

FORM AND PIANISTIC TEXTURE IN THE OPERATIC FANTASIES BASED ON  
*LA SONNAMBULA* AND *DER FREISCHÜTZ* OF FRANZ LISZT AND JULIAN  
FONTANA: A COMPARISON OF COMPOSITIONAL APPROACH

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This study examines and identifies the differences in compositional approach in the operatic fantasies based on Bellini's *La Sonnambula* and Weber's *Der Freischütz* by Franz Liszt and Julian Fontana. These four fantasies are placed in the context of musical conventions and audiences in the first half of the nineteenth century. The two operatic fantasies by Liszt that are included in this study are representative of reinterpretations that employ formal and textural features suitable for the concert repertoire of piano virtuosos. In contrast, the fantasies by Fontana are indicative of the potpourri style, and suitable both for amateur performance as well as for pedagogical use. The different functions and purposes of the operatic fantasies of Liszt and Fontana are compared and contrasted, with attention to each composer's respective intended audiences as well as their distinct compositional intentions.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The fantasy based on popular opera themes was one of the most popular genres of piano music in Paris in the first half of the nineteenth century. Numerous operatic fantasies were written and performed by virtuoso pianist-composers at that time, and the genre continues to enjoy popularity among concert-goers today. These works have also attracted attention of many scholars, which is evidenced by the arrival of dissertations, books, and articles on the subject with special interest especially concerning the fantasies of Franz Liszt.

Although the operatic fantasies by Franz Liszt and Julian Fontana selected for this investigation share the same operatic sources in Vincenzo Bellini (1801–1835) and Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826) [*La Sonnambula* (1831) and *Der Freischütz* (1821) respectively] a comparative study of these fantasy works has until now not been undertaken. Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine and identify the differences in compositional styles, analyzing the ways in which Liszt and Fontana utilized, adapted, and modified original operatic material in relation to form and pianistic texture.

The two operatic fantasies by Liszt that are included in this study are representative of reinterpretations that employ formal and textural features suitable for concert repertoire of pianist-virtuosos. In contrast, the fantasies by Fontana are representative of another type of fantasy: one suitable both for amateur concert performance as well as for pedagogical use.

To better understand the capabilities of these respective markets and how these composers factored into each, Chapter 2 provides an overview of operatic fantasies for the piano written in the first half of the nineteenth century. It addresses Liszt's and Fontana's contributions

to the operatic fantasy for the piano, and gives biographical information on the lesser-known pianist-composer, Julian Fontana.

Chapters 3 and 4 discuss the overall form and the pianistic texture of Liszt's two works, focusing on thematic material used in two operatic fantasies in relation to the original operatic sources. Chapter 3 presents Liszt's approach to the *La Sonnambula* fantasy, examining form and pianistic texture. It illustrates how Liszt redesigned the dramatic narrative form of the opera to craft a symphonic poem of the piano fantasy. Specific attention is given to the thematic treatment of materials, particularly motivic and thematic combination (such as motivic unification, the quasi-refrain theme, and thematic combination) and expansive texture treatment (such as, melodic embellishment, and three-layer texture). In a similar fashion, Chapter 4 examines overall form and pianistic texture in Liszt's *Der Freischütz* fantasy: thematic combination device, along with motivic and melodic unification, and exploration of texture using variation techniques (doubled melody in octave and vocal embellishment) and his expansive range of register.

Chapters 5 and 6 address Fontana's two operatic fantasies by using the same procedure of examining form and pianistic texture. Chapter 5 examines Fontana's *La Sonnambula* fantasy to illustrate how Fontana adapted the original material to achieve a potpourri-style using the popular vocal melodies. It further demonstrates Fontana's use of a compact form with vocal embellishment and chordal texture. It also shows how Fontana's reordering of the events of the opera influenced his compositional choices. Chapter 6 discusses Fontana's *Der Freischütz* fantasy and how it stands independent of Weber's original opera plot, with Fontana having selected only what he needed musically rather than following the sequence of Weber's opera. Equally important is that Fontana employed the musical device of motivic and rhythmic fragmentation as a unification technique, and texture intensification in the accompaniment.

Chapter 7 offers a comparative evaluation of fantasies by Liszt and Fontana, contrasting the differences in compositional approach: Liszt aimed his works to serve as professional-level compositions which may be viewed as “operatic fantasy as symphonic poem for piano,” while Fontana aimed his works to serve as amateur-level compositions for use as salon music and teaching pieces in a potpourri-style operatic fantasy for the piano. Despite these key differences in intent and desired market, both composers modified the original narrative, had an understanding of the musical impact of particular themes, and displayed a creative desire to offer their own personal perspective on the original work.

CHAPTER 2  
LISZT, FONTANA, AND THE OPERATIC FANTASY  
IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY

The Fantasy in the Early Nineteenth Century

In the early 1800s, opera was an extremely popular genre throughout all levels of society. Opera's popularity coincided with changes in piano music, piano design and the increased demand for public piano concerts. After the Restoration period of the early 1800s, Parisian society offered increased opportunities for the bourgeois, both socially and musically.<sup>1</sup> People could attend musical events held at such diverse public venues as opera houses, musical theaters, salons, public concert halls, and churches.

The early 1800s witnessed very significant changes in piano design due to developments by Sébastien Erard (1752–1831) and Ignaz Pleyel (1757–1831), two eminent piano makers in France who began manufacturing their pianos at mass rates. In addition to their famous concert grand instruments, Erard and Pleyel also put out upright pianos at a more reasonable price, due to smaller living quarters and increased demand for instruments.<sup>2</sup>

Multiple mechanical improvements allowed the piano's popularity to grow even more. These developments included heavier felt-covered hammers and thicker strings. There were enhancements to the iron bracing, and to both the sustaining and the *una corda* pedals. The keyboard range was expanded to seven octaves. These developments resulted in richer sound, more expansive dynamic range and more consistent tone quality.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Arthur Loesser, *Men, Women and Pianos: A Social History* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954), 342–45.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 339–40.

The double-escapement action of Erard, invented in 1821, allowed pianists to control tone quality, dynamics, voicing, and fast note repetitions.<sup>4</sup> Professional pianists were able to explore technical and musical aspects not heretofore possible;<sup>5</sup> it also became feasible for amateurs to perform with comparative ease. Piano manufacturers had to meet the increasing demand for instruments as more and more people took up piano either as professionals or amateurs.<sup>6</sup>

Capitalizing on opera's widespread popularity as well as developments in the instrument, the operatic fantasy for piano became one of the most explored and developed genres in Paris in the 1830s and 1840s.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, the years between 1825 and 1875 saw a marked emphasis on operatic piano arrangements and fantasies in various degrees of difficulty, and their publication was extensive.<sup>8</sup> While music publishers sought difficult fantasies for professional use, they also aimed to offer works suitable for amateur performers, as well as for pedagogical purposes. Therefore, virtuoso composer-pianists frequently arranged many famous operatic pieces to satisfy the diverse expectations of the Parisian audiences. Fantasies were written by virtuosos such as Franz Liszt (1811–1886), Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849), Sigismond Thalberg (1812–1871), Henri Herz (1803–1888), Johann Peter Pixis (1788–1874), Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778–1837), Ignaz Moscheles (1794–1870) and Friedrich Kalkbrenner (1785–1849), all of whom resided either occasionally or permanently in Paris.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 337–38 and Cyril Ehrlich, *The Piano: A History* (London: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1976), 22–23.

<sup>5</sup> Carl Humphries, *The Piano Handbook: A Complete Guide for Mastering Piano* (New York: Outline Press, 2007), 13.

<sup>6</sup> Loesser, 361.

<sup>7</sup> Calogero Di Liberto, “Fantasy on Cavalleria Rusticana in the Context of the Romantic Opera Fantasy for Piano” (D.M.A. diss., Rice University, 2006), 35.

<sup>8</sup> Loesser, 361.

<sup>9</sup> Di Liberto, 35.

The wildly famous *Robert le Diable* (1831) of Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791–1864) was the subject of a number of fantasies or similar works during the 1830s and 1840s. In the case of Chopin, the *Grand Duo Concertant sur des thèmes de Robert le diable*, B. 70 (1832) was written jointly with French cellist Auguste Franchomme (1808–1884), with whom he also performed the piece in 1832. Liszt's piano fantasy, *Réminiscences de Robert le diable*, S. 413 (1841) appealed to Parisian audiences because of his unparalleled adroitness and power. Very few could perform like Liszt, however. Thus, a work such as *Fantaisie sur des motifs favoris de Robert le Diable* by Carl Czerny (1791–1857), published in 1841, aimed specifically at the amateur market,<sup>10</sup> with its purposefully modest technical demands.

#### Franz Liszt and the Operatic Fantasy as Symphonic Poem for Piano

Franz Liszt was one of the most prolific composers of fantasies in the nineteenth century. He strove to create orchestral effects on the piano in his aim to represent multiple instruments and vocal characteristics. Liszt composed over fifty transcriptions, arrangements, fantasies, and paraphrases for the keyboard based on opera themes. Liszt popularized the piano fantasy by frequently including such works in his solo concerts.

Since his Parisian debut on 7 March 1824,<sup>11</sup> Liszt's performances prominently featured opera-inspired fantasies and transcriptions.<sup>12</sup> Particularly in the years between 1839 and 1847, Liszt worked on operatic fantasies both as an independent genre and as a vehicle for bravura display of his own abilities as a pianist. His Parisian concerts between 1836 and 1844 included fantasies on *Les Huguenots* and *I Puritani* (1836), *Lucrezia Borgia* (1840), *Norma* (1841), *Don*

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<sup>10</sup> Loesser, 359.

<sup>11</sup> Pierre Azoury, *Chopin through His Contemporaries: Friends, Lovers, and Rivals* (London: Greenwood Press, 1999), 129.

<sup>12</sup> Kenneth Hamilton, *The Cambridge Companion to Liszt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 80.



*Giovanni* and *Robert le Diable* (1841).<sup>13</sup> Subsequently, he wrote additional fantasies based on the operas of other composers: in particular, five based on Bellini's operas and five based on Weber, including *La Sonnambula* and *Der Freischütz*, respectively. Liszt aimed to suit different musical purposes and his innovations took shape as a new genre which can be described as "operatic fantasy as symphonic poem for piano." Indeed, the term "symphonic poem" was originally coined by Liszt, and the style shares a number of conventions with the opera fantasy: heavy use of one or more motivic groups, insightful combination and juxtaposition of motives, and a dedication to an overarching dramatic aspect (often supplemented with literary programs).<sup>14</sup> In particular, the element of musical drama plays a key aspect in the compositional decisions undertaken by Liszt in the operatic fantasy.

Liszt adapted characteristics of his own symphonic poems, namely thematic metamorphosis and motivic transformation, to his operatic fantasies for piano. In taking this approach, Liszt employed the versatile sonic possibilities of the piano in order to evoke orchestral timbre and lyrical vocal characteristics. Liszt's fantasies on *La Sonnambula* and *Der Freischütz* can be considered among the best examples of his musical innovation in conceiving the operatic fantasy as symphonic poem for piano: in both *La Sonnambula* and *Der Freischütz*, Liszt exploited multi-layered textures and thematic mixtures, his two most frequently used compositional characteristics.

In a letter to his secretary, Belloni, Liszt made his special concern and dedication evident, "I'm working as though possessed on fantasies taken from melodramas: ...*Sonnambula*, *Freischütz*. ... This is a new vein I have discovered and I want to draw all I can from it. These

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<sup>13</sup> Humphrey Searle, *The Music of Liszt*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004), 128–33.

<sup>14</sup> Keith T. Johns, *The Symphonic Poems of Franz Liszt*, Franz Liszt Studies Series 3 (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1997), 9–11.

pieces are incomparably more effective than things I have written previously.”<sup>15</sup> It is surprising, therefore, that not only is there no record of his own performance of the work, but Liszt’s *Der Freischütz* fantasy had remained unpublished in his lifetime. Only in 2011 was the score published, edited by Wolfgang M. Wagner. Regardless, it is evident that writing and playing his operatic fantasies, as “symphonic poems for piano,” served as an important means for Liszt to channel his skill, and that his symphonic poem facilitated his creative drive for years.

#### Julian Fontana and the Operatic Fantasy in Potpourri-Style for Piano

A noteworthy figure in the nineteenth century Parisian music scene was Julian Fontana (b.1810 Warsaw; d. 1869 Paris). The Polish virtuoso was active in Paris from 1832 to 1848 as a pianist, composer, and teacher. Fontana’s name has frequently appeared in music in association with Chopin. Fontana was a close friend and frequently entrusted with copying Chopin’s manuscripts. He was responsible for the publication of Chopin’s posthumous works, opp. 66–73, in 1855, and op. 74, in 1859. Only recently have scholars and academics taken a personal interest in Fontana as both a pianist and composer in his own right.

To a great extent, Fontana’s musical travels through the United States and Cuba between 1844 and 1846 proved essential to his compositional development. These travels resulted in a broader reach and dissemination of not only works by Liszt, Chopin, and Thalberg, but also of his own compositions. Works inspired by his time in Cuba hold a central place in Fontana’s output: representative works included mazurkas and compositions with a noticeable Latin influence indicative of his exposure to Cuban culture.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Letter from Franz Liszt to Belloni, qtd. in Wolfgang M. Wagner, preface to *Fantasie über Themen aus “Der Freischütz” für Klavier*, ed. Wolfgang M. Wagner (Mainz: Schott, 2011), [iii].

<sup>16</sup> William J. Rodriguez, “The Internet Revival of Julian (Jules) Fontana,” *Julian Fontana: In the Shadow of Chopin*, [http://julianfontana.com/bibliography/Internet\\_Revival\\_of\\_Julian\\_Fontana\\_rev2.pdf](http://julianfontana.com/bibliography/Internet_Revival_of_Julian_Fontana_rev2.pdf) (accessed November 20, 2011).

Fontana performed fantasy works to disseminate popular operatic melodies for public amusement at salons and private venues, as a way to inspire young pianists and amateurs to perform similar works. It would appear that not only was Fontana inspired to compose operatic fantasies, but also the pieces featured in his public concerts were the fantasy works composed by his major contemporaries. For example, at his New York concert, in 1846, Fontana's recitals included Chopin's *Fantasy* op. 49 and the *Fantasy Impromptu* op. 66 at the Paris concert in 1856.<sup>17</sup> What his repertoire demonstrates, in the absence of any substantial data on the composer himself, is that the fantasy genre was Fontana's most frequently used musical form and thus may be seen to exemplify his craft as a composer and pianist.

Fontana also enjoyed success as a piano teacher during the Parisian years.<sup>18</sup> No historical evidence remains that points to Fontana's achievement as a teacher during that time; however, it is presumed here that Fontana's fantasies indicate a definite intention of using fantasies as both concert pieces and for teaching non-professional performers. This is evidenced by the literal arrangement of opera excerpts into relatively straightforward and smaller musical forms with limited textures. There are no specific accounts of Fontana's performances of his own operatic fantasies, but he can be credited with contribution to the genre.

Fontana's fantasies share a number of similarities with Carl Czerny's interpretation of the potpourri style of fantasy. Jesse Parker considers the potpourri style of Czerny's fantasies as a diverse assortment of themes and arrangements. Parker states that "Czerny wrote at least 304 pieces built on melodies from 87 different operas ... the great majority of these operatic fantasies were nothing but arrangements, ranging from the simple to the virtuosic, of various themes from

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<sup>17</sup> Rodriguez, "The Internet Revival."

<sup>18</sup> Aleksander Janta, *A History of Nineteenth Century American-Polish Music: With Annotated Bibliography and Illustrations* (New York: Kosciuszko Foundation, 1982), 5.

a particular opera, loosely strung together.”<sup>19</sup> In his *School of Practical Composition*, Czerny describes his interpretation of the formal construction of the fantasy genre, which includes themes as follows: single, several, known, capriccio, and potpourri.<sup>20</sup> Fontana’s operatic fantasies featured in this study consist of several themes and thematic fragments assembled in a manner to unify the overall form. Subsequently, this form can be extended via “a variation: another with a short development, or with brilliant, but not too difficult passages, [uniting] the different themes to each other by means of pleasing modulations, pauses or cadences, and [taking] the liveliest subject for the end, in order to obtain a gay and animated conclusion.”<sup>21</sup> These operatic fantasies are related not only by their development but also by various textural figurations and the creative reorganization of the original opera narrative. Fontana employs what Czerny illustrates as musical aspects in form and texture, which are derived from original materials within traditional fantasy conventions.

Fontana composed four operatic fantasies: two based on Bellini’s opera, *La Sonnambula*, one on Weber’s opera, *Der Freischütz*, and one on Daniel Auber’s (1782–1871) *Le Duc d’Olonne*. Fontana’s *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Première Fantasia Brillante sur des motifs de la Somnambule de Bellini*<sup>22</sup> and *Fantasia Brillante Pour le Piano Sur les motifs du Freyschutz de Weber* (1843), which were published by Tropenas in Paris,<sup>23</sup> are the most representative works to consider as a different type of fantasy from those of Franz Liszt. This type was one which was suitable for

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<sup>19</sup> Jesse Parker, “A Clavier Fantasy from Mozart to Liszt” (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1974), 123.

