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“My songs lie unheeded and unknown..”

Fanny Hensel's Lieder in Reparative Practice Research

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Declaration

I, Tim Parker-Langston hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented is my own. Where the ideas and work of others are presented, these are cited accordingly. Where collaborative practice is presented, this is with the express permission of my collaborators.

Tim Parker-Langston

20th December 2024

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Abstract

Despite being one of the most established female figures in Western classical music, Fanny Hensel (born Mendelssohn) continues to face the underrepresentation that restricts women in music more broadly. Although her presence in scholarship is considerable, over a third of her 239 composed songs remain unpublished and unrecorded. This practice research asks: *how can singing Fanny's songs contribute to scholarship around her music and Lieder in general?*

Positioning practice research as a feminist methodology, this study engages with Suzanne Cusick's concept of "*reparative musicology*" to envision the dimensions of reparative practice research. This approach addresses the neglect of Hensel's music through the creation of scores, recordings and resources while aligning with feminist calls for rebalancing Western classical music's hierarchies of thought. An embodied 'discovery-led' trajectory prioritizes reparative practice and puts trust in the epistemic nature of technique.

Through embodied engagement with Hensel's Lieder this research challenges dismissive notions of 'simplicity' and 'repetition' often ascribed to her unsung works. By tracing the technical responses required in performing her songs, the study foregrounds the dynamic interplay between text and music, revealing their expressive and technical depth.

The submitted *portfolio of reparative practice* includes the first complete song edition (via the open-access resource henselsongsonline.org), the CD *Hensel: Lieder* and 31 premieres recorded for the advocacy project #HENSEL. At the point of submission, all the unpublished Lieder are now widely available and only 14 songs await their (planned) premiere recordings.

Dedicated to Echo Erica Ann. May you always be heeded and heard.

Table of Contents

<u>Table of Contents</u>	viii
<u>List of figures</u>	xi
<u>Introduction</u>	1
<u>Chapter 1: Reparative Practice Research</u>	7
1.1 Fanny Hensel and feminist musicology	8
1.2 A brief history of Hensel studies	9
1.3 Practice research as feminist methodology	13
1.4 Reparative musicology	18
1.5 The language of practice	20
1.6 Phenomenotechnique	21
1.7 Phenomenotechnical writing in this research	24
1.8 Reparative practice research	26
1.9 Reflexivity statement	27
<u>Chapter 2: Two Practitioners</u>	29
2.1 Fanny	29
2.2 A life in practice	31
2.3 Fanny's Lieder practice	33
2.4 Techniques of Fanny's Lieder practice	39
2.5 Poetry as a technical object in Fanny's practice	41
2.6 My Lieder practice	43
2.7 My practice of Fanny's Lieder	48
2.8 Two Practitioners	48
<u>Chapter 3: Case Studies: Music and Words</u>	50
3.1 Positioning	51
3.2 Music and words	52
3.3 Music and words in Lieder practice	52
3.4 Strophic songs in practice	53
3.5 'Die sanften Tage', 'Der Blumenstrauß' and 'Umsonst'	55
3.6 Examples of practice	55
3.7 A note on the documentation of practice	56
<u>Chapter 4: 'Die sanften Tage'</u>	57
4.1 "Ich bin so hold der sanften Tagen"	57
4.2 Fanny's setting of 'Die sanften Tage'	59
4.3 'Die sanften Tage' in practice	63
4.4 'Die sanften Tage' in embodied practice	64
4.5 Expressive voice	65

4.6	Repeated pitches	66
4.7	Singing repeated pitches	67
4.8	Vowels	69
4.9	Appoggiaturas	75
4.9.1	Appoggiatura positions	76
4.9.2	Appoggiaturas and contour	76
4.10	Melisma	77
4.11	Cumulative effects	79
4.12	Strophic songs in practice: difference and repetition	81
4.13	Verse by verse	83

Chapter 5: ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ 90

5.1	‘Der Blumenstrauß’	90
5.2	‘Der Blumenstrauß’—Ludwig Uhland	90
5.3	Die Blumen	93
5.4	Qualities of movement	98
5.5	So brach ich wohl mit Grund in meinem Garten	99
5.6	Dir ist ja meine Lust, mein Hoffen, Leiden	102
5.7	Zu wildem Strauß	103

Chapter 6: ‘Umsonst’ 104

6.1	‘Umsonst’	104
6.2	Johann Heinrich Voß	106
6.3	Fanny’s setting: Umsonst	106
6.4	Piano and voice struggle	109
6.5	Rests	110
6.6	Phrase lengths	110
6.7	Register	112
6.8	‘Bersorgniß’	114
6.9	Strophic Arrangement	115
6.10	Strophic variation	117
6.11	Cumulative effects	119

Chapter 7: Reparative Acts: Resources 120

7.1	www.henselsongsonline.org	121
7.1.2	Impact	123
7.1.3	Submitted portfolio of multi-component outputs	123
7.1.4	Edition	124
7.1.5	Editorial principles	125
7.2	Reparative acts in performance	129
7.2.1	Fanny’s settings of poetry by Christoph Ludwig Heinrich Hölty	131
7.2.2	Simple songs?	132
7.2.3	”...now that Rebecca has left off singing...”	132
7.2.4	Repeated notes	133
7.2.5	Strophic unfoldings	133
7.2.6	Rubato	134

7.2.7	Bach and Handel	134
7.3	#HENSEL	138
7.4	Reparative acts	138

Chapter 8: Conclusions, Reflections, Questions 140

8.1	Question one	140
8.2	Question two	143
8.3	Question three	145
8.4	Conclusions	148

Bibliography

Portfolio and appendices

Portfolio A: *Hensel: Lieder* tracklist and links to audio recordings.

Portfolio B: #HENSEL: The Concert audio recordings.

Portfolio C: www.henselsongsonline.org: Complete sheet music edition.

Portfolio D: www.henselsongsonline.org [PDF record of site]

Appendix A: *Hensel: Lieder* commissioned artwork by Kirsty Matheson.

Appendix B: Annotated scores and texts used for *Hensel: Lieder*

Appendix C: A life in practice data.

Appendix D: Documentation of my practice of Fanny's songs and the types of practice engaged.

Appendix E: 'Die sanften Tage' and 'Der Blumenstrauß': an infrastructure of practice.

List of figures

Figure 0.1: Fanny Hensel's 'Sehnsucht', H-U 192, performed by Tim Parker-Langston and Genevieve Ellis.

Figure 1.1: A visual interpretation of the material-discursive circuit identified in phenomenotechnique.

Figure 1.2: A visual interpretation of how this material-discursive circuit is mapped onto my Lieder practice.

Figure 1.3: An example of a phenomenotechnical description, taken from Case Study 1: 'Die sanften Tage'.

Figure 2.1: Fanny's known practice of Bach and Handel extracted from the larger dataset included as Appendix E.

Figure 2.2: Fanny's music room at Nr.3 Leipzigstraße, painted by Julius Edward Wilhelm Helfft (1849).

Figure 2.3: The external border of the Gartensaal at Nr.3 Leipzigstraße.

Figure 2.4: A mapping of Fanny's Lieder composition practice onto Bachelard's notion of the material-discursive circuit.

Figure 2.5: An illustration of how conceptually mine and Fanny's material-discursive circuits intersected in the score (engaged as a technology in my practice and reflecting a documentation of the emergent epistemic phenomena of her compositional practice, engaging with the poem as technical object).

Figure 2.6: A recording of Franz Liszt's 'Wanderers Nachtlied' with Genevieve Ellis. Recorded in Deptford Town Hall, July 2023.

Figure 2.7: A recording of Fanny Hensel's 'Das Ständchen' with mezzo soprano Heather Lowe. Recorded in the Royal Opera House, 7th June 2024.

Figure 2.8: A recording of Fanny Hensel's 'Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh' taken from a performance at the Brazilian Embassy in London, for Donne *Let Her Music Play*, Guinness World Record Attempt, 23rd February 2024 (5.30am).

Figure 2.9: A recording of some vocal exercises, my practice focusses on vocalisation here.

Figure 2.10: Documentary footage of my learning 'Der Blumenstrauß', in which I am exploring possible approaches to phrasing and shaping the musical material.

Figure 2.11: Handwritten texts and translations, with interpretative markings, prepared in learning the song.

Figure 2.12: Exploring different vocal colours in 'Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh'.

Figure 2.13: A performance excerpt from a recital for the International Anthony Burgess Foundation, 21st April 2021.

Figure 2.14: An excerpt of 'Anklänge', performed with Genevieve Ellis in Deptford Town Hall, December 2020.

Figure 2.15: An example of imagined practice, neither piano nor singing engaged performatively, but as a representation of mental processes.

Figure 2.16: Examples of speaking to curate elements of a recital programme.

Figure 2.17: A discussion during rehearsals with Ewan on 23rd November 2024.

Figure 2.18: Documentation taken during the recording of *Hensel: Lieder*.

Figure 2.19: A screenshot of a live Sibelius file, engaging ‘Umsonst’ in arrangement.

Figure 4.1: ‘Die sanften Tage’, performed by Tim Parker-Langston and Genevieve Ellis. Track 5 of *Hensel: Lieder*.

Figure 4.2: The original Uhland text, as set by Fanny Hensel in ‘Die sanften Tage’, with an English poetic translation by Tim Parker-Langston.

Figure 4.3: Autograph manuscript for ‘Die sanften Tage’, H-U 75, held in the Berlin Staatsbibliothek, Mendelssohn Archiv. Hensel, Fanny, 27 Musikstücke (22.03.1823 bis 12.09.1823), RISM A2-Nummer: 1001000180, StaBiKat (ppn digital) 87934359, Mendelssohn-Archiv, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, Germany

Figure 4.4: A simple analysis of ‘Die sanften Tage’, identifying the phrase lengths, harmonic journey and contours of each phrases’ melodic peak.

Figure 4.5: Annotated score highlighting the piano accompaniment texture and figuration, which is consistent throughout the song.

Figure 4.6: Annotated score highlighting the piano postlude figure.

Figure 4.7: Verse 1 of ‘Die sanften Tage’, performed with Genevieve Ellis, PureGold Festival, Deptford Town Hall, July 2023.

Figure 4.8: Audio recording of “Wann in der ersten Frühlingzeit” (from *Hensel: Lieder*).

Figure 4.9: Video recording of “Wann in der ersten Frühlingzeit” (from PureGold Recital).

Figure 4.10: Video recording of “Wann in der ersten Frühlingzeit” (from Donne *Let Her Music Play*).

Figure 4.11: Audio recording of “Der Himmel blaulichaufgeschlagen” (from *Hensel: Lieder*).

Figure 4.12: Video recording of “Der Himmel blaulichaufgeschlagen” (from PureGold recital).

Figure 4.13: Video recording of “Der Himmel blaulichaufgeschlagen” (from Donne *Let Her Music Play*).

Figure 4.14: Graph mapping the intensity of the breath release over time.

Figure 4.15: Graph mapping the intensity of the breath release over time.

Figure 4.16: Verse 1 with annotations to highlight repeated notes and the shaping of these passages.

Figure 4.17: A basic illustrations of Daniel Jones’ cardinal vowel quadrilateral.

Figure 4.18: German vowels mapped onto vowel quadrangle.

Figure 4.19: German diphthongs mapped onto vowel quadrangle.

Figure 4.20: Vowel quadrangle mapped onto anatomy of mouth.

Figure 4.21: Vowel mapping and sung e.g. of “hold”.

Figure 4.22: Vowel mapping and sung e.g. of “den”.

Figure 4.23: Vowel mapping and sung e.g. of “san-”.

Figure 4.24: Vowel mapping and sung e.g. of “hold den san-”.

Figure 4.25: “hold den san-” in context (PureGold Recital).

Figure 4.26: Vowel mapping and sung e.g. of “er-”.

Figure 4.27: Vowel mapping and sung e.g. of “-sten”.

Figure 4.28: Vowel mapping and sung e.g. of “Früh-”.

Figure 4.29: Vowel mapping and sung e.g. of “ersten Früh-”.

Figure 4.30: “ersten Früh-” in context (PureGold recital).

Figure 4.31: Vowel quadrilaterals for “hold den san-” (consolidation of figures 4.21—4.24).

Figure 4.32: Quadrangle for mapping aspects of vocal colour.

Figure 4.33: Vocal colour quadrangles mapping of “hold den san-”.

Figure 4.34: “Ich bin so hold den sanften Tagen ..”. including annotations of figure 4.33.

Figure 4.35: Verse 1 of ‘Die sanften Tage’ with annotations for repeated pitches, vowel journeys. and colour contours included.

Figure 4.36: Verse 1 of ‘Die sanften Tage’ with annotations highlighting instances of appoggiatura.

Figure 4.37: “Dann steh’ ich auf dem Berge droben..”. (from PureGold recital).

Figure 4.38: “Der Kinder Spiel sich neu belebt”.

Figure 4.39: “Der Kinder Spiel sich neu belebt” (PureGold recital).

Figure 4.40: Verse 2 in its entirety (PureGold recital).

Figure 4.41: ‘Ich bin so hold den sanften Tagen..’. (verse 3) audio.

Figure 4.42: ‘Ich bin so hold den sanften Tagen..’. verse 1 audio.

Figure 4.43: ‘Dann steh’ ich auf dem Berge droben’ verse 2 audio.

Figure 4.44: ‘Ich bin so hold den sanften Tagen..’. verse 3 audio.

Figure 4.45: Die Seele jüngst so hoch getragen’. verse 4 audio.

Figure 4.46: ‘Sie prangt nicht mehr mit Blüt’ und Fülle’ audio.

Figure 4.47: ‘Sie sammelt sich in süße Stille’ audio.

Figure 4.48: Annotated score for verse 3 showing repeated notes (blue), appoggiaturas (pink) and melismas (green).

Figure 4.49: Verse 3 (PureGold recital) with live annotations for repeated notes (blue), appoggiaturas (pink) and melismas (green).

Figure 4.50: Poem annotated to highlight language that supports the metaphor of the seasons in practice.

Figure 4.51 (also 4.3): Autograph manuscript for ‘Die sanften Tage’, H-U 75, held in the Berlin Staatsbibliothek, Mendelssohn Archiv.

Figure 4.52: The opening bars of ‘Die sanften Tage’.

Figure 4.53: Opening of ‘Die sanften Tage’ during PureGold recital.

Figure 4.54: Opening of ‘Die sanften Tage’ with annotations of the technical response.

Figure 4.55: Opening of ‘Die sanften Tage’ with annotations of the technical response in self-accompanied performance (Donne).

Figure 4.56: Verse 1, B section audio.

Figure 4.57: “Die Täler” vowel journey if spoken.

Figure 4.58: “Die Täler” vowel journey as modified when singing.

Figure 4.59: “Die Täler” spoken and sung.

Figure 4.60: “Der Kinder spiel sich neu belebt” audio.

Figure 4.61: Point of repeat for transition of verse 1 into 2.

Figure 4.62: Transition between verses 1 and 2 in performance (PureGold).

Figure 4.63: “Ich bin ein Kind und mit der Spiele” in performance (PureGold).

Figure 4.64: “Ich bin ein Kind und mit der Spiele” in performance (Donne).

Figure 4.65: Transition between verses 2 and 3 in performance (PureGold).

Figure 4.66: Transition between verses 2 and 3 notated.

Figure 4.67: Sie prangt nicht mehr mit Blüt” und Fülle, All ihre regen Kräfte ruhn’ audio.

Figure 4.68: Transition between verse 3 and 4 in performance (PureGold).

Figure 4.69: “Das die Natur der Seele gab”. audio (*Hensel: Lieder*).

Figure 4.70: “Hinunter in mein stilles Grab” audio (*Hensel: Lieder*).

Figure 5.1: Two performances of ‘Der Blumenstrauß’, H-U 49: a recital performance given on 5th and an audio recording made in May 2025.

Figure 5.2: The text of ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ with an English translation by Tim Parker-Langston.

Figure 5.3: ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ text with annotations reflecting the intensifying ardency.

Figure 5.4: Becoming animated as I discuss the poem and song journey of ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ in the first rehearsal with Genevieve (June 2023).

Figure 5.5: Link to a simple analysis of ‘Der Blumenstrauß’.

Figure 5.6: Text for stanzas 1—2 with annotations highlighting the named flowers and colours.

Figure 5.7: Video of the opening stanzas with annotations highlighting when flowers and colours are named.

Figure 5.8: Fanny’s setting of “Wenn in den Rosen Liebe sich entzündet”.

Figure 5.9: Fanny’s setting of “Vergißeinnicht im Namen schon sich kündet”.

Figure 5.10: Fanny’s setting of “Lorbeere Ruhm”.

Figure 5.11: Fanny’s setting of “Zypressen Trauer zeigen”.

Figure 5.12: Video recording of “Wenn in den Rosen Liebe sich entzündet...” (from PureGold Recital) flower and colour.

Figure 5.13: Demonstration and discussion of what I mean by this personal headshaking technique.

Figure 5.14: Video recording of “Vergißeinnicht im Namen schon sich kündet...” (from PureGold Recital).

Figure 5.15: Video recording of “Lorbeere Ruhm...” (from PureGold Recital).

Figure 5.16: Video recording of “Zypressen Trauer zeigen...” (from PureGold Recital).

Figure 5.17: These phrases in performance.

Figure 5.18: Notated representation of the breaths (^), consonant placement and dynamics/articulation employed in negotiating this moment (with audio from PureGold performance).

Figure 5.19: Annotated video breaking down the processes engaged in negotiating the change of embodiments between ‘...kündet, Lorbeere...’.

Figure 5.20: Annotated video breaking down the processes engaged in negotiating the change of embodiments between ‘...Ruhm, Zypressen...’.

Figure 5.21: Marking through the negotiation of the different flowers in collaborative rehearsal with Genevieve.

Figure 5.22: The change of piano texture that marks the transition between emotional states in both poem and song.

Figure 5.23: Playing this texture with phenomenological account.

Figure 5.24: “So brach ich wohl mit Grund in meinem Garten..”. in context (PureGold performance).

Figure 5.25: Five-note ‘turn’ motif.

Figure 5.26: Graph depicting the contour of the rubato associated with the five-note ‘turn’ motif.

Figure 5.27: “So brach ich wohl mit Grund...” in context with figure 26 as an aligned annotation.

Figure 5.28: “Die Blumen aller Farben...” in context with an aligned annotation.

Figure 5.29: “Die Blumen aller Farben, aller Arten...” in context (PureGold performance).

Figure 5.30: An excerpt of practice playing this evocative piano part.

Figure 5.31: Excerpt of first rehearsal with Genevieve, describing this quality.

Figure 5.32: “Dir ist ja meine Lust...” In context (PureGold performance).

Figure 5.33: “Dir ist ja meine Lust...” al fine (PureGold performance).

Figure 6.1: ‘Umsonst’, performed by Tim Parker-Langston and Genevieve Ellis. *Hensel: Lieder*.

Figure 6.2: Autograph manuscript of ‘Umsonst’, held at the Berlin Staatsbibliothek.

Figure 6.3: Voß’ ‘Besorgniß’ with an English translation by Tim Parker-Langston. The stanza set as ‘Umsonst’ is highlighted in bold type.

Figure 6.4: A simple harmonic analysis of ‘Umsonst’ (key signature changed to A_b minor).

Figure 6.5: Bars 1—2 of ‘Umsonst’, in which piano triplet rhythms contest with the duplet quavers of the vocal melody.

Figure 6.6: “Durch der Wand Weinlaub, das die Abendkühlung” audio (*Hensel: Lieder*).

Figure 6.7: Notated representation of ‘da-ssdie’.

Figure 6.8: Fanny inserts an unexpected rest in the middle of this line (bar 4).

Figure 6.9: Audio of this moment.

Figure 6.10: Annotated score figure demonstrating telescopic phrase lengths.

Figure 6.11: Audio and visual representation of telescopic phrase lengths.

Figure 6.12: Annotated score highlighting the restrictive range of the song.

Figure 6.13: “Nein, umsonst Liebkoset, o Mond, dein Antlitz...” in context (PureGold performance).

Figure 6.14: ‘Umsonst’s’ distinctive piano postlude.

Figure 6.15: Annotated score highlighting moments of melodic fragments that appear in the playing of the piano part.

Figure 6.16: Audio recording of the first verse of ‘Umsonst’.

Figure 6.17: Audio recording of the second verse of ‘Umsonst’.

Figure 6.18: Audio recording of the technical negotiation of “trug kein..”. in the second verse of ‘Umsonst’.

Figure 6.19: Audio recording of the third verse of ‘Umsonst’.

Figure 7.1: Image representing the component parts of each song entry in the www.henselsongsonline.org catalogue.

Figure 7.2: An example of A Life in Practice feature in the www.henselsongsonline.org catalogue.

Figure 7.3: An example of Editor’s Choice feature in the www.henselsongsonline.org catalogue.

Figure 7.4: An example of Did you know? feature in the www.henselsongsonline.org catalogue.

Figure 7.5: (left) Bar 2-3 of ‘Die Linde’ in Fanny’s autograph manuscript. E.g. of accidentals absent with crossing of barline). (right) www.henselsongsonline.org edition version.

Figure 7.6: (left) Bar 12 of ‘Maigesang’ in Fanny’s autograph manuscript. E.g. of accidentals in one hand only (E_b and B_b of left hand not reflected in the ascending right-hand melody). (right) www.henselsongsonline.org edition version.

Figure 7.7: (top) Bar 15-17 of ‘Maigesang’ in Fanny’s autograph manuscript. E.g. of absent accidentals where harmonic context is more ambiguous). (bottom) www.henselsongsonline.org edition version (where editorial decisions are signposted with bracketed accidentals).

Figure 7.8: (left) Fanny’s autograph notations for bars 1-2 of ‘Sehnsucht’, H-U 192 (melisma indicated by beaming). (right) www.henselsongsonline.org edition (including dashes slurring, in line with modern convention, aids reading).

Figure 7.9: Text from original publication of ‘An den Mond’. Used as a reference for entering text when Fanny’s hand unfamiliar.

Figure 7.10: Transcription of Fanny’s Sütterlin script for ‘Wiegenlied’, provided by Margarete Ritzkowsky.

Figure 7.11: Images of the recording space at the Mendelssohn-Haus in Leipzig (January 2023).

Figure 7.12: The Hensel: Lieder cover art, featuring the commissioned artwork by Kirsty Mathesson.

Figure 7.13: Repeated pitches in [6] ‘Der Sänger’.

Figure 7.14: Repeated pitches in [7] ‘An die Entfernte’.

Figure 7.15: Repeated pitches in [8] ‘Auf der Wanderung’.

Figure 7.16: Repeated pitches in [17] ‘Sehnsucht’, H-U 203.

Figure 7.17: Rubato in [6] ‘Der Sänger’.

Figure 7.18: Rubato in [7] ‘Auf der Wanderung’.

Figure 7.19: Rubato in [9] ‘Abschied’.

Figure 7.20: Rubato in [12] ‘Sehnsucht’, H-U 192.

Figure 7.21: Rubato in [27] ‘Ich wandelte unter den Bäumen’.

Figure 7.22: Songs identified as having technical responses to Fanny’s practice of Bach and Handel, which inspire technical responses associated with these composers in my own practice.

Figure 7.23: An amalgamation of a pre-take recording and the final edited version of ‘An die Ruhe’s’ opening line. I am heard establishing the tempo through a section of Handel’s Messiah.

Figure 7.24: This passage from ‘Vorwurf’ demonstrates the technical interplay between Bachian and Henselian style.

Figure 7.25: The romantic opening of ‘An den Mond’.

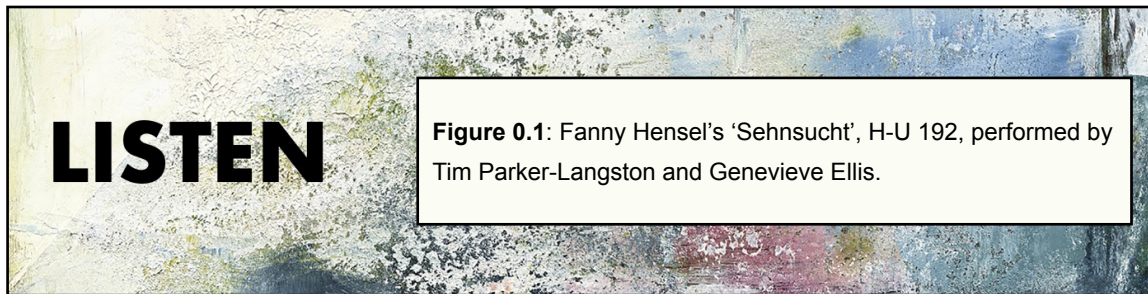
Figure 7.26: The more Bachian cantus firmus/interventional middle section of ‘An den Mond’.

Figure 7.27: Technical negotiations between the Handelian and the romantic in ‘Mutter, o sing mich zur Ruh’.

Figure 7.28: The assembled performers of #HENSEL: The Concert take a bow.

Figure 8.1: Fanny’s ‘Sehnsucht’, H-U 217. Performed by Tim Parker-Langston and Jâms Coleman

Introduction



[‘Sehnsucht’, H-U 192](#), is one of nearly a hundred songs by the composer Fanny Hensel (born Mendelssohn) that have been published and recorded for the first time as part of this PhD project. Despite being one of Western classical music’s most renowned female figures and composing 239 Lieder—making her one of the genre’s most prolific contributors—over a third of her work has remained “unheeded and unknown”.¹

This PhD project seeks to redress this imbalance between scholarship and practice, asking:

- 1. How can singing Hensel’s songs contribute to scholarship around her music and Lieder in general?**
- 2. How does foregrounding the knowledge gained through embodied singing practice reorient discourse on the musicopoetic relationships in Hensel’s Lieder?**
- 3. How can practice research be engaged as a feminist methodology and how can this be applied to the investigation of underrepresented historical repertoires of Western classical music?**

The forces that have hindered the recognition of Fanny Hensel’s full song repertoire are the same ones that feminist musicology has been challenging since its inception. In this research narrative, I engage with the frameworks of feminist musicology, focusing specifically on recurring arguments for disciplinary reorientation made across multiple waves of feminism. I examine how these ontological and epistemological aims are shared by scholars who critique the hierarchies of knowledge in Western classical music.²

¹ R. Larry Todd, *Fanny Hensel: The Other Mendelssohn* (Oxford University Press, 2009), 206.

² These researchers’ ontological approaches align across disciplines. Sally Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First-Century Feminist Politics of Music* (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2010); Paulo de Assis, *Logic of Experimentation* (Leuven University Press, 2018), 19.

Practice research is proposed as a feminist methodology.³ Aligned with the reparative principles articulated by Suzanne Cusick, it is positioned as reparative practice research.⁴ This practice research prioritises the reparative acts of **editing, singing, playing, recording, publishing and disseminating** Fanny Hensel's obscured song repertoire. These acts are positioned within a "discovery-led" methodology that highlights the unique knowledges encountered through singing her music.⁵

The submitted portfolio of multi-component outputs includes a **complete sheet music edition** of Fanny Hensel's 239 songs and www.hensel songs online.org—the open-access resource which hosts this edition.⁶ Launched in 2021, the website has already been visited 11000 times, by 8200 unique users and across 100 countries.⁷

The CD **Hensel: Lieder** is also submitted (see [Portfolio A](#)). Recorded at the Mendelssohn-Haus in Leipzig during January 2023, this disc represents a comprehensive artistic response to Fanny Hensel's Lieder voice as encountered through embodied practice. The **34 tracks** feature performances by six artists and includes **17 premiere recordings**. My contribution to the project includes programming, co-production, CD design, writing liner notes and performing on **21 tracks**.

Finally, I am submitting audio documentation of **#HENSEL: The Concert** (see [Portfolio B](#)), an event in which I accompanied 12 singers in the performance of 22 Hensel premieres.⁸ These recordings form a part of the larger **#HENSEL** project.

#HENSEL utilised social media networks to collaborate with artists worldwide, who participated in DIY recordings of the 86 remaining unrecorded Hensel songs. These performances—submitted from countries including the UK, Germany, Finland, Denmark and Indonesia—represent a significant contribution to the understanding an important musician's most extensive body of work.

3 James Bulley and Özden Şahin, "Practice Research-Report 1: What Is Practice Research? And Report 2: How Can Practice Research Be Shared?" (Goldsmiths, University of London, 2021). <https://doi.org/10.23636/1347>

4 Suzanne G Cusick, "Musicology, torture, repair", *Radical Musicology* 3, no. 1 (2008): 1–9. 17 May 2009 <<http://www.radical-musicology.org.uk>>.

5 Desmond Bell, ed., *Mind the Gap! Working papers on practice-based doctoral research in the creative arts and media* (Distiller's Press, 2016), 190.

6 Also provided in PDF format as [Appendix E](#).

7 According to Squarespace website analytics, accessed on 18/12/2024.

8 The concert was performed at Deptford Town Hall on 2nd March 2024.

This accompanying research narrative explores the distinct perspectives that have emerged through my practice of Hensel's Lieder. It also establishes the parameters and onto-epistemic reorientations defined by a *reparative practice research* approach.

Chapter 1: Reparative Practice Research positions practice research as a feminist methodology.

Fanny Hensel's Lieder repertoire is situated within a post-textual ontology of musical works as living, breathing "things".⁹ The specific challenges that this reorientation poses to Lieder studies and performance are interrogated. Susan Cusick's concept of "reparative musicology" is interpreted in the context of practice-based advocacy and research, giving rise to the term *reparative practice research*.¹⁰ Ben Spatz's advocacy of technical descriptions in articulating embodied research outcomes is outlined, following which their adaptation of Bachelard's notion of phenomenotechnique are outlined.¹¹ Phenomenotechnical descriptions as proposed by Spatz are adapted to fit the dimensions of my Lieder practice.¹² This approach is proposed as a means to communicate the tacit, embodied knowledges encountered in musical practice to a community of singer-researchers—what Spatz calls a "disciplinary we".¹³

Chapter 2: Two Practitioners engages in the ontological reorientation of a post-textual study in which the composer, Fanny Hensel, is reimagined as a practitioner—Fanny. Engagement with historical sources tells the story of Fanny's 'life in practice'. Closer examination of sources relating to her Lieder practice facilitates specification and speculation regarding the dimensions and techniques of her composition and performance of song. This includes a reflection on how the composer is "recomposed".¹⁴ Bachelard's material-discursive circuit is projected onto Fanny's practice. I propose that Fanny engages with poetry as a technical object—documenting the entanglement of epistemic phenomena encountered in her diary-like autograph scores. This material-discursive circuit—Fanny—Poem—Score—is shown to intersect with my own. The technical dimensions of my Lieder practice are specified and I detail my practice of Fanny's Lieder in this project, thereby reinforcing practice research as a methodology for studying past music.

9 Tim Ingold. "Bringing Things to Life: Creative Entanglements in a World of Materials", *Realities, Working Papers # 15* (2010).

10 Cusick, "Musicology, torture, repair", 2008.

11 Hans-Jörg Rheinberger, "Gaston Bachelard and the Notion of "Phenomenotechnique"." *Perspectives on Science* 13, no. 3 (2005): 313–28.

12 Spatz, "Colors Like Knives: Embodied Research and Phenomenotechnique in Rite of the Butcher", *Contemporary Theatre Review* 27, no. 2 (2017): 195–215: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10486801.2017.1300152>.

13 Spatz, "Colors Like Knives", 214.

14 Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First-Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 62.

Three case studies follow these opening chapters, each focusing on a previously unpublished and unrecorded song. These case studies are prefaced by a discussion on the interplay of music and words in Lieder practice ([Chapter 3: Case Studies: Music and Words](#)), which serves as the foundation for the investigations within each case study.

[Chapter 4: ‘Die sanften Tage’](#) focusses on the physicality and openness of expression embodied in singing this song. Three seemingly innocuous musical features—repeated notes, melismas and appoggiaturas—are demonstrated to cumulatively cultivate this heightened embodied investment. The case study examines how the negotiation of strophic form in singing this song challenges the concept of exact repetition—highlighting the transformative potential of poetic narrative and technical nuance. The distinct epistemic and technical phenomena that emerge are examined through the lens of embodiment.

[Chapter 5: ‘Der Blumenstrauß’](#) examines an apparent disparity between a highly emotive text and Fanny’s ‘simple’ setting. Through an embodied perspective, I trace three tiers of emotional valence in the poetic text as they manifest in performance, demonstrating how Fanny’s subtle changes in texture and melodic variation reshape musical intensities to follow this emotional arc. The result is a fervent, frenzied declaration of love, reminiscent of teenage ardour, which is fitting given Fanny’s age at the time of composition.

[Chapter 6: ‘Umsonst’](#) highlights the bold embodied dimensions of a miniature song, which spans just 14 bars. The antithesis of embodied musical elements is explored before introducing a speculative practice explored in the recording of *Hensel: Lieder*. This practice involved adapting unset poetic text from the primary source (Voß’ ‘Besorgniß’) into a new arrangement of Fanny’s ‘Umsonst’.¹⁵

[Chapter 7: Reparative Acts: Resources](#) is an outline and contextualisation of the submitted portfolio of multi-component outputs. The website www.henselsongsonline.org is introduced, specifying the editorial approach and detailing the interactive and curatorial elements. The recording of *Hensel: Lieder* is detailed and illustrative examples of techniques explored in the case studies are highlighted. Several themes are presented to contextualise the practice documented in the recording. These include repeated pitches, songs that give the impression of simplicity, songs

¹⁵ Johann Heinrich Voß, “Besorgniß”, in *Sämmtliche Poetische Werke Von Johann Heinrich Voss*, ed. Immanuel Müller (Leipzig, 1835), 118. https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=f_hjAAAAcAAJ.

composed after Fanny's sister stopped singing them, songs in strophic form, rubato in Fanny's Lieder and the influence of Bach and Handel as encountered in technical negotiations.

The research narrative concludes with [Chapter 8: Conclusions, Reflections, Questions](#). This section reflects on the project's findings and articulates new questions that have emerged over the course of this research.

Terms

In this research narrative, I engage several terms whose meanings require specification. In some cases, these terms diverge from their typical usage within the field of my creative practice, while in other instances they are newly coined for this research. Here, I will define and contextualise the key terms necessary for understanding and evaluating the arguments and ideas presented in this narrative.

Technique

My use of the word technique is central to the means by which the embodied qualities encountered in the singing of Fanny Hensel's songs are communicated in this research narrative. There is an inherent tension in the choice of this term, owing to the fact that my definition does not reflect the common usage within my field of practice—classical singing.

I am not referring to [a](#) singing technique that signifies a clearly defined approach to vocal production—shaped by treatises, pedagogy, recording and repertoire—such as “bel canto”.¹⁶ Nor am I speaking about technique in a “merely mechanical” sense.¹⁷ Neither will I labour over physiological descriptions, formant harmonics or resonance.¹⁸

I use the word technique after the theatre practitioner Ben Spatz as a term which denotes the layers of embodied knowledge that structure my Lieder practice.¹⁹ Technique still relates to the mechanical negotiations of my vocal apparatus, but encompasses far more: my musical, poetic and dramatic processes—both imaginary and corporeal; my piano playing and collaborative work with other musicians; my editing of scores and production of recordings; the thinking that surrounds

¹⁶ Giovanni Battista Lamperti, *The Technics of Bel Canto* (1905), ed. Gregory Blankenbeler (2012).

¹⁷ Ben Spatz, “Massimiliano Balduzzi: Research in Physical Training for Performers”, *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training* 5, no.3 (2014): 5.

¹⁸ John Nix, “Vowel modification revisited”, *Journal of Singing* 61, no. 2 (2004): 173–176. For example.

¹⁹ Ben Spatz, *What a body can do: Technique as Knowledge, Practice as Research* (Routledge, 2015), 1.

my work; and the reflection that feeds back into this loop. All of these elements constitute my use of the word 'technique'. Therefore, when I engage the language of technique in specifying concepts, this will at times include metaphorical, lyrical, physical and conceptual discussion, as I unfold the layers of process that can be traced in arriving at a certain artistic encounter.²⁰ This conception of technique is applied consistently throughout.

Technical response

I coin the term *technical response* as a means to trace a line from epistemic impulse to embodied technique. This is used in reference to my practical engagements of technical objects (scores) in my practice. I also use the term in reference to Fanny's compositional responses to poetry.

Phenomenotechnique, phenomenotechnical

Gaston Bachelard's concept of phenomenotechnique is introduced in [Chapter 1: Reparative Practice Research](#) and re-engaged in [Chapter 2: Two Practitioners](#). The term phenomenotechnical refers to an account of a research process in which the omnidirectional fluid circuit connecting the experimenter, tools engaged and the encountered epistemic phenomena is accounted for.²¹

20 Ben Spatz, "Embodied research: A methodology", *Liminalities* 13, no. 2 (2017), 4.

21 Rheinberger, "Gaston Bachelard and the Notion of "Phenomenotechnique"", 2005.

1. Reparative Practice Research

This chapter introduces *reparative practice research*, a methodological proposal for the study of underrepresented repertoires that prioritises the making of tangible outputs—namely recordings, scores and performances—to counteract the absence of such repertoires in performance spaces. The chapter begins by discussing the relationship between the study of Fanny Hensel and early feminist musicology. A brief history of Hensel studies demonstrates that calls for her music to receive more attention have been rearticulated across four decades of scholarship.²² After introducing arguments by feminist musicologists for a post-textual ontology of the musical work, practice research is proposed as a feminist methodology in music. The implications for Lieder practice, as well as the knowledge hierarchies that shape its discourse, are examined.

Suzanne Cusick's "reparative musicology" is introduced as a means to specify the purpose of practice research within a feminist context.²³ The methodological approach of this project is outlined, namely engaging with an underrepresented repertoire in practice and permitting the study to be "discovery-led".²⁴ In this way, the practice serves a reparative function—both as a form of practical advocacy and as a methodological reorientation.

Having established the value of embodied research perspectives in reparative work, Ben Spatz's discourse on technique is examined as a way to articulate the embodied knowledge emergent in artistic practice.²⁵ Drawing on Bachelard's concept of phenomenotechnique, as adapted by Spatz, this study develops a methodological approach to writing to effectively convey the embodied knowledge encountered in singing.²⁶ This approach centres the 'language of technique' as a means to trace my *technical responses* to Hensel's songs.²⁷

22 "In spite of her considerable musical talents and prolific compositional output, neither her music nor her life has received in-depth investigation". Marcia J. Citron, "The Lieder of Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel", *The Musical Quarterly* 69, no. 4 (1983): 570–594; "Much writing about Hensel [...] is largely not about her music at all. In this, it ironically perpetuates the very obscurity of Fanny's music that it seeks to criticise". Marian Wilson Kimber, "The "Suppression" of Fanny Mendelssohn: Rethinking Feminist Biography", *Nineteenth Century Music* 26, no. 2 (2002): 121; "As far as we have come, however, we have much further to go. There is one area in particular where more work is needed [...] we need to get to know her music better". Stephen Rodgers, *The Songs of Fanny Hensel* (Oxford University Press, USA, 2021).

23 Suzanne G Cusick, "Musicology, torture, repair", *Radical Musicology* 3, no. 1 (2008): 1–9. 17 May 2009 <<http://www.radical-musicology.org.uk>>.

24 Desmond Bell, ed., *Mind the Gap! Working papers on practice-based doctoral research in the creative arts and media* (Distiller's Press, 2016), 190.

25 Ben Spatz, *What a Body Can Do: Technique as Knowledge, Practice as Research*. Routledge, 2015.

26 Ben Spatz, "Colors Like Knives: Embodied Research and Phenomenotechnique in Rite of the Butcher". *Contemporary Theatre Review* 27, no. 2 (2017): 201–203.

27 Ben Spatz, *What a body can do* (Routledge, 2015).

1.1 Fanny Hensel and feminist musicology

The study of women's work in music represents a diverse and vibrant area of contemporary musicology—celebrated in study days, conferences and publications.²⁸ And yet, the issue of underrepresentation persists for women composers in Western classical music.²⁹ Even after decades of advocacy and research, repertorial, pedagogical and intellectual canons continue to cast their shadow over industry and education.³⁰ The same sources that reflect the progress made by and for women in music also reveal an increasing underlying frustration and tiredness, as the world of music at large struggles to break free from the influence of its canons.

Fanny Hensel's song repertoire exemplifies this struggle. Despite her status as one of classical music's most famous women, over 100 of her nearly 250 songs have remained unrepresented in performance and publishing.³¹ This sustained neglect is especially hard to accept considering the crucial role that her music played in the foundation of feminist musicology.³²

This research project engages a novel methodology, which I term *reparative practice research*. This explores the potential of applying practice research frameworks to an advocacy of Fanny Hensel's songs.³³ What emerges is a multimodal approach that integrates tangible, practice-based advocacy—such as score creation and audio recording—with a newly developed mode of *phenomenotechnical writing*. This writing describes the emergent knowledges encountered through practice, employing a “language of technique” to articulate my technical responses to Hensel's

28 Conferences include Women's Work in Music conferences at University of Bangor (annually since 2021) and International Women and/in Musical Leadership conferences (hosted virtually 2022/23). Publications include Rhiannon Mathias, ed., *The Routledge Handbook on Women's Work in Music* (Routledge Abingdon, 2022); Karin Pendle, ed. *Women & Music: A History* (Indiana University Press, 2001); and Karin Pendle and Melinda Boyd eds., *Women in music: A research and information guide* (Routledge, 2012). An example of a study day can be seen here <https://blogs.bl.uk/music/2024/01/celebrating-women-musicians-past-and-present.html>.

29 Mathias, *The Routledge Handbook on Women's Work in Music*, 2022.

30 Gabriella Di Laccio, “Equality & Diversity in Global Repertoire”, *Donne Women in Music* (17 April 2022): <https://donne-uk.org/research-new/> accessed 6/5/2023; Sally Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First-Century Feminist Politics of Music* (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2010); Susan McClary, “Feminine Endings at Twenty”. *Trans. Revista Transcultural de Música*, no. 15 (2011): 1–10; Angela Elizabeth Slater, “Invisible Canons: A Reflective Commentary on the Formation of My Personal Canon of Women Composers”, in *The Routledge Handbook of Women's Work in Music*, ed. Mathias (Routledge, 2021), 177–86; Marcia J. Citron “Women and the Western Art Canon: Where Are We Now?”. *Notes* 64, no. 2 (2007): 209–15.

31 Thym states “Fanny Hensel seems to have been “canonised”—if not in the concert hall, then certainly in the world of musicology”. Jürgen Thym, “Crosscurrents in Song: Five Distinctive Voices”, in *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Rufus Hallmark (Routledge, 2010): 153–185.

32 Marcia J Citron, “The Lieder of Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel”, *The Musical Quarterly* 69, no. 4 (1983): 570–94, “Felix Mendelssohn's Influence on Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel as a Professional Composer”, *Current Musicology* 0, no. 37 (1984); Victoria Ressmeyer Sirota, “The Life and Works of Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel” (PhD diss., Boston University School for the Arts, 1981); Carol Lynelle Quin, “Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel: Her Contributions to Nineteenth-Century Musical Life” (PhD diss., University of Kentucky, 1981).

33 James Bulley and Özden Şahin, “Practice Research-Report 1: What Is Practice Research? And Report 2: How Can Practice Research Be Shared?” (Goldsmiths, University of London, 2021). <https://doi.org/10.23636/1347>

songs in singing and the distinct epistemic phenomena that emerge within this practice.³⁴ These phenomenotechnical writings trace a line of technique that links Fanny—the practitioner—to my present-day Lieder practice.

1.2 A brief history of Hensel studies

The study of Fanny Hensel's Lieder is not a new academic pursuit. Research on her life and music has grown exponentially since her “rediscovery” in the 1980s, with her songs representing a thriving sub-field.³⁵ However, more than 100 of her 239 Lieder have remained absent from publishing and performance—an oversight that I will explore through the examination of three key figures in Hensel studies: Marcia Citron, Marian Wilson Kimber and Stephen Rodgers. Though their scholarship spans over four decades, each of these acknowledges a persistent underrepresentation of Fanny Hensel's music in both academic discourse and performance. Following this discussion, I argue for a scholarly reorientation that places musical practice at the centre—shifting beyond recurring claims of underrepresentation and toward a new spaces within Hensel studies.

1983

“In spite of her considerable musical talents and prolific compositional output, neither her music nor her life has received in-depth investigation”.³⁶

Marcia Citron was arguably the most influential voice in the establishment of Hensel studies, as well as a prominent scholar known for her significant contributions to the emerging field of feminist musicology.³⁷ Citron engaged in laborious efforts—hand-copying letters and scores—in order to facilitate her early papers,³⁸ which contextualise Hensel's approach to song within the pedagogical

34 Spatz, *What a body can do*, 2015.

35 PhD theses by Victoria Sirota and Carole Lynelle Quin marked the genesis of this movement. Stokes described Sirota's thesis as “seminal”. Her work included a comprehensive (though now outdated) work list of Hensel's compositions and highlighted the important theme of Hensel's involvement within the Sunday Musicales. Quin's thesis is a closer look at the style within Hensel's Lieder and an exploration of the “cultural milieu” of the time. Victoria Sirota, “The Life and Works of Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel”. (PhD diss., Boston University School for the Arts, 1981); Carole Lynelle Quin, “Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel: Her Contributions to Nineteenth-Century Musical Life”, (PhD diss., University of Kentucky, 1981); Rodgers, *The Songs of Fanny Hensel*, 2021; As is reflected in the comprehensive research guide: Laura Stokes, *Fanny Hensel: A Research and Information Guide*, (Routledge, 2019).

36 Citron, “The Lieder of Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel”, *The Musical Quarterly* vol. LXIX, iss.4 (1983): 570.

37 Citron, “Felix Mendelssohn's Influence on Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel as a Professional Composer”, 1984; “Gender, Professionalism and the Musical Canon”. *The Journal of Musicology* 8, no. 1 (1990): 102–117; *Gender and the Musical Canon* (University of Illinois Press, 1991).

38 Citron, “The Lieder of Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel”, 1983.

influence of the “second Berlin Lieder School” as imparted by Karl Friedrich Zelter.³⁹ She was also amongst the first to articulate the “suppression narrative” that permeates much of early Hensel scholarship and biography.⁴⁰

The enthusiasm shared for Hensel’s music amongst Citron and like-minded colleagues was not universal. In contrast to these champions, who felt that they had discovered long-lost gems,⁴¹ some scholars responded with cynicism, suggesting that the music was receiving undeserved attention. Most disconcerting were the alleged attitudes of Dr Rudolf Elvers—the chief custodian of Hensel’s manuscripts at this time—who was amongst the most vehement: “it’s too much and it’s not so good [...] I don’t believe she will play an eminent role in music history”.⁴² Elvers’ tight grip on Fanny Hensel’s autograph manuscripts undoubtedly contributed to the delays in the publishing and recording of her songs that are still felt today.⁴³

2002

“Much writing about Hensel [...] is largely not about her music at all. In this, it ironically perpetuates the very obscurity of Fanny’s music that it seeks to criticise”.⁴⁴

By 2002, much about Hensel studies had changed. Perhaps most significantly, at the turn of the millennium Renate Hellwig-Unruh published her definitive catalogue of Hensel’s known compositions, which provided a key resource supporting the creation of www.henselsongsonline.org.⁴⁵ The years since Hensel’s ‘rediscovery’ had also seen a flurry of works engaging themes of feminism and gender in narrating Fanny Hensel’s life in music—most significantly, the first full-length Hensel biography.⁴⁶

39 Citron, “The Lieder of Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel”, 581.

40 Françoise Tillard, Fanny Mendelssohn, trans. Camille Nash (Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1992); Eugene Gates, “The Woman Composer Question: Four Case Studies from the Romantic Era” (PhD. diss., University of Toronto, 1992); Sarah Rothenberg, ““Thus Far, but No Farther”: Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel’s Unfinished Journey”, *The Musical Quarterly* 77, no. 4 (1993): 689–708.

41 Swan cites Sirota as having said “These are the kinds of pieces that should be studied for years [...] I realised that this was a life commitment -- to get her music out”. Christopher Swan, “The Other Mendelssohn”, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 27 March 1986.

42 Swan, “The Other Mendelssohn”, 1986.

43 Elvers cited one of Hensel’s letters in which she claimed to be done with publishing as justification, arguing that scholars ought to “respect her will”. Swan’s piece demonstrates how several scholars were critical of this stance. Swan, “The Other Mendelssohn”, 1986.

44 Wilson Kimber, “The “Suppression” of Fanny Mendelssohn”, 2002.

45 Renate Hellwig-Unruh, Fanny Hensel Geb. Mendelssohn Bartholdy: Thematisches Verzeichnis Der Kompositionen (Vol. 1016: Kunzelmann, 2000).

46 Tillard, Fanny Mendelssohn”, 1992.

This focus on biography, gender and her relationship to brother Felix prompted Marian Wilson Kimber's "The "suppression" of Fanny Mendelssohn: Rethinking Feminist Biography". Wilson Kimber critiqued the characterisations of Felix Mendelssohn as an oppressive figure in Fanny's musical life that had permeated the field. She claimed that this "suppression narrative" was "at best, an exaggeration", the result of feminist biographers overstating the restrictive influences of the Mendelssohn men because it aligned Fanny Hensel with the canonical archetype of the "suffering romantic genius' composer".⁴⁷ In the quotation above, Wilson Kimber identifies that, paradoxically, this type of work had served to detract from Hensel's music itself.⁴⁸ Wilson Kimber's work was met with derision by Citron, who characterised the article as a "bump in the road" of Hensel studies, following which the pair traded blows in a series of papers and responses.⁴⁹

2021

"As far as we have come, however, we have much further to go. There is one area in particular where more work is needed [...] we need to get to know her music better".⁵⁰

Stephen Rodgers' *The Songs of Fanny Hensel* is the first monograph dedicated solely to the composer's *Lieder*. Alongside Larry Todd's definitive biography *Fanny: The Other Mendelssohn* and Laura Stokes' *Research Guide*,⁵¹ it stands as one of the most significant contributions to Hensel scholarship. For Rodgers, the path to knowing Hensel's music better is through music analyses and this collection is dedicated to that pursuit. His analytical approach reflects a broader trend in Hensel studies during recent years, deepening scholarly engagement with the songs and

47 Wilson Kimber, "The "Suppression" of Fanny Mendelssohn", 121.

48 Wilson Kimber, "The "Suppression" of Fanny Mendelssohn", 126.

49 Marian Wilson Kimber, "Of 'Bumps' and Biography: A Response to Marcia Citron", *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* 5, no. 2 (2008): 171–76.

50 Rodgers, *The Songs of Fanny Hensel*, 17.

51 R. Larry Todd, *Fanny Hensel: The Other Mendelssohn* (Oxford University Press, 2009); Stokes, *Fanny Hensel: A Research and Information Guide*, 2019.

uncovering significant thematic threads.⁵²

And yet, despite this growing body of research, the narrative remains strikingly familiar. Much like the theses of Victoria Sirota and Caroline Lynelle Quin, published in the early 1980s, this research narrative once again begins with an assertion that Fanny Hensel's music remains underrepresented. How, after four decades of passionate advocacy, have we arrived at a point where the foundational concerns of Hensel studies are still being restated?

As I will argue in this research narrative, it is not the fault of the rigorous and well-intentioned work of the Hensel studies community over the past decades—my work here is only possible owing to their labours. Instead, I point to larger disciplinary issues of how musical value is attributed within traditional musicological paradigms. While early feminist scholars have identified these issues, their insights have yet to be sufficiently heeded.

I find it no coincidence that the songs overlooked in Fanny Hensel's repertoire—both in scholarship and performance—are largely from her earlier years. Many of these Lieder adhere to the “stylistic confines of the Second Berlin Lieder School”,⁵³ bearing compositional traits considered epistemically less valuable: strophic form, simple piano figurations and melodies and a general lack of perceived complexity. These are the very songs that might be cynically dismissed as “not very good”, simply because they do not align with canonic ideals of the great German Lied.⁵⁴

In the recent push to engage with Fanny Hensel's music more seriously, some of these earlier

52 Cornelia Bartsch, “Fanny Hensel”. MUGI: Musik und Gender im Internet, updated 22 March 2010, accessed 26 September 2018: <https://mugi.hfmt-hamburg.de/content/index.xml>; “Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdys Lieder (mit und) ohne Worte im Dialog”, in *Mendelssohn-Interpretationen: Der unbekannte Mendelssohn—das Liedschaffen*, ed. Dominik Sackmann (Peter Lang, 2011), 101–123; Evee Curtis “‘Perceived ‘beginnings’” Reconsidered: Fanny Hensel's “Sehnsucht” (1830)”, (Poster Presentation, Symposium on Undergraduate Research and Creative Expression (SOURCE), 2022) <https://scholar.valpo.edu/cus/1122>; Hyejung Jun, “An Analytical Study of the Two Sacred Cantatas by Fanny Hensel: Lobgesang and Hiob”. (PhD diss., University of Cincinnati, 2022); Lars Korten et al., “Metrum, Rhythmus, Melodie: Der Maiabend von Johann Heinrich Voß und Fanny Hensel”, *Poetica* 43, no. ½ (2011): 81–102; Yonatan Malin, *Songs in Motion: Rhythm and Meter in the German Lied* (Oxford University Press, 2010); Samuel Ng, “Rotation as Metaphor: Fanny Hensel's Formal and Tonal Logic Reconsidered”, *Indiana Theory Review* 29, no. 2 (2011): 31–70; Kenton Tyler Osborne, “Defining the “Lovely Harmonic Disorder” in Fanny Hensel's Musical Language” (PhD diss., University of Oregon, 2020); Stephen Rodgers and Tyler Osborne, “Prolongational Closure in the Lieder of Fanny Hensel”, *Music Theory Online* 26, no. 3 (2020); Stephen Rodgers, “Thinking (and Singing) in Threes: Triple Hypermeter and the Songs of Fanny Hensel”, *Music Theory Online* vol.17, no.1 (2011), “Fanny Hensel's Lied Aesthetic”, *Journal of Musicological Research* vol.30, issue 3 (2011).

