Schumann’s Late Style

*Schumann’s Late Style* is the first study in English devoted to Robert Schumann’s little-known music from the 1850s. The reason most often given for these works having been considered lesser achievements than the earlier song and piano cycles is that Schumann’s mental illness had a detrimental effect on his compositions. However, this study demonstrates that there were several other, still more complex, reasons why the music from the 1850s sounded different. Schumann had started to compose ‘in a new manner’, depending more on preliminary sketches; he also began to write for larger forces (orchestra and chorus), which required a more ‘public’ style of music, as is also apparent in his works on nationalist themes, and in his more commercial pieces for children. This book thus attempts to disentangle assumptions about Schumann’s late style from biographical interpretations, and to consider it in broader artistic, social and cultural contexts.

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L A U R A  T U N B R I D G E
For my parents
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List of illustrations

1. Richard Julius Jungtow after Alfred Rethel, ‘Der Tod als Freund’
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