<sup>20</sup> Carl Czerny, *School of Practical Composition: Complete Treatise on the Composition of All Kinds of Music, Both Instrumental and Vocal, Together with a Treatise on Instrumentation, Opus 600*, tr. John Bishop, vol. 1 (New York: Da Capo Press, 1979), 82.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>22</sup> The extant score of a second fantasy on *La Sonnambula*, *Deuxième Fantasia Brillante pour le Piano sur des motifs de la Sonnambula de Bellini*, is currently not publicly available. The work is not covered in this study.

<sup>23</sup> Rodriguez, “The Internet Revival.”

salon music, for a dilettante market of young pianists and amateurs, and for pedagogical material.

As Liszt and Fontana represent dissimilar compositional approaches, analyzing the opera fantasies that they adapted from the same source material reveals the highly individual manner in which each composer balanced and modified the musical phrases present in the originals into their own unique musical form and style, and into a pianistic medium. Thus, it is significant to compare these works in terms of their form and pianistic texture as a means to better understand the scope of their intended musical goals.

## CHAPTER 3

### ANALYSIS OF OPERATIC FANTASY ON BELLINI'S *LA SONNAMBULA* BY LISZT

Since his adaptation of Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots*, Liszt's numerous operatic fantasies were renowned not only for their high level of technical difficulties but also for conveying what Ben Arnold considers "the dramatic core of the opera, an approach he would refine and master in his [following] Fantasies."<sup>24</sup> Particularly, in his *La Sonnambula* (*The Sleepwalker*, 1839), Liszt takes Bellini's original themes, modifying and extending them through a blend of diverse compositional techniques and putting them into a larger-scale form. Liszt processed his fantasy in a new experimental way, presenting fantasies as "symphonic poems for the piano," a compositional style based on opera melodies instead of on orchestral music.<sup>25</sup> Liszt's operatic fantasy for the piano provides new insight for exploring his numerous musical constructions, devices, elements, and virtuoso pianistic techniques. Particularly, Liszt integrates not only *bel canto* vocal lyricism but also orchestral sonorities. Liszt heightened the musical expression and dramatic intensity through his new keyboard writing style being characteristic of pianistic exhibition, something not previously conveyed by any other virtuosi and certainly not inherent in Bellini's opera.

#### Synopsis of Bellini's *La Sonnambula*

Bellini's opera deals with the lovers Amina (a village maiden) and Elvino (a farmer). Amina, who suffers from sleepwalking, causes a misunderstanding when she sleepwalks into the room of a traveling nobleman and falls asleep. Elvino arrives at the inn with a crowd of townspeople to hail their new lord, only to find Amina in an apparent act of infidelity. Act I ends

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<sup>24</sup> Ben Arnold, *The Liszt Companion* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2002), 180–82.

<sup>25</sup> Wolfgang M. Wagner, preface to *Fantasie über Themen aus "Der Freischütz" für Klavier*, by Franz Liszt, ed. Wolfgang M. Wagner (Mainz: Schott, 2011).

with Elvino calling the wedding off and storming out of the inn. Act II focuses on the reconciliation of Amina and Elvino, though Elvino remains doubtful of Amina. At the climax, Amina sleepwalks across a dangerous mill bridge at night where if she is awoken she might fall off and die. Elvino realizes the truth and goes to the other side of the bridge in order to catch Amina if she should cross to safety. She wakes in his arms and the lovers are reconciled.<sup>26</sup>

### Formal Devices in Liszt's *La Sonnambula* Fantasy

The fantasy is divided into three sections with a coda, and uses formal devices such as motivic unification and thematic combination in an approach similar to the symphonic poem. Liszt constructed his own musical form making extensive use of rhythmic motives, a quasi-refrain theme, and thematic combination to unify the thematic organization. Interestingly, the sequence of themes in this new structure explores a different interpretation of opera's narrative that reveals Liszt's own perspective of Bellini's intention.

### *Dramatic Narrative Form*

In Liszt's fantasy on *La Sonnambula*, a total of six themes appear from the Bellini original: the chorus themes from Act I, "Osservate l'uscio è aperto" and "Dell'ossequio del villaggio"; Amina's aria from Act II, "Ah! non giunge uman pensiero"; Elvino's aria from Act II, "Tutto è sciolto" and "Ah! Perchè non posso odiarti"; and Elvino's melody from the chorus theme from Act I, "Voglio il cielo che il duol ch'io sento." Though he used particular themes from Act I, Liszt primarily emphasized the conflict that occurs in the Act II: the interaction between Amina and Elvino as he suspects her infidelity. The fantasy highlights only the two dominant characters, Elvino and Amina, focusing on their dramatic intensity without allusion to

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<sup>26</sup> George P. Upton, *The Standard Operas: Their Plots and Their Music* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Co., 1914), 32–34.

secondary characters. Liszt forgoes Bellini's original introduction and instead reorders the sequence of themes (see Table 1) so that the fantasy begins with the chorus theme from Act I, "Osservate l'uscio è aperto" (You see the door is open) and "Dell' ossequio del villaggio," (By the homage of the town) which alludes to the opera's central conflict. In the middle sections (Sections B and C), Liszt alternates between Elvino's melodies and Amina's single melody, to convey their emotional tension as Amina struggles to prove her innocence. Notably, Liszt combines their melodies to heighten their intense conflict. Liszt concludes the finale (Coda) with Elvino's melodies, rather than Amina's, to present the jubilant rejoining of the two lovers. Liszt allows the prominence of the music of Elvino's melodies to carry the emotional intensity for both characters, brilliantly emphasizing that Elvino has come to realize Amina's innocence.

Liszt structured the substance of the fantasy by rearranging Bellini's original order to dramatize the musical narrative, as Charles Suttoni has noted. In his preface to *Franz Liszt: Piano Transcriptions from French and Italian Operas*, Suttoni offers the following commentary on Liszt's fantasy on *La Sonnambula*: Amina's aria "Ah! non giunge uman pensiero" (Human thought cannot conceive) from Act II: "This coloratura showpiece signals the opera's happy ending but Liszt evidently wanted a nobler tune for his finale so he returned to the Act I, quintet-finale 'Voglia il cielo[che il duol ch'io sento]' ... to close the bravura work."<sup>27</sup> Liszt re-sequences *La Sonnambula* to heighten his rendition of the music for the purpose of closing happily with a more virtuosic pianistic treatment. Table 1 illustrates the overall formal construction of Liszt's work, and demonstrates the way Liszt treated Bellini's original thematic materials.

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<sup>27</sup> Charles Suttoni, preface to *Franz Liszt: Piano Transcriptions from French and Italian Operas*, by Franz Liszt, ed. Charles Suttoni (New York: Dover, 1982).



Table 1. Thematic content in Liszt's *La Sonnambula* fantasy and its relation to Bellini's opera themes

Sections	Thematic sources from Bellini's <i>La Sonnambula</i>	Original opera key	Usage		Key used by Liszt
A (mm. 1-120)	Theme (a) from Chorus theme (Act I) "Osservate l'uscio è aperto"	DM	mm. 1-29	Theme (a)	D <sup>b</sup> M
	Theme (b) from Chorus theme (Act I) "Dell' ossequio del villaggio"	DM	mm. 30-58	Theme (b)	D <sup>b</sup> M
			mm. 39-42		EM – I/CM
			mm. 43-50		EM
	1 <sup>st</sup> variation of Theme (b)	DM	mm. 51-58		CM
			mm. 59-62	Extension	
			mm. 63-76	Repeat mm. 9-16, Fragments of Theme (a)	D <sup>b</sup> M
			mm. 77-84	Bridge	
			mm. 85-93	Repeat mm.30-38, Fragments of Theme (b)	
	Postlude of chorus theme (a)		mm. 94-101	Bridge	
	mm. 102-109		Repeat mm. 43-50	AM(m. 102)–I/C <sup>#</sup> M (m. 109)	
	mm. 110-120		Transition	i <sub>v</sub> <sup>6</sup> / D <sup>b</sup> M (m. 110)–V / B <sup>b</sup> m (m. 120)	
B (mm. 121-185)	Theme (c) and Theme (d) from Elvino's aria (Act II) "Tutto è sciolto"	Am	mm. 121-137	Theme (c)	D <sup>b</sup> m
	Theme (d): from Elvino's aria (Act II) "Pasci il guardo e appaga l'alma"	CM	mm. 138-156	Theme (d)	AM–Dm–DM
	Fragments of Theme (b)		mm. 157-172	Fragments of Theme (b)	DM
			mm. 173-185	Cadenza	V <sub>7</sub> / E <sup>b</sup> M (m. 185)
C (mm. 186-296)	Theme (e) from Amina's aria (Act II) "Ah! non giunge uman pensiero"	B <sup>b</sup> M	mm. 186-197	Theme (e) in RH	E <sup>b</sup> M
		B <sup>b</sup> M	mm. 197-220	Theme (f) in RH	
			mm. 197-205	Theme (e) in LH	
		B <sup>b</sup> M	mm. 206-209	Theme (f) in LH	
			mm. 220-236	Theme (f) in LH	
			mm. 220-228	Theme (e) in RH	
			mm. 237-262	chorus Theme (b) in LH	
			mm. 262-270	Theme (e) in RH	
			Theme (f) in LH		
	Fragments of Theme (e)		mm. 271-280	Theme (e) in LH	
		mm. 281-296	Theme (e) in LH		
Coda (mm. 297-333)	Theme (g) from Elvino's melody in chorus theme (Act I) "Voglia il cielo che il duol ch'io sento"	E <sup>b</sup> M	mm. 297-316	Theme (g)	E <sup>b</sup> M
		E <sup>b</sup> M	mm. 317-324	Fragments of Theme (g)	E <sup>b</sup> M
			mm. 325-328		
			mm. 329-333		




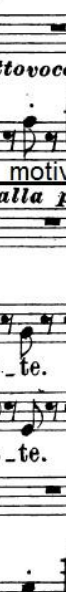

### *Unification of Rhythmic Motives*

Throughout Section A (mm. 1–120), unity is achieved by using repetition of rhythmic motives derived from the chorus themes, “Osservate l’uscio è aperto” (Example 1A) and “Dell’ ossequio del villaggio” (Example 2A). Examples 1A and 2A show three rhythmic motives (motives a1, a2, and b) from Bellini’s original themes which are employed as motivic devices through Section A in Liszt’s fantasy. Liszt developed the motives using rhythmic variations (motives a3 and a4), connecting sixteenth note passages and subdividing eighth note passages into sixteenth notes. Additionally, motive a2 functions as an accompaniment texture as well as homorhythmic interjections in both hands. Liszt quoted the twenty-nine-measure orchestral accompaniment of the theme from the introduction in mm. 1–29 (Example 1B), retaining the pizzicato of strings of the original as the villagers’ chorus theme is introduced in the melody in m. 31–38 (Example 2B). Maintaining the pizzicato articulation throughout the chorus both unifies the piano sonority with the previous section while also emphasizing the rhythmic pulse articulation of the chorus melody.

In addition, when the key modulates from D-flat major to C major in m. 50, Liszt used the rhythmic fragment of the chorus theme with rhythmic modification sequentially. While the melody of the chorus theme is in the right hand, the left hand joins with the rhythmic motive in the accompaniment in mm. 51–62. Notably, Liszt combines the chorus theme of Act I, “Dell’ ossequio del villaggio,” in m. 50, with the thematic fragments of the chorus theme “Osservate l’uscio è aperto.” Meanwhile, Liszt’s repetition of thematic motives of the chorus theme and of the constant pizzicato pattern alternating between the accompaniments to the melody further unifies Section A (Example 2C). Table 2 illustrates the unification of rhythmic motive which

Liszt modified in his fantasy and which represents Liszt's variation technique of Bellini's motives.

Table 2. Rhythmic motives and modifications taken from chorus themes, "Osservate l'uscio è aperto" and "Dell' ossequio del villaggio" in Liszt's *La Sonnambula* fantasy

Rhythmic motive	Original motives by Bellini's <i>La Sonnambula</i>	Rhythmic modification	Motives modified by Liszt's <i>La Sonnambula</i> fantasy
motive a1		motive a3	
motive a2		motive a4	
motive b		No rhythmic modification	Not applicable

Example 1A. Bellini, *La Sonnambula*, "Osservate l'uscio è aperto," chorus theme from Act I



26

*sottovoce sempre* *pp* *leggero*

Sop. *Tutti sottovoce sino alla parola. Amina,*

Ten. (di dentro) *pp* L'uscio è aperto. Senza

ALES. coi Bassi *pp* Os-ser - va - te. Senza

Bassi *pp* Os-ser - va - te. Senza

*p*

Example 1A, continued

Example 1A, continued, showing vocal lines and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: stre - pi - to i - nol - triam.

Example 1B. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Allegro moderato*, mm. 1–23

Example 1B. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Allegro moderato*, mm. 1–23. The score includes measures 1, 5, 9, and 15. Key markings include *p ma marcato*, *dim.*, *sempre piano e marc.*, and *sempre p*. Motive a1 and motive b are indicated. Fingerings and dynamics are also shown.

Example 1B, continued

20

motive a4

Example 2A. Bellini, *La Sonnambula*, “Dell’ ossequio del villaggio,” chorus theme

*con brio*  
*pp legg.*  
*pp stacc.*  
motive b

ta - ce: ei dor - me cer.to.  
ta - ce: ei dor - me cer.to.  
ta - ce: ei dor me certo.

Example 2B. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Allegro moderato*, mm. 28–41

28

*p sempre*  
motive b

32

Example 2B, continued

Musical score for Example 2B, continued, showing measures 36-39. The score is in G major and 4/4 time. It features a piano accompaniment with a treble and bass clef. Measure 36 includes a dynamic marking of *sf ten.* and a tempo marking of *rit.*. A bracket labeled "motive a3" spans measures 36-39. Measure 39 includes a dynamic marking of *cresc.* and a tempo marking of *rit.*. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and articulation marks.

Example 2C. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Allegro moderato*, mm. 47-62

Musical score for Example 2C, Liszt's *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Allegro moderato*, mm. 47-62. The score is in G major and 4/4 time. It features a piano accompaniment with a treble and bass clef. Measure 47 includes a dynamic marking of *p* and a tempo marking of *rit.*. A bracket labeled "motive a1" spans measures 47-50. Measure 51 includes a dynamic marking of *marc.* and a tempo marking of *rit.*. A bracket labeled "motive a2" spans measures 51-54. Measure 54 includes a dynamic marking of *cresc.* and a tempo marking of *rit.*. Measure 57 includes a dynamic marking of *molto cresc.* and a tempo marking of *rit.*. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and articulation marks.

Example 2C, continued

The image shows a musical score for piano, starting at measure 60. The score is written for both the right and left hands. The right hand features a melodic line with a series of eighth notes and rests, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into four measures, each marked with a bracket and the number '8', indicating a rhythmic pattern. The final measure is marked 'mesuré' and 'p' (piano). There are also some asterisks and other markings below the staff.

*Quasi-Refrain Theme*

Bellini treated the chorus theme of Act I, “Dell’ ossequio del villaggio,” heard alternately in chorus and orchestra, as a quasi-refrain theme (see Example 2A). In a similar way, Liszt uses the theme to unify his thematic organization. Liszt’s fantasy consists of three sections connected by the reiteration of this chorus theme [Theme (b) shown in Table 1] as a means to unify the overall structure; the Coda instead uses Theme (g). The refrain theme takes on a ritornello quality as a recurring passage within the accompaniment. Table 3 illustrates the overall structure of Liszt’s transformation of the refrain theme.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Charles Suttoni notes a similar observation regarding the quasi-refrain, in his preface to *Piano Transcriptions from French and Italian Operas*, by Franz Liszt, ed. Charles Suttoni (New York: Dover, 1982).

