieste 1998, pp. 90

of *Kind im Einschlummern* dreams. At the end of the day the narrator comes out of the picture and tells about himself: it is Schumann's voice *Der Dichter spricht*, and his words come as if from a distant memory, faded and precisely for this reason more delicate and moving.

According to the musicologist Andrea Malvano, what these thirteen short pieces tell us is not just a trivial reproduction of the scenes experienced by the child on a daily basis; but Schumann tries to render the emotions that emerge in the adult by observing the world of children, and transcribes what he feels in front of the dynamism and the pulsation of their lives, where everything is still perfect and pure.

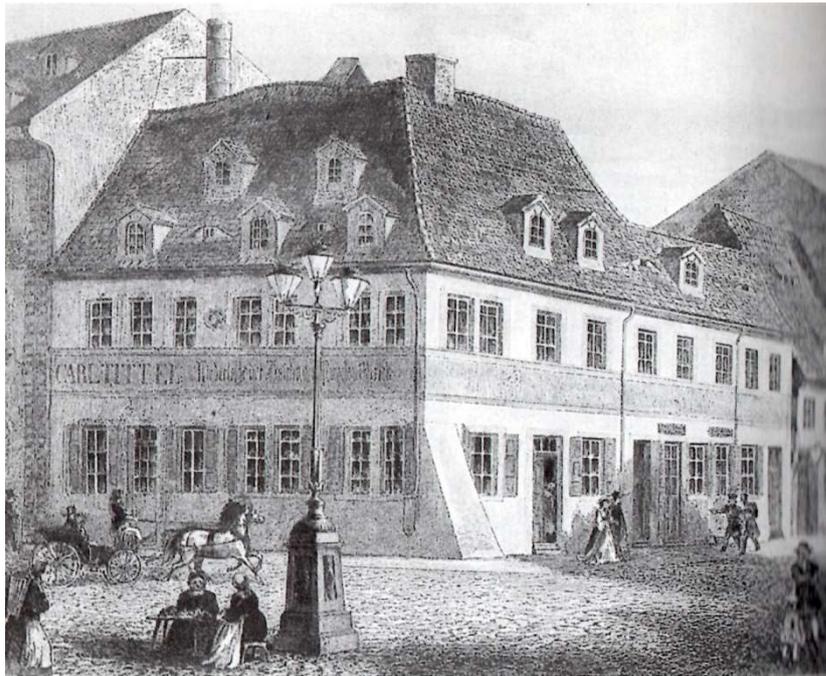
Precisely for this reason, the virtuosity present elsewhere in Schumann's music is completely absent from these scores as they are inspired by the candor of childhood, which are not difficult from a technical point of view, but obviously are from an interpretative point of view: a recurring situation in much literature of cultured music, where the little technical-instrumental difficulty is however compensated by the complexity of fully rendering the composer's thought.

# LIFE AND WORKS OF ROBERT SCHUMANN



Robert Alexander Schumann was born in Zwickau in Saxony in 1810. He was son of a humanist publisher. He grew up in a family environment that was extremely favourable to the development of his vast literary and musical interests,

in an era and in a national climate crossed by the agitation of the most outspoken romanticism. At the age of six he began his private education with the Archduke Döhner; three years later his father took him to Karlsbad to listen to Moscheles, one of the greatest pianists of the time: so little Robert wanted to become a pianist, but this did not prevent him from following his love for poetry with great enthusiasm during his high school studies which began in 1820.



Zwickau, la casa natale di Robert Schumann. Incisione di A. Krauß, 1860.  
Robert Schumann Haus, Zwickau.

He read Goethe's Faust, the novels of W. Scott and seemed on the verge of leaving out music for literature, and seized by literary passion he attempted the novel and tragedy; but a youthful love for the wife of a doctor, interpreter of Schubert's Lieder, brought him back to music inspiring some lieder pages. In the meantime, however, serious family deaths had struck him: the death of his mentally ill sister Emilie and the death of his father.

Later on, Schumann undertook some trips to Leipzig, Dresden, Prague and Tepliz, and in 1828, having completed his high school studies, he enrolled in the law faculty of Leipzig where he was also a frequent visitor to the Carus salon, where he met F. Wieck a teacher who will have decisive influences (both positive and negative) on his life. In Wieck Schumann's house he met his daughter Clara, still a child but already active in musical gatherings, also becoming his pupil for the

piano, and increasingly attracted by music, forgetting the university, he wrote the Polonaises for piano and some Lieder.

In 1829 he settled in Heidelberg hoping to find the cultural climate his restless and curious spirit needed; the same year he visited Italy: it was in Milan where he listened to the music of Rossini. Once back home, he resumed his musical studies with new energy and in 1830 he established himself as a pianist performing the *Alexandervariationen* of Moscheles which had aroused his first enthusiasm. Subsequently he was impressed by a Paganini concert in Frankfurt, thus deciding to write a letter to her mother communicating his decision to abandon the university to devote himself entirely to music; following this decision Schumann was helped by Wieck with whom he retired and studied composition.

The following years were very fruitful in work, in fact the first compositions for piano saw the light: the *Variations ABEGG Op.1* and *Papillons Op.2*, and at the same time his name began to circulate in musical circles; but an incorrect system to force his fingers into wider articulations cut short his career as a pianist, temporarily paralyzed in his right hand, after his recovery he could no longer face the keyboard with the certainty of a time and the *Intermezzi Op.4* are from this period and the piano transcriptions of the Caprices of Paganini.

In 1833 he crossed the threshold of the Leipzig Gewandhaus with a first movement of the Symphony; alongside his compositional activity, however, he had never neglected the exercise of criticism, and subsequently founded the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, a magazine which he himself directed and polemically edited and which had a fundamental importance in cultural life, not only in Germany, constituting an unsurpassed model of music criticism.

In 1834, while attending Henriette Voigt's salon, Schumann fell in love with a young pupil of Wieck, Ernestine von Fricken, but the relationship did not last long because after a few months the musician fell in love with Clara Wieck who was to be his life's devoted companion and great interpreter of his piano poetics; this was a highly contrasted love because Clara's father came, in her opposition, to episodes of incredible intolerance.

In 1835 Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy had been appointed director of the Gewandhaus, inaugurating an extraordinary season and a deep friendship was born between Mendelssohn and Schumann.

Schumann at that time was at the height of his piano production, characterized by short pages enclosing a complete and intense poetic world. 1836 was the year of his mother's death and, prostrated by her pain, Schumann was comforted by Clara who, however, could not assist him for long due to her concert commitments throughout Europe.

Four years of struggles followed with Wieck who did not hesitate to organize a defamatory campaign against his future son-in-law forcing him even to seek protection from the court: Schumann already had many admirers at the time, but not yet enjoying the charisma of officialdom the publishers Haslinger and Diabelli refused to publish his compositions. Schumann then defended himself from the accusations made against him by Wieck by obtaining an honorary degree from the University of Jena and writing his best Lieder, including the cycles *Frauenliebe und Leben Op.24* and *Dichterliebe Op.29* which reveal his personality and the fervour of the his poetic world unequivocally. On September 12, 1840, with the protection of the court, he was finally able to marry Clara. In the period following the marriage, he devoted himself to symphonic compositions. In 1841 *Frühlings – Symphonie in B flat major* and a *Fantasy for piano and orchestra* were born, which would become the first movement of the famous *Concerto in A minor Op.54*.

However, this period was preceded by an intense chamber music activity: *the Quartets Op.41*, *the Quintet with piano Op.44*, and *the Quartet with piano Op.47*; but the great artistic results of these years did not correspond to adequate financial advantages. In 1844 Robert and Clara agreed to tour Russia hoping to resolve a situation that was becoming worrying, but even if the tour brought success and celebrations to the spouses, the takings were not what they had hoped for; moreover Schumann at the age of thirty-four began to suffer from the consequences of precarious health, and no longer able to support the commitment of the magazine at the end of 1844 Schumann left Leipzig for Dresden where he met Wagner, but he was too far from his world ethical to become his friend.

He painstakingly completed the *Second Symphony* which was performed in 1846. His health was now irreparably undermined, he tried to recover with a short period of rest in *Scheweningen* where he still had a joy from his tormented existence: the visit of Brahms which took place on November 30, 1853; In the meantime Mendelssohn had died and Schumann understood that he could bestow on that

young man his need for friendship, and Brahms was the young man who was perhaps able to take on his spiritual inheritance.

In 1854, desperate, he threw himself into the Rhine, was saved by some fishermen, but on March 4 Clara was forced to commit him to the Enderich asylum near Bonn. He died two years later, in 1856, attended by Clara and Brahms at the age of forty-six.

In his short and unhappy existence, Schumann expressed one of the purest testimonies of romantic culture and sensibility. In the piano, the romantic instrument par excellence, like Liszt, he did not see a means to amaze the crowds, but like Chopin, whom Schumann esteemed and loved, he discovered the most intimate and responsive qualities. Among the highest creations we find: *Papillons Op.2, Davidsbündlertanze Op.6, Carnaval Op.9, Fantasiestücke Op.12, 12 Etudes symphoniques Op.13, Kinderszenen Op.15, Kreisleriana Op.16, Fantasia in C Op.17* , *Arabeske Op.18, Humoreske Op.20, 8 Novelletten Op.21, Faschingsschwank aus Wien Op.26, 3 Romanzen Op.28, Album für die Jugend Op.68, Waldszenen Op.82, the Sonatas Op.11, 14 , 22.*



Zwickau, interno della casa natale di Robert. Il pianoforte è firmato Matthäus Andreas Stein, Wien 1825. Su questo pianoforte Clara debutta il 20 ottobre 1828 al Gewandhaus di Lipsia.

# SCHUMANN

## AND HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH CHILDHOOD

Schumann's life was an alternation of ups and downs depending on whether he managed to bring together the two poles, of art and life. There were times when he hit rock bottom, for example his law school days, when there seemed to be no hope of marrying Clara, the concert trips with Clara, and finally his failure in his office at Dusseldorf. But on the other hand there were periods in Schumann's life in which he was able to create a superb relationship with the surrounding world and with his collaborators. He especially benefited from her ability to work diligently and consistently, an ability that he was able to develop only if he had to carry out a task that he had assigned himself without depending on external obligations. The charm of the romantic image of the charismatic artist, who obtained a prestige never existed before him, showed its first disturbing effects here because only by putting the utmost effort was he able to preserve his artistic morality.

After his marriage to Clara, the family situation presented itself in a completely different light from what Schumann had expected; since Schumann's pride did not admit that Clara, and not him, provided with her concert work for most of the household expenses, and in order not to hurt his feelings, Clara had to reduce her concert activity. Thus it was that for purely material reasons Schumann began to compose tirelessly, even works not always of the same value; the correspondence with the publishers that has come down to us shows us how he was concerned with highlighting the side concerning the external effect and success with the public. But the consequences of such a position would not allow him to retreat into his inner world as he used to. Schumann tried to explain the typical contrasts of his nature, as he himself recognised, considering them due to a "double nature" that he would have liked to "amalgamate to make a single man". In fact there is a marked contrast between the eloquent writer with an easy style, and even more between the musician who often overwhelms his listeners and his reserve, shyness, and his very little ability to establish personal, direct, above all verbal with others, but despite his grumpiness, his tendency to withdraw into himself which he

repeatedly admitted to himself, Schumann was convinced that he was a good connoisseur of men and a psychologist, above all he believed he knew how to identify the "person" of his music. Nonetheless, he was mostly too busy with himself to fix his attention effortlessly on other people.

Already in his young years, Schumann tried to understand the difficulties he encountered in direct conversation, even towards his closest friends who often joked about his behaviour which irritated and disturbed strangers; but Schumann always continued to underline the inadequacy of verbal communication and said that he expressed much more in a quarter of an hour at the piano than if he had written sheet after sheet.