53 Thym, “Crosscurrents in song”, 179.

54 A good example of this viewpoint is expressed in the preface to this edition of Felix's Lieder, where the author contrasts the Second Berlin Lieder School with the more popular Viennese approach. “His song aesthetic was strongly influenced by his teacher, Carl Friedrich Zelter (1752–1832), who was a close friend of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and a powerful exponent of the Berlin Lieder School. Simplicity of expression and a natural subservience to the text were among the most important principles of this tradition. Musical individuality for its own sake was discouraged for fear of obscuring or even overpowering the words of the poem. Strophic songs with a folk-like simplicity were the norm. This contrasts with the approach of Schubert, Schumann and Wolf who were continually trying to break new ground in the way they set words to music...”. Eugene Asti, ed., *Mendelssohn Bartholdy Lieder by Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy* (Bärenreiter-Verlag, 2008), VI.

songs have begun to feature in academic discussion. However, a new iteration of Wilson Kimber's paradox threatens to emerge, in which detailed analyses that 'elevate' Hensel's simple songs are written about Lieder that have not been published or performed, and thus have occupied neither embodied nor auditory space—existing only theoretically.⁵⁵

It is for these reasons that my research has focused on musical practice, undertaking the challenging yet valuable task of developing a methodology that both disseminates Hensel's Lieder through accessible, non-specialist means and uncovers new scholarly insights. Of Fanny Hensel's 450 known compositions, more than half are Lieder for solo voice and piano, making the disproportionate absence of these songs even more striking. It is this disparity between Hensel's scholarly acclaim and her limited performance presence that this study seeks to address.

1.3 Practice research as feminist methodology

"The master's tool will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change".

—Audre Lorde ⁵⁶

In this section, I identify a shared ontological foundation between two seemingly disparate disciplines—feminist musicology and practice research. Owing to their aligned purposes and approaches, I propose that practice research methodology can be harnessed to enact the disciplinary reorientations advocated by feminist musicologists over the past four decades.

From its inception, feminist musicology has argued that new scholarly tools are necessary to effect meaningful change for women in music.⁵⁷ Canonic tools, such as musical analysis and philology, not only dictate what music is deemed worthy of study but also profoundly influence the actions that are performed in musical spaces.⁵⁸ These spaces are shaped by the music performers choose

⁵⁵ Rodgers' includes engagement with songs such as 'Zu deiners Lagers Füßen', 'Erwache Knab', 'Auf der Wanderung' and 'Mond'. Rodgers, *The Songs of Fanny Hensel*, 2021.

⁵⁶ Audre Lorde, "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House", in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches* (Crossing Press, 2007), 110–114.

⁵⁷ Citron, "Gender, Professionalism and the Musical Canon", 102–17; Don Michael Randel, "The Canons in the Musicological Toolbox", in *Disciplining Music: Musicology and Its Canons* (University of Chicago Press, 1992), 10–21.

⁵⁸ Citron, "Gender, Professionalism and the Musical Canon", 102; Sara Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology: Orientations, objects, others* (Duke University Press, 2020), 52.

to sing again and again—and that which they don't.⁵⁹

Sara Ahmed's philosophy of orientation highlights the dangers of repetitious action, such as those resulting from the reapplication of established musicological paradigms. She argues that "the work of repetition is not neutral [...] it orients the body in some ways rather than others".⁶⁰ Furthermore, Ahmed states that "it is important that we think not only about what is repeated, but also how the repetition of actions takes us in certain directions".⁶¹

Repetitive actions inevitably result in bodies that are orientated "toward some objects more than others, not only physical objects [...] but also objects of thought, feeling and judgements, as well as objects in the sense of aims, aspirations and objectives".⁶² Through repetition, these orientations become sedimented as "our body takes the shape of this repetition; we get stuck in certain alignments as an effect of this work".⁶³ Crucially, Ahmed identifies how the actions chosen in a space come to determine the actions that are "available to be reached" in that space, as well as the types of body that can inhabit it.⁶⁴

I find Ahmed's work highly suitable when considering the influence of habitual musical actions carried out by both musicologists in the academy and performers in the concert hall. The repetition of the familiar perpetuates an ease of inhabitation for only a certain type of body, and in turn makes music spaces less porous for those which are different.⁶⁵

In order to counteract these sedimented alignments of our discipline and our bodies and to meaningfully reorientate, performers and researchers must consciously and courageously carry out new actions—not only turning to face new things (such as unfamiliar repertoire) but also reaching beyond that which is ready to hand.⁶⁶ It is through new actions that Ahmed claims we are able to reshape the spaces we inhabit—be they physical, such as performance venues and academic institutions, or conceptual, such as disciplinary boundaries—potentially creating room for what

59 Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, 56–7.

60 Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, 57.

61 Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, 56.

62 Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, 56.

63 In artistic practices, these alignments quite literally become embodied, shaping technique and knowledge through reiteration. Spatz, *What a body can do*, 55; Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, 57.

64 Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, 52, 58.

65 Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, 56–7.

66 Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, 52, 57; Spatz, *What a body can do*, 55.

seemed to have no place before.⁶⁷

Disciplinary reorientation also underpins practice research, which is founded on the premise that knowledge is inherent in doing and making.⁶⁸ Practice research has manifestations across a wide range of disciplines and has, unsurprisingly, proven popular as methodology within artistic research. By bridging the often-artificial divide between theory and practice, artistic practice is granted an epistemic authority it has not previously held.⁶⁹

As in feminist musicology, the foundational arguments of the “practice turn” in classical music,⁷⁰ now articulated within practice research, advocated for post-textual ontologies of musical works.⁷¹ As Citron identified intellectual and canonic hierarchies within Western classical music,⁷² Christopher Small observed similarly restrictive structures in the concert hall.⁷³ While feminist musicology critiques the impact of these attitudes on the compositions and lives of women in music, Small examines how they marginalize participants in music-making. His ideas reposition performers as more than just vessels for a composer’s intentions, casting them as active agents who create meaning in musical experiences.⁷⁴

Small’s ontological and etymological reorientation, in which “music” becomes a verb, opens musicology to new intellectual frameworks and methodologies.⁷⁵ If music is something that happens,⁷⁶ then the interactions and experiences it shapes become crucial considerations for scholarly representation.

67 “It is interesting to note that in landscape architecture they use the term ‘desire lines’ to describe unofficial paths, those marks left on the ground that show everyday comings and goings, where people deviate from the paths they are supposed to follow. Deviation leaves its own marks on the ground, which can even help generate alternative lines, which cross the ground in unexpected ways. Such lines are indeed traces of desire; where people have taken different routes to get to this point or that point”. Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, 20, “Women’s music...takes on a minoritarian tendency, a movement away from order and uniformity characterising this writing, veering in the direction of inconsistency and disorder”. Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 8.

68 James Bulley and Şahin Özden, “Practice Research—Report 1: What is practice research?”, 2021.

69 Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, “Classical music as Enforced Utopia”, *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education* 15, no. 3-4 (2016): 325–36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474022216647706>.

70 Karin Knorr Cetina, Theodore Schatzki and Eike von Savigny eds., *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory* (Routledge, 2001).

71 Citron, “Women and the Western Art Canon: Where Are We Now?”, 209–21; Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 2010; Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Wesleyan University Press, 1998); Leech-Wilkinson, “Classical music as enforced utopia”, 325–336.

72 Citron, “Gender, Professionalism and the Musical Canon”, 110, 112.

73 Small, *Musicking*, 1998.

74 Small, *Musicking*, 10.

75 Leech Wilkinson, “Classical music as Enforced Utopia”, 2016.

76 Small, *Musicking*, 2.

Small's approach necessitates a critical re-examination of the values underpinning the scholarship and performance practices associated with German Lieder. Though the art form began as a predominantly domestic and amateur musical pursuit,⁷⁷ German Lieder has come to occupy a revered status as one of Western classical music's "most recondite" genres,⁷⁸ celebrating a connoisseurship that has influenced the perspectives and practices of audiences, performers and scholars.⁷⁹ At odds with the reorientations proposed by Small, Lieder scholarship and performance have been firmly aligned with a textual perspective of musical works,⁸⁰ perpetuating a reverence for compositions via positivist descriptions of the composer's intentions.⁸¹ This is reflected in the prevalence of prescriptive attitudes towards performance and listening in what remains a highly canonized repertoire.⁸²

The influence of these attitudes is evident across both academia and performance. While some recent publications have begun to incorporate performance perspectives into Lieder studies, a distinct divide between musicological knowledge and performers' lived experiences persists.⁸³ This divide is also embedded within Lieder practice itself, where an imbalance often exists between pianist and singer—the former sometimes cast as the "resident musicologist", and the latter

77 "In an age before recording, the Lied—along with choral music and works for piano solo and duet, above all—allowed for music lovers to participate". Katy Hamilton, "Natalia Macfarren and the English German Lied", in *German Song Onstage*, eds. Laura Tunbridge and Natasha Loges (Indiana University Press, 2020), 52.

78 "The Lieder recital is considered to be formal and requiring specialist knowledge in order to be fully understood". Laura Tunbridge, "Introduction—Restaging German Song", in *German Song Onstage*, vii–viii.

79 This development is traced in this collection of essays that reveals the modernity of ideas that are now commonplace in Lieder performance. Tunbridge and Loges, eds., *German Song Onstage*, 2020. Natasha Loges presents the "elevation" of the Lied as an evolution of the *Werktreue* phenomenon in nineteenth-century Germany. Natasha Loges, "From Miscellanies to Musical Works: Julius Stockhausen, Clara Schumann and *Dichterliebe*", in *German Song Onstage*, 2020.

80 Spillman's surprisingly recent publication is filled with prescriptive language that highlights the reverence for text experienced in Lieder at large. e.g. "Once a musician commits to a path of fidelity to a composer's wishes..." Robert Spillman. "Performing lieder: the mysterious mix", in *German Lieder in the nineteenth century*, 408.

81 Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 43.

82 To cite just a few examples of prescriptive attitudes in this relatively recent chapter: "...personal expression that does not fit the text is intrusive.", "If he or she is not in accord with the words and music of a song, there had better be an excellent reason for such ambiguity or irony", "Once a musician commits to a path of fidelity to a composer's wishes..." Robert Spillman, "Performing Lieder: The Mysterious Mix", 407–8.

83 Benjamin Binder and Jennifer Ronyak, eds. *The Lied at the Crossroads of Performance and Musicology* (Cambridge University Press, 2024); Ironically, those singers who have transcended their 'inferior' intellectual status have been amongst the most prescriptive in describing how to interpret and perform arts. See, for example, Elizabeth Schwarzkopf speaking prescriptively about the shortcomings of younger Lieder singers, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQfGmFk7Z8U>. Some have penned articles or books that continue to feature of music college recommended reading lists, for example, Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, George Bird and Richard Stokes, *The Fischer-Dieskau Book of Lieder* (Limelight Editions, 1984).

perceived as disinterested or anti-intellectual.⁸⁴

This distinction reflects a broader issue in how musical knowledge is defined, revealing the persistent reluctance of some for musicology to become more porous. Singers who are granted intellectual credibility are often those who adopt the language of musicologists or pianists, a tendency that can unintentionally diminish the value of embodied, musicopoetic insight developed through vocal practice, along with the intellectual and critical capacities of all practising musicians.⁸⁵

Reparative practice research responds to these limitations by expanding the scope of what constitutes musicological knowledge to encompass a host of novel perspectives that better represent the messiness and beauty of music as it lives.⁸⁶

The advocacy of a post-textual conception of musical works within feminist musicology and practice research supports this ontological reorientation. This position is exemplified by Sally

84 “As long as I have been a song pianist, I have sensed a gulf between those free-as-air spirits who specialize in vocal performance on one hand and highly intellectual and analytical musicologists on the other. Occasionally these skills appear united [...] the few singers willing to step into musicological shoes fail to mask a fundamental difference in Weltanschauung between most of the musicians practicing these two careers. Coexistence has often been “managed”, neither side engaging very deeply with the other [...] In playing the piano for singers I soon realized that the accompanist, sometimes *faute de mieux*, occupied the role of coach, adviser and for want of a better expression, resident musicologist [...] If I wanted to inform them [singers about anything, it had to be in an entertaining manner. It is not as if they were anti-knowledge, but they chose where and how to acquire information palatably. Any talk about music was considered far less urgent than the concerns of the here-and-now—for example, who had been sleeping with whom and who was going to be doing so that very night”. Graham Johnson, “Foreword: Susan Youens: The Ivory Tower and the Stairway to Paradise”, in *The Lied at the Crossroads of Performance and Musicology*, eds. Benjamin Binder and Jennifer Ronyak (Cambridge University Press, 2024), xvii–xxv.

85 Ironically, those singers who have transcended their inferior intellectual status have been amongst the most prescriptive in describing how to interpret and perform arts. See, for example, Elizabeth Schwarzkopf speaking prescriptively about the shortcomings of younger Lieder singers, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQfGmFk7Z8U>.

86 Small, *Musicking*, 1998; de Assis’s calls for a post-representational musicology: “Musical practice becomes primarily a critical act, allowing performances to be critical studies of the works performed, significantly in, by and through the means of performance itself”. de Assis, *Logic of Experimentation*, 19; de Assis also expresses a novel ontology of the musical work: “Every musical work is a space in itself, which has to be navigated internally by every single actant—it is not placed within an overarching (n+1) transcendental space containing it. Thus, a musical work is as many “works” as the people thinking of it”. de Assis, *Logic of Experimentation*, 63; Macarthur, *Towards a twenty-first-century feminist politics of music*, 2016; William Brooks, ed., *Experience music experiment: pragmatism and artistic research* (Leuven University Press, 2021); “The textualist paradigm thus deliberately wrote out of its discourses the best part of what makes music are uniquely powerful and exceptionally valued means of human communication, imagination, creativity, subjectivity and intersubjectivity: the sounding phenomenon created in the act of music making, with its wondrously rich and varied, ever-dynamic phenomenal qualities, as well as the artistry of performers that enable this marvel to emerge”. Mine Doğan-Dack, “Senses and Sensibility: The Performer’s Intentions between the Page and the Stage”, *Rivista di Analisi e Teoria Musicale*: XXVII, 1 (2021): 27–28; “It is the repeated experience of making singular and situated expressive nuances that forms the basis of a performance affective knowledge of music and of her artistic intentions that bridge the score of performance”. Doğan-Dack, “Senses and Sensibility”, 34; “Anyone who wishes to specify the “content” of a musical phrase has no choice but to play the phrase itself. In fact, the “content” of a musical composition can never be grasped objectively [*gegenständlich*] but only musically, i.e. as the concrete sounds of which the work is composed”. E. Hanslick in Doğan-Dack, “Phrasing—the Very Life of Music” 1: *Performing the Music and Nineteenth-Century Performance Theory*, *Nineteenth-century music review* 9, no. 1 (2012): 7–30; Annegret Huber, Doris Ingrisch, Therese Kaufmann, Johannes Kretz, Gesine Schröder and Tasos Zembylas, eds., *Knowing in performing: Artistic research in music and the performing arts* (transcript Verlag, 2021); “Via learning by doing, knowledge can be acquired which is implicit in the action itself. Mastering new challenges is thus accompanied by a knowledge which does not already exist and which only rises in doing...” Huber et al. eds., *Knowing in Performing: Artistic Research in Music and the Performing Arts*, 2020, 18.

Macarthur and Paulo de Assis, who adopt post-representational, Deleuzian approaches to composers and compositions.⁸⁷ Both draw on Deleuze and Guattari's concept of "assemblage", reimagining musical works as "creative entanglements".⁸⁸ Their understanding of composers' works as living, breathing "things" positions musical practice as an ideal tool to explore these fluid, evolving organisms.⁸⁹ This, in turn, opens the door to the methodological shift long sought by feminist musicology.

Although a methodological pathway for the post-textual study of musical works has yet to be fully developed, the robust theoretical framework provided by the now well-established field of practice research presents itself as a viable methodology for realising the disciplinary reform—and ontological foundations—advocated by both feminist musicology and practice research in music. Therefore, in this research narrative, I approach Hensel's songs not merely as texts to be read (scores) or analysed (scholarship), but as lived experiences, both past and present.⁹⁰

1.4 Reparative musicology

"Reparative musicology" offers a novel approach to integrating practice-based research with feminist musicological frameworks. The term was coined by Suzanne Cusick in a study of music's use in torture at the Guantanamo Bay detention centres.⁹¹

Cusick's use of "reparative" is derived from Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's distinction between "paranoid" and "reparative" critical practices.⁹² Reparative scholarship, as proposed by Sedgwick, offers an alternative to dominant paranoid approaches that favour strong theory and adversarial language. Instead, it seeks to understand not only what knowledge is, but also what knowledge does—striving for positive real-world outcomes and using affirmative, constructive terms.⁹³

87 de Assis, *Logic of Experimentation*, 19; Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 4–5.

88 Tim Ingold, "Bringing Things Back to Life", 2010.

89 "Every musical work is a space in itself, which has to be navigated internally by every single actant—it is not placed within an overarching (n+1) transcendental space containing it. Thus, a musical work is as many 'works' as the people thinking of it". de Assis, *Logic of Experimentation*, 63. "The thing, by contrast, is a 'going on', or better, a place where several goings on become entwined. To observe a thing is not to be locked out but to be invited into the gathering. We participate, as Heidegger rather enigmatically put it, in the thing" thinging in a worlding world". Ingold, "Bringing Things Back to Life", 4.

90 This readerly/textual engagement is identified in Citron, "Gender, Professionalism and the Musical Canon", 112.

91 Cusick, "Musicology, Torture, Repair", 2008.

92 Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick Hamilton, "Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading; or, You're So Paranoid, You Probably Think This Introduction is About You", in *Novel Gazing*, eds. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Michèle Aina Barale, Jonathan Goldberg and Michael Moon (Duke University Press, 1997), 1–38.

93 Sedgwick, "Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading", 4.

Cusick imagines a reparative musicology that promises a future of joy, detaching itself from the “bitter decades” of her scholarly adulthood and embracing weak theory.⁹⁴ She envisions a discipline that “would reconstruct musical experiences so that we could love them (which is more than to appreciate them, more than to understand their functions)”.⁹⁵ In articulating this vision, she emphasises the importance of integrating the premises and techniques of both “old” and “new” musicologies.⁹⁶ Her goal of improving institutions has since been taken up by other scholars and is included in Macarthur’s thesis as part of the ideological foundation for a twenty-first-century feminist politics of music.⁹⁷

Cusick’s aspiration for a reparative musicology has been pivotal in shaping the methodological foundation of this project. I aim to realise reparative goals both methodologically—by reorienting scholarly discourse—and more literally, by reflecting on what it means “to remedy an undesirable condition or situation [...] to make amends for a wrong or harm done”.⁹⁸

I approached the long-neglected songs of Fanny Hensel as a form of practical, reparative intervention. Nearly 100 unpublished songs—largely overlooked for decades—became the focus of this project. My reparative actions included publishing a [complete performance edition](#) of Hensel’s solo songs, curating and performing a commercial album release ([Hensel: Lieder](#)) and leading an online advocacy campaign ([#HENSEL](#)).⁹⁹ These efforts not only drew attention to these overlooked works but also created the conditions for a discovery-led inquiry, in which questions and insights emerged organically through my practice-based engagement with the music.¹⁰⁰

Through my embodied encounters with these songs I disseminate and articulate the findings of my research, both in the submitted portfolio of multi-component outputs and through three detailed [case studies](#). In preparing to present my findings for the latter, I needed to develop a way of articulating insights from my embodied singing practice within an uncharted academic space—a ‘language of practice’.

94 Cusick, “Musicology, Torture, Repair”, 19.

95 Cusick, “Musicology, Torture, Repair”, 20.

96 Cusick, “Musicology, Torture, Repair”, 5.

97 Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 2010; William Cheng observed modern academic criticism bursting with paranoid readings, arguing for “...experimental rhetoric, interdisciplinary discretion [...] and reparative attitudes [in] music and musicology [that] can serve as barometers of better worlds”. William Cheng, *Just Vibrations: The Purpose of Sounding Good* (University of Michigan Press, 2016), 16, 107.

98 Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford University Press, 2023).

99 <https://hensel songs online.org/hashtaghensel>

100 Bell ed., *Mind the Gap!*, 190.

1.5 The language of practice

Having identified embodied perspectives as bridging the aims of practice research and feminist musicology, it is necessary to develop a language of practice through which to articulate insights emerging from singing and playing Hensel's Lieder with clarity and precision. This presents a challenge, as the most significant of these insights emerge through "intuitive, embodied, tacit, imaginative, affective and sensory modes of knowing"—forms of understanding that resist conventional academic articulation.¹⁰¹ While it is important to acknowledge that such knowledge can never be fully captured in language, the epistemic value of the perspectives emerging from song practice compels me to convey these almost inexpressible phenomena as clearly and meaningfully as possible.

My approach is strongly informed by the embodied research theories of practice researcher and theatre practitioner Ben Spatz—particularly their conception of "technique" as a means of articulating the epistemology of embodied practice. Although traditionally associated with the "merely mechanical" dimensions of embodied practice, Spatz uses the term to account for "the whole body—not just its physiology but its emotional and mental life as well".¹⁰² Technique, in this sense, is understood as "knowledge that structures practice", not only structured by but also "productive of further knowledge".

Spatz suggests that researchers can produce epistemically robust practice research by accounting for technique in moments of discovery during embodied artistic practices. Articulating embodied research findings through the language of technique, as Spatz proposes, remains true to the lived knowledge of the practitioner while also offering a means for others with sufficiently similar practices—what Spatz calls "a disciplinary we"—to trace these inquiries within their own bodies, potentially leading to shared or contrasting discoveries and supports more specific and consensual knowledge claims within artistic inquiry, without retreating into abstraction or overly personal narrative.

In the paper "Colors Like Knives", Spatz adapts a framework from laboratory science—*phenomenotechnique*—to explore how such accounts of practice might be developed.

¹⁰¹ Bulley and Şahin, "Practice Research-Report 1", 1.

¹⁰² Spatz, What a body can do, 30.

1.6 Phenomenotechnique

Spatz engages the concept of phenomenotechnique as a means of specifying what should be accounted for in a technical account of an instance of artistic practice. Phenomenotechnique originates in the laboratory sciences, specifically in the work of French scientist and philosopher Gaston Bachelard. Bachelard argued that to fully understand emergent phenomena in an experiment, researchers must attend not only to the phenomena themselves but also to the methods of inquiry through which the phenomena were encountered.¹⁰³ He stated that “one must [...] know the method of knowing in order to grasp the object to be known”.¹⁰⁴ A phenomenotechnical account encompasses not just the phenomena, but also the researcher’s practice and the apparatus that they engage in that practice.

Bachelard emphasized that neither the apparatus used in observation (such as a microscope) nor the manner in which it is employed by the expert researcher is epistemically neutral; both how we look and the tools we use to look shape the phenomena we observe.¹⁰⁵ Instead, he posits a “material-discursive circuit” between researcher, research apparatus and epistemic phenomena. It is this material-discursive circuit (as visualised in [Figure 1.1](#) and adapted in [Figure 1.2](#) in the context of my own Lieder practice) that Spatz identifies as necessary to structure a meaningful account of embodied research discoveries.¹⁰⁶

When it comes to articulating this phenomenotechnical account of practice, Spatz advocates for a multimodal methodology, combining video documentation of practice with detailed technical writing that highlights the pathways the researcher identifies as key to arriving at those discoveries. These writings, while dense and detailed, are rooted in the language of practice itself. A phenomenotechnical account encompasses both the epistemic phenomena of the practice (through audiovisual documentation and descriptive language) and a grounded technical vocabulary that enables practitioners with shared disciplinary knowledge to engage with the

103 Rheinberger, “Gaston Bachelard and the notion of “Phenomenotechnique””, 321.

104 Rheinberger, “Gaston Bachelard and the notion of “Phenomenotechnique””, 321.

105 “The position of the scientific object, actually the object as an instructor, is much more complex, much more engaged. It claims a solidarity between method and experience. One must therefore know the method of knowing in order to grasp the object to be known, that is, in the realm of methodologically valued knowledge, that object which is capable of transforming the method of knowing”.—Gaston Bachelard in Rheinberger, “Gaston Bachelard and the notion of “Phenomenotechnique””, 321.

106 Figure 1.2 visualises how I have mapped the material-discursive circuit onto my Lieder practice of Hensel’s songs. This adaptation is also informed by de Assis and Macarthur’s positioning of songs as “things”, as discussed earlier. As the multi-directional arrowheads indicate, the influence of each element circulates across all aspects of the circuit. As such, the practitioner’s technique, the epistemic possibilities of the technology (score) and the song as thing are constantly in flux. In every repetition is an inherent difference.

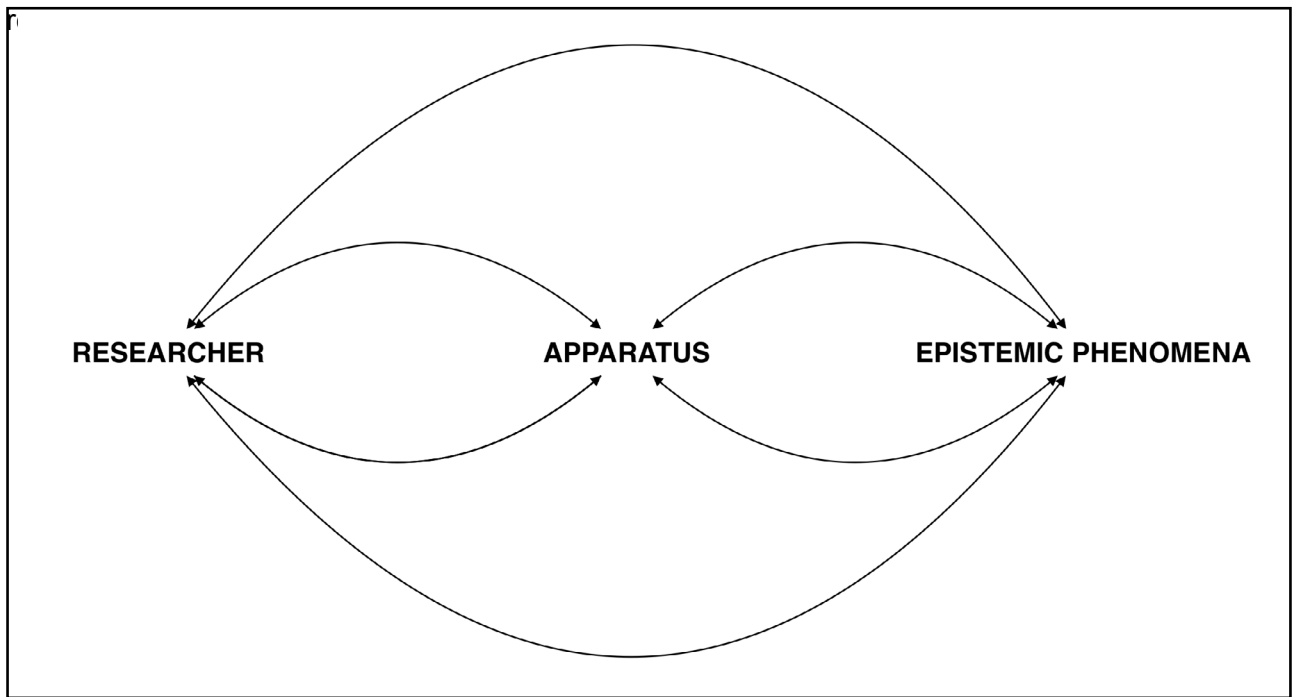


Figure 1.1: A visual interpretation of the material-discursive circuit identified in phenomenotechnique.

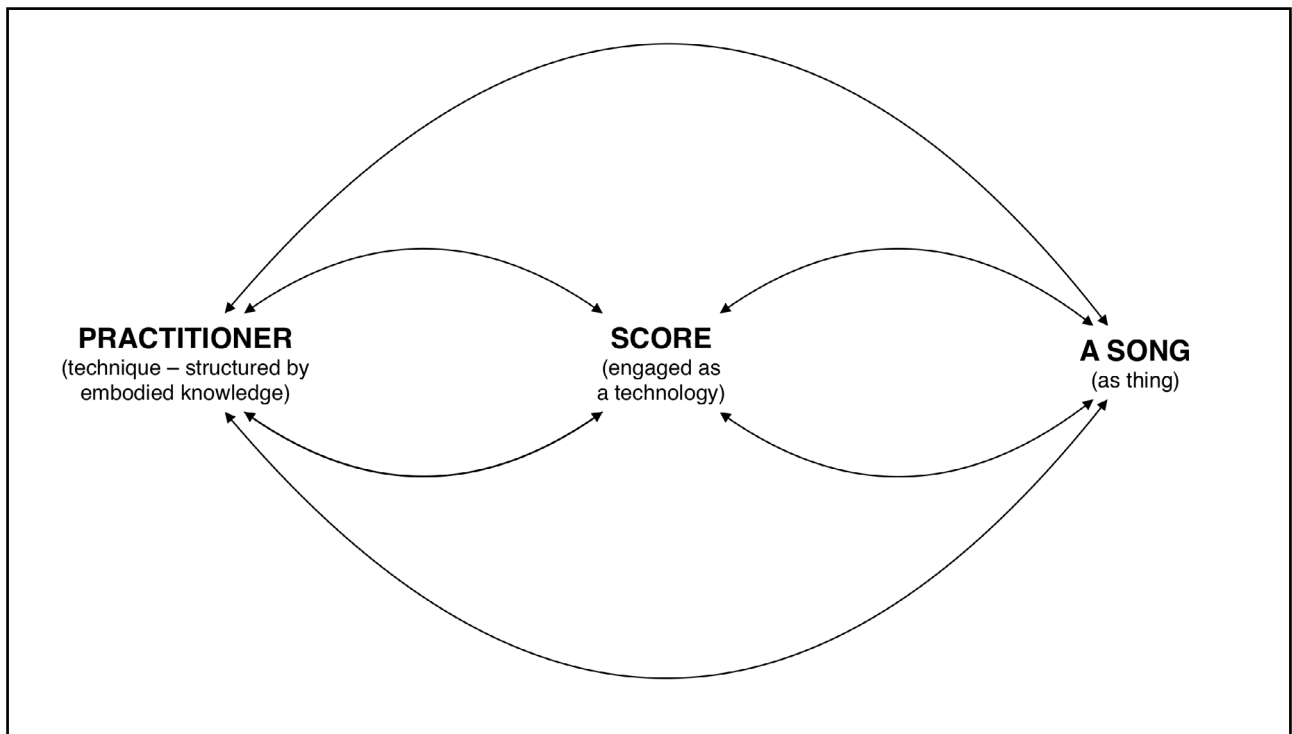


Figure 1.2: A visual interpretation of how this material-discursive circuit is mapped onto my Lieder practice.

This approach offers a deeper understanding of the contexts and dynamics of epistemic ruptures, as well as the practices and artworks from which they emerge. Such accounts are valuable because they are at once precise, replicable and defined, while also articulating the singular, essential phenomena unique to each instance of practice. Spatz illustrates this through a detailed technical analysis of a minute-long excerpt from their ‘Seated Martial Dance’, showing how initially distinct technical flows subconsciously converge, giving rise to a new technique.¹⁰⁷

Spatz’s proposal for phenomenotechnical writing has been instrumental in helping me strike a balance in articulating my research findings. However, it is important to note that this approach was not specifically designed with music research in mind. While Spatz has engaged with musical practices to some extent—particularly through their Deleuzian exploration of song in relation to Judaica—their primary disciplinary grounding remains in theatre-making.¹⁰⁸ Violinist Mira Benjamin, who also served as a supervisor for this project, has played a key role in extending Spatz’s ideas into musical practice, particularly through her collaborations with composer Scott McLaughlin and pianist Zubin Kanga.¹⁰⁹ Spatz’s notion of technique was central to Benjamin’s PhD research on microtonality and intonation in her violin practice of experimental music.¹¹⁰ More recently, Benjamin has focused her attention on the development of Spatz’s proposals for phenomenotechnical writing and video annotation as tools for articulating the findings of music research—an avenue that we have been exploring together.¹¹¹

Emily Worthington is another scholar who has contributed to the development of Spatz’s embodied research methodologies within music research, particularly through her project *Baermann’s Body*.¹¹² In this work, Worthington investigates how embodied research might be mobilised within the field of historically informed performance (HIP), identifying this as a way to explore the embodiments of historical practitioners—through their treatises and the reconstruction or preservation of their instrumental technologies. The aims of Worthington’s approach diverge from mine: my concern is not to make claims about Fanny’s embodied experience of her songs, nor to

107 Ben Spatz, “Colors Like Knives”, 201–203.

108 Ben Spatz, *Race and the Forms of Knowledge: Technique, Identity and Place in Artistic Research* (Northwestern University Press, 2024).

109 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CGrni9ozwOg>

110 Benjamin’s use of graphic representations to ground abstract concepts has been particularly influential in shaping my approach to this work. Mira Benjamin, “Thick Relationality: Microtonality and the Technique of Intonation in 21st Century String Performance”. (PhD diss., University of Huddersfield, 2019).

111 Mira Benjamin, “Phenomenotechnics of experimental music”, audiovisual presentation, RMA Music & Philosophy Study Group 9th Conference, King’s College London, July 11–12, 2024. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J55oNSM6B3A>

112 <https://baermannsbody.york.ac.uk/>

trace her technical gestures in my own. Rather, I engage embodied research as a contemporary practitioner, using it to articulate the knowledges that emerge through my practical encounters with her songs—knowledges that, in turn, contribute to the wider body of understanding surrounding her *Lieder*.

1.7 Phenomenotechnical writing in this research

I employ phenomenotechnical writing within the case studies of this research narrative, complemented by a combination of graphics, diagrams, annotated videos and audio materials (see linked '**PTQ**' folders throughout).¹¹³ These multimodal texts articulate my technical responses to Hensel's scores—understood here as technical objects in my practice (as illustrated in [Figure 1.2](#)). Crucially, I identify these technical responses as the means by which another singer-researcher may cross the threshold between what is and what is not yet known.¹¹⁴

To strike the aforementioned balance of tone, I write with two research audiences in mind. Firstly, those whose practices align with my own—such as singers or pianists—who can trace the technical pathways that structure moments of epistemic rupture (the 'disciplinary we').¹¹⁵ Secondly, a broader research audience with sufficient related experience who, although practical exploration may not be accessible to them, can engage with the technical discoveries through the multimodal nature of the writing.¹¹⁶

The phenomenotechnical description shown in [Figure 1.3](#) is taken from [Case Study 1: 'Die sanften Tage'](#), in a section dedicated to the embodied implications of melisma for the expressive palette of the *Lied*. This description pertains to an instance of practice lasting only a few seconds, peeling back the layers of technique that support the panicked quality of the portrayed character cultivated in my singing. Several quick-fire technical negotiations are identified which, when realised in practice, shape the embodied qualities of this expressive moment. This example demonstrates the distinct quality of language within the phenomenotechnical mode well, which combines precise mechanical descriptions with evocative imaginative stimuli that specify difficult-to-quantify parameters in transferable techniques.

¹¹³ This multimodal approach includes, but is not limited to, the use of videos. I have found that in the context of music research, audio recordings can be just as effective for phenomenotechnical accounts.

¹¹⁴ Ben Spatz, *Making a laboratory: Dynamic configurations with transversal video* (punctum books, 2020), 92–93.

¹¹⁵ Spatz, "Colors Like Knives", 213–214; Michael Schwab, "Experiment! Towards an Artistic Epistemology", *Journal of Visual Art Practice* 14, no. 2 (2015): 120–31.

¹¹⁶ Spatz, "Colors Like Knives", 207.

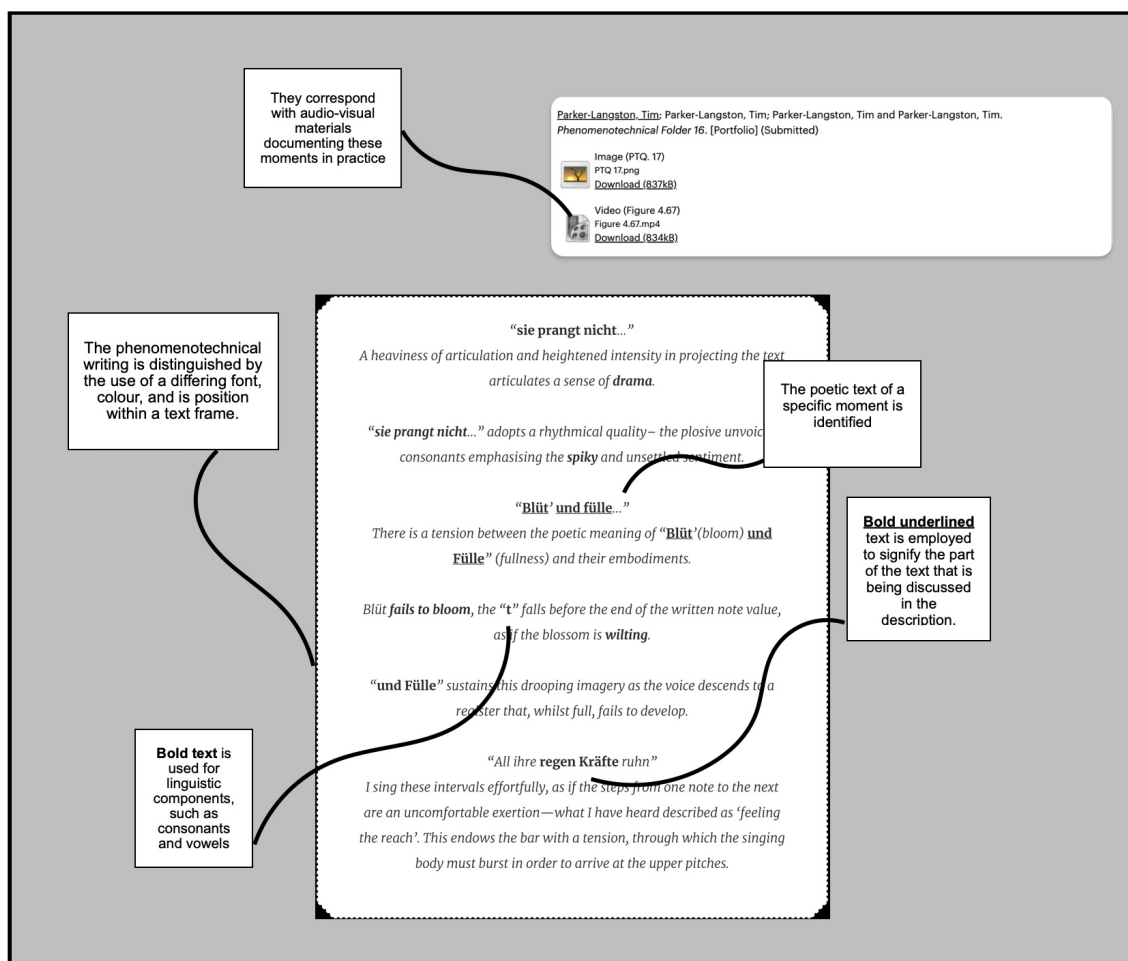


Figure 1.3: An example of a phenomenotechnical description, taken from Case Study 1: 'Die sanften Tage' (in [Phenomenotechnical Folder 16](#)).

Spatz's notion of technique, when applied to my Lieder practice, accounts for the sedimented layers of embodied knowledge that structure my embodiment of Hensel's Lieder—not only the mechanical negotiations of my vocal apparatus but also the musical, poetic and dramatic processes—both imagined and enacted—alongside my piano playing, collaboration with other musicians, score editing, recordings, reflective thinking and the recursive feedback loop that weaves these elements together.¹¹⁷ In alignment with Spatz's view that "thought and language are fully embodied processes", my understanding of technique extends beyond the "merely mechanical" to encompass the full range of interpretative and imaginative processes that support expressive performance.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Spatz, What a Body Can Do, 11.

¹¹⁸ Spatz, What a Body Can Do, 29.

In shaping this understanding, I have found Courtney Reed's work in vocal phenomenology particularly valuable. Reed distinguishes between sound production and vocal shaping, emphasising the role of musical imagery and metaphor in developing technique—especially given the limited physical feedback available in vocal practice.¹¹⁹ Her framing of metaphor as central to the language of singing informs my phenomenotechnical writing, which integrates metaphorical but transferable technical language without leaning too heavily on first-person phenomenological accounts, as Spatz cautions against.^{120 121}

Additionally, I have been guided in my written accounts of embodied practice by Jessica Aszodi's advocacy of honesty.¹²² In this spirit, the language I engage often mirrors that which would be used in a practice or pedagogical space, avoiding academic jargon and '-ologies' where possible without sacrificing conceptual clarity.

Most importantly, phenomenotechnical writing provides a means of fulfilling feminist musicology's call for new tools, creating space for embodied, intuitive knowledge within academic work. It contributes to the disciplinary shift towards reparative practices by using lived, technical experiences to uncover and highlight voices that have long been overlooked.

1.8 Reparative practice research

In this opening chapter, I have outlined how this project aspires to realise feminist musicology's calls for methodological newness by devising a project within the discipline of practice research. In doing so have gone some way to answering research question three: *How can practice research be engaged as a feminist methodology and how can this be applied to the investigation of underrepresented historical repertoires of Western classical music?*

By engaging with Cusick's vision of a "reparative musicology", I propose a replicable methodology for practice-based advocacy focused on underrepresented repertoires. This approach amplifies marginalised works while allowing space for the unpredictable nature of artistic practice to guide emergent research—a particularly important feature when the specific nature of the

119 Reed, "Imagining & Sensing", 27, 90–91.

120 Reed, "Imagining & Sensing", 34–39.

121 Spatz, "Colors like knives", 207.

122 Jessica Aszodi, "Voicing Subjectivity: Artistic Research in the Realization of New Vocal Music", (PhD diss., Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, 2016), 26.

underrepresented materials is not yet fully known. Through reflecting on the embodied experiences of singing and playing Fanny Hensel's songs, I will continue to present interactive case studies that fold back layers of unseen meaning, revealing the distinct qualities of Hensel's Lieder in practice. These case studies incorporate phenomenotechnical writings that communicate with other practitioners in the language of technique, allowing the claims and experiences articulate in introducing these songs to be critically scrutinised.

In the spirit of a meaningful methodological reorientation, the next section of this thesis turns to face Fanny Hensel as a practitioner, considering her life in musical practice and tracing the connections and distinctions between her work and my own Lieder practice. This sets the stage for an in-depth exploration of her songs 'Die sanften Tage', 'Der Blumenstrauß' and 'Umsonst'.

1.9 Reflexivity statement

There are a number of inherent tensions in the positioning of reparative practice research as presented in this work. Perhaps the most pressing of these pertains to my position as a white male scholar engaging with the life and work of a historical female creative and with the feminist discourse that remains entangled with her study and legacy. This tension was a paramount consideration as I set out on this project.

As identified in [1.2](#), the origins of Hensel studies are inextricably linked with feminist musicology. However, following the debates between scholars in the field and in the wake of watershed publications such as Hellwig-Unruh's thematic catalogue, these discussions have, to a degree, become secondary to more traditional musicological engagements.

As I embarked on a project principally concerned with the continued underrepresentation of Fanny's Lieder in performance and publishing, I felt it was essential to re-engage with these themes. In doing so, I came to see that the core arguments of the feminist scholars who first advocated for Fanny's work remain prescient and that to bypass them—especially considering my own position and endeavours—was not only undesirable but would risk undermining the very reparative intentions that underpin this research. My work in positioning the material presented here reached beyond disciplinary boundaries and I spent time considering my place within feminist scholarship. I was particularly guided by Sara Ahmed's advice to develop "feminist tendencies" and

to “stay a student”.¹²³ I present these ideas humbly and as part of an ongoing journey of discovery. A second tension may be seen in my decision to develop Cusick’s idea of “reparative musicology” in relation to a musician who is arguably one of the best-known women composers of the Western classical tradition. As identified throughout this thesis, it is precisely the dissonance between Fanny Hensel’s renown and the continued absence of much of her repertoire from publishing and performance that has called for a reparative approach. By engaging with a female musician whose status has ensured relatively accessible materials and scholarly tools, I have been able to develop a method that I hope might also be adapted to the study of lesser-known musicians.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the broader context of my position as a performer, particularly in light of my critiques of canonic ideals within both performance and musicology. Performing Fanny’s music has been a liberating and enriching experience—one that has reshaped my understanding of Lieder practice. There is a particular freedom in engaging with music unburdened by a dominant performance tradition and this has encouraged me to revisit the core repertoire with a renewed sense of playfulness and exploration. In doing so, I find myself better attuned to the genre’s original spirit of self-development and the social parameters within which it was first composed.

Despite recent developments in my own practice, it would be naive to suggest that my approach to Lieder has not been shaped by these influences. My practice will likely continue to reflect tendencies rooted in prescriptive and often restrictive attitudes and tastes. While it is my intention to challenge these frameworks—and to distance myself from them—it is not my aim to undermine other modes of musicological inquiry. Rather, I hope to open new avenues of knowledge through performance perspectives, which remain, in many respects, underexploited.

¹²³ Sara Ahmed, *Living a Feminist Life* (Duke University Press, 2017,) 11, 38.

2. Two Practitioners

In the previous chapter, I outlined how feminist musicology and practice-based research are mutually applied to establish reparative practice research. The frameworks challenge restrictive epistemological and political paradigms and advocate for a renewed understanding of composers and their artistic works. Decentering the composer-as-author, this study reinterprets Fanny Hensel's song compositions within a post-textual context, where musical practice serves as the primary methodological tool. Reflective of this shift away from the traditional authorial model, from hereon I refer to Fanny Hensel simply as Fanny.

This chapter further articulates a reimagined relationship between composer and performer, conceiving of both as practitioners. The discussion begins by considering Macarthur's proposals of how the composer is "recomposed".¹²⁴ By engaging with historical sources, the story of Fanny's life in practice is retold through all known instances of her musical practice. This facilitates speculation about the dimensions and techniques of Fanny's Lieder practice. It is proposed that the technical object engaged by Fanny in her compositional practice was poetry—revealing a theoretical point of intersection between her practice and mine when I sing her songs.

The chapter finishes by specifying the dimensions of my own Lieder practice and descriptions of how this practice is engaged for this project.

2.1 Fanny

In her feminist critique of Western classical music, Sally Macarthur examined how the composer herself is composed. She demonstrates how textual paradigms not only effect the valuation of musical works but have also "nourished an image of the composer as autonomous, heroic creator", which she states "is a model of authorship that is elitist and hierarchical: it places enormous store in the composer's intentions, which exert significant control over the music".¹²⁵ This synonymity between composer and composition fosters an "illusion that the personality traits of the composer constitute the music".¹²⁶ In a sense, the composer herself ceases to be a person with agency and is

¹²⁴ Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 62.

¹²⁵ Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 43–44.

¹²⁶ Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 51.

instead objectified, judged according to musical structure—“the imagined site of abstract meaning in the musical work”.¹²⁷

“Utilising the theoretical tools of poststructuralism”, Macarthur explores “how different conceptions of authorship potentially dissolve this image of the composer”.¹²⁸ She proposes a Deleuzian definition of musical works as “assemblages of content and expression where there are no clear distinctions between material and semiotic, text and content, animate and inanimate”.¹²⁹

‘As an assemblage, a [musical work] has only itself, in connection with other assemblages and in relation to other bodies without organs. We will never ask what a [musical work] means, as a signified or signifier; we will not look for anything to understand in it. We will ask what it functions with, in connection with what other things it does or does not transmit intensities, in which other multiplicities its own are inserted and metamorphosed and with what bodies without organs it makes its own converge. A [musical work] exists only through the outside and on the inside. A [musical work] is a little machine’.¹³⁰

This post-representative ontology renders a reduction of the composer to the parameters of the score impossible. Instead, the composer is “recomposed”:

“...in the Deleuzian model the composer is involved in an ongoing process in which she/he is being assembled and de-assembled, composed and decomposed. It is a process into which women composers could be inserted as active participants”.¹³¹

It is in this spirit that I turn to face Fanny the practitioner. This does not mean turning away from Fanny as a composer, but rather redefining that label to signify a woman with a composition practice—one aspect of her broader life in music. This chapter examines these elements which might previously have been conceived of as separate to her compositions, as I consider the dimensions of Fanny’s *life in practice*.

2.2 A life in practice

Fanny’s musical life was experientially rich, encompassing diverse practices that, alongside composition, included piano performance, conducting, curatorship and singing. Some of Fanny’s

¹²⁷ Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 50.

¹²⁸ Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 56.

¹²⁹ Threadgold in Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 59.

¹³⁰ Deleuze and Guattari in Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 59–60.

¹³¹ Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 62 [my emphasis].

early displays of virtuosity,¹³² acclaimed interactions with prominent peers,¹³³ and her contributions to the Sunday musical gatherings in the Mendelssohn home have been well documented.¹³⁴ However, the practical experiences of her musical life remain largely unexplored—a missed opportunity. Engaging with, playing and contextualising the same pieces that Fanny played offers a rare opportunity to gain deeper insights into her musical world.

Viewing Fanny's life through this lens also seems to offer a more truthful understanding of her identity as a musician. Much of her compositional work is thought to have been unrelated to publication, influenced by the dissuasions of her father and, to a degree, her brother.¹³⁵ If publication was not Fanny's primary motivation for songwriting, then her manuscripts are more fittingly conceived as outputs of a dynamic compositional practice rather than as static, fixed objects of meaning. Considering her as a practising musician as opposed to an author may also help mitigate ethical concerns surrounding new publications of her unpublished songs, about which her wishes remain unknown.¹³⁶

To illustrate Fanny's life in practice, I have drawn on the biographies of Larry R. Todd and Sebastian Hensel, compiling all documented instances of her musical activities. These are presented in a table included as [Appendix C](#).¹³⁷ The information in this table has been integrated into www.henselsongsonline.org and woven throughout the resource via interactive audio features. Curated playlists highlight the music referenced in documented accounts of Fanny's performance practices, aligning with corresponding dates and *Lieder*. This approach offers fresh perspectives on the evolution of her musical voice within her lifelong songwriting practice and invites users to explore her repertoire interactively. By connecting her compositions to these satellite repertoires

132 Fanny displayed virtuosic tendencies as a young pianist, infamously performing an incredible feat of musicianship and memory when aged 13, she performed, from memory, the 24 preludes from J.S. Bach's *Well Tempered Klavier*. Todd, Fanny Hensel, 27; "Fanny and Felix performed works by Bach and Handel for Dorothea, who was dumbstruck by their "energy, skill, precision and expression". Todd, Fanny Hensel, 27; "Thus at a dinner party hosted by Zelter in May 1819, guests including the philosopher Hegel and Goethe's daughter-in-law Ottilie heard the two perform duets with "unbelievable skill, precision and knowledge of art". Todd, Fanny Hensel, 32; "...but Lea informs us the *éminence grise* [Goethe also received Fanny, who "had to play a good deal of Bach to him" and indeed performed her Goethe settings with his approval". Todd, Fanny Hensel, 66.

133 These musicians included Charles Gounod, Franz Liszt and Clara Schumann. Todd, Fanny Hensel, 248, 284 & 337.

134 Fanny inherited custodianship of the Sunday music from her mother, reigniting the events herself in 1831. In this environment Fanny played the roles of curator, host, conductor, musical director and performer. Todd, Fanny Hensel, 150, 166–168, 171, 174–5, 200, 217–219, 224, 233, 241, 244–245, 247–248, 250, 253 284–285, 299–303, 314, 334–335, 337–338 and 334.

135 Note that Wilson Kimber states this facet of Fanny's life has been overstated in the work of other scholars. Wilson Kimber, "The "Suppression" of Fanny Mendelssohn", 115–116.

136 "The fact that Hensel did not prepare the bulk of her music for publication (and, indeed, may never have considered that it might be made widely available) makes publishing these works at all problematic—and this, in turn, makes the idea of a complete works edition fraught with difficulties". Stokes, Fanny Hensel: A Research and Information Guide, 21.

137 Todd, Fanny Hensel, 2010.

and situating them within the context of her lived musical experiences, this project opens novel pathways for engaging with Fanny's musical world.

Among the most intriguing avenues to emerge from this exploration is the consideration of how Fanny's frequent engagement with the music of J.S. Bach and G.F. Handel may have shaped the technical aspects of her compositional practice, particularly in her *Lieder*. This theme is explored in the recording *Hensel: Lieder*, as will be elaborated in [Chapter 7: Reparative Acts: Resources](#). Johann Sebastian Bach's music and legacy were woven into the fabric of the Mendelssohn family.¹³⁸ The siblings' appreciation for Bach was inherited from their maternal line and Fanny performed Bach's keyboard music from an early age.¹³⁹ This reverence was reinforced in the education provided by Karl Friedrich Zelter, which included the study of Bachian harmony and counterpoint.

While Bach's influence on Fanny's musical upbringing is well known, the collated instances of practice also highlights an equally significant role of the composer G.F. Handel in her artistic life.¹⁴⁰ As early as 1816, Fanny is recorded performing Handel's keyboard music (though the specific pieces are unspecified) for Dorothea Schlegel. Notably, Handel's *Te Deum* was included in the final performance documented before Fanny's untimely death.¹⁴¹ Fanny also seems to have shared Felix's interest for Handel's vocal music, immersing herself in oratorios such as *Solomon*, *Samson*, *Judas Maccabaeus* and *Messiah*.¹⁴² This prominence of Bach and Handel in Fanny's life is further underscored in [Figure 2.1](#), which compiles all documented instances of her engagement with these composers.¹⁴³

138 Todd, Fanny Hensel, 27, 65, 125, 134–135, 174–175, 190, 200, 218, 285 and 338.

139 Fanny's mother Lea was a passionate advocate of the composer and made sure that her children were aware of his music—just days after her birth, she infamously prophesied that her first-born daughter had “Bach fugal fingers”. Lea had in turn inherited the legacy from her mother Bella Salomon and Aunt Sarah Levy, the latter of whom was the custodian of many Bach manuscripts and another leading voice insisting that the Mendelssohn children were educated in the music of Bach. Todd, Fanny Hensel, 15.

140 Hellmuth Christian Wolff, Ernest Sanders and Luise Eitel, “Mendelssohn and Handel”, *The Musical Quarterly* 45, no. 2 (1959): 175–90.