Table 3. The structure of Refrain theme, “Dell’ ossequio del villaggio” in Liszt’s *La Sonnambula* fantasy and its relation to Bellini’s opera theme

Section	Measures	Keys		Phrasing Structure	Characteristics
		Liszt	Bellini		
A	mm. 30–38	D <sup>b</sup> M	DM	(4 + 4)	- Bellini’s original thematic phrasing used (4+4 in DM)
	mm. 50–62	CM	DM	$\underbrace{(4 + 2)}_{\text{CM}} + \underbrace{(2 + 4)}_{\text{Am}} + \underbrace{(2 + 4)}_{\text{C}^{\#m}}$ <p style="text-align: center;">extension</p> $\underbrace{\hspace{10em}}_{\text{Relative (vi) M3}}$	
	mm. 85–93	D <sup>b</sup> M	DM	(4 + 4)	
B	mm. 156–167	DM	DM	$\underbrace{(4 + 2)}_{\text{D}^{\flat}\text{M}} + \underbrace{(2 + 4)}_{\text{Bm}} + \underbrace{(2 + 4)}_{\text{E}^{\flat}\text{m}}$ <p style="text-align: center;"><sup>b</sup>vii (enh.) d4(M3)</p>	- Liszt uses iv (minor Subdominant key rather than IV (original chord) in DM) - modulation (Bm, E <sup>b</sup> m)
C	mm. 236–248	E <sup>b</sup> M	DM	$\underbrace{(4 + 2 + 2 + 4)}_{\text{E}^{\flat}\text{M}}$ <p style="text-align: center;">[use of iv] [use of IV]</p> $\underbrace{\hspace{10em}}_{\text{Relative (vi) M3}}$ <p style="text-align: center;">extension</p> $\underbrace{(2 + 4)}_{\text{Cm}} + \underbrace{(2 + 4)}_{\text{Em}}$	- Liszt uses iv (minor Subdominant key rather than IV (original chord) in E <sup>b</sup> M) - modulation (Cm, Em)

As shown in Table 3, Liszt uses the refrain theme five times throughout the fantasy modifying the keys and phrasing. In particular, he moved from the original D major key to neighboring keys by way of semitones, while maintaining the major-minor-minor key relationship during the modulation between the phrasing and its extension (2+4). The final two iterations of the theme are developed even further, as Liszt employs the subdominant key relationship as well as the extended phrasing of the final repetition. The overall effect shows a definite progression of the original theme over the course of the fantasy: as the theme rises chromatically, the phrasing structure gradually expands and the harmonic progression diversifies (see Examples 3A to 3E).



Example 3A. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Allegro moderato*, mm. 30–38

Musical score for Example 3A, measures 30–38. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a piano accompaniment with a steady eighth-note bass line and a treble line with chords and melodic fragments. The dynamic marking *p sempre* is present at the beginning. Measure 38 shows a final chordal cadence.

Example 3B. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Allegro moderato*, mm. 47–62

Musical score for Example 3B, measures 47–62. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a piano accompaniment with a steady eighth-note bass line and a treble line with chords and melodic fragments. The dynamic marking *f* is present. The tempo marking *vivamente* is present at the end of the section. The score includes markings for *marc.*, *rit.*, and *rit.* with a double bar line and a star symbol. Measure 51 shows a final chordal cadence.

Example 3B, continued

Musical score for Example 3B, continued, showing measures 54-60. The score is in G major and 3/4 time. It features a piano accompaniment with a melodic line in the right hand and a more active line in the left hand. The piece includes dynamic markings such as *cresc.*, *molto cresc.*, and *p*. There are also performance instructions like *rit.* and *resuré*. The score is divided into systems, with measures 54-56, 57-59, and 60-62. The key signature changes to E major at measure 60. The piece concludes with a *p* dynamic marking and a *resuré* instruction.

Example 3C. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Allegro moderato*, mm. 83-93

Musical score for Example 3C, Liszt's *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Allegro moderato*, mm. 83-93. The score is in E-flat major and 3/4 time. It features a piano accompaniment with a melodic line in the right hand and a more active line in the left hand. The piece includes dynamic markings such as *dimin.*, *pp*, and *p semplice*. There are also performance instructions like *rit.* and *resuré*. The score is divided into systems, with measures 83-86, 87-89, and 90-93. The key signature changes to C major at measure 87. The piece concludes with a *p* dynamic marking and a *resuré* instruction.

Example 3D. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *ritenuto il tempo*, mm. 155–169

155

Tempo I

*p* sotto voce

157

161

*poco a poco accel.*

*simile*

*poco a poco*

*cresc.*

165

*più cresc.*

168

*f marcato*

The musical score is presented in a system of five systems, each with two staves (treble and bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). Measure numbers 155, 157, 161, 165, and 168 are indicated at the beginning of their respective systems. Performance instructions include 'Tempo I' at measure 155, 'p sotto voce' at measure 156, 'poco a poco accel.' and 'simile' at measure 161, 'poco a poco' and 'cresc.' at measure 162, 'più cresc.' at measure 165, and 'f marcato' at measure 168. The score features complex textures with multiple voices, including triplets and sixteenth-note passages. Dynamic markings such as 'p' (piano) and 'f' (forte) are used throughout. The piece concludes with a final chord in measure 169.

Example 3E. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Tempo giusto*, mm. 235-248

The image displays a musical score for Liszt's *La Sonnambula* fantasy, measures 235-248. The score is written for piano and is divided into four systems. The first system (measures 235-237) features a treble clef with a melodic line marked *ff* and a bass clef with a rhythmic accompaniment marked *p*. A bracket above the treble staff indicates an eighth-note pattern. The second system (measures 238-241) shows the treble staff with a melodic line and the bass staff with a rhythmic accompaniment. A *cresc.* marking is present in the treble staff, and *sempre stacc.* is written below the bass staff. The third system (measures 242-245) continues the melodic and rhythmic patterns, with a *string.* marking above the treble staff. The fourth system (measures 246-248) features a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a rhythmic accompaniment. A *ff* marking is present in the treble staff, and a *3* marking is written below the bass staff. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics, articulation, and performance instructions.

*Thematic Combination*

Liszt combined thematic materials (either simultaneously or alternating between hands) not only to create his own unique treatment of the original but also to highlight the dramatic momentum. Suttoni notes that the “Réunion des themes, [is] an ingenious and audience-pleasing

method of enhancing musical interest.”<sup>29</sup> Similarly, in his *La Sonnambula* fantasy, Liszt adapted this thematic device which was often utilized in his other operatic fantasies such as *Robert le Diable* (1831), *Dou Juan* (1841), *Norma* (1841) and *Der Freischütz* (1841). Suttoni quotes Ferruccio Busoni (1866–1924):

*Sonnambula* presents the performer with a formidable technical challenge – the climactic combination of themes accompanied by a trill. Once when Liszt played it, the effect was so startling that a listener approached him and earnestly asked to see the sixth finger that rumor maintained he had between his fourth and fifth to play the celebrated trill.<sup>30</sup>

Notably, Liszt chose not to emphasize Amina’s joy for reconciliation with Elvino, but to build Elvino’s emotional anguish. This new interpretation allowed Liszt to join the two different themes with a new dramatic perspective. Liszt combined Amina’s melody from Act II, “Ah! non giunge uman pensiero,” and Elvino’s melody from Act II, “Ah! Perchè non posso odiarti,” three times, alternating between hands through Section C (mm. 186–296) (see Table 1). Interestingly, these two melodies share a common relationship with Bellini’s original as both are based on a similar melodic phrasing and a rhythmic gestures (a march-like rhythmic figuration), and both have a similar harmonic progression. To further depict Elvino’s ardor for Amina, Liszt added a trill in the upper register. The trill effectively increases the tension at the final appearance as the two themes are combined with a very dense chordal texture in the left hand in mm. 262–270 (Examples 4A to 4C).

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

Example 4A. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Tempo giusto*, mm. 197–205: First appearance of combination of Theme (e) in LH and Theme (f) in RH

197

Theme (f)  
un poco sostenuto il tempo

espress. assai

Theme (e)

ben marc. i due tempi

200

203

Example 4B. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Tempo giusto*, mm. 220–228: Second appearance of combination of Theme (e) in RH and Theme (f) in LH

ben marc. i due temi

220 Theme (e)  
Theme (f)  
cantando espr.

(8<sup>va</sup>)

223

(8<sup>va</sup>)

226 poco a poco piu animato  
p sciolto

Example 4C. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Tempo giusto*, mm. 258–270: Third appearance of combination of Theme (e) in RH and Theme (f) in LH

The image shows three systems of musical notation for piano. The first system (measures 258-262) shows the right hand playing Theme (e) and the left hand playing Theme (f). The right hand is marked 'marcato' and 'f'. The second system (measures 263-266) shows the right hand playing Theme (e) and the left hand playing Theme (f). The left hand is marked 'ben marc. i due Temi'. The third system (measures 267-270) shows the right hand playing Theme (e) and the left hand playing Theme (f). The left hand is marked 'ben marc. i due Temi'.

Liszt's formal devices (rhythmic motive, quasi-refrain theme, and thematic combination) effectively contribute to the new structure by reorganizing and emphasizing three selected motives to elaborate the extended overall form. In the fantasy, denser sound and more rhythmically active passages reveal Liszt's desire to compose technically demanding music with an overall density of sound reminiscent of the orchestra.



## Pianistic Texture

Inspired by a vocal medium, Liszt developed a new form of orchestral pianism by incorporating extensive pianistic figurations encompassing both lyrical vocal melodies and orchestral sonorities. Liszt enriched the texture of the piano and embellished the *bel canto* melodies to heighten both vocal effect and orchestral impact. This musical treatment includes doubling of the melody in octaves, adding melodic embellishments, utilizing arpeggiated flourishes, employing a wide range of registers, and utilizing a three-layered texture, as well as tremolos and rapid leaps.

### *Melodic Embellishment and Doubled Melody in Octave*

Liszt intensified the melody by techniques of rhythmic variation and melodic embellishment. In Section B, for example, he introduced Elvino's melodies derived from two sections within the same aria from Act II: "Tutto è sciolto" (All is undone) (Example 5A), and "Pasci il guardo e appaga l'alma" (Feed your glance, fill your soul) (Example 6A). These themes reflect Elvino's doubt of Amina. Liszt evoked the drama of the moment through a widespread range in the overall texture. Liszt gradually built up musical force by textural intensifications such as a widely expanded register, as well as a thicker harmonic texture in the right hand. Liszt notated distinct ornamentation in the melodic phrases to evoke the improvisational melodic embellishments. For example, the increase in harmonic density and the ornamentation suggest vocal embellishment techniques in mm. 132–136. In particular, m.135 of the fantasy is a more pianistic treatment of a typical vocal embellishments used in the opera (as seen in the sixth measure in Example 5A). The passage at m. 135 extends subdivisions of the original vocal passage into a melisma-like coloration related to common virtuosic vocal techniques (Example 5B).

Example 5A. Bellini, *La Sonnambula*, “Tutto è sciolto,” Elvino’s aria from Act II

**Elvino.**

Tut to e sciol to: piu per me, per me non v'ha con for - to. Il mio

cor - per sempre e mor - tp al - la gio - ia ed al - l'a mor

*p*

*Vlns.*  
*legg. e.*

The musical score is presented in four systems. The first system shows the vocal line starting with a half rest, followed by a melodic phrase. The piano accompaniment begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The second system continues the vocal line with a long note and a melodic flourish. The piano accompaniment remains consistent. The third system shows the vocal line with a long note and a melodic flourish. The piano accompaniment remains consistent. The fourth system shows the vocal line with a long note and a melodic flourish. The piano accompaniment includes a violin section (*Vlns.*) and a section marked *legg. e.* (leggiero e).

Example 5B. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Andante con molto sentimento*, mm. 129–137:  
Liszt's variation techniques

*Andante con molto sentimento*

129 *con passione*

Ossia

132 *colla parte* *piu cresc.*

135 *con forza* *ritard.* *poco rall.* *dim.*

136 *colla parte*

Measures 138 to 145 present the vocal lyrical expression of Elvino's anguish by modifying Bellini's original orchestral texture. The accompaniment is further supplemented with wide arpeggios played legato and *una corda* in the left hand, while the melody is played in octaves in the right hand. The dense activity in the accompaniment emphasizes Elvino's tension while the octaves reinforce the melody (Examples 6A and 6B).

Example 6A. Bellini, *La Sonnambula*, "Pasci il guardo e appaga l'alma," Elvino's aria from Act II

(bitterly) *sempre legato*

Elvino

Pa - sci il guardo e appa-ga l'al - ma, del - l'ec-ces - so, del - l'ec-ces-so de' miei  
 Canst thou seethesetears of sor - row, By thy false hood, by - thy falsehood brought up -

Piano

*pp*

E.

ma - li: — il piú tri - ste de' mor - ta - li so - no, o  
 on \_\_\_\_\_ me? Be content, thou hast un - done me, Hope - dies with -

Pno.

*a tempo*

E.

cru - da, so - no o cru - da, e il son per te.  
 in me, cru - el maid, since we must part. *Strs. & Hn.*

Pno.

*a tempo* *pp*

Example 6B. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Andante con molto sentimento*, mm. 138–145

138 *ritenuto il tempo*  
*con intimissimo sentimento*

*dolciss.*

*una corda*

140 *sempre legato*

142 *poco rallent.*

144 *in tempo*

*smorz.* *marcato*

*arpeggiando* *espressivo*

### *Three-layer Texture*

Liszt used the wide range of the piano to create a depth to the overall sound. In particular, Liszt intensified Elvino's melody "Pasci il guardo e appaga l'alma," (see Example 6A) not only to demonstrate the virtuoso pianistic technique but also to evoke Elvino's agitation. This is accomplished by using a three-handed technique, a term for the advanced technical device made famous by Thalberg in his operatic fantasies for the piano. Kenneth Hamilton included Czerny's description: "...a legato melody in the center of the keyboard ... decorated above and below which chords or arpeggios cleverly laid out ..." <sup>31</sup> Example 7 illustrates Liszt's adaptation of a three-handed pianistic technique. Liszt expanded the texture into three layers while keeping the original Elvino melody in the middle register. The texture then progresses with constant rhythmic passages in the accompaniment figuration in the left hand with arpeggiated running scales in the upper register over a tonic pedal point.

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<sup>31</sup> Carl Czerny, *The Art of Playing the Ancient and Modern Pianoforte Works* (London: Cocks and Co., n.d.), 3, quoted in Hamilton, 81.

Example 7. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Andante con molto sentimento*, mm. 146–149

The image displays a musical score for Liszt's *La Sonnambula* fantasy, measures 146 through 149. The score is written for piano and features a vocal line in the upper staff and a piano accompaniment in the lower staves. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/D minor) and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is *Andante con molto sentimento*.

**Measure 146:** The vocal line begins with a *ten.* (tenuto) marking and is marked *il Canto espressivo ed appassionato assai*. The piano accompaniment is marked *l'accompagnamento in tempo e semplice*. The measure contains a complex melodic line with numerous fingerings (e.g., 3 2 5 2 5 1 3 2 5 4 2 1 5 4 2 1 5 4 2) and a triplet in the bass line.

**Measure 147:** The vocal line continues with a *ten.* marking. The piano accompaniment features a triplet in the bass line and a *ten.* marking in the vocal line.

**Measure 148:** The vocal line continues with a *ten.* marking. The piano accompaniment features a triplet in the bass line and a *ten.* marking in the vocal line.

**Measure 149:** The vocal line continues with a *ten.* marking. The piano accompaniment features a triplet in the bass line and a *ten.* marking in the vocal line. The measure concludes with a *rinforzando molto* marking and a *ff* dynamic.

### *Pianistic Virtuosity*

Liszt employed virtuosic pianistic writing to evoke a unique sonic effect, and exploited the piano's ability for dexterous passages and perpetual motion to increase dramatic intensity.

Dana Gooley notes Liszt's efforts to expand the capabilities of the piano:

Liszt's concert music...often rejects the piano's limitations. It strives for orchestral effects even at the expense of sonorous beauty – for example, a large chord repeated six or eight times [in mm. 176–177] fortissimo in limitation of climatic tutti – and bounded materiality.<sup>32</sup>

Such qualities are apparent in the cadenza at the end of Section C. The thirteen-measure cadenza starts with ascending chromatic scale passages in major thirds, which reach a dissonant harmony seven times in mm. 173–177. Liszt used a fast tempo (*prestissimo*) and perpetual motion to build a sense of dramatic intensity that grows over the first five measures. It is followed by a chordal passage of repetitive rhythmic figures with intense dynamic and wide leaps within a range that spans seven octaves (Example 8).<sup>33</sup> This exhilarating passage anticipates the transition to the jubilant finale (in Section C).

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<sup>32</sup> Christopher H. Gibbs and Dana Gooley, eds., *Franz Liszt and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 97–99.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*



Example 8. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Prestissimo*, mm. 173–185

173 **Prestissimo**  
*Cadenza ad libit.*

175

178 *stringendo*  
*fff* *simile*

181 *sempre ff*

Example 8, continued

The image displays two systems of musical notation. The first system, labeled '183', consists of two staves. The upper staff is in bass clef and contains a melodic line with several fermatas (indicated by a horizontal line with a vertical bar) over specific notes. The lower staff is in bass clef and provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The second system, labeled '185', also consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and shows a melodic line with a fermata. The lower staff is in bass clef and provides accompaniment. A small asterisk (\*) is placed below the lower staff of measure 185.

Liszt adapted the operatic convention of embellishing a vocal line at a fermata by augmenting the technique with the capabilities of the piano. He placed a short one-measure cadenza-like passage in m. 155, which has no accompaniment (thereby evoking the image of an improvised fermata in an operatic aria). The passage prolongs the cadence of Elvino's melody while also building anticipation in the transition to the next section. However, the actual melodic embellishments have a discernibly more pianistic quality in terms of range, melodic and rhythmic figuration, and the overall dexterity necessary to execute the passage (Example 9).

