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The formation of a style: selected early works by Hugo Wolf

Jure Rozman

Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College

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**THE FORMATION OF A STYLE: SELECTED EARLY WORKS
BY HUGO WOLF**

A Monograph

**Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts**

in

The School of Music

By

Jure Rozman

B. M., Universität Mozarteum, Salzburg, Austria, 2001

M. M., Louisiana State University, 2003

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ABSTRACT

Hugo Wolf's (1860–1903) most pronounced talent was in marrying music and poetry in novel ways, which is clearly demonstrated by his more than 240 art songs. In his early years Wolf composed a series of works for piano solo, published for the first time in 1974 by the *Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag* in Vienna. This paper explores these and other formative works in detail, focusing on music-theoretical issues, but also placing them in historical context by means of a brief biography which includes recent discoveries regarding Wolf's Slovene lineage.

INTRODUCTION

Hugo Wolf's short life (1860-1903) has been a regular, if not persistent, fascination with biographers, collectors of letters, and other historical writers. However, except for analysis of his songs, music-theoretical scholarship has been somewhat hesitant to adopt his work as a constant topic.¹ It seems that Wolf has not been able to escape the shadow of his more famous influence, Richard Wagner. In addition, art song, the genre in which Wolf was most proficient, has often been regarded as less challenging and less significant than the opera or symphony. It is certain that much work needs to be done to present a more complete and independent picture of Hugo Wolf as an artist and of his work as a vital and influential contribution to Western music.

Fortunately, in recent years important strides have been made in that direction. Wolf's relationship with Wagner has been reexamined, and it has been shown that he did not follow the aesthetics of Wagner without question, but that he was critical of his style in many aspects and had thus developed a version of the late 19th-century sensibilities that was entirely his own. His achievement in art song has been recognized not just as the application of Wagnerian dramatic principles, but as an independent creation of an inspired and articulate creator.² This study will build on such a view and show that from the very beginning Wolf's work exhibits individual traits and that among influences on his musical aesthetics is not only Wagner, but also other composers.

The popularity of Wolf's songs has been steadily growing not only with audiences, but also with musicologists and musical analysts. Several works examining a few of his larger song

¹ Eric Sams' work (Eric Sams, *The Songs of Hugo Wolf* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992)) is so far the most exhaustive study of Wolf's songs.

² Amanda Glauert, *Hugo Wolf and the Wagnerian Inheritance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

cycles in a critical manner have been put forth.³ His only opera, *Der Corregidor* has been examined in significant detail⁴ and some interest has been sparked into his symphonic⁵ and chamber works.⁶ However, there is still a portion of Wolf's work that has hardly been examined at all, namely his youthful and formative compositions. A considerable portion of Wolf's attempts at composition prior to 1882 had been for piano, the instrument he grew up with and which played a crucial role throughout his life's work. Thus was created a relatively short, but significant, album of works for solo piano that offers insight into the development of Wolf's compositional style from tentative beginnings in 1875 to the years immediately preceding the first masterpieces (ca. 1882). This study will examine those works in detail in order to illuminate the formation of Wolf's style. It will progress from the formative *Variations*, op.2 and Sonata, op. 8 to the exuberant *Rondo capriccioso* and the polished *Humoreske*. Miniature masterpieces *Schlummerlied* (titled *Albumblatt* in another version) and *Scherz und Spiel* will be examined next. The paper will conclude with a brief examination of transcriptions of excerpts from Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and *Die Walküre*, and Wolf's *Kanon*, a brief exercise in imitative counterpoint. In addition, a few of Wolf's earlier songs will be examined in order to show how the composition of works for piano solo influenced the writing in those and how they in turn influenced his mature work. It will be shown that despite their youthful nature, many of these works are worthy of rigorous scrutiny and public performance.

Hugo Wolf's life has been documented in considerable detail by several competent biographers.⁷ However, until recently not much has been known about his childhood and

³ Susan Youens, *Hugo Wolf and his Mörike Songs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

⁴ Glauert, *Hugo Wolf and the Wagnerian Inheritance*, 20-31.

⁵ For example: Aber, A., "Hugo Wolf's Italian Serenade," *The Musical Times* 82 (February 1941): 56-58.

⁶ For example: Eric Sams, "Literary Sources of Hugo Wolf's String Quartets," *Musical Newsletter* 14/1 (Winter 1974): 3-10.

⁷ Frank Walker, *Hugo Wolf: A Biography*, 2d ed. (New York, NY: Knopf, 1968. Reprint, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992) and Kurt Hanolka, *Hugo Wolf: Sein Leben, sein Werk, seine Zeit* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt GmbH, 1988).

ancestry, mainly due to the complicated political situation in Slovenia, his country of birth, after World War II. Recent resurgence of interest in Wolf in Slovenia has motivated new research and greater cooperation of Slovene scholars with musicological circles around the world. Thus, new insights into Wolf's early life surfaced, along with establishment of his genealogy, thanks to recently discovered records of his ancestry in Slovenia. These new discoveries will be presented, as their existence is unreported in English biographical writing on Wolf.

It is my hope that this paper will be a contribution to scholarship on Hugo Wolf not as just another Wagner disciple, but as a composer of the highest individual value.

CHAPTER ONE: MUSICAL BEGINNINGS AND A BIOGRAPHICAL OUTLINE

A thorough examination of any of Hugo Wolf's works is not possible without an understanding of the events that surrounded them. Thus, a good place to start is by outlining Wolf's life and career. Special attention will be devoted to new discoveries in regard to Wolf's lineage. The biographical portion of this study will focus on Wolf's formative years (1875-1882), as it was during this period that all of his preserved works for solo piano were composed. However, an overview of his later life will also be given in order to present a more complete portrait of an artist who, after all, matured relatively late in his career.

Hugo Wolf's Ancestry and the History of His Reception in Slovenia

The lineage of Hugo Wolf has caused plenty of controversy and is colored by cultural, ethnic and political issues. In 1987, German musicologist Kurt Hanolka, who was at the time working on a new biography of Hugo Wolf, came to Slovenj Gradec, Wolf's place of birth, and reexamined the evidence supporting the claim of Wolf's Slovene lineage on both sides of the family. In his 1988 book⁸ he incorporated the new information and made recent discoveries known to the international scholarly public.

It has long been known that Hugo's mother, Katharina (1824-1903), was of Slovene descent. Her paternal grandfather's family name was Orehovnik (i.e., "nut farmer"), which he later changed to its German equivalent Nussbaumer. This practice was common in Slovene territories during the 18th and 19th centuries, as it provided the emerging merchant class with the means to separate themselves from the commonly rural and provincial Slovene population. In most cases, however, the owners of these names remained Slovene and used the Slovene language as a primary means of communication, reserving German for business transactions. The few preserved letters from Katharina to her son Hugo show that her German was elementary and

⁸ Kurt Hanolka, *Hugo Wolf: Sein Leben, sein Werk, seine Zeit* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt GmbH, 1988).

full of mistakes; it is therefore safe to assume that her first language was Slovene. On the other hand, Hugo's father Philipp has always been thought to be of purely German descent. All but the latest biographies make that claim.⁹ However, it has lately emerged that he came from at least a mixed family, if not from a purely Slovene stock. On the basis of baptismal books found in 1985 in Šentjur pri Celju (approximately 30 kilometers south of Slovenj Gradec) it has been discovered that Philipp Wolf's paternal ancestors went by the name Vouk (or Volk), a Slovene equivalent of Wolf. Philipp's grandfather Maximilian Wolf (who later moved to Slovenj Gradec to establish the leather trade) is the first member of the family entered in official records under the German version of the name. According to Jože Leskovar, who found the documents, the German form of the name resulted from the fact that Maximilian was brought to baptism by his German-speaking godmother; three years later, his brother Frančišek was entered by the same clerk under the Slovene version of the name. On the basis of this information, scholars have been able to sketch out a revised Wolf family tree that shows mostly Slovene elements. They also traced down living relatives of the Vouk family who continue to live in Šentjur pri Celju.

The discovery of Hugo Wolf's roots naturally had important implications for the renewal of interest in Hugo Wolf among Slovene musicologists, historians, and the public at large. In 1943, during the German occupation of Slovene territory, the regional Nazi command bought Hugo Wolf's birth-house, and in September of the same year opened in it a museum and a German music school in Wolf's honor. According to people who still remember the occasion, the ceremony was complete with Nazi flags, propaganda posters, and marching bands.¹⁰ The Germans even considered renaming Slovenj Gradec (Windischgraz) Hugo-Wolf Stadt. Considering the memories of four years of war, it is hardly surprising that, after the liberation of

⁹ None of the English biographies says otherwise.

¹⁰ Jože Leskovar, president of the Slovene chapter of the Hugo Wolf Society. Interview by author, June 2006, Slovenj Gradec, Slovenia.

Slovenia (in 1945), the new Yugoslav government dismantled the museum, destroyed many of its artifacts, and removed the German memorial plaque from the front of the house.

In 1953, Wolf's birth-house once again became a music school, albeit without public recognition of the importance of the building. From 1956 to 1980 the principal of the Slovenj Gradec music school was my grandfather, Jurij Bocak. In 1960, in commemoration of the centennial of the composer's birth, he commissioned a plaque in Wolf's honor in the Slovene language, which still resides on the façade of the music school. When the Slovenj Gradec cemetery was being demolished to make room for a new block of apartments, he personally salvaged the tombstones of the Wolf family, including the ones belonging to Hugo's parents; during the renovation of the music school in the 1990's the tombstones were built into the walls of the inner courtyard of the building. With his enthusiasm Jurij Bocak laid the groundwork for later research and accomplishments.

In 1990, tied in with the celebration of Wolf's 130th anniversary of birth, a new memorial room was dedicated. Plans are under way to move the music school to a different location and to convert the entire building to a Hugo Wolf museum. Slovenia's embrace of Hugo Wolf is a positive step for historians and musicologists, but there is no denying that Hugo Wolf remains an Austrian composer. As a result of the growing division between the Slovene majority and German minority, Wolf's knowledge of Slovene was rudimentary, and he never showed any particular interest in Slovene culture or musical tradition.

In the latter half of 19th century, nationalistic tensions within the Austro-Hungarian Empire deepened as native populations' aspirations for independence became stronger, following examples and ideals of revolutions in other parts of Europe. These tensions eventually escalated into World War I, when smaller nations openly resisted the intended German annexation. Within Slovene territories, the divisions among the native population and Germanic outposts intensified

to the extent that it was no longer acceptable to publicly combine parts of both cultures. As part of the merchant class, the Wolf family declared itself German; at home they spoke German, even though they still used Slovene to interact with their predominantly Slovene customers. In time, Hugo Wolf developed a great love for the German language and literature which was the driving force behind most of his creative work. His Slovene ancestry, however, remains significant, at least for the people of Slovenia, who see in Hugo Wolf a source of pride and a fascinating lesson in the difficult ethnic and cultural history of their country.

The Early Years (1860-1882)

The musical development of Hugo Wolf differs somewhat from that of other important figures in the history of music. Indeed, from an early age he showed signs of considerable talent, but in no way could he be described as a *Wunderkind*. The circumstances of his family life played a large role in preventing a stellar and privileged progress in the art of music.

He was born into a family of leather salesmen in Slovenj Gradec in Styria, now in Slovenia (in the time of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy also known by its German name Windischgraz). The town was at the time a German outpost within a largely Slovene population. Cultural life was not abundant, and professional musicians were practically non-existent. This is not to say that there was a total absence of musical endeavors and entertainment. As in almost every town in the Austrian Empire, regardless of how provincial it may have been, there were at any time several amateur chamber groups and a few amateur choirs. The Wolf family was in the forefront of musical life in Slovenj Gradec. Hugo's father Philipp Wolf was an amateur, but nevertheless accomplished, musician. He played five instruments, conducted a small house orchestra, played violin in the town's string quintet and was an active member of Slovenj Gradec's elite *Männerchor* (Men's Chorus). All of his children¹¹ received musical instruction

¹¹ In the Wolf family, there were eight children. Two of them died in infancy.

and participated in the house orchestra. At age four Hugo began to learn keyboard and violin, and soon showed signs of extraordinary talent. He progressed rapidly, possessing an astonishing musical memory and absolute pitch.¹² In 1865, when he was only five years old, his piano instruction was taken over by Sebastian Weixler, a local piano teacher and a friend of Phillip Wolf (they played together in the above-mentioned string quintet); undoubtedly it was Weixler who laid the groundwork for what was to become a remarkable mastery of the instrument. Wolf also played the violin in the house orchestra led by his father, but it was the piano that became his main instrument and would develop into an important influence on composition throughout his career.

Despite Hugo's obvious talent, it was not accepted that anybody in the Wolf family would become a professional musician; such a career was deemed unacceptable within the merchant class, and his father vehemently opposed his son's intention to study music. The exchange of letters through the years shows the disappointment of the father with his son's inability to make a decent living, and the son's frustration with his father's "narrow-mindedness."¹³ It would be interesting to investigate to what extent the fact that Hugo Wolf was never promoted as a child prodigy influenced the formation of his character. Unlike many other well-known composers, he was not (willingly or unwillingly) exposed to the musical centers of the world; thus, he did not have the opportunity to absorb ideas directly from the living masters, nor did he have the obligation to please them. The individual nature of his compositions may be a direct consequence of early formation in relative isolation from first-hand influences. Most of Wolf's major song cycles (*Mörrike*, *Eichendorff*, *Goethe*, Spanish and Italian songbooks) were composed during relatively brief periods of inspiration (1888-1891 and 1896). Had he been more

¹² Hugo Wolf, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 18: *Klavierkompositionen*, edited by Hans Jancik (Vienna, Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag, 1974), Preface, [n. p.].

¹³ Hanolka, *Hugo Wolf: sein Leben, sein Werk, seine Zeit*, 48.

regularly exposed to and scrutinized by the public, perhaps his inspiration would have been more consistent, or at least less sporadic.

Wolf's enthusiasm for the study of music is in sharp contrast to his attempts at general education. While he completed the four-year primary school in Slovenj Gradec without much trouble, his secondary education was not as successful. At age ten he was sent to Graz to attend *Gymnasium*; after about six months he was dismissed and sent home with the official explanation of *ganz ungenügend* (wholly inadequate).¹⁴ The following year (1871) he began attending a private school at the convent St. Paul where he attracted attention of Slovene Pater Sales Pirc, who recognized his musical talent and had him play organ at church services and take part in the resident piano trio. Nevertheless, before two years were over, Wolf was sent home again with unsatisfactory grades in Latin and Slovene. He proceeded to spend the following two years at the *Gymnasium* in Maribor (then also known by its German name Marburg), where he was yet again reported to be in constant confrontation with his superiors. Only a few months before the school year 1875 ended, he pleaded with his father to pick him up, otherwise he would leave himself. In light of his academic failures, Hugo had apparently decided to dedicate his life to music, much to his father's dismay. The four-year primary school in Slovenj Gradec thus remained the only school Wolf would ever finish in its entirety!

Fortunately, his father gave in to Hugo's desire to study music following his sister's offer that his son could live with her family in Vienna. Wolf enrolled in the Vienna Conservatory in September 1875; he managed to stay there for a year and a half, focusing on the study of piano and harmony. Apparently Wolf's regular piano instruction was interrupted when he began attending secondary school in 1871, and it did not commence again until the beginning of his studies at the Vienna Conservatory. However, he must have continued studying piano by

¹⁴ Walker, *Hugo Wolf: A Biography*, 8.

himself, as he had acquired enough technical facility to place straight into the second year piano class taught by Prof. Wilhelm Schenner. During this time, Wolf became an ardent Wagnerian. As a result of pleading with the manager of the Imperial Hotel, where Wagner was staying, Wolf was able to procure a meeting with his idol, who, though indulgent, was unwilling to spend time examining Wolf's works and merely suggested patience and practice.

After a confrontation¹⁵ with the administration of the Vienna Conservatory in the early months of 1877, Wolf withdrew and was never to officially resume his studies. After his departure from Vienna in March 1877, Wolf spent eight months at home in Slovenj Gradec. He busied himself with the composition of the Symphony in B-flat major (featuring an orchestration of his *Rondo capriccioso* as a finale), *Humoreske* for piano solo and several songs, including *Morgentau*, which became the earliest work Wolf deemed worthy of publication (in 1888). All of these works will be examined during the course of this study.

In November of 1877 Wolf was allowed to return to Vienna to try to earn a living as a music teacher. He was no teacher by temperament, but his talent secured him the patronage of several generous families and wealthy individuals, including the composer Adalbert von Goldschmidt (1848-1906). According to Alma Mahler, it was Goldschmidt who took Wolf to a brothel (part of a customary sexual initiation), where, probably in 1878, he contracted syphilis, the disease that would lead to his insanity in 1897 and his death in 1903.¹⁶

Wolf later described 1878 as his "days of Lodi," when he "wrote at least one good song a day."¹⁷ That is of course an exaggeration, but it points to a pattern of mood swings that would persist throughout the remainder of Wolf's life. That same year Wolf fell in love with the society

¹⁵ Apparently, one of Wolf's acquaintances wrote a threatening letter to the dean of the Vienna Conservatory, probably as a joke. Wolf was expelled and even had a confrontation with the police. Briefly, he considered filing legal charges against the Conservatory, but had later changed his mind (Hanolka, *Hugo Wolf: sein Leben, sein Werk, seine Zeit*, 60.)

¹⁶ Walker, *Hugo Wolf: A Biography*, 77.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 71.

beauty Vally Franck; their three-year affair was a vital impulse for Wolf, despite their frequent separations.

Wolf experienced extended periods of depression in 1879. Early that year he had a significant interview with Brahms, who suggested further study, especially in the discipline of counterpoint. Wolf perceived Brahms' bluntness as a rejection, and assumed an anti-Brahmsian stance that would color his public musical opinions during years as a critic and afterwards. In April 1879 he met the Lang family, including Melanie Köchert who would become his mistress and lifelong protector five years later. The despair of 1879 was followed by happier times in 1880. The summer of that year was spent in Mayerling with the family of the architect Viktor Preyss; this was to become the first of many summers that Wolf would spend in idyllic countryside resorts owned by his wealthy patrons. There he composed the Wagner transcriptions for piano and the slow movement of the String Quartet in D Minor, arguably one of the best works of Wolf's youth. In March 1881, shortly before Hugo's 21st birthday, Vally Franck wrote him a letter, breaking their oft-interrupted relationship for good. Some of Wolf's suffering is surely reflected in his composition of six remarkable choruses on poems by Eichendorff, the *Sechs geistliche Lieder* (April 1881). In November 1881, Adalbert von Goldschmidt managed to arrange for Wolf to become a second Kapellmeister in Salzburg, where his duties mainly consisted of rehearsing the soloists and chorus in popular operettas. Unsurprisingly, this line of work did not agree with Wolf; after a few months of quarreling, he returned to Vienna in the early months of 1882 to resume his tenuous existence as a music teacher and accompanist.

Wolf's activities in 1882 are somewhat obscure. He was probably conscripted in the Austrian army early in the year; for unknown reasons, he was not retained long. He spent another summer in Mayerling, where he composed his first comic masterpiece, *Mausfallensprüchlein*, which he later published in *Sechs Lieder für eine Frauenstimme* (1888), together with *Morgentau*

and several other songs. In August Wolf visited Bayreuth to see *Parsifal*, and was predictably smitten by the performances. He was at a compositional standstill until December, when he composed the two popular Reinicke songs, *Wiegenlied im Sommer* and *Wiegenlied im Winter*.

As noted above, Wolf's first attempts at composition can be traced to 1875, the time when he was attending the secondary music school in Maribor. Virtually all preserved pieces for piano were written between 1875 and 1882. In addition to the finished pieces that will be discussed in this paper, we can (with the aid of existing fragments and letters to his father) establish the intended composition of a whole line of works that are either missing or were not finished. Between 1875 and 1877 he attempted to compose at least four Piano Sonatas, a Minuet with Trio, dedicated to his father, a set of variations (only fragments remain), a piece called *Wellenspiel*, No. 1 of *Sechs Characterstücke* (never finished) and a few other fragments, all for solo piano. In the following two years he also attempted to write a *Fantasie* for piano and a Piano Sonata in F# Minor. He completed the Fantasy on Lortzing's opera *Czar und Zimmermann* which existed in manuscript at the museum in Slovenj Gradec, but has been lost since the end of the World War II.¹⁸

A line of other works started between 1875 and 1882 serves as evidence of Wolf's occupation with instrumental music: a Violin Concerto, a String Quartet in D Major, a Piano Quintet, a Violin Sonata, a Symphony, an Overture to Byron's *Corsair* and the orchestration of Beethoven's "Moonlight" Sonata were all begun but never saw completion, or are now lost. In 1878 Wolf composed the first and third movements of String Quartet in D Minor, a piece on which he worked intermittently until 1884.¹⁹ In addition, by 1882 Wolf had already composed about eighty art songs and numerous choral works, including the *Liederstrauss* from 1878 and the masterful *Sechs geistliche Lieder nach Gedichten von Eichendorff* (*Ergebung* was sung at his

¹⁸ In 1943 a recording of the Fantasy was broadcast by the Graz Radio.

¹⁹ For more detailed information on Wolf's earliest works, see Walker, *Hugo Wolf: A Biography*, 15-16, 36-38.

funeral) for mixed chorus from 1881, showing his developing talent for musical representations of poetry.

Years of Uncertainty (1883-1888)

In 1883, Wolf made a series of unsuccessful attempts to publish his works, but received an important encouragement from none other than Franz Liszt, who visited Vienna that year. Liszt embraced the young Wolf and advised that he should consider the composition of larger symphonic works. This resulted in beginnings of the tone poem based on Kleist's *Penthesilea*, long an obsession of Wolf's; he finished the work in 1885.

From January 1884 until April 1887 Wolf held a post as music critic for *Wiener Salonblatt*, a fashionable weekly newspaper. His anti-conservative critiques made him many enemies, particularly with the Vienna Philharmonic, whose members effectively blocked performances of any of Wolf's works. *Penthesilea* was finally accepted for a run-through in October 1886. The trial was a disaster, reportedly followed by an outburst of laughter by the members of the orchestra. Wolf overheard disparaging remarks about "people who dared to criticize Brahms" made by the conductor Hans Richter.

Despite this serious blow, Wolf persevered. In winter of that year he composed *Italienische Serenade* for string orchestra and several promising songs. It was perhaps this onset of creative energy that made him decide to give up music journalism in April of 1887. Several days after the publication of his final column Wolf received news of his father's imminent death. Despite his pessimism, Philipp dearly loved his son, and Wolf was devastated by his father's death; as a result, he composed nothing further until the end of the year. In November of 1887, however, Wolf's friend Friedrich Eckstein unexpectedly offered to help with the publication of two volumes of Wolf's works (*Sechs Lieder für eine Frauenstimme* and *Sechs Gedichte von Scheffel, Mörike, Goethe und Kerner* for a male voice) by a small Viennese firm Emil Wetzler.

Overjoyed, Wolf thought only of composing. He sought solitude at Perchtoldsdorf, where he was allowed to inhabit the summer house of the Werner family.

Mastery, Fame and Terminal Illness (1888-1903)

It was there that the true flood of inspiration began. For the next several months, Wolf composed at least one and sometimes as many as three songs a day. After a summer vacation, the flow of songs renewed itself with even greater intensity. From January 1888 until February 1889 he composed the entire *Mörrike* (53 songs), *Eichendorff* (20 songs) and *Goethe* (51 songs) songbooks. The next outpouring of songs came a year later. Between November 1889 and December 1891 Wolf composed the entire *Spanisches Liederbuch* (34 songs), *Alte Weisen* (six songs after poems by Keller) and the first part of *Italienisches Liederbuch* (22 songs).

These works were immediately recognized as masterworks, not only by Wolf (he called them “the unheard-of wonder”),²⁰ but also by the larger musical public. Within months, his songs were regularly performed at the Vienna’s *Wagner-Verein*. Baritone Ferdinand Jäger (who had sung *Parsifal* at Bayreuth) would serve Wolf’s cause much as Johann Michael Vogl had served Schubert’s. Articles by several prominent musicians spread Wolf’s fame beyond Vienna’s borders, particularly to Bavaria, where the memory of Mörrike was still very much alive. Wolf attracted the attention of the German publisher Schott, who would publish most of his subsequent works.

From 1891 to 1894 Hugo wrote nothing. He spent several frustrating months looking for a libretto for a projected opera, long his dream. During those lean years, he gave concerts of his music and arranged many of his best known songs for voice and orchestra. Periods of depression were becoming longer and more severe, exacerbated by the almost constant inflammation of his throat, a secondary result of syphilis.

²⁰ Walker, *Hugo Wolf: A Biography*, 205.

Quite suddenly, in April of 1895, Wolf's operatic obsession renewed itself. He took up a libretto based on Alarcon's *El sombrero de tres picos* by Rosa Mayreder (which he formerly despised), entitled *Der Corregidor*. In only nine months, he completed the entire opera, which received its first performance in Mannheim in June 1896. Although an initial success, the opera was soon dropped from the repertoire. Despite many beautiful passages, the work is considered undramatic²¹ and suffers from a weak libretto. Wolf's vision of the opera is in many ways opposite to Wagner's: *Der Corregidor* is a comical work, more suited to Wolf's cynical character than an earth-shattering Wagnerian drama.

Between 25 March and 30 April 1896, Wolf composed twenty-four songs of the second volume of *Italienisches Liederbuch*, which was to be his last major work. Until his breakdown the following year, he completed only five more songs, most notably the three Michelangelo songs from March 1897. During the summer of 1897, Wolf began work on his second opera, *Manuel Venegas*, but it was becoming increasingly clear that he was on the verge of losing his mind: he had convinced himself that he was the new Kapellmeister of the *Wiener Hofoper*, replacing Mahler, who had earlier that year declined to produce *Der Corregidor*. Hugo was taken away under restraint to Dr. Wilhelm Svetlin's asylum.

In 1898, he was briefly well enough to visit his sister Käthe in Celje. Together with her and Melanie Köchert he visited several resorts on the Adriatic Sea (despite his love for the Mediterranean *joie de vivre*, this was the first and last time he would glimpse the sea). After a suicide attempt in Gmünden he returned (at his own request) to the asylum in October 1898, never to leave again. His maintenance became the responsibility of the recently established *Hugo Wolf-Verein*, while Melanie Köchert visited him three times a week.²² After a long agony of

²¹ Glauert, *Hugo Wolf and the Wagnerian Inheritance*, 20.

²² After Wolf's death, Melanie Köchert became increasingly melancholic and self-reproachful until she committed suicide by jumping from the window of her home in 1906.

insanity Wolf died on 22 February, 1903. He is buried in Vienna's central cemetery, close to the graves of Schubert and Beethoven.

CHAPTER TWO: COMPOSITIONS FOR PIANO AND OTHER EARLY WORKS

Wolf's works for piano were published for the first time as part of *Hugo Wolfs Sämtliche Werke*, an effort undertaken by the *Hugo Wolf Gesellschaft* in Vienna. Edited by Hans Jancik, the album appeared in 1974.²³ It is not sold with the rest of the collection and is not available directly from the publisher (the state-owned *Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag* in Vienna). I was able to make use of a copy in possession of Jože Leskovar, president of the Slovene chapter of the Hugo Wolf Society.

All but one of the pieces (op. 8) are finished compositions. The following works are included in the volume:

1. Variations, op.2 (1875)
2. Sonata in G Major, op. 8 (1876)
3. *Rondo capriccioso*, op. 15 (1876)
4. *Humoreske* (1877)
5. *Aus der Kinderzeit* (From Childhood)
 - Schlummerlied* (1878)
 - Scherz und Spiel* (1878)
6. Paraphrase of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (1880)
7. Paraphrase of *Die Walküre* (1880)
8. *Albumblatt* (1880)
9. *Kanon* (1882)

²³ An updated reprint (edited by Leopold Spitzer) was issued in 1997.

The remainder of this chapter will present detailed descriptions of these works. Special attention will be devoted to the pieces after op. 8, as they better represent Wolf's emerging style. In connection with the works for solo piano, two of Wolf's earlier art songs²⁴ will be examined in order to show how the composition of works for solo piano influenced the writing in Wolf's preferred genre.

Variations, op.2 (1875)

This is Wolf's earliest preserved completed work. His Sonata, op.1 was probably never finished; all that has survived is an Adagio leading to an Allegro, and a Minuet and Trio. The Variations were composed in Maribor in April 1875, while Wolf was attending the *Gymnasium*. The rapid decline of his success in the *Quarta* (fourth year of middle school) may be attributed to his decision to pursue the study of music at any cost.²⁵ The composition of this work (and of op. 3: Four Songs on poems by Goethe) may have served as validation of this intent. Together with the Sonata, op.1, the Variations are dedicated to Wolf's father Philipp, perhaps to placate him and to demonstrate Hugo's devotion to music.²⁶ In all the writings on Wolf, the Variations have been dismissed as insignificant on the basis of the obvious influences of other composers, notably the Viennese classics. Walker mentions the work but does not supply any information about its form or character. However, in many ways it foreshadows qualities seen in his mature work, and valuable insights into Wolf's creative process can be gained from its study.

The main theme (Figure 1) is a simple rounded binary form (||:A:||:BA:||). All sections are eight measures long. Part A is a parallel period with the two phrases differing only in the final cadence. Virtually the entire theme is based solely on tonic and dominant harmonies, except for m. 13 which employs a secondary dominant (V/V). The only hint that this is not a product of

²⁴ *Morgentau* in connection with *Humoreske*, and *Über Nacht* in conjunction with the two pieces of *Aus der Kinderzeit*.

²⁵ Walker, *Hugo Wolf: A Biography*, 14.

²⁶ Sims, Youens, *Hugo Wolf* (Grove Music Online).

the preceding century is the harmony on the third beat of m. 7: instead of a standard V^{6-5} resolution we find here a V^7 chord with an added sixth (V^{13}). Wolf's manner of varying the theme falls into the category of melodic variation where the melody is changed, but the harmonic structure mostly remains intact.

Thema
Allegretto

Piano

Figure 1: Variations, op. 2; Theme.

Considering the lack of formal instruction, young Wolf seems to have had an instinctive control of classical harmony. His voice leading, despite occasional errors, is mostly correct, if not particularly inspired. For example, there are parallel octaves between beats one and two in m. 7, and in m. 13-14 of Variation II, Wolf resolves the V^2/V to a root position chord instead of the customary first inversion.

Already the first variation introduces piano writing that has all the brilliance characteristic of early Romantic pianism, including runs in the high register and virtuoso leaps

which reveal that Wolf, at fifteen, must have already been a proficient pianist. Variation II introduces a few alterations of the harmonic structure. In m. 6, instead of a dominant harmony, Wolf uses a ii^6 and vii^{07}/V to drive toward V^7 in m. 7. Similarly, in m. 15 ii^6 of D Major is used. These harmonies are both times characterized by accented passing notes ($F\#$ in m. 6 and $C\#$ in m. 15) on the downbeat of their respective measure; in this way Wolf demonstrates an innate sense of unity that will flourish in his mature works. Throughout the work, harmonic reinterpretations of the theme occur mostly in these two spots (mm. 6 and 15 of each variation). In Variation V, for example, we find in m. 6 a subdominant harmony, which only in the second half of the measure tonicizes ii . The same variation also offers an alternative solution of m. 15: instead of a ii/V , we find here a leading tone triad which resolves to a cadential six-four (in D Major) on the second beat of the measure. In fact, only Variations IV and VII use in those measures the original harmonic structure.

Whereas in Variations I-III most of the virtuosic elements were in the right hand, Variation IV serves as an etude for the left hand. Variation V is the central episode; it is a lyrical *Andante* with a newly invented melody. Its importance is emphasized by the introduction of new harmonic solutions in m. 6 and m. 15 (as described above). While Variation VI's rapid sixteenth-note figurations make it an exercise for the right hand, the seventh variation serves as a moment of repose; the eighth-note texture returns, albeit with a new melody.