Given precisely how difficult contacts with the outside world were for Schumann, it is necessary and interesting to examine his relationship with young people, especially with children. Schumann was the father of three children, and from what emerges from the writings of people close to him, it seems that he was particularly skilled in understanding them, managing to penetrate deeply into their souls by involving them in games and poetry readings. His love for them is beyond doubt, but it seemed to some observers that he was incapable of lastingly and intimately caring for them. If by chance Schumann met his children on the street, he would stop, he would observe them for a moment and say, pursing his lips, "well, dear little ones?" and then he immediately resumed his usual expression.

On the other hand, Schumann wanted to have many children; and when Clara realized she was pregnant again she seems to have said: 'Children are the greatest blessing. You can never have enough.'

In a booklet of *memories for our children* held between 1846 and 1849, he testifies to his affectionate participation in the life and growth of his children where Schumann, as a proud father as he was, also shows a remarkable ability to penetrate the child's psyche noting sentences, character traits, important events in the lives of children who, under an apparent banality, reveal something special.

During walks Schumann used to tell his children everything that kept his mind occupied, and with his art as a storyteller he had also won Clara's confidence as a child. Already at nineteen she spoke yearningly in her diary about the ideal of a family life and a nursery, and Clara's observation that Schumann sometimes seemed to her like a child was at the origin, among other things, of the idea of the *Kinderszenen*.

All the attention paid to the family sphere is transferred and shaped in the musical sphere, in fact he can be considered as one of the first composers who invested the written works with pedagogical intentions of poetic meaning, merging it with the more strictly technical one, having treated under multiple levels the theme of childhood.

Poetry, for Schumann, is what is not rationally graspable, which is difficult to capture based on the external face of the work; after all it is not a quality of the work, but a state of mind, an emotional experience, both of the creator and of the user, originating from the music as a mediator. In Schumann all this took the form of images, of visions that arise when one is in the right disposition for the "conception" of music, which grow and take on ever clearer contours. Schumann's music narrates these visions without any illustrative intent, in fact it must evoke a poetic mood also in the listener. Schumann was extraordinarily interested in knowing if the contents evoked by listening to his music corresponded to those of the composer, in which case the harmony of souls to which the romantics aspired would become reality. The poetic mood enables the listener to enter into communication with the music in an absolutely independent way and to respond to it with his own and autonomous reaction, in fact Schumann repeatedly underlined that the titles of some of his pieces had been added later. Their meaning is nothing more than an indication that wants to suggest the atmosphere of the piece as a whole; for the composer it is the surest way to prevent a patently misinterpretation of the character of the piece. However, this poetry pervades and conditions the composition of collections and piano pieces, expressly aimed at a young audience, with precise didactic intentions designed to stimulate young students to reasoned study of music and guide them towards the discovery and understanding of the irrational sphere that is inherent in the Schumannian sphere, as happens starting from the first piano compositions such as the *Kinderszenen Op.15*, up to the works of maturity such as the *Album für die Jugend Op.68* and the *Three Sonaten für die Jugend Op.118*; in which youthful lightheartedness is experienced as an element of escapism from reality, a sad reality in which Schumann found himself living in spite of himself.

## THE KINDERSZENEN

[..] The *Kinderszenen* even enraptured me: luckily you weren't present – how beautiful they are! tomorrow I want to enjoy them in peace; so far I've only had time to play them once, in the presence of Halle, who was also enthusiastic about them. I do not know the composition sufficiently to give a definitive judgment, however I was moved by the *Bittendes Kind*, *Von fremden Ländern und Menschen*, *Fürchtenmachen*, *Kind im Einschlummern*, *Glückes genug*, *Dichters spricht worte* (*Dichter spricht*). I know the poet and his words have penetrated to the depths of my soul.<sup>2</sup>

Thus Clara wrote to Robert from Paris on Friday morning of March 21, 1839, and three days later she wrote:

[..] How infinitely beautiful are your *Kinderszenen*! I would like to kiss them! Yesterday I thought, and I think it also today: the poet who speaks here ( *Der Dichter spricht* ) is truly mine, isn't that happiness too great for me? It seems incredible to me. My enthusiasm grows every time I play. How deep your music is, I understand your every thought and I would like to get lost in you and your music. In these all your soul and their moving simplicity are revealed; for example the *Bittendes Kind*! he is seen joining his little hands in prayer, and the *Kind in Einschlummern*! you couldn't close your eyes more gracefully. In this passage there is something particular, I would say almost adventurous, I am looking for the words. The first of the pieces, *Vom fremden Ländern und Menschen* has always been my favourite, I played it all the time, because it really transports us to foreign countries. I also love *Curiose Geschichte* and then the *Masche – Mann* is very funny, described in a wonderful way. Such a peaceful feeling has given me so much happiness and the progress after the F major is so elevated; at this point doesn't it also seem to you that you can ascend towards happiness?

I enjoy playing the *Begebenheit*; the second part is delicious. *Träumerei* – here I seem to see you at the piano – it's a beautiful dream. The *Cammin* is all German (absolutely not French), no French fireplace creates as much cosiness. However, it occurs to me that today I behave as if I were a critic! Don't be offended by these

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<sup>2</sup> A cura di CARLO DE INCONTRERA, "Il Cielo ha versato una lacrima – Robert e Clara Schumann, lettere 1832-1840", Stampa: Stella Arti Grafiche – Trieste 1998, pp. 174-175

comments of mine, I just want you to understand the feelings these songs arouse in me and I'm not capable of it.<sup>3</sup>

1838 marked in a certain sense the culmination of Schumann's early piano period, the four main works were born, the *Fantasia in C major Op.17*, *Kinderszenen Op.15*, *Kreisleriana Op.16* and *Novelletten Op.21*. Schumann himself felt that he had taken a new step forward in the piano style marked by the synthesis of seemingly contrasting elements: contrapuntal character, language-like communicative clarity, and expressiveness. Concerning this he wrote:

[..] above all it is peculiar that almost everything I invent has a canonical form and that I always discover a posteriori how the voices respond to each other, with reversed rhythms. My music seems to me now so strangely woven in all its simplicity, so full of eloquence that comes from the heart, and has this effect on all to whom I play it.<sup>4</sup>

At that time Schumann observed with amazement that everything was taking place in him as a natural process without costing him any effort saying: "It flowed into me and I joined my song to it - and then most of the time it succeeded. Play with shapes. For about a year and a half I have had the impression of being in possession of the secret; it's so strange."

Mainly thanks to the apparent ease of execution, the *Kinderszenen* spread more rapidly than all other piano works, so much so that Schumann himself pointed out to his publisher R. Härtel that these small pieces were very suitable as gifts and therefore he recommended to take great care of the incision also in the outer garment.

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<sup>3</sup> A cura di CARLO DE INCONTRERA, "Il Cielo ha versato una lacrima – Robert e Clara Schumann, lettere 1832-1840", Stampa: Stella Arti Grafiche – Trieste 1998, pp. 178-179

<sup>4</sup> ARFRIED EDLER, "Schumann e il suo tempo", E.D.T 1991, PP. 100



Prima edizione, Lipsia: Breitkopf & Härtel 1839.

In those first months of 1838 the individual pieces of these three very different collections were born side by side. Originally the *Kinderszenen* were to form the beginning of the collection of *Novelletten* and only gradually did they become a work in their own right. In the *Kreisleriana* the music reflects the impetuous moods of love and despair, of laceration; while the *Kinderszenen* recounts that future side by side, pacified and suffused with a tranquil light to which two artists aspired who opened up and gave themselves to each other with the purity and sincerity of children. The *eight Novelletten Op.21*, on the other hand, represent coherent and adventurous stories of a certain breadth, even events are told that correspond to his present life.

Since Clara's childhood the fairy tale had been a very important form of communication between her and Robert, and these pieces can be understood as musical letters in which Schumann entertained his girlfriend with exciting and humorous stories, telling her that music was the only friend who relates in the best way everything we have inside.

This greatness of the *Kinderszenen* consists in a compositional discourse that is only apparently simple but behind which is hidden a sound world of extraordinary coherence and complexity, hence the enormous interest that these pieces arouse and the need to investigate some of the main compositional parameters. with particular regard to form, melodic behavior, harmonic paths; to indicate a possible key to interpreting these thirteen pieces by showing, at the same time, an imperceptible but very solid red thread that holds them together as part of an inseparable whole.

## I. VON FREMDEN LÄNDERN UND MEUSCHEN (Of Foreign Lands and Peoples)

The poet begins his story as the beginning of every fairy tale, "Once upon a time, in a country so far away .....". And here are the big eyes of the children, wide open, full of wonder.

Each piece in this collection is like a small picture of family life and has its own defined character, but all are only linked by the constant presence of three motifs which give the series a unitary character and form a sort of more or less hidden plot.

The reasons identified by Réti are three:

### First motif



is the initial motif, characterized by an initial momentum of an ascending sixth and by a fall enlivened by the dotted rhythm.

### Second motif



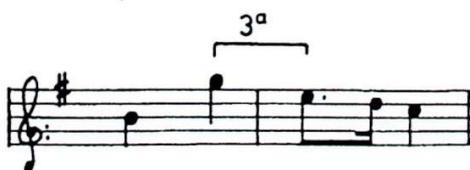
The second motif is more swinging, less characteristic than the previous one, it recalls a progression.

### Third motif



The third motif is the weakest; it is a scale contained in an ascending sixth with a link function.

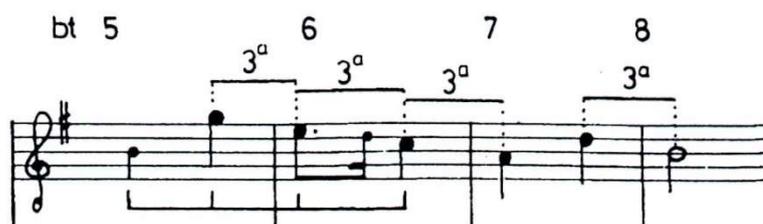
The first motif undergoes two transformations in the course of the piece: a first one in bars 5-6, in which a third one replaces the movement by conjunct degree at the beginning of the descent:



a second at measure 22-23, in which a fourth interval replaces the sixth; in reality the interval of a sixth is present considering the B on the second beat of the previous bar and the note, even though it is on a weak beat, is however highlighted by a *fermata*.



However, the two transformations acquire more importance in the course of the piece: the first gives rise to a series of descending thirds in the right hand at measure 5-8.



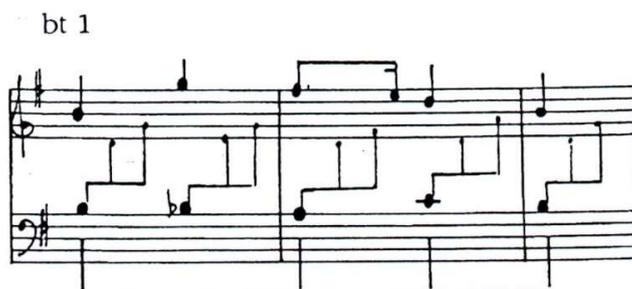
moreover, the third interval becomes a connecting element between the first and second motif:



The second transformation is anticipated in the left hand during the second part at measure 17-20.



The same intention is already present from the beginning: while the first motif "sings" in the upper part, in the inner part, formed by triplets, the second motif insinuates itself in a retrograde version.



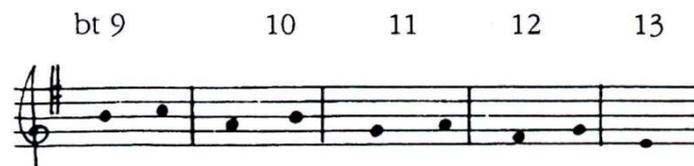
As regards the shape and tonality, we can say that the composition is tripartite:

A measure 1-16 G Major

B measure 17-22 G Major

A measure 23-30 G Major

The composition is written entirely in the key of G major and the apparent modulation to E minor, in the central section, is a coloristic nuance; the latter in fact has different characters, furthermore the melodic line seems to interrupt its evolution proposing the second motif with a progression character.



In the left hand, on the other hand, we find the repetitions of the first motif which introduce the figuration of the dotted quaver in the bass; however, this choice restores vitality to a section which, due to the progression and the harmonies that allude to the relative minor, seems to withdraw into itself.

In the global trend of the melody line it is interesting to note the position of the initial chords: the parts are not in an octave position, thus giving the melody an upward opening condition.

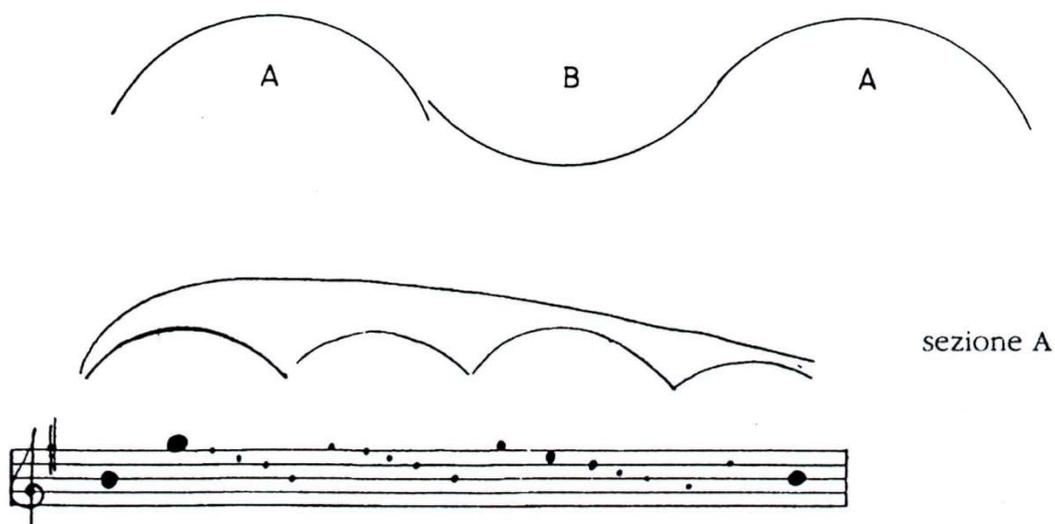
Furthermore, none of the parts ends with a chord in first position, the typical closed position; and even more interesting is the conclusion of the piece which suggests an only partial closure of the musical discourse. In fact, the G note is present not only in the bass, where it has a harmonic function, but also in the intermediate part, but it is added on the third beat of the two triplets and therefore in a particularly weak rhythmic context; therefore a sense of suspension occurs. The entire piece is therefore dominated by a naive fairy-tale atmosphere which is

expressed in the simplicity of the melodic line, in the essentiality of the harmony and in the homogeneity of the writing.

The first motif, presented no less than six times in the upper part and five times in the internal parts, forms a sort of childish chant; moreover, the writing remains homogeneous throughout the piece through some permanence:

- A cantabile melodic line at the top
- A soft and continuous motif in the middle part, formed by loose chords in triplets
- A bass with harmonic support function

Finally, tracing a global line of the piece, it is possible to note the presence in each section of large opposing arches:



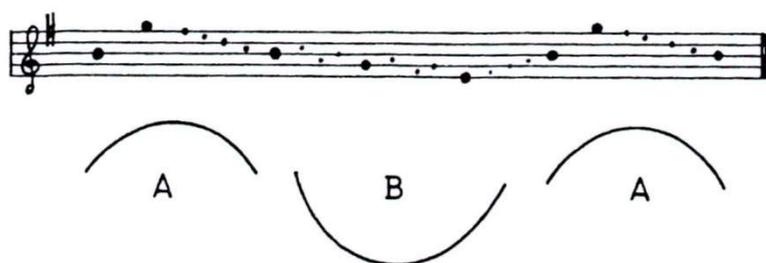
The first arch, which corresponds to section A, contains three other arches of equal size and a smaller final one which gives it a momentum, an opening character.



sezione B

The second arch, which corresponds to section B, begins curved downwards and the trend is more oscillating, it moves downwards through a progression process and returns to the B note with an ascending scale; however, the whole has a folding character.

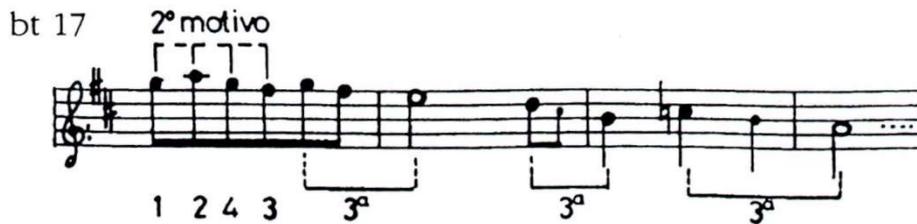
Finally, the third arch, which corresponds to section A, is the same as the first.



Observing the melodic line in its entirety, the melodic interval of the ascending minor sixth deserves a final observation, an interval full of momentum with a strong sense of openness, but at the same time with an affectionate character. This interval suggests a pleasant ascent, lightly, without effort, almost like taking off and leaving towards a dream world, precisely towards distant and foreign lands and peoples.

Furthermore, the movement of the tercets helps to give the sense of a non-stop wandering to discover an unknown world, therefore not to be kept in the shade but on the contrary to be continuously highlighted. Because of this character of wonder and amazement, its execution should not be too sophisticated, but rather simple and fresh.





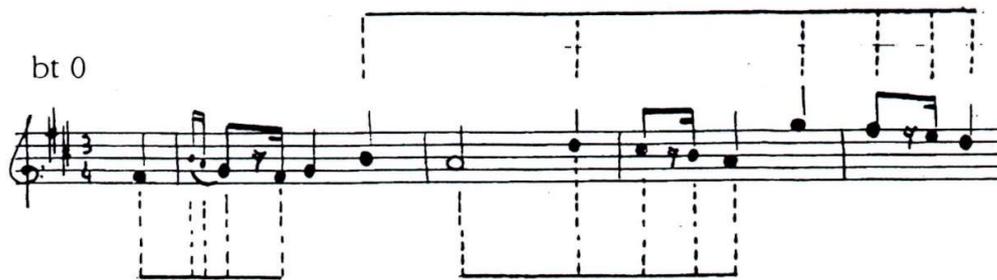
The third motif appears for the first time in bars 7-8 enclosed in an interval of a sixth.



The second time it appears at bars 18-19 in an interesting situation from a polyphonic point of view: the intermediate part proposes an imitation of the upper part, while the bass suggests a melodic line linked both to the first motif (F sharp-A-D ), and to the third with a movement by ascending conjunct degree:



As can be clearly seen, there is a tendency to play with the same motif by overlapping and interlocking it, as occurs for example in bars 0-4.



The form of the piece is ternary ABA' expanded with the repetition of the second and third part:

A (8)	A (8)	B (4)	A' (8)	B (4)	A' (8)
1-8	9-16	17-20	21-28	29-32	33-40
└──────────┘		└──────────┘			
A		B	A'		

The entirety of part A remains in the main key, D major, and only in the conclusion (bars 7-8, 15-16) does it modulate to the dominant A major. The second part B begins with a cadenza d'inganno in E minor and then moves to G major and finally returns to D major, being G major IV degree of D.

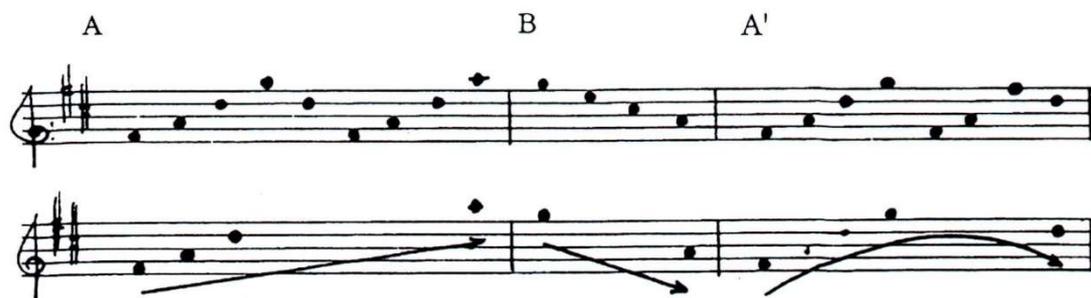
LA Magg		I		I	V <sub>min.</sub>		IV	
RE Magg	I	V	I	V	I	IV	I	
SOL Magg								
MI min								
bt	1	8	16	17	19	20		

In this passage we find the rhythmic figuration  which takes on particular importance and becomes the driving element of the whole part A, related

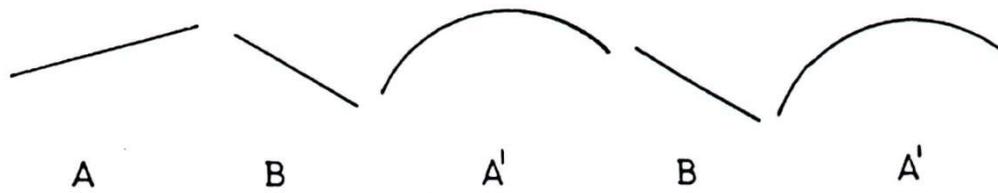
to , the rhythm that had occurred in the first motif of the first piece. This rhythmic figuration leaps into evidence from the beginning, and almost causes a "nervous snap" that characterizes the initial part; the rhythm then relaxes in a fluid figuration of quavers in the central part B, with a more melancholic trait also due to the passage in minor mode.

It is possible to note a similarity between the first two pieces in which a more moved and animated first part is followed by a central one in which the melody folds back on itself. Here, unlike the first, one proceeds in accord and homorhythmically, and the other parts move around a dominant pedal and the whole, however, appears as a monolithic block.

As for the melodic line, it starts in anacrusis, a rhythmic figuration that highlights a momentum; each section, including the reprise of A variata, has its own characteristic melodic line.



Analysing the three sections, we can see that the trend of the melodic line in section A draws a broad wave, and from the overall design it can be deduced that the musical sense is decidedly ascending. Instead of descending character is the section B, which draws a clear retreat, almost like a melancholy afterthought. The reprise of A varied, maintains the upward momentum in the first part and then closes in the finale with a line that curves downwards.



Finally, it can still be noted that the section A' closes on a chord in the first position and the sense, this time, is decidedly more conclusive. However, the story continues with something even more interesting, in fact it can be seen that the bass line rises decisively in the last six measures, and this upward movement indicates that the discussion is over for now, but not definitively.

This second picture stands in stark contrast to the fairy-tale character of the first, therefore an execution with a more humorous, brilliant spirit will follow, with well-marked dynamic contrasts.

### III. HASCHE-MANN (Blind man's Buff)

Here too the three motifs are present, even if hidden within broader melodic lines, and it almost seems that Schumann, bearing in mind the title, enjoyed hiding them. In fact, the first motif is presented several times within the passage:

- a. measure 1-2 considering the initial B and the group of descending sixteenth notes on the second half of the second bar
- b. measure 1-2, considering the C on the second beat from the first measure and the group of descending sixteenth notes on the first beat of the second bar
- c. measure 3-4 considering the F and the following descending sixteenth notes, similar to the previous one
- d. measure 9-10 and 11-12 considering the A on the second half and the F of the group of successive descending sixteenth notes and again the Fa on the second beat and the D of the group of successive descending sixteenth notes.

The image shows a musical score for 'Blind man's Buff' in G major, 2/4 time. The score is divided into four systems, each with a circled letter (a, b, c, d) indicating specific motifs. System 1 (measures 1-4) has annotations 'bt 1', 'b', and 'c'. System 2 (measures 5-8) has annotation 'a'. System 3 (measures 9-12) has annotation 'd'. Dotted lines connect the circled letters to the notes and groups of notes they refer to in the score.