141 Todd, Fanny Hensel, 338.

142 Todd, Fanny Hensel, 190, 200, 218 and 285.

143 Todd, Fanny Hensel, 2010.

Date	Composer(s)	Repertoire	Practice (s)
Not specified	Bach; Handel	<i>Unspecified</i>	Piano
1818	Bach	<i>Preludes from Well-Tempered Clavier (Vol. 1)</i>	Piano
September 1822	Bach	<i>Bach motets</i>	Listening/singing?
1822?	Bach	<i>Bach</i>	Piano
1823	Bach	<i>Bach Fugues and 'Bachian passacailias'</i>	Piano
1823, November 23	Bach	<i>Unspecified</i>	Piano
Dec 3, 23	Bach	<i>Concerto in D Minor</i>	Piano
October 1825	Bach	<i>Bach fugue, pastoral and fantasia</i>	Piano
Winter 1827	Bach	<i>St. Matthew Passion</i>	Singing
April 1829	Handel	<i>Unspecified aria</i>	Song accompaniment
March 1833	Bach	<i>Fanny portrays J.S. Bach in a masquerade</i>	Acting
1st September 1833	Bach	<i>Concerto in D minor BWV 1052</i>	Piano
1834	Handel	<i>Acis and Galatea</i>	Conducting, piano
May 1835	Handel	<i>Samson</i>	Piano/directing, singing (?)
1835 June 7	Handel	<i>Solomon</i>	Singing and scorereading
November 1835	Bach	<i>BWV 105 and BWV 8</i>	
July 1837	Bach and Handel	<i>Unspecified</i>	Piano
September 1837	Handel	<i>Judas Maccabaeus; Samson</i>	Song accompaniment
November 1837	Bach	<i>Unspecified</i>	Piano
November 1837	Bach	<i>Cantatas (unspecified)</i>	Scorereading
Italy Trip 1840	Bach	<i>Concerto in D Minor;</i>	Piano
1842	Handel	<i>Unspecified aria from Messiah.</i>	Directing and piano
April 1843	Bach	<i>Unspecified</i>	Piano
March-July 1846	Bach	<i>Gottes Zeit ist die allerbeste Zeit; Triple keyboard concerto (BWV 1063)</i>	
Apr 11, 47	Handel	<i>Te Deum.</i>	

Figure 2.1: Fanny's known practice of Bach and Handel extracted from the larger dataset included as Appendix E.

2.3 Fanny's Lieder practice

This exploration of Fanny's life in practice sheds new light on the dimensions of her Lieder practice. The data demonstrates that, while the practices of opera, oratorio and choral music are frequently documented, surprisingly little is known about Fanny's practice of Lieder—despite it being her most prolific compositional genre. Existing scholarship has examined the contexts of her compositional practice, including her proximity to the Second Berlin School through her tutelage under Karl

Friedrich Zelter.¹⁴⁴ However, details of her Lieder practice as a performer are less widely discussed.

To build a picture of these more obscured dimensions of Fanny's Lieder practice, I have examined the handful of instances that reference Lieder, forming hypotheses about who sang Fanny's songs, if and when they were performed and the dimensions of her Lieder practice beyond composition. Though documentation is fragmentary, there is evidence to suggest that Fanny's Lieder were performed by musicians other than herself. For instance, in a letter to Karl Klingemann dated July 15, 1836, in which a disheartened Fanny references that her sister Rebecka had stopped singing her songs—leaving them “unheeded and unknown”.¹⁴⁵

“Once a year, perhaps, someone will copy a piece of mine, or ask me to play something special—certainly not oftener; and now that Rebecka has left off singing, my songs lie unheeded and unknown”.¹⁴⁶

Fanny's complaint suggests a Lieder practice within the Mendelssohn family home, where performances of her songs had been frequent enough that their cessation was deemed noteworthy. Knowing that Fanny often performed with her siblings Felix and Paul,¹⁴⁷ it is possible to imagine that this singing of Fanny's songs by Rebecka was a shared sisterly practice.¹⁴⁸ The exact context—whether as part of Sunday music gatherings, or a private domestic practice remains unknown.

144 Renate Hellwig-Unruh's comprehensive catalogue of Fanny Hensel's works, which serves as the foundation for the song resources compiled for this project, documents nearly 500 compositions, with almost half being songs for solo voice and piano. Renate Hellwig-Unruh, *Fanny Hensel Geb. Mendelssohn Bartholdy: Thematisches Verzeichnis Der Kompositionen* (Vol. 1016: Kunzelmann, 2000); Jonathan Impett, “sound work: composition as critical technical practice”, *Sound Work* (2021): 1–384; Spearheaded by the poet Wolfgang von Goethe, a close friend of Zelter, the Second Berlin School was characterized by its reverence for poetic text. Composers were expected to support the “authentic” poetic meaning and qualities of the language without disrupting or altering them. As a result, Lieder of this style exhibit simple, accompaniment-like piano parts, singable melodies and an absence of overt expression or dramatic contrasts. Instead, the style celebrates subtlety and nuance, with Zelter's songs exemplifying this approach.; Jennifer Ronyak's comprehensive review of the socio-political context of the Lied in early-nineteenth century Berlin offers valuable insight into the backdrop of Fanny's engagement with Lieder practice. Ronyak's research debunks derogatory perceptions of the so-called Second Berlin School, which was headed by Fanny's principal composition tutor, Zelter and demonstrates the nuanced aesthetics for musico-poetic dynamics in German song in Berlin at this time. The study presents Berlin as a distinct musical environment for the Lied, contrasting with the Viennese practices reflected in the songs of Franz Schubert. Ronyak details the intimate Kreise of Berlin and reveals the degree to which the nuance of song composition was reflected in the singing practices of the time. Although Ronyak's research brings the musical environment of Berlin to life, the scant documentation from domestic musical environments means scholars can only hypothesize that Fanny may have attended the Kreise or participated in the practice of Lied with proponents of the Second Berlin School.

145 Todd, *Fanny Hensel*, 206.

146 *Fanny Hensel* in Todd, *Fanny Hensel*, 206.

147 Todd, *Fanny Hensel*, 92, 125, 134–135, 166–168, 174–175, 190, 206, 218, 224, 233, 248, 262, 273, 285, 302–303, 336–337 and 344.

148 However, it is also possible to hypothesize that Rebecka herself may have had a solo singing and playing practice, akin to many women of the era.

It can be presumed that Fanny participated in a regular Lieder practice with Therese Schlesinger beginning in October 1820, when Fanny joined the Singakademie choir under Zelter's directorship. Fanny befriended the soprano during this time and Therese became a regular guest at the Mendelssohn home.¹⁴⁹ It is plausible that she was the intended performer for many of Fanny's Lieder during these domestic gatherings. The advent of this friendship coincides with the emergence of new qualities in Fanny's songwriting—qualities perhaps prompted and shaped by the distinctive characteristics of Therese's singing. For example, Fanny's compositions for vocal parts began to exhibit a heightened expressive and melodic dimension.

There are also numerous accounts of Fanny accompanying singers outside of the family circle in opera and song repertoire, including several professionals.¹⁵⁰ In some instances, the named repertoire includes Fanny's own Lieder—such as 'Die Spinnerin', which is referenced on two occasions.¹⁵¹ This might suggest that Fanny was in the habit of sharing her songs through practice with guests she hosted and in the homes she visited.

It is also possible that Fanny played and sang Lieder alone. Though there is no evidence to suggest this was an exhibited practice, there is some documentation of Fanny doing so privately. In July 1841, Fanny wrote enthusiastically to Felix, telling him that she was enamoured with Josephine Lang's Lieder, which upon encountering she spent days singing and playing.

"I like them so much that I play them and play them again—I can't tear myself away-and then finally: put them aside. I've been singing them all day so that I'll remember them."¹⁵²

There is no mention of a collaborating singer, but given the widespread practice for self-accompanied singing by women in domestic spaces during this era, it is feasible that Fanny is referring here to a solo, private practice. Another instance in which Fanny might have engaged in a similar practice is her daily musical exchanges with Clara Schumann during February and March of 1837.¹⁵³ It is also plausible that Fanny employed a self-accompanied practice when devising her song settings—singing and playing as a part of her composition technique.¹⁵⁴ This seems likely,

¹⁴⁹ Todd, Fanny Hensel, 50.

¹⁵⁰ For example, Pauline Decker, Amalie Hähnel, Marie Recio and Bertha Bruns. Todd, Fanny Hensel, 169, 175–175, 290 and 336–367.

¹⁵¹ Todd, Fanny Hensel, 92 and 174–175.

¹⁵² Todd, Fanny Hensel, 273.

¹⁵³ Todd, Fanny Hensel, 337.

¹⁵⁴ Todd, Fanny Hensel, 273.

as there are numerous documented instances of her playing through Felix's works to assess and provide feedback.¹⁵⁵

This hypothesised practice raises questions about the extent of Fanny's singing practice. While this was not her central focus, there are several instances where we hear of Fanny singing. Todd describes performances of Felix's early operatic experiments and Liederspiel, suggesting it is likely that Fanny sang some of the roles.¹⁵⁶ Fanny was also an alto in the Singakademie choir, where she sang alongside her brother in a choir directed by Zelter.¹⁵⁷

Fanny's most significant singing experience was perhaps her involvement in the 1827 revival of J.S. Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, in which she sang the alto part in this demanding double-choir work. The only other reference to Fanny's singing is from a performance of Felix's *St. Paul* on May 22nd, 1836. In this concert, Fanny made an impromptu solo vocal performance when one of the soloists lost the pitch in a recitative. She boldly stepped out from the choir of 364 singers and sang the correct notes and then returned to her place among the group.¹⁵⁸

While there is no documentation of Fanny singing Lieder, these records affirm that she was a serviceable and confident singer. That said, her involvement in opera performances and sacred vocal works in her Sunday Music concerts—as a pianist or director—suggests she preferred collaboration with singers rather than taking on vocal roles herself.

When attempting to pinpoint the dimensions of Fanny's Lieder practice, it is interesting to consider the spaces in which this practice was conducted. Fanny's musical life was largely confined to the "private" sphere, with only two public performances during her lifetime. This implies that all instances of her Lieder practice occurred within domestic, private settings. One of the principal spaces of Fanny's practice was Nr.3 Leipzigstraße—the Mendelssohn family home—which boasted several spaces for music-making, including Fanny's beautifully equipped music room (as shown in [Figure 2.2](#)), Felix's study rooms and Rebecka's room.¹⁵⁹

155 Todd, Fanny Hensel, 37–38.

156 Fanny and Felix perform *Die Soldatenliebschaft* (an opera by Felix) for Abraham's birthday, presumed to be piano duet version. Fanny sang in the performance. Todd, Fanny Hensel, 37.

157 Todd, Fanny Hensel, 48.

158 Todd, Fanny Hensel, 204.

159 Gail S. Davidson et al., *House Proud, Nineteenth-Century Watercolor Interiors from the Thaw Collection* (New York: Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution, 2008), 69, fig. 59; 109, pl. 41.



Figure 2.2: Fanny's music room at Nr.3 Leipzigstraße, painted by Julius Edward Wilhelm Helfft (1849).

Fanny is presumed to have conducted much of her composition practice and likely hosted musical guests, such as Therese Schlesinger, her friend from the Singakademie, or the tenor Ferdinand von Worigen, in these spaces.¹⁶⁰

Although these environments demonstrate that Fanny had the essential “room of one’s own” identified by Virginia Woolf, these images do not align with a conception of domestic spaces as confined and intimate. The Gartensaal—a grand concert-hall-like space at No.3 Leipzigstraße—further distorts this picture of domesticity. On more formal occasions, such as the Sunday Music gatherings, this space could be converted by moving columns and extending out into the garden. This “domestic” space could accommodate as many as 300 attendees.¹⁶¹ Whether Fanny performed Lieder on these occasions is unknown, but if so, it was likely in the capacity of a pianist.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ Todd, Fanny Hensel, 50, 218.

¹⁶¹ Kim, Hyun Joo. “Architecture and Artistic Function: Fanny Hensel’s Uses of Different Musical Spaces.”, 197; Fanny Hensel, *Tagebücher*, H.G. Klein and R. Elvers eds. (Breitkopf & Härtel, 2002), 85.

¹⁶² In addition to the spaces within the Mendelssohn home, Fanny is known to have visited the homes of other musicians, both as a child to perform and as an adult. Todd, Fanny Hensel, 32, 65, 66, 84 and 203; She is also reported to have given regular performances while traveling in Italy, in gatherings that more closely resembled the romanticised image of artistic salons, unlike the grander Sunday Music events. Todd, Fanny Hensel, 248.



Figure 2.3: The external border of the Gartensaal at Nr.3 Leipzigstraße.

A final speculative offering to this picture of Fanny's Lieder practice concerns the centrality of improvisation in nineteenth-century musical practice. Recent research has recognised the technique as a standard skill taught in conservatories and as a critical element of virtuoso pianists' practice. Improvisation practices of this era included spontaneously devising preludes and interludes in concert, perhaps as a means to punctuate a group of études or miscellaneous program items.¹⁶³ Given that Fanny received a similar musical education to Felix, for whom improvisation is a known facet of his technique, it is plausible that Fanny incorporated this into her own practice.¹⁶⁴

The possibilities of improvisation in Lieder performance also warrant consideration.¹⁶⁵ Improvisation technique may have shaped the vocal lines, with singers incorporating appoggiaturas and ornamentation, or Fanny might have elaborated on the written piano accompaniments in her songs. The latter may account for the sparse accompaniments in some of her early compositions

¹⁶³ Dana Gooley, *Fantasies of Improvisation: Free Playing in Nineteenth-Century Music* (Oxford University Press, 2018); Shane Levesque "Functions and Performance Practice of Improvised Nineteenth-Century Piano Preludes". *Dutch journal of music theory* 13, no. 1 (2008); Mo-Ah Kim, "Towards a Revival of Lost Art: Clara Wieck Schumann's Preluding and Selected 20th Century Pianist-Composers' Approaches to Preluding". (PhD diss., University of Cincinnati, 2019), ProQuest 27692272.

¹⁶⁴ Siegwart Reichwald, *Mendelssohn in Performance* (Indiana University Press, 2008), 35; R. Larry Todd, *Mendelssohn: A Life in Music* (Oxford University Press, 2003).

¹⁶⁵ Loges and Tunbridge eds., *German Song Onstage*, 48–49.

and the lack of notated introductions in many of her songs.¹⁶⁶ This concept has been effectively explored in Kateryna Kasper and Dmitry Ablogin recording *Ein süßes Deingedenken*, which features songs by Fanny and Felix, and this approach merits further investigation.¹⁶⁷

2.4 Techniques of Fanny's Lieder practice

By engaging with historical sources, I have hypothesised dimensions of Fanny's Lieder practice beyond composing. I will now reintegrate the dimensions of her composition practice as I consider the techniques that may have structured her Lieder practice as a whole.¹⁶⁸

Fanny's piano practice

An obvious, but clearly important, part of Fanny's Lieder practice—in both performance and compositional contexts.¹⁶⁹

Fanny's singing practice

Fanny's ability to sing, though less likely to have been a central performance practice, was most likely a technique within her Lieder practice. This may have served to prepare and learn songs for collaboration, to sing songs for herself and potentially others, or as a way to explore melody and vocal writing.

Fanny's composition practice

In a post-textual framework, Fanny's composition is defined not by the quantity or characteristics of her outputs, but as a practice itself.¹⁷⁰ Fanny's conception of songwriting, along with the physical alignment of her body in each iteration of this practice, would have been constantly evolving. This would have shaped her approaches to performing and composing practices of Lieder.

166 Several songs without written introductions are feature of *Hensel: Lieder*. See: '[Wenn ich ihn nur habe](#)', H-U 17, '[Die Schönheit nicht, o Mädchen](#)', H-U 10, '[Der Abendstern](#)', H-U 70, '[An die Entfernte](#)', H-U 105, '[Auf der Wanderung](#)', H-U 111, '[Mond](#)', H-U 154, '[Sehnsucht](#)', H-U 192, '[Maigesang](#)', H-U 192, '[An die Ruhe](#)', H-U 201, '[Sehnsucht](#)', H-U 203, '[Sehnsucht](#)', H-U 205, '[Umsonst](#)', H-U 206, '[Suleika](#)', H-U 210, '[Sehnsucht](#)', H-U 217, '[In die Ferne](#)', H-U 271, '[Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh](#)', H-U 285, '[Ach, die Augen sind es wieder](#)', H-U 325, '[Traurige Wege](#)', H-U 380, '[Dämmerung senkte sich von oben](#)', H-U 392 and '[Mutter, o sing mich zur Ruh](#)', H-U 400.

167 Kateryna Kasper & Dmitry Ablogin, "Ein süßes Deingedenken: Lieder von Fanny and Felix Mendelssohn", (RYXart, 2022).

168 I cite Spatz here to restate my alignment with their conception of embodied practice being structured by knowledge in the form of technique. Spatz, *What a Body Can Do*, 2015.

169 See [Figure 2.1](#).

170 Alison Isadora, "Performing the Practice of Composition" in *Hamburg: The International Conference on Technologies for Music Notation and Representation*, 2020.

Collaborative practices: social and exhibiting.

Fanny's Lieder practice involved collaborative work in both social and performance settings.¹⁷¹

Collaboration brings its own set of technical considerations, which in collaborative song practice includes processes such as: active listening, leading, following, discussion, shared reflection, flexibility in technical responses, aligned breathing, dynamic balancing, rubato and rhythmic alignment.

Poetry into song

A significant technique of Fanny's Lieder practice was the musical engagement of poetic texts.

Alongside the compositional processes self-evident in setting a poem to song (melodic, harmonic, structural choices etc.), this area of technique could have included: gathering and selecting poetry, reading poetry aloud (a common practice in salons at this time),¹⁷² revision of the poetic text (an occurrence encountered in a number of her Lieder),¹⁷³ imaginative engagement of the text, transcribing the text, translation of text (in language other than German) and singing the poetic text.

Solo singing and piano Lieder practice

As speculated, a solo singing and playing practice could have been part of Fanny's broader Lieder practice. This would involve distinct technical elements, as encountered in my own explorations of this practice. These include novel approaches to breathing, where the breathing of singing changes the dynamic between phrasing and breath in the piano playing. Additionally, the synchronicity of voice and hands may foster greater flexibility in tempo and texture. Such practice may also have been more relaxed, offering space for the exploration of new repertoire or the development of compositional ideas.

Improvisation

Improvisation may have been a component of Fanny's Lieder practice, serving various functions such as composition, preluding, interluding, vocal ornamentation, or enriching the texture of her earlier, more sparsely scored songs during practice. Although the extent of her use of improvisation

¹⁷¹ See [Figure 2.1](#).

¹⁷² Jennifer Ronyak, *Intimacy, Performance and the Lied in the Early Nineteenth Century* (Indiana University Press, 2019), 54–60.

¹⁷³ For example, the song 'Traum', in which Fanny reorders Joseph Eichendorff's poem 'Erinnerung'. She begins her setting with the second part of the poem, to which she adds the second of three stanzas from the first part. This song is included on the recording *Hensel: Lieder* (see [7. Reparative Acts: Resources](#)).

remains uncertain, this customary practice of the period could have introduced a compelling dimension to her musical work.

2.5 Poetry as a technical object in Fanny's practice

When examining the scope of Fanny's Lieder practice, I have contemplated how this practice might be understood through the lens of phenomenotechnique. When positioning my own practice, I considered how to map my practice of Fanny's Lieder onto a material-discursive circuit, as as described by Bachelard (see [Figure 1.2](#)).¹⁷⁴

In the context of Fanny's Lieder practice, this material-discursive circuit could be reimagined in a number of ways, depending on the perceived technical object. The most compelling conception reveals a point of intersection between my practice and Fanny's. In this permutation, Fanny (the practitioner) engages the poem (the technical object) and encounters an entanglement of epistemic phenomena—a song as "thing".¹⁷⁵

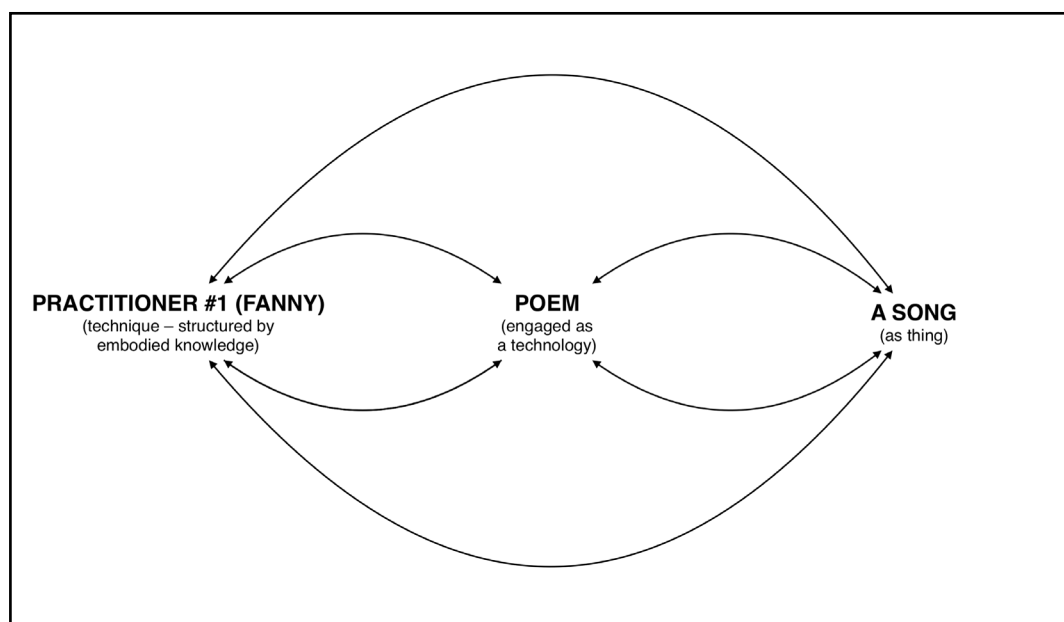


Figure 2.4: A mapping of Fanny's Lieder composition practice onto Bachelard's notion of the material-discursive circuit.

This conceives of Fanny engaging her chosen poem as a technical object that possesses its own agencies, unpredictability and alignments. The embodied techniques of Fanny's Lieder practice—composition, piano playing and singing—structure this technical engagement, during

¹⁷⁴ Rheinberger, "Gaston Bachelard and the Notion of "Phenomenotechnique"", 315.

¹⁷⁵ Ingold, "Bringing Things Back to Life", 4.

which an entanglement of epistemic phenomena (a song) emerges. Within this framework, Fanny's autograph score may be viewed as a documentation of the *song-as-thing* encountered within her practice.

This interpretation identifies a point of intersection between the material-discursive circuit of my practice and that of Fanny's. The documentation of the epistemic phenomena that emerged in her practice—the score—is engaged in my practice as the technical object. Through this engagement, the score becomes a medium through which I encounter the epistemic phenomena of Fanny's practice, extending the material-discursive circuit and forging a dialogue across time.

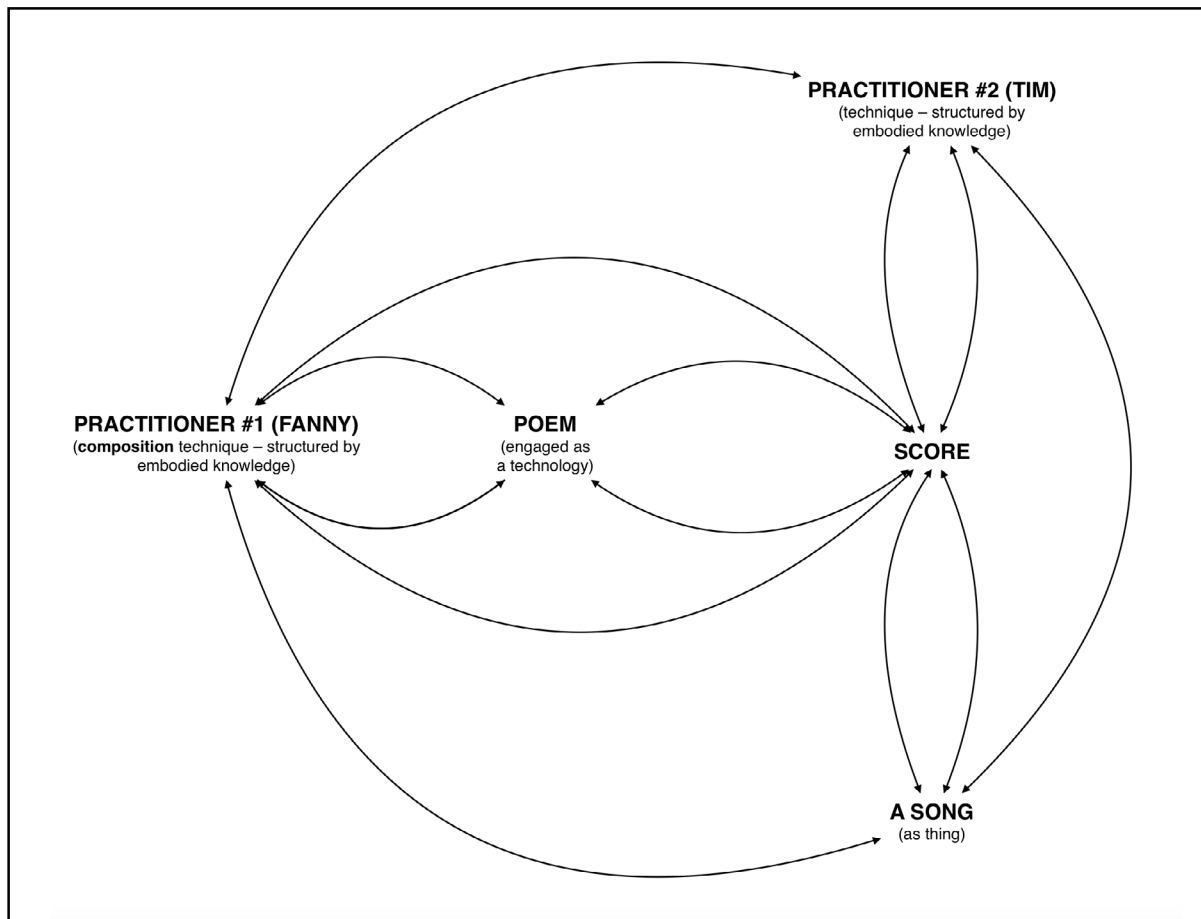
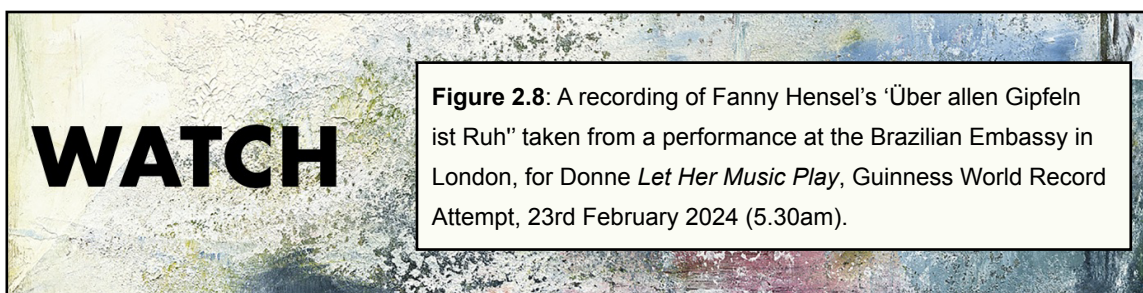
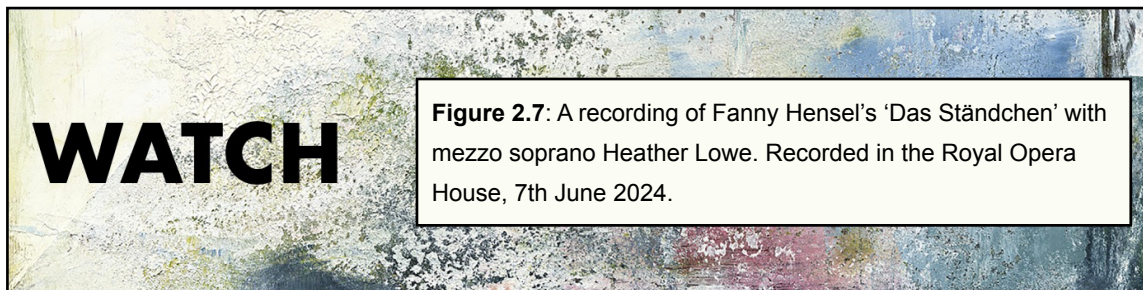
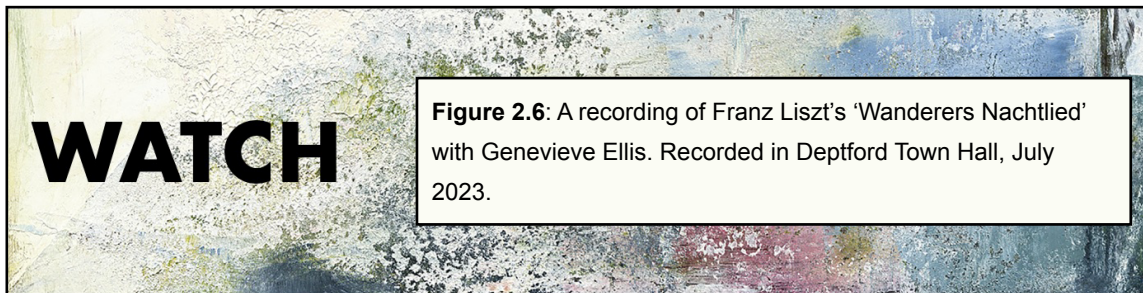


Figure 2.5: An illustration of how conceptually mine and Fanny's material-discursive circuits intersected in the score (engaged as a technology in my practice and reflecting a documentation of the emergent epistemic phenomena of her compositional practice, engaging with the poem as technical object).

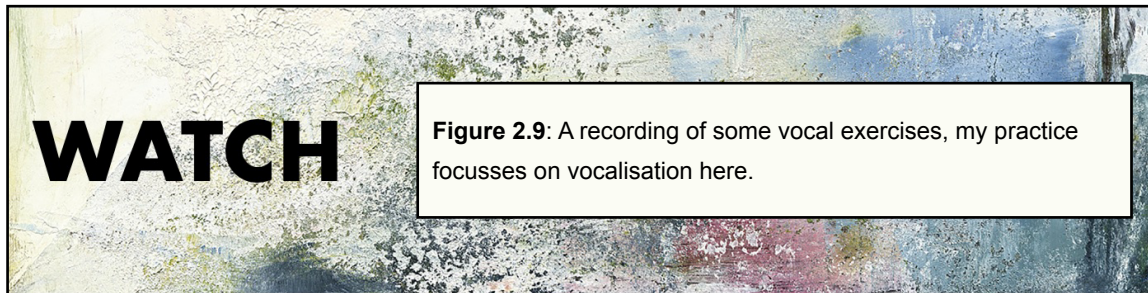
2.6 My Lieder practice

Having detailed the known and speculative dimensions of Fanny's Lieder practice—and how these practices become intertwined within a phenomenotechnical perspective—I will now proceed to specify my own Lieder practice, which, like Fanny's, comprises several constituent elements. These include singing (alone and in collaboration), piano playing (by myself for study and accompanying singers), a solo singing and playing practice and my editing practice. From these constituent practices, a list of techniques has been extracted and specified.



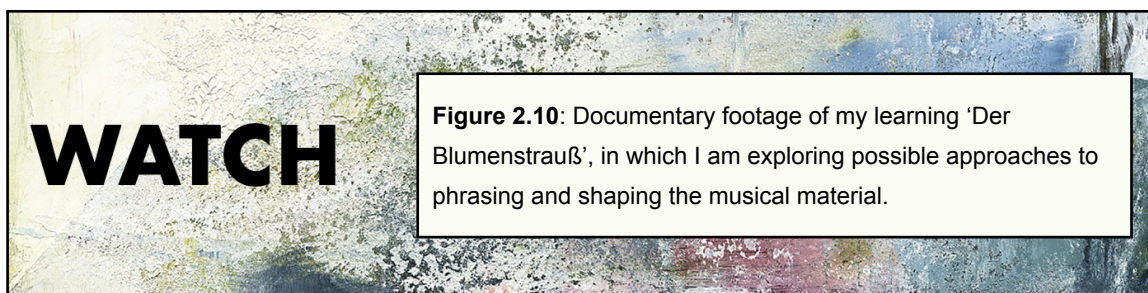
Vocalising

Underpinning my singing practice is the technique of vocalisation—perhaps the clearest example aligning with the term’s typical usage. I have been trained in the Western classical operatic tradition, where vocalising involves the use of clear, distinct vowels, negotiated in response to factors such as register, pitch, note duration, dynamics, and emotion. An even, flexible tone is highly valued and developed through targeted vocal exercises.



Phrasing and shaping

A key technique in my Lieder practice is the negotiation and shaping of phrasing within larger musical structures. This flexible approach proved essential when engaging with the unfamiliar repertoire of Fanny’s Lieder, and the instincts cultivated through this work became a crucial facet of the practice.



Translation

As a non-German speaker, translation is an essential part of my technical toolkit when singing Lieder. This process sometimes necessitates taking poetic liberties to interpret syntactically unconventional literal translations, transforming them into an accessible and inspiring English text. This English version serves as a guide during my preparation and performance, while individual German words act as expressive signposts. I fluctuate between these languages in my internal expressive commentary when singing Lieder.

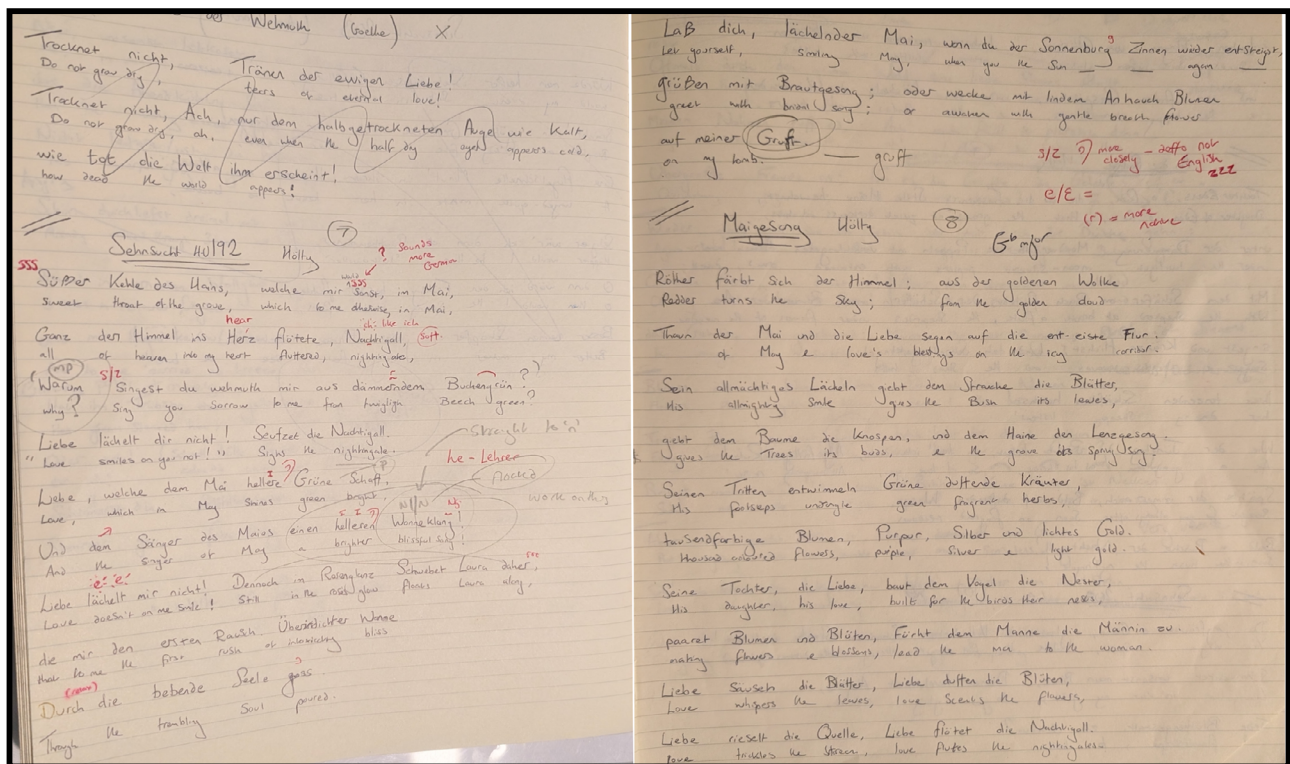


Figure 2.11: Handwritten texts and translations, with interpretative markings, prepared in learning the song.

Vocal colouring

The technique of vocal and emotional colouring, while supported by the technique of vocalising, is sufficiently complex to warrant its own category. It involves identifying an artistic impulse to communicate an emotional, musical, or textual idea and then, through musical imagination, visualising the desired tonal qualities. The singer then engages the vocalising body to realise this imagined colour.

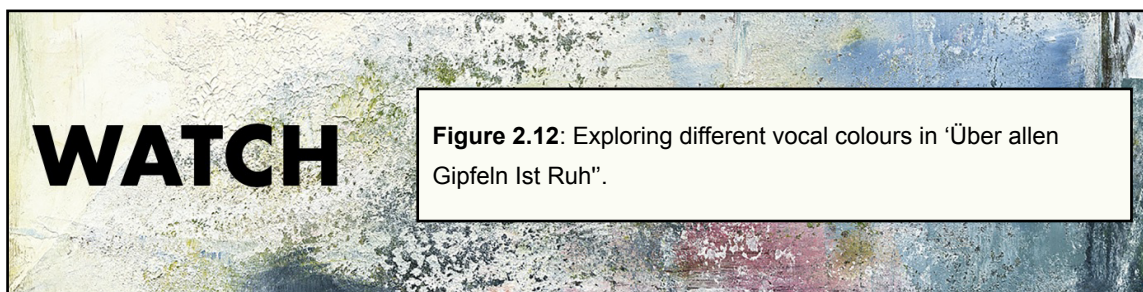
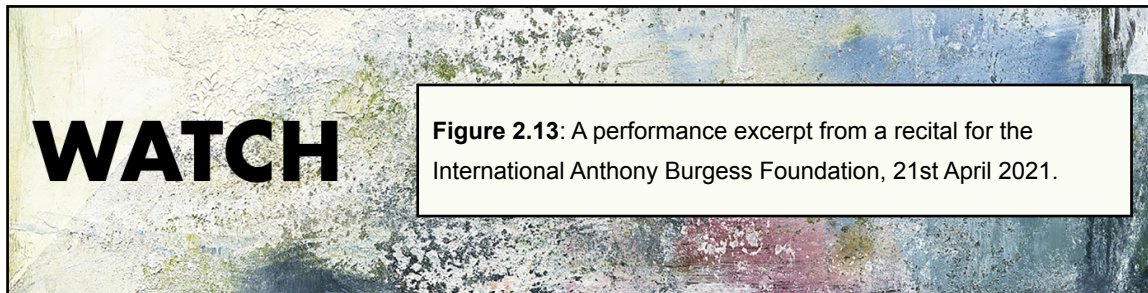


Figure 2.12: Exploring different vocal colours in ‘Über allen Gipfeln Ist Ruh’.

Acting

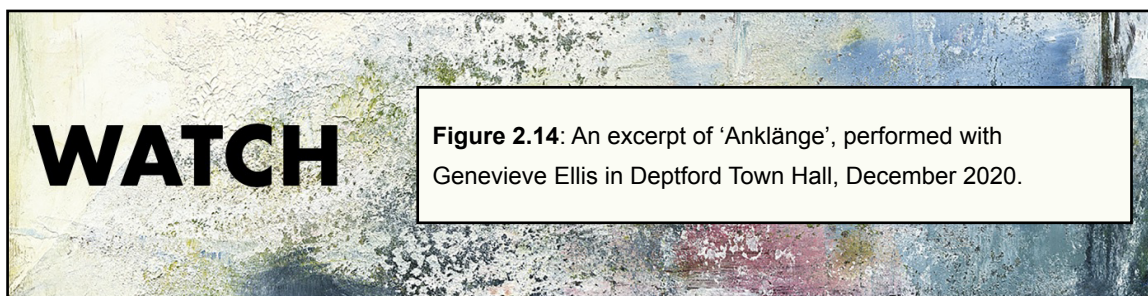
When singing Lieder, I employ acting techniques that intersect with my operatic training. In song, this approach aims to foster emotional precision and a character-like presentation. Acting

technique also shapes my interpretation and realisation of poetic texts, which in turn influences the balance of other technical elements.



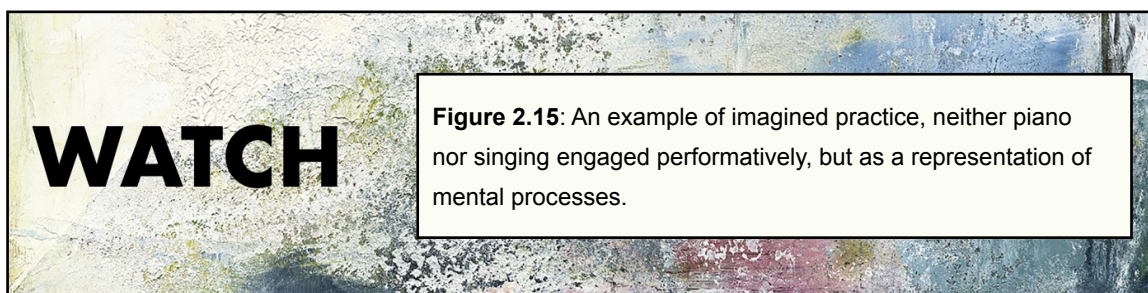
Text and music negotiations

This involves an internal narrative process, either continuous or responding to distinct moments of change. It includes technical linguistic elements in realising the text, such as the delivery and expression of consonants, syntax, and interpretive parameters.



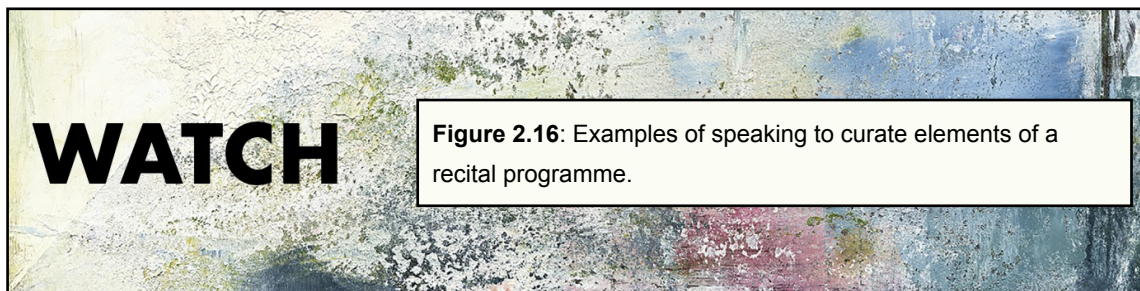
Imaginative

Imaginative processes are crucial in my Lieder practice—not only in the moment of singing, to preempt or cultivate musicotechnical responses, but as a means to rehearse in transitional spaces. I will often engage in “mental” practice, exploring the musical geography without fully engaging the physical singing or playing apparatus.



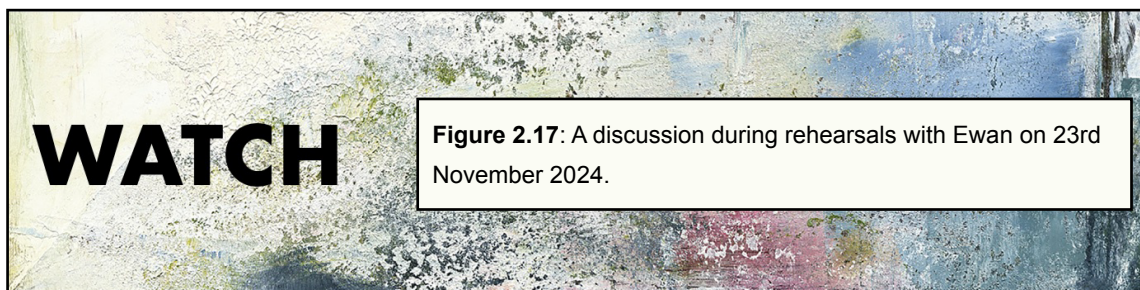
Curatorial

When planning performance projects and programmes, I incorporate curatorial techniques into my Lieder practice, carefully considering the balance, flow, and impact of my choices. This may involve writing programme notes, delivering spoken interludes during recitals, and composing CD and edition notes that contextualize moments of my practice.



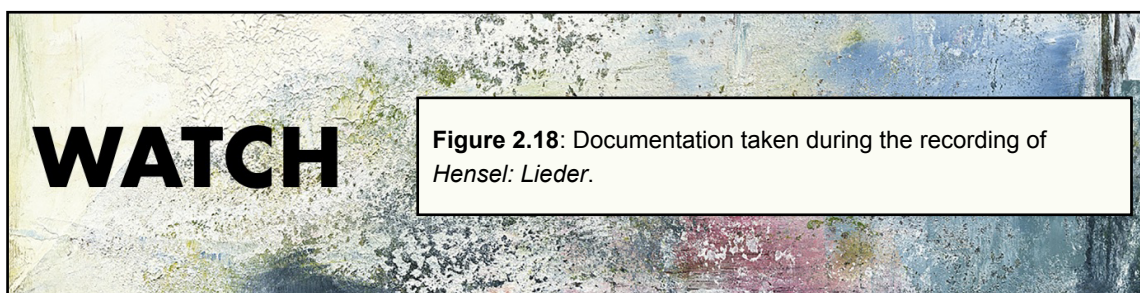
Collaborative

My Lieder practice incorporates collaborative techniques similar to those outlined in Fanny's work, extending to my piano accompaniment for other singers as well as when singing with a pianist.



Recording

Recording has been an important technique in this project. This approach involved distinct technical elements, including reflexive listening, collaboration with a producer, singing with a microphone, performing in segments, out-of-sequence song performances and pick-ups and drop-ins. As a co-producer for the CD in this project, my recording technique also extended to creative editing and mixing, facilitated through collaboration with David Jones.



Arrangement and Transposition

I frequently employ the technique of transposition to support other technical aspects of my practice. In contrast, arrangement—often taking on a compositional character—is a more creative process, which I apply particularly in instances where Fanny’s songs exhibit structural ambiguity.

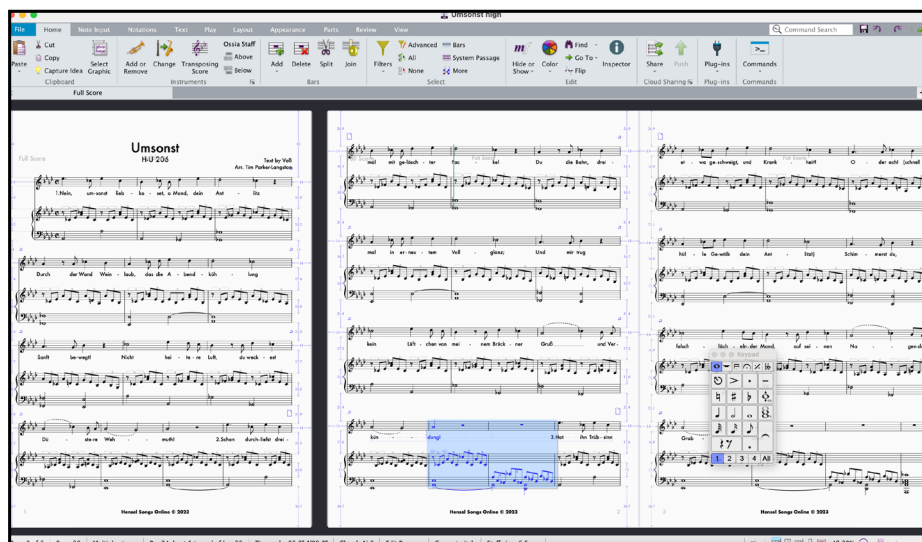


Figure 2.19: A screenshot of a live Sibelius file, engaging ‘Umsonst’ in arrangement.

2.7 My practice of Fanny’s Lieder

During this PhD, I have engaged with all **239** of Fanny Hensel’s songs for solo voice and piano through one or more facets of my Lieder practice. The depth of engagement has varied—from exploratory score study and playing and singing as part of my iterative practice-led editing, to more regular and intensive sessions preparing for recordings and performances.¹⁷⁶

80 songs have been explored in these deeper instances of practice. The audiovisual documentation of this body of practice forms the core of my submitted portfolio (multi-component) outputs. [Appendix D](#) details the eighty songs and the constituent practices engaged for each.

2.8 Two Practitioners

This chapter has demonstrated how, within a post-textual ontology—as advocated by the foundational frameworks of reparative practice research—the composer is recomposed. Fanny Hensel—the composer—who is in danger of being defined by her musical works, becomes

¹⁷⁶ <https://www.henselsongsonline.org>

Fanny—the practitioner—a paradigm shift that illuminates the many vibrant elements of her life in practice.

A review of documented instances of Fanny's activities beyond composition has informed hypotheses about the dimensions of her Lieder practice, while also highlighting the importance of composers such as Bach and Handel to her work. This practice has been explored through a phenomenotechnical lens, examining its likely constituent elements and illustrating how engaging with the material-discursive circuit of her Lieder composition—where the poem functions as a technical object—reveals a meaningful point of intersection between her practice and my own.

3. Case Studies: Music and Words

Having outlined the methodology, contexts and reasons for engaging Fanny's Lieder in reparative practice research, this narrative continues with three case studies, each of which focusses on a previously unpublished and unrecorded song. At first, the selected songs—'Die sanften Tage', 'Der Blumenstrauß' and 'Umsonst'—might suggest compositional simplicity. Yet in practice, they reveal a distinctly expressive quality that I consider a hallmark of Fanny's songwriting—a trait underexplored due to the limited attention performers and scholars have given to nearly half of her song repertoire.

Across the three case studies, I examine how the interpolation of words and music in my singing body gives rise to distinct epistemic phenomena. Each study reveals how I engage the technical object—the score—in my embodied practice and the resulting moments of epistemic rupture.¹⁷⁷ Central to this investigation is the way poetic text shapes my technical responses to Fanny's settings—both at the micro level, where text and music interact in specific moments and at the macro level, through larger-scale poetic devices such as structure and narrative.

These case studies aim to address research questions one and two of this project:

- 1) How can singing Hensel's songs contribute to scholarship around her music and Lieder in general?**
- 2) How does foregrounding the knowledge gained through embodied singing practice reorient discourse on the musicopoetic relationships in Hensel's Lieder?**

In addition to these technical and interpretive dimensions, each case study introduces its respective song in broader terms, highlighting the unique qualities that distinguish the work. Collectively, chapters 4—6 exhibit how embodied practice has revealed new layers of meaning and significance in Fanny's Lieder, which challenge long-standing assumptions of simplicity in her compositions.

¹⁷⁷ Michael Schwab, "Experiment! Towards an artistic epistemology", *Journal of Visual Art Practice* 14, vol 2 (2015): 1–12.

3.1 Positioning

The case studies are **not**...

- advocating for any specific interpretation of the chosen songs;
- making claims about Fanny's compositional intentions in her setting of the poetry;
- proposing that technique be adopted as a parameter of, or alternative to analysis;
- proposing that my technical responses and the emergent epistemic phenomena were considered by Fanny in her compositional practice;
- attempting to offer an exhaustive account of each song or their emergent qualities;¹⁷⁸
- qualifying the value of Fanny's songs by demonstrating them as compositionally complex;
- an attempt to justify portfolio as a research output.

The case studies **are**...

- structured to reveal the emergent knowledges in practice and specify the patterns of technique that scaffold them;
- examining the embodied interpolation of music and words, transcending a cerebral engagement only;
- designed to scrutinise and elaborate on my technical responses to the score as a technology within a material-discursive circuit;
- specifying the extent of knowledge that goes into the practice of these songs, which could be dismissed as epistemically shallow;
- “inviting [the reader] into the gathering” of the song as “a place where several goings on become entwined”;¹⁷⁹
- demonstrating that a notion of compositional complexity is irrelevant, as embodiment is inherently complex;
- specifying the epistemic qualities and patterns of technique that went into its creation;
- demonstrating that by engaging songs in practice, meaning and depth will emerge, irrespective of aesthetic considerations—there will be a technical response, which will reveal new things about a “song”.

178 “To observe a thing is not to be locked out but to be invited into the gathering”. It is within this spirit that I embark on these case studies. Tim Ingold. “Bringing Things to Life: Creative Entanglements in a World of Materials”, *Realities, Working Papers # 15* (2010): 4.

179 Ingold, “Bringing Things to Life”, 4.

3.2 Music and words

In the establishment of reparative practice research, I observed imbalances in intellectual status within both the Lieder domain and academic discourse.¹⁸⁰ Pianists and musicologists often command higher authority, supported by score-based and text-analytical methods.¹⁸¹ These approaches, rooted in a composer-as-author ontology, centre on textual analysis of the musical score as the primary tool, brought into dialogue with the poetic text to infer compositional intent and prescribe performance practices.¹⁸²

By adopting the post-textual ontology proposed in [Chapter 2: Two Practitioners](#),¹⁸³ these hierarchical epistemologies of music and text are subverted. Rather than centring textual analysis, the dynamic between music and words is reimagined through the act of performance.¹⁸⁴ This shift elevates text-music interaction from the theoretical into the realm of embodied practice, where meaning transforms in and through performance.

As the case studies demonstrate, this reimagined approach proves particularly beneficial for Fanny's songs. While 'Die sanften Tage', 'Der Blumenstrauß' and 'Umsonst' may initially appear simple or less compositionally sophisticated than later works, embodied practice reveals a depth and richness that challenges such perceptions. By researching these songs through the act of singing, new dimensions of meaning and technical response emerge—insights that may prompt future scholars to revisit works previously overlooked for their apparent lack of sophistication.

3.3 Music and words in Lieder practice

Words are a central consideration in Lieder practice. The poetic text in a song inspires a physical, emotional and dramatic realignment of the singing body, which is never exactly replicated. Words inform narrative arcs, character profiles, emotional landscapes and hidden meanings. Each word possesses the potential to inspire a thought, feeling, or association that is singular to the speaker

180 Graham Johnson, "Foreword: Susan Youens: The Ivory Tower and the Stairway to Paradise", in *The Lied at the Crossroads of Performance and Musicology*, eds. Benjamin Binder and Jennifer Ronyak (Cambridge University Press, 2024), xvii.

181 Johnson, "Foreword: Susan Youens: The Ivory Tower and the Stairway to Paradise", xix–xxii.

182 Brian W. Draper, "Text-Painting and Musical Style in the Lieder of Fanny Hensel" (Masters diss., University of Oregon, 2012); Robert Spillman, "Performing Lieder: The Mysterious Mix" in *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Rufus Hallmark (Routledge, 2009), 427–4; Deborah Stein and Robert Spillman. *Poetry into Song: Performance and Analysis of Lieder* (Oxford University Press, 2010).

183 Sally Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First-Century Feminist Politics of Music* (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2010); Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Wesleyan University Press, 1998).

