“Music expresses that which cannot be put into words and cannot remain silent.”

~Victor Hugo
A TALE OF TWO PIANO TRIOS: FANNY AND FELIX MENDELSSOHN’S PIANO TRIOS IN D MINOR (OP. 11, OP. 49); AND HOW A WOMAN COMPOSER’S WORK SHOULD RELATE TO THE CANON

DOCUMENT

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By

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*****

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Social forces shape the musical canon and the relation of the work of women composers to that male-dominated canon. Felix Mendelssohn is a major figure in classical music, while Fanny is most likely known as his sister and not as a composer in her own right. In my study I will address the injustice of the past, and argue for the inclusion of Fanny Mendelssohn’s music in the traditional concert repertoire.

Fanny’s story is emblematic, and her situation can help illuminate the fate of other nineteenth-century women composers. Her story is a story of a woman with talent, with merit, who had been given the chance to try her wings, but not the chance to fly. There are two main issues here: why did her music, and that of many other nineteenth-century women composers, never become part of the canon; and how might that neglect be remedied, if it should in fact be remedied? These questions cannot be addressed without looking closely at the music, and without discussing larger social problems and analogies. The former issue broaches the social forces that prevented Fanny from becoming a professional musician, the powers that shape tradition, the notion of universal value, and
the notion of difference. The latter issue brings up questions about assimilation, segregation, and acculturation.

The core part of the document is a comparative analysis of the Piano Trios in D minor by Fanny and Felix Mendelssohn. The purpose of this comparison is to show that there is no intrinsically musical justification for the neglect of Fanny’s composition. The two trios have enough similarities and analogies to show that her work fits securely into the tradition of the piano trio genre, while the subtle differences in dealing with musical details are witnesses to Fanny’s unique, distinct musical language, which is generally speaking more spontaneous than that of Felix.

Fanny’s music is the music of a composer in her own right.
To my son, Géza, with love.
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FANNY CECILIA MENDELSSOHN HENSEL (1805-1847)

“Fanny was in full possession of her art. Filled with the inner well-being acquired during the summer, she plunged into what was to be her masterpiece, a grand romantic Trio in D Minor for piano, violin, and cello… Fanny endowed it with all her passion, animating it with lyrical phrases as broad and generous as the ideas of that time… The work’s heroic side reminds us that Fanny, too, was a composer formed in oratorio and that for the Mendelssohns, religious inspiration could be transformed into Dionysian ardor.”

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Motivations

Fanny Mendelssohn’s Piano Trio in D Minor strikes the listener by its powerful passion and beauty. In my quest of learning more about the work and the composer, I realized that in standard music dictionaries and anthologies, it is not easy to find information on Fanny Mendelssohn, or her Piano Trio. I found myself in a territory of musicological dispute over the notion of canon, women composers, standards, and diversity. My questions seemed to resonate with many discussions on these topics. Why is Fanny Mendelssohn’s Piano Trio in D Minor Op. 11 not included in general index anthologies of chamber music repertoire? What are the social forces that prevented Fanny from extensively publishing her works? How do the works of women composers relate to the canon? How can tradition be changed? How could past neglects be remedied, if they should be remedied? These questions surfaced in academic writings during the last three decades, and are part of an ongoing debate. There are also works
that focus specifically on Fanny Mendelssohn’s life and compositions, for example, by Victoria Sirota, Marcia J. Citron, François Tillard, and others.²

My goal is to put the above-mentioned questions into context through the case of Fanny Mendelssohn, as well as to argue for the merit of her music through the comparison of Fanny and Felix Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trios*.

1.2 Musical Canon

In the one-volume *International Dictionary of Music*, canon lists two meanings: imitative singing style, or round, and a plucked *Zither* derived from the Arabic *Qanun*.³ Neither of those would apply here. The musicological term “used to describe a list of composers or works assigned value and greatness by consensus. The derivation is ecclesiastical, referring to those biblical books and patristic writings deemed worthy of preservation.”⁴ In literature, the term has been used for quite some time, whereas in music it is relatively new.

Different music scholars use the term with different emphasis. Austin B. Caswell calls canon a body of works that is important to know. Latter he refers to it as “a consensus… in ‘classical’ music study… and influences what classical musicians study and perform in their training as well as in their professional careers.” He also points out the assumption that the included “great works of Western art music speak to all generations and are the cultural soil for all subsequent compositional manifestations in

² These works are listed in the List of References.


Western art music.” Caswell criticizes the notion itself and its role within academia.

Katherine Bergeron writes about canon: “… a ‘higher’ authority, a ‘standard’ of excellence, all ideals embodied in what we call the canon.” Susan C. Cook and Judy S. Tsou approach the canon by pointing out the historically omitted works of women composers: “the study of women in music began with compensatory history: the identification of those women — typically composers or performers of neglected concert music — whose lives and work were not part of the accepted musico-historical canon of ‘great work.’” She also points out the bias in canon formation.

Marcia J. Citron parallels the word “canon” with the “standard repertoire”: “For us ‘canon’ is more or less equivalent with ‘standard repertoire.’ We can think of it as a loosely codified organism, broadly accepted…the power wielded by the canon is enormous: its members are presumed best and thus most deserving of reiteration in performance, in scholarship, and in teaching…One is hard-pressed to find them in concert programs and in the standard music histories and anthologies.” She also questions the notion itself pointing out the unjust under representation of women in scholarly anthologies. In her book Gender and the Musical Canon, her ideas resonate with Caswell’s: “…canonicity has become a central disciplinary concern.”

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continues by questioning the “fundamental assumptions, values and paradigms in music” implied in the notion of canon.\textsuperscript{9} Maree Macmillan also calls for the change of musical canon: “Musicology has consisted largely of a chronological history of the lives and times of “Great Composers” (always male)... with little sense of music’s power as a social force which not only reflects but shapes history and culture. Alternative modes of historiography are needed.”\textsuperscript{10}

Musical canon refers to both an abstract notion of excellence and accepted values, as well as to its manifestation of standard repertoire, sometimes called the repertory canon. It has been shaped through history by composers, music historians, critics, performers, and audiences. How is the canon actually made? What are the powers that influence its formation? What are the criteria of inclusion of a work or composer? These are all questions that are debated by musicologists. In the above examples of scholarly views, there is a consensus on criticizing the notion and call for a change. Changes can be made either in a top-down or bottom-up fashion. The former requires a set of rules, or criteria made to reflect the necessary changes in canon formation. The rules would have to be established by high authorities in musicology, which immediately brings up questions of power, bias, and censorship. The bottom-up fashion requires a time consuming process of slow changes through diversification of the canon. I view this as a possible solution that takes a long time, but may result in a more unbiased canon. In this process, neglected works and composers would be exposed through writings and


performing. Concert programs as well as academic writings give opportunity to expand and diversify the notion of canon through deserving works.

How should women composers’ music relate to the canon? Social historian Marsha Rozenblit points out the important difference between acculturation and structural assimilation of minorities in a society. Acculturation is a cultural modification through the interaction of different cultural traditions. Assimilation results in the so-called melting pot. In describing the ways of incorporating women composers’ work into the canon, I shall argue for the possibilities of acculturation as opposed to full assimilation or segregation.

Preference for the familiar has always informed musical tradition. Composers struggle for the acceptance of their works, and their compositional styles evolve partly due to such interaction with society. This has a two-fold result. It enables the composer to adapt and grow, while conversely, it helps to shape trends and alter the tastes of society. As society gains familiarity with a work, that work may become part of the canon.

Fanny Mendelssohn was denied this interaction with musical society at large. She began her musical career alongside her brother, Felix Mendelssohn. Felix’s works became widely accepted; Fanny’s did not. Why did their musical careers take such different turns? Why was her music neglected while his music became part of the canon?

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The name and music of Fanny Mendelssohn are completely omitted from such collections as Maurice Hinson’s guidebooks to piano and chamber music repertoire.\textsuperscript{13} Without the effort of the women’s music movement, we would not have had the opportunity to become acquainted with Fanny’s music. When curators of culture create awareness of such a void, extremes are inevitable. Feminists have created their own world: concerts and recordings of women composers, and collections of essays from women writers about women’s music.\textsuperscript{14} The inertia of the traditionally male musical society is so strong that it takes an extreme force to move it in new directions.

Is this male-female segregation a means to an end or an end to itself? Karen Monson opposes the separation altogether, whereas Miriam Gideon questions the notion of canon, the idea of universal value.\textsuperscript{15} I view separation as a necessary intermediate step, a kind of affirmative action, a remedy for the neglect of the past. Familiarity plays an important role in acceptance. The more familiar the performer, the critic, and the audience are with a piece of music, the more likely the piece will be performed again. It is therefore important to have recitals, recordings and anthologies of music by women composers, but only as a means to an end. The exposure should bring awareness and familiarity, which can lead eventually to acceptance. The goal is acceptance into the canon.


\textsuperscript{15} Richard Taruskin, “The Reading Room,” \textit{Opus Magazine} 4, no.2 (February, 1988): 64.
1.3  Fanny Mendelssohn

Fanny Mendelssohn’s musical career is a concrete example that supports my position. Fanny was a talented musician, a virtuoso pianist, and a composer of great imagination and poetry. In the stream of the nineteenth century, her musicianship remained her pleasure for spare time and for the joy of her family and close friends. The Mendelssohns, a well-to-do Jewish family facing the resurfacing anti-semitism in nineteenth-century Germany, were remarkable people, great talents in different fields. Fanny’s grandfather, Moses Mendelssohn, was a prominent figure in his time, a philosopher, and litterateur. The siblings, Felix, Fanny, Rebecka, and Paul all showed musical gifts. The family’s web of social connections mirror well the sparkling cultural life of nineteenth-century Western Europe. Felix became famous, and now Fanny is referred as the “tragic sister” of Felix Mendelssohn. This document attempts to point out some aspects of society, which prevented Fanny Mendelssohn from becoming either a famous performer, such as Clara Schumann, or a well-known composer like Felix Mendelssohn.

Fanny published only a few of her works. This is due to her father’s (Abraham Mendelssohn) opposition to her publishing. Felix valued some of Fanny’s compositions to the degree that he published them under his own name. This gave Fanny a chance to be recognized, even if incognito. Her musical output is dominated by lieder and piano pieces, along with some large-scale works in various genres: cantata, oratorio, overture, and few instrumental chamber pieces that include a string quartet and the Piano Trio in D minor, Op.11. In the following, I do not attempt to give an objective measurement of the value of Fanny’s piece. Felix Mendelssohn’s piano trio in the same key is popular and
well received. The genre itself, the piano trio, forms an important part of the canon. To support my argument for Fanny’s work to be included into the standard repertoire, I point out analytical and technical similarities and analogies between the two trios. I also emphasize the subtleties that reveal Fanny Mendelssohn’s individuality and creativity as a composer. It is interesting to mention that Charles Rosen compares some features in the works of the young Felix Mendelssohn with elements in the works of Beethoven in order to point out Felix’s genius.\textsuperscript{16}

1.4 Organization of the Document

The document includes six chapters. The first and last chapters are the frames of introduction and conclusion. Chapter 2 deals with the history of the Mendelssohn family, Fanny’s place in it, her life, and her music in overview. Chapter 3 addresses social issues, Fanny’s fate, the canon, and the genre of the piano trio. Chapter 4 is the longest, and contains the comparative analysis of the two trios. The commonly used music-analytic method involves formal, thematic, and harmonic analysis. It deals with the forms of each movement in each work, based on how musical phrases and sentences divide the piece into substructures, how the harmonies change and progress, what constitutes the melodic lines, how they are shaped and divided, and what the motives are in the different musical themes. The method is widely understood. Chapter 5 focuses on performance issues to show another dimension of the similarity and analogy of the two works: pianistic writing, technical problems, stylistic aspects, and ensemble issues. Chapter 6 contains conclusions drawn from the previous chapters to support the original statement that Fanny’s music deserves to be included into the musical canon. In this final

chapter, I will restate my views of and hopes for the standard repertoire performed in concert halls all over the world.
CHAPTER 2

THE MENDELSSOHN FAMILY

2.1 The Remarkable Family

Fanny Mendelssohn’s early years suggest that her musical abilities and her talent in composition measured up to those of her brother, Felix Mendelssohn. Yet, she was prevented from becoming a professional musician. In order to have an understanding of how and why it happened so, it is necessary to peek into the life of the Mendelssohn family.

The fame did not start with Felix or Fanny Mendelssohn. Their maternal great-grandfather was an Itzig. Both the Itzig and the Mendelssohn families were well-known in Central Europe. They were both descendants of the famous philosopher Rabbi Moses Isserles (Cracow 1520-1572).

Fanny’s maternal great-aunt, Sara Itzig Levy (1763-1854), was a student of Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, and a patron of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach. After Philipp Emanuel’s death, she even supported his widow. Sara was a harpsichord player, a soloist of the Singakademie in Berlin (1806-1808), where Karl Friedrich Zelter was a conductor. In 1818, Zelter became the composition teacher of both Fanny and Felix Mendelssohns. It seems that it was Sara Itzig who recommended Zelter for the position. Not only did
she support the arts and artists, but was also a faithful advocate of Judaism. She
sponsored many Jewish charities and was saddened by the conversion of her many
relatives. She quoted Schiller in a letter to her friend, the Protestant theologian
Schleiermacher: “…’I am like a tree without leaves’, so many of my relatives are
estranged from me by their conversion.” She reasoned against conversion: “Since the
Jewish belief is, even according to Christian doctrine, the foundation upon which the
whole structure of Christianity is erected, how can I be expected to break down the
foundation of my house in order to live in its first floor?”17 Sara lived a long life,
surviving both Fanny and Felix. In Fanny’s letters she is referred as “Tante Levy.”

Fanny’s mother, Lea Salomon Mendelssohn (1778-1842), was a niece of Tante
Levy. Lea and her brother, Jacob, were brought up in a highly educated and wealthy
environment. Both Lea and Jacob felt confused about their origin. While in some circles
Jews were entirely accepted, they were still not equal by law. They were discriminated
against by several parts of society. The pressure and the desire to become an equal
citizen in nineteenth-century Germany were so strong that Jacob converted to the
Protestant Church. He also took the name of a former owner of a garden he bought,
Bartholdy. Ironically, the Berliners continued to call his land the “Jews’ garden.” Years
after Jacob’s conversion, Lea followed his steps with her husband, Abraham
Mendelssohn. Lea was a very intelligent and well-educated woman. She spoke French,
English, and Italian, and could read Greek. She played the piano and studied with
Johann Philipp Kirnberger (1721-1783), who was a student of Johann Sebastian Bach.

