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## Magical and Mysterious Resonances: Structural Principles in E. T. A. Hoffmann's Kreisler Works and Robert Schumann's Kreisleriana

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# Magical and Mysterious Resonances: Structural Principles in E. T. A. Hoffmann's Kreisler Works and Robert Schumann's Kreisleriana

## Abstract

Robert Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16 (1838), borrows its title from E. T. A. Hoffmann's set of essays concerning his literary alter ego, Johannes Kreisler. The character of Kreisler is most prominently featured in two of Hoffmann's works: the *Kreisleriana* essays (1814-1815) and his final novel, *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr* (1820-1822). This thesis explores the influence of E. T. A. Hoffmann on Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, focusing on how structural principles derived from Hoffmann's Kreisler works—duality, creating and blurring boundaries, fragmentation and irresolution, and circularity—are at work in Schumann's composition. While others have treated the relationship between Schumann's *Kreisleriana* and the prose literature programmatically, drawing connections between specific passages in the music and the stories, this thesis discusses how the nature of the influence may be better understood through structural principles such as these.

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MAGICAL AND MYSTERIOUS RESONANCES:  
STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLES IN E. T. A. HOFFMANN'S KREISLER WORKS AND  
ROBERT SCHUMANN'S *KREISLERIANA*

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A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of Arts and Humanities

University of Denver

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

---

by

Alison Redman

August 2017

Advisor: Jack Sheinbaum

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Author: Alison Redman

Title: MAGICAL AND MYSTERIOUS RESONANCES: STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLES  
IN E. T. A. HOFFMANN'S KREISLER WORKS AND ROBERT SCHUMANN'S  
*KREISLERIANA*

Advisor: Jack Sheinbaum

Degree Date: August 2017

## ABSTRACT

Robert Schumann's *Kreiseriana*, Op. 16 (1838), borrows its title from E. T. A. Hoffmann's set of essays concerning his literary alter ego, Johannes Kreisler. The character of Kreisler is most prominently featured in two of Hoffmann's works: the *Kreiseriana* essays (1814-1815) and his final novel, *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr* (1820-1822). This thesis explores the influence of E. T. A. Hoffmann on Schumann's *Kreiseriana*, focusing on how structural principles derived from Hoffmann's Kreisler works – duality, creating and blurring boundaries, fragmentation and irresolution, and circularity – are at work in Schumann's composition. While others have treated the relationship between Schumann's *Kreiseriana* and the prose literature programmatically, drawing connections between specific passages in the music and the stories, this thesis discusses how the nature of the influence may be better understood through structural principles such as these.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures .....	v
Introduction.....	1
Duality.....	10
Creating and Blurring Boundaries .....	22
Framing Devices and Storytelling .....	22
Conflation of Established Dualities .....	28
Boundaries Between Fictions and Reality .....	30
Fragmentation and Irresolution.....	38
Circularity .....	49
Implications of the 1850 Revision .....	58
Conclusion .....	61
References.....	65

## LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , No. 4, image from 1838 edition.....	17-18
Fig. 2: <i>Papillons</i> , No. 12, mm. 1-4.....	27
Fig. 3: <i>Carnaval</i> , “Marche des Davidsbündler,” mm. 62-73.....	27
Fig. 4: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , No. 6, mm. 19-20.....	27
Fig. 5: <i>Kinderscenen</i> , “Der Dichter Spricht,” mm. 1-4.....	34
Fig. 6: <i>Kinderscenen</i> , “Der Dichter Spricht,” mm. 9-12.....	35
Fig. 7: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , No. 2, mm. 1-2.....	37
Fig. 8: Sonata, Op. 14, III., mm. 17-18.....	37
Fig. 9: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , No. 3, m. 1.....	41
Fig. 10: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , No. 5, mm. 1-5.....	41
Fig. 11: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , No. 1, mm. 10-12.....	42
Fig. 12: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , No. 1, mm. 1-2.....	43
Fig. 13: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , No. 5, mm. 159-16.....	44
Fig. 14: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , No. 6, mm. 38-39.....	44
Fig. 15: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , No. 7, m. 117-118.....	44
Fig. 16: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , No. 8, mm. 4-6.....	45
Fig. 17: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , No. 8, mm. 9-13.....	46
Fig. 18: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , No. 8, mm. 141-146.....	47
Fig. 19: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , No. 2, mm. 99-123, image from 1838 edition.....	53
Fig. 20: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , No. 3, mm. 33-36.....	56
Fig. 21: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , 1850 edition, No. 5, mm. 160-161.....	59
Fig. 22: <i>Kreisleriana</i> , 1850 edition, No. 4, m. 26.....	59



## INTRODUCTION

The keener and more penetrating his recognition [of the audible sounds of nature] becomes, the higher the musician stands as a composer, and the art of composing consists in his ability to seize upon his inspirations with special mental powers and to conjure them into signs and symbols.... But music is a universal language of nature; it speaks to us in magical and mysterious resonances; we strive in vain to conjure these into symbols, and any artificial arrangement of hieroglyphs provides us with only a vague approximation of what we have distantly heard.<sup>1</sup>

These are the musings of the fictional character Kapellmeister Johannes Kreisler, a passionate, unpredictable musician created by E. T. A. Hoffmann (1776-1822). A composer himself, Hoffmann wrote of composition as the harnessing of inspiration into the signs and symbols of music. But in Kreisler's theorization, a composition can never quite capture the inspiration from which it came.

Robert Schumann (1810-1856) was greatly influenced by his literary contemporaries and predecessors, and he often wrote about how about how they affected his compositions and conceptions of music. Above all, he admired Jean Paul (1763-1825) and Hoffmann, and like Hoffmann, Schumann often blurred the distinction between the arts of music and literature. In fact, he wrote that playing the compositions of Schubert is "like reading one of Jean Paul's novels" because "Schubert unburdened his heart on a sheet of music-paper, just as others leave the impressions of passing moods in their

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<sup>1</sup> E. T. A. Hoffmann, *Kreisleriana*, in *E. T. A. Hoffmann's Musical Writings: Kreisleriana, The Poet and the Composer*, *Music Criticism*, ed. David Charlton, trans. Martyn Clarke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 164-165.

journals.”<sup>2</sup> Schumann often left clues in his prose writings and in the music itself about the connections of his works to his literary idols. He wrote in a letter to his family about the relationship between his *Papillons*, Op. 2 (1831), and Jean Paul’s novel *Flegeljahre* (1804-1805), and his own copy of the novel outlines the specific moments represented in the first ten movements.<sup>3</sup> The titles of several of his compositions reference works by Hoffmann. Schumann’s *Fantasiestücke*, Op. 12 (1837), and *Kreisleriana: Fantasien für Piano-Forte*, Op. 16 (1838), reference Hoffmann’s 1814-1815 prose collection *Fantasy Pieces in Callot’s Manner (Fantasiestücke in Callot’s Manier)*, and his *Nachtstücke*, Op. 23 (1839), references Hoffmann’s own *Nachtstücke* (1815-1817), a collection of short stories. Additionally, Schumann’s prose writing reflects the influence of Hoffmann and Jean Paul. Florestan and Eusebius, two of Schumann’s alter egos in his music criticism, resemble the personalities of Walt and Vult, characters from from Jean Paul’s *Flegeljahre*, as well as Hoffmann’s own alter ego, Johannes Kreisler.

Kreisler is most prominently featured in two of Hoffmann’s works: the *Kreisleriana* essays (1814-1815) and his final novel, *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr: together with a fragmentary Biography of Kapellmeister Johannes Kreisler on Random Sheets of Waste Paper* (1820-1822).<sup>4</sup> This thesis will explore how these works may have influenced Schumann’s *Kreisleriana*, focusing on how certain structural

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<sup>2</sup> Robert Schumann to Friedrich Wieck, November 6, 1820, in *The Letters of Robert Schumann*, ed. Karl Storek, trans. Hannah Bryant (New York: Arno Press, 1979), 44.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Schumann to his family, April 17, 1832, in *Early Letters of Robert Schumann*, trans. May Herbert (London: George Bell, 1888), 159-160.

<sup>4</sup> *Lebens-Ansichten des Katers Murr: nebst fragmentarischer Biographie des Kapellmeisters Johannes Kreisler in zufälligen Makulaturblättern*; all English translations in this thesis are from E.T.A. Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr: together with a Fragmentary Biography of Kapellmeister Johannes Kreisler on Random Sheets of Waste Paper*, trans. Anthea Bell (New York: Penguin, 1999).

principles I identify – duality, creating and blurring boundaries, fragmentation and irresolution, and circularity – are at work in Schumann’s composition. Other scholars have tended to treat the relationship between the literature and Schumann’s *Kreisleriana* programmatically, drawing connections between specific moments in the music and in the stories. I will instead argue that the nature of this influence can be better understood through these structural principles.

Before discussing how Schumann may have been influenced by Hoffmann, it is necessary to give a brief overview of the two Kreisler prose works. Hoffmann’s *Kreisleriana* were published in two volumes in 1814-1815 as part of the first and fourth installments of his *Fantasy Pieces in Callot’s Manner*, subtitled *Leaves from the Diary of a Travelling Enthusiast*.<sup>5</sup> The cycle has its roots in an abandoned project titled *Lucid Hours of an Insane Musician*,<sup>6</sup> which began to take shape in early 1812 and only exists as what is most likely an incomplete table of contents.<sup>7</sup> Ideas from *Lucid Hours* also made their way into Hoffmann’s second and final novel, *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*,<sup>8</sup> published in two volumes in 1820 and 1822. Both works revolve around the figure of Kapellmeister Johannes Kreisler.

The introduction to Hoffmann’s *Kreisleriana*, presumably written by the collection’s fictional editor, explains that Kreisler has disappeared, and that “brief essays,

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<sup>5</sup> *Fantasiestücke in Callots Manier: Blätter aus dem Tagebuche eines reisenden Enthusiasten*; all English translations in this thesis are from Charlton, E. T. A. *Hoffmann’s Musical Writings*.

<sup>6</sup> *Lichte Stunden eines wahnsinnigen Musikers*.

<sup>7</sup> Harvey W. Hewett-Thayer, *Hoffmann: Author of the Tales* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1948), 277.

<sup>8</sup> There is a long passage in *The Life and Opinions* about the “love of the artist” (117-119), which is one of the items on the *Lucid Hours* table of contents (see Hewett-Thayer, *Author of the Tales*, 294).

largely humorous in content, had been hastily scribbled in pencil during odd moments” on the back sides of many pieces of music.<sup>9</sup> In fact, in the first essay, “Kapellmeister Johannes Kreisler’s Musical Sufferings,” Kreisler specifies that he is writing on the back of a copy of Bach’s *Goldberg Variations*.<sup>10</sup> The essays feature Kreisler’s often sarcastic or ironic views on music and theater, anecdotes, and letters, and one piece, titled “Extremely Random Thoughts,” consists of fourteen even smaller fragments.

Hoffmann’s incomplete final novel, *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*, was written in two volumes, each containing two parts. It features the autobiography of the Tomcat Murr (named for Hoffmann’s actual cat), spliced together with fragments from a biography of Kreisler. In an editor’s postscript, Hoffmann expresses his intention to write a third volume, though he died before writing it.<sup>11</sup> Hoffmann, as the fictional editor of the book, explains in the foreword that he has accidentally allowed Murr’s autobiography to go to print with the waste paper used for blotting ink – pages torn from Murr’s master’s copy of Kreisler’s biography – still in the manuscript. Therefore the cat’s narrative is frequently interrupted by episodes from Kreisler’s biography. Murr’s fragments continue where they left off, while Kreisler’s fragments are left incomplete.

The cat’s story parodies the *Bildungsroman*, or coming-of-age story, popular among Romantic authors. After waxing poetic on the subject of feline existence, Murr begins his narrative with the story of his birth, writing,

In fact I believe we simply get accustomed to consciousness: we come into life and get through it somehow, just how we don’t know ourselves. At least, that’s

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<sup>9</sup> Hoffmann, *Kreisleriana*, 80.

<sup>10</sup> Hoffmann, *Kreisleriana*, 81.

<sup>11</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 322.

what happened to me, and I suppose there isn't a human being on earth, either, who knows the How and Where of his birth from personal experience, only by hearsay, and hearsay can often be very unreliable.<sup>12</sup>

Murr continues through the story of his life with the intention of educating young tomcats about how to make their way in the world.

Kreisler's fragments read more as the story of his brief time at the fictional court of Sieghartshof than as a complete biography. The bulk of the story takes place at the court, where Prince Irenaeus continues to act as the ruler, although he had "lost his little state out of his pocket one day when he went for a walk over the border."<sup>13</sup> This imaginary court serves as the scene for Kreisler's interactions with various characters, including Master Abraham (a famous conjurer and organ builder), the young Princess Hedwiga, talented singer Julia Benzon, and her mother Madame Benzon. Kreisler's biography is in many ways a fantastic version of Hoffmann's own life, and many of the biographical facts attributed to Kreisler are in fact true of Hoffmann himself, as will be discussed in more detail below.

