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## PREFACE

### History

Schumann's Piano Concerto traces its origins, through the first movement, to a single-movement Phantasie in A minor for piano and orchestra which was completed in May 1841 (his "symphonic year") and revised at the beginning of 1843. Clara Schumann, who had long wanted a major work for piano and orchestra from Schumann, played through the Phantasie with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra in 1841 but, although she played it again in 1843, it was never publicly performed, nor a publisher found, even though they were both happy with the work. In the summer of 1845 in Dresden, where they had now moved, Schumann revised the Phantasie and added a second and third movement to form what is described on the surviving manuscript of the full score (**AFS**, the only manuscript of the concerto; see page 100) as "Concerto for piano . . . with accompaniment . . .".<sup>1</sup> It was premiered on 4 December 1845 at a special Clara Schumann concert with Dresden musicians, independent of the regular subscription concerts, conducted by their friend and supporter Ferdinand Hiller, the dedicatee. The performance was critically successful and a second performance was arranged at the more prestigious Leipzig Gewandhaus at the 11th subscription concert on New Year's Day 1846, under its conductor Mendelssohn. This performance was an even greater success than the first, and the work was immediately accepted by the Leipzig publisher Breitkopf & Härtel and quickly established itself as a repertory work. Schumann made corrections to the orchestral parts for the performance he conducted with Clara at the Lower Rhine Music Festival in May 1853.

This was not Schumann's first attempt at a piano concerto. Early sketches and diary entries refer to concerto beginnings in a bravura style (while he was intent on a virtuoso career *c.* 1827–28) and even to a complete movement in summer 1831, of which nothing survives.<sup>2</sup> Schumann was by 1838 already radically reconsidering the future of the concerto genre in reviews of new works in his musical paper *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, notably proposing that "we must await the genius who will show us a brilliant new way of combining orchestra with piano".<sup>3</sup> A surviving and partially-complete movement for piano and orchestra in D minor of 1838/9 (a sketch of four bars of a scherzo suggests it was planned as a concerto) demonstrates just such a new approach, with the piano often in exchange with the orchestral instruments.<sup>4</sup>

The intimate relation of piano and orchestra in the Phantasie in A minor develops this quality much further. Formally, the Phantasie holds a balance between a typically Schumannesque freedom in the contrast of tempo and character within an essentially monothematic movement, and traditional concerto features – the latter demonstrated through the use of first-movement form with a clear second theme; the central elaboration section (it is here, at bars 156–259, that the contrasting Andante espressivo and Passionato passages are placed); the (almost literal) recapitulation of the exposition; the powerful cadenza, here integral to the work rather than optional, and coda. When finalizing the manuscript of the concerto full score **AFS**, Schumann clearly sought to strengthen this traditional outline by substituting a more powerful orchestral tutti to conclude the exposition and usher in the Andante espressivo theme, replacing the original eight bars by 24 (bars 132–155 in the present edition).

The direct relation between the Phantasie and concerto movement is confirmed by much documentation. Most obviously, Schumann's dating of the movement on the flyleaf of his personal copy of the piano score of the concerto **PS1** states "First movement, previously a self-contained piece entitled Phantasie, written in Leipzig in May of 1841". Furthermore, in Schumann's (part) autograph full score **AFS**, the title includes "(Allegro quasi Fantasia, Intermezzo und Rondo)". **AFS** was made by a copyist first inserting the piano part on the top two staves, giving Schumann the opportunity to rewrite, and thus revise,

his original orchestration, and to make amendments to the piano score. The only major textual change concerning the piano part is in the Passionato passage of the elaboration section, where the composer gives the full material to the piano rather than as an accompaniment to the melodic part in the orchestra, which explains why it is substantially more difficult for the soloist than the rest of the movement.<sup>5</sup>

In linking the second and third movements by an evocative recall of the work's opening Schumann creates a composite second part to balance the first. Indeed, the programme of the first (Dresden) performance specifies: "Allegro affettuoso / Andantino. Rondo". In linking the second and final sections – as also in dispensing with the orchestral exposition in the first movement, instead initiating a direct engagement of piano and orchestra – Schumann seems closest to Weber's *Konzertstück* and its successors, including Mendelssohn (still one of Schumann's primary models for orchestral writing) in his piano concertos and violin concerto. However, in the inspired continuity and energy of his poetic lyricism, Schumann transcends any models, creating what is perhaps the most beloved of the Romantic piano concertos.