Her family background and view of a woman’s role were progressive and liberal. It was

17 Eric Werner, Mendelssohns: A New Image of the Composer and His Age (London: Collier-Macmillan
Limited, 1963), 8.
Lea who paid very close attention to Fanny’s musical development and who constantly encouraged her.

The name Mendelssohn became famous through Fanny’s and Felix’s grandfather, Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786). Originally, he was called Moses, “son of Mendel,” which he converted into Mendelssohn. At age fourteen, he left the Dessau ghetto to follow his former teacher Rabbi Frankel. Moses raised himself from poverty to a stable existence and fame. He learned philosophy and was literate in many languages including Hebrew, German, English, Greek, Latin, and French. Among his several books, the best-known, *Phaedon or the Death of Socrates*, was translated into all European languages. Moses established the foundation of Reform Judaism and contributed to the emancipation of the Jews.

The youngest son of Moses, Abraham Mendelssohn (1776-1835), became a successful banker. Abraham’s belief in a universal “natural” religion grounded in obligation to the voice of conscience resonated with the idea of the Enlightenment. He did not consider religious observance to be essential. In his eyes all religions were the same: “only one God, one virtue, one truth, one happiness.”18 In 1816, the Mendelssohn children, Fanny, Felix, Rebecka, and Paul, were baptized, years later confirmed, and in 1822, Lea and Abraham themselves became Lutheran to share the faith of their children. But they never abandoned their Jewish heritage, never tried to hide or deny it. Abraham remained faithful to humanistic ideals and the openness passed onto him by his well-respected and famous father, Moses Mendelssohn. When Felix became a celebrated

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composer, Abraham described his position in fame with humor: “Formerly, I was known as the son of my father, but now I am known as the father of my son.”

2.2 Fanny

Fanny Cecilia Mendelssohn (1805-1847) was born into the family as the first child of Lea and Abraham Mendelssohn. Felix followed her in 1809, Rebecka in 1811, and Paul in 1813. They all studied music. Paul played the cello, Rebecka sang, Felix played both the piano and the violin, and composed, Fanny played the piano and composed as well. Both Felix and Fanny received a distinguished music education. They studied with Zelter and sang in the Singakadame of Berlin, where Zelter conducted. During the family’s stay in Paris in 1816, they also studied with Madame Marie Bigot, who was praised by Haydn and Beethoven. After returning to Germany, they learned piano from Ludwig Berger, a student of Muzio Clementi and John Field. In family events, both Felix and Fanny had opportunities to perform. Their early childhood was similar to that of the Mozart siblings. But the future for Fanny seemed to change. It was not a choice for a woman in her situation to become a professional musician. It had to be some serious financial reason to make it necessary for a woman to go out to the public to give recitals or compose. That was the case for Clara Schumann, who gained fame as a pianist and composer in her time.

Fanny’s fate was shaped by the gender-biased traditions of society. Her father, Abraham Mendelssohn, clearly expressed his views toward a musical career for Fanny: “Music will perhaps be his, (Felix’s), profession, while for you it will always be only an...

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ornament, and never can or should be the *Ground-bass* of your being and doing.\(^{20}\)

Fanny was not permitted to argue about that. She wanted to live up to the standards expected of her. At age thirteen, she memorized twenty-four preludes from Bach’s *Well-Tempered Clavier* to please her father. Later she composed a song for her father’s birthday. But it was hard for her to witness how the path of Felix’s musical career took such a different turn from hers. In 1821, Zelter took Felix to Goethe without her. Nevertheless, one of Fanny’s songs was sung there and Goethe sent a verse to her. Her very first published pieces were lieder, published under Felix’s name in his *Opus 8* collection in 1827. Ironically, during Felix’s visit to England in 1842, Queen Victoria chose to sing *Italien* with Prince Albert at the organ from the *Opus 8* collection. Felix acknowledged that the song was written by his sister, Fanny. There was a very close relationship between Fanny and Felix. In those early years Felix’s only reason to publish her works under his name was to give her a chance to be heard by the public despite their father’s objections.

Fanny composed over four hundred pieces, few of which were ever published. The family’s Sunday concerts, *Sonntagsmusiken*, starting in 1822, gave the opportunity for Fanny regularly to perform and introduce new pieces. After her marriage she received more encouragement and started to publish some of her works. Each Mendelssohn child had a happy marriage. Felix married the beautiful Cecile Jeanrenaud, daughter of a pastor of a Reformed French Church, and had five children. Paul married Albertine Heine, a cousin of Heinrich Heine, the poet. They also had five children. Rebecka married Peter Dirichlet, a great mathematician, who became internationally

known from his “Dirichlet integral” and “Dirichlet problem.” Dirichlet was the first to
lecture about number theory. They also had five children. Fanny met her husband-to-be,
Wilhelm Hensel, in 1821 when the Mendelssohns attended Hensel’s exhibition. He was
court painter for the King of Prussia. In a short time he proposed to Fanny, but Lea
thought that Fanny was too young. When Wilhelm was sent to Rome on a governmental
scholarship for five years, Lea prohibited him from writing directly to Fanny. He could
only write to Lea instead. But Hensel managed to turn Lea’s opinion by sending portraits
of the family and corresponding regularly. When Hensel returned to Germany, he and
Fanny became engaged, with Lea’s permission and support. They married in 1829. It
was hard for Fanny to depart from her beloved brother, Felix. On her wedding day she
wrote to him: “I have always known that I could never experience anything that would
remove you from my memory for even one-tenth of a moment…and I do not believe I am
doing Hensel an injustice through it…I am at peace with everything because I know he
loves you.”\footnote{Marcia J. Citron, ed. The Letters of Fanny Mendelssohn to Felix Mendelssohn (Stuyvesant, New York: Pendragon Press, 1987), 90-91.} Hensel remained a successful artist and an open-minded, kind man. He
strongly encouraged Fanny to publish and perform her compositions.

In 1838, Fanny performed Felix’s \textit{Piano Concerto in G Minor} at a charity
concert. After their father’s death, encouraged by both Lea and Hensel, Fanny published
her \textit{Lieder Opus 1.} and \textit{Lieder Ohne Worte Opus 2} for piano. Felix hesitated to approve,
but eventually gave his blessing: “May you have much happiness in giving pleasure to
others; may you taste the sweets and none of the bitterness of authorship.”\footnote{Herbert Kupferberg, \textit{The Mendelssohns: Three Generations of Genius} (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1972), 163.}
While Fanny became a devoted wife and mother, just as her father had wished, she continued performing and composing for their *Sonntagsmusiken*. Her only child was named after her musical idols: Felix Ludwig Sebastian Hensel. Although, in 1833, she had another pregnancy, she unfortunately gave birth to a stillborn child. Her son Sebastian, in 1889 wrote the family history in his book; *The Mendelssohn Family (1729-1847) from Letters and Journals*. In that book Sebastian describes Fanny: “The most beautiful thing about her was her large, dark, very expressive eyes,…her nose and mouth were rather strong; she had beautiful white teeth…She was quick and decisive in her movements, her face was very lively and showed all of her moods truthfully; deceit was impossible for her.”  

Fanny’s sudden death occurred in the middle of a rehearsal for the coming Sunday concert, on May 14, 1847. In the following summer, Felix also died, from a serious of strokes.

2.3 Questions of Identity

The Mendelssohn family struggled with identity issues regarding origin, faith, belief, and religion. Moses Mendelssohn made the Mendelssohn name known through his scholarly works as a Jewish philosopher. He bravely spoke out for the emancipation of the Jews. A monument erected to his memory has the following inscription: “Moses Mendelssohn born at Dessau of Hebrew parents, a sage like Socrates, faithful to the ancient creed teaching immortality, himself immortal.”

There were many discriminating laws against Jews passed through generations. Jews had to buy the wild

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boars that were killed at royal hunting parties. They had to buy a certain amount of china from the royal china factory for their weddings. Thus, the manager of the factory could get rid of things that would otherwise not sell. Ironically, the twenty life-sized china apes that Moses Mendelssohn acquired on his marriage became highly-prized family heirlooms.25

Moses had six children: three boys and three girls. Two of the girls, Dorothea and Henrietta, ended up converting to the Roman Catholic faith. Dorothea converted twice. She became a Protestant before finally embracing the Roman Catholic faith. The tolerance and openness of the Mendelssohn family are witnessed in Henrietta’s last will: “As in these words I speak for the last time to my dear relations, I hereby thank them for all the aid and friendship they have shown me during my life, and especially for having in every way tolerated the exercise of my religion, and never having shown any hatred toward it.”26 Fanny writes about Henrietta’s death: “She died with such tranquility, such a clear consciousness, and such solicitude for others, to the last moment, that her death was the crown to her beautiful life.”27

A third child of Moses Mendelssohn converted to Christianity: Abraham Mendelssohn, the father of Fanny and Felix Mendelssohn. Abraham married Lea Salomon. Lea’s elder brother Jacob became a Protestant and adopted the name Bartholdy. Influenced by Jacob’s decision, Abraham had his four children baptized into the Lutheran Church. They kept it a secret. Lea and Abraham delayed their conversion until after Lea’s mother’s death. They did not want to upset those members of the family who

25 Ibid., 1-4.


27 Ibid., 1: 60.
would have grieved over their conversion. They eventually also adopted the name Bartholdy and changed the family name into Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. Abraham was torn between remaining faithful to his heritage and taking the steps that would help his family. George Marek in his book writes about Abraham: “If...he wished to remain faithful to an oppressed, persecuted religion, let him do so but realize clearly the prospect of leaving his children a heritage of martyrdom. Once one ceased to believe, the martyrdom became silly barbarism.” While the use of the name became an issue with Felix, Fanny was spared that through her marriage to Wilhelm Hensel. Hensel’s family was Protestant, but his sister, Louise, became a Roman Catholic. The Mendelssohns showed some concern about Louise’s conversion regarding Wilhelm Hensel’s marriage to Fanny.

Here is a family of fame and fortune, yet still trying to find the right path. We find tolerant, open-minded thinking, and an embrace of the universal meaning of religion, as well as some more traditional, rigid, views. Family ties and the love that bound them overcame all and they accepted each other. There is not much explicit reference to how the abandoning of Judaism for Protestantism had an impact on Fanny’s life, but it well parallels her role and fate as a woman, with certain privileges and many obstacles. Fanny might not have experienced directly the oppression and limitations on Jews in Germany at the time, but she faced many bumps on her dreamed path.

The Mendelssohn family had a distinguished place in German society. On the maternal side, due to the court banker Itzig family, they were allowed to inherit lands and houses, while it was not permitted to other German Jews at the time. The family maintained its social status through respect and fame, education and talent, financial

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success, and the wisely-decided conversion to the prevailing German Lutheran faith. The family had members in different faiths and had a deep understanding of one another. On one hand, it helped Dorothea and Henrietta Mendelssohn, and even Louise Hensel, to practice the Roman Catholic faith without prejudice in the predominantly Protestant-convert family. On the other hand, it made it more difficult, especially for Felix, to find one religious path. His works of St. Paul, Lobgesang, and Elijah, show that his Christian faith deeply rooted in Judaism. Leon Botstein refers to him as “a devout Protestant, and a convert from Judaism — bearing the most famous Jewish name of the day.”

The few steps toward the emancipation of the Jews at the end of the eighteenth century are followed by a new wave of oppression. In 1816, the Prussian Ministry of Finance issued a so-called votum that all civil rights of Jews should be linked to their conversion to the Christian religion. Unfortunately, conversion may have given rights according to the law, but society’s judgment was hostile toward ethnic Jews regardless of their faith. It is a sad fact that the rising anti-Semitism of nineteenth-century Germany prevented Felix from becoming the successor of Zelter at the Singakademie, despite the family’s conversion to Christianity. It is outside of the scope of this paper to get into further detail of this very deep, interesting, tragic, and complex issue. Leon Botstein’s article in the book Mendelssohn and His World elaborates on Felix’s conflicts and

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manifestations of his religious identity.\textsuperscript{31} Other relevant sources are in the List of References.

Fanny did not have to ponder about embracing the disputed name Bartholdy after her marriage to Hensel. Her questions of identity centered on the role of women in nineteenth-century high-class society. Dorothea and Henriette Mendelssohn, paternal aunts, were independent, working women. Dorothea, in assisting her second husband, was a copyist, editor, and writer, while Henrietta, who never married, founded and taught in a boarding school in Paris.\textsuperscript{32} On the maternal side, the Itzig women represented the well-to-do high-class society. They only worked for charity and engaged in numerous cultural events and sponsorship. According to Abraham’s letters to Fanny, she had to follow the footsteps of the Itzig women. It was appropriate for her to remain a talented dilettante, who organized and occasionally performed at the *Sonntagsmusik* but it was not appropriate to publish her works and become a professional musician. Despite the continuous support of Lea Mendelssohn and Wilhelm Hensel, it took many years for Fanny to overcome the expected domestic role.

\section*{2.4 Felix’s Influence on Fanny}

Fanny received the same education as Felix and their musical lives paralleled at first. They both had piano lessons with Ludwig Berger and studied composition with Carl Friedrich Zelter. But Abraham paid more attention to touring Felix and introducing him to important people. Felix met Goethe at Weimar in 1821, Cherubini in Paris in


1825, and toured in England in 1829. Goethe asked Felix to play one of Fanny’s compositions that he had heard before. In 1822 Fanny, Felix, and their parents visited Goethe. Thus Fanny had the chance to play her own work for him. In Goethe’s eyes, Fanny’s talent equaled Felix’s. He wrote to Felix in 1825: “…Remember me to your parents, your equally gifted sister and your excellent Master.” Abraham Mendelssohn had a liberal view of society and culture, yet, in thinking about the role of women in the family life, was very traditional. He discouraged Fanny from becoming a professional musician or aspiring to publish her compositions. Fanny composed over four hundred works, but only a few of them were published.

