

Annual Review of Schubert's Life

1819

The year was starting well for Schubert. On the 8th January a second performance of his cantata Prometheus (D451) was introduced by Leopold Sonnleithner into the programme of one of the fortnightly meetings of the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde as a way of promoting the music of Schubert. These domestic concerts were held at the home of his father Ignaz Sonnleithner in the winter months when maybe more than 120 music lovers would be able to gather. This introduction by Leopold into the Sonnleithner circle was to become extremely valuable to Schubert. Vogl's benevolence in obtaining for Schubert a commission for a one-act opera for the Kärntner-Theater would seem to carry with it the certainty of an early performance there, as well as a much-needed fee. This opera, Die Zwillingsbrüder (D647), was completed by Schubert by the 19th of January.

Over the early months of 1819 music by Schubert would be included in four public concerts. Three of these would feature the same song, Schäfers Klage lied (D121). The performance of this song, given by the Kärntner-Theater's operatic tenor Franz Jäger at the Roman Emperor Inn on the 28th of February, was the first of Schubert's songs to be performed in public. The concert given by the Dilettanten-Gesellschaft on the 4th March included an orchestral overture. If this was the Overture in E Minor (D648) it had only been completed in the previous month. Schubert was getting to be known in musical circles, and especially now that he was beginning to be invited to the musical 'salons' at the home of Ignaz Sonnleithner.

If the number of songs now being written was declining, his interest in more complex poems and deeper emotions would have an increasing effect on the nature of his songs.

In April the Esterházy's moved back to their summer palace at Zseliz but if invited Schubert did not move back with them. He was anxiously waiting for news that Die Zwillingsbrüder would be put on.

Vogl sang eight major roles at the Kärntner-Theater in the 1819 season and then was able to take a summer break from mid-July to mid-September. He wished to return to his roots at Steyr in Upper Austria, and invited Schubert to go with him, and whilst this was presumably at Vogl's expense he took the trouble to arrange for an advance on Schubert's commission for Die Zwillingsbrüder to be given to Schubert so that he could at least have some money of his own on the trip. Schubert was put up at the Schellmanns, who lent him the use of their piano for the duration of his stay, it being moved into his room. Albert Schellmann was an uncle of Schubert's friend from their younger days, Albert Stadler, who was now living and working in Steyr. Schubert evidently was enjoying his stay and whilst there wrote to his brother Ferdinand, "At the house where I lodge there are eight girls, nearly all pretty. Plenty to do, you see".

Vogl arranged for Schubert to meet him for meals at the Kollers. Joseph von Koller had a daughter Josefine who played the piano, evidently fairly well, and Schubert gave her a copy of the Piano Sonata in A (D664) that he had written for her, presumably whilst he was there. It seems likely that this was the original manuscript, for he was to ask for it back on a subsequent visit in 1825.

A generous patron of the arts in Steyr, Sylvester Paumgartner gave mid-day chamber concerts and at these Vogl and Schubert performed Schubert's songs for invited audiences, as well as in the evenings for private gatherings. When the time came for them to leave, Paumgartner asked Schubert to write variations on a song that especially pleased him, *Die Forelle* (D550), and being an amateur cellist may well have asked for it to be a chamber work. It is probable that as a result of Paumgartner's request Schubert wrote the Trout Quintet (D667) upon his return to Vienna. Some authorities however dispute this, suggesting that the Quintet was more likely to have been written in 1825; nevertheless, stylistically it is difficult to believe that this work could have been written after 1822.

Whilst at Steyr Vogl celebrated his fifty-first birthday, and to celebrate the event Albert Stadler produced a poem which Schubert set for solo soprano, tenor, bass and piano *Kantate zum Geburtstag des Sängers Johann Michael Vogl* (D666). Josefine von Koller sang in this performance with a local singer Bernhard Benedict and Schubert himself, with Albert Stadler playing the piano. From Steyr Vogl and Schubert moved on to Linz where he met Anton von Spaun again, and got to know Anton Ottenwalt. After a brief return to Steyr they went back to Vienna and in Schubert's case back to his lodging with Mayrhofer where he found him working on the libretto for a new opera *Adrast* (D137 – a false Deutsch number following the original misdating of the work). Having written little in the summer months, in the autumn Schubert made five settings of Mayrhofer poems and settings to poems by Goethe and Schiller, made a start on his A-flat Mass, and presumably wrote the 'Trout' Quintet. As to *Die Zwillingbrüder* there was no news of any prospective performance.

"Thus 1819 passed, for Schubert a year of some successes, of rewarding friendships, and of rich advances in his intellectual and musical thinking and its application." [\[1\]](#)

Notable works of 1819:

D647 D Major *Die Zwillingbrüder* 1 Act Hofman Singspiel 1819 Jan
 D664 A Major Piano Sonata 13 1819 Jul [or 1825]
 D666 C Major *Kantate zum Geburtstag des Sängers Johaan Michael Vogl Stadler*
 Sop, Ten, Bass, pf 1819 10 Aug
 D667 A Major Piano Quintet "Die Forelle" piano, violin, viola, cello, doublebass
 1819 Autumn
 D669 G Minor *Beim Winde* Mayrhofer song 1819 Oct
 D670 D flat Major *Die Sternennächte* Mayrhofer song 1819 Oct
 D671 E flat Major *Trost* Mayrhofer song 1819 Oct
 D672/1 C sharp Minor *Nachtstück 1* Mayrhofer song 1819 Oct
 D672/2 C Minor *Nachtstück 2* Mayrhofer song 1819 Oct
 D673 B flat Major *Die Liebende schreibt* Goethe song 1819 Oct
 D674 G Minor *Prometheus* Goethe song 1819 Oct
 D677 A Minor *Strophe aus die Götter Griechenlands* (2 Versions) Schiller song
 1819 Nov
 D678 A flat Major Mass 5 Sop, Alto, Tenor, Bass, orchestra, organ 1819 Nov -
 1822 Sep

Notes

[1] McKay: [Franz Schubert: A biography](#), p.98

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