For the second reason, however, the situation is clearly more complex because it nestles between the sixteenth notes and sometimes the sounds are reversed, exchanged with each other; this happens, for example, at bars 9-14:



To simplify, we can see:

- a) bar 9-11 we have G-A-F-G, where the second and fourth sounds are move down an octave
- b) bar 11-13 we have F-G-E-D
- c) bar 14-15 we have the motif in its original form with Mi-Fa-Re-Mi

Furthermore, it is possible to note the simultaneous presence of the first and second motives at bars 9-10 and 11-12:

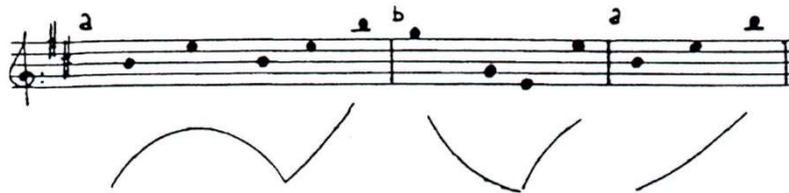




afterwards with renewed energy. It is no coincidence, in this regard, that the quarter note is followed in all cases by a group of four ascending sixteenth notes which create a sense of animation and movement.

Two levels can be distinguished in writing: an upper one that is always in rapid movement and a lower one which harmoniously supports the first; moreover, also in this piece the external parts can be traced back to an ascending line, while the central part is characterized by a downward inflection which is raised again in the last measures.

The melodic line is suggested by the quarter notes:



As the title already points out, the spirit is that of play, and the *forzatos* almost seem to indicate an attempt to "catch" someone, the staccato notes make one think of the child running from one side to the other. The staccato should not be too light, but rather expressive and full of sound so as to give the piece a brilliant character.

So this piece must not be conceived as a flamboyant piece and neither must it be performed with difficulty so as not to cancel its true character.

#### IV. BITTENDES KIND (Pleading Child)

Right from the start it is important to observe that the piece, made up of 17 bars, is made up of a regular series of repetitions: in fact bars 1-2 are reproduced in their entirety as bars 3-4, bars 5-6 as 7-8, bars 9-10 as 11-12 and finally bars 13-16 are identical to bars 1-4 with the addition of a last measure which repeats the dominant seventh of D major.

The three motifs in this piece are placed in different sections and are therefore not overlapping.

First motif

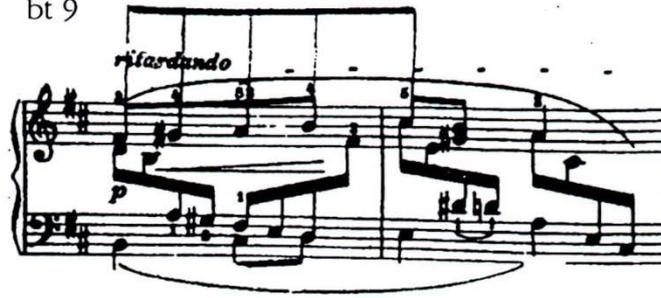
Musical notation for the first motif, labeled "bt 1". It shows a piano piece in D major, 4/4 time, with a dynamic marking of *p*. The notation is for the first four bars, with a bracket above the staff indicating the motif's span. The bass line features a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-4.

Secondo motif

Musical notation for the second motif, labeled "bt 5". It shows a piano piece in D major, 4/4 time, with a dynamic marking of *p*. The notation is for bars 5-8, with a bracket above the staff indicating the motif's span. The bass line features a steady eighth-note accompaniment. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 3<sup>a</sup>, 4<sup>a</sup>, and 3<sup>a</sup>.

terzo motivo

bt 9



From a careful observation of the use of the first motif, it can be noted that all the pieces analyzed so far not only propose this motif at the beginning, but the proposal takes place using the same sounds: B-G-F-E-D. The tempo, the tonality, the way of inserting the motif change, sometimes more evident, others hidden within a broader melodic line; but the motif is regularly proposed for the benefit of the unity of musical discourse:



The form is a little more varied than in the previous pieces, while maintaining a tripartite structure, with a wider central area: we will therefore have a section A

bars 1-4, a section B including a (b) bars 5-8 and a (c) bars 9-12, finally a section A bars 13-17. This structure creates an imbalance, and as a result the arc shape loses some stability in favor of an evolution of speech, emphasizing the dominant emotional situation.

The touched shades are also significant and oriented towards creating a state of suspension:

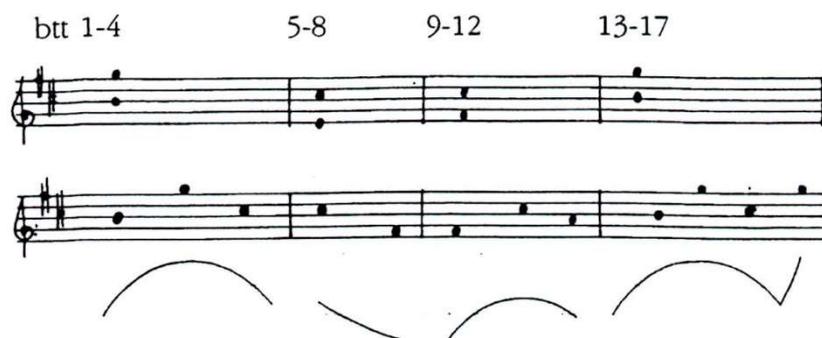
A	a: 1-4	D Major	I
B	b: 5-8	G Major	IV with respect to D Major
	c: 9-12	A Major	V with respect to D Major
A	a: 13-16	D Major	I

In this way a broad suspended cadenza is created, and the modulations take place through chromaticism: for example C sharp-C natural between D major and G major. Moving on to the analysis of the chords, we can see the constant presence of dominant chords, the only cadence on the first degree is set to A major, therefore on the dominant tone of D major with the result of increasing even more the sense of suspension .

The dominant harmony, being a chord loaded with a sense of suspension, requires a resolution of its elements (the sensitive note must rise to the tonic, the seventh and ninth must resolve descending), even so the child's prayer asks for an answer, and it is important to observe that since the response is late in arriving, or does not arrive at all, the piece ends as it began on a dominant chord with all its components unanswered.

As far as the rhythm is concerned, in addition to the eighth note of the piece, two constant rhythmic figures can be noted: an internal movement of arpeggiated sixteenth notes  which creates a sense of flow, and a series of eighth notes at the top , which remains unchanged for the entire duration of the piece, recurring eight times. This insistence can be considered as an expression of the repeated prayer of the child who never tires of continually asking his question.

The type of writing adopted by Schumann in this piece is similar to that of the first, as three levels can be distinguished: the first is the melody, the second is made up of a series of sixteenth notes which give the piece fluency and finally the third which has the harmony bass function. Overall, the upper melodic line draws a wide arc with the downward curve:



Above all, measures 5-8, characterized by the presence of the second motif, move the melodic line to more serious areas; while the presence of the third ascending motif in the following four measures determines a first moment of ascent completed and made definitive by the last four measures. So the piece "closes" with an open, interrogative line, of enormous suspension also due to the conclusion of the last phrase with the dominant seventh in the upper part; thus leaving even the child without a definitive answer to his prayer.

From this analysis of the phrasing follows an execution inspired precisely by this structure where one can almost see a dialogue between the mother who suggests the phrases of prayer next to the cot of her child who, with joined hands, repeats the phrases with an accent of childish monotony.

Following precisely this hypothetical image, the interpretation of the piece arises naturally: the mother's sentences will therefore have a more composed and serious expression, while the repetitions of the child will have a character full of candor, almost inexpressive characteristic of the unconscious happiness of childhood.

## V. GLUCKES GENUG (Happy Enough)

For this piece it is important to focus attention on a few aspects: the tonality, D major, is the same as in the previous piece. This choice reveals the intention to link the two compositions: almost as if the prayer had been answered leading to a perfect and complete happiness.

Right from the first bars we can notice an evident imitative game of the first motif of the upper voice and of an internal voice:

The image shows a musical score for two staves, treble and bass clef. The first staff (treble clef) contains motifs labeled 'bt 1' (bars 1-2) and 'bt 6' (bars 6-7). The second staff (bass clef) contains motifs labeled 'bt 2' (bars 2-3) and 'bt 5' (bars 5-6). A third motif, 'bt 7', is indicated by a bracket in the treble staff for bars 7-8. Arrows show that the motif in the bass staff (bt 2) is an imitation of the motif in the treble staff (bt 1), and the motif in the treble staff (bt 6) is an imitation of the motif in the bass staff (bt 5). Dashed lines and brackets are used to group the notes of each motif.

The first reason assumes the function of a question which is followed, a fifth below, by an answer. This play continues throughout the piece creating an elegant plot that becomes its unifying principle.

All three motifs are present in the piece, but the first certainly has a higher relevance than the others as it appears several times, while the second motif is found hidden in the upper melodic line at bars 3-4 in a retrograde version:

- a) bar 1-2 in the upper voice, bar 2-3 in the middle voice
- b) bars 6-7 and 7-8 in the upper voice, bars 5-6 in the middle voice

1º motivo

2º motivo

1º motivo

1º motivo

- a) bar 17-18 in the upper voice in the key of F major, bars 18-19 in the middle voice
- b) bars 21-22 in the upper voice
- c) bars 23-24 the motif begins on B flat accented in the lower voice and continues in the upper voice

Finally, the third motif is found in the bass, at the end of the piece at bars 21-23, with a line enriched by the presence of some chromatisms:

1º motivo

1º motivo

1º motivo

3º motivo

rit. dim. do d.c.

The entire piece can be considered in tripartite form even if a contrasting central zone is missing; so we can talk about a structure:

A bar 1-8

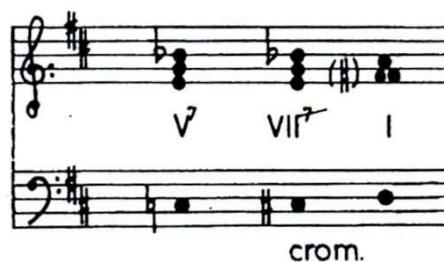
A bar 9-16

A' bar 17-24

However, there is an explanation for this choice made by Schumann: the child has calmed down and serenity is expressed in a form in which there is no contrast, there is no evolution. Calm and serenity are not only expressed on this level but also through the ever-equal rhythm; therefore a homogeneous writing and also the constant affirmation, up to bar 16, of the key of D major. Then it suddenly modulates to F major, the key in which the subsequent *Träumerei* and *Am Camin* are written.

This modulation, which occurs through a chromatism C sharp like V6 of D major, C natural like V of F major; it does not have a dynamic character, but simply colouristic.

The modulation returning to D major takes place by exploiting a C-C sharp chromatism, which transforms the dominant seventh of F major into a diminished seventh of D major:

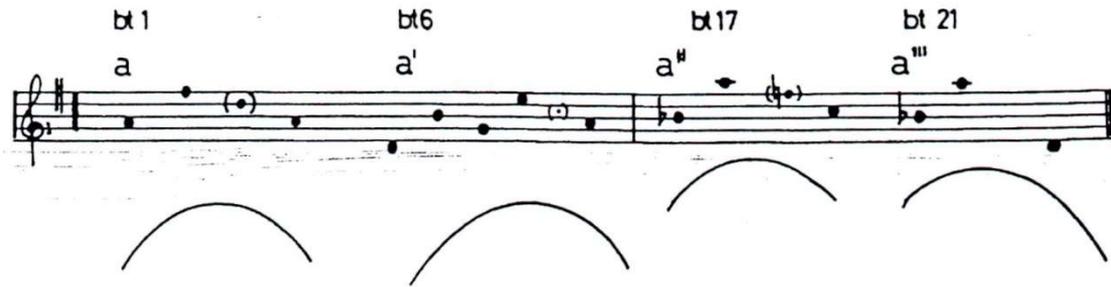


As far as the rhythm is concerned, it is uniform throughout the piece: in addition to the usual movement of sixteenth notes which almost constitute an internal plot, it is possible to identify a rhythmic formula which repeats itself incessantly



Furthermore, the writing is similar to that of the previous song; and

also the trend of the melodic line is undulating, rocking, and only in the last section does the most acute point of the whole piece first touch, i.e. A, and then descend rapidly towards the lowest sound of the whole melody, i.e. D the final.