Felix was a great inspiration for Fanny. He gave genuine and detailed assessments of her works while he was also seeking advice from Fanny on his own compositions. In Fanny’s letters there are many references to the need of Felix’s approval and love. She writes on her wedding day: “Your picture is next to me, but as I write your name and imagine you are actually here, I cry… Your love has provided me with a great inner worth, and I will never stop believing in myself as long as you love me.” Fanny’s dependency on Felix’s opinion of her shows in many other letters: “…If you seriously suggested that I become a good mathematician, I would not have any special difficulty in doing it; if you thought that I was no longer any good at music then I’d give it up tomorrow.” In the early years, while their father opposed Fanny publishing her work, six of her lieder were published under Felix’s name. Three of those appeared in his Op. 8 collection in 1827, and three in his Op. 9 collection in

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1830. It is not very clear whether Felix published her works to give them an opportunity to be heard, or because he felt the music worthy to be published and how convenient it was to have them under his name. In any case, he was quick to praise Fanny for her music and openly admitted that the chosen pieces were actually Fanny’s. It is even more surprising that after their father’s death, Felix became opposed to Fanny publishing her works. While her husband, Wilhelm Hensel supported and encouraged her musical career without any reservation, Felix openly disapproved publishing. Fanny still had one of her lied published in a Schlesinger anthology in 1837. Felix gave Fanny feedback via his society connections, stating that her work was considered to be the best in the album, that then she became a true composer, and she should feel happy. He put it, though, into the context of criticizing the entire anthology. Felix did not approve of Fanny’s desire to publish. Fanny had yet another lied published in another collection in 1839 before becoming quiet for seven years. Fanny’s mother, Lea Mendelssohn, who was always supportive of her talent, even wrote a pleading letter to Felix to help and encourage Fanny in her publishing endeavors. Felix answered with a clear rejection: “I consider publishing something serious… and believe that one should do it only if one wants to appear as an author one’s entire life and stick to it. But that necessitates a series of works, one after the other… Fanny, as I know her, possesses neither the inclination nor calling for authorship. She is too much a woman for that, as is proper, and looks after her house and thinks neither about the public nor the musical world, unless that primary occupation is accomplished. Publishing would only disturb her in these duties, and I cannot reconcile myself to it. If she decides on her own to publish or to please Hensel, I
am, as I said, ready to be helpful as much as possible, but to encourage her towards something I do not consider right is what I cannot do.”  

It is impossible to tell if there was any sign of jealousy on Felix’s part. He was a celebrated composer at the time, and he truly loved his sister. He was probably not jealous of her talent, but inherited his father’s views on the role of women. Felix also experienced not only the fame but also the hardship of dedicating his life to professional musicianship. Aside from his traditional views on the family role of women, he was also very protective of Fanny and wanted to spare her from the darker side of the professional musician’s life. That becomes clear from another letter of Felix that he wrote to Fanny after she published more works on her own in 1846: “I send you my professional blessing on becoming a member of the craft. This I do now in full, Fance, and…may the public pelt you with roses, and never with sand; and may the printer’s ink never draw lines upon your soul --- all of which I devoutly believe will be the case.”

Fanny remained an avid supporter and an equal critic of Felix’s works. In closely studying his works, it is inevitable that she got inspiration from some of them. They both have a vast output of lieder for piano. Felix titled his collection *Songs without Words*. Fanny’s *Piano Trio in D Minor* is written in the same key as one of the two piano trios of Felix. As we will see later in more detail there are trades of clear musical influence of Felix on Fanny’s music, while she retaining a unique compositional style that shines through her work.

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Fanny and Felix Mendelssohn remained very close throughout their entire lives and even in their deaths. Fanny collapsed from a paralytic stroke in the middle of a rehearsal for her *Sonntagsmusik* on May 14, 1847. For Felix “this shattered everything. With a cry, he fell to the floor insensible.”\(^{37}\) In November, just a few months after Fanny’s untimely death, Felix also died from a series of strokes. During those few months, Felix gave to the Leipzig publisher Breitkopf and Hartel four opus numbers composed by Fanny.\(^{38}\) One of those is the *Trio for Piano Violin, and Cello, Opus 11.*

### 2.5 Fanny’s Music

Fanny’s short life was filled with interesting people, compassion, friendship, and love. While Felix played an important role in encouraging her talent and admiring her compositions, it was her mother Lea and her husband Wilhelm Hensel who supported and encouraged her to publish her works. They gave their unconditional blessings. In the end, there were only 11 opus numbers published during her lifetime or posthumously. There are songs that were published under Felix’s name and a few pieces that appeared in different collections without opus numbers. In the late twentieth century, Fanny’s works sparked new interest and more of her works were published. Many of her manuscripts are in private hands, making the revival of her music even more difficult. Here is a


partial list of her works based on information from *The New Grove Dictionary*\(^ {39}\) and from Marcia Citron’s article.\(^ {40}\)

There are at least 250 lieder, songs, for voice and piano including the following:

Published under Felix’s name in his *Op. 8* collection in 1827:

- *Das Heimweh*, ca.1824 (No. 2)
- *Italien*, 1825 (No. 3)
- *Suleika und Hatem* for 2 voices and piano, 1825 (No. 12)

Published under Felix’s name in his *Op. 9* collection in 1830:

- *Sehnsucht* (No. 7)
- *Verlust* (No. 10)
- *Die Nonne*, 1822 (No. 12)

Published during Fanny’s lifetime or by her family:

- *Ave Maria*, published in London, 1832
- *Die Schiffende*, published in an *Album* by Schlesinger, Berlin, 1837
- *Schloss Liebeneck*, published in *Rhein-Sagen und Lieder*, Cologne, 1839
- *6 Lieder, op. 1*, published in Berlin, 1846
- *6 Lieder, op. 7*, published in Berlin, 1848
- *6 Lieder, op. 9*, published in Leipzig, 1850
- *5 Lieder, op. 10*, published in Leipzig, 1850

Published in the collection *Ausgewählte Lieder*, in Dusseldorf, 1991:

- *Sehnsucht nach Italien*, 1822
- *Mignon*, 1826
- *In die Ferne*, 1833
- *Sehnsucht*, 1839
- *Anklänge* nos. 1-3, 1841
- *Auf dem See*, 1841
- *Traurige Wege*, 1841
- *Liebe in der Fremde*, 1844


Published in the collection *Ausgewählte Lieder*, in Wiesbaden, 1993:

*An Suleika*, ca.1825  
*Harfners Lied*, 1825  
*Über allen Gipfeln ist Ruh*, 1835  
*Suleika*, 1836  
*Ach, die Augen sin des wieder*, 1837  
*Fichtenbaum und Palme*, 1838  
*Anklänge* nos.1-3, 1841  
*Traurige Wege*, 1841  
*Dämmerung senkte sich*, 1843  
*Im Herbst*, 1844  
*Ich kann wohl manchmal singen*, ca.1846  
*Nacht ist wie ein stilles Meer*, ca.1846  
*Wanders Nachtlied*  

There are at least 125 piano works including the following:

Published during Fanny’s lifetime or by her family:

*4 Lieder ohne Worte*, op.2, published in Berlin, 1846  
*6 mélodies*, op.4, published in Berlin, 1847  
*6 mélodies*, op.5, published in Berlin, 1847  
*4 Lieder ohne Worte*, op.6, published in Berlin, 1847  
*2 Bagatellen für die Schüler des Schindelmeisserschen Musik-Instituts*, published in Berlin, 1848  
*Pastorella*, published in Berlin, 1848  
*4 Lieder ohne Worte*, op.8, published in Leipzig, 1850

Published in the collection *Ausgewählte Klavierwerke*, in Munich, 1986:

*Übungsstück*, 1822  
*Übungsstück*, 1823  
*Notturno*, 1838  
*Abschied von Rom*, ca.1840  
*Allegretto*, ca.1846  
*Allegro molto*, 1846  
*Allegro vivace*, 1846  
*Andante cantabile*, 1846  
*O Traum ser Jugend, o goldener Stern*, 1846

Published in Six Pieces from 1824-1827, in Bryn Mawr, PA, 1994:

*Allegro in C minor*, 1824  
*Andante con moto in C minor*, 1825  
*Capriccio in F-sharp major*, 1825
Allegro ma non troppo in F minor, ca.1826
Andante con espressione in C minor, 1826
Fugata in -flatb major, 1827

Published in Kassel, Germany:

Sonata in C minor, 1824, published in Kassel, 1991,
and in Bryn Mawr, PA, 1992
Prelude in E minor, 1827, published in Kassel, 1989
Das Jahr: 12 Characterstücke, 1841, published in Kassel, 1989
Sonata in G minor, 1843, published in Kassel, 1989
Sonatensatz in E major, published in Kassel, 1991
3 Stücke, for piano 4 hands, published in Kassel, 1990

Approximately 28 choral works, including:

Nachtreigen, for double chorus, 1829
Hiob, cantata, for soprano, alto, tenor, bass, chorus, and orchestra, 1831,
published in Kassel, 1992
Lobgesang, cantata, for soprano, alto, chorus, and orchestra, 1831
published in Kassel, 1992
Oratorium nach den Bildern der Bibel, for soprano, alto, tenor, bass,
chorus, and orchestra, 1831
Zum Fest der heiligen Cäcilia, for mixed chorus and piano, 1833
Einleitung zu lebenden Bilder, nar, for chorus and piano, 1841

Published in the collection Weltliche a cappella Chore von 1846, in Kassel, 1988:

Gartenlieder: 6 Gesänge, op. 3, 1846
Lockung, 1846
Herbst, 1846
Schon kehren die Vögel, 1846

Other works:

Orchestral:

Overture, in C major, ca.1830

Chamber:

Adagio in E major, for violin and piano, 1823, published in Kassel, 1989
Piano Quartet in A -flat major, 1823, published in Kassel, 1990
Capriccio in A-flat major, for cello and piano, 1829
Die frühen Graber, for viola, 2 cellos, and double bass, 1829
Fantasia in G minor, for cello and piano, ca.1830,  
published in Wiesbaden, 1994  
String Quartet in A-flat major, 1834, published in Wiesbaden, 1988  
Trio for piano, violin, and cello in D minor, op. 11, 1846  
published in Leipzig, 1850

Organ:

Praeludium, in F major, 1829, published in Pullman, WA, 1993  
Praeludium, in G major, ca.1829-33

Dramatic scene:

Hero und Leander, 1832
CHAPTER 3

SNAPSHOTS ON GENDER ISSUES IN MUSIC: TERMS, GENRES, AND THE CANON

“All humans are equal but some are more equal than others”41

3.1 Introduction

The topic of gender issues in music is complex and has a vast literature written by excellent scholars. This chapter neither attempts to raise all the important issues nor tries to give answers or solutions. Gender issues in music are closely intertwined with anthropological, sociological, and even political questions. It is beyond the scope of this document to truly address all the possible point of views or give a comprehensive historical background of the origin and evolution of classical music traditions. This chapter simply illuminates the fact that there are gender issues related to music. That recognition gives context to the path Fanny Mendelssohn traveled in her compositional career. It also helps the understanding of the choices Fanny made, both the choices of the

41 Paraphrase (by my Father, Iván Bach) of the original: “All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others.” George Orwell, Animal Farm: A Fairy Story (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books Ltd., 1951), 114.
musical genres of her compositions and the changes in her intentions to publishing her works. The snapshots of this chapter add another angle to the analysis of Fanny Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 11*. They add a symbolic meaning to the work. There will be examples of use of musical terms, musical forms, and musical genres.

3.2 Genders in Music Terminology

Traditions play a fundamental part in shaping society. Not only do different nations, countries, and cultures follow certain traditions, but also, every field and profession has its own customs, rituals, and terminology. So does music. There are many layers of musical traditions. A seemingly superficial level is the simple use of words. Words are very powerful, yet they can be so subtle that their effect may not be easily noticed. For example, in studying the notion of cadences, it is clear that the role of a cadence is to create a sense of ending. In that definition, a cadence is closest to its meaning when it is completely conclusive, leaving the listener without any expectation of continuation. The completely conclusive cadence is now called authentic cadence. Cadences that do not give the full sense of closure have names such as deceptive and half cadences. It is quite clear that authentic means something more valid and true to its nature than deceptive or half.

Let us now recall how these cadences were referred to in the past. It is important to mention that these cadences used to have gender-specific names. In my childhood music studies, I was fortunate to be immersed into the Kodály method, which involved solfège and music theory studies along with instrumental studio lessons. Through these studies, students get exposed to more complex musical terms at an early age. I vividly
remember the names of the now called authentic and half cadences as masculine and feminine cadences, respectively.\textsuperscript{42} It did not make anyone pause or blink an eye at the time. In my personal journey, it took quite a long time to comprehend fully the influence and the danger of even so innocent a use of words. I started to pay attention only when in a music seminar fellow students pointed out that these gender names were inappropriate. My first reaction was (this may seem shocking by now) that there are so many more important things in life to deal with, why dwell on small little things such as the issue of gender names given to cadences. Different cadences have different roles in music. All of them are needed in the architecture of musical compositions. They are equally integrated parts of the art we call music. Why would it be wrong to call one type masculine and another feminine?

The explanation lies under the surface. It is not immediately clear how these terms for different cadences may influence or reflect upon society. In time, it can become clear why words are so important. Those words state that the authentic, the pure and true cadence is masculine, yet the incomplete, half cadence is feminine. It implies that feminine is a stray from the norm. It also suggests that the feminine version is not complete therefore it cannot stand on its own. It reflects a judgment of society, and it influences and reinforces the pre-existing view ever so subtly. The subtle is often more

\textsuperscript{42} Originally, derived from literature, ending on a strong beat is called masculine, and ending on a weak beat is called feminine. (see also The New International Dictionary of Music, ed. Philip D. Morehead, (New York: Meridian Penguin Group, 1992), s.v. “feminine cadence.”) Half cadences often end on a weak beat, whereas authentic cadences tend to end on a strong beat. Thus, a free generalization of the terminology, applied to cadences, associates weak closure with feminine and strong closure with masculine attributes. (See also David Pinkerton, Minimalism, the Gothic Style, and Tintinnabulation in Selected Works of Arvo Pärt, \url{http://www.arvopart.org/analyses/chapter_3.html}, or Andrew Keeling, King Crimson: In The Wake Of Poseidon – An Analysis by Andrew Keeling, Part VI, \url{http://www.songsouponsea.com/Keeling/Keeling-InTheWakeOfPoseidon.html})
harmful than the obvious. The subtle can sneak into human minds unnoticed. Luckily, in
the case of cadences, the old gender terms are rarely used today.

There are other examples of music terminology using gender in a certain
hierarchical way. One of the most important forms in classical music is the sonata-
allegro form often referred in short as sonata form. The essence of the sonata-allegro
form is its dichotomy. A division of the thematic ideas into the main and the secondary
themes, as well as the tonal division of the themes, is the foundation. The first theme is
often more characteristic, containing shorter motives built of fragments that give
excellent possibilities of development. Secondary themes are either derived from the first
theme, resulting in a monothematic form, or opposite in nature. In the latter case, the
new theme is often lyrical, gentle, and built of longer melody lines. In either case, the
secondary theme is subsidiary. While both themes are essential to create the totality of
the form, they do not play equal roles. “In the nineteenth century, some theorists
considered the first and second themes of a sonata-allegro form to be masculine and
feminine, respectively.”\textsuperscript{43} One of those theorists is A. B. Marx who between 1837 and
1847 wrote a four-volume book on musical composition.\textsuperscript{44} This categorization of the
themes implies that masculine is the standard and feminine is a form of deviance. These
terms seem to reflect the views of society. Marcia Citron discusses this nineteenth-
century view specifically related to the dichotomy of sonata-allegro form in her book

\textit{Gender and the Musical Canon}. “The two themes of the exposition are set up as a

\textsuperscript{43} Renée Cox Lorraine. “Recovering Jouissance: Feminist Aesthetics and Music,” in \textit{Woman & Music: A

\textsuperscript{44} Adolf Bernhard Marx, \textit{Die Lehre von der musikalischen Komposition} 4 vols. (Leipzig: Breitkopf &
Härtel, 1868-1887).
hierarchy that exhibits stylistic traits considered characteristic of man and woman, respectively… the basic model is one of ideological domination of man over woman.”

Margaret Myers describes this dichotomy in her article “Musicology and ‘the Other’.” Her reference to “Other” calls for quotations from Simone de Beauvoir: “…woman…is the Other in a totality of which the two components are necessary to one another.”

 “…she – a free and autonomous being like all human creatures – nevertheless finds herself living in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the Other.” Further to clarify the meaning of “Other” within the totality, Myers adds important implications of the term itself. She states “…a totality…in which the male is the norm, the rule, and the female is the other, the exception to the rule.”

She continues “The definition of woman as the other/different has implied exclusion, inferiority, discrimination, stigmatization of women by men, who hold the power in society.” It is obvious from this point of view that the interpretation of “Other” is not in favor of the female gender. The same notion of “Other” is used by the word difference in Ruth Solie’s Introduction to the anthology Musicology and Difference. The intention of the anthology is to question the notion

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45 Marcia J. Citron, Gender and the Musical Canon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 133.


47 Ibid., 29.

48 Margaret Myers, “Musicology and ‘the Other’,” in Gender Studies & Musik ed. Stefan Fragner, Jan Hemming, and Beate Kutschke (Regensburg: Con Brio Verlagsgesellschaft, 1998), 96.

49 Ibid.
itself. “First and foremost, it is intended not to endorse the concept of difference but, rather, to interrogate it…”50

It is sufficient to say that gender-related terms in music do not promote the emancipation of women. Although the gender terms have been replaced by more neutral and analytical terms, the afterthought of their use still lingers in the cultural atmosphere. Categorization in music does not end with themes, harmonies, or cadences. There is a bias about the different musical genres, as well.

3.3 Genders, Genres, and the Canon

In the history of Western music, there is a certain trend in how women composers and even performers choose musical genres and instrumentations. They tend to converge toward what seems appropriate and accepted by society. In the Medieval period, music is almost exclusively for men. The prevailing genres are Gregorian chant, organum, and the Medieval Mass, all sacred music for monasteries and churches. Even in the polyphonic Mass, male singers sing the high voices, using falsetto style. Women are not welcome to perform in the ceremony. Small, rural, all-female convents are the only exceptions, where females sing the Gregorian chants for themselves. That is how Hildegard de Bingen’s beautiful music survives time. Her chants are regularly performed at her own rural convent in the small German town of Bingen. Another forum into which women are allowed to enter is court entertainment. At the time of the troubadours, the female counterparts are called trobairitz. They are the country singers of the Medieval era, the wanderers, who are invited to courts at different places to sing chansons. They sing

about everyday life, most of all love, and accompany themselves on some instrument, often the mandolin.

In the Renaissance, the free spirit of Humanism sweeps all over Europe. Printing makes music more available, and the genre of the madrigal involves amateur musicians of both genders in a cappella singing. In the world of church music, women are excluded, and the motets or Masses of Josquin Desprez, Palestrina, and Orlando de Lasso are sung by men only. The female choirs of small convents are the only exception. They remain islands of musical expression, but the women sing for themselves and are isolated from other parts of society. Public performances of women are seen only at the courts for entertainment. The mere fact that women perform or compose works does not mean they have roles in society equal to men. Ellen Koskoff, in her article “Gender, Power, and Music” points out the gender role of women musicians at the Northern Italian courts of the late Renaissance and early Baroque. Women in all-female performing ensembles often have dual roles of musicians and female entertainers for the male society of the sixteenth and seventeenth century. Their origins are from the rising merchant classes, and they are not included in polite society as they are regarded as marginal.51

Barbara Strozzi is an example of a fairly successful woman composer of the early Baroque, with more than one hundred works. Most of her compositions are songs for soprano voice with basso continuo. She is an illegitimate daughter of a merchant and has four children on her own out of wedlock.52 Her case is an exception for gaining income


52 Craig Wright, Listening to Music, 4th ed. (Australia, Canada, Mexico, Singapore, Spain, United Kingdom, United States: Thomson and Schirmer, 2004), 112.
from her compositions, but she remains an outcast from society. Another example of
women performers of low social status is the orchestra of the Hospice of Mercy, an
orphanage in Venice for abandoned, mostly illegitimate girls. The orchestra regularly
performs Antonio Vivaldi’s concerti on their Sunday concerts during the time Vivaldi is
the violin and music teacher, and also musical director of the orphanage.53

In the Classical era, instrumental genres become more accessible to women
through the popularity of the piano. The piano becomes a part of the household in middle
class society. It is the piano that is considered suitable for women. Musical
performances are not only for the high-class court society, but also for the private middle
class, in their homes. In these semi-professional soirées, women can be found as
performers and on occasion, as composers. Marianne Martinez composed over two
hundred works. Many of them are written for keyboard, like her charming Sonata in A
major. Her teachers include Haydn, and she has a respected role as a performer and
composer during her own time. Yet her name and her works are still omitted from
reference books such as the popular Guide to the Pianist’s Repertoire by Maurice
Hinson.54

The nineteenth century instills a new atmosphere in the world of music. This is
an era of revolutions, the rise of nationalism, and high recognition of artistic ingenuity.
Musicians are no longer servants. They do not only work for specific commissions but
can enjoy financial sponsorship for their creativity. Music and art are appreciated on
their own, l’art pour l’art. Poetry and music are closely intertwined. Culture thrives

53 Ibid., 128.
54 Maurice Hinson, Guide to Pianist’s Repertoire, Second, Revised and Enlarged Edition (Bloomington
throughout Europe. Instruments’ capabilities are further improved and expanded. The size and variety of the orchestra are growing. The English mechanism allows greater force on the piano. New musical genres are on the rise. The Lied, character pieces, program music, music drama, and new combinations of instruments in chamber music are added to the palette of genres. Musicology and music criticism become more influential, with heated arguments. Composers evaluate and criticize their colleagues; Schumann writes about the greatness of young Brahms and Brahms praises the young Dvořák. Composers are not only writing music but forming loud opinions about the philosophy of music. The views of Hegel and Schopenhauer clash. Musicians form two opposing camps. Wagner, Liszt, and Berlioz argue for program music, whereas Brahms, Mendelssohn and Schumann argue for absolute music. Can music express something? Does it have to express anything to be meaningful, or can music be appreciated on its own, without any extra-musical meaning? These questions are still being debated. Works from either category become part of the canon. Certain genres gain particular respect. Symphonic literature, music dramas, and chamber music are among the highly-praised genres.

What place does a woman musician have in this newly liberated world of music? There is a rise in the number of female musicians in the nineteenth century who compose, perform, and even publish.55 Citron, in her article “Women and the Lied,” emphasizes women’s contribution to the Lied genre. The art song, Lied, is a suitable genre for private home performances. It is accessible for women, who have difficulty getting their

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works performed in public. Many of the women excelled as pianists and singers. While teaching becomes an acceptable role for women, it is still not appropriate for one to become a professional musician. Women’s works are published under male authorship, like the lieder of Clara Schumann and Fanny Mendelssohn.\(^{56}\) When works of women get openly published, they receive criticism in a special, separated way. “Reviews of the lieder under consideration tended to isolate ‘female’ musical qualities – clearly implying an inferior or more amateur class of musical works.”\(^{57}\) This view is not unique to music. Theresa Schwartz points out similar problems in art history in criticism of women’s art, in which the artwork itself never gets discussed on its own merit if it is the work of a woman. “In over one hundred years of writing on the subject of women artists, it is almost impossible to find direct, critical discussion of the work itself.”\(^{58}\) Schwartz also quotes an art historian, C. J. Holmes, from 1899, who suggests women stay within particular genres of the art. “…don’t aim at the heroic… the complicated or the grandiose… paint flowers, children or animal, but not landscape…”\(^{59}\) The quote continues to offer even more sexist and offensive statements.

Schwartz’s article shows that the lack of the opportunities given to women and the bias in the appreciation of their works are not only part of music history, but are also present in other fields. Schwartz asserts that a hierarchy exists among the genres of art, putting landscapes above portraits, for example. In music, there are also genres that are

\(^{56}\) Ibid., 232.

\(^{57}\) Ibid., 241-242.


\(^{59}\) Ibid.
considered more appropriate for women. Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, and Mahler are all composers of lieder. Schubert has over six hundred works of this genre, and many of those have a flavor of depth and sophistication. All these composers have significant output in the so-called canonic genres such as symphonies, concertos, and chamber music. Nineteenth-century women composers have a vast output of lieder, but most of those works are still inaccessible to the musical public.60

The twentieth century finally, if not slowly, brings a long-awaited change in attitude toward women composers. The French Boulanger sisters, Nadia and Lili, are well-respected in the musical world. Nadia Boulanger is the composition teacher to many outstanding composers, including Aaron Copland and Leonard Bernstein. She is also the first woman to conduct a symphony orchestra in London. In 1913, Lili Boulanger becomes the first woman to win the Prix de Rome with her composition Faust et Hélène.61 The American, Ellen Taaffe Zwillich, is the first woman to win the Pulitzer Prize, in Music, in 1983. She is also the first person ever to occupy the Composer’s Chair at Carnegie Hall during 1995-1998.62 The new era is not only a time for opportunity for women composers to have a professional and respected career, but also a time when research and discovery of women composers of the past can have new appreciation. There is new hope, but the inertia of society is too great for it to change course too quickly. Maurice Hinson’s anthology Guide to the Pianist’s Repertoire not

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62 Craig Wright, Listening to Music, 4th ed. (Australia, Canada, Mexico, Singapore, Spain, United Kingdom, United States: Thomson and Schirmer, 2004), 390.
only omits Marianne Martinez and Fanny Mendelssohn but also fails to mention the Boulanger sisters, or Ellen Taaffe Zwillich.  

Why and how do composers and compositions become part of such an anthology? The question raises the issue of the musical canon and how that canon is maintained. There are different dimensions of forming the canon. It is influenced by scholars who research, analyze, compare, measure, and evaluate compositions and composers. It is also influenced by the performers in the choice of their repertoire. Through the performers, the audience and the critics also have an influence on the canon in their way of reflecting on the works. “Canon formation has various and distinct steps, for works do not acquire canonic status without acquiring the measure of timelessness... Canon formation, furthermore, depends on agents, at the very least the canonizer and the audience for which she creates a canon,” writes Philip Bohlman. Arthur Nelson, in his book *Woman’s Work in Music*, states that “According to Nero, music unheard is valueless.” The canon formed through the standard repertoire is referred to as the repertory canon by Marcia Citron in her book *Gender and the Musical Canon*. Works performed regularly may become part of the canon; works in the canon are respected, and therefore become part of the standard repertoire. It is not only a self-reinforcing cycle but also a devilish cycle for works that are outside of the canon.

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What role, if any, does gender play in forming the canon? How can a composition or a composer have a breakthrough? It takes advocates from both performers and musicologists. The first step is to find works that for some reason have been overlooked and give them a chance of being heard. In time, they get measured by the already-existing standard. Ellen Koskoff, in her “Foreword” to the anthology *Music and Gender*, lists several scholars who “dealt with the near invisibility of women’s musical activity in the scholarly literature, concentrating primarily on collecting, documenting, and notating women’s music”.67 The result of the research may create opportunities for performers to add women’s music to their repertoire. The reception of a work by the audience and the critics provide feedback that affects the future life of the composition. Positive reviews by critics and musicologists give credibility to the work. When a newly-discovered treasure gets accepted into the canon and becomes part of the performed repertoire, it can touch and enrich the lives of many people. Through the efforts of dedicated members of the informed musical society; musicologists, music theorists, critics, performers, publishers, and broadcast media, forgotten works are discovered and brought to light.

3.4 The Piano Trio

The piano trio is part of the family of chamber music. The literal meaning of “chamber music” is “music played in a room or a small chamber.” It implies music of an intimate character for either solo instrument or a small group. In that definition, solo

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works would be included in the chamber music term. The most common use of the musical term refers to music played by a small ensemble. Furthermore, until the twentieth century it means strictly instrumental music, with each instrument being equally important. In the heat of the nineteenth-century argument between program music and absolute music supporters, a special appreciation develops for chamber music. It is a genre, for a variety of instrument combinations, in musical forms that follow classical frameworks. In the pedestal of absolute music, chamber music stands high. It takes a high level of competence from the composer to deal with the idiomatic features of each individual instrument, combined with the appropriate balance of the ensemble as a whole. Chamber music magnifies compositional details, and calls for clarity and sophistication.

The piano trio is one possible combination of instruments in the palette of chamber music. It commonly contains three instruments; violin, cello, and piano. Developed from the Baroque duo, trio, and keyboard sonatas, the keyboard plays the continuo role with figured bass, and there are actually four instruments. In the keyboard sonatas there are often string accompaniments. Starting in the Classical era, the piano trio has obligatory parts for all three instruments. The piano part is the most sophisticated, and the strings, especially the cello, only slowly gain importance in the development of the genre.

Most piano trios by Beethoven and Schubert have a four-movement scheme associated with the string quartet and the symphony. In that four-movement scheme, the
first and last movements are large-scale movements. The first movement is written in sonata-allegro form. The last movement is often in rondo or sonata rondo form, but can also be in sonata-allegro, or even theme and variations form. One of the two middle movements, most often the second movement, is a slow movement in either some kind of ternary form or theme and variations form. The other middle movement is often a minuet and trio, or a scherzo and trio. This movement is missing from the scheme of the three-movement version.