Some evidence from Schumann's letters and diaries shows the extent of Hoffmann's influence on his own *Kreisleriana*. Schumann wrote relatively little about this work, in comparison with the wealth of writings available on his other programmatic works such as *Papillons*, and unlike some of his other programmatic works, the movements of the piece do not have individual titles. However, in a letter from March 1839 to his admirer Simonin de Sire, Schumann at once solidifies the connection to

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<sup>12</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 10.

<sup>13</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 28.

Hoffmann's *Kreisler*, and claims that he didn't add the title until after he finished composing:

Of all of these [piano pieces], *Kreisleriana* is my favorite. The title conveys nothing to any but the Germans. *Kreisler* is one of E. T. A. Hoffmann's creations, an eccentric, wild, and witty conductor. You will like some of it. The inscriptions over my pieces always occur to me after I have finished composing the music.<sup>14</sup>

Still, letters and diary entries from the time of composition show that at least while he was still putting the finishing touches on the work, he indeed had the title in mind. On April 13, 1838, he wrote to his future wife Clara Wieck, "I'm overflowing with music and beautiful melodies now – imagine, since my last letter I've finished another whole notebook of new pieces. I intend to call it *Kreisleriana*."<sup>15</sup> On May 3, he wrote in his diary, "*Kreisleriana* done in four days," which was probably an exaggeration. He continued work on the piece until he sent it to the publisher in July and made the final corrections that September.<sup>16</sup> As late as 1843, Schumann wrote that of all his piano works, he still considered *Kreisleriana* to be one of his best.<sup>17</sup>

Notably, when Schumann did write about the piece, he primarily emphasized Clara's influence. In the same letter from April 13, 1838, he wrote to Clara that "you and one of your ideas play the main role in [*Kreisleriana*], and I want to dedicate it to you – yes, to you and nobody else – and then you will smile so sweetly when you discover

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<sup>14</sup> Robert Schumann to Simonin de Sire, March 15, 1839, in Storck, *The Letters of Robert Schumann*, 128.

<sup>15</sup> Robert Schumann to Clara Wieck, April 13, 1838, in *The Complete Correspondence of Clara and Robert Schumann*, ed. Eva Weissweiler, trans. Hildegard Fritsch and Ronald L. Crawford, vol. 1 (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 141.

<sup>16</sup> See Robert Schumann, *Tagebücher*, ed. Gern Nauhaus, vol. 2 (Leipzig: Veb Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1987), 55; John MacAuslan, *Schumann's Music and E. T. A. Hoffmann's Fiction* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016), 141; and John Daverio, *Robert Schumann: Herald of a "New Poetic Age"* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 167.

<sup>17</sup> Robert Schumann to C. Kossmaly, May 5, 1843, in Storck, *The Letters of Robert Schumann*, 241.

yourself in it.”<sup>18</sup> Indeed, a theme written by Clara does appear throughout the work. However, because of her father’s disapproval of their relationship, Schumann instead dedicated the piece to Chopin.<sup>19</sup> After Schumann sent her the pieces, he wrote, “Play my *Kreisleriana* sometimes! There’s a very wild love in a few movements, and your life, and mine and many of your looks.”<sup>20</sup> Interestingly, Schumann used the word “wild” in describing the influence of both Clara and Kreisler.

Some scholars have discussed the connections between Schumann’s *Kreisleriana* and Hoffmann’s Kreisler works. Many notice aspects of duality in the music, which I will describe in detail below, and often associate it specifically with either Hoffmann’s *Kreisleriana* or *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*, arguing that the work’s duality represents either the erratic personality of Kreisler himself, or the duality between Kreisler and Murr in the double novel. In his book *Schumann’s Music and E. T. A. Hoffmann’s Fiction*, for example, John MacAuslan asserts that Schumann was very fastidious with titles, and therefore would not have directly referred to *Kreisleriana* in the title if he was in fact primarily interested in the novel.<sup>21</sup> In contrast, in Lora Deahl’s article “Robert Schumann’s *Kreisleriana* and Double Novel Structure,” she suggests that the alternating movements in alternating home keys represent the double cycle of *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*, and that the two opposing key areas of B-flat major and G minor, like Hoffmann’s Kreisler and Murr, are invoking the literary concept

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<sup>18</sup> Schumann to Wieck, April 13, 1838, in Weisswiler, *The Complete Correspondence*, 141.

<sup>19</sup> Robert Schumann to Clara Wieck, August 31, 1838, in Weissweiler, *The Complete Correspondence*, vol. 1, 234.

<sup>20</sup> Robert Schumann to Clara Wieck, August 3, 1838, in Weissweiler *The Complete Correspondence*, vol. 1, 225.

<sup>21</sup> MacAuslan, *Schumann’s Music and E. T. A. Hoffmann’s Fiction*, 171.

of *Doppelgänger*.<sup>22</sup> Her earlier dissertation contains a detailed discussion of the structure of the work.<sup>23</sup>

John Daverio suggests two contrasting interpretations. In his *Nineteenth-Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology*, he emphasizes the “Kater Murr Principle” at play in this piece, suggesting that the unusual structures of the piece in fact represent an interleaving of fragmented parts similar to that of the novel.<sup>24</sup> However, he argues in his biography of Schumann that “Schumann’s substitution of the Kreisler persona for the figures of Florestan and Eusebius marks a subtle but telling shift in his creativity: dualism now becomes a function of a *single* character.”<sup>25</sup> This argument excludes the possibility that in this work, Schumann portrays the duality between the two different characters of Kreisler and Murr.

In the following sections, I will argue that Schumann’s piece embodies neither work specifically, but rather employs a more abstract principle of duality he derives from Hoffmann, as well as principles of creating and blurring boundaries, fragmentation and irresolution, and circularity. As Deborah Crisp suggests, “It is possible... that Schumann refers not to *Kreisleriana*, the writings about music, but to his own assemblage in this work of matters pertaining to Kreisler, the musician,”<sup>26</sup> allowing the possibility that

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<sup>22</sup> Lora Deahl, “Robert Schumann’s *Kreisleriana* and Double Novel Structure,” *International Journal of Musicology* 5 (1996): 140.

<sup>23</sup> Lora Deahl, “Principles of Organization in Robert Schumann’s *Davidsbündlertänze*, Opus 6 and *Kreisleriana*, Opus 16” (DMA diss., University of Texas at Austin, 1988), 16-100.

<sup>24</sup> John Daverio, *Nineteenth-Century Music and the German Romantic Ideology* (New York: Schirmer, 1993), 61-62.

<sup>25</sup> Daverio, *Herald of a “New Poetic Age,”* 167-168.

<sup>26</sup> Deborah Crisp, “The *Kreisleriana* of Robert Schumann and E. T. A. Hoffmann: Some Musical and Literary Parallels,” *Musicology Australia* 16, no. 1 (1993): 11.



Schumann was simply writing his own volume of Kreisler pieces. My discussion will include a thorough examination of these principles in Hoffmann's writing and the ways that they are manifested in Schumann's work.

The discussion will conclude with an examination of some of the differences between the first edition of Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, published in 1838, and the more well-known 1850 revision, considering some implications of those differences. (All measure numbers and musical examples pertain to the first edition, unless otherwise noted.) In some cases, Schumann chose to revise the very passages which represent the strongest connections to Hoffmann's style.

## DUALITY

In Hoffmann's writing, duality as a structural principle is most clearly evident in the double novel structure of *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*. The book alternates between the autobiography of the Tomcat Murr and fragments of Kreisler's biography because Hoffmann, as the fictional editor, accidentally allowed the book to be printed with the "waste paper" still included.<sup>27</sup> In this way, the real Hoffmann establishes a duality that dictates the structure of the entire novel. Although the editorial frame presents the cat's autobiography as the primary text of the book, it becomes increasingly apparent as the novel progresses that the true weight lies in Kreisler's story. In his introduction to the novel, Jeremy Adler notes, for example, that Kreisler's tale makes up about sixty percent of the novel's length, redressing the balance between the two sides of the double novel structure.<sup>28</sup>

There is also a sense of duality at play in the character of Kreisler himself, as represented in both the *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr* and *Kreisleriana*. In the novel, he is often described as quickly shifting from a deep emotional state to a bitter, sneering irony.<sup>29</sup> Kreisler is, in a sense, split in two in the final piece of *Kreisleriana*, entitled "Johannes Kreisler's Certificate of Apprenticeship." In his prefatory remarks,

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<sup>27</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 3-4.

<sup>28</sup> Jeremy Adler, introduction to Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, xxii.

<sup>29</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 42, 54.

David Charlton suggests that this essay resolves the binary identity of Hoffmann and Kreisler, writing that “though both are aspects of the same consciousness, the Kreisler part is, for the moment at least, put to one side as having accomplished creative wholeness.”<sup>30</sup> The “Certificate” is written as a letter both to and from Johannes Kreisler. In it, he writes:

Ah my dear Johannes! Who knows you better than I? Who has gazed more deeply into your heart, and even from your heart, than I? And therefore I believe that you know me completely, and that as a result our relationship was always tolerable, even though we exchanged the most contradictory views about each other; we thought ourselves at times extraordinarily wise, even gifted with genius, but at other times quite silly and ignorant, even slightly stupid. You see, my dear wandering scholar, although I used the word ‘we’ in the previous sentence, I feel as though in modestly using the plural I was actually speaking of myself in the singular, as though the two of us were in fact only *one*. Let us tear ourselves free of this absurd delusion! So once again, my dear Johannes! Who knows you better than I? And who can affirm with greater authority, therefore, that you have now achieved that mastery which is necessary in order to begin your really specialised learning?<sup>31</sup>

Additionally, he ends the letter, “And so I, like you, sign myself, Johannes Kreisler.”<sup>32</sup>

Thus, duality remains an essential part of the representation of Kreisler’s character.

Duality is also integral to the structure of Schumann’s *Kreisleriana*. Most notably, it has a dual key structure, with the majority of movements (and sections of movements) in either B-flat major or its relative G minor, with some sections in related keys such as D minor, C minor, and F major. Table 1 sketches the approximate form and key scheme of each movement, although in this work they are often somewhat ambiguous. Indeed, scholars do not agree about the keys or forms of many of the sections.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Charlton, *E. T. A. Hoffmann’s Musical Writings*, 73.

<sup>31</sup> Hoffmann, *Kreisleriana*, 160.

<sup>32</sup> Hoffmann, *Kreisleriana*, 165.

The two main key areas each tend to have associated musical characteristics, which Deahl aptly captures. She writes that the B-flat major passages are characterized by a slower tempo, a lyrical expressive style, and more harmonic ambiguity and instability. The G minor sections feature a faster tempo, a non-lyrical style, and a strong tonal context. She refers to these as *Stimmungen*, or “affective states of mind.”<sup>34</sup> These distinctly different musical moods reflect Hoffmann’s principle of duality, especially in their alternation in the opening sections of movements two through six.

Notably, structural duality in Hoffmann’s works does not remain straightforward. The binary of the two texts is immediately complicated, for instance, in the first Kreisler fragment because Kreisler and Murr both appear. Master Abraham, who has already been introduced in Murr’s autobiography as his master, appears as a key character in Kreisler’s story as well, and he presents Murr to Kreisler to be kept in his service until Abraham returns from a journey.<sup>35</sup>

The duality is further complicated in the relationships between characters, and through a fascination with the idea of *Doppelgänger*. Various characters in the novel function as foils of Kreisler, which both supports and complicates the duality that pervades the works. Kreisler and Murr are the clearest example of paired characters. Adler writes that Murr is “the lovable cat, a calm, integrated, vain, self-satisfied and confident bourgeois who enjoys an unproblematic relation to his comrades and the

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<sup>33</sup> Compare, for example, Deahl, “Principles of Organization,” 23; Chung-Ha Kim, “E. T. A. Hoffmann’s Influence on Robert Schumann’s *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16” (DMA thesis, University of Cincinnati, 2005), 35-36; and Crisp, “Some Musical and Literary Parallels,” 14.

<sup>34</sup> Deahl, “Principles of Organization,” 78-79, 84.

<sup>35</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 21-22.