### Performance Practice

The history of the work is dominated by Clara Schumann's promotion of it over a period of 40 years or so. Robert Schumann never played the work, since he had given up public performance by the time of its composition. All evidence is that Clara played it to his great satisfaction, and it was obviously meant for her.

On the basis of her experience she made two separate editions in the 1880s, one as part of the Complete Works (**CE**) published by Breitkopf & Härtel in 1883 under her supervision, the other for her own "Instructive Edition" (**CSI**) of the complete piano music.<sup>6</sup> The latter, like all performer editions before the advent of recordings, was intended to give the soloist a fuller picture of how she believed the music should be played, adding many expressive and dynamic markings not present in the first edition (the Complete Works edition also has added markings, though the two editions are far from uniform in these regards). These numerous variants with the first edition, though of absorbing interest regarding changing performance style, cannot be regarded as primary sources for a critical edition. They involve such matters as the broadening of phrasing, changes to dynamic markings and articulation (including the substitution of wedges for staccato dots), additional (sometimes cautionary) markings and, above all, complete pedal markings and fingerings.

One further reason for her changes is likely to have been the developing character of the piano. The Schumanns' house instrument during the composition of the concerto was a Graf of six and a half octaves which was radically different from the more modern grands she favoured later, with their greater attack – with deeper fall of the keys – and sustaining power and volume, largely achieved by greater string tension and the single cast-iron frame developed after Schumann's death. The larger size of orchestras by this time would also have encouraged greater projection from the pianist. Schumann himself only anticipated eight first and eight second violins, four–five violas, nine cellos and three basses, thus a maximum of 45–46 instruments for the Zwickau performance of his Symphony in C on 10 July 1847, a programme that also included the Piano Concerto. Smaller-scale performances may also explain Schumann's rather fast metronome marks, though he may also have been accustomed to setting his marking at the beginning without allowing for any relaxation of tempo, or he may have based the tempo on an overly-fast imagined rendition rather than an actual performance.<sup>7</sup>

Of greater value to an overall sense of performance style are the written records of Clara's performances. A description survives of her jubilee performance at the Leipzig Gewandhaus in 1878. Moreover,

# Concerto, Op. 54

Ferdinand Hiller freundschaftlich zugeeignet

Allegro affettuoso  $\text{♩} = 84$

Piano Solo

Accompaniment

4

Ww., Hn.

*fp*

*espress.*

*sf*

9

Solo

*p espressivo*

*sf*

Str.

*p pizz.*

15

VI. I

20

Vc.

23

Ped.

## CRITICAL COMMENTARY

### Sources

#### Solo Piano Part (Piano 1)

##### Primary Sources

- PS1** Proof copy of first edition, first issue. Schumann's personal copy with annotations. Text as **PS2** without price or plate number on title page. (1846) Location: Schumann-Haus, Zwickau (Archiv Nr. 4501, Bd. 9, A4).
- PS2** First edition, first issue. Wrapper description: Concerto/für das Pianoforte/mit Begleitung des Orchesters/componiert/und/FERDINAND HILLER/freundschaftlich zugeeignet/von/ROBERT SCHUMANN/Op. 54./Eigentum der Verleger./Leipzig, bei Breitkopf & Härtel. Pr. mit Begleitung d. Orch. 5 Thlr. [Thaler]/für Pianof. allein 2 [Thlr.]/7413./ Eintragen in das Vereinsarchiv [1846]. Location: The British Library. Shelf Mark g.715.cc.(2.).
- PS3** First edition, second issue. Text identical with **PS1/2** and with added price indication on title page of "mit Begleitung eines 2. Pianof. 3 Thlr. 10 Ngr. (Neugroschen)". Plate numbers 7415. 10121 [1862] Location: Musgrave Collection, New York.

##### Evaluation

**PS1** has very few annotations, only some of which correct the engraving errors/composer oversights in the music text. None of these is corrected in subsequent issues **PS2** and **PS3**. See Variants and Remarks for descriptions of these. **PS1** was not made from the copyist's text in **AFS** (see below), but from an intervening copy or copies, either by Schumann or a copyist, evident by the significant changes between them.

##### Primary Reference Source

**AFS** (Part) Autograph Manuscript full orchestral score. Location: Schumann-Haus, Zwickau (Archiv Nr. 89.50.27/7/G). Reproduced in the English preface of Robert Schumann, *Piano Concerto in A minor, Opus 54. Facsimile Reproduction of Autograph Score*, ed. Heinrich-Heine-Institut, Düsseldorf, with prefatory notes by Joseph A. Kruse and Akio Mayela and an introduction by Bernhard R. Appel, Kassel (Bärenreiter), 1996.

