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**THE CHARACTER PIECES OF CLARA WIECK-SCHUMANN AND FANNY
MENDELSSOHN-HENSEL: A STYLISTIC COMPARISON OF GENDER
TRAITS AND IDIOMS PROPER TO THE GENRE**

THESIS SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF ARTS

**IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTERS OF ARTS**

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

BY IOLANDA MARIA LUCCIOLA

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&
Dr. Paul Merkley**

December 2000

Ottawa, Ontario

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ABSTRACT

Based on recent feminist work in the field of musicology, this thesis combines a “gender sensitive approach” with a “common practice technique” in order to provide insights into the fundamental questions raised by feminist scholars. I first became interested in this field as an undergraduate pianist who played mostly pieces that did not deviate from the standard musical canon. The compositions of Mozart, Beethoven, Chopin etc., were part of my regular repertoire and I began to wonder why women composers of the past were not included frequently in recitals and performances. Then, as a music and social science teacher, I began to wonder why I taught music history from the perspective of a “male oriented” and “political” approach, rather than a socio-historical approach.

These ideas provoked me to undertake and challenge the conventional way of viewing music. Thus, I began to talk to people, and search for courses and books that dealt with feminism, social history and the fine arts. This thesis is a product of my inquiries into the questions surrounding women and music. It discusses some interesting patterns about the lives of women composers, and reveals through a social-critical approach the factors that contributed to the isolation and marginalization of two women composers, Clara Wieck- Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn- Hensel and their conformity toward the prevailing norms and values of the nineteenth century. Analysing their character pieces inform us about their lives, style and the era in which they lived and in turn gives us new insights into these women’s incursion into male territory.

I chose to study character pieces because the character piece as a genre was very common among female composers and in the parlour environment. Furthermore, I decided that choosing two character pieces from the same composer that revealed diverse methods of approaching their works provided an interesting comparison between compositions by the same composer, even though they were composed under the same social conditions. Understanding that music as a signifier of cultural and socio-political issues supports the idea that genres composed most often by women, such as the character piece in the nineteenth century are a result of the social ramifications that were part of that era. By viewing the character pieces as such, it is important to note that the works by Clara Wieck-Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel for this thesis illustrate elements of these constructions.

Such studies could create additional layers and meaning that support and further invite many other interpretations attributed to music written by women. Furthermore, it would be advantageous to conduct perhaps, an investigation that would examine analytical results of male composers who wrote in controlled socio-political environments such as that of the Romantic era. Through this we could unveil and discover whether a socio-critical stance coupled with historical systematic musicology has the potential to produce further interesting results and fresh perspectives to the study of other musical works.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank with sincere gratitude all those who have helped me through this entire project. My first inquiry into the question of women and music developed as a pianist who always wondered why she never performed pieces that deviated from the traditional musical canon.

Thus, my heartfelt thanks goes out to my primary thesis advisor, Dr. Nicole Labelle who has generously given her time, effort and support and has inspired me to embrace my questions surrounding social issues in the arts and music in regards to women in the nineteenth-century. I was extremely fortunate to have Dr. Paul Merkley as my secondary advisor and reader. His challenging “science experiment debates” always gave me a new perspective as to how to approach a thesis project.

I would like to thank my thesis readers Dr. Lori Burns for helping me get my feet on the ground and giving me the resources to help me get answers to my questions and Dr. Ruby Heap who is extremely familiar with women’s issues and is the director of women studies at the University of Ottawa. I am eternally grateful to Katherine Meisner, my fellow masters student who I could easily talk to about the stress and excitement of writing a masters thesis, Tina Paglia who took the time to thoroughly edit this work, and my friend Paul Zappala for proof-reading my prose and give me suggestions.

I express all my thanks to those people who have supported me in one way or another throughout this project: A. Nunno (French corrections), I.Falco (Bibliography suggestions), C. Lemos, M.DeLuca, M.Braccio, S. Carr-Harris, N.Wittingham, S. Gomes, M.Chaly, C.Carronzo, C. Goncalves, D. Nangini, Father Gaetano Grazzani, C. Donkin, and Luc and Debbie, at the University of Ottawa’s Music Library.

And, lastly but most importantly, I give special thanks to my mother, father, sister and brother who have been such a supportive family through the ups and downs of this endeavour.

FORWARD

Introduction

I once believed that I possessed creative talent, but I have changed my mind about this idea; a woman must not wish to compose—no one has yet been able to do it, should I be destined for it? That would be arrogant, something with which only my father once tempted me in earlier time, but soon I changed my mind about this belief. May Robert only still create; that should always make me happy.¹

This quotation from Clara Schumann's diary is a prime example of the conflict and internal division that she felt as a woman composer. She has expressed for the most part, many of the feelings and sentiments that were common among nineteenth-century women composers. Ambivalence, hesitation and conformity are expressed in this quotation and similar feelings were often expressed in much of the literature written by women composers of that time period. Such documentation will serve as a starting point from which to formulate a number of questions about gender and its ideology, past and present musical activity, works, culture, and experience dealing with women composers and musicians.

Feminist criticism in art and literature has developed in the last quarter of the 20th century however, it is only within the last ten to fifteen years that feminist scholarship in music has grown in importance among academics. There are many reasons for this phenomenon. One is that female musicians have been less evident to musical scholars

¹ Jeffery Kalberg, "The Harmony of the Tea Table: Gender and ideology in the Piano Nocturne," *Representations* XXXIX (1992): 18.

than female artists and writers because of the lack of readily available materials. A second reason is the lack of opportunity in education for nineteenth-century women, performance mediums, and the public nature to relegate the role of women to the home made it difficult for composers to produce their pieces publicly. As a result, the lack of availability of musical resources pertaining to nineteenth-century woman and their written work has not only created an obstacle for academics, but it has also resulted in a long but overdue process of relevant research in regards to these women. In light of a growing interest in the study of feminist perspectives in music, musicologists have seen the need to practice gender-sensitive music criticism. This has resulted in literature that recovers the women who have participated in musical activities of Western European history by examining diverse genres that are associated with the “feminine”², such as the character piece and evaluating the role that certain instruments have had in the musical education of women and the public acceptability of women playing them.

This thesis provides an examination of the application of a “gender-sensitive approach” with a “common practice technique” to selected character pieces by two nineteenth-century women composers in order to provide insights to the questions that have been raised by recent feminist scholars. In the midst of this growing interest in feminist musicological studies, scholars are attempting to establish analytic methods for this type of musical study. Academics have adapted the traditional methodologies appropriate for the study of “classical music” and have devised new approaches that are

² In making this distinction between “feminine” and “female” I am referring to genres of music that have associations with the 19th Century perception of “female” characteristics, such as gentle, kind, soft spoken, delicate, sweet, sensitive and sensual rather than referring to the word “female” and “male” as gender opposites.

linked to a combination of viewing music from a socio-historical base as well as harmonic analysis. These feminist scholars face many interpretative difficulties and challenges that are associated with approaching the repertoire from the standpoint of a socio-critical analysis since their conclusions are never definitive as compared to traditional harmonic methods. Consequently, fundamental questions are raised by this type of analysis: Is there a distinctive female approach to the character piece? Do women compose differently because of their social conditioning? If so, how do women express gender in their character pieces?

Theoretical Issues and Intent of Study

In response to these critical questions, my thesis will present a survey of current trends in feminist musicology, provide an analysis of the socio-historical background of two women composers and attempt to identify possible gender-identifiable elements in the character pieces composed by these women. In establishing a connection between music and gender, the common-practice technique coupled with a gender sensitive approach are the best methods of comparison and stylistic analysis because studying music from these vantage points can also provide insights into the socio-professional, and cultural aspects of musical history.

Susan McClary undertook an early comparison between both techniques in her book *Feminine Endings. Music, Gender and Sexuality*. In her research, McClary proposes that a critique of music from a feminist perspective has begun to surface rapidly in the 1990s. She argues that the construction of gender is more obvious in texted

or dramatic repertoires, which emerged very rapidly under the conditions of the seventeenth-century opera. Therefore, masculine and feminine beliefs are informed by societal beliefs of gender and difference that have been constructed by male artists. The awareness of feminine notions of Romanticism has indicated that musical productivity is marked by socially constructed concepts of gender difference more than simply thematic ideas.³ Indeed, by challenging conventional musicology, McClary has examined women in the narrative and has provided justification for examining the genres, such as the character piece, to include notions of social and political constructions and to engage in a discovery of gender and influence that has affected compositional choices. In her examination of 'absolute music' she explores the sonata-allegro procedure and the masculine and feminine cadence, reworking the definition of music as a signifier of emotions, our own desires, gender difference, and discrimination, especially in the portrayal of the women, and through a socio-critical approach.

The intent of this present study is to examine the character pieces of Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel and Clara Schumann from the standpoint of historical-systematic⁴ musicology and socio-critical analysis. Adopting McClary's model of comparison between compositions with text and those of solely instrumental music, this study will examine two character pieces written by Clara Schumann, namely *Notturmo Op.6, No.2* and *Romance Op.5, No.3* in the selection of the *Quatre Pièces Caractéristiques* and also two character pieces by Fanny Mendelssohn in her *Songs for Pianoforte Number 7 and*

³ Susan McClary, "Towards a Feminist Criticism of Music," *Canadian University Music Review* 10, No.2 (1990): 9-18.

Number 2. Through this consolidation approach of interdisciplinary fields and by outlining the history of the genre, highlighting the significance and place in the repertoire of women composers, and focusing on feminist methods by illustrating and demonstrating the politics of representation, a connection between the character piece and the social constructions of gender will be established. Comparing conventional musicology with contemporary analysis will illustrate that there is a connection between how music is informed, and as a medium, informs our notions of gender and sexuality,⁵ and will provide some insight into the stylistic interpretations underlying music, especially those composed by women in the early Romantic era. It is crucial to adopt the concepts and principles of a socio-critical stance with historical-systematic musicology from the era in which it was conceived in order to establish a convincing connection between music and gender. In doing so, the modern day scholar may achieve a clear understanding of the musical and literary environment in which the composer worked. The scope of this thesis is not to discuss whether or not the character pieces of Fanny Mendelssohn- Hensel and Clara Wieck-Schumann were considered to be labelled properly as “characteristic pieces”. Rather, given that their works are part of the ‘general’ definition of the character piece, I will explore how society informed the compositional process of these nineteenth-century women, and how in turn, their compositions inform us about their lives and style, and the era in which they lived.

⁴ Historical-systematic musicology refers to viewing music through a combination of a conventional-analytical (harmonic based) approach coupled with historical-research analyses.

⁵ Jeffery Kalberg suggests here that ‘adopting genre as a communicative concept shared by composers and listeners alike (one that therefore actively informs the experience of a musical work), we can construct genre as a social phenomenon which requires an investigation into the responses of communities that encountered a particular genre.’

Chapter Organisation

This present study will unfold as follows. In Chapter 1, I will provide the background for the field of feminist musicology by introducing a number of analytical methodologies that are currently used by scholars. These scholars include Camilla Cai, Marcia Citron, Jeffery Kalberg, Ruth Solie and Susan McClary. In addition, this chapter will present critical issues that are important and arise often in the study of music through a socio-critical stance. The remainder of the thesis is divided into Chapters 2 and 3, each of which is divided into two parts. Chapters 2.1 and 3.1 offer a socio-critical analysis of Clara Wieck-Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel. Chapters 2.2 and 3.2 explore gender-identifiable elements that are relevant in terms of viewing these character pieces as communicative fabrics of nineteenth-century life. Adopting the models of feminist musicologists explored in Chapter 1, the second part of chapters two and three will use the technique used by these authors. In doing so it will provide an interesting interpretative stance that gives new insight in viewing this type of music. The musical examples and illustrations are available in the Appendix of this thesis.

A Definition of the Terms and Concepts Used in this Study

It is beneficial to explain the terms used in this thesis in order to understand the formation of certain concepts and principles that are the groundwork for this type of analysis. Understanding the challenges in this new and rapidly unfolding study is important in facing the difficult questions that surround gender in music written by women. For instance, when defining the terms *female*, *feminine* and *feminist* there are

essential distinctions to be made. While the term *female* as compared to *male* refers to the gender of a person, the terms *feminine* and *feminist* are distinct in their particular definitions.

Susan McClary describes the word *feminine* as a socio-critical stance. She argues that the meaning of *feminine* or 'femininity' has changed over time. It is a socially constructed concept that has different meanings and codes depending on the characteristics and associations that society has placed on the term. McClary argues that:

"many aspects of the codes are strikingly resilient and have been transmitted in ways that are quite recognisable up the present: for instance, musical representations of masculine bravura or feminine seductiveness in Indiana Jones movies resemble in many respects those in Cavalli's seventeenth-century operas. But if some aspects of the codes proves stable, it is not because music is a "universal language," but rather because certain social attitudes concerning gender have remained relatively constant throughout the stretch of history".⁶

Thus, descriptive terms such as 'sweet', 'nice', 'gentle', 'kind', 'delicate', 'emotional', 'sensitive', 'pretty', etc. are concepts that have originated historically in the ideals rooted in what characterises what is *feminine*. This is important to remember since musical semiotics of gender can tell us much about the actual music—why certain pitches or rhythm are chosen as compared to others. Furthermore, it also allows us to understand that these terms are not attached to a particular gender. For example, just because the term *feminine* characterises a socially constructed concept that illustrates the "female" verses the "male" it is important to note that music written by women is not necessarily *feminine*. Likewise, music written by males is not by any means always *masculine*.

⁶ Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music Gender and Sexuality* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1991): 8.

Since music through stylistic comparisons may illustrate aspects of *feminine* and *masculine* qualities, it is fundamental to make this distinction between the terms *female*, *feminine* and *feminist* to better understand the concepts outlined in the theoretical study for this thesis. In conjunction with McClary, studying music from these vantage points can provide insight into the sign and signifiers which define social history and various models of gender organisation within society.⁷

The term *feminist*, on the other hand, signifies a political approach towards certain concepts and ideas formulated in society. It is an active demonstration of a political movement primarily by women who have struggled in Europe and North America for women's suffrage at the turn of the century. In 1948, Sophie Drinker's *Music and Women: The Story of Women in relation to Music* began to question many of the presumptions and attitudes towards the musical life and activity of women. This was one of the first feminist approaches to music. In the 1960's a second wave of the feminist movement occurred which brought renewed interest in the lives of women and their activities and experiences. Cook and Tsou state that:

"like its sister discipline, women's history, the study of women in music began with compensatory history: the identification of those women—typically composers or performers of neglected concert music—whose lives and work were not part of the accepted music-historical canon of "great work."⁸

As time progressed, the feminist movement gained momentum and more influence in society. As women continued to be vocal, academic scholars who wrote and

⁷ Ibid., 8.

⁸ Susan Cook and Judy Tsou ed., *Cecilia Reclaimed: Feminist Perspective on Gender and Music*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, (1994): 3.

researched in other fields helped bring diverse approaches and methodologies to the study of what came to be called “women in music”. Cook and Tsou explain that:

“in the late 1980s, explicitly feminist scholarship in musicology also emerged. This work identified gender as a distinct social force, sought to examine it’s ramifications within musical culture, and asked new questions about musical practice. Such studies extended beyond the composers as the only ways of making women the subjects of study.”⁹

This thesis is using a *feminist* approach to the study of the compositions of two women composers. Understanding the grass roots of feminist musicology and the theories that have been formulated is important in establishing a connection between the composers and their works. In Chapter 1, I will identify the various musicologists who have set the fundamental groundwork for this type of study. My definition of *feminism* is based on the theoretical models of those authors who have written extensively on this issue.

My thesis also uses *common practice technique*, in combination with a socio-critical approach. Citron states that “a common practice approach stresses the structure in purely musical terms: harmonic, tonalities and similarities and differences among themes have formed the basis of the approach”.¹⁰ Thus, a *common practice technique* is a theoretical approach to music through traditional analysis. Theoretical aspects such as form, phrase structure, harmonic analysis and similarities and differences among themes are the conventional way of analysing music.

⁹ Ibid., 5.

¹⁰ Marcia Citron. *Gender and the Musical Canon*. Houston: Cambridge University Press (1993): 145.

Along with this methodology, the present thesis will also attempt to identify possible elements of gender, or otherwise termed as *gender-identifiable elements*. The phrase *gender-identifiable elements* is difficult to define because it can have so many implications. When analysing music using this method, it is important to note that it is an exploration of possibility. Using this methodology does not always account for everything that is musical in the piece. It does not even account for the most significant aspects of the piece and to a great extent it is a matter of judgement and interpretation. Citron argues that this reading of gender:

“is meant as an added layer of meaning to a work capable of many interpretations and analytical frameworks and it may partially contradict important ways of viewing the work. But I do not necessarily view this as a drawback, it can be an advantage because it persuades one to view the work as a complex field of signifiers of diverse kinds: historical, stylistic, aesthetic and ideological”.¹¹

For this thesis, elements of gender construction are various. Phrase structure, harmonic and melodic decisions, melodic motifs, variance between themes, the sonata form principle, and aspects of hesitance, resistance, and conformity to social norms are all under the jurisdiction which could be considered to be *gender identifiable*. It is my intention that by viewing the compositions of women composers through a *common practice technique* coupled with *gender-identifiable elements*, a new perspective will emerge. By using both methodologies in this thesis, I will attempt to bring to light an aspect of these women’s lives that is reflected in their compositions.

¹¹ Ibid., 145.

Sonata Aesthetic is a composite idea that encompasses sonata form, the sonata as a genre, and the myriad works that utilise sonata form in one or more movements.¹² It has been one of the major compositional structures in music history. *Sonata Aesthetic* is important to feminist musicologists such as Marcia Citron and Susan McClary because they believe it reinforces the notions of certain codes and ideas in music which, distinguish what is *feminine* from what is *masculine*. Marcia Citron quotes D'Indy's statement about sonata form that illustrates the eighteenth-century concept well:

“force and energy, concision and clarity such are almost variably the essential masculine characteristics belonging to the first idea. It imposes itself in brusque rhythms, affirming very nobly its tonal ownership one and definitive. The second idea, in contrast entirely gentle and of melodic grace, is affective almost always by means of its verbosity and modulatory vagueness of the eminently alluring feminine; supple and elegant, it spreads out progressively the curve of its ornamented melody; circumscribed more or less clearly in a neighbouring tonality on the course of the exposition, it will always depart from it in the recapitulation in order to adopt the first tonality occupied from the beginning by the dominant masculine element, alone.”¹³

The *Sonata Aesthetic* is fundamental to the study of music. It reinforces the social concept of femininity and masculinity in music and allows musicologists to view musical composition as an important cultural work. Susan McClary has suggested that the various narrative paradigms that crystallised during the history of tonality contain many features that are in effect gendered. The sonata-allegro procedure in particular illustrates this custom of calling the opening theme “masculine” and the subsidiary theme feminine.¹⁴ Furthermore, McClary also states that this custom extends as far back as the

¹² Ibid., 141.

¹³ Ibid., 136.

¹⁴ McClary., 13.

mid-nineteenth century with the theorist A.B. Marx who first used this terminology in his

Die Lehre Von de Musikalischen Komposition (1845):

“The second theme, on the other hand, serves as contrast to the first, energetic statement, though dependent on and determined by it. It is of more tender nature, flexibility rather than emphatically constructed, in a way, the feminine as opposed to the preceding masculine. In this sense each of the two themes is different, and only together do they form something of a higher, more perfect order.”¹⁵

Distinguishing between certain themes and how it illustrates such social concepts associated with the words *feminine* such as “supple and elegant” and the “curve of its ornamented melody” allows musicologists to view compositions as a means of social representation. Power, class, and gender can be inscribed in a work and represent social ideologies, strategies of representation and expose in some way the ideological paradigms concerning socialised women and men.¹⁶ This is important in this present thesis since it helps to understand the concepts that will be outlined in the next chapters. Chapters 2 and 3 will attempt to identify these social constructions in compositions on a smaller (private) scale such as the character piece, which is often devalued.

The *character piece*, or *characteristic piece*, is a short piano piece that flourished as a significant genre for the piano in the nineteenth century. Often it is lyrical in style, and usually expresses a single mood or programmatic idea that is suggestive in the title of the piece.

¹⁵ McClary., 13.

¹⁶ Ibid., 122.

The Character Piece as a Neglected Genre

Virtually all composers in the nineteenth century wrote character pieces. Compared to the sonata form, however, the character piece has not been thoroughly studied by musical scholars. The lack of attention to the character piece is especially noteworthy when one realises that women composers in the nineteenth century wrote character pieces primarily. Jeffery Kalberg in his groundbreaking article “The Harmony of the Tea Table Gender and Ideology in the Piano Nocturne” undertook an early study of the character pieces by women. In this article, Kalberg points out that there is a lack of criticism about the character piece as a genre, and he explains the relationship between character pieces and women composers. He suggests that music historians “have readily explored the ramifications of gender in opera and song because they have been nourished by theoretical models developed by critics of literature, art, and film”.¹⁷ Therefore many academics have concentrated on the *lied* as an important genre for female expression in the nineteenth century because of the facilitation of models that are linked to poetry.

Furthermore, scholars have focused on other aspects of research such as an enlightenment of the socio-professional issues that dealt with women musicians of that time and elements of gender- identifiable elements in music written by male composers (McClary 1991; Solie 1993; Cook, Tsou 1994). In his study, Kalberg not only examines the socio-professional questions that are associated with women composers such as Clara Wieck-Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel, but he also analyses their nocturnes in detail. In doing so, he always keeps in mind the question of what the nocturne meant as

¹⁷ Kalberg, 4.

a cultural, historical and musical aspect of their lives. Furthermore, he takes into account the effect that this genre (that was written primarily by females) had on the nineteenth-century audience. Having illustrated through a socio-critical approach the challenges that these two women faced in composition and their struggle for assertiveness, Kalberg brings to light how an analysis of their pieces can aid our understanding of how we view past musical ideologies versus contemporary analysis.¹⁸ Indeed these new and exciting inquiries about the lives of women and their music provides justification for the scholarly study of the character piece and the prospects of gender identifiable elements in such an important genre for women composers in the nineteenth century.

One final observation is that a clear and distinct definition of the term “character piece” has been neglected in musical scholarship. Both *The Harvard Dictionary of Music* and *The New Grove Dictionary of Music* offer a general definition. They suggest that the character piece is often lyrical in style, and usually expresses a single mood or programmatic idea that is suggestive in the title of the piece.

The only substantial piece of music scholarship that has been written on the character piece is by Elfriede Glusman, *The Early Nineteenth-Century Lyric Piano Piece*.¹⁹ In this work, she defines the character piece as a ‘lyric piano piece of the early nineteenth century; a short independent composition in a simple form, which expresses

¹⁸ Kalberg suggests here that he has not escaped the dangerous tendency of veering towards a note by note mapping of musical structures of feminist thought that would deny any form that would promote the use of a patriarchal agenda or code.

¹⁹ Elfriede Glusman, “The Early Nineteenth Century Lyric Piano Piece” (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1969). Please note that the following work or scholarship was a Ph.D. dissertation, and does not refer to any recent articles that were written on the character piece since it was written in 1969.

one, or at most a few musical ideas.”²⁰ She also makes reference to the point that the character piece includes the following criteria: the lyrical factor, the degree of emphasis upon the element of sound, and the presence or absence of the poetic factor.²¹ Having explained this, she states that the various styles within the lyric piano piece are the nocturne, the character piece and the *Lieder ohne Worte*.