184 Small, *Musicking*, 1998.

or reader.¹⁸⁵ These variables are manifested in nuances of vocal timbre, shaping and production as the singing body reconciles its corporeality with an imagined speaker. Alongside these poetic dimensions, text also fulfils an instrumental role within the technical apparatus, due to the different sounds, shapes and spaces of vowels and consonants.¹⁸⁶

In the act of singing a song, text and music collide, prompting transformations of each unfixed expressive system as they respond to the qualities of the other.¹⁸⁷ These collisions spawn reorientations of the singing body, generating visceral, subjective and unanticipated meaning. In this sense, a song might be described as an “experimental system”, wherein these interactions reveal new possibilities of expression and interpretation.¹⁸⁸

3.4 Strophic songs in practice

Two of the three case studies focus on songs that deploy strophic form—an approach used in many of Fanny’s often-neglected *Lieder*—that is crucial for a deeper understanding of her work. Strophic form—where a single verse of music is repeated for an unfolding poetic text—is often undervalued due to the perception that repetition is simplistic.¹⁸⁹ This perception stems from a musicological tradition that remains heavily focused on music analysis and text-based interpretations of the musical work.¹⁹⁰ Within this approach, the subtleties of musicopoetic relationships are often less evident in strophic songs, as the text for several stanzas is usually printed separately from the musical score, without clear indications of how the musical setting or underlay adapts to varying poetic structures. Moreover, this view of repetition tends to overlook the

185 Shira Wolosky, *The art of poetry: How to read a poem* (Oxford University Press, 2008), 2–15.

186 Ranci re in Ben Spatz, *Making a Laboratory: Dynamic Configurations with Transversal Video* (punctum books, 2020), 127; Wolosky, *The art of poetry: How to read a poem*, 4; “...scholars writing about music and text have tended to disregard the sonic elements of poetry—the vowels and consonants, or phonemes, that makeup a poem and the various ways in which those phonemes are arranged into expressive patterns. The reasons for this are many and varied, but it is the consequences that interest me even more and, conversely, the possibilities that are opened up if we pay careful attention to how a poem sings in its own right and how its music interacts with the music of song”. Stephen Rodgers, “Song and the Music of Poetry”, *Music Analysis* 36, no. 3 (2017): 316; “Certain sounds tend to be associated with specific emotional qualities. Phonetic symbolism suggests that there is an inherent connection between the sound of a word and its perceived emotional tone”. David Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge University Press, 1997) 162; “The shape of the vocal tract, which varies with different vowels, has a major influence on the acoustic qualities of the voice. Different vowel shapes can emphasize certain frequencies, which in turn affect the emotional impact of the sound”. Johan Sundberg, *The Science of the Singing Voice* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1987), 116.

187 Annekatrin Kessler and Klaus Puhl, “Subjectivity, emotion and meaning in music perception” in *Proceedings of the Conference on Interdisciplinary Musicology (CIM04)* (Graz/Austria, 2004): 16.

188 Spatz, *Making A Laboratory*, 1–36; Schwab, “Experiment! Towards an Artistic Epistemology”, 2015.

189 “Almost without exception, the songs she composed in the 1820s are simple strophic settings with subordinate piano accompaniment”. J rgen Thym, “Crosscurrents in Song: Five Distinctive Voices”, in *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*, 193.

190 “...musical structure, the imagined site of abstract meaning in the musical work”. Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First-Century Politics of Music*, 50.

potential for musical development within strophic songs—particularly when these compositions are rooted in principles reminiscent of *Lieder*’s amateur origins.¹⁹¹ As a result, many strophic *Lieder* are dismissed as lacking deeper significance before any meaningful exploration can occur.¹⁹²

Embodied practice reveals that the appearance of simplicity in strophic form songs conceals a profound epistemic complexity. This is demonstrated in the case studies of ‘*Die sanften Tage*’ and ‘*Umsonst*’, where I identify the inevitable differences in sung repetitions and challenge the notion that repetition can be exact.¹⁹³ For instance, recurring musical material, when performed, is inherently reshaped by its temporal and structural context. It is transformed by having already been heard in a previous verse and by the anticipation of its return in a new guise. Technical responses to the poetic text and its emotional shifts inspire new approaches to breath, phrasing and articulation, imbuing the musical material with fresh meaning. The sonic qualities of different words also significantly influence the acoustic dimensions of a repeated phrase. Arguably, the most profound transformations emerge from the unfolding poetic text itself, which often cultivates a narrative arc that spans the duration of the song. Each musical iteration is subtly altered in response to this evolving narrative, shaping the song’s overall trajectory and proving that repetition in strophic *Lieder* is neither neutral nor simplistic.

Experiencing strophic songs through performance offers a far richer understanding of the dynamic relationship between music and text than can be gleaned from score study alone. The case studies of ‘*Die sanften Tage*’ and ‘*Umsonst*’ specifically explore how the evolving text redefines the concept of compositional repetition, highlighting the unique qualities of embodiment that arise during moments of textual contrast and within the unfolding narrative arc.

The following case studies will explore how these reimagined approaches to text and music affect the performance and interpretation of Fanny Hensel’s songs and will elaborate on how embodied

191 Katy Hamilton, “Natalia Macfarren and the English German Lied” in *German Song Onstage*, eds. Tunbridge and Loges, 52.

192 These attitudes towards less complicated songs are reflected in Thym’s writing on Hensel, the purpose of which is ironically to laud her. He characterises the aesthetic of the Second Berlin *Lieder* School as “stylistic confines” and dismisses Fanny’s early *Lieder* in a single sentence—“Almost without exception, the songs she composed in the 1820s are simple strophic settings with subordinate piano accompaniment”. Thym, “Crosscurrents in Song: Five Distinctive Voices”, 153–185.

193 “The circular form in this case is a short repeating refrain, melodically simple by the standards of European musicology. The complexity of the singing process is then found not in extended melodic development but rather in a linear process that cuts across multiple iterations of the refrain. According to Richards, traditional (?) songs in his practice function “through repetition and the way in which the vibratory qualities of the song are affecting the doer through this repetition. The melody stays the same, but the resonance is changing, the vibratory qualities develop along with the repetition”. As Richards suggests, repetition of this kind structures embodied practice on multiple scales, from small to large”. Ben Spatz, *Blue Sky Body: Thresholds for Embodied Research*, (Routledge, 2020), 104.

practice uncovers new dimensions of meaning that extend beyond established musicological parameters.

3.5 ‘Die sanften Tage’, ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ and ‘Umsonst’.

Case study 1: ‘Die sanften Tage’

This first case study introduces ‘Die sanften Tage’, a setting of text by Ludwig Uhland from the year 1823. Written in a simple strophic form and evoking the style of the Second Berlin Lieder School, ‘Die sanften Tage’ has nonetheless stood out to me as one of Fanny’s most beautiful and expressive songs. The song’s expressive qualities are explored from an embodied perspective, revealing how seemingly innocuous melodic devices—repeated pitches, appoggiaturas and melisma—contribute to this perception. The influence of Uhland’s poetic narrative, specifically a metaphorical reading of seasonal change, is shown to be powerful in redefining the repeated musical material and inspiring an arrangement of the ambiguous autograph manuscript.

Case study 2: ‘Der Blumenstrauß’

This second case study examines another setting of a text by Uhland—‘Der Blumenstrauß’. It explores how Uhland’s evocative poem guided my technical responses to Fanny’s musical setting. This includes an examination of an iterative approach to practice that helped make sense of the opening section, as well as an investigation into how the singing body is shaped by this intensity of expression, particularly in response to Fanny’s variations of movement and texture in the piano part.

Case study 3: ‘Umsonst’

The final case study explores ‘Umsonst’, a song of only 14 bars, that nonetheless emerges as a standout within Fanny’s expansive repertoire. My technical responses to the piano and voice dynamics and register and phrase lengths are examined, before continuing to detail a speculative practice in which Voß’ complete poem was adapted to create a strophic song, despite Fanny’s autograph including only the first stanza. This was found to be an effective approach, the musical material proving flexible in adapting to the increasingly dire emotional landscape of the poetic arc.

3.6 Examples of practice

The case studies incorporate audiovisual materials as an integral part of the discourse. These instances of practice are drawn from a range of performance contexts, including live performances

with a collaborative pianist, audio recordings from the edited and mixed *Hensel: Lieder* CD and private practice sessions and rehearsals. In ‘Die sanften Tage’, excerpts are also presented from a unique performance in which I simultaneously sing and play the piano.

It is important to note that the songs manifest differently across these various performance contexts. This is particularly evident in my self-accompanied singing practice, where my vocal technique is significantly restructured as I reconcile the use of breath required for shaping phrases at the piano with that of my singing practice. As such, when discussing particular musical or expressive qualities, I reference examples from multiple settings to illustrate how these moments are nuanced by their respective environments and conditions.

3.7 A note on the documentation of practice

As outlined in [Chapter 1](#) of this research narrative, the development of a methodological course in this project was initially discovery-led. My starting point was the editing, preparation and recording of Fanny’s Lieder, before the scope of the embodied enquiries had been clearly defined. Faced with uncertainty about which aspects of practice were significant and which might be arbitrary—and accompanied by a self-consciousness in the early stages of filming private practice—I gravitated towards the familiar. Consequently, my practice of ‘Die sanften Tage’ and ‘Umsonst’ was not subjected to systematic documentation until after the recordings had already been completed.

By contrast, ‘Der Blumenstrauß’, which I engaged with later in the process, was documented with greater rigour: all practice sessions were filmed. This thorough documentation allowed for a more compelling engagement with phenomenotechnical descriptions, as it captured the precise moments when ideas first emerged or crystallised. As I reiterate my [conclusion](#) to this narrative, I recommend a rigorous and trusting approach to documentation for those adopting methodologies similar to those proposed in this project.

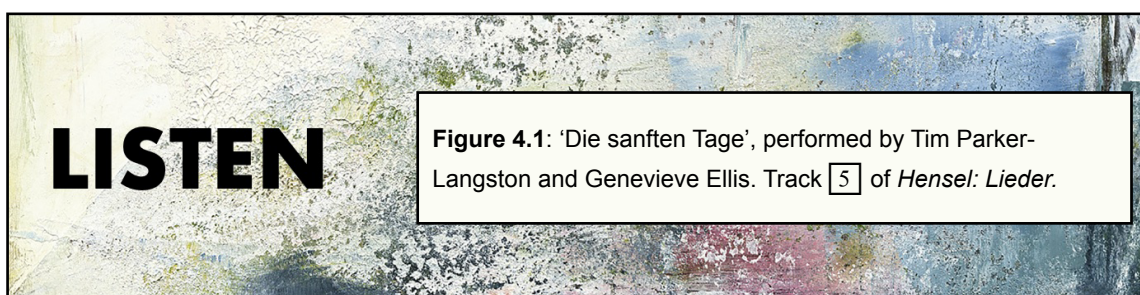
4. ‘Die sanften Tage’

‘Die sanften Tage’, H-U 75

Composed by Fanny Hensel (born Mendelssohn), 15th June 1823.

Poem written by Ludwig Uhland.

- [Score](#)
- [Autograph Manuscript](#)
- [Hensel: Lieder recording](#)



4.1 “Ich bin so hold der sanften Tagen...”

‘Die sanften Tage’ was composed by Fanny when she was seventeen years old.¹⁹⁴ The text was written by Ludwig Uhland, a lawyer and politician who was also a prolific poet, recognised as the “Head of the Swabian school”.¹⁹⁵ A thorough review contextualising Uhland’s creative environment, style and reception is found in Aisling Kenny’s thesis “Josephine Lang’s Goethe, Heine and Uhland Lieder”, which forms part of her larger study on settings of Uhland’s poetry by Josephine Lang—including a setting of ‘Die sanften Tage’.¹⁹⁶

Uhland was known “for the clarity, simplicity and objectivity of his poetic style and language”,¹⁹⁷ which has been likened to “delicate water-colours”.¹⁹⁸ His poetry has been attributed an “eminently musical quality [...] derive[d] from the folk-song idiom which he tried to emulate”,¹⁹⁹ and a long list

¹⁹⁴ Renate Hellwig-Unruh, Fanny Hensel Geb. Mendelssohn Bartholdy: Thematisches Verzeichnis Der Kompositionen (Kunzelmann, Adliswil, 2000).

¹⁹⁵ This title was given to Uhland by Köstlin, referenced by Kenny in relation to the critical engagement of this premise by Doerksen. Aisling Kenny, “Josephine Lang’s Goethe, Heine and Uhland Lieder: Contextualizing Her Contribution to Nineteenth-Century German Song”. (PhD diss., National University of Ireland Maynooth, 2010), 107.

¹⁹⁶ Kenny, “Josephine Lang’s Goethe, Heine and Uhland Lieder”, 2010.

¹⁹⁷ Kenny, “Josephine Lang’s Goethe, Heine and Uhland Lieder”, 108.

¹⁹⁸ Kenny, “Josephine Lang’s Goethe, Heine and Uhland Lieder”, 108.

¹⁹⁹ Luise Eitel Peake in “Josephine Lang’s Goethe, Heine and Uhland Lieder”, 111.

of Lieder composers who set Uhland's poems are identified by Kenny (including Fanny). Uhland's poem 'Die sanften Tage' consists of four stanzas (see [Figure 4.2](#)) and utilises "an alternating rhyming scheme: ababcbcd, which is typical of ballads".²⁰⁰

<i>Ich bin so hold den sanften Tagen, Wann in der ersten Frühlingszeit Der Himmel, blaulich aufgeschlagen, Zur Erde Glanz und Wärme streut;</i>	<i>I am so fond of these gentle days When in the first moments of springtime The sky, opening into blueness, Scatters radiance and warmth to earth;</i>
<i>Die Täler noch von Eise grauen, Der Hügel schon sich sonnig hebt; Die Mädchen sich in's Freie trauen, Der Kinder Spiel sich neu belebt.</i>	<i>The valleys are still grey with ice, The hill is now rising in the sun The young women dare to go outside The children's games are revived.</i>
<i>Dann steh' ich auf dem Berge droben Und seh' es alles, still erfreut, Die Brust von leisem Drang gehoben, Der noch zum Wunsche nicht gedeiht.</i>	<i>Then I'll stand atop the mountain, And take it all in, quietly delighted, My breast lifted by a quiet urge, Which is still and does not thrive on desire.</i>
<i>Ich bin ein Kind und mit dem Spiele Der heiteren Natur vergnügt, In ihre ruhigen Gefühle Ist ganz die Seele eingewiegt.</i>	<i>I am like a child with their games, Happy nature, The soul is completely lulled Into her calm feelings.</i>
<i>Ich bin so hold den sanften Tagen, Wann ihrer mild besonnenen Flur Gerührte Greise Abschied sagen; Dann ist die Feier der Natur.</i>	<i>I am so fond of these gentle days, When in her mildly sunny streets Touched old men say farewell; Then there is the celebration of nature.</i>
<i>Sie prangt nicht mehr mit Blüth' und Fülle, All ihre regen Kräfte ruhn, Sie sammelt sich in süße Stille, In ihre Tiefen schaut sie nun.</i>	<i>It is no longer resplendent with abundant bloom, All her active powers rest, She gathers in sweet silence, She now looks into her depths.</i>
<i>Die Seele, jüngst so hoch getragen, Sie senket ihren stolzen Flug, Sie lernt ein friedliches Entsagen, Erinnerung ist ihr genug.</i>	<i>The soul that was carried so high, Now lowers its proud flight, It learns a peaceful renunciation, Memory is enough for it.</i>
<i>Da ist mir wohl im sanften Schweigen, Das die Natur der Seele gab. Es ist mir so, als dürft' ich steigen Hinunter in mein stilles Grab.</i>	<i>There I feel good in the gentle silence, That nature gave to the soul, I feel like I can climb Down to my quiet grave.</i>

Figure 4.2: The original Uhland text, as set by Fanny Hensel in 'Die sanften Tage', with an English poetic translation by Tim Parker-Langston.

On a surface level, the text speaks to the theme of nature—voiced through an individual's revelry and appreciation for the beauty that surrounds them:

<i>Der Himmel, blaulich aufgeschlagen, Zur Erde Glanz und Wärme streut;</i>	<i>The sky, opening into blueness, Scatters radiance and warmth to earth;</i>
---	---

²⁰⁰ Kenny, "Josephine Lang's Goethe, Heine and Uhland Lieder", 164.

I conceive of the poetic arc as spanning a lifetime, beginning with the optimistic hopefulness of youth and concluding with a quiet, contented resolve to rest at the close of a life lived well:

*Die Seele, jüngst so hoch getragen,
Sie senket ihren stolzen Flug,
Sie lernt ein friedliches Entsagen,
Erinnerung ist ihr genug.*

*The soul that was carried so high,
Now lowers its proud flight,
It learns a peaceful renunciation,
Memory is enough for it.*

Kenny's work supports this reading:

In the first stanza, a feeling of unreserved contentment is communicated through the lines. The observer watches the activity before him, yet we are conscious that he is not a part of it. The juxtaposition of "Täler", "Hügel", "Mädchen" and "Kinder" suggests that man and nature are one. The second stanza is more reflective as the poet remembers what it was like to be a child. The third stanza is a contemplation of death and nature and stanza 4 is about a longing for peaceful death. Death here is contemplated as a positive experience; it is presented as just another form of "peaceful renunciation" and "gentle silence". Essentially, the poem narrates the cycle of life.²⁰¹

4.2 Fanny's setting of 'Die sanften Tage'.

Fanny sets 'Die sanften Tage' as a strophic song with four verses. Her autograph score is strikingly sparse, with just a single strophe notated and no specification of variation or approach informing the adaptation of the poetic text in the succeeding verses. The only performance direction is the tempo marking "Langsam". The simplicity and clarity of the musical notation is juxtaposed by the cramped engraving of the poem, which, perhaps having run out of room to stack the text, is squeezed in (see [Figure 4.3](#)).²⁰²

The clarity of her musical notation is reflected by Fanny's seemingly uncomplicated compositional response to the setting, which possesses qualities associated with the "Second Berlin Lieder School"—an idiom in which the original text is compositionally privileged.²⁰³ The **AB AB BC BC** structure of the poem is reflected in Fanny's symmetrical 2-bar-phrases, each of which is a variation on the opening melodic line (see [Figure 4.4](#)). The binary poetic form is demarcated by

201 Kenny, "Josephine Lang's Goethe, Heine and Uhland Lieder", 165.

202 Fanny Hensel, 27 Musikstücke (22.03.1823 bis 12.09.1823), RISM A2-Nummer: 1001000180, StaBiKat (ppn digital) [87934359](#), Mendelssohn-Archiv, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, Germany

203 Jennifer Ronyak, *Intimacy, Performance and the Lied in the Early Nineteenth Century* (Indiana University Press, 2018), 8–9, 52–53.

a modulation to the relative minor, the tonic returning for the poetic resolution at the end of each verse.

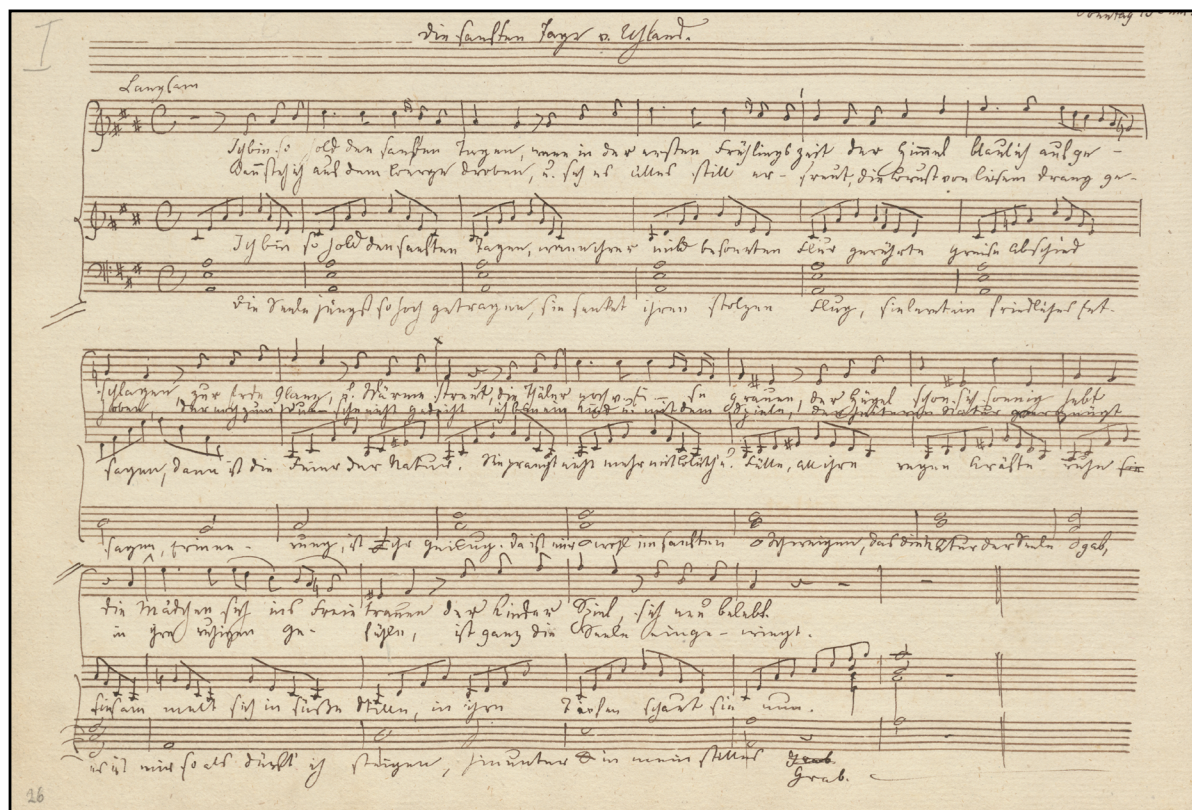


Figure 4.3: Autograph manuscript for 'Die sanften Tage', H-U 75, held in the Berlin Staatsbibliothek, Mendelssohn Archiv.

There are further fingerprints of the Second Berlin Lieder school's aesthetic in Fanny's technical response to the text. For example, the vocal part, which is comfortable in both register and range and the piano part's textural simplicity, where an unvaried broken chord arpeggiated figure lays out a harmonic foundation out for the voice. Though the "Henselian Lied" has been characterised by an "avoidance of tonic harmony", this song presents few surprise turns, with the tonic clearly established at several points of the song.²⁰⁴ A two-bar rising postlude ends the written verse, representing a singular melodic moment in the piano material (see figures 4.5 and 4.6).

²⁰⁴ "What defines the Henselian Lied? What makes her songs distinctive and unmistakably her own? What, in short, was her Lied aesthetic? An examination [...] uncovers three hallmarks of her approach to the Lied: an avoidance of tonic harmony, an emphasis on text painting and the use of the piano accompaniment as commentary. The most striking of these hallmarks—the absence of the tonic—can be traced through several songs from the middle of her output, including her setting of Goethe's "Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh" (1835)". Stephen Rodgers, "Fanny Hensel's Lied Aesthetic", *Journal of Musicological Research* 30, no. 3 (2011/07/01 2011): 175–201. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01411896.2011.588641>.

Langsam

2 bars 2 bars

Ich bin so hold den sanf - ten Ta - gen, Wann in der ers - ten Früh - lings -

Ab major: I V^7/I

5 2 bars 2 bars

- zeit Der Him - mel, blau - lich auf - ge - schla - gen, Zur Er - de Glanz und Wär - mes

[Ab major:] I I^7 IV ii vi III^7

F minor: I/V V^7

9 2 bars 2 bars

streut; Die Tä - ler noch von Ei - se - grau - en, Der Hü - gel schon sich son - nig

[F minor:] I vii^7

13 2 bars 2 bars

hebt, Die Mäd - chen sich ins Frei - e frau - en, Der Kind - er Spiel sich neu be - lebt

I III^7 VI iv ii I/V V^7 I

Ab major: ii I/V V^7 I

Figure 4.4: A simple analysis of ‘Die sanften Tage’, identifying the phrase lengths, harmonic journey and contours of each phrases’ melodic peak.

Die sanften Tagen
H-U 75

Ludwig Uhland

Langsam

Ich bin so hold den sanften Ta-gen, Wann in der ers-ten Früh-lings-zeit Der Him-mel, blau-lich auf-ge-schla-gen, Zur Er-de Glanz- und Wär-messtret; Die Tä-ler

Figure 4.5: Annotated score highlighting the piano accompaniment texture and figuration, which is consistent throughout the song.

noch von Ei-se-grau-en, Der Hü-gel schon sich son-nig hebt, Die Mäd-chen sich ins Frei-e

trau-en, Der Kind-er Spiel sich neu be-lebt.

Figure 4.6: Annotated score highlighting the piano postlude figure.

Many of my observations of Fanny's 'Die sanften Tage' are also made in Kenny's initial assessment of Lang's setting, which is strophic; devoid of dynamic or expression markings and partly owing to drawings of mountains on the page, suggests a "youthful setting".²⁰⁵ Despite the song's apparent simplicity, Kenny does not accept this conception of Lang's 'Die sanften Tage' and through

²⁰⁵ Kenny, "Josephine Lang's Goethe, Heine and Uhland Lieder", 238.

closer analysis of the compositional practice, sets out to substantiate the complexities that she perceives.²⁰⁶

In the case of Fanny's 'Die sanften Tage', I will engage an adjacent approach, rejecting a thin reading of the songs as epistemically shallow. However, eschewing an analytical approach centred on the music as signified by the score alone, I attempt to articulate the epistemic richness of the song as encountered in my Lieder practice.

'Die sanften Tage' has been stand-out song in my performances of Fanny's Lieder. There is a beauty, expressivity and emotional depth, which, in singing, reveals a multivalent complexity that is not apparent in functional or formal score analysis. In what follows, I will account for some of the layers that contribute to this impression, presenting phenomenotechnical descriptions of significant moments.²⁰⁷ Specifically, I will engage the themes of expressive voice and the dynamic between poetic narrative and musical repetitions in the strophic song.

4.3 'Die sanften Tage' in practice

'Die sanften Tage' has been one my most frequently performed songs during this project and in exploring it, I will draw upon documentation from a range of performance contexts:

Hensel: Lieder [\[link\]](#)

This performance with pianist Genevieve is featured on *Hensel: Lieder* (see [7. Reparative Acts: Resources](#)). It was recorded in sessions at the Mendelssohn Haus, Leipzig, 2–8 January 2023.

Donne's *Let Her Music Play* [\[link\]](#)

I have also engaged 'Die sanften Tage' in the development of my nascent practice of self-accompanied performance. I include a performance given for *Let Her Music Play*, a 26-hour, 18-minute and 57-second continuous live-stream concert featuring music by women and non-binary composers exclusively organised by Donne: Women in Music.²⁰⁸ This video is taken from my half-hour contribution, beginning at 5:30am in the Brazilian Embassy, London.

206 Kenny, "Josephine Lang's Goethe, Heine and Uhland Lieder", 241.

207 Ben Spatz, "Colors Like Knives: Embodied Research and Phenomenotechnique in Rite of the Butcher". *Contemporary Theatre Review* 27, no. 2 (2017): 195–215.

208 "Let Her Music Play", Donne, accessed 25th March 2025, <https://donne-uk.org/let-her-music-play/>.

Live performance PureGold [\[link\]](#)

I have also performed ‘Die sanften Tage’ in several recitals during this project. This video is an excerpt of *Wanderers Nachtlied*, a performance with Genevieve at Deptford Town Hall for PureGold 2023.

Note: On technique and technical response

Prior to the following investigation, it is important to draw attention to the use of the word *technique* and the term *technical response* as engaged here. These terms are outlined in the [introduction of this research narrative](#), but the frequency of use in the upcoming pages renders it salient to reassert my usage. When I discuss *technique* and *technical responses*, this refers to the whole apparatus engaged in my Lieder practice—all physical, mental, vocal and imaginative processes. It is not limited to the technical means of vocal production, as is the typical usage in practice spaces.

I use the term technical response to draw attention to the technical aspects I judge as crucial to access the embodied qualities of specific moments in Fanny’s song. It is through these technical responses that I trace a path from the ‘technology’ of Fanny’s score to my own music-making and the emergent knowledge.

4.4 ‘Die sanften Tage’ in embodiment

The debates around the epistemic status of performance have been signposted in [Chapter 2: Two Practitioners](#) and I have aligned myself with those advocating for the integration of performers’ specialist perspectives and embodied knowledges in developing a more porous and representative musicology.²⁰⁹ ‘Die sanften Tage’ offers a compelling example of how this scholarly reorientation can benefit the study of music that could, in a score-orientated methodology, appear to lack depth.

From the first time I practised ‘Die sanften Tage’, the expressive qualities of the song struck me as something special, but why, I could not yet articulate. Over time, this initial “thin” appreciation has given way to a “thick” and nuanced understanding, achieved through a layered, embodied process of experimentation, reflection, musicking and repetition.²¹⁰ In what follows, I unfold some of these

209 Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Wesleyan University Press, 1998); Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, “Classical music as Enforced Utopia”, *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education* 15, no. 3-4 (2016): 325–36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474022216647706>; Mine Doğan-Özkan, “Senses and Sensibility: The Performer’s Intentions between the Page and the Stage”, *Rivista di Analisi e Teoria Musicale*: XXVII, 1 (2021): 23–68.

210 Joseph G Ponterotto, “Brief Note on the Origins, Evolution and Meaning of the Qualitative Research Concept Thick Description”, *The qualitative report* 11, no. 3 (2006): 538–49.

layers by analysing my embodied interactions with Fanny's musical materials in performance, through which a deeply expressive and complex song is encountered. By scrutinising my technical responses to the output of Fanny's composition practice—the score—I trace the patterns of technique that have granted me access to my perspectives.²¹¹

This discourse engages transmodal representations, including graphics, audio and video recordings and phenomenotechnical writing. In places, the language engaged is less academic in tone and I employ a language of technique, one that can be meaningfully engaged by other Lieder singers.²¹²

The exploration of 'Die sanften Tage' in practice focuses on two overarching themes. Firstly, it examines the tacit qualities of the expressive voice, to which I first responded when playing the song. I demonstrate how these qualities are heightened by the embodied expressive dimensions of my technical responses to three aspects of the melodic material: repeated notes, appoggiaturas and melismas. Secondly, it explores the transformative role of the unfolding poetic text on the repeating musical material of the composed strophe.

4.5 Expressive voice

When playing through Fanny's collected Lieder for the creation of my edition, some of the unpublished songs stood out as particularly special from the offset. 'Die sanften Tage' was one such example. Though I could only offer a "thin" description of the song as being "very expressive", each time I engaged with it in practice, I felt that there was a distinct quality that emerged when the Lied was played and sung.

Over time, as I have performed, recorded, edited and shared 'Die sanften Tage', what was once a vague "thin" description has become a "thick" understanding of the song as a living, breathing "thing". My instincts for its expressive potential have proven well-founded and the response to the song by audience, critics and collaborative musicians has been similar to my own.

In my experience of the song in singing, I have come to appreciate an openness, vulnerability and earnestness in the expressive voice. These qualities are not encountered cerebrally; rather, they

²¹¹ Mira Benjamin, "Thick Relationality: Microtonality and the Technique of Intonation in 21st Century String Performance". (PhD diss., University of Huddersfield, 2019), 111.

²¹² Spatz, "Colors Like Knives", 214.

are instinctive and physical understandings developed through embodiment. The vocal lines feel like expressions of my emotional self, deepening and growing more nuanced with each singing.

A reflection on this practice has led me to identify distinct technical responses to three specific aspects of Fanny's vocal lines: repeated pitches, appoggiaturas and melisma. Though commonplace in much vocal writing these devices—as they appear in 'Die sanften Tage'—coalesce in my singing body, culminating in a unique expression that, for me, defines the song.

I will now examine each of the three elements in isolation, before demonstrating how this accumulation is manifested.

4.6 Repeated pitches

Five of the eight phrases in Fanny's strophe contain a sequence of three repeated pitches, which fall in the middle of the melodic line. These repeated pitches are the first of three aspects of the melodic material where my technical responses challenge analytical paradigms and contribute to a thicker appreciation of the song. An analysis of 'Die sanften Tage' that privileges the parameters of pitch, rhythm and form,²¹³ identifies a simple, symmetric and somewhat predictable compositional response to Uhland's text (see [Figure 4.4](#)).

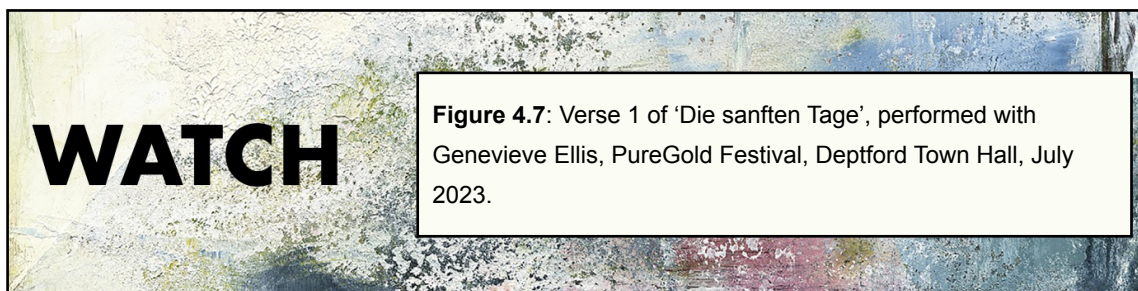
Like the poem, Fanny's strophe engages binary form. The A section consists of four melodic statements (mirroring the poem's **abab** section). These phrases are defined by a rising sequence that develops across the first three phrases, with each peak falling in the middle of the melodic line. Each phrase ascends a step higher (^3–^4–^5), until the fourth phrase, where the melody descends again to resolve in the relative minor (^4–^3).

The B section follows almost exactly the same form, except for an arpeggiated diminished chord sung in bar 12. Where the descending final phrase of the A section led to a modulation, the ascent in the B section continues (^3–^4–^5–^6), followed by a gently descent to the tonal centre (^5–^4–^3–^2–^1).

The repeated pitch series, which I identify as central to the expressive character of the melodic material, are not highlighted as significant in this analysis. In fact, because melodic contour is

213 Nicholas Cook, *A Guide to Musical Analysis* (Oxford University Press, 1994), 9.

often represented by scale degree, these moments are presented as static. As I will show, this interpretation does not hold.



4.7 Singing repeated pitches

In a sung phrase, no note is neutral. Each utterance plays a role in determining a musical unfolding.²¹⁴ Therefore, repeated pitches are no less ‘melodic’ than those which rise or fall in pitch. They are not neutral, but active and intentional, shaping and being shaped by the surrounding musical context. Moreover, each sung note within a repeated series has distinct qualities—its own shapes, directions and sensations. When I sing multiple syllables on a single pitch, the cultivated response of my singing body is to accumulate tone and resonance as the support mechanism engages, intensifying the physicality of the singing. If I yield to this familiar technical pathway, each subsequent note feels fuller and more focussed, developing as if I were singing a sustained “blooming” pitch, where the voice is allowed to spin out.²¹⁵

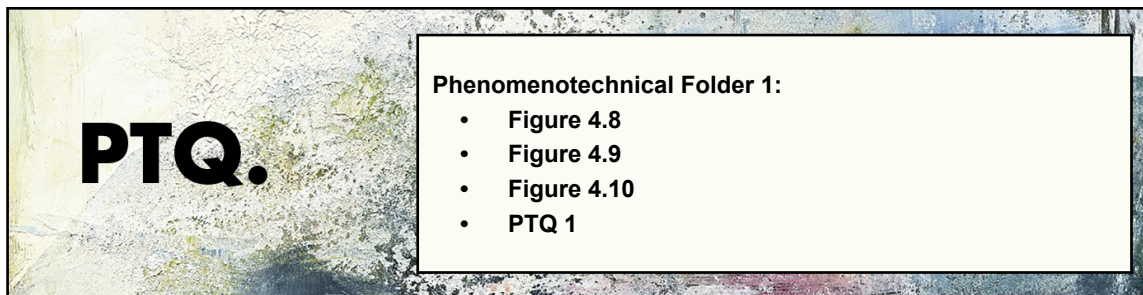
Rather than a passive melodic moment, the repeated pitches in ‘Die sanften Tage’ emerge as expressive hotspots, through which my physical connection to the music and text deepens, allowing a more open and vulnerable “grain” of my voice to be shared.²¹⁶ The specific technical responses—including my choice to engage with or resist this physical intensification—vary depending on the musical and/or poetic context.

214 Richard Miller, *The Structure of Singing: System and Art in Vocal Technique* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1986), 23–24; Barbara Doscher, *The Functional Unity of the Singing Voice* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1994), 44; Joan Melton, *Singing in Musical Theatre: The Training of Singers and Actors* (New York: Allworth Press, 2007), 58; David Blair McClosky, *Your Voice At Its Best* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1972), 91; William Vennard, *Singing: The Mechanism and the Technic* (New York: Carl Fischer, 1967), 89; For example: “As the realization of her fate strikes her at last, Desdemona’s wrenching “Ah, Emilia, Emilia, addio, Emilia, addio!”, in stark contrast with everything that preceded it, is made achingly poignant by Callas’s impassioned use of dynamics and phrase-shaping”. Robert E. Seletsky, “The Performance Practice of Maria Callas: Interpretation and Instinct”, *The Opera Quarterly* 20, no. 4 (2004): 600.

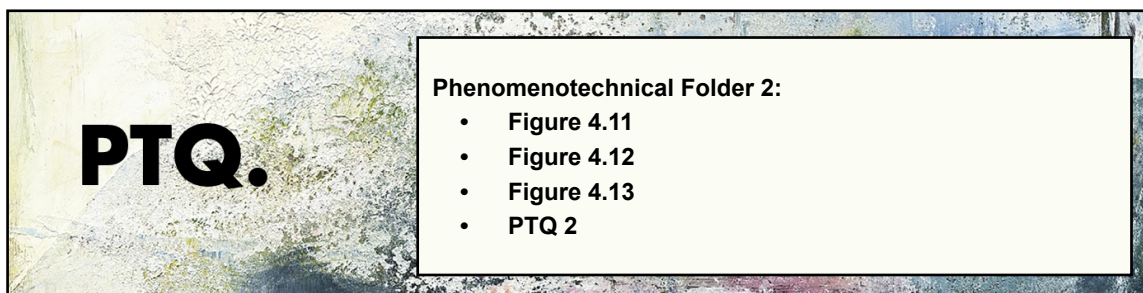
215 R. Fleming, *The Inner Voice: The Making of a Singer* (Penguin Publishing Group, 2005), 52.

216 Roland Barthes, *The grain of the voice: Interviews 1962–1980* (Northwestern University Press, 2009).

“Wann in den ersten Frühlingszeit...” presents an instance in which I encourage a gathering of focus and tone.



“Der Himmel, blaulich aufgeschlagen...” provides a contrary example, in which the embodied instinct to accrue weight and fullness of tone is counteracted.



These phenomenotechnical descriptions of “Wann in den ersten Frühlingszeit...” and “Der Himmel, blaulich aufgeschlagen...” represent two contrasting negotiations of repeated notes in ‘Die sanften Tage’. Both approaches share a unifying element: the intensity of physical engagement with the breath, the controlled exhalation of which is responsible for shaping and supporting each such phrase. This provides a tangible example of a technical response that anchors these melodic moments to the body, contributing to a somatic conception of the expressive voice in ‘Die sanften Tage’.

This perspective on repeated pitches offers a more three-dimensional understanding of these melodic moments, in contrast to the melodic stasis suggested by [Figure 4.4](#). This reveals new insights into phrase shaping, transcending the parameters of pitch and rhythm. By mapping the intensity of airflow over time onto a graph, the nuanced contours of phrasing choices become visible. Figures [4.14](#) and [4.15](#) illustrate these mappings for “Wann in den ersten Frühlingszeit...” and “Der Himmel, blaulich aufgeschlagen...”. These graphics are displayed alongside the adjacent instances of practice from the first verse of ‘Die sanften Tage’ in [Figure 4.16](#).

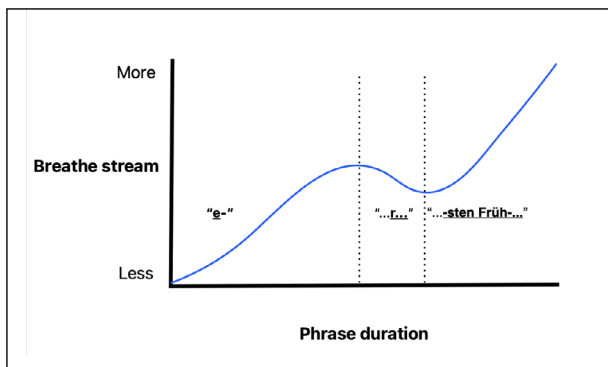


Figure 4.14: Graph mapping the intensity of the breath release over time.

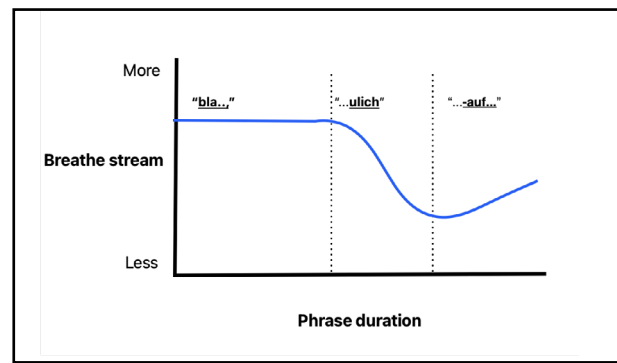
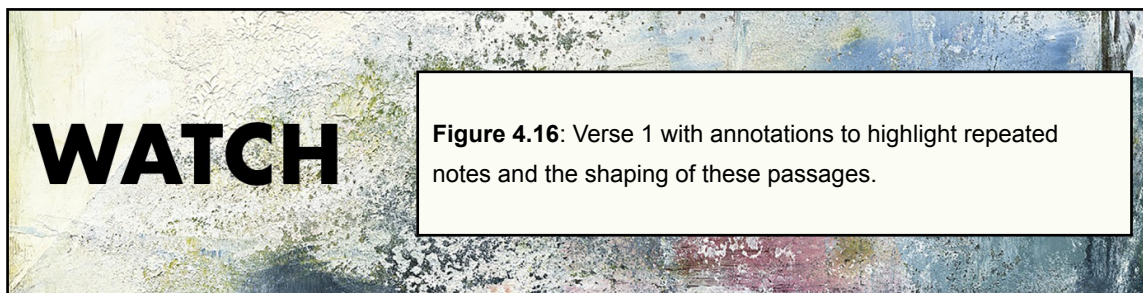


Figure 4.15: Graph mapping the intensity of the breath release over time.



4.8 Vowels

An examination of phrasing and airflow when singing repeated pitches in ‘Die sanften Tage’ reveals a wealth of permutations and expressive possibilities, providing a three-dimensional perspective on these seemingly static melodic fragments. This stereoscopic account is further enhanced by a closer examination of the sung text, focussing particularly on the contours and timbres shaped by a foundational element of their phonemes: the vowels.²¹⁷ While Lieder analyses often consider the impact of word stress, declamation and poetic structure in relation to song interpretation and meaning, novel insights arise from examining the technical aspects of singing the words themselves.

Clear and distinct vowels form the foundation of much singing pedagogy, serving as the primary vehicle for cultivating vocal colour.²¹⁸ In German, these include both single vowel sounds and diphthongs. [Figures 4.17 to 4.20](#) visually represent the different vowel placements in the German

²¹⁷ This is reflected in the discussions of vocal tract influences on the shaping and identity of vowels in The Oxford Handbook of Singing. Brad Story, “The Vocal Tract in Singing” in The Oxford Handbook of Singing, eds. Graham F. Welch, David M. Howard and John Nix (Oxford University Press, 2019); Catherine Anderson et al., Essentials of Linguistics, 2nd Edition (Ontario: eCampusOntario, 2022), 95 <https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/essentialsoflinguistics2/>.

²¹⁸ Susan Yarnall, “The ‘Real’ Me: Practical application of research into the perception of vocal timbre”, Contemporary Music Review 36, no. 6 (2017): 577.

language, mapped onto a quadrilateral.²¹⁹ The vertical axis of the vowel chart reflects the degree to which a vowel is “open” or “closed”. As a rule, closed vowels are more focused and brighter, with reduced internal space due to the raised tongue position required to produce the sound. In contrast, open vowels are created with a flatter tongue, resulting in a broader sensation and a more spacious tonal quality.²²⁰

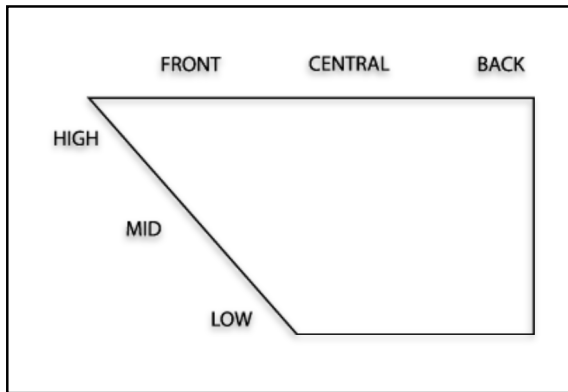


Figure 4.17: A basic illustration of Daniel Jones' cardinal vowel quadrilateral.

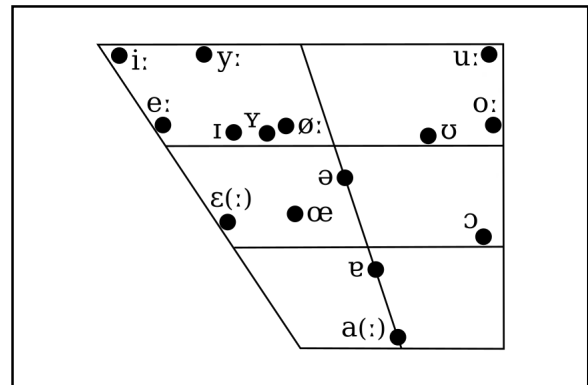


Figure 4.18: German vowels mapped onto vowel quadrangle.

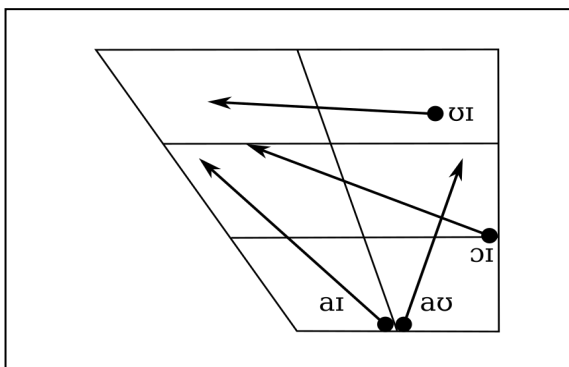


Figure 4.19: German diphthongs mapped onto vowel quadrangle.

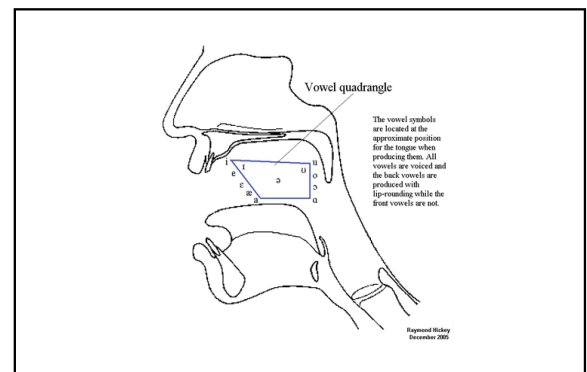
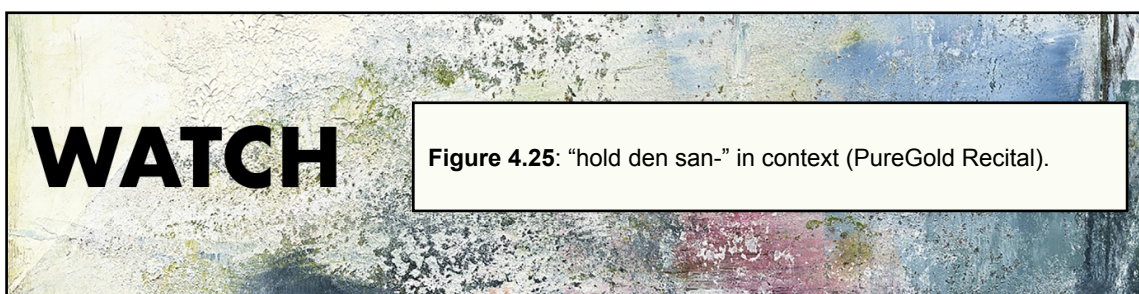
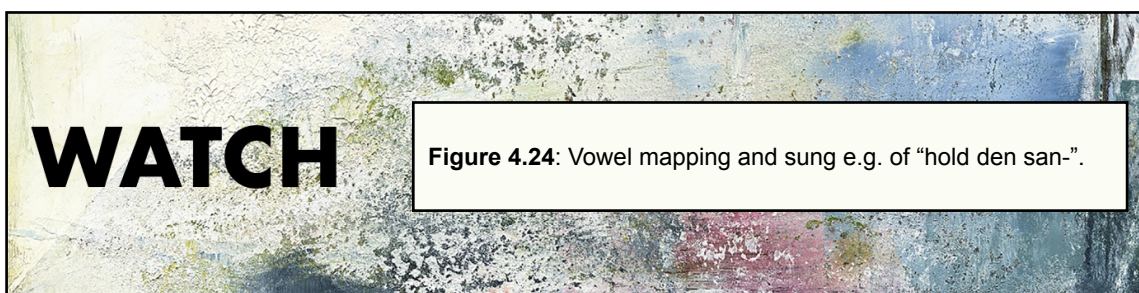
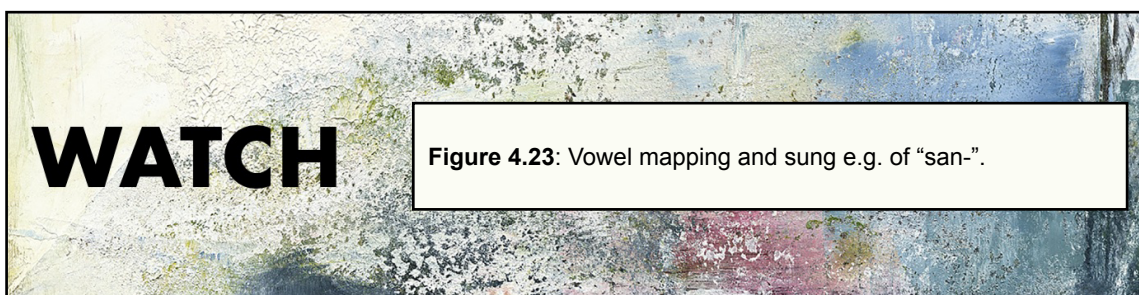
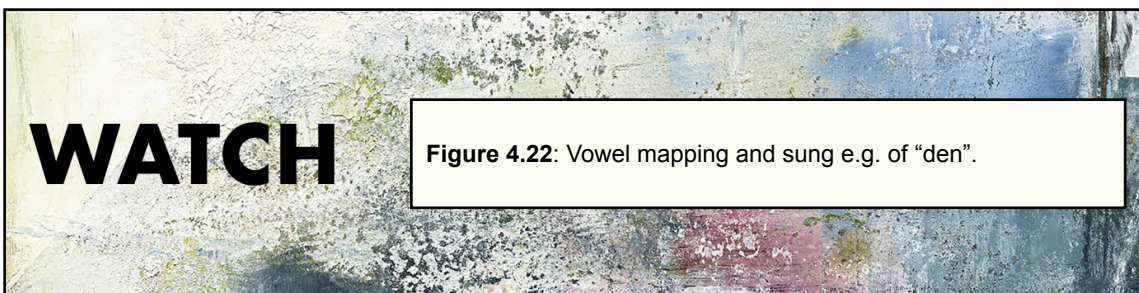
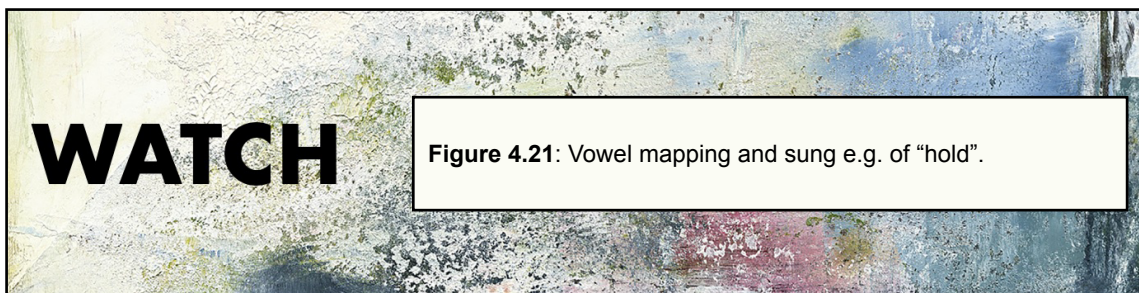


Figure 4.20: Vowel quadrangle mapped onto anatomy of mouth.

Variations in vowel sounds can make repeated pitches sound strikingly different from one another. When analysed through the lens of vowel placement, these differences reveal an additional dimension of melodic shape. By visualising phonetic journeys, the conceived melodic contours of the song become more nuanced.

219 **Figure 4.17:** This vowel quadrilateral is believed to originate from: Daniel Jones, *The pronunciation of English*. Vol. 369 (Cambridge University Press, 1966). Figures **4.18** and **4.19:** Stefan Kleiner Dudenredaktion and Ralf Knöbl, *Das Aussprachewörterbuch* (in German), 7th ed. (Berlin: Dudenverlag, 2015 [first published 1962], ISBN 978-3-411-04067-4). **Figure 4.20** Raymond Hickey, 2005.

220 Anderson et al. *Essentials of Linguistics*, 2nd Edition, 95.





WATCH

Figure 4.26: Vowel mapping and sung e.g. of “er-”.



WATCH

Figure 4.27: Vowel mapping and sung e.g. of “-sten”.



WATCH

Figure 4.28: Vowel mapping and sung e.g. of “Früh-”.



WATCH

Figure 4.29: Vowel mapping and sung e.g. of “ersten Früh-”.



WATCH

Figure 4.30: “ersten Früh-” in context (PureGold recital).

This can be further extended when considering my choices regarding vowel *placement*.

[Figure 4.31](#) illustrates the phonetic journey established in the prior examples, defined by the position of vowels within the mouth.