So far the variations have been conventional and predictable. Similar rhythmic patterns and figurations have been used and the homophonic texture has been preserved. By contrast, the three concluding variations become progressively more "modern" (in a 19th-century sense of the word) in terms of pianism and texture. Variation VIII introduces a two-voice polyphonic texture. The meter changes to 4/4, while triplets are used throughout. The right hand incorporates more of the melodic material (newly invented), but the left provides interest with large leaps and

register changes. An extensive passage in octaves in the B section adds considerable technical difficulty. Variation IX is a type of scherzo. It preserves the 4/4 time signature of the previous variation and combines duplets with triplets (from Variation VIII) to create an animated flow. In this way another of Wolf's talents comes to the fore: rhythmical invention. His later works are full of novel and expressive rhythmical solutions not only in regard to adaptations of text, but in the instrumental music as well.²⁷ Variation IX also includes a figurative Cadenza. Variation X (Allegro) functions as a finale. It contains some of the work's most overt pianism with octaves, chordal writing and large leaps. Here, the meter returns to the original 3/4. It is interesting that, except for the *f* and *ff* in the last variation, there are no dynamic markings in the entire work. Excluding the staccatos in Variation IX, there are also no slurs or other articulation instructions. As Wolf never considered publishing this work, it remains in a draft form.

Variations, op. 2 is by no means a masterpiece, but it deserves serious consideration. It shows that elements of Wolf's mature style were already present at the beginning of his creative life. These include an inexhaustible melodic invention, rhythmic vitality, and an innate sense of proportion and unity.

Sonata in G Major, op. 8 (1876)

The Sonata, op.8 was written in January and February of 1876 while Wolf was a student at the Vienna Conservatory. The manuscript of the fourth movement (Rondo) breaks off after the first beat of m. 54 in a way that suggests that a sheet with continuation is missing (the title page, which would be on the other side of the same sheet is also missing).²⁸ In a letter to his family on March 15, 1876 Wolf wrote: "Prof. Fuchs [his professor of harmony at the Vienna Conservatory] in quite enthusiastic about my Sonata in G Major, since I show a better command of sonata form in it. His approval inspired me to write my 4th Sonata, in G Minor, the very same day. In this

²⁷ The Scherzo from *Scherzo and Finale* is an outstanding example (Walker, *Hugo Wolf: A Biography*, 49-50.)

²⁸ Hugo Wolf, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol.18: *Klavierkompositionen*, Preface, [n. p.].

piece I finally got a clear idea of sonata form, and from now on I am turning my back on my former models and taking my own direction.”²⁹ Unfortunately, the Sonata in G Minor has not been preserved.

Opus 8 is in four movements. The opening *Allegro grazioso* is followed by a slow movement (*Largo et sostenuto*), a Scherzo and the unfinished Rondo. The Sonata shows a slight shift from the simple diatonic structure of the Variations, op. 2 to a more frequent use of “modern” chromatic harmony; naturally, the form itself allows for more modulation and transitional passage work, especially when compared to that of the earlier Variations. Of particular interest are some of the modulations. For example, in m. 13–14 of the first movement, Wolf reaches the subdominant by means of raising the fifth of the tonic harmony chromatically and resolving it to a IV⁶. A similar situation is found in m. 40 of the second movement. Another adventurous spot is in m. 53 (Figure 2a); here a chromatic shift up a semitone and then back prolongs the F-sharp Major harmony while creating parallel fifths in the bass and tenor and octaves in the bass and the alto voices. The parallel spot in the recapitulation (m. 117) indicates the possibility of an error, either in Wolf’s manuscript or in the editorial process. Arguably, the first chord in m. 53 should be a F#⁷ chord with E-natural in the alto (Figure 2b). This would eliminate the parallel octaves, but still not address the parallel fifths.

The formal design also shows signs of independent thinking. Of greater interest are the transitional passages: the imitative interlude after the first theme (m. 8 ff.) is going to become one of the most important elements of the overall structure: it returns at the end of the exposition (m. 64), in the development (m. 82; modified in texture) and in the recapitulation (m. 128). Similarly, we find a new melody after the first statement of the second theme (m. 31). It contains

²⁹ Hugo Wolf, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol.18: *Klavierkompositionen*, Preface, [n. p.].

an accompaniment in triplets that will be the basis of part of the exposition's closing material (mm. 56-63) and an important element in the recapitulation.



Figure 2a: Sonata, op. 8, m. 53.



Figure 2b: m. 53, corrected.

Wolf varies the recapitulation (m. 87 ff.) considerably. The first theme is omitted; its statement (in the tonic minor) at the beginning of the development section (m. 74 ff.) eliminates the need for additional repetition. Secondly, the transitional theme originally found in the exposition after the second theme (m. 31 ff.) is now replaced by the new material (mm. 95-104), which promotes the accompanying triplets to the prevailing texture. Like the exposition, the recapitulation ends with a reprise of the imitative transitional material. Modifications of the typical sonata design show that young Wolf possessed an individual sense of form and unity. In addition, the substitution of the recapitulation of the first theme with the statement in the development section is an original contribution to the development of sonata form.

The slow movement is the most elaborate of the four. The form is an unusual ABCAC + Coda (Figure 3). All sections are parallel periods: A and C are sixteen measures and B is eight measures long. In terms of harmony, sections A and B are fairly diatonic while section C is considerably more adventurous. After only one measure (m. 25) it modulates to A-flat Major where it lingers for most of the segment; it returns to C Major only at the very end (m. 37). The

return of themes A and C (m. 40 ff.) varies the original statements. The texture is thicker, especially in the left hand which employs an accompaniment consisting of running 32nd notes instead of the original 16ths. A new middle voice is added; first it moves in sixteenth notes, but then it joins in a dense 32nd-note pattern at the start of the second period (m. 50). The repeated version of the C theme is ornamented in the right hand while the left hand remains the same.

Measures	Section	Key Area
1-16	A	I
16-24	B	I
25-40	C	I and flat VI
40-57	A	I
57-69	C	I and flat VI
69-90	A as Coda	I

Figure 3: Sonata, op 8, the form of the second movement.

The character of the movement is serious, influenced possibly by some of Beethoven's slow movements.³⁰ The variation principle brings to mind some particular works, notably the middle movement of Beethoven's Sonata, op. 57 (*Appassionata*) or the slow movement of Sonata, op. 106 (*Hammerklavier*). Of course the scope and depth of Wolf's attempt cannot be compared to the older composer's masterpieces, but Beethoven emerges as an important influence in Wolf's formative years.

³⁰ For example: Largos of op. 2/2, Op. 7 or Op. 10/3.

The Scherzo is extensive. Each of its sections (Scherzo and Trio) is a closed ternary form. Wolf's preference for four- or eight-measure phrases is imminently evident, as many of the themes in the movement adhere to that principle.

Measure	Section	Key Area
Scherzo: 1-17	A	I-V
18-46	B	I
47-56	A	I
Trio: 1-16	C	I
17-56	D	Flat III
57-71	C	i

Figure 4: Sonata, op. 8; the form of the Scherzo.

It is interesting that the central sections (B and D) of each ternary form are much longer than the outer ones. The one in Scherzo (B) is poly-thematic, as each of the three eight-measure phrases introduces a new theme. It concludes with a six-measure (m. 41-46) extension of dominant harmony. Its counterpart in the Trio achieves interest by means of changes of register and texture (duplets vs. triplets), while maintaining the melodic outline from the beginning of the Trio. The Scherzo does not yet show the rhythmic vitality that will manifest itself in the composition of the *Scherzo* and *Rondo capriccioso* from the Symphony in B-flat Major. Instead, it focuses on melodic invention.

As mentioned earlier, the concluding *Rondo* has not been preserved in its entirety. In comparison with other movements of the Sonata, however, the existing fragment of fifty-three

measures shows considerable potential. Its polyphonic writing, consistent texture (running sixteenth notes in one or more voices are featured almost throughout the work) and fleeting Mendelssohnian character anticipate the *Rondo capriccioso*.

Sonata, op. 8; Rondo, m. 26-27



Rondo capriccioso; m. 166-169



Figure 5: Sonata, op.8, m. 26-27; compared to *Rondo capriccioso*, m. 166-169.

The main theme (m. 1-16) is in the form of a parallel period. The only pronounced melodic notes in the two-voice texture are the accented eighth notes in the first two measures of each four-measure phrase. From m. 9, the parallel motion (instead of the contrapuntal voice-leading) is emphasized to the point where both voices move in unison (m. 14). The contrasting second theme (m. 19ff.) employs a homophonic texture with the left hand playing a supporting

role by means of a persistent tremolo. The contrast between the two themes shows striking parallels to the divergent ideas in *Rondo capriccioso*. Further similarities between the two works are imitations of orchestral effects (tremolo) and extensive passages of arpeggiated harmonies (Figure 5). The first theme returns in m. 38. After eight measures it is followed by a virtuosic episode which introduces octaves, large leaps and other pianistic devices. Again, the similarity between this work and *Rondo capriccioso* is apparent: in both works the episodes are used not to provide contrast, but to elaborate on a technical idea or pattern. It is a pity that the final pages of this work have been lost. *Rondo capriccioso*, written only a few months later, can be considered a spiritual child of the earlier work and one of the most individual works of Wolf's youth.

Rondo Capriccioso, op. 15 (1876)

This work was begun in Vienna on April 4, 1876 while Wolf was still a student at the Conservatory. Between the Sonata in G Major, op. 8 and the *Rondo capriccioso* Wolf attempted a series of compositions for piano, all left unfinished. These include the *Fantasie*, op. 11, a *Marsch* for piano duet and a Piano Sonata in G Minor, op. 14. *Rondo capriccioso* is in fact one of the few completed compositions from his time at the Conservatory.

In May 1876 the family of the aunt with whom Wolf was staying moved to Hetzendorf (a suburb of Vienna) for the summer. It was there that he finished the composition of the *Rondo capriccioso* on June 4.³¹ In May and June of the same year Wolf attempted an orchestration of Beethoven's "Moonlight" Sonata, op. 27/2. As he was not yet in the composition class at the Vienna Conservatory, he studied orchestration by himself; in his letters he mentions studying Berlioz's *Treatise on Orchestration*.³² Doubtless eager for further practice in that area of composition, Wolf orchestrated the *Rondo capriccioso* to be used as the Finale of a projected Symphony. He completed the task during the summer in Slovenj Gradec. The orchestral version

³¹ Walker, *Hugo Wolf: A Biography*, 39.

³² *Ibid.*, 40.

has recently become better known due to a recent recording of *Scherzo and Finale from the Symphony in B-flat*.³³ The first and second movements of the Symphony have been lost (Wolf misplaced the manuscript at the train station in Graz in 1877).³⁴

In *Rondo capriccioso* influences of other composers are evident. Its fluent virtuosity and feather-like character point to some obvious works of inspiration, most notably Mendelssohn's *Andante and Rondo Capriccioso* and the famous Scherzo from *The Midsummer Night's Dream*, which might have also inspired the eventual orchestration of Wolf's work. A work of similar character is Beethoven's *Rondo über den verlorenen Groschen*, which may have prompted the humor in Wolf's work. In addition, the *Rondo* from Wolf's own Sonata, op. 8 served as another precursor to the work at hand.

One of the individual traits of this work is the form. The main characteristic of Wolf's structure is that, instead of using contrasting melodic material, he achieves variety by resourcefully developing the principal theme. The overall form can be described as ABA' + Coda. Each of the larger sections is built from the presentation of the theme and followed by its development. Only the first A section is divided into smaller, somewhat contrasting sections, notably an 'abab'. The B section introduces a contrasting theme (after 100 measures!) and develops it in a manner similar to the one in A. Towards the end of the B section (measure 228) the return of the initial thematic material is foreshadowed. The A' section recapitulates the initial theme for only about ten measures. The remainder consists of yet another elaboration of the main theme, considerably different from the A section. The piece concludes with a lengthy Coda, which uses both main themes and with abundant virtuosity brings the piece to a close.

³³ Hugo Wolf, *Works for Orchestra*, Warner Classics LC 04281, 2003. Compact disc.

³⁴ For the complicated history of the Symphony in B-flat Major, see Walker, *Hugo Wolf: A Biography*, 42-3, 48-50.

Measure	Section	Key area
1	A (a)	I
17	(b)	(V)
46	(a)	(I)
62	(b)	(V)
100	B	V
228	Retransition	
278	A'	I
379	Coda	

Figure 6: form in Rondo capriccioso, op. 15.

As mentioned, the entire work (482 measures) is based on only two thematic ideas. However, the richness of invention with which they are developed is quite remarkable, especially considering the young Wolf's lack of instruction and experience. The opening theme is simple. It is sixteen measures long (Figure 7) and is divided into four phrases of four measures each; it is further broken down into two-measure motives that represent the main source of invention in the work. From the outset it is apparent that Wolf is now firmly set in the chromatic harmony of his time. The evidence is the use of mode mixture: already in m. 2, he uses a minor (instead of major) subdominant; he repeats the same in m. 4. Somewhat surprisingly, in m. 6 Wolf modulates to D Major: the minor subdominant (from m. 2) is revealed as a lowered second scale degree to this harmonic goal. As we will see, this alteration is one of the most important features in *Rondo capriccioso*. After a full cadence in the mediant in m. 8 (the end of the first half of the theme), Wolf suddenly returns to the tonic. The second part of the main thematic area modulates

to the dominant, where it also ends (m. 16). In mm. 9 and 11 we find more examples of a minor second motive (F-G-flat exchanges in the tenor; also, in m. 15 is the dominant of F Major preceded by its upper neighbor (D-flat⁷, third inversion)).

The image shows a musical score for the first 16 measures of 'Rondo capriccioso'. The score is written for piano and is in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat (F major). The tempo is marked 'Presto'. The dynamic is 'pp' (pianissimo). The score is divided into three systems. The first system contains measures 1-5. The second system contains measures 6-11. The third system contains measures 12-16. Measure 12 is marked with '12' and '8va'. Measure 16 ends with a 'ppp' (pianississimo) dynamic marking. The right-hand part features a melodic line with eighth-note patterns, while the left-hand part provides harmonic support with chords and eighth-note accompaniment.

Figure 7: *Rondo capriccioso*, m. 1-16.

The theme is followed by a digression of twenty-nine measures, beginning and ending on the dominant. Instead of presenting a contrasting theme, Wolf elaborates on the first idea, as every measure derives from the original motive. At first, four-measure units (rhythmically equivalent to mm. 5-8) dominate; from m. 24 a fragment of the motive (from m. 2: four sixteenth notes followed by two eighth notes) takes over. Starting with m. 39, the sixteenth-note motive is augmented into an eighth-note form and brings the section to its ending. In m. 30 we find the key of D-flat Major (lowered sixth in F) which is later raised to a more common sixth scale-degree

chord (D Minor). The section ends on the dominant of this key, followed by one measure of silence. Despite the monothematic nature of this digression, the contrast to the initial theme is evident. Instead of utilizing new melodic material, dynamic contrasts and register changes (ex.: measures 17-18 vs. 19-20) are emphasized.

The initial theme is restated in m. 46, where the strongest influence of the traditional rondo form is found. As the preceding development section varied the theme considerably, the repose offered by the initial form of the theme is certainly welcome. The second episode (m. 62-99) is even more adventurous than the first. It starts quite similarly on the dominant (F Major), but it quickly reaches distant harmonies; from m. 70, a rising sequence arrives at B Major in m. 75; it is hard to imagine a key more distant from both F Major and B-flat Major. After a dominant pedal (mm. 83-90) is the key of F Major reestablished; the concluding nine measures are merely the prolongation of this harmony and return the register closer to the one in the following section.

Motivically, the second developmental section (m. 66 ff.) is similar to the first: the same motive from the beginning of the piece is used in virtually every measure. Contrast is again achieved by dynamic contrasts and changes of register (through the section ascending to the highest point in m. 83 and then descending). The semitone motive remains important; the most striking example is the dissonant exchange between pitches D-flat and C in the alto of m. 87, resulting in the dominant chord with the added minor ninth. Another example of progressive harmony is the use of an unprepared V^9 chord in m. 90, this time with the major ninth (D-natural).

A detailed examination of the exposition of the *Rondo capriccioso* shows that Wolf is already operating with a sophisticated sense of thematic unity. Constructing an extended passage of one hundred measures out of a single motive is a challenge. Wolf certainly does not

accomplish it with the inevitability of Beethoven or Brahms, but his attempt should be recognized as a relative success. Later, in the shorter scope of the art song, this ability will contribute to the creation of many masterpieces of form.