The general character of the piece is of impetus and freshness, in fact already in the first seven notes there is enthusiasm to be rendered with a vibrant sonority and consequently the initial "p" will be relative, until reaching the maximum peak of happiness in the concluding part of the piece where the sonority is stronger and full of joy; the whole passage must be full of life and flowing.

## VI. WICHTIGE BEGEBENHEIT (An Important Event)

The composition with its strong character, the chordal writing and the lack of flowing sixteenth notes is in antithesis with the sweet and serene character of *Glückes genug*.

Here the first, second and third motifs are proposed in their original form in the first part and in the central part respectively.

The first motif is presented three times: at the beginning of the piece in anacrusis without the low sound.



The other quotations are identical to the first and we find them at bars 2-3; 4-5; 6-7. The last proposal is at the end of the central section, more precisely in the bass where the descending melodic line presents the motif:



The second reason can be found in the initial measures following the first proposal of the first reason.

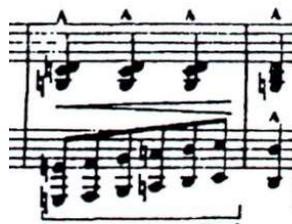


but mainly it dominates the central part of the composition:



here we can identify the four sounds that make up the second motif: La-Si-Mi-La; where the third sound that should be a G natural is instead replaced by an E; even if the G is still present in the internal part. Instead the melodic line of the bass, which implies a progression, is formed by four descending quavers and by the repercussion of the last sound.

Finally, we find the third motif at bar 13, and equal to bar 21 in the bass:



3° motivo

The form of the piece is tripartite, in fact we will have:

- A 8 bars in A Major
- B 8 bars in D Major
- A 8 bars in A Major

In the first part, the initial four bars are reproduced identically an octave below, resulting in a long descending melodic line, with some modulating hints; while the central zone is more stable, and except for bar 12, the other measures contain only one harmony which, due to the movement of the bass, continuously modifies its state:

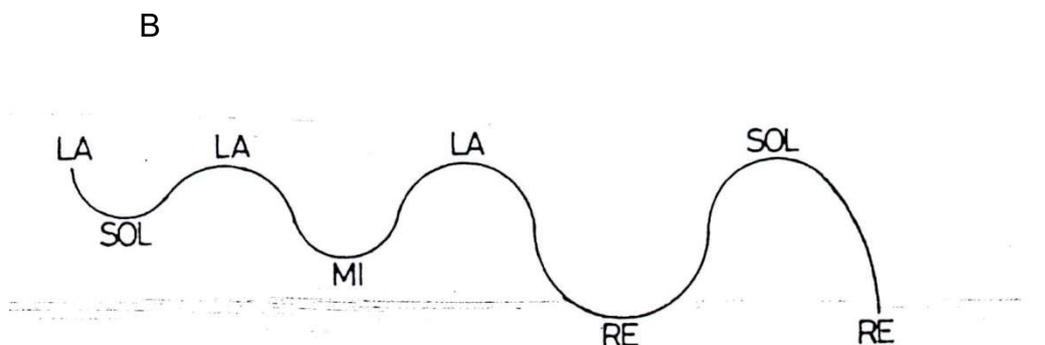
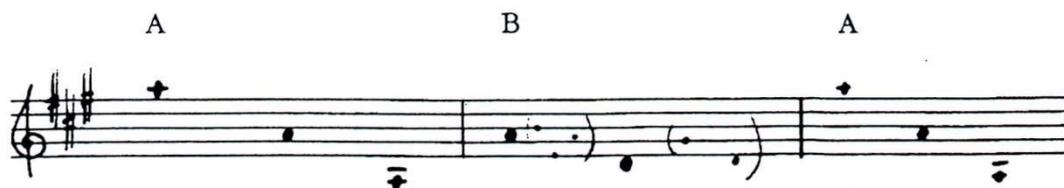
Handwritten musical notation for 'RE Mogg' showing two systems of staves. The first system contains bars 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12. The second system contains bars 13, 14, 15, and 16. The notation includes chord symbols (v, IV, V7), figured bass numbers (6, 4, 3, 5, 7), and a double bar line with repeat dots in bar 16.

In this section the melodic lines help to confirm the sensation of stability as the upper line is contained within a fifth, while the bass proceeds by repeating the same rhythmic formula five times .

Rhythmically, the figure reappears  present above all in the first two pieces; together with the four quarter notes, it forms a rhythmic sequence which continues regularly throughout the first part:

Also in the central part there is rhythmic uniformity given by: .

Because of these rhythmic figurations this piece appears in stark contrast to the previous pieces which instead were enlivened by the rapid flow of sixteenth notes. Three descending lines can be identified in the melodic line: the two outer ones are wider and cover the space of two octaves, while the central one is narrower and moves within a fifth with a more undulating trend:



As can be clearly seen, the sound A has great importance: the three sections all start on A and the first and last end on A, only the central section closes on a D (IV degree of A); in fact, this element highlights even more the highly unitary and compact character of the piece.

What is narrated in the passage is a very important event for the child therefore the character must be pompous, thinking for example of the expression of seriousness on the faces of the little ones when they confide something that appears extremely important to them.

The performance should be full of leaning and sustained sound on accented quarter notes, while the eighth notes of the central part should be performed with leaning pomposity rather than excessive heaviness.

## VII. TRAUMEREI (Dreaming)

The characteristic elements of this famous piece are above all the flexibility of the melodic line and its rhythmic freedom which continuously shifts the support points within the measure; therefore it also becomes increasingly difficult to identify the various reasons, especially the second one.

The first reason is becoming more and more relevant, while the third is not mentioned. The initial interval of a fourth suggests a first quotation of the first motif:

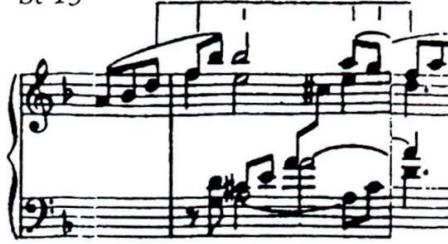
a) Bar 0-1 with C-F-E-D-C

b) Bar 1-3 with A-C-F-E-D-C in the inferior part

The image shows two musical staves. The top staff is a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a complex melodic line. Above the staff, there are markings 'bt1' and '3'. Below the staff, there is a circled 'C'. The bottom staff is a single treble clef staff with a circled 'a' at the beginning and a circled 'b' above a specific melodic phrase.

Again at bars 13-15 we find the first motif in the key of D minor.

bt 13

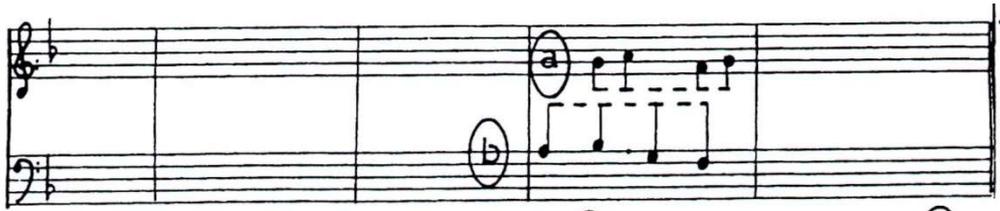


At bars 22-23 we find it both in the upper part and in the inner part.

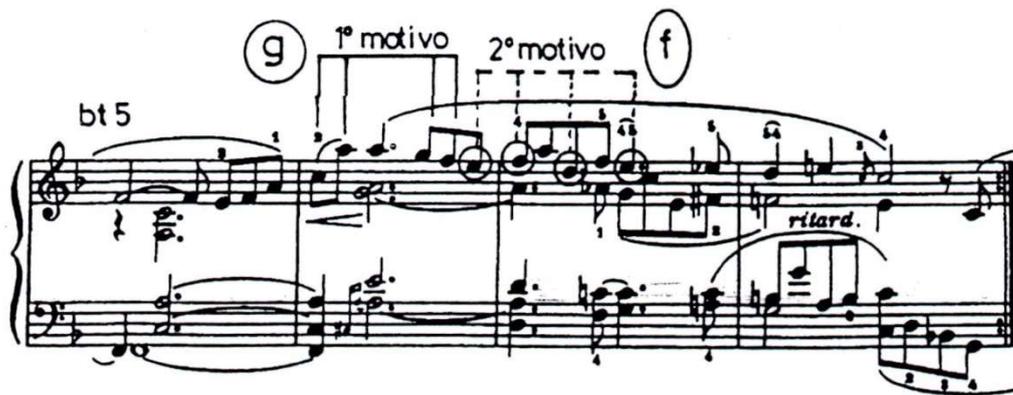


It is much more difficult to identify the second reason; it can be found in bar 3 in the original version in the right hand, while in the left hand we find the motif with the sounds La-B-F-G, with the third and fourth sounds interchanged.





The second motif can also be found at bar 6-7 in the upper part, a similar situation can also be found at bar 24.



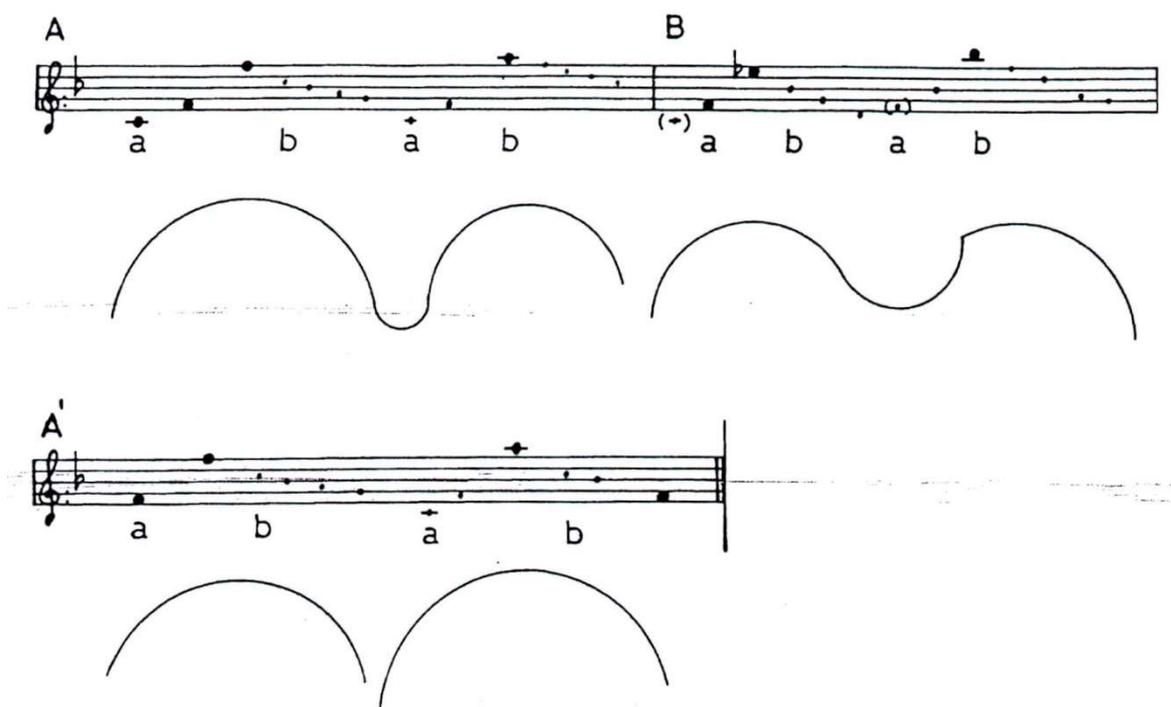
The form of the piece is tripartite with the following structure:

- A bars 1-8 in F Major
- B bars 9-16 in Bb Major
- A' bars 17-24 in F Major

Within the sections A and A', a series of apparent modulations can be noted which, however, reinforce the dynamic situations; instead it is interesting to note that the modulation to Bb major creates an interval of a fourth which resumes the ascending movement of the beginning.

