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Marie C. Miller
Emporia State University

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A product of the German Romantic national cultural renaissance, Robert Schumann was one of the foremost stimuli of the young European Romantic movement (Moss, 1997). As a youth he was introduced to the fiercely independent German Romantic idealism of his day – respect for the rights of the individual, deep appreciation for the use of reason, and an undying sense and need for German unification.

Robert Schumann (1810-1856) was born into a family that espoused cultural awareness and appreciation. As a youth, Robert was highly influenced by the writings of Byron, Sir Walter Scott, and Jean Paul Richter (Moss, 1997). He developed an early interest in both literature and music. He composed his first musical works at the age of seven. He wrote poetry and began two novels, *Juniusabende* and *Selene*, the former completed in 1826. One of Robert's early writings was included in *Portraits of Famous Men*, edited by his father (Piano Paradise). Robert's many interests are detailed in his diary, a vast commentary collection that the author maintained through most of his life.

Robert, encouraged by his mother, moved to Leipzig in 1821 to study law. During his first year in Leipzig, he undertook piano studies with Friedrich Weick and continued a variety of musical and literary activities. Letters to his mother and journal entries detail Robert's continual struggle to maintain literary activities, musical composition, and piano performance studies. In a 1829 letter to his mother, Robert self-described his pianist abilities:

I have arrived at the conviction that with work, patience, and a good teacher, I would be able, within six years, to surpass any pianist. Besides... I have an imagination and perhaps a skill for the individual work of creation. (Moss, 2007, ¶3)

A journal entry (1830) described Schumann's self-evaluation as "excellent in music and poetry – but not a musical genius; {my} talents as musician and poet are at the same level" (Moss, 2007, ¶4).

In an attempt to develop his performance abilities, Robert moved in with Friedrich Weick undertaking a regimen of daily piano lessons, music theory studies, and composition. Tradition relates Robert's attempt to utilize a mechanical device to strengthen his right hand. More recent literature (Daverio, 2007; Moss, 2007) indicates that the use of mercury treatments for syphilis may have caused crippling of his right hand. The result permanent damage proved to be the impetus that moved Robert into the dual roles of composer and music journalism.

Robert's composition efforts, not a topic specific to this paper, include broad and extensive variety of genres including opera, dramatic poem, choral works with orchestra, and symphonic and chamber orchestral compositions. Schumann is widely recognized as a period leader in piano solo literature and lieder for voice and piano. He developed several new musical forms including the choral and declamatory ballad, the dramatic song cycle, and a spiritual poem (his term) for chorus and orchestra (Daverio, 2007). As a composer, Schumann often dedicated long periods of time composing in one medium or form. His journal entries detail his long intensive compositional hours with the composer describing his work as an outpouring of deep intense emotions (Piano Paradise).

Considered a master of miniature forms characteristic of much of his solo piano literature, Schumann's works are often characterized by a soaring lyricism coupled with experimentation of the technical boundaries and limits of a given genre or form. He was fond of mixing literary ideas with music to produce compositions that were both enigmatic and replete

with personal references. With the exception of several periods of deep depression, Schumann remained an active composer throughout his life until his final two years.

Schumann's role as music critic, honed early in his youth, was publicly acknowledged in his review of Frederick Chopin's Variations for piano and orchestra on *La ci darem la mano* from *Don Giovanni* published in *Allgemeine musikalisches Zeitung*. The work was discussed by Florestan and Eusebius, each character assuming opposite roles in the discussion and moderated by Meister Rora who ultimately offered his opinion. Florestan and Eusebius appear to be equivalents of Vult and Walt depicted in Jean Paul's novel *Flegeljahre* (Piano Paradise). Meister Rora, it is thought, originally represented Friedrich Wieck, Schumann's teacher, mentor, and father of Robert's wife Clara. In subsequent appearances, Meister Rora represented Schumann himself. This 1830 publication secured Schumann's acceptance by the arts community not only as a composer but also as a rising music critic.

In 1833, Schumann along with music enthusiasts pianist Julius Knorr, painter and composers J. P. Lyser, music critic E. A. Ortlepp and philosopher J. A. Wendt founded a music journal *Zeitschrift für Musik*. With an ambitious plan for a twice weekly production, the journal was intended as a vehicle for musical criticism in support for the masters and the traditions of classical music. The originators also intended the journal as a denouncement of the current trends complacency and mediocracy in music (Davidsbündler Homepage). In a June 28, 1833 letter to his mother, Schumann explained his vision:

We are chiefly possessed by a plan for a great new journal of music, ... prospectus and advertisement of which will appear as soon as next month. Its tone and color are to be fresher and better varied than the others. In particular we shall set up a dam against the even flow of the old, time-honored routine; ... The directors are ... mostly executive

musicians (nine-fingered me excepted) which at once gives the cause an air ...