Willi Kahl also studied the character piece in detail in *Das Charakterstück*. He included the works by composers that were not part of the standard musical canon. He determined from his investigation that “the character piece as a single autonomous composition was already in existence long before the Romantic era; but not until this period does it appear to have secured finally and absolutely its independent existence outside the framework of cyclical forms”.²²

The lack of attention paid to the character piece seems to result from the fact that women composers in the nineteenth century wrote this genre primarily, and as a result, the character piece seems to have been devalued.

The Rationale for the Study of the Character Piece

In the tradition of Western musical composition, the character piece had a particular significance because it provided the framework for, and was the precursor to,

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Please note that Elfride Glusman’s study is primarily concerned with the lyrical piano pieces that are composed from approximately the turn of the century until the early 1830s, thus she does not explore any character pieces that may have been written during the mid-Romantic era.

²² Willi Kahl, *Das Charakterstück*, Mw8. Translated into English. (Cologne: A Volk, 1955).

larger genres of music, specifically the sonata form, symphonies, and the concerto. From this standpoint, we could assume that women composers of character pieces would also have proceeded to compose larger forms such as the sonatas, concertos, and symphonic works. However, only few women composers did so. The power of influence and norms in the nineteenth century relegated the compositional style of many women composers to produce only character pieces and not larger genres that were associated with the *traditional*²³ male canon. Marcia Citron has argued that musical categories such as genre reflect social values, a preference for largeness and for non-functionality that implies transcendence and establishes hierarchies that are linked together with gender: “maleness with the large the non-functional and the intellectual which are valued; femaleness with the small and the functional (and the private) which is undervalued.”²⁴

As a result, it is important to study the character piece for several reasons. First, since scholarship surrounding women composers is fairly recent, it is essential that musical scholars examine the genres that are associated with women composers. So far, the *Lieder*, and operatic genres, have been extremely popular since they lend to a good analysis of the genres that affected women because of the facilitation²⁵ of the text and because these genres were primarily written by women in that era.²⁶ By contrast, non-

²³ Please note that the term “traditional” here denotes male hegemony in the realm of music, specifically composition.

²⁴ Citron., *Gender and the Musical Canon*, 122.

²⁵ ‘Facilitation of the text’ refers to a direct reference to words when analysing music such as the use of words to form an understanding of the musical choices that the composer made because of the text and vice versa.

²⁶ Jeffery Kalberg writes extensively on this issue. He states that many scholars have relied on analysis of text and music when approaching gender-sensitive music criticism for women composers since it is easier to refer to gender issues when looking at a combination of text and music. In conjunction with

traditional or non-text oriented genres have been neglected, especially the character piece, sonata, concertos and symphonies. Jeffery Kalberg argues that “a ballad or nocturne is no less of a cultural construct than *Carmen* or *Frauenliebe und-leben*, and in principle it should have been no less (and no more) given to gendered meanings”.²⁷ Thus, if we can assert that non-textual music may have the same gender ramifications as textual genres we can explore the possibility that the character piece may also have gender-inscribed codes. Furthermore, it seems that music has been extensively examined in composers that were male, but under-evaluated for composers that were female. For this reason, it is important to recover these genres and shed a new and fresh perspective to musical analysis and stylistic interpretations of those works starting from the vantage point of the character piece, one the most common written forms for women composers.²⁸

Second, since musical scholarship has directed its questions toward the socio-political and cultural concerns towards woman, it would be fruitful to examine a consolidation approach through a common practice technique coupled with a gender-sensitive approach. Some scholars who find this intersection of methods may shy away from the traditional methods of analysis. I feel that this can only yield to promising and exciting new methods of understanding and interpreting music. When addressing this

Mr. Kalberg, I propose that as musical scholars we attempt to investigate an exploration of possibility, which is the chance that viewing music through stylistic interpretations without the text may yield to interesting observations about gender and compositions by women.

²⁷ Kalberg, 103.

²⁸ Aside from *Lieder*, more women wrote character pieces than any other form of genre. Various women composers wrote approximately over one thousand character pieces during the romantic era of the salon. Furthermore, as scholars continue to retrieve manuscripts and sources, more character pieces are becoming published and available for musicologists to study.

gender-sensitive approach, however, it is important to keep in mind a few concerns. Was it possible to have a distinctive female approach to this genre? And, can we assert that women may compose differently than men because of their social conditioning? Further, if this is so, do women express gender in their pieces? Perhaps answers to these questions may be found in an era where women composers were restricted to certain genres because of their sex. The early Romantic era was such a time in history. Women composers were conditioned to have certain gender roles, and the bulk of music written was for the *salon*, and consisted mostly of *Lieder* and character pieces, which carried certain implications that music outside of this sphere was improper. If a connection between music and gender is to be established, this era in history will constitute an ideal area of inquiry into the complicated question of exploring how women composers express their gender through the character piece genre.

CHAPTER 1

Current Research Methodologies and Literature Review

The Importance of the Piano in the Nineteenth Century

The tradition of women playing and using keyboard instruments and their affinity with it in the domestic sphere was apparent as early as the Renaissance.²⁹ By the early nineteenth century, women, particularly the middle class, played the piano. Since the piano was a home furnishing and middle class women were mostly at home, they had the most time and opportunity to play, perform at the *salon* and compose music that was for voice and piano. Arthur Loesser points out in *Men, Women and Pianos: A Social History* that “negative suggestions that were associated with playing the flute, violin, cello, were not associated with playing the piano”³⁰. In fact, the keyboard instrument enabled females to preserve a maximum amount of modesty and decorum in the exercise of their musical efforts. For a nineteenth-century middle class family, it was absolutely essential that the middle class girl behave with respect and modesty in order to preserve her family’s reputation and good name. Loesser states that:

“a woman could sit, gentle and genteel, and be an outward symbol of her family’s ability to pay for her education and her decorativeness of it (sic) striving for culture, and the graces of life, of its pride in the fact that she did not have to work and that she did not ‘run after men’.”³¹

²⁹ Arthur Loesser, “The Claviers are Feminine,” *Men, Women and Pianos: A Social History* (New York, 1954): 24.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 24.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 25.

These values were embedded in the minds of women, and it is no surprise that so many women wrote compositions that centred around the piano and in the domestic sphere.³²

Richard Leppert also suggests that connections between women and the piano were multiple and complex during the nineteenth century. In his article “Sexual Identity, Death and the Family Piano” he examines the piano as a symbol of societal mores and value systems. Middle and upper class families usually had pianos with artistic designs embossed in them (see Appendix). In addition to being aesthetically beautiful, these designs functioned as subverted signs and signifiers of what the role of women and families should be in the romantic era. He examines ‘the gazing’ at the piano which was mostly done by women while they were playing the instrument. He suggests that it was also particularly gendered because it was ‘driven by the instrument’s extra musical function within the home using visual pictures on the piano simulating the family, wife and mother.’³³ Thus, not only was the piano an acceptable instrument to play, but it also encouraged middle class women to subconsciously accept stereotyped roles for themselves in the Romantic era. Leppert illustrates that the Latin “motto” marks identities constructed on the basis of education, class, status, and privilege. In his examination of

³² The mores of the French bourgeois, like those of their Victorian counterparts ensured that any public performance by women raised questions about her personal conduct. For more information see Katherine Ellis, “Female Pianists and their male critics in nineteenth century” in *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 50 no. 2-3 (1997).

³³ Richard Leppert, “Sexual Identity, Death and the Family Piano,” *Nineteenth Century Music* XVI (1992): 105.

the decorative art on the piano, he concluded that it marks the piano as feminine and as a instigator of feminine ideals.³⁴

Another instance of a connection between women and the piano is from a literary standpoint. Nineteenth-century novelist Jane Austin illustrated the piano as the instrument of the nineteenth century in her novel *Emma*. Set domestically both as a solo and accompanying instrument for the amateur musician, most of the performances were mainly by women because 'piano playing at a moderate level, was one of the most desired feminine accomplishments'.³⁵ Music, and in particular the regular performance of the piano, was in essence the very fabric of social interaction between men and women in nineteenth-century culture. It was a system of signs, codes and signifiers of communication with one another that is, a social convention. Thus, conforming to the prevailing norms and values of the Romantic era, many women played and composed pieces of music that were for the piano. Those who wrote for the piano and performed *Lieder* and various forms of character pieces did so because it was particularly generated by social practice rather than for professional intentions. For instance, Emma having the prospect of a reasonably good marriage is content to play less well than Jane Fairfax whose circumstances suggest a career as a teacher or governess. Note the following examples:

³⁴ Ibid., 106-107. Gonzales Corpus, portrait addresses a certain understanding about the notion of life—the setting is middle class and elegant, typical of new wealth and ideals associated with it.

³⁵ Leon Plantinga, "The Piano in the Nineteenth Century" in *Nineteenth-Century Piano Music* (New York, Schirmer,) 1990: 1-15.

“...you take up an idea, Mrs. Weston, and run away with it; as you have many a time reproached me with doing. I see no sign of attachment—I believe nothing of the pianoforte—and proof only shall convince me that Mr. Knightley has any thought of marrying Jane Fairfax.”

“...She knew the limitations of her own powers too well to attempt more than she could perform with credit; she wanted neither taste nor spirit in the little things which are generally acceptable, and could accompany her own voice well. One accompaniment to her song took her agreeably by surprise—a second, slightly but correctly taken by Frank Churchill. Her pardon was duly begged at the close of the song, and every thing usual followed. He was accused of having a delightful voice and a perfect knowledge of music; which was properly denied; and that he knew nothing of the matter, and has no voice at all, roundly asserted. They sang together once more and Emma would then resign her place to Miss Fairfax, whose performance, both vocal and instrumental, she never could attempt to conceal from herself, was infinitely superior to her own.”³⁶

These quotes illustrate how important playing the piano was in the nineteenth century. Jane Austin’s novel *Emma* was set in the heart of the romantic era and used various levels of performance and expertise to illustrate the status of various women in that era.

The ‘Parlour Tradition’ and the Tradition of Piano Performance by Women

In Ruth Solie’s article “Gender, Genre and the Parlour Piano” she states that “the parlour piano, (which was synonymous with the idea of music in the home) moved out of the adult world, and became an aspect of social training that was routine of adolescent girls”. Solie refers to ‘praxis orientation’ of both gender and genres, which illustrated that the piano in the home was a factor in the process of gender formation and gender itself was a performative function of domestic music making.³⁷ Thus, parlour music (or domestic music making) is saturated with simple pieces such as the character pieces of

³⁶ Jane Austin, *Emma* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991): 204.

³⁷ Ruth Solie, “Gender, Genre and the Parlour Piano,” *The Woodsworth Circle* XXV(I) (1994): 53.

various forms. In *Nocturnes, Etudes, Variations* and *Fantasies*, Solie illustrates that these genres were typical compositions for women to compose and perform because of their brevity and their associations with the *feminine*. Solie states that as the century progressed, the parlour repertoire became “more eccentric and colourful”.³⁸ It became an important tool for the ‘acceptable’ promotion of musical efforts as women developed a sincere interest in increasingly performing and composing more and more interesting and complex genres. Strong efforts were made to host spectacular program music, which was designed to make the amateur pianist appear more like a virtuoso but in a socially acceptable sphere. Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel’s extravagant *parlour* functions, which will be discussed in section 3.1 of this thesis, are a clear example of the nineteenth-century phenomenon. Like other upper class women Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel knew that this tradition was important and was expected if she wanted to improve her status and that of her family. Solie describes this phenomenon of the parlour tradition in a quote where she refers to an anonymous correspondent to the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* in 1800:

“every well-bred girl, whether she has talent or not, must learn to play the piano or sing; first of all it’s fashionable; secondly, it’s the most convenient way for her to put herself forward in society and thereby, if she is lucky, make an advantageous matrimonial alliance, particularly a moneyed one.”³⁹

Thus at a deeper level, we can come to an understanding of why music was so important to the bourgeois and, in particular, to women in that culture. The ability of a young woman to play the piano made her appear more feminine and desirable and,

³⁸ Ibid., 54.

³⁹ Ibid, 55.

therefore, increased her prospects of marriage. To be able to perform and, even more so importantly, compose short, lyrical and extremely sensitive musical pieces for the piano suggested to society a woman's essence towards a whole artistic and emotional realm that made her femininity more convincing. From the 1800s to the 1850s, there was a widespread knowledge and acceptance of compositional and performance practices that were common in musical circles. Women knew that being able to perform and compose piano pieces gained respectability and status, and increased their marital prospects. Solie refers to the 'Pictorial Tradition' which shows women at the keyboards illustrating them as key roles in the Romantic family. She suggests that when a "nineteenth century artist working in a conventional and commercial genre needed to represent "*daughterness*" he did it with a girl at a keyboard."⁴⁰ It is not surprising then, that in the context of this social tradition, there was an abundance of character pieces written for the piano during the early 1800s to mid-1800s.

Music as a Social and Gendered Discourse

For the purpose of this study, if girls were socially conditioned by the mere fact that the piano was a domestic instrument, and music for the piano was a social convention, then it is possible to suggest that music written for this instrument may have elements of these social conventions. For instance, examining these genres as communicative fabrics of nineteenth-century life we notice that musicality as a practice was more inclined to be found in nineteenth-century genres that were written by women and lost its appeal for the non-professional male musician. Furthermore, if we can assert that women were socially

⁴⁰ Ibid., 14.

conditioned to compose and perform in certain ways, then it may also be true that they expressed their gender roles and societal mores in their music, be it sub-consciously or consciously. Jeffery Kalberg uses this approach in his examination of the Nocturne. He states that 'in an assessment of the notes of a piece, if we filter our received analytical systems through a social-historical net, it might indeed contribute to our understanding of gender'.⁴¹ Cultural circumstances and assumptions affect the way a work is composed, whether the composer is male or female. For society this can mean that as a whole, a musical work can function as a discourse that reproduces societal values and ideologies while also constructing those same values and ideologies.⁴² In her book Gender and the Musical Canon, Marcia Citron discusses in detail women who have occupied a marginal position in relation to the musical canon. The reception and response not only follow but also act prior to creativity as they help construct the aesthetic conditions that shape a way a composer is trained, and hence writes. She suggests that

"a work and its musical conventions that govern a work are socially biased in certain ways even though it is extremely difficult to figure out how especially in instrumental music. Social variables such as power, class, and gender can be inscribed in a work and can be mapped out to function as a means of representation to represent societal ideologies of desirable status and behaviour; strategies of representation which often aim to expose in some way the ideological paradigms concerning socialised women and men." ⁴³

This thesis seriously considers music as an important gendered and social discourse. It is essential to explore music through its codes to illustrate how gender and

⁴¹Kalberg, 103.

⁴² Marcia J. Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon* (Houston: Cambridge University Press, 1993): 121.

⁴³ Ibid., 121.

social ideologies reflect the experience of real women who compose music.

Understanding that music is a signifier of various meanings in reference to society can bring to light certain circumstances that have affected the way a composer can approach a composition, and the way a work is composed. It also leads to a better understanding of the various fundamental assumptions about the culture from which the music has originated.⁴⁴

Music-Analytical Techniques relevant to the interpretation of music from a Feminist Perspective

As we explore the character pieces of Clara Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn, two prominent women composers, it is important to consider the factors that influenced how they composed their pieces. Some critics of feminist musicology (such as Pieter van den Toorn)⁴⁵ believe that it is a difficult and almost impossible task to identify possible traces of gender-identifiable elements in music written by women composers. However, Marcia Citron states that the musical scholars who have had an interest in socio-critical analyses, have found it difficult not to identify and possibly bring to light those social characteristics that define women (or woman) because women have been nurtured in a male-dominated society and may illustrate characteristics of this in their music. She suggests that they have internalised and appropriated many of the assumptions and conventions that could be dubbed male.⁴⁶ Furthermore, for those that have composed, Citron states that an "'anxiety of authorship'" has been a relevant factor in the negativity

⁴⁴ Ibid., 120.

⁴⁵ Pieter C. van den Toorn. "Politics, Feminism and Contemporary Music Theory" *The Journal of Musicology* Volume IX, no.3 (Summer 1991): 275-299.

⁴⁶ Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon*, 9.

that has led to psychological consequences of ambivalence and doubt in their compositions.⁴⁷ Much of this anxiety is associated with a societal link between female creativity and the female body.⁴⁸ Indeed, this correlation that Citron has identified about the “anxiety of authorship” is relevant to musicologists when comparing the large numbers of character pieces written against the few complex and larger genres such as the sonata, symphonies and concerts written by women in the early Romantic era.

In *Cecilia Reclaimed*, Citron expresses in her article “Feminist approaches to musicology” that feminine nature and sexuality influenced societal views, thus creating many societal restraints that were placed on women in the nineteenth century. Consequently, women were not raised in “pure” female culture and have tended to express at least in part, aspects of masculine culture that they have internalised (Cook, Tsou, 1994). This is especially relevant since it has been established in the preceding discussion that music can be viewed as a social and gendered discourse. Furthermore, she suggests that male hegemony is evident in sonata forms as well as other forms of music. The “master narrative” epitomises absolute music, which has taken an “aura of primal myth, of sanctity, of privilege, of control” and is generally accepted without question. Citron states that:

“nineteenth century society constructed stereotypes of femininity, and has hypothesised that such paradigms arose out of a need of the newly emergent bourgeois society to assert and maintain social control over women. Sonata form became a

⁴⁷ Part one of Chapters 2 and 3 delves into the issue of “an anxiety of authorship” and the relevance it has had on the compositions of Clara Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 9

metaphor for the gendered struggle, and once entrenched probably acted to reinforce and re-construct that gendered ideology in Western society at large."⁴⁹

Viewing the sonata form as a socio-political construct that is reflective of social values leads to a better understanding of why so many women refrained from writing music that resembled the sonata form. Asserting certain types of gender associations with the sonata form itself and by the fact that it was viewed as absolute music has relegated the compositions by women to simpler and less threatening forms. This has resulted in a diminished interest in absolute music than other types of music (such as *Lieder*) because of the male stigma attached to the music, and perhaps because of the difficulties of performing chamber music, concerto and symphonies in an acceptable performance medium.

Citron also suggests that the narrative genres such as song and the character piece have provided a more direct means of female self-expression and these have been given more attention because of the fact that women may have felt uncomfortable composing in the realm of the absolute or metaphysical.⁵⁰ For instance, in Marcia Citron's exploration of gender identifiable elements in Cecil Chaminade's *Sonata Op. 21*, she notes a restraint in the way that Cecil Chaminade approached this sonata. This example is extremely important for this study as it will be used as a model and will be discussed further in the immediate paragraphs of this chapter.

⁴⁹ Citron., *Gender and the Musical Canon*, p. 134.

⁵⁰ "metaphysical" refers to having or relating to the transcendent or to the reality beyond what is perceptible to the senses. In relation to music, moving towards perfection and God's image and man as the creator, thus leaving women unable to create because men were part of centre stage. In addition, the transcendence of the composer as a subject, focused the attention on the ego; leaving women who seldom injected a strong sense of ego in conflict with their compositions and their role in society.

Through her analysis, Citron makes various comparisons between two themes evident in the sonata. Published in 1895, but composed perhaps in 1888-1889, Citron states that the first movement may result in a mixture of three conventions: sonata form, character piece, and prelude and fugue. As for the quality of the character piece, the compositional influence can be felt in the many experimental sonatas of the second half of the nineteenth century.⁵¹ In the analysis of the second theme in the sonata, Citron makes connections between feminine and masculine traits. She observes that the second theme is ambiguous because it is derived from the methodology that deals with ideological constructions of gender and suggests that it is a theme with features of each gender. In her explanation of the second theme in measures 134-145, she explains in detail the development of marked *Meno mosso* containing three statements with three respective harmonisations implying A flat, f minor, and A Flat. She also observes that the later section had feminine traits that are associated with a feeling of floating and of non-functionality, of emphasises of pure sound and colour. She states that:

“it acts as another means of arresting the progress of sonata form, especially since the passage occupies approximately half of the development in the number of measures and possibly well over that in psychological time.”⁵²

⁵¹ Ibid., 148.

⁵² Ibid., 151.

Measures 134-145:

The image displays three staves of musical notation, likely for a piano and right hand. Each staff begins with the tempo marking 'Meno mosso.' and the dynamic 'p leggiero.' (piano, light). Above the first two staves, there is a 'Tempo f.' marking with a dashed line indicating a change in tempo. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and pedaling marks ('Ped.').

In her analysis, Citron also explains how the *feminine* acts to challenge an important driving force of sonata form. Citron's observation is that the first movement of the sonata had qualities similar to the character piece. She argues that its disposition is an important indication that many of the attributes of a character piece are in place, and that the whole movement is thought to behave like a character piece especially since the category is fairly broad based and ambiguous.⁵³

After identifying a connection between gender and music, Citron reached two important conclusions. First, through her analysis, she argues that what may be important to note in this movement is a representation of nineteenth-century values and interestingly this echoes Cecile Chaminade's feeling towards composing a sonata.

⁵³ Ibid., 147.

Although there is no fixed form of the movement, Citron suggests that the power of social ideologies of masculine and feminine and the flexibility of actual pieces in sonata form imply that one can still infer masculine and feminine themes in a mixed musical convention in sonata form. Citron states:

“Understandings of masculine as strong, bold, rhythmic and assertive, and of feminine as lyrical, gentle, soft and diffuse do not evaporate when a movement deploys themes in an individual way.”⁵⁴

This is important because one can apply the associations attached to the *masculine* and the *feminine* to diverse forms. This is even more applicable if the forms or the compositions are by women because it would reflect, in addition to a musical statement, a social and cultural stance. Citron states that even if the first movement is considered a character piece, signs of masculine and feminine are still evident. For the purpose of this study, if the hypothesis that one can assert *masculine* and *feminine* themes to a character piece is established, then we can also compare the character pieces of other women composers such as Clara Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel who have experienced similar cultural and social factors. In Cecile Chaminade’s Sonata, Citron observes that the social and cultural component of the work were influential in the way that Chaminade approached the piece:

“there is a resistance to the hierarchical relationship between the masculine and feminine as articulated in the gendered codes of sonata form and even more importantly in the ideologies that they represent. It is expressed through a re-conceptualization of the feminine, not an obliteration of the feminine, and not an inversion of power relations but in a sense a refusal to play by the rules laid out in ideology.”⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Ibid., 153.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 154.