This detail also helps to create a unitary sense that does not seem to evolve for the entire duration of the piece.

Rhythmically, both the dotted rhythm of the eighth note are missing (  ) and that of the four sixteenth notes (  ); here the support points change continuously, creating a sense of mobility, and even from the point of view of writing, a real accompaniment is missing: one can almost speak of a simple dialogue that is established between the upper line and the internal parts. In fact, as it is possible to notice, the trend is quite varied, there are moments in which the line throws them upwards (a), followed by as many softer folds (b) and in this phase of descent the melody favours the movement by joint degree to give a sense of softness.



The image displays two musical staves with corresponding waveform diagrams. The top staff, labeled 'A' and 'B', shows a melodic line with notes and arrows pointing to specific points labeled 'a' and 'b'. Below it, a waveform diagram shows a series of peaks and valleys corresponding to the notes. The bottom staff, labeled 'A', shows a similar melodic line with notes and arrows pointing to points labeled 'a' and 'b'. Below it, a waveform diagram shows a series of peaks and valleys corresponding to the notes.

With its introspective character full of *pathos*, the piece has become one of the most famous of the entire work. It seems that for a second the poet is immersed in his thoughts, letting himself be carried away by his dreams and getting lost in the world of his memories. The beginning of each sentence seems like a continuous striving towards the highest peaks, in spite of all the obstacles, sufferings and troubles which here vanish completely.

Therefore, a calm execution follows, without however falling into slowness; the performer will have to let himself go to complete abandonment, relaxing his nerves and letting himself be carried away by the charm that this music evokes.

## VIII. AM CAMIN (At the firesight)

This piece, although with a very different tempo and character, can be considered, as regards the thematic substance, an echo of the previous piece; this can be seen in the three initial sounds shifted an octave above which are the same as in the previous piece, furthermore the tonality remains the same and further confirmation of the link between the two pieces is the lack of the third motif.

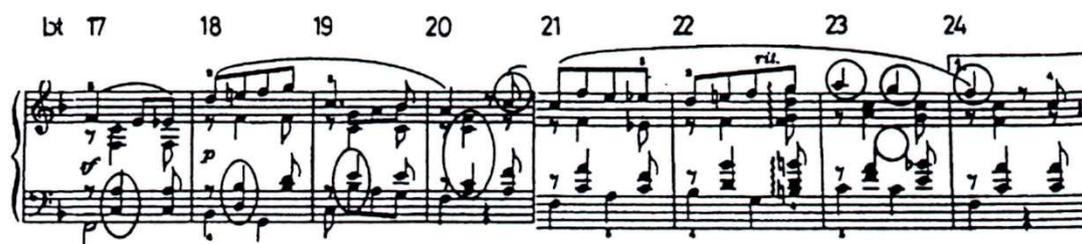
The first motif recurs several times, especially in the central section at bars 9-10, 14-15-16-17, in all these measures it is possible to identify the notes of the motif in the global line drawn from the upper part.

bt 9



Furthermore, at bar 20-21-22-23-24 the motif is repeated with the interval of a sixth, and C, although at a distance of two bars from the other three notes, is a support sound from which a series of quavers to arrive at the three quarter notes A-G-F.

bt 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24



The second motif is instead inserted in the thick weave of the internal parts and in different situations but at the same time as the first. This can already be seen from the first bars 1-8 where the left hand proposes an accompaniment formed by a low sound on the forte tempo and by two syncopated bichords, and it is precisely these notes that form the second motif.

bt 0 1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8

a b

This can also be seen in bars 26-27 where, again in the left hand, it is possible to identify the second motif.

bt 26

f g

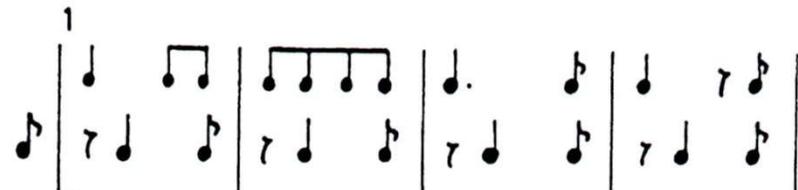
The form of the piece is tripartite:

A	bar 1-8	F Major	a (4) + a (4)
B	bar 9-16	F Major	
A	bar 17-24	F Major	a (4) + a (4)
CODA	bar 25-32	F Major	4 + 4

This is the first piece of the collection that has a final coda, made almost necessary by the continuous rhythmic and melodic movement; in fact the presence of the syncope creates a rhythmic phase shift that only the coda can restore to a calm situation.

The tonality, F major, is the same as *Träumerei* because the emotional situation is the same, as the idea of the blazing flame creates a particular psychological state that lies between dream and meditation, and the continuous renewal of the flame, which now it rises and then folds back on itself, creating a fascinating play of light, but the situation, despite its continuous evolution, is in reality always the same, just as the tonality is always F major and the accidentals that appear do not create modulations.

Here, too, the two rhythms are missing  ; on the other hand, syncope takes on considerable importance, which with the phase shift of the accents creates a continuous rocking. The upper melody, which respects the accents of the beat, is contaminated by the syncopations that move in the internal parts and the union of the two lines generates precisely the sense of disordered movement that is typical of the flame.

sezione A: parte superiore	
parte interna	
sezione B: parte superiore	
parte interna	

In the coda the syncopated rhythm is present only in bars 26 and 30, while in bars 25 and 29 the accents on the first and third quavers bring the rhythm back to the traditional schemes, also making one think of the image of the fire slowly losing intensity and the its movement becomes less confused.



From a melodic point of view, the melody line as a whole draws a wide arc which reaches its climax at the end of the reprise and which closes with a long descending line until it reaches the lowest point.

Looking at the individual sections, it can be noted that they draw as many arcs and it is possible to identify movements of ups and downs, broken melodies: all means adopted by Schumann to further highlight the flickering of the flames. Furthermore, it can be observed that the trend of the tail downwards, refers to a sense of closure of the speech, as if the fire were going out and everything is quieting down.



Also in this passage we are still immersed in the world of the poet's memories. This time however the font seems more nostalgic; memories come to mind of when he was a child who used to sit in front of the fireplace on winter evenings and watch the crackling fire. Therefore the sonority of the song must be rich and brilliant, to best reflect this splendid memory of the housewife flame.

## IX. RITTER VOM STECKENPFERD (Knight of the Hobbyhorse)

At first glance at the piece it would seem that the motifs are absent, but looking more closely it is possible to identify both the first and the second motif, while the third appears in a descending version.

The first and second motives are combined in the same melodic line at bars 1-8 and 17-24 as can be seen.

bt 1

The image displays a musical score for the piece 'Ritter vom Steckenpferd'. At the top, it is labeled 'bt 1'. The score consists of a piano accompaniment and four vocal staves. The piano part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand. The vocal staves are marked with 'm. d.' (mezzo-soprano) and 'm. a.' (alto). The second and third vocal staves are labeled '2° motivo' and '1° motivo' respectively, indicating the presence of specific motifs. The first vocal staff shows a melodic line that combines elements of the first and second motifs. The second vocal staff shows a descending version of the first motif. The third vocal staff shows a descending version of the second motif. The fourth vocal staff shows a melodic line that combines elements of the first and second motifs.

bt 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24

2° motivo

linea principale

1° motivo

Finally, it is possible to identify a reference to the third motif in the line descending by conjunct degree in the central part at bars 9-12 entrusted to the left hand.

(più sonoro)

(cantare)

La forma di questo brano è ternaria con:

- A bar 1-8 in C Major
- B bar 9-16 in F Major, D Minor with conclusion on the dominant of C Major
- A' bar 17-24 in C Major

In the first part, tonic and dominant harmonies alternate, while in the central part the harmonic situation is more varied as the keys touched are F major (IV degree of C), D minor (II of C) and finally the section closes on the dominant of C major; one can therefore think of a broad cadence formed by IV (F) – II (D) – V – I.

To determine these changes are substantially the pedals used abundantly during the piece. The dominant pedal in the bass in the first part creates a sense of suspension in fact all the tonic harmonies are found in second inversion; while the bass tonic pedal in the final part instead gives a sense of stability by transforming all the tonic harmonies to the fundamental state.

It is important to note that this is the first and only time that the key of C major is used, this is because Schumann believed that simple feelings are explained with simple keys, while more complex ones move in keys with a greater number of alterations; moreover, that of C major is a tonality in which simplicity, fluidity and innocence can be expressed with greater clarity; it is therefore conceivable that Schumann chose this tonality to express the innocence of the child playing on the rocking horse.

Also in this passage the most important figure is certainly the syncopé. Inserted as an accompaniment part in the previous piece, here it becomes the fundamental element: it is present both in the right hand with the bichords and in the left hand with the repeated pedal. However, the syncopation collides with the line proposed by the left hand, first in the inner part of section A and then in the lower part of section B, creating a shift of the support point well highlighted also by the accent placed in the melodic line.

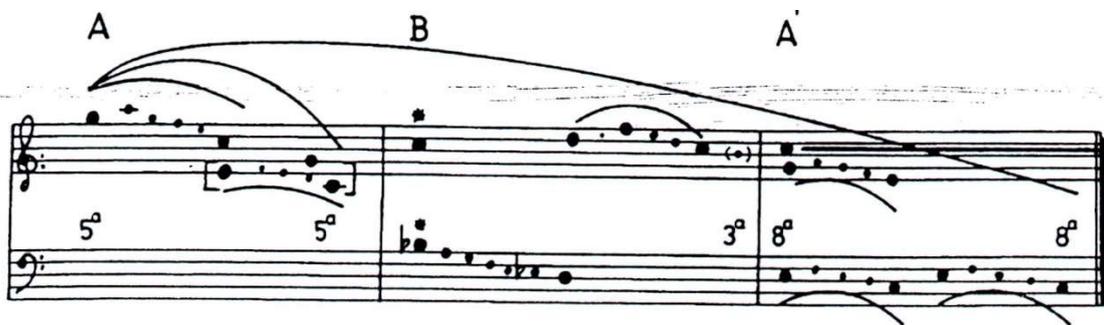
The image contains two musical diagrams, each with three staves labeled 'a', 'b', and 'c'.  
 The first diagram, labeled 'bt 1 e 2', shows:  
 - Staff 'a': A rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents, specifically a syncopated eighth note followed by a quarter note.  
 - Staff 'b': A series of quarter notes.  
 - Staff 'c': A series of quarter notes with a long horizontal line underneath, indicating a sustained pedal point.  
 The second diagram, labeled 'bt 9 e 10', shows:  
 - Staff 'a': Similar to the first diagram, with a syncopated eighth note and quarter note pattern.  
 - Staff 'b': A series of quarter notes with a long horizontal line underneath, indicating a sustained pedal point.  
 - Staff 'c': A series of quarter notes with a long horizontal line underneath, indicating a sustained pedal point.

This plurality of rhythmic figures generates a sense of movement which contrasts with that of static given by the pedal. All this may somehow suggest the

movement of the wooden horse which swings, but which remains stationary at the same time.

The melodic line as a whole draws a wide descending arc, but several melodic lines can be identified, almost all with a descending trend whose amplitude is always regular.

Overall, it can be thought of as a beginning of the game given by the initial impetus and then a progressive closure until the final static is reached, as if the tired child decided to abandon the game.



A peculiarity of this piece is precisely the accent on the third movement, very significant, which best conveys the idea of movement of the child on the rocking horse. Therefore, the beginning of each bar must not be supported too much, in order not to neutralize the effect desired by Schumann; moreover, the rhythm of each bar must be well marked, making all the notes heard well so as not to fall into a too frantic and hasty execution.

## X. FAST ZU ERNST (Almost Too Serious)

In this piece all three motifs are inserted in the first eight bars; and as we can see in the example the first and second overlap in the opening three bars, then the first and third in the following bars.

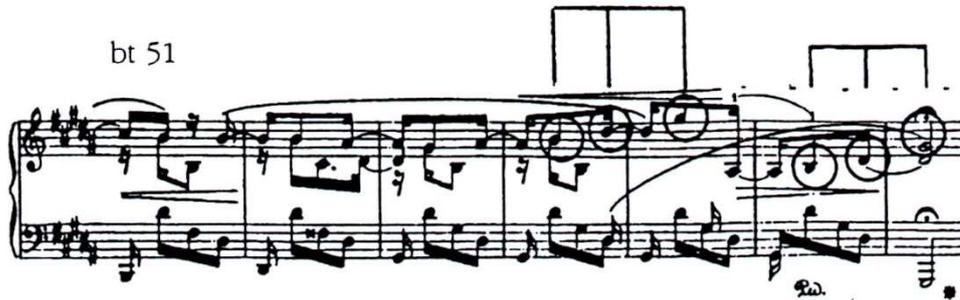
bt 1

The image shows a musical score for the first eight bars of a piece. The top staff is a piano score with a dynamic marking 'p' and a 'ritard.' marking. The bottom three staves show the first, second, and third motifs respectively, with brackets indicating their durations and overlaps.

We find the same situation in bars 9-16.

The image shows a musical score for bars 9-16 of a piece. The top staff is a piano score with a 'ritard.' marking. The bottom three staves show the first, second, and third motifs respectively, with brackets and dashed lines indicating their durations and overlaps.

In the conclusion of the piece we find a small coda where the head of the first motif is re-proposed; a first time in measures 54-55 and a second time, moved to a lower octave, in measures 56-57.



As regards the shape, in this case it is difficult to indicate a precise shape; moreover, the writing of the piece remains the same from beginning to end and therefore it is not possible to identify a contrasting section.

To define the shape it is necessary to rely on the tonal play and on the crowns present with a certain regularity.

Starting from this last aspect we can divide the piece into different sections:

- a bars 1-8 fermata
- b bars 9-16 fermata
- c bars 17-21 fermata
- d bars 22-34 fermata
- b bars 35-42 fermata
- c bars 43-47 fermata
- d' bars 48-57 fermata

Sections b and c occur twice in the course of the piece, while the d section is formed the first time by thirteen bars and the second time by ten bars and finally the section a seems to be present only once.

Taking the tonal aspect as a reference now, we can find confirmations of what is suggested by the crowns, in fact we have:

- a bar 1-8 G# Minor and B Major
- b bar 9-16 B Major and D# Minor
- c bar 17-21 Dominant of G# Minor
- d bar 22-34 G# Minor, B Major e G# Minor
- b bar 35-42 B Major and D# Minor
- c bar 43-47 Dominant of G# Minor
- d' bar 48-57 G# Minor, B Major and G# Minor

The harmonic aspect of the piece is rather simple despite the syncopated trend; but it is important to note that on the weak tempo there is an alternation of consonances and dissonances, while on the forte tempo there are almost always dissonances. This procedure makes us notice a certain tension towards the major mode, for example in the first four bars, where we go from G sharp minor to B major:

bt 1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8

          c      c      d      c      d      c

armonie I      V<sup>7</sup>      I      A#<sup>6</sup>      I<sup>6</sup>      V<sup>7</sup>      I      I<sup>6</sup>

SOL min      SI Magg

c = consonante  
d = dissonante

Finally, the coronets, as can be clearly seen, are all placed on tonic or dominant harmonies and this choice determines a sense of suspension which softens the

conclusion of the individual phrases and transforms the piece into a single homogeneous discourse which fades away only on the last agreement.

Also in this piece the syncopation imposes itself on the other rhythmic figures creating an unchanged effect from the beginning to the end, this because the slower progress compared to the previous piece, the lack of tension and the overlapping of rhythmic figures that integrate and do not enter in contrast, they create a relaxed, almost hypnotic situation.

parte superiore

parte centrale

parte inferiore

More specifically, the lower part can be broken down into two figures: the lowest note, with a harmonic function, given on the strong tempo of each measure and the three upbeat sixteenth notes, placed in a more central area of the keyboard. This last writing therefore merges with the middle one characterized by the lack of beat, therefore we have a set of figures that accompany the bass harmony which is the only sound placed on the strong time:

mano sinistra

Furthermore, this accompaniment divided into two registers is made homogeneous by the systematic use of the damper pedal. But this type of writing

on three registers of the piano broadens the sound range and gives a perspective depth to the sounds as the example shows us.

A musical score consisting of three staves. The top staff is labeled 'melodia' and contains a melodic line with various note values and rests. The middle staff is labeled 'voce mediana (accomp.)' and contains a vocal line with notes and rests. The bottom staff is labeled 'basso' and contains a bass line with notes and rests. The score is written in a common time signature and includes dynamic markings like 'p' and 'f'.

The melodic line as a whole draws a large arc, but looking at the individual sections, they in turn form a series of arcs that can be broken down into smaller arcs, as can be seen from the example.

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The staff contains a melodic line divided into three sections labeled 'a', 'b', and 'c'. Each section is topped with a large, smooth arc that spans the width of the section, illustrating the overall shape of the melodic line.

A diagram illustrating the breakdown of the melodic sections. Section 'a' is shown with two smaller arcs, labeled 'A' and 'B'. Section 'b' is also shown with two smaller arcs, labeled 'A' and 'B'. Section 'c' is shown with one smaller arc. This demonstrates how the larger arcs of the individual sections can be further subdivided.

A musical staff in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps. The staff contains a melodic line. A large arc is drawn over the first section, while smaller arcs are drawn over the second and third sections, showing the hierarchical structure of the melodic line.

A diagram showing the overall structure of the melodic line. It features a large arc labeled 'A' that covers the first section, labeled 'x'. A smaller arc labeled 'a' covers the second section. A final section is labeled 'CODA' and is not covered by an arc, indicating it is a separate structural element.

Finally, as we have already said, it can be noted that in correspondence with the crowns there is always a second inversion chord which concludes the phrase without definitively closing a section, while the last chord is finally in the root state and in the melodic octave position so as to close the entire musical discourse.

As the title already suggests, this piece has a more melancholic character almost of resignation. It seems that the poet abandons himself in a moment of self-confidence, of his own experiences, disappointments and broken dreams. The piece will therefore have a thoughtful expression, given by an execution attentive to the depth of the touch, the broad phrasing and the continuity of movement: all elements that make this picture so intimate.

## XI. FÜRCHTENMACHEN (Frightening)

Finally, after so many transformations, the first motif here reappears in its original state; however, his notes are not close, but it is necessary to jump from the first to the fourth bar to find the second G sound.

In the first eight bars the other two motifs are also present as can be seen from the example.

bt 1

1° motivo

2° motivo (per moto contrario)

3° motivo (per moto contrario)

Continuing, it can be noted that from bars 9-12 the second motif is above all present.

bt 9

*Piu presto*

2° motivo

As regards the form of the piece, this time we are in the presence of a Rondo with the refrain (a) always the same, and two episodes (b) and (c) decidedly contrasting with respect to (a):

- a bar 1-8 from E Minor to G Major
- b bar 9-12 from E Minor to C Major
- a bar 13-20 bars 1-8 are the same
- c bar 21-38 from G Major to E Minor
- a bar 29-36 bars 1-8 are the same
- b bar 37-40 bars 9-12 are the same
- a bar 41-48 bars 1-8 are the same

Tonally, the piece experiences a misunderstanding as it begins in E minor and concludes in G major after having touched the two keys several times.

However, it is necessary to underline the choice of tonalities which, according to Schumann's thought, are suitable for expressing simple and childish feelings because they present only two alterations in key. G major is the tonality of light-heartedness, lightness, while E minor is more suitable for expressing an intense and thoughtful feeling.

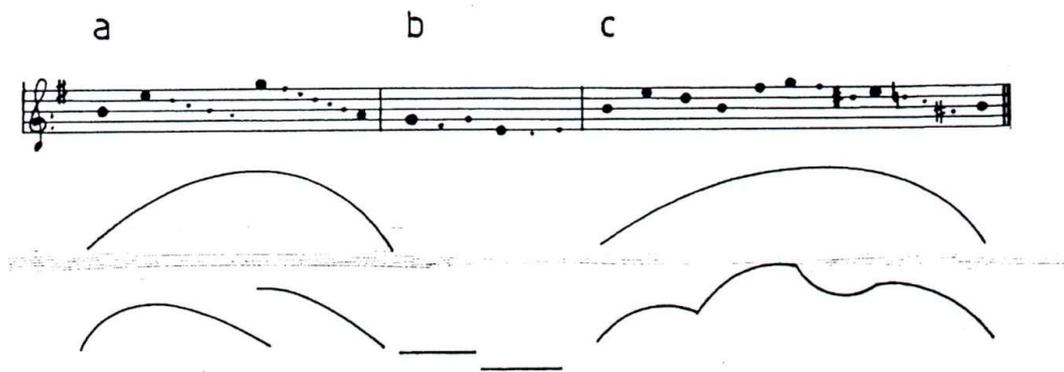
Rhythmically, the syncopation disappears completely, but only the right-hand backbeat remains in section (b). However, almost forgotten figures reappear in the dotted quaver  and sixteenths. Therefore the sections also diverge from each other in terms of rhythm: section (a) is more fluid, section (b) more moved and pulsing, while section (c) is nervous and snappy.

The writing of the piece is complex as there are several lines in dialogue with each other and there is no upper hand of one hand over the other, for example as

occurs at the beginning where the initial melodic line entrusted to the right hand then returns to bar 5 in the left hand.

In section (b) the singing is this time in the bass and the accompaniment is moved to the upper part.

The atmosphere that dominates is almost feverish, there is a sense of uncertainty and instability also due to the tonality used, one can think that the melody apparently moves without a precise direction; in reality sections (b) and (c) create contrasting movements with the linearity of (a) which instead draws a wide arc:

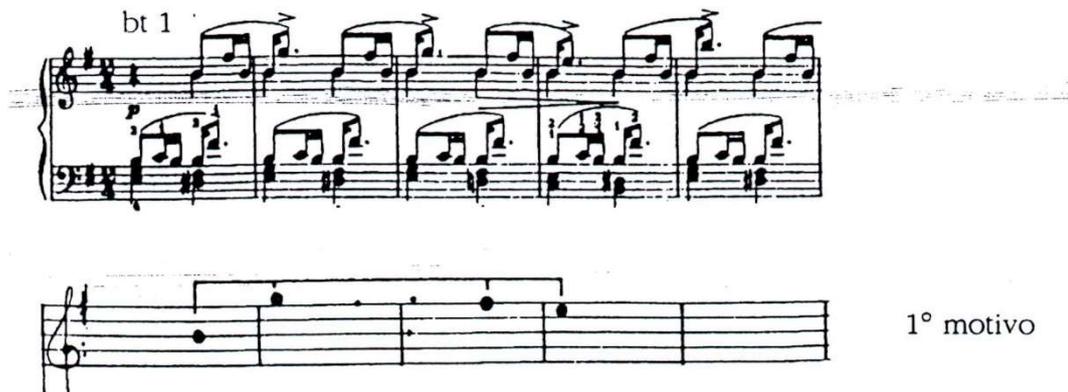


Throughout the piece, the first inversion position is the privileged one, and only at the end do we find a tonic harmony in the fundamental state. All of this creates an added sense of movement and dread that subsides only at the end of the piece. This "frightening" character of the piece is rendered with a flow that is sometimes more flowing and agitated which perfectly conveys this feeling of fear for who knows what monstrous creatures that animate the tales of fairy tales. These predominant episodes alternate with calmer and quieter moments, as if the fear had suddenly vanished thanks to the resurgence of sweet and tender thoughts.