Example 9. Liszt, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Andante con molto sentimento*, mm. 154–156

The image shows a musical score for Liszt's *La Sonnambula* fantasy, measures 154–156. The score is written for piano and consists of two systems. The first system covers measures 154 and 155. Measure 154 is marked *accentato assai*. Measure 155 is marked *rallent.* and *dolce*. The second system covers measures 156 and 157. Measure 156 is marked *Tempo I* and *p molto roco*. The score includes various musical notations such as treble and bass clefs, notes, rests, and dynamic markings. There are also some performance instructions like *rit.* and *p*.

In another technically demanding passage, mm. 220–227 Liszt combined the two themes, “Ah! non giunge uman pensiero” and “Ah! perchè non posso odiarti,” in different registers with widely spaced intervals, and skips in the left hand. As a supreme pianistic challenge, he adds a continuous trill in the upper register. This device was used by Liszt in many fantasies, and is an amazing feat of scoring for piano and technical abilities (see Example 4B).

In his fantasy on Bellini’s opera, Liszt expanded on the textures of the original work to create a technically demanding work which translates orchestral and operatic qualities to the piano, requiring a great deal of dexterity and artistry to execute.

## CHAPTER 4

### ANALYSIS OF OPERATIC FANTASY ON WEBER'S *DER FREISCHÜTZ* BY LISZT

In his *Der Freischütz* fantasy (*The Marksman*, 1840–1841), Liszt continued to focus his attention on the balance between dramatic narrative and musical structure. Liszt emphasized the dramatic intentions of the musical themes in Weber's opera, using his own unique compositional approach. Liszt manipulated a multitude of musical ideas, blending both motivic and thematic content. He joined together two contrasting themes at their climax, using different thematic movements and musical motives. Wolfgang M. Wagner writes:

As an introduction Liszt takes Agathe's Cavatina No. 12 'Through clouds obscure' from Act III. Rather surprisingly, it leads into the 'Bohemian Waltz' from Act I, where the peasants celebrate victory by one of their number over the gamekeepers Max and Caspar in a shooting contest... The middle section that follows consists almost entirely of themes from the finale of Act II, the scene in the Wolf's Glen interspersed with quotations from Caspar's song. In the last part of the work Liszt uses themes from... the Huntsmen's Chorus and Agnes's first aria, finishing off with a reprise of the Peasant's Waltz. Max the eponymous hero evidently forms the central focus of this operatic fantasia...<sup>34</sup>

This description of Liszt's fantasy outlines the development of Liszt's musical narrative as a musical drama in form and structure and gives insight into the scope of Liszt's intention to follow the main points of the opera, or as Stephen C. Meyer puts it, to do things "musico-dramatic[ally]."<sup>35</sup> Liszt's thematic choices were relatively similar to Weber's compositional purpose in *Der Freischütz*. Liszt progresses in parallel with the central operatic scenes of the opera, acknowledging his primary story and plot concept. Notably, in his book, *Carl Maria von Weber and the Search for a German Opera*, Meyer notes:

In *Freischütz*," Weber says, "there are two principal elements that can be recognized at first glance: the hunting life and the force of the demonic powers ... personified by

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<sup>34</sup> Wolfgang M. Wagner, preface to *Fantasie über Themen aus "Der Freischütz" für Klavier*, by Franz Liszt, ed. Wolfgang M. Wagner (Mainz: Schott, 2011), [iii].

<sup>35</sup> Stephen C. Meyer, *Carl Maria von Weber and the Search for a German Opera* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 83.

Samiel. My first task in the composition of the opera was [to] find the most significant tone and sound-colors ... for these two elements.<sup>36</sup>

From Weber's personal diary and letters, Meyer proves that Weber's compositional process began with the duet theme of Ännchen and Agathe from Act II, "Schelm, halt' fest," instead of the presentation of either "hunting life" or "demonic powers" that form the integral imagery of the opera.<sup>37</sup> Meyer assumes from Weber's remarks that the composer initially concentrated on the three main characters, Agathe, Max, and Caspar.<sup>38</sup> Meyer's framing of Weber's original intention supports Liszt's creative musical form.

#### Synopsis of Weber's *Der Freischütz*

Weber's opera mainly focuses on Max, a forest hunter who is engaged to Agathe, the daughter of Cuno, the head forest ranger. Max loses at a shooting contest to a peasant, upon which Cuno withdraws permission to marry Agathe. After losing this test, Max conspires with his friend Caspar, who provides Max with seven magic bullets that never miss their target. Caspar and Max prepare to cast the bullets as they prepare for the final shooting contest. However, Caspar, who is to die in one day, hopes to gain three more years of life through a pact with Samiel (a representation of the devil). Caspar offers Max's soul instead of his own, with Samiel intending to take Max to eternal damnation upon firing the final bullet. Unknown to Max, Samiel curses the final bullet to strike a target of his own choosing. Fortunately, Max is protected from the devil's pact due to Agathe's prayers as Max traveled to Wolf's Glen, where Samiel fashions the bullets. At the final shooting contest, the cursed bullet travels toward Agathe, but instead strikes her bridal wreath. The bullet deflects and hits Caspar, who dies instead of Agathe.

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<sup>36</sup> Johann Christian Lobe and Carl Maria von Weber, "Gespräche mit Carl Maria von Weber" *Fliegende Blätter für Musik*, (Leipzig, 1855), 31, qtd. in Meyer, 82.

<sup>37</sup> Meyer, 83–84.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

The events of this day bring about Max's exoneration, and after a year of probation, he will be allowed to marry Agathe after all.<sup>39</sup>

#### Formal Devices of Liszt's *Der Freischütz* Fantasy

Liszt utilized Weber's original thematic materials for his own musical structure by way of thematic combination and motivic fragments in his narrative structure. This new structure offered Liszt's own interpretation of Weber's intention, with an extension of his narrative form interrelated with the presentation of musical aspects.

#### *Dramatic Narrative Form*

In his *Der Freischütz* fantasy, Liszt fashioned his musical dramaturgy to unify the overall structure musically and dramatically through a large tripartite form. Each of the three sections includes two contrasting themes chosen from each Act that delineate the opera's substantial core. Liszt exposed the musical and dramatic demarcation concurrently. While Weber's opera represents three dominant figures – Agathe, Max, and Caspar – to convey both the confrontation of the hunting peasant life and the struggle between good and evil, Liszt accentuates Agathe's anxiety and uneasiness about Max's doom and Caspar's plan to ruin Max. However, Liszt omitted Max's arias completely. Instead, Liszt's fantasy centers on Agathe, who is praying to guard against Max's doom, and Caspar, a forester and devilish figure that drinks with Max and arranges a deal for magic bullets to win the final shooting contest. Liszt's fantasy consists of six themes from Weber's opera: Agathe's aria from Act III, "Und ob die Wolke sie verhülle" (Even though clouds may hide it); the Bohemian Waltz theme from Act I; the Finale from Act II,

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<sup>39</sup> Elements of the plot synopsis were supplemented by researching the following sources: Oscar Thompson, *The Plots of Operas: As Compiled for the International Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1940), 178–81; and Ernest Newman, *Stories of the Great Operas and Their Composers*, vol. 1 (New York: Garden City Publishing Co., Inc., 1930), 280–305.

“Uhui! Uhui!” Caspar’s aria from Act I, “Hier im ird’schen Jammerthal” (Here in this earthly vale of tears) the Huntsmen’s Chorus theme from Act III, “Was gleicht wohl auf Erden dem Jägervergnügen” (What pleasure on earth can compare with the chase); and Agathe’s aria from Act II, “Süss entzückt entgegen ihm” (In sweet enchantment for him). Liszt’s choice of themes from Weber’s original suggests that Liszt desired to highlight a dramatic musical contrast using the distinctively affectionate thematic materials of Agathe and Caspar, immersing in the major figure of Max despite the exclusion of Max’s aria. Consequently, these characters frame a scheme to embody the central plot of Weber’s opera while simultaneously creating his own musical perspective for the narrative. Interestingly, Liszt includes a Bohemian waltz theme from Act I, which according to Weber, was originally followed by Max’s recitative and aria.

The fantasy begins with Agathe’s aria from Act III, “Und ob die Wolke sie verhülle,” which is a prayer-song in which Agathe trusts in God’s protection, after having a nightmare before the day of a shooting contest. The unexpected thematic connection to the Bohemian Waltz (the peasantry dance to celebrate Killian’s victory against Max) seemingly underplays Max’s lamentation after having lost the first marksmanship contest of the narrative. Even though Liszt’s presentation of two thematic materials of Section A does not follow the opera’s sequence, it predicts an evil omen of Max’s fate in the next section. As Weber intended Act II to have increasing dramatic intensity, Liszt took a similar musical approach in the middle of Section B by introducing the Wolf’s Glen scene with Caspar’s aria. In the finale of Section C, Liszt underscores the moment when the villagers celebrate the final shooting trial and Max’s triumph over Caspar.

Liszt continues to express the emotional moment of Agathe’s aria, “Süss entzückt entgegen ihm,” from Act II, which describes her emotional conflict: despairing because Max

delays to visit her after his shooting contest, but still joyous with anticipation of Max's victory in the initial marksmanship trial. Consequently, even though Liszt's narrative does not sequentially follow the opera's plot, Liszt closes with the finale theme of Act III, "Schaut, o schaut" (Look, oh look). In the Coda, this terminal scene, the same concluding scene as in the Weber's opera, is one of happiness as Cuno gives his permission for Agathe and Max to wed. Liszt ultimately brings out the climactic grandeur as Agathe and Max profess their love. Through his way of rearranging the thematic sequence, Liszt accelerates the action and the intensity of musical drive in order to make the drama and the music come to unification in his fantasy. Table 4 shows the overall formal structure of Liszt's work and illustrates how Liszt utilized Weber's original thematic materials.



Table 4. Thematic content in Liszt's *Der Freischütz* fantasy and its relation to Weber's opera themes

Sections	Thematic Sources from Weber's <i>Der Freischütz</i>	Original opera key	Usage		Key used by Liszt	
A (mm. 1-216)	Theme (a) from Agathe's aria (Act III) "Und ob die Wolke sie verhülle"	A <sup>b</sup> M	mm. 1-30	Theme (a)	A <sup>b</sup> M	
	Theme (b): orchestra introduction (Act I) from "Bohemian Waltz"	DM	mm. 31-43	Theme (a) in LH Theme (b) in RH	A <sup>b</sup> M	
			mm. 44-59	Fragments of Theme (a) in LH Theme (b) in RH	AM Modal mixture (mm. 59-73) iv of Dm/AM(m. 59)	
					mm. 60-84	Theme (b) in LH Harmonic sequence (mm. 66-73)
			mm. 85-115	Theme (b) in RH Theme (a) in LH	F <sup>#</sup> M	
			mm. 116-144	Theme (b) in RH Theme (a) in LH	A <sup>b</sup> M	
			mm. 144-159	Theme (b) in RH	A <sup>b</sup> M	
			mm. 160-174	Borrowed melodic pitches of Theme (b)	AbM	
			mm. 175-200	Extension-melodic fragments of Theme (a)		
			mm. 201-216		A <sup>b</sup> M	
B (mm. 217-356)	Theme (c) from Finale (Act II) "Uhui! Uhui!"	F <sup>#</sup> m	mm. 217-229		F <sup>#</sup> m	
			mm. 230-237		F <sup>#</sup> m	
			mm. 238-241		F <sup>#</sup> m	
	Theme (d) from Caspar's aria (Act I) "Hier im ird'schen Jammerthal"	Bm	mm. 242-278	Alternating fragments of Theme (c) in RH and Theme (d) in LH	Cm	
			mm. 264-265	Inserted Theme (d) in LH		
			mm. 268-269	Inserted Theme (d) in LH		
			mm. 272-273	Inserted Theme (d) in LH		
			mm. 276-278			
	Adaptations: Finale (Act II), Orchestral Interlude of Chorus theme	No specific key written, but music suggests A <sup>b</sup> m		mm. 279-297		Suggests A <sup>b</sup> m

	Postlude of Orchestral accompaniment	Cm	mm. 298-309	Melodic and rhythmic adaptation: Postlude of orchestral accompaniment	Cm: V(m. 298)-i <sup>6</sup> <sub>4</sub> -iv-V-i <sup>6</sup> <sub>4</sub> -vii <sup>0</sup> <sub>7</sub> /i - V(m. 304)	
	Orchestral Interlude of Max's aria (Finale, Act II) "Agathe! Sie springt in den Fluss!"	Am	mm. 310-316		Tritone key relationship (Cm-AM-F#M)  Cm	
mm. 317-323			Repetition of mm. 310-316	AM		
mm. 324-335			Extension	F#M		
mm. 335-356			Melodic fragments	F#M		
C (mm. 357-521)	Theme (e) from Huntsmen's Chorus theme (Act III) "Was gleicht wohl auf Erden dem Jägervergnügen"	DM	mm. 359-374	Theme (e) in RH	DM: circle of fifth used (F#M-Bm-Em-AM) (mm. 359-368)	
			mm. 375-390	Juxtaposition of melodic pitches between the hands		DM
			mm. 390-406	Theme (d)		DM
	Theme (f) from Agathe's aria (Act II) "Süss entzuckt entgegen ihm"	EM	mm. 407-416	Theme (f)	BM	
			mm. 417-424	Extension		
			mm. 425-434	Theme (f) in RH Theme (e) in LH		
			mm. 435-440	Extension		
			mm. 441-448	Repeat mm. 427-433	E <sup>b</sup> M	
			mm. 449-462	Extension	E <sup>b</sup> M-BM-AM	
			mm. 463-470	Theme (e) in LH Theme (f) in RH	BM	
			mm. 471-482	Extension		
			mm. 483-490	Theme (e) in RH Theme (f) in LH	BM	
			mm. 491-498	Repeat mm. 483-490		
			mm. 499-506	Theme (e) in LH		
	mm. 507-521	Theme (f) in LH				
	Coda (mm. 522-574)	The finale of Act III, "Schauf, o schauf,": using fragments: Quotation of seven-pitch motive (G#, F#, D#, F#, E, C#, B), harmonic sequence, and harmonic cadence with melodic fragments (e#, f#, a#, c#, and B)	BM	mm. 522-529	Melodic motive adapted in RH	BM
				mm. 530-537	Continued melodic motive in both hands	
				mm. 538-543		
				mm. 544-557		
mm. 558-574				Dominant seventh harmony on f# and similar harmonic cadence		

### *Thematic Combination*

Liszt utilized thematic combination to unite the musical structure of his fantasy in diverse ways, combining themes by using repetitive melodic and motivic patterns, which are interspersed in the fantasy. Each section is arranged by including two thematic selections from the opera; while Sections A and C feature thematic combination, Section B is built on thematic alternation throughout. In Section B, Liszt alternated themes by exchanging registers between hands, and emphasized themes by presenting the same theme in both hands simultaneously. In alternating themes linked to villainous elements in the narrative, Liszt emphasized the overwhelming evil that predominates in the scene.

In Section A, the presentation of thematic fragmentation from Agathe's Act III aria "Und ob die Wolke sie verhulle," [theme (a)] and the orchestra introduction from Act I "Bohemian Waltz," [theme (b)] alternates in key, harmony, and register. This serves to emphasize the specific dramatic presentation of Agathe's praying and the villagers' celebration of Killian, the victor of the first shooting contest. Indeed, Liszt focused on the cheerful musical tune with flowing rhythmic repetition through Section A (Example 10A), which contrasts with the Wolf's Glen scene of Section B, the evil scene of demonic power. In the first part of Section B the approach differs somewhat in the thematic use by exchanging registers in both hands with thematic fragments of the Act II Finale "Uhui! Uhui!," [theme (c)] and Caspar's Act I aria "Hier im ird'schen Jammerthal," [theme (d)] ( Example 10B). Section C presents the climax to elaborate the jubilant finale for Agathe and Max, alternating the melody and accompaniment with interpolation by three extensions (Example 10C).

Example 10A. Liszt's *Der Freischütz* fantasy, *Allegretto*, mm. 44–59

Theme (b)

*sempre sim.*

Thematic fragmentation of Theme (a)

49

54

Example 10B. Liszt's *Der Freischütz* fantasy, *Sostenuto*, mm. 245–260

Thematic fragments of Theme (c): orchestral part

245

247

249

251 *espress.*

253

Thematic fragments of Theme (d): orchestral part

*ff*

*feroce*

*tra*

Example 10B, continued

The image displays a musical score for a piano piece, continuing from Example 10B. It consists of two systems of staves, each with a treble and bass clef. The first system covers measures 256 and 257. Measure 256 begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The music features a complex texture with many beamed notes and chords. The second system covers measures 258 and 259. Measure 258 starts with a mezzo-forte (*ff*) dynamic marking. A red rectangular box highlights a specific section of the score in measure 258, labeled "feroce" above and "8va" above the notes. Below the box, the text "*ff* Thematic fragments of Theme (d)" is written. The highlighted section shows a series of chords and notes with accents and slurs, indicating a powerful and dramatic passage.