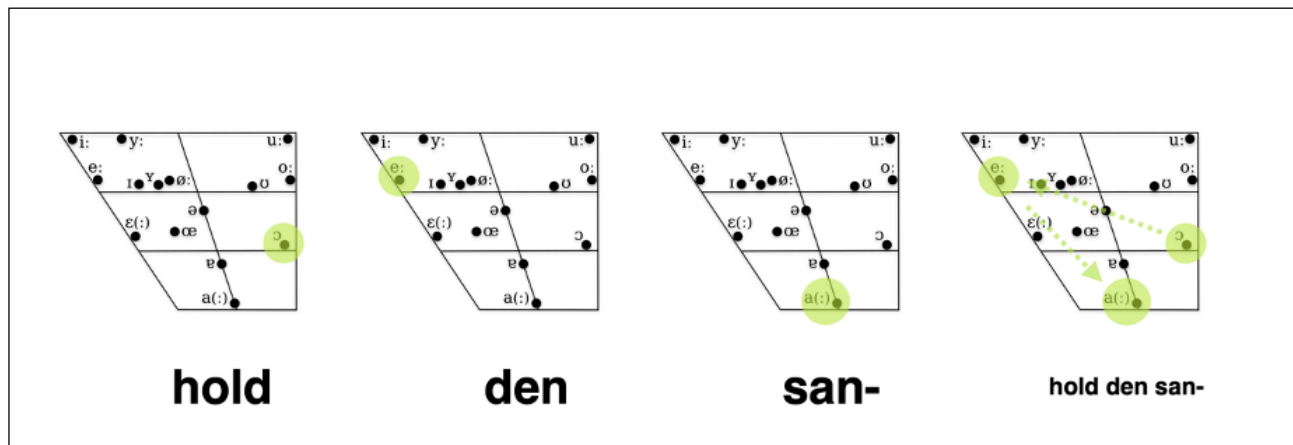


Figure 4.31: Vowel quadrilaterals for “hold den san-” (consolidation of figures 4.21–4.24).

When vocal colour is considered, this picture becomes even more intricate. In a new new quadrangular diagram, I have redefined the vectors to represent “weight”—i.e. how heavy or light the note is made to feel; and “colour”—i.e. how bright or dark the note is shaded ([Figure 4.32](#)).

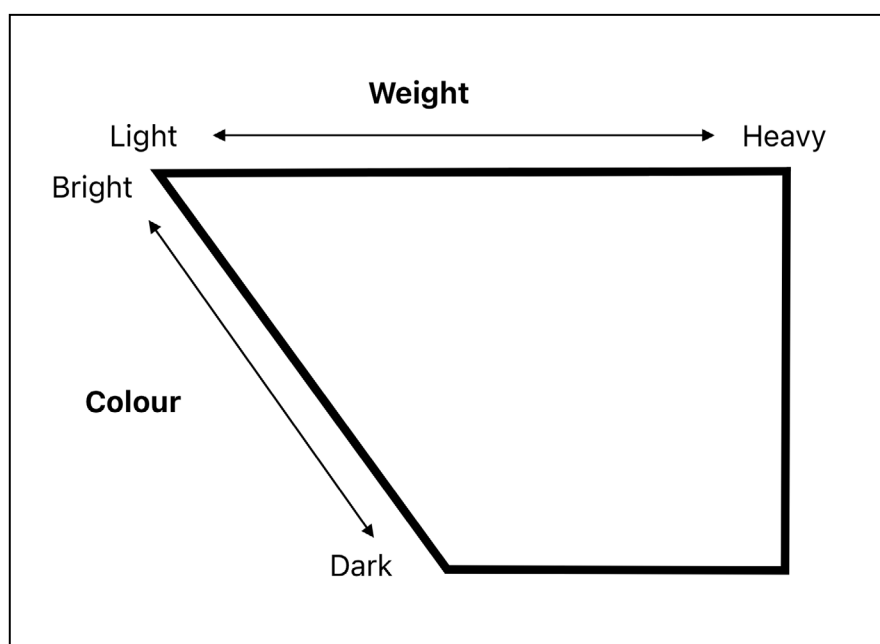


Figure 4.32: Quadrangle for mapping aspects of vocal colour.

Figure 4.33 maps two dimensions of vocal colour from my practice onto this diagram.

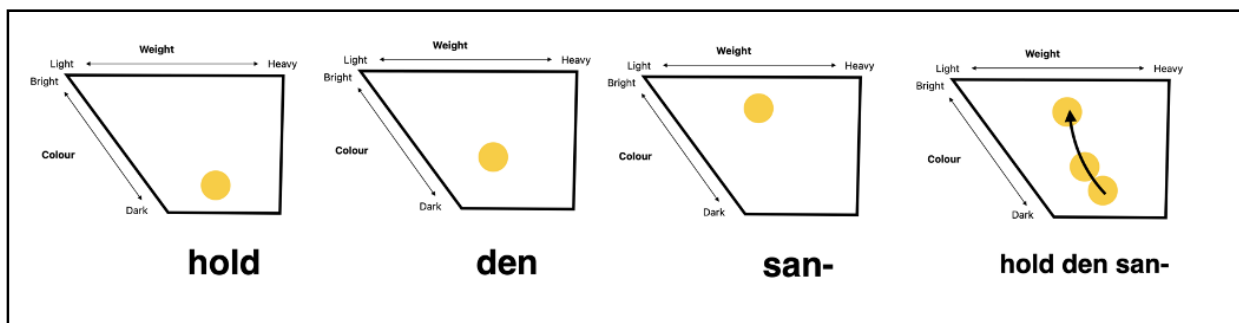
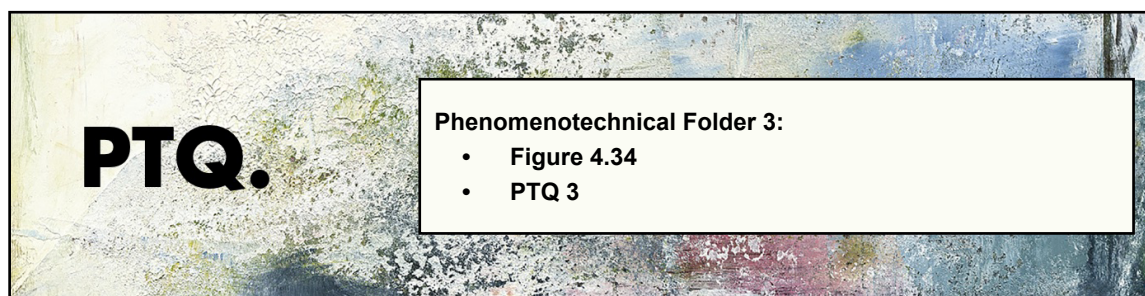
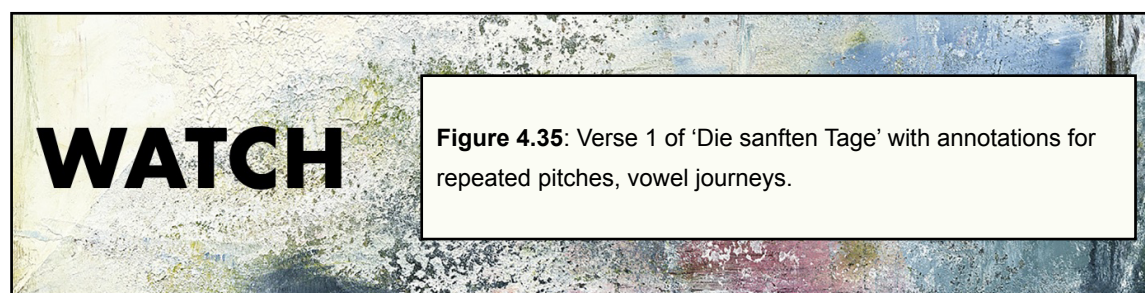


Figure 4.33: Vocal colour quadrangles mapping of "hold den san-"

Figure 4.34 presents graphics that map these choices of vocal colour in alignment with the sung phrases.



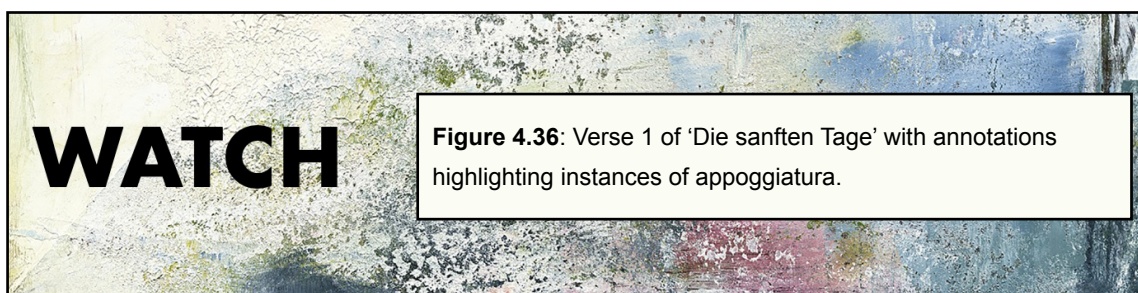
My negotiation of repeated pitches in 'Die sanften Tage' reveals a new perspective on melodic contours—one shaped by nuances of phrase shape, breath flow, vowel contours and vowel placement. The technical responses outlined in the phenomenotechnical descriptions demonstrate the intense physicality of these expressive moments as encountered in practice, positioning them as integral to the song's expressive fabric.²²¹



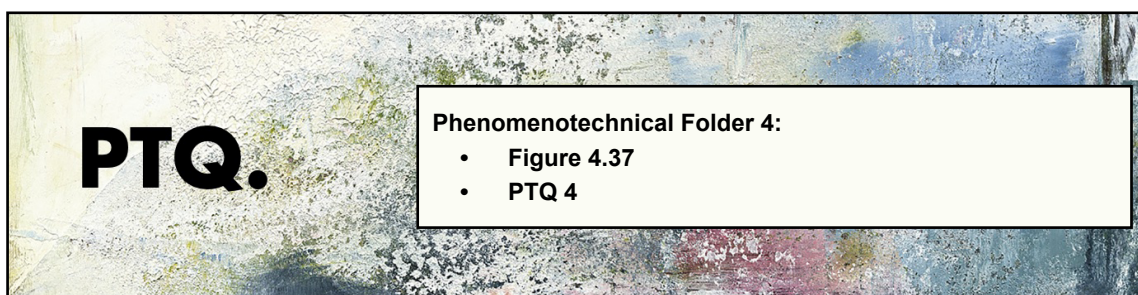
²²¹ Small, Musicking, 1998.

4.9 Appoggiaturas

The discussion now turns to the second technical aspect identified as central to the expressivity of ‘Die sanften Tage’—appoggiaturas. Appoggiaturas—melodic fragments consisting of two notes, typically resolving stepwise from an auxiliary tone to a chord tone ²²²—trigger a technical response in which the first note will often be accentuated, producing a characteristic strong-weak inflection. The device is encountered across a wide range of vocal repertoire and is often associated with moments of heightened emotion.²²³ In ‘Die sanften Tage’, there is an appoggiatura in every vocal phrase.



As with repeated notes, singing an appoggiatura elicits a cultivated technical response, where musical and dramatic intent, breath and vocal timbre converge in a moment of gathering to emphasise and lean on a privileged pitch. This phenomenotechnical description of “Droben” demonstrates the complexity of this technical response and the physical investment it demands.



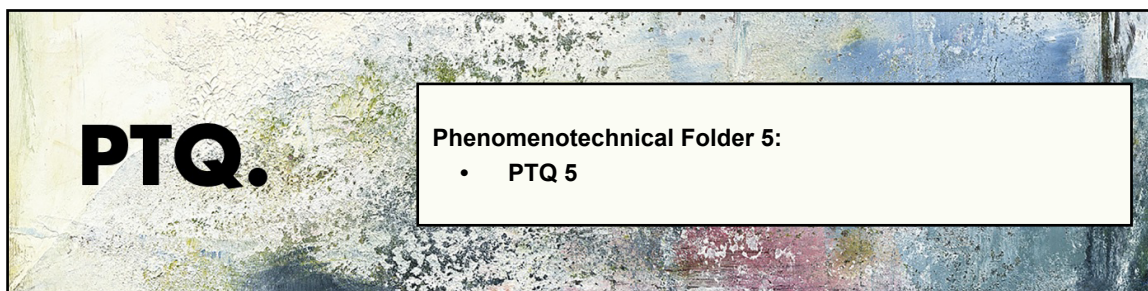
²²² “Appoggiatura is a word to which the English language has not an equivalent; it is a note added by the singer for the arriving more gracefully to the following note, either in rising or falling . . . it is derived from appoggiare (sic), to lean on. In this sense, you lean on the first to arrive at the note intended, rising or falling and [mark this you dwell longer on the preparation than on the note for which the preparation is made and according to the value of the note”. Gaillard in A. H. F. S., Ben Davies, Herman Klein and Ernest Walker. “The Appoggiatura”. *Music & Letters* 5, no. 2 (1924): 125. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/726942>.

²²³ Neumann highlights the use of appoggiaturas in vocal music as “emotional markers”, often placed on strong beats to emphasize significant words or syllables, creating tension that enhances expression. Frederick Neumann, *Ornamentation in Baroque and Post-Baroque Music, with Special Emphasis on J.S. Bach* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 125–127; Burton discusses how appoggiaturas serve as an expressive tool in Baroque vocal music, where performers use them to add depth and emotional weight to specific phrases. Anthony Burton, *Performance Practice in Baroque Vocal Music* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 45–46; Although focusing on violin music, Boyden notes the widespread use of appoggiaturas in Baroque vocal and instrumental music, describing them as essential for conveying emotional intensity. David D. Boyden, *The History of Violin Playing from its Origins to 1761* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), 217.

4.9.1 Appoggiatura positions

The phrases in ‘Die sanften Tage’ reach out in broad arcs, requiring a generosity of breath to realise the expressive repeated notes and melismas that sit in their centre. The time given to breathe in between the phrases does little to facilitate this. The lines flow almost seamlessly from one to the next, the longest break being just a dotted crotchet in length, with most instances offering less, or even no written rest to facilitate breathing.

These factors alone make the expenditure of breath in the song both generous and physically demanding. The presence of appoggiaturas—and, more specifically, their placement within the phrase—adds a further degree of physical intensity to the act of singing. Of the eight appoggiaturas in the song, six occur at the end of a vocal phrase. These must be anticipated to ensure that sufficient resources remain to realise the expressive gathering described in the phenomenotechnical description of “droben”. The frequency and regularity of this appoggiatura type has a compounding effect, with each breath becoming increasingly physical to maintain support and flexibility in the successive phrases.



4.9.2 Appoggiaturas and contour

In two of the phrases in ‘Die sanften Tage’, the appoggiaturas join together two half-phrases.

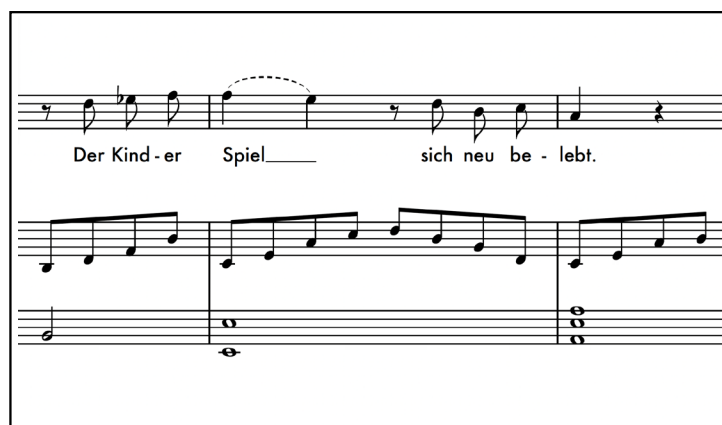
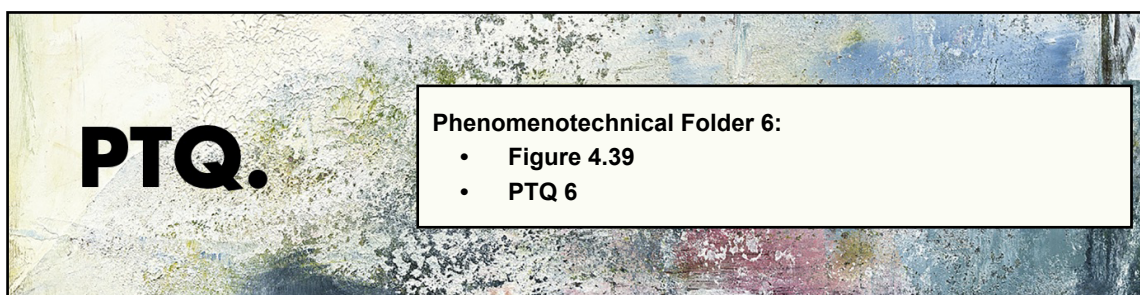
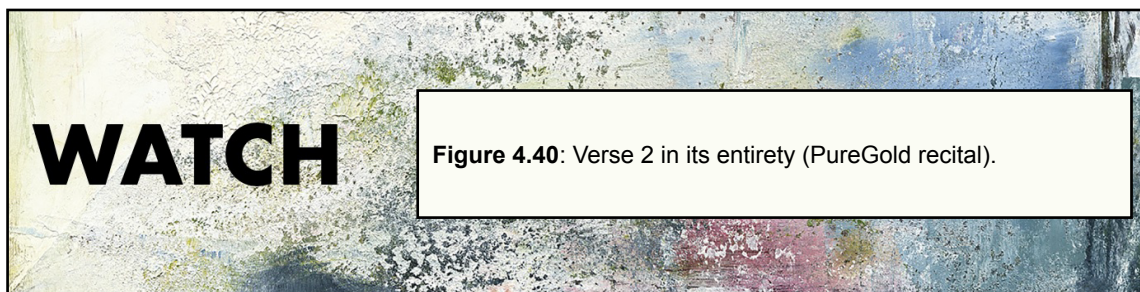


Figure 4.38: “Der Kinder Spiel sich neu belebt”.

“Der Kinder **spiel** mit neu belebt...” exemplifies this alternative appoggiatura. Among the four verses, this iteration is the most vibrant, depicting the lively play of children. This vibrancy does not manifest in a climactic or intense vocal colour; rather, in keeping with the song’s delicate soundworld, the upper register is approached with a mix of head and chest voice. This contributes to an airy, light and sweet tone that, in this instance, emulates the carefree play of children with a levity and fondness.



This alternative highlights the highly flexible expressive potential of appoggiaturas, shaped by the singer’s technical response—a quality that becomes especially apparent when the strophe is heard in its entirety.



4.10 Melisma

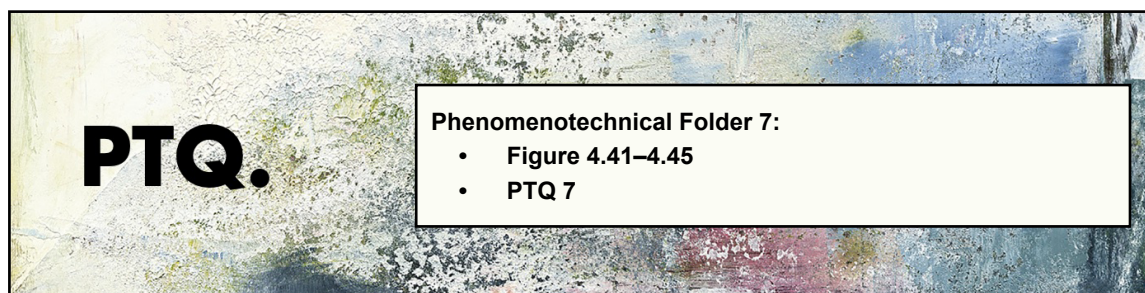
Melisma is the final technical aspect considered in this study as contributing to the expressive character of the vocal lines in ‘Die sanften Tage’. Melisma—where multiple pitches are sung on a single vowel—is typically used to emphasise the expressive quality of a word through the melodic extension of a syllable.²²⁴ Though much of the text setting in this ‘Die sanften Tage’ is syllabic, there are several uses of melisma. Like repeated notes and appoggiaturas, these prompt a specific technical response.

²²⁴ Richard Taruskin, *Text and Meaning in Music*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 56; Robert Morgan, *Melodic Structures in Vocal Music* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 88; David J. Rothenberg, *Sounding the Body: Music and the Mind* (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 142.

There are three types of melismas in 'Die sanften Tage':

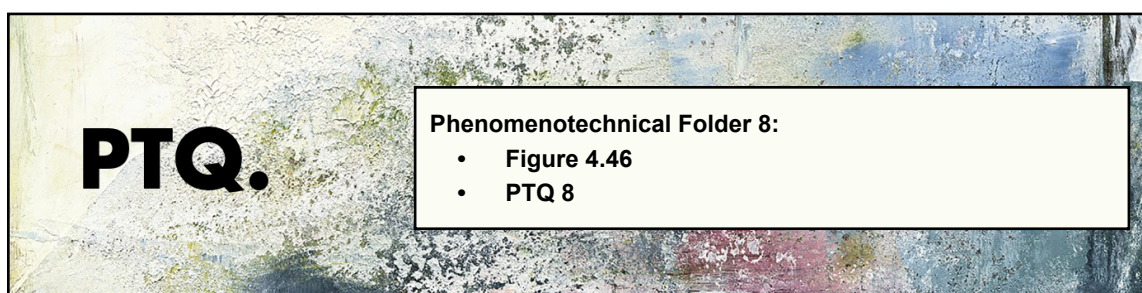
Type 1: Melisma via written ornaments attached to a sustained pitch (e.g. first line)

The first melisma encountered falls in the centre of the opening line. It is scored as grace notes and is consequentially rhythmically ambiguous. This ambiguity cultivates a flexibility when singing the line, extending the parameters of expression to include rhythmical shaping. This flexibility becomes especially apparent when comparing the various iterations of the opening line across each verse.



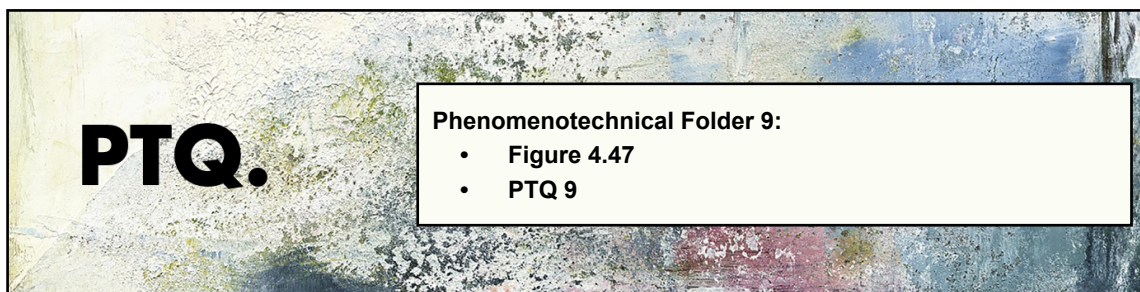
Type 2: Descending semiquavers melismas.

The second type of melisma features a descending pattern of four semiquavers, set in the relative minor. This injects a distinct moment of rhythmic intensity. The melisma is most evocative in the phrase "*Sie prangt nicht mehr mit Blüt' und Fülle*", which describes the fading of a once resplendent Summer. Here, the melismatic figure falls on the conjunction "*und*", perhaps not the most expressive word. However, the quality of this melisma, within the fuller context of the line, betrays the protagonist's panic and desire to hold on to what is slipping away.



Type 3: Descending triplet melismas.

The third type of melisma appears as descending triplet quavers, moving independently of the pianist's duplets beneath. Following the repeated notes on a high E_b, this melisma carries a sense of release.



These examples of the embodied engagement with melismatic passages in this song reveal that, much like repeated notes and appoggiaturas, there are multiple layers of expression, colour, shaping and language. These elements demand an intensified physical and emotional technical response. Additionally, these layers deepen our understanding of what might initially seem to be a series of simple sequential melodies. In the following section, the cumulative effects of these embodied expressive devices will be outlined.

4.11 Cumulative effects

From the perspective of embodied research, I have identified three distinct technical responses to melodic devices encountered in the singing of 'Die sanften Tage': series of repeated pitches, appoggiaturas and melismas. These technical phenomena have been introduced in an effort to account for what I have described as the "emotional openness", "generosity", and "vulnerability" evident in the song. While I have examined these elements individually, in practice, they are experienced simultaneously. It is this cumulative effect that, I believe, plays a significant role in shaping the song's expressive voice..

[Figure 4.48](#) highlights the frequency with which these phenomena occur in singing the song and demonstrates how these individually powerful moments seamlessly dovetail into one another, often within a single breath. What initially appeared as predictable and symmetrical melodic fragments now reveal far more nuanced and technically challenging contours, each of which triggers embodied phenomena that contribute to a sense of expressive openness.

Langsam

2 bars 2 bars

Ich bin so hold den sanf - ten Ta - gen, Wann in der ers - ten Früh - lings -

Ab major: I v^7I

5 2 bars 2 bars

- zeit Der Him - mel, blau - lich auf - ge - schla - gen, Zur Er - de Glanz und Wär - mes

[Ab major:] I I^7 IV ii vi III^7 $F\ minor: I/V$ V^7

9 2 bars 2 bars

streut; Die Tä - ler noch von Ei - se - grau - en, Der Hü - gel schon sich son - nig

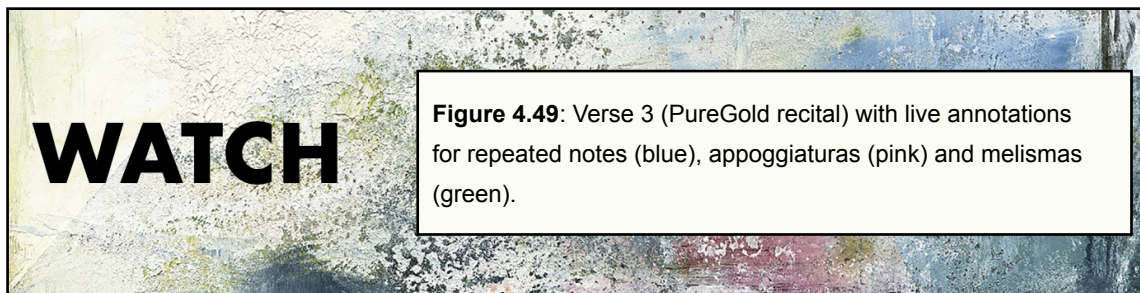
[F minor:] I vii°

13 2 bars 2 bars

hebt, Die Mäd - chen sich ins Frei - e trau - en, Der Kind - er Spiel sich neu be - lebt

I III^7 VI iv $Ab\ major: ii$ I/V V^7 I

Figure 4.48: Annotated score for verse 3 showing repeated notes (blue), appoggiaturas (pink) and melismas (green).



The annotations in this video (Figure 4.49) reveal an almost rhythmic quality in the recurring sequence of repeated notes—melisma—appoggiatura, such that the expressive impact of its absence in a single phrase is striking. They also highlight the physical demands placed on the breath: the generous expenditure and flexibility of air required to support the repeated notes, appoggiaturas and melismas; the incremental rises in tessitura; and the limited breathing opportunities due to the flowing tempo—all contribute to an embodied experience of the phrases as broad and expansive. It is this cumulative effect that renders the singing of ‘Die sanften Tage’ a deeply physical and committed act, one that cultivates a sense of expressive openness and vulnerability in the performer.

4.12 Strophic songs in practice: difference and repetition

By examining the embodied expressive qualities of repeated notes, appoggiaturas and melismas, as well as the cumulative effects of their frequent use, the melodic material is redefined in terms unique to embodied practice. This deepens the understanding of Fanny’s setting of Uhland’s text. The approach also challenges analytical paradigms by asserting new parameters that reveal nuances of the song in singing—moments which might have otherwise been dismissed as compositionally insignificant.

This case study now shifts focus to address perceptions of another element of ‘Die sanften Tage’: its use of strophic form. In the exploration thus far, the transformative power of text in strophic repetitions has been illustrated through an examination of individual words and their phonetic and instrumental attributes. However, the influence of the poetic material in strophic song extends far beyond this. Here, the larger poetic context of the song is considered—specifically how the technical responses to a developing text redefine the musical material in each reiteration, unfolding as a coherent narrative-musical arc.²²⁵

²²⁵ Macarthur articulates her interpretations of Deleuze’s theory of difference, including his concepts of virtual and actual. Sally Macarthur, *Towards a twenty-first-century feminist politics of music* (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2010), 11–14.

When introducing Uhland's poem, I identified varying interpretations. Taken literally, the narrative voice reflects on their surroundings—specifically, the burgeoning warmth of spring, the beauty of nature and people who revel in these. In a metaphorical reading, the poem represents a more significant journey, with the changing of the seasons from Spring to Winter symbolising the various stages of a lifetime (see [Figure 4.50](#)).

S P R I N G	<p><i>Ich bin so hold den sanften Tagen, Wann in der ersten Frühlingszeit Der Himmel, blaulich aufgeschlagen, Zur Erde Glanz und Wärme streut;</i></p> <p><i>Die Täler noch von Eise grauen, Der Hügel schon sich sonnig hebt; Die Mädchen sich in's Freie trauen, Der Kinder Spiel sich neu belebt.</i></p>	<p><i>I am so fond of these gentle days When in the first moments of springtime The sky, opening into blueness, Scatters radiance and warmth to earth;</i></p> <p><i>The valleys are still grey with ice, The hill is now rising in the sun The young women dare to go outside The children's games are revived.</i></p>
	<p><i>Dann steh' ich auf dem Berge droben Und seh' es alles, still erfreut, Die Brust von leisem Drang gehoben, Der noch zum Wunsche nicht gedeiht.</i></p> <p><i>Ich bin ein Kind und mit dem Spiele Der heiteren Natur vergnügt, In ihre ruhigen Gefühle Ist ganz die Seele eingewiegt.</i></p>	<p><i>Then I'll stand atop the mountain, And take it all in, quietly delighted, My breast lifted by a quiet urge, Which is still and does not thrive on desire.</i></p> <p><i>I am like a child with their games, Happy nature, The soul is completely lulled Into her calm feelings.</i></p>
	<p><i>Ich bin so hold den sanften Tagen, Wann ihrer mild besonnten Flur Gerührte Greise Abschied sagen; Dann ist die Feier der Natur.</i></p> <p><i>Sie prangt nicht mehr mit Blüth' und Fülle, All ihre regen Kräfte ruhn, Sie sammelt sich in süße Stille, In ihre Tiefen schaut sie nun.</i></p>	<p><i>I am so fond of these gentle days, When in her mildly sunny streets Touched old men say farewell; Then there is the celebration of nature.</i></p> <p><i>It is no longer resplendent with abundant bloom, All her active powers rest, She gathers in sweet silence, She now looks into her depths.</i></p>
A U T U M N	<p><i>Die Seele, jüngst so hoch getragen, Sie senket ihren stolzen Flug, Sie lernt ein friedliches Entsagen, Erinnerung ist ihr genug.</i></p> <p><i>Da ist mir wohl im sanften Schweigen, Das die Natur der Seele gab. Es ist mir so, als dürft' ich steigen Hinunter in mein stilles Grab.</i></p>	<p><i>The soul that was carried so high, Now lowers its proud flight, It learns a peaceful renunciation, Memory is enough for it.</i></p> <p><i>There I feel good in the gentle silence, That nature gave to the soul, I feel like I can climb Down to my quiet grave.</i></p>
W I N T E R		

Figure 4.50: Poem annotated to highlight language that supports the metaphor of the seasons in practice.

This latter metaphorical narrative has been formative in structuring the development of the musical material across the verses in my practice, with each season reflected in the text mapped onto its corresponding verse and a distinct emotional character cultivated for each. Furthermore, these contrasting qualities of the four seasons informed a novel arrangement of the strophic form.

By notating strophic songs without prescribing a specific approach to repetition and variation, composers allow for a degree of interpretative liberty. It is the performers who must inevitably make decisions regarding dynamics, tempo relationships between verses, whether to include all the written (or even additional) strophes and where and how to begin musical repeats when moving from verse to verse. I took advantage of this notational ambiguity, common in many simple strophic form songs, to further emphasise the seasonal quality of each verse.²²⁶



Figure 4.51 (also 4.3): Autograph manuscript for ‘Die sanften Tage’, H-U 75, held in the Berlin Staatsbibliothek, Mendelssohn Archiv.

In the following section, the technical cultivation of these distinct emotional temperatures of Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, along with the decisions concerning arrangement, will be explored in detail.

4.13 Verse by verse

The CD recording and the live video performance of ‘Die sanften Tage’, exhibited throughout this case study, both follow an original arrangement devised in response to the narrative structure of Uhland’s poem and Fanny’s single notated strophe.

²²⁶ It is not uncommon to encounter strophic songs where only one or two stanzas are written to align with the musical notation, while the remaining stanzas are presented as text alone. Within many poems of strophic songs, discrepancies in phrase units, line breaks and word-stress may be evident in these text-only verses. It is then the performer’s responsibility to adapt this text to the melodic strophe according to their own sensibilities.

Verse 1

The first verse—*Spring*—adheres to the autograph manuscript, where like in many of Fanny’s Lieder, there appears to be a lack of written introduction. “Appears”, because, unlike songs such as [‘Sehnsucht’, H-U 217](#), [‘Maigesang’, H-U 194](#), or [‘Dämmerung senkte sinkt nach oben’, H-U 392](#), the voice and piano do not begin entirely simultaneously. Instead, the piano plays alone for two crotchets and a quaver before the voice enters. This music seems merely functional—an establishment of key, tempo and movement via a broken tonic arpeggio over a left-hand chord, before the song begins in earnest with the voice’s entry, much like the beginning of a bel canto aria following the orchestral introduction.²²⁷

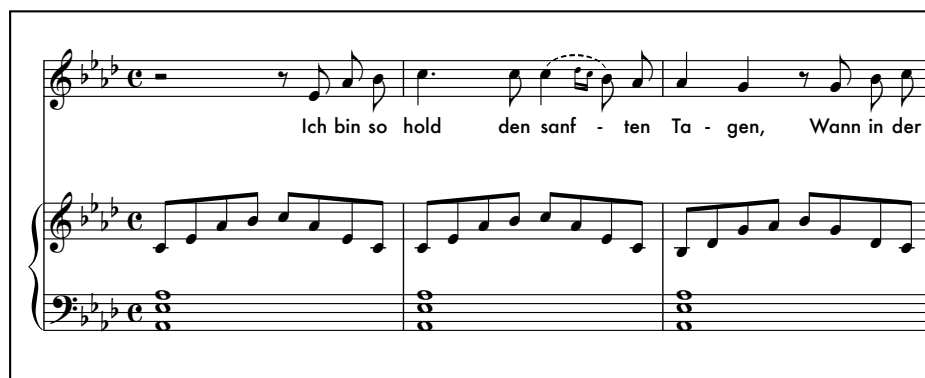
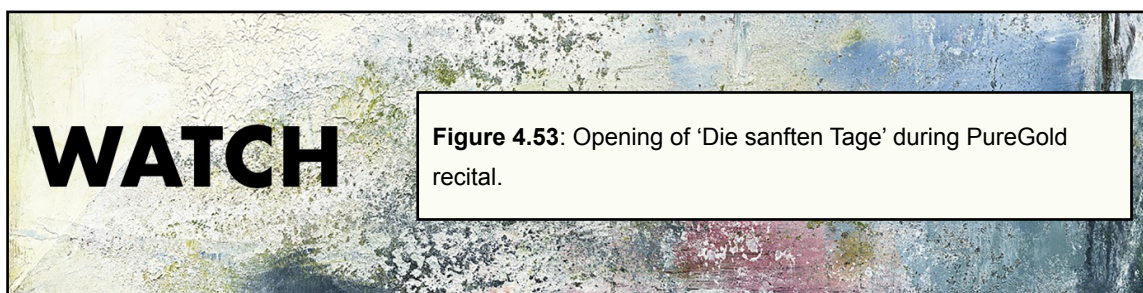


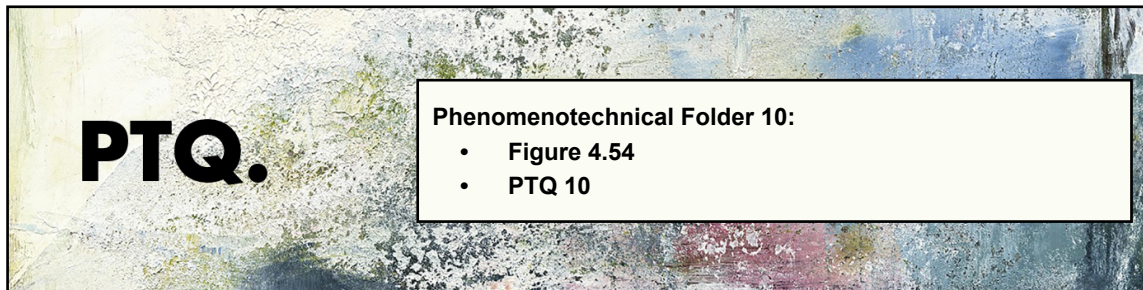
Figure 4.52: The opening bars of ‘Die sanften Tage’.



As with the melodic devices introduced previously, in embodied practice this seemingly “merely functional” moment proves greater than the sum of its parts, extending beyond its brief temporal dimensions. The inclusion of a single passing tone in the right hand of the piano—foreshadowing the opening vocal melody—prompts a rich technical response that subverts the impression of functionality, revealing ample material from which to cultivate a vivid emotional atmosphere for the first verse and season.

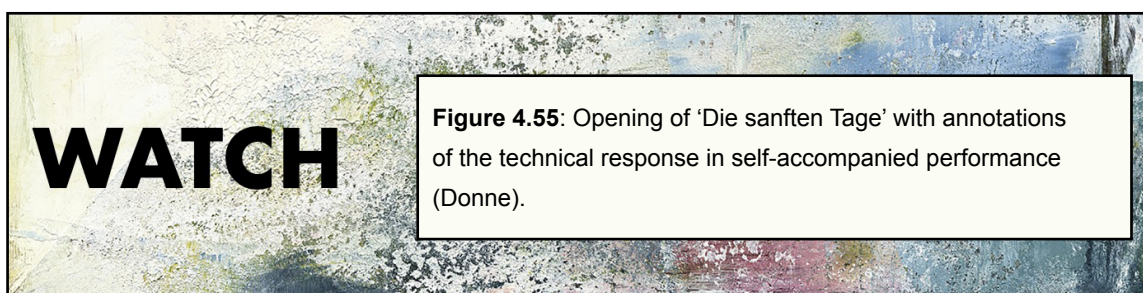
²²⁷ For example, bar 9 of ‘Una Furtiva Lagrima’ (from L’elisir d’amore by Gaetano Donizetti). Robert Larsen ed., *Arias for tenor* (G Schirmer Inc., 1991), 78.

Though it lasts only a few seconds, the process of finding the imaginative bud of the song—feeling it grow, first in my body as an emotion, then into my breath, through the piano and finally into my first utterance—has the experience of a comprehensive musicopoetic arc, one that might otherwise be crafted in a longer prelude.



What seems at first to be a song without an introduction, through a subtle leading tone and the living dynamic of pianist and singer in performance takes on a more profound and connected musical quality, from which the song unfolds. The warm feeling gathered in my body prior to singing colours the opening lines, which are sung with thoughts of beauty, appreciation, honesty and smiling influencing the tone.

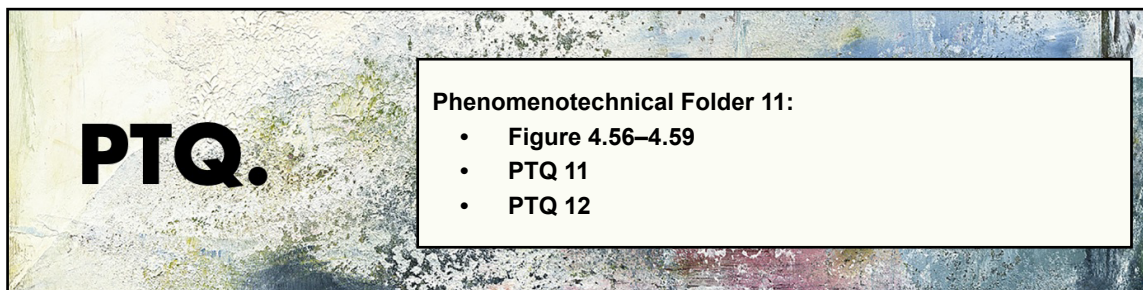
This short musical moment is afforded further depth when examined in the context of my self-accompanied practice. Here, a tension arises between my desire to breathe in—preparing for the vocal entry and sense of forward movement—and my instinct to breathe out into the warm left-hand piano voicing on the first beat. This moment is broken down in detail through video annotations in [Figure 4.55](#).



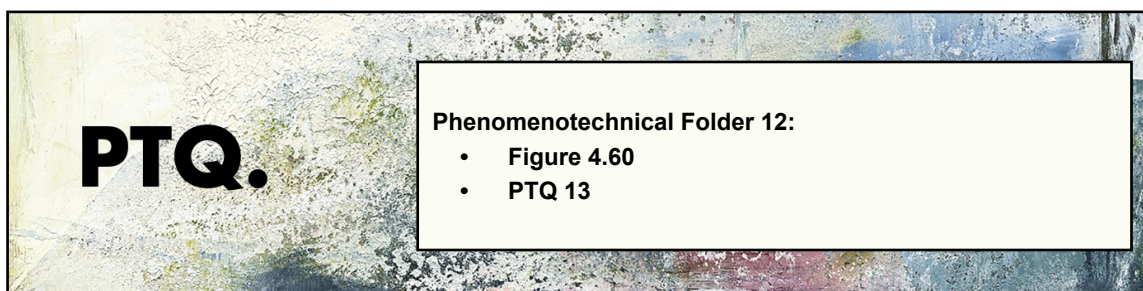
The warmth and subtle joy cultivated in the opening of 'Die sanften Tage' later give way for remembrances of the Winter, forming a multidimensional portrayal of Spring—its blossoming and mildness viewed alongside the remnants of grey ice in the shadowy valleys of the hills. Accompanied by a modulation to the relative minor, the vocal material of the B section arpeggiates

discordant harmonies, articulated through shorter, more restless rhythmic units and a wilder negotiation of range.

The pinnacle of these darker poetic undercurrents is embodied in *“Eise grauen”*.



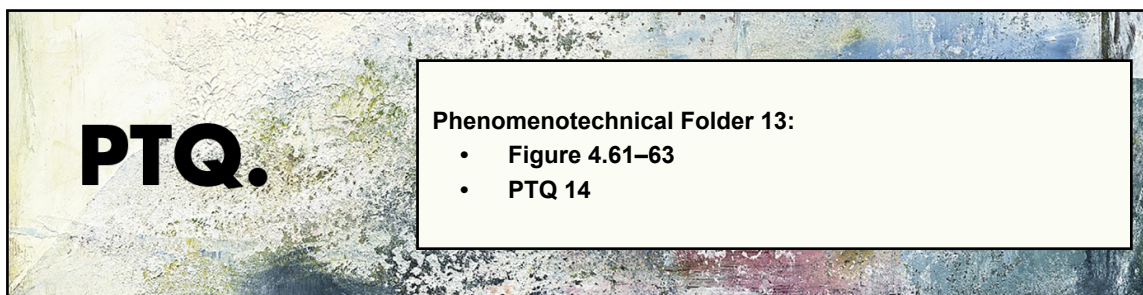
The verse returns to the tonic, as if the sun has now risen beyond the crest of the hill to illuminate the people below and thaw the remaining ice. The poetic voice observes the new life and freedom of the young women and children in their play. The joy of Spring is reaffirmed.



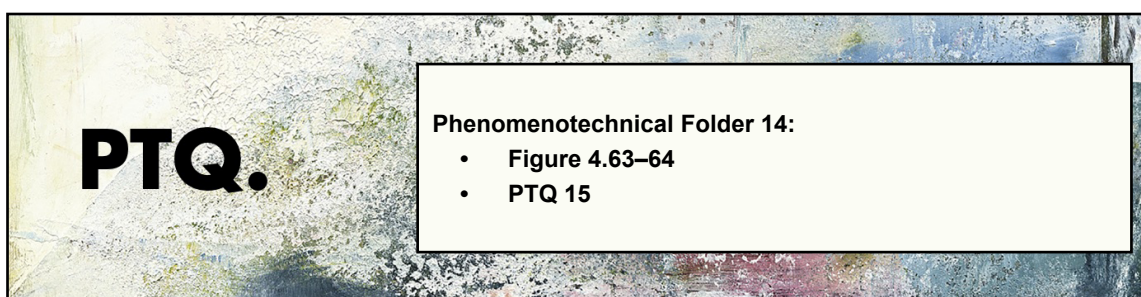
Verse 2: Summer

The second verse—Summer—takes the kindling of Spring’s new beginnings and vitality and lets them burn brightly. There is a swagger to the phrases, revelling in carefree nostalgia, as if the protagonist feels younger just speaking these words and reliving these memories.

To facilitate a seamless transition from verse one to verse two in performance, I place the repeat sign at bar 16, eschewing the wistful piano postlude to maintain the perpetual quaver movement without pause. This adjustment proved necessary, as following the postlude—which floats up and disperses into the ether—into the charged silence from which the opening is drawn, created a stilted musical moment that could not be reconciled with the ardour of the poetic text. Furthermore, the potency of the piano’s postlude was found to be most effective if iterated sparingly.



The heat of this emotional ardour is sustained through the minor B section, which is energised by a technical response that subverts the bodily reaction to the tonality and prioritises the embodiment of the states described by the words themselves. The imagery shaping this technical response draws on the language of movement. These active concepts are expressed not only through technical and imaginative frameworks but also through actual bodily motions within the space.



The next seasonal change —Summer to Autumn—is anticipated in the final couplet of the stanza.

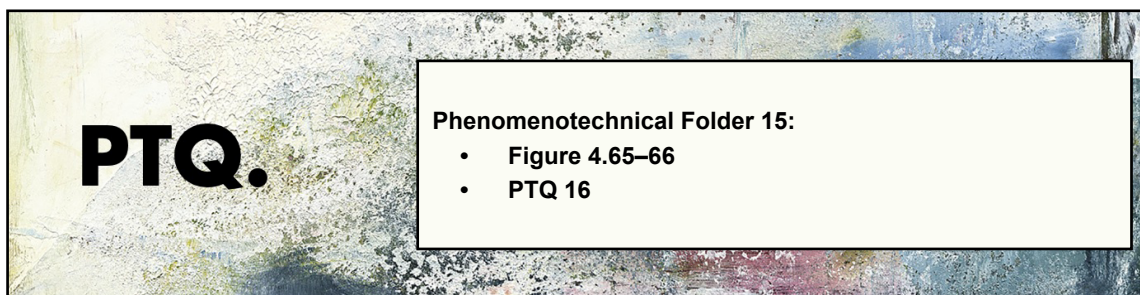
*In ihre ruhigen Gefühle
Ist ganz die Seele eingewiegt.*

*The soul is completely lulled
Into her calm feelings.*

Where the emotional intensity was heightened in the prior strophic transition, this moment is approached calmly—emulating a gradual cooling of summer’s heat that gives way to the smouldering embers of memory. The written piano postlude complements this shift perfectly and the first of two iterations in my arrangement of ‘Die sanften Tage’ falls here.

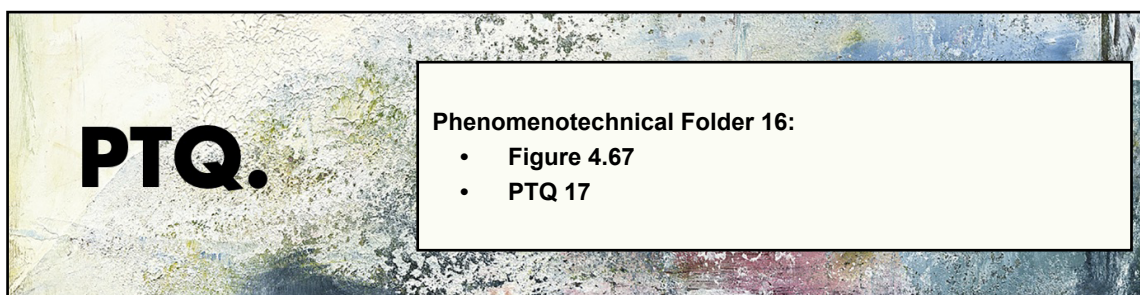
From the ensuing silence, an unaccompanied vocal entry establishes the third verse’s tone in earnest. This approach effectively realises the poetic transition while also avoiding the potentially

jarring effect of repeating the opening piano arpeggio. In performance, this passage stands out as one of the song's most beautiful moments.

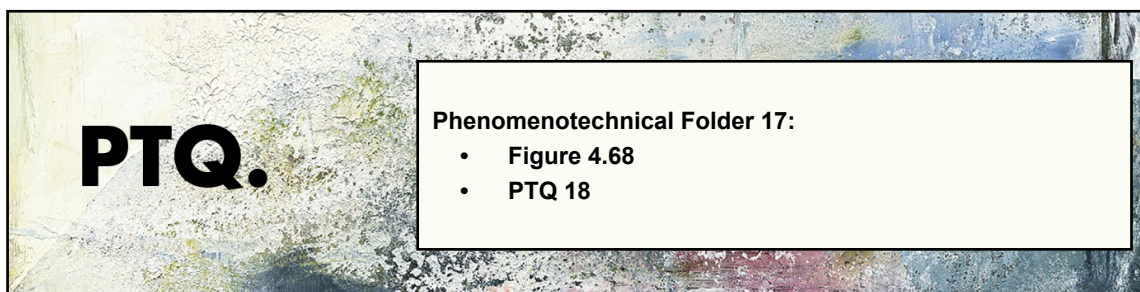


Verse 3

Verse 3—Autumn—contains the most tumultuous, insecure expressions of a song that is overwhelmingly accepting of the passage of time. My technical response to the minor tonality in this verse highlights this fear of change and loss.



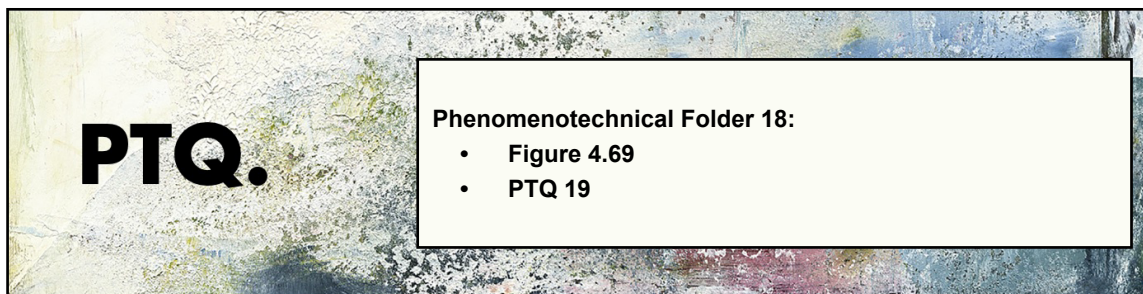
The verse ends once again without the inclusion of the piano prelude—the repeat placed at the same point as in verse one. Here, the transitory piano arpeggio anticipates the calm that gradually settles throughout the final verse:



Verse 4

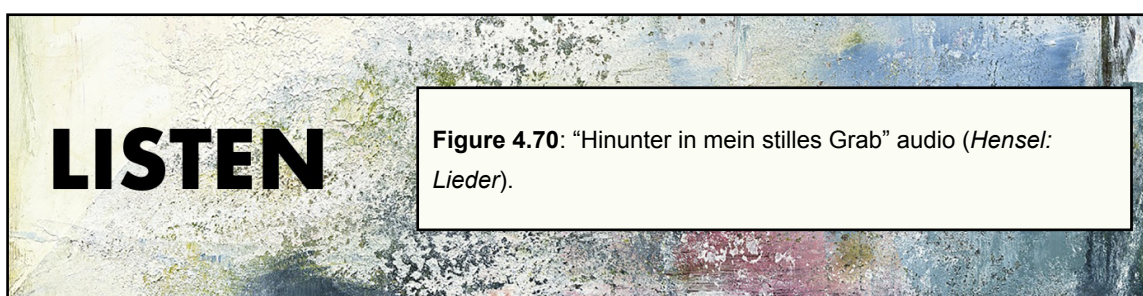
This blanket of calm unfolds over the entirety of the verse, which redefines the minor tonality once again. The accepting resignation and contentment of the poetic voice are manifested in a

slower tempo, with the minor material engaged with a sense of peace and neutrality—neither exaggerating the dissonances nor striving to reinvent them. Instead, each phrase is taken at face value, sung with an openness and simplicity of tone.



The poetic metaphor of the seasons, explored through the distinct embodied qualities arising from technical responses to the musicopoetic material, has uncovered a wealth of expressive potential and a deeper appreciation of 'Die sanften Tage'. The ambiguities of the sparse score, coupled with the interpretive flexibility inherent in strophic songs, have facilitated a novel arrangement that engages Fanny's song within a structure supporting the meaningful and richly poetic arc of Uhland's poem. In turn, broader perspectives on the song have emerged through practice, helping to move beyond definitions rooted solely in its compositional form.

The conclusion of the final strophe exemplifies the revelatory power of practical exploration—a moment that unfolds uniquely at the end of a complete performance. Through the iterative musical and dramatic journey of singing, the somatic qualities of love, hope, passion, fear, loss and wisdom are embodied, enriching the beauty of the final utterance. This closing gesture portrays a protagonist at peace with a life fully and richly lived. All fears and worries dissipate, leaving only the warm glow of memories—the essence of 'Die sanften Tage'—to linger in the mind as the final postlude gently fades.



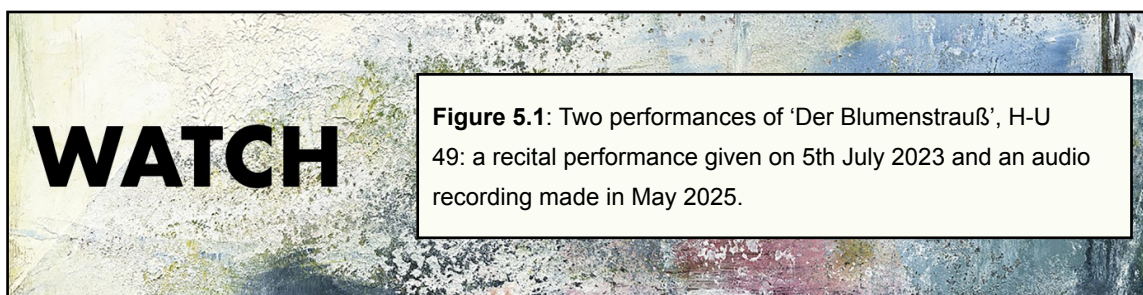
5. ‘Der Blumenstrauß’

‘Der Blumenstrauß’, H-U 49

Composed by Fanny Hensel (born Mendelssohn), 19–25 July 1822.