## XII. KIND IM EINSCHLUMMERN (Child Falling Asleep)

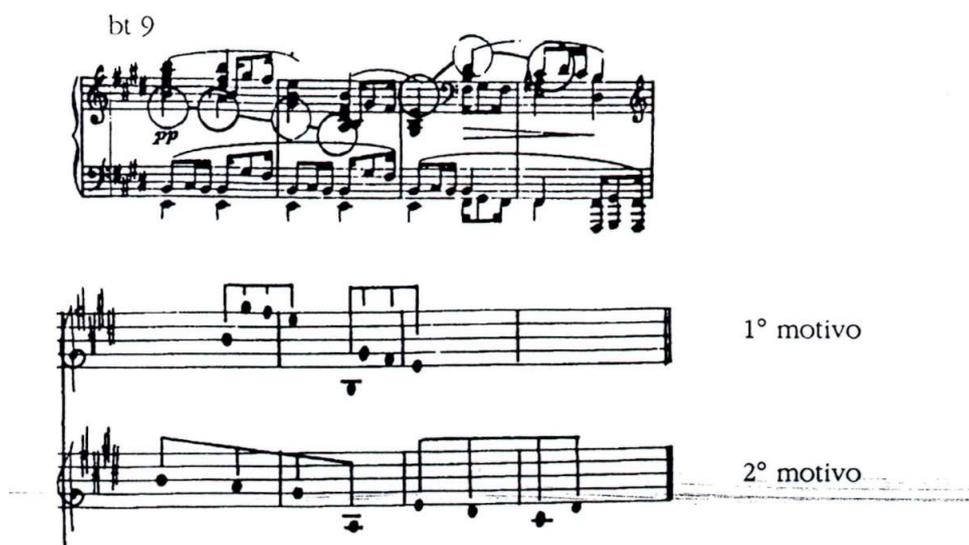
This song is one of the most expressive, with a very deep and nuanced range of sounds that generate a sense of tranquility as already suggested by the title.

The first two motifs are present in various moments of the composition, the first is audible in the first measures and in measures 9-10.



The image shows a piano score for the first motif. The top part is a grand staff with treble and bass clefs, labeled 'bt 1' and 'p'. It contains five measures of music. Below it is a single staff labeled '1° motivo' showing the melodic line of the first motif.

The second motif is present in two different moments with some transformations: at bar 9 -10, the first two sounds are reversed and the last one moved to a lower octave, and at bar 11-12, the first two sounds are reversed.



The image shows a piano score for the second motif. The top part is a grand staff with treble and bass clefs, labeled 'bt 9' and 'pp'. It contains four measures of music. Below it are two single staves: the top one is labeled '1° motivo' and the bottom one is labeled '2° motivo', showing the melodic lines of the two different transformations of the motif.

Again in bars 17-24 the second reason is widely proposed again with some modifications.

bt 17

The image displays a musical score for a piano piece. The top system consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with various ornaments and a 'ritard.' (ritardando) marking above it. The bass staff contains a rhythmic accompaniment. The bottom system is a single staff with chord symbols: 'a', 'b', 'c', and 'e', which correspond to the bars of the piece.

The formal structure is tripartite with the central part divided into two sections:

- A a bar 1-8 in E Minor
- B b bar 9-16 in E Minor
  - c bar 17-24 in A Major, B Major and G Major
- C a bar 25-32 in E Minor

The middle section B does not create a sharp contrast from a writing point of view; but there are instead some modifications, for example the keys touched have different characteristics, in fact E major is suitable for expressing a sense of clarity and serenity, A major instead expresses grace, simplicity and finally G major expresses playfulness, freshness. They are all major keys that create a new, more open and serene climate.



reversed , the four sixteenth notes do not appear all together, but are the unifying element together with the syncope .

Throughout the piece the rhythm remains almost constant following the sum of all the rhythms presented, and it is possible to identify the presence of two musical figures used as rhythmic-melodic ostinatos.



All these compositional choices made by Schumann create a situation of calm, serenity; it is a writing that entrusts both the melodic and the accompaniment to both hands and it is therefore possible to identify a single melodic line obtained from the sum of the two parts, and this melodic line that occupies a sound space of almost two octaves suggests an escape in the world you are dreams. This continuous upward movement, alternating with folds that always return to the same notes, evokes the image of the child sleeping and moving around in the cot, disturbed for an instant by a bad dream and immediately reassured by something more reassuring.

In section (b), the writing is more massive, there are chords of six/seven simultaneous sounds, but the dynamic, however, remains very contained, and this lightens the texture; section (c) is the most varied both for the tonal play and for the writing, the melodic line is articulated and complex both for the interweaving of different parts and for the presence of sounds extraneous to the harmony and therefore dissonant. All this creates a small change in climate which does not, however affect the rather serene and lulling general atmosphere.

Overall, the melodic line is very articulated, you can see a rapid ascending movement followed by a melodic stasis; in section (b) the melody plunges downwards and returns again towards the high register to re-propose the previous

descent. In section (c) the line slowly returns upwards and then slowly closes in the final section.

However, everything is anchored to a rather static harmony, but dampened by the melodic variety that gives the speech a sense of evanescence, of suspension between reality and the dream world.

We have almost reached the end of the day and the lids of our tired eyes droop, the noises go out and everything is silent; only the pale light of the candle remains which illuminates the face of the child in his rocking cradle. The initial rhythm of the piece already seems to suggest this lulling movement, but suddenly the transition to E major brings a little smile to the child's lips which brings him back to a peaceful and serene sleep.

### XIII. DER DICHTER SPRICHT (The Poet Speaks)

We have reached the end of the day, the story is finished and now the poet, leaving the scene, presents his report.

This is the piece in which the motifs are least present, we find a quotation of the second motif and two of the first in measure 12.

bt 12

The image shows a musical score for measure 12. The top part is a piano accompaniment in treble and bass clefs, marked with *rit.* and *pp*. Below it are two extracted motifs. The first motif, labeled "1° motivo", is a melodic line in treble clef. The second motif, labeled "2° motivo", is a bass line in bass clef.

The second motif, on the other hand, is already inserted as an embellishment in measures 3 and 6, 15 and 18; while the third reason is not mentioned.

However, a new melodic design takes over, characterized by an interval of a diminished fifth ( F#-C ; G-D# ).

bt 1

The image shows a musical score for measure 1. The top part is a piano accompaniment in treble and bass clefs, marked with *pp*. Below it are two extracted motifs. The first motif, labeled "nuovo motivo", is a melodic line in treble clef. The second motif, labeled "2° motivo", is a bass line in bass clef.

The form of the piece is tripartite:

A	bar 1-8	in G Major and A Minor
B	bar 9-12	in G Major and E Minor
A	bar 13-20	in G Major and A Minor
CODA	bar 21-25	in G Major

The piece is very particular, almost unreal and introspective; unreal because it is decidedly detached from the others and Schumann proposes a series of new situations, first of all the basic motifs have almost completely disappeared and the short quotations are only a reminder of the real motifs inserted moreover in a very particular context which presents them as in a timeless dream. Secondly, the completely new choral-style writing gives the piece a calm and meditative flow.

In particular, at bar 12, dilated to excess, it seems to enter an almost "timeless" context where, however, one perceives a line in which the first two motifs appear; the effect is fantastic because the motifs hidden within a larger sentence slowly emerge to the surface, like a memory surfacing in memory. Furthermore, crowns and long values further enhance the sense of a slow return to a past world; but immediately, the image vanishes, replaced by the new motif. It is interesting to note that this motif appears no less than six times: the first proposal is in G major; the second is in A minor, and finally in E minor.

Rhythmically, the minims appear; these two elements underline the calm and regular pace of the choir in contrast to the freedom of the central section.



## CONCLUSION

From the analysis carried out it can be seen that the *Kinderszenen* were written and intended for a private performance. Schumann was particularly fond of compositional cycles and was very attentive to symbols, in fact in this case the derivation of themes from elementary cells becomes for him the principle of composition to such an extent that with only three cells he gives life to the thirteen small pieces that form the *Kinderszenen*.

In Schumann's cycles the unifying principles can be sought in literature, in the feeling aroused by a text or a spectacle of nature or even by scenes of family life.

It is immediately noticeable how the entire work contains quotations in the titles that refer directly to the world of childhood; titles such as *Von Fremden Ländern und Menschen* (Of foreign countries and peoples), *Fürchtenmachen* (To be scary) or *Kind im Einschlummern* (The child falls asleep), are explicit references to the fantasy world that children often read in books and fairy tales for childhood, where in distant lands, among green and deep forests, witches, trolls, and wolves roam; archetypes of childhood fear, obstacles placed in the path of the hero, who will have to defeat them to complete his mission, and bring the fairy tale to a conclusion. So Schumann inserted elements with a strong fairy-tale reference in the album titles, probably inspired by the novels and fairy tales of the Grimm brothers, of which Schumann was a keen and passionate connoisseur.

In this sense, it could therefore be assumed that Schumann had a particular idea about childhood and musical education. Surely at an age in which the child was conceived as a being to be made into an adult as soon as possible, Schumann made a paradigm shift.

In fact, childhood, for the society of the Restoration, was a temporary moment where the child had to be educated strictly, since this stage of the human being was characterized by moments of negativity, by whims linked to his temporary nature and destined for change to which the boy tried to resist.

As far as possible, therefore, it was the task of the educator to address the child and speak to him in the language of adults because it was the adult that the infant

had to tend to without delay: the child had to learn to be in the world, to think like an adult and put behind absurd reveries completely inappropriate to grow up.

On the other hand, the pedagogical perspective on which Schumann moves is different; for Schumann the child, with his infantile mentality, his very particular approach to the world, his aesthetic and intellectual categories and his whole way of being is a value in itself. In this sense, for Robert Schumann, educating a child musically means identifying psychological and existential categories linked to childhood and elaborating musical works in consonance with them and in relation to the child's way of being and in particular with his way of experiencing the world, that is to say with that ability to marvel at every new and unexpected manifestation.

However, the titles, as already mentioned above, must not mislead us, they must not be interpreted simply in a descriptive way; they allude not so much to childish games as to moments of the childish soul. In short, the allegorical-symbolic meaning that it contains must be sought behind each title.

In this regard, the passage entitled *Fürchtenmachen* could arouse much attention if viewed from this perspective. The title undoubtedly refers to a situation of fear told in fairy tales haunted by evil spirits and slightly mischievous creatures like children sometimes are!

In this regard, Schumann's piece also musically presents this mischievous, somewhat crazy and unpredictable whimsy that probably represents the wildest, most primitive and instinctual nature of the child, often rebellious and disobedient to the rules of adults.

Childhood is therefore seen by this composer as a primordial age in which our being is still intact, beyond any social relationship, any worry and convention; so what wins out is a state of pure creativity.

The freshness, ingenuity, native strength and spontaneity of the child are therefore well suited to art in general and to the creative activity of the artist where the social superstructures, the worries with which every adult is overloaded, dissolve as if by enchantment through the purifying act of creating, everything regains that amazement and clarity so spontaneous in every child.

In the end it is Schumann himself who reveals to us the profound meaning of the entire piano work already from the simple reading of the last title of the album *Der*

*Dichter Sricht* (The Poet Speaks): the musician himself is the child of the *Kinderszenen*.

The message that Schumann wants to leave with this work is much deeper and goes beyond the beauty of the music itself: childhood has a value in and of itself, the value of childhood is good for the whole community, for humanity itself and must be preserved and removed from any attempt to disfigure, harness or demean it.

In addition to this story that emerges from it, I also believe that the three motifs revealed by the analysis of the pieces certainly constitute a subtle bond between them, like a sort of red thread that unites the individual pieces: a bond that is not static, but always in flux, which adapts to individual circumstances through changes of tonality, manner and writing. However, this must not lead to excessively highlighting the motifs in the executive phase, as it would risk distorting the passages and the entire piece. However, the important thing is to be aware of these more or less hidden links so as to arrive at a reasoned and conscious execution without thus falling into a superficial interpretation attentive only to the graphic sign, to the crescendo or diminuendo, or to the metronome tempo; thus not expressing the true feeling or state of mind intrinsic to each piece and even more to the entire work.

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