Example 10C. Liszt's *Der Freischütz* fantasy, *Molto vivace*, mm. 425–440

The thematic combination employed throughout the fantasy offers a strong sense of juxtaposition for dramatic effect. The emotional and narrative significance of Agathe's aria from Act III contrasts with the intent of the Bohemian waltz; likewise, the Wolf's Glen scene and Caspar's aria contrast with the Huntsmen's Chorus theme which in turn contrasts with Agathe's

aria from Act II. This new structure confounds and reinvents the original narrative for an audience already familiar with the original work. Additionally, it is interesting to note that by introducing Agathe's Act III aria at the opening of the fantasy, Liszt both anticipated and highlighted the central conflict of the narrative: the worry that Agathe expresses in her prayer predicts the following actions that befall her and Max due to Caspar's treachery. In the original opera, this aria helps emphasize Agathe's sensitivity to her situation and the impending doom, whereas in the fantasy, the aria anticipates for the audience the events that have yet to happen. Liszt's task of reordering themes allowed the composer the opportunity to manipulate the expectations of his audience, who were no doubt familiar with the original material.

*Use of Original Material: Motivic and Melodic Unification via Five-Note Motive*

Liszt's selection of themes from Weber's work reveals his intent to unify the musical form and balance thematic combination in his fantasy. Three themes [(a): Agathe's aria from Act III, "Und ob die Wolke sie verhülle," (b): orchestra introduction from Act I, "Bohemian Waltz," and (f): Agathe's aria from Act II, "Süss entzückt entgegen ihm"] share a striking similarity in their opening first five-note melodic motive. This motive appears in the same intervallic outline, ascending fourths and thirds, and descending seconds. Liszt noted this relationship developed by Weber, and he relied on this motive as a foundation for unifying the material, modifying it to his own intention.

The opening theme (a) of Weber is in A-flat major (Example 11A) and Liszt maintained the same melodic pattern as Weber's theme. Liszt modified theme (b) from D major to A-flat major (Example 11B) and modified theme (f) from E major to B major (Example 11C). With these appearances of melodic motives, theme (f) best exemplifies Liszt's intent to provide a unity of motivic and melodic structure that borrows from Weber's original. In particular, the motive in



theme (f) is not presented consecutively unlike theme (a) and theme (b), but extends the motive into the hypermeter. The first note of each measure contains the outline of five notes (B–E–G-sharp–C-sharp–B) from Agathe’s aria in Weber’s opera (E major transferred to B major in Liszt’s fantasy). Although Liszt adapted three distinct thematic materials from different opera scenes, he especially focused on the unified structure with the themes (a), (b), and (f) through Section A, which functions as an introductory part without any thorough development of narrative. Certainly, this melodic motive unification of three thematic materials depicts Liszt’s intention to balance the musical structure and development for motivic and thematic integration throughout the fantasy. Examples 11A to 11C illustrate Weber’s three original themes that Liszt selected to mingle into a unifying motivic device.

Example 11A. Weber, *Der Freischütz*, “Und ob die Wolke sie verhülle,” Agathe’s aria from Act III: excerpt from theme (a) in Liszt’s fantasy

Adagio

The musical score is for an Adagio piece in 3/4 time, marked *p dolce*. It features Horns and Bassoons (labeled "Horn Bssn.") and a Cello solo. The melody is in B major (three flats). The first measure contains the outline of five notes: B, E, G-sharp, C-sharp, B. The score includes dynamics like *p dolce* and *Cello solo*.

Example 11B. Weber, *Der Freischütz*, “Bohemian Waltz,” orchestra introduction from Act I: excerpt from theme (b) in Liszt’s fantasy

**Waltz.**

The musical score for the Bohemian Waltz introduction is presented in two systems. The first system features the Violins (Vlns.) and Oboes & Violins (Ob. & Vln) parts. The Vlns. part begins with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and a 3/4 time signature. The Ob. & Vln part enters with a 'Tutti' dynamic. The second system shows the piano accompaniment, which includes a 'ten.' (tension) marking at the end of the excerpt.

Example 11C. Weber, *Der Freischütz*, “Süss entzückt entgegen ihm,” Agathe’s aria from Act II: excerpt from theme (f) used in Liszt’s fantasy

**Vivace con fuoco.**

The musical score for Agathe's aria "Süss entzückt entgegen ihm" is presented in two systems. The top system shows the vocal line with lyrics in German and English. The bottom system shows the piano accompaniment, which includes a piano (*p*) dynamic and a 4/4 time signature.

süss ent - Zuckt ent - ge - gen ihm, -  
 We shall - meet in - joy - at last,

*Use of Original Material: Motivic and Melodic Unification via Nine-Note Motive*

Section A is characterized by a nine-note melodic-motivic device, which originated in Weber’s opera. Liszt continued to draw on the perpetual agitation and tension of Agathe to the end of Section A.

Along with the five-note motivic unifying device, Liszt shapes Section A by using a short melodic phrase from theme (a). This section is based on the thirty measure thematic quote from Agathe's aria of Act III, highlighting the initial head of melodic motive phrase (E-flat–A-flat–C–F–E-flat–B-flat–D-flat–C–A-flat). The section moves by way of key changes (original A-flat major to A major and F-sharp major), as well as alternating registers. Furthermore, Liszt used the five-note motivic phrase from theme (a) in a way reminiscent of Wagner's *leitmotiv*. Liszt may have intended to give attention and interest to the dramatic contrast, which follows the Wolf's Glen scene by maintaining a hypnotic mood (Examples 12A and 12B).

Example 12A: Weber, *Der Freischütz*, “Und ob die Wolke sie verhülle,” Agathe’s aria from Act III

Adagio. N<sup>o</sup> 12. Cavatine.

Hörn. u. Fag. *p dolce* Viella - Solo.

Baß.

Agathe. (Mit wehmütiger Andacht.)

Und ob die Wol - ke sie ver - hül - le, die Son - ne bleibt am Him - mels - zelt, - es waltet mit Vio - len.

dort ein heiliger Wil - le, nicht blindem Zu - - fall dient die Welt.

Das Au - ge, e - wig rein und klar, nimmt al - ler We - sen lie - bend wahr, das Au - ge,

The highlighted pitches outline the melodic motive from Theme (a)

Example 12B. Liszt's *Der Freischütz* fantasy, *Adagio*, mm. 1–20

*Adagio*

*pp dolce*

5

9

13

17

It is interesting to note that the melodic motives employed by Liszt throughout the fantasy all relate in some fashion to Agathe's opening aria. From a symbolic standpoint, her presence and significance throughout the opera are emphasized with each iteration of the

unifying motives. Much like a major character in a narrative, Liszt composed with the intent to emphasize her character's importance throughout the plot.

### Pianistic Texture

Liszt utilized complex pianistic texture to display his flamboyant transference of vocal and orchestral effects as was the case in his *La Sonnambula* fantasy. Liszt also remained faithful to these ideas in his *Der Freischütz* fantasy by way of increasing vocal flourishes and dense orchestral texture. The pianistic figurations include doubling of melody, embellishments, and rhythmic variants and orchestral effects (wide register range and thick texture) with virtuosic variation techniques, all used extensively throughout the work.

#### *Texture Intensification: Melodic Doubling, Vocal Embellishment, and Expanded Range*

To maximize the effect, Liszt extended the range of both melody and accompaniment to evoke orchestral sonority. Liszt presented the Huntsmen's Chorus theme seven times throughout the fantasy using variation techniques such as rhythmic alterations, wide range of registers, and key changes. He presents the second statement of Huntsmen's Chorus theme (Example 13A) in the key of D major in mm. 359–374 and subsequently repeats it with greater harmonic density in the melody and doubled octaves in the accompaniment. Liszt further changed the rhythms to triplet, sextuplet, and septuplet in accompaniment (Example 13B).

Example 13A. Weber, *Der Freischütz*, “Ist fürstliche Freude,” the second part of the Huntsmen’s Chorus theme from Act III

fol - gen durch Di - ckicht und Teich, ist fürst - li - che Freu - de, ist  
 suit while the horns gai - ly sound. Oh this is a plea - sure that

männ - lich Ver - lan - gen, er - stär - ket die Gli - der und wür - zet das  
 princ - es might en - vy, For health and for man - hood the chief of de -

Mahl. Wenn Wäl - der und Fel - sen uns hal - lend um - fan - gen, tönt  
 lights, 'Mid e - choes re - ply - ing, when day - light is dy - ing, To

Example 13B. Liszt, *Der Freischütz* fantasy, *Molto vivace*, mm. 359–370

**Weber : (Molto vivace)**  
(poco maestoso)

The musical score consists of four systems of piano accompaniment. Each system has a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is 2/4. The first system starts at measure 359 with a forte (ff) dynamic. The second system starts at measure 362. The third system starts at measure 365. The fourth system starts at measure 368. The right hand plays chords and short melodic phrases, while the left hand plays a continuous eighth-note octave pattern that moves up the register.

Liszt maintained the melodic and harmonic basis of the opera theme and processed the mounting tension of the extensive pianistic texture by using constant octave motion in the left hand and increasing the range of the register. At m. 483 the left hand accompaniment is subdivided into triplets, creating a polyrhythmic texture not present in the original piece.



The melody is embellished with a denser scoring and transposed to a higher register, further highlighting the passage. Liszt expanded upon the original thematic fundamentals, taking advantage of the multiple variation techniques in articulation and texture. The first part of the Huntsmen’s chorus theme appears in mm. 483–506. Liszt transposed the original from the key of D major to B major using both a wide range of registers and interval leaps triggered by eighth-note triplet octaves, and filling in chromatic passages in the left hand to highlight the brilliant climax of the opera scene. Consequently, Liszt intensifies the dramatic moment of the Huntsmen’s chorus by using thematic combination of both the Huntsmen’s Chorus theme of Act III and Agnes’s aria of Act II (Examples 14A and 14B).

Example 14A. Weber’s *Der Freischütz*, “Was gleicht wohl auf Erden dem Jägervergnügen,” Huntsmen’s Chorus theme from Act III

**Molto vivace.**  
Horns & Trombone

Tenor. *ff*  
Was gleicht wohl auf Er - den dem Jä - ger-ver-  
The joy of the hunt - er on earth all sur-

Bass I. *ff*  
Was gleicht wohl auf Er - den dem Jä - ger-ver-  
The joy of the hunt - er on earth all sur-

Bass II. *ff*  
Was gleicht wohl auf Er - den dem Jä - ger-ver-  
The joy of the hunt - er on earth all sur-

Example 14A, continued

gnü - gen, wem spru - delt der Be - cher des Le - bens so reich? Beim  
pass - es, The foun - tain of plea - sure for him doth a - bound, Thro'

gnü - gen, wem spru - delt der Be - cher des Le - bens so reich? Beim  
pass - es, The foun - tain of plea - sure for him doth a - bound, Thro'

The musical score consists of three systems. The first system contains two vocal staves (Soprano and Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are in German and English. The piano part features a rhythmic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The second system continues the vocal and piano parts. The third system shows the piano part concluding with a *p* dynamic marking.

Example 14B. Liszt, *Der Freischütz* fantasy, *Molto vivace*, mm. 483–490

**Molto vivace**

483 *ff*

485

488

The musical score is for Liszt's *Der Freischütz* fantasy, *Molto vivace*, measures 483–490. It is in G major and 2/4 time. The score is in piano (piano) and features a *ff* dynamic marking. The music is characterized by rapid sixteenth-note passages and complex chordal textures. The score is presented in three systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The first system starts at measure 483 and includes a *ff* dynamic marking. The second system starts at measure 485 and the third at measure 488. The music features intricate fingerings and trills, with some passages marked with a '3' for triplets.

### *Orchestral Effects*

Liszt continued to adapt orchestral texture to a pianistic setting in his treatment of the famous Wolf's Glen scene of Weber's opera. Key elements of this iconic scene include Weber's varied orchestral and choral timbres: a wide dynamic range in the string tremolos, noticeably prominent woodwinds, chromatic descending movements of bass supplemented with clarinet and bassoon, and "monotone chorus."<sup>40</sup> Similar to Weber's creativity of orchestral timbre and texture, Liszt worked to reach a close correlation between musical and dramatic intensity in his own work. Liszt embellished the monotonous chorus theme, while keeping Weber's melody and harmonic progression as well as the same f-sharp minor tonality.

Through the presentation of the Wolf's Glen scene (Example 15A) in the first part of Section B (mm. 217–275) in his fantasy, Liszt produced the dramatic contrast from Section A by using expansive pianistic colors to simulate Weber's orchestral timbre, while notating the range of registers on three staves in order to better describe the mysterious and sinister aspects of the Wolf's Glen scene. Liszt's transference of the orchestral medium to the piano setting is best exemplified by Section B of this fantasy, the most contrasting section, to emphasize the sinister relationship between Caspar and the devilish Samiel, as Weber intended. Liszt used three staves for twelve measures and fundamentally retained the original melody and harmony by remaining in the same key of F-sharp minor as in the original. However, he filled in the inner harmonic figurations in order to establish an extreme musical contrast with Section A. For instance, Liszt began with the orchestra's introduction and supplements the chorus parts using woodwinds for the middle staff. This reliance on the chorus theme can be interpreted as Weber's presentation of demonic elements in his opera. Likewise, Liszt produced a similar musical direction (in D minor

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<sup>40</sup> Meyer notes the "monotone chorus" used in this scene, as the chorus passages are sung on a single pitch (F# in the bass and A in the upper voices) to simulate incantations and howling respectively. Meyer, 96.

key and use of chromaticism) as in Weber's scene, and gradually built up the atmosphere of demonic and evil power. Liszt retained the bass and violoncello in the bass line using octaves, and represented the tremolos of the string parts in the top staff to present the various sonorous levels. After thirteen measures as an introductory passage in mm. 217–229, Liszt transformed the string tremolos into aggressive and restless chromatic runs which break into even more massive orchestral timbre using rhythmic motive and consisting of various rhythmic figurations (the thirty-second note sextuplet, septuplet, nontuplet) in mm. 230–250, alongside of rising and falling chromatic scale passages and tremolos in wide leaping broken chords (Example 15B). Along with the incisive rhythmic drive, Liszt consistently sustained the intensity and developed the tension in order to present Caspar's fateful thematic presentation by using rhythmic variations six times in mm. 230–254. Liszt still continued to follow the eight melodic pitches of the original (E-flat, D, C, G, F, E-flat, D, and C) from the orchestral accompaniment (violin and horn) in mm. 242–245, emulating the string tremolos in the original orchestration while maintaining the sense of frenetic activity over a similar range from mm. 245–255 (Example 15C). This particular section features more elaborate pianistic devices, often called upon to mimic elements of orchestral accompaniment. In particular, the left hand accompaniment alternates between the sextuplet patterns shared with the right hand and extensive interjections of thirty-second notes and tremolos meant to simulate the string section of the orchestra.

Example 15A. Weber's *Der Freischütz*, "Uhui! Uhui!," Wolf's Glen scene from Act II

10. FINALE.

The musical score is for the finale of Act II, titled "10. FINALE." It is in the key of D major and common time. The score includes the following parts:

- Flauti piccoli. (Piccolo Flutes)
- Flauti. (Flutes)
- Oboi. (Oboes)
- Clarineti in A. (Clarinets in A)
- Fagotti. (Bassoons)
- Corni in D. (Horns in D)
- Corni in C. (Horns in C)
- Trombe in D. (Trumpets in D)
- Timpani in C.A. (Timpani in C and A)
- Tromboni. (Trombones)
- Violino I. (Violin I)
- Violino II. (Violin II)
- Viola. (Viola)
- Sopran. (Soprano)
- Alt. (Alto)
- Tenor. (Tenor)
- Bass. (Bass)
- Chor unsichtbarer Geister von verschiedenen Seiten. (Invisible Spirit Chorus from various sides)
- Violoncello e Basso. (Cello and Double Bass)

Key performance instructions include "Sostenuto." at the top and "Milch des Mondes" at the bottom right. Dynamics such as *pp* (pianissimo) and *f* (forte) are used throughout. Brackets are placed around specific passages in the strings and woodwinds, indicating their use as motivic material by Liszt.

The passages indicated by the brackets are used as motivic material by Liszt.