**Table 1: Approximate Forms and Key Areas of *Kreisleriana***

I. Äussert bewegt

Measure numbers	1-24	25-49	50-73
Formal section	A	B	A
Key area	d	B <sub>b</sub>	d

II. Sehr innig und nicht zu rasch

Measure numbers	1-37	38-54	55-71	72-98	99-122	123-147	148-153
Formal section	A	B	A	C	transition	A	Coda
Key area	B <sub>b</sub>	F	B <sub>b</sub>	g	~	B <sub>b</sub>	B <sub>b</sub>

III. Sehr aufgeregt

Measure numbers	1-32	33-94	95-125	126-196
Formal section	A	B	A	Coda
Key area	g	B <sub>b</sub>	g	g

IV. Sehr langsam

Measure numbers	1-11	12-23	24-28
Formal section	A	B	A
Key area	B <sub>b</sub>	B <sub>b</sub> / g	B <sub>b</sub> → D

V. Sehr lebhaft

Measure numbers	1-52	53-123	123-161
Formal section	A	B	A
Key area	g	g	g (ends on V)

VI. Sehr langsam

Measure numbers	1-5	6-10	11-18	19-34	35-39
Formal section	A	B	A	C	A
Key area	B <sub>b</sub>	~	B <sub>b</sub>	V of B <sub>b</sub>	B <sub>b</sub>

VII. Sehr rasch

Measure numbers	1-9	10-33	34-41	42-70	71-82	83-90	91-118
Formal section	A	B	A	C	B	A	D
Key area	c	g	c	c	c	c	B <sub>b</sub> → E <sub>b</sub>

VIII. Schnell und spielend

Measure numbers	1-25	26-49	50-73	74-113	114-146
Formal section	A	B	A	C	A
Key area	g	B <sub>b</sub> ~	g	~	g

opposite sex,” and that “Kreisler, by contrast, is the neurasthenic anguished genius, unable to find a niche in society or to satisfy his desires; an artist whose wildly pendular moods swing between radical extremes, from the plainly ridiculous to the loftily sublime.”<sup>36</sup> However, scholars have also noted the pairing of Kreisler and Master Abraham, and Steven Paul Scher refers to them as Hoffmann’s “antithetical alter egos.”<sup>37</sup> The novel additionally presents Leonhard Ettlinger explicitly as Kreisler’s *Doppelgänger*, a former court painter who went mad over his love for Princess Maria, the matron of the court at Sieghartsweiler. When sixteen-year-old Princess Hedwiga tells Kreisler the story of her experience with Ettlinger when she was young, including her attempted murder at his hand, Hoffman writes:

Kreisler stood there shaken to his depths, unable to utter a word. He had always been obsessed with the idea that madness lay in wait for him like a wild beast slaving for prey, and one day would suddenly tear him to pieces; he was now trembling with the same horror that had seized upon Princess Hedwiga at the sight of him, a horror of himself, and was wrestling with the dreadful notion that it had been he who tried to murder her in a frenzied fit.<sup>38</sup>

Later, as Kreisler walks through the park towards Master Abraham’s cottage, he believes he sees Ettlinger as his reflection in the water and speaks to him as his *Doppelgänger*.<sup>39</sup> The vision reveals to Kreisler the madness that may await him, and it affects his actions for the rest of the novel.

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<sup>36</sup> Adler, introduction to Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, xxiii.

<sup>37</sup> Steven Paul Scher, “Hoffmann and Sterne: Unmediated Parallels in Narrative Method,” *Comparative Literature* 28 (Jan. 1976): 322.

<sup>38</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 117.

<sup>39</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 123.

Complex dualities between characters are also present in Hoffmann's *Kreisleriana*. The second volume opens with a pair of letters written by Kreisler and Baron Wallborn, a character of German Romantic writer Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué (1777-1843), with the Baron's letter actually written by Fouqué himself. This introduces two layers of duality: one between Kreisler and Wallborn, and the other between both authors and their literary alter egos. Both Hoffmann and Fouqué are named in the preface as third parties involved in the transmission of the letters, which were never delivered to their intended recipients. Each character's description of the other resembles the true author as much as the character. This is especially obvious in the attribution of some of Fouqué's works to Wallborn, and in the story of the two characters' first meeting, which so closely resembles the actual meeting of the two authors.<sup>40</sup> Although the two writers appear by name in the preface, each is also conflated with his own character. The two characters are then further confused, as Kreisler writes in his letter to Wallborn, "For you see, Baron Wallborn, I hereby give you my solemn assurance that *I* want to be *you*, and just as full of love, gentleness, and innocence as you. But then I am already!"<sup>41</sup> The permeable identities within these character binaries, as each fictional character is conflated with his author and the two characters are conflated with one another, contributes to the notion of duality as a structural device in these works, as well as the breaking down of these dualities.

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<sup>40</sup> Charlton, *E. T. A. Hoffmann's Musical Writings*, 66.

<sup>41</sup> Hoffmann, *Kreisleriana*, 131.

Duality also does not remain straightforward in Schumann's *Kreisleriana*. There are several cases where the two primary key areas, B-flat major and G minor, are both employed in a single movement. Movements three, five, and eight all begin in G minor and use B-flat major as the key of the B section. The fourth movement is particularly interesting because it relies on a degree of ambiguity between the two keys (see Figure 1). In his article "Directional Tonality in Schumann's Early Works," Benjamin Wadsworth classifies this movement as one that can equally be interpreted as dual-tonal or monotonal, slightly favoring dual tonality.<sup>42</sup> A monotonal interpretation of the movement would favor B-flat major as the primary key. The A sections (mm. 1-11 and 24-28) can be considered in B-flat major, even though the only tonic pitches appear as contrapuntal phenomena, such as a prolongation of the dominant chord in the first measure. The affective state reinforces this B-flat classification – it is slow, lyrical, expressive, and extremely unstable, a perfect example of the *Stimmung* Deahl associates with B-flat major. But the B section (mm. 12-23), marked *Bewegter* for a slightly faster tempo, equally exhibits B-flat and G as possible tonics. This movement thus presents a microcosm of the whole piece, which relies both on the duality between B-flat major and G minor as well as the breaking down of this duality through key ambiguity, and the whole resembles the permeable identities of the characters in Hoffmann's works.

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<sup>42</sup> Benjamin K. Wadsworth, "Directional Tonality in Schumann's Early Works," *Music Theory Online* 18, no. 4 (2012): examples 4, 5b.



Figure 1: *Kreisleriana*, No. 4, image from 1838 edition (with measure numbers added)

18

IV.

(M.M. ♩ = 66.)

Schr langsam. *p*

Pedal.

3 *ritardando.* *f* *p*

6 *p*

8 Linke. *pp* *ritard.* *ritardando.*

Pedal.

11 *Bewegter.* *mf* *p*

T. H. 7570.

14

Musical notation for measures 14-16. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The music features a complex rhythmic pattern with sixteenth and thirty-second notes. Fingerings are indicated with numbers 1 and 2. A slur covers the entire system.

17

*ritard.*

*pp*

Musical notation for measures 17-19. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The key signature has two flats. The music continues with sixteenth-note patterns. A slur covers the entire system. The dynamic marking *pp* is present.

20

*pp*

*ritar.*

*Pedal.* \*

Musical notation for measures 20-22. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The key signature has two flats. The music features sixteenth-note patterns. A slur covers the entire system. The dynamic marking *pp* is present. The instruction *Pedal.* with an asterisk is written below the bass staff.

23

*ritardando.*

Erstes Tempo.

*Pedal.* \*

Musical notation for measures 23-25. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The key signature has two flats. The music features a change in texture with more sustained notes. A slur covers the entire system. The instruction *Erstes Tempo.* is written above the treble staff. The dynamic marking *pp* is present. The instruction *Pedal.* with an asterisk is written below the bass staff.

26

*ritardando.*

Adagio.

*pp*

T.H. 7570.

Musical notation for measures 26-28. The system consists of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The key signature has two flats. The music features a change in texture with more sustained notes. A slur covers the entire system. The instruction *Adagio.* is written above the treble staff. The dynamic marking *pp* is present. The instruction *Pedal.* with an asterisk is written below the bass staff. The text *T.H. 7570.* is written below the system.

It is useful to examine this movement through the lens of tonal pairing, as presented by Harald Krebs in his analysis of Schubert's "Der Wanderer."<sup>43</sup> Krebs borrows a list of ways that tonal pairing is commonly manifested from Christopher Orlo Lewis's *Tonal Coherence in Mahler's Ninth Symphony*, which includes:

1. Juxtaposition of musical fragments implying the two tonics in succession or alternation.
2. Mixture of the two tonalities, exploiting ambiguous and common harmonic functions.
3. Use of a tonic sonority created by conflation of the two tonic triads.
4. Superposition of lines or textures in one key upon those in another.
5. Some combination of the above.<sup>44</sup>

The first A section ends in m. 11 on a low B-flat that is ambiguous in function.<sup>45</sup> On paper, the functional significance of every note seems perfectly clear. The voice exchange at the end of m. 9 tonicizes G minor, and the descending bass moves through the G harmonic minor scale, leading to a formulaic cadence on the mediant. However, in actual performance, the tonal picture is not so simple; as the section draws to its conclusion, sonority starts to outweigh function. The necessary resolution of the dominant is withheld; indeed, the note G is not even present. The extreme low register of the melody reinforces this sense that the melody has cast off its harmonic underpinnings and become pure monody, and in this context, as the low B-flat sounds in m. 11, it is already possible to have forgotten the F-sharp and the dominant harmony of G minor, and

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<sup>43</sup> Harald Krebs, "Some Early Examples of Tonal Pairing: Schubert's 'Meeres Stille' and 'Der Wanderer,'" in *The Second Practice of Nineteenth-Century Tonality*, ed. William Kinderman and Harald Krebs (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 18.

<sup>44</sup> Christopher Orlo Lewis, *Tonal Coherence in Mahler's Ninth Symphony* (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1984), 6.

<sup>45</sup> Some of this analysis is derived from Lauri Suurpää, "The Fourth Piece of Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, Op. 16, as a Musical Fragment: Discontinuity and Unity Intertwined," *Rivista di Analisi e Teoria Musicale* 1, no. 19 (2013): 7-24.

thus to hear this note as a tonic. This possibility is underscored by the manifest key of the entire section as B-flat major and the fact that the tonicization of G minor in mm. 9-10 is in fact very fleeting. That Schumann seems interested in the possibility of weakening the sense of G minor is confirmed by the first chord of the ensuing *Bewegter* section, in that G is again withheld from the first chord. The low B-flat in m. 11 represents the second of Lewis's elements, as the single note is ambiguous in function and significant in both of the possible keys.

Schumann continues to use this type of ambiguity throughout the B section, which opens on the third beat of m. 11 with a B-flat/D sonority, that could belong to the tonic chord of either B-flat major or G minor, also invoking Lewis's third element, the conflating of the tonic triads. This sonority opens each of the first three phrases of the B section, which alternate implications of B-flat and G tonics, thereby demonstrating Lewis's first point. (These phrases also demonstrate Lewis's second point through frequent use of other harmonies that function in both keys, such as E-flat major, which serves as IV in B-flat major and VI in G minor.) The first phrase ends on a D major chord in m. 13, which seems to function as a half cadence in G minor. As Lauri Suurpää writes, this allows the listener to retrospectively interpret the opening sonority as part of the G minor chord.<sup>46</sup> However, the following phrase ends in m. 15 with a clear dominant-tonic cadence in B-flat major, again changing the meaning of the B-flat/D sonority.

The third phrase further confuses the meaning of the B-flat/D sonority. On beat two of m. 17, the phrase moves to a V6/5 chord of B-flat, which is then transformed into a V4/3 chord of G minor, the final chord of the phrase. This is immediately followed by

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<sup>46</sup> Suurpää, "The Fourth Piece of Schumann's *Kreisleriana*," 16.

the B-flat/D sonority opening the fourth phrase on the final beat of m. 17, which is an exact repetition of the first phrase, ending again with a half cadence in G minor. The harmony here moves to a brief prolongation of C minor in mm. 21-22, and the final phrase ends in m. 23 with a final half cadence in G minor. But this chord is quickly transformed into the F dominant  $\frac{4}{3}$  that opened the movement, and leads back to the ambiguous manifestation of B-flat major. The final chord of the movement refuses to solve the discrepancy between the two keys, as it ends on an open D/A sonority, possibly serving as the dominant of the G minor movement that follows.<sup>47</sup>

The double-tonic complex in this movement exemplifies the duality between these two key areas that underlies the entire work, which reflects the duality in Hoffmann's works. As duality functions in many different ways in the Kreisler works – in character pairings, in the double novel structure, and in Kreisler's own character – Schumann's duality is also more than a presentation of two opposing characters, but rather a structural principle that underlies all aspects of the work.

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<sup>47</sup> In the 1850 edition, the D/A sonority is filled in with an F-sharp to create a D major chord. The implications of the added F-sharp will be considered later in this thesis.