The contrasting middle section (m. 100 ff) introduces, for the first time, new thematic material. After a two-bar vamp, a simple melody (Figure 8) with chordal accompaniment is employed; its dance-like rhythmical regularity is in contrast to the fleeting character of the first theme. There is one thing, however, that both themes have in common: both are built from two-measure motives which are combined to form four-measure phrases.

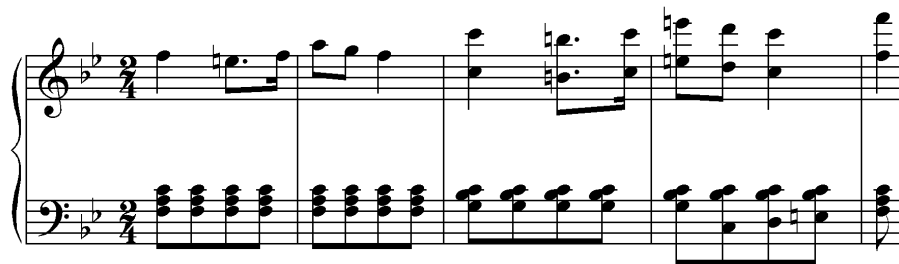


Figure 8: *Rondo capriccioso*; second theme.

Following the initial *piano* statement (m. 102-105) and a louder repetition, Wolf presents a third statement (m. 110), marked *fortissimo*, briskly modulating to G Minor (m. 114), then reaching B-flat Major in m. 118. During the course of these four phrases we can observe an impressive variety of dynamics and register, which rose in the right hand by two octaves, only to come back to the original octave in m. 118. To continue, more statements of the same four-measure phrase are used, now in the local subdominant (B-flat Major). After two of those (the right hand of the second again reaching into the stratospheric register), we finally begin to see some contrast as dynamics decrease to a *pianissimo* (m. 128). A chromatic departure starts in

earnest in m. 134 with a series of modulations reaching B-flat Minor in m. 144 and returning to the home dominant in m. 160.

The next section (m. 160 ff) shows the influence of contemporary opera. It is known that already at that time Wolf was considering writing an opera, but was unable to find a suitable libretto.³⁵ His early exposure to music consisted largely of *potpourris* and arrangements of popular Italian operatic repertoire, as can be seen from remnants of Wolf family's music library.³⁶ Judging from the rumbling tremolos in the left and rapid registral shifts (suggesting changes in orchestration) in the right hand, Wolf already had an orchestral version in mind; in m. 198 a furious climax is reached that is highly effective in orchestral version. The rhythmic motive from the second theme (ex.: m. 107-108: four eighth notes, followed by a quarter note) is associated with the semitone motive from the first theme. This motive (Figure 9) encapsulates the content of the entire *Rondo capriccioso*!



Figure 9: *Rondo capriccioso*; m. 162-163.

The climax of the development section is reached in m. 198 (F# Minor), a semitone higher than the prevailing key; in this way, the importance of the semitone motive is reaffirmed. The rhythmic content of the motive is further abridged: here only two eighth notes and a quarter note remain. The climax is prolonged by reiterations of the same motive rising by half step, until

³⁵ Walker, *Hugo Wolf: A Biography*, 42.

³⁶ Unfortunately, much of it was destroyed in 1945, after the end of German occupation of Slovenj Gradec.

in m. 218 E-flat Minor is reached. Interestingly, the tonalities in this climax are represented not by their respective root-position chords, but by the dominant-seventh chords in third inversion. The implied harmonic progression rises chromatically from the dominant of C Major (m. 202) by half steps in four-bar units to the dominant of E-flat Minor in m. 214. For the most part, Wagner's influence is not yet seen in Wolf's work, but this passage is an exception. The substitution of a key area by its dominant was one of Wagner's main compositional tools and innovations.

The repose is achieved by the next section, which functions as a retransition to the varied repeat of the first thematic area. E-flat Minor is transformed into its parallel major. In m. 228 the original motive returns (four sixteenth notes, followed by two eighth notes); it is not stated in the original form, but it serves as a bridge, diminishing the metric and dynamic pace. In m. 260 E-flat Major is transformed into a diminished chord, which in turn resolves to the dominant one measure before the recapitulation. In this cadence (Figure 10) some interesting sonorities are used: one is the second inversion of the dominant chord on F, first appearing without its root or a third, but with a major ninth in m. 272; another is the second inversion of V^7 with the lowered fifth in m. 274. Despite its spelling, it functions as an augmented-sixth chord; the lowered fifth resolves stepwise to the root of the subsequent triad and subtly reaffirms the importance of the semitone motive.



Figure 10: *Rondo capriccioso*; m. 272-277.

Finally, in m. 278 we reach a return of the principal theme in the key of B-flat Major. The beginning of the first theme is repeated almost verbatim, except that the first beats are not silent, but punctuated by B-flats in the lower register. The semitone neighbor motion is even more widespread: we find it already in the first measure (F-E-F in the tenor of m. 278; incidentally, those are also the first pitches of the second theme (m. 102)).

After only about ten measures, literal return is abandoned in favor of another new elaboration of the first theme. Whereas at the beginning the theme was followed by a turn to the dominant, it now remains in the tonic; in this way Wolf is adhering to classical principles of resolving tonal tensions. This is further confirmed in m. 306, where the music in F Major from m. 24 is restated in B-flat Major. To continue, we are treated to another outburst of ideas that have not been seen before: first, in m. 314 a series of chords that originate in the dotted rhythm of the second theme is found. Furthermore, the section starting in m. 317 shows another side of Wolf's talent: thus far the writing has been for the most part homophonic and figurative; here, however, it is suddenly polyphonic, even resembling a three-part fugue.

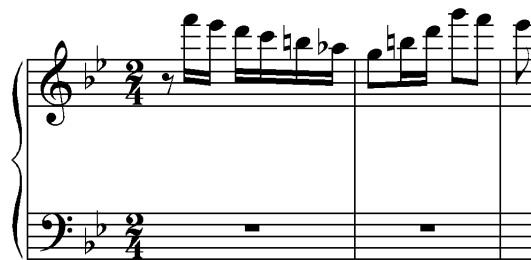


Figure 11: *Rondo capriccioso*; m. 317-319, subject of the fugato section.

The main subject (Figure 11) starts in m. 317. It consists of a falling scale motive, a rising arpeggio and a descending three-note motive cadencing on the first beat of m. 319. There are two

versions of the subject: the second starts in the left hand of m. 319. It differs from the first only in the rhythm of the second measure. The rhythm in m. 320 corresponds to the much-used pattern from the first theme (four sixteenth notes followed by two eighth notes).

Harmonically, the subject is in the form of a V-I cadence, only reaching the goal key at the end of each statement. The initial statement is thus in C Minor; the second version (starting in m. 319) is in B-flat Major. Immediately following are two more statements of the subject, namely in the alto (starting in m. 321 in F Major) and in the tenor (m. 323 in B-flat Major). After a two-measure interlude that employs the eighth-note motive (this time rising and falling) another statement in B-flat Major is found, this time divided between the registers of the left (m. 327) and right (mm. 328-329) hands.

Using vocabulary from the study of the fugue, the section thus far could be described as an *exposition*. Similarly, what follows could be considered a *stretto*. Starting with the upbeat to m. 330 the two entrances of the main subject overlap. The original version (from m. 317) returns; however, the elements of the subject (the falling scale, a rising arpeggio and the three-note motive) are now separated by the insertion of an additional quarter note. Harmonically, the key of D Minor is employed (reached in m. 333). The final statement of the subject (starting in alto of m. 333) moves toward C Minor, the key this section started in. The final cadence in m. 335 is deceptive, leading to an A-flat Major tonality and preparing more familiar tonal areas. The final statement also contains a deviation from the established voice-leading: the descending three-note motive is taken from the alto by the soprano voice, perhaps demonstrating the influence of the freer polyphonic writing of Schumann or Brahms. In the left hand (m. 334) we encounter a rising four-note motive. Its origin is interesting: the most obvious point of derivation is the short introduction to the second theme (Figure 12). Its employment in the contrapuntal and in subsequent sections presents another instance of unification in the work.

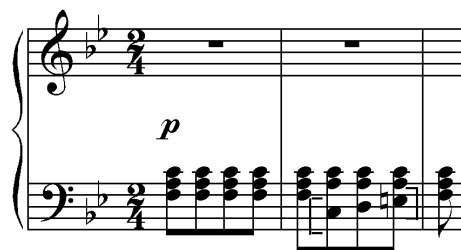


Figure 12: *Rondo capriccioso*, m. 100-101.

The polyphonic segment is of course by no means a full-fledged fugue; it is rather a burst of sudden inspiration lacking organic connection with the rest of the work. It is possible that Wolf, in his quest for compositional virtuosity, was eager to display all aspects of his talent, regardless of the appropriateness of the circumstances. Wolf has often been criticized for a lack of contrapuntal skill, but in passages like the one described he demonstrates that he was a serious student of that area of composition. Passages in *Humoreske* from 1877 exhibit further evidence, as we shall see.



Figure 13: *Rondo capriccioso*; augmented version of the semitone motive.

The polyphonic writing ends in m. 335 as suddenly as it began. However, the remnant of the motivic material from the polyphonic section persists in the form of rising and falling groups

of three or four notes, eventually progressing in a circle of fifths in mm. 343-347. In m. 349 the motive from the first theme returns; it is in E-flat Major, as in the section just before the beginning of recapitulation (compare m. 228). In m. 359 there is a return to the tonic. The original motive becomes a pedal point that persists all the way to the Coda (m. 379). The importance of the semitone motive is emphasized by its augmentation (Figure 13) in m. 372 and 374.

This would seem to be a logical point to conclude the work, but Wolf finds a way to continue with a Coda which starts in m. 379. The measure count confirms the placement of the beginning of the Coda: in this way sections A (m. 1-100) and A' (m. 278-379) are of almost identical length, namely 100 measures. Interestingly, the Coda adds another 100 measures (there are in fact 103 before the end, but the final three measures are merely the prolongation of the final cadence). Several other proportions are fascinating: the retransition before the recapitulation lasts exactly 50 measures (m. 228-278); the climax of the work (around m. 200) is found almost exactly 100 measures into the second theme. Such a scheme may be accidental, but it is more likely the result of careful planning on Wolf's part.



Figure 14: *Rondo capriccioso*; m. 399-402: new theme in G Minor

The Coda employs both of the main themes and introduces another (Figure 14) in m. 399 (again almost a round number!): this one is in G Minor and derives rhythmically from the first theme. In the third measure (m. 401) the motive is raised by a semitone, confirming the overwhelming authority of this interval. The key of G Minor persists until m. 434. In m. 451, Wolf returns to the original form of the first theme. G Minor is briefly reiterated in m. 463, only to return to B-flat Major four measures later. The work concludes with the triumphant statement of the second theme in the tonic. At the very end the long-awaited conclusion is confirmed by virtuoso cadences and leaps.

Rondo capriccioso is not a masterpiece of the kind that Wolf would produce in his later years, but it shows a great deal of talent. A melodic gift and the sense of form are apparent. Even though it leans on influences of other composers and lacks the typical “voice” of Wolf, it should be afforded more attention as an accomplished formative composition. The work also demonstrates the skillful application of counterpoint. This aspect is even more apparent in the orchestral version, as the colorful medium of the large orchestra provides better opportunities for thicker textures and more polyphonic writing. The orchestration of this work is successful and innovative; its close examination will surely reveal additional qualities of Wolf’s creative talent.

Rondo capriccioso is also an effective concert-piece for piano. If Wolf was able to master its difficulties at this stage in his life (he was sixteen years old), he must certainly have possessed an exceptional pianistic talent. Technical challenges of every kind abound, ranging from rapid arpeggiated or scalar figures to hand crossings, octaves, leaps and tremolos. Occasionally, the desire for correct voice-leading results in somewhat awkward pianistic writing. An example of this can be found in measures 75 and 79-82: in these measures the bottom notes of the right hand could be omitted without harm to the overall effect. In other passages, redistribution of the voices between hands can contribute to an easier execution and overall fluency of the work. For

example, notes in mm. 42 and 44 could be played with the right hand instead of with the left, as indicated in the score. In general, however, the writing is pianistically rewarding and in line with the overall effect. *Rondo capriccioso* may not become part of pianists' standard repertoire, but it deserves an occasional public performance.

As is the case with the Variations and the Sonata in G major, there are only a few interpretation markings in *Rondo capriccioso*. Slurs are lacking completely, and dynamic indications most often mark sudden contrasts rather than subtle gradations. It is possible that during the composition of the piano version Wolf already had an orchestral version in mind; his dynamic markings may indicate changes in orchestration. Adherence to indicated contrasts in the orchestral version confirms this assumption.

It is curious that as yet little Wagnerian influence can be found in Wolf's works. The famous meeting between Wagner and Wolf took place in 1875, the year prior to the composition of *Rondo capriccioso*. At sixteen, Wolf was already an ardent student of Wagnerian drama and was active in Vienna's *Wagner-Verein*.³⁷ The lack of Wagnerian influence may be attributed to the promotion of more conservative composition at the Vienna Conservatory, where Wolf was still a student. It was only in the mid 1880s that Wolf's work showed progress towards a more chromatic style of composition; by then it may have been Wolf's personal preference as a composer that furthered this shift, rather than the direct influence of Wagner's work.

Humoreske (1877)

Humoreske was written in Slovenj Gradec between September 9 and 26, 1877; those are the dates on the manuscript which is still in existence in Vienna's *Stadtbibliothek*. There it is found in a wrapper bearing the title *Aus der Kinderzeit* (From Childhood), together with *Schlummerlied* and *Scherz und Spiel*, to which it hardly belongs, since a wrapper of its own has

³⁷ Founded in 1872.

also been preserved.³⁸ *Humoreske* is mentioned in a letter from Hugo to his father from November 15, 1877. In it, Wolf writes that he had played it (together with his Symphony in B-flat Major) for Adalbert Goldschmidt, who found it “charming,” and observed in all his newer works an enormous step forward, both musically and intellectually.

During Wolf’s early independent years, Goldschmidt’s influence as a friend and sponsor cannot be overstated. With his help, Wolf was able to form a network of friends and benefactors that would support him through years of financial and personal instability. Goldschmidt also influenced Wolf artistically. Through his activities as a musician and patron of music he exposed the younger composer to a variety of musical experiences and personalities. He was an accomplished and at the time quite respected composer himself: the Liszt-influenced secular oratorio *Die sieben Todsünden*, his best known work, enjoyed in its time considerable success. Additionally, he nurtured in Wolf (who had unlimited access to Goldschmidt’s vast library) the love of poetry and literature.

It should be remembered that as of March 1877 Wolf was no longer a student at the Vienna Conservatory. He spent eight months of that year at home after a controversial break from the celebrated institution, only returning to Vienna on November 10th. During his stay in Slovenj Gradec he composed the *Humoreske*, the rest of the Symphony, began an opera *König Alboin* (which was never completed) and finished at least six songs for voice and piano. In addition, he presented several recitals of songs and piano music in his home town. It is apparent that Wolf’s creative impulse blossomed after leaving the Conservatory and finding it necessary to depend on his own activities for further progress. As a result, the nature of his work is transformed and immediately takes on more progressive traits.

³⁸ Hugo Wolf, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol.18: *Klavierkompositionen*, Preface, [n. p.].

From the very beginning of *Humoreske* influences of more recent German Romantics, most notably Schumann, can be seen, rather than those of the earlier Viennese classics. In place of an absolute musical form, a 19th-century character piece is instituted. Musical directions are in German, rather than the more common Italian.³⁹ An expanded ternary form is employed. The overall design is ABA', but each of the A sections is further divided into a shorter aba form (Figure 15), thus resulting in the overall form of A(aba)BA'(aba).

Large form	Measure	Section	Key area
A	1 – 32	A	i - VII
	33 – 69	mod. episode	V – V
	69 – 119	B	V – i
	119 – 134	A	i
B	135 – 163	B	I – V
	163 – 185	Retransition	V – i
A'	185 – 192	A	i – III
	193 – 225	mod. episode	VII - V
	225 – 277	B	V – i
	277 – 293	A	i

Figure 15: the diagram of form in *Humoreske*.

³⁹ German markings will of course persist into Wolf's mature works.