Example 15A, continued

U - hu.i! U - hu.i! U - hu .i! U - hu.i! U -

U - hu.i! U - hu.i! U - hu .i! U - hu.i! U -

fiel aufs Kraut, Spinnweb ist mit Blut bethaut! Eh' noch wieder Abend graut,

Example 15B. Liszt, *Der Freischütz* fantasy, *Sostenuto*, mm. 217–229

**Sostenuto** String tremolos from Weber's opera

*p* *f* *m.s.* *f* *legato, espress.*

Violoncello and Bass from Weber's opera

223

227

*8<sup>va</sup>* *3* *3* *8<sup>va</sup>* *dim.*

Example 15C. Liszt, *Der Freischütz* fantasy, *Sostenuto*, mm. 238–255

The musical score is presented in four systems. The first system (mm. 238-240) features two bass staves with a *mf* dynamic. The right hand plays a series of sixteenth-note chords, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The second system (mm. 241-243) continues the accompaniment with a *mf* dynamic. The right hand has a triplet of eighth notes in the final measure. The third system (mm. 244-246) introduces a vocal line in the treble clef, with the piano accompaniment in the bass clef. The dynamic is *espress.* The fourth system (mm. 247-250) shows the piano accompaniment continuing with a *espress.* dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.



Example 15C, continued

Woodwinds from Weber's opera

247

249

251 *espress.*

253 *ff* *feroce* *tra-* *tra-*

The musical score consists of five systems. The first four systems (measures 246-250) are piano accompaniment in 4/4 time, featuring a complex bass line with sixteenth-note patterns and a treble staff with chords and triplets. The fifth system (measures 251-252) shows the woodwind part in the treble clef, marked *espress.* (espressivo), with a melodic line and a bass line. The sixth system (measures 253-254) continues the piano accompaniment, marked *ff* (fortissimo) and *feroce* (ferociously), with a melodic line in the treble clef and a bass line. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

The left hand accompaniment in m. 246 mimics the activity in the strings.

Through this operatic fantasy, Liszt made significant contribution to this new musical genre. The unified musical structure is attained through formal devices (thematic, motivic, and melodic unification) and various textural devices demanding extreme pianistic virtuosity. The pianistic passages of vocal melodies and the bold presentation of orchestral sonorities accomplished through the sonic versatility of the piano create a daunting and dramatic composition. Most notable in this respect is the Wolf's Glen scene, which utilizes orchestral texture and expansive pianistic technique. Liszt's treatment of Weber's opera offers highly skilled performers a dazzling and highly creative vision of the original in terms of narrative and perspective.

## CHAPTER 5

### ANALYSIS OF OPERATIC FANTASY ON BELLINI'S *LA SONNAMBULA* BY FONTANA

Fontana, in the *Première Fantaisie Brillante Pour le Piano sur des Motifs de la Sonnambula*, op. 14 (1848), fashioned his musical writing into a small form, one similar to the potpourri-style fantasy which Czerny defined as “a fantasy on several familiar and conjoined themes.”<sup>41</sup> Fontana’s fantasy faithfully relied on the Bellini original. His adherence to Bellini’s original melodies, harmonies, and rhythms revealed his approach to this genre. Although he embellished the vocal and instrumental melodies, Fontana generally supplied a relatively straightforward piano reduction of the opera. Fontana thus transferred popular opera melodies into a piano setting for public entertainment rather than for advancing pianistic virtuosity as was the case with his famous contemporaries.

#### Formal Devices of Fontana’s *La Sonnambula* Fantasy

This fantasy consists of three sections with a short introduction, transition, and coda. Fontana selected a limited amount of thematic material to form the potpourri-style composition, and unified the form by way of recurring melodic and rhythmic motives. Fontana’s thematic statements are unified by the fragmentation of melodic and rhythmic motives that structure the overall form, rather than developing excerpts of original thematic materials within the narrative.

#### *Dramatic Narrative Form*

Fontana’s narrative is comparatively simple and only considers Act II of the opera. Fontana dealt not with the central cause of the conflict, but with the subsequent emotional

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<sup>41</sup> Michael Saffle, “Czerny and the Keyboard Fantasy: Traditions, Innovations, Legacy,” in *Beyond the Art of Finger Dexterity: Reassessing Carl Czerny*, ed. David Gramit, (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2008), 203.

conflict that ensues between Amina and Elvino. Fontana constructed the fantasy by using three melodies from the original that center the interest on the two main characters, Amina and Elvino, without any secondary incidents. Fontana left the piece unresolved, so to speak, by omitting what in the original work stands as a jubilant ending to the opera signified by the villagers' chorus theme. Fontana's omission tends to make the ambience of his fantasy lack dramatic consequence and narrative sequence. His attention was only concerned with crucial episodes of the opera in order to display the vocal essence and the lyrical expressiveness in what he works with in terms of the contrasting scenes of Amina and Elvino.

The fantasy tangentially presents the opera's original narrative: Fontana attempted to portray the essential drama of Elvino's emotional anguish. Consequently, he reorganized the sequence of the selected arias, reversed their original order and provided them with a dramatic introduction as well as a brilliant finale coda. Magdalena Oliferko describes the narrative form of Fontana's fantasy on Bellini's *La Sonnambula*:

In the original, they appear in a reverse order, while the aria of Amina's turns into a song of the triumph of love. However, the Fontana's fantasia [sic] commences with "womanly" subject....The fantasia is concluded with a lively, dance accent.<sup>42</sup>

This reordering of the thematic sequence of the original provides a highly suggestive observation of Fontana's intention. Fontana's approach intended to display the consistent dramatic intensity of specific scenes chosen from the Bellini work, but was not used to accomplish any sequence of incidents, disregarding the original narrative development of the opera.

Fontana used three themes from Act II: Amina's aria "Ah! non credea mirarti," (Human thought cannot conceive) and two themes from Elvino's aria, "Tutto è sciolto" (All is undone) and "Pasci il guardo e appaga l'alma" (Feed your glance, fill your soul). Significantly, he did not

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<sup>42</sup> Magdalena Oliferko, CD liner notes, Julian Fontana, *Julian Fontana - Complete Piano Works*, vol. 1, performed by Hubert Rutkowski, digital disc, Acte Prealable, CD AP0161, 2007.

represent a central episode from the original: the incident of the villagers discovering Amina in the bedroom of a visiting nobleman, Rodolfo. Instead, Fontana first introduced an anticipation of the initial statement of theme (a) of Amina's aria. Then the first theme (a) of Amina's melody appears in mm. 17–44, leading to Section A1 (mm. 45–71). With the intense transitional passage in mm. 72–82, the dramatic turn of the scene occurs at Section B. The theme (b) of Elvino's aria, "Tutto è sciolto," expresses the different musical pictures as an entreaty to Amina's innocence versus Elvino's suspicion, anguish, discouragement, and hopelessness. The fantasy epitomizes the intensity of Elvino's inner feeling, communicated through the theme (c), "Pasci il guardo e appaga l'alma," in mm. 100–117 of the finale (Section B). Finally, the Coda delivers the scene with all its indignation and lamentation of Elvino's emotion. The piece ends here, not concluding with the conviction of Amina's innocence, as is seen in Bellini. However, the Coda presents Elvino's melody with an atmosphere of rejoicing that celebrates the lovers' reconciliation. Table 5 shows the overall formal structure of Fontana's fantasy and the use of Bellini's original thematic materials.

Table 5. Thematic content in Fontana’s fantasy, op. 14 and its relation to Bellini’s opera themes

Section in op. 14	Thematic source from Bellini’s <i>La Sonnambula</i>	Original opera key	Usage	Key used by Fontana
Introduction (mm. 1-16)	Theme (a) from Amina’s aria (Act II) “Ah! non credea mirarti” Variation of Theme (a)	Am	mm. 1-8: Thematic fragments of Theme (a)	B <sup>b</sup> m
		Am	mm. 9-16: Repetition of mm. 1-8	Am
A (mm. 17-44)		Am–Am–CM	mm. 17-44: Theme (a)	Am–Am–CM
A1 (mm. 45-82)		Am–Am–CM	mm. 45-71: Variation of Theme (a)	Am–Am–CM
			mm. 72-82: Transition	Secondary Dominants leading toward B <sup>b</sup> m
B (mm. 83-117)		Themes (b) and (c) from Elvino’s aria (Act II) “Tutto è sciolto”(b) “Pasci il guardo e appaga l’alma”(c)	Am	mm. 83-99: Theme (b)
	CM		mm. 100-117: Theme (c)	D <sup>b</sup> M
Coda (mm. 118-129)	Melodic fragmentation of Theme (c) from Elvino’s melody (Act II) “Pasci il guardo e appaga l’alma”	CM	mm. 118-129	D <sup>b</sup> M

### *Unification of Melodic and Rhythmic Motive*

Fontana used thematic fragments to unify the structure through melodic and rhythmic motives, carrying out two interrelated motivic unifications. Dramatic contrast found in the juxtaposition of the two dominant characters (Elvino and Amina) is further highlighted by reversing the order of their arias. In particular, Fontana directed relative importance to the character of Elvino’s aria, using its melodic motive as a closing theme for the finale, while Amina’s aria was used as an opening theme.

The thematic fragment of Elvino’s aria (see Example 6A) is presented in section B. Then, the first eight pitches (F–G-flat–F–E-flat–D-flat–E-flat–F–D-flat) of theme (c) in Fontana’s fantasy are repeated seven times in the Coda. The combination of the *molto allegro* in 2/4 and the triplet rhythm of both hands in a motto-like rhythmic pattern provide a forceful climactic ending. To pull off a lively and jubilant ending in the finale, Fontana employed the dance-like triplet

rhythm in the melody and broken chords in the accompaniment with tonic pedal point on D-flat and a dominant seventh harmonic relationship of D-flat major throughout the Coda. Decidedly, there is no doubt that Bellini's impassioned climactic finale infused the Coda (mm. 118–129); the finale of Bellini's opera finishes with Amina's aria and the chorus of villagers. Ultimately, Fontana emphasized specific elements and facets of the Bellini original (Example 16).

Example 16. Fontana, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, *Molto Allegro*, op. 14, mm. 118–129

The highlighted pitches outline the melodic motive from Theme (c).

The adaptation of Amina's aria (Example 19A) and use of the rhythmic fragments in the introduction show that Fontana aimed to connect the drama and music through the first half of

the piece, while focusing on Amina. The sixteen-measure introduction opens with the first statement of Amina's melody from Act II, "Ah! non credea mirarti," which consists of the crisp rhythmic figuration (♩ ♪. ♪ ♩ ♩) that is one of Bellini's characteristic rhythmic figures. Conspicuously, the rhythm drives the music with added force in a bustling pulse<sup>43</sup> to anticipate Amina's vocal expression; this emotional intensity is observed in the introduction. The use of Amina's aria follows the structure of a potpourri-type of fantasy, and establishes a rhythmic framework throughout this section in relation to the rhythmic motive introduced by the four-note motive (E–F-sharp–G-sharp–A in A minor of Bellini) first transposed to B-flat minor before returning to the original key of A minor. Moreover, the accompaniment takes on a homorhythmic texture, emphasizing the theme in the manner of a chorus or orchestral introduction. Rather than the original accompaniment which consists of arpeggiation, this new introduction puts greater stress on Amina's theme while creating a more dynamic introduction for the fantasy as a whole (Example 17).

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<sup>43</sup> Leslie Orrey, *Bellini*, The Master Musicians Series (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1969), 126.



Example 17. Fontana, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, op. 14, *Allegretto*, mm. 1–15

**Allegretto.**

Piano. *f* *Energio*

*8va* *6* *f* Ped. Ped. \*

4 *veloce.* *f* *cresc.* Ped. \*

8 *f* Ped. \*

12 *8va* *6* *cresc.* *Poco rall.* *ten.* *sf* Ped. \*

Both the homorhythmic treatment of the melody and the extended flourish at m.4 are extensions of the existing material, adapted into a more elaborate introduction for the fantasy.

The use of melodic and rhythmic motives as unifying devices echoes Czerny’s assertion that in the potpourri style fantasy, “the creative worth rests in the use of variation and in linking

passages.”<sup>44</sup> It is also important to note that the overall fantasy is assembled by reversing the order of events in the original opera act. Fontana’s decision to reformat the second act into his piano fantasy naturally leads to the compositional approach indicative of potpourri, giving an elegant and artistic solution to unifying the work.

### Pianistic Texture

Fontana’s approach to pianistic writing preserved Bellini’s original thematic materials with simple melodic structures akin to a piano reduction. He elaborated on the overall accompaniment textures through tempo changes and expressive directions, with creative use of rhythmic ostinati for transitional material as well as to build dramatic intensity. While the source material is maintained, Fontana expanded the harmony of chordal passages to evoke a more dramatic effect, particularly in the finale.

### *Quasi-Piano Reduction*

Fontana retained the vocal purity and lyricism of Bellini’s original themes: much of Bellini’s phrasing appears as in the opera. As such, Fontana’s fantasy is not dissimilar to a piano reduction of the arias in question. Fontana’s writing reflects Bellini’s *bel canto* style and keeps the relatively straightforward texture when presenting Elvino’s melody (Example 5A), similar to the way the melody appears originally in the vocal score. Indeed, Fontana retains a number of elements that occur in the opera: Fontana’s melody and rhythm produce few modifications (aside from a transposition from A minor to B-flat minor), while the articulation is also faithful to the original (consistent non-staccatos in the first and third beats in the left hand) (Example 18). The overall density of activity is also indicative of an aria reduction, as the voices are placed so as to

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<sup>44</sup> Catherine Coppola, paraphrasing Czerny’s *School of Practical Composition*, in Catherine Coppola, “The Elusive Fantasy: Genre, Form, and Program in Tchaikovsky’s ‘Francesca da Rimini,’” *19th-Century Music* 22, no. 2 (Autumn 1998): 176.

highlight the division between melody and accompaniment. While Liszt’s adaptation of the same theme engaged a wider range of the piano and increased density of texture in the accompaniment, Fontana’s treatment primarily employed Alberti bass similar to the string pizzicato in the original opera accompaniment. Similarly, Fontana’s melodies lacked the rhythmic complexity and embellishments used by Liszt, such as adding octaves and other intervals to the melody, elaborate figurations in the phrasing, and carefully notated passages indicative of operatic embellishments (See Example 5B). Whereas Fontana took liberties with the introductory material, in treating the original arias the approach is noticeably conservative in order to remain close to the source material.

Example 18. Fontana, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, op. 14, *Larghetto*, mm. 83–91

The theme (b) of Elvino's aria, "Tutto è sciolto": octave down (R.H)

The musical score consists of two systems of piano music. The first system begins at measure 83 and ends at measure 91. The second system begins at measure 88 and ends at measure 91. The music is in 3/4 time with a key signature of three flats. The right hand plays a melody, and the left hand plays an Alberti bass accompaniment. Pedal markings are present throughout. The first system includes the instruction "Larghetto." and "con espress.".

### *Texture Intensification*

While Fontana retains the overall melody in its original form, the accompanimental texture is enriched with each statement of the melody. The alteration of musical expressions to an *Allegro, energico* and *veloce*, from Bellini's *Andante cantabile*, shows Fontana's intent to create dissimilar musical content in order to produce a driving power. In fact, the tension of Amina's sincerity continues through to Section A1 which is a variation of Section A. Fontana modified the rhythmic figuration keeping the melody of Amina's aria intact: he filled in additional middle voices between the hands and transitioned to a more lively musical presentation with the addition of the direction *leggiere*, as well as including *con anima, il canto marcato*. Extending the overall harmonic density of the accompaniment to incorporate inner voices shared between both hands, Bellini's original vocal expression is maintained with alternating tempo changes, *ritenuto* and *a Tempo*. The following Examples 19A to 19C present a comparison of Bellini's original material with Fontana's rhythmic variation technique, which relies on rhythmic motives to fulfill the expressiveness of the scene. It is also important to note the compositional approach shown in Example 19B, which further supports the quasi-piano reduction writing style discussed above. More significantly, Example 19C offers a new direction of Amina's aria that is more compositionally developed than Example 19B: here, the enhanced accompaniment texture breaks from the quasi-piano reduction in order to give more dramatic development to the theme. Combined with the difference in musical direction (employing *leggiere* and *con anima*), a new perspective is placed on the originally somber and pessimistic tone, again alluding to a new interpretation as a song extolling the triumph of love. This adaptation of the dramatic content manipulates the famous arias to arrive at the same jubilant finale, despite the fact that the act itself does not suggest a positive outcome for the lovers.

Example 19A. Bellini, *La Sonnambula*, “Ah! non credea mirarti,” Amina’s aria from Act II

*AND:<sup>te</sup> CANTABILE*

A

61 *AND:<sup>te</sup> CANTABILE* *legato* Ah! non credea mi -

*pp*

- rar - ti si pre - sto. estin - to, o fio - re; pas - sa - sti alpardà -

- mo - re, che un giorno so - lò, che un gior - no sol du - rò..... che un giorno

A

62 (piango sul fiore) *ELV.* *AMI.* so - lo, ah sol du - rò. Io... più non reg - go. Pas -

*ELV.* *AMI.* - sasti al par d'amo - re... Più non reg - go a tan - to duo - lo. Che un



Example 19B, continued

Musical score for Example 19B, continued. The score consists of two systems of piano music. The first system starts at measure 31 and ends at measure 34. The second system starts at measure 35 and ends at measure 38. The music is written for piano with a treble and bass clef. The bass line features a continuous eighth-note accompaniment. Pedal markings are indicated by 'Ped.' and asterisks (\*). Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *p* (piano). A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' in the first system.