## CREATING AND BLURRING BOUNDARIES

### Framing Devices and Storytelling

A second structural principle of Hoffmann's works is the creation and blurring of boundaries, which reinforces the works' overall instability of identity and reality. One way that Hoffmann utilizes this principle is through an elaborate structure of narrative framing devices, especially in *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*. The novel begins with an editor's preface, in which Hoffmann as the fictional editor explains how he came across the manuscript and apologizes for his error in allowing the "waste paper" to be printed along with the cat's work. However, he notes:

...it seems extremely likely that the torn-up book never reached the bookshops at all, since nobody knows the slightest thing about it. Consequently, the Kapellmeister's friends at least will be glad that the cat's literary vandalism allows them access to some information about the very strange circumstances of the life of Kreisler, in his own way a not unremarkable man.<sup>48</sup>

Following this are two further framing devices: an effusive author's preface written by Murr, and a foreword marked "suppressed by author." In this foreword, Murr reminds his reader that he is "a tomcat possessed of intellect, understanding, and sharp claws" (for which Hoffmann as editor again apologizes).<sup>49</sup> Kreisler's biography, where the true narrative interest lies, exists within the frame of the satirical *Bildungsroman* of the tomcat. Finally, the Kreisler biography has its own internal frame, because the

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<sup>48</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 4.

<sup>49</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 7.

biographer, whom many scholars suspect is, within the fictional world of the novel, Master Abraham,<sup>50</sup> recounts the difficulty of acquiring information about Kreisler's life and apologizes for the "rhapsodic nature" of the text.<sup>51</sup> Additionally, the distinctions between all of these established boundaries become increasingly unclear as the novel progresses.

Framing devices also play a significant role in Hoffmann's *Kreisleriana*. Each of the two volumes are contained in one of the four volumes of *Fantasy Pieces in Callot's Manner: Leaves from the Diary of a Travelling Enthusiast*. In this way, the entire set is placed as part of the writings of the Travelling Enthusiast, who is another fictionalized iteration of Hoffmann. Hoffmann additionally writes a preface to the whole collection explaining the influence of Jacques Callot (1592-1635), a French artist of the early Baroque era who specialized in etching and printmaking, and the Kreisler essays are situated within this context. Yet another preface introduces the *Kreisleriana* and presents the character of Kreisler, emphasizing his instability and tortured genius, and ends by relating the facts of his disappearance, presumably related to his madness. It then states that, as alluded to above,

on the plain reverse-side of several sheets of music brief essays, largely humorous in content, had been hastily scribbled in pencil during odd moments. This faithful pupil of the unfortunate Johannes allowed his faithful friends to make a copy of these, and to pass them on as unconsidered products of a momentary impulse.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> See Scher, "Hoffmann and Sterne," 322; and Anthony Phelan, "Prose Fiction of the German Romantics," in *The Cambridge Companion to German Romanticism*, ed. Nicholas Saul (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 57.

<sup>51</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 37.

<sup>52</sup> Hoffmann, *Kreisleriana*, 80.

Therefore, the set of essays (or at least the first volume – it is unclear if both volumes are to be considered under this preface) consists of these writings scribbled on the back sides of pieces of music. All of the essays of the first volume, written in the first person, can be understood through this frame.

However, some of the essays defy the logic of the frame. The second volume begins with a preface for only the first two pieces – the letters from Kreisler and Wallborn – and the frame is complicated because the essays are no longer all clearly written by Kreisler. The letter from Wallborn is accounted for in the preface, but the third essay, “Kreisler’s Musico-Poetic Club,” is written anonymously in the third person about Kreisler, and there is no explanation of how this fits within the narrative frame. Similarly, the split identity of Kreisler in “Johannes Kreisler’s Certificate of Apprenticeship” defies the logic of the frame.

Hoffmann also employs the idea of creating and blurring boundaries through layers of embedded storytelling in both the essays and the novel. Most of the essay “Johannes Kreisler’s Certificate of Apprenticeship” consists of the writer (one of the Kreislers) recalling a time when he met a young man named Crysostomus who “told [him] a remarkable story from his childhood,” which included another story told to him by his father.<sup>53</sup> This embedding of stories can also be seen in Kreisler’s opening fragment of *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*. It begins in the middle of one of Master Abraham’s sentences, as he tells Kreisler the story of a conversation he had with Prince Irenaeus, in which he was telling the Prince a story borrowed from Laurence Sterne’s *A*

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<sup>53</sup> Hoffmann, *Kreisleriana*, 160-163.



*Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*.<sup>54</sup> In these instances, Hoffmann embeds multiple layers of storytelling which highlight the extreme use of narrative frames in these works.

Schumann employs this principle of creating and blurring boundaries in several ways throughout his own *Kreisleriana*. The structure of the entire piece defies the otherwise clear alternation of the two main keys, B-flat major and G minor. The first movement opens in D minor with a B section in B-flat major, and the listener only retrospectively realizes that although D plays an important role as the mediant of B-flat major and the dominant of G minor, it will not be one of the primary keys of the work. The movements then begin to alternate between an opening key and character of B-flat major and G minor. However, the seventh movement complicates this otherwise straightforward alternation by beginning instead in C minor, with its B section in G minor, and setting its unusual final section in B-flat major with a final cadence in E-flat major.

Deahl suggests that, when viewed in light of the series of opening prefaces in *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*, Schumann's D minor opening functions as a framing device for the piece.<sup>55</sup> However, Schumann does not close the frame as Hoffmann does. At the end of the second volume of the novel, Hoffmann includes the editor's postscript, but Schumann has no such closing of the musical frame. While this is one interesting interpretation of how the off-tonic opening movement functions, it seems

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<sup>54</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 13.

<sup>55</sup> Deahl, "Double Novel Structure," 133, 136, 141.

more useful to consider it in light of some of Hoffmann's other structural principles, and this movement will be considered further in the following two sections.

Schumann also employs the use of boundaries through the forms of each movement, which reflect Hoffmann's embedded layers of storytelling. Crisp suggests that the unusual musical forms in *Kreisleriana* "resemble the literary parallel of a story-within-a-story." For example, she states that the fifth movement could be seen as a ternary form embedded within a rondo form (I have instead chosen to label this in Table 1 as a ternary form, where each section contains a smaller rounded binary form).<sup>56</sup> Indeed, most of the forms used in this piece are some type of ternary or rondo form, both of which suggest a frame with digressions. The opening movement consists of two rounded binary forms embedded in a larger ternary form – each of the three major sections has a smaller ABA within it. For example, within the first A section, mm. 1-24 make up the first small section, there is a digression in mm. 25-49, and mm. 50-73 are a reprise of the opening.

Movement six also includes a story-within-a-story, as its C section, beginning in m. 19, uses a well-known folk tune, often called the "Grossvater Tanz," that Schumann had already used in his *Papillons*, Op. 2, and *Carnaval*, Op. 9 (Figures 2, 3, and 4). The theme is presented in a straightforward manner in *Papillons*. In *Carnaval*, it is developed and sequenced, and it is this form of the theme that Schumann seems to be referencing in *Kreisleriana*. Crisp writes that it seems to be quoted from the "secondary source," and

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<sup>56</sup> Crisp, "Some Musical and Literary Parallels," 14.

that it is “transformed yet again into a mere echo or reminiscence.”<sup>57</sup> In recalling this theme that also permeates his other programmatic works, the movement seems to suggest the memory of another story.

Figure 2: *Papillons*, No. 12, mm. 1-4

**FINALE**

Figure 3: *Carnaval*, “Marche des Davidsbündler,” mm. 62-73

Figure 4: *Kreisleriana*, No. 6, mm. 19-20

<sup>57</sup> Crisp, “Some Musical and Literary Parallels,” 12-13.

### **Conflation of Established Dualities**

In *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*, Hoffmann begins to conflate the two halves of the double novel structure as the novel progresses. In his article “Hoffmann and Sterne: Unmediated Parallels in Narrative Method,” Scher writes that “everything depends on the two narrative strains gradually converging upon one another in the actively participating reader’s mind.”<sup>58</sup> Kreisler’s opening fragment previews the trajectory of gradual conflation by including both Kreisler and Murr, and by introducing Master Abraham as a presence in both texts. It features a conversation between Kreisler and Master Abraham about Princess Maria’s name day party, which Kreisler has missed. The final fragment of the novel includes a letter in which Master Abraham invites Kreisler to this party, so the reader is only able to place the opening fragment chronologically after reading the end of the second volume. Thus, the first Kreisler fragment belongs chronologically at the end of the story, although the reader only realizes this in retrospect.

Later in the novel, there are several instances where the fragmented sentences of the two narratives can be read as one logical sentence. For example, one of Murr’s fragments ends with “However, I –” and the following Kreisler fragment begins with Master Abraham saying, “– wasted the best part of my life on these paltry, foolish devices.”<sup>59</sup> Near the end of the novel, an editor’s note from Hoffmann points out that Murr, in one of his many instances of plagiarism, has borrowed reflections “straight from

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<sup>58</sup> Scher, “Hoffmann and Sterne,” 320.

<sup>59</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 284.

the mouth of Kapellmeister Johannes Kreisler.”<sup>60</sup> Hoffmann does not explain where the borrowed text comes from, although one can speculate that it may be from part of the “waste paper” book that was not inserted into Murr’s manuscript, further blurring the established boundaries of the frame.

Schumann uses a similar technique in his piece to blur the established boundaries between movements and affective states through the elision of movements. As discussed in the previous section, he establishes a duality between the B-flat major and G minor key areas, giving each its own distinct character. However, Schumann allows the two keys to be conflated, no longer occupying separate spaces, much like Hoffmann’s confluences between the dualities he establishes in his works, and this is especially evident in the tonally ambiguous fourth movement. The movement ends on a D/A sonority, in the context of an ambiguous B-flat major, and the fifth movement opens in G minor. Locally, D is the mediant of B-flat major, but the ambiguity of the entire movement, as well as the lack of a chordal third, do not give the sonority a strong sense of function (see Figure 1). In this way, the seemingly open-ended fourth movement is linked to the fifth movement, and the first note of the fifth movement is necessary to complete the cadence. This directly parallels Hoffmann’s elisions of sentences between the Kreisler and Murr fragments, in which the first sentence of the following fragment completes the incomplete sentence of the previous fragment. This is also one of the ways in which Schumann employs Hoffmann’s principle of fragmentation, explored in the following section.

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<sup>60</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 303.

## Boundaries Between Fictions and Reality

Hoffmann not only blurs boundaries within his works, but he also blurs the boundaries between different works of fiction, and between fiction and reality. Kreisler is a presence in multiple texts – not only these two works, but also in another of the *Fantasy Pieces*, in a piece from his *Nachtstücke*, and even in Hoffmann’s personal correspondence.<sup>61</sup> Hoffmann also references the preface of *Kreisleriana* in *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr* when he writes, “It was said somewhere of Kapellmeister Johannes Kreisler that his friends could not get him to write a composition down, and if he ever did, then whatever pleasure he had expressed at succeeding with it, he would throw the work into the fire immediately afterwards.”<sup>62</sup> Hoffmann then cites the *Fantasy Pieces* in one of his only footnotes of the novel. In this way, Kreisler is a character who inhabits Hoffmann’s entire fictional universe, as well as his real one.

Kreisler is also conflated with Hoffmann (the real person) in multiple ways. Many of the biographical facts about Kreisler presented in *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr* are, in fact, true of Hoffmann, often presented in a fantastical manner. For example, both Hoffmann and Kreisler followed in the footsteps of an uncle to become a Legation Councillor rather than initially pursuing a career in music. Moreover, some of Hoffmann’s music criticism is attributed to Kreisler, such as his famous 1810 review of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony. Although it was initially unsigned, part of it was used in

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<sup>61</sup> See “A Report on the Latest Adventures of the Dog Berganza” from *Fantasiestücke*; “Das Sanctus” from *Nachtstücke*; and two letters to Fouqué from May 1814 (Johanna C. Sahlin, ed. and trans., *Selected Letters of E. T. A. Hoffmann* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 248, 251).

<sup>62</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 213.

the essay “Beethoven’s Instrumental Music” from *Kreisleriana*.<sup>63</sup> The first essay of the cycle, “Kapellmeister Johannes Kreisler’s Musical Sufferings,” was also first published anonymously in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, a prominent music journal. Thus it existed as a piece of Hoffmann’s criticism before being placed within the frame of *Kreisleriana*.<sup>64</sup> Hoffmann even wrote in a letter, “The measure of what and how I drink you’ll find in the *Kreisleriana*.”<sup>65</sup> In many cases, Hoffmann did not seem to make any distinction between himself and his literary creation.