Second, she also states that ‘emasculatation’ or taking on the viewpoints of men and rejecting femininity signifies that the socialisation of women is not pure. As a result,

“the Subject positioning does not lie entirely in Otherness, therefore, but also inhabits some centred cultural strictness. For women who have learned to be composers socialisation has taken place largely in male convention and norms. Women probably identify in many ways with male mentors and colleagues and with customs and traditions that grow out of the expectations and experiences of men.”⁵⁶

Thus, it may be possible that women composers may have elements of resistance to social ideology or musical conventions while expressing elements of those social conventions. The gender of “the maker” can make a difference as to how the codes are manipulated because of the Subject positioning and socialisation; but Citron suggests that no essentialist relationship exists between the gender of “the maker” (the composer) and gendered codes of representation.⁵⁷ In this way there is no reason why the re-conceptualisation of the feminine and the resistance to masculine domination could not have appeared in a work that was by a man. However, given that the social-cultural position of women in the nineteenth century has been less advantageous than that of men, Citron suggests that female composers may be more likely than men to mount strategies of resistance to gendered codes in music that suggest women’s domination by men.⁵⁸

Thus, using Citron’s analysis it is possible to make connections between gender and music, especially in compositions by women. To argue for or against gender-identifiable elements in the character pieces of Clara Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn

⁵⁶ Ibid., 154.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 159.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 156.

as well as using conventional common practice methodology will yield interesting comparisons between gender and music written by these women. Furthermore, using similar stylistic analysis and interpretations of music, such as that of Marcia Citron's analysis, and developing an understanding of an era that relegated the role of women to the home will help to illustrate the connections and restrictions that women had to certain genres because of their sex.

The domain of the private versus the public: domestication versus musical career

In an effort to understand the circumstances affecting female self-expression, many scholars have addressed the forum of the private and public spheres. Although professional women such as Clara Schumann (who was quite exceptional) were more public than other women, she also fell into a segregated sphere characteristic of the private realm, because she lacked the freedom to perform, and bore the burden of social restraints.⁵⁹

Women such as Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel, who remained in the private sphere, felt the restrictions even more so because of their class and gender.⁶⁰ Consequently these women experienced much more defined and constraining boundaries because of cultural circumstances. Men's work was not as defined as women's work, thus they experienced

⁵⁹ Susan Cook and Judy Tsou ed., *Cecilia reclaimed: Feminist Perspectives on Gender and Music* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994)

⁶⁰ Sarah Rothenburg suggests that Abraham Mendelssohn confirms his daughter's talent at the same moment as denying her ambition in a letter he wrote to his daughter July 16 1820. As well as being a issue of gender for Fanny, the restraints on her composing and performing were also based on her status in society as being an upper class woman.

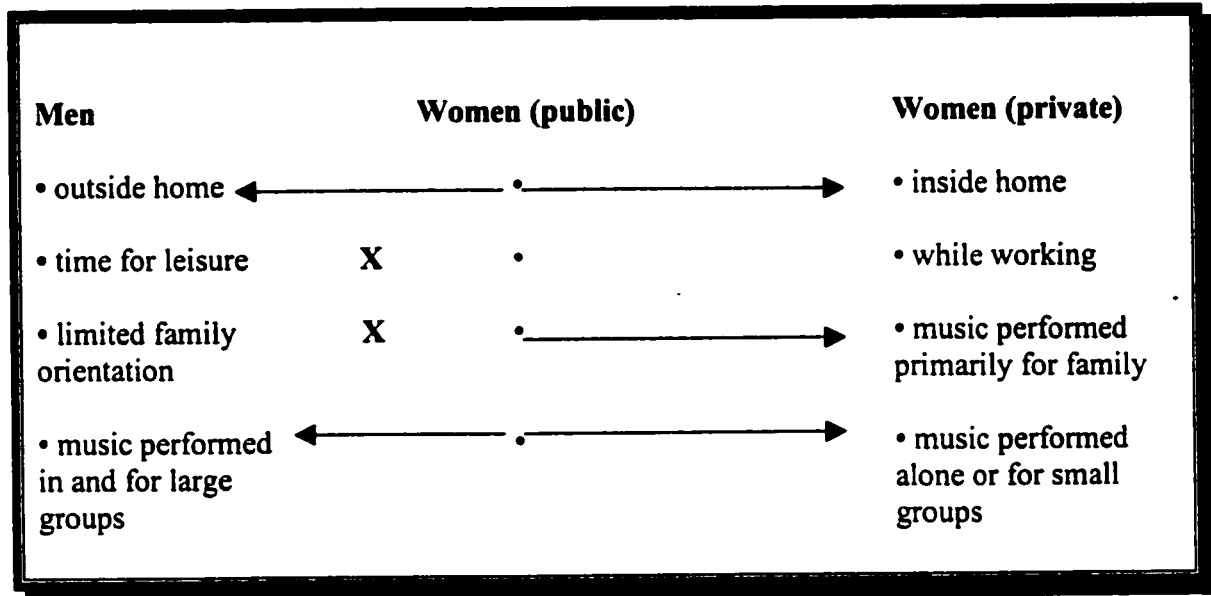
much more leisure time and musical enjoyment. The table below demonstrates the clear dichotomy between the two genders and the ramifications of this division⁶¹:

Men's and Women's Musical Spheres

Men's Sphere (Public)	Women's Sphere (Private)
Music performed outside the home Music performed during times of leisure Limited family orientation of musical performance Music performed in and for large groups Resulting in: • Musical Freedom • Musical domination • Integration in musical performance	Music performed inside the home Music performed while working Music performed primarily for family Music performed alone or for small groups Resulting in: • Musical restriction • Musical subordination • Separation in music performance along sexual lines

These restrictions on women defined the role of women musicians in the nineteenth century. Although composers such as Clara Schumann experienced aspects of the public sphere they still needed to conform to the mores and values of the society in which they lived. Even if we revisit the diagram and place the subject of women in the public sphere, their position would still not equal that of men:

⁶¹ Susan Cook and Judy Tsou ed., *Cecilia Reclaimed: Feminist Perspectives on Gender and Music.*, 39. (Please note that this table was taken directly from this chapter and is important in illustrating



Resulting in:

- ⇒ Musical freedom is restricted
- ⇒ Musical domination is not possible
- ⇒ Separation in music performance along sexual lines
- ⇒ Alienation, hesitation and ambivalence towards oneself and society at large
- ⇒ Pressure to perform in a male-dominated sphere
- ⇒ Criticism from both sides

Positioning women in the public sphere does not change the fact that, as a subject, she is still seen as “the Other” in the arena of a male dominated musical culture. This positioning contributes to a feeling of tension, ambivalence, and insecurity about oneself, and a sense of being torn between what society expects and what one would expect of oneself. As a result, women faced internal and external obstacles which prevented them from giving musical performance in public. Scholars such as Harold Bloom have described this as an “anxiety of influence” where composers consciously know that they have been influenced by another and thus are not original enough. The act of differentiating themselves is an anxiety-provoking endeavour. For women, this has

the relationship).

translated into an “anxiety of authorship” where women writers operating in the patriarchal system have felt alienated from this tradition and have felt that they have had to get over this obstacle so that they can be critics—or in the case of music, confident and self-assured composers.

The correlation between domestication and the barriers faced by women who wanted to compose are further affirmed in nineteenth-century literature. Authors such as George Uptown and Helen J. Clarke write on problems faced by the female composer. They have diametrically opposed opinions on the matter.

George Uptown, the Chicago music critic, writes in 1880:

“... it [music] is not only an art, but an exact science, and, in its highest form, mercilessly logical and unrelentingly mathematical. The imagination does not have a free flight, but is bounded within the limits of form. The mere possession of the poetical imagination and the capacity to receive music in its fullest emotional power will not lead one to the highest achievements in musical art. With these subjective qualities must be combined the mastery of the theoretical intricacies, the logical sequences and the mathematical problems which are the foundation principles of music. In this direction, except in very rare instances, women (sic) has never achieved great results. Her grandest performances have been in the regions of romance, or imagination of intuition, of poetical feeling and expression. For these and many other reasons growing out of the peculiar organisation of woman, the sphere in which she moves, the training which she receives and the duties she has to fulfil, it does not seem that women will ever originate music in its fullest and grandest harmonic forms. She will always be the recipient and interpreter, but there is little hope she will be the creator.”⁶²

Helen J Clark in *The nature of Music and Its Relation to the Question of Women in Music* writes in March 1895:

“...until women have had the same sort of training, above all, the same musical environments, the same opportunity to devote themselves body and soul to the art of composition, it is manifestly unfair to declare them mentally and emotionally incapable of great work. The difficulties that women must overcome are far greater than those which meet men at the dawn of their musical career. They must come into competition with all the great work which have preceded them, and they must struggle in the face of a prejudice against their possession and genius so deep rooted and widespread that even their faith in themselves wavers and the desire to attain without which no goal can be

⁶² Neul-Bates, Carol ed., *Women in Music*, 1996: 207-227.

made is thus shorn of the strong impulse that should “aim at the stars” and it content if it but “hits the moon”.⁶³

This type of literature represents the social expectations, family obligations and romantic culture which limited the opportunities for women to feel confident enough to compose and perform in the public sphere. Consequently, those who have attempted to compose have seen themselves restricted and limited by these cultural boundaries. Thus, we see an emergence of pieces such as the character piece which expressed, for the most part, genres that were acceptable for these women to compose and perform in certain venues.

Camilla Cai is a prominent musical scholar whose latest research focuses primarily on Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel and on questions of social class and gender. In her article “Texture and Gender: New Prisms for Understanding Hensel’s and Mendelssohn’s Piano pieces,” Cai suggests that both cultural and personal events have had a powerful influence on the siblings. She stated that the way in which Hensel and Mendelssohn expressed themselves musically was cultural and it was determined by gender roles that were fostered primarily by their family and nineteenth-century society. In her examination of the piano pieces of both composers she observes that Hensel’s pieces resemble Mendelssohns, and this resemblance shows the force of the values of dominant masculine musical culture because Hensel studied music with men, and by men. Cai explains that :

⁶³ Neul –Bates, Carol ed., *Women in Music: An Anthology of Source Readings from the Middle Ages to the Present*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1996: 207-227.

“While Hensel was being taught to compose ‘like a man’ (resembling a man, yet not a man), she was also being imbedded with the feminine values of the same culture. By being a composer at all she chose a position that put her in conflict with cultural values of her time and although she did use the musical-technical language of men, she accepted a women’s place by choosing genres and an instrument appropriate to women.”⁶⁴

For the most part, Hensel lived a busy life which included domesticity and travel, and a dual focus on the home and music-making at home. No doubt, this multifaceted life-style would have given her the chance to compose more pieces that could have been considered part of the standard canon. She restrained her energies, however, to the salon and to music surrounding the salon, which was a place for domestic music-making primarily for the upper middle class. In Camilla Cai’s comparison of the work of both composers (Op. 117 of Mendelssohn and No.7 of the Hensel’s of *Songs for Pianoforte*), she uses the common practice technique with a gender-sensitive approach. In her conclusion, she states that the *salon* had an important impact on the composition process of Fanny Hensel:

“in this Nineteenth-century culture, private gatherings like Hensel’s salon were settings in which the feminine was not only accepted, but even celebrated. The corollary is that since the feminine included emotion, displays of emotion would have been encouraged both as behaviour and as a characteristic of musical composition. Since emotion, sensuousness and texture are all feminised in this context and therefore appropriate for this intimate setting, it is entirely possible that Hensel chose texture as an important compositional tool largely because her music was intended for her own use in her salon. Hensel’s comparative compositional freedom within the confines of this salon environment was a privilege belonging to the feminine, private sphere; Mendelssohn’s search for control in his life and mastery in his field was the privilege of the masculine and public sphere”.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Cai., 54.

⁶⁵ Cai., 83.

Thus, her genres consisted of music written for the piano and voice, and she rarely explored any other “types” that may have deviated from the acceptable norm such as the sonata form or any piano concertos or symphonies which would have been considered highly inappropriate for women.

On a few occasions, Fanny also expressed her frustrations through the phrase “Lords of Creation” which referred to male hegemony in music.⁶⁶ It is not until 1835-1836 that we see Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel explore the possibility of composing more difficult and advanced genres. In fact, although her pieces were not published, in 1835 she composed a set of pieces, which strongly resembled her brother Felix’s compositions. She named her pieces *Songs for Pianoforte*, and they were often twice as long as Mendelssohn’s *Songs without Words*. Camilla Cai states that “the large proportions of Hensel pieces require a different approach to the handlings of form, melodic span and texture”.⁶⁷ A question one might ask is whether Fanny wanted to establish herself as a professional composer by writing a large set of pieces. Secondly, if these “Songs for Pianoforte” resemble so much the traditional genre of “Songs without words” was it Fanny’s choice to name them “Songs for Pianoforte” because she believed that “Songs without Words” resembled too much the genre for the salon? For the purpose of this study, I will explore two character pieces from the set of “Songs for Pianoforte” (Mendelssohn Archives, Manuscript 44). I will determine whether there may have been traces of gender identifiable elements in those pieces written by Fanny Mendelssohn-

⁶⁶ Ruth Solie ed., *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993)

⁶⁷ Camilla Cai, *Texture and Gender*, 58.

Hensel and analyse through a socio-critical approach her style, texture, and form and the melodic qualities of her pieces.

Clara Schumann, on the other hand, flourished in both the private sphere and even more so in the public sphere. In the nineteenth century, the common perception of music composed by women was that it was simple, trivial and suitable only for home entertainment. For Clara this was not the case. As Nancy Reich states, almost every concert in the 1830's featured one or more of Clara's own works and often included improvisations which were not only integral to her father's pedagogical techniques, but which were also a skill expected of all keyboard performers in the nineteenth century, especially males.⁶⁸ Her girlhood compositions fell into three categories--- early waltzes, virtuosic audience pleasers and imaginative short lyric pieces. Reich states that by 1840, Clara Schumann wrote few "Charakterstücke" and composed a number of great *Lieder* as well as piano pieces and chamber works in larger, more classically structured forms.⁶⁹

Even though Clara Schumann ventured out to compose larger and more demanding genres of music, she still expressed many of the insecurities of women composers in her class.⁷⁰ She was exposed to larger genres of music first, through her excellent musical education and later through her marriage to the musician Robert Schumann. However, she still doubted her own capabilities. Though a dichotomy existed

⁶⁸ Nancy B. Reich, "Master Class: Clara's Art," *Piano Today* Vol. 16, no.3. May-June 1996.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ The quote on the first page of this thesis is a prime example of her feelings towards composing.

between the women composers who were part of the aristocracy and those who were in the artist-musician class, each had to deal with their own struggles both in the professional and private realm. In this thesis, an investigation of Clara Schumann's *Romance* Op.5 No.3 in the selection of *Quatre Pièces Caractéristiques*, and her *Notturmo* Op.6, No.2 which formed part of her *Soirées musicales* composed in 1835-1836 will illustrate how Clara Schumann had to deal with this struggle.

Kalberg suggests that sections of Schumann's Nocturne display assertiveness, but this is done "surreptitiously to subvert the feeling of surface stability at the start... which subtly undermine the 'normal' associations of serenity that were attached to the genre and substitute in their place a latent dynamism."⁷¹ In the present study, the issue of assertiveness for women will be explored through the ramifications of social questions. The notion of "Romantic ethos" and how it relates to the common conventions of femininity and feminine traits in music are important aspects to consider when exploring the character piece in terms of women composers.

The preceding discussion reviewed the theoretical issues and literature that surface when studying music through a gender-sensitive approach and gave a clearer understanding of the challenges that current music historians face in regards to this innovative way of viewing music. Understanding the importance of the piano in the nineteenth-century is crucial in formulating a context in which to situate romantic

⁷¹ Kalberg , 119.

ideology about music. As Arthur Loesser and Richard Leppert suggest, the piano, especially for women, signified a social acceptability and venue for which they felt comfortable performing and composing. Consequently this contributed to the “Parlour” culture that included the character piece—“lyrical in quality and short forms” became the acceptable genre for women to compose and perform. Ruth Solie has written extensively on this issue and as will be seen in the following chapters, this tradition is crucial in determining the boundaries in which women composers such as Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel and Clara Schumann were allowed to write.

Furthermore, musicologists have attempted to meet this challenge by modifying the common-practice technique with gender-sensitive methodologies when applying them to compositions written by women. Viewing music as a gendered discourse contributes to another understanding of music as a signifier of the greater society as a whole and of particular groups and how they functioned with respect to these social ideologies. Thus, this approach, coupled with conventional methods of analysis, will yield to a representational model of encoded masculine and feminine constructions. A framework which allows an exploration of this possibility (as mentioned earlier in this chapter) will contribute to another layer of understanding to an analysis of music, which may have many structural, analytical parts and interpretations.

Marcia Citron goes beyond traditional analysis and states that: “the advantages of viewing the works in such a manner outweighs the disadvantages because it persuades one to view the work as a complex field or signifier of diverse kinds: historical, stylistic

and ideological while underscoring the temporal multiplicity of interpretations".⁷² In the spirit of Marcia Citron, the goal of summarising a socio-critical approach coupled with historical-systematic musicology is simply to introduce this analytical model, which is based upon a contemporary view on conventional methods of analysis in music.

In her analysis of Cecilia Chaminade's *Sonata Op.21*, Citron illustrates the analytical techniques relevant to an interpretation of music from a feminist perspective. Beyond analysing the music from a harmonic and structural point of view, Citron explores the possible aspects and traits of gender and social influences in Cecilia Chaminade's sonata. She makes connections between the feminine and masculine themes which is coupled with the theory of "anxiety of influence." She concludes that the sonata is a representation of nineteenth-century values, a social cultural stance by the way of Chaminade's compositional techniques. Aspects of resistance and emasculation became apparent and illustrated the issue of Subject positioning within the work and within socialisation of male culture.

In addition to viewing music as a social and gendered discourse, one may also study the domain of the public and private spheres. The domesticity of women relegated music-making to the home and this resulted in restricted access to adequate and comparable musical education and venues. These women who attempted to pursue a public life faced numerous obstacles that contributed to their feeling pulled in two directions and feeling ambivalent towards their musical ambitions. Citron has written on the

⁷² Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon*, 145.

Mendelssohn siblings and, in a comparison of their pieces, has documented significant differences in compositional technique and approaches towards their works. Riech has stated that Clara Schumann has experienced similar feelings in her compositions because of the strong boundaries that were placed on women who ventured into the male-dominated public realm.

Gender-related issues and literature in this chapter are relevant to musical analysis and they play a significant role in how Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel and Clara Schumann wrote their character pieces. In sections 2.1 and 3.1, I will examine the factors that influenced Clara Wieck-Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel. I will identify common elements in their music that may contribute towards a standardised approach to the study of their character pieces. This will be in the context of understanding the importance of social conventions, the theory of *anxiety of influence*, and the way in which the time period and environment in which they lived helped to shape how they perceived themselves as composers. In undertaking this approach, I will attempt to reveal issues that are important in examining their works. In sections 2.2 and 2.3 I will analyse two character pieces by Clara Wieck-Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel and I will discuss compositional techniques that support the tentative hypothesis of gender-identifiable elements, social influences and conventions in their compositional style. This consolidated approach will show the importance of examining a genre of music that has been neglected in the domain of the nineteenth-century women composer, while demonstrating the originality in the inquiry of such intriguing research.

CHAPTER 2

Introduction

Feminists have rallied around the figure of Clara Schumann in celebration of great women composers of the past. Her life struggles as a prominent pianist, composer, performer, wife and mother have left the impression on modern day musicologists that she was a woman who must be seen in the context of her time. She was a child prodigy, who excelled in musical arts until the day she died. Although she was revered as an artist, she fell victim to the common perception that music composed in the nineteenth century by women was simple, trivial, and suitable only for home entertainment.

Clara Schumann, like many other female artists of her time was affected by the stereotypes associated with “women’s music”. McClary suggests that this anxiety was understood, and had its origins in the oratory of Monteverdi’s dramatic music. She suggests that :

“rhetoric in the mouth of a woman was understood as a different phenomenon from that issuing from a man. A man skilled in oratory was powerful, effective in imposing his will at large. A woman’s rhetoric was usually understood as seduction, as a manifestation not of intellectual, but of sexual power”.⁷³

These beliefs that originated at the height of the Renaissance continued to dominate well into the nineteenth century. The ramifications of these cultural values were evident in Romantic society and especially in the arts, which were manifestations of deeper social constructs of gender.

⁷³ Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender and Sexuality* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1991): 38.

In using a modern approach to the understanding of Clara Schumann, I am not claiming that she was a feminist in the modern sense of the word, even though she composed, performed and associated with male artists in a predominantly male circle. Instead, I propose that her compositions were deeply affected by the cultural values and norms of her time. Susan McClary's analytical stance provides insight to this relationship between music and gender. In her study of classical music, she states that: "people believe that classical music is not contaminated by the libidinal or even the social; but classical music, no less than pop, is bound up with issues of gender construction and the channelling of desire".⁷⁴

Further, she states that music teaches us how to express our own emotions, our own desires, and even (especially in dance) our own bodies—it socialises us.⁷⁵ If music socialises us, then can we assert that Clara Schumann projected those social conventions that were characteristic of her time into her music? In chapter 2.1, I will address these social issues, outline Clara Schumann's life story, and analyse her life works in the context of nineteenth-century music. Chapter 2.2 will focus on the music of Clara Schumann, specifically her character pieces *Notturmo* and *Romanze*. I will illustrate aspects of gender-identifiable elements in her music, address questions of influence and social conventions, and draw conclusions between the two character pieces analysed.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 54.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 53.

PART ONE: Chapter 2.1

Clara Schumann: The emergence of a Female Voice

Marcia Citron states that an “anxiety of authorship” had an important impact on the creativity of women. This anxiety often translates into ambivalence, which is expressed as contradictory statements about one’s own relationship to the creative process and is often seen as a lack of confidence.⁷⁶ In the case of Clara Schumann, this is seen most often in her relationships with the men in her life, namely, her father Frederick Wieck, her husband Robert Schumann, and later, her long-time friend Johannes Brahms.⁷⁷ Her famous quote⁷⁸, written on November 11, 1839 expressing her sometimes-contradictory feelings as a composer was especially revealing. Her lack of confidence in her creativity and her support for her husband’s creativity seem to be a natural pre-determined outcome in the prevalently male-centred society of the nineteenth-century.

McClary states that the nineteenth century saw great turmoil in the area of sexual politics. Women demanded rights to education and admission into professions, and were “less willing to accept passively the prescribed role of *angel in the house* [sic] and their inevitable fate”.⁷⁹ As for Clara Schumann, her father was the first influential figure in her

⁷⁶ Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon*, 54.

⁷⁷ For the purpose of this thesis, the study and inquiry of Johannes Brahms in Clara Schumann’s life is beyond the scope of this argument.

⁷⁸ “I once believed that I possessed creative talent, but I have changed my mind about this idea; a woman must not wish to compose—no one has yet been able to do it, should I be destined for it? That would be arrogant, something with which only my father once tempted me in earlier time, but soon I changed my mind about his belief. May Robert only still create; that should always make me happy.”

⁷⁹ McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 99.

life as a woman musician and she was fortunate to have him as a teacher. Convinced that he was to create a virtuosa, Wieck began to work alone with his daughter in the spring of 1825. Nancy Reich, in her biography *Clara Schumann the Artist and the Women*, states that:

“small pieces written especially for her encouraged Clara to concentrate on position, musical phrasing, and a ‘singing’ tone, and provided a familiarity with the keyboard which accounted for the facility and ease she kept to the end of her life. At the age of seven she was at the piano for three hours a day—one hour for a lesson and two for practice”⁸⁰.