The first theme is sixteen measures long. It consists of two repetitions of an eight-measure phrase. Each of these phrases modulates from G Minor to the relative key of B-flat Major. Differences between the two repetitions are minuscule and include only slight changes in register (the intervals in the left hand are inverted). Each eight-measure phrase is further divided into four two-measure units, each of which employs the same rhythmic pattern. In addition to the final cadence in B-flat, we find in the fourth measure of each varied repetition an imperfect cadence on the dominant (D Major), which turns the eight-measure phrase itself into a parallel period. Except for mm. 5 and 13, each measure takes form of an arpeggiation of the corresponding harmony. Measures 5 and 13, on the other hand, introduce a new semitone motive in the left hand that will play a larger role later in the piece.

The original theme is followed by a similar construct of sixteen measures. This time it starts on the dominant (D Major) and finishes in F Major. The harmonic rhythm speeds up, with harmonic goals changing every two measures. Another distinction is the use of suspensions that distinguish the final four measures of each eight-measure period. Motivically, this segment is related to the first. The most important difference is the introduction of the three descending sixteenth notes in the right hand of every other measure (for the first time in m. 18); in the second repetition of the eight-measure phrase this motive becomes even more important, as it is employed in every measure. This motive will prove to be the origin of the second theme. The second varied repetition is also distinguished by a wider range of dynamics than the first. Each of the eight-measure phrases contains a crescendo and a decrescendo, reaching *forte* (m. 25) and *fortissimo* (m. 29), respectively. In this way the illusion of a development is achieved without actually changing the musical substance.

The transitional section starts in m. 33. It is longer than the two initial parallel periods together (38 vs. 32 measures) and reinforces the importance of motives introduced at the

beginning. At first, in measures 33-37 the two most important motives are treated canonically. They include the familiar three sixteenth-note motive and the newly prominent motive of two eighth notes (Figure 16).



Figure 16: two main motives in *Humoreske*.

This is followed by the arpeggiation of the D Major harmony (with passing notes) using the three-note motive in contrary motion between the two hands and preparing G Major in m. 41. The sequence of nine measures (m. 33-41) is followed by a varied repeat in a new key (mm. 41-49). It is rewritten to include a new variation of the three-note motive, namely the dotted version (for ex. right hand in m. 45). In the final two measures the passage modulates to E major.

To continue, the rhythmic pattern from the beginning of the work returns (mm. 49-53). E major is established, but it is distorted by multiple suspensions creating a series of semitone progressions. In this way the importance of the semitone motive (from m. 5) is manifested: first, as a melodic motive (a result of multiple suspensions); secondly, as a sudden harmonic shift upward to a dominant seventh on F in m. 53. The subsequent arpeggiation is the onset of a stepwise sequence, in four-bar steps rising from B-flat Minor (m. 57) to B Major (m. 61), C Major (m. 65) and reaching the dominant (D Major) in m. 69. Harmonic goals are emphasized by cadential chords in the form of a familiar rhythmic motive of two eighth notes. The modulation

from B-flat Minor to B Major is curious in its use of enharmonic notes: in m. 60 the right hand converts flats to sharps, whereas the left hand maintains the lowered notes, resulting in a B Major harmony, enharmonically spelled with C-flat in the bass.

As demonstrated, the transitional section was dominated by the two main rhythmic motives. It is only fitting, and a sign of great sense of unity, that those motives should also figure prominently in the second thematic area (m. 69 ff). Both motives (three sixteenth notes and two eighth notes) are melodically transformed to form a new theme (see Figure 17).



Figure 17: “A” section, second theme.

The second theme is eight measures long, and is constructed as a sentence: a two-measure motive is repeated and followed by a four-measure conclusion. The use of imitative writing (divided between the two hands) is persistent in the first half of the theme, while the second part is melodic and features an interesting slurring which displaces the strong and weak beats of each measure. The theme ends in m. 77, where another statement, this time in G Major, begins; accordingly, the final cadence leads to C Major in m. 85. From this point, the initial two-measure unit of the theme (from m. 69-70) is presented in a stepwise rising sequence (C, D, E, F#), ending in a climactic *fortissimo* in F# Minor in m. 97. From here the main motive is transformed into another canonic exchange between the two hands. It is built as a *stretto*: the two hands use different primary motives (sixteenth notes vs. eighth notes) simultaneously. After two statements (mm. 99-103 and mm. 104-108), the section ends in A Major.

At this point, the gradual return of the first theme begins. First of all, the original arpeggiated texture returns. Secondly, the semitone motive again becomes prominent, taking the form of a minor second scale-degree resolving downwards to the prime (ex.: left hand, m. 107-110). The initial A Major (m. 97-99) is followed by the dominant (D Major, mm. 111-118), which returns to G Minor at the beginning of the recapitulation of the first theme (m. 119). The prominence of the semitone motive is asserted in mm. 115-118, where it is first stretched over two octaves (left hand, upbeat to m. 115) and then stated in four different octaves. At the end, the rhythmic shape of this motive (sixteenth note followed by a dotted eighth note) is melodically transformed into a cadential leap of a fourth (upbeat to m. 119) to the home key of G minor. In this way it has been made clear that the original texture of two-note groups (m. 119 ff.) is inextricably connected to the semitone motive through this common rhythmic content.

In many ways *Humoreske* seems conventional. However, the manner in which relatively few rhythmic patterns dominate the entire work is remarkable and separates Wolf's talent from that of lesser composers. In general, the Romantic period emphasizes melodic aspects of composition; the 19th-century concept of thematic (in relation to the melodic material) transformation demonstrates this fully. In contrast, the works of the Classical period are often derived from a limited number of shorter motives, distinguished more by their rhythmic rather than melodic properties. *Humoreske* in an original way reconciles the rhythmic properties of the Classical period with the 19th-century notion of thematic (in this case rhythmic) transformation; its themes are not associated by common melodic contours, but by rhythmic kinship.

After the culminating appearance of the semitone motive Wolf reaches the recapitulation of the first theme. It is distinguished from its source in several ways: the most obvious difference is the employment of dynamic contrasts: accents on weak beats are enforced (ex.: *forte* in m. 120) and mm. 123-126 serve as an echo. The varied repetition (m. 127 ff) is marked *forte* and

culminates in a fermata in m. 132. Only the last two measures return to the calm of the initial statement.

The A section is for the most part chordal or figurative; its melodic fluency is secondary to the motivic and rhythmic development. In the contrasting B section, however, the melodic elements become more prominent. The main melodic statement is only two measures long and consists of an ascending beginning and a descending conclusion. Throughout the B section, this motive appears in several forms: an expressive, legato version (for ex.: m. 135-136) later gives way to a more witty, articulated variant (m. 147). This type of melodic manipulation is known as “thematic transformation.” It is apparent that, though in general Wolf’s style is at this point largely devoid of the innovations of Wagner, some elements, such as examples of thematic transformation, are already finding their way into Wolf’s work.

In addition to thematic transformation it is difficult to miss the similarity of the second half of this theme with both main themes from the A section (Figure 18). A consideration of Wolf’s mature works shows that the manner of developing entire compositions from just a few rhythmic ideas is Wolf’s most typical compositional achievement.

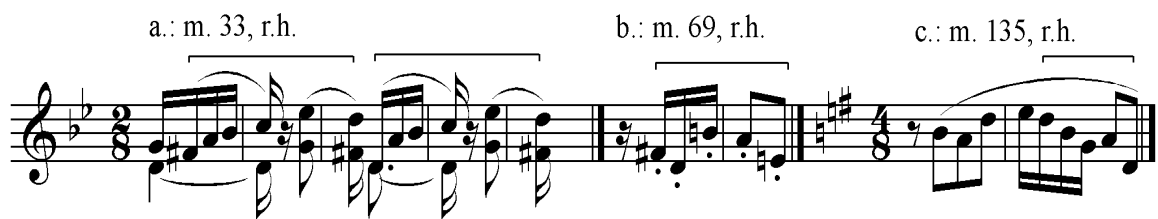


Figure 18: common origin of the three main themes in *Humoreske*.

The two-measure theme is repeated several times in the B section; however, the contrasting dynamics and shifts of register make it seem continuous. After the initial statement in

G major it is stated an octave higher and marked *zart* (tender). The third repetition, back in the lower register and marked *feurig* (fiery), briskly modulates to B Major. It is followed by another statement with contrasting dynamics and is placed in a higher register. In contrast to the A section, this theme is homophonic; the left hand provides a fluent version of the Alberti bass in triplets. The theme is fragmented after the fourth repetition. Only the second half of the theme remains, namely the one derived from the A section (m. 143 ff). The fragmented variant is (like the first four statements of the theme) presented in different registers and with distinct dynamics.

In m. 147 the piece returns to G Major. As mentioned, we find here a transformed version of the theme. The character change is obvious: it is more humorous, due to the varied articulation (contrast between staccato and legato). Character is further enforced by the abandonment of the Alberti bass accompaniment and the return of the more independent texture. After only one statement the new version is reduced to its second half, which is repeated three additional times (mm. 148-149). To follow, the resulting four-measure phrase is restated note by note in B Major, according to the principle used in the first occurrence of the theme (m. 135 ff). In m. 155 the third repetition begins, this time in E-flat Major. In this way Wolf creates a sequence of rising major thirds (G Major-B Major-E-flat Major). Such a sequence is one of the compositional devices that Wolf borrowed from Wagner.⁴⁰

The progression is modified only two measures after reaching E-flat Major. The harmony shifts to vii^{o7} of F Major (m. 157), and the character changes from melodic to figurative arpeggiation. The new four-measure design (mm. 155-158) is repeated in F Major and cadences (m. 163) in D Major. With the onset of this familiar key area (dominant) we find a gradual return to the varied repeat of the first theme. At first, Wolf invokes the beginning of the transitional area (mm. 33-37) in A by the use of semitones and related rhythmic patterns. Though modified,

⁴⁰ For further examples see the discussion about *Schlummerlied* in the continuation of this study.

the kinship can be seen in the form of a descending semitone motive (E-flat-D) and in the only slightly modified rhythm (Figure 19).



Figure 19: mm. 163 - 164 as the variation of mm. 33 – 35.

After two measures this material gives way to another form of arpeggiated figuration, this time in contrary motion. The descending pattern of two-note groups is derived from the conclusion of the main body of the B section (for ex. mm. 157-158), but it also looks back to the arpeggiated harmonies in the A section (m. 37 ff). Measures 163-167 in this way form a four-measure unit that at the same time recaptures and compresses the familiar material from the A section, including the two main motives (see Figure 16). This unit is repeated in B Major, a key that figured prominently in the B section. After m. 171, only the second half (the arpeggiated pattern) of the four-measure unit remains; a circle of fifths progression carries the pattern to the home dominant in m. 175 where it is further reduced to form one-measure units. Several familiar elements bring the retransition to its conclusion: first, the octave shifts of register recall the ones used in the main theme area of the B section (m. 135 ff); second, the semitone motive returns in the form of alternating harmonies between D^7 (m. 177) and $E\text{-flat}^{o7}$ (m. 178). In m. 183 this ascending motive stepwise reaches E natural (the seventh of the $F\#$ half-diminished chord) and precedes the return to G Minor. This ascent is accompanied by a crescendo and culminates in a widely spaced tonic triad in m. 185.

The recapitulation (m. 185 ff) is considerably shorter than the exposition, due to the omission of the second period of the first theme (m. 17-32 of the exposition). In addition, the transitional segment (mm. 193-225) is modified and abbreviated. By this point, the texture of the main theme has evolved into a thicker and rhythmically more complex form. The staccato sixteenth notes in the left hand are continuous while the right hand is modified even more. Its triplet texture is derived from the accompaniment of the B section (m. 135 ff). The clash between triplets and duplets has not figured prominently in the work, but the newly invented texture contrasts with the one from the beginning and contributes to the wayward character of the passage.

The transitional section starts in m. 193. Its counterpart in the exposition (m. 33 ff) began with an imitative passage that for the first time presented the succession of the two main motives as the source of the second theme. Wolf does not need to emphasize this development in the recapitulation; instead, he employs the final version of the second theme from the start of the transitional section (m. 193). Two statements of the theme are followed by an arpeggiated motive that literally corresponds to mm. 53-56. In this way a nine-measure unit is established that is repeated four times before cadencing in the dominant at the start of the second theme-area. The ascending tonal scheme from the exposition (F-B-flat-B-C-D in mm. 53-69) is retained, except that the unit in B-flat (m. 201-209) begins in B-flat Major (not Minor). After two measures it changes to a minor mode in preparation for the subsequent arpeggiation.

After the start of the second theme area (m. 225 ff) the progress of the piece matches the exposition. Only minor differences can be found, the most obvious being the two-measure insertion in mm. 253-254, which delays the goal harmony of F# Minor but does not contain new elements. Secondly, the left hand in mm. 246-249 is lowered by an octave in preparation of the subsequent register. Finally, the left hand of m. 256 is placed an octave higher. The latter two

modifications facilitate the execution and should probably be used in the exposition as well. The intervals in the left hand of m. 243 and 245 are sixths, not octaves, a likely mistake by Wolf or the editor.⁴¹ Just before the end, two silent measures are inserted: they heighten the tension after the minor-seventh chord in m. 290 and make the final cadence seem more definitive. In addition, dynamic markings in the recapitulation are marginally modified or omitted. Performers should adopt a more detailed version of the exposition.

In comparison to Wolf's other works for piano to date, *Humoreske* presents a big step forward. In all other works there are shortcomings that prevent their absorption into the pianists' standard repertoire. Even the exuberant *Rondo capriccioso* suffers somewhat from excessively difficult pianistic writing. *Humoreske*, on the other hand, is pianistically rewarding; it should prove to be accessible to a wide variety of pianists, including advanced students.

The character of the work can be quite easily grasped. It is not merely comical; as seen from the fluent and mostly uniform texture, the "humor" is mostly of an understated kind. Only the second theme's insistent canonic treatment of the short theme could be considered overtly humorous. On the other hand, the work is not as serious as, for example, Schumann's *Humoreske*. Comparison between the two may illuminate Wolf's choice of the title. The German word *Humor* has two meanings: something humorous or a description of a feeling or mood (*Stimmung*). *Humoreske* may therefore not be a musical joke, but instead a character study. To the performer it presents an attractive alternative to well-known character works by Chopin and Schumann.

⁴¹ Another inconsistency is found in m. 200: the second note of the left hand is a C, compared to an E-flat in the parallel place in the exposition. C should be played both times, as the resulting leap of a tenth (rather than an octave) corresponds to versions of the passage in other keys.

Morgentau

Morgentau was one of five songs composed during the summer (1877) that saw the composition of *Humoreske*. Others are *Ständchen* (Körner), *Andenken* (Matthison), *An** (Lenau) and *Wanderlied*. The words for *Wanderlied* and *Morgentau* were taken from “an old song-book,” which was likely a volume of poems copied by his father. Together with the earlier *Ein Grab*, Wolf included these songs in a thin volume, bearing the title: “Lieder und Gesänge. Erstes Heft. In Musik gesetzt von Hugo Wolf.” (Poems and Songs. Book One. Composed by Hugo Wolf). With that effort Wolf excluded the earlier works in the genre from his canon and established the first critical overview of his work to date.⁴² *Morgentau* was also the earliest of Wolf’s compositions included in his first publication *Sechs Lieder für eine Frauenstimme* in 1888.⁴³

Morgentau is, compared to other songs from this period, not ambitious, but is a short and simple portrayal of its subject matter. The influence of earlier masters of the form, especially Schumann, can be felt. It is the also the first of Wolf’s successful depictions of morning, spring and freshness; other examples are the famous *Er ist’s* and *Im Frühling* and the *Spring Chorus* from the unfinished opera *Manuel Venegas*.

The rhyme scheme is constant and in each verse takes the form of an alternating rhyme (abab). The meter is an iambic trimeter with an addition of a final unstressed syllable in the first and third lines of each verse. Metric scheme according to the “ictus and x” system of scansion:⁴⁴

x / x / x / x

x / x / x /

x / x / x / x

x / x / x /

⁴² Walker, *Hugo Wolf: A Biography*, 47.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 503

⁴⁴ / = stressed and x = unstressed syllable

MORGENTAU

Der Frühhauch hat gefächelt
Hinweg die schwüle Nacht,
Die Flur holdselig lächelt
In ihrer Lenzespracht;

Mild singt vom dunklen Baume
Ein Vöglein in der Früh,
Es singt noch halb im Traume
Gar süsse Melodie.

Die Rosenknospe hebet
Empor ihr Köpfchen bang
Denn wundersam durchbebet
Hat sie der süsse Sang;

Und mehr und mehr enthüllet
Sich ihrer Blätter Füll,
Und eine Träne quillet
Hervor so heimlich still.

MORNING DEW

The early breeze has fanned
Away the sultry night!
The flowers smile charmingly in their
Spring glory;

Softly from the dark tree
A bird sings in the early morning.
It sings as if half in a dream,
A sweet melody.

The rosebud lifts
Her head timidly,
For the sweet song
Has wondrously moved her.

More and more unfold
Her petals, in their fullness,
And a tear trembles
Forth in still secrecy.

Figure 20: *Morgentau*, German text and an English translation.

The simplicity of Wolf's musical setting is reflected in its modified strophic form. Each verse sets to music four lines of text, ending with words *Lenzespracht*, *Melodie*, *Sang* and *still*, respectively. Musically, the first three verses are strongly related. The last one is different, as it also carries the main poetic message. Each verse consists of two four-measure phrases. Therefore, each line of text is set during the course of two measures, the design employed in the majority of Wolf's songs to come. According to Deryck Cooke,⁴⁵ if there is one criticism of Wolf to be made, it is his insistence on symmetrical design. In *Morgentau*, the only exception is at the very end of the song, where the final two lines of the poem are set to music in the course of five measures, emphasizing the poetic climax of those lines. As in many Wolf's songs, the piano part creates the atmosphere corresponding to the character of the poem. In this case, the texture depicts the pearly quality of the morning dew and the waking nature with the insistent motion in sixteenth notes.

Wolf's main talent is evident in the use of tone-painting to describe the poetic contents. The word *hauch*, for example, is in the voice part accompanied by a lower-neighbor figure which depicts a light breeze. Subsequently, this motive appears at the beginning of every four-measure phrase (until the final stanza). The second half of each verse is to be sung softly; this is especially important in the second verse to suggest the "half in dream" quality of the bird's singing. To the words *süsse Melodie* Wolf invents a new melody which rises higher than its counterpart in the first verse and ends in a suspension. The "sweetness" of this melody is underlined by the varied harmonic structure. A similar cadence is found at the end of the third stanza to words *süsse Sang*.

In the fourth verse, the tone of the poem changes from the idyllic description of the awakening nature to progressive action which culminates in the central association between a

⁴⁵ Cooke, Deryck: "Hugo Wolf," *The Musical Times* 101 (March 1960): 153-154.

dew-drop and a tear. The opening of the rose to its full bloom is depicted by the ascending sequence (m. 25 ff) and highlighted by the indication *etwas drängend* (somewhat pressing forward). The quivering of a dew-drop (tear) is represented by a vocal appoggiatura (m. 30), while the descending line in the same measure depicts the sliding of the drop down the petal of the flower (Figure 21). In conclusion, the stillness of the scene (*so heimlich still*) is emphasized by the lengthening of the phrase and the first ever pause in the piano part. The postlude returns to the original texture and stresses the unchanging state of nature.

The musical score for 'Morgentau' (m. 29-33) consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a rest, followed by an ascending sequence of notes (m. 29-30), a quivering note (appoggiatura) (m. 30), and a descending line (m. 30-31). The piano accompaniment features a series of chords and arpeggiated figures. Dynamics include 'rit.', 'p', 'pp', and 'pp rit.'

und ei - ne Trä - ne — quil - let her - vor so heim - lich still.

Figure 21: *Morgentau*; m. 29-33.

For a seventeen-year-old composer, the matching of music and poetry in *Morgentau* is remarkable. Evaluation of Wolf's work often focuses on the periods of inspiration which produced his major songbooks. On the other hand, *Morgentau* serves as proof that Wolf's compositional endeavors, especially in the earlier years, were not as sporadic as is sometimes assumed. This song indicates that the maturity of his later work did not appear out of nowhere, but was foreshadowed by other examples of high artistic value.

In both *Humoreske* and *Morgentau* a strong influence of Schumann can be felt, not only in the choice of genres, but also in compositional details. At the same time they point to Wolf's own development. His preference for small forms is evident, and the aptitude of matching music to poetry is persuasive. The two short pieces from *Aus der Kinderzeit* will show further evolution of Wolf's talent.

Aus der Kinderzeit (From Childhood)

Schlummerlied (1878)

Scherz und Spiel (1878)

Both pieces in *Aus der Kinderzeit* were composed on May 20, 1878. That year was referred to by Wolf as his "days of Lodi," by which he meant that during that time occurred the first period of intense creative inspiration. In February 1888, during the composition of his Mörike Songs, he insisted that "the days of Lodi were renewing themselves."⁴⁶ Apart from the two piano pieces, between May 18 and June 22 Wolf composed ten art songs. All but one of the poems had been taken from Heinrich Heine's *Buch der Lieder*; seven of them were to form a *Liederstrauß* (garland of songs). The inspiration for the cycle was Schumann's Heine-inspired cycle *Dichterliebe*; Wolf only set to music poems that were not used by Schumann. *Liederstrauß* was not published in Wolf's life, but is preserved in a manuscript copy. It was printed by the *Hugo Wolf Gesellschaft* edition of collected works. The songs in the cycle were highly valued by their composer and warrant a thorough examination, but such an undertaking lies beyond the scope of this study. Another song composed during that time was *Über Nacht*, a setting of a poem by Julius Sturm. Owing to its posthumous publication it has gained considerable popularity. If *Liederstrauß* was inspired by *Dichterliebe*, then *Aus der Kinderzeit* owes its conception to Schumann's *Kinderszenen*. The two songs in the collection are by no

⁴⁶ Walker, *Hugo Wolf: A Biography*, 71.

means to only be played by children but, like Schumann's masterpiece, they try to capture the innocence and playfulness of childhood.

Schlummerlied (1878)

Schlummerlied was first published posthumously (1909) in the journal *Der Merker* under the title *Wiegenlied* (Cradle Song); in 1910 it was issued by Schott, together with arrangements for violin and piano, cello and piano, and voice and piano. The version for voice and piano was contributed by Engelbert Humperdinck, one of Wolf's loyal supporters.⁴⁷ The text used for this version was the poem *Su, su, su du Windchen* by Adelheid Wette, Humperdinck's sister and the librettist of *Hansel und Gretel*.

Albumblatt is another version of the *Schlummerlied*, copied for Maria "Mitzi" Werner, sister of Wolf's friend Heinrich Werner. The harmony of a few bars is varied, perhaps improving several weak spots in the original version. The title page of the *Albumblatt* contains a motto: "Gering ist es, der Rede nicht werth. /Richard Wagner" (It is insignificant, not worthy of speech). The manuscript was given to Maria Werner on July 30, 1880, the first of several summers that Wolf spent with the Werner family in Maierling and later in Perchtoldsdorf, where some of his greatest work took shape, including the Mörike Songs in 1888. In the summer of 1882 Wolf dedicated to Maria his first comical masterpiece, *Mausfallensprüchlein*.

Schlummerlied, like almost all of Wolf's early works, is constructed primarily from a series of phrases of regular length. At the beginning four two-measure motives are joined to form an eight-measure phrase ending with dominant harmony in m. 8. Immediately following is another eight-measure construct with altered harmonies, again ending in the dominant in m. 16. At this point, a six-measure extension of the second phrase leads to the recapitulation of the original theme; in this transitional section a musical climax occurs. In m. 23 we return to the

⁴⁷ Hugo Wolf, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol.18: *Klavierkompositionen*, Preface, [n. p.].

original material; a modified statement of the main theme leads to a tonic arrival in m. 31. Wolf restates the main theme over a tonic pedal in the seven-measure Coda.

The form of *Schlummerlied* is thus an expanded period (aaba). After two statements (m. 1 and m. 9) of the principal theme (a) is found a contrasting section of six measures (b). The piece concludes with a varied repetition (m. 23 ff) of the main material (a) and a Coda. Therefore, mm. 1-22 (aab) serve as an antecedent and mm. 23-37 (a', Coda) as a consequent. In addition, *Schlummerlied* may also be interpreted as a strophic form.

The three statements of the main theme (starting in mm. 1, 9 and 23) serve as separate verses; the transitional passage (mm. 16- 23) could be seen as an interlude, and the final seven measures play the role of a postlude. It is not known whether Wolf, while composing this work, had a particular text in mind. It is inevitable that his serious occupation with the *Liederstrauss* would influence the instrumental compositions. It is equally possible that the form of *Schlummerlied* is merely the result of Wolf attempting to capture the repetitive and folksong-like quality of an archetypal cradle song. Humperdinck's arrangement is not in print anymore, a pity since it would be interesting to examine his understanding of *Schlummerlied's* poetic potential.

There are several differences between *Schlummerlied* and *Albumblatt*, but only one of them will be examined in detail. For that purpose *Albumblatt* will be preferred, as the alternative harmonic solutions employed in it show a more mature musical taste of Wolf's. Differences between the two versions will be described, as they shed light on the development of Wolf's understanding of harmony and form.

As is customary with Wolf, the entire composition is derived from a limited number of motives. In the case of *Albumblatt* one motive is sufficient: it is found at the very beginning and consists of two measures. In the first we find two eighth notes followed by two quarter notes, while in the second a half note is trailed by a quarter note. This motive (see Figure 22) will

appear in some form in every measure of the piece; at times, only the first half of the motive will be used, either in the original or in the derived form.

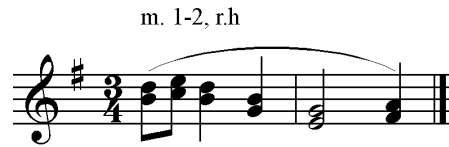


Figure 22: the main motive in *Albumblatt*.

In the first eight measures the motive is used in a canonic pattern between the registers: a statement in the right hand is followed one measure later by an answer in the left; only in the last measure of the phrase (m. 8) do the statements of the motive align. The first half of the motive is expanded into a series of eighth notes, which appear simultaneously in both hands and prepare the subsequent phrase.



Figure 23: primary melodic motive and its derivatives.

The most persistent melodic motive is the upper-neighbor eighth-note motive from the beginning, but even this motive is subject to alteration. For example, in mm. 3-4 it is found in the ascending version. The ascending motive in m. 8 is derived from this variant of the eighth-note

motive (Figure 23); an additional appearance can be found in m. 21. The original form of the motive (upper-neighbor form) is also expanded: a derived and expanded version of this type may be found in m. 22. Furthermore, those two motives combine to form yet another version of the expanded motive, which is located in m. 16 and 18.

In the second phrase (m. 9 ff) the main motive appears in its original form, albeit in parallel 10ths instead of the initial parallel 3rds. After two statements in each hand (mm. 9-12), the motive is fragmented and modified. Only the first half of the motive is utilized and its rhythmic content is reversed in a retrograde manner (Figure 24). As a result, the harmonic rhythm speeds up to accommodate the quicker rhythmic pace. For the first time more distant harmonies are used, for example E-flat major (borrowed from the parallel minor) in m. 14.



Figure 24: fragment of the main motive and its rhythmic retrograde.

The conclusion of the phrase (m. 16) features a sudden return to the dominant of the home key. The purpose of the succeeding transitional passage is to slow the harmonic rhythm and to prepare the return of the next verse. Motivic development continues: in the extension of the second verse (m. 16 to 23) most of the derived versions of the main motive can be found. Measures 16 and 17 state the main two-measure motive (Figure 22) in a retrograde version: to start with, the second half of the motive (half note followed by a quarter note) is reversed, as is evident in the rhythm of the middle voices in m. 16, which is followed in the right hand of m. 17

by a retrograde version of the motive from the first measure. Simultaneously we find in m. 16 the combined version of the melodic content of the main motive (see Figure 23).

Measures 18 and 19 are practically identical to the construct described above, except that the retrograde of the second half of the original motive is blurred by the omission of the middle voices. In this passage the most apparent difference between the two versions of the piece occurs: in *Schlummerlied* we find in m. 19 a V/V harmony which prepares the eventual return to the tonic. In *Albumblatt*, however, this measure restates the harmony from m. 17 and preserves the more literal repetition of the two-measure retrograde passage. The A⁹ (V/V) chord is in this case delayed until m. 20.

The resulting chord progression in m. 19 and 20 is the most poetic moment in the composition (see Figure 25). The harmony in m. 19 is ambiguous; it could function as a Neapolitan to the dominant with an added sixth scale-degree, or else as a second inversion of the diminished triad on A, with G and B-flat in the right hand representing the lower and upper neighbors to the root of the chord. The former interpretation is more convincing, especially since in the parallel spot (m. 17) is the A in the melody reharmonized as a V/V, which indicates that pitches G and B-flat are members of the previous chord, but not A.

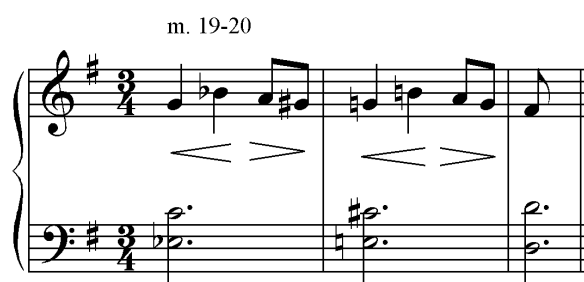


Figure 25: *Albumblatt*, m. 19-21.

In any case, this harmonic progression transforms the diatonic nature of the main motive to a chromatic one, descending by a series of half-steps from B-flat to G. The disposition of this “cradle song” is thus not completely innocent and trouble-free; there are melancholic sub-tones to the poetic message. The portrayal of emotional ambivalence is a trademark of Wolf’s. This measure takes place almost exactly in the middle of the piece (m. 19), which confirms its central meaning. Melancholy is not here to stay: in m. 20 the harmony suddenly shifts to A major. The interval of a minor third (between G and B-flat) is transformed to a major version which outlines the dominant-ninth chord before resolving to D Major in m. 21. Before the recapitulation (m. 23) two further expanded versions of the main motive (see Figure 23) occur. The climactic section is in this way concluded with the eighth-note motive which prepares the return of the original form of the main motive.

The last verse (or the consequent) starts similarly to the others: after two statements of the main motive the canonic nature of the exchange is interrupted, as the main motive is fragmented in the fifth measure of the phrase (m. 27). The significance of this measure is that on the third beat it forms the same harmony as in m. 19 (see Figure 26). Furthermore, the semitone motive in the left hand recaptures the major-minor duality of mm 19-20.



Figure 26: m. 27.

The same fragmented form of the motive is used in mm. 28 and 29. On the third beat of m. 29 there is another difference between the two versions of the work: the second inversion of the sixth scale degree (E Minor) in *Schlummerlied* is interpreted in *Albumblatt* as a vii^{o7}/V . This is the only time in the entire work that a diminished harmony is prominently used. The unusual quality of the chord is emphasized by the loudest dynamic marking in the work, namely a *mf*. In *Schlummerlied* this marking is preceded by a *crescendo* (starting in m. 27), which reaffirms the escalating importance of the subsequent measures. Both versions conclude the return to the *piano* of the Coda by means of a short *diminuendo*.

The final seven measures present in a reduced version all the important elements of the work. The left hand states the main motive twice and eventually fragments it to only its first half (as seen in mm. 35-36). The canonic exchange between hands persists, except that in the right hand the second measure of the motive is for the first time transformed into a dotted half note. The diminished harmony (including the upper neighbor E-flat) occurs on the second beats of mm. 32 and 34. All elements are featured over a G pedal-point. The statements of the theme progressively diminish in volume and thickness of texture until only dotted half notes and the main motive remain. Presumably, the child has fallen asleep.

Albumblatt's 19th-century manner of polyphonic imitative writing is somewhat unusual for the genre of a short character piece. In this respect it rather brings to mind some of the piano works by Brahms (e.g.: *Romanze* from op. 118). The imitative writing also develops the compositional principles in *Rondo capriccioso* and *Humoreske*.