To further this conflation, Hoffmann also often inserted himself into his works as a character alongside his alter ego (or alter egos). Scholars have debated the possibility of Kreisler, Murr, and Master Abraham all sharing identities with Hoffmann. James M. McGlathery suggests that Murr “may be a self-humorous image of Hoffmann as a writer, exhibiting all due authorial vanity,” and that Master Abraham is “a second humorous self-image as the older man foolishly devoted to a dream of transcendent young love.”<sup>66</sup> Scher writes that the cycle of *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr* “is completed when we recognize the basic identity of Abraham and Kreisler as antithetical alter egos of the only real author, E. T. A. Hoffmann.”<sup>67</sup> However, Hoffmann is present in the fiction not only in the guise of the alter egos, but also as the editor, who occasionally adds remarks throughout the novel. Similarly, Hoffmann is present on four different levels in

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<sup>63</sup> Hoffmann, *Kreisleriana*, 96-103.

<sup>64</sup> Charlton, *E. T. A. Hoffmann’s Musical Writings*, 56.

<sup>65</sup> E. T. A. Hoffmann to Carl Friedrich Kunz, July 20, 1813, in Sahlin, *Selected Letters of E. T. A. Hoffmann*, 199.

<sup>66</sup> James M. McGlathery, *E. T. A. Hoffmann* (New York: Twayne, 1997), 144-145.

<sup>67</sup> Scher, “Hoffmann and Sterne,” 322.

the preface to the second volume of *Kreisleriana*. He exists as Kreisler, as the fictional Hoffmann to whom Kreisler delivers the letter, as the fictional “Travel Enthusiast” of the entire *Fantasy Pieces* collection, and as the true author behind the whole text. In this way, Hoffmann’s presence as a character in these works blurs the lines between fiction and reality.

Hoffmann also conflates reality and fiction by including other real-life figures in the fiction. For instance, the Tomcat Murr is based on Hoffmann’s actual cat, who died shortly after he finished the second volume of the novel.<sup>68</sup> In a letter to his friend

Friedrich Speyer, Hoffmann writes:

I recommend to you the wisest and most profound Tomcat Murr, who right now lies near me on a small, upholstered chair. He seems to give himself up to the most extraordinary thoughts and fantasies, for he purrs a great deal. I raised this *real* tomcat of great beauty (his striking likeness is on the cover of his book) and of even greater intelligence, and he gave me the impetus to the farcial thread that runs through the actually very serious book.<sup>69</sup>

But the death of the real cat seems to have altered Hoffmann’s plan for his fictional counterpart. In the editor’s postscript to the second volume of the novel, he shares the news that “the clever, well-educated, philosophical, poetical tomcat Murr was snatched away by bitter Death in the midst of a fine career.”<sup>70</sup> He then explains that Murr’s *Life and Opinions* must remain fragmentary, and that a third volume (never written due to Hoffmann’s own death) would soon be published. This third volume would include the remaining parts of Kreisler’s biography along with some of Murr’s literary papers from

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<sup>68</sup> Hewett-Thayer, *Author of the Tales*, 308-309.

<sup>69</sup> E. T. A. Hoffmann to Friedrich Speyer, May 1, 1820, in Sahlin, *Selected Letters of E. T. A. Hoffmann*, 291. Italics in the original.

<sup>70</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 322.



the time of his residence with Kreisler. It seems that Hoffmann did not want the fictional Murr to live on if the real Murr could not, and it raises the unanswerable question of Hoffmann's actual intentions for a third volume.

Another character borrowed from Hoffmann's reality is Julia Benzon, who is likely a stand-in for the real Julia Marc. Early in his career, Hoffmann developed a romantic passion for Julia Marc, one of his voice pupils. She, like the fictional Julia Benzon, had a mother who was the widow of a prominent local figure, and she ultimately married a man that Hoffmann deemed unworthy.<sup>71</sup> Echoes of this experience can be seen throughout Hoffmann's works, but using the same first name in this work invokes another degree of reality. Although Julia's ultimate fate is not revealed in the incomplete novel, the reader learns in the final Kreisler fragment that her mother has arranged for her to marry the simple-minded Prince Ignatius. This parallel adds to the impression that Kreisler's biography is simply a fantastic version of Hoffmann's real life.

The use of intertextuality necessarily looks different in Schumann's composition, and he blurs the boundaries between his works and between fiction and reality through musical quotation, of his own works as well as Clara's. The use of the "Grossvater Tanz" in the sixth movement is one example of such intertextuality. In invoking this theme, Schumann reminds the listener of two of his most richly programmatic pieces, *Papillons* and *Carnaval*, which are related to each other through quotation and through the thematic idea of a masked ball. By using this same theme in his *Kreisleriana*, Schumann brings the piece into the programmatic universe of these other two works. *Carnaval* is filled with musical characterizations of both fictional *commedia dell'arte* figures, and people from

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<sup>71</sup> McGlathery, *E. T. A., Hoffmann*, 10-13.

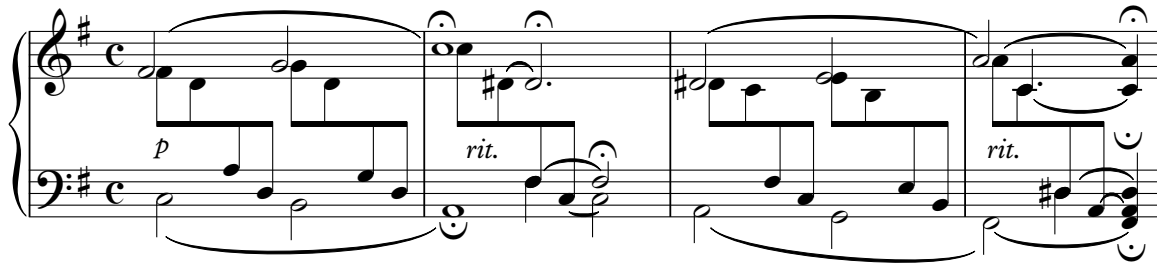
Schumann's own life, such as Clara, Ernestine von Fricken, Chopin, and Paganini. In this way, Schumann's fictional universe (also represented in his music criticism) is peopled with real figures, and his use of intertextuality connects *Kreisleriana* to this universe.

*Kreisleriana* is also linked to *Kinderscenen*, Op. 15 (1838), through quotation. The fourth movement invokes "Der Dichter Spricht" ("The Poet Speaks"), the final movement of Op. 15. In a way, the *Kreisleriana* movement is an expanded composing-out of the material presented in the movement of *Kinderscenen*. Both movements use a small ABA form. The opening phrase of the *Kreisleriana* movement follows the melodic shape of the opening of "Der Dichter Spricht," including the grace note turn, and the whole A section is based on this material (Figures 1 and 5). The middle section, beginning on the third beat of m. 11, uses the same texture as the brief middle section of "Der Dichter Spricht" (mm. 9-12), using held top and bass notes, with descending arpeggiations in the middle voice (Figures 1 and 6).

**Figure 5:** *Kinderscenen*, "Der Dichter Spricht," mm. 1-4



Figure 6: *Kinderscenen*, “Der Dichter Spricht,” mm. 9-12



The invocation of “Der Dichter Spricht,” as well as *Kinderscenen* as a whole, is particularly interesting. In a letter to Clara, after referring to *Kreisleriana*, Schumann wrote, “The *Kinderszenen* are the opposite, light and gentle and happy like our future.”<sup>72</sup> But this musical reference does not retain the light and gentle atmosphere of the *Kinderscenen*; instead, it is one of the darkest movements of the *Kreisleriana*, which is heightened by its harmonic ambiguity. Additionally, the programmatic title “Der Dichter Spricht” leads one to wonder if the poet is in fact speaking again in *Kreisleriana*. Who is the poet? Is he one of Schumann’s fictional inventions, or is Schumann perhaps inserting himself as a narrator into the piece, as Hoffmann so often did? After receiving and playing the *Kinderscenen*, Clara wrote to Schumann that this movement was one of her favorites and said, “I know the poet; his words have sunk deep into my heart.”<sup>73</sup> She understood that Schumann himself was the poet, and if we extend this to the fourth movement of *Kreisleriana*, Schumann is both linking this work to his lighter, happier *Kinderscenen*, and allowing himself as the poet a moment of presence in the piece.

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<sup>72</sup> Clara Wieck to Robert Schumann, August 3, 1838, in Weissweiler, *The Complete Correspondence of Clara and Robert Schumann*, vol. 1, 225.

<sup>73</sup> Clara Wieck to Robert Schumann, March 21, 1839, in *The Complete Correspondence of Clara and Robert Schumann*, ed. Eva Weissweiler, trans. Hildegard Fritsch and Ronald L. Crawford, vol. 2 (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 120.

Schumann also invokes a theme of Clara's, which he used previously as the theme for the variations in the third movement of his Sonata, Op. 14. While Clara's work does not survive, the theme in Schumann's sonata is marked "Andantino de Clara Wieck," and scholars have noted many connections between this theme and the *Kreisleriana*. Mary Hunter Arnsdorf writes that this theme underlies every movement of the work, which she demonstrates in detail in her dissertation "Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, Opus 16: Analysis and Performance."<sup>74</sup> One of the more convincing examples is in the opening theme of the second movement, whose first four notes parallel the B-flat up to F from mm. 17-18 of Clara's theme, although it is in a different key and uses different scale degrees (Figures 7 and 8).<sup>75</sup> Although most of the connections to Clara's theme are somewhat elusive, it is typical of Schumann's style to embed hidden ideas that, while they may not be aurally striking, become clear to one who studies the score. In this way, Schumann is both referencing other texts, Clara's piece as well as his own previous use of the theme, and referencing a real person. The quotation of Clara (mediated for modern listeners through its use in Schumann's Op. 14) adds another layer to the intertextuality of this piece. Like Hoffmann's use of Julia in *The Life and Opinions*, Schumann in a sense uses his beloved as a character in this work.

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<sup>74</sup> Mary Hunter Arnsdorf, "Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, Opus 16: Analysis and Performance" (Ed.D. diss., Columbia University Teachers College, 1976), 46-47.

<sup>75</sup> Arnsdorf also shows many instances throughout the *Kreisleriana* of the use of a descending fifth motive which opens Clara's theme, as well as its inversion (54, 73, 176-177).

Figure 7: *Kreisleriana*, No. 2, mm. 1-2

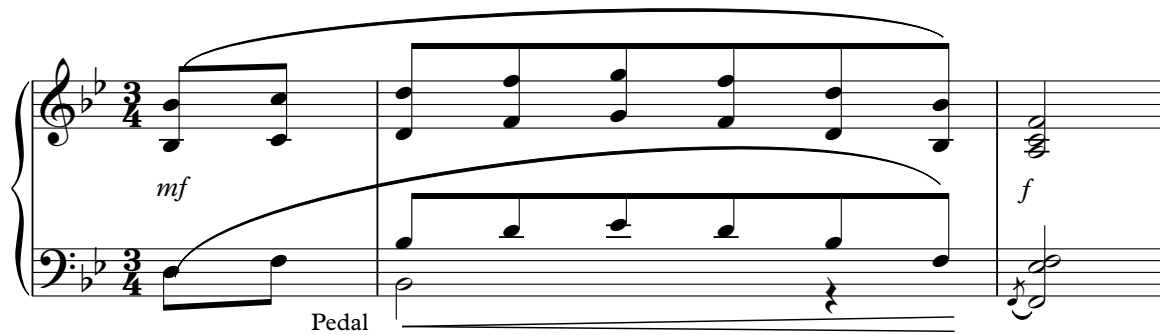
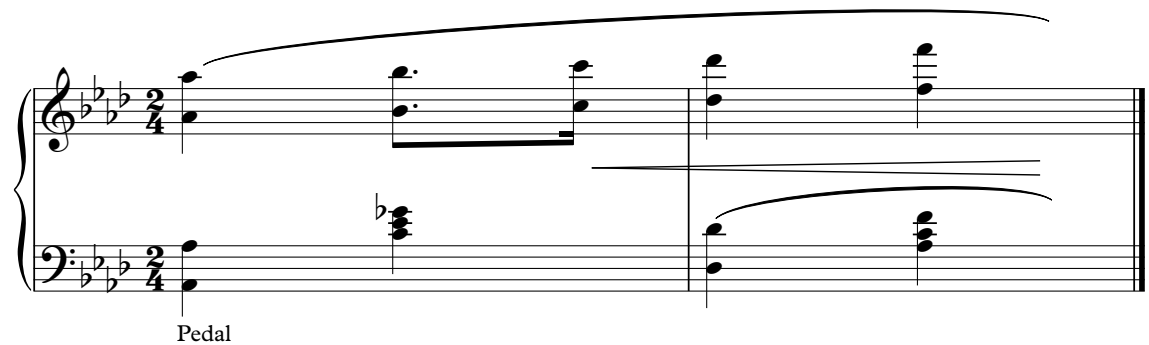


Figure 8: Sonata, Op. 14, III., mm. 17-18



It is worth noting that the difference in medium makes this a less straightforward comparison. Hoffmann represents Julia as a fictional character, and while he invokes the real Julia, he also creates a new, fictional Julia. There is no such distinction in Schumann's invocation of Clara. Because Schumann's music does not create a fiction in the same sense that Hoffmann does, his reference can simply be a reference to the real Clara, without the need to mediate her through a new character. The theme is written by her, not written by Schumann to represent her. This is one example of the ways in which Schumann was influenced by Hoffmann's principles, but their function cannot be directly translated from literature to music.

## FRAGMENTATION AND IRRESOLUTION

Hoffmann also uses the principles of fragmentation and irresolution in both of his Kreisler works. In the *Kreisleriana*, fragmentation is most evident in the essay “Extremely Random Thoughts,” which consists of an introduction and fourteen short statements of varying lengths, all on the topic of music or art in general. The entire work also lacks a satisfying resolution in the sense that Kreisler’s disappearance is often hinted at, yet never fully explained. The *Kreisleriana* preface states that no one knew how or why he disappeared, and the disappearance is not alluded to again until the preface to the second volume. At the end of “Kreisler’s Musico-Poetic Club,” Kreisler tells the “travelling enthusiast and true friend” (i.e. Hoffmann) that he wanted to “wander freely and harmlessly through the wide spaces of heaven” and “sit on my Chinese dressing-gown as though it were Mephistopheles’ cloak and fly out that window there!” The friend nonsensically asks if he is a “harmless melody,” and instead Kreisler calls himself a *basso ostinato*, adding, “but I have to get away soon, however I do it.” The unspecified narrator writes, “And it soon came about, just as he had foretold.”<sup>76</sup> This is the most that is revealed about the disappearance, although the confusing “Certificate of Apprenticeship” represents a “sending out” of Kreisler into the world. Still, the reader reaches the end of the cycle with more questions about Kreisler than answers.

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<sup>76</sup> Hoffmann, *Kreisleriana*, 135-136.

*The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr* depends on fragmentation for its entire structure, particularly for the Kreisler biography. While each Murr fragment continues where the previous one ended, the Kreisler fragments are entirely independent and do not connect. Harvey W. Hewett-Thayer writes that the fragmentary technique “sets perilous traps in the pathway of the narrator, though of course it forms a convenient method of skipping neutral passages in the lives of his characters.”<sup>77</sup> While there is enough missing from the fragments to give the sense that they were in fact selected at random, there is still a clear intention behind what is presented. Hewett-Thayer later writes, “for the second fragment Murr made a very judicious selection, unwittingly tearing from the book the leaves that contain just the material which the reader requires in order to go on with the story.”<sup>78</sup> But even without this device of fragmentation, it seems that the Kreisler biography lacks a complete and orderly presentation of information. The fictional biographer writes:

... nice chronological order is out of the question, since the unfortunate narrator has at his disposal nothing but oral information imparted bit by bit, which he must set down at once if the whole is not to be lost from his memory. As for just how this information was imparted, gentle reader, that is something you shall learn before the end of the book, when perhaps you will forgive the rhapsodic nature of the whole, and you may perhaps think that, despite its apparent incoherence, it has a firm thread running through it, holding all the parts together.<sup>79</sup>

However, the reader is not privy to the rest of this information, partially because of the intentional fragmentation, and also because Hoffmann died before writing the promised third volume.

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<sup>77</sup> Hewett-Thayer, *Author of the Tales*, 287.

<sup>78</sup> Hewett-Thayer, *Author of the Tales*, 288.

<sup>79</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 37.

In leaving the novel unfinished, Hoffmann unwittingly added to the text another layer of fragmentation and irresolution. In the editor's postscript, after informing the readers of Murr's death, Hoffmann remarks that Murr left behind many papers from the time of his residence with Kreisler, and says that it would be appropriate if "he imparts what remains of Kreisler's biography to his gentle readers, now and then, at suitable places, inserting those parts of the cat's comments and reflections which seem worth further communication."<sup>80</sup> Here Hoffmann, at least in his fictional iteration, expresses his intention to complete the third volume. Hoffmann even received financial advances on the volume from his publisher, surely indicating that he planned to produce something.<sup>81</sup> However, it is difficult to imagine the novel ending in this way. Without the device of Murr using Kreisler's biography as blotting paper, there would be no more logical explanation for the double novel structure. If Hoffmann did intersperse Murr's reflections within Kreisler's biography, as he wrote in the editor's postscript, it would feel contrived, but if he abandoned the double novel structure, there would be a lack of symmetry and continuity with the rest of the novel. Regardless of Hoffmann's unknown intentions, the novel now exists as a fragment of fragments. It ends mid-sentence in a Kreisler section – "So short and full of matter was this little note from the old Master that—" – and the key tensions of the novel are never resolved.

Schumann's *Kreiseriana* also depends on fragmentation and irresolution for its basic structure. One way that fragmentation is experienced is through the use of short,

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<sup>80</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 322.

<sup>81</sup> E. T. A. Hoffmann to Julius Eduard Hitzig, March 7, 1822, in Sahlin, *Selected Letters of E. T. A. Hoffmann*, 330, fn. 1.



fragmentary motives that make up much of the work, especially the sections in the G minor *Stimmung*. For example, the A section of the third movement is characterized by a repeating motive of a sixteenth-note-triplet followed by a staccato eighth note (Figure 9). The right hand uses almost no other rhythm until the B section. Similarly, much of the A section of the fifth movement is made up of the rhythmic pattern: sixteenth rest, sixteenth note, eighth note (Figure 10). The texture of these sections consists of the repetition of small fragments, and in this way, fragmentation makes up their basic structure.

**Figure 9:** *Kreisleriana*, No. 3, m. 1



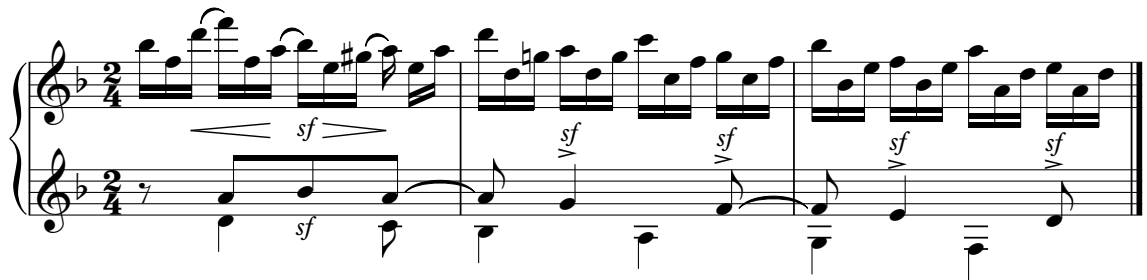
**Figure 10:** *Kreisleriana*, No. 5, mm. 1-5



The texture and key of the opening of Schumann's work also demonstrates the structural principle of fragmentation and irresolution. MacAuslan suggests that because

the first melodic fragment does not appear until mm. 10-12 (in the upper voice of the left hand, Figure 11), the opening movement of Schumann's *Kreisleriana* resembles the minor variation of a conventional variation set, and thus begins *in medias res*.<sup>82</sup> The use of D minor, rather than one of the two main keys of the work, reinforces the idea of this movement as an interior fragment; D minor would be a logical key to find in the middle of a piece in B-flat major or G minor, but it would not usually be found as the opening key. The perpetual motion texture of the A section could also suggest that the listener is entering into something that has already begun (Figure 12). The movement opens on a dominant rather than a tonic, and Schumann avoids changing left hand harmonies on the beat. This opening can be clearly linked to the first Kreisler fragment of *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*, which is displaced chronologically from the end of the second volume. Both begin in the middle of the action, and both more generally demonstrate an underlying principle of fragmentation.

**Figure 11: *Kreisleriana*, No. 1, mm. 10-12**



<sup>82</sup> MacAuslan, *Schumann's Music and E. T. A. Hoffmann's Fiction*, 154-155.

Figure 12: *Kreisleriana*, No. 1, mm. 1-2



Irresolution is most evident in this work through the use of weak cadences at the end of movements. The previous section discussed one such cadence at the end of the fourth movement leading harmonically into the next movement, and several other movements also have weak endings that give the sense of an unresolved fragment. The fifth movement ends on a D major chord in the context of G minor, essentially ending on a half cadence (Figure 13).<sup>83</sup> The sixth movement cadences in its key of B-flat major, but it ends on a second inversion chord, which, although an earlier B-flat sustained in the pedal lends the chord some stability, implies a lack of harmonic resolution (Figure 14). The seventh movement also closes on a second inversion chord, this time an E-flat major chord, which functions locally as tonic, although most of the movement is in C minor (Figure 15). This movement has a sense of irresolution because it lacks a strong final cadence, and the unusual chorale section preceding this cadence also contributes to the fragmentary feel because it does not seem to relate in any way to the surrounding material. The section is in a completely different key and character than the rest of the movement, and in this sense, it can be heard as an interpolated fragment, perhaps from a different piece of music.

<sup>83</sup> In the 1850 edition, Schumann adds a G minor chord at the end, so it ends on a perfect authentic cadence.

Figure 13: *Kreisleriana*, No. 5, mm. 159-161



Figure 14: *Kreisleriana*, No. 6, mm. 38-39

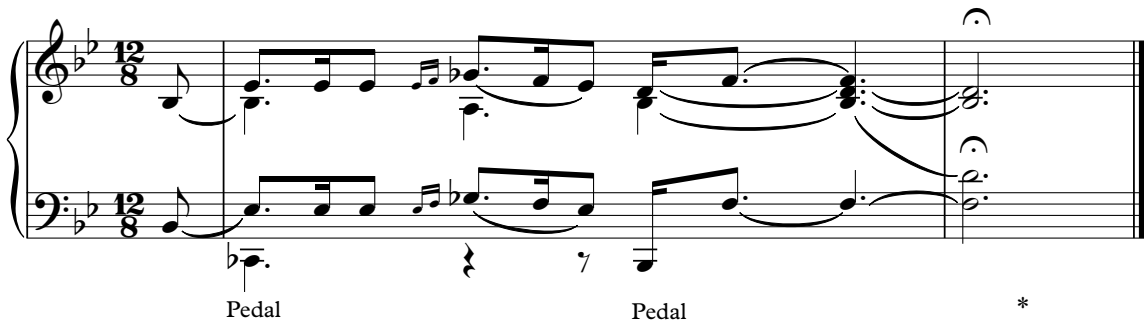


Figure 15: *Kreisleriana*, No. 7, mm. 117-118



The final movement lacks a satisfying resolution, giving even the end of the work the sense of a fragment. The unsettled nature of the whole movement contributes to the feeling of irresolution; in each iteration of the A section, the changes in harmony become less congruent with the melody, and there is, as Crisp writes, “the refusal of important

harmonic events to take place on the beat.”<sup>84</sup> Beginning as early as the second phrase, the bass and melody get increasingly disparate as the movement progresses, particularly in the A sections. In m. 5, the first measure of the second phrase, one would expect a rearticulation of the tonic pitch in the left hand to match the small dominant-tonic motion to the downbeat in the right hand, but this does not come until the final eighth note of that measure (Figure 16). Here, there is no change in the bass harmony, so it is only mildly disconcerting, but the following phrase presents a displacement in harmonic change which increases the disorientation (see Figure 17). The phrase begins with a D major harmony in m. 9, and in m. 11 the right hand harmony changes to C minor, but the left hand shifts from a D octave to a G octave on the final eighth note of the previous measure so that it anticipates the harmonic shift. In m. 13, the right hand harmony moves to F major on the first beat, but the left hand’s shift to F is delayed until the third eighth note of the measure. These incongruities represent a pattern that becomes increasingly apparent throughout the movement, and the unsettled feeling that it creates contributes to the sense of irresolution in this final movement, and thus in the entire work.

**Figure 16: *Kreiseriana*, No. 8, mm. 4-6**

The musical score for Figure 16 shows measures 4, 5, and 6 of 'Kreiseriana, No. 8'. The piece is in 6/8 time and has a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The right hand (treble clef) plays a melody consisting of eighth notes and rests. The left hand (bass clef) plays a bass line with eighth notes and rests. The score is written on a grand staff with a brace connecting the two staves. The first measure (m. 4) shows a D major chord in the right hand and a D octave in the left hand. The second measure (m. 5) shows a D major chord in the right hand and a D octave in the left hand. The third measure (m. 6) shows a D major chord in the right hand and a G octave in the left hand.

<sup>84</sup> Crisp, “Some Musical and Literary Parallels,” 15-17.