The piano trio writings of commonly-known Romantic composers like Schumann, Brahms, Smetana, Dvořák, Franck, Hummel, Chopin, and Felix Mendelssohn tend to be virtuosic. The piano develops into the powerful instrument of today during the nineteenth century. In the trios of the Romantic era, the piano writing is usually idiomatic, virtuosic, and sometimes dominating. It is often hard to balance the piano with only two string instruments. The demand of balance requires a brilliant style in the string parts, as well. The genre is still featured in the twentieth century, along with many new and non-traditional combinations of instruments and voice. Fauré, Ravel, Ives, and Shostakovich all have significant works in the traditional combination.69 It is interesting to mention the sad fact that The New Grove Dictionary entry does not list Fanny Mendelssohn’s piano trio among the piano trios of the Romantic period. A subsequent discussion will demonstrate, it certainly deserves to be.

Fanny Mendelssohn has over four hundred compositions. Her piano trio is an excellent candidate for inclusion in the canon. The work is a natural choice for the argument of inclusion for two reasons. First, it is written in the same key as one of the

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two piano trios written by Felix Mendelssohn, thus giving a point of origin for comparison. The second reason is its genre. The piano trio, as one of the forms of the chamber music genre, is part of the canon. There are selected composers who have works in this combination and there are selected works of this genre that are part of the standard repertoire. Felix Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio in D Minor* is one of those selected works. By comparing Fanny’s trio to Felix’s trio with respect to structure, form, balance, and performing aspects, I will argue its merits, its fit into the criteria of the genre, and ultimately, for its inclusion into the canon. Furthermore, Fanny’s achievement in a well-respected genre should give her a wider recognition as a composer.
CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

4.1 The Overall Structure

This chapter contains an analysis of Fanny Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio in D Minor Op. 11* and Felix Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio in D Minor Op. 49*. The focus is on Fanny’s trio. Analysis of Felix’s music is used for comparison to Fanny’s work. After a brief introduction of the origin and the overall structure of both trios, each movement is discussed in further detail. The chapter concludes with a summary of the results.

Fanny Mendelssohn’s *Op. 11 Trio* was composed in 1846. The constant encouragement of her mother Lea Mendelssohn and her husband Wilhelm Hensel kept Fanny’s musical spirit alive. In 1846, Fanny finally had more of her works published: some lieder, piano pieces, and choral music. In the same year, Felix gave Fanny his long-awaited full approval and “professional blessing on becoming a member of the craft.”

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Felix wrote two piano trios; the *D minor, Op. 49*, in 1839, and the *C minor, Op. 66*, in 1845. Fanny’s choice of the key of D minor in her trio suggests a natural comparison with the first trio of Felix written in the same key. It also opens a question of “What if?” Had Fanny lived and had the opportunity to compose yet another piano trio, would that second trio have been in the key of C minor? There are no answers to “what if” questions, but it is still interesting to ponder on the idea.

Fanny Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio in D Minor Op. 11* contains four movements. The first movement is in the key of D minor and is written in sonata-allegro form. While the first is a large-scale movement with fast tempo and a dramatic drive, the second movement is short, lyrical, and very expressive. The latter is in a free ABA form, and despite its bright color A major key, it has a sense of melancholy. Written in a free strophic form, the third movement, titled *Lied*, follows *attacca* (without a pause). It has a playful character in the key of D major. An improvisatory fantasia-like piano introduction opens the last movement, *Finale*. It is in the key of D minor, but turns into D major by the very end. Different atmospheres and a variety of colors, including lyricism, melancholy, agitation, drive, and playfulness characterize this hybrid sonata-rondo form movement. Foreshadowing the late nineteenth-century cyclic form, the work is unified by a quotation from the first movement in the *Finale*.

Felix Mendelssohn’s *Piano in D Minor Op. 49* has also four movements. The first movement is in a large-scale sonata-allegro form, with a fast-paced inner drive in D minor. Contrasting with the passion of the first movement, a lyrical, expressive, ABA form song follows in B-flat major. A refreshing new voice is introduced in the monothematic, playful, D major third movement. It is a *Scherzo* without the typical trio
section. The *Finale* is a large-scale movement in hybrid rondo form in D minor that turns into D major toward the end.

It is interesting to compare and see the common features of the overall structures of the two trios, shown in Table 4.1, before taking a closer look at the individual movements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement I</th>
<th>Movement II</th>
<th>Movement III</th>
<th>Movement IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fanny’s Trio</strong></td>
<td><em>Allegro molto vivace</em>, in D minor, sonata-allegro form, large scale, passionate</td>
<td><em>Andante espressivo</em>, in A major, ABA form, lyrical, expressive</td>
<td><em>Lied</em>, <em>Allegretto</em>, in D major, strophic song form (Fanny’s signature genre)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Felix’s Trio</strong></td>
<td><em>Molto Allegro agitato</em>, in D minor, sonata-allegro form, large scale, passionate</td>
<td><em>Andante con moto tranquillo</em>, in B-flat major, ABA form, lyrical, expressive</td>
<td><em>Scherzo</em>, <em>Leggiero e vivace</em>, in D major, scherzo without trio (Felix’s signature genre)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 Overall structures of the trios.

4.2 First Movement

The first movement of Fanny Mendelssohn’s Piano Trio has the tempo marking *Allegro molto vivace*. It is a large-scale movement in sonata-allegro form with driving force. While the piano part is mostly virtuosic and passionate, the strings have lyrical
roles. Running scale-like sixteenth notes begin in the piano and remain the prevailing accompaniment pattern for the opening theme. Octave unisons in the violin and the cello present this D minor theme. Its fourteen measures are divided into a pattern of 4+4+3+3 measures.

Figure 4.1 shows the opening of the first theme. Underlying chromatic harmonies in the piano, including fully diminished seventh and augmented sixth chords, create tension. Preceding the literal restatement of the opening four-measure motive in D minor, the theme ends on a D dominant seventh chord that prepares a presentation of the motive in G minor.
Figure 4.1 Fanny, 1st movement, opening theme.
Figure 4.2 Fanny, 1st movement, transition to the second theme.
The transition leading into the second theme is relatively long, containing 31 measures starting at measure 27. See figure 4.2. A four-measure scale pattern cadences in D minor, and is followed by a piano solo introduction of a new motive. This section can be interpreted as the second theme of the first theme group, but the harmonic instability of the sequenced motive and the developmental treatment of segments from the opening theme, clearly suggest transitional material.

Figure 4.3 Fanny, 1st movement, first and second themes.
Figure 4.3 shows the opening of both first and second themes. The second theme starts at measure 58 in F major, which is the relative major of D minor. The fourth-interval leap and the scale pattern following the leap of a sixth interval are references to the first theme. Underneath the lyrical cantabile second theme introduced by the strings, the piano plays a tremolo accompaniment pattern. The sixteen-measure theme is built out of four-measure parts. Beginning in the cello with continuation in the violin, it is fully restated in the right hand of the piano, while the tremolo continues in the left hand. A short extension prepares the key change into F minor. The second theme unifies the entire work. It will be quoted in the coda of the fourth movement.

The closing theme is introduced by a piano solo in measure 96, in F minor, which is the parallel minor of F major. Fanny uses the relative major-minor relationship between the first and second themes, while she uses the parallel major-minor relationship between the second and the closing themes. The resulting F minor is a far related key to the original key of D minor. The melody line, built out of four-measure parts, has a strong resemblance to the previously introduced themes, by its rhythmic structure, high leap, and falling scale pattern. As the strings join the theme, the piano plays a countermelody. The variety of countermelodies, the different accompaniment patterns, and the melody passed among the instruments keep the attention of the listener. Heavy use of diminished seventh and augmented sixth chords enhances the underlying harmonies. The last eight measures serve as a bridge to the development section. See figure 4.4.
Figure 4.4 Fanny 1st movement, closing theme and bridge.
A highly-chromatic development section, in measures 142-252, follows the exposition. The melody is in the strings, with the running scale patterns in the piano underneath, just like at the opening of the exposition. Segments of the theme are varied and developed. Homophonic and imitative textures alternate in the strings, while the piano continues the running scale patterns. At measure 180, the piano changes into chords for a short transition into the development of the second theme. The F-sharp major entrance of the second theme in the cello is followed in B-flat major in the piano. Motives of the theme are imitated in the two hands of the piano. Augmented sixth and different kind of seventh chords build tension. The climax of the development section is reached in a fortissimo statement of the first theme intertwined with motives from the transitional material. Octave scale patterns and chords in the piano, and imitative entrances enhanced by occasional double stops in the strings, make the texture very heavy. The tonic D minor eventually returns in measure 253. Figure 4.5 shows the climax of the development.
Switching the roles of the instruments, as well as the dynamic levels of the exposition, in the recapitulation, the piano starts the first theme fortissimo, while the
strings play the running scale pattern underneath. The sequencing transitional material in measures 267-278 precedes the restatement and modulation of the first theme in measures 283-297. Their order here is the opposite to that of the exposition.

The second theme returns in measure 298 is in D major. While the instrumentation and phrase structure follow the pattern of the exposition, the dynamic indications are reversed. In the exposition, the theme enters softly by the strings and the piano entrance builds it into mezzoforte. In the recapitulation, the strings boldly state the theme in fortissimo, which is later echoed softly by the piano.

The closing theme in the recapitulation returns in the original key of D minor in measure 332. The parallel key relationship of the second and closing themes of the exposition, F major and F minor, is mirrored in the recapitulation by D major and D minor. The phrasing, the texture, the instrumentation, and even the dynamic markings of the closing theme are fairly straightforward mimics of those in the exposition.

Just as the closing theme in the exposition ends with an eight-measure bridge that leads into the development of the first theme, the closing theme in the recapitulation ends with an eight-measure bridge that leads into the coda built on segments of the first theme. Both development and coda open with the running scale pattern in the piano. The coda, measures 378-416, is thirty-nine measures long. The movement closes brilliantly with a big crescendo on fragments of the first theme, shown in figure 4.6. All the themes of the first movement share some common characteristics in their rhythmic, harmonic, or melodic patterns.
Figure 4.6 Fanny, 1st movement, the coda.
Felix Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio* also opens with a large-scale movement in sonata-allegro form with a driving force in the key of D minor. The tempo marking of the first movement is *Molto Allegro agitato*. Syncopated broken chord accompaniment patterns in the piano give harmonic support for the first theme. Framed by the notes of the D minor triad, the theme opens in the cello with a dominant to tonic fourth interval leap. There are two sixteen-measure phrases, made up of four-measure parts. After the first phrase, the violin joins the cello with a leap of a sixth. In the middle of the second phrase, the piano accompaniment shifts into joining the melody line. The second phrase has a seven-measure extension of the ending. Figure 4.7 shows the beginning of the first theme.
Figure 4.7 Felix, 1st movement, opening theme.
A cadential motive reinforces the key of D minor in measures 39-51. Descending lines and rising broken triads of a short imitative material follow in measures 51-66. The fortissimo return of the opening theme in measure 66, first in D minor then in G minor, leads into a transitional material that uses fragments of the opening theme.

The transition is filled with diminished seventh and augmented sixth chords. These chords, along with their resolution to E major and to E dominant seventh chords, prepare the modulation into the key of A major.

A pedal point on E, a quasi-written out trill in the piano, sets up the entrance of the second theme in the cello. Built around an A major triad in second inversion, this sweeping melody opens with a dominant-tonic fourth interval leap, as does the first theme. The theme is made up of four-measure parts with an extended closing. Figure 4.8 shows the modulation into A major through augmented sixth chords and the opening of the second theme in A major.
Figure 4.8 Felix, 1st movement, transition and second theme.
Measures 162-186 contain more transitional material that modulates from A major into the A minor key of the closing theme that starts in measure 186. This parallel major-minor relationship between the second and the closing theme is the same as that in the first movement of Fanny’s *Trio* between F major and F minor. Felix’s closing theme is not a new theme, but is built out of parts the opening theme and segments of the first transitional material. The theme opens in the strings with accompanying triplets in the piano; this gets reversed when the piano takes over the theme with the triplets in the strings. An eight-measure bridge leads into the development. Figure 4.9 shows the opening and the ending of the closing theme with the bridge into the development.
Figure 4.9 Felix, 1st movement, closing theme and bridge.
The development starts at measure 222 with the opening theme in the cello. Development of the first theme quickly changes into development of the second theme at measure 250. Motives of the theme enter in imitative texture, first in the piano, then in the violin, and last in the cello. An alternation of fragments of the first theme and second theme starts in measure 297. Measures 297-311 and 320-327 have materials from the first theme, while measures 312-319 and 328-360 have materials from the second theme. A pianissimo eight measure bridge of alternating questions and answers between the strings and the piano prepares the recapitulation.

The recapitulation starts in measure 368 in D minor, and it follows the structure of the exposition with very little change. In the return of the opening, a short *Adagio* improvisatory moment is inserted before the second part of the first theme, and the transition into the second theme is shortened.

The second theme returns now in the key of D major in measure 431. Outside of the change of key, the phrases literally follow the structure of the second theme in the exposition, along with the transition into the closing theme. Even the pedal point, the quasi-written out trill on the dominant note in the piano, is kept unchanged.

The closing theme returns in measure 503 in D minor. This keeps the original parallel major-minor relationship between the second and the closing theme. Outside of the different key, the return of the closing theme is also literal. It follows, measure by measure, the closing theme in the exposition.
Figure 4.10 Felix, 1st movement, end of coda.
Just as an eight-measure bridge leads into the development of the opening theme, the same musical material comes this time as a ten-measure bridge into the coda. The coda starts with a fortissimo, passionate statement of the first theme in measure 540. Eighteen measures of imitative segments of the first theme are followed by the second theme material, starting in measure 558. After fragments of the transitional materials, the opening of the first theme returns at the end. Most of the coda is fortissimo, with a tempo change into *assai animato* in measure 580. The movement closes with a powerful reinforcement of the key of D minor. Figure 4.10 shows the end of the movement.

