

JOHANN KASPAR MERTZ

(1806-1856)

Guitar Works

Volume VII

**SIX SCHUBERT SONGS**

arranged for solo guitar by Mertz

Editor: Simon Wynberg

CHANTERELLE

# JOHANN KASPAR MERTZ

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Volume VII

### 6 SCHUBERT SONGS (arr. for solo guitar by Mertz) Editor: Simon Wynberg

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Liszt ultimately transcribed fifty-six Schubert songs, including twelve from *Winterreise* (D.911), and the complete *Schwanengesang* (D.957); visionary cycles which had first appeared in 1828, the year of Schubert's death. Other transcriptions include the four *Geistliche Lieder*, the popular *Erkönig*, *Horch, horch die Lerch*, *Ave Maria*, and *Die Forelle*. The arrangements enjoyed immediate success and were soon published by Diabelli and Tobias Haslinger, who issued the *Schwanengesang* and *Winterreise* transcriptions in 1840<sup>6</sup>.

Mertz's choice of six songs was supposedly made in conjunction with Haslinger. The set comprises: *Lob der Thränen*, *Liebesbotschaft*, *Aufenthalt*, *Ständchen*, *Die Post* and *Das Fischermädchen*. The second, third, fourth and sixth numbers are drawn from the *Schwanengesang*, while *Die Post* is in the first number of the second book of *Winterreise*. *Lob der Thränen* (D.711b) is an earlier song, published first in 1822 and in Liszt's arrangement for Haslinger in 1838<sup>7</sup>. I am indebted to Robert Spencer who kindly allowed me access to the first editions of the 6 *Schubert'sche Lieder* as well as other works by Mertz in his collection.

It is not coincidental that Mertz's six songs are all included in Liszt's set of Haslinger transcriptions. As will be discussed, Mertz was familiar with both the piano arrangements and Schubert's originals. However, his choice was restricted by the limitations of the guitar, and, although he chose wisely, he was obliged to change the keys of three of the songs: *Ständchen* from d minor to a minor, *Die Post* from E flat to D and *Das Fischermädchen* from A flat to D.

A literal piano transcription of a Schubert song is a difficult task. The original accompaniments, always conceived as emotional mirrors to the meaning of the text, are often technically demanding in their own right. Adding the vocal line can introduce a minefield of complexities. Nevertheless, Liszt's transcriptions are remarkably complete and usually quite faithful. Only occasionally does he add some filigree of his own, or very slightly alter the melody. Chords are thickened perhaps, but their original identity is rarely contradicted. Mertz follows Liszt in this regard and, if anything, makes fewer additions – although many omissions and alterations must be made because of the guitar's more limited textural resources.

Liszt was well aware of the commercial implications of presenting familiar music in virtuosic arrangements. For this reason, many of the songs have *ossia* staves with more accessible piano writing. The average pianist would have been, and still is, ill-equipped to cope with some of Liszt's demands. Understandably, Mertz usually refers to the *ossia* version when following Liszt's arrangements, not so in *Ständchen* however. Here Mertz includes the final section of the song which is omitted in the *ossia*. He also chooses to follow Liszt's departure from the original in borrowing the 'Echo' at the end of the first verse. Alan Walker, in a thought-provoking article<sup>8</sup> on the Liszt transcriptions, points to the contrast of the melody line, in the soprano register for the first verse and in the baritone for the second; something which Schubert, writing for one singer, could not do. The canonic treatment in the 'Echo' passage then makes good sense as a conversation between two lovers. Mertz, by stating the stanza once only rather robs the Liszt original. Perhaps he was unable to arrive at an effective solution whereby the melody could be dropped an octave for the repeat. At the ending, Mertz does succeed in simplifying Liszt's piano embroidery to suit the guitar and similar features can be seen in his treatment of the ending of *Die Post*. However in this piece, he ignores Liszt's flourishes at the fermate and opts for Schubert's unfussy original.

The extent to which Mertz must compromise, compared to Liszt, is most aptly demonstrated in *Das Fischermädchen*. For his transcription, Liszt uses three staves, transposing the melody down an octave but retaining the full effect of the original and adding a twenty one bar coda of bravura display. There is an *ossia* ending (omitting this section) for the faint of heart and Mertz chooses this version. He is also obliged to reduce the original texture and retains the melody in the soprano. In *Lob der Thränen*, Mertz does his own way after the *Più Lento* indication, following neither Liszt or Schubert. This section shares features with another Mertz transcription of the same piece, issued with Abt's *Agathe* as Op. 22 in the series entitled *Portefeuille für Gitarre Spieler*<sup>9</sup>: this consisted of arrangements by Mertz and Joseph Fahrbach of popular arias and was published by Joseph Aibl (predecessor of Universal Editions). Here Mertz uses the second statement of the theme as the basis of a brief variation. The idea could well have been borrowed. Mertz's *Liebesbotschaft* and *Aufenthalt* both adhere more closely to the original, although once again textural adjustments are made for the guitar. In general, melodic changes are only made to compensate for the guitar's inability to sustain notes. Throughout Mertz's transcriptions, the expression and dynamic signs are largely copied from Liszt's arrangements; sometimes they are altered or abbreviated.