Figure 17: *Kreisleriana*, No. 8, mm. 9-13



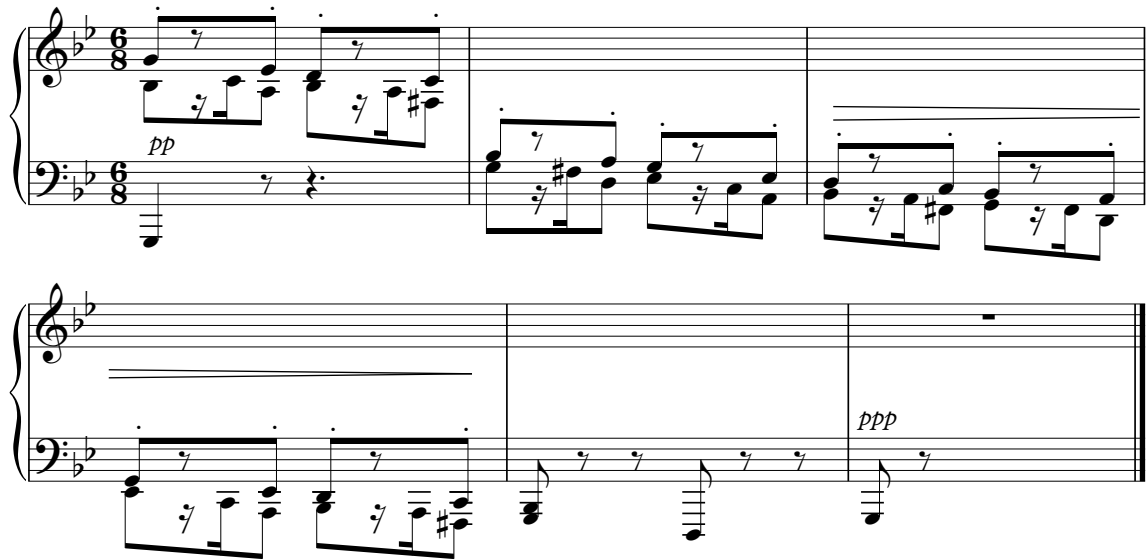
As in the preceding movements, even the final cadence of the final movement has a sense of irresolution (see Figure 18). This time, the movement does resolve harmonically. In the context of G minor, it ends with a single D and G in the low range of the piano, with short note values, marked *ppp*. However, the thin texture and quiet dynamic do not provide a satisfying resolution for a work of this scope. In fact, Schumann wrote to Clara that if she chose to perform the work in France, “I would change the diminuendo at the end into a crescendo and close with a couple of strong chords; otherwise there’ll be no applause.”<sup>85</sup> Perhaps in this way, Schumann is reaffirming his statement in the 1839 letter to de Sire that none but the Germans would understand the connection to Hoffmann.<sup>86</sup> Crisp writes that “the nature of this ending, together with all other instances of lack of resolution of one sort or another, are a strong

<sup>85</sup> Robert Schumann to Clara Wieck, December 1, 1838, in Weissweiler, *The Complete Correspondence of Clara and Robert Schumann*, vol. 1, 322.

<sup>86</sup> Schumann to de Sire, in Storck, *The Letters of Robert Schumann*, 128.

indication that some other guiding principle is at work here.”<sup>87</sup> Indeed, a principle of fragmentation and irresolution abstracted from Hoffmann seems to have guided the choice for such an inconclusive ending.

**Figure 18: *Kreisleriana*, No. 8, mm. 141-146**



Scholars such as Crisp and MacAuslan have drawn a connection between this ending and Kreisler’s disappearance in Hoffmann’s *Kreisleriana*.<sup>88</sup> Crisp suggests that the expressive marking at the beginning of the final movement, *Das Bässe durchaus leicht und frei* (the bass light and free throughout), is possibly “intended to represent Kreisler, as a basso continuo after all, floating ‘free and harmless through the vast heavens.’”<sup>89</sup> In this view, the dissipating texture and dynamic of the ending represent Kreisler’s own mysterious disappearance.

<sup>87</sup> Crisp, “Some Musical and Literary Parallels,” 17.

<sup>88</sup> Crisp, “Some Musical and Literary Parallels,” 17; MacAuslan, *Schumann’s Music and E. T. A. Hoffmann’s Fiction*, 170-171.

<sup>89</sup> Crisp, “Some Musical and Literary Parallels,” 17.

However, it seems more likely that this unusual ending employs Hoffmann's general principles of fragmentation and irresolution, rather than literally depicting Kreisler's disappearance. Like the endings of both of Hoffmann's Kreisler works, Schumann's ending leaves the listener with a sense that the work is not truly finished. Hoffmann's *Kreisleriana* ends with the confusing "Certificate" that further complicates Kreisler's identity; the second volume of *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr* ends with a Kreisler fragment, so that it cuts off in the middle of a sentence, and it is further incomplete because of the never-written third volume. Although Schumann's final movement resolves harmonically, its wider musical rhetoric lacks the type of ending that would have signaled for an audience to applaud, and therefore employs the principle of irresolution.



## CIRCULARITY

The principle of circularity in Hoffmann's works derives directly from Kreisler's name, which translates to "circler." In the novel, Kreisler explicitly describes the importance of his name:

No, there's no getting away from the word *Kreis*, meaning a circle, and Heaven send that it immediately puts you in mind of these wonderful circles in which our entire existence moves and from which we cannot escape, do what we may. A Kreisler circulates in these circles, and very likely, weary of the leaps and bounds of the St Vitus's dance he is obliged to perform, and at odds with the dark, inscrutable power which delineated those circles, he often longs to break out more than a stomach constitutionally weak anyway will allow.<sup>90</sup>

As mentioned above, he also describes himself in "Kreisler's Musico-Poetic Club" from *Kreisleriana* as a *basso ostinato*, which is circular in its repetition.<sup>91</sup>

In a sense, the whole of *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr* is a circle from which the reader cannot escape. Because the first Kreisler fragment falls chronologically after the final fragment of volume two, the reader is obliged to return to the beginning to try to make sense of the story. Hewett-Thayer writes, "It was probably also not a mere whim to have the cat tear out this later portion of the narration; by this Hoffman could anticipate the development of the relation between Kreisler and Juila..."<sup>92</sup>

This anticipation colors the way one experiences the rest of Kreisler's story and also

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<sup>90</sup> Hoffmann, *The Life and Opinions*, 50-51. The translator makes some modifications to account for the lack of clear word play in English, such as the addition of "meaning a circle" after *Kreis*.

<sup>91</sup> Hoffmann, *Kreisleriana*, 136.

<sup>92</sup> Hewett-Thayer, *Author of the Tales*, 287.

contains the nearest thing to a resolution of Kreisler's biography. The fragment begins *in medias res* with Abraham retelling the story of a conversation he had with Prince Irenaeus about Princess Maria's name day party, to which he had invited Kreisler in the final fragment of the novel. But, as Scher writes,

The unassuming reader is likely to overlook the double quotation marks around Meister Abraham's first speech; only gradually and in retrospect does he realize that the pseudo-Rabelaisian passage so shrewdly integrated into a reported conversation between Abraham and Fürst Irenäus is in turn embedded into yet another conversation between Abraham and Kreisler... The whole construction of the first Kreisler fragment anticipates the multi-layered vertical design that emerged from the Kreisler parts of the novel: essentially a complex circular pattern of dialogues.<sup>93</sup>

The embedded layers here and in the *Kreisleriana* are one way that circularity is represented. In this fragment, Abraham leaves Murr to "enter into the service" of Kreisler, adding to the circularity by joining the two threads at the beginning of the book, although it is the end of the story.

This fragment also involves circularity in the chronology of the two parts of the novel. Murr's *Life and Opinions* was written while he lived with Master Abraham, and he tore pages out of a presumably completed Kreisler biography while writing it. At the end of his final section in volume two, Murr states that his master is sending him to live with Kapellmeister Johannes Kreisler. However, Master Abraham asks Kreisler to take Murr in the opening Kreisler fragment, which is part of the completed Kreisler biography that Murr tears pages from, and is even from a section which he used as blotting paper early in the writing of his manuscript. Murr tears pages from a completed book while writing his own autobiography, but the events of the two overlap. Therefore, the chronology is

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<sup>93</sup> Scher, "Hoffmann and Sterne," 316.

irreconcilable and creates circularity in the novel's overall timeline. Hoffmann also uses an impossible circularity in the final essay of the *Kreiseriana*, "Johannes Kreisler's Certificate of Apprenticeship" because the letter identifies Kreisler as both the master and sender of the letter, and as the apprentice and recipient.

Although these instances of circularity add to the confusion of the text, circularity also functions alongside the structural principle of fragmentation as a way to lend some coherence to the disorderly text. Scher points out the circularity in the constellation of characters in Kreisler's biography, with Kreisler at its center. He writes, "Each Kreisler fragment contains at least one revealing conversation; and it is through an elaborate scheme of conversations that the characters are linked to one another, through Kreisler, and to Kreisler."<sup>94</sup> He goes on to point out that this constellation, rotating around the figure of Kreisler, is what gives the disjointed episodes of the biography some structural coherence.<sup>95</sup> By these means, Hoffmann uses circularity and fragmentation in tandem to create a unified text.

The principle of circularity also helps to explain many of the unusual features of Schumann's *Kreiseriana*. This is evident in the use of rondo and rondo-like forms throughout the piece. It is useful here to consider James Hepokoski's concept of rotational form, which he defines as "a set of rhetorical cycles or waves, in which the end of each rotation reconnects with (or cycles back to) its beginning."<sup>96</sup> Although Hepokoski

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<sup>94</sup> Scher, "Hoffmann and Sterne," 317.

<sup>95</sup> Scher, "Hoffmann and Sterne," 317.

<sup>96</sup> James A. Hepokoski, "Rotations, sketches, and the Sixth Symphony," in *Sibelius Studies*, ed. Timothy L. Jackson and Veijo Murtomäki (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 325.

uses this idea in a different context, citing later composers such as Sibelius and Debussy, Schumann's use of rondo-like forms for almost every movement resembles such rhetorical waves. Each movement cycles back to its opening material in a way that is reminiscent of the circularity used throughout Hoffmann's *Kreisleriana* and *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*. The ternary forms of movements one, three, and four can even be seen as small-scale or fragmented rondo forms; each returns to the material with which it began.

The second movement is an interesting example to consider in terms of rotation. Schumann marks the B and C sections as Intermezzo I and Intermezzo II, and each contrasts enough from the A section to seem as if it doesn't belong in the movement at all. Intermezzo I is in a different meter (2/4 against the A section's 3/4), and both sections have a tempo mark that contrasts with the surrounding material. Crisp suggests that this is an example of a story-within-a-story,<sup>97</sup> and in this way, the circularity of the returns to the opening material resembles Hoffmann's model of circular returns. Because of the intermezzos, this movement is almost twice the length of any of the other seven, and this imbalance deliberately plays with one's expectations. Each intermezzo gives the aural impression of a new movement, especially because the score signals a full stop in each of the preceding A sections, so when the A material returns, it can be a somewhat jarring experience for the listener to realize that the intermezzi are in fact part of a single movement.

One of the most striking passages in the whole work comes in the transition back to the final A section (Figure 19). MacAuslan suggests that in this passage, Schumann

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<sup>97</sup> Crisp, "Some Musical and Literary Parallels," 14.

Figure 19: *Kreislariana*, No. 2, mm. 99-123, image from 1838 edition (with measure numbers added)

10  
Langsamer (erstes Tempo.)  
99

104

109

114

119

*ad libitum.* Adagio. *Erstes Tempo.*

*accelerando.*

T. H. 7570.

captures the type of music invoked in Kreisler's meeting with Wallborn, described as a "wild sequence of chords melted into gentle angel-harmonies."<sup>98</sup> This passage resembles the texture and rhythms of the A section, so it is not a distinctly separate section like the intermezzos. The A section theme, originally in B-flat major, emerges triumphantly in F-sharp in m. 111 from a highly chromatic passage, and it is then repeated in m. 113, re-interpreted in G-flat. The F-sharp major return suggests G minor, the other main key of the work, but its enharmonic re-interpretation as G-flat allows the movement to move back to its home key of B-flat major for the final iteration of the A section. Schumann complicates a typical rondo form through the use of the intermezzos and the highly chromatic transition back to the final A, but the complications of the form only strengthen the resemblance to Hoffmann's complex and unusual circularity.