##### Secondary Reference Sources

- CE** *Robert Schumann Werke*, ed. Clara Schumann [J. Brahms and others], Leipzig (Breitkopf & Härtel), 1881–1893; Serie III: Concerte und Concertstücke für Orchester, Nr. 16: Concert für Pianoforte mit Begleitung des Orchesters, 1883.
- CSI** *Klavier-Werke von Robert Schumann*, erste mit Fingersatz und Vortragbezeichnung versehene instruktive Ausgabe, nach den Handschriften und persönlicher Überlieferung herausgegeben von Clara Schumann, 6 vols.; supplementary vol. (vol. 7): Konzerte, Leipzig (Breitkopf & Härtel), 1887, pp. 418–463.

#### Orchestral Reduction (Piano 2)

There is no record of Schumann's having completed or mentioned a second piano part for rehearsal purposes with the solo part (although he did offer the publisher an orchestral reduction for second piano for the Phantasie).<sup>1</sup> **PO** appeared from Breitkopf & Härtel, though without date, or arranger's name, to accompany the second issue of the solo version around the time of the publication of the first printed edition of the full score, which had been held back conditional upon

the success of the work in the solo version with only orchestral parts (1846; plate number 7415), as was customary. This was an independent second part intended to be used with the solo part (though neither carried bar numbers): its first text page carries the heading "Concerte/ Pianoforte II" [Plate number 10121] and its title page is identical to **PS3**, both now indicating the three available formats: the solo edition, the two piano edition, and the full orchestral score [Plate number 10317] [1862].<sup>2</sup>

However, **PO** gives a very rudimentary sense of the effect of the orchestral score and also has a number of errors and omissions. It was developed largely from the very simplified continuity transcription that Schumann included of orchestral passages in **PS1**, which also indicates the orchestral leads, though **PO** has no such indications. This text, though a first edition, has no source status, as it appeared after Schumann's death and is not his arrangement.

Arrangements with a fully integrated Piano 2 orchestral reduction on alternating systems appeared only from the 1880s and 1890s by Ernst Pauer, Karl Klindworth and Adolf Ruthardt.<sup>3</sup> Ruthardt's edition, the first Peters Edition of the two piano arrangement, gives, in the present editor's opinion, the best effect of the orchestral part and is here reprinted in essentially the form in which it appears in Ruthardt's edition. However, since the Ruthardt orchestral reduction was naturally edited to accord with the editing of the solo part in regard to phrasing and dynamics, it has here been re-edited to accord with the presently edited solo part.

### Editorial Method

#### Piano 1

**PS1** is chosen as primary source for the present edition because it represents the only printed text of the piano part on which Schumann made comments, or appears to have done so. Though few of the annotations can be certainly ascribed to him, they at least show that he made no significant changes to this text which, since he was also a highly competent pianist, must represent the most authoritative source of this part.

The editorial method is to correct both obvious engraving errors and other inconsistencies through reference to these annotations or through internal comparison of parallel passages for inconsistencies and errors overlooked by Schumann. Standardizations to modern practice affect only beaming, the re-allocation of clefs where the range is awkward to read, and the insertion of balancing diminuendo hairpins where implicit. In view of the revision stage that exists between **AFS** and **PS1**, the numerous variants between them are incidental to the establishment of a critical text other than for reference to specific inconsistencies in **PS1**. They are compared in Robert Schumann, *Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke*, *ibid.* pp. 188–194.

<sup>1</sup> Unpublished letter of 14 August 1841. Reproduced in Robert Schumann, *Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke*, *ibid.* p. 185.

<sup>2</sup> Advertised in *Hofmeisters Monatsbericht*, vol. 33, 1861, p. 25. Since the Piano 2 part was reissued in identical format as part of Breitkopf & Härtel's series "Clavier-Concerte alter und neuer Zeit" ... hg. v. Karl Reinecke (1877?), it is to be assumed that Reinecke was the arranger.

<sup>3</sup> Schumann, *Concerto/Op. 54/Two Pianos*, Augener Edition No. 8405A [1881]. "Revised with additional Second Piano accompaniment by E. Pauer", Plate No. 5789; Klindworth's edition is advertised in *Hofmeisters Monatsbericht* (vol. 59, March 1887, p. 143); Schumann, *Konzert für Klavier und Orchester/von/Robert Schumann/mit Begleitung eines zweiten Klaviers/herausgegeben/von/Adolf Ruthardt/Leipzig/C. F. Peters* (Plate No. 8324).