Frederick Wieck played an important role in Clara Schumann’s education and most certainly influenced her confidence as a woman composer and concert pianist later on in her life. For Wieck, gender was no obstacle. In fact he may have felt that training Clara would be easier than training her brothers because of the fact that women in general, and Clara in particular, had to depend on a male figure to promote their musical abilities and to handle their finances. This fact may have made it easier for Wieck since he may have felt that Clara would not have rebelled or become independent. Training Clara, therefore, would be less of a financial risk than training her brothers.

Clara’s diaries are the most important source that reflects the intense influence that her father had on her as a young girl. Her father until she was eighteen often supervised her writings in her diary.⁸¹ This had an indirect effect on the practical education of Clara Schumann. Not only did it give her practice in reading and writing, but it also helped her develop management skills which were necessary for her to

⁸⁰ Reich, *Clara Schumann: The Artist and Woman*, 44.

⁸¹ Reich and Burton, *Clara Schumann, Old Sources, New Readings*, p.334.

succeed in a male- dominated sphere. Clara learned to successfully plan events, advertise and tour. Burton states that Clara Schumann “absorbed through eyes, ears and fingers her father’s attitudes towards money and success and something of his competitive personality and belligerent spirit”.⁸² Thus, her great progress may be attributed in part to Wieck's program and to the fact that she acquired the carefully trained mind of a musician because she was encouraged to be distinguished in a male-dominated tradition.

Eugenie Schumann, the youngest of the Schumann daughters shares a letter written by the tutor of the Duke of Weimer and published in *Robert Schumann, Ein Lebensbild meines Vaters*. In this letter, we see a reaction to a performance given by Clara when she was only twelve years old:

“... We heard the little Wieck of Leipzig—she’s a veritable marvel; for the first time in my life I caught myself admiring with enthusiasm a precocious talent: perfect execution, irreproachable measure, force, clarity, difficulties of all sorts successfully surmounted – here are rare things at any age—but still one encounters then occasionally, and if little Clara had offered nothing more, I should have said that she was a machine, to play so remarkably, and I would have remained cold as stone; but she is a musician, she feels what she plays and knows how to express it; under her fingers the piano takes on colour and life; one takes an interest in her without wanting to, and if she does not succumb early to some lingering illness, she will not have much need to beauty in order to become a tempting Siren. Poor child! She has a look of unhappiness and of suffering, which distresses me; but she owes perhaps a part of her fine talent to this inclination to melancholy; in examining closely the attributes of the Muses, one could almost find there some traces of tears”.⁸³

⁸² Ibid., p. 336.

⁸³ Eugenie Schumann, “The Schumanns and Johannes Brahms: The Memoirs of Eugenie Schumann”. (New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1970): 225.

It is through this example that we see early on the reaction of audiences to the young Clara Schumann. Her dedication, commitment, perseverance and hard work result from an inner drive that was fostered early in life through her father's influence.

Clara's mother is often overlooked in literature and in musicological studies that discuss influential figures in Clara's life. Though there is no doubt that Frederick Wieck played an important role in Clara's musical education, it is also important to note that Marianne Tomilitz, Clara's mother, also had a significant influence on the young girl.

Recent articles refer to Clara Schumann's neglect of her children. Scholars suggest that this may be attributed to her experience with her own mother. Clara's mother shouldered a heavy burden of pregnancies, teaching and performances and, as a result, she had little time for her children.⁸⁴ Burton finds evidence in Clara's diaries that Marianne Tomilitz was denigrated by her husband Wieck, who believed that Tomilitz abandoned her children when they were very young. These accusations must have affected Clara and they influenced the way that she perceived herself both as a mother and as a musician. Burton states that: "it is clear that a rereading of old sources provides evidence that the character of the remarkable Clara Schumann was partly formed because of the tenacious, practical, energetic father and the talented independent-minded mother".

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⁸⁴ Anna Burton, "Robert Schumann and Clara Wieck: A Creative Partnership," *Music and Letters* 69 (1988): 339

⁸⁵ Reich and Burton, *Clara Schumann, Old Sources, New Readings*, 340.

The fact that Clara Schumann had ambivalence to composition and performance in male circles is of no surprise. The feelings that she may have had in a subordinate position and in conflict with the status quo of the nineteenth century affected Clara Schumann's compositional style and the way in which she perceived herself in the musical world. Even though she was a great *Lieder* composer who also composed and performed various forms of piano concertos, her compositions reflected the dominant style of the nineteenth century. Marcia Citron in *Cecilia Reclaimed* states that "many women had a difficult time placing themselves in positive juxtaposition with their compositions not to mention dominating it with an individual self."⁸⁶ Clara Schumann's hesitancy, resistance and conformity to the stylistic norms of the day will be examined in the two character pieces discussed in section 2.2.

The fact that Clara Schumann took so long to separate herself from her father suggests that she felt a great deal of fear due to her father's scrutiny. Correspondence between Clara and Robert Schumann reveal that Clara felt great turmoil and inner instability when she referred to her father and to the prospect of leaving him. Clara, in her letter to Robert in dated Wednesday December 6th 1837, writes,

Today the 13th, Fischhof said to me: 'I have a letter from Schumann', and I shook all over as I do every time I hear your name—The most terrible of all questions is always: "Who is this Schumann? Where does he live? Does he play the piano?"—"He composes"—"What are his compositions like?" Then I want to say, like you, "He is a person with whom you have nothing at all to do, who stands so far above you that you are incapable of understanding him, and who cannot be described in words, etc.," I had to puzzle out several words in your letter to-day, which Fiechhof could not read. How glad I was to see the writing, and when I saw your name at the bottom, my heart was at once glad and sad. —I could have wept for pain and joy! —Ah! Robert, believe me, I have many sorrowful hours! No pleasure is complete to me when you are not there! How many

⁸⁶ Cook and Tsou, 23.

polite things I have to say to people, and all the while I am conscious of nothing but the thought of you.

...But do not judge Father harshly because of what I wrote about him; he does not now try to persuade me to give you up, because he knows that that hurts my feelings, depresses and disheartens me, makes it difficult for me to give concerts and to practice—he thinks his letter had put an end to everything....

But it hurts me when you wish to cast a stone at Father because he wishes for some small recompense for all the hours which he devoted to me. He wishes me to be happy, and thinks that is to be obtained by riches; can you be angry with him for it? He loves me above all things, and would not thrust me, his child, away from him if he saw that my happiness could be founded on you alone, so, for love of me, forgive him his natural vanity. Consider that he has treated you like this only for love of me. You too love me, and you make me happy when you forgive him; I would not have him misunderstood by you-- every man has his faults; I have and so have you—you will allow me to say so!⁸⁷

Through this correspondence between Clara and Robert, we see that Clara Schumann was expressing an internal conflict reflecting her struggle with herself and the prospect of leaving her father. Burton states that Clara Wieck's struggle for independence was prolonged and severe. "Over a period of four years she had pledged herself to Schumann but had a difficult time breaking the bond [with her father]".⁸⁸

It was difficult for a woman in the nineteenth century to rebel against social conventions. Clara Schumann experienced this in two ways: First, Clara was an extraordinary pianist, composer and musician comparable to male musicians of that time, but she had difficulty pursuing her musical interests because she lived in a society which expected women to be domestic.

Second, Clara challenged nineteenth-century convention through her rebellion against her father, the one person who supported her endeavours and encouraged her

⁸⁷ Carol Neul-Bates ed., *Women in Music: An Anthology of Source Reading from the Middle ages to the present*. (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1996).

⁸⁸ Reich and Burton, *Clara Schumann, Old Sources, New Readings*, 349.

musical talents despite her gender. Marcia Citron states that “encouragement was crucial in the family” especially for those women who aspired to compose and perform. Clara lacked the support of her father when he criticised her performance in his letters. Defaming her must have been a serious attack against Clara Schumann’s ability to continue on as a serious professional. Her father’s criticism affected her life, her creative process and the way she perceived herself in society and in her art form.

Susan McClary states that music socialises us. If music is, in fact, a method of socialisation and an expression of our own emotions and desires, then music, or the creative process of producing music through composition, is a reflection of what we have internalised and been socialised to accept. In the compositional style of her two character pieces, Clara Schumann expresses her ambivalence, resistance, hesitancy and conformity, which were internalised during her upbringing. Her character pieces resemble typically labelled “feminine forms” such as a *Nocturne* or *Romance*.

Harold Bloom describes the male model as an “anxiety of influence” where composers consciously know that they have been influenced by another composer or writer and they feel that they are not original enough. The act of differentiating themselves becomes an anxious endeavour because they are afraid of being like their precursors.⁸⁹ For women, this anxiety has translated into an *anxiety of authorship*⁹⁰ and it

⁸⁹ Please refer to Harold Bloom in *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

⁹⁰ Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar in *The Madwomen in the Attic; The women writer and 19th Century literary imagination* speak extensively on the issue of women writers operating in the patriarchal system who have felt alienated from this tradition and have felt that they have had to get over this obstacle

is evident in the way that Clara Schumann responded to her father's comments about her abilities as a professional woman performer and composer.

The importance of Robert Schumann

The relationship between Clara and her husband Robert Schumann began and was communicated through their mutual love of music. Robert had an enormous influence on Clara Schumann. He provided the type of support and encouragement that she had from her father as a child. Reich states that

“they were drawn together and remained together not only because of common musical experiences, mutual emotional dependency and physical attraction, but because their musical and creative needs complemented each other”.⁹¹ The relationship between the married couple became a creative partnership. Robert Schumann never ceased writing whether it be through poetry or the creative means of composition. Accounts illustrate that Clara was an inspiration for him on many occasions. In the early piano compositions that he wrote, he credited Clara for providing inspiration for his works:

“I dare say the struggles I have endured about Clara are to a certain extent reflected in my music.... The concerto, the sonata, *Davidsbundlertanze*, *Kreisleriana*, and *Novelettes* were almost inspired by her”.⁹²

so that they can be writers—this has relevance also in the musical tradition of the canon and the compositions by women composers.

⁹¹ Nancy Riech, *Clara Schumann the Artist and the Women* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1985): 103.

⁹² Burton, *Robert Schumann and Clara Wieck: A Creative Partnership*, 212.

Robert Schumann was also an importance influence in Clara's perception of herself as an artist. However, even though they worked together as creative partners and they shared many positive musical experiences, there are accounts of the "inner voice" in their pieces which signified the voice of the spirit, the voice of the beloved, and the expression of their union.⁹³ Clara Schumann often felt that it was her duty as a wife and mother to take on the subordinate role and let her husband, Robert Schumann compose. Clara writes on June 2, 1824:

My piano playing is falling behind. This always happens when Robert is composing. There is not even one little hour in the whole day for myself! If only I don't fall too far behind. Score reading has also ceased once again, but I hope that it won't be for long this time... I can't do anything with my composing—I would sometimes like to strike my dumb head!⁹⁴

Here, Clara expresses her frustrations and anxiety over the lack of time for her composition and piano practice. As a woman, she conformed to the ideals ingrained in nineteenth-century social conventions. Reich suggests since that Robert Schumann composed frequently and left most of the household duties for Clara, this might have put a temporary halt to Clara's performances and compositions and made it difficult for Clara to dedicate herself to her own career.⁹⁵

Thus, Romantic social conventions hindered Clara Schumann as an artist even though she had a supportive marriage where in she shared her musical endeavours with Robert Schumann. The internal division that she felt as a composer, and performer on the one

⁹³ Ibid., 213.

⁹⁴ Reich, *Clara Schumann: The Artist and Women*, 110.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 110.

hand and then a wife and mother on the other hand continued to have psychological consequences on Clara Schumann's creative process.

While the diaries of Robert and Clara Schumann show that Clara sacrificed her creative work in order to accommodate her husband's creativity, we do not have any indication that illustrated that Robert Schumann sacrificed much of his time to support Clara's efforts. In fact, there are instances where Clara Schumann had to travel to her performances accompanied by another woman.

In addition, evidence indicates that occasionally, Robert Schumann made remarks that hint at a jealous temperament; during their lifetime his wife was more renowned as an artist than he was.⁹⁶

Citron offers a theory that can provide insight into the relationship between social constructions of what 'maleness' and 'femaleness'⁹⁷ mean in a given culture. She proposes that gender is being contingent on a socio-historical context and is capable of affecting other conventions and codes. She uses the term "writing the body" or *Écriture Feminine* which centres on "women and proceeds from something intrinsic to her—the fact that her body, which is uniquely *woman* and thus her own. This anxiety of the body

⁹⁶ For more information regarding this issue, Nancy Riech in *Clara Schumann the Artist and Women* demonstrates that there may have been some rivalry or jealousy on the part of Robert Schumann. He may have not been as supportive as musicologists have perceived him to be in past musicological accounts.

⁹⁷ Please refer back to the Forward of this thesis, which gives a definition of these terms.

has fed an anxiety of authorship".⁹⁸ Furthermore, Citron also suggests that for a specific female respondent, multiplicity exists as a consequence of the conflict and contradictions between her sense of herself as a woman and her conditioning in a male-dominated society.⁹⁹ The image of the body is also used by Cook and Tsou to explain how Romantic ideology rationalised that women cannot be creators due to a lack of male sexual equipment. Furthermore, women are seen in a negative light because as recipients of sperm in the sexual act, women are somehow robbing a man of his creative powers.¹⁰⁰ Clara Schumann sacrificed her own creativity so as to not rob her husband of his creativity. However, she paid a price as seen in her diaries that describe the frustration that she felt as a performer and composer. Her internal conflicts will be demonstrated, as well, in the two character pieces used for this study.¹⁰¹

The Struggles of the Professional Class

It has already been noted that nineteenth-century social conventions and norms that governed society may have had an influence on the compositional output of women during that era. Concepts such as the home as a refuge, the domestic roles of women and the legalisation of their disenfranchisement were the prevailing romantic concepts that affected all women, but particularly professional women and artists.

⁹⁸ Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon*, 54.

⁹⁹ Cook and Tsou, 26.

¹⁰⁰ Susan Cook and Judy Tsou ed., *Cecilia Reclaimed: Feminist Perspectives on Gender and Music*. (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

¹⁰¹ In literature, Virginia Woolf in *A Room of One's Own* discusses thoroughly that women have been unable to write freely because of the restrictions that have been placed on them in terms of social restraints in history.

Society was especially hard on women who challenged these norms and who defied convention because attempting to do creative work was presumed to be unwomanly. Consequently, the fact that societal values reserved 'creative power' for men in the professional world seriously hindered women's musical education because they did not receive the same rigorous classes in counterpoint and harmony due to their gender. Reich suggests that social class was not an issue, but gender was in the nineteenth century. Thus, it is not surprising that Clara Schumann faced so many obstacles and made pronouncements that women should not attempt to compose and she also incorrectly stated that "none have ever done so".¹⁰²

By way of comparison, Louise Farrenc, a pianist, composer and performer who belonged to the artist musician class also experienced similar circumstances, as did Marie Pleyel. In 1848, a tale entitled "Le Démon de la Mélomanie" was published in the journal *La France Musicale*. This tale illustrated the artistic delusions of an amateur woman pianist who "disdains the prospect of a good provincial marriage" in order to play professionally.¹⁰³

Reich explains that as professional performers, women had problems which were never faced by men. Women were paid for their work, but they were regarded as unfeminine, and a manager was necessary to protect the women's "femininity". In the

¹⁰² Solie ed., *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship*, 134.

¹⁰³ Ellis, 355.

case of Clara Schumann, the “manager’s” role was first filled by her father and then later to a lesser extent, by her husband Robert Schumann.

Another obstacle which women musicians had to face was the “charge of disloyalty or threat of being *unsexed* and also the emotional burden that was borne by women who had to leave the home and tour in order to maintain careers and earn good fees.” Clara Schumann expressed her outrage that she would perform free of charge:

“It is simply incomprehensible that the men could think that for the first time I will play gratis. Moreover, I cannot understand the indelicacy of just demanding this! Do they take us for rich people? Or do they think that I will play whenever they like for the salary my husband receives? Dear Herr Hiller, if I had not children and if I were wealthy, I would play as often as they wanted, and would be happy to play gratis, but in my circumstances, I cannot do this What shall I do now? I cannot discuss it with them nor can Robert... My playing is a separate matter on which they could not count when they engaged my husband.”¹⁰⁴

This letter to Herr Hiller describes accurately the frustrations that she felt as a professional woman in the nineteenth century. Clara Schumann faced different obstacles from those faced by women such as Fanny Mendelssohn who played and composed in the private sphere. There were financial issues as well as social ones for Clara Schumann. Victorian mores like their French counterparts ensured that any public performance by women raised questions about her personal conduct.¹⁰⁵ Women’s musical performance practices were diverse in different social contexts during the nineteenth century. Clara Schumann’s financial situation was different. As Clara mentions in the above quote money was always an issue for her because she married and later became widowed to a man who earned a modest income as she continued to have the financial

¹⁰⁴ Solie, *Musicology and Difference*, 144.

¹⁰⁵ Ellis, 359.

burden of raising a family. Consequently, she may have had to face criticism not only by music critics, but also by friends and colleagues who did not support her independent, but necessary actions.

Public scrutiny has the positive outcome of changing Clara Schumann into a strong woman who was aggressive, commendable and demanding while at the same time having feelings of insecurity, hesitancy, conformity and resistance to the stylistic norms of the day. But how did women composers respond to these social conventions? What were the ramifications of what may have been a typical situation for them? It is important to remember that Clara Schumann, like many other women of the Romantic era, had to deal with sexual stereotyping and they internalised the conflicts and contradictions that come with being conditioned in such a society. It serves to reinforce the tentative hypothesis that Clara Schumann, like Fanny Mendelssohn, may have incorporated gender identifiable elements and aspects of social conventions into her character pieces because of her environment.

To summarise, Chapter 2.1 explored the social, musical and emotional influences that shaped Clara Schumann into an exceptional performer and pianist of her time. Musicologists such as Marcia Citron and Ruth Solie have readily explored, through a feminist and socio-critical approach, the consequences of being conditioned in a male-dominated society. Clara Schumann's father and husband contributed to her overall sentiment of ambivalence as a performer and composer. She was torn between

conformity to and rebellion against the social conventions of the Romantic era. This is extremely important when exploring and understanding stylistic interpretations of her *Notturmo* and *Romance* in the next section of this chapter. The tentative hypothesis that the character pieces written by Clara Schumann express, at least in part, aspects of gender-identifiable elements as well as evidence of male conditioning is important in understanding the questions surrounding the compositional style of women composers. This results in increased sensitivity to Clara Schumann's life experiences and struggles and we appreciate more deeply her compositional orientation, which reflected cultural influences that were the context for standard classical tradition of the musical canon of that time.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ For more discussion on the musical canon, see Marcia Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon*. (Houston: Cambridge university Press, 1993).

CHAPTER 2.2

An Analytical Framework for the Character Pieces of Clara Schumann

Although the field of feminist musicological research is relatively new, the scholarship surrounding this innovative area of study is extensive. There are a vast number of academic scholars who actively conduct research in this field, and apply a contemporary socio-critical approach to conventional historical-systematic musicology. At times, analytical approaches to this method are quite similar and at other times, differences are abundantly clear. The result is an interesting and varied body of research. An exploration of a common-practice technique coupled with a socio-critical approach that has been used by prominent feminist scholars such as Camilla Cai, Marcia Citron, Jeffery Kalberg, Susan McClary and Ruth Solie will provide an excellent framework and aid in developing theoretical insights into the circumstances surrounding the female composers in this study.

Before introducing the analysis of these character pieces, it is important to note that the approach will be in reference to the feminist theories that have been discussed in the previous chapters. The goal of this section is to explore the character pieces *Notturmo Op.6 No.2* and to a lesser degree, *Romanze Op. 5 No.3*, in order to bring forth evidence that demonstrates the influence of Romantic conventions that were present in Clara Schumann's life. Furthermore, the two character pieces will demonstrate that the theory surrounding an "anxiety of authorship" is pertinent to the study of classical music, especially by women composers.

Leon Plantinga in *Nineteenth Century Piano Music* suggests that piano playing was evening entertainment provided by young unmarried women. It was: “woven in the very fabric of social interaction, it was part of the system of signs by which people communicated with each other, and for the entire century this occurred routinely around that familiar fixed object, symbol of both success and sensibility”.¹⁰⁷ In fact, the extensive amount of music written for the piano illustrates the popularity of this instrument during the Romantic era. As a result, it was during this time period and environment that the *Parlour*¹⁰⁸ became extremely popular among musical circles. Within the parlour environment, women composed and performed character pieces such as the *Nocturne*, *Etudes*, *Romances*, and *Variations* and *Fantaises*, along with *Lieder*, which also became extremely important genres for women composers. Katherine Ellis suggests that:

“ because of their [women’s] status as interpreters primarily, rather than composers, women pianists not only challenged traditional ideas about the meaning of pianistic virtuosity, but were also central to the development of the keyboard repertory toward chronological and stylistic range on the one hand, and historical specialisation on the other”.¹⁰⁹

Clara Schumann was influenced by the popularity of the genres such as the character piece that were played and composed for the parlour not only because she was a professional pianist and composer but also because she was a woman. Through an

¹⁰⁷ Plantinga, 3.

¹⁰⁸ This term and associated concepts will be discussed in detail in the following chapters on Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel since it is more relevant to women who composed in the private sphere.

¹⁰⁹ Ellis, 355.

investigation of the pieces that she wrote in her lifetime, we see that she wrote more character pieces and *Lieder* than any other types of larger forms of genres, such as the piano concertos. Her compositions include diverse character pieces ranging from *Polonaises* (Berlin, 1887), *Etude in Ab* (early 1830's), *Caprices en forme de valse* (1831-2), *Valses romantique*, (1835), *Quatre pièces caractéristiques* (1833-6), *Soirées musicales* (1834-6), *Scherzo* (1838), *Trois Romances* (1840), and *Impromptu* in 1844. In general, her pieces were characteristic, short, “lyrical piano” pieces with a “poetic factor” which was very much associated with the *Lieder* and *Songs without Words* for that time period.

Notturmo

The titles of the character pieces studied in this thesis—*Nocturne* and *Romance*—are descriptive of the moods, sentiments and emotions that are affiliated with the ‘feminine’ ideals in nineteenth-century literature, art, music and society. In particular, the nocturne had a certain assertive quality that went beyond the affirmation of *night music*. Rather, it was affiliated with the feminine.¹¹⁰ As Jeffery Kalberg suggests, it was also encouraged as a perception of ‘feminine’ music and was often to be devalued as such.¹¹¹ The nocturne of Clara Schumann, composed in 1835-1836 and published in 1836, forms part of her *Soirées musicales*, *Op. 6*. It is an example of this patriarchal code of inscribed gender associations, and may illustrate to us her response to this tradition. Written as part

¹¹⁰ Kalberg, 110.

¹¹¹ Kalberg, 110.

of a collection of six character pieces including a *Toccata No.1*, *Ballade No.4*, and a *Mazurka No.5*, this collection was written before Clara's marriage to Robert Schumann and appeared under the name of Clara Wieck. The publication Whistling in Leipzig included Opus 5 in September 1836, while Opus 6 was issued two months later by Hofmeister. Shortly after, Hofmeister apparently took over Opus 5 as well and issued works Opus 5 and Opus 6 as *Soirées Musicales* and *10 Pièces Caractéristiques* in 1838.

¹¹² Kalberg states that "in musical outline, including its harmonic inventiveness, treatment of dissonance, rhythmic variety, clever disposition of form, and wistful coda, the Wieck nocturne is an extraordinary work". ¹¹³ At this point it is useful to explore the Nocturne in detail using harmonic language, melodic motion, dynamic and stylistic markings coupled with sensitivity to a socio- critical approach.

Throughout the nocturne there is evidence which implies that Clara Schumann composed in a fashion that responded to generic tradition with certain social conventions in place. One of these technical features is the poetic lyrical quality that resembles a singing tone used most often in genres such as *Lieder* and *Songs Without Words* and this feature is evident throughout the composition. In his account of the nocturne, Jeffery Kalberg makes reference to a quote in 1839 by Carl Czerny who "implied that many listeners understood the piano nocturne to be roughly equivalent to it [sic] vocal counterpart; they viewed it quite literally as a *song without words*". ¹¹⁴ Clara Schumann

¹¹² Janina Klassen Editor., in *Collection of Piano Pieces by Clara Schumann*. Hamberg: Henle Verlag, 1986.

¹¹³ Kalberg, 117.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 113.

clearly modelled this singing tone and lyrical quality in her piece. When observing the nocturne at first glance, it is obvious that it is in a standard ABA1+Coda form, symmetrical as in a song form, with subtle variations, and long lyrical lines.

A	B	A1 + Coda
Measures 1-56	Measures 57-90	Measures 90-126 Coda (113-126)

In the section marked A, it is obvious that there is a clear indication of a lyrical quality in the melody. (see example on the opposite page)

Andante con moto [♩. = 63 ±]

(p) sempre legato

(p) dolce

f

(mp)

(etc.)

rubato stretto

cresc.

The range is even well suited for a singer up to measure 17 until she places a high 'c' on the third beat of that phrase. This is also evident in her stylistic markings in measures 19-21 at the end of the phrase which is intended for a vocal line that is supposed to diminuendo "poco a poco". Clara Schumann takes this further throughout the nocturne as she refers to the specific melodic line as a *canto* in measures 102 and through her stylistic markings for the end of the final measures of the piece. This lyrical quality in her piece is important because it means that Clara Schumann used 'song like' techniques that would be found in *Songs without Words* and also in *Lieder* writing while at the same

time maintaining a composition that was purely instrumental. This is not to say that the nocturnes of the Fieldian and Chopin traditions lack this essential poetic quality. However, because of Clara Schumann's experience with the parlour tradition coupled with the public sphere, she may have felt that she needed to maintain the poetic and lyrical quality that was so characteristic of the private sphere more so than a male composer would. Kalberg affirms that the genre of the nocturne transmitted a message of a gender-identity conflict, and that Clara Schumann must have been divided against herself in response to the feminine nocturne.¹¹⁵

Another technical feature is the specific instances in the nocturne where there is an internal feeling of instability. Kalberg states that the first few measures of the nocturne secretly upset the surface stability at the start. Harmonically, the piece begins with an augmented triad, instead of perhaps an F major triad. As we progress further, what is immediately striking about the *Notturmo* is the drama and unexpected instability of its opening gesture. The tonic pedal which opens the work is a reiterated 'F' which continues to re-occur throughout the piece producing a feeling of anticipatory tension because the listener is expecting change and not stability. Although the melodic line seems tranquil, it is full of suspensions in measures 3-5, which add to the harmonic tension between the relationship among the bass clef and the treble clef lines. In addition, the augmented triad 'FAC#', which accompanies the first notes of the piece, becomes a kind of reference sonority in the piece since it re-occurs in each statement of "the primary

¹¹⁵ Kalberg., 110.

tune as well as the transition back to the coda.”¹¹⁶ Furthermore, the small appoggiaturas, but mostly the suspensions that occur at the beginning in measures 3-6, increase the tension in the beginning of the piece. Schumann also uses a rising and descending chromaticism which is evident through the whole nocturne, it begins at measure 7 to 25 which suggests changes in harmonic stability. The harmonic structure here is changing as well with a chord progression that alters the perceived key in F major to F minor by the time the work reaches measures 19, then an augmented F A C# in measures 21, to F major.

Ex. 1.3

The musical score for Ex. 1.3 consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a tempo marking of *a tempo* and a dynamic of *pf* *il canto marcato*. The piano accompaniment begins with a tempo marking of *e poco a poco morendo* and a dynamic of *mp*. The score includes a *rit.* marking and a *pp* dynamic. The key signature changes from F major to F minor and then to F major. The score ends with a *a tempo* marking and a *F+* dynamic.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 117.

McClary states that “excessive ornamentation and chromaticism that mark the madwomen’s deviance have long been privileged components in Western music which have escaped the formal and diatonic conventions”.¹¹⁷ Schumann’s passages have excessive ornamentation, chromaticism, and augmented triads. She alters the surface stability of the piece since it is not tranquil and serene to the listener’s ear. Clara Schumann articulates different moods in her character piece and this runs counter to the tradition of a single mood or programmatic idea being expressed in character pieces of the early nineteenth century. In a cultural context, these instances of instability that are evident especially in the first few measures of the introduction of the nocturne, undermine any ‘normal’ associations of the serenity that is implicit in the genre. The listeners experience, perhaps, a sense of Clara Schumann’s struggle with the character piece itself.

Susan McClary’s model of understanding music through a socio-critical perspective will help us appreciate that the *Nocturno* incorporates two themes that represent the ‘feminine’ and the ‘masculine’ ideals that were associated with gender conventions of the nineteenth century. In our narrative reading of this piece we will come across words which suggest stereotyping, however, it is important to note that for this thesis descriptive words such as *kind, gentle, female, rough, angry, assertive*, and so on, have associations with certain characteristics that are part of nineteenth-century norms, and will be used in this analysis for the sole purpose of exposing these conventions.

¹¹⁷ McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 82.

From the beginning of the piece we notice that Clara Schumann has given us suggestions that there is a lyrical voice that describes the first theme for this piece at measure 3. I would suggest that in many ways this theme resembles a 'feminine voice' in the nocturne because it is subtle but present, and not too obtrusive. If we notice the stylistic markings that are placed on the melody of the nocturne, we gain a sense that Schumann is ascribing a subtle meaning to this voice that illustrates some characteristics similar to a narrator who is telling a story, as in *Lieder* writing. At measure 15, we first see evidence of this. A *rubato stretto* marking suggests the 'strangling' of this first theme that introduced itself in bar 3. Here, the rhythm is tighter, and there is increased harmonic tension as well as more stylistic expressive markings.

This theme continues then proceeds to die until measure 25. In measure 19 we see markings such as *Il Canto marcato e poco a poco morendo*, which give us insight into a few details about Clara Schumann's composition of this narrative. First it sets up a parallel between the female voice and the beautiful melodic line of this piano music. Then, the term *morendo* explicitly announces the death of the first theme at measure 25, which starts off melancholic, deadly, and trails off with a dynamic marking of *pianissimo*. Furthermore, the *ritenuto e legato* markings also suggest some tension at measures 17-18 in the piece, perhaps as a struggle or emphasis of a sustained voice that dies slowly in measures 19. At measure 28 there is this continuation of the first theme but with more force enriched by ornamentation and repetition of notes. Note the following example:

Ex. 1.4

The musical score for Ex. 1.4 consists of three systems of staves. The first system shows a vocal line starting at measure 27 with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second system features a piano accompaniment with a crescendo (*cresc.*) leading to a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic, and a vocal line marked *resoluto*. The third system continues the piano accompaniment with a *rinforz.* (reinforcement) marking and a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic, ending with a double bar line and a repeat sign. Measure numbers 27, 31, and 35 are indicated above the staves.

Here there is a reoccurrence of the augmented chord 'FAC#' again which disrupts the underlying stability of the melody of this piece but continues on with a variation of the first theme which seems to continue. It develops in strength and force with dynamic markings in measure 30 that indicate a crescendo to a *risoluto* at measure 32 with an interesting outlined triad of (G#, Bb, D) which would have resembled a g minor triad here if it were not for the sharp on the 'g'. At this measure there is significant sign of the melody or voice attempting to move forward here with increased thirty-second notes that

give a feel of movement into the 'a minor' chord which then is marked *piano*. The chromaticism that occurs in bar 32 maintains interest and keeps the melody moving forward especially since there are a number of sharps in a flat key. In measure 36, Clara Schumann adopts a more aggressive style, as there are gestures of grace notes and accented eighth notes with a rhythmic change in an accented 4 against 3 rhythm (hemiola). The stylistic marking of *reinforzando* and a dynamic marking of *mezzo forte* over a diminished seventh chord that then resolves itself to a F major chord in first inversion also illustrates this through harmonic motion. This continues to accentuate the melodic line up until measure 37. In measures 39-45 we see again a change in the overall status and stability of the melodic voice. The chromatic and rising bass line leading to a *stretto* and *rubato* section with a *ritenuto* on the Bb contributes to the overall tension in the first theme/voice. These features illustrate that Clara Schumann is more assertive in her writing, exploring and utilising various chromatic techniques, ornamentation, harmonic changes and stylistic markings. As a result, the thematic material is expanded to create variety and movement, which exerts primarily the first dominant theme in the nocturne.

It is important to note that in these previous examples, there are definite influences of the generic tradition of Frederick Chopin's *Nocturnes* during this period. For instance, if we briefly examine Chopin's Nocturne Op. 48, No.2 written in 1841, and compare it to Clara Schumann's *Notturmo*, we see that Schumann conforms to traditional nineteenth-century style in various ways.

Ex.1.4

Andantino

The musical score is for a piano exercise in G major (one sharp). It is marked 'Andantino'. The score is divided into four systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system features a large slur over the first two measures of the treble staff. The second system has a slur over the first measure. The third and fourth systems have slurs over the first two measures. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5. The bass staff of each system contains a series of notes, some marked with an asterisk and a '2' below them, indicating specific fingering or articulation.

First, her form is similar to that of Chopin with a symmetrical ABA1+ coda and a contrasting middle section. Second, the style of the *Nocturno* is similar to Chopin's. Both Nocturnes are saturated with chromaticism, appoggiaturas and grace notes. Kalberg states that:

"these agitated middle sections departed so sharply from the Fieldian tradition of the genre that a wide spectrum of his listeners, including the progressive Robert Schumann, doubted the propriety of the gesture. Yet no other innovation was so quickly recognised as deriving specifically from Chopin. Wieck's decision to adopt a contrasting middle section would plainly have linked her with Chopin in the minds of her contemporaries".¹¹⁸

Lastly, just as Chopin illustrates two major themes in his Nocturne, first in Section A and then in the contrasting middle section, so too does Clara Schumann illustrate similar themes. In the contrasting middle section of the *Nocturno*, or Section B, we see evidence of a secondary theme that introduces itself in a more dominant way. It appears to be the "male" theme in d minor then as A major with chords and octaves that have a strange sonority coupled with a steady rhythm  which sounds almost like a march.

Figure 1.1.



¹¹⁸ Kalberg, 119.

At measure 57 we notice that it is marked stylistically with a *piu mosso* and that the chords in the left hand are more rhythmic and give the listener a stronger sense of movement, direction and agitation. At measure 58, Clara Schumann articulates the dotted eight-note rhythm followed by a sixteenth with a *portamento* marking and crescendos. In addition, in measure 77 we see the chords in the left hand being marked with a pedal as they become a F major chord that moves into g minor, instead of triads that were played earlier with a *forte* and *animato rinforzando* marking. This illustrates the accentuation of the secondary and contrasting middle section of her *Notturmo* not only through harmonic motion by asserting her writing in the primary key of F major but also through her stylistic markings as well. Kalberg suggests that this nocturne seems to assert that “this contrast needs to be kept in check so that it does not upset listeners by referring to foreign genres like the etude”.¹¹⁹ In the *Notturmo* there are instances of this occurring in the middle section of measures 78-80, with a *ritenuto* which is a prime example of shying away from any strong sense of an Etude. In the return of the first theme, in measure 91 to the end, we see again the return to the unstable augmented triad in the left hand. This time the theme seems to be slightly more aggressive as shown in the *double forte* and the high-accentuated notes in octaves in bar 95. Once again, Schumann illustrates this in measure 107 where there are slight hints at assertiveness for this voice when it returns again at the *ritardando* marking in measures 111-112 with the contrary motion of the notes rising towards each other. If we adopt McClary’s concept of the narrative in which the protagonist seems victimised by patriarchal expectations and by sensual feminine entrapment, it may be possible that the first theme may be a signifier of Schumann’s

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 117.

dying 'feminine' voice. Clara Schumann creates feelings of nostalgia, death and solitude in her choice of expression markings such as *calando e morendo*, and the use of the 'd minor' chord which occurs in measure 122 moving to an 'F major' in the final measure in the piece. This gesture is striking as it is anticipated earlier on in measure 112 (the coda) of the *Nottürno* with the theme that appears with the low bass line and high melodic line veering towards each other through contrary motion. The dynamic marking of *pianissimo* is beautiful, and representative of the final resolution of the first feminine theme.

For the pianist, this piece is difficult because the harmonic motion in the left-hand accompanied by the changing chromatic melody provides various challenges. While each four, six or eight bar strain is static within itself, each chord pivots harmonically in its last measure to the next segment which sets out a contrasting key (F+, V7 of g minor (ii), ii6/4-5/3 in measures 10, V7 of d- in measure 12, vi (d-) in measure 14, V of d- in measure 15 returning to F minor at measures 19). Here we have a high degree of certainty with the constant F# reassuring us to the tonic at measure 19. However, the harmonic pivot coupled with a suspended chromaticism both harmonically and melodically offers the thrill of the unexpected and provides a colourful yet subtly unstable and challenging technical skill for the pianist to master. In this piece we see an individual and original communicative aspect of Clara Schumann's compositional style.

Metaphorically through the sounds and notes that she chooses, Clara Schumann communicates her social discourse through her music. Her harmonic structure is not clear

and simple. Instead, her rhythms are often complex with a 4 against 3 rhythm like Robert Schumann's and her melodies consist of two obvious contrasting themes that are often saturated with leading tones, chromatic notes, appoggiaturas and suspensions. These gestures and the compositional style allow one to view this piece as a signifier of Clara's knowledge of social conventions and of her limited assertiveness as a female composer. While one sees this in literature through language, in Clara Schumann's compositions this language and style is seen through her compositional choices.

Romance

Clara Schumann's *Romance* op.5 no.3 of her *Quatre Pièces Caractéristiques* is a very beautiful piece that clearly expresses the emphasis on the element of sound, and the lyrical and poetic qualities that were often associated with this genre. The use of sustaining notes, wide ranges and colourful effects were, in fact, often emphasised over other musical aspects. Written before her marriage to Robert Schumann, this *Romance* illustrates the typical character pieces that were written by women during that era. The archives of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna have a fair copy of the *Romance* in Clara's hand with the date "zu Wien im April 1838", possibly intended as an engraver's copy. A second autograph copy of this piece, dated "Leipzig. Im Juni 1836", is preserved in the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek in Berlin GDR—Musikabteilung. Both manuscripts are largely identical to the printed version and furthermore, may have been intended for publication in addition to, or in place of, no.1 in her collection of *Quatre Pièces Caractéristiques*.¹²⁰

The *Romance*, although not as prominent as the *Notturmo*, illustrates aspects of a compositional style that was dependent upon a patriarchal frame of reference and may have imitated some form of women-centred meanings associated with the genre and generic tradition. Kalberg suggests that another way of understanding how women listened to, and were influenced by the music that surrounded them is to examine the pieces that were composed by them in response to the predominant male tradition.¹²¹ The *Romance* is written in the parlour tradition. It is in a symmetrical ABA form with the

¹²⁰ Janina Klassen in Clara Schumann manuscript pieces, this is an editorial note written by the editor for this piece.

¹²¹ Kalberg 117.

returning third part in b minor at measures 52, and with a change of key in D major in Section B (measures 26). It also has a beautiful poetic and lyrical melody that continues throughout the whole piece. Unlike the *Notturmo*, the opening measures of the piece provide a sense of line and harmonic status that give the listener a sense of stability and comfort when listening to the piece. The work is in the key of B major and the harmonic progression is clear and flowing. The opening measures of this piece illustrate this:



Measure 1 through 9 has a typical V-I chord progression usually found in this type of genre until measure 10 (V7 of A major (ii)). At measure 11, the harmonic movement becomes more complex with the introduction of accidentals, challenging and varied chord types, which can be unidentifiable at a quick glance. This type of writing

functions to heighten the tension and motion in this section which contributes to an attractive sound. The melodic function of this piece is extremely interesting to note because the elements of sound are subtle and beautiful since the time signature (3/4) sets the whole piece in constant movement and motion. This is noticeable in the stylistic and melodic aspect of the piece. The melodic scheme in the *Romance* is divided quite evenly in parts with 68 measures in total. It is usually divided into phrases of 4 or 8 measures with sometimes a half-bar introduction that is the anticipatory (pick-up) notes to the next melodic section.

Note the following diagram:

MEASURES	DIVISIONS
1-4	4 bars
5-8	4 bars
9-16	8 bars
17-20	4 bars
21-25	4+1 cadence at 25 (V-I) progression bar 26
26-29	4 bars
30-37	8 bars
38-42	5 bars
43-48	6 bars
49-51	3 bars return to rhythmic and melodic scheme in D major/Section A
52-55	4 bars
56-59	4 bars

60-61 ½	2 ½
62-64	2 ½
64-68	Coda 4 ½

In the preceding example, Clara Schumann incorporated the melodic symmetry that is often associated with the parlour pieces of the era. The phrases are divided into sections of 4 and 8 with a pick-up note that leads into the next sequence. Unlike the *Notturmo*, the division of the measures and the melodic phrase into even sections in the *Romance* illustrate that Clara Schumann did not deviate much from the ABA song form similar to *Lieder* writing which often has characteristics of even phrases that make the piece easier to follow and sing. The characteristics that are found in *Lieder* writing that simulate aspects of song form are also found in this character piece. Applied melodically through stylistic markings and harmonically through motion, there is evidence of this throughout the whole piece. For instance, the chromatic *stringendo* in measures 12-15, where the bass line changes consistently from an 'E, E#, F, F#, G, G#, A' act like appoggiaturas or anticipatory chords that aid the continual flow of the phrase. Note this example:

Furthermore, the rhythmic gestures of  continue throughout the piece and are strikingly beautiful because the chord progressions coupled with rhythmic motion develops into a waltz feel in Section B that has a key change into D Major. The movement here is articulated strongly through a V-I cadence at measures 25-26, and followed by thirds at measures 26-27, which gives stability to the waltz feel here. Stylistically Schumann notes *con anima*, which also moves Section B forward and gives it a lighter and more pleasant feel. Chromaticism is evident throughout the whole piece and draws attention to a slight sense of assertiveness in her work as seen in measures 10-14 and measures 30-34 to 47-48.

Using the narrative model, which is often found in Susan McClary's readings, I see no real evidence that points to an explicit reading of a "feminine" or "masculine" theme. However, the introduction of Section B of this piece does challenge the 'melodic idea' evident in section A in several ways. One example is the use of a different key in D Major, with stylistic and dynamic markings that articulate a difference in thematic writing. McClary states that: [in the *sonata allegro procedure* where the]

"first theme establishes the tonic key and sets a tone to the music, it is used most currently as the 'masculine' theme whose character is somewhat aggressive and frequently described as having a 'thrust' and is often concerned with closure, midway there is an encounter with the feminine theme which is usually more lyrical and presents a new key, incompatible with the first".¹²²

In the *Romance* there is possible evidence that suggests the 'self' and the 'other' as in *sonata allegro procedure*, but as with any gender reading analysis, nothing is ever conclusive. Rather, we should view the analysis of the *Romance* as an interpretative

¹²² McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 68.

stance. Section B definitely functions differently from Section A, but a clear example, such as that in the *Notturmo*, I find is not as present in this character piece. This work can be viewed more as an example of a character piece typically written by women composers who conformed to social conventions and restrictions of the parlour tradition.

Furthermore, the development of the *Romance* which has been labelled Section B (measures 26-52) turns to a kind of passionate sequential procedure, but does not signify a move to transcendence beyond that of the first melodic line made evident in Section A. Clara Schumann writes the recapitulation of the main theme not in the original key, but in 'b minor' (measures 52). The materials of the second theme are absorbed as illustrated in measures 49-52 and modulate quite easily into the minor key, which then neutralises the opening key. What is most striking about this evidence is that Clara Schumann forfeits the exact sonata principle. This happens because either she avoided it due to genre specific qualities which characterised the poetic and lyrical factor of a character piece, or perhaps this is a signifier of hesitancy and ambivalence which is a result of conforming to nineteenth-century social norms.

In summary, the character pieces, *Notturmo* and *Romance* have demonstrated, at least in part, aspects of nineteenth-century social conventions. Influenced strongly by patriarchal tradition, originating early on from her father then her husband, Clara Schumann internalised and was socialised by the Romantic ideologies governing the role of women and men in that society. Her character pieces have illustrated her response to

these social conventions, and to society's attitudes towards gender and composition for women.

In her *Notturmo*, she demonstrates conformity coupled with hesitancy and ambivalence. Her treatment of the two major themes in the tradition of Chopin is a prime example. Furthermore, the feel of subtle instability through re-occurring augmented triads and chromaticism in the piece may reflect Clara Schumann's own lack of confidence in expressing her own emotions and desires through the creative process of composing and producing music. In the *Romance*, we see conformity to the *Parlour* tradition which was dependent upon a patriarchal frame of reference since it did not deviate much from that style. Clara Schumann expressed beautifully the typical notions that were associated with femininity. Not only is the *Romance* strikingly romantic in terms of the element of sound, but it is also characterised by qualities such as gentleness, softness, poetic and fragility that are associated with the mores and virtues that were internalised by women during that era.

The character pieces of Clara Schumann were effected deeply by the cultural values and norms of her time. Though the *Notturmo* and the *Romance* are only two examples of her work, they both clearly illustrate Clara Schumann's response to the social conventions of her time period. As discussed in Chapter 1, a standardised approach to the study of classical music should include an investigation of socio-critical questions in conjunction with aspects of conventional historical-systematic musicology because without the former an approach to a narrative reading may be unsubstantial and

unqualified. These non-traditional areas of inquiry may provide additional insight into the meaning of a composition at work, the historical and cultural context in which it was written and the theoretical conclusions that support this type of study.

CHAPTER 3

Introduction

The name Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel has leapt into prominence in recent years. Current musicologists have recovered her works and encouraged a revival of performances of her pieces. As a result, there has been an increased interest in her life and music in many scholarly fields. Fanny Cecile Hensel-Mendelssohn was an important figure in the life of the nineteenth-century musician; she has been the subject of several scholarly studies attesting to her abilities as a performer and composer and she was instrumental in the promotion of nineteenth-century music in the *Salon*. Through her extensive and quite thorough musical education as a child, she exhibited talents that were equal to, if not better than, those of her male counterpart, her brother Felix Mendelssohn. However, her talents and ambition to pursue her musical interests were hindered by the Romantic conventions that were placed on her as a woman of that era.

Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel, like Clara Schumann, was a victim of her time. Unlike Clara Schumann, however, Fanny Hensel-Mendelssohn belonged to the private and privileged bourgeois class. This had an impact on the way she defined herself throughout her adult life. Reich states that “women musicians suffered because of their gender, but class also played a large part of nineteenth-century music history and must be addressed.”¹²³ The romantic ideals of the French Revolution, the economic and

¹²³ Reich, *Clara Schumann: The Artist and Women*, 125.

technological change that came with industrialism and the spurt of a growing capitalist economy which fostered a prosperous middle class, contributed to a sharp division between the public and private spheres in the nineteenth century. These factors are important considerations when examining the music of Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel because they lead to a deeper understanding of the context in which she composed her character pieces.

McClary states that musicology has developed as a history of chronology, not social history and this presents problems due to the fact that power struggles and issues of gender and sexuality are overlooked when considering compositions of a certain era.¹²⁴ Examining music through a socio-critical approach is crucial, however, when looking at the lives of women composers because they were intensely affected by the social conventions of their time. This approach coupled with conventional musicology results in viewing women's music from a more informed point of view.

If Fanny Hensel lived in an era that expected her to play the role of a housewife and restricted her creative abilities to the domestic sphere, then we should be able to address that fact that her music may have expressed, at least in part, ramifications of those social norms, whether or not the intent was to reflect these norms. McClary suggests that "the point of critical musicology would be to examine the ways in which various different music's articulate the priorities and values of various communities".¹²⁵

¹²⁴ McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 28.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p.26.

Chapter 3.1 will address the social circumstances that surrounded Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel in the nineteenth century. Chapter 3.2 will examine how these ideologies are reflected in her character pieces, *Songs for Pianoforte Number 7* and *Number 2* (1836-37).

CHAPTER 3.1

The Dichotomy of Gender

Women's responses to music in the nineteenth century, whether through musical composition or literature, has been influenced by patriarchal culture. This has limited the reaction of many women, one of whom was Fanny Hensel-Mendelssohn.¹²⁶ Marcia Citron states that "reception and response not only follow but also act prior to creativity as they help construct the aesthetic conditions that shape the way a composer is trained and hence writes".¹²⁷ For Fanny Hensel this affected her willingness to compose and perform publicly and had negative effects on her creativity. As discussed in the preceding chapter, this is often called "an anxiety of authorship" and it translates itself into ambivalence in one's relationship with oneself and one's creative process.

In the case of Fanny Hensel her expectation that she live up to the feminine gender role was first instilled by her father Abraham Mendelssohn and then reinforced later by her brother Felix Mendelssohn. This expectation helped shape the way she defined herself as a musician in the early nineteenth century. For instance, in a letter written on July 16 1820, Fanny's father tells his fifteen-year-old daughter that music can play an important part in Felix's life, but not hers:

"What you wrote to me in one of your earlier letters concerning your musical activities in relation to Felix was as well thought out as expressed. Perhaps for him music will become a profession, while for you it will always remain but an ornament; never can and should it become the foundation of your existence and daily life...you have proved by your joy in the acclaim which he has won for himself, that in his situation you would

¹²⁶ Please note that for the rest of this chapter she will be referred to as Fanny Hensel and not Fanny Mendelssohn to not confuse her with her brother Felix Mendelssohn.

¹²⁷ Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon*, 7.

be able to earn the same for yourself. Remain fast in this conviction and conduct, they are feminine and only the feminine ornaments women."¹²⁸

Through this letter we see a confirmation of the gender roles that were expected of Fanny as she headed into womanhood. Sara Rothenberg states that "containing both praise and veiled warnings, it expresses the contradictions and limitations within which Fanny would struggle to define herself throughout her adult life".¹²⁹ Furthermore, Rothenberg states:

"that the most constraining directive here is clearly the bold statement that music be merely an *ornament* to someone who had already exhibited not only remarkable talent, but also the discipline and intelligence to create something with it."¹³⁰

In addition to Sara Rothenberg's observations, this letter demonstrates nineteenth-century social conventions that were placed on women in general as well as expectations placed on women of the bourgeois class. This letter, unfortunately, spelled out the limitations which Fanny Hensel was to experience for the rest of her lifetime.

Fanny Mendelssohn received the same musical education as her brother Felix. Lessons began every day at dawn and covered a broad range of subjects, ranging from academics to drawing, and representing the ideals of the Age of the Enlightenment.¹³¹ Fanny and Felix received music lessons from Ludwig Berger and later from Zelter. These

¹²⁸ Sebastian Hensel. "Letter of July 16, 1820" in *Die Familie Mendelssohn 1729-1847: Nach Briefen und Tagebuchern*. 6th edition. Translated by Victoria Sirota (Berlin: B. Behr, 1880): 97.

¹²⁹ Sarah Rothenberg, "Thus Far, But No Farther: Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel's Unfinished Journey," *Musical Quarterly* 77 no. 4. (1993): 648.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 648.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 649.

lessons were intense and broad. Fanny often excelled her brother, especially in playing the piano. In 1822, Edouard Derrients comments "I found his (Felix's) playing astonishing in technical execution and musical assurance, but it was not yet equal to that of his older sister Fanny".¹³² Comments such as these, tells us that Fanny had the ability to perform and compose as well as, if not better, than her brother.

It is unfortunate that because she was female, Fanny was denied the opportunity to develop and share her musical talent more extensively. Given a similar environment as a child to express her talents equally, her reception of herself as a musician and her creative process may have remained confident and continually progressive. Abraham Mendelssohn often confirmed his daughter's talents while simultaneously denying her ambition. A letter written on Fanny's twenty-third birthday on November 14, 1828, is significant and worth quoting in full:

Every year makes both of us 365 days older. Who knows how often I may yet congratulate you on your birthday, and speak a serious word to you? Or how long you may be able and willing to hear it? I will, then, tell you today, dear Fanny that in all essential points, all that is most important, I am so much satisfied with you that I have no wish left. You are good in heart and mind. 'Good' is a small word, but has a big meaning, and I would not apply it to everybody.

However you must still improve! You must become more steady and collected and prepare more earnestly and eagerly for your real calling, the *only* calling of a young woman—I mean that state of a housewife. True economy is true liberality. He who throws away money must become either a miser or an impostor. Women have a difficult task; the constant occupation with apparent trifles, the inception of each drop of rain, that it may not evaporate, but be conducted into the right channel, and spread wealth and blessing; the unremitting attention to every detail, the appreciation of every moment and its improvement for some benefit or another—all these and more (you will think of many more) are the weighty duties of a woman.

Indeed you want neither mind nor sense to fulfil them faithfully, and yet there is an ample scope left for constant endeavour to strengthen your will, to collect your thoughts, and arrive at a right choice and appreciation of your occupations. Do this as

¹³² Cited in Sirota, 15.

long as you can freely, and before you are compelled. Whilst Providence still allows you to live with your parents, try to do many things better than they do. Give a solid foundation to the building, and there will be no want of ornaments.

But I won't preach, and am not old enough to prate. Accept once more my fatherly wishes, and take my well-meant advice to heart.

Your Father

While Felix was encouraged to pursue a career in music, Fanny was encouraged to become a good housewife. Jennifer Post expresses this dichotomy between the sexes in relation to the nineteenth century by stating that:

“women's domestic orientation in many cultures has resulted in musical performances mainly in the private sphere. The boundaries around women's work in some cultural contexts are not as defined as those of men's work, which allows women less time for leisure, and thus for musical enjoyment”.¹³³

As noted in Chapter 1, the division of men and women's spheres demonstrates the clear dichotomy between the two genders and the ramifications of this division. For Fanny Hensel, the boundaries that defined her role as a woman contributed to the contradictory impulses that she felt as a composer.

The result of this division for women is usually musical restriction, musical subordination and separation in music performance along sexual lines. Fanny Hensel expressed her contradictory feelings in several ways. First, her writing reveals that she wanted to both comply with and rebel against her father's and her brothers' expectations. Her diary entries express her feelings at various times. Her correspondence also reveals how angry she felt as a woman. An example may be found in her letter to Klingmann in 1829 following her engagement to Hensel:

¹³³ Cook and Tsou ed., 38.

"I would almost have forgotten to thank you for not having concluded until my engagement announcement that I am a woman like any other, I for my part was settled on the point long ago, after all a fiancé is also a man like any other. That one moreover is reproached for one's miserable feminine nature every day, on every step of one's life by the lords of creation, is a point which could bring a person into rage and consequently deprive one of femininity, but that would make things even worse".¹³⁴

In a cynical tone she expresses the musical restraints that she felt as she referred to the "lords of creation" (the imposition of male social norms) that have had influence over her fate and feminine nature. Rothenburg states that "the last phrase shows us the bind in which Fanny finds herself...frustration with her feminine role which if acted upon, would be seen as unfeminine. As great as her talents and passions, equally strong was Fanny's desire to embody the ideals, as she saw them defined by her father and brother, of womanhood."¹³⁵

Another way that Fanny Hensel illustrates the ramifications of gender stereotyping and division is in her choice of musical genres. Fanny Hensel wrote over 400 compositions, with the majority being Lieder and character pieces. Her style was closer to song form. Examples of Fanny Hensel's music will be analysed and we will examine the presentation of musical constructs and their musical meanings in relation to her reactions to the social conventions that were placed on her as a woman musician of the nineteenth century.

¹³⁴ Letter of 22 Mar. 1829 Hensel, *Die Familie Mendelssohn*, 1:197 (Sirota, 45).

¹³⁵ Rothenburg, 693.

The importance of Felix Mendelssohn

There is no doubt that Felix Mendelssohn had an important impact on Fanny's creative process as a musician and composer. As mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, they received the same musical education during their childhood, and Fanny was known to surpass her brother's talents. Musicologists have reported extensively on the closeness of their relationship both personally and on a creative, musical level.¹³⁶ If the siblings meant so much to each other then what can we say about Fanny's reactions to her brother's objections to her composing publicly and professionally? What impact did Felix have on Fanny's self-confidence as a composer and performer? And, does Fanny exhibit in her music her frustrations towards these socially constructed notions?

The romantic ideal of "*das Ewigweibliche*" – the 'eternal feminine'—was a common circulating ideology in the nineteenth century. These romantic ideals restricted women and separated the professional from the non-professional musician. They also influenced Felix, and he in turn, tried to curb his sister's ambition to compose and perform publicly. Nancy Reich states that "Jean Jacques Rousseau's pronouncements on the duties and education of females had a long lasting influence on opinions about women and their place in society".¹³⁷ Consequently, Felix did not look favourably upon Fanny's publication of her pieces in public or even her performances. He expresses his dislike clearly in the following letter dated the 2nd of June 1837, to Lea Mendelssohn:

¹³⁶ It is interesting to note that musicologists have gone so far as to speculate incest between the two siblings when referring to the closeness that they may have experienced. For more information see Sabean, David Warren. "Fanny and Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy and the Question of Incest." *Musical Quarterly* 77 no.4 (1993): 704-715.

¹³⁷ Cook and Tsou ed., 133.

“You write about Fanny’s new pieces and tell me that I should persuade her to publish them. You praise her new compositions to me, which really isn’t necessary.... for I think they’re splendid and lovely. In addition, I hope I don’t need to say that if she decides to publish anything, I will help her all I can and alleviate any difficulties arising from it. But I cannot persuade her to publish anything, because it is against my views and convictions. We have previously spoken a great deal about it, and I still hold the same opinion. I consider publishing something serious (it should at least be that) and believe that one should do it only if one wants to appear as an author one’s entire life and stick to it. But that necessitates a series of works, one after the other.... Fanny as I know her, possesses neither the inclination nor the calling for authorship. She is too much a woman for that, as is proper, and looks after her house and thinks neither about the public nor the musical world, unless that primary occupation is accomplished. Publishing would only disturb her in these duties, and I cannot reconcile myself to it. If she decides on her own to publish, or to please Hensel, I am, as I said, ready to be helpful as much as possible, but to encourage her towards something I don’t consider right is what I cannot do.”¹³⁸

Statements such as these by her brother must have had an effect on the way that Fanny Hensel perceived herself in relation to her compositions. Felix’s reluctance to her publishing was a direct result of the reaction of the dramatic events that influenced all of Europe. Women were property of their husbands and motherhood was raised to sainthood. Reich labels this concept *the cult of domesticity*¹³⁹ and it is evident that nineteenth-century culture was socially dependent on the dynamics of this romantic ideology. For Fanny Mendelssohn this translated itself into more than relegating her role towards the domestic sphere and negative, non-supportive reactions for anything contrary to those beliefs. This fostered feelings of subordination, hesitance and internal conflict with the status quo. Coupled with her own perception of herself as a woman in that era, influenced the way that Fanny Hensel approached her character pieces, and in the way she wrote to either illustrate her ambivalence or resistance to stylistic conventions.

¹³⁸ Marcia Citron, “Felix Mendelssohn’s influence on Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel as a Professional Composer,” *Current Musicology*, 37-38 (1984):15.

¹³⁹ Cook and Tsou ed., 133.

Fanny herself was caught between two opposing forces: the desire to publish, and the desire for her brother's approval. In a letter to Felix dated November 22, 1836, Fanny reveals that Felix's support is more important than her husband's support in this matter:

"In regard to my publishing, I stand like a donkey between two piles of hay. I myself am quite neutral about it...yet Hensel is for it, you are against it. In any other matter I'd naturally accede entirely to the wishes of my husband. But in this matter alone, it's crucial to have your approval; without it I might not undertake anything of the kind."¹⁴⁰

In reference to issues describing creativity, Marcia Citron has suggested that male appropriation has been a factor in regards to the creativity of woman. The fact that culture is privileged over nature implies not only that these distinctions imply exclusively in the sense that men cannot, and should not, partake of women's bodily kind of creativity, but that "women are unable to partake of men's intellectual kind of creativity" as well.¹⁴¹ Fanny illustrates this in her correspondence throughout her lifetime. In the examination of her character pieces, it is important to keep these issues at hand for they will be helpful in understanding certain compositional procedures and techniques.

The Significance of the Parlour tradition in the life of Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel

During the nineteenth century, a significant connection was made between women and the piano. The associations between women and keyboard instruments were

¹⁴⁰ Citron, *Felix Mendelssohn's Influence*, 13.

¹⁴¹ Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon*, 46.

perceived as early as the Renaissance and Baroque periods when instruments such as the virginals and harpsichord were played by women. Richard Leppart states that: [in]

“Victorian culture, the piano functioned in sound and sight alike, an analogical referent to social harmony and domestic order. It’s seniorities, whether only potential or realised through performance, served as the aesthetic metaphor simultaneously connecting and justifying the connection between public and private life: between the outside world of the industrial revolution, and the protected inner sanction of the Victorian bourgeois home, between men and women in their social relation, and finally (and in some regards, most importantly) between bourgeois desire and erotic capacity”.¹⁴²

The associations that affiliated keyboard instruments with women were important in establishing a connection between gender and genre. Most of the genres that were written by women during the early nineteenth-century were centred around the lyrical and poetic styles that demonstrated the technique and facility of performing on the keyboard. The Pictorial tradition is a key aspect of the association of women at the keyboard. For instance, Richard Leppart states that the Gonzales portrait addresses a certain understanding about the nature of life, as seen in Figure 1.2:

¹⁴² Leppert, 115.

Figure 1.2.



Plate 1: Gonzales Coques (1618–84), *Portrait Presumed that of the van Coudenberg Family* (ca. 1650/60), Brussels: S. Bergmans Coll.
Photo copyright: A. C. L., Brussels (plates 1, 3, and 4)

Here, the setting is middle class and elegant which is typical of new wealth, family life, domestic, and descriptive about the roles of women in nineteenth-century society. The motto that is inscribed in the harpsichord states “Audi vide et trace, Si ves vivere in pace” (Listen watch and be silent if you wish to live in peace). Comments such as these are imperative since it urges the attention to music as a metaphorical language. Leppert suggests that “its message is gendered, and its discursive form is more than

slightly shaded by threat—made visible in the binary structure of the painting”.¹⁴³ In conjunction with this theory, I propose that the motto of the painting also displayed additional metaphorical meanings since it is women who observe the motto on the piano if they are playing and performing on it on a regular basis. These associations are pertinent since one cannot understand the history of nineteenth-century music in relation to women composers if one does not understand the responses to account for the associations that link the domestic role of the piano and the metaphoric language that was physically placed on the instrument itself in the form of a “motto”.

The popularisation of the piano in art, literature and musical production contributed to a surge in social gatherings among middle and upper class women that became known as the *Parlour* or *Salon music*. Fanny Hensel was an important figure in the promotion and the continual support of music that was produced and performed on a weekly basis in her home. Her Sunday matinee concerts reflected a tradition of Victorian mores and norms during the early nineteenth century. The distinction between the professional and public music-making in comparison to the domestic and private salons of that era was just beginning to be a major force in Vienna, and eventually became a widespread phenomenon in all of Europe.

Ruth Solie argues that:

“the parlour piano (which was synonymous with the idea of music in the home) moved out of the adult world and became an aspect of social training routine of adolescent girls—termed as *praxis orientation* of both gender and genre. The piano in the

¹⁴³ Ibid., 108.

home was the process of gender formation and gender itself was a performative function of domestic music making".¹⁴⁴

In fact, this is especially evident in the life of Fanny Hensel. If one examines various sources such as her diaries and her responses to these stereotypes that are associated with the instrument, it becomes clear that most of the music that Fanny wrote was in direct response to the social conventions that were placed on her because of her gender.

Fanny Hensel wrote over 400 compositions consisting of genres that were favoured at the parlour. Simple pieces that were lyrical, poetic and displayed beautiful sonorities and musicality such as *Lieder* and character pieces such as the *nocturnes*, *etudes*, and *variations* and *fantasies* were common among educated middle class women. The famous music critic Stendhal wrote as early as 1801 "in our century it is absolutely essential that a girl know music otherwise one would think her quite uneducated."¹⁴⁵ Comments such as these were influential in the lives of women since it defined for them their parameters surrounding womanhood. If Fanny Hensel was conditioned and exposed to these theories and ideologies then her music, no less than any other form of art or literature during that period, expressed at least in part, aspects of gender conditioning such a conformity to stylistic conventions or a reaction to these social implications.

¹⁴⁴ Solie, *Gender, Genre and the Parlour Piano*, 56.

¹⁴⁵ Leon Plantinga p.2. makes reference to Guichard Leon. La musique et les lettres au temps du romantisme, Paris. 1955.

If the keyboard instrument enabled women to preserve a maximum “decorum” in the efforts and exercise of their musical experience, then can we assert that their music expressed and illustrated aspects of these gender-identifiable elements that surrounded their environment? I propose that in circumstances governed by social conventions, Fanny Hensel expressed these elements in her character pieces, especially in her *Songs for Pianoforte No. 7*, which will be examined more in detail in the second part of this chapter.

Women viewed themselves more as crafts people in the tradition of performing and composing in the home which was an affiliation that was characteristic prior to the nineteenth century. Marcia Citron states that

“the development of the upper and middle class could afford to take lessons and educate themselves about music, but were resorted to the home which meant that they were socialised to develop close to the home, and to establish inclusive, rather than exclusive bonds—we rather than I”.¹⁴⁶

These ideologies affected both male and female domestic orientation in the nineteenth century. In broader gender and music studies, there has been less stigma attached to male performance and composition. Men during that era were given more freedom to move around different performance venues whether it was in the domestic and/or private spheres. Women, however, especially those who belonged to the middle and upper class, were limited to performing in the *salon*. Male standards shaped the musical style of women in the public and more so, in the private sphere. As a result, we see that their audience, repertoire, compositions, instruments and performance context

¹⁴⁶ Cook and Tsou ed., 24.

was subjected to social conventions reflective of romantic ideologies and thus, are illustrations of these ramifications that have been affiliated with this type of philosophy.

Part one of this chapter explored the socio-critical circumstances that affected the musical life of Fanny Hensel. Issues such as these are important considerations when examining her music. The influence of her father and brother coupled with Romantic conventions of that era provoked various responses from Fanny Hensel. Ambivalence, resistance, conformity and resentment are all reactions to her limited opportunity to perform publicly, compose professionally and in general, develop her musical talents to a higher level. Responses such as these are evident in her compositional techniques and will be further explored in Chapter 3.2.

CHAPTER 3.2

An exploration of the Character Pieces of Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel

Between the approaches for the analysis of nineteenth-century music, a methodology has emerged that borrows elements from both poles. As noted in the preceding chapter that examined the character pieces of Clara Schumann, there are a number of musicologists who focus on both a conventional common-practice technique coupled with a socio-critical stance. Both techniques are explored in this thesis. Susan McClary, Marcia Citron and Camilla Cai fall into this category and give a fresh new perspective to musical analysis in the context of cultural influences. By choice, this thesis focuses on the literature that would fall into the rubrics of musicology and socio-critical theories surrounding the lives of women composers. This is the goal of the present chapter. The discussion will proceed by introducing the character pieces of Fanny Hensel while utilising the theories that contribute to viewing music as a reflection of the Romantic conventions that were placed on her life. These issues focus on similarities and differences between the two character pieces concentrating on *Songs for Pianoforte No. 7* and to a lesser degree on *Number 2* of the selection with respect to analytical methodologies and musical structure.

The *Parlour*, her family environment and the romantic conventions of the nineteenth century were key factors that influenced the compositional output and style of Fanny Hensel. Male standards not only dictated women's key roles, but also shaped women's style and interpretations towards art, culture and music. The performance

contexts and styles of music performed by women, whether it was in the public or private domain, manifested the social restrictions that surrounded them. Susan McClary states that “gender intersects with other modalities of identity – religious, racial, class, ethnic, to mean that gender does not exclude other modalities of identity but is somehow deeply implicated in each of them.”¹⁴⁷ If gender is defined as a power relationship between men and women then it also implies that it evokes a different experience in life. Consequently, the work of women may be different from that of men because of the significance of encoding gender roles. The experience that Fanny Hensel had in an environment that informed her work through these codes might have had an influence on the writing and publishing of her compositions. Consequently, her works centred on these private occasions and included piano pieces, songs, choral works, chamber works and an overture. Through an investigation of the pieces that she wrote during her lifetime, we note that she wrote over 400 compositions but only a few were published. Her genre included an extensive amount of *Lieder* (over 250 compositions), of which only six songs were published under Felix’s name, two songs published under her own name in 1837 and 1839, Op. 1 to 6, songs, choral works and piano pieces published during the last two years of her lifetime. The rest of her works remained unpublished throughout the nineteenth-century and have only recently been recovered in the Mendelssohn Archives by musicologists.¹⁴⁸ Her diverse character pieces range from *Capriccio in F#*, (1825), *Notturmo* (1838), *6 melodies, op.5*, (1847) *Pastorella*, (1846) to her *Das Jhar* collection.

¹⁴⁷ Kielian-Gilbert, Marianne. “Of Poetics and Poetics, Pleasure and Politics-Music Theory and Modes of the Feminine.” *Perspectives of New Music* 32/1 (1994): 44-67.

¹⁴⁸ Camilla Cai, ed., “Fanny Mendelssohn’s Songs for Piano forte 1836-37: Stylistic Interaction with Felix Mendelssohn,” *Journal of Musicological Research* 14 (1994).