In addition to this circularity within the forms of individual movements, there is a larger-scale circularity in the alternation of keys and affective states. As the piece moves between the B-flat major and G minor *Stimmungen*, there is a sense of returning to previous ideas because the associated movements relate in tempo, texture, and harmonic palette. After the D minor first movement, the second movement uses the B-flat *Stimmung* for the first time. The third movement in G minor contrasts this completely, so that when B-flat returns in the fourth movement, there is a sense that the listener is revisiting the content of the second movement. Similarly, the fifth movement returns to the G minor state of the third movement, and so on. The seventh movement presents an unusual example, as its primary key is C minor, but I would argue that its minor mode, tempo, and texture indicate that it belongs to the G minor *Stimmung*. Using that

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<sup>98</sup> Hoffmann, *Kreisleriana*, 129; MacAuslan, *Schumann's Music and E. T. A. Hoffmann's Fiction*, 157.

classification, the piece then returns to the G minor state for both the seventh movement and the finale. Although it is not a literal return of the same musical material, the alternation of the two affective states gives a sense of Hepokoski's "rhetorical cycles or waves,"<sup>99</sup> and it lends the piece overall a sense of cycle or rotation.

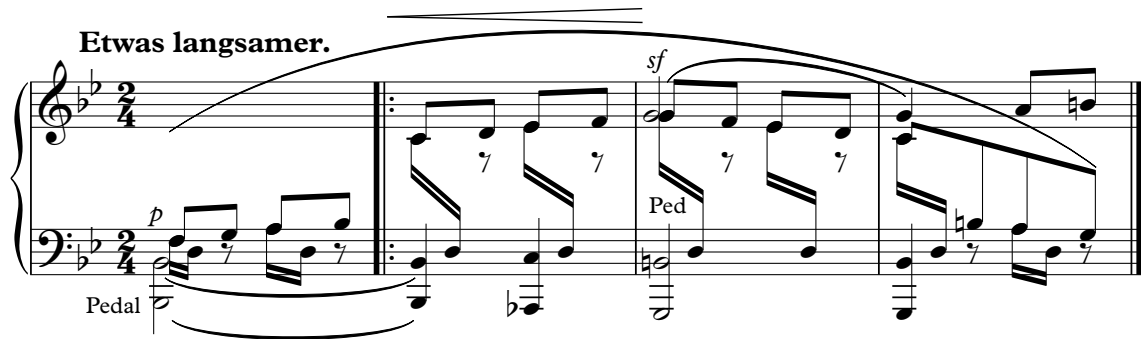
Circularity is also at work in this piece in circular themes and gestures. Crisp suggests that the opening theme of the second movement (Figure 7) and the B theme from the third movement (Figure 20) are circular, as both ascend to a high point, then return to where they began, and both also include a repetition of this material.<sup>100</sup> There is also circularity in many of the smaller motives, which would suggest the use of circular gestures or rotational technique for the pianist. For example, the first movement opens with a passage that generally ascends in the right hand, but each beat includes a jump to lower notes before arpeggiating to an accented high note, so that one must continuously use both the lower and upper parts of the hand while generally moving it up the keyboard (Figure 12). This gesture characterizes the entire A section of the movement. The opening of the third movement uses a similar gesture, as the right hand must on each beat reach down to a low note with the thumb, then roll up to a melody note with the top of the hand (Figure 9). Again, this gesture is characteristic of the entire A section and its reprise. Other examples of physical rotational gestures include the D section of the fifth movement and the opening of the seventh movement.

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<sup>99</sup> Hepokoski, "Rotations, Sketches, and the Sixth Symphony," 325.

<sup>100</sup> Crisp, "Some Musical and Literary Parallels," 11-12.

Figure 20: *Kreisleriana*, No. 3, mm. 33-36



Unlike the ending of Hoffmann's novel, however, the final movement of Schumann's *Kreisleriana* does not link back to its beginning. Schumann could have easily chosen to end the piece in D minor to close the frame, or connected the music to the beginning through figuration, quotation, or other means, but he did not. In *The Life and Opinions of the Tomcat Murr*, Kreisler's *in medias res* first fragment connects the end of the book to the beginning, giving the novel a large-scale circularity. But in the music, although it also opens *in medias res*, there is no such direct linking of the end back to the beginning. The ending does lack resolution, and the opening does use material that could be heard as an interior fragment, but they do not have qualities that connect them in a way that is comparable to Hoffmann's opening Kreisler fragment coming chronologically right after the final fragment. Perhaps, due to the difference in medium, this is an example of how Schumann's use of these principles in music works differently than Hoffmann's use of them in literature. In a live performance, the listener does not have the luxury of being able to return to the beginning of the piece as a reader does in a novel, so it would not make as much sense for Schumann to link the end back to the beginning of his piece. However, the use of the *in medias res* opening and the rhetorically



inconclusive final gesture still invoke a sense of circularity in beginning and ending in the middle of the action, without Schumann creating an actual loop from the finale back to the opening.

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE 1850 REVISION

While this thesis has mainly been concerned with the first edition of Schumann's *Kreisleriana*, the revised version from 1850 remains the most well-known edition of the work today, perhaps because it is the version that Clara Schumann chose to publish. However, recent scholarship, including the *New Edition of the Complete Works*, have given primacy to the first edition, and it is interesting to consider how the changes in the later edition affect the potential connections to Hoffmann. Schumann wrote in an 1849 letter to the publisher, Friedrich Whistling, that this version had been "greatly revised."<sup>101</sup> While the changes do in fact seem fairly minor, save for dynamic markings and the addition of repeats in the first and second movement, some of the most significant alterations occur in the very places that represent the strongest evocations of Hoffmann's style.

At the end of the fifth movement, Schumann revised the inconclusive ending on D major, the dominant of the G minor movement, and added an additional G major chord, so that the movement ends on a perfect authentic cadence (Figures 13 and 21). While in the 1838 edition this moment left a sense of irresolution, the revision instead allows the

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<sup>101</sup> Robert Schumann to Friedrich Whistling, November 18, 1849, in *Schumann Briefedition*, ed. Eberhard Möller, et al., vol. 3 (Köln: Dohn, 2008), 363; quoted in Robert Schumann, *Kreisleriana*, ed. Roe-Min Kok and Michael Beiche, in *Robert Schumann: New Edition of the Complete Works*, Series III: Piano and Organ Works, Group 1: Works for Piano Solo, vol. 4 (Mainz: Schott, 2016), 335.

movement to end with a strong cadence in the tonic, so the movement no longer functions as a fragment.

**Figure 21: *Kreisleriana*, 1850 edition, No. 5, mm. 160-161**



However, in the case of the fourth movement, the revision perhaps reinforces the perception of Hoffmann's principles. Here, Schumann again changed an inconclusive final chord, adding an F-sharp to the previously open D/A sonority (Figures 1 and 22). While this example also strengthens the final cadence, it functions differently than the end of the fifth movement. This final cadence is not in the tonic of the fourth movement, but rather on the dominant of the following movement. Instead of helping the fourth movement sound more complete in itself, this revision intensifies the pull of the fourth to the fifth movement, reinforcing the Hoffmannesque sense of blurring boundaries.

**Figure 22: *Kreisleriana*, 1850 edition, No. 4, m. 26**



Interestingly, Schumann chose to leave the inconclusive original ending in the 1850 edition. This perhaps reflects a conscious decision to leave aspects of the Hoffmann inspiration intact, regardless of its accessibility for audiences. Most of Schumann's revisions around this time were made to serve audience preferences, such as in the republication of the *Davidsbündlertänze* (1841) in 1851 as *Die Davidsbündler: Achtzehn Charakterstücke*, which removed the attributions of individual movements to Florestan and Eusebius, and, as Holly Watkins describes, is "expunged of its esoteric motto."<sup>102</sup> Many of his revisions specify the genres of his works and clarify closures, such as the other examples cited from the *Kreisleriana*.<sup>103</sup> Schumann's mention to Clara of changing this ending when performing the piece in France shows that he did not believe that it would appeal to all audiences, yet he did not choose to modify it in his 1850 revision as he did with so many of his other poetic touches. Because the ending is left intact, the whole piece retains its air of fragmentation and irresolution.

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<sup>102</sup> Holly Watkins, *Metaphors of Depth in German Musical Thought: From E. T. A. Hoffmann to Arnold Schoenberg* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 116.

<sup>103</sup> See Watkins, *Metaphors of Depth*, 116; and Anthony Newcomb, "Schumann and the Marketplace: From Butterflies to *Hausmusik*," in *Nineteenth-Century Piano Music*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. R. Larry Todd (New York: Routledge, 1990), 277.

## CONCLUSION

Through the principles of duality, creating and blurring of boundaries, fragmentation and irresolution, and circularity, Schumann's *Kreisleriana* shows the influence of Hoffmann's Kreisler works. However, as explored above, literary principles cannot always be directly translated into music, and their use necessarily looks different in different media.

It may be useful to consider Schumann's *Kreisleriana* as a "misreading" of Hoffmann's Kreisler works. The notion of misreading invokes Harold Bloom's theory of the "anxiety of influence," which includes the idea that poetic history is indistinguishable from poetic influence "since strong poets make that history by misreading one another, so as to clear imaginative space for themselves."<sup>104</sup> A number of scholars have considered how this theory may apply to music, including Kevin Korsyn, Mark Evan Bonds, and Joseph N. Straus.<sup>105</sup> Each explores different ways that Bloom's theory can be adapted to accommodate musical works.

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<sup>104</sup> Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 5.

<sup>105</sup> Kevin Korsyn, "Towards a New Poetics of Musical Influence," *Music Analysis* 10, no.1/2 (March-July 1991): 3-72; Mark Evan Bonds, *After Beethoven: Imperatives of Originality in the Symphony* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996); and Joseph N. Straus, *Remaking the Past: Musical Modernism and the Influence of the Tonal Tradition* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990).

Korsyn acknowledges that in translating Bloom's theory of misreading to music, we are in fact misreading Bloom.<sup>106</sup> He adopts Bloom's six revisionary ratios, or interpretations of influence, and applies them to a musical misreading of Brahms and Chopin. Bonds uses Bloom's theory to understand how Beethoven's symphonies affected his symphonic successors, and in each chapter, he compares one Beethoven symphony to a symphony by a later composer. Bonds chooses not to employ Bloom's revisionary ratios in this project, as he is not "convinced that such ratios can be readily translated into music," and instead focuses more generally on the evidence of influence and misreading in these symphonies.<sup>107</sup> Straus considers how twentieth-century composers were influenced by their tonal predecessors, and he uses the concept of misreading by creating his own set of revisionary ratios that are concerned with "specifically musical strategies of reinterpretation."<sup>108</sup> Each of these scholars is interested in the influence of one piece of music, or one musical era, on another. However, in light of the present discussion, one can consider how Bloom's theory might aid in the understanding of influence across media, specifically music and literature.

In fact, Bloom's concept of misreading perhaps becomes even more necessary when moving from one medium to another. For example, the principle of duality, while present in both Hoffmann's texts and Schumann's music, functions in a completely different way when translated from one to the other. While Hoffmann's duality involves pairings of characters, Schumann's duality relies on key areas, musical textures, and

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<sup>106</sup> Korsyn, "Towards a New Poetics," 14.

<sup>107</sup> Bonds, *After Beethoven*, 4.

<sup>108</sup> Straus, *Remaking the Past*, 17.

affective states. In this sense, a composer could never simply imitate a work of literature without modifying the nature of the work. Composers would not only have to misread the literature in order to clear space for themselves, but such a misreading would also be necessitated by the change in medium. One might theorize in what ways misreading is necessitated in this type of situation and create a new set of techniques through which to understand influence across media, comparable to Straus's new revisionary ratios for twentieth-century music. For example, intertextuality is essential to both Romantic music and literature, but a composer generally must employ literal quotation in order to achieve a similar effect to a literary reference, which can be less direct.

However, this also raises the question: might there be there less anxiety in the influence of a different medium? Bloom insists that strong poets must “wrestle with their strong precursors, even to death,” and his revisionary ratios describe what this struggle can look like. For example, his second ratio, *Tessera*, involves a “completion and antithesis” of the precursor, where a poet ““completes’ ... the parent-poem as to retain its terms but to mean them in another sense, as though the precursor had failed to go far enough.”<sup>109</sup> In a sense, a composer who is influenced by an author is not experiencing the same “belatedness” as a writer or composer who feels the weight of his predecessors in the same field. For this reason, the composer might not experience the Oedipal struggle that Bloom deems necessary when dealing with a pre-existing literary work in the same way as in a music-to-music or literature-to-literature relationship. Perhaps this type of influence can be an act of love, rather than an act of violence. But even if this is the case,

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<sup>109</sup> Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, 5, 14.

an element of misreading becomes necessary purely through the impossibility of the two different media to express in the same way.

In the nineteenth century, storytelling pervaded musical composition. Indeed, music's capacity to evoke subjectivity and narrative is a hallmark of the Romantic era. With so many explicitly programmatic works, as well as many more which are suspected to have literary ties, a theory of influence from literature to music could be extremely useful in understanding the music of this era. Considering how Hoffmann's influence is manifested in Schumann's *Kreisleriana* opens up possibilities for establishing such a theory, which could provide a new path to understanding the inherently literary music of many Romantic composers.



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