(Schauffler, 1945, pg. 74)

The early issues were edited by Julius Knorr and published by Christian Hartmann. Schumann provided the majority of reviews and articles. Differences among the editorial board members (Knorr, Schumann, Friedrich Wieck, and Ludwig Schunke), the untimely death of Schunke, and dissatisfaction expressed by Hartmann, led Schumann to assume sole control of the journal. The first issue under Schumann's position as editor was published on January 2, 1835 under the title *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, a title that remains in publication today (Daverio, 2007).

The first issue of *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* Schumann officially declared the journal's purpose:

...to acknowledge the past and its creations and to draw attention to the fact that new artistic beauties can only be strengthened by so pure a source; next, to oppose the recent past as an inartistic period with only a notable increase in mechanical dexterity to show for itself; and finally, to prepare for and hasten the advent of a new, poetic future.

(Daverio, 2007, ¶ 9)

The editor's declaration of purpose was loosely based on the Romantic movement view of history: the past as a nurturing source for the present, the present as imperfect, and the future as the poetic age toward which both the past and present should aspire (Davidsbündler Homepage).

During the early years of the journal, the Davidsbündler society made its public debut.

The following provides an accurate description of this group:

At the center of the publication was a mysterious secret society, the Davidsbündler. The progressive Davidsbündler (League of David) was fanatically devoted to the tenet of high romanticism and strove at all times to overthrow the Philistines—bastions of bourgeoisie

tastelessness and complacency. The use of the term Philistine to demote the culturally ignorant or reactionally did not originate with Schumann, but he did popularize it.

(Maxwell & Du Van, 1984, pg. 31)

The references to the biblical King David appear to have been intentional with Schumann envisioning himself as the king leading his troops in the fight.

Davidsbündler membership, originally including the early board members of the first *Zeitschrift*, was highly selective as well as enigmatic with members assuming new names: Frederich Wieck was the original Meister Raro, although this name was later taken up by Schumann; Ludwig Schunke wrote under the name Jonathan. After Schumann assumed editorship of the *Neue Zeitschrift*, contributors often write under the guise of created characters. Mendelssohn was Felix Meritis; Clara Wieck (later Schumann's wife) contributed under several names including Chiarina, Chiara, and Zilia; Stephen Heller wrote under the name Jeanquirit. Johann Peter Lyser, as Fritz Friedrich, wrote fictional accounts of various composers; the characters of Vult and Walt from Jean Paul Richter's works appeared regularly. Eusebius and Florestan often contributed together representing two distinct views within a musical discussion, and possibly two contrasting sides of Schumann's own personality (Schauffler, 1945).

The Davidsbündler often assigned fictional names to non-Davidites. Karl Banck, a composer who attempted to court Clara and whom Schumann considered devious was named Serpentinus. Fink, the editor of the rival popular music journal *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, was named Knif.

Schumann worked diligently to maintain the secret identities of the Davidsbündler. In response to subscribers' questions about the association, Schumann countered in the *Neue Zeitschrift*:

Various rumors are floating about in regard to the undersigned association. As we unfortunately must, for the time being, withhold our reasons for veiling this matter, we beg Herr Schumann (in case such a person is known to the honorable board of editors), if circumstances demand it, kindly to represent us with his name.

The Davidsbündler

I'll of it with pleasure. R. Schumann (Schauffler, 1945, pg. 80)

The Davidsbündler society under Schumann's guidance rallied against cultural current interest in and support of what the society termed "banal and empty theatrical and virtuoso compositions" (Davidsbündler Homepage, ¶ 4) and performers of the period. Music of the Future as composed, performed, and prorogated by Liszt and Wagner according to the Davidites was rapidly becoming the language of intense, irrational, and unnecessary sensualism. The true music – that of Bach and Beethoven – espoused the qualities and language of poetic beauty and ideals and should be the sole basis for future compositional efforts. The composers, performers, and supporters of the Music of the Future were, according the Davidsbündler, attacking the very core and essence of the musical arts (Davidsbündler Homepage).

The issues of *Neue Zeitschrift* were widely diverse and, as intended, counteracted the "perceived critical indifference of some earlier music journals, in particular, the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*" (Vosteen, ¶ 2). Schumann contributed well over three hundred articles, reviews, and critiques to the journal. Other writers including Oswald Lorenz, Alfred Julius Becher, Carl Ferdinand Becker, Heinrich Dorn, Gustav Adolph Keferstein, and Johann Lobe reported on musical events, current musical genres, new composers and compositions. The *Neue Zeitschrift* provided a comprehensive and cosmopolitan view of music across Europe (Vosteen). The journal continues today as a vehicle for information on contemporary music as well as

interdisciplinary subjects. Today it is a publication of Schott Music found in forty-plus countries.

