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Lost in Quotation: The Nuances behind E. T. A. Hoffmann's Programmatic Statements

KEITH CHAPIN

E. T. A. Hoffmann proclaimed the virtues of Romanticism in stark and unequivocal words. He thereby gave many of his pronouncements a programmatic character, which he reinforced as he quoted himself from review to review and essay to essay. For this reason, Hoffmann often serves today as an eloquent spokesman for Romantic musical aesthetics.¹ Yet the emphatic character of his assertions, however fundamental it was to the passionate conviction that was the kernel of his Romantic outlook, gives only a partial view of Hoffmann's thought about music. This article will address certain particularities of Hoffmann's prose and life that make

his writings difficult sources for historical scholarship, even as they are brilliant works of literature. By addressing these particularities, the article aims to put some of Hoffmann's most famous and widely quoted words into a new perspective. If he inspired and propagated Romantic principles of art music, he also said much where these principles appear in an ambiguous light, where his words and his meaning diverge, and where he toned down what he elsewhere boldly proclaimed.

There are at least three literary techniques that Hoffmann used to nuance his bold statements. First, he approached many of his texts through the literary poses dictated by Romantic irony. Second, he often used words in a fashion more connotative than denotative. Finally, he placed divergent and even contradictory aesthetic views into the mouths of a multitude of narrators and characters. Hoffmann's programmatic statements hide other stories, a sign of his delight in ironic play and his skepti-

¹For example, Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), II, 641–51; Mark Evan Bonds, *A History of Music in Western Culture* (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 2003), p. 359. I would like to thank Marshall Brown for his subtle and close commentary of a draft of this article, and Fordham University for a course reduction that made its writing possible.

cism toward all dogma, including his own. The delightful confusion began in Hoffmann's own time. As David Charlton has noted, his "elliptical, varied, sometimes fragmentary approach" puzzled even Carl Maria von Weber and Hoffmann's own publisher, Carl Friedrich Kunz.² And of the "excellent beauty" *Prinzessin Brambilla* (1820), Heinrich Heine wrote in his *Briefe aus Berlin* (1822) that the one who did not go dizzy in the head had no head to begin with.³

For the modern interpreter, chronology compounds the challenges involved in using Hoffmann as a spokesman for Romantic musical aesthetics. Hoffmann evolved as a writer, particularly after 1814, the year he resumed the tasks and the financial security of a civil servant, the year he won fame with the publication of the *Fantasiestücke in Callot's Manier*, and the year he received the first public criticism of his work, most notably in Jean Paul Friedrich Richter's preface to the *Fantasiestücke*. This preface, translated here for the first time, appears as an appendix (pp. 61–64).

In the various acts of the present article, which deals with Hoffmann's literary techniques and his responses to Jean Paul's criticism, central themes in Hoffmann's Romanticism will recur as Leitmotifs: his views on the relationship of artist to audience, his politics, and his metaphysics. The article approaches his thought on two levels. It is structured around the issue of how Hoffmann wrote, but it addresses no less what he said and what he believed in.

THE POSES OF IRONY

Hoffmann was not interested in simple expository prose. Even in his music criticism he cultivated distinct attitudes and styles that had their own aesthetic charm. Through these sty-

listic modes he accentuated his views, almost to the point of distortion. He was still young when he learned to cultivate such literary poses, and he stylized both his life and his literature. Hoffmann read insatiably, wrote interminably, and shaped his own life through literature. This was the common practice among the literate bourgeoisie of the late eighteenth century.⁴ Novels like Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *La nouvelle Héloïse* (1760) and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (1774) provided Hoffmann with early models of epistolary style and practice, and his multiple readings of Rousseau's *Les Confessions* (1782/91) influenced him powerfully—in 1804 he reported reading them for "perhaps the thirtieth time."⁵ Such reading bore fruit in letters and in his behavior to his friend Theodor Gottlieb Hippel, toward whom he cultivated an enthusiastic and effusive style. This style remained a pillar of his prose.

Later he added skepticism and satire to his stylistic repertoire. Here he drew upon Voltaire's *Candide* (1759), Denis Diderot's *Jacques le fataliste* (1773, pub. 1796) and *Le Neveu de Rameau* (pub. in 1805 in a translation by Goethe) as well as on the German Romantics, especially Ludwig Tieck. In the *Lebens-Ansichten des Katers Murr* (1820), for example, Hoffmann gave his tomcat an illustrious ancestor in Tieck's Puss-in-Boots from *Der gestiefelte Kater* (1797; Hoffmann's title also parodies that of Laurence Sterne's *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*, 1759–67). Throughout his life, Hoffmann cultivated these two attitudes: effusive enthusiasm and satirical skepticism. They are most clear in his fiction. In *Kater Murr*, the

²David Charlton, *E. T. A. Hoffmann's Musical Writings: Kreisleriana, The Poet and the Composer, Music Criticism*, trans. Martyn Clarke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 7.

³Heinrich Heine, *Heinrich Heines Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Adolf Strodtmann, 21 vols. (Hamburg: Hoffmann and Campe, 1861–63), XIII, 127–28. All translations are my own.

⁴Klaus-Dieter Dobat, *Musik als romantische Illusion: Eine Untersuchung zur Bedeutung der Musikvorstellung E. T. A. Hoffmanns für sein literarisches Werk*, ed. Wilfried Barner, Richard Brinkmann, and Friedrich Sengle (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1984), pp. 25–38; Rüdiger Safranski, *E. T. A. Hoffmann: Das Leben eines skeptischen Phantasten* (Munich: Carl Hanser, 1984), pp. 50–60, 73–85; Hartmut Steinecke, *Die Kunst der Fantasie: E. T. A. Hoffmanns Leben und Werk* (Frankfurt am Main and Leipzig: Insel, 2004), pp. 18–32.

⁵Journal entry of 13 February 1804. E. T. A. Hoffmann, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Hartmut Steinecke, et al., 6 vols. in 7 (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher Klassiker Verlag, 1985–2004), I, 347. All further references to this edition will be abbreviated to *Werke*.

Kapellmeister Johannes Kreisler slips from one mood to the other with scarcely a transition.

As soon as the princess began to speak, the stranger [Kreisler] turned suddenly and looked her in the eyes, but his entire countenance seemed to have become a new one. – Gone was the expression of melancholy yearning, gone every trace of a spirit aroused in its innermost depths. A crazily distorted smile intensified the expression of bitter irony to a prankish and scurrilous point.⁶

Hoffmann approached criticism in a literary manner, and the same attitudes of enthusiasm and satire hyperbolically intensified many of his statements made in the columns of the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*.

The two stylistic modes play into both Classical and Romantic conceptions of irony. With his satire, Hoffmann worked within the boundaries of a type of irony practiced since antiquity: an author says one thing and means another.⁷ He wielded this Classical irony with virtuosity and a sense of the comic often lacking in the works of his compatriots. He could even give the Classical model a Romantic tint: in *Prinzessin Brambilla*, humor and satire reveal essential truth and thereby allow people to know their inner selves.⁸ But if satire alone draws upon Classical irony, enthusiasm and satire together belong to Romantic irony. Romantic irony is an attitude toward life rather than a literary technique; as Friedrich Schlegel described it in the *Athenäums-Fragment* no. 51, it swings between “self creation and self destruction.”⁹ In other words, while original poetic inspiration springs from enthusiasm, to

produce any work of lasting quality poets have to reflect critically on their enthusiastic creations and alter them.¹⁰ Although Schlegel applied this pendular principle primarily to the creative process—works themselves could but did not need to show the ruptures between the two attitudes—Hoffmann clearly worked it into the stylistic surface and narrative content of his works. The excerpt quoted above from *Kater Murr* is but a single example, and it is not difficult to distinguish the enthusiastic and satirical tendencies of Hoffmann’s various writings.

Hoffmann’s embrace of Romantic irony had two consequences for his writings. He exaggerated his points in both stylistic modes, and he simplified his views as he bifurcated them into polar oppositions.¹¹ His satirical bites often had enthusiastic counterparts; each completes or conditions the other. For instance, in various *Kreisleriana*, Hoffmann allowed Kreisler to rage passionately against deeply disapproved practices, heaping scorn upon the general public. Yet Kreisler’s most infamous statement of scorn is balanced by a satirical send-up in the *Nachricht von den neuesten Schicksalen des Hundes Berganza*, published at the same time as the *Kreisleriana*.

In “Beethovens Instrumentalmusik,” the Kapellmeister Kreisler speaks to the ignorant “common crowds”: “What if it is only your fault that you do not understand the master’s language, though it is entirely comprehensible to the initiated, and if the gates of the inner-

⁶“Der Fremde [Kreisler] hatte sich, so wie die Prinzessin zu sprechen begann, rasch zu ihr gewendet, und schaute ihr jetzt in die Augen, aber sein ganzes Antlitz schien ein andres worden.—Vertilgt war der Ausdruck schwermütiger Sehnsucht, vertilgt jede Spur des tief im innersten aufgeregten Gemüts, ein toll verzerrtes Lächeln steigerte den Ausdruck bitterer Ironie bis zum Possierlichen, bis zum Skurrilen” (*Werke*, V, 65–66).

⁷Ernst Behler, *Klassische Ironie, Romantische Ironie, Tragische Ironie: Zum Ursprung dieser Begriffe* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1972), pp. 15–16.

⁸*Werke*, III, 826.

⁹Friedrich Schlegel, *Kritische Schriften und Fragmente: Studienausgabe*, ed. Ernst Behler and Hans Eichner, 6 vols. (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1988), II, 109.

¹⁰Behler, *Klassische Ironie, Romantische Ironie, Tragische Ironie*, pp. 65–68.

¹¹As many have noted, Hoffmann analyzed music in order to make a point, not offer a complete analysis. They differ as to the point he wanted to make, and as to his motivations. Joseph Kerman, “Tändelnde Lazzi: On Beethoven’s Trio in D Major, Opus 70, No. 1,” in *Slavonic and Western Music: Essays for Gerald Abraham*, ed. Malcolm H. Brown and Roland J. Wiley (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1985), pp. 109–22, at 110; Robin Wallace, *Beethoven’s Critics: Aesthetic Dilemmas and Resolutions during the Composer’s Lifetime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 23–24; Stephen C. Rumph, *Beethoven after Napoleon: Political Romanticism in the Late Works* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004), pp. 27–31; Holly Watkins, “From the Mine to the Shrine: The Critical Origins of Musical Depth,” this journal 27 (2004), 179–207, at 196.

most shrine remain closed to you?"¹² Although it is often forgotten that Kreisler accompanies these words with a similarly harsh condemnation of connoisseur critics (the "artists with aesthetic yardsticks" [*ästhetische Meßkünstler*]), the elitism could not seem more pronounced. But the *Nachricht* presents the same motifs in another light.

In the story, the narrator overhears a dog one evening speaking to himself in human words. It is Berganza, one of the two dogs that converse in Cervantes's *Coloquio de los perros* (1613). After a conversation between the narrator and the dog begins, Berganza agrees to relate his more recent adventures, saying:

If I may say so, it does me good to chat about my sorrows and joys in human tones. After all, your language does seem to lend itself to the clear presentation of events with words invented to suit the many objects and occurrences in the world. However, for all that deals with the expression of the inner conditions of the soul and all the relationships and connections that thereby arise with external things, it seems to me as if my snarling, growling, and barking, modulated in a thousand types and degrees, were at least as effective, and perhaps even more effective than your words. As a dog often misunderstood in my language, I often thought that it was more your fault that you did not attempt to understand me, rather than my fault that I did not know how to express myself properly.¹³

In the *Nachricht*, canine barks and growls take on the fine shades and subtleties that other-

wise characterize music, while a bulldog ascends the raised dais otherwise occupied by the composer. Hoffmann thus satirized two primary planks of his own musical aesthetics: the status of music as a privileged medium that transcends the constraints of everyday language, and the listener's responsibility to understand the composer.

The *Kreisleriana* and *Nachricht* passages complement each other. Hoffmann tempered his enthusiastic advocacy of Beethoven with the skeptically ironic satire of his own views. Although he certainly placed Beethoven's rights over those of his public, he was presciently aware that his own positions could become laughable dogmas.

With his portrayal of ineffable barks and growls, Hoffmann did not rescind his commitment to Beethoven or to the ideals of art. Nor is it highly likely that he wished to add to his other characterizations of Beethoven's music. Rather, he may have used the irony to ward off the appropriation of his beliefs by the "aesthetic tea societies" that he roundly satirized. If passionate commitment and conviction were essential to him, he may have realized that blind acceptance of these ideals could easily lead to the same affected attitudes that he believed were around him. The problem was similar to that noted by Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder in a letter to Ludwig Tieck of 11 May 1792: fine sensibility (*feiner Empfindsamkeit*) turned easily to affected sentimentality (*Empfindelei*).¹⁴ The Romantics hoped to distinguish authentic and affected feeling, and it is easy to see that they had difficulties. Aside from the fact that Hoffmann enjoyed self-irony for its own sake, it helped him to avoid a trap that faced all Romantics. Self-irony allowed him to keep his ideals in perspective.

WORDS BEYOND WORDS

While Hoffmann's ironic approach to literature demands an awareness of stylistic mode, his belief in the insufficiency of words creates fur-

¹²"Wie ist es aber, wenn nur *Eurem* schwachen Blick der innere tiefe Zusammenhang jeder Beethovenschen Komposition entgeht? Wenn es nur an *Euch* liegt, daß ihr des Meisters, dem Geweihten verständliche Sprache nicht versteht, wenn *Euch* die Pforte des innersten Heiligtums verschlossen blieb?" (*Werke*, II/1, 55).

¹³"Wenn ich denn nun reden darf, so tut es mir wohl, mich über meine Leiden und Freuden in menschlichen Tönen auszuschwatzen, weil *Eure* Sprache doch recht dazu geeignet scheint, durch die für so manche Gegenstände und Erscheinungen in der Welt erfundene Wörter die Begebenheiten recht deutlich darzulegen, wiewohl was die innern Zustände der Seele und allerlei dadurch entstehende Beziehungen und Verknüpfungen mit den äußern Dingen betrifft, es mir vorkommt, als sei, um diese auszudrücken, mein in tausend Nuancen modifiziertes Knurren, Brummen und Bellen eben so hinreichend, vielleicht noch hinreichender als *Eure* Worte, und oft als Hund in meiner Sprache nicht verstanden, glaubte ich: es läge mehr an *Euch*, daß ihr nicht trachtetet, mich zu verstehen, als an *mir*, daß ich mich nicht gehörig auszudrücken wüßte" (*Werke*, II/1, 103-04).

¹⁴Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, *Sämtliche Werke und Briefe: Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*, ed. Silvio Vietta and Richard Littlejohns (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1991), II, 34.

ther problems of interpretation. As a lawyer, Hoffmann was indeed trained to use words precisely, as noted by Charlton.¹⁵ But as a Romantic writer he was equally chary of their claims. To take another famous phrase, Hoffmann wrote: "Music unlocks to man an unknown realm, a world that has nothing in common with the external world of the senses surrounding him, and in which he leaves behind all feelings that can be defined through concepts in order to give himself over to the ineffable."¹⁶ The escapist attitude is clear enough, or so it seems.

As noted by Carl Dahlhaus, Hoffmann drew on a poetological tradition that went back to the early eighteenth century. Two Swiss literary critics, Johann Jakob Breitinger (1701–76) and Johann Jakob Bodmer (1698–1783), had mustered Leibniz's theory of "possible worlds" to defend poetry and fiction from rationalist demands for "truth." As they argued, Milton's *Paradise Lost* presented an alternate reality that was as "true" as that presented in the Bible.¹⁷ This poetological tradition was alive and well at the end of the eighteenth century. In a letter to Hippel of 25 October 1795, Hoffmann described how, in moments of imaginative authorship, "I lose myself entirely in this newly created world and thereby forget all the bitterness of the present."¹⁸ In musical contexts, the poetological tradition could be used to distance music from mimetic paradigms. Just as the poet created "another world" in which laws of veri-

similitude were suspended or altered, the musician worked within a tonal world that obviated the necessity of imitating nature.

But in its evolution over the course of the eighteenth century, the poetological tradition changed, and it is worth asking whether Hoffmann subscribed to the metaphysics that originally underpinned it. In the statement above, he seems to describe another world, spatially, temporally, or metaphysically distinct from the everyday world. A human being enters this world briefly, or at least as long as the music lasts. Yet in his quasi-scientific beliefs, Hoffmann preferred brands of metaphysics that did not distinguish between worlds, but rather presented the existing world as richer than ordinary modes of perception and cognition reveal. In this interpretation, the language of an "unknown realm" would be a poetic paraphrase denoting not a distinct world, but rather a sublime experience of singular intensity and with entirely different metaphysical implications. With reference to Hoffmann's more philosophically careful contemporaries, Karl Ameriks has described the two approaches as negative and positive idealism, respectively.¹⁹ In negative idealism, the sensory world is a shadow of a higher, ideal world; in positive idealism, ideal principles underpin a single existing world. The issue is of import, for it is not the same thing to flee the world and to experience it anew. The two paths point to quite different conceptions of the religious and political function of music.

At times Hoffmann did give substance to the unknown realm, especially in works of fiction where characters move in and out of magical lands of fleet fantasy and alchemical fire. Atlantis, Dschinnistan, and Urdargarten are among his totemic geographies. In "Ritter

¹⁵Charlton, *Hoffmann's Musical Writings*, p. 8.

¹⁶"Die Musik schließt dem Menschen ein unbekanntes Reich auf, eine Welt, die nichts gemein hat mit der äußern Sinnenwelt, die ihn umgibt, und in der er alle durch Begriffe bestimmbaren Gefühle zurückläßt, um sich dem Unaussprechlichen hinzugeben" (*Werke*, I, 532.)

¹⁷Carl Dahlhaus, "Eine abgesonderte Welt für sich selbst," in *Klassische und romantische Musikästhetik* (Laaber: Laaber, 1988), pp. 144–49. See also Laurenz Lütteken, "Die Tichter, die Fideler, und die Singer: Zur Rolle Bodmers und Breitingers in der musikalischen Debatte des 18. Jahrhunderts," *Schweizer Jahrbuch für Musikwissenschaft* 20 (2000), 39–61.

¹⁸"Wenn ich dann des Abends sitze, mein Werk vor mir, und wenn meine Fantasie tausend Ideen vervielfältiget, die sich in mein[em] Gehirn erzeugen—denn verliere ich mich so ganz in diese neu erschaffne Welt, und vergesse darüber alles bittere der Gegenwart" (E. T. A. Hoffmann, *Briefwechsel*, ed. Hans von Müller and Friedrich Schnapp, 3 vols. [Munich: Winkler, 1967], I, 67).

¹⁹Karl Ameriks, "Introduction: Interpreting German Idealism," in *The Cambridge Companion to German Idealism*, ed. Karl Ameriks (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 1–17, at 8–9. The exemplary breadth of his survey of early Romantic aesthetics of music does not allow Mark Evan Bonds to distinguish between the strands of German idealist thought. By emphasizing neo-Platonism at the expense of pantheism, however, he gives a strongly "negative" cast to the idealism of the time. Mark Evan Bonds, "Idealism and the Aesthetics of Instrumental Music at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 50 (1997), 387–420.

Gluck," the mysterious protagonist describes a "realm of dreams" into which few penetrate and from whose mystical harmonies he is banned to Berlin.²⁰ In *Der goldene Topf* (1814), the student Anselmus is initiated into the salamandrian library of the Archivarius Lindhorst and eventually takes up residence in Atlantis.²¹ The list could continue. Yet it is noteworthy that the majority of its examples would involve fiction proper, which, all affiliation aside, is not quite the same thing as literary music criticism, as Hoffmann himself noted.²² The "other worlds" within the tales function either as a mirror in which bourgeois life looks boring and banal or as high-flung and high-strung double that eventually fuses with the bourgeois world to present a utopian synthesis of imagination and practicality. Hoffmann used the alternate realms for narrative and critical functions, not as a plank in a philosophical theory.

To look beyond the fiction, those works that use explicit religious imagery suggest the "other world" of Christian tradition: heaven. In the enthusiastic essay "Alte und neue Kirchenmusik" (1814), Hoffmann wrote that the masses of Palestrina were "true music from the other world (*musica dell'altro mondo*)" and hoped that music would soon "freely and powerfully stir its Seraph's wings in order to begin again its flight into the beyond, which is its home."²³ The rather grisly political pamphlet "Visionen auf dem Schlachtfeld bei Dresden" (1814) presents an exchange of apocalyptic words between a bloody tyrant (Napoléon) and a voice from above.

Yet these are genre pieces or draw upon a generic vocabulary and do not necessarily indicate a fixed theological or philosophical position. While Hoffmann certainly believed in a divine hand—he headed the years 1812 and 1813 in his journal with the epigraphs "*quod*

deus bene vertat!" and "*In nomine domini*" and occasionally used standard formulas of religious supplication in his letters and journals—he was also notoriously skeptical toward organized religion and its doctrines.²⁴ When a friend tried in 1822 to console the mortally ill author with some pat morality—"Life is not the highest of goods."—Hoffmann replied "No, no, life, only life—no matter what the conditions!"²⁵ The practices of religious traditions attracted him as much for the "exalted mood" (*exaltirte Stimmung*) they elicited, and he sought such experiences in the church and cloister no less than in the concert hall or the public house.²⁶ The allure of heaven may have been in part literary rather than doctrinal. How could a self-respecting early-nineteenth-century writer, even one with especially shaky commitments to churchly institutions, write about church music without referring to higher worlds and the great beyond? To leave them out would be to fall from tone.

If he was skeptical toward organized religion, Hoffmann still believed firmly that there was more to the world than met the eye, and it was above all his ear that he relied on for revelatory hints of hidden connections. As the synaesthetic "Höchst zerstreute Gedanke" of Kreisler notes: "Both in dreams and as I fall asleep, and in particular when I have heard much music, I find an agreement between colors, tones, and smells. It seems to me as if all of them have been produced in the same mysterious way through the ray of light, and as if they must join each other in a wonderful concert."²⁷ In state-

²⁴*Werke*, I, 390, 442.

²⁵Hitzig: "Das Leben ist der Güter höchstes nicht." Hoffmann: "Nein, nein, leben, nur leben—unter welcher Bedingung es auch sein möge!" (Cited in Safranski, *Hoffmann*, p. 483.)

²⁶Hoffmann dined at the Capuchin Monastery in Bamberg on 9 February 1812. Its ambiance affected him enough that he used the same words to describe his mood in both his journal and in a report to Hitzig. Friedrich Schnapp, *E. T. A. Hoffmann in Aufzeichnungen seiner Freunde und Bekannten* (Munich: Winkler, 1974), p. 193; *Werke*, I, 398.

²⁷"Nicht sowohl im Traume als während des Einschlafens, vorzüglich wenn ich viel Musik gehört habe, finde ich eine Übereinkunft der Farben, Töne und Düfte. Es kömmt mir vor, als wenn alle auf die gleiche geheimnisvolle Weise durch den Lichtstrahl erzeugt würden, und dann sich zu einem wundervollen Konzerte vereinigen müßten" (*Werke*, II/1, 63).

²⁰*Werke*, I, 505–06 and II/1, 24.

²¹*Werke*, II/1, 315–21.

²²Journal entry for 21–31 August 1814. *Werke*, VI, 260–61.

²³"Es ist wahrhafte Musik aus der andern Welt (*musica dell'altro mondo*)." "Mag . . . die Musik frei und kräftig ihre Seraphschwüngen regen, um aufs neue den Flug zu dem Jenseits zu beginnen, das ihre Heimat ist" (*Werke*, II/1, 509, 531).

ments like these, Hoffmann let his protagonist adduce not another world, but a transformed experience of the world around him. The narrator views the world as a great system that imbricates human actions and natural occurrences. Because the human mind exists within the overlapping connections of this system, it faces limits and can know only a small part of the whole. Only through the experience of art (and, in other Romantics' writings, nature) can one begin to intuit the world's full workings. This worldview grew out of the great Pantheism Controversy of the 1780s, which revolved in essence around the issue of other worlds. It is worth a moment to review the debate, as it produced a new intellectual environment within which the poetological language of "other worlds" assumed a new significance.

The debate started in 1783, when Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi (1743–1819) revealed that Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729–81), the darling of the German Enlightenment, had expressed an interest in the seventeenth-century Dutch Jewish philosopher Baruch Spinoza (1632–77). In the form of a series of logical proofs, the mathematically minded Spinoza had presented creation as a system entirely grounded on causal relationships between the constituent parts. To both his contemporaries and to German *Aufklärer*, his work seemed heretical and atheistic, for God appeared only as the sum total of worldly things and happenings, including human actions. The systematic network of causal relationships seemed to allow no room for either divine will or human freedom, no "other world" in which the determinism of a causal nexus did not operate. Yet this failing was itself the source of fascination to critics of the Enlightenment. Spinoza offered them a chance to see God as immanent within nature, although they traded in Spinoza's mathematical/mechanical model for an organicism full of fluidity and life. While there were many steps and missteps in the pantheism debate, many German intellectuals after 1790 gradually embraced some form of pantheism.²⁸ Pantheism

²⁸For a wonderfully readable account of the Pantheism Controversy, see Frederick C. Beiser, *The Fate of Reason: German Philosophy from Kant to Fichte* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987), pp. 44–108.

rejected negative idealism (in which the sensory world is a shadow of a higher world) and prepared the way for positive idealism (in which unknown principles underpin a single existing world).

Hoffmann did not read such Enlightenment debates directly. As is well known, however, he did study Schelling's *Von der Weltseele: Eine Hypothese der höhern Physik zur Erklärung des allgemeinen Organismus* (1798) and also drew scientific and pseudoscientific knowledge from works like Gotthilf Heinrich von Schubert's *Ansichten von der Nachtseite der Naturwissenschaft* (1808) and *Die Symbolik des Traumes* (1814)²⁹ and Johann Wilhelm Ritter's *Fragmente aus dem Nachlasse eines jungen Physikers* (1810). The titles speak volumes enough about Hoffmann's intellectual milieu. Schubert and Ritter popularized the heady ideas of heavyweights like Schelling and Fichte, who were active participants in the pantheism debate. Thus, while Hoffmann willingly drew upon the dramatic religious language of "other worlds," he also integrated pantheistic thought into his writings. His was the art of the "nature-philosophical *coup de théâtre*" (*naturphilosophisches Theatercoup*), as Heinrich Heine wrote in the *Briefe aus Berlin*.³⁰

In the climactic pages of the *Kreisleriana*, Hoffmann has the narrator comment on the metaphor of other worlds: "Our realm is not of this world, say the musicians, for where in nature do we find the prototype of our art, as do the painters and the sculptors?" As he spells out the antimimetic motivation of the language of other worlds, the narrator also critically distances himself from the oft-repeated iconic phrase by attributing it to anonymous musicians. Then he responds to its content directly: "But does not the spirit of music suffuse all of nature in the same way as the spirit of the tone?" In other words, music permeates the

²⁹In fact, in the second edition of the *Fantasiestücke* (1819), Hoffmann changed the fragment above to accord with the opening sentence of Schubert's *Symbolik*. Charlton, who translates from the second edition, notes the similarity between Schubert's and Hoffmann's versions, but does not note the late emendation that produced it. Charlton, *Hoffmann's Musical Writings*, p. 33, n. 21.

³⁰Heine, *Sämtliche Werke*, XIII, 126.

world rather than characterizing a distinct one. The narrator finally alludes to the very "Höchster zerstreuter Gedanke" quoted above: "It is no empty image, no allegory, when the musician says that colors, smells, and light rays appear to him as tones, and that he sees in their interconnections a wonderful concert."³¹

Hoffmann could not have stated a vision of a metaphysically potent single world more clearly—a positive rather than a negative form of idealism. If the poetological figure of the "unknown realm" releases the composer from mimesis and provides a model for the internally coherent work, it also circumscribes an experience so powerful that it seems to rip the fabric of everyday life.³² For Hoffmann, "unknown" or "higher realms" could be circumlocutions for the sublime experience. The words intimated worldly relations beyond the normal ken.

Because Hoffmann believed that words, when poetically treated, went beyond their immediate denotative significance, an interpreter must take his words seriously but not necessarily literally. And minute differences are significant. In this particular case, the interpretation of "other worlds" affects the issue of the social function of the sublime musical experience. If one attributes the negative form of idealism to Hoffmann—a division between separate worlds—then he can more easily be mustered as a champion of the existing hierarchies of

church and state: the Lutheran church hierarchy and the Prussian state would be the secular representatives of the higher realm and Hoffmann's prized musical unity could easily seem a sonic manifestation of political or religious unity. If, by contrast, Hoffmann's idealism is positive, then the existential experience of art falls less easily under particular institutions. Rather, the sublime experience of art has an indeterminate potency, one that can affirm, subvert, or be relatively unconcerned with religious or political institutions.

The variety of interpretations of Hoffmann's politics today speaks itself to the indeterminacy of a pantheist position. For Stephen Rumph, who has linked him to the political Romantics, Hoffmann was an apologist for German political aspirations. For Rüdiger Safranski and Holly Watkins, he tried to escape the political turmoil of his time through art.³³ Ultimately, even if he tended toward a pantheist position, Hoffmann was probably divided in his metaphysical commitments, or, more likely, too eccentric and nonconformist to make a commitment. His religious thought was certainly not orthodox to any religious denomination, and, as William O'Brien has noted, his tales of automata build upon but also critique his contemporaries' idealism.³⁴ Hoffmann did not assign the musical experience a fixed political function. Over the course of his life, he used the idea of music to various ends. In fact, he could assign the same centrality to the sublime experience and draw upon the same characteristic repertoire of poetic images in his writings as he attempted to pursue the apolitical life of an artist (up to 1813), as he supported German liberation from Napoléon (1813–14), and, once he had rejoined the Prussian judiciary in 1814, as he upheld the rule of law against the illiberal and arbitrary political acts of the military and

³¹"Unser Reich ist nicht von dieser Welt, sagen die Musiker, denn wo finden wir in der Natur, so wie der Maler und der Plastiker, den Prototypus unserer Kunst? . . . Aber geht denn nicht so wie der Geist des Tons, auch der Geist der Musik durch die ganze Natur? . . . Es ist kein leeres Bild, keine Allegorie, wenn der Musiker sagt, daß ihm Farben, Düfte, Strahlen, als Töne erscheinen und er in ihrer Verschlingung ein wundervolles Concert erblickt" (*Werke*, II/1, 453).

³²The "other world" also complemented in height the imagery of depth and interiority recently analyzed by Watkins. Thomas Weiskel has noted that metaphors of height and depth are flip sides of the same coin, their use linked to the sensibility of the writer—"what is 'lofty' for the idealist will be 'profound' for the naturalizing mind." But this dichotomy does not entirely fit Hoffmann, who as a writer moved back and forth between heights and depths. Thomas Weiskel, *The Romantic Sublime: Studies in the Structure and Psychology of Transcendence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), p. 24; Watkins, "Critical Origins of Musical Depth," pp. 191–94.

³³Safranski, *Hoffmann*, pp. 425–35, 455–71; Stephen Rumph, "A Kingdom Not of This World: The Political Context of E. T. A. Hoffmann's Beethoven Criticism," this journal 19 (1995), 50–67; Rumph, *Beethoven after Napoleon*, pp. 9–34; Watkins, "Critical Origins of Musical Depth," p. 192.

³⁴William Arctander O'Brien, "E. T. A. Hoffmann's Critique of Idealism: Psychology, Allegory and Philosophy in *Die Automate*," *Euphorion* 83 (1989), 369–406. I thank Colin Bennert for alerting me to this article.

state bureaucracy, even against the King himself.

Connotation is not the only type of word wizardry to provide interpretive challenges. Hoffmann was aware that words did not simply signify a specific meaning, either through connotation or denotation. By varying the intensity of his vocabulary and the pace of his argument or narrative, he could elicit emphatic experiences from his readers. In his best stories, he progressively swept the reader into a state of suspense and excitement through the use of effect-oriented formulas. As Wittkowski, though unkind to librettists, has noted:

Designed to instigate excitement, Hoffmann's enthusiastic-exalted style is characterized by the trivial, garish, clichéd, and almost echoing empty quality of opera libretti. His exalted enthusiasm thereby inspires our fantasy to give events credence as part of the fictive reality of the fairy-tale stage, even though, for all their concreteness, the events increasingly ridicule the rules of verisimilitude.³⁵

This dynamic quality in Hoffmann's fiction permeated his criticism as well. In the Fifth Symphony review, he used his prose to elicit from the reader the same sense of uncanny might that he felt in his own personal experiences of Beethoven's music. As Helmut Müller has written, his terms are "simultaneously an expression of excitement and a means of eliciting emotions."³⁶ Because he often used words to stir up his readers, his metaphors are often mixed and even at times contradictory.³⁷ He

was certainly aware of the quasi-musical formal power of his narratives. In a letter of 24 March 1814, he described the episodes in *Die Elixiere des Teufels* (1815/1816) using tempo and dynamic designations: *Grave sostenuto*, *Andante sostenuto e piano*, and *Allegro forte*.³⁸

NARRATORS

No less than the ironic poses (enthusiasm and satire) and the connotative and affective use of words, the variety of literary personae muddy the waters for those who seek clear meaning in Hoffmann's writing. Some scholars, particularly those writing several decades ago, have treated the beliefs of Hoffmann's characters as his own,³⁹ but to varying degrees many now separate him from his narrators, including all his many self-projections. In part, this is simply a result of the modern critical insight into the difference between author and narrator, an insight not foreign to the nineteenth century. Responding to Jean Paul's criticism of stridency in the *Kreisleriana*, Friedrich Rochlitz conceded that the irony did not need to be so highly pitched: "But then he would be less Herr Johannes and more Herr Hoffmann, who has known, in those excellent reviews, how to combine clear thoughts, searching analyses, and scholarly judgments with these visions and intuitions."⁴⁰ Rochlitz's apologetic intent is evident. He was defending his own *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, where many of the *Kreisleriana* first appeared, and Hoffmann himself would probably have winced at the clean break between sober criticism and Romantic fiction. Yet Rochlitz's defense does show that

³⁵"Hoffmanns enthusiastisch-exaltierter Stil, der Begeisterung anfachen soll, hat das Triviale, Grelle, Schablonenhafte, gleichsam Hallende von Operntexten. Damit begeistert sein exaltierter Enthusiasmus unsere Phantasie, den Vorgängen, die bei aller Konkretheit doch zunehmend der Wirklichkeitsgesetze spotten, die fiktive Realität der Märchenbühne zuzubilligen" (Wolfgang Wittkowski, "Stufe und Aufschwung: Die vertikale Grundrichtung der musikalischen Struktur in Hoffmanns *Kreisleriana* I," in *Literatur und Musik*, ed. Steven Paul Scher [Berlin: Erich Schmidt, 1984], pp. 300–11, at 301).

³⁶"Ausdruck der Erregung und Mittel der Affektauslösung zugleich" (Helmut Müller, *Untersuchungen zum Problem der Formelhaftigkeit bei E. T. A. Hoffmann* [Bern: Paul Haupt, 1964], p. 57).

³⁷Scholars have taken different approaches to Hoffmann's mixed metaphors. Where Johanna Sahlin has chosen "to neutralize the aberrations" in the interest of a fluid translation, Watkins has sensibly chosen to analyze the com-

mon roots to Hoffmann's repertoires of metaphors. Johanna C. Sahlin, *Selected Letters of E. T. A. Hoffmann* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), p. vii; Watkins, "Critical Origins of Musical Depth," pp. 202–03.

³⁸Hoffmann, *Briefwechsel*, I, 454.

³⁹For example, Pauline Watts, *Music: The Medium of the Metaphysical in E. T. A. Hoffmann* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1972).

⁴⁰"Doch freylich wäre er dann weniger eben der Herr Johannes, und mehr Hr. Hoffmann, der in jenen trefflichen Recensionen mit diesen Visionen und Ahnungen klare Gedanken, gründliche Zergliederungen und wissenschaftliche Beurtheilungen zu verbinden wusste" (Friedrich Rochlitz, "Fantasiestücke in Callot's Manier [Review]," *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 16, no. 33 [1814], 546).

Hoffmann's contemporaries could distinguish author from narrator. But this is not the only distinction.

Hoffmann also refracted his views into the mouths of a variety of speakers and thereby paid tribute to the variety of possible viewpoints on an issue. He frequently worked in literary genres that highlighted contrasts of opinion. At times he cultivated the genre of the dialogue. In "Der Dichter und der Komponist" (1814), Ferdinand and Ludwig represent the thoughts of a prototypical poet and composer on aesthetic and political matters. The messianic political remarks have earned Hoffmann the reputation as a political ideologue, especially in the interpretations of Stephen Rumph, but Hoffmann did not present a clear political message in the dialogue.⁴¹ Ferdinand, the poet, has joined the army and rants politically. His politics are clear enough. But Ludwig, the musician, is surprised that his friend has given up the apolitical life dedicated to the muses in favor of the soldierly life. He only feels comfortable with his friend after the latter has laid off the "strange disguise" of saber and helmet, and he looks "with astonishment" when his friend again dons war attire and returns to fervent political discourse.⁴² Hoffmann presents two different attitudes toward the political events of the time and maintains authorial distance from both, if in varying degrees.

Furthermore, as Hoffmann scholars have often remarked, at the outset of "Der Dichter und der Komponist," Ferdinand belongs to the besieging forces of "the enemy" (the Prussians and Russians), who then take the city. At the end he rides off to face "the enemy" (the French). Hoffmann either cared little enough about the politics that he overlooked the details of the war, as Safranski has suggested, or he wished to make a clever comment on the bizarre political alliances, as Steinecke has argued. The "besiegers" of the Saxon city of Dresden included Prussians and Russians; the "French" troops in Dresden were mostly from Saxony, Württemberg, or Poland; and the "liberators" were most-

ly Russians and Austrians.⁴³ "Friend" and "foe" were anything but patent political designations.

The ambiguity of the dialogue appears in a still sharper light if one looks to Hoffmann's own waffling on political matters. In his letters, Hoffmann often emphasized opportunistic hopes of financial gain and public favor rather than political ideology as he discussed his political writings and caricatures with his publishers. As he explained in a letter to Gottfried Christoph Härtel, he "put the consoling closing words into the mouth of the poet" to make the aesthetic theory more palatable to his reading public.⁴⁴ In his diary entries of 1813, he expressed happiness at first for Napoléon's victories, then later for those of the Prussian-Russian alliance.⁴⁵ A speedy return to peace and stability rather than the nationality of the victor was his primary concern. To be sure, Hoffmann did not actively oppose the hopes of the political Romantics, and by 1814 he too was swept up in the patriotic fervor. But he neither unwaveringly supported the political Romantics' program nor engaged in their radical politics later in his life.

His attitudes toward the French also shifted with political times. He yearningly associated the fall of the Bastille with freedom in a journal entry of 8 October 1803. He vilified France in "Alte und neue Kirchenmusik" (1814)—but he left out the passage involved when he included the essay in *Die Serapionsbrüder* (1819–20).⁴⁶ In his political cartoons and tracts of 1814, written in part to earn money at a time when he was out of a job, he distinguished between Napoléon (as a representation of demonic power) and France (as a country perhaps benighted enough to fall under Napoléon's sway, but not in itself evil).⁴⁷ For Heinrich Heine, a thorough

⁴³Safranski, *Hoffmann*, pp. 284–85; Steinecke, *Die Kunst der Fantasie*, pp. 144–45.

⁴⁴"Die Einkleidung, welche die Spur der Zeitverhältnisse trägt und die tröstenden Schlußworte die ich dem Dichter in den Mund gelegt, dürften wohl ein größeres Interesse gewähren, als wenn ich dem Ganzen die Form einer trocknen Abhandlung gegeben" (letter of 14 November 1813, Hoffmann, *Briefwechsel*, I, 417).

⁴⁵Safranski, *Hoffmann*, p. 285.

⁴⁶*Werke*, I, 334; II/1, 504; IV, 490.

⁴⁷On the cartoons, see Steinecke, *Die Kunst der Fantasie*, pp. 147–51.

⁴¹Rumph, "A Kingdom Not of This World," pp. 50–67; Rumph, *Beethoven after Napoleon*, p. 13.

⁴²*Werke*, I, 754, 755, 774.

skeptic of the Romantics' politics, the Hoffmann of the early 1820s was without equal as a source of gossip on intellectual and artistic matters, not to speak of the doings of the aristocracy, precisely because he was his own man. "He belongs to no party, to no school, is neither Liberal nor Romantic, and when he says something *médisant* remains as innocent as the unhappy reed from which the wind unlocked the words, 'King Midas has the ears of a donkey!'"⁴⁸

Another literary genre that highlighted diversity of opinions was the frame story. In the *Serapionsbrüder* (1819–21), a group of fictional characters (the "Brothers of Serapion") meet regularly to read stories and essays together, to discuss the relative merits of the readings, and even to disagree. These meetings provide a frame for the individual tales and essays (among them "Alte und neue Kirchenmusik") that Hoffmann for the most part had previously published independently. These discussion groups had both a recent and a distant history, from Ludwig Tieck's *Phantasia* (1812) to Boccaccio's *Decameron* (1349–51). While the Brothers of Serapion owe much to Hoffmann's circle of friends in Berlin, which used the same name, they provide more than a record of amicable moments. In part, their literary discussions help Hoffmann regain the immediacy of narrated story. As Safranski has noted, the frame enacts the fluidity of a told story and resists the reification that comes with the printed page.⁴⁹ More importantly, the frame allows Hoffmann to temper the remarks in the essays by presenting a spectrum of opinions. The essay "Alte und neue Kirchenmusik," in particular, occasions discussion and disagreement among the Brothers of Serapion. It closes with words in which Hoffmann again ironically relativizes his own theorizing. Lothar, who Safranski views as one of Hoffmann's self-projections, says: "For the musical laity your discussions were not

quite agreeable, and thus it is good that we break them off."⁵⁰

Hoffmann's literary techniques thus provide at least three methodological challenges to any critic: (1) the ironic split between enthusiastic and satirical modes, (2) the connotative and affective use of words, and (3) the division of viewpoints between different speakers. The three are interrelated. If words take wing with connotative and affective potential at the point where their denotative power ends, this is only a sign that the enlightened, rational mind is limited in its ability to comprehend the world. But to say that language cannot adequately represent the totality of the world is not to say that language cannot go far. Hoffmann had faith in his words and wielded them well even as he realized their limits. He nodded to the constraints on human knowledge by distributing viewpoints between characters and by fragmenting the narrative voice into enthusiastic and satirical modes. In each case, the single statement is at most only half of the story.

NEW TONES AND TUNES AFTER 1814

If literary techniques make Hoffmann's discrete statements difficult to read—though they should by all means be read, as they will be in the remainder of this article—the meanderings of his career make it even more difficult to generalize them into a single aesthetic.⁵¹ More pragmatist than ideologue, Hoffmann changed at times his tone, at times his tune, as his career zigged and zagged through the fraught first decades of the nineteenth century. This is a difficult issue, as apparent differences between

⁴⁸"Er gehört zu keiner Partei, zu keiner Schule, ist weder ein Liberaler noch ein Romantiker, und wenn er etwas Medisantes sagt, so ist er so unschuldig dabei wie das unglückliche Rohr, dem der Wind die Worte entlockte: 'König Midas hat Eselsohren!'" (Heine, *Sämtliche Werke*, XIII, 48).

⁴⁹Safranski, *Hoffmann*, pp. 404–06.

⁵⁰"Für musikalische Laien waren eure Abhandlungen eben nicht ganz genießbar und daher ist es gut, daß wir sie abbrechen" (*Werke*, IV, 501. Safranski, *Hoffmann*, p. 404).

⁵¹The most complete biographies of Hoffmann are Safranski, *Hoffmann*; Eckart Kleßmann, *E. T. A. Hoffmann, oder die Tiefe zwischen Stern und Erde: Eine Biographie* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1988). Other easily accessible biographical sketches of Hoffmann include Werner Keil, "Hoffmann, Ernst Theodor Amadeus (Wilhelm)," in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, ed. Ludwig Finscher (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1994–), Personenteil IX, 113–22; Gerhard Allroggen, "Hoffmann, E. T. A.," *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, ed. Stanley Sadie and John Tyrrell (London: Macmillan, 2001), vol. 11, pp. 585–94.

his early and late writings may have as much to do with literary genre as change in outlook. To take an example, Charlton contrasts the exclusivity of the Fifth Symphony review (1810) with the pragmatic tone of the late essay on music criticism, "Zufällige Gedanken beim Erscheinen dieser Blätter" (1820).⁵² In the later essay, Hoffmann emphasized the critic's power to mediate between composer and listener and did not look upon listeners with his earlier condescension. Yet in part, though only in part, Hoffmann's seeming descent from the Olympian heights is a matter of genre and purpose. The review was a piece of poetic music criticism, while the "Zufällige Gedanken" was an editorial statement of critical principles, and indeed of principles that fit his earlier criticism rather well. After all, despite his expressed disdain for the unknowing common crowd and the knowing judges in his essay on the Fifth Symphony, Hoffmann did try to illuminate his perception of the symphony's Romantic content to his readers and to convince them to approach the work openly, albeit with words tailored to the nineteenth-century *Bildungsbürger*.

Yet the shift in tone was not confined to this one essay, and it also stemmed from changed circumstances in Hoffmann's life. Charlton emphasizes Hoffmann's own experience as the critiqued composer of the opera *Undine*.⁵³ In addition, in 1810, when he penned his review of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, Hoffmann turned to music criticism out of desperation, to support himself financially at a time when he had put law behind him and his musical career was not in good repair. If the music criticism offered him material sustenance, it also provided an outlet for his frustrations. Moreover, Europe was in the throes of the Napoleonic Wars, and Hoffmann sought out commensurate artistic manifestations of demonic energy and overpowering forces. By 1820 the Napoleonic Wars were over, though not forgotten. Hoffmann had attained not only financial security through his position on the Prussian Cameral Court, but also musical and literary

fame through *Undine* and numerous tales. And he had found like-minded friends and companions who responded to his leaping humor and unflagging energy. He no longer suffered (and, in compensation, gloried) in artistic isolation as he had in Bamberg.

While such events would be enough to change anyone's point of view, there was one event in Hoffmann's life that relates directly to the issue of his tone: Jean Paul Friedrich Richter's preface to the *Fantasiestücke in Callot's Manier*. Although Hoffmann was eventually recognized as a literary luminary in his own right, Jean Paul's preface both made his first fame and influenced his early reception. It is also possible that Jean Paul's criticisms, repeated in many reviews of the *Fantasiestücke*, made Hoffmann pause for thought and even adjust the tone with which he translated his aesthetics into music criticism and literary fiction.

The preface was originally the idea of the publisher of the *Fantasiestücke*, the wine dealer Carl Friedrich Kunz in Bamberg.⁵⁴ Kunz was a man with literary tastes, a large library, and a sense for artistic talent, and it was he who approached Hoffmann in the winter of 1812–13 with the idea of a collection of writings, or at least so he reported in his self-aggrandizing reminiscences. It was certainly he who approached his friend Jean Paul Friedrich Richter (1763–1825) in neighboring Bayreuth to write a preface. Jean Paul, as he signed his works, was well known on the literary scene of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. He was a champion of humor in the style of Jonathan Swift and Laurence Sterne, though with a Germanic twist, as he smugly and patriotically noted. Hoffmann himself had serious reservations about the idea of a prefatory speech (*Vorrede*), if not a prefatory word (*Vorwort*).⁵⁵ Not only had he already written a preface to the work (the essay "Jaques Callot"), but he also thought of prefaces by second hands as

⁵²Charlton, *Hoffmann's Musical Writings*, pp. 5, 423–24.

⁵³Ibid, pp. 423–24.

⁵⁴Except where noted, I have relied for historical background on the editorial commentary by Gerhard Allroggen and Hartmut Steinecke in *Werke*, II/1, 553–606.

⁵⁵Francis Paul Greene, "Preface, Vorwort, Vorrede: Jean Paul and E. T. A. Hoffmann," *New German Review* 15–16 (1999–2001), 6–22, at 9.

"letters with which young authors beg for applause."⁵⁶ He did allow Kunz to write to Jean Paul, and Kunz, as so often in his troubled relations with Hoffmann, took a skeptical nod as a blank check for full freedom in the matter. Kunz assumed that Jean Paul's name on the title page of the *Fantasiestücke* would make their fortune. And he was right.

Initially Jean Paul declined to write the preface, but relented upon reading the *Fantasiestücke*. Their quality won him over, though in later years he expressed both manifest disgust (publicly) and grudging praise (privately) for Hoffmann's writings. His ambivalence is not difficult to explain. Not only did Hoffmann rise to higher satire and irony than was to Jean Paul's taste, but the erstwhile debutant had overshadowed the master in literary fame. Be that as it may, Jean Paul did not finish the preface until 24 November 1813, and he sent it to Kunz only on 13 February 1814. The resulting delay in the publication of the *Fantasiestücke* frustrated Hoffmann no end and possibly heightened his own skepticism toward Jean Paul's involvement. The first two (of four) volumes were already in press when Kunz first brought up the matter in the middle of 1813, but they did not appear before the public until the Easter book fair of 1814.

In the preface, Jean Paul noted in approving tones the coquettish and brusque circular movements of the "vinegar-eels of art"—the play of ideas—and then praised in more straightforward manner the sharpness of the outline, the warmth of the colors, and the soul and freedom of the whole.⁵⁷ He devoted much more of the preface, which he wittily wrote in the form of a review dated to 1823, to criticism, at times of Hoffmann, at times of publishers and writers generally. Although he found fault with much, he perceived three main errors in the *Fantasiestücke*. The items belonged to the genre of the art novella (*Kunstnovelle*) rather than being fantasy pieces; the satires targeted disrespect toward the artist more than disrespect to

art; and the use of the canine interlocutors from Cervantes's *Coloquio de los perros* in the *Nachricht von den neuesten Schicksalen des Hundes Berganza* might well have been explained in a footnote. The last two criticisms are really one and the same: in his devotion to art, Hoffmann had too little respect for the public.

In part, Jean Paul accused Hoffmann of solipsism in his dedication to art. Although he agreed in principle that the cultivation of art for reasons of social prestige and social display missed the point of art and deserved satire, he noted a potential danger in satires like "Gedanken über den hohen Wert der Musik," despite their "excellent" quality. "An artist, our author for the sake of example, can easily enough fall into a hatred of mankind through his love of art, and can use the rose wreaths of art as crowns of thorns and belts of barbs as a means of discipline."⁵⁸ And if art lost its foundation in love, it could turn cold. "Love and art live mutually in each other, as brain and heart, each immunizing the other for mutual strength."⁵⁹ Love had a double significance for Jean Paul. If he looked in vain for humanitarian goodwill in Hoffmann's satires, he missed no less the Christian metaphysics of love in Hoffmann's Romantic metaphysics of art.

Above all, Jean Paul criticized Hoffmann for the distance between author and public that his brand of irony created. It was not that he disagreed with Hoffmann on the necessity of high artistic ideals or on the failure of the broad public to live up to them. He too viewed askance what he perceived as the foibles of middle-classes leisure activities—the pride of women and the voyeurism of men—though he found them forgivable sins. It was more that Jean Paul disagreed with the sharp separation between artist and public. This was only natural, as Jean Paul grounded his critique in an ethical

⁵⁶"Diese Vorreden sind gleichsam die Brandbriefe, mit denen in der Hand die jungen Schriftsteller um Beyfall betteln" (letter to Kunz of 20 July 1813, Hoffmann, *Briefwechsel*, I, 400).

⁵⁷*Werke*, II/1, 12–13.

⁵⁸"Ein Künstler kann leicht genug—Beispiels halber sei es unser Verfasser—aus Kunstliebe in Menschenhaß geraten, und die Rosenkränze der Kunst als Dornenkronen und Stachelgürtel zum Züchtigen verbrauchen" (*Werke*, II/1, 13).

⁵⁹"Liebe und Kunst leben gegenseitig in einander, wie Gehirn und Herz, beide einander zur Wechsel-Stärkung eingeimpft" (*Werke*, II/1, 14).

theory of music that lay far away from Hoffmann's metaphysics:

Music is actually the most universal art and folk-art, and everyone at least sings, as church-goers and beggars illustrate. Music is the only art that crosses over into the animal realm. And one can unpack this art in every parlor at any time, as long as one carries one's throat or one's fingers with one. There, through the exhibition of one's art, one can win the prizes of all who drink tea around one. As a result, in fashionable cities no foolishness is more natural, forgivable, and common than that the desire to please, especially that of women, strikes its musical peacock's tail before each man who has eyes to see how art and artist melt together into a single beauty.⁶⁰

Jean Paul's attribution of male peacock feathers to female singers is odd, to say the least, and might have given a reflective contemporary occasion to rethink the role of men in the representative use of the arts. But though amply dosed with the time's prejudices about women, Jean Paul believed in the universality of music. All people and even all animals made music, and thus all could profit from its formative sounds.

Jean Paul expressed the universality of the art more clearly, though with a rather curious notion of child psychology, in *Levana* (1806/07), his contribution to the burgeoning literature on education: "Music, the only fine art in which human beings and all classes of animals (spiders, mice, elephants, fish, amphibians, birds) have common property, must inexorably infiltrate the child, who combines human and animal qualities."⁶¹ In some of his fiction, Hoffmann did give music a similar ethical power

to form character and thus to act equally on all people in society.⁶² For the most part, however, he located the transformative power of music in the sublime experience, not in the specific tonal characteristics or formal shapes that many ethical theories of music emphasized. And because the sublime experience was total and absolute, not something that could be experienced partially, Hoffmann tended to separate those who had this kind of experience from those who, to his mind, did not. Such metaphysical experiences by all means affected the dispositions of listeners and could transform their lives, but only indirectly, by giving them a greater sense of the world. It should be noted that Jean Paul himself was no populist, and his criticism may have come as a surprise to Hoffmann. In the *Vorschule der Aesthetik* (1804), from which Hoffmann borrowed, Jean Paul had written that "nothing is rarer than the Romantic flower."⁶³

Hoffmann first saw Jean Paul's preface in March of 1814 and did not take kindly to it. In a letter to Kunz of 24 March 1814, he complained that Jean Paul had focused too much on himself rather than on the *Fantasiestücke*, and that he had revealed Hoffmann's name. (Hoffmann had wanted to publish the book anonymously in order to save his major debut for a musical work.) On Jean Paul's criticisms of his high tone, he remarked: "And as for his admonishment to love humanity, I have done almost too much for this love. From sheer love I have often become quite weak and miserable in spirit, so that I had to drink wine or arrack to compensate."⁶⁴ Thick layers of unstable irony

⁶⁰"Da die Musik eigentlich die allgemeinste Kunst und Volks-Kunst ist und jeder wenigstens singt, z. B. in der Kirche und als Bettler, die einzige ins Tierreich hinübersteigende—und da man diese Kunst, wenn man seine Kehle oder seine Finger bei sich führt, in jedem Besuchzimmer in jeder Minute auspacken kann, um durch seine Kunstausstellung auf eigne Hand die Preise aller derer zu gewinnen, welche Tee mittrinken: so ist keine Narrheit natürlicher, verzeihlicher und häufiger als die, daß die Gefallsucht, besonders die weibliche, ihre musikalischen Pfauenräder in Modestädten vor jedem schlägt, der Augen hat zu sehen, wie Kunst und Künstlerin zu Einer Schönheit verschmelzen" (*Werke*, II/1, 13).

⁶¹"Musik, die einzige schöne Kunst, wo die Menschen und alle Tierklassen—Spinnen, Mäuse, Elefanten, Fische, Amphibien, Vögel—Gütergemeinschaft haben, muß in das Kind, das Mensch und Tier vereint, unaufhaltsam eingrei-

fen" (Jean Paul Friedrich Richter, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Norbert Miller [Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2000], I/v, 616).

⁶²For example, "Der Kampf der Sängler" (*Werke*, IV, 332–82, esp. 356).

⁶³"Nichts ist seltener als die romantische Blume" (Richter, *Sämtliche Werke*, I/v, 143). Similarities between phrases in Hoffmann's Fifth Symphony review and Jean Paul's *Vorschule* have been noted by Carl Dahlhaus, "E. T. A. Hoffmanns Beethoven-Kritik und die Ästhetik des Erhabenen," in *Klassische und romantische Musik-ästhetik* (Laaber: Laaber, 1988), pp. 105–06.

⁶⁴"Was aber seine Ermahnung zur Menschenliebe betrifft, so habe ich ja dieser Liebe beynahe zu viel gethan, indem mir oft vor lauter Liebe ganz schwächlich und miserabel zu Muthe worden, daß ich Wein oder Arak nachtrinken müssen" (Hoffmann, *Briefwechsel*, I, 454).

cover this reaction, and it is difficult to know exactly what Hoffmann meant. While he insisted on his love of mankind, he treated it almost as a disease to be cured with appropriate medicine. The irony may have been a defense mechanism to ward off the truth in Jean Paul's preface: in Hoffmann's desire to capture the singular intensity of music, he had placed a huge gap between those of Romantic sensibility and everyone else.

If Hoffmann reacted defensively to Jean Paul's criticism, he could not have been happy at the critical reception that followed. (Public reception was another matter. The *Fantasiestücke* were avidly read, especially by women.⁶⁵) With minor points of difference, almost all the reviews of the *Fantasiestücke* repeated elements of Jean Paul's criticism. In the *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen*, the reviewer noted that "the humoristic sentimentality will not displease readers, but perhaps the sideswipes" would. They were "unmotivated to boot." It is easy to see a pedant behind this pen, as the reviewer also suggested an index for the work. Yet the criticism also had a wider fortune. The reviewer for the Viennese *Friedensblätter: Eine Zeitschrift für Leben, Literatur und Kunst*, implicitly approving of all Jean Paul had said, claimed that he saw no need for a review. Jean Paul had already done the work. The *Jenaische Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* spoke forcefully of Hoffmann's "unbearable arrogance," though its horror was in part a matter of principle. Tied to Goethe and the seriousness of Weimar, the journal opposed the "humoristic" writing of the "new aesthetic."⁶⁶ Needless to say, the reviewer did not take kindly to Jean Paul's use of the journal's name as the fictive source of his preface/review.

⁶⁵See the letter by Ottilie von Pogwisch (later Goethe's daughter-in-law) of 10 July 1815. Schnapp, *Hoffmann in Aufzeichnungen*, pp. 300–01.

⁶⁶"Selbst die humoristische Sentimentalität wird nicht misfallen: wohl aber Seitenhiebe, noch dazu nicht motivirte" (anonymous, "Fantasiestücke in Callot's Manier [Review]," *Göttingische gelehrte Anzeigen* 3, no. 72 [1815], 720). Further: anonymous, "Fantasiestücke in Callot's Manier [Review]," *Friedensblätter: Eine Zeitschrift für Leben, Literatur und Kunst*, 22 September 1814; [Karl Ludwig von Woltmann], "Phantasiestücke in Callots Manier [Review]," *Jenaische Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* 4, no. 232 (1815), 417–18.

Hoffmann had his chance to respond publicly, if obliquely, to Jean Paul's criticism when Friedrich Baron de la Motte Fouqué put similar words in the "Brief des Baron Wallborn an den Kapellmeister Kreisler" that began the second set of *Kreisleriana*. Hoffmann had collaborated with Fouqué from afar on *Undine* (based on Fouqué's novella by that title), and when the two met in Berlin in September of 1814, they decided to include a fictional exchange between Hoffmann's Kreisler and Fouqué's Baron Wallborn, the fictional poet-hero of his novel *Ixion*. Baron Wallborn, then, wrote: "Look, Johannes, you seem to me at times very harsh in your efforts against all music lacking genius. Does music with absolutely no genius even exist? And again, seen from the other side, does absolutely perfect music exist other than among the angels?"⁶⁷ Wallborn notes that he would prefer bad music to no music at all, that music is better than senseless gossip, and finally that children, for all the dissonant tones pianistically pounded and vocally mangled, produce a spot of angelic harmony. The epistolary exchange between Wallborn and Kreisler was written at the earliest in September of 1814—that is, after the publication of the first two volumes of the *Fantasiestücke*, along with Jean Paul's preface—and Fouqué must have known Jean Paul's criticisms. It is possible, though ultimately a matter of speculation, that he, too, felt Jean Paul's influence.

Whatever motivated Fouqué, he did not add anything significant to Jean Paul's words. And Hoffmann, through Kreisler, had his chance to respond to the common charge of elitism:

You know, Baron Wallborn, that I have often become angry and crazed over the musical activities of the common multitude [*Pöbel*], but I can say to you that—when I feel roundly battered and bruised by the accursed bravura arias, concertos, and sonatas—often a small, insignificant melody, sung by a mediocre voice or played tentatively and with no great

⁶⁷"Sieh, Johannes, Du kommst mir mit dem, was Du gegen alle ungeniale Musik eiferst, bisweilen sehr hart vor. Gibt es denn absolut ungeniale Musik? Und wieder von der andern Seite, gibt es denn absolut vollkommene Musik, als bei den Engeln?" (*Werke*, II/1, 365). A brief history of the collaboration between Fouqué and Hoffmann can be found in Charlton, *Hoffmann's Musical Writings*, pp. 65–67.

skill, but sincerely and well meant and felt from the heart, consoled and healed me.⁶⁸

It is clear that the attitudes expressed in "Beethovens Instrumentalmusik" are at issue, for Kreisler uses the word *Pöbel* in both contexts to denote the amateurs of the time. While Kreisler does not lay down his high standards, he shifts the inspirational source of great musical experiences from the music itself, where it lay in the essay on Beethoven, to the intention and sentiments of the performers, no matter their skill or the quality of what they produce. This is no about-face. Kreisler still rages against virtuosity, and he had also appreciated Beethoven for the composer's extreme commitment to the art of music. All the same, Kreisler at least shows a willingness to meet those with little knowledge or skill in music on their own ground. Indeed, Kreisler now speaks more in the tone of sense and sensibility, or *Empfindsamkeit*, favored by Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1752–1814), who gave lessons to Hoffmann during the latter's first sojourn in Berlin. Heart and sentiment count far more than mystical insight into the world of tones.

Thus, while Hoffmann channeled his views into searing words in his early fiction and criticism, he toned down his satires of the broad public after 1814. Three cases will serve here as further examples.

First, Reichardt ghosted through Hoffmann's later fictional works, where simple melodies recur frequently as signs of uncontrived feeling and noble simplicity. In "Der Kampf der Sänger" (1818), Wolfframb von Eschinbach's simple and heartfelt melodies win victory over the harmonic and virtuosic vocal fireworks of both Heinrich von Ofterdingen (a Wartburg singer) and Master Klingsohr (the devil in disguise). In other words, Hoffmann staged a battle between melody (good) and harmony (bad). He marked

simplicity and general comprehensibility as desirable, again along lines set out by Reichardt, while he quite literally demonized harmony, which he linked to virtuosity under the common sign of musical mechanics. It might be thought that the simplicity of melody was something he associated with lost paradises, as he suggested in "Alte und neue Kirchenmusik," but he also presented simple melodies in modern times in stories like "Die Fermate" (1815) and "Der Zusammenhang der Dinge" (1820), always associated with vocal music. Of course, one sometimes senses that Hoffmann chose the music-aesthetic stances of his stories as much for their narrative effect as out of personal conviction. Hoffmann maintained his appreciation of Beethoven's "harmonic" arts, and he was even willing to excuse the tone painting in *Wellington's Victory* in a concert review of 1820.⁶⁹ Nonetheless, he could have his characters praise the wonders of simple, heartfelt melodies in unabashed tones.

Second, in Berlin Hoffmann defended the public (and art) against angry comments made by the singer Joseph Fischer. In response to a cool reception to one of his performances, Fischer had written in a local newspaper that "loud applause is essential to the artist; it lifts him up, fires him, inspires him. Indeed he may *demand* it as acknowledgement of the respect *he* pays the public by his performance, as a receipt for what they have heard, as it were, for example after an important scene, aria, etc."⁷⁰ With a tone dripping with irony, Hoffmann responded, taking up the same issue of the relationship between artist and public that he had touched upon earlier in his Beethoven criticism: "How wonderful, how gladdening it is when a great artist deigns to instruct the public *personally* as to how it should behave toward him and how it should receive his productions." In similarly ironic tones, he then moved on to his familiar defense of art, noting his "shame"

⁶⁸"Du weißt, Baron Wallborn! daß ich mehrenteils über das Musiktreiben des Pöbels zornig und toll wurde, aber ich kann es Dir sagen, daß wenn ich oft von heillosen Bravour-Arien, Konzerten und Sonaten ordentlich zerschlagen und zerwalkt worden, oft eine kleine unbedeutende Melodie von mittelmäßiger Stimme gesungen oder unsicher und stümperhaft gespielt, aber treulich und gut gemeint und recht aus dem Innern heraus empfunden, mich tröstete und heilte" (*Werke*, II/1, 369).

⁶⁹*Ibid.*, III, 683.

⁷⁰"Der laute Beifall ist dem Künstler nothwendig, er erhebt ihn, feuert ihn an, begeistert ihn; ja er darf ihn *fordern* als Anerkennung der Achtung, die *er* dem Publikum durch seine Darstellung schenkt, z. B. am Ende einer Haupt-Szene, Arie u.s.w. gleichsam als Empfangschein des Gehörten" (*Ibid.*, III, 1074).

that he had once thought that "the true actor should be thoroughly permeated by the artwork and must let his inspiration shine forth from within him."⁷¹ Although the two situations are different, there is nonetheless an interesting shift in approach. Whereas Hoffmann had berated Beethoven's critics, both amateurs and connoisseurs, for their unwillingness to follow the composer, he now berates an artist for expecting the audience to come to him.

Third, as noted above, Hoffmann presented the relationship between composer and audience in a markedly less polarized fashion in the late "Zufällige Gedanken bei dem Erscheinen dieser Blätter," an essay dedicated to the critical principles behind a new (and short-lived) music journal, the *Allgemeine Zeitung für Musik und Musikliteratur*. In this essay, framed as an imaginary discussion between the narrator and a truculent composer, the composer, who has perhaps read too much of Hoffmann's earlier criticism, objects that the new journal will only be another "anatomical table" on which works will be both medically dissected and cruelly tortured. Hoffmann's narrator responds that the understanding is by no means to be ignored, for even composers, after all their moments of creative inspiration, must submit their works to its judgments. While he does not go so far as to suggest that the critic should shake the compositional edifice, he does present the critic as (in Charlton's words) "an almost-encharmed facilitator."⁷² The critic is a "kindred spirit" who sees into the work as the composer does, and helps the public to listen well: "It is certain that judgments of this sort can lead a person to *listen* well. Listening well is a skill which may be learned, if one has the disposition for it, though composing well is cer-

⁷¹"Wie herrlich, wie erfreulich ist es, wenn ein großer Künstler es nicht verschmäht, *selbst* das Publikum darüber zu belehren, wie es sich gegen ihn zu betragen und seine Produktionen aufzunehmen hat. . . . Mancher, und selbst der Schreiber dieses, wie er mit reuiger Scham eingestehen muß, war sonst der Meinung, daß der wahre Schauspieler von dem darzustellenden Kunstwerk ganz durchdrungen sein und seine Begeisterung recht aus dem Innern herausstrahlen müsse" (*Werke*, III, 521). Hoffmann's attack may have been motivated partly by revenge. After much negotiation, Fischer had withdrawn from the production of Hoffmann's *Undine*.

⁷²Charlton, *Hoffmann's Musical Writings*, p. 424.

tainly not."⁷³ Even if composition requires genius, while listening does not, Hoffmann nonetheless narrows the gap between composer and listener. The listener can learn to listen well.

It is doubtful that any of these three steps toward a less exclusive aesthetic show an earth-shattering change in Hoffmann's thought. As noted above, Hoffmann satirized his own Romantic aesthetic even before Jean Paul's criticism. After 1814, he never reverted entirely to a Reichardtian world of *Empfindsamkeit*. Simple melodies may have evinced heartfelt feelings, but he did not postulate a fundamental sympathy among the individuals in modern society; he was well aware of the "dissonance" that lay within each individual.⁷⁴ Nor did his critique of Fischer in any way suggest that he had given up on the total dedication that he demanded of all those involved in the arts. Finally, in his defense of music criticism, Hoffmann did not necessarily give up the "restriction to those of Romantic sensibility," as Charlton has suggested.⁷⁵ Hoffmann describes the critic, after all, as a "kindred spirit" who enters intuitively into the composer's work, and it is not clear if all listeