

Annual Review of Schubert's Life

1821

At the beginning of 1821 Schubert may have still been working on an opera that he had begun in the previous year, *Sakuntala* (D701), which would remain unfinished, and part of which is now lost.

In January Schober was back in Vienna having abandoned the idea of becoming a painter. On the 26th of January he organised what was probably the first 'Schubertiad' at his rooms, and on a number of occasions over the year there would be evenings amongst friends similarly devoted entirely to the music of Schubert.

It was probably Vogl who got Ignaz von Mosel, Count Dietrichstein, Josef Voigt & Salieri to write testimonials for Schubert so that he could obtain a post at the Court Theatre (*Kärtnertor-Theater* or *Hofoper*). As a result, for a brief time in February he was employed as *répétiteur* to coach Karoline Unger in Mozart's *Così*. This ended abruptly that same month as it was said that he "was incapable of keeping punctually to the rehearsal hours, and the mechanical side of the work irked him".^[1]

In March Leopold Sonnleithner who admired and was anxious to promote Schubert's music (and who's father Ignaz hosted the salons at which Schubert's songs, or part-songs, would be presented) was irritated enough to write to Anselm Huttenbrenner about Schubert's failure to appear for rehearsals with the artists who were to perform his music at the concerts; Sonnleithner, in the words of Mrs McKay^[2] was upset at Schubert's offhand treatment of him, 'having made considerable efforts to further his career'. In spite of this, Leopold Sonnleithner, arranged for, and with a group of friends paid for, the publication in April of *ErIkönig* (D328) to be printed by Capi & Diabelli as Schubert's Op. 1, and this sold so successfully that the proceeds were used to pay for the publication of *Gretchen am Spinnrade* (D118). Ignaz Sonnleithner acquired valuable patronage for Schubert for both of these songs.

In an attempt to plan a work in a larger structure, early in 1821 Schubert worked on the four movements of a Symphony in D (D708a), but this came to be abandoned and left in piano-score.

In June Spaun had left Vienna to take up a post at Linz. Kupelwieser was absent towards the end of the year having left to make a copy of Correggio's *Jupiter & Io* at the Belvedere Palace and was sorely missed. The original Bildung Circle was becoming depleted and by the autumn had become a reading circle now centred on Schober.

In August Schubert started work on a Symphony in E (No.7, D729) and finished this apart from the completion of the orchestration - which has since been completed by, amongst others, [Brian Newbould](#) in a performing edition.

In early September Schubert left with Schober for Schloss Atzenbrugg, where Schober with members of his family kept up their annual house party. Schober then took Schubert on to St Pölten 35 miles west of Vienna where the Bishop of St Pölten was a relative of Schober's, and after they had enjoyed a brief stay at an inn in the town square the Bishop gave them accommodation in Oschenburg

Castle where, over the next weeks, Schubert and Schober worked together on their new operatic venture *Alfonso und Estrella*, D732.

Returning to Vienna in late October they saw a heavily censored version of *Der Freischütz* and a new production of *Fidelio*. Accused of rarely promoting anything other than Italian opera, the new director Domenico Barbaja invited Weber and Schubert to submit works in German for the following season, and encouraged by this Schubert & Schober continued to work to complete *Alfonso und Estrella*. It was about this time that Schubert was invited to move into the Schober family home (as he had done previously in 1817). Schubert and Schober submitted the score of *Alfonso und Estrella* on its completion but heard nothing, and in the meantime the theatre continued with a long run of the ever-popular Rossini. Meanwhile Schubert wrote two numbers for insertion in Herold's *Das Zauberglöckchen (La Clochette)* at the Kärntnertor-Theater, and this ran there for eight performances.

Schubert was now beginning to show an unfortunate side to his character, becoming increasingly thoughtless or offhand and often displaying ill-mannered behaviour toward his friends, who saw in this what they believed to be the influence of Schober's hedonistic temperament on him.

Fortunately Schubert was now getting works performed, and during the year a song or a partsong was included in some eight concerts at the *Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde*, where he had now been admitted as a member. Later his Overture in E minor (D648) of February 1819 was performed by the *Gesellschaft* in the Redentensaal, and coincidentally his song *Der Wanderer* (D489) of October 1816 was given by the *Dilletanten Gesellschaft* on the same day.

Notable works of 1821:

D723 B maj Aria and Duet inserted in Herold's Opera *Das Zauberglöckchen (La Clochette)*

D729 E maj Symphony 7 sketched 20pp. of full score + instrumental sketch. (Full score realised by Brian Newbould 1992)

D732 *Alfonso und Estrella* Three Acts; Schober Opera 20 September 1821 - 27 Feb 1822

Notes

[1] Leopold von Sonnleithner, November 1857. Biographical material collected by Ferdinand Luib, quoted by Deutsch in his [Memoirs](#), p109.

[2] McKay: [Franz Schubert: A biography](#), p115

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