Example 19C. Fontana, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, op. 14, *Andante cantabile*, mm. 43–64

Musical score for Example 19C, Fontana's *La Sonnambula* fantasy, op. 14, *Andante cantabile*, mm. 43–64. The score consists of two systems of piano music. The first system starts at measure 43 and ends at measure 50. The second system starts at measure 46 and ends at measure 64. The music is written for piano with a treble and bass clef. The bass line features a continuous eighth-note accompaniment. Pedal markings are indicated by 'Ped.' and asterisks (\*). Performance instructions include *Tempo.*, *Con anima. il canto marcato.*, *leggiero.*, *riten.*, and *Tempo.* Dynamics include *p* (piano).

Example 19C, continued

The musical score for Example 19C, continued, consists of five systems of music, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes the following performance markings and features:

- Measures 49-51:** Ped. markings under the bass staff.
- Measures 52-54:** *ritenuto.* markings above the treble staff, followed by *a Tempo.* markings above the treble staff.
- Measures 55-58:** *Piu f* marking above the treble staff, followed by *ritenuto.* and *a Tempo.* markings above the treble staff.
- Measures 59-61:** *riten.* marking above the bass staff, followed by *tempo.* marking above the treble staff.
- Measures 62-64:** *cresc.* marking above the bass staff, followed by *ff* marking above the treble staff.

Fontana incorporated long and flowing melodic lines filled with embellishments and paired with rhythmic repetitions, all characteristics of Bellini's *bel canto* style (Example 20). An




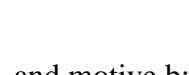
example of this may also be seen in Fontana’s treatment of Elvino’s aria from Act II, “Tutto è sciolto” (see Example 5A) in which the theme is filled in with arpeggiated figurations in the accompaniment spanning a wider range of the piano.


Example 20. Fontana, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, op. 14, *Larghetto*, mm. 92–99

The musical score for Example 20 consists of two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system covers measures 92-95, and the second system covers measures 96-99. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The right hand plays a melodic line with various rhythmic values and articulations, including slurs and accents. The left hand plays a rhythmic ostinato of eighth notes. Performance markings include 'Tempo.' at the beginning of the second system, 'riten.' in measure 95, and 'cresc.' in measure 98. Pedaling is indicated with 'Ped.' and asterisks below the notes. Fingerings are indicated with numbers 1-5 above the notes.

### *Rhythmic Ostinato*

As Fontana began with the motivic variation in the introduction and continued by using the variation technique from Amina’s melody in Section A1, dramatic intensity builds in the pianistic writing relative to a characteristic feature of rhythmic ostinato, particularly in the transition throughout mm. 72–82. Section A1 presents a variation of Amina’s melody from Act II, “Ah! non credea mirarti,” in which Fontana altered both the melody and the accompaniment in restless arpeggiated chords. Fontana reinterpreted C-sharp diminished chord in m. 72 as a diminished 7<sup>th</sup> leading to A flat to initiate the transitional passages, which are established by

using two rhythmic motives from m. 71 [motive a:  and motive b: 


 ] which function as a rhythmic ostinato through the transition. These perpetual rhythmic continuations keep driving to build up the intensity which follows Section B. Fontana effectively underscores the two rhythmic motives, as undulating rhythmic gestures over a range nearing four octaves, with a dominant pedal of B-flat minor in the bass through the section from mm. 72–82 (by way of diminished seventh harmonies and augmented sixth chords). At the end of the section in mm. 81–82, Fontana interpolates the transitional passages for the dramatic turn of the narrative by including an additional expression mark, *con duolo* as well as highly charged dynamic of *fff* (Example 21).

Example 21. Fontana, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, op. 14, *Andante cantabile*, mm. 71–82



The musical score for Example 21 consists of two systems of piano music. The first system covers measures 71 and 72. Measure 71 is marked with a bracket labeled "motive a" and a dynamic marking of *ff*. The second system covers measures 73 through 82. Measure 72 is marked with a bracket labeled "motive b" and a "Ped." (pedal) marking. The score includes various musical notations such as fingering (5, 4, 3), articulation (accents, slurs), and dynamic markings (*dimin.*, *p*). Pedal markings are indicated with "Ped." and asterisks throughout the piece.

Example 21, continued

75 *poco a poco crescendo* *f*

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \*

77 *p* *crescendo* *f*

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \*

79 *ff*

Ped. \* Ped. \* Ped. \*

81 *Con duolo.* *riten.* *sf* *fff* *sf*

Ped. \* Ped. \*

### Chordal Texture

The incorporation of chordal texture and homorhythmic writing propels the music more actively in the grand finale. While Liszt's setting of the same theme expanded the melody to octaves with a sweeping arpeggio in the accompaniment (See Example 6B), Fontana expanded a hymn-like chordal texture by adding middle voices, doubling octaves, and widening figurations, along with having an accompaniment that signifies the finale. The multi-voice texture and homophonic rhythmic gesture of the finale depicts Fontana's intention to imitate the chorus setting of the chorale finale in Bellini's original (see Example 6A) in Section B (Example 22). The overall homorhythmic texture with *fortissimo* dynamics (as opposed to the original *pianissimo*) suggests a more powerful sense of conclusion by the sheer amount of sound occurring in unified melody and accompaniment.

Example 22. Fontana, *La Sonnambula* fantasy, op. 14, *Più vivo grandiso* [*sic*], mm. 100–107

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Più vivo grandiso" from Fontana's *La Sonnambula* fantasy, measures 100 to 107. The score is written for piano and features a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The tempo and dynamic markings are "Piu vivo grandiso" and "ff" (fortissimo), with the instruction "legatissimo" (legatissimo) in the first system. The music is characterized by a dense, homophonic texture with multiple voices in both hands. The right hand plays a melody with triplets and sixteenth-note patterns, while the left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. Pedal points are indicated by "Ped." and asterisks throughout the piece. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4.

In his *La Sonnambula* fantasy, Fontana showed his drive to give clarity to the form and texture of this work, preserving Bellini's *bel canto* melody, harmony, and rhythm. In particular,

he used variation technique, motivic unification (of melody and rhythm), and rhythmic ostinati. However, Fontana also brought out his own musical insight in adapting Bellini's original to new musical creation. With the arias occurring in reverse order from their original appearance in the opera, Fontana redesigned their function and dramatic substance using them to create a powerful introduction and a grandioso finale to better suit the new series of events as he interpreted them.

## CHAPTER 6

### ANALYSIS OF OPERATIC FANTASY ON WEBER'S *DER FREISCHÜTZ* BY FONTANA

Fontana's *Der Freischütz* fantasy, comparable to the type of potpourri-style fantasy seen in his *La Sonnambula* fantasy, is divided into three sections (with introduction and coda), and is based on three melodies from Weber's opera: Caspar's aria from Act I, "Hier im ird'sehen Jammerthal"; the Huntsmen's Chorus from Act III, "Was gleicht wohl auf Erde"; and the duet from Act II, between Ännchen and Agathe, "Schelm, halt' fest." The material of the fantasy is faithful to Weber, literal in its melodic quotation as well as in the harmonic pattern. Fontana brought cohesion to the overall structure by using the short motivic and thematic materials of Caspar's aria and the Huntsmen's Chorus theme as unifying elements throughout the fantasy.

#### Formal Devices of Fontana's *Der Freischütz* Fantasy

Fontana's fantasy consists of three sections with an introduction and coda. Similar to his approach to his *Sonnambula* fantasy, Fontana's use of motivic unification through fragments and quotations are indicative of the potpourri style. He relied heavily on two significant themes, having them recur throughout the fantasy in ways that both unify the structure and represent key dramatic aspects of the narrative.

#### *Dramatic Narrative Form*

Fontana's fantasy shows the design of a new, smaller art form in an order that does not follow Weber's original, as seen in his *La Sonnambula* fantasy. Indeed, Fontana intended to define only specific incidents of his own choosing, regardless of their location and purpose in the larger plot. The fantasy lacks the sequential dramatic developments of the opera; however, it revolves around the same conflict of evil and virtue, the fantasy and opera both having the same

finale. Fontana's fantasy presents three different musical scenes from Weber's *Der Freischütz*: Caspar's drinking song, displaying Caspar's temptation of Max; the duet of Ännchen and Agathe (discussing Agathe's concern for Max); and the jubilant Huntsmen's Chorus theme of the villagers. Similar to Liszt's setting, Fontana focused on the two dominant characters, Caspar and Agathe, magnifying the contrast of emotions. Fontana's fantasy brings out the triumphant finale with the Huntsmen's Chorus theme to celebrate the approval of marriage for Agathe and Max. As a result, Fontana distinctly focused on two central points: the supernatural power of "Evil" in Caspar's deceit, and the exuberant culmination of Max and Agathe's coming together to marry.

The furious atmosphere of the introduction is triggered by thematic fragments of Caspar's aria from Act I, "Hier im ird'schen Jammerthal," (Here in this earthly vale of tears) in mm. 1–14. This is followed in m. 15 by the initial thematic motive of the Huntsmen's Chorus theme from Act III, "Was gleicht wohl auf Erden dem Jägervergnügen" (What pleasure on earth can compare with the chase) an allusion to the tension between Caspar and Agathe by way of ascending and descending sixteenth scale passages of V<sub>7</sub>/A major in mm. 23–30. In Section A, Fontana transitioned to the duet theme of Ännchen and Agathe, "Schelm, halt' fest," (You wretch, stay put) from Act II. The fantasy drives to unfold both Agathe's love for Max and Agathe's anxiety over the unfortunate omens she encounters. The thematic statement of the duet theme is represented by the same key, meter, and harmony as in Weber's opera, including the additional musical markings that express Agathe's innermost feeling toward her beloved Max. Fontana presented the disturbing premonition of Caspar's treachery using dynamic contrast (*forte/piano*). Section B (mm. 123–178) draws on Caspar's aria to paint the devilishness of Caspar's deeds: instant gratification by trading Max's soul to the devil in place of his own. As Caspar's unholy power dissipates, the lifting of the evil gets resolved via the harmonic movement F#<sub>7</sub> (m. 179)–

A<sub>7</sub> (m. 183)–V<sub>7</sub> (m. 194) through the transition (mm. 179–194), by transferring the minor key to the major key (B minor to A major). Afterwards, Fontana contrasted the dramatic moment by using orchestral and vocal parts from the Huntsmen’s Chorus theme (mm. 195–252) and elaborates the theme with virtuosic variation (mm. 261–292) to carry the triumphant finale. Table 6 shows the formal outline of Fontana’s fantasy and his use of Weber’s original thematic materials.



Table 6. Thematic content in Fontana's *Der Freischütz* fantasy and its relation to Weber's opera themes

Sections in op. 6	Thematic Sources from Weber's <i>Der Freischütz</i>	Original opera key	Usage		Key used by Fontana
Introduction (mm. 1-30)	Theme (a) from Caspar's aria (Act I) "Hier im ird'schen Jammerthal"	Bm	mm. 1-8	Thematic fragments of Theme (a)	Bm
			mm. 9-14	Harmonic sequence	DM
	Theme (b) from Huntsmen's Chorus theme (Act III) "Was gleicht wohl auf Erden dem Jägervergnügen"	DM	mm. 15-18	Thematic fragments of Theme (b)	DM
			mm. 19-30	Harmonic sequence	DM-Bm-AM
A (mm. 31-122)	Theme (c) from Duet theme of Ännchen and Agathe (Act II) "Schelm, halt' fest"	AM	mm. 31-46	Theme (c)	AM
			mm. 47-60		C <sup>#</sup> m-BM-AM
			mm. 61-77		AM
			mm. 78-83	Bridge	AM
			mm. 84-109	Melodic fragments of Theme (c)	AM-C <sup>#</sup> m-Bm Aug6-V/Bm (mm. 105-109)
			mm. 110-122	Transition	Bm
B (mm. 123-260)	Theme (a) from Caspar's aria (Act I) "Hier im ird'schen Jammerthal" Variation of Theme (a)	Bm	mm. 123-153	Theme (a)	Bm
			mm. 154-178	Variation	Bm
			mm. 179-194	Transition	F <sup>#</sup> <sub>7</sub> -A <sub>7</sub> -V <sub>7</sub> (mm. 179-194)
	Theme (b) from Huntsmen's Chorus theme (Act III) "Was gleicht wohl auf Erden dem Jägervergnügen"	DM	mm. 195-252	Theme (b)	DM
mm. 253-260			Transition	DM	
C (mm. 261-296)	Variation of Theme (b)	DM	mm. 261-292	Variation	DM
	Fragments of Theme (a)		mm. 293-292	Thematic motive of Theme (a)	Bm-V <sub>7</sub> /DM
			mm. 293-296	Bridge	
Coda (mm. 297-310)	Melodic fragmentation of Huntsmen's Chorus theme (Act III)		mm. 297-305		DM
	Motivic fragments with rhythmic imitation of Caspar's aria :Theme (a)		mm. 306-310		DM

### *Motivic Unification*

Fontana unified the structure by using motivic fragmentation while juxtaposing the theme from Caspar's aria, "Hier im ird'schen Jammerthal," with the Huntsmen's Chorus theme, "Was gleicht wohl auf Erden dem Jägervergnügen." The use of thematic fragments to anticipate the presentation of the complete theme provides unity to the work in its arching formal design, as well as the motivic unification (e.g., motivic usage: motive of Caspar's aria—motive of Huntsmen's Chorus theme—theme of Caspar's aria—Huntsmen's Chorus theme—variation of

Huntsmen's Chorus theme—motive of Caspar's aria—melodic fragmentation of Huntsmen's Chorus theme—motivic fragments of Caspar's aria). This motivic procedure concretely shows how Fontana intended to design his composition to unify the formal structure. Fontana's linking of thematic elements heightened the urgency and intensity between Caspar and Agathe. Fontana delivered the original scene of the finale of Weber's opera by mingling throughout the work the thematic materials of Caspar's aria and the Huntsmen's Chorus theme.

Fontana employed Caspar's aria (Example 23A) by extracting the head of the theme and the last three measures which appears at the beginning of the introduction in mm. 1–8 and continues by the harmonic sequence ( $V_7-I^6_4-V_7-I^6_4-V_7$  of D major) in mm. 9–14 (Example 23B). Immediately, the head of the theme from the Huntsmen's Chorus follows at m. 15–18 ( $I-V_7/D$  major— $i-V/B$  minor), which is followed by the same harmonic sequence as Caspar's aria represented in mm. 9–14 ( $V_7-I^6_4-V_7-I^6_4-V_7$  of A major) in mm. 19–30 (Example 23C). It reappears at the end of Section C (mm. 293–294) which shows Fontana's intent to convey continuous conflict of the scene. What is even more interesting is the interpolation into the Huntsmen's Chorus theme of a quite similar rhythmic figuration of Caspar's aria at the end of Coda (mm. 305–310). Fontana employed *tutti forza* and *fff* which make up the orchestral sonorities of the grand finale ending (Example 23D).

Example 23A. Weber, *Der Freischütz*, “Hier im ird’schen Jammerthal,” Caspar’s aria from Act I

**Allegro feroce ma non troppo presto.**

**Caspar.**

Cas. Hier im ird’schen Jammerthal  
In this earth-ly\_vale of woe

Strings & Bassoons

*ff*

Cas. wa r’doch nichts als Plack und Qual, trug’ der Stock nicht Trau- ben :  
If no more the grape would grow, Life were but vex- a - tion!

Strings

Picc. & Bssn.

*ff*

*p*

Example 23B. Fontana, *Der Freischütz* fantasy, *Allegro ma non troppo*, mm. 1–18

The musical score is presented in four systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is common time (C). The tempo is marked "Allegro ma non troppo".

- System 1 (Measures 1-3):** The right hand begins with a melodic line marked *f* and *risoluto.* The left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment. Measure 3 features a *cresc.* marking and a *p* dynamic.
- System 2 (Measures 4-8):** The right hand continues with a melodic line marked *sf sf*. The left hand accompaniment includes a *riten.* marking in measure 8.
- System 3 (Measures 9-11):** The right hand features a complex, rhythmic melodic line with many slurs and fingerings (e.g., 2 3 2 3 2, 3 1, 1 2 1 3). The left hand accompaniment consists of block chords.
- System 4 (Measures 12-18):** The right hand continues with a melodic line marked *riten. molto*. The left hand accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern.





chordal textures derived from outlining and embellishing the melodic figurations of the Huntsmen's Chorus theme embedded within the rhythmic phrase. This juxtaposition of themes lends a new musical interpretation to the conclusion, suggesting Fontana constructed the motivic unifying form in order to establish the balance of drama and music in his own work. The ending reworks the rhythmic motive of Caspar's aria, maintaining the basic articulation and use of grace notes while transposed to the key of D major in order to form the plagal cadence that ends the fantasy (Example 23D).