Her compositions centred mostly on the works for pianoforte, displaying the poetical and lyrical characteristics that were associated with the *Lieder* and *Songs without Words*.

Song for Pianoforte No. 7.

What is not known about Fanny Hensel is the large quantity of music that survives in manuscript. She continues to be judged by a small sample of pieces because these works are readily available and can be performed. Camilla Cai states that “without adequate exposure to the full range of her music it is not surprising that people generally believe that she wrote only songs, or songs without words and that her works are an imitation of Felix Mendelssohn.”¹⁴⁹ Fanny Hensel’s unpublished music such as the *Songs for Pianoforte* provides a much clearer picture of her style and compositional abilities.¹⁵⁰ Although her style has much in common with Felix Mendelssohn’s it is also evident that there are personal and distinct features to her music, as will be seen in the subsequent discussion of her *Song for Pianoforte, No. 7*.

Camilla Cai has produced the first edition of this unpublished set of songs written in 1836-1837, and I was very fortunate to have found this recent collection. As she states: “these pieces are an important type of nineteenth century music written not for the public concert hall, but for private gatherings of connoisseurs. The expectations of this style are as particular and exacting as those of the concert hall... with audiences that were sophisticated, well educated guests invited for a musical afternoon at Fanny Hensel’s elegant home.”¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 2.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 2

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 2.

The numbered set of the ten pieces, in addition to the unnumbered piece dating from 1836-37, is taken from the composer's autographs found in the *Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin-Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Mendelssohn Archiv, Sammelband MA Ms 44*.¹⁵² Number 7 written July 8th 1836, of this collection, is a beautiful work. It expresses Fanny Hensel's capabilities as a composer, demonstrating stylistic conventions that conveyed a thorough knowledge of compositional techniques. Hensel gained knowledge and experience while living in an upper middle class household in the nineteenth century and this may have informed her works in many ways. Fanny Hensel illustrates in two ways throughout the Number 7 piece, evidence that suggests that she was composing in a fashion that responded to the generic tradition of the parlour while, at the same time, understanding more complex and expansive forms, and being consciously aware of her limitations.

First, Cai states that: "of Hensel's works available for study this numbered set of 1836-37 falls closest in time to Mendelssohn's early *Songs without Words*...out of all her pieces it would be here that the strongest stylistic crosscurrents should exist between her style and *songs without words*."¹⁵³ The similarities between the *songs for pianoforte* and the *songs without words* may lead to some interesting observations due to the fact that Fanny was familiar with the compositional style of the time. To suggest that there was specific women's music with *feminine* traits from one composer to the next can be problematic. However, to suggest that Fanny understood the particular style and

¹⁵² Ibid., 6. For the purpose of this analysis, this song will be referred to as M.A., Ms. 44 for the rest of this thesis for simplicity.

¹⁵³ Cai, *Songs for Pianoforte*, 58.

expanded on it through an acceptable medium might lead to interesting conclusions on how she viewed herself in relation to her pieces. Marcia Citron supports this theory by suggesting that a woman composer cannot feel validated if she has no history, and no precursors:

“ Virginia Woolf noted that for the female creator who has no female past, the choice was either to demur to men, claiming she was “only a woman” or secondly, to protest that she was *as good as a man* therefore rejecting her femaleness.”¹⁵⁴

In the case of Fanny Hensel, her *Song for Pianoforte No. 7* is an example of her “protesting that she was as good as a man”. Having no real female examples preceding her, Fanny was a pioneer in many ways. Her work is much more expansive than a *song without words*. It has a beautiful melodic line, is expressive and demonstrates a familiarisation with the sonata principle.

Song for Pianoforte No. 7 is a very beautiful piece that clearly expresses the emphasis on the element of sound and the lyrical and poetic qualities that are associated with a character piece. The work is in g minor with a stylistic marking of *Allegro agitato* which in itself is interesting because it sets the tone or mood for the piece instead of being described in the title of the piece as in the case in some traditional character pieces. This feature may indicate that Fanny Hensel intended these pieces to be considered as *songs for pianoforte*, which were more progressive and more expansive technically and thematically than ordinary songs for the time. Cai suggests that she called them *songs for*

¹⁵⁴ Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon*, 68.

pianoforte, not *songs without words*, which supports the theory that she considered these pieces as *songs for pianoforte*.¹⁵⁵

The form for this piece is fascinating because it is not in a typical song form and makes for an intriguing inquiry. It is a modified ABA with a Coda (A- Development- A1- Coda) which hints at signs of the familiarisation of the sonata form. This would not be surprising since Fanny Hensel's musical education was similar to that received by her brother Felix Mendelssohn. The harmonic structure is static in the beginning of the piece and does not really move into motion until measure 8 where there is an increased tension in the melodic line that is rising with a stylistic marking of expression and the change of harmony since she modulates to Bb major at bars 13-14 by chromaticism from bars 10. Note measures 1-15 on the following page:

¹⁵⁵ Cai, *Songs for Pianoforte*, 58. This is one of the most fascinating features of the piece. The fact that Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel did not specifically name each of the character piece instigates an interesting inquiry into the genre specific characteristics that would categorise this work as a character

Measures 1-15:

No. 7

Allegro agitato

The musical score for measures 1-15 of No. 7 is presented in five systems. The tempo is marked *Allegro agitato*. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score includes various dynamic markings and performance instructions:

- Measure 1:** Piano (*p*) in the right hand, with a triplet of eighth notes in the left hand.
- Measure 2:** Continuation of the piano texture.
- Measure 3:** Continuation of the piano texture.
- Measure 4:** Continuation of the piano texture.
- Measure 5:** Continuation of the piano texture.
- Measure 6:** Continuation of the piano texture.
- Measure 7:** Continuation of the piano texture.
- Measure 8:** Continuation of the piano texture.
- Measure 9:** Continuation of the piano texture.
- Measure 10:** Continuation of the piano texture.
- Measure 11:** Continuation of the piano texture.
- Measure 12:** Continuation of the piano texture.
- Measure 13:** Continuation of the piano texture.
- Measure 14:** Continuation of the piano texture.
- Measure 15:** Continuation of the piano texture.

Performance markings include *p* (piano), *cresc.* (crescendo), *f* (forte), and *con espress.* (con espressione).

piece. These reasons inspired me to probe into the collection of *Songs for Pianoforte* and investigate further the relationship and connection to gender and the genre in the character piece.

Here we note Hensel's piece moving forward and pianistically it becomes much more difficult since the texture becomes woven in terms of rhythm (2 against 3) and the harmonic development, which is more expansive, resembles the development of a sonata. Furthermore, at measures 32-38, the physical sensation of playing this piece is similar to playing a section of a Mozart or Beethoven sonata. The rising tension, chromaticism, passing notes, and triplet gestures articulate an anticipatory tension that is the height of the piece resolving at measures 38-39.

Measures 32-39:

The musical score for measures 32-39 is presented in three systems. The first system shows measures 32 and 33, with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second system shows measures 34 and 35, with a diminuendo (*dim.*) marking. The third system shows measures 36 and 37, with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The texture is complex, featuring a 2 against 3 rhythm. The notation includes various note values, rests, and articulation marks.

An impetus for a sonata form is suggested through a quasi exposition, development, recapitulation and coda. This developmental form raises Hensel's heightened sense of pianism through the use of a wider range and the sheer expansiveness of her melodic motif throughout the piece. Her work suggests a much more complex compositional writing than that of the *salon*, which also gives an indication that Fanny Hensel wrote these pieces as a diverse more advanced and sophisticated form of the standard character piece. Cai suggests that the developing texture as in measure 54's 'staccato passage' can be used as a way of interpreting Hensel's formal structure of the piece. In the following diagram we see the evidence of this form:

Figure 2.6.

A	DEVELOPMENT	A1	CODA
Measures 1	15-39-43-54-60	62-74	89-97-103-111

Through this example, it is evident that the piece may illustrate some resistance to the standard ABA song form because of its expansive qualities. It resembles in some aspect characteristics similar to sonata form, which illustrates that Fanny Hensel was indeed informed and used aspects that were associated with the diverse genres aside from the traditional parlour style that existed in the nineteenth century.

From the standpoint of Susan McClary's theoretical stance, we perhaps could indicate a variance of a secondary theme in the development section. In *Feminine Endings*, McClary states that through the "futile attempts at reconstructing the self, the development turns to the kind of passionate sequential procedure that typically signals the standard move to transcendence."¹⁵⁶ In the case of Fanny Hensel, her development of the work in measures 15-36 may indicate two aspects that relate to McClary's theory. First, a move towards a 'secondary theme' (subordinate theme) or rather, an expansion of the melody, illustrates a familiarisation of nineteenth-century musical developmental techniques and second, it demonstrated Fanny Hensel's progressive writing. Though neither of the two examples is conclusive, they indicate, however, an important point that must be considered when examining this work. Through her compositional choices, Fanny Hensel demonstrated a thorough knowledge needed to apply aspects of the sonata principle in her compositional works. This suggests that she was influenced and informed by the compositional techniques used in male circles. The expansiveness of her melody, the difficulty pianistically in the development section, and the return to the main theme demonstrate certain characteristics in her piece, which lead to a familiarisation with the development section of sonata form both harmonically and melodically. This classical technique was used more often in complex written pieces written that had various themes and motifs. Thus, one cannot overlook the intersection of gender and genre in the connection and impact that it had on the creative process of Fanny Hensel, and moreover, the relationship and affect of nineteenth-century musical society on her writing.

¹⁵⁶ McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 54.

The melody, as in Clara Schumann's pieces, is the strongest backbone of this piece and Fanny Hensel may have derived this traditionally from the practice of composing *Lieder* works, which required a consistent melodic line with beautiful piano accompaniment. At first glance, *Songs for Pianoforte No. 7* is saturated with beautiful melodic lines. The first beautiful one that continues throughout the work begins prominently at measure 1 through 15 (the second ending). Her beautiful melodic gestures of a rising line with expressive leaps of 6ths and 7ths reverse the direction of the line at measure 1 through 4 and create a sense of introduction and closure that comes with a musical phrase as if one were to complete a sentence in poetic writing or as in text writing that is associated with *Lieder*. If we look at the melodic structure of the work, we find that her phrases are divided into 2, 4, 8 and sometimes in an uneven division of 5 measures:

MEASURES	DIVISON
1-4	4 bars
5-9	5
10-13	2 ½
12-13	2 ½
15-19	5
20-23	4
24-25	2
26-27	2
28-29	2

30-33 ½	4
34-37,38	4+1 back to return
39-44	4
44-45	3
46-49	4
50-53	4
54-55	2 ½
56-60,61	4+1+1 expansion of measures 54-55 plus one measure to end the development section and return to A
62-65	4
66-70	4 ½
70-72	2 ½
73-74	2 ½
75-76	2
77-80	4
81-82	2
83-88	6 measures of developmental expansion of the melody in measures 81-82
89-92	4
93-96	5
97-98	2
99-102	Expansion of measures 97-98
103-104	2

105-106	2
107-108	2
109-110	2
111-114	4

Often in her melody we see instances of incomplete measures or 'pick up' beats. Vocally these gestures aid the singer to take breaths and produce an anticipatory beat into the next phrase. In the preceding diagram, we see instances of this occurring. Although her lines are even throughout, usually in phrases of 4 or 2, there are measures of 5 ½ and pick up notes to the next section. In addition, Hensel uses this technique not only to contrive a smooth melodic line but also to expand extensively her melodic ideas. This is seen in various sections of the work by first introducing it through a two-measure phrase and then expanding the motif through a four or six measure phrase.

The soaring melodies and, more importantly, the triplet accompaniment are also interesting features of this piece. The bass clef accompaniment illustrates a more forceful, secure and stable line because of the solid triads rather than the broken arpeggiated form, and also because of the triplet accompaniment that is set against the duplets in the melody. Cai suggests that "the strong accompaniment texture is tied to a single rhythmic pattern almost throughout... and is dominant in the piece because it is established early and it continues in prominence until the end."¹⁵⁷ In a comparison of two pieces written by Fanny Hensel and her brother Felix Mendelssohn, we find that his *Songs without Words*,

¹⁵⁷ Cai, *Texture and Gender*, 68.

Op.117 measures 1-6 is in the closest resemblance to Fanny Hensel's *Song for Pianoforte No.7*.¹⁵⁸ Whereas Mendelssohn arpeggiated the chords in his *Songs without Words*, Op.117, measures 1-6, Hensel has repeated the chords in her work:

Figure 1.3.



Hensel, No. 7, mm. 1-4



Mendelssohn, Op. 117, mm. 1-6

¹⁵⁸ Camilla Cai suggests that the "two similar pieces were mostly written within a year of one another give a strong sense of the importance of this conjunction of texture and rhythm. Hensel's piece, without title but the designation No.7, is part of a ten-piece set; if one were to suggest a title it would most likely be *Song for Pianoforte*. Mendelssohn's comparable piece, op.117 is titled both *Album Leaf* and *Song without Words*. Mendelssohn knew Hensel's No. 7, which was completed 8 July 1836 because she sent it to him in late October of that year. Since Mendelssohn's op. 117 is dated as *probably* written in 1837, there is the good possibility that he considered Hensel's piece in writing Op.117." Cai, *Fanny Hensel's Songs for Pianoforte*, p.71

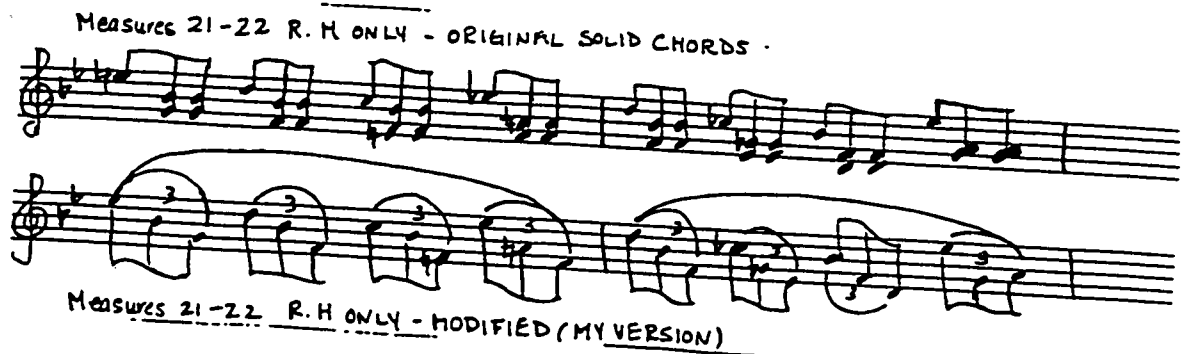
This is an important consideration when viewing the character piece by Fanny Hensel because it illustrates the cultural and personal factors that suggest the powerful influence of gender roles. Cai argues

“that Hensel’s pieces resemble Mendelssohn’s shows the force of the values of the dominant masculine musical culture. Hensel studied music with men and by men. While she was being taught to compose ‘like a man’ (resembling a man, yet not a man) she was also being imbedded with the feminine values of the same culture. By being a composer at all she chose a position that put her in conflict with cultural values of her time, and although she did use the musical-technical language of men, she accepted a woman’s place by choosing genres and an instrument appropriate to women.”¹⁵⁹

The solid chords are continued throughout the piece and are a prominent moving force. In certain instances she reverses them in the treble clef as in measures 20-23 with an emphasis on the intervals of seconds, thirds, fourths and fifths which give it a pulsating motion and an inner line that moves in contrary motion. This occurs again in measures 70-74 as the piece returns back to Section A. Features such as these that are evident in her work display the fact that Fanny Hensel has chosen specific and particular compositional devices that illustrated at least in part, aspects of masculine culture that she had internalised. Fanny Hensel composed in a fashion that demonstrated that she had responded to the generic tradition, but with certain social conventions in place. The compositional choice in her work for an arpeggiated bass line over solid chords, which would have given the piece a more lyrical, ‘soft’, ‘gentle’ and *feminine* quality illustrates this concept.

¹⁵⁹ Cai, *Texture and Gender*, 60.

For instance:



By no means is there an implication that any compositional device can be labelled as 'feminine'. One must always take care in using such stereotypical words that may affiliate a single musical idea with certain meanings and implications that can be ascribed a gender value. However, it is imperative to note that Hensel's musical choices articulate instances when one questions the creative process by which a composer chooses their models and this instance is an example of those choices.

Cai even furthers this socio-critical stance to suggest that Fanny Hensel's strong interest in the texture of the piece suggests a feminine learning through using texture as a

unifying force that replaces the form in importance. She states that two images are present which indicate a sense of attention to surface and texture:

“ the one image is that musical surface is analogous to exterior feminine dress; the second compares music to woven cloth. Both nineteenth-century feminine dress and woven fabric (*das Gewebe*), though no part of the musical-technical language of Hensel’s time, would have had strong importance for a nineteenth century women like Hensel in preparing herself for the presentation at her elegant salon. Since her attire and her music were both important parts of this same event, it is intriguing to connect similar aspects of the two.”¹⁶⁰

Fanny Hensel articulates an active textural component in her pieces that runs counter to simple programmatic ideas that were written for lyrical purposes. Physically playing these character pieces requires one to pay attention to rhythmic intensity and textural patterns. The chords are difficult to play and provide impetus for a forward motion that is agitated and intense. Although there is no clear indication that adopts McClary’s model of a ‘feminine’ and ‘masculine’ theme evident in some sonata forms, and in first movements of symphonic works, elements such as these are important in understanding the relationship between the parts in Fanny Hensel’s *Song for Pianoforte No. 7* and suggest a more critical reading of the piece rather than a standard conventional approach.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 60.

Songs for Pianoforte No.2

Fanny Hensel's *Songs for Pianoforte No.2*, is a beautiful melodic piece which expresses the poetic, lyrical and melodic motifs that were associated primarily with the traditional character pieces of the Romantic era. The use of a wide vocal range, colouristic effects and melodic sensibility were important and were emphasised over other musical aspects. Written in the unpublished collection of *Songs for Pianoforte 1836-37*, Hensel's piece No.2, illustrates a very distinct and personal style which also conformed to stylistic conventions that were in place. Hensel wanted to please her well-educated guests who were invited on a weekly basis for musical events in her home. Interestingly, No.2 of this set was published in 1846 as Hensel used it to open her four-piece collection that Bote and Bock published and was known as Opus 2, No.1. Comments directed towards this work, illustrates its favourability: "we open the first volume, read the first eight measures and [know] we have made a new and interesting acquaintance."¹⁶¹

The piece is derived from the tradition of composing songs and *Lieder* and has a formal structure with musical qualities that illustrate the compatibility of character pieces that would be heard in the salon. The themes are organised as classical or an attempt towards 'femininity' due to the long musical phrases, soft tone and easy harmony. In

¹⁶¹ Cai, Camilla, Editor., *Songs for Pianoforte 1836-1837 in Recent Researches in the Music of the Nineteenth Century and Early Twentieth Centuries Volume 22*. Madison: A-R Editions Inc, 1994.

addition, it also illustrates a traditional hierarchy of authority because Fanny Hensel did not experiment much in terms of excessive harmonies, key changes and transposition. Rather, it is in 'G major', simple ABA form, is extremely romantic sounding and it expresses Fanny's interest in musicality and sensitivity towards emotionalism. Also, it is not as expansive as her work *Number 7* of this collection. Cai states that:

"the melody for these pieces, includes the concept of a piano song, a concept useful for describing and categorising Hensel's work. Piano song, or better, "songs for pianoforte" as a genre designation can suggest not only the importance of the piano in Hensel's work—it was the instruments she played best and that she used most frequently for self expression—but also suggest the importance of the piano melody as an expression of Hensel's own musical voice.¹⁶²

The constant melodic line with accompaniment has a colourful contrast in harmonic movement, especially in section B (measures 36) with a rising chromaticism. Though both the top voices are uppermost and independent of the inner voices, Fanny Hensel's melody is singable in the soprano range up to a singable 'g' over middle 'c' on the piano. Although she extends her melody, she takes care not to exaggerate it since it would disturb the melodic line by including large leaps which would be difficult vocally. Her phrase structure is divided evenly into sections of 4, 6, 8 and 12 measure phrases. The piece begins in G major and in the dominant (V) chord. It then progresses to the tonic (I) chord in measure 2 and harmonically proceeds until the key change in 'g minor' in measure 36 without emphasis to accentuate many accidentals or chromaticism which would alter the melodic and harmonic serenity that is perceived when performing the piece. This suggests that she composed in a controlled environment, which may have restricted her style.

¹⁶² Cai, Camilla, Editor., *Songs for Pianoforte*, 4.

The thirds in this piece are an important feature since they give rhythmic and harmonic stability which are under-shadowed by a beautiful melodic line until section B where there is a key change. The movement is articulated by a strong cadencial procedure: V of G major to I of g minor, which introduces a new thematic material. Stylistically, Hensel marks *ben tenuto*, which introduces the new melodic motif of the piece. It indicates a more held, prolonged sound in the treble clef while the bass clef's broken chord caress the melody with descending tones that give the work a seductive, dreamy like characteristic that draws the listener's attention into a diverse mood. Harmonic chord changes are frequent, but chromaticism is evident in section B where Hensel chooses to climax from 'e minor' (measure 69) in the piece at measures 67-75 when Section A returns. Measure 68-75:

The image displays three staves of musical notation, likely from a piano score, covering measures 68 to 75. The notation is in G minor (one flat) and 3/4 time. The first staff (measures 68-70) shows a melodic line in the treble and a broken chord in the bass, marked 'poco cresc.'. The second staff (measures 71-73) continues the melodic line and broken chord, marked 'riten. e molto cresc.'. The third staff (measures 74-75) shows the melodic line and broken chord, marked 'dim.'. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Here, we find the most central and energetic movement of the piece. The heightened chromaticism gives way to a more assertive and aggressive motion. As the eight note motif which is derived from the theme in A and the tempo starts to slow down, the dynamics reach their peak at this section illustrating that Fanny's movement is based on an identity of both thematic and tonal. As in Clara Schumann's *Romance*, the introduction of Section B challenges the melodic idea in Section A, but not enough to categorise a dichotomy between a masculine and feminine theme. One may approach a narrative reading to suggest the possibility of a "self" and "other" between sections A and B. However, what is more intriguing about section B is that it intersects the correlation between gender and genre and the relationship between women and their place in juxtaposition with compositions by men. For instance, if one examines closely the pieces of Felix Mendelssohn, we find that his *Song without Words op.102 No.4*. is the strongest crosscurrent between Fanny Hensel's section B and Mendelssohn's work. Note the similarity:

Fanny Hensel Song for Pianoforte No.2. Measures 36-43

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (bass clef). The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4.

System 1 (Measures 36-37): The piano part begins with a *mf* dynamic. The vocal line has a *ben tenuto* instruction with a dotted line above it.

System 2 (Measures 38-40): Measure 38 is marked with a *f* dynamic. The piano part includes a *p. 22* marking below the staff. The vocal line has a dotted line above it.

System 3 (Measures 41-43): Measure 41 is marked with *dim.* and a dotted line above the vocal line. Measure 43 is marked with *cresc.* and a dotted line above the vocal line. A small asterisk (*) is located below the piano part at the beginning of measure 41.