Poem written by Ludwig Uhland

- [Score](#)
- [Autograph manuscript](#)
- [Recording](#)



5.1 ‘Der Blumenstrauß’

This case study focuses on a song I engaged in the latter stages of this project, when I performed ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ for the launch of [#HENSEL](#) (Summer 2023). ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ significance to this research narrative was not initially anticipated. Although the song had been earmarked early on as a possible inclusion for the [Hensel: Lieder](#), I returned to it with only a vague recollection of its qualities—and was taken aback by the impression it made on me in practice. Like ‘Die sanften Tage’, the song bears the compositional hallmarks of the Second Berlin Lieder School, yet it also challenges the presumed simplicity often attributed to this style in performance.²²⁸ Whereas ‘Die sanften Tage’ is characterised by a nuanced poetic text that gradually descends toward a calm acceptance of time’s passage, ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ is structured around an evocative, ardent crescendo that, in singing Fanny’s song, assumes a visceral quality.

5.2 ‘Der Blumenstrauß’—Ludwig Uhland

The text of ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ was written by Ludwig Uhland. Where ‘Die sanften Tage’ was characteristic of Uhland’s “delicate watercolour” style, ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ is better characterised

²²⁸ Sally Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First-Century Feminist Politics of Music* (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2010), 43.

as expressionistic—exchanging subtle blending of hue and light brushwork for bold, contrasting colours and assertive, uninhibited broad strokes.²²⁹ The poem encompasses a distinctive emotional arc, which becomes steadily more ardent to the point of eruption. Its apex lies in the final two stanzas, which depict hyperbolic declarations of infatuation that possess an almost wild quality. This youthful ardour might have particularly drawn a teenage Fanny to the poem.

<p><i>Wenn Sträuchern, Blumen manche Deutung eigen, Wenn in den Rosen Liebe sich entzündet, <u>Vergißmeinnicht</u> im Namen schon sich kündigt, Lorbeere Ruhm, Zypressen Trauer zeigen;</i></p> <p><i>Wenn, wo die andern Zeichen alle schweigen, Man doch in Farben zarten Sinn ergründet, Wenn Stolz und Neid dem Gelben sich verbündet, Wenn Hoffnung flattert in den grünen Zweigen:</i></p> <p><i>So brach ich wohl mit Grund in meinem Garten Die Blumen aller Farben, aller Arten Und bring sie dir, zu wildem Strauß <u>gereiht</u>:</i></p> <p><i>Dir ist ja meine Lust, mein Hoffen, Leiden, Mein Lieben, meine Treu, mein Ruhm, mein Neiden, Dir ist mein Leben, dir mein Tod <u>geweiht</u>.</i></p>	<p><i>If bushes and flowers have different meanings, If love is ignited in a rose, Forget-me-nots' name announces their quality, <u>Lorberry</u> is for glory, cypresses for sadness;</i></p> <p><i>If, where the other signs are all silent, Then one can explore the delicate meanings in the colours, If pride and envy join forces in yellow, If hope flutters in green branches:</i></p> <p><i>So, I will break the ground in my garden, Flowers of all colours, all kinds, And bring them to you, arranged in a wild bouquet:</i></p> <p><i>You are my joy, my hope, my suffering, My love, my loyalty, my fame, my envy, My life is dedicated to you, my death is dedicated to you.</i></p>
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Figure 5.2: The text of ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ with an English translation by Tim Parker-Langston.

Narrated by its protagonist, the poem follows a wave of ecstatic, obsessive and exuberant romanticism. Reflections on flowers, colours and their fabled qualities in nature quickly give way to a crescendoing ardency, culminating in the conception of a grand gesture. In a surge of passion, the protagonist, who might be imagined as acting while thinking aloud, plans to destroy the beauty around them by liberating the flowers from their beds to create a wild and mismatched bouquet. This fervour peaks in a declaration that the object of their affections embodies all the beauty of the natural world and must receive this fittingly extravagant gift.

The poem structures this emotional arc across three distinct expressive climates. The opening pair of stanzas are cerebral and ponderous, with simmering romantic undertones. In the third, the speaker’s ardency begins to galvanise, with thoughts and words giving way to action. This grounds the poem in a present moment, characterised by an excitement and hopefulness. The final stanza conjures an image of the protagonist wildly gathering and presenting a mismatched bunch of manically harvested flowers, with an intensity that is almost uncontrolled.

²²⁹ Aisling Kenny, “Josephine Lang’s Goethe, Heine and Uhland Lieder: Contextualizing Her Contribution to Nineteenth-Century German Song”. (PhD diss., National University of Ireland Maynooth, 2010), 108.

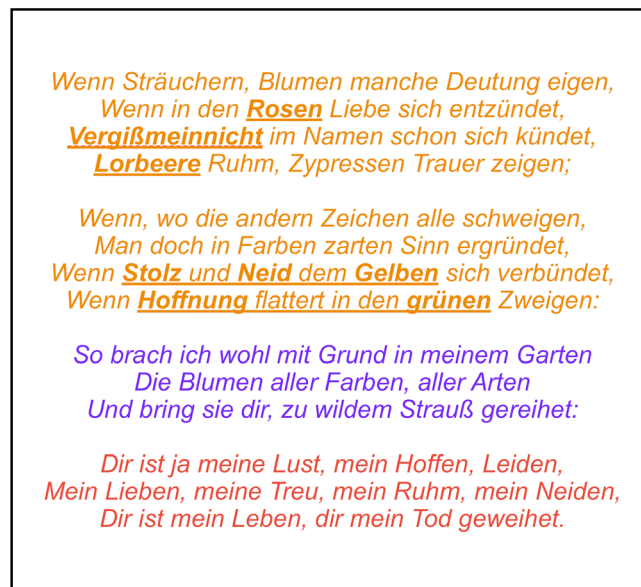
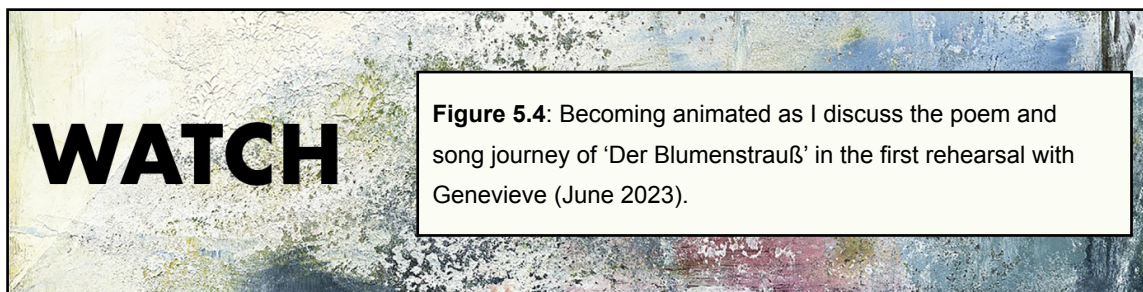


Figure 5.3: ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ text with annotations reflecting the intensifying ardency.

This poem evoked a competing visceral response in me, reflected as I relate the poetic journey to Genevieve in our first rehearsal ([Figure 5.4](#)).



These three emotional temperatures are supported in Fanny’s setting of ‘Der Blumenstrauß’. She employs a through-composed form, adapting the four stanzas into a triadic AA:B:C structure that builds in intensity throughout. The emotional narrative of the poem is also reflected in the tessitura of the vocal writing, which gradually rises as the text becomes more impassioned. In a divergence from stylistic expectations, the tessitura of the concluding section makes demands on singing practice that exceed that expected of an amateur domestic musician (the presumed forces). The harmonic language is less settled than in ‘Die sanften Tage’, reinforcing the text’s emotional vitality. Destabilization of the tonic harmony underscores the protagonist’s romantic expressions and their slightly manic shifts between contrasting emotional states.

[Figure 5.5](#) presents a simple harmonic analysis of ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ that reflects a more complex harmonic structure.

It is in performance that the emotional crescendo of Uhland’s evocative poem takes on its most visceral dimensions—and where the qualities of Fanny’s setting are most fully realised. The intensification of passion is conveyed through subtle compositional shifts, primarily in the piano texture, which in turn alter the dimensions of the singing body. The brimming ardour of the poetic voice is channelled through expansive, physically generous vocal lines.

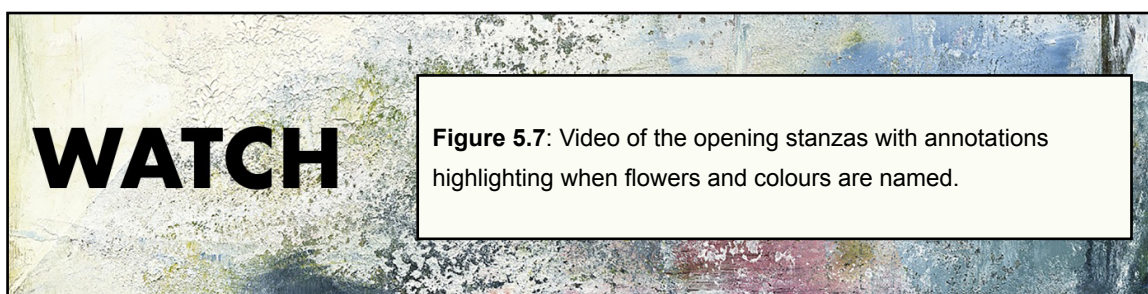
5.3 Die Blumen

The opening stanzas of this poem situate its speaker mid-contemplation. They list the poetic qualities of flowers and colours that surround them: the rose, which “ignites love”; forget-me-nots, who “announce themselves”; proud laurels and grieving cypresses (see [Figure 5.6](#)).

*Wenn Sträuchern, Blumen manche Deutung eigen,
Wenn in den **Rosen** Liebe sich entzündet,
Vergißmeinnicht im Namen schon sich kündet,
Lorbeere Ruhm, **Zypressen** Trauer zeigen;

Wenn, wo die andern Zeichen alle schweigen,
Man doch in **Farben** zarten Sinn ergründet,
Wenn Stolz und Neid dem **Gelben** sich verbündet,
Wenn Hoffnung flattert in den **grünen** Zweigen:*

Figure 5.6: Text for stanzas 1—2 with annotations highlighting the named flowers and colours.



Fanny responds to these contrasting poetic images with understated variations of melodic quality, in keeping with the Second Berlin Lieder School aesthetic.

Figure 5.8 shows a musical score for a song. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is common time (C). The score consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "ei - gen, Wenn in den Ro - sen Lie - be sich ent - zün - det, Ver -".

Figure 5.8: Fanny's setting of "Wenn in den Rosen Liebe sich entzündet".

Figure 5.9 shows a musical score for a song. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is common time (C). The score consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "zün - det, Ver - giß - mein - nicht im Na - men schon sich".

Figure 5.9: Fanny's setting of "Vergiße mein nicht im Namen schon sich kündigt".

Figure 5.10 shows a musical score for a song. The key signature is G major (one sharp) and the time signature is common time (C). The score consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "kün - det, Lor - bee - re Ruhm, Zy -".

Figure 5.10: Fanny's setting of "Lorbeere Ruhm".

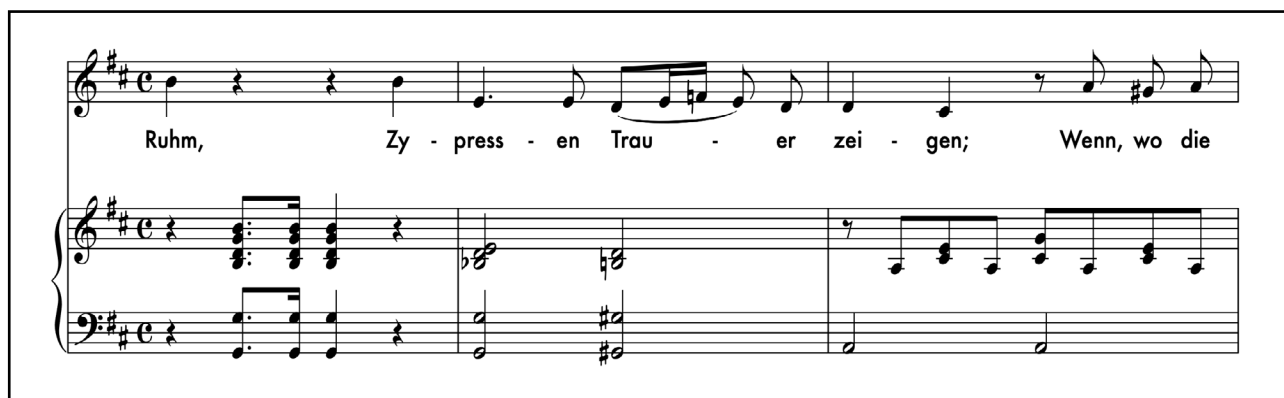


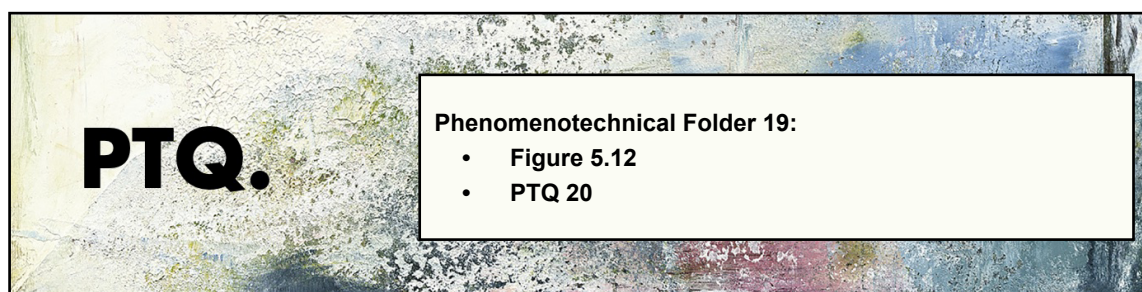
Figure 5.11: Fanny's setting of "Zypressen Trauer zeigen".

Although these musical variations appear subtle, their differences are pronounced through technical responses. Each poetic nuance and melodic fragment cultivates its own distinct sense of embodiment in the singing body, which deftly adjusts to realign with each new phrase.

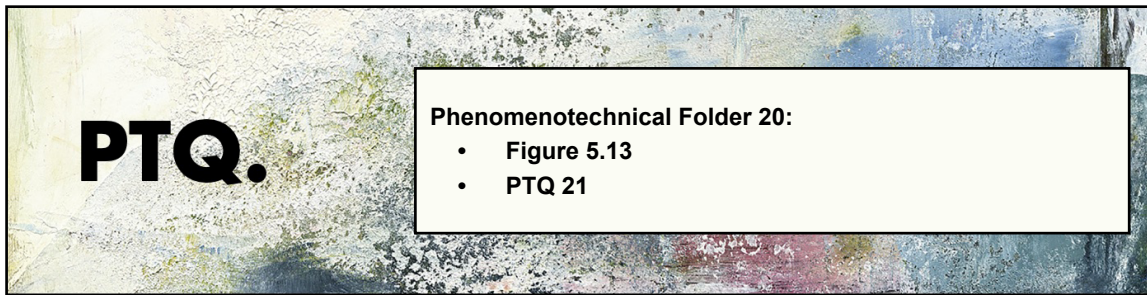
"Wenn in den Rosen Liebe sich entzündet..."

Uhland portrays the rose as a symbol of kindling love. Though subtly set in Fanny's song, "Rosen" takes on a greater expressive significance by means of an appoggiatura.

This, as discussed in [Case Study 1](#), manifests a gathering of expression, intention and physicality. In this instance, the appoggiatura takes on a further depth of expression owing to its position in the bar (on the downbeat) and the melodic approach. By rising up to the appoggiatura from the lower register of the voice, there is a richness of tone, as the timbre carries aspects of the preceding tessitura.

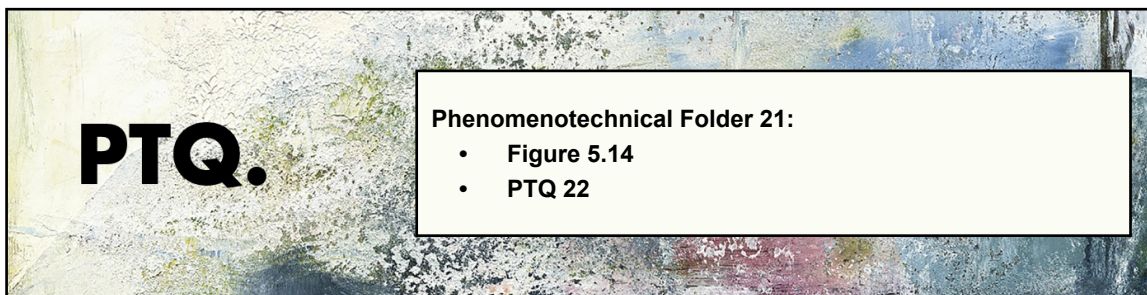


This richness of the "***Rosen***" is the spark that ignites the expression of love. As the phrase unfolds, this increased valence of the emotional quality is embodied across a series of tethered, head-shaking quavers.



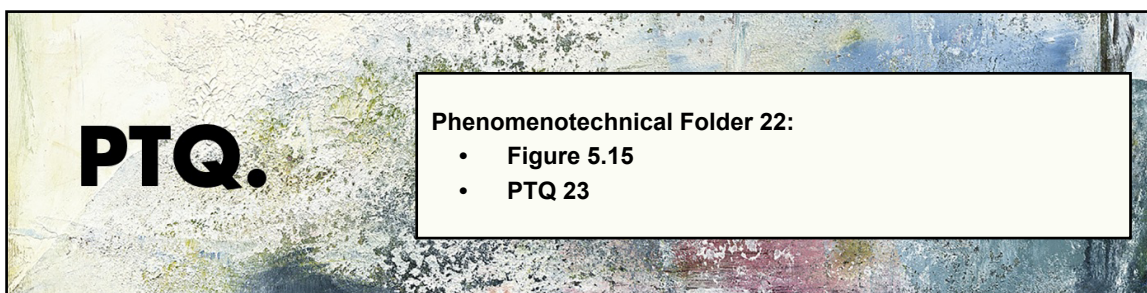
“Vergißeinnicht im Namen schon sich kündet...”

Uhland’s speaker jokes that the poetic significance of Vergißeinnicht (forget-me-nots) is made clear by their name. The vocal approach to the light, tripping descending triplet quavers of *“im Namen schon sich kündet...”* reflects this humorous quality, standing in contrast to the exuberant rising minims and broad melodic arc of the preceding ‘Vergißeinnicht’. This musical punchline is sung with playfulness, as if laughing to oneself.



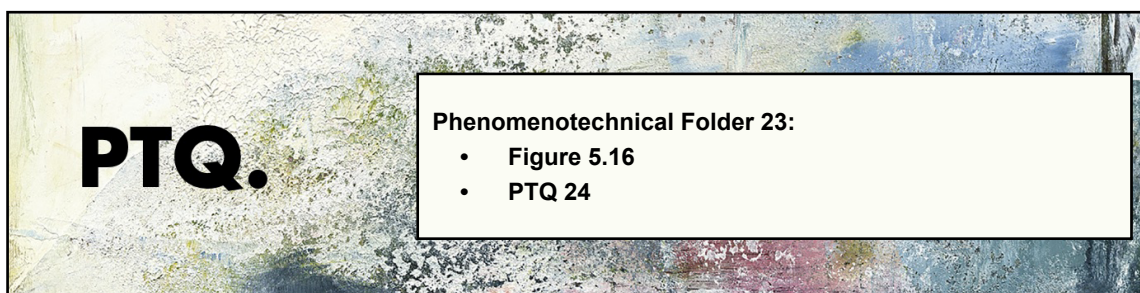
“Lorbeere Ruhm...”

The laurel (Lorbeere) is characterised by the word *“Ruhm”*, meaning glory or pride. A pair of stabbing chords, reminiscent of an orchestral recitative accompaniment, announce the tree before the previous line has a chance to settle. The singer must then leap an octave, launching into a vocal line that also recalls the style of recitative. The unprepared, intrusive quality of this colour change—though initially disorienting—facilitates an embodiment of *Ruhm* in a triumphant phrase that crashes in unapologetically.



“Zypressen Trauer zeigen...”

The cypresses (Zypressen) undergo a similarly sudden and dramatic shift in emotional temperature. Longer note values in the chordal piano part create a space that accommodates this change, while also marking the first significant disruption of the perpetual quaver motion. The tonal colour here aligns with the sombre connotations of the cypresses and the vowel “**Trau-**”, emphasised by a melisma, evokes a distinctly mournful quality.



The degree of contrast in the sung embodiment of “*Vergißmeinnicht*”, “*Lorbeere*”, and “*Zypressen*” demands a swift realignment of the technical apparatus. Fanny’s musical setting does not permit much space or time for its singer, who must navigate these technical realignments in rapid succession. The negotiations of these moments of reorientation are illustrated via annotations in figures [5.17—5.20](#).

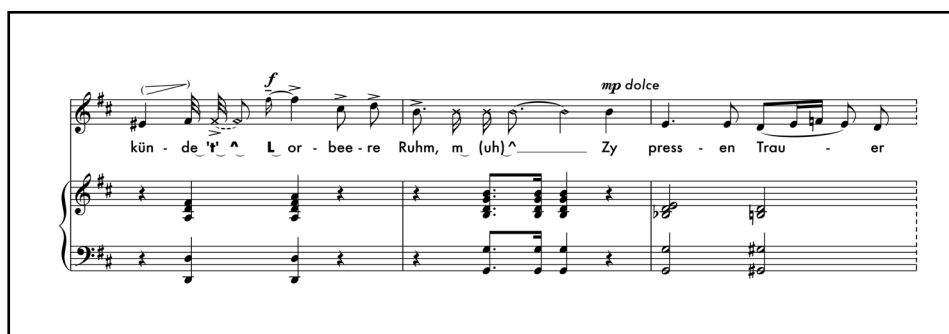
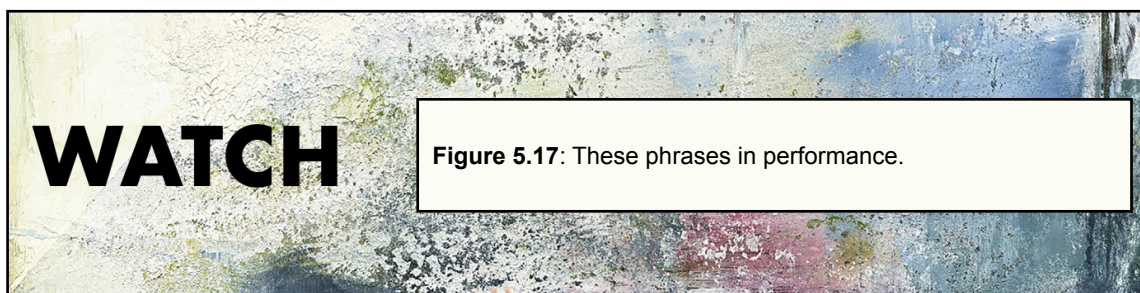
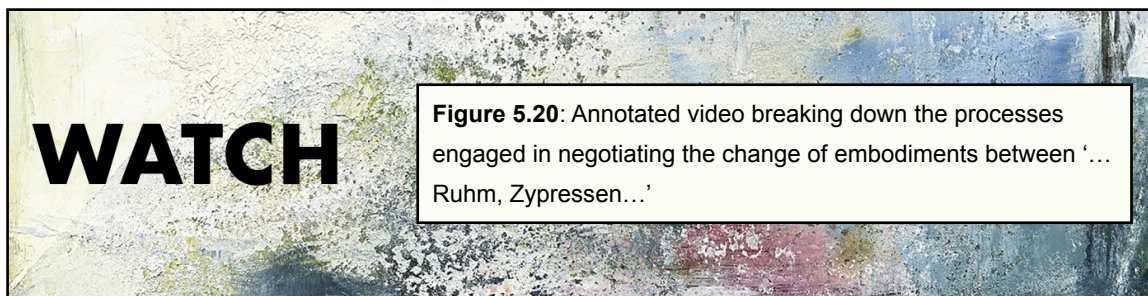
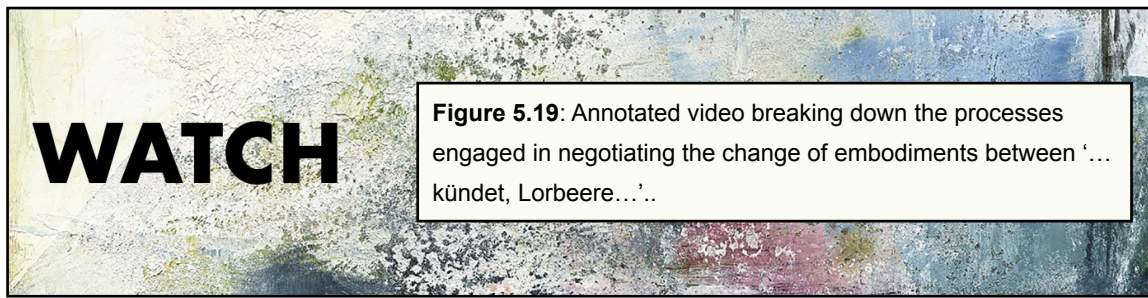


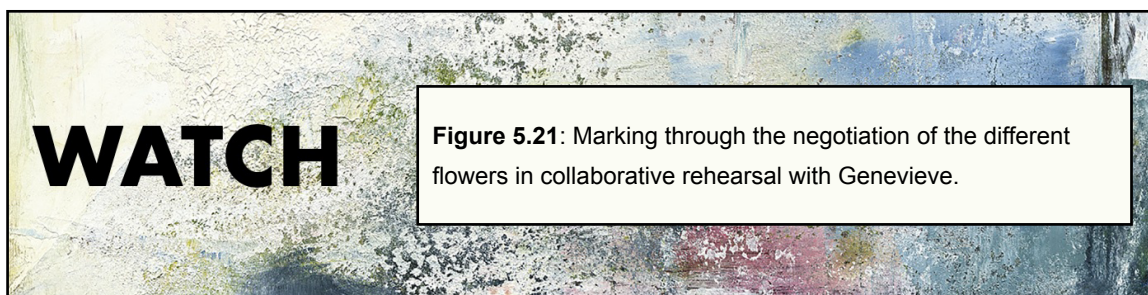
Figure 5.18: Notated representation of the breaths (^), consonant placement and dynamics/articulation employed in negotiating this moment (with audio from PureGold performance).



5.4 Qualities of movement

Each emotional temperature in the song can be defined by its quality of movement and the dynamic of the relationship between piano and voice. The most significant contributor to this is the changes in piano figuration, which mark each tier of the building intensity.

The first section is the most settled in tempo and phrase direction. Only mild rubato is needed, as the rocking quaver figures in the right hand, over the settled minims in the bass, provide the necessary flexibility to navigate the distinct technical responses to each flower’s description fluidly, with piano and voice moving as one. Though understated, this rhythmic flexibility is integral to singing this section, while also foreshadowing the bolder use of this flexible parameter in sections to come. [Figure 5.21](#) is taken from the first rehearsal with Genevieve, in which I am captured articulating this idiomatic quality of movement.

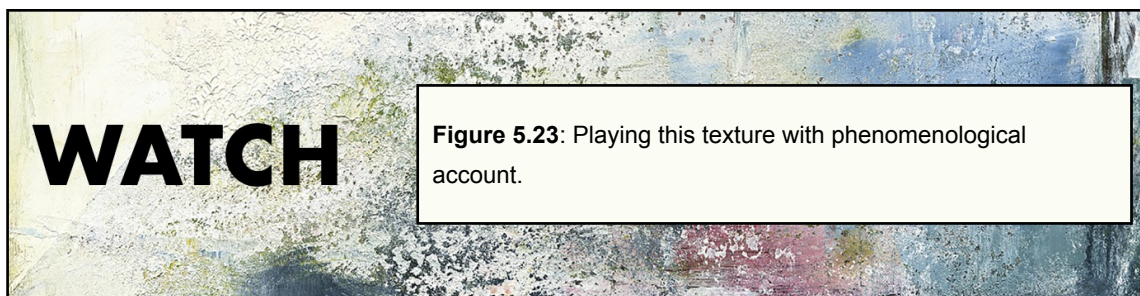


5.5 *So brach ich wohl mit Grund in meinem Garten*

The central idea of the poet's musing crystallises by the end of the first two stanzas and they resolve to act. This pivotal moment marks an intensification, which Fanny underscores with a new texture. The piano figuration shifts from the rocking broken chords supporting the florid melodic movement to more insistent pulsing rhythms in the right hand. Meanwhile the left hand descends into a deeper, more resonant register, expanding the song's soundworld and grounding it with a resolute quality.

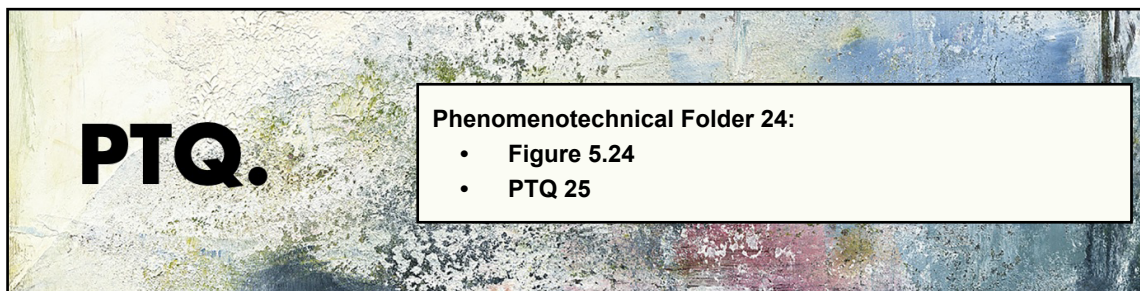


Figure 5.22: The change of piano texture that marks the transition between emotional states in both poem and song.



The remembrance of this embodied dichotomy when playing the piano shapes my technical response as a singer. I conceive the piano texture here as a reflection of the character's inner life, experiencing the unfolding music as if it were internal to my own body. In turn, the inherent tension between the opposing qualities of momentum and resistance identified in playing is reflected in singing.

The momentum is cultivated through sensory imagery, in which I imagine a force at work on my body, resulting in a perceived physical response:



Resistance shapes my technical response to “*so brach ich wohl mit Grund...*”. I sing this line as if physically enacting the action it describes—breaking the ground with a shovel—first pressing down into the earth, then levering the soil loose. I imagine the weight of the earth that must be overcome to complete the motion. As shown in [Figure 5.24](#), my hands quite literally mimic this act in performance.

An increased liberality of rubato is another key characteristic of this heightened emotional passage. This is most clearly illustrated in the singing of a melodic figure—a series of five quavers tracing the contour of a turn, followed by a larger rising interval ([Figure 5.25](#))—which is introduced for the first time in this section.

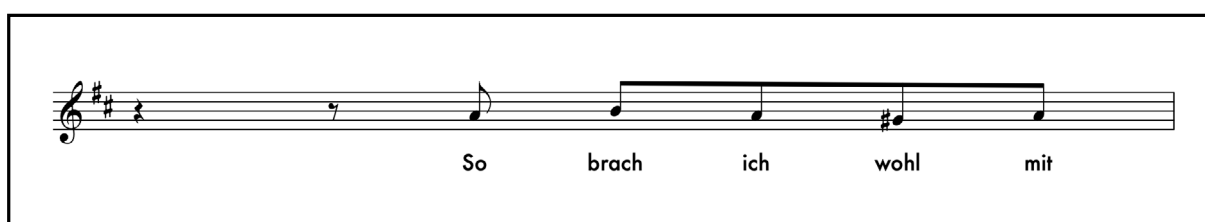


Figure 5.25: Five-note ‘turn’ motif.

This musical gesture possesses a sense of elasticity: it is pushed and pulled in different directions—first stretched to build tension, then released in a surge into the final notes, propelling the phrase to its conclusion. This unsettled gesture churns up the emotional intensity, anticipating the ardent climax of the song and introduces an impulsive quality to the characterisation.

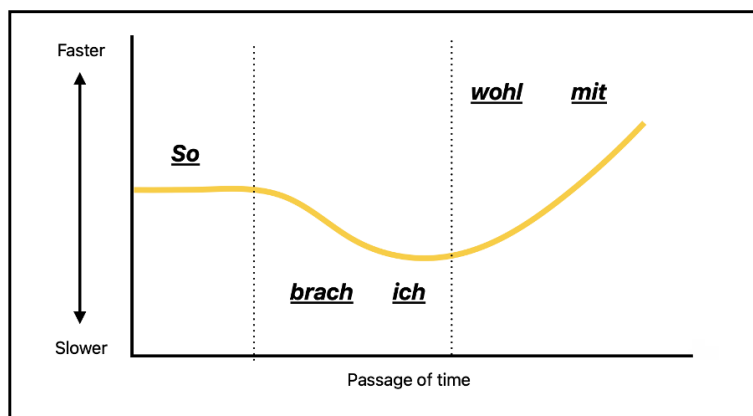
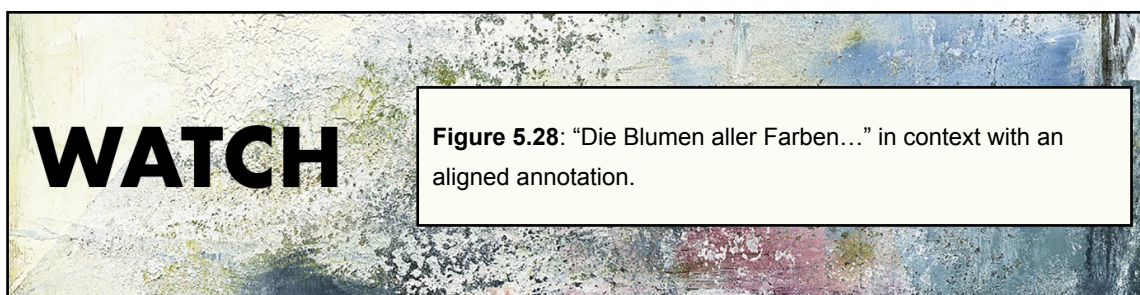
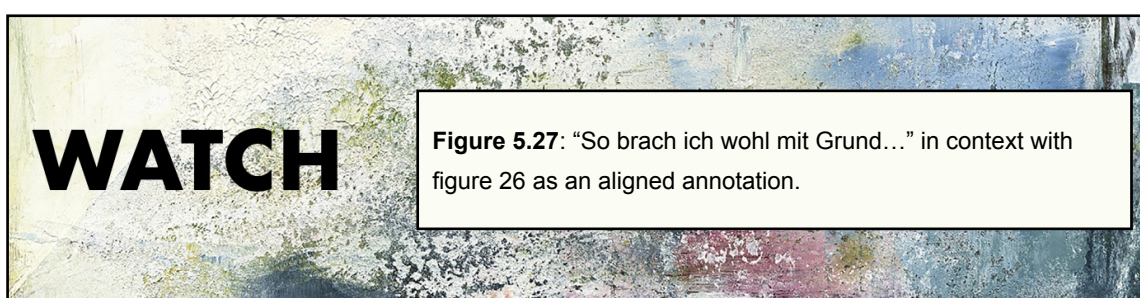
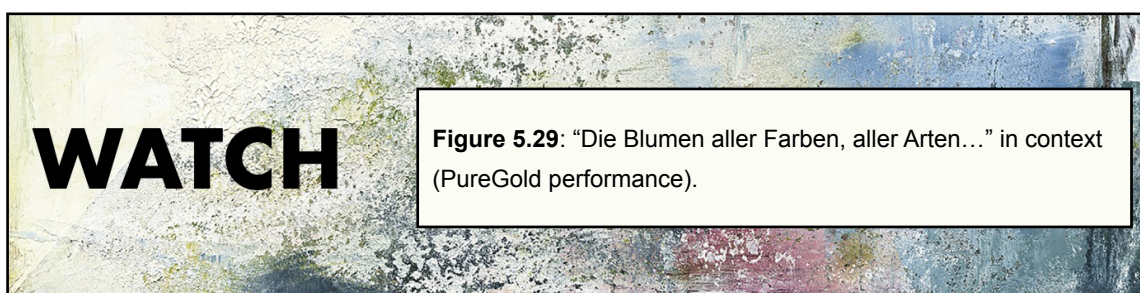


Figure 5.26: Graph depicting the contour of the rubato associated with the five-note ‘turn’ motif.



The wonderfully evocative line that closes this B section is also marked by rhythmic irregularity, reflecting the protagonist’s emerging manic tendencies. I launch into this phrase, emphasising the asymmetry of the dotted rhythm and negotiating the register change with a deliberate sense of unwieldiness.

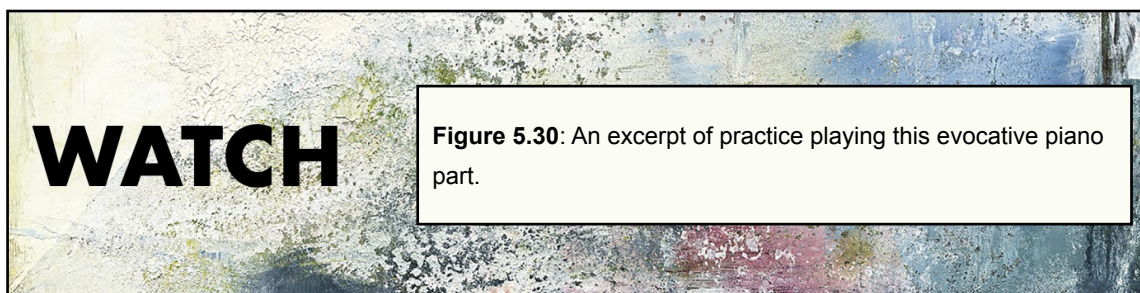


5.6 *Dir ist ja meine Lust, mein Hoffen, Leiden...*

In the final stanza, having gathered their wild bouquet, the protagonist offers each flower as a symbol of their beloved's qualities. This unsettled, almost wild ardour is conveyed through an irregular, untethered quality of movement, as the piano bursts into pulsing homophonic quavers. These insistent chords—further destabilised by the absence of grounding bass notes and irregular harmonic shifts—create a push-and-pull effect, forming hairpin-like temporal contours. I have found this rhythmic gesture to be commonplace in Fanny's music. From my earliest instances of practice, at a point where I had no conception of how her music might function beyond my knowledge of Felix's, I found myself compelled to take liberalities with tempo, not least in response to a *surging* quality of the music movement, as if the elements of melody, harmony, rhythmic impetus, dynamics and tempo had a shared directionality. I later discovered Larry R. Todd's reference to a rare performance direction described by Fanny in the piece *Allegro ma non troppo in F Minor*, where the performer is instructed to *accelerando* and *ritardando* in line with the notated crescendo and diminuendo hairpins.²³⁰

“First, the performer is to interpret the tempo flexibly, presumably in a type of rubato—the rhythmic groupings are not literal but elastic, now pressing forward, now restrained. Traditionally used to control dynamics, the hairpins regulate instead a constantly shifting sense of rhythmic energy and abatement. Second, the question arises whether this unusual rhythmic experiment was unique to the *Allegro in F Minor* or representative of Fanny's general performance practice”.²³¹

This instance in ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ is one of many that I see as supporting Todd's gentle hypothesis. Though not expressed through notated hairpins, there is a flexibility and *togetherness* of the technical parameters in expressing this gesture, which in this song takes on a quality of fizzing rushes of endorphins.

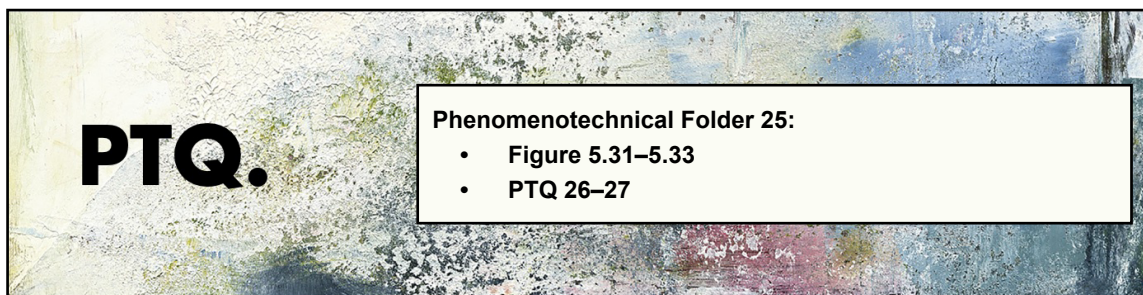


²³⁰ Todd, Fanny Hensel, 102. Fanny made an editorial marking here which reads: “This piece must be performed with many changes in tempo, but always gently, without jerking. The signs < > stand for *accelerando* and *ritardando*”.

²³¹ Todd, Fanny Hensel, 102

The onset of this evocative movement is prepared by “*dir ist ja meine...*”. This phrase is a melodic variation on the five-note motif of “*so brach ich wohl mit...*”. Anticipating the exuberant passage to come, the elasticity of this gesture is stretched to its limit and sung almost allargando—brimming with a mounting pressure that finally bursts forth, releasing explosively into the closing inundation.

“*Dir ist ja meine Lust...*” launches into the first of two expansive phrases, which are shaped with the surging movement of the piano chords, as if these reflected the protagonist’s physical, adrenalised state. The lines sweep into a higher tessitura, intensifying the visceral qualities of the poetic expressions. This physical valence is sustained to the end of the song, with only brief moments of cooling off, such as the first iteration of “*Dir ist mein Leben, dir mein Tod...*”, which serve as moments of repose—a chance to regather energy in this tirade of emphaticisms. The song ends with climactic high notes, returning time and time again to the demanding tessitura of the final section.



5.7 *Zu wildem Strauß...*

By examining the technical responses to the poetic narrative and its tiered emotional crescendo, alongside the varying qualities of movement that emerge through Fanny’s piano figuration variations, ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ not only matches but also emphasises the emotional vigour of the Uhland text.

Unlike ‘Die sanften Tage’, ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ was initially slow to reveal its musical qualities in practice. By identifying the evolving role of rubato and gesture throughout the song and pushing my technical responses to their extremes, the piece has revealed another dimension of the young Fanny’s songwriting. Fittingly, the song exudes a youthful energy, with outpourings of raw, visceral emotion that conjure an image of the 17-year-old Fanny playing and perhaps singing this piece in her family home during the summer of 1822.

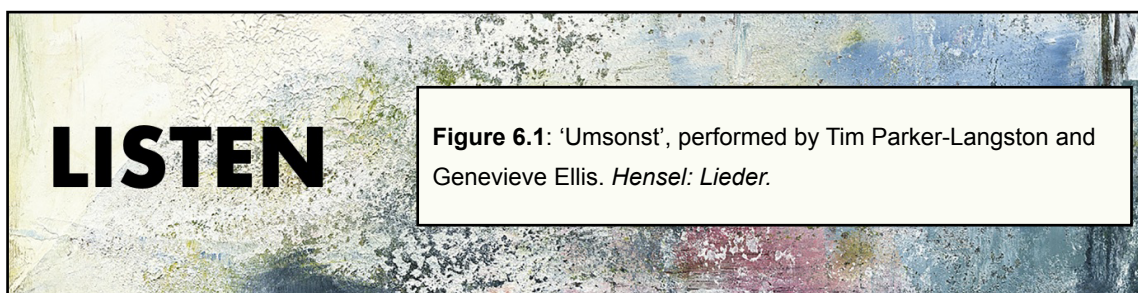
6. 'Umsonst'

'Umsonst', H-U 206

Composed by Fanny Hensel (born Mendelssohn), 24th July 1827.

Poem written by Johann Heinrich Voß.

- [Score](#)
- [Autograph Manuscript](#)
- [Recording](#)



6.1 'Umsonst'

This final case study explores 'Umsonst', a song which occupies only two staves in the autograph manuscript—totalling just 14 bars of written music and lasting little over 40 seconds (see [Figure 6.2](#)).²³² Despite these miniature dimensions, 'Umsonst' leaves a significant impression. Like 'Die sanften Tage' and 'Der Blumenstrauß', it exemplifies how a song that appears compositionally simple ought not to be overlooked. Singing 'Umsonst', I experience a claustrophobic restlessness, which emerges from the technical negotiations of a restrictive vocal tessitura, rhythmic tensions between voice and piano, irregular telescopic phrase lengths and unusually placed rests.

Despite its brevity, 'Umsonst' delivers such emotional and musical impact that it was unquestionably included in the recording project [Hensel: Lieder](#). Preparations for the recording, however, took an unexpected turn upon the discovery that the text in Fanny's autograph set only the first stanza of a longer, three-stanza poem—'Besorgniß' by Johann Heinrich Voß.

The full poem depicts a compelling narrative. A lover, somehow separated from their partner,

²³² Fanny Hensel, 52 Musikstücke (22.07.1827), RISM A2-Nummer 1001031606, StaBiKat (ppn digital): [1012783693](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:5:1-63863-p0010-9), Mendelssohn-Archiv, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, Germany.

laments to the moon as for a fourth consecutive night of waiting, the longed-for reunion appears as if it will not materialise.²³³ Hope of being reunited now all but disintegrated, the protagonist rails bitterly against the moon's shining beams, which silver their waiting place. Across the three stanzas, impatience and disappointment give way to a full-blown anxiety, as the protagonist imagines the worst.

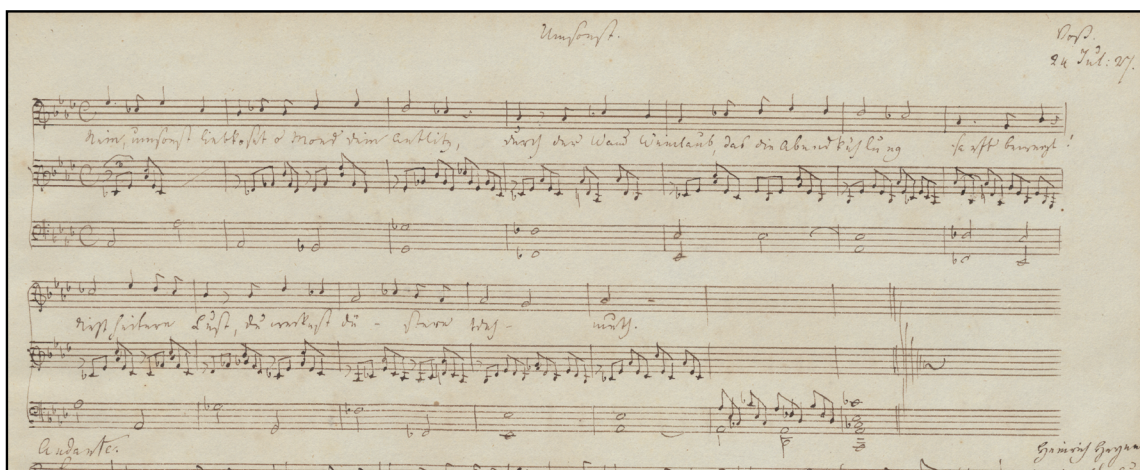


Figure 6.2: Autograph manuscript of 'Umsonst', held at the Berlin Staatsbibliothek.

<p>Nein, umsonst liebkoest, o Mond, dein Antlitz Durch der Wand Weinlaub, das die Abendkühlung Sanft bewegt! Nicht heitere Lust, du weckest. Düstere Wehmuth!</p>	<p>No, in vain, o moon, you show your face, Through the wall of vine leaves That are gently moving in the cool evening. No, clear air. You awaken gloomy melancholy!</p>
<p>Schon durchliefst dreimal mit gelöschter Fackel Du die Bahn, dreimal in erneutem Vollglanz; Und mir trug kein Lüftchen von meinem Brückner Gruß und Verkündung!</p>	<p>Three times already the night torch has extinguished, Three times you shone in full glory along this path; Yet no breeze Has carried a greeting Or proclamation from my love to me.</p>
<p>Hat ihn Trübsinn etwa geschweigt, und Krankheit? Oder ach! (schnell hülle Gewölk dein Antlitz!) Schimmerst du, fälschlicher Mond, auf seinen Nagenden Grabstein?</p>	<p>Has the gloom silenced him, or sickness? Or ah! (Clouds cover your ears!) Do you shimmer false smiling moon, Upon his gnawing tombstone?</p>

Figure 6.3: Voß' 'Besorgniß' with an English translation by Tim Parker-Langston. The stanza set as 'Umsonst' is highlighted in bold type.

This evocative poem, combined with the raw emotional potency of the single stanza set by Fanny, inspired a speculative approach: a new arrangement of the song that extends 'Umsonst' to incorporate Voß's complete poem. Treating Fanny's setting as though it were strophic, I reimagined the song to accommodate all three stanzas. The recording and score of this arrangement are linked on [page 104](#) at the beginning of this case study.

233 J.H. Voß, A. Voß, F.E.T. Schmid, Tischbein and C. Mayer. *Sämmtliche Poetische Werke Von Johann Heinrich Voss* (Müller, 1835), 118. https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=f_hjAAAACAAJ.

In this case study, I first identify the musical elements in ‘Umsonst’ that evoke an embodied sense of unrest and claustrophobia, as experienced prior to the creation of the new arrangement. I then explore the arrangement itself, along with the insights that emerged from this speculative, technical engagement with Fanny’s autograph manuscript.

6.2 Johann Heinrich Voß

The text of ‘Umsonst’ is taken from a poem by Johann Heinrich Voß, a German writer who is perhaps best known for his translations of Homer.²³⁴ He was a prominent member of the Göttinger Hainbund, a collective of poets associated with the era of “German sentimentality” that included Ludwig Höltz (whose works Fanny set in 13 solo Lieder).²³⁵ Between the winter of 1825–6 and the 8th August 1827, Fanny set 11 of Voß’ poems to music, reaffirming Citron’s observation of her tendency to devote sustained compositional energy to a single author over a concentrated period.²³⁶

Other notable composers who set texts by Voß include Johannes Brahms, Franz Schubert, Karl Loewe and Josephine Lang, as well as several figures closely connected to Fanny’s musical life—among them her teachers Karl Zelter and Ludwig Berger, her brother Felix and the esteemed Carl Weber. Of the composers who have set Voß’ poetry, only Johann Reichardt did so more frequently than Fanny.²³⁷

6.3 Fanny’s setting: ‘Umsonst’

‘Umsonst’ was composed in the summer of 1827, four and five years after ‘Die sanften Tage’ and ‘Der Blumenstrauß’ respectively.²³⁸ This passage of time was significant for Fanny, who was now a young woman of 21. Her brother Felix had become a published composer and musician of increasing renown (his grand tour would commence in just a few months’ time),²³⁹ and the musical life in and around the Mendelssohn house had been vibrant through the continued tradition of Sunday musical gatherings, as well as preparations for the *St. Matthew Passion* performance with

234 Johann Heinrich Voss, *Homers Odyssee* (Berfallers, 1781); *Homers Ilias*. Vol. 1 (Cotta, 1807); George Edwin Rines ed., *Encyclopedia Americana* (1920), s.v. “Voss, Johann Heinrich”.

235 Renate Hellwig-Unruh, *Fanny Hensel Geb. Mendelssohn Bartholdy: Thematisches Verzeichnis Der Kompositionen* (Vol. 1016: Kunzelmann, 2000); The Editors of *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, “Göttinger Hain” in *Encyclopedia Britannica* (May 24, 2007), <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Gottinger-Hain>.

236 Marcia Citron, “The Lieder of Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel”, *The Musical Quarterly* 69, no. 4 (1983): 577.

237 According to a review of the comprehensive open-access resource <https://www.lieder.net/>.

238 Hellwig-Unruh, *Fanny Hensel Geb. Mendelssohn Bartholdy: Thematisches Verzeichnis Der Kompositionen*, 2000.

239 Todd, *Fanny Hensel: The Other Mendelssohn* (Oxford University Press, 2009), 131.

the Singakademie in Berlin.²⁴⁰

Over the course of these three years, Fanny's Lieder output expanded by at least 85 songs, including six works later published under Felix's name in his Op. 8 and 9.²⁴¹ The compositional voice evident in 'Umsonst' reflects a galvanising of her songwriting—a maturation of the expressive qualities she began to explore in her settings of Uhland. This development is particularly evident in her [1826—27 settings of Christoph Heinrich Hölty](#), several of which are featured on the *Hensel: Lieder* album.²⁴²

Fanny's setting of Voß' stanza is rendered in a succinct yet potent 14 bars. As is typical of her unpublished works, she provides no indications of tempo, dynamics, or articulation. Also characteristic of this compositional period, the song has no written introduction, with both voice and piano entering together on the first beat.²⁴³ There is a short solo piano postlude.

The brevity and visually concise appearance of the score are somewhat deceptive, as by this point Fanny's compositional style is beginning to assert its independence from the aesthetic of the Second Berlin School. Whilst this is not necessarily evident in the vocal writing or piano textures, this development is reflected in the more ambiguous relationship to the tonal centre (see [Figure 6.4](#)).

Although the compositional picture is slightly more complex than in the Uhland settings explored in the previous case studies, the deeper impact of 'Umsonst' reveals itself in practice, where the unrest of the hopeless, impatient lover is vividly embodied. This embodiment can be traced to certain instabilities in Fanny's compositional response to Voß' text—namely:

- cross-rhythms between the melodic materials and piano figures;
- awkwardly placed rests;
- asymmetrical vocal phrases;
- a limited vocal tessitura.

240 Todd, Fanny Hensel, 73, 82, 87, 90, 97 & 113.

241 Todd, Fanny Hensel, 104–105, 143.

242 Hellwig-Unruh, Fanny Hensel Geb. Mendelssohn Bartholdy: Thematisches Verzeichnis Der Kompositionen, 2000.

243 Other examples of songs from 1827 without a written introduction include '[An die Ruhe](#)', H-U 201, '[Sehnsucht](#)', H-U 192 and '[Maigesang](#)', H-U 194.

The image displays a musical score for the song 'Umsonst' in A-flat minor. The score is divided into four systems, each featuring a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the vocal line, and the harmonic analysis is provided below the piano accompaniment.

System 1:

Vocal: 1. Nein, um-sonst lieb - ko - set, o Mond, dein Ant - litz

Piano: Ab minor: i VII/I VII⁷ v III

System 2:

Vocal: Durch der Wand Wein - laub, das die A - bend - küh - lung Sanft be - wegt!