It is worth stressing that Mertz was well aware of Schubert's originals. He did not slavishly adapt Liszt. In 1847, only two years after the publication of the arrangements for solo guitar, a collection of songs with guitar accompaniment were issued, once again by Haslinger. It was given the opus number 13 (the same, confusingly, as the *Bardenklänge* series) and ultimately consisted of fourteen numbers, appearing under the collective title *Beliebte Gesänge mit Begleitung der Gitarre*. Hölzel, Suppé and most importantly Schubert, are represented, the latter by No. 1 *Ständchen*, No. 2 *Die Post*, No. 3 *Das Fischermädchen*, No. 4 *Aufenthalt*, No. 5 *Liebesbotschaft* and No. 6 *Die Taubenpost* (plate nos. 10.261–10.266)<sup>10</sup>. Only the last is not included in Mertz's version for solo guitar, its place taken by *Lob der Thränen*. All follow Schubert's markings and are effective and workmanlike arrangements, a welcome change from some of the early versions of lieder with guitar accompaniment – Diabelli's *Erkönig* being particularly ill-considered and unviable. On the subject of lieder, it is interesting to discover that Mertz also drew on Schubert's titles for some of his own compositions. We find for example, *Nachtviolen*, *Sehnsucht* and *Mignon*.

A comprehensive comparison between the sources discussed above still awaits serious scholarly attention and more thorough research. Guitarists are urged to consult and, if possible, to hear both the Schubert originals and the Liszt transcriptions. This is enormously helpful for a full understanding of the character, tempo and agogics of each lied.

## The Edition

Mertz used fairly novel and idiosyncratic notational indications and playing techniques, when viewed with hindsight. One of the most important of these was his use of the left hand thumb to stop bass notes, usually on the sixth string, a practice now frowned on by most classical guitarists. The use of the thumb is indicated by the  $\Lambda$  sign adjacent to the relevant bass note.

e.g.



The  $\Lambda$  sign is retained in this edition, not necessarily to encourage the revival of the thumb technique, although this is left up to the individual, but so that some insight may be gained into Mertz's style. Also, it must be noticed that the use of the thumb occasionally creates an otherwise impossible chord voicing or sustains a bass note for a longer period. Both these advantages have been capitalised on by today's players of narrow-necked guitars.

Curiously, the  $\Lambda$  sign is also used by Mertz in his *Method*<sup>12</sup> to indicate the use of the right hand thumb. Occasionally it is encountered in his published and MS works, as it the use of dots to indicate the employment of the other right hand fingers. There do not appear to be any instances of this in the Haslinger engraving of the *6 Schubert'sche Lieder*.

The original edition is accurate and almost mistake-free. The very few fingering errors have been silently corrected and string indications have been modernised from EADghe to the normal ringed numbers. The word *loco* is used by Mertz either to cancel 8va signs or to tell the player to move to a position closer to the nut (normally the first or second position). *Flag* has been changed to *Harm*. Editorial slurs are crossed and all musical shorthand has been expanded. No fingering has been added, save for those parts where the use of the left hand thumb makes Mertz's fingering unworkable. All additions, fingering and otherwise, are enclosed in square brackets.

## Mertz's Guitars

Mertz, like many guitarists of the nineteenth century, used an instrument with an extended range: Regondi and Legnani both played eight-string instruments, Coste a seven-string, Makaroff and Carulli ten-strings (the latter's name was called the *Decachorde*) and in the 1830's Sor and Salomon composed for the twenty-one-string Harpolyre.

Mertz's conversion to the ten-string guitar was gradual. Presumably he commenced his studies on the six-string. He then certainly played an eight-string, in the early 1840's according to contemporary newspaper reports, and only then did he graduate to the ten-string. A guitar builder, Knaffl-Lenz, invented a pedal instrument (the pedal shifted a moveable capodastro) which Mertz played in recitals and for which he is said to have composed. These points are also detailed in newspapers and journals of the time.