Felix Mendelssohn Song without Words Op.102, No.4

Felix Mendelssohn
(1809-1847)
Op.102, No.4

Un poco agitato ma Andante (M.M. ♩ = 60-69)

P

con pedale

3

sf

simile

5

sf

dim.

7

P

sf

9

10

The piece is in a similar key, (g minor) as in Section B of Hensel's work and displays likewise the same tonal and melodic techniques employed by Felix Mendelssohn, however, the scope of Hensel's piece is broader and there are technical demands on the player. Here she is influenced by patriarchal tradition. She labels the piece as *songs for pianoforte No.2*, however it conforms mostly to a *song without words*, a tradition mostly found in the music-making of the parlour. Since she published this piece in an earlier collection, she may have felt that it complied with the lyrical style that was expected of her. Certainly the fact that she did not publish the whole set as one may be partially attributed to the fact that Felix's lack of encouragement in musical matters affected the way Fanny perceived herself in relation to her work.

The *Songs for Pianoforte 1836-37* provide an interesting study for viewing music through a socio-critical eye. Aside from the fact that there are gender-related issues and identifiable elements associated with the pieces, one of the most intriguing features of these works is the fact that they belong to a collection labelled *Songs for Pianoforte*. This in itself has caught my attention and thus by further examining these pieces, one discovers through a socio-critical eye instances where Fanny Hensel expressed her ambition, ambivalence and conformity to social conventions. *Number 7* of this collection is an attempt at a more expansive, complex form and thematic ideas rather than the typical ABA. This justifies categorising this piece in her *Songs for Pianoforte* collection. Conversely, *Number 2* reflected the typical ABA song form that was common in most of the parlour style works. These differences in the two pieces have resulted in interesting

comparisons and have yielded many conclusions about her works. While there are expressions of Hensel's ambition towards her compositions, there are also instances of constraint and hesitancy. This has fuelled the theory of an "anxiety of authorship", which is evident in her compositions. Fanny Hensel's character pieces are a reflection of this notion that intersects gender and genre and they are substantially informative works for musicologists and academics who study the composer, in general, and women composers of the nineteenth century, in particular.

CONCLUSION

Throughout this thesis, I explored the potential for a common practice technique coupled with a socio-critical approach to the study of two character pieces composed by Clara Wieck-Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel. As my point of departure, I reviewed recent literature surrounding the field of feminist musicological research, conventional analysis and socio-historical methodologies. Through this, I discovered that these methodologies and diverse ways of viewing music were indeed derived from analytical methods that attempted to recover the issues surrounding the compositions of women in the Romantic era while exploring diverse fields of traditional musical analysis. Among these scholars were those who examined in detail the role of women in the nineteenth century and the effect that social conventions had on music and on the composers who worked in that era.

Through my detailed investigation of musical scholars such as Susan McClary, Richard Leppart, Jeffery Kalberg, Ruth Solie, Marcia Citron and Camilla Cai, I revealed a number of common links between gender and genre. This raised an inquiry into the examination of a possible tentative-hypothesis that in genre-related forms such as the character piece (which were often associated with the parlour and the compositions written by women) gender-identifiable traits were evident, and this led to some interesting questions about the environment in which Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel and Clara Wieck-Schumann composed.

The assertion that textual-related genres can only yield to given-gendered meanings has a limited scope. Understanding that music as a signifier of cultural and socio-political issues supports the idea that genres composed most often by women, such as the character piece in the early nineteenth century are a result of the social ramifications that were part of that era. By viewing the character pieces as such, it is important to note that the works by Clara Wieck-Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel for this thesis illustrate elements of these constructions.

Through my detailed investigation of the works of the two composers, I revealed a number of common links that had the potential to be included in this socio-critical approach. Both women were deeply influenced by social conventions. Although they each belonged to two different social classes (Clara Schumann in the working professional class and Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel in the privileged, private bourgeoisie), each of them had to deal with a similar struggle. They both shared a passion and enthusiasm for music and were gifted pianists. However, their creative output was restricted and limited because women composers and performers were not valued in the nineteenth-century. Furthermore, both women were encouraged, at least in part, by male figures who helped them feel a sense of confidence and ambition coupled with an anxiety and ambivalence towards their compositions.

In the early nineteenth century, women began to fight for a better education, the right to vote, and the right to equality, and these demands posed a threat to society. Often women such as Fanny Hensel and especially Clara Schumann, who performed publicly

on a regular basis, faced many critics who were alarmed by the “feminisation of music” and who feared the inevitable deterioration of male superiority of this art form. As seen in the passages quoted from the diaries of both composers, these ideologies and theories which attempted to maintain the inferiority of women, affected the patriarchal constructions of what womanhood meant in that century. Consequently, the male figures in their lives, in addition to offering some bouts of support, also negatively influenced them and played a part in the shared ambivalence that these women felt as they attempted to practice their art form. For Clara, this is seen first with her father who attempted to ruin her after she wanted to leave him to marry Robert Schumann, and later with her husband who also shared mixed feelings towards Clara Schumann’s musical endeavours. For Fanny, patriarchal constructions of womanhood were set by the parameters that her father placed on her as an adolescent and later, by her brother Felix Mendelssohn who continued to object to her composition and public performance.

In Part II of each of the chapters on Clara Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn, I discussed the prospect of gender-identifiable elements in the character pieces for this study. Through my investigation of the works by both composers, I discovered a number of similarities. Between Schumann’s *Notturmo* and Mendelssohn’s *Songs for Pianoforte No. 7*, there existed common thematic and melodic contexts that suggested prospects of gender-identifiable elements. Although both pieces were slightly different from each other in form (ABA verses ABA1+Coda) they both displayed two themes that are related to the theories presented by Susan McClary. The lyrical qualities of both pieces that clearly modelled two distinct voices exposing perhaps a “feminine and masculine” theme

is one instance of this occurrence. In the *Notturmo*, this is clearly divided by the second section labelled as B. In the *Song for Pianoforte No.7*, we see this more towards a secondary theme (subordinate theme) in the developmental section of her work at measures 15-36. Both of these examples illustrate knowledge of compositional techniques somewhat related to sonata form and the distinction and purpose between two themes in the character pieces. In addition, both pieces have gestures that indicate an instability and hesitancy through a re-occurrence of augmented triads and chromaticism in the *Notturmo* and a quasi-developmental section that challenged the traditional model of the character piece in *Songs for Pianoforte No. 7*.

Whereas the *Notturmo* and the *Songs for Pianoforte* challenged the conventional model of the character piece by displaying the aspects of gender-identifiable elements, the *Romance* and the *Songs for Pianoforte No.2*, were good comparisons for this study because these works illustrated the epitome of nineteenth-century social conventions. My investigation of both character pieces suggested that the typical ABA form, the long lyrical lines and poetic factor that were common elements in a typical character piece were also common in both works. Thus, the sketches of their melodic outline of a song did not form drastically different results. In fact, the analytical results were quite similar. Restricted by time and paper length, I could not conduct a large number of melodic analyses and a socio-critical stance as in the previous works by the two composers. However, both character pieces proved to be conclusive since they illustrated how the works reflected a *Parlour* style that was typical of that era. While there were instances where one could see assertions in their works, the two character pieces yielded interesting

comparisons between one style of writing versus another since all the works by each composer were derived from the same set and written in, and around, the same time span.

The question of gender-identifiable traits in the works of women composers is still a controversial issue. The main challenge that still exists is to study other non-traditional parameters of music written by women and men. The question arises as to how an analyst can systematically account for aspects of music that are difficult to identify using the traditional mode of analysis. In any case, I still believe that a study which uses a non-traditional, socio-critical approach coupled with conventional parameters is a valuable exercise and a valid method and should be used in a consolidation approach when analysing music written by women composers. While I still believe that each composer has a distinct style, there are common elements among women composers of the nineteenth-century that suggest that they created their compositions in a controlled environment, which reflected nineteenth-century norms. This is not to say that there is a distinctive female approach to the character piece. One cannot identify a work as being composed by a female or male because of the way a composer has written their work, just as one cannot attend a concert and declare any composition to be written by a female or male by listening to it. However, given that the terms “feminine” and “masculine” are contrived as socially constructed phenomena, one can identify these traits in compositions. Such studies could create additional layers of meaning that support and further invite many other interpretations attributed to music written by women.

The study and quest for a socio-critical approach to music has increased in popularity over the last ten years. As an interest has sparked in musicological research, this thesis has provided an impetus for the study of a social-critical approach to musical analyses where further study is always an asset. For instance, examining the diverse genres such as a sonata, a concerto, trio, or even a symphonic work written by women composers of the past to the present day would be advantageous in drawing comparisons between the sociological influences, compositional style and attitudes. In addition, it would be advantageous to conduct perhaps, an investigation that would examine analytical results of male composers who wrote in controlled socio-political environments such as that of the Romantic era. Through this, we could unveil and discover whether a socio-critical stance coupled with historical-systematic musicology has the potential to produce further interesting results and fresh perspectives to the study of musical works.

The main question of this present study is whether or not gender-identifiable elements and aspects of social influences are conveyed in music. The analyses of the character pieces by Clara Wieck-Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel in the form of a socio-critical stance coupled with conventional harmonic techniques supports the hypothesis that the intent of the composer, whether it be a subconscious or conscious intent, was in fact conveyed through their works and their lives. It is my hope that knowing the environment in which these compositions were written contributes to a better understanding of feminist perspectives in music. As was the case with the character pieces, the sociological factors of these women contributed to another layer of

understanding of their music. Do these factors always lead to a conclusive understanding of gender and genre? Perhaps we should extend our analytical methodologies to those composers who have composed their works as artistic expressions of extra-musical content.

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APPENDIX

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Example 1.1: A reprint of Clara Schumann's Notturmo Op.6., No.2.

Notturmo

Andante con moto [♩. = 63 ±]

The musical score is written for piano and consists of five systems of music. The key signature has one flat (F major), and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked 'Andante con moto' with a metronome marking of quarter note = 63 ±.

System 1: The first system begins with the instruction *(p) sempre legato*. It features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The second measure of the first system has a *(p) dolce* marking. A first ending bracket with a double bar line and a repeat sign is shown at the end of the system.

System 2: The second system continues the melody and bass line. It includes a *sf* (sforzando) marking in the right hand and a *(mp)* (mezzo-piano) marking in the left hand. A first ending bracket with a double bar line and a repeat sign is shown at the end of the system.

System 3: The third system continues the melody and bass line. It includes a *sf* marking in the right hand and a *(etc.)* marking in the left hand. A first ending bracket with a double bar line and a repeat sign is shown at the end of the system.

System 4: The fourth system begins with the instruction *rubato stretto*. It includes a *cresc.* (crescendo) marking in the right hand and a *(mp)* marking in the left hand. The system ends with a *sf* marking in the right hand and a *pp* (pianissimo) marking in the left hand. A first ending bracket with a double bar line and a repeat sign is shown at the end of the system.

System 5: The fifth system begins with the instruction *e poco a poco morendo*. It includes a *(mp)* marking in the right hand and a *(rit.)* (ritardando) marking in the left hand. The system ends with a *pp* marking in the right hand and a *(a tempo)* marking in the left hand. A first ending bracket with a double bar line and a repeat sign is shown at the end of the system.

pp
p
risoluto
cresc.
f
p
rinfor.
mf
mp
cresc.
etc.
stretto e rubato
ritenuto
cen
do

- The editor applies this accent to the E in the alto.
- This 8 applies to the octuplet in the R.H.

First system of a musical score. The right hand (treble clef) begins with a melodic line marked *p* (piano). It features a series of eighth notes, followed by a phrase marked *(a tempo)* and *con grazia*. The left hand (bass clef) provides a steady accompaniment of eighth notes. The system concludes with a phrase marked *p*.

Second system of the musical score. The right hand features a complex passage with an octuplet marked with an '8' and a slur. The left hand continues with a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The system ends with a phrase marked *pp* (pianissimo).

Third system of the musical score. The right hand starts with a phrase marked *risoluto con forza* and *9* (nono). This is followed by a phrase marked *sf* (sforzando). The left hand has a phrase marked *ff (Sub.)* (fortissimo, Subito). The system concludes with a phrase marked *p* (piano) and *(♩. = 76) più mosso* (half note = 76, more motion). A bracketed instruction *[Sos.]* (Sostenuto) is located below the left hand.

Fourth system of the musical score. The right hand features a melodic line with a crescendo marked *cresc* and a decrescendo marked *cen - - - do*. The left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines.

* This 8 applies to the octuplet in the R.H.

First system of musical notation, featuring a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a melodic line with slurs and accents, while the bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines.

Second system of musical notation. It includes the instruction *[rit. . . . a tempo]* above the staff. The treble staff begins with a *dim.* (diminuendo) marking and a *p* (piano) dynamic. The system concludes with a *p* dynamic marking.

Third system of musical notation. The treble staff features a melodic line with slurs and accents. The bass staff includes a *mf* (mezzo-forte) dynamic marking and contains several asterisked notes (*).

Fourth system of musical notation. The treble staff includes the instruction *animato rinf.* (animato rinforzando) and a *rit.* (ritardando) marking. The system concludes with a *rit.* marking. The bass staff contains several asterisked notes (*).

Fifth system of musical notation. The treble staff includes the instruction *espress.* (espressivo) and a *(a tempo)* marking. The system concludes with a *(a tempo)* marking. The bass staff contains several asterisked notes (*).

First system of musical notation, featuring piano accompaniment. Dynamics include *(p)*, *(mf)*, and *(mp)*.

Second system of musical notation, featuring piano accompaniment. Dynamics include *pp*, *ca*, *lan*, *do*, and *ppp*. Includes a *(U.C.)* marking.

Third system of musical notation, featuring piano accompaniment. Dynamics include *pf* and *cresc.*. Includes a *(T.C.)* marking.

Fourth system of musical notation, featuring piano accompaniment. Dynamics include *ff risoluto* and *p*. Includes a *8va... loco* marking.

Fifth system of musical notation, featuring piano accompaniment. Dynamics include *dolce* and *ben marcato il canto*. Includes fingerings 3, 2, 3, 5.

* The editor suggests Tempo I in the second half of this measure.

stretto

cres *cen* *do* *f*

riten. *f* *p* *sf* *sf* *pp*

(p) *ri - tar - dan - do*

ri - tar - dan - do

a tempo ma più lento *con espress.* *(pp)*

pp *(U.C.)*

calando e morendo *(rit.)* *PPP*

Example 1.2: A reprint of Clara Schumann's Romance in the Selection of the *Quatre Pièces Caractéristiques*

Andante con sentimento

p legato e dolce

ten.

45

6

11

stringendo

cresc.

dimin.

16

ten.

22

Con anima

f

sempre col Ped.

28

tr

f

sf

31 *sf* *ten.* *f con espress. e animato* *sf*

39 *ten.* *dim.* *ppf*

45 *sf* *pp* *ritard.*

51 *a tempo dolente* *ten.* *sf* *ten.*

57 *mf* *dim.*

63 *dim.* *riten.* *ppp diluendo* *ppp*

Example 1.3 A reprint of Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel's Song for Pianoforte No.7.

No. 7

Allegro agitato

The musical score is written for piano and consists of 12 measures. It is in 3/4 time and B-flat major. The tempo is marked 'Allegro agitato'. The score is divided into five systems, each with a treble and bass staff. Measure numbers 1, 3, 6, 9, and 12 are indicated at the start of their respective systems. Dynamics include piano (p), crescendo (cresc.), and fortissimo (f.). Performance markings include 'con espress.' and accents. The first system (measures 1-2) features a piano introduction with a triplet of eighth notes in the bass. The second system (measures 3-5) continues the piano texture. The third system (measures 6-8) shows a crescendo in the bass and a fortissimo section in the treble marked 'con espress.'. The fourth system (measures 9-11) returns to a piano texture with a crescendo. The fifth system (measures 12) concludes with a piano texture and a first ending bracket.

Measures 1-12 are shown, including dynamics such as *p*, *cresc.*, *f.*, and *con espress.*

15 *cresc.*

18 *f*

21 *sempre f*

24

26

26 *ff*

The musical score is written for piano on six systems. Each system consists of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, accidentals, and dynamic markings. The systems are numbered 15, 18, 21, 24, 26, and 26 at the beginning of each system. The first system (15) includes the marking *cresc.*. The second system (18) includes the marking *f*. The third system (21) includes the marking *sempre f*. The fourth system (24) and fifth system (26) do not have dynamic markings. The sixth system (26) includes the marking *ff*. The notation is complex, with many beamed notes and accidentals.

30 *mf* *cresc.*

8va

33 *f*

36 *dini.*

39 *p* *con espress.*

42 *poco ritard.* *p [a] tempo* *cresc.*

45 *f*

47

System 1, measures 47-49. Treble and bass staves with complex rhythmic patterns and accidentals.

50

sempre f

cresc.

System 2, measures 50-52. Treble and bass staves. Measure 50 has *sempre f* and measure 52 has *cresc.*

53

[b]#

ff

p

System 3, measures 53-54. Treble and bass staves. Measure 53 has *[b]#* and *ff*, measure 54 has *p*.

55

cresc.

System 4, measures 55-57. Treble and bass staves. Measure 57 has *cresc.*

58

ff

p

System 5, measures 58-60. Treble and bass staves. Measure 59 has *ff*, measure 60 has *p*.

61

p

System 6, measures 61-63. Treble and bass staves. Measure 61 has *p*. Measure 61 has a long slur over the treble staff.

64 *grazioso*

67 *con espress.*

70

73 *p*

76 *f*

79

The image displays a page of musical notation, likely for a piano piece. It consists of six systems of staves, each with a treble and bass clef. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The page is numbered 166 at the bottom.

- System 1 (Measures 64-66): Marked *grazioso*. The right hand features a melodic line with a slur over measures 64-65. The left hand has a dense, rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.
- System 2 (Measures 67-69): Marked *con espress.*. The right hand continues the melodic line. The left hand's accompaniment becomes more complex with triplets and sixteenth notes.
- System 3 (Measures 70-72): The right hand has a melodic line with a slur. The left hand continues with a rhythmic accompaniment.
- System 4 (Measures 73-75): Marked *p* (piano). The right hand has a melodic line. The left hand has a more active accompaniment with eighth notes.
- System 5 (Measures 76-78): Marked *f* (forte). The right hand has a melodic line. The left hand has a more active accompaniment with eighth notes.
- System 6 (Measures 79-81): The right hand has a melodic line. The left hand has a more active accompaniment with eighth notes.

82

85

88

91

94

97

100

sempre cresc.

f

103

p

p

106

p

109

p

111

pp

perdendosi

pp

Example 1.4 A Reprint of Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel's Song for Pianoforte No.2.

No. 2

Andante tutto legato

p *con espress.*

cresc.

con espress.

p *cresc.*

p

5

10

15

20

25

30

35

38

41

44

47

50

53

56

59

p.

62

p.

65

dim. *p*

68

poco cresc.

71

riten. e molto cresc. *p.* *

74

f *dim.* *p*

* 2 *

77

82

* 2 *

87

* 2 *

92

pp

* 2 *

Figure 1.5. A reprint of a concert grand pianoforte (1902) by Alexandre Charpentier,
case paintings by Albert Besnard (1849-1934). *Nice, Musée des Beaux-Arts Jules Chéret*

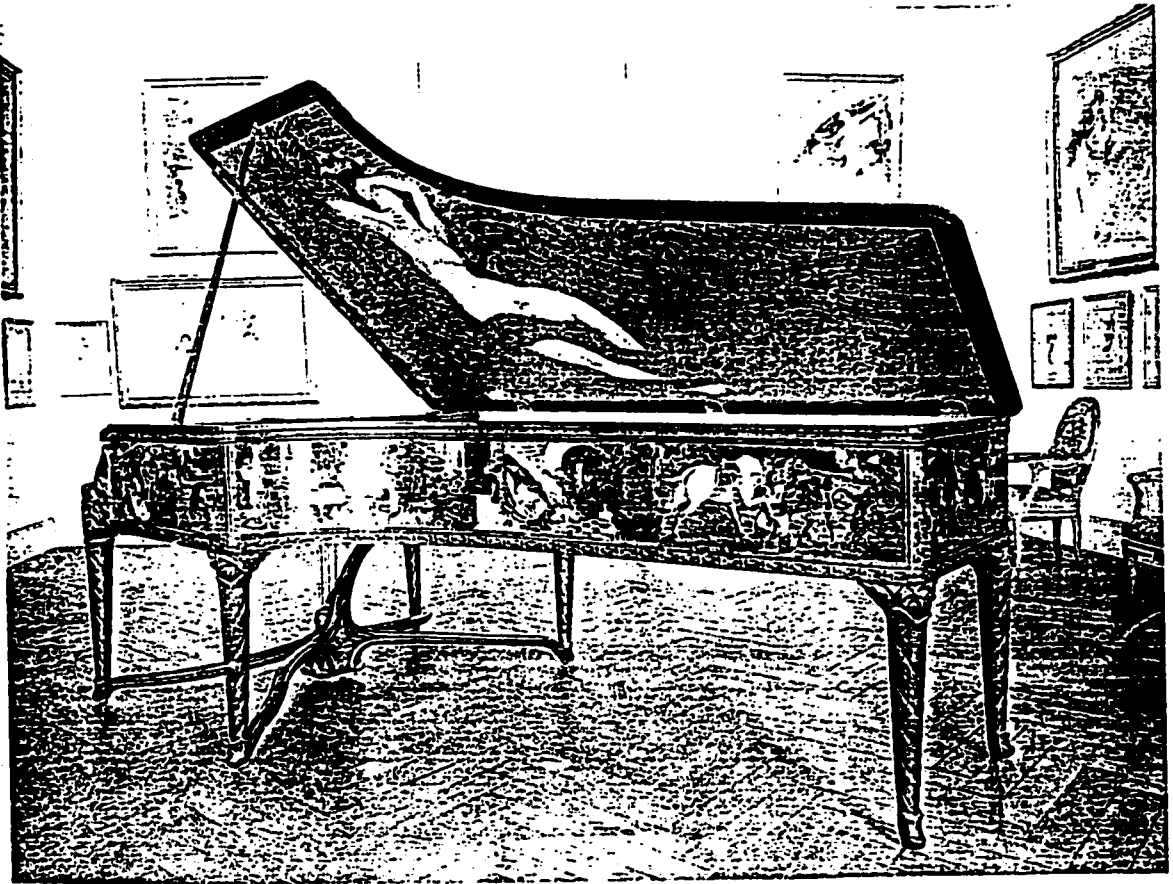


Figure 1.6 A reprint of Edward Samuel Harper (1854-1941), *A Reverie*. Private collection.



Figure 1.7 A reprint of Henry J. Stock (1853-1931), *A Musician's Reverie* (1888).
Harrow (Greater London), Harrow School Collection.



Figure 1.8. A reprint of Sir Frank Dicksee (1852-1928), *A Reverie* (1895). *National Museum and Galleries on Merseyside (Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool).*



Figure 1.9. A reprint of an upright pianoforte by Priestly, detail of painted panel by Edward Burne-Jones (1833-98): Death and the Maidens.