Piano: i/vi Ger⁶ i⁶ V V/I i i/vi Ger⁶ V

System 3:

Vocal: Nicht hei - te - re Luft, du weck - est Dū - - - ste - re

Piano: i VI⁶ VII⁷ III⁶ i/vi Ger⁶

System 4:

Vocal: Weh - - - muth!

Piano: V₇ dim. 7th i i⁴ iv ii⁶ i

Figure 6.4: A simple harmonic analysis of 'Umsonst' (key signature changed to A \flat minor).

6.4 Piano and voice struggle

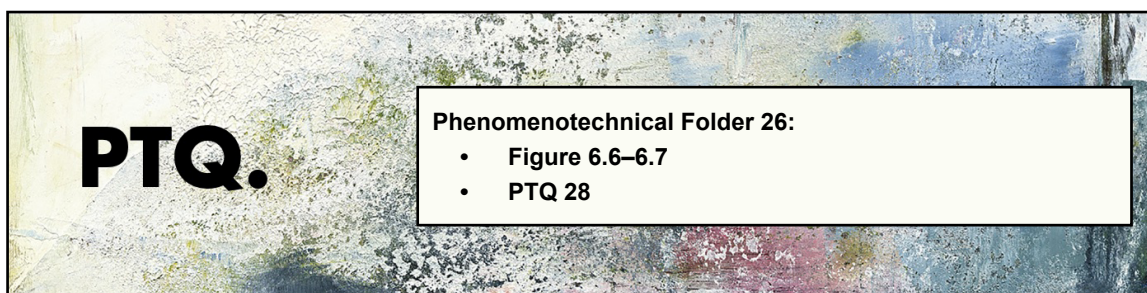
There is an inherent tension in performing ‘Umsonst’ as the vocal melodies contend with the independent rhythmic movement of the turbulent piano. While the piano part appears to serve an “accompanying” role, supporting the vocal line with regular arpeggiated figures, the undulating triplet figures of the right-hand battle with the pulsing duplet quavers of the vocal lines (see [Figure 6.5](#)).



The image shows a musical score for the song 'Umsonst'. It consists of two staves. The top staff is for the vocal line, written in a soprano clef, with the lyrics 'Nein, um - sonst lieb - ko - set, o Mond, dein .' underneath. The bottom staff is for the piano accompaniment, written in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The right hand of the piano part features a complex, undulating triplet figure, while the left hand plays a simpler, pulsing duplet quaver pattern. The key signature has five flats, and the time signature is common time (C).

Figure 6.5: Bars 1—2 of ‘Umsonst’, in which piano triplet rhythms contest with the duplet quavers of the vocal melody.

In practice, this struggle is conceived as an inner emotional turmoil, which the vocal utterances defiantly resist. This resistance is embodied in the technical negotiation of the duplet quavers—moments where the piano rhythms take on the quality of a literal force opposing the movement of the singing body.



The image shows a folder cover with a textured, abstract background in shades of blue, green, and yellow. On the left, the text 'PTQ.' is written in large, bold, black letters. On the right, there is a white rectangular box containing the text 'Phenomenotechnical Folder 26:' followed by a bulleted list: '• Figure 6.6–6.7' and '• PTQ 28'.

6.5 Rests

“Durch der Wand Weinlaub, das die Abendkühlung” presents another tension when performing ‘Umsonst’—Fanny’s placement of a rest in bar 4 unnaturally separates the clause.

There are numerous ways to approach this moment technically, with the rest either emphasised as a defining feature or smoothed over. I choose to harness the unusual rest to further highlight the rhythmic tension between voice and piano.

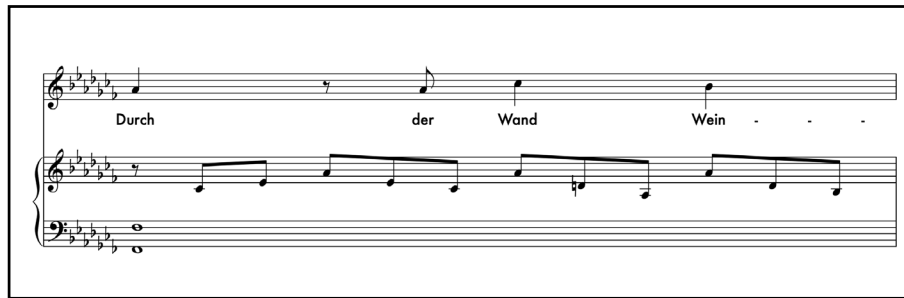
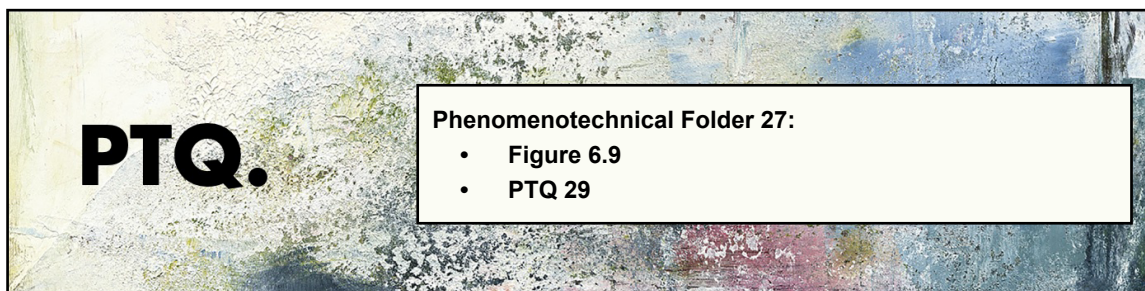


Figure 6.8: Fanny inserts an unexpected rest in the middle of this line (bar 4).



6.6 Phrase lengths

Voß’ first stanza consists of three lines of 11 syllables, followed by a final 5-syllable line. However, moments of enjambment disrupt the linguistic patterns, contradicting the visual symmetry of the printed text. As a result, the speaker must make decisions about phrasing, choosing whether to adhere to the poetic meter or to represent the language as spoken.

The apparent symmetry in Voß’ text is distorted further by Fanny’s musical setting, which adopts a telescopic 3–bar, 4–bar and 5–bar phrase structure (see [Figure 6.10](#)). Idiomatic technical responses are required to navigate this somewhat awkward melodic construction, introducing another layer of embodied instability.

3 bar phrase

1. Nein, um-sonst lieb - ko - set, o Mond, dein Ant - litz

Ab minor: i VII/I VII⁷ v III

4 bar phrase

Durch der Wand Wein - laub, das die A - bend - küh - lung Sanft be - wegt!

i/vi Ger⁶ i⁶ V V/I i i/vi Ger⁶ V

5 bar phrase

Nicht hei - te - re Luft, du weck - est Dü - - - ste - re

i VI⁶ VII⁷ III⁶ i/vi Ger⁶

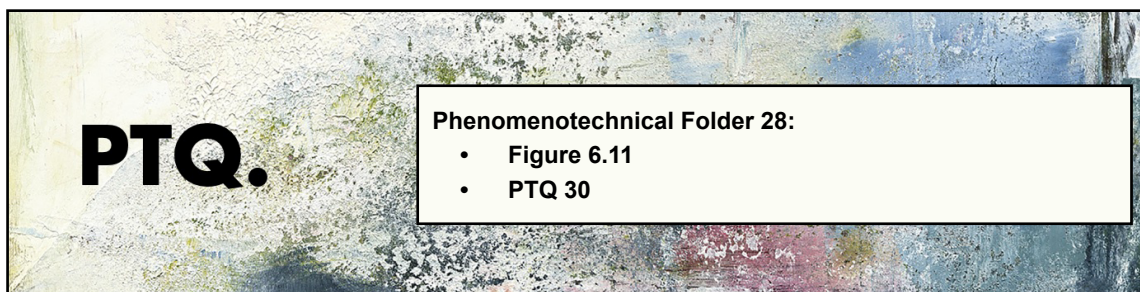
Weh - - - muth!

V₃ dim. 7th i i⁴ iv ii⁶ i

The figure shows a musical score in Ab minor (three flats) with a common time signature. It consists of four systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first system is a 3-bar phrase with the lyrics '1. Nein, um-sonst lieb - ko - set, o Mond, dein Ant - litz'. The second system is a 4-bar phrase with the lyrics 'Durch der Wand Wein - laub, das die A - bend - küh - lung Sanft be - wegt!'. The third system is a 5-bar phrase with the lyrics 'Nicht hei - te - re Luft, du weck - est Dü - - - ste - re'. The fourth system continues the 5-bar phrase with the lyrics 'Weh - - - muth!'. Roman numerals are placed below the piano accompaniment to indicate the harmonic structure for each phrase. The first phrase uses i, VII/I, VII⁷, v, and III. The second phrase uses i/vi, Ger⁶, i⁶, V, V/I, i, i/vi, Ger⁶, and V. The third phrase uses i, VI⁶, VII⁷, III⁶, i/vi, and Ger⁶. The fourth phrase uses V₃, dim. 7th, i, i⁴, iv, ii⁶, and i.

Figure 6.10: Annotated score figure demonstrating telescopic phrase lengths.

In the first occurrence of this idiomatic melodic extension, my technical approach is to surprise the listener by treating the second phrase as if it were going to unfold as a typical three-bar antecedent, before pointedly reengaging for “*Sanft bewegt!*”.



6.7 Register

The vocal part of ‘Umsonst’ is restricted to the narrow range of a minor sixth (G—E_b), confining my voice to a small portion of the middle register. The song’s upper limit (E_b) is established from the very first note and never surpassed. Phrase after phrase, the vocal line returns to this pitch, as if trying to break through this ceiling—but always, the gravitational pull of the tonic wins out. I imagine this as the protagonist having already reached their capacity for woe at the beginning of the song and being unable by no means to express themselves more vehemently.

Though it might seem that the song would be easier to sing with only a small range, this limitation, in practice, cultivates a sense of effortfulness. Singing within a restricted range makes it challenging to maintain a balanced tone, vocal freedom and flexibility, as the connection to the other registers of the voice is cut off.

Deprived of the lighter qualities of the upper register, the middle voice in ‘Umsonst’ becomes laboured, the register burdened with a dark weight that impairs vocal flexibility. Each pitch feels unusually distant and the E_b—treated as though it were the range’s uppermost note—feels disproportionately high. This phenomenon is abundant throughout, as phrases oscillate between the upper limit of E_b and a darker, chestier register—the ascent to the upper pitch weighed down by the pull of the lower. The phenomenon is evident from the very first line.

Nein, um-sonst lieb - ko - set, o Mond, dein Ant - litz

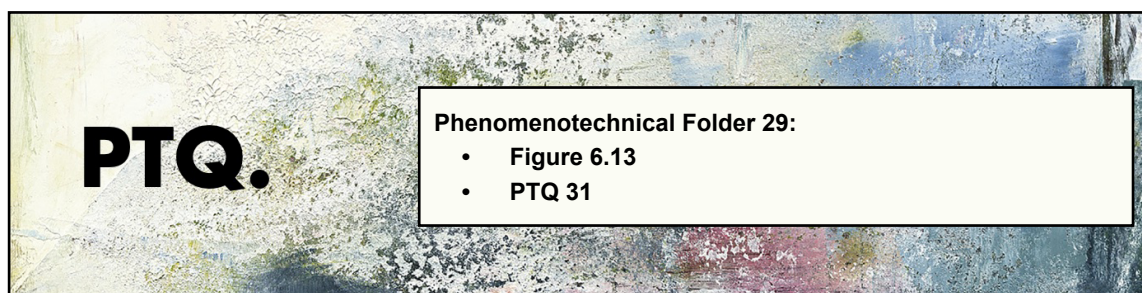
III

Durch der Wand Wein - laub, das die A - bend - kühl - lung Sanft be - wegt!

Nicht hei - te - re Luft, du weck - est Dū - - - ste - re

Weh - - - muth!

Figure 6.12: Annotated score highlighting the restrictive range of the song.



6.8 'Besorgniß'

The autograph manuscript for 'Umsonst' only includes the first stanza of Voß' 'Besorgniß', but it is possible to adapt the other two stanzas to Fanny's music. As identified in **Case Study 1**, only providing the written text for subsequent verses in a strophic song was a widespread practice across Fanny's scores. In these instances, she does not specify how the subsequent stanzas of the poetic text should be fitted to her composed strophe. Nor does she indicate where and how to repeat the text, or what musical qualities should be developed from verse to verse.

With a song like 'Umsonst', which show no signs of having considered for publication (unlike 'Anklänge' for example), it is impossible to know how Fanny herself regarded the manuscript to which we now have ready access. These entries in her music books could have served as a neat record of a completed composition, a preliminary sketch, or a work-in-progress.²⁴⁴ It is also possible that, due to limited space in her diary, Fanny recorded only the first strophe of a song—using the entry as a shorthand reference—supplemented in performance by a printed copy of the poem or by a separate engraved manuscript. The scarcity of documentation concerning Fanny's performance practice of her own songs (see [Chapter 2: Two Practitioners](#)) makes it difficult to determine whether this was the case with 'Umsonst', or with other songs that present similar circumstances (e.g., ['Wenn ich ihn nur habe', H-U 17](#)). My impression is that, owing to the assured quality of Hensel's hand, the precise use of paper space and the convincing musical qualities of the song itself, this song has been included in this manuscript book for posterity of a piece initially developed on papers now lost.

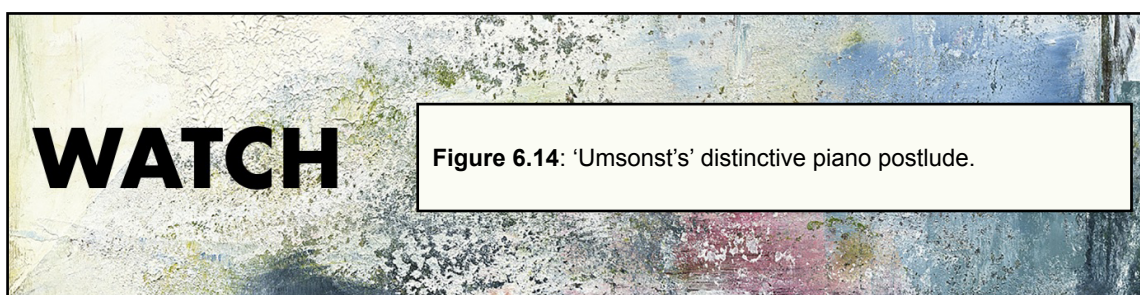
²⁴⁴ Laura Stokes raises concerns about publishing Fanny's complete scores, noting that "Hensel did not prepare the bulk of her music for publication (and, indeed, may never have considered that it might be made widely available)", making such efforts problematic. However, I believe this caution is addressed through the editorial decisions in my performance edition, which prioritize knowledge exchange and performance facilitation. By engaging her scores as outputs of practice rather than presenting them as fixed musical works, my methodology incorporates these reservations about Fanny's intentions. Laura Stokes, *Fanny Hensel: A Research and Information Guide* (Routledge, 2019), 21.

The possibility to treat ‘Umsonst’ as a strophic song was enticing. I found its musical qualities compelling and was eager to include the piece in my recording *Hensel: Lieder*, as well as in recital programmes. While a 40-second song can be an effective performance item in the right context, I was drawn to the opportunity to offer listeners a more immersive experience of this remarkable music. As such, I chose to embark on a speculative practice: performing ‘Umsonst’ with the complete text of Voß’s poem.

6.9 Strophic Arrangement

I set out to devise an arrangement of Fanny’s ‘Umsonst’ that incorporated all three stanzas of ‘Besorgniß’. My choices were primarily guided by the restlessness I had identified in my practice of the 14 written bars. The narrative arc—growing increasingly unsettled and anxious—proved an effective vehicle for sustaining this quality, with the song intensifying in parallel with the protagonist’s escalating distress.

In the autograph manuscript, the agitation in ‘Umsonst’ achieves its climax with the final piano bars, where a descending arpeggiated figure in the piano’s right hand, enriched by non-chord tones and inversions, forms a cascading melody that closes the song with feelings of bitterness and futility (see [Figure 6.14](#)).



Like ‘Die sanften Tage’, where the melodic piano postlude was more effective when executed sparingly, the thunderous piano ending of ‘Umsonst’ is performed only once in its entirety—at the close of Voß’ third stanza. In the previous two verses, the repeat begins earlier, cutting the written postlude short and creating seamless transitions from one verse to the next.

Nein, um - sonst lieb - ko - set, o Mond, dein Ant - litz

Durch der Wand Wein - laub, das die A - bend - küh - lung Sanft be - wegt!

Nicht hei - te - re Luft, du weck - est Dü - - - ste - re

Weh - - - muth!

Figure 6.15: Annotated score highlighting moments of melodic fragments that appear in the playing of the piano part.

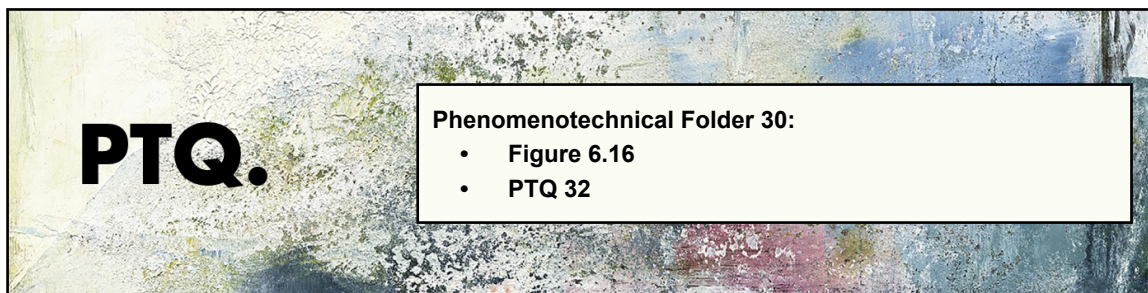
The placement of the repeat bar is different for each strophic transition. After verse two, it is delayed by a bar, teasing out a fragment of the evocative postlude without fully revealing its final impact. This approach resonates with the telescopic irregular phrases of Fanny's vocal phrases, reinforcing a sense of compositional instability and unrest.

6.10 Strophic variation

By performing 'Umsonst' as a strophic song, the transformative impact of an unfolding poetic text on repeated musical material reveals new interpretative possibilities and deepens our understanding of the song.

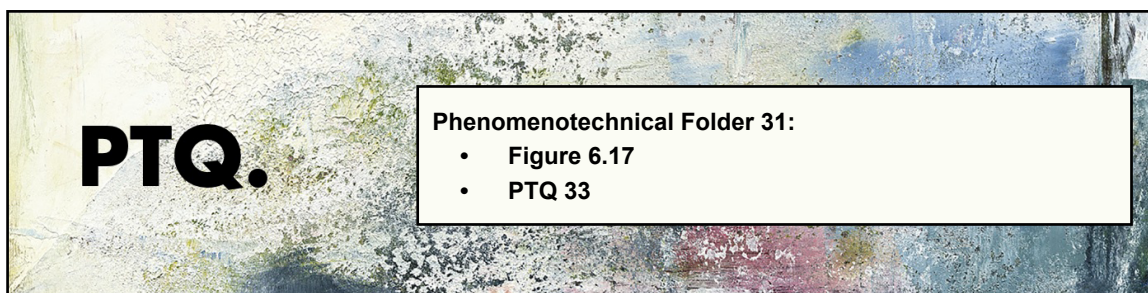
'Verse 1'

The first verse begins with an already distressed protagonist, speaking, perhaps even shouting, at the moon, the light of which escapes through vine-leaved walls. The juxtaposition of nature's beauty intensifies the woe and loneliness of the poet.



'Verse 2'

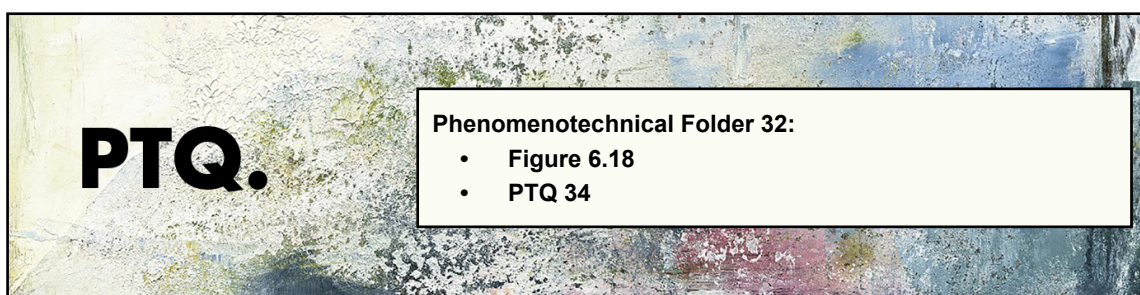
The second verse grows more agitated, the protagonist revealing that for three days now they have arrived at this place, where presumably a rendezvous had been anticipated. There is a bitterness in the accusations of the moon having shone in glory each night.



Und mir Trug...kein”

In the first verse, the unexpected lengthening of the second phrase—though surprising—aligns to some degree with Voß’s enjambment, lending it a degree of syntactical coherence. In this modified second verse, however, the extension of the vocal line at “*und mir trug...*” disrupts the poetic flow established by Voß, which ought to continue seamlessly as “*und mir trug kein...*”. This may even hint at why Fanny chose not to include the second stanza in her autograph—perhaps recognising that the strophic setting posed challenges in terms of textual underlay.

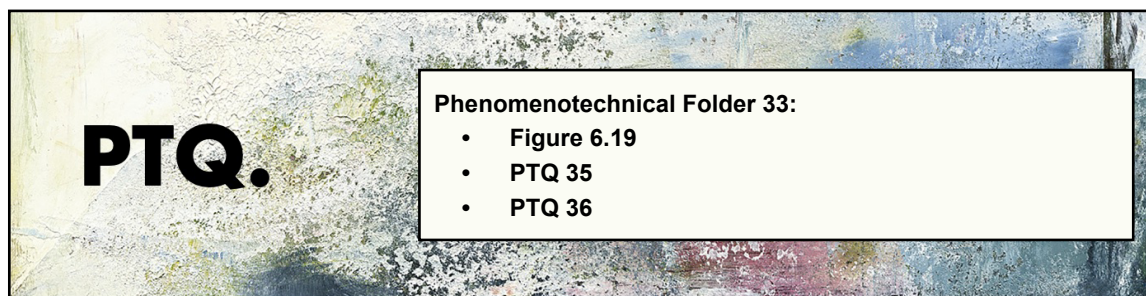
That being said, the unusual musical phrase structure of the first stanza introduces a degree of ambiguity that facilitates creative approaches without them feeling out of place. In this instance, the articulation of the final consonant in “trug” and the first consonant in “kein” is employed rhythmically to create an artificial join between the two fragments.



‘Verse 3’

Frustration and disappointment give way to panic: “What if something has happened to him?” The protagonist, increasingly unhinged, tells the clouds to cover their ears—as one might to children—before daring to question if the moonbeams are falling elsewhere on their beloved’s tombstone. The first pinprick of realisation that some ill may have befallen the missing lover coincides with bar 4 of Fanny’s setting.

Responding to the fear that their adored may have been struck by tragedy—or perhaps worse, abandoned them knowingly—the tone of the protagonist turns sour here, mirroring the accusatory tenor of the poem. This resentment is gathered together in the pause that separates the second and third lines. The unidiomatic rest here serves as a moment to take an emotionally charged, almost hateful breath, which is then released venomously into “**falsch-**”.



6.11 Cumulative effects

The descent into anger and resentment that emerges from the amalgamation of Fanny's 14-bar setting and Voß' poetic text results from an accumulation of factors: the distortion of the poetic meter, rhythmic unrest between piano and voice, irregularly extended phrases, odd punctuating rests and a claustrophobic narrow register. These elements together manipulate the singing body into an increasingly fraught state that mirrors the poetic descent.

By singing the entirety of Voß' poem, new permutations of these uncomfortable, gnawing embodiments are explored. The elongation of the original manuscript allows for Fanny's harmonic and melodic miniature to be experienced in a more immersive and evocative engagement.

As with 'Die sanften Tage', it is the real-time unfolding and emotional experience of these musicopoetic relationships in practice that reveal the song's power. This process brings its extreme emotional peaks into focus, deepening the engagement with the emotional landscape and fraught tensions embedded in the piece.

7. Reparative Acts: Resources

My case studies have demonstrated an epistemic depth encountered in three songs that, in a textual paradigm, might have been dismissed due to their apparent simplicity. The phenomenotechnical perspectives not only reveal the technical and emotional richness of these works but underscore the broader potential of practice-based research to uncover layers of meaning within Fanny Hensel's *Lieder*.

[‘Die sanften Tage’](#), a simple strophic song, cultivates a vulnerable emotional openness in singing, owing to the physicality and expansiveness of the melodic lines. These demands on the singing body emerge through the accumulation of three seemingly innocuous melodic devices: repeated pitches, appoggiaturas and melismas. As the poetic text unfolds, these elements evolve into highly contrasting expressions, with each musical repetition reimagined within the shifting context of the metaphorical arc of Uhland's lyrics.

[‘Der Blumenstrauß’](#) reveals its own physical qualities, characterised by an increasing ardour that eventually overflows into a series of almost wild sung declarations of love. Subtle shifts of texture and form profoundly shape this unfurling emotion.

[‘Umsonst’](#), a 14-bar miniature possesses an inherent unrest owing to conflicting poetic, compositional and technical forces. This song was explored in a speculative practice in which additional poetic text (not reflected in Fanny's autograph) was integrated in a novel arrangement to further explore this restless and claustrophobic embodiment.

Rather than standing out as hidden gems within the obscured repertoire, these three songs were selected from the 86 songs engaged with during an extensive practice because they typify the kinds of emergent knowledge that have characterised my broader work with Fanny's *Lieder*. In this chapter, I will outline the outputs of my practice throughout this doctorate, structured around patterns of technique similar to those identified in the case study songs.

In [Chapter 1: Reparative Practice Research](#), I positioned this practice research as reparative, not only because of the methodological renewal it represents, as demonstrated in the case studies, but also because the practice from which these “discovery-led” enquiries emerged was engaged

first and foremost as reparative action. The outputs of this PhD are described as reparative acts due to their tangible contributions toward addressing the significant gap in the performance and study of Fanny Hensel's unpublished and unsung songs.

This chapter presents an overview of these reparative acts, consolidated in the resource www.henselsongsonline.org and included in this research narrative as [Portfolio A—D](#).

7.1 www.henselsongsonline.org

www.henselsongsonline.org is an open-access web resource that houses the **first complete edition of Fanny Hensel's songs for solo voice and piano**, with links to recordings, autograph sources, curatorial elements and the materials needed for the study and performance of any of Fanny's songs. Central to the resource is the **SCORES** web page, which is structured after Renate Hellwig-Unruh's catalogue and presents entries for all of Fanny's solo song compositions chronologically. Each entry includes the catalogue number, title, date of composition, author of the poetic text and a series of interactive links. These provide the user access to downloadable PDF scores of individual songs in a variety of keys (* denotes the original) and the autograph manuscripts consulted in the editorial process (see [Figure 7.1](#)).

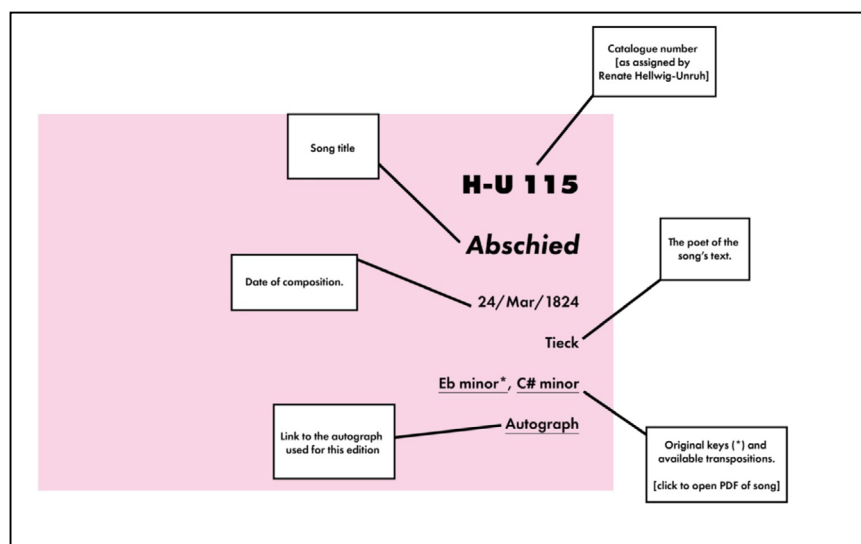


Figure 7.1: Image representing the component parts of each song entry in the www.henselsongsonline.org catalogue.

The entries are also linked to audio recordings of the song, taken either from *Hensel: Lieder* and the #HENSEL recordings, or from a curated playlist of other artists' recordings. Each song entry includes a comprehensive introduction to the piece. As the resource continues to develop,

translations of the poetic texts are gradually being added. Recent updates include the addition of curatorial features such as “*A Life in Practice*”, “*Did you know?*” and “*Editor’s Choice*” (see figures 7.2—7.4). The resource is also included in PDF format, along with all downloadable files, in the appendices of this research narrative. While the submission reflects the state of the site at the time of submission, the website will continue to be maintained beyond the end of this project.

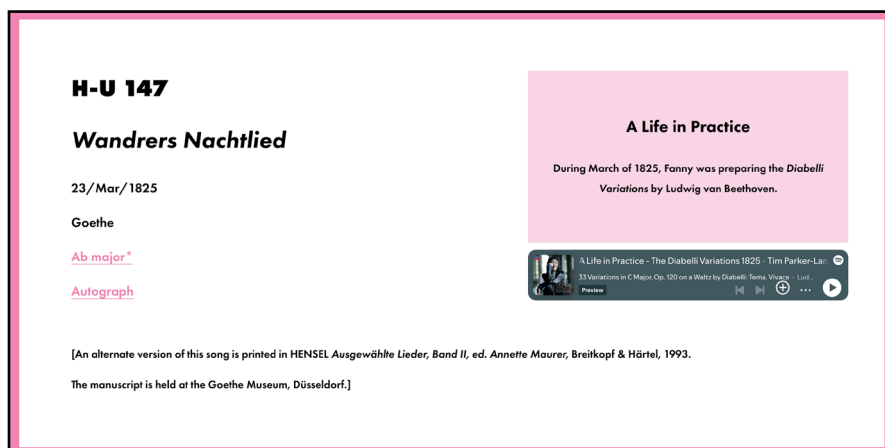


Figure 7.2: An example of A Life in Practice feature in the www.hensel songsonline.org catalogue.

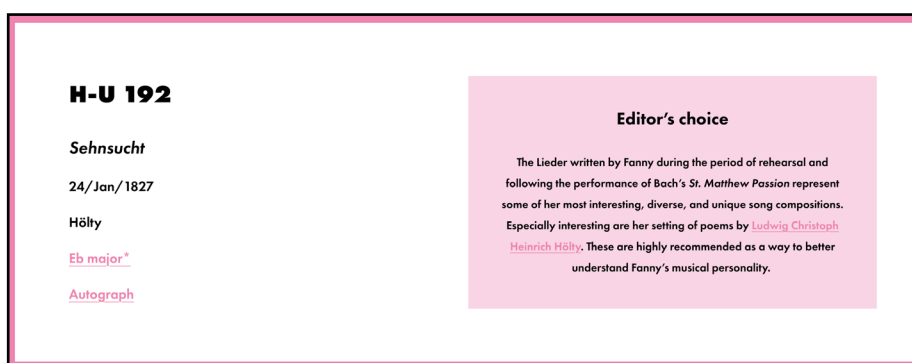


Figure 7.3: An example of Editor's Choice feature in the www.hensel songsonline.org catalogue.

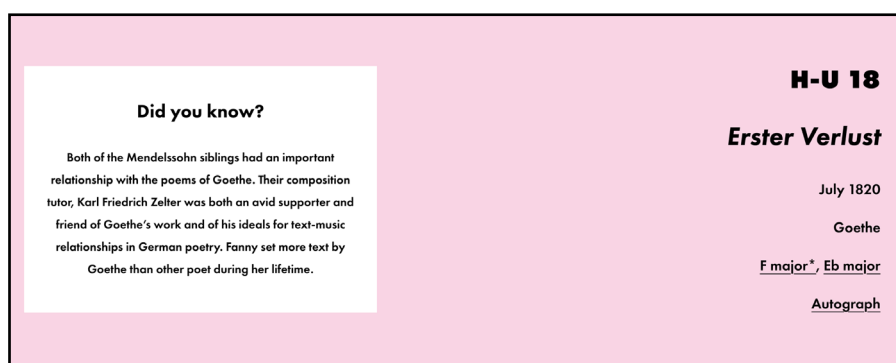


Figure 7.4: An example of Did you know? feature in the www.hensel songsonline.org catalogue.

7.1.2 Impact

www.henselsongsonline.org has already proved a valuable resource and has been engaged as a teaching tool in several higher education institutes. The resource was featured in *BBC Music Magazine* in a full feature about the project and has also appeared on the RISM website and in the recent film *Fanny: The Other Mendelssohn*.²⁴⁵ Hard copies of the sheet music edition have also been published and purchased by a number of leading music libraries and are distributed by Presto Music.²⁴⁶ The resource has recently been cited by Stephen Rodgers in the book *The Lied at the Crossroads of Performance and Musicology*.²⁴⁷ The work has been presented at a number of conferences.²⁴⁸

The website has had website traffic: 8.3k 6/7/24.

Hensel: Lieder has been streamed more than 43000 times.

(Streams of my tracks only—40840 6/7/24)

#HENSEL has accumulated >1.4k video streams

7.1.3 Submitted portfolio of multi-component outputs

The submitted portfolio accompanying this research narrative includes the following components:

- The CD recording ([Portfolio A](#)).
- An [audio recording of the #HENSEL concert event on March 2nd](#), in which I accompanied 13 singers in the premiere of 22 Hensel Lieder. (**Portfolio B**).
- A complete edition of Fanny Hensel's songs for solo voice and piano (see [Portfolio C](#)).
- www.henselsongsonline.org, a website hosting this edition in a curated, interactive format (PDF record included as **Portfolio D**).

245 Rebecca Franks, "A Song in her heart", *BBC Music Magazine*, August 2023; Tim Parker-Langston, "www.henselsongsonline.org", *Répertoire International des Sources Musicales*, May 13, 2022. https://rism.info/electronic_resources/2022/05/13/hensel-songs-online.html; Sheila Hayman dir., *Fanny: The Other Mendelssohn* (film), Mercury Studios, 2024.

246 Ellena Taylor, "Diverse Repertoire, Fanny Hensel: The Collected Songs", Presto Music, September 20, 2022. <https://www.prestomusic.com/sheet-music/articles/4895--diverse-repertoire-fanny-hensel-the-collected-songs>

247 Stephen Rodgers, "Analysis, Performance and the Deep Nineteenth Century" in Benjamin Binder and Jennifer Ronyak, eds. *The Lied at the Crossroads of Performance and Musicology* (Cambridge University Press, 2024), 163.

248 Presentations include: "Making Noise: Musical Activism & Fanny Hensel's Lieder Repertoire" at The Second International Conference on Women in/and Musical Leadership (2024), Gendering Music Matter (University of Copenhagen, 2024) and the Mendelssohn Network Preconference (University of Colorado Denver, 2023); "Towards a Reparative Musicology of Action" at the Fourth International Conference on Women's Work in Music (Bangor University, 2023); "Singing by Myself: Lieder During the Lockdown" at The Art Song Platform: Art Song Out of the Concert Hall (Goldsmiths, University of London, 2021); and as a panellist on "Women in Music: Leadership, Resources, Research Directions" at Celebrating Women Musicians, Past and Present (British Library, 2024).

The scores that contribute to this portfolio should be conceived as epistemic materials that will facilitate the technical engagement of other practitioners and scholars. Audiovisual performances are integral to expressing the research findings, offering a practice-based reflection on Fanny Hensel's songs. These performances, as demonstrated in my case studies, represent a technical negotiation of the score (as a technical object) and the emergent phenomena encountered during practice.

Where language reaches its limits in conveying “intuitive, embodied, tacit, imaginative, affective and sensory ways of knowing”,²⁴⁹ these technical outputs articulate my understanding of Hensel's songs through expressive and performative means.

7.1.4 Edition

The creation of the *www.hensel songsonline.org* edition has been a cornerstone of this project, particularly in preparing scores for previously unpublished songs. The editorial process emphasized practical application due to the significant variation in Fanny Hensel's autograph manuscripts. These range from fully revised works to rough, shorthand notations. Given these variations, producing a critical edition of her collected songs was neither feasible nor desirable. Instead, the focus was on developing performer-friendly scores that reflect Hensel's manuscripts as closely as possible, with minimal editorial intervention, especially since much of her Lieder repertoire remains unseen and unheard.

The *www.hensel songsonline.org* edition primarily relies on a series of sheet music albums held in the Mendelssohn-Archiv at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, which were likely compiled by Fanny herself. These albums seem to serve as personal collections of songs that Hensel wished to preserve. This is evidenced by the fact that the majority of the songs are neatly notated, indicating that they represent finished versions rather than drafts. Some songs, however, include revisions or sketches, particularly from Hensel's early years. These early versions show evidence of input from her tutor, Karl Friedrich Zelter, or revisions made by Hensel herself in preparation for publication. In some cases, later volumes contain updated versions of earlier songs and these later versions have been followed in this edition. Due to the variation in sources, it was not practical to include full bibliographic details for each song.

249 James Bulley and Özden Şahin, “Practice Research-Report 1: What Is Practice Research? And Report 2: How Can Practice Research Be Shared?” (Goldsmiths, University of London, 2021). <https://doi.org/10.23636/1347>

The following volumes are used:

Mendelssohn-Archiv at the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, Germany.

- *Ihr Töne schwingt euch fröhlich durch die Saiten* (1819), RISM A2-Nummer: 462104100, StaBiKat (ppn digital) 832600296
- *19 Musikstücke* (1820), RISM A2-Nummer: 1001030254, StaBiKat (ppn digital) 72189903X
- *69 Musikstücke* (1822), RISM A2-Nummer: 462003200, StaBiKat (ppn digital) 1012778487
- *27 Musikstücke* (22.03.1823—12.09.1823), RISM A2-Nummer: 1001000180, StaBiKat (ppn digital) 87934359
- *45 Musikstücke* (1823), RISM A2-Nummer: 1001025402, StaBiKat (ppn digital) 1007288183
- *62 Musikstücke* (Lieder, Duette, mehrstimmige Gesänge und Klavierstücke), RISM A2-Nummer: 462003500, StaBiKat (ppn digital) 751526770
- *52 Musikstücke* (22.07.1827), RISM A2-Nummer: 1001031606, StaBiKat (ppn digital) 1012783693
- *14 Musikstücke* (1829), RISM A2-Nummer: 1001032429, StaBiKat (ppn digital) 1013691423
- *70 Gesänge* (1839), RISM A2-Nummer: 462012800, StaBiKat (ppn digital) 859190781
- *Reise-Album 1839—1840* (1841), RISM A2-Nummer: 462016300, StaBiKat (ppn digital) 833525425
- *21 Musikstücke* (1840), RISM A2-Nummer: 1001127740, StaBiKat (ppn digital) 1731772106
- *19 Musikstücke* (1843), RISM A2-Nummer: 1001026965, StaBiKat (ppn digital) 1007292563
- *Traum* (V, pf; F-Dur; H 412), RISM A2-Nummer: 462008900, StaBiKat (ppn digital) 655181652
- *53 Musikstücke* (1846), RISM A2-Nummer: 1001092177, StaBiKat (ppn digital) 1681602563

Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, England.

- Bodleian Library MS. M. Deneke Mendelssohn d. 8

Mugar Memorial Library, Boston University Libraries, USA.

- Music Library Scores M2.H46 A4 - 1828aM

7.1.5 Editorial principles

The editorial principles adhered to in the creation of the sheet music resources are outlined below.

Errata

There were several instances in which the autograph manuscripts featured notational errors. The most common issue was the omission of accidentals, which in some places are applied to only one of the two hands (see [Figure 7.6](#)) or were not rearticulated after a barline (see [Figure 7.5](#)). In

these instances, the implied harmonies were adhered to, but accidentals were added throughout all parts in accordance with convention.



Figure 7.5: (left) Bar 2-3 of 'Die Linde' in Fanny's autograph manuscript. E.g. of accidentals absent with crossing of barline). (right) www.henselsonsongonline.org edition version.

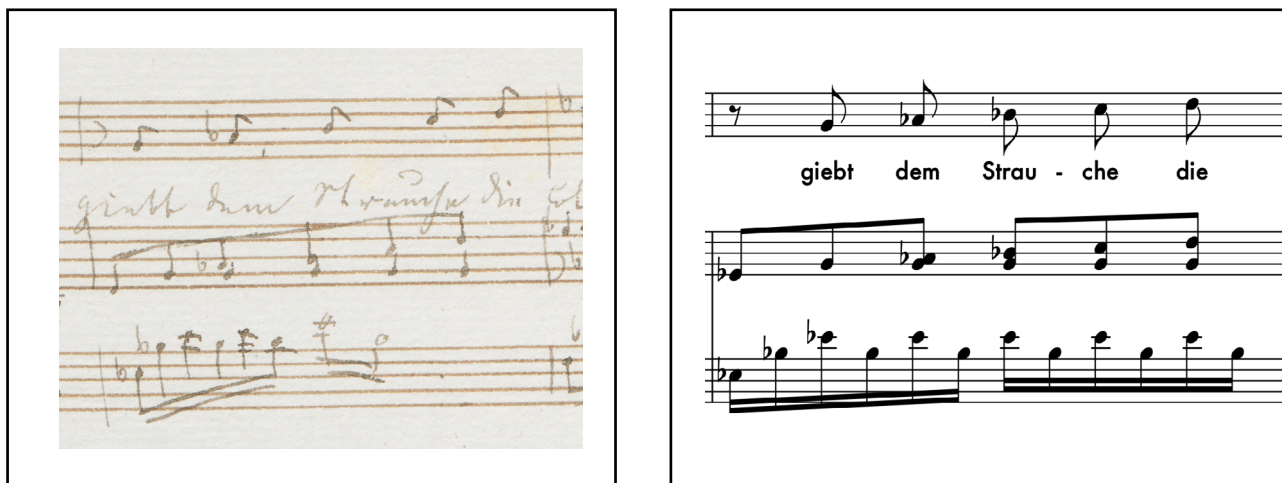


Figure 7.6: (left) Bar 12 of 'Maigesang' in Fanny's autograph manuscript. E.g. of accidentals in one hand only (E_b and B_b of left hand not reflected in the ascending right-hand melody). (right) www.henselsonsongonline.org edition version.

Ambiguities

In some instances, the absence of an accidental was more ambiguous, requiring choices to be made. Where I made an editorial decision to insert an accidental in one of these ambiguous moments, I signified this by bracketing the note or using minimised notation (see [Figure 7.7](#)).

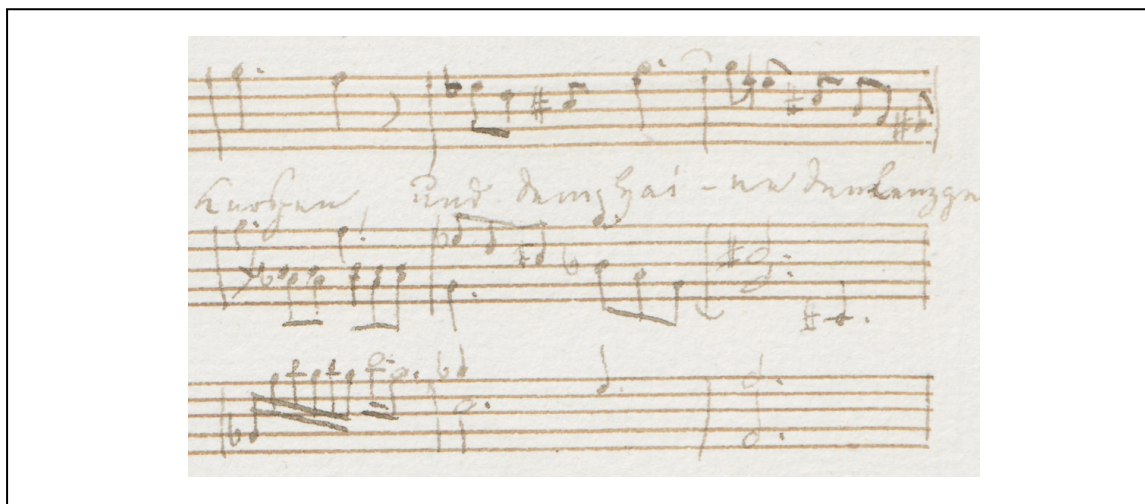


Figure 7.7: (top) Bar 15-17 of 'Maigesang' in Fanny's autograph manuscript. E.g. of absent accidentals where harmonic context is more ambiguous). (bottom) www.henselongsongonline.org edition version (where editorial decisions are signposted with bracketed accidentals).

Versions

In some cases, more than one manuscript was extant. As a rule of thumb, I engaged the later copies as the basis for my version. An example of this is '[Sehnsucht](#)', [H-U 190](#), which is included in an 1824 manuscript book (MA Ms. 35) and a later 1839 collection of 70 songs (MA Ms. 128).

Notational conventions

For clarity and ease of use by 21st century musicians, I reflected Hensel's musical choices in accordance to modern notational conventions—so long as these choices would not distort the impression of Fanny's autograph notation.

Songs published by Fanny (and Felix)

The scores for the songs that were published in Fanny Hensel's **Op. 1, 7, 9 & 10** and Felix Mendelssohn's **Op. 8 & 9** (in which Fanny had an editorial presence), have been typeset after

Strophic songs

Based on my experience working with scores in which several stanzas of poetry are stacked beneath the melody, or for which the stanzas after verse one are written as separate text, in some cases I opted to re-notate repeated music (e.g. [Maigesang](#)). I limited stacking of verses to three lines, without only a couple of exceptions.

Slurring

Hensel indicated melisma using beaming, as opposed to slurring. I employ her original beaming but insert dotted slurs, as I find this greatly improves the reading experience and clarity of the text underlay (see [Figure 7.8](#)).²⁵⁵

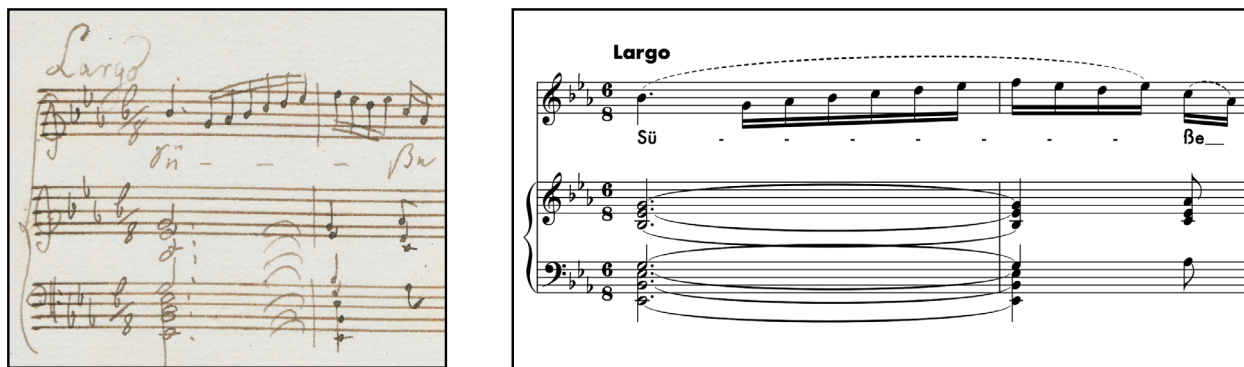


Figure 7.8: (left) Fanny's autograph notations for bars 1-2 of 'Sehnsucht', H-U 192 (melisma indicated by beaming). (right) www.henselsongsonline.org edition (including dashes slurring, in line with modern convention, aids reading).

Handwriting

In cases when I struggled to decipher Fanny's handwriting (written in Sütterlin script), I sourced the editions of the poem that I deduced she most likely used and copied these into the song in consultation with the autograph (see [Figure 7.9](#)). When I could not track down a copy of the

²⁵⁰ Fanny Hensel geb. Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, *Sechs Lieder für eine Stimme mit Begleitung des Pianoforte* (Op. 1) (Berlin: Bote & G. Bock, 1846).

²⁵¹ Fanny Hensel geb. Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, *Sechs Lieder für eine Stimme mit Begleitung des Pianoforte* (Op. 7) (Berlin: Bote & G. Bock, 1846).

²⁵² Fanny Hensel, *Sechs Lieder für eine Stimme mit Begleitung des Pianoforte* (Op. 9), (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1850).

²⁵³ Fanny Hensel, *Sechs Lieder für eine Stimme mit Begleitung des Pianoforte* (Op. 10) (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1850).

²⁵⁴ Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, *Zwölf Gesänge* (Op. 8) (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1827).; Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, *Zwölf Gesänge* (Op. 9) (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1830).

²⁵⁵ Elaine Gould, *Behind bars: the Definitive Guide to Music Notation* (Faber Music Ltd., 2016), 453.

original text, I engaged the help of the late Margarete Ritzkowsky, who generously provided me with modern alphabet versions that I could then plot onto the music in the same way (see [Figure 7.10](#)).

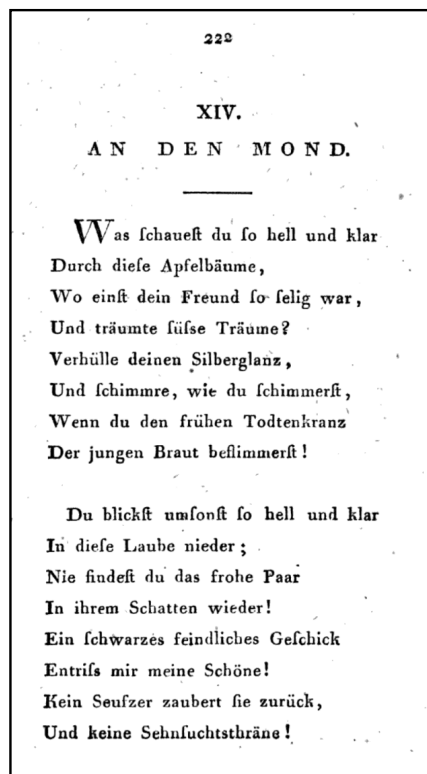


Figure 7.9: Text from original publication of 'An den Mond'. Used as a reference for entering text when Fanny's hand unfamiliar.

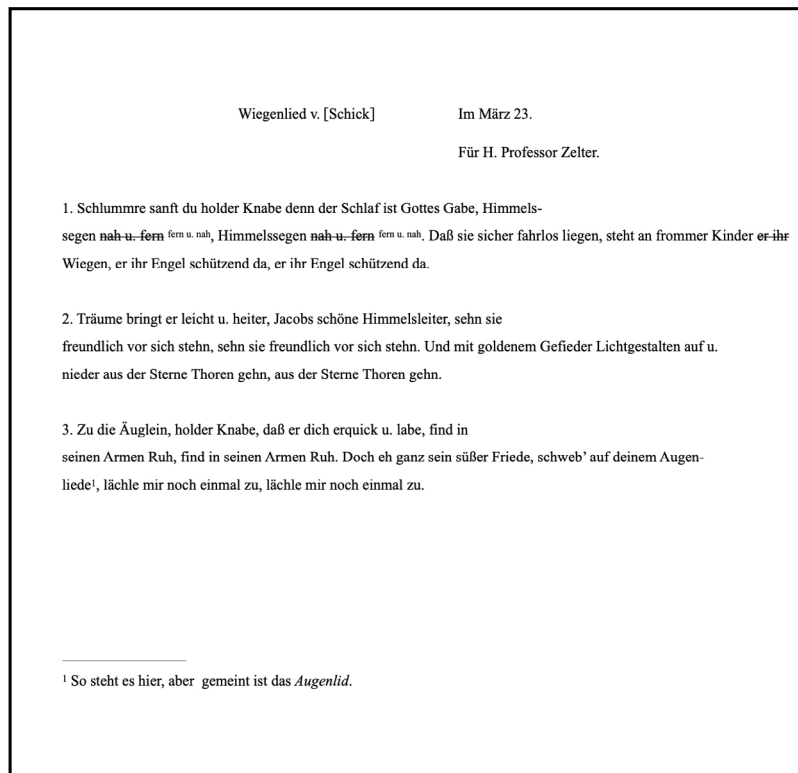


Figure 7.10: Transcription of Fanny's Sütterlin script for 'Wiegenlied', provided by Margarete Ritzkowsky.

7.2 Reparative acts in performance

The album *Hensel: Lieder* was recorded January 2–8 2023, in the Gartenhaus at the Mendelssohn-Haus, Leipzig. The album features 34 tracks, of which 17 are premiere recordings. The programme was selected entirely from songs that were unpublished during Hensel's life, 'Vorwurf' being the song that came closest to public recognition during her lifetime, appearing in her Op. 10 posthumously after Felix ensured it was submitted.

The album is ordered chronologically, beginning with the exceptionally simple yet haunting 'Wenn ich ihn nur habe', written when the composer was just 14 years old. As the recording progresses, the years unfold and Hensel's compositional voice evolves as she explores varying emotions, poetic styles and aesthetics.

I invited three pianists (Genevieve Ellis, Jâms Coleman, Ewan Gilford), two mezzo-sopranos (Stephanie Wake-Edwards, Jennifer Parker) and co-producer/engineer David Jones to join me for the recordings. I was keen to work with several different musicians, each of whom has a distinctive musical personality, so that Fanny's musical voice could be expressed across a wider range of perspectives.



Figure 7.11: Images of the recording space at the Mendelssohn-Haus in Leipzig (January 2023).

The CD *Hensel: Lieder* reflects a crucial part of the submitted practice. The 21 songs for which I am a credited performer, alongside the remaining 13 tracks in which I played the role of co-producer, are the most incisive practical outputs in this study. The week spent recording these songs provided a space in which I felt as if I was writing an essay, as I took every effort to capture those qualities in practice that I have come to see as crucial in Fanny's Lieder voice.

The ensuing editing and mixing process with David had an almost conductor-like quality to the practice, as we composed a performance of each song that best reflected the songs as things from the hundreds of audio takes.

In what follows, I will dedicate time to signpost certain themes and techniques that can be observed within the practice documented in this recording. First, I will introduce three themes that can be traced running through the practice.



