On Text-Setting as Aspect-Seeing by Means of Music
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1. Listening to music (then talking about it)

Listening to music is logically prior to analysis. Analysis (or at least the kind I would like to argue for) gives you the chance to spend quality time with the music you love; to try to re-present chance to spend quality time with the music you love; to at least the kind I would like to argue for) gives you the

Listening to music is logically prior to analysis. Analysis (or metaphorically, the ‘wholeness’ may exemplify sluggishness, etc. In general, the music normal exemplifies, while at the same time the music will denote and exemplify. This means that a, the relation net is inherently rich, and it determines the result-
fourth) is disturbing, lies in the way the piano is made asynchronous to the voice (in rhythmical dissonance, as it were, with it). It seems, like the overall aspect Schumann elicits from the Eichendorff poem has to do with the lack of synchronization between the two worlds that correspond to the two halves of the poem. The local words-to-music reaction model is not adequate to account for this. We notice that the weinet-aspect, as well as the aspect of two contrasting temporal orders are the two principal aspects that Schumann sees in the Eichendorff text; in a way that his musical reactions to these spill over into different points in the course of the unfolding of the song.  

4. Words and Music  
As users of language we are able to make the distinction between actuality and different temporal frames of reference; also, the distinction between indicating, guessing, ordering, wishing, believing, comparing etc. What if one applies to language the filter of another medium, like painting, dance: one loses negation, temporal reference other than the actual, modalities like possibility, counterfactuals, necessity (or maybe it is all necessity?). In such a ‘translation’, apart from nouns, adjectives can be rescued too, but one needs to spend some time in the other medium to realize this: In an indirect way, the temporal element is rescued after all, and after a while one realizes that one can in the end have both actuality and long-term second order emerging qualities, which is what I think the equivalent of the adjectives. What, however, is for sure out of this list is: pronouns, prepositions, all the little syncategorematic words, and acts like the ones mentioned before: negation, as well as disjunction, entailment, conjecture, belief, doubt, wish, order etc. Ultimately, what gets lost in the passage from the linguistic to any other domain is the very distinction between Truth and Falsehood. All these is generally true for language set to music. Schumann (again) is exceptional: He has managed to set to music even the little syncategorematic words that introduce a simile: the comparative conjunctions ‘wie’, ‘als’, ‘als ob’.  

5. Case Study Schumann (II)  
Another song also from the periphery of audiences’ and critics’ attention is “Kommen und Scheiden”, no 3 from Opus 90, poems by Nikolaus Lenau. Here is the text Schumann set to music:

So oft sie kam, erschien mir die Gestalt/ so lieblich wie das erste Grün im Wald./ Und war sie sprach, drang mir zum Herzen ein’s süßes wie des Frühlings erstes Lied/ [im Hain].// Und als Lebewohl, sie winkte mit der Hand./ War’s, ob der letzte Jugendtraum mir schwand.

The song is in g flat major at the beginning and f sharp major, at the end: a first, almost visual hint (six flats – six sharps), at the Romantic identity-paradox (cf. Luhmann, 364). The presence in the text of the feminine figure is also ambivalent: she is a human person and/or an immaterial ‘Gestalt’. This ontological ambivalence is emphasized through the tone-setting use in the text – and their ingenious setting to music of – similes. Through its embedding in the context of the overall ambivalence of ‘her’ presence, Schumann is setting to music not the specific content of the similes (e.g. ‘das erste Grün im Wald’ or ‘des Frühlings erstes Lied’), but the very notion of a simile. Musically, this is brought about through the setting of every simile-introducing word to an ingenious harmony that clearly deviates from the principal tonality (all in all something like the musical equivalent to Eichendorff’s ‘meta-physical tac’ (Adorno, 73)). The other music-textual aspects relate to the composer’s reaction to the semantics of concrete verbs: ‘drang’, with the harmonic friction of the 2nd, ‘schwand’, with the homologous ‘elimination’ a. of b sharp to b natural, b. of the voice; opening the way to the piano postlude in f sharp major.

Listening to music is logically prior to analysis – of course, other approaches to analysis (e.g. more on the poetic side) are possible that might even dispense altogether with the listening experience. However, for the kind of analysis counting on the analyst’s involvement as a critical listener, listening to music is to analysis what dreaming is to planning.

Endnotes  
1 We can’t say about somebody ‘She is musical’, says Wittgenstein (T), if she is not able to talk about the music she seems to appreciate (Lectures, 6 n. 5; my emphasis); conversely, it could be argued that talking about music is meaningful only in relation to the quality of our involvement as listeners.
2 We may call it with Boerthold Hoeckner ‘distant analysis’, an allusion to Nouwens.
3 Wittgenstein refers originally to the Freudian explanations of jokes.
4 Wittgenstein brings indirectly music in the discussion: “Doesn’t it take imagination to hear something as a variation on a particular theme?” (PI, 181).
5 Another example of spilling over: the drone on c in the setting of the second verse is related to the auf der Lauer-aspect of the first line. In the second (fourth) verse, except for the early music-aspect, Schumann also notices musically the aspect of the passing years - aspect through the use of harmonic sequence.
6 “Analysis and criticism are deeply related modes of perception”, in Hoeckner, 82.

Literature  
Appendix


b) Robert Schumann, “Kommen und Scheiden” (op. 90, no 4):