Another significant element of the *Albumblatt* is the overwhelming presence of the interval of the third, both melodically and harmonically. The main motive affirms this preference by assuming the melodic form of a series of falling thirds. Texturally it is also presented in parallel thirds. Furthermore, in measure two we find a harmony (E Minor) which is removed

from the tonic by the interval of a third. The left hand of m. 5 describes the ambivalent nature of the third-relation by employing both major and minor modes of the interval. Harmonically, the third-relationship can be observed in m. 13 to 15. The indicated harmonies (Figure 27) present a sequence of falling thirds:

m. 13-15

B^b g E^b c⁷

Figure 27: *Albumblatt*, m. 13-15.

Wolf's adherence to this interval shows the influence of classical models as well as those of Wagner and even Brahms. In fact, the conciseness of the motivic development in *Albumblatt* can be compared to similar compositional procedures in some of Brahms' shorter works for piano solo (for example op. 119, no. 1). In addition, predecessors to such miniatures are found among Chopin's Preludes. Wolf's professed admiration of the Polish composer would support the existence of this influence.

As a character piece *Schlummerlied* achieves its goal perfectly. Wolf's ability to create a particular atmosphere has, even at this early stage, taken flight.

Scherz und Spiel (1878)

The work illustrates the opposite of *Schlummerlied*: in place of the innocent serenity we find here a jocular, playful and carefree aspect of childhood (*Scherz und Spiel* means "A joke

and play”). As such, it is a perfect companion to the *Schlummerlied*. Together they portray two contrasting elements of childhood that we all admire: the ability to forget and the ability to experience unrestrained joy.

The form of *Scherz und Spiel* is typically Wolfian, as the reliance on the traditional *Vierhebigkeit* prevails. The A section is sixteen measures long and consists of two identical statements of the opening eight-measure phrase, both ending on the dominant (D Major). The central B section is eleven measures long (m. 17–27) and is divided into two phrases of four measures and an extension of the same length. The work concludes with a modified version of the eight-measure phrase from A. The form of *Scherz und Spiel* is therefore more closely related to the rounded binary form than that of *Schlummerlied*.

The contrast in texture between the first and second themes is pronounced, especially considering the brevity of the composition. The outer sections (A) are polyphonic in nature: a two-voice texture (divided between the two hands) is consistent and is characterized by the constant exchange of the main motive between the hands, which contributes to the playful character of the work. On the other hand, the more serious central section (B) is homophonic: the melodic outer voices are accompanied by the chordal middle of the texture.

The contrast in character between the two sections is the most striking we have seen in Wolf’s early works. In this respect it is different from the rest of his *oeuvre*, including the majority of later works. Even though they often contain dramatic shifts in character, they always stem from the poetic contents of the text rather than from interpretations of established forms. Naturally, it would be unlike Wolf not to include some type of motivic connection between the contrasting sections: in the case of *Scherz und Spiel*, the climactic running sixteenth notes (for example in m. 19) stem from one of the two central motives in the opening section. As in *Schlummerlied* and *Humoreske*, the motives are not characterized primarily by their melodic

contours, but rather by their rhythmic properties. There are two main motives (Figure 28) in the opening section of *Scherz und Spiel*. The first is a group of three sixteenth notes ending with an eighth note (ex.: m. 1, right hand). It appears in virtually every measure of the A section. Aside from its original version it is also found in an abbreviated guise as two sixteenths (m. 7) or as a triplet (m. 8 and 16).



Figure 28: main motives in *Scherz und Spiel*.

The first motive is, in addition to rhythmic modifications, also varied melodically. Two basic forms can be identified: diatonic and chromatic. A diatonic variant is more common, while the chromatic alternative appears only at the beginning (mm. 1 and 9), just before the recapitulation (mm. 24 and 25) and again near the end of the work (m. 34). The expansion of the motive in the development section (mm. 17-28) emphasizes the contrast between the two melodic versions: in the left hand of mm. 23 and 25 we find a chromatic version which is transformed into a trill-like exchange in the dominant key. The two versions are combined in the left hand of mm. 26 and 27: a trill-like variant (second half of m. 26) is enclosed by diatonic scalar passages ending in a descending G Major scale which ends at the beginning of the recapitulation of the first theme.

The second motive is a series of eighth notes. The main theme is a succession of the two motives and is only one measure long; it can be found in its entirety in the right hand of m. 1 (Figure 28). The second motive fulfills two functions: immediately following the first motive it

concludes the main theme of the section. On the other hand, when the main theme enters in another voice, it turns into an accompanying figure. This type of writing may be described in polyphonic terms: the theme represents the main subject, and the continuation of the eighth-note motive functions as a countersubject in terms of its rhythmic content (not melodic, as the subject and countersubject's melodic properties are consistently varied). This manner of composition was also used in *Humoreske*, particularly in the second theme of the first section (m. 69 ff).

The difference in importance of the two motives is highlighted by the use of contrasting dynamics. The opening gesture in sixteenths is marked *forte*, whereas the following eighth notes are to be played *piano*. Although not explicitly specified, this arrangement of dynamics should probably be observed throughout the work as it emphasizes the polyphonic nature of the writing.

A novel compositional device for Wolf is metric displacement. It is mainly employed in the A sections and results in the blurring of the downbeats. Due to the nature of the first motive, the three sixteenth notes are aurally perceived as an upbeat to the following eighth note. Therefore, the perceived strong beat of each measure is the written second beat. The displacement is somewhat blurred by the insertion of a *sfz* on the third beat of m. 4, which temporarily disrupts the regularity of the procedure. Wolf restores it in the right hand of the following measure, while the lower voice (m. 5, left hand) becomes more independent and moves autonomously in groups of two or three beats. To account for metric displacement, Wolf needed to make up for the added beat at the end of the eight-measure phrase, which is accomplished by modifying the metric implication in m. 7-8, in effect creating 2/4 measures within a 3/4 framework (Figure 29). Metric displacement is absent from the middle section of *Scherz und Spiel*, owing to its more serious character. The concluding recapitulation, however, recaptures the displacement and uses it to conclude the work in a playful way. A compositional tool has in this way become also a poetic device.

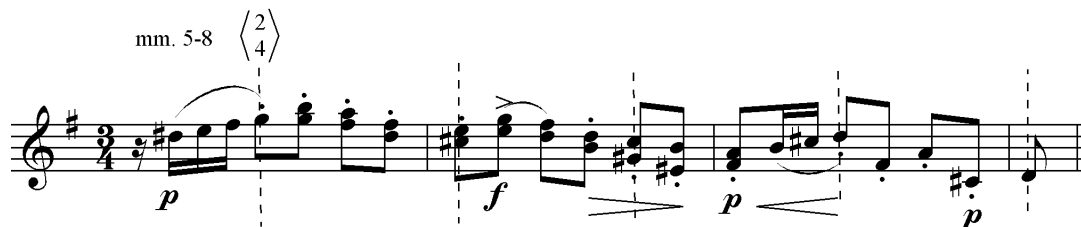


Figure 29: metric displacement in *Scherz und Spiel*.

Scherz und Spiel represents a pivotal step in the development of Wolf's style. Metric flexibility will be a hallmark of Wolf's subsequent output as well, and will help to mitigate the constant regularity of *Viertaktigkeit*.⁴⁸ Schumann and Brahms's frequent use of metric displacement is of course the model and inspiration for Wolf's use of this procedure.⁴⁹

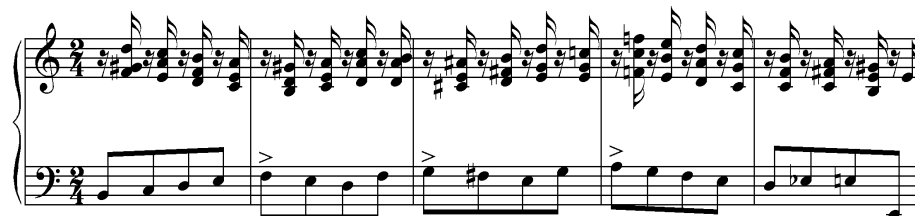


Figure 30: *Die Spinnerin*: measures 1-5; piano part

The harmonic rhythm of *Scherz und Spiel* is rapid. For instance, in measures 6 and 7 the harmony changes six times, so that every beat of each measure serves a different harmonic function. A similar harmonic pace can be observed throughout the work; this is in contrast to other works examined thus far and points to Wolf's mature works where this type of harmonic

⁴⁸ An example is *Auch kleine Dinge* from the Italian songbook, where the perceived downbeat is consistently misplaced to the second beat of the measure.

⁴⁹ For an example of metric displacement in Schumann's *Kinderszenen* look at *Kuriose Geschichte*.

spacing is more common. *Scherz und Spiel* is not the only early work to use this type of harmonic spacing: art song *Die Spinnerin* (composed in April 1878 and preceding *Scherz und Spiel* by about a month) uses a very similar principle (Figure 30).

The middle section of *Scherz und Spiel* provides strong contrast to the outer sections. At the beginning, the key of B Minor is brought to prominence. In addition, instead of the detached articulation of the opening section, legato lines are employed. The sixteenth-note climax in m. 19 is derived from the motive of the opening section (m. 1). In addition to expanding the original motive in length this passage also inverts its melodic direction to a descending form. Similarly, the ascending and descending quarter notes in the outer voices of mm. 17-18 and 21-22 could be seen as the reinterpretation and augmentation of the primary eighth-note motive. The middle section serves as the climax of the work also in terms of dynamics: *forte* prevails, except for the brief echo (*piano*) of the climactic run in m. 20. In this section, the metric displacement is abandoned in favor of a more common three-beat arrangement. Homophonic writing replaces the imitative style of the opening segment. However, the semblance of polyphony is preserved in the form of contrary motion between the outer voices in mm. 17-18 and 21-22. In m. 23 the minor key is abandoned as suddenly as it emerged in m. 18. The two rhythmic motives return to form a familiar succession of sixteenth and eighth notes (Figure 31).



Figure 31: rhythmic correlation between m. 1 and m. 23.

In mm. 24-26 the rhythmic motives are distributed between the two hands. The sixteenth-note motive is transformed into a chromatic version which alternates between the two pitches in a trill-like fashion. The chromatic version of the motive is significant in that it appears at crucial moments in the piece: at the beginning, just before the recapitulation and at the conclusion. Similarly, the eighth-note motive is altered into octave leaps (mm. 24-25), which emphasize the motive's flexible melodic potential.

The return of the first theme begins in the same way as its statement at the beginning of the work. Modifications start on the third beat of m. 31: instead of the vii^{07}/I , here is found a $\text{vii}^{07}/\text{ii}$ (in the second inversion) leading to the descending stepwise sequence (A Minor in m. 32 and G Major in m. 33) of the familiar motives. In m. 34 we find the same material in D Major. All these statements are anticipated by the respective vii^{07} chord on the third beat of each preceding measure. The final statement on the dominant resolves the harmonic progression to the concluding tonic. The final note in the left hand of m. 34 should be a D natural and not the printed D#, as the underlying harmony is a dominant seventh and not a diminished chord. Metric displacement returns; the metric pattern of the concluding four measures is similar to the one in the exposition. The voices (as distributed between the two hands) are displaced by different amounts: the right hand uses as its perceived downbeat the second beat of each measure whereas the left hand employs the third. Only in the two concluding measures is the displacement rectified through the inclusion of perceived 2/4 measures.

Schlummerlied and *Scherz und Spiel* share many elements. First, the key (G Major) and the time signature (3/4) are the same. Secondly, they are nearly identical in length (they differ only by two measures). Finally, their respective main motives share a similar basic outline: shorter note values (eighth notes in *Schlummerlied* and sixteenth notes in *Scherz und Spiel*) are followed by longer ones (quarter notes and eighth notes, respectively). Moreover, the basic

contour of the motives is similar (ascending-descending pattern). Figure 32 illustrates the similarity between the two main themes.

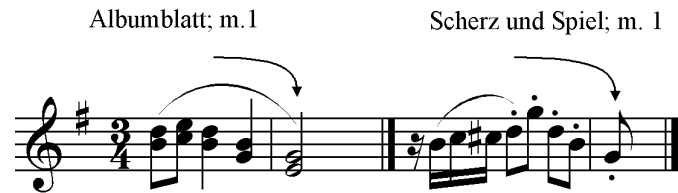


Figure 32: main themes in *Schlummerlied* and *Scherz und Spiel*.

Schlummerlied and *Scherz und Spiel* are precursors to a better-known pairing of works in Wolf's mature opus. *Der Knabe und Das Immelein* and *Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag* from Mörike songs (1888) are coupled in a similar way.⁵⁰ Even though not presented in succession by Mörike, they follow each other in Wolf's songbook. In this case, the musical connection is even more obvious, as the opening verse of *Der Knabe und Das Immelein* is restated almost verbatim in the *Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag*. The reason for this association is rooted in the poetic message: both songs share the musical motive that describes the emptiness that results from a lover's absence. In *Der Knabe und Das Immelein* this emptiness is followed by a playful conversation between the boy and the bee, concluding with a hopeful hymn-like ode to imagined love. In *Ein Stündlein wohl vor Tag*, on the other hand, upon the realization of the boy's unfaithfulness, the emptiness turns into desperation and a denial of love. The shared musical motive is used throughout to depict the disappointment and despair of the protagonist. The piece ends on the dominant (D

⁵⁰ Hugo Wolf: *Gedichte von Eduard Mörike für eine Singstimme und Klavier* (Leipzig: C.F. Peters, 1890).

Major), further emphasizing the unfulfilled longing. In this way the two songs at the same time contrast and complement each other, much like the two piano works.⁵¹

It is not known whether Wolf intended *Schlummerlied* and *Scherz und Spiel* to be part of a longer cycle that would be more analogous to Schumann's *Kinderszenen*. As has been shown, Wolf's formative period of composition is filled with unfinished compositions and projected cycles. However, the two works in existence function perfectly well in the preserved format. They should by all means be played as a pair, as only in this way can their message of complementary aspects of childhood be fully understood.

Über Nacht

Über Nacht was written on May 23 and 24, 1878, only 4 days after the two works for piano. It deals with subject matter that has a lot in common with the two piano pieces from *Aus der Kinderzeit*. Both works focus on exploring aspects that are at the same time contrasting and complementary. In the case of *Über Nacht* the contrast is more pronounced, because the poem deals with exact opposites. The first verse depicts the pain and suffering caused by night's dark thoughts by describing the resulting anxiety and sorrow upon waking; accordingly, the musical setting is slow and in a minor key. On the other hand, the second verse focuses on the joyous dream that disperses the dark thoughts; it is lively and in a major key. The third verse presents a synthesis of the first two (Figure 33).

The main difficulty in setting this poem to music is the irregular poetic meter of the stanzas. All the verses follow a similar model: the first four lines are the same and employ a mixed meter which is built from a series of anapests (x x /) or iambs (x /):

⁵¹ For a further discussion of these works, see: Susan Youens. *Hugo Wolf and his Mörike Songs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

x x / x x /

x / x /

x / x x /

x / x x /

On the other hand, the meter of the final two lines varies from verse to verse:

Verse 1:

x / x x / x x / x

x / x / x / x

Verse 2:

x / x / x x / x

x / x / x / x

Verse 3:

x / x x / x / x

x / x x / x

As a result, each of the three verses calls for a different ending, which excludes the possibility of a simple strophic musical setting. Wolf uses this to his advantage to portray contrasting poetic messages. In the first verse, the final two lines feature a return of the motive from the piano introduction, set to the words *Weinen und Sorgen*. In this way the opening motive is revealed as the musical representation of anguish and anxiety. In the second verse, on the other hand, the final two lines represent the musical climax of the song with majestic E-flat Major chords in the piano and a high G in the voice to the words *und Freude ist gewonnen* (and joy triumphs). The third verse returns to the more solemn tone and incorporates a hymn-like musical setting of the words *und gehen dem Herrn zu sagen* (and go to report to the Lord). Therefore, the main contrast in the song is the struggle between the first and second verses as they depict opposite thoughts, much like the two pieces in *Aus der Kinderzeit*, which deal with differing aspects of childhood.

ÜBER NACHT

Über Nacht, über Nacht,
Kommt still das Leid,
Und bist du erwacht,
O traurige Zeit,
Du grüssest den dämmernden Morgen
Mit Weinen und mit Sorgen.

Über Nacht, über Nacht,
Kommt still das Glück,
Und bist du erwacht,
O selig geschick,
Der duster Traum ist zerronnen,
Und Freude ist gewonnen.

Über Nacht, über Nacht,
Kommt Freud und Leid,
Und eh du's gedacht,
Verlassen dich beid
Und gehen dem Herrn zu sagen,
Wie du sie getragen.