Mertz's ten-string had four extra "floating" strings that ran off the neck and were tuned diatonically below the sixth string: D C B A. This tuning was not a hard and fast rule and scordatura could be used as the tonality and musical requirements of the piece demanded. The *6 Schubert'sche Lieder* were composed for the six-string guitar which was still the regular instrument for the amateur, if not for all virtuosi. Perhaps this was a commercial consideration rather than an artistic one. Mertz would surely have employed low basses had he performed the works, and the guitarist need not feel any qualms about lowering notes an octave where this is musically justified. For guitarists with the Yepes type ten-string instrument, the works are most effectively altered using Mertz's diatonic tuning.

## NOTES

1. *The Guitar Review* transl. V. Bobri and N. Ulrich, Nos 1, 3 & 5 (New York, 1946-47) pp. 10-12, 32-34, 56-59 & 109-113. Excerpts also appear in *Der Gitarrefreund*, transl.? Heft 1-5 (Munich, 1911) pp. 1-3, 11-13, 23-25, 35-37 & 45-47. Since writing the introduction to Volume I of the Mertz series, the original source for Makaroff's *Memoirs* has been located by Matanya Ophee of Boston. They were first published in 1859 in a literary journal entitled *Sovremenik*. For full details regarding the background of the *Memoirs* and additional relevant information, omitted in both *Der Gitarrefreund* and *Guitar Review* articles, Matanya Ophee's excellent article *The Memoirs of Makaroff; A Second Look*, is recommended. The article appeared in *Soundboard*, the journal of the Guitar Foundation of America, Vol. IX, No. 3 (California, 1982). The article provides new and interesting evidence which proves that the *Concertino*, issued in Vol. I of the present Mertz series, was in fact the winning piece of the Brussels competition of 1856.
2. *Mitteilungen des Internationalen Guitarristen Verbands*, Heft 12 & 13 (Munich, 1902 & 1903) pp. 83-85 & 9-12.
3. A complete catalogue of Mertz's works is being assembled by the German guitar historian Astrid Stempnik. The catalogue will form part of a Ph.D. thesis for the University of Berlin. Its working title is: *Johann Kaspar Mertz and the decline of the guitar c. 1850*.
4. These are housed in the Musikalische Akademien Bibliothek, Stockholm and were bequeathed by the amateur guitarist and mathematician C.O. Boije af Gennäs. Works from this important collection are included in Vols. I, II and VI of the *Editions Chanterelle* Mertz series.
5. The Haslinger plate number is T.H. 9714 which, according to O.E. Deutsch (*Musik Verlags Nummern*, Berlin, 1961), puts the date of publication at 1845. There was also an announcement in the *Wiener Zeitung* on March 6th of the same year. I am indebted to Astrid Stempnik for the latter information. Copies of the first edition survive in the following collections: the Copenhagen Royal Library; the Krick collection of the Gaylord Music Library, Washington University, St. Louis Missouri; the Stadt und Landesbibliothek, Vienna, and the Boije collection, Stockholm.
6. There is a complete set of the *Schwanengesang* and *Winterreise* cycles (Haslinger edition) in the British Library, call mark f.470.d.
7. A copy of Liszt's *Lob der Thränen* in the Haslinger edition is bound with the *Schwanengesang* and *Winterreise* cycles in the British Library volume.
8. "Liszt and the Schubert Song Transcriptions", *Music Quarterly*, 1x (1981) p.61.
9. The series includes Mertz's Opp. 16, 17, 21, 22, 24, 27-35, 62, 63, 85-88 and 100 in 19 parts (Hefte). The plate number for Op.22 is 889 and the piece was published in January 1851, as announced in Whistling's *Musikalischer Monatsbericht*. There are copies in the Royal Library and Carl Claudius collections in Copenhagen and the Krick collection (see note 5). *Lob der Thränen* and *Agathe* were published in *Udvalgte Kompositioner for Guitar* ed. A. Eggers published by Det Nordiske Verlag, Copenhagen early this century and in a modern version edited by Peter Sensier published by Clifford Essex (1960).
10. These six songs are announced in the *Wiener Zeitung* of the 9th of February 1847, announcement no. 1977. There are copies of the songs in the Boije collection, shelf nos. 860-865. I am grateful to Astrid Stempnik for dating the songs and Op.22, and for her help in clarifying the numbering of the two Opp. 13s.
11. *Franz Liszt's Briefe*, ed. La Mara, 8 vols. (Leipzig 1893-1905), II, No. 157 as quoted in Alan Walker's article (op. cit.).
12. *Schule für die Gitarre*, Haslinger plate no. T.H. 10,695 (Vienna, c.1847).

