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Viennese composer Franz Schubert (1797-1828) left a vast oeuvre spanning various genres. Lieder represent the majority of his output with over 600 compositions. Schubert was the first to elevate the Lied from a melody with a simple accompaniment to a complex artform, making the text as important as the music itself, while keeping the music independent at the same time. “[...] *melodies that accompany me through life, eventful and calm, unsteady and mysterious, gloomy and bright, like life itself*” (Johann Mayrhofer: *Erinnerungen an Franz Schubert*, 1829)

“Ständchen” (Serenade), composed in 1828, is one of Franz Schubert’s most renowned compositions and has been transcribed for various instruments, most famously by Franz Liszt for piano solo. “Ständchen” was published posthumously, as part of the song cycle “Schwanengesang” (Swan Song), created by the publisher.

This transcription is based on Liszt’s version, which adds a fourth verse to the original three. In the 2nd stanza the melody is set one octave lower, while in the third an echo effect is used. Here (mm. 71-90) it was possible to maintain the accompaniment as written by Schubert, whereas Liszt was forced to change it for the piano version. It is advisable to seek a different sound for the accompaniment (e.g. staccato), to make it easier to differentiate it from the melody, especially in the 2nd stanza.

Ludwig Rellstab: Ständchen

*Leise flehen meine Lieder
Durch die Nacht zu Dir;
In den stillen Hain hernieder,
Liebchen, komm’ zu mir!*

Softly my songs plead
through the night to you;
down into the silent grove,
beloved, come to me!

*Flüsternd schlanke Wipfel rauschen
In des Mondes Licht;
Des Verräters feindlich Lauschen
Fürchte, Holde, nicht.*

Slender treetops whisper and rustle
in the moonlight;
my darling, do not fear
that the hostile betrayer will overhear us.

*Hörst die Nachtigallen schlagen?
Ach! sie flehen Dich,
Mit der Töne süssen Klagen
Flehen sie für mich.*

Do you not hear the nightingales call?
Ah, they are imploring you;
with their sweet, plaintive songs
they are imploring for me.

*Sie verstehn des Busens Sehnen,
Kennen Liebesschmerz,
Rühren mit den Silbertönen
Jedes weiche Herz.*

They understand the heart’s yearning,
they know the pain of love;
with their silvery notes
they touch every tender heart.

*Lass auch Dir die Brust bewegen,
Liebchen, höre mich!
Bebend harr’ ich Dir entgegen!
Komm’, beglücke mich!*

Let your heart, too, be moved,
beloved, hear me!
Trembling, I await you!
Come, make me happy!

Ständchen

D-Moll, No.4 aus Schwanengesang, D. 957

by F. Schubert - F. Liszt
arranged by Elisabeth Plank

Mässig

pp tempo rubato

mp espressivo il canto

pp

mp

pp

mf

pp

C#

C#

C#

Ständchen

20

mf

F# F# C# F#

25

f

B \flat A# D# D# B \flat

29

mf espressivo *pp*

B \flat

34

espressivo il canto - quasi Violoncello

rall. *smorzando* *mp*

sempre *pp* gli accompagnamenti

B \flat F#