IN THE NIGHT

In the night, in the night,
Sorrow comes silently,
And when you awake,
Oh, sad moment,
You greet the awakening Morning
With tears and anxiety.

In the night, in the night,
Happiness comes silently,
And when you awake
Oh, blessed fate
The gloomy dream has vanished,
And joy triumphs.

In the night, in the night,
Come joy and sorrow,
And ere you have thought of it,
Both of them leave you,
And go to report to the Lord
How you have endured them.

Figure 33: *Über Nacht*, the German text and a translation.

Because of a similar number of syllables, each verse is able to occupy the same number of measures. As expected, Wolf employs the standard solution of eight measures per verse. The

first four lines of each verse occupy one measure each, whereas the final two lines are extended (due to a larger number of syllables) to take up two measures each.

The anxiety of the first verse begins with the two-measure introduction. The harmony of the first measure (Figure 34) is built on the second scale-degree of E-flat Minor, resulting in a half-diminished chord. Falling intervals of the fifth (in soprano) and seventh (in the bass) further emphasize the anxiety of the text. In the second measure this sonority leads to a B-flat⁷ dominant harmony that resolves to the minor tonic on the first beat of m. 3, where the sung verse starts. The verse is slow (*Mässig langsam*) and in a minor key (despite the key signature); sparse chordal accompaniment gives it a somber and recitative-like character.



Figure 34: *Über Nacht*, piano introduction.

The second verse, on the other hand, is quick (*Rasch*) and in the parallel major key. If the first verse served as a recitative, this one could easily be described as an aria, complete with fluid accompaniment and a clear melodic direction towards the climactic high G in m. 18. There is ample musical evidence that in Wolf's interpretation the two verses deal with the same subject matter: the melodic contours are almost identical, the only variation being the mode of tonality. Only in the settings of the final two lines of each verse does the melody change.

The third verse is somewhat separated from the first two in the original poem as well as in Wolf's setting. It provides commentary and a synthesis of the dramatic action in the rest of the work. Accordingly, the musical setting is sparse, the tempo returning to the initial *Mässig langsam*. The melodic shape is almost entirely new; the only element shared with the preceding verses is the rhythm of the melodic line which, except for the final three measures, is identical to the other verses. Accompaniment is reduced to a minimum with sustained chords merely outlining the harmonic progressions. The setting of the text (vocal line) ends in a minor key. Only in the final measure, at the end of the postlude, does the mode turn again to major to promote the glimmer of hope that is exposed in the second verse. The conflict between joy and sadness is therefore present also in the contrast between major and minor modes.

In this song we see the increased importance of instrumental interludes, at least compared to earlier songs such as *Morgentau*. The significance of the opening motive has already been discussed. Aside from setting the tone of the work, it appears before each verse and in the instrumental postlude. The frequency of its use indicates that however happy (second verse) or philosophical (third verse) we may be, fear and anxiety are never far away. In addition, the second and third verses feature newly composed instrumental interludes. After the second verse, a short new theme is introduced (mm. 19-21). It bridges the gap between the triumphant high register of the final stanza of the second verse and the reappearance of the opening motive. The character of this interlude continues the sunny disposition of E-flat Major and only at the end surrenders suddenly to the familiar half-diminished harmony of m. 22. Similarly, the interlude after the third verse (mm. 31-33) continues the somber pacing of the corresponding verse. It is already in a minor mode, therefore the transition to the final appearance of the opening motive is less striking. It is worth noting that none of the new motives presented in the piano part has anything in common musically with the others or with the voice part itself. Considering Wolf's

obsession with internal unity, it is surprising to see such a multitude of themes and motives. In light of this, the importance of the opening motive (Figure 34) is further enhanced as it (besides the rhythmic commonalities between melodic lines) serves as the thread holding together the many contrasting aspects of this work. In *Über Nacht* we also note the increased independence of voice and piano parts. Building on the innovations of Schumann, the two parts complement and comment upon one another in complex ways. The contrast in character between the piano parts of the two opening verses is the case in point.

Über Nacht anticipates the direction of Wolf's creative impulse more clearly than *Schlummerlied* and *Scherz und Spiel*. His talent of developing an intimate relationship between poetry and music is the driving force behind the liberation from reliance on influences of other composers. Whereas the two piano pieces betray the influence of Schumann, *Über Nacht* displays a move towards a more modern and individual language. At the same time, *Schlummerlied* and *Scherz und Spiel* possess similar compositional craft and imagination. Their value is not diminished on the basis of their conservative tonal and formal design.

It is surprising that the influence of Wagner on young Wolf, despite Wolf's professed and ardent conversion to "Wagnerianism" is not more evident in the younger composer's work at this time (late 1878). It seems as if Wolf is leading a double life: in instrumental music he follows the example of composers of absolute forms, but it is only in the union between poetry and music that some of the Wagnerian principles of "musical drama" are employed. Throughout Wolf's life, it will be only in settings of poetic texts that the application of Wagnerian harmony and aesthetics will be successfully utilized (even *Penthesilea*, his symphonic poem from 1883-1885, is based on a poetic background). In the *Italian Serenade* (1887), a Scherzo-like movement for string orchestra, Wolf returns to absolute forms and harmony. The relative success of the *Italian Serenade* and certain other instrumental compositions, including the early *Scherzo and Rondo*

capriccioso and certain works for piano, indicates that Wolf's talent was not as one-sided as has been commonly accepted. Even though the instrumental works are not written in a typical "Wolfian voice," they exhibit the creativity and vitality that equal the more familiar work in the genre of the art song.

**Paraphrases on Wagner's "Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg" and "Die Walküre"
(1880)**

The two Paraphrases will be afforded only a cursory examination. In terms of compositional development, which is the central topic of this paper, they offer but little insight. It is well known that Wolf was a fervent Wagnerian from the time he arrived in Vienna at the age of fifteen; in social settings he would often impose on others his renditions of Wagner operas, often to the dismay of his more conservative friends and patrons. In 1876, when he returned to Slovenj Gradec for the first time since he had moved to Vienna, he played for his parents the *Tannhäuser* overture, assaulting their piano and, in the course of the performance, causing four hammers to fall off.⁵²

The Paraphrases were never published, but they were likely given as a gift to Dr. Joseph Reitzes, whose summer residence in Mayerling was Wolf's home during the summer months of 1880 and 1882.⁵³ There, Wolf often played the piano for other guests, and the paraphrases were probably written for some of those occasions. Reitzes's attempts to publish the works after Wolf's death were unsuccessful, and the manuscript remains in private possession.⁵⁴ The edition in Wolf's Collected Works is therefore their first appearance in print.

As sources for Wolf's transcriptions of the operas one can easily identify contemporary editions of vocal scores (vocal parts with piano reduction of the orchestral score). For both

⁵² Walker, *Hugo Wolf: A Biography*, 40.

⁵³ Hugo Wolf, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 18: *Klavierkompositionen*, Preface, [n.p.].

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

paraphrases Wolf used the scores published by Schott;⁵⁵ for *Die Meistersinger* he used Karl Tausig's arrangement (1868), for *Die Walküre* one by Karl Klindworth (1875), often copying extended passages note-for-note.

The only original idea occurs at the beginning of *Die Walküre*. There we find a succession of three motives that never appear in that order in the opera, namely the "Walsungs," "Sword" and "Hunding." The first two are set by Wolf in E Minor, which is not their original key, whereas the final one is found in the original key of F Minor. With his choice of the opening key, Wolf was perhaps striving to achieve tonal unity within the paraphrase, as it ends in a parallel key of E Major (as does Wagner's opera). If that is the case, Wolf again shows himself to be classically minded, which is in stark contrast to his admiration of Wagnerian aesthetics and is at the heart of the main conflict in Wolf's creative life.

In following the initial idea, Wolf dutifully repeats the invented succession of motives in their original keys (in C Minor, C Major and F Minor, respectively). However, as soon as the second statement concludes, the original association of motives is abandoned, and Wolf starts quoting extended passages directly from the opera (m. 27ff). It is possible that Wolf initially had different hopes for the *Die Walküre* paraphrase. He may have envisioned a more individual reinterpretation of Wagner's drama⁵⁶ but soon found the task too difficult and settled instead for a work at hand.

Traditionally, paraphrases utilize a familiar theme in an original way, most often according to the principle of variation. However, Wolf's contribution mostly consists of conflating the vocal line and the piano reduction (often he only transcribes the orchestral reduction and leaves out the vocal line) and deciding which passages of operas to use. In this

⁵⁵ Hugo Wolf, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol.18: *Klavierkompositionen*, Preface, [n.p.].

⁵⁶ The collection of the three opening motives may have intended to portray the confrontation ("Sword" motive) between the race of the Walsungs and Hunding.

sense, Wolf's works are not so much paraphrases as they are arrangements, or *potpourris*. As such, these works are perhaps most useful for domestic consumption. For those wishing to familiarize themselves with the most important motives and themes in two of the best-known Wagner operas, Wolf's arrangements can be a rewarding first step.

The ending of *Die Walküre* is perhaps the one exception and may be valuable to public performers as well. Wolf rewrites Klindworth's rather cumbersome arrangement in a way that is considerably easier to play and sounds far better on the piano. During the final juxtaposition of the "Magic Sleep" and "Fate" motives he rewrites the original thirty second notes as sixteenths (sextuplets), thus making the texture less thick. There is a recent recording of this work made by Mikhail Rudy;⁵⁷ he starts in m. 392 and plays to the work's conclusion. In this way a section of Wolf's paraphrase can be turned into a successful concert piece. I believe a similar effect could be achieved with his transcription of the "Spring Song" (*Du bist der Lenz*) from the first act of the opera. In Wolf's paraphrase the song starts in m. 111 and ends in m. 146. In this case, Wolf fits the tenor melody with the orchestral reduction to create a section that is not too difficult to execute pianistically while still delivering all the important components of the original Wagnerian score.

It is only natural that any of Wolf's attempts at transcribing music by his idol would eventually turn into an act of imitation. His transcriptions are a testament of his admiration for Wagner. However, Wolf often professed frustration with the lack of artistic options left in Wagner's wake. As has been shown, this dissatisfaction is one of the reasons for Wolf's late maturity and his turning away from Wagner's colossal demands to a more intimate form of musical expression, namely the art song.

⁵⁷ Mikhail Rudy, *Wagner-Siegfried Idyll*, EMI Records, 2003. Compact disc.

Kanon (1882)

This work was written on July 6, 1882 for Lotte, daughter of Viktor Preyss, who took piano lessons from Wolf during his second stay at Mayerling. The Preyss family rented the residence for the summer and took in the young musician as a guest. *Kanon* was likely written as an exercise in sight-reading and counterpoint. This is further demonstrated by the inclusion of fingerings for almost every note.

As a composition, *Kanon* should not be overlooked. Due to a lack of formal training, Wolf had in his time often been thought of as deficient in the discipline of counterpoint. In their only meeting, when Wolf was only sixteen, Brahms suggested that he take counterpoint lessons from Nottebohm, one of the most respected (and expensive) teachers in Vienna. Naturally, Wolf could not afford the fees, but, as his works show, he took the advice to heart and devoted himself to private study of this difficult discipline. In this respect, *Kanon* is quite an accomplished demonstration. It is a simple, but consistent canon at the octave, with the lower voice trailing the higher by half a measure. The piece is only nine measures long. The phrase structure is quite regular; the extension by one measure occurs in mm. 8 and 9 to accommodate the canonic delay. The familiar two-measure phrase-structure prevails: after two measures of C Major, Wolf reaches the dominant in m. 3. In m. 5, the opening motive is restated, and in m. 6, C Major turns into a V/IV, resolving to IV in m. 7. A dominant-tonic exchange brings the work to a close.

In scholarship on Hugo Wolf, the years from 1881 to 1883 are known as “years of indecision.”⁵⁸ In 1882, for example, aside from several abandoned works, Wolf completed only four songs. However, the quality of these is higher than that of any from the preceding years. *Mausfallensprüchlein*, from June 18th, is the most accomplished, although *Wiegenlied in Sommer* and *Wiegenlied in Winter* (Reinick) are not far behind. All three were included in Wolf’s first

⁵⁸ Walker, *Hugo Wolf: A Biography*, 118.

publication, *Sechs Lieder für eine Frauenstimme* (1888). They show for the first time a marked shift in harmonic language towards a more chromatic idiom, possibly inspired by another important event for Wolf: in August of 1882, he was able to procure for himself one of the free tickets for the Bayreuth premiere of Wagner's *Parsifal*.⁵⁹ With financial help from his friends he was able to attend and was enormously inspired by the occasion. *Mausfallensprüchlein* and *Kanon* reflect the happiness of Wolf's summers in Maierling and show Wolf's witty side, which is often overlooked due to the emotional weight of his profound masterpieces of later years.

⁵⁹ Walker, *Hugo Wolf: A Biography*, 118.

CONCLUSION

This survey of Hugo Wolf's early works shows that, even though they do not represent Wolf at his best and most accomplished, they are still important and necessary building blocks on his path to maturity. Within the pages of these works, the essential parts of Wolf's later achievements are developed nearly to the point of mastery.

The first typically Wolfian element is the adherence to symmetrical phrase-structures. Wolf almost invariably uses two-measure units as the basic element of phrase-building. At first (as for example in *Variations*, op.2 and in *Sonata in G Major*, op. 8), this insistence seems to be the result of imitating the classical masters, but it soon becomes Wolf's own, as for example in *Humoreske* or in *Schlummerlied* and *Scherz und Spiel*, where the monotony of phrasing is avoided through the use of imitation and other rhythmic devices that anticipate Wolf's mature work. Even though the harmonic language of the formative works is considerably different from that displayed in Wolf's mature output, an evolution from simple classical idioms in the earliest works to a more decorated Romantic language in later ones can be observed, again culminating in the Schumannesque *Humoreske*, *Schlummerlied* and *Scherz und Spiel*. In terms of formal preferences, a shift occurs from the large structures of the Classical period to increasingly more intimate forms, which will culminate in Wolf's eventual solution: the reliance on the art song as his main means of expression. The two works from *Aus der Kinderzeit* are in their scope indeed very close to the genre of the art song. Without a doubt, the main achievement of Wolf's early works is the fine-tuning of his apparently inborn sense of motivic unity. Tentative experiments that start in *Variations*, op.2 culminate in *Humoreske*, *Schlummerlied*, and *Scherz und Spiel*, which are all derived from single motives, not unlike some of Wolf's greatest mature masterpieces (for an example, look at *Das verlassene Mägdlein* from Mörike songs).

Perhaps the most surprising discovery is that none of these works shows a marked influence of Wagner, even though Wolf was at the time clearly familiar with and entranced by his idol's work. Instead, influences of two other types prevail: composers who mainly produced large instrumental forms (Beethoven, Mozart, and Mendelssohn) and inventors of intimate early-romantic character pieces (Schubert, Schumann, and Chopin). Wolf's early compositional preferences indicate that Wagner's influence has often been overemphasized and that his profound admiration of Wagner frequently resulted in a deliberate rejection of Wagner's style and aesthetics.

Admirers of Wolf are so used to examining his output in conjunction with poetry and the poetic message that it may seem somewhat unnatural to consider some of his compositions in terms of absolute music. However, in our attempt to achieve a more complete view of Wolf as a great composer, we should responsibly examine all aspects of his output, including the formative and lesser-known works.

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VITA

Jure Rozman was born in Slovenia, where he started his musical education at the age of nine. Following secondary education at the Secondary Music School in Ljubljana (Slovenia), he continued studies at the University Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria. There he studied piano performance with Karl-Heinz Kämmerling and graduated in 2001. In 2003 he completed his Master of Music Degree at Louisiana State University in the class of Professor Constance Carroll. Presently, he is presently in a doctoral program at LSU and a student of Professor Michael Gurt.

Jure Rozman has won several awards, including the first prizes in Slovene National Piano Competitions in 1995 and 2001. In addition, he has recorded numerous solo piano works for the Slovene National Radio. He has performed as a soloist with the Slovene Youth Orchestra, the Slovene Philharmonic Orchestra and the LSU Symphony Orchestra. He has frequently presented solo and chamber music recitals in Slovenia, Austria, Germany, Italy, Czech Republic, Croatia and USA.