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# LOB DER THRÄNEN

SCHUBERT  
arr: J.K. MERTZ

**Andantino**

*sempre legato*

**IX**

*espressivo il canto*

**VII**

**8 loco**

**12 [loco]**

**16**

*cresc.*

*sotto voce*

**20 con molto sentimento**

**24**

**Più lento**

**28**

**VII**

**V**

*loco*

**XII**

**[3]**

**[6]**

30 V Harm. [—]

32 Harm. [—]

34 Harm. [—]

36 Harm.

38 IX

40 loco loco

43

45 [—]

48

# LIEBESBOTHSCHAFT

SCHUBERT  
arr: J.K. MERTZ

Quasi Allegretto  
*dolce tranquillamente*





24 *espressivo* VII

27

30 *canto espressivo*  
*un poco ritenuto*

33

36 *con tenerezza*  
*rall.* *cres.*

39 [CII]

42 *sempre più con affetto*

45 *sempre più dim.*

48 *poco ritenuto*  
*pp* *p*

51

53

56

58

60

62 *rall.* *a tempo*

65 *smorz.* *pp* *a tempo*

68 *pp*

71 *pp* *ppp* *Harm.*

# AUFENTHALT

SCHUBERT  
arr: J.K. MERTZ

Nicht zu geschwind doch kräftig

*p* *dim.*

*molto marcato la melodia*

[CVII]

*più cresc.* *fp*

*loco* *sotto voce* *sempre agitato*

[CVII] *Harm. XII* *VIII* *f* [1]

[CVII] [CII] *stringendo*

48 *dim.*

54 *sempre ben marcato il canto*

60 [CVII] *più f*

66 *cresc.*

72 *rfz* *sotto voce* *poco a poco cresc.*

78

84 *ff* *Harm.*

90

96 *stringendo*

101 *decresc.*

106

111

116 *con strepito*  
*fff*

121 [CVII] *poco rit.* *ben marcato il canto*

126 *sempre più*

131

## STÄNDCHEN

SCHUBERT  
arr: J.K. MERTZ

Mässig  
Tempo rubato

*pp*

*espressivo il canto*

*p*

*espress.*

*rall.*

*smorz.*

*Echo*

*Vll*

*p*

40 *V* *VII* *Harm.* *[3]*

45 *[X]* *VII* *VIII* *VI* *[3]*

50 *VII* *[3]*

55 *con agitazione*

60 *poco a poco riten.*

65 *[3]*

70 *molto dim. e ritenuto*

74 *X*

78 *XI* *rall.*

82 *smorz.* *V* *[1]* *ppp* *quasi niente* *ppp*

## DIE POST

SCHUBERT  
arr: J.K. MERTZ

Un poco vivo

leggeramente

5

10

15

20

25

30

35

41

*p*

*sf*

*pp*

*f*

*p*

*cresc.*

*decresc.*

*rit.*

*dolciss.*

*cresc.*

*ten.*

*delicato ma sempre marcato il canto*

*parlante*

*tristamente*

V

VI

VII

VIII

X

XII

Harm:-----

[1]

[2]

[3]

[4]

[5]

[6]

[7]

[8]

[9]

[10]

[11]

[12]

[13]

[14]

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[41]

[42]

[43]

[44]



47 *leggeramente*

52 *sempre marcato il canto*

57 *cresc.* *sf.*

62 *p* *decresc.*

67 *Harm:---* *1* *dolcissimo*

73 *poco rall.*

78 *delicatamente* *rit.*

84 *precipitato* *f*

90 *V*

94 *marcato* *Harm:---* *Harm:---* *p*

*rit. poco a poco*

# DAS FISCHERMÄDCHEN

SCHUBERT  
arr: J.K. MERTZ

Etwas geschwind  
*dolce*



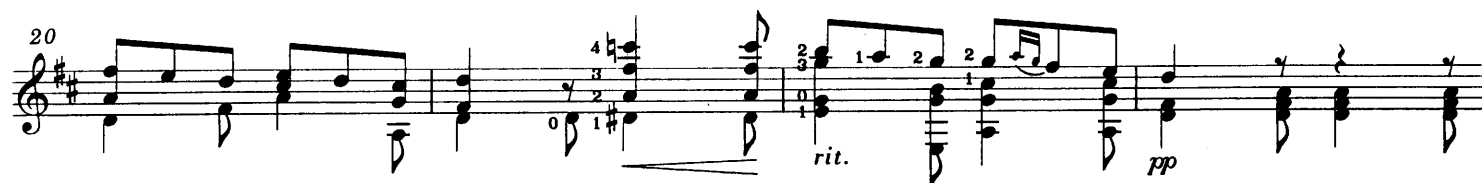
*il canto sempre espressivo*



*poeticamente*



*quasi Echo*



*rit.*



*il canto sempre espressivo*



[CIII]



[CII]

39 [CIII]

43

47 *sempre più dim.*  
smorz. *semplice ma sempre espressivo*

52 *dolce*  
pp

57

62 *Ritornello*  
rit. pp

67