Example 23D. Fontana, *Der Freischütz* fantasy, *Vivace assai*, mm. 285–310

The image displays a musical score for Example 23D, consisting of two systems of piano and vocal parts. The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is 3/4. The first system begins at measure 285. The piano part features a bass line with a 'marcatissimo il basso' instruction and includes several measures with circled notes and 'Ped.' markings. The vocal line starts with a forte (*ff*) dynamic and includes the lyrics 'cre--scen--do'. The second system begins at measure 290. The piano part continues with circled notes and 'Ped.' markings. The vocal line includes the lyrics 'cre--scen--do' and concludes with a 'leggiero' section marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The score includes various performance instructions such as *ff*, *marcatissimo il basso*, *Furioso*, and *leggiero*, along with dynamic markings like *sf* and *p*. Fingerings and articulation marks are also present throughout the score.

### Example 23D, continued

The image displays two systems of musical notation for piano. The first system, starting at measure 296, features a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a rhythmic accompaniment. The treble staff has a six-pitch motive (D, A, F#, A, G, E) circled in red. Dynamic markings include *pp*, *cresc. e*, and *f*. The second system, starting at measure 301, continues the piece with a *8<sup>va</sup>* marking. It includes dynamic markings such as *f*, *cresc. e*, *accelerando*, *ff*, *tutti*, *forza*, *riten.*, and *fff*. A *Ped.* marking with an asterisk is present at the end of the system.

The melodic phrase is outlined in the highlighted pitches (quotation of six-pitch motive: D, A, F#, A, G, and E). The melodic fragments are derived from the Huntsmen's Chorus theme (in mm. 285–292 and mm. 297–304) and Caspar's aria (in mm. 293–294). Note the quotation of the rhythmic motive found in Caspar's aria at mm. 305–310, transposed into D major but maintaining the articulation (see Example 23A).

In his *Der Freischütz* fantasy, Fontana unified the structure by adapting the thematic and motivic materials of two themes significant to the original narrative. This practice reflects the potpourri style as defined by Czerny, which reorganizes the original material while maintaining an overall sense of unification. Notably, the use of these two themes shows Fontana's focus on the core narrative element of the opera, the juxtaposition of good and evil.

### Pianistic Texture

Fontana's pianistic texture maintains the original melody, harmony and rhythm as they appear in Weber's opera. Exploiting the well-known opera themes (especially the Huntsmen's Chorus) for public amusement rather than focusing primarily on creating musical developments, Fontana's pianistic texture is essentially faithful to Bellini's original, though he articulated the



vocal lines with a number of varied musical expressions (dynamics, articulations, rhythmic alterations) and a chorale texture in the finale.

### *Quasi-Piano Reduction*

Fontana gave a near-literal quotation of the original theme in the same key of D major as a quasi-piano reduction as compared to Weber's original themes, especially the second part of the Huntsmen's Chorus of Act III and the duet theme of Ännchen and Agathe from Act II. He retained the original theme in the same middle-register with few changes, only enriching the texture by adding a 5th to the left hand octaves and doubling the bass notes in octaves (Example 24A and 24B). The lack of major embellishments and deviations from the original is also found in his approach to the *Sonnambula* fantasy, retaining the purity of the original themes to be readily recognized by audiences.

Example 24A. Weber, *Der Freischütz*, “Ist fürstliche Freude,” the second part of the Huntsmen’s Chorus theme from Act III: piano accompaniment part

The musical score for Example 24A consists of two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system is marked with a forte *f* dynamic in the bass clef and a piano *p* dynamic in the treble clef. The second system continues the piece with various articulations and dynamics.

Example 24B. Fontana, *Der Freischütz* fantasy, *Allegro feroce ma non troppo presto*, mm. 211–226

The musical score for Example 24B consists of two systems of piano accompaniment. The first system is marked with a piano *p* dynamic in the bass clef. The second system is marked with a *piu f* dynamic in the bass clef. The score includes measure numbers 211 and 219.

Another of Fontana’s literal quotations of Weber’s score (see Example 25A) is seen in the duet of Ännchen and Agathe from Act II. Fontana even kept the original tempo (*Allegretto*), key (A major), and meter (6/8) of the instrumental accompaniment of Weber’s original. Extracting three sections from the aria, Fontana devised new connective material linking the

segments together into a cohesive whole. Again, this echoes the potpourri style of writing, wherein fragments and tunes are intricately interconnected by the composer (Example 25B).

Example 25A. Weber's *Der Freischütz*, "Schelm, halt' fest," Duet theme of Ännchen and Agathe from Act II

**Allegretto grazioso.**

2nd Vln. & Viola  
1st Vln.  
*P leggiero* (Hammer-strokes)  
Cello  
Bass

An. Annie (to the nail).  
Schelm, halt'  
Rouge, hold

An. Agathe  
fest! ich will dich's leh - ren, Spu - ke -  
firm, or I will show thee That a

Horns sustain *pp*

An. Agathe  
rei' n kann man ent - behren in - solch' al - tem Eu - len - nest.  
woman's spite — I owe thee, As the cause of our a - larm.

Fl.  
Bssn.

Example 25B. Fontana, *Der Freischütz* fantasy, *Allegro feroce ma non troppo presto*, mm. 31–47

The image displays three systems of musical notation for a piano piece. The first system is marked 'Allegretto' and 'p' (piano). It features a treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 6/8 time signature. The right hand plays a series of chords and eighth-note patterns, while the left hand provides a steady bass line. The second system begins at measure 35 and continues the melodic and harmonic development. The third system starts at measure 41 and includes dynamic markings such as 'f' (forte) and 'mf' (mezzo-forte), along with fingerings (e.g., 2, 3, 1, 4) and articulation marks. The notation includes various rhythmic values, slurs, and phrasing slurs.

*Use of Original Material and Virtuosity: Rhythmic Variation and Polyrhythm*

Fontana's choice of the Huntsmen's Chorus theme for the finale shows the composer's intent to integrate the unity of opera scene and music by employing variation techniques, especially in the area of rhythm. The rhythmic modification of the Huntsmen's Chorus theme is one of the representative compositional treatments that Fontana employed throughout the work. Fontana applied one complete variation to various musical settings from the Huntsmen's Chorus theme in Section C. This section, *Vivace assai*, stands out as the most musically extravagant, creating texture using coloristic harmonic gestures (see Examples 13A and 14A). However, Weber's theme is presented in more extensive form in *Vivace assai*, where Fontana developed the initial part of the theme as he incorporated thematic variants by using rhythmic variation techniques. Some of the variation techniques employed by Fontana include changes in the

articulations and the rhythmic outline and motivic fragmentation. The Huntsmen's Chorus theme appears in mm. 195–252 (Example 26A) and is repeated in mm. 261–292 as a variation: it appears initially in the left hand and is soon followed with sixteenth-note triplet figurations in the right hand incorporating notes from the melody. The *Vivace assai* presents the Huntsmen's Chorus theme in a virtuosic fashion; this variation is set by a variety of pianistic elaborative figurations in both melody and accompaniment parts, including broken-chord arpeggios, arabesque figurations, and a six octave range. In a somewhat challenging passage, the original melody is shared between the hands, with parts of the melody embedded within the right hand triplet figurations. The consistent thirty-two-measure arabesque rhythmic figure in the right hand encompasses the dramatic intensity of Weber's jubilant finale which Fontana delivered as the most virtuosic elaboration of the fantasy (Example 26B).

Example 26A. Fontana, *Der Freischütz* fantasy, *Allegro feroce ma non troppo presto*, mm. 195–229

195 *mf* 5 3 2 1 4 Ped. Ped. Ped.

203 *mf* Ped. Ped. Ped.

211 *p*

221 *piu f* *cresc.* *p* Ped. Ped.

Example 26B. Fontana, *Der Freischütz* fantasy, *Vivace assai*, mm. 261–284

The musical score consists of five systems of music, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 2/4. The tempo is marked 'Vivace assai'. The score includes various dynamics such as *ff* (fortissimo), *sf* (sforzando), and *dim.* (diminuendo). Pedal points are indicated by 'Ped.' and asterisks. Fingerings are shown with numbers 1-5. Articulation marks like accents and slurs are present. The score is divided into systems, with measure numbers 261, 265, 269, 273, and 277 marking the beginning of each system. The right-hand part features a complex melodic line with many triplets and slurs. The left-hand part provides harmonic support with chords and a 'marcato' section. The overall texture is dense and rhythmic.

The highlighted pitches outline the melodic motive from theme (b)

Example 26B, continued

The musical score for Example 26B, continued, spans measures 281 to 292. It is written for piano in G major and 3/4 time. The right hand part begins with a triplet of eighth notes in the melody, marked with a forte (*ff*) dynamic. The melody continues with a 'loco' marking and another triplet of eighth notes. The left hand part provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and a pedal point. Pedal markings are indicated with 'Ped.' and asterisks.

Toward the finale of the Coda, Fontana balanced drama and music in terms of embellishment of accompaniment in pianistic color. The second part of the Huntsmen's Chorus theme is continuously driven and more active in virtuosic fashion. Instead of using unison in the chorus melody as in Weber's original (Example 27), the fantasy employs an embellished accompaniment of triplet rhythms, scalar passages, and dynamic intensity. Fontana used the triplet rhythmic figuration while outlining the harmony by running scales in ascending and descending motion. Also, Fontana built up the dynamic intensity by the alternating of *crescendo* and *decrescendo* in mm. 285–292 (see Example 23D).



Example 27. Weber, *Der Freischütz*, the third part of Huntsmen's Chorus theme from Act III

4 or 8 SOLO VOICES.

la, la la la, la la  
hark, follow hark, fol-low

la, la la la, la la  
hark, fol-low

la, la la, la la, la la,  
fol-low, fol-low,

la, la la la, la la  
hark, follow hark, follow

CHORUS in unison.

la, la la la, la la la, la la la, la la la, la la la, la la  
hark, follow hark, follow hark, follow hark, follow hark, follow hark, follow

la la, la la  
fol-low, fol-low

la, la la la, la la  
hark, fol-low

la, la la, la la,  
fol-low, fol-low,

la, la la la, la la la, la la la, la la  
hark, follow hark, follow hark, follow hark, follow hark, follow hark, follow

la la, la la  
fol-low, fol-low

la, la la la,  
hark, follow hark,

la, la la la,  
hark, follow hark,

la, la la la la  
hark, fol-low, fol-low

la, la la la, la la la, la la la, la la la, la la la la  
hark, follow hark, follow hark, follow hark, follow hark, follow hark, fol-low, fol-low

In adapting *Der Freischütz*, Fontana employed his own structure and form in a different direction from Weber's intent. Whereas Fontana's adaptation of *La Sonnambula* offers a new experience and perspective from a narrative standpoint, the compositional decisions in Fontana's *Der Freischütz* create a new experience on a formal and musical level. Functionally, his adaptation of Bellini can be interpreted as a piece with a more pedagogical inclination; in many ways, it differs little from a piano reduction as far as technical difficulty. Comparatively, Fontana presented an entirely new musical perspective on Weber's original opera; the virtuosic writing demands a higher degree of skill from performers while still maintaining reasonable performance demands aimed toward the amateur.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION: A COMPARATIVE EVALUATION OF FANTASIES BY LISZT AND FONTANA

The operatic fantasies on Bellini's *La Sonnambula* and Weber's *Der Freischütz* by Liszt and Fontana represent different compositional styles, and the discussion of these works reveal the individual manners in which each composer balanced and modified the musical and dramatic elements of the respective operas.

This examination illustrates the differences of musical styles as well as purposes for each composer: Liszt, to serve a professional market with a symphonic poem style of operatic fantasies, as contrasted with Fontana's potpourri style intended for an amateur market. Liszt reinterpreted the original opera sources and created a new musical insight through expansive treatments by way of diversity of rhythm, register changes, figuration, and harmony. He increased density of texture, utilizing unheard of pianistic challenges to interrelate structure of music and drama. Consequently, Liszt's operatic fantasies invoke both vocal and orchestral sonorities in a musical drama suitable for grand concert pieces. Liszt's operatic fantasies on *La Sonnambula* and *Der Freischütz* illustrate his creative innovation of integration of the acts, characters, and scenes from the operas. Liszt expanded the musical form to become a symphonic poem for piano. He diversified compositional approaches to enhance both vocal and orchestral aspects simultaneously, transferring vocal elements and orchestral sonorities into multi-layer texture. Liszt created a new type of piano playing that included elaborate virtuosic pianistic techniques to reflect orchestral capabilities.

Conspicuously, in his *La Sonnambula* fantasy, Liszt reinterpreted Bellini's original central episodes of plot, modified to create his own musical-drama. Additionally, Liszt's

pianistic texture demands the highest level of pianistic dexterity. He manipulated various textures and extensive pianistic figurations, doubling melodies, adding melodic embellishments, using the expansive range of register, and frequently having several different voices performed simultaneously.

Liszt structured the contents of his *Der Freischütz* fantasy (especially the Wolf's Glen scene) to balance the drama and music by diversifying the presentation of Weber's material; this is done by stating an individual single theme, combining themes, and using the motivic unification. The thematic quotes show his intention to structure the unified form by using a five-note motive and a nine-note motive throughout the work. To approach the musical form and elevate its effect, Liszt enlarged the texture of the Huntsmen's Chorus theme into more pianistic figurations: doubling the melody in octaves, vocal embellishment, rhythmic variation, and expanding the register. Additionally, Liszt presented the Wolf's Glen scene not only to dramatize musical contrast, but also to display lavish textures, using orchestral tone colors as intended in Weber's opera.

On the other hand, Fontana's fantasies faithfully set the original musical material to highlight the vocal aspects and preserve the opera's original themes. Fontana organized form by using short thematic elements for motivic unification and texture intensification in order to make effective use of musical contrast and climax, instead of an interrelated musical development between music and narrative. In reversing the order of arias, Fontana relied on his skill for connecting fragments of thematic material as well as repurposing entire fragments to apply an appropriate sense of dramatic development and function to the newly-ordered act. In both fantasies, Fontana kept the modest texture of the original thematic materials of vocal melody and orchestral accompaniment in a strikingly close rendition of the original score on the piano.

Fontana intended to reflect vocal expressionism, especially the *bel canto* of Bellini or the Huntsmen's Chorus theme of Weber, to exploit the well-known melodies rather than the progression of the dramatic plots. In his *La Sonnambula* fantasy, Fontana selected a very limited amount of thematic material and unified the form by thematic fragmentation. Fontana's unifying treatments of melodic and rhythmic motives in Bellini's *La Sonnambula* are the most characteristic of his formal devices to carry out the tension between two central characters. Instead of presenting the development of the narrative as in Liszt's fantasies, Fontana unfolded a much simpler, potpourri style approach.

It is important to emphasize the distinctively different compositional aims of the two composers. Both Liszt and Fontana approached the works with individualism, arguably based on the musical insights each had in relation to their different intended markets. Although Liszt emphasized three different facets—musical texture, orchestral timbre, and pianistic dexterity—through his fantasies, his genius produced all different levels of musico-dramatic emphasis within his compositions, balancing drama and music simultaneously. His fantasies demand extraordinary pianistic techniques, including imitating orchestral timbre in virtuosic fashion, rather than presenting the opera's dramatic musical literally. However, they reflect the essential scenes from the operas, but elaborated in accordance with Liszt's vision. The techniques and writing employed by Liszt often relate to the significant dramatic impact of the scenes he chose to represent in his fantasies.

Just as Liszt constructed the musical form to suit his needs, Fontana also created new structures. Fontana's *Sonnambula* fantasy shows the composer's intention to present a work faithful to Bellini's original vocal score. While the vocal content reflects the original with only some rhythmic variation, Fontana's innovation here is his use of structure. The fantasy

successfully uses motivic unification to add cohesion to the potpourri structure. He continued this style in the *Der Freischütz* fantasy which shows more extended form and a comparatively heightened level of technical demands. However, Fontana emphasized the contrast by juxtaposing quotations of Caspar's aria and the Huntsmen's Chorus theme in a similar fashion as Liszt's treatment in his own fantasy. Functionally, both composers employed these juxtapositions not only to highlight the dramatic content of the opera, but also to suggest a narrative symbolism inherent in the original work. Fontana, however, focused on the use of motivic unification (similar to his approach with Bellini's work), rather than using the extended structure and orchestral sonorities produced by Liszt. While the technical demands of Fontana's writing do not parallel that of Liszt, both Liszt and Fontana approached the narrative with innovative musical developments brought about by their distinctly different musical perspectives.

This comparative study of the diverse compositional aspects in these four operatic fantasies provides an essential understanding of both Liszt's and Fontana's different contributions to this genre, both in concert repertoire and in pedagogy. Additionally, this original research into the music of Fontana shows a composer deserving of greater attention from performers as well as scholars. Further research into Fontana's work will no doubt give greater credit to the composer's contributions to music, hopefully allowing his works greater recognition.

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