Figure 7.12: The Hensel: Lieder cover art, featuring the commissioned artwork by Kirsty Mathesson.

7.2.1 Fanny's settings of poetry by Christoph Ludwig Heinrich Hölty

The first of these are Fanny's settings of **Christoph Ludwig Heinrich Hölty**. Like Johann Voß ([see Case Study 3: 'Umsonst'](#)), Hölty was a member of the Göttinger Hain, a group of lyric poets "credited with the reawakening of themes of nature, friendship and love in the German lyric and popular national poetry".²⁵⁶ Fanny set 13 poems attributed to Hölty. *Hensel: Lieder* features eight of these, six of which come from a period of less than six months in 1827.²⁵⁷

I have identified the Hölty settings as a significant omission from knowledge of Hensel's unsung Lieder. They signify a phase of Fanny's compositional practice in which her expressive melodic voice is emerging in earnest. The songs possess an experimental spirit. '[Sehnsucht](#)', H-U 192 twists and turns in varied strophic form, characterised by its distinctive vocal cadenzas that begin each verse. '[Maigesang](#)', H-U 194, a strophic song, is highly surprising, moving through a broad range of musical expressions, with waltz-like movement that tame the wild expressions into dancing gestures. '[An die Ruhe](#)', H-U 201 and '[An den Mond](#)', H-U 198, which will be explored

²⁵⁶ The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, "Göttinger Hain" in Encyclopedia Britannica (May 24, 2007), <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Gottinger-Hain>.

²⁵⁷ Although the text of 'Abendluft' cannot be verified despite an extensive search.

further, possess imprints of Fanny's practice of Bach and Handel. The Hölty settings were among the first programmed for this disc and whilst it has been a privilege to explore them, their absence to date is amongst the most surprising.

7.2.2 Simple songs?

The second theme pertains to songs which, like those explored in the case studies, give the impression of simplicity but, when engaged with in practice, take on new epistemic depths. Songs that share this quality include:

- 1 [‘Wenn ich ihn nur habe’](#)
- 3 [‘Der Abendstern’](#)
- 5 [‘Die sanften Tage’](#)
- 7 [‘An die Entfernte’](#)
- 8 [‘Auf der Wanderung’](#)
- 10 [‘Mond’](#)
- 14 [‘Seufzer’](#)
- 16 [‘An die Ruhe’](#)
- 17 [‘Sehnsucht’, H-U 203](#)
- 18 [‘Sehnsucht’, H-U 205](#)
- 19 [‘Umsonst’](#)
- 21 [‘Sehnsucht’, H-U 217](#)

7.2.3 "...now that Rebecca has left off singing..."

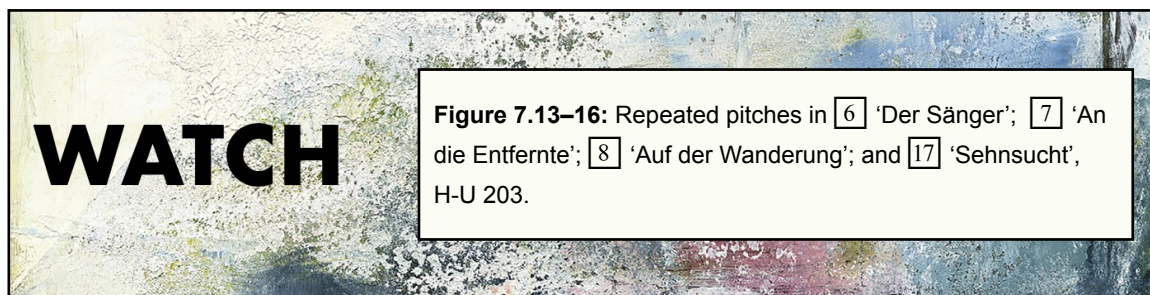
Another theme for reflection pertains to a potential development in Fanny's compositional practice after her sister Rebecca is reported to have stopped singing her songs in 1836. Tracks 25—34 (listed below) support the hypothesis that this shift in dimensions within Fanny's Lieder practice led to a transformation in her vocal writing, making it noticeably more demanding—characterised by expansive, romantic phrases and an extended range.

- 25 [‘Ach, die Augen sind es wieder’](#)
- 26 [‘Das Meer Erglänzte weit hinaus’](#)
- 27 [‘Ich wandelte unter den Bäumen’](#)
- 28 [‘Der Fürst vom Berge’](#)
- 29 [‘Traurige Wege’](#)

- [\[30\] 'Dämmerung senkte sich von oben'](#)
- [\[31\] 'Traum'](#)
- [\[32\] 'Mutter, o sing mich zur Ruh'](#)
- [\[33\] 'Erwache Knab'](#)
- [\[34\] 'Vorwurf'](#)

7.2.4 Repeated notes

The prevalence and emotional capital of repeated notes identified in the case study of 'Die sanften Tage' is reinforced in several songs, in which the technical responses to these repeated pitches are manifested in potent emotional phenomena.



7.2.5 Strophic unfoldings

Many of the recorded songs explore the expressive transformations of strophic form. The recording environment facilitates space and time to explore these different manifestations to a greater degree than live performance. The tracks include:

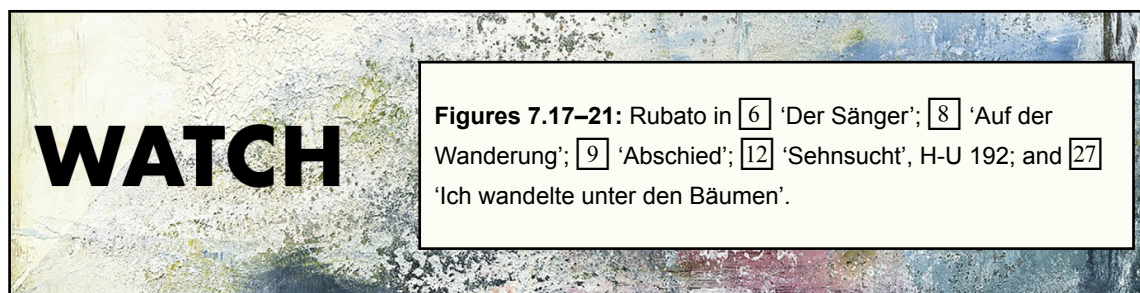
- [\[1\] 'Wenn ich ihn nur habe'](#)
- [\[3\] 'Der Abendstern'](#)
- [\[5\] 'Die sanften Tage'](#)
- [\[6\] 'Der Sänger'](#)
- [\[7\] 'An die Entfernte'](#)
- [\[8\] 'Auf der Wanderung'](#)
- [\[13\] 'Maigesang'](#)
- [\[15\] 'An den Mond'](#)
- [\[16\] 'An die Ruhe'](#)
- [\[17\] 'Sehnsucht', H-U 203](#)
- [\[19\] 'Umsonst'](#)

[\[21\] 'Sehnsucht', H-U 217](#)

[\[25\] 'Ach, die Augen sind es wieder'](#)

7.2.6 Rubato

The significant role of rubato and flexibility of tempo relations, identified in the case study of 'Der Blumenstrauß' and in **Two Practitioners**, is articulated by all the performances on *Hensel: Lieder*. The following tracks represent some clear instances of this technical response to Fanny's songs.



7.2.7 Bach and Handel

The final theme is evidence of Bach's and Handel's influence on Fanny's compositional practice and the ways in which this has reshaped the dimensions of my Lieder practice—in which incorporating technical flows more commonly associated with the performance of these composers and their contemporaries. This has been of great interest to me throughout this project and will likely form the basis of future phenomenotechnical research. My research has found that in approximately a third of her song repertoire, Fanny's compositional practice evidences a technical response stemming from her engagement with these composers. Her frequent performance and study of works by Bach and Handel likely influenced her musical techniques and embodiment—possibly shaping the natural movement of her hands when experimenting with chord voicings, her sense of breath and phrasing when vocalising melodic ideas and her conception of tempo markings.

In some cases, this influence is directly evident in her song compositions and is also encountered in my own practice as auditory fingerprints—the sounds of Bach and Handel permeating the expected melodic-harmonic language of an early Romantic composer. These instances range from subtle influences—such as phrase shapes, figurations, sequential patterns and voicing—to more overt examples, which seem to be deliberate evocations of these musics (see [Figure 7.22](#)).

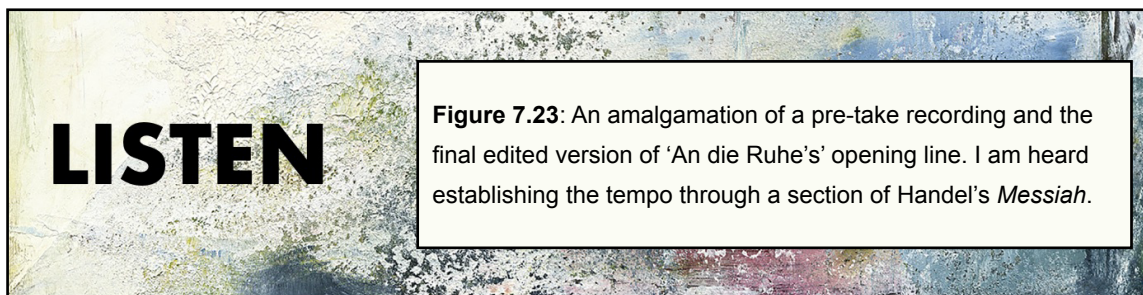
Songs engaging a hybrid of techniques associated with Bach and Handel with those more familiar in nineteenth-century Lieder.	Songs overtly structured by techniques engaged in the performance of Bach and Handel	Songs with subtle influence of techniques associated with Bach and Handel's music.
<i>Agläe</i> <i>An den Mond *</i> <i>Beharre</i> <i>Bright be the place of thy Soul</i> <i>Der Eichwald brauset</i> <i>Der Pilgrim von St. Just</i> <i>Die frühen Gräber *</i> <i>Durch zartes Mailaub blinkt die Abendröte</i> <i>Farewell!</i> <i>Harfners Lied *</i> <i>Im Herbst</i> <i>Kommen und Scheiden</i> <i>Mutter, o sing mich zur Ruh' *</i> <i>Neue Liebe, neues Leben</i> <i>Schlafe, schlaf!</i> <i>Sehnsucht</i> <i>Sehnsucht nach Italien</i> <i>Stimme der Glocken</i> <i>Totenklage</i> <i>Traurige Wege *</i> <i>Vorwurf *</i> <i>Was will die einsame Träne</i> <i>Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele</i>	<i>Abendbild [H-U 455]</i> <i>Allnächtlich in Träume</i> <i>Am leuchtenden</i> <i>Sommernorgen</i> <i>An die Ruhe *</i> <i>Gram</i> <i>Lebewohl</i> <i>Nacht [H-U 225]</i> <i>Neujahrslied</i> <i>Sehnsucht [H-U 217] *</i> <i>Selmar und Selma</i> <i>Verlust</i> <i>Wo kommst du her?</i> <i>Wohl deinem Liebbling *</i> <i>Wonne der Wehmut</i> <i>Zu deines Lagers Füßen</i>	<i>Altes Lied</i> <i>Am Morgen nach einer Sturm Canzonetta</i> <i>Das Meer erglänzte weit hinaus</i> <i>Das stille Fleh'n *</i> <i>Der Abendstern *</i> <i>Der Sprosser</i> <i>Die Ersehnte</i> <i>Die Linde *</i> <i>Die sanften Tage *</i> <i>Drei Lieder nach Heine von Mary Alexander</i> <i>Erster Verlust [H-U 18] *</i> <i>Erwachen</i> <i>Ferne</i> <i>Fichtenbaum und Palme</i> <i>Füllest wieder Busch und Tal</i> <i>Gleich Merlin</i> <i>Heut' in dieser Nacht</i> <i>In die Ferne</i> <i>La fuite inutile</i> <i>Le rocher des deux amants</i> <i>Liederkreis</i> <i>Minnelied des Grafen Peter von Provence</i> <i>Nacht [H-U 133]</i> <i>Némorin [H-U 31]</i> <i>Romance de Claudine</i> <i>Schäfers Sonntagslied</i> <i>Sehnsucht [H-U 117]</i> <i>Sehnsucht [H-U 141] *</i> <i>Sehnsucht [H-U 190]</i> <i>Sehnsucht [H-U 219] *</i> <i>Seufzer *</i> <i>Suleika [H-U 150]</i> <i>Suleika [H-U 210]</i> <i>Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh' *</i> <i>Verloren</i> <i>Wenn ich ihn nur habe *</i> <i>Wiegenlied *</i> <i>Wonne der Einsamkeit</i>

Figure 7.22: Songs identified as having technical responses to Fanny's practice of Bach and Handel, which inspire technical responses associated with these composers in my own practice.

When discovering the sounds of Bach and Handel in Fanny's Lieder during practice, I've been struck by my own technical responses while singing these songs. These moments challenge the established dimensions of my practice, requiring me to draw on the technical patterns that shape my singing of Bach and Handel—patterns that differ significantly from the Romantic approach I bring to the music of Fanny's contemporaries. In some cases, I have performed significant

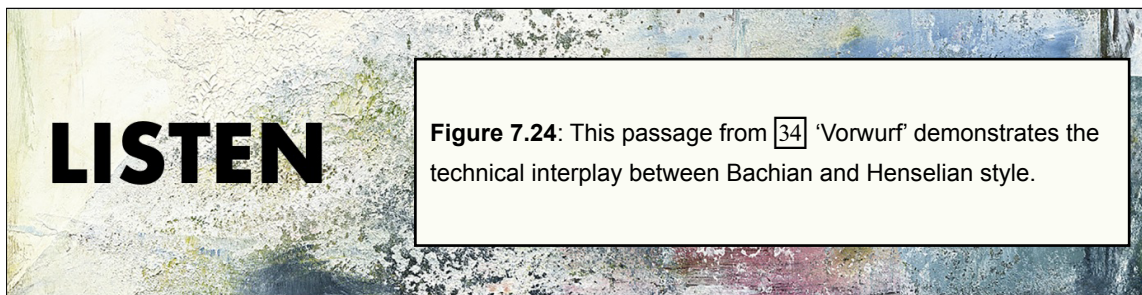
sections—or even entire songs—from Fanny’s repertoire using the technical approach to tempo, phrasing, tone and gesture that would typically shape my singing of Bach or Handel’s.

[Figure 7.23](#) joins together two audio clips recorded during the sessions for *Hensel: Lieder*: the first half taken from the “height pair” microphones and the second half from the final mix. In this clip, I can be heard recalling the tempo of a moment from Handel’s *Messiah* (‘O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion’), singing the orchestral opening to myself as a way of harnessing the music flow and pulse that I identify as central to both that work and Fanny’s song.

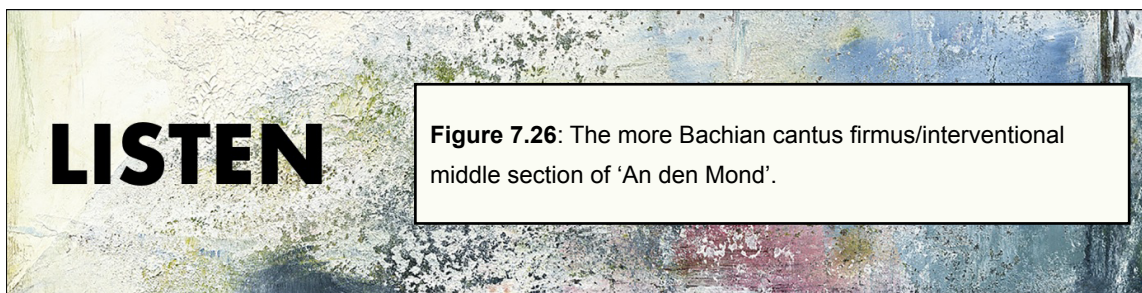
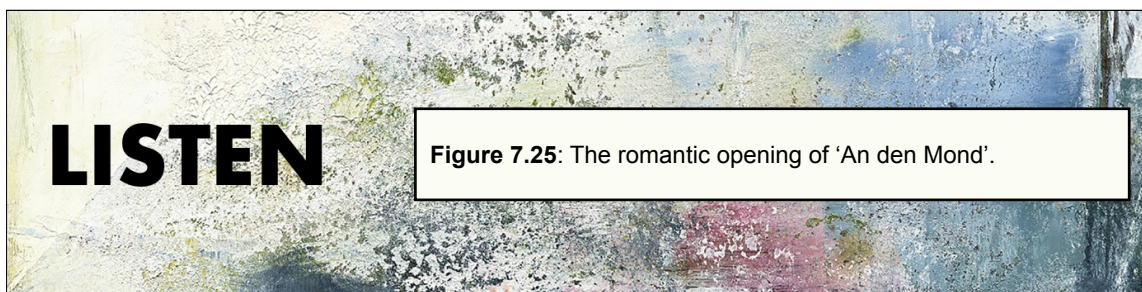


In some of the most effective instances, Fanny’s compositional practice simultaneously pushes the boundaries of her Romantic Lieder voice while integrating techniques shaped by her engagement with Bach and Handel. The merging of these elements creates a hybrid between Fanny’s songwriting and the music of earlier composers. This fusion of soundworlds prompts a technical response that intertwines practices once considered distinct: the performance of Bach, Handel and their contemporaries and the Romantic expressivity shaped by my engagement with Lieder composers such as Schubert, Schumann, Beethoven, Loewe, Strauss, Mendelssohn and Brahms.

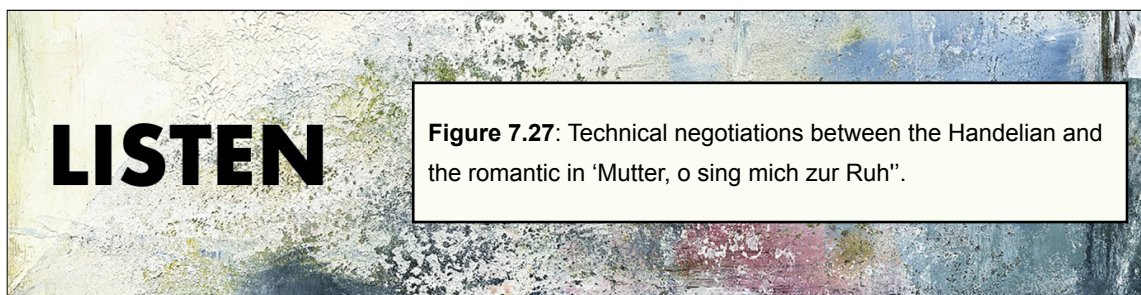
This interplay of technical phenomena is evident in several tracks on *Hensel: Lieder*, including ‘Vorwurf’, ‘Traurige Wege’, ‘An den Mond’ and ‘Mutter, o sing mich zur Ruh’. In [Figure 7.24](#) the interplay between technical flows associated with Bach and Hensel respectively are illustrated in an excerpt from ‘Vorwurf’.



Figures [7.25](#) and [7.26](#) present excerpts from '*An den Mond*', a song in which the two soundworlds are largely contained within separate sections of the strophe. Because of this clear structural division, the differing technical approaches are engaged in stark contrast.



[Figure 7.27](#) presents a passage demonstrating a near-seamless transition between the technical flows: moving from a Handelian pastoral legato into a more emotionally charged quality, then erupting into a churning, Chopin-esque waltz—with the vocal line adopting higher tessitura and more angular rhythmic articulations. After reaching a peak, the song settles back into the calmer emotional-technical quality established at the opening, though now with a weaker, more desperate pleading tone.



7.3 #HENSEL

After the release of *Hensel: Lieder*, which featured 17 premiere recordings, 89 songs remained unrecorded and unheard. #HENSEL has since become a global collaborative effort, in which I invited musicians via social media to volunteer to perform these unsung songs and capture their performances through DIY audio and video recordings.

66 musicians participated in the project. When completed, these recordings will be edited and mastered for an upcoming streaming release which will make the song repertoire accessible on all major platforms.

#HENSEL was launched with two premieres performed in concert alongside Genevieve Ellis in July 2023, where I was singing. However, my involvement grew beyond the initial plan—I performed as pianist on a total of 31 recordings, including a concert on March 2nd featuring 22 premiere recordings with 12 singers. The audio recording of this event is included in the accompanying project portfolio.

7.4 Reparative acts

The edition, recordings and performances documented in this chapter have been conceived as reparative acts—tangible steps towards addressing the obscurity of more than a third of Fanny Hensel's Lieder repertoire. Thanks to the time and expertise of colleagues in the performance industry, generous financial support from a community of crowdfunders and interest from print, film and radio outlets, this work has made a significant impact on a previously overlooked gap in knowledge. Now filled, this gap has enriched our understanding of Hensel's complete Lieder oeuvre. These resources are maintained and used daily across the world. No longer do these songs go "unheeded and unknown".²⁵⁸

²⁵⁸ R. Larry Todd, *Fanny Hensel: The Other Mendelssohn* (Oxford University Press, 2009), 206.



Figure 7.28: The assembled performers of #HENSEL: The Concert take a bow.

8. Conclusions, Reflections, Questions

This research narrative began by asking the questions:

- 1) **How can singing Hensel's songs contribute to scholarship around her music and Lieder in general?**
- 2) **How does foregrounding the knowledge gained through embodied singing practice reorient discourse on the musicopoetic relationships in Hensel's Lieder?**
- 3) **How can practice research be engaged as a feminist methodology and how can this be applied to the investigation of underrepresented historical repertoires of Western classical music?**

This written contribution concludes by exploring emerging perspectives that partially address these questions. However, the nature of practice and the song as a thing inherently generates as many new questions as it resolves,²⁵⁹ with the scope of enquiry continuously expanding outward in ever-widening circles.

8.1 Question one

How can singing Hensel's songs contribute to scholarship around her music and Lieder in general?

The reparative approach taken in this project has revealed the power of singing as a tool to uncover and disseminate the qualities of Fanny Hensel's Lieder. The production of the recording *Hensel: Lieder* has facilitated broader access to the rich diversity of her songwriting practice,²⁶⁰ which exhibit distinct qualities in nearly every Lied. The recording has accrued 47,679 streams,²⁶¹ reflecting a tangible step forward in raising the profile of her previously underrepresented songs.

The website www.henselsongsonline.org supports performances of Fanny's songs by other artists, while the #HENSEL project has fostered the emergence of a community of practice centered on her complete repertoire.²⁶² Above all, this repertoire has proven to be far more diverse than previously assumed—perhaps a reflection of the creative freedom Fanny Hensel experienced as a

²⁵⁹ Tim Ingold. "Bringing Things to Life: Creative Entanglements in a World of Materials", *Realities, Working Papers* # 15 (2010).

²⁶⁰ With 17 premiere recordings featured on the record.

²⁶¹ Analytics provided by Spotify for Artists, accessed 9.18pm December 18th, 2024.

²⁶² #HENSEL has seen musicians from across the world singing Fanny's previously unrecorded songs.

result of her exclusion from the constraints of public musical life.

The performed outputs are enriched by discoveries unique to the act of singing and playing Fanny Hensel's *Lieder*. From the outset, performing her songs revealed expressive dimensions that elude purely analytical or written musicological approaches.²⁶³ When sung, her songs take on an expressive quality that is broad and assured, while also possessing a vulnerability and openness that resonates deeply with the individual performer. This is underscored by vocal writing that employs an extended range—often drawing on the darker tones and power of the lower register, while retaining the flexibility to frequently soar into the upper tessitura. The vocal lines are frequently expansive, placing considerable demands on the breath, control and phrasing.

Notably, the songs from Fanny's early compositional era, which Thym dismisses out of hand as "... almost without exception [...] simple strophic settings with subordinate piano accompaniment"²⁶⁴—have, in performance, revealed these expressive qualities just as vividly as her later, more overtly Romantic *Lieder*.

The embodied experience of singing songs that appear compositionally simple can be just as dynamic and physically engaging as performing more complex, canonically aligned examples. This is demonstrated in the case studies. '**Die sanften Tage**' showed how technical responses to repeated pitches, appoggiaturas and melismas challenge the notion that melodic contour is defined solely by pitch, instead drawing attention to the cumulative expressivity of the embodied technical response to these seemingly innocuous devices.

In '**Der Blumenstrauß**', the supposedly "subordinate" piano part is revealed to be integral, as the distinct emotional qualities of the poetic text are cultivated through the technical responses to Fanny's score. Though the notated texture changes only slightly, these subtle shifts generate distinctly different musical characters. Similarly, the simple piano part of '**Umsonst**' is recontextualised in performance, uncovering an embodied struggle between the piano and vocal parts. This tension arises from their displaced harmonic roles and persistent cross-rhythms, effectively mirroring the poem's tangible sense of discomfort.

263 Don Michael Randel, "The Canons in the Musicology Toolbox" in Katherine Bergeron and Philip V. Bohlman eds., *Disciplining music: musicology and its canons* (University of Chicago Press, 1992), 10.

264 Jürgen Thym, "Crosscurrents in Song: Five Distinctive Voices", in *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Rufus Hallmark (Routledge, 2010), 193.

Flexibility of pulse and tempo has been a prevalent feature in the performance of Hensel's songs, particularly in works that are underexplored or lack performance directions. My liberal approach to *ritardando*, *accelerando* and dynamic shaping has proven fruitful in uncovering the nuances and character of certain lines or sections through an iterative practice.

Particularly striking have been the unified surges in tempo and dynamics encountered during practice, which were later found to resemble a technique Fanny herself described in a rare instance of performance instruction. Discovering this approach instinctively—and in the absence of explicit markings—supports Todd's speculation that such techniques may reflect a broader performance practice.²⁶⁵

Fanny's practice of Bach and Handel, though acknowledged in scholarly literature,²⁶⁶ has yet to be examined in depth as an influence on her songwriting. In this study, more than a third of her songs have been identified as evidencing influence derived from her Bach and Handel practice.²⁶⁷ In the most noteworthy examples, musical languages typically considered distinct come together in a style that is uniquely Henselian. Singing these songs necessitates a negotiation of the different phenomenotechniques associated with the music of Bach and Handel alongside those more often encountered in early-to-mid Romantic *Lieder*. These technical flows converge, giving rise to a new, hybrid technique.²⁶⁸

This is briefly discussed in relation to 'Mutter, O sing mich zur Ruh' and 'Vorwurf',²⁶⁹ and explored in the practice of several songs recorded for *Hensel: Lieder* and #HENSEL. A deeper examination of this new phenomenotechnique is proposed for future research, which should include an evaluation of the distinct dimensions of a 'baroque' and 'Romantic' phenomenotechniques prior to exploring the emerging new technique in Hensel's *Lieder*.²⁷⁰

265 R. Larry Todd, *Fanny Hensel: The Other Mendelssohn* (Oxford University Press, 2009), 102.

266 Marianne Kielian-Gilbert, "Inventing a Melody with Harmony: Tonal Potential and Bach's 'Das Alte Jahr Vergangen Ist'", *Journal of Music Theory* 50, no. 1 (2006): 77–101; Peter Schleuning, "Das Bach-Bild Fanny Hensels: Aus dem Entstehen einer Fanny-Hensel-Monographie", in *Bach und die deutsche Tradition des Komponierens: Wirklichkeit und Ideologie-Festschrift Martin Geck zum 70. Geburtstag*, eds. Reinmar Emans and Wolfram Steinbeck (Dortmund: Klangfarben Musikverlag, 2009), 168–179; Beatrix Borchard and Monika Schwarz-Danuser, eds., *Fanny Hensel geb. Mendelssohn Bartholdy: Komponieren zwischen Gesellschaftsideal und romantischer Musikästhetik* (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler Verlag, 1999; reprint ed., Kassel: Furore, 2002), 341 pp., ISBN 978-3-476-45204-7.

267 See [page 135](#).

268 "...two different technical flows can come together to produce a new epistemic object". Ben Spatz, "Colors Like Knives: Embodied Research and Phenomenotechnique in Rite of the Butcher", *Contemporary Theatre Review* 27, no. 2 (2017): 203. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10486801.2017.1300152>.

269 See [page 136](#).

270 These terms are used knowing that they are generalised descriptions and should not be taken to mean any specific style or era.

Singing Hensel's Lieder can deepen understanding of her music and contribute to Lieder scholarship more broadly. Future researchers might build on these approaches by reflecting on their own practical experiences—asking, “How do I technically achieve this effect or sensation?”—and using those insights to uncover new dimensions of Hensel's songs or other German Lieder. Techniques explored here, such as the treatment of repeated notes, breath and subtle textural changes, can open new perspectives on the performance of these songs.

Through singing, Hensel's Lieder are revealed as dynamic, living works, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of both her music and the wider Lieder tradition.

8.2 Question 2

2) How does foregrounding the knowledge gained through embodied singing practice reorient discourse on the musicopoetic relationships in Hensel's Lieder?

In order to foreground technique, a mode of communicating the technical patterns that underpin the acquisition of knowledge in Lieder practice was devised.²⁷¹ Phenomenotechnical descriptions, as realised in this project, present a significant opportunity to transform discourse surrounding text and music in Lieder.²⁷² In this study, the body is the place where music and words interact, as opposed to the score. The highly subjective meanings of text and music independently make this a limitless area of intrigue for understanding the constituent “goings on” of a song.^{273 274}

Phenomenotechnical descriptions have proven effective in tracing the lines of technique triggered by this embodied interpolation of music and text. These pathways are articulated in a way that allows singer-researchers with shared practices to engage directly, tracing my means of knowing in their own bodies and drawing similar—or contrasting—conclusions.²⁷⁵

From an embodied perspective, text is shown to be transformative. In strophic songs, where musical material is ‘repeated’ this approach has proven especially potent. Embodied explorations

271 Mira Benjamin, “Thick Relationality: Microtonality and the Technique of Intonation in 21st Century String Performance”. (PhD diss., University of Huddersfield, 2019), 111.

272 Ben Spatz, “Colors Like Knives”, 2017.

273 Annekatrin Kessler and Klaus Puhl, “Subjectivity, emotion and meaning in music perception” in Proceedings of the Conference on Interdisciplinary Musicology (CIM04) (Graz/Austria, 2004): 16.

274 Ingold, “Bringing Things Back to Life”, 4.

275 Spatz, “Colors like knives”, 214.

of ‘Die sanften Tage’ and ‘Umsonst’ demonstrate how the larger arc of a poetic narrative shapes the technical responses throughout a full performance, while word-by-word details similarly influence the reorientation of musical material and technical apparatus depending on context.

This study’s focus on embodiment and technique offers a contrasting perspective on the interplay between music and text in Lieder. Rather than probing Fanny’s intentions when setting a song—an approach grounded in an archaeology of intent and traditional analytic paradigms—the study proposes examining composers’ technical responses to poetry. These responses are encountered through my own practice, at the intersection where my material-discursive circuits meet those of Fanny.²⁷⁶

This challenges inherited attitudes toward Lieder performance, where the singer is often perceived as lacking ‘knowledge’ about the music and in need ‘coaching’ by the pianist, who assumes the role of maestro.²⁷⁷ Instead, by creating space for personal, imaginative and emotional perspectives of text—as embodied in the technical responses of practitioners—Fanny’s songs can be understood as existing within a modern interpretive space. This approach offers valuable insights for championing underrepresented repertoire.

Foregrounding technique has introduced the instrumental properties of words into academic discourse. The sounds of words and their physical characteristics are shown to have expressive applications in Lieder practice. This perspective shaped the case study of ‘Die sanften Tage’, demonstrating how these technical elements can transform perspectives of melodic contour and colour.

The distinct qualities of phonemes—specifically vowels—were presented as charting both physical and timbral contours when sung on a single pitch, redefining moments previously deemed static by analysis as living, evolving cores of the phrases. The potential of this perspective extends beyond vowels, with consonants also offering a new parameter within the musical fabric, serving both as percussive elements and as part of the technical expression of emotional colours.

These embodied perspectives of text and music reorient discourse within Lieder and render

²⁷⁶ See [Figure 2.5](#).

²⁷⁷ Graham Johnson, “Foreword: Susan Youens: The Ivory Tower and the Stairway to Paradise”, in *The Lied at the Crossroads of Performance and Musicology*, eds. Benjamin Binder and Jennifer Ronyak (Cambridge University Press, 2024), xix–xxii.

discussions of ‘simple’ settings of text in Fanny’s early songs irrelevant. Instead, these dimensions are viewed as they emerge in singing—a space in which poetic, dramatic, narrative and expressive directions are open to the performer. This approach has proven particularly effective when applied to strophic form songs, inspiring future research that will focus on a project exploring a range of underrepresented women and non-binary composers through the study of songs in this form exclusively.

Note on documentation of practice:

Having reflected on the efficacy of the methodology during the viva examination stage of this project, I want to emphasise the importance of diligent documentation when working with embodied research methods in the study of song. While early practice sessions can often feel unfocused and the presence of a recording device inevitably shifts the atmosphere of the practice space, the aleatoric nature of discovery-led work means that all sessions—regardless of how tentative or loosely structured they may be—are valuable to have a record of.

This became especially clear when writing the case study on ‘Der Blumenstrauß’, which I approached later in this research project and subsequently benefited from the more rigorous documentation practices that had developed by this time. By having access to more footage, I was able to illustrate moments of discovery as they happened and align them directly with phenomenotechnical descriptions of those precise instances. In contrast, the earlier case studies required me to retrospectively deconstruct songs without access to audio-visual documentation of my early explorations. Moving forward, I intend to document all practice sessions indiscriminately, recognising that it is often in the most fleeting or seemingly unremarkable moments that the most meaningful artistic ruptures occur.

8.3 Question three

How can practice research be engaged as a feminist methodology and how can this be applied to the investigation of underrepresented historical repertoires of Western classical music?

Feminist musicologists have identified that traditional tools in musicology “...force music to fit a pre-existing theoretical model...”.²⁷⁸ These tools “...developed in the context of a certain canon

²⁷⁸ Sally Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First-Century Feminist Politics of Music* (Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2010), 6?.

of works...” serve “...to define and maintain that canon...” and are, therefore, inadequate for exploring repertoires exterior to this canon and its values.²⁷⁹ As Randel notes, “We cannot expect to understand any new repertory other than the traditional ones if we are not prepared to invent new methods appropriate for its study”.²⁸⁰

This approach “...ignores the chaos of music as it might be experienced in the ‘real’ world, the multiply differentiated sound world that music lets loose on the chaotic, virtual world of listeners. It ignores...what music does to people...the standard method deployed by the analyst is locked into a paradigm that closes music off rather than opening it out to new possibilities [...] because the future arises out of a pre-existent reality and a set of pre-determined goals, the outcomes tend to conform to the prevailing conditions of the present reality”.²⁸¹

This research narrative positions practice research as a feminist methodology by emphasising their shared ontological and epistemic foundations. Like feminist musicology, practice research in music strives for methodological renewal as a means to reorient the discipline of music studies towards an ontology that embraces performers and their valuable knowledge perspectives. Both approaches support a post-textual paradigm,²⁸² undermining the score as a fixed document of the composer’s intentions. Instead, *musicking* is identified as the activity in which musical meaning is encountered.²⁸³

Practice research, with its emphasis on making and doing, provides an alternative framework. I engaged with Bachelard’s notion of phenomenotechnique, where technique is foregrounded, reorienting the composer as a practitioner and active participant,²⁸⁴ and the score as a technical object.²⁸⁵ A focus on technique—as advocated by Ben Spatz—challenges problematic hierarchies of compositional value, such as the binary between simple and complex structures, by highlighting the inherent complexity of embodiment itself.

The suitability of practice research as a feminist methodology is established further in this research

279 Don Michael Randel, “The Canons in the Musicological Toolbox”, in *Disciplining Music: Musicology and Its Canons* (University of Chicago Press, 1992), 10.

280 Randel, “The Canons in the Musicological Toolbox”, 10.

281 Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First-Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 6.

282 Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First-Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 2010; Paulo de Assis, *Logic of Experimentation* (Leuven University Press, 2018).

283 Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Wesleyan University Press, 1998).

284 Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music*, 62.

285 My reworking of Bachelard’s concept as articulated in chapters 1 and 2.

narrative by identifying the way in which this approach realises the meaningful reorientation of disciplinary apparatus called for across generations of feminist musicology. Rather than simply facing a new thing, the actions carried out are new—thereby avoiding the reinforcement of harmful alignments.²⁸⁶ This opens a more equitable space, with each body engaging in this type of research yielding its own perspectives and knowledge, hopefully free from the hierarchies that have characterised Lieder studies and practice.

The phenomenotechnical mode has proved an effective tool in realising these ideological realignments practically. It offers a way into the embodied phenomena of practice after the fact, providing the freedom to focus on the practice as advocacy before reflecting on the knowledge acquired. The two cuts described by Spatz in *Making a Laboratory* can be made reflectively—not asking “what happens if” and then “what happens”, but instead “what happened when”. This is particularly well suited to the practice of repertoires whose qualities and dimensions are not yet known.²⁸⁷

Because practice research centres on making and doing, it presents a distinct scholarly opportunity for addressing underrepresented repertoires. I proposed a reparative approach that prioritises an underrepresented repertoire through a practical advocacy project.²⁸⁸ In this project, I edited and performed all of Hensel’s Lieder, then selected and prepared a recording programme. By adopting an embodied perspective of song, this approach assures potential researchers that the inherent complexity of embodiment and the myriad technical manifestations of music-text relationships, as well as the individual researcher’s unique practice, will yield meaningful insights. In a post-textual paradigm, no music is neutral or passive. Instead, engagement through technique reveals a wealth of embodied knowledge and ensures that the music can be sung and heard beyond a specialist community.

The impact of www.henselsongsonline.org evidences the efficacy of this approach, having attracted more than 8,300 unique users, whilst the CD recording has been streamed over 48,000 times. My advocacy for Fanny Hensel has extended across multimedia platforms. My edition

286 Queer phenomenology: Orientations, objects, others (Duke University Press, 2020).

287 Spatz discusses the experimental system after Rheinberger, which is discussed across practice research as a potential epistemology. This posthumous application is my adaptation and is better suited to the self-conscious nature of artistic practice. Ben Spatz, *Making a laboratory: Dynamic configurations with transversal video* (punctum books, 2020), 32.

288 Suzanne G Cusick, “Musicology, torture, repair”, *Radical Musicology* 3, no. 1 (2008): 1–9. 17 May 2009 <<http://www.radical-musicology.org.uk>>.

and research were featured in the film *Fanny: The Other Mendelssohn*,²⁸⁹ directed by Hensel's thrice-great-granddaughter Sheila Hayman. *BBC Music Magazine* featured the project in a four-page spread, where I discussed the music and resource with Rebecca Franks.²⁹⁰ The recordings and findings have been reviewed widely,²⁹¹ and I appeared on *BBC In Tune* to play excerpts and discuss the project.²⁹² The resource has been presented at numerous conferences,²⁹³ and colleagues in tertiary education have reported using it in their teaching. Consequently, this research succeeds in its primary aim: Fanny's unsung songs are now brought to light and widely shared, with awareness of her music growing exponentially.

8.4 Conclusions

This research enquiry has been fruitful, with singing proving to be a powerful methodological approach for reimagining Lieder studies and introducing fresh perspectives that transcend the textual paradigm of Western classical music. Embodied explorations of music and text have unveiled compelling possibilities for the study of strophic song, repositioning poetry as an integral tool in the composer's practice. Practice-based research has emerged not only as a viable but an effective feminist methodology. Yet, the hours spent singing, playing and editing Fanny Hensel's Lieder are only partially reflected in this discussion.

Before 2020, I had never heard of Fanny Mendelssohn. Her music found its way to my stand during an early lockdown project in the first furloughs of the pandemic. Within bars, I was captivated by a musical voice distinct not only from her brother's but from any Lieder composer I knew. Her work resonated with a truthfulness that reshaped my own practice. Exploring this connection to Fanny's songwriting voice over the past five years has been a privilege and I never tire of her music. She will always hold a principal place in my singing practice. I hope to have done her justice in this research. At the very least, I take solace in knowing her songs are no longer "unheeded and unknown".

289 Sheila Hayman dir., *Fanny: The Other Mendelssohn* (film), Mercury Studios, 2024.

290 Rebecca Franks, "A Song in her heart", *BBC Music Magazine*, August 2023; Tim Parker-Langston, "www.henselsongsonline.org", *Répertoire International des Sources Musicales*, May 13, 2022.

291 Including Planet Hugill, *BBC Music Magazine*, *American Record Review* and *MusicWeb International*.

292 <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m001n27y>

293 Presentations include: "Making Noise: Musical Activism & Fanny Hensel's Lieder Repertoire" at The Second International Conference on Women in/and Musical Leadership (2024), Gendering Music Matter (University of Copenhagen, 2024) and the Mendelssohn Network Preconference (University of Colorado Denver, 2023); "Towards a Reparative Musicology of Action" at the Fourth International Conference on Women's Work in Music (Bangor University, 2023); "Singing by Myself: Lieder During the Lockdown" at The Art Song Platform: Art Song Out of the Concert Hall (Goldsmiths, University of London, 2021); and as a panellist on "Women in Music: Leadership, Resources, Research Directions" at Celebrating Women Musicians, Past and Present (British Library, 2024).

This research narrative finishes as it begins, with one of Fanny's songs in singing.

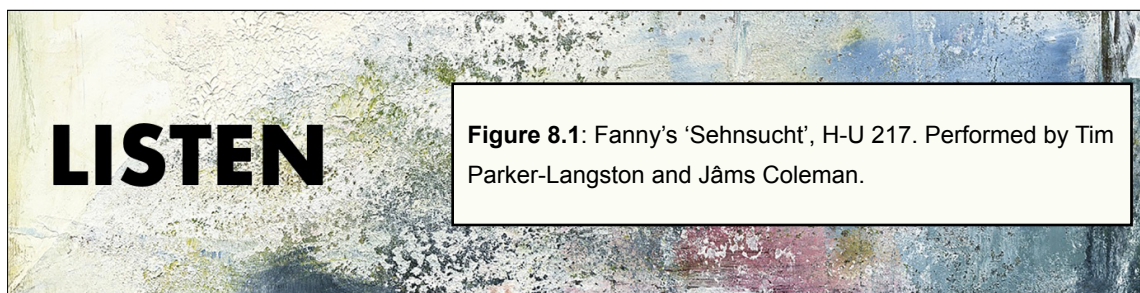


Figure 8.1: Fanny's 'Sehnsucht', H-U 217. Performed by Tim Parker-Langston and Jâms Coleman.

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Portfolio and appendices

Portfolio A: *Hensel: Lieder*

Recorded at the Mendelssohn-Haus, Leipzig, Germany

2–8 January 2023

Produced by Tim Parker-Langston and David Jones (Sonus Audio)

24bit, 96kHz high resolution recording, editing and mastering by David Jones

Album cover artwork by Kirsty Matheson

Released by First Hand Records on DigiSleeve CD and all digital platforms: 23 June 2023



Tracklist * Première recording † Première commercial recording

1 [‘Wenn ich ihn nur habe’, H-U 17 *](#)

Composed c. June–July 1820; poetry written by Novalis.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Genevieve Ellis, piano.

2 [‘Die Schönheit nicht, o Mädchen’, H-U 10 *](#)

Composed 29th April 1820; poetry written by Johann Gottfried Herder.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Ewan Gilford, piano.

3 [‘Wohl deinen Liebling’, H-U 26 *](#)

Composed late December 1820; Psalm 95 trans. Moses Mendelssohn.
Stephanie Wake-Edwards, mezzo soprano; Jâms Coleman, piano.

4 [‘Der Abendstern’, H-U 70 †](#)

Composed 18th May 1823; poetry written by Johann von Mailáth.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Ewan Gilford, piano.

[5] ['Die sanften Tage', H-U 75 *](#)

Composed 15th June 1823; poetry written by Ludwig Uhland.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor, Genevieve Ellis, piano.

[6] ['Der Sänger', H-U 76 *](#)

Composed 18th June 1823; poetry written by Novalis.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Ewan Gilford, piano.

[7] ['An die Entfernte', H-U 105](#)

Composed 13th December 1823; poetry written by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.
Stephanie Wake-Edwards, mezzo soprano; Jâms Coleman, piano.

[8] ['Auf der Wanderung', H-U 111 *](#)

Composed 17th January 1824; poetry written by Ludwig Tieck.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Genevieve Ellis, piano.

[9] ['Abschied', H-U 115 *](#)

Composed 24th March 1824; poetry written by Ludwig Tieck.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Jâms Coleman, piano.

[10] ['Mond', H-U 154 *](#)

Composed 20th June 1825; poetry written by Ludwig Christoph Heinrich Hölty.
Stephanie Wake-Edwards, mezzo soprano; Genevieve Ellis, piano.

[11] ['Sehnsucht', H-U 190](#)

Composed 23rd November 1826; poetry written by Johann Heinrich Voß.
Stephanie Wake-Edwards, mezzo soprano; Genevieve Ellis, piano.

[12] ['Sehnsucht', H-U 192 *](#)

Composed 24th January 1827; poetry written by Ludwig Christoph Heinrich Hölty.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Genevieve Ellis, piano.

[13] ['Maigesang', H-U 194](#)

Composed 4th February 1827; poetry written by Ludwig Christoph Heinrich Hölty.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Genevieve Ellis, piano.

[14] ['Seufzer', H-U 195 *](#)

Composed 14th February 1827; poetry written by Ludwig Christoph Heinrich Hölty.
Jennifer Parker, mezzo soprano; Genevieve Ellis, piano.

[15] ['An den Mond', H-U 198 *](#)

Composed 16th March 1827; poetry written by Ludwig Christoph Heinrich Hölty.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Genevieve Ellis, piano.

[16] ['An die Ruhe', H-U 201 *](#)

Composed 30th March 1827; poetry written by Ludwig Christoph Heinrich Hölty.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Genevieve Ellis, piano.

[17] ['Sehnsucht', H-U 203 *](#)

Composed 2nd May 1827; poetry written by Ludwig Christoph Heinrich Hölty.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Genevieve Ellis, piano.

[18] ['Sehnsucht', H-U 205 *](#)

Composed between 4th—22nd July 1827; poetry written by Johann Heinrich Voß.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Ewan Gilford, piano.

[19] ['Umsonst', H-U 206 *](#)

Composed 24th July 1828; poetry written by Johann Heinrich Voß.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Genevieve Ellis, piano.

[20] ['Suleika', H-U 210](#)

Composed 4th October 1827; poetry written by Marianne von Willemer.
Stephanie Wake-Edwards, mezzo soprano; Jâms Coleman, piano.

[21] ['Sehnsucht', H-U 217](#)

Composed 17th February 1828; poetry written by Friedrich Adolf Märcker.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Jâms Coleman, piano.

[22] ['Nacht', H-U 259](#)

Composed 1st October 1831; poetry written by F. Robert.
Stephanie Wake-Edwards, mezzo soprano; Jâms Coleman, piano.

[23] ['In der Ferne', H-U 271 *](#)

Composed 29th August 1833; poetry written by Ludwig Christoph Heinrich Hölty.
Stephanie Wake-Edwards, mezzo soprano; Genevieve Ellis, piano.

[24] ['Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh', H-U 285](#)

Composed 22nd August 1835; poetry written by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.
Stephanie Wake-Edwards, mezzo soprano; Ewan Gilford, piano.

[25] ['Ach, die Augen sind es wieder', H-U 325](#)

Composed 20th December 1837; poetry written by Heinrich Heine.
Jennifer Parker, mezzo soprano; Ewan Gilford, piano.

[26] ['Das Meer Erglänzte weit hinaus', H-U 335](#)

Composed 6th September 1838; poetry written by Heinrich Heine.
Stephanie Wake-Edwards, mezzo soprano; Ewan Gilford, piano.

[27] ['Ich wandelte unter den Bäumen', H-U 334](#)

Composed 7th August 1838; poetry written by Heinrich Heine.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Jâms Coleman, piano.

[28] ['Der Fürst vom Berge', H-U 359](#)

Composed fall 1839—summer 1840; poetry written by Wilhelm Hensel.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Ewan Gilford, piano.

[29] ['Traurige Wege', H-U 380](#)

Composed 28th July 1841; poetry written by Nikolaus Lenau.
Stephanie Wake-Edwards, mezzo soprano; Jâms Coleman, piano.

[30] ['Dämmerung senkte sich von oben', H-U 392](#)

Composed 28th August 1843; poetry written by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Ewan Gilford, piano

[31] ['Traum', H-U 412](#)

Composed 1844 or earlier; poetry written by Joseph von Eichendorff.
Jennifer Parker, mezzo soprano; Ewan Gilford, piano.

32 [‘Mutter, o sing mich zur Ruh’, H-U 400 *](#)

Composed between late 1843—early 1844; poetry written by Felicia Dorothea Hemans.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Ewan Gilford, piano.

33 [‘Erwache knab, erwache’, H-U 431 *](#)

Composed 16th June 1846; poetry written by Wilhelm Hensel.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Jâms Coleman, piano.

34 [‘Vorwurf’, H-U 462](#)

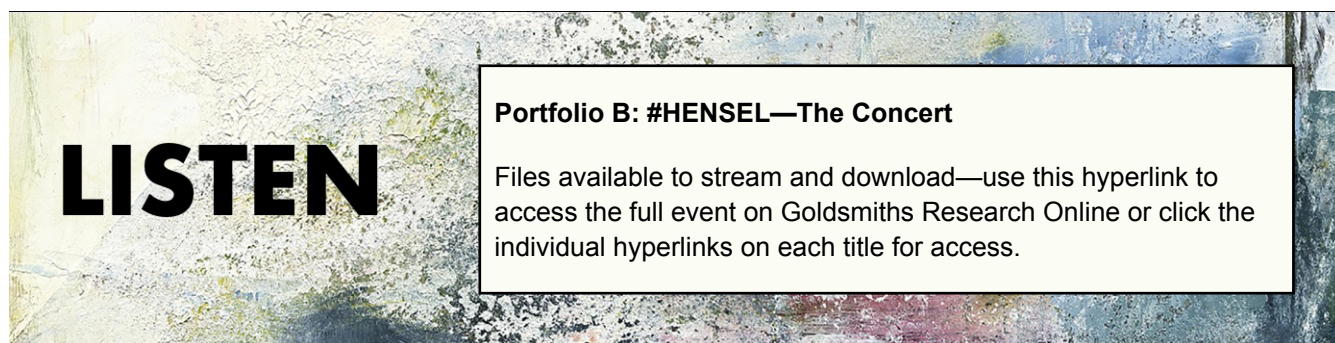
Composed 1846 or earlier; poetry written by Nikolaus Lenau.
Tim Parker-Langston, tenor; Genevieve Ellis, piano.

Portfolio B: #HENSEL—The Concert

2nd March 2024

Deptford Town Hall

Recording engineered by David Jones (Sonus Audio).



Concert Running Order

[‘Im Herbste’, H-U 54 *](#)

Composed 9th November 1822; poetry written by Ludwig Uhland.
Sarah Parkin, soprano; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

[‘Lauf der Welt’, H-U 47 *](#)

Composed May 1822; poetry written by Ludwig Uhland.
Tom Kelly, Tenor

[‘Einsamkeit’, H-U 80 *](#)

Composed 12th July 1823; poetry written by Wilhelm Müller.
Tom Asher, baritone; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Die Schwalbe', H-U 77 *](#)

Composed 20th June 1823; poetry written by Friederike Robert.
Alistair Sutherland, baritone; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Die Sommerrosen Blühen', H-U 57 *](#)

Composed December 1822; poetry written by Luise Hensel.
Tom Kelly, Tenor; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Wiegenlied', H-U 65 *](#)

Composed March 1823; poetry written by Ludwig Uhland.
Sarah Parkin, soprano; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Vereinigung', H-U 101 *](#)

Composed 11th December 1823; poetry written by Wilhelm Müller.
Esther Mallett, soprano; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Nacht', H-U 133 *](#)

Composed 12th September 1824; poetry written by Ludwig Tieck.
Charlotte Broadbent, soprano; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Am stillen Hain', H-U 138 *](#)

Composed 5th November 1824; poetry written by Wilhelm Müller.
Esther Mallett, soprano; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Der Frühlingsabend', H-U 185 *](#)

Composed between 29th August and 26th October 1826; poetry written by Johann Heinrich Voß.
Anna Bernardin, soprano; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Frühlingserinnerung', H-U 38 *](#)

Composed 25th May 1821; poetry written by Friederike Robert.
Fae Evelyn Asher, soprano; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Glück', H-U 125 *](#)

Composed 10th June 1824; poetry written by Ludwig Tieck.
Charlotte North, soprano; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Seefährers Abschied', H-U 83 *](#)

Composed 1st August 1823; poetry written by Wilhelm Müller.
Alistair Sutherland, baritone; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Ecco quell fiero istante', H-U 155 *](#)

Composed 29th June 1825; poetry written by Pietro Metastasio.
Anna Bernardin, soprano; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Klage', H-U 112 *](#)

Composed 24th January 1824; poetry written by Ludwig Tieck.
Charlotte North, soprano; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Zu deines Lagers Füßen', H-U 245 *](#)

Composed 19th January 1830; poetry written by Wilhelm Hensel.
Fae Evelyn Asher, soprano; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Nacht', H-U 225 *](#)

Composed 1st October 1831; poetry written by Friederike Robert.
Jennifer Parker, mezzo soprano; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Abendluft', H-U 218 *](#)

Composed mid-June 1828; poetry attributed to Ludwig Christoph Heinrich Hölty.
Alison Langer, soprano; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['So muß ich von dir scheiden', H-U 24 *](#)

Composed 13th December 1820; poetry written by Adam Storck.
Jennifer Parker, mezzo soprano; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Selmar und Selma', H-U 230 *](#)

Composed 4th March 1829; poetry written by Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock.
Tom Asher, baritone; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Sie Liebt, mich liebt die Auserwählte', H-U 172 *](#)

Composed 17th May 1826; poetry written by Johann Heinrich Voß.
Stephanie Edwards, soprano; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

['Beharre', H-U 457 *](#)

Composed 27th November 1846; poetry written by Helmina von Chézy.
Alison Langer, soprano; Tim Parker-Langston, piano.

Portfolio C: www.henselsongsonline.org: Complete sheet Music Edition [[link](#)].

Portfolio D: Website—henselsongsonline.org [web [link](#), PDF [link](#)].

Appendix A: *Hensel: Lieder* commissioned artwork by Kirsty Matheson [[link](#)].

Appendix B: Annotated scores and texts used for *Hensel: Lieder* [[link](#)].

Appendix C: A life in practice data [[link](#)].

Appendix D: Documentation of my practice of Fanny's songs and the types of practice engaged [[link](#)].

Appendix E: 'Die sanften Tage' and 'Der Blumenstrauß': an infrastructure of practice [[link](#)].