Schumann, as editor from 1835 to 1843, and as the primary writer, was, perhaps, one the primary influences on the direction of music of that period. A champion of the music of past masters, he, along with the *Dauidsbüundler*, viewed the past as the source of inspiration and stimulation for composers of his day. He viewed his musical times as imperfect and continually focused on future aspirations. Schumann, unlike fellow Romantics within other art forms of his period, observed that musical development and progress moved not in a continuous progression, but rather characterized by both forward advancement and stagnant or backward movement. He continually grappled with the dilemma of describing music, an auditory but non-verbal art form, in language understood by both artists and composers within the field as well as the broader general reader (Daverio, 2007). Schumann's literary work "embodied the most progressive aspects of music thinking in his time" (Vosteen, ¶8). His work drew attention to rising composers, new musical forms and genres, as well as stylistic developments in both composition and performance.

Many of his contributions to the *Neue Zeitschrift* were under the guise of Eusebius and Florestan. Eusebius and Florestan generally presented two different and, at times contentious, critiques of compositions, composers, and performers. Eusebius was the lyrical, quiet, introspective, and contemplative of the two. He is considered the embodiment of lyricism and appears to be the controlling force to Florestan's more flamboyant and impetuous personality. Florestan, the truer Romantic of the pair, often displayed a mercurial state of mind and quickly changing personalities.

Along with their literary appearances, Eusebius and Florestan were characterized by Schumann in four piano compositions. They first appeared in *Papillons*, Opus 2 (1830-1831), a series of short miniatures, each of which reportedly by the composer, created under the influence of either Eusebius or Florestan. *Carnival*, Opus 9 (begun in 1834 and published in 1839) with the original title of *Carnival Scenes on Four Notes by Florestan*. United by the musical notes of A, S (E flat), C, and H (B), *Carnival* is a series of miniature characterizations each with a unique descriptive title; Eusebius and Florestan are two of the miniatures. Other characterizations include members of the Davidsbündler (Chiarina, March of the Davidsbündler against the Philistines) as well as traditional carnival characters of Pierrot, Arlequin, and Pantalón and Colombine.

Schumann's *Sonata No. 1* (first edition of 1835) was described by the composer as "the collaborative effort of Florestan and Eusebius" (Maxwell & Du Van, 1984, pg. 39). The sonata was later retitled *Première Grande Sonate* in its second edition (1940); this edition deleted the names of Florestan and Eusebius and listed Schumann as the composer. The final musical appearance of Eusebius and Florestan is noted in the publication of *Davidsbündler Achtzehn Charakterstücke (Die Davidsbündler)* Opus 6 (1837). A two-volume collection of brief character pieces (1838 first publication) lists the title as *Davidsbündlertanze* with Eusebius and Florestan as the composers. Each piece was initialed with either E. or F. or E. and F. representing the work of the respective character or a collaboration of both. A second edition in 1851 reflected the new title *Die Davidsbündler*, removal of the initials, and acknowledgement of Schumann as the composer. (Maxwell & Du Van, 1984).

Eusebius and Florestan, selected by the composer/critic to represent himself, appear to give a very personal glimpse into Schumann's very personality, one characterized by duality and

a mix of literary and musical ideals (Machlis & Forney, 2007). Throughout his life, Schumann's public persona was acknowledged as much like that of Eusebius, an introspective and contemplative thinker who wished to be more like Florestan. Schumann declared himself the happiest when he was composing and writing about music. Clara provided much stability and support throughout their married life. Yet, despite his many accomplishments, Schumann was subjected to periods of irrational and overwhelming fear. He shied away from attracting attention and, of making direct definitive statements about music – he left those for Eusebius and Florestan. He feared physical disability, loss of hear, and of becoming mad. Following a suicide attempt (1854), Schumann was committed to a private asylum in Eendenich and remained there until his death (1856) (Piano Paradise).

Despite these severe limitations, Schumann received much public acclaim both as a composer and in his role as music critic and journalist. Much like Eusebius, Schumann declaimed public attention and often shied away from notoriety. He considered his writing as a safe refuge, one to which he constantly retreated. Yet, as a composer, he developed several new musical forms and carried these forms to apex level. As a music critic, writer, and editor, he seriously focused and directed cultural acceptance of Romanticism, not only in music but also in other art forms. He was the primary shaper of public musical taste of his day. His literary accomplishments illustrate the artistic and cultural period of his day as well describe that developmental period music historians term as Romantic. He explored the extremes of his day, both within his compositional efforts as well as in literary accomplishments. A portion of the review of Clara Wieck's *Soirées for Piano, Opus 6* by Florestan and Eusebius for the September 12, 1837 edition of the *Neue Zeitschrift* bears evidence of the duality with which Schumann viewed life:

What to we have, then, in these Soirées? What so they tell us? Whom do they concern? Are they comparable with the work of a master? For one thing, they tell us much about music, and how it surpasses the effusions of poetry, how one can be happy in pain and sad when happy. They belong to those who can delight in music without the piano, whose hearts swell to the bursting point at the sound of intimate yearning and inner song. And they belong to those already verses in the fraternal language of a rare species of art. As they, finally, a result? Yes, the way a bud is a result before it breaks out in the splendid colors of the blossoms, fascinating and important as is everything that harbours a future. (Schumann, 1836, ¶3)

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