A comparison of the structures of the first movements of both trios is shown in table 4.2. Both movements have a passionate drive. Their first themes in D minor are followed by transitions into the second themes. In Fanny’s *Trio*, there is new material for the transition, but in Felix’s work, fragments of the first theme are used. Fanny’s second theme modulates into the relative major key of F major, while Felix’s second theme modulates into the dominant key of A major. Both key changes are part of the main stream sonata-allegro form pattern and are equally common. Felix’s movement has another transition into the closing theme. Both closing themes resemble earlier materials, and are written in the parallel minor key of that of the second theme. Fanny’s closing theme is in F minor, while Felix’s is in A minor. The trios continue in similar fashion. An eight-measure bridge leads into the development section. Development of the first theme material is followed by the development of the second theme. Segments of both themes alternate and are followed by a bridge into the recapitulation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fanny</th>
<th>Felix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I Allegro molto vivace</strong></td>
<td><strong>I Moltò Allegro agitato</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D minor</td>
<td>D minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonata-allegro form</td>
<td>Sonata-allegro form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposition (m1-141)</td>
<td>Exposition (m1-221)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First theme in D minor followed by transition (m1-57)</td>
<td>First theme in D minor followed by transition (m1-114)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second theme in F major, reference first theme (m58-96)</td>
<td>Second theme in A major, some reference to first theme and transition (m115-186)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing theme in F minor, reference to previous themes (m97-133)</td>
<td>Closing theme in A minor, mostly first theme material (m187-213)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge to development (m134-141)</td>
<td>Bridge to development (m214-221)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development (m142-252)</td>
<td>Development (m222-367)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recapitulation (m253-377)</td>
<td>Recapitulation (m368-539)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First theme in D minor and transition (m252-297)</td>
<td>First theme in D minor and transition (m368-430)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second theme in D major (m298-331)</td>
<td>Second theme in D major and transition (m431-502)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closing theme in D minor (m332-369)</td>
<td>Closing theme in D minor (m503-529)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridge to coda (m370-377)</td>
<td>Bridge to coda (m530-539)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coda (m378-416)</td>
<td>Coda (m540-616)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 Comparison of the schemes of the first movements.

The recapitulation follows a textbook sonata-allegro form, with first theme in D minor, second theme in D major, and closing theme in D minor. Just as a bridge prepares the development of the first theme, a bridge leads into the coda that opens with the first theme as well. The ending is brilliant and powerful. Felix’s work has a slightly faster tempo and is in triple meter, while Fanny’s in quadruple. Thus, the overall lengths of the
movements are basically the same despite the significant difference in the number of measures.

4.3 Second Movement

Fanny uses A major, the dominant key of D minor, for her second movement Andante espressivo. Despite the bright color of the A major key, the atmosphere is melancholic, very expressive, and lyrical. It is a *Song without Words*\(^{71}\) in a free ternary ABA form, in which the return of the A section is modified and more complex than its first presentation. Figure 4.11 shows the opening of the movement.

The thirty-seven measure opening A section consists of four eight-measure phrases and a five-measure bridge that leads into the B section. Solo piano presents the A theme in the first eight measures, divided into four measures in A major, and four measures that start in F-sharp minor and return to A major. The strings join the piano in the next eight measures. This time, the second part of the phrase starts in F-sharp major. A march-like accompaniment pattern follows in the piano with fragments of the theme in the strings for another eight-measure phrase. A major modulates into C-sharp minor using F-sharp minor as a pivot, first as the relative minor of A major, then as the subdominant of C-sharp minor. The piano dominates the next eight measures with the theme that starts in C-sharp minor and closes in A major, reinforced in a short bridge that leads into the B section.

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\(^{71}\) *Songs without Words* is the title of collections of piano works by both Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn. Their genre, “character piece”, is popular in nineteenth-century piano music. A good amount of Fanny Mendelssohn’s piano music is written in this genre and style.
Figure 4.11 Fanny, 2nd movement, opening of the A section.
Figure 4.12 Fanny, 2nd movement, opening of the B section.
The B section begins at measure 38 in F-sharp minor, the relative minor of A major, and ends in measure 68 in A major. F-sharp minor arrives through shifting of the E in the A major harmony to E-sharp, which is the leading tone of F-sharp minor. Most of the musical components of the B theme are derived from the A theme. Pizzicato arpeggios in the strings accompany the piano melody for the first eight measures of the B section. Figure 4.12 shows the opening of the B section.

Then the roles are switched, as the violin plays the melody and the piano imitates the pizzicato touch with staccato arpeggios. This time the eight-measure phrase is interrupted at the sixth measure where the melody begins again in E minor. The piano starts the theme for two measures passing the melody to the violin, this time in A minor. With a measure delay, the cello enters. After four measures of imitative texture, the cello starts the theme in B minor. The violin takes over in measure 63 and the B minor harmony quickly shifts into an E dominant seventh chord to prepare the return of the A theme in the tonic key of A major.
Figure 4.13 Fanny, 2nd movement, the modified return of the A section.
The A theme returns in measure 69 in the piano. After the eight-measure phrase in A major, an abbreviated six-measure phrase starts in C-sharp major. It is followed by a B-flat major extended variant of the four-measure opening in the piano. A short bridge of modulating sequences leads back to the tonic key of A major by measure 92. While the piano plays the A theme material, the strings imitate segments of the B theme. With the added presence of the theme from the B section, the texture here is enriched and more layered than it is in the opening. Beginning at measure 92, the A theme stands alone. It is played in the violin, gets doubled in the piano right hand, and finally is imitated in the cello. The texture builds to a forte climax, followed by a diminuendo back to piano. A cadential scale pattern leads to a last statement of the A theme before the movement ends on short pizzicato chords. The last A major chord prepares the key of D major of the third movement that starts *attacca*. Figure 4.13 shows the A theme played in the piano with fragments from the B theme added to it in the strings. The figure gives a good chance to compare these themes and see how closely they are related.

The second movement of Felix Mendelssohn’s Piano Trio, *Andante con moto tranquillo*, is a *Song without Words*, just like the second movement of Fanny Mendelssohn’s Piano Trio. Its B-flat major key is the submediant key of D minor. The use of third relationship between keys became fairly common during the nineteenth century. Schubert, as one of the pioneers, uses it often, as in his *Piano Sonata No.8 in C Minor, Opus Posthumous*, where the second movement is in the key of A-flat major. While it is not as close key as the relative or the dominant major, it only adds one more flat to the one-flat key signature of D minor. The dominant of B-flat major is F major, which is the relative major key of D minor. Similarly to Fanny’s second movement, it is
in a free ternary ABA form where the return of the A is not a literal restatement of the opening. Figure 4.14 shows the opening of the movement.

Figure 4.14 Felix, 2nd movement, the opening of the A section.
The A section is thirty-two measures long. A piano solo introduces the sweet lyrical theme in B-flat major. The first eight measures are divided into two four-measure phrases. While the violin repeats the melody starting at measure 8, the cello plays a countermelody with piano accompaniment. It is followed by a piano solo presentation of the second part of the A theme. Its eight measures are also divided into two four-measure phrases. Just as the first half, the second half of the A theme is also echoed in the violin, with countermelody in the cello and accompaniment in the piano. The key remains B-flat major throughout the A section.

The B-flat minor key of the B section is another example of the parallel major-minor key relationship. It starts in measure 33 in B-flat minor and ends in measure 61 with the return to B-flat major. Here is another parallel major-minor relationship between the A and B themes. Musical components of the B theme are derived from A theme materials. A piano solo introduces the first four-measure phrase of the B theme, echoed by the cello with an extended six-measure phrase. It ends in D-flat major, which is the relative major of B-flat minor, followed by a four-measure chromatic sequence of the opening motive of the theme. In measure forty-seven the theme starts again in B-flat minor, but this time the phrase is further extended. This extension leads into a bridge that connects to the return of the A theme in measure 62. Through the keys of D-flat major and F major, the tonic key of B-flat major returns, as well. Figure 4.15 has the opening of the B theme in B-flat minor.
After the eight-measure phrase of the A theme is repeated, a more developmental treatment of its fragments follows. A four-measure bridge leads into the last statement of the A theme in the piano, with pianissimo tremolo accompaniment in the strings. With
one last sigh in a forte moment, this beautiful song softly fades away into the ether. The ending of the movement is shown in figure 4.16.

Figure 4.16 Felix, 2nd movement, the end of the movement.
A comparison of the second movements of both trios appears in table 4.3. Both second movements are lyrical songs without the literal presence of the human voice or words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fanny</th>
<th>Felix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>II Andante espressivo</strong></td>
<td><strong>II Andante con moto tranquillo</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A major (dominant key of D minor)</td>
<td>Bb major (third relationship to D minor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABA form</td>
<td>ABA form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song without Words</td>
<td>Song without Words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A section (m1-37)</td>
<td>A section (m1-32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A major</td>
<td>Bb major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four eight measure parts + a bridge</td>
<td>Four eight measure parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme is introduced in the piano</td>
<td>Theme is introduced in the piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B section (m38-68)</td>
<td>B section (m33-61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F# minor relative major-minor relationship</td>
<td>Bb minor parallel major-minor relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B theme is derived from the A theme</td>
<td>B theme is derived from the A theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme is introduced in the piano</td>
<td>Theme is introduced in the piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Return of the A section (m69-108)</td>
<td>Return of the A section (m62-93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The opening A returns modified</td>
<td>The opening A returns modified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A major</td>
<td>Bb major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All instruments are involved, the A and B themes are superimposed</td>
<td>All instruments are involved in a developmental treatment of the theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale pattern introduces the last statement of the A theme</td>
<td>Scale pattern introduces the last statement of the A theme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movement fades softly away</td>
<td>Movement fades softly away</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3 Comparison of the schemes of the second movements.
Both second movements are in a free ABA form, where the return of the A is in one way or another different from the opening A section. The first A section is built out of four eight-measure phrases. The first one is introduced as piano solo and echoed in the strings. The B section is in minor key. In Fanny’s work, A major modulates into the relative minor key of F-sharp minor, while in Felix’s work, the B-flat major modulates into the parallel minor key of B-flat minor. The B theme is derived from elements of the A theme, and is also introduced in the piano before the strings join. There is a bridge connecting the B section to the return of the A theme, which is extended. At the end, scale patterns lead to the last statement of the theme presented in the piano. There is a moment of a forte last sigh before everything fades softly away.
Figure 4.17 comparison of Felix’s A theme from the second movement to Fanny’s first theme in the first movement.
It is very important to mention in this comparison of the two piano trios that there is a clear resemblance of the A theme of the second movement of Felix Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio* to the first theme of the first movement of Fanny Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio*. Figure 4.17 show Felix’s theme in the return of the A section in the second movement and Fanny’s theme in the return of the first theme in the recapitulation of the first movement.

4.4 Third Movement

The third movement of Fanny Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio*, *Allegretto*, is in the key of D major, the parallel major key of D minor. It is in a free strophic form where the repetitive patterns of the strophic form are intertwined with through-composed elements. Preceding the tempo marking, there is an added title *Lied*, literally meaning song in German. It is another *Song without Words*, but has a different character from that of the second movement. While the second movement is more expressive and lyrical, this one is more playful, light, and sweet, like a colorful meadow at spring time. It is also very short, and has only forty-seven measures that follow the second movement *attacca*, without any pause. One *Song without Words* flows into the other, replacing melancholic contemplation with hope and optimism. The A major key of the second movement is the dominant key of both D minor and D major. Thus, the tonic A major chord at the closing of the second movement serves as a pivot. It becomes a dominant chord in the context of D major leading to the beginning of the third movement.

While the melody has its own unique character, it is built from motives that resemble the first theme of the first movement. The opening ten-measure strophe in the piano consists of five pairs of measures. Joining the solo piano at measure seven, the
violin echoes parts of the melody, with a countermelody in the cello in A major. The second strophe also starts with solo piano in D major, with the first pair of measures restated in F-sharp minor, which is the relative minor of the dominant A major key. The strings join with countermelodies as the second strophe is extended into twelve measures, passing through E minor with C major in the cello.

All instruments are playing at the beginning of the twelve-measure third strophe with the melody in octave unison in the violin and the piano. The D major key of the first half of this strophe is followed by a piano echo in E minor. E minor is the relative minor of G major, which is the subdominant of D major. The return of the tonic D major is prepared through the A dominant seventh chord.

In the fourth strophe, the melody begins in the cello with imitative countermelody in the piano. It is extended in a coda-like fashion into thirteen measures. The violin quotes the opening shortly before arriving on the tonic D note together with the cello, while the piano plays segments of the melody until the very end. Figure 4.18 and figure 4.19 show this short movement with markings at the beginning of each strophe.
Figure 4.18 Fanny, 3rd movement, first half.
Figure 4.19 Fanny, 3rd movement, second half.
Figure 4.20 Felix, 3rd movement, opening.
The third movement of Felix Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio, Leggiero e vivace*, is also in the key of D major, which is the parallel major of D minor. Figure 4.20 shows the opening of the movement.

The movement is titled *Scherzo*, but its form is not typical of the genre. The usual trio section is omitted, as the scherzo theme dominates the entire movement. It is spun out in a hybrid monothematic sonata-rondo form.

The kernel of all musical ideas of this movement is in the first two measures of the sixty-two-measure exposition. A piano solo presents the theme in D major, which is echoed in the violin with cello and piano accompaniment. It is followed by an imitative transitional material based on the theme. The key changes to A major by measure 17, for a new theme intertwined with motives of the opening. Following more transitional material, the theme returns in A major at measure 39. An imitative, modulating, developmental part begins in measure 63 using motives of the first measure. Alternating fortissimo and pianissimo mark the climax starting at measure 82, where the piano plays a modified version of the opening motive repeatedly in three different keys. The imitative transitional idea returns and leads back to D major. The recapitulation starts in measure 118, with the theme in the violin followed by the second thematic idea, starting at measure 128, this time in D major. After more transitional material, the main motive returns in measure 156. The motive fades away with a short coda starting at measure 176.

A comparison of the third movements of both trios is shown in table 4.4. These movements do not have many literal similarities, as one of them is a lied while the other
is a scherzo. Although they are in two different genres with two inherently different characters, there are still many aspects of interest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fanny</th>
<th>Felix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III Lied Allegretto</td>
<td>III Scherzo Leggiero e vivace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature genre of the composer</td>
<td>Signature genre of the composer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title added</td>
<td>Title added</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D major (parallel key of D minor)</td>
<td>D major (parallel key of D minor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free hybrid form closest to modified strophic form</td>
<td>Free hybrid sonata-rondo form, scherzo without trio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monothematic structure, each musical idea is a variation of motives of the very opening</td>
<td>Monothematic structure, each musical idea is a variation of motives of the very opening</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4 Comparison of the third movements.

Both movements have specific titles beyond the tempo markings. They share the same key, D major, the parallel key of their respective trios. While the outside movements of a chamber music composition of the era have to follow certain characteristics and forms, and while a slow movement should also be included in one of the inner movements, the choice of the remaining movement is somewhat free. In some works, that free-choice movement is simply omitted, resulting in a three-movement work like in *Beethoven’s Piano Trio in D major, Op. 70, No. 1, “Ghost”*. In the two trios of the Mendelssohn siblings, there are two different choices for this movement, but they both use it as their signature. Felix Mendelssohn is brilliant at the scherzo genre. One of
his most successful orchestral works written at the tender age of seventeen, *Overture to a Midsummer Night’s Dream*, has scherzo character in sonata-allegro form. So does his popular piano work *Rondo Capriccioso, Op. 14*. It is his genre, while *lied* is the genre of Fanny Mendelssohn. A major part of Fanny’s compositional output consists of lieder. They have a special charm. It was Fanny’s *Italien* that was chosen by Queen Victoria as the favorite song out of Felix’s *Opus 8* collection. While the forms of both movements are used in their respective genres, the forms are freely interpreted. Felix’s *Scherzo* is without the usual trio, resulting in a monothematic sonata-rondo form with characteristics of both sonata-allegro and rondo forms. Fanny’s *Lied* is neither completely through-composed, nor binary, nor ternary, nor strophic. It is in a free strophic form where there is a touch of evolution in each strophe, a characteristic of the through-composed form. Both movements are based on motives presented at the opening and both are monothematic.

4.5 Fourth Movement

The fourth movement of Fanny Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio, Allegro moderato*, has an added title, *Finale*. It is a large-scale movement in a hybrid sonata-rondo form. The key is D minor but at the conclusion, in the coda, it changes into D major ending on a bright color. There are three different characteristic themes. The first is contemplative and improvisatory, the second is more agitated, and the third is lively and has a dance-like character. A long piano solo opens this movement with an improvisatory free introduction that leads into the main theme at measure eight. The atmosphere of this introduction sets the mood for the first theme in D minor built out of eight-measure phrases. An improvisatory bridge leads into the restatement of the first part of the theme.
Joining the piano, the strings enter at measure 32, where the theme modulates into the relative key, F major. A transitional section leads back to D minor into a forte tutti outburst of the theme followed by a short bridge into the second theme. Figure 4.21 shows the introduction and the opening of the main theme.
Figure 4.21 Fanny 4th movement, introduction and opening of the main theme.
Figure 4.22 Fanny 4th movement, second theme with opening of third theme.
The second theme starts in measure 58 with the tempo marked *Più vivace*. The theme has three layers; a highly chromatic melody line, a countermelody with chords in the bass, and a sixteenth-note triplet accompaniment in the piano middle voice. Agitation and drive characterize the smooth chromatic melody that, played in the piano, is alternately doubled in the violin and the cello. The four-measure phrase first comes in D minor, then in G minor, which is the subdominant key of D minor, and lastly in C major.\(^72\) Through chromatic motion, a C dominant seventh chord arrives that prepares the F major key of the third theme. Figure 4.22 shows the second theme with the first measure of the third theme.

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\(^72\) C major is the dominant key of F major and F major is the relative major of D minor.
Figure 4.23 Fanny, 4th movement, parts of the third theme.
The third theme begins in measure 72 in major mode. While the three-layered texture is the same as it is in the second theme (the melody, the countermelody with bass chords and sixteenth triplets in the middle voice), the character is different. This theme is livelier and has a dance-like rhythm with a steady pulse.

The melody, built out of two-measure motives of chord arpeggios, sequences through pairs of dominant seventh chords and their resolutions to the respective tonic chords. In this sequence, the first pair of chords is in F major, the next is in G minor, followed by its parallel major key B-flat major. A two-measure bridge is followed by more sequencing through F minor, A-flat minor, A minor, B-flat minor back to F minor. Figure 4.23 shows parts of the third theme.

At measure 91 the first theme returns with the tempo marked *Allegro moderato come prima*. This time the theme is in the relative F major key. Before the first theme starts to evolve completely, the third theme interrupts in measure 99. The themes open in switched mode; the first theme is in major, while the third theme starts in minor going through a sequence of modulations in a developmental treatment. In this hybrid sonata-rondo form, this middle part, including both the first and the third themes, represents the development section.

The first theme returns in B minor\(^{73}\) in measure 119. After only four measures in B minor, a modulation starts with a chromatically falling bass line. The return of the second theme follows in F-sharp minor with the tempo marked *Più mosso*. F-sharp minor is the relative minor of A major, and A major is the dominant key of D minor. Aside from the different key, the second theme returns in the same way as it was

\(^{73}\) B minor is the relative minor of D major, and D major is the parallel major of D minor.
presented toward the beginning of the movement. The structure of the transition into the third theme and the third theme itself also follows the scheme of their earlier presentations. This time, the third theme starts in B-flat major. Fragments from both the second and first themes are added in the strings. The return of the three themes in this fashion would suggest sonata-allegro form, but the key relationships are freely interpreted and do not follow the usual scheme. The refrain-like returns of the first theme add rondo characteristics, resulting in the above-mentioned hybrid sonata-rondo form.

A chromatically rising trill in the piano prepares the return of the Allegro moderato first theme in D minor starting in measure 176. The D pedal point in the bass is reinforced by the continuing trill on D in the high register. This is the beginning of the Coda. In measure 193, the first theme is followed by the livelier third theme, in tempo marked molto vivace, with a shift into D major. The third theme almost reaches its final cadence in measure 212, when suddenly another theme interrupts. This passionate theme, also in D major, comes as new in the fourth movement, yet is still familiar. Here it is the second theme from the first movement presented exactly the same way as it is in the recapitulation of the first movement; the melody in octave unison in the strings with tremolo accompaniment in the piano, all in fortissimo. The only difference comes from the time signature, as the originally quadruple meter theme is notated now in duple meter. Thus, the second theme of the first movement is quoted in diminution in the fourth movement. The entire trio is unified as this theme frames the work from the beginning until the end. This moment is a precursor of the cyclic form that becomes more common in late nineteenth-century works like Cesar Franck’s Sonata for Violin and Piano in A.

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74 B-flat major is the relative major of G minor and G minor is the subdominant key of D minor.
major from 1886, where the theme of the third movement returns in full force in the fourth movement.

After this moment of interruption, the third theme is presented once more. The Finale ends with full of drive, zest, and optimism. It is like a story with a happy ending, like Fanny’s dream of conquering all the challenges in her career. Figure 4.24 shows the second theme of the first movement in the recapitulation of the first movement, and its quote in the coda of the fourth movement.
Figure 4.24 Fanny, the second theme of the first movement in the recapitulation, and the quote of that theme in the Coda of the fourth movement.
Figure 4.25 Felix, 4th movement, opening of the rondo theme.
The fourth movement of Felix Mendelssohn’s Piano Trio Allegro assai appassionato, also titled Finale, is in the key of D minor that changes into D major at the end of the movement. This large-scale movement is in a hybrid form that either can be viewed as an arch rondo with coda or as a sonata-rondo. Figure 4.25 shows the rondo theme.

The rustic rondo theme begins in the piano, and the strings join in measure 4. The consequent part of the parallel phrase is extended and varied using the Neapolitan chord. After a perfect authentic cadence in measure 28, the rondo theme is repeated. While the opening phrase remains in D minor, the varied extension modulates to F major, using chromatic diminished seventh and augmented sixth chords.

The second theme begins in the relative key, F major, in measure 54. It is interesting to note that this closely-related key has not been used in the other three movements; this lyrical legato derivative of the rondo theme is the first theme in F major in the entire trio. The eight-measure phrase, introduced in the piano, is echoed in the violin with a four-measure extension. Figure 4.26 shows the second theme.

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75 The Neapolitan chord is a major chord built on the flat second degree of the scale. It has a special dark-color flavor.
Figure 4.26 Felix, 4th movement, opening of the second theme.
In measure 73, segments of the rondo theme return in F major. This time the theme is not fully presented. After the closing part of the theme is repeated, a
countermelody starts in the violin. A strong cadence in measure 103, with a repeat in 107, emphasizes the F major key before the modulation back to D minor. In the tonic key, the rondo theme returns in its full length.

At measure 142 a third theme is introduced in B-flat major.\(^7\) This new cantabile theme opens in the cello and then passed on to the violin. It is restated three more times, first in the strings in octave unison, then in the piano, and finally again in the strings. Figure 4.27 shows parts of this third theme.

While the strings still linger on the third theme, the piano, very softly underneath, inserts the closing motive of the rondo theme in B-flat major, later in A major, and finally in D major. All three instruments then join in playing the rondo theme in an imitative fashion. After a modulation through G minor, the tonic D minor key returns by measure 193 with the rondo theme in the piano in fortissimo. In measure 208, the second theme enters, this time in D minor; thus, the originally F major theme not only changes its tonic note to D but also its mode to minor. Aside from the key change, the structure and instrumentation of the theme remain the same as in its first appearance. The segments of the rondo theme, leading to its full statement, also return here in D minor. This recapitulation of the themes is characteristic of the sonata-allegro form. The full return of the rondo theme in measure 253 marks the beginning of the Coda. While the cantabile third theme comes back in the cello in its original B-flat major key, it is repeated in D major by both strings in octave unison. D major remains the key until the end. Motives of the rondo theme in a driving tempo build a long crescendo up to fortissimo. The specific instructions *sempre più animato e cresc. sino al Fine, espressivo e cresc. sempre*

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\(^7\) B-flat major is the relative major key of G minor, and G minor is the subdominant of D minor.
*sino al Fine*, and *con forza*, are witnesses of a passionate and full-force ending of this movement, and thus the entire *Trio*. Figure 4.28 shows the end of the movement.
### Table 4.5 Comparison of the schemes of the fourth movements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fanny</th>
<th>Felix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>IV Finale</strong></td>
<td><strong>IV Finale</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Allegro moderato</em></td>
<td><em>Allegro assai appassionato</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D minor ending in D major</td>
<td>D minor ending in D major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hybrid sonata-rondo or rondo form</td>
<td>Hybrid rondo or sonata-rondo form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposition (m1-90) with Introduction</td>
<td>Exposition (m1-123)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First theme in D minor restated in a transitional treatment (m1-57)</td>
<td>First theme in D minor restated in a transition (m1-52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second theme <em>Più vivace</em></td>
<td>Second theme <em>animato</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From D minor a sequence of modulation arrives at F major (m58-71)</td>
<td>It is in F major, a derivative of the first theme (m53-73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third theme opens in F major, after sequencing into different keys it closes also in F major (m72-90)</td>
<td>Segments and variations of motives of the first theme return in F major in place of a closing theme (m73-123)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development (m91-118)</td>
<td>Development (m123-173)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First theme starts in F major then modulates (m91-98)</td>
<td>First theme comes in D minor (m123-141)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third theme sequences (m99-118)</td>
<td>Third theme a new theme in Bb major (m142-173)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recapitulation (m119-175)</td>
<td>Recapitulation (m173-252)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure of themes follow the exposition in different keys</td>
<td>Structure of themes follow the exposition but now in D minor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coda (m176-243)</td>
<td>Coda (m252-321)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First theme and third theme and the second theme of the first movement in D major</td>
<td>First theme and third theme in D major</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5 shows a comparison of the fourth movements. Preceding the usual tempo marking, there is an added title, *Finale*. The key is D minor that changes to D major in the end. Both movements are in a hybrid form with mixed characteristics of sonata-allegro and rondo forms, based on three themes, with one in F major. There is a Coda with an accelerated tempo, a long crescendo into fortissimo, and a passionate,
zestful reinforcement of the new D major key. The table shows the structure of both movements in the scheme of the sonata form.

4.6 Summary

The two piano trios in D minor have many more commonalities than just their genres and tonic keys. As the above comparison shows, Fanny Mendelssohn’s work follows the forms, themes, and harmonic relations of the genre in many ways similar to those in the work of Felix Mendelssohn. Her music has additional features that are still within the boundaries of the forms of each movement, and as a whole, of the piano trio genre. Her choice of a Lied for the third movement is unusual, especially after the second movement, which is also in the genre of Song without Words. Thus, the two middle movements do not give great variety, but they are tied together in attacca to form a bouquet of songs. The piano trio genre, even in the nineteenth century, includes both four- and three-movement works. In an extreme interpretation, Fanny Mendelssohn’s trio can be viewed as a crosscut between the three- and four-movement forms. Both first and fourth movements have sections with highly chromatic transitional, developmental treatments of the themes. Diminished seventh and augmented sixth chords intensify the chromatic motions. These traits are also present in Felix Mendelssohn’s music, but Fanny uses these chromatic chords with greater freedom and spontaneity. While individual movements of the Piano Trio of Felix Mendelssohn have monothematic characteristics, Fanny Mendelssohn’s work has more variety within the movements. The variety is created either by inventing more new themes or by transfiguring one theme into another in a non-trivial fashion. Her unification of the entire work, by quoting the second
theme of the first movement in the Coda of the fourth movement, is very peculiar and is further discussed in Chapter Six.

The purpose of this chapter is fulfilled by showing that, from the analytical standpoint, the trios share so many features, that they belong to the same category. Thus, there is not any theoretical justification for omitting Fanny’s work from collections or lists in which Felix’s trio is mentioned or included.
CHAPTER 5

PERFORMANCE ISSUES

5.1 Introduction

Music is a performing art. In comparing two compositions, it is not only important to compare their analytical structures but also their performance attributes. A work that fits well the concert repertoire has a better chance to be performed regularly.

There are many different categories even within the repertory canon. A work may become popular because it does not demand too much from the performer while it is still beautiful and interesting to the listener, for example, Beethoven’s *Für Elise*. Another work may be performed because it challenges the performer, who can thus showcase special abilities for the enjoyment of the audience to applaud, such as Tchaikovsky’s *Piano Concerto in B flat Minor, Opus 23*. Another work may be performed because it is so profound that it takes a special vision of the performer to convey and a depth of the listener to understand, like the second movement of Beethoven’s *Piano Sonata in C Minor, Opus 111*.

One work is featured because of its simplicity while another one is favored for its complexities and challenges. Thus, it is difficult to point out particular features of Fanny Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio in D Minor Op. 11* to argue for its inclusion in the repertory.
canon. Instead, while looking at Fanny’s composition from the performer-listener point of view, I will not only focus on its individual features but also on the commonalities it shares with Felix’s work. The purpose of this comparison is to show that there is not any particular reason from the performer-listener standpoint to treat the two trios differently in planning a repertoire program.

5.2 Listening to the Music

Let us take a look at Felix Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 49* for a moment. It is part of the so-called standard repertoire and is equally popular among performers and audience. What are the features that make this music a good fit in a concert program? Like many works of the Romantic era, it has zest and passion. Melodies of most themes are built from clear symmetric phrases, and are smooth and easy to remember. Expected and surprise elements in melody, harmony, and dynamics are well balanced. High and low strings mixed with the piano sound result in a pleasant, well-liked combination. There is a nice variety of different atmospheres in the four movements. The work as a whole is large-scale yet concise, with its approximate duration of twenty-four minutes.

Turning back the focus on Fanny, the listener is immediately struck by the inner drive, passion, and drama of Fanny Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio in D Minor Op. 11* at the very opening of the first movement. The virtuoso piano part and the long legato melody lines with rich vibrato in the strings are elements of nineteenth-century Romantic music. The instrumental combination is the same as in Felix’s work, the usual piano trio setting. Symmetric phrases characterize most of the melodies of Fanny’s themes, as well. Her work also has a well-balanced combination of expected and surprise elements. The four
movements bring different atmospheres in this large-scale yet concise composition of approximately twenty-five minutes.

My first impression in listening to Fanny’s work was that it had to be a well-known piano trio from the nineteenth century that for some reason I did not recognize at the moment. In every way, the music provoked the same emotions and admiration that I find in listening to Felix Mendelssohn’s piano trios, or Schumann’s and Schubert’s chamber music works. Since then, I have shared Fanny’s music with other musicians and friends from all walks of life. Witnessing their reactions to her work, I see enthusiasm and interest. From the audience’s angle, Fanny Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio in D Minor Op. 11* is certainly a welcome choice at a chamber music recital.

5.3 Performance Attributes

In both piano trios, there is not really a moment of rest for the piano player. The piano writing is concerto-like, idiomatic, challenging, and exciting. Either the piano presents the melody or it provides the harmonic support and rhythmic foundation in the accompaniment. While the piano has the most prominent role, the strings also have interesting and beautiful writings that carry the melody most of the time.

Let us take a closer look at Fanny’s work. The piano part is the technically most challenging. Because of the idiomatic writings, however, most parts flow under the hands comfortably, and even the difficult areas are within reasonable reach. Perhaps the most demanding passage is in the development of the first movement leading into the recapitulation. Here, the writing is not as idiomatic as it is in other parts of the work. It is more orchestral than pianistic, with running octaves in the bass imitating the low strings of the orchestra. While the strings powerfully project fragments of the theme, the
heavy texture in the piano should stay in a supportive role to create tension with the underlying drive of the eighth-note pulse. The challenge is to keep the bass octaves in control, and not to let them become overbearing. They have to be very light, even at the fortissimo level. Similar technical difficulty appears in Felix’s work. In the fourth movement, staccato octaves in the piano bass accompany segments of the theme in the strings also, in fortissimo.

Figure 5.1 shows an excerpt of Fanny’s first movement, while figure 5.2 shows an excerpt of Felix’s fourth movement, both with running octaves in the bass.
Figure 5.1 Fanny, 1st movement, development, running octaves in the bass.
Figure 5.2 Felix, 4th movement, octave runs.
There are other passages in Fanny Mendelssohn’s *Trio* that may not be very difficult but require special attention. Another type of technical problem arises in playing the sixteenth-note accompaniment pattern of the first theme in the first movement. The sixteenths have to be steady and articulate with a sense of ease. At the beginning of the recapitulation, the roles get switched, as the strings play the running sixteenths against the melody in the piano. Aside from this virtuosic moment for the strings, they assume a more lyrical role. Figure 5.3 shows the development of the first theme in the first movement.
Figure 5.3 Fanny, 1st movement, development of the first theme.
Similar quick runs, in a guitar-like arpeggio, are in the fantasia-like first theme of the fourth movement, shown in figure 5.4.

![Figure 5.4 Fanny, 4th movement, quick arpeggios.](image)

Balance of voices is important in the *Più vivace* theme of the fourth movement. There are three layers with running sixteenth triplets in the middle voice that have to remain in the background. Both the triplets and the sweeping melody line are in the right hand of the piano. Similar voicing is needed in the closing theme of the first movement, and throughout the short *Lied* third movement. In the latter, there are four voices in the
piano part, with active middle voices that have to remain under control. Figure 5.5 shows the opening of the third movement.

Figure 5.5 Fanny, 3rd movement, voicing.
The pianist faces yet another challenge throughout the work, in the parts of long horizontal lines enriched by ever-present subdividing pulses. Without special care, those parts can easily become vertical, even choppy. Giving a moving forward feel of the pulse and grouping many of them into one arm gesture solves the problem. The previously mentioned examples of voicing difficulties, the transitional material of the first theme, and the sixteenth-note piano accompaniment in the second movement all exhibit this phenomenon. Figure 5.6 shows excerpts of the second movement.

Figure 5.6 Fanny, 2nd movement, heavy texture in subdividing pulse.
Comparable difficulty levels are found in Felix Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio*. The running note piano accompaniment, which needs to be steady and articulate with a sense of ease, appears in the sixteenth notes of the *Scherzo* movement shown in figure 5.7, and also in the triplets of the first movement. Virtuoso accompaniment patterns also appear occasionally in the strings, more often than in Fanny’s work.

![Figure 5.7 Felix, 3rd movement, running sixteenths in the scherzo.](image)
Figure 5.8 shows guitar-like quick arpeggio runs in the first movement.

![Figure 5.8 Felix, 1st movement, quick arpeggio runs.](image)

Balance of voices is needed in different parts of the fourth movement, including the *cantabile* third theme, and most importantly, throughout the second movement.

Figure 5.9 shows the opening of the second movement.
The problem of keeping the horizontal lines against the vertical subdividing pulse arises in the piano accompaniment of the first theme in the first movement, and of the middle section in the second movement. The latter one is shown in figure 5.10.
In both works, the strings play a, lyrical role, holding long sustaining melody lines with rich vibrato sound. Felix gives more opportunity for the strings to play technically difficult accompaniment passages than Fanny does, but the overall challenge for the strings in both trios is to project well and balance the powerful writing of the piano.

Comparing the two works from the performer-listener point of view they again appear to be in the same category. As a result, Fanny’s composition should be included approximately as often as Felix’s in concert performances. Furthermore, as a logical
consequence, if Felix’s *Piano Trio* is part of the standard repertoire, so should be Fanny’s.
6.1 Results

The most striking discovery in this fairy tale of Fanny Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 11* and Felix Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 49* is that the two works have traveled such different paths, while in so many ways, they are alike. Closely looking at and listening to Fanny’s music, it is easy to recognize the individuality of a master composer. Her style is like bravely-painted big brush strokes combined with meticulously-observed, closely-examined details on a huge canvas. Fanny’s inventions and derivations of themes, developmental-transitional materials, and chromatic harmonic motions, mixed into the carefully designed structure of key relationships and thematic architecture, are witnesses both to her spontaneity within the required framework and her mastery planning. The *Piano Trio* is not a copycat or an afterthought of works of Felix or other Romantic composers. The similarities are not such that they would compromise her integrity as a musician. It is common and widely accepted that works of artists from the same period have similar attributes; for example, the works of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven share many features.
Focusing on the same aspects in the comparison of Fanny’s and Felix’s music has a particular reason. The purpose of chapters 4 and 5 is to point out how much the two compositions share, while never questioning the individuality of each. There are no objective measurements to judge the value of an art work. Instead, there is a complex process, through interaction of the art work with professionals in the field, as well as with society, that in time creates a categorization. One would like to hope that, in the long haul, truly valuable works do prevail, while the weeds get wiped out. But who is to tell the truly valuable from the weed? Marcia Citron points out how social forces and the formation of canon are deeply intertwined. “Canons in general have become a lightning rod for fierce cultural debate… It provides a means of instilling a sense of identity in a culture: who the constituents are, where they come from, and where they are going. It can imply ideals of unity, consensus, and order… The canon creates a narrative of the past and a template for the future.”

In the above-mentioned notion of the unity, consensus, and order of the canon, the previous chapters focus on the common aspects of Fanny’s and Felix’s Piano Trio in order to show that Fanny’s work fits the required conventions associated with the genre and the era. It is not enough to argue for Fanny’s composition by emotional reasons, or just by its beauty. While it is clear to any listener that her Piano Trio is just like any other already well-known, respected, and canonized chamber work of the Romantic era, an argument needs facts and proof.

Felix Mendelssohn’s Piano Trio in D Minor, Op. 49 is not only popular and often played in concert halls all around the world, but there is also scholarly evidence

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indicating that the work belongs in the canon. It is mentioned in chapter 1 that Charles
Rosen compares compositional features of the young Felix Mendelssohn and Ludwig van
Beethoven to show Felix’s genius.\textsuperscript{78} Other praise of Felix’s \textit{D Minor Trio}, by Robert
Schumann, is quoted from a contemporary issue of the \textit{Neue Zeitschrift} in Melvin
Berger’s chamber music guide book. According to Schumann, it is “the master trio of the
age, as were the B flat and D major trios of Beethoven and the E flat trio of Schubert in
their times.”\textsuperscript{79} (It is interesting to note that Berger’s book does not contain any chamber
works of Fanny Mendelssohn, Clara Schumann, or any woman composer, for that
matter.) Felix’s work stands still on the musical pedestal. The results of the comparisons
of Felix’s and Fanny’s \textit{Piano Trio} suggest that in the measurable musical sense they have
the same classifications. If Fanny’s composition can be put in the same category as one
that is already part of the canon, then there is no intrinsically musical justification for the
neglect of her work.

6.2 Conclusions and Hopes for the Future

The above result serves as a basis for two further discussions. It validates an
argument for the inclusion of Fanny’s work into the canon. It also gives a basis to
discover, address, and question the factors outside of music that may have contributed to
the neglect of her work, such as issues of gender, tradition, and discrimination. Chapter 2
shows Fanny’s personal struggles in her family and social environment with the gender
roles, while chapter 3 gives some insight into the historical perspective of gender issues
in music. It is possible to argue that one forgotten treasure can be a simple coincidence

\textsuperscript{78} Charles Rosen, \textit{The Romantic Generation} (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995),
569-282.

and not part of a pattern. There can be many different reasons for neglect. Even Johann Sebastian Bach was forgotten for years after his death in favor of the new expressive style of his son Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach and the upcoming styles of the Classical era. It was Felix Mendelssohn and his teacher Zelter who took a major step in rediscovering Johann Sebastian Bach by a successful performance of the *St. Matthew’s Passion*. In Fanny’s case, however, it is important to see how gender played an important role in preventing her from becoming a professional, publishing musician during her lifetime. There are many women composers throughout history who worked at a time when it was not considered appropriate for a woman to earn income through composing. While there are also forgotten male composers whose works should be still discovered and measured against already existing standards, it is important to address the case of women composers, particularly.

Toward the end of the twentieth century, the feminist movement of groups of musicians, promoting works of women composers, was an important first step in remedying the mistakes of the past. While the movement was necessary in the beginning, it created an atmosphere of segregation. The goal has to be acculturation when cultures are mixed in an equal role where each has an interaction-influence on the other. Traditions do not change overnight; thus, the intermediate step of the feminist movement is very important. Without an extra effort to discover never-published works of women composers, there cannot be an opportunity to have those works measured against the standards. It would do more harm than good suddenly to loudly praise every work of women composers in order to elevate them into the canon, as a remedy for past injustices. But it is important to discover and expose the works so time can take its course. Igor
Stravinsky’s revolutionary ballet *The Rite of Spring* provoked a riot at its première in Paris, yet it is loved today, part of the canon, and included in every music history survey class. J.S. Bach was temporarily forgotten, yet today he is regarded as one of the greatest composers. Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* was considered too dark and dissonant at its première, Beethoven’s *Eroica Symphony* was deemed unorganized and chaotic, and the list can go on. These works are not only part of the canon, but stand in very high regard among all the works ever written. Even if the first impression of the public or critics is complete rejection, in the long haul, treasures get elevated to their deserved rank. My trust and belief in that universal system give me hope that it is enough to discover, publish, perform, and give exposure to unjustly-neglected works and composers. It is also important to inform the public of the reasons for the neglect. Equality has not yet been reached, even in music. There is still a long and bumpy road to travel before equality can be celebrated. It is still important not to get discouraged by the distance, and to take every possible step on that road.

There is a place in Fanny Mendelssohn’s *Piano Trio in D Minor Op. 11* that can be interpreted as a feminist statement. It is the return of the second theme from the first movement in the coda of the fourth movement. As mentioned in chapter 3, the second theme of the sonata-allegro form in gender-biased musical terminology is often associated with feminine qualities, labeled as lyrical and gentle, as well as weak and subsidiary. Fanny’s choice of bringing it back at the conclusion of the *Trio*, in a powerful triumphant interpretation, reflects her attitude at the time. In 1846, she finally rebelled against the traditions that had prevented her from pursuing a musical career. Unfortunately, her plans for performing and publishing were cut short by her untimely
death and the *Trio* was published only posthumously. The return of the second theme at the conclusion of the *Trio* in this victorious fashion is like a final statement of triumph, like letting the Amazon say the last word.

There is nothing wrong with projecting individual qualities like gender through a work. A certain quality, however, should not exile a work from the mainstream and place it into a separate, so-called “women composers” category. It is common, for example, to characterize music of composers with their added quality of national origin. A group of composers is often referred to the “Viennese Classics” or the French “Les Six,” or the “Russian Five” without any measurement or justification. It is time to include gender among such individual qualities that may shine through a work, but do not separate it from possible canonization. The canon dynamically changes through inclusion of new or newly-discovered compositions. The more works of women composers become part of the canon, the more chances other works of women get to be viewed without gender bias.

Fanny Mendelssohn’s dream may have been to have her music performed not as music of a woman composer, but simply, without labels, as respected works of art. I believe that there will be a day when that dream can come true. In the meantime, musicians of both genders should research, discover, discuss, and perform forgotten treasures, to give them an opportunity to be measured and possibly elevated into the canon.
EPILOGUE

“There is a vitality, a life force, a quickening that is translated through you into action, and because there is only one of you in all time, this expression is unique. And if you block it, it will never exist through any other medium and be lost. The world will not have it.

It is not your business to determine how good it is, nor how valuable it is, nor how it compares with other expressions. It is your business to keep it yours clearly and directly, to keep the channel open. You do not even have to believe in yourself or your work. You have to keep open and aware directly to the urges that motivate you. Keep the channel open.

No artist is pleased...there is no satisfaction whatever at any time. There is only a queer, divine dissatisfaction; a blessed unrest that keeps us marching and makes us more alive than the others.”

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80 Martha Graham to Agnes DeMille. Quoted at “Influences and Inspiration” by Nafeesa Monroe at http://www.nafeesamonroe.com/photo5.html
LIST OF REFERENCES


