

Schwanengesang

Franz Peter Schubert


Kayleen Sánchez, soprano

Johnandrew Slominski, fortepiano

Schwanengesang, D. 957

1. Liebesbotschaft
2. Kriegers Ahnung
3. Frühlingssehnsucht
4. Ständchen
5. Aufenthalt
6. In der Ferne
7. Abschied
8. Das Fischermädchen
9. Am Meer
10. Die Stadt
11. Der Doppelgänger
12. Ihr Bild
13. Der Atlas
14. Die Taubenpost

Total time 50'42"



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Schwanengesang is a compilation of Franz Schubert's 14 last lieder, and while it was published—and is frequently performed—as a complete work, it was not necessarily Schubert's intent to publish the songs as a cycle. After the composer's death in 1828, his brother Ferdinand arranged a contract with the publisher Tobias Haslinger, which provided Haslinger with a volume of unpublished songs. These songs were then published together as Schubert's "Swan-songs," comprising seven poems by Ludwig Rellstab, six by Heinrich Heine, and one by Johann Seidl; all were composed between August and October of 1828. The set of poems by Heine appear in the poet's *Heimkehr* cycle in *Reisebilder*. Significantly, while Schubert's other song cycles invariably preserve their respective poems' original order, Haslinger shuffled the Heine songs of *Schwanengesang* somewhat. For the purpose of preserving what was certainly Schubert's custom in attending to text, and to illuminate what we observe to be compelling tonal connections across songs, we present the six Heine songs of *Schwanengesang* in the order in which the poems originally appeared.

One will undoubtedly notice embellishments from both voice and piano that deviate from the printed score, great variations in vocal color, and the use of straight-tone singing in some places. These performance decisions are deliberate, and are emblematic of what would have been expected from nineteenth-century performers of Schubert's lieder. There are certain "essential" ornaments that Schubert wrote explicitly in the score, as well other "nonessential" ornaments and musical gestures that a musician from Schubert's time would likely have improvised in performance. Walther Dürr, a German musicologist and Schubert scholar, as well as editor of the *Neue Schubert-Ausgabe* from 1965 to 1997, wrote in his book "A Companion to Schubert's *Schwanengesang*" that "Schubert regarded singers, even if they were amateurs, soloists who, in accordance with older traditions, decided for themselves with regard to their ornaments." The Austrian baritone Johann Michael Vogl, who premiered and promoted many of Schubert's lieder and shared a close personal relationship with the composer, regularly embellished Schubert's works in performance, and employed changes in vocal color and style to draw particular attention to the text—apparently with Schubert's blessing. Anton Diabelli's 1830 edition of Schubert's *Die Schöne Müllerin* includes ornamentation and embellishments as performed by Vogl; many of our performance decisions in *Schwanengesang* are modeled upon this venerable source.

The fortepiano used for this recording was built by Paul McNulty in 2014 after an 1812 instrument by the Viennese maker Johann Fritz, and is tuned using a Broadwood temperament. We are very grateful to Malcolm Bilson for the gracious loan of this magnificent instrument from his personal collection. The Fritz delivers a direct, intimate, and clear sound that simply cannot be achieved on a modern instrument; its balance of intensity, delicacy, and nuance profoundly influences nearly every aspect of performance and interpretation, and we feel that it brings these pieces to life in lovely and unexpected ways.

If there is there is a single thread or underlying tenet that has tied this project together for us, it is that there exists no single way in which these songs must be performed. As evidenced by historical documents, musicological research, and the vast number of recordings by outstanding artists, *Schwanengesang* is subject to a great variety of interpretations and performance choices. While one can never recapture the sound world that Schubert and Vogl experienced, we have attempted to mediate a dialogue between performance practices both past and present. We embrace this legacy and this multiplicity of possibilities, and hope that through this recording, we might revitalize these lieder in a way that is bold, exciting, and original.

– **Kayleen Sánchez and John Andrew Slominski**

Producer, audio editor: Paul Sánchez

Audio engineer: Rich Wattie

Fortepiano: Paul McNulty Fortepiano, after Johann Fritz, ca. 1812

Fortepiano Technician: Sue Brown

Recorded with Schoeps and Neumann microphones in Hatch Recital Hall, Eastman School of Music, March 15–17, 2017.

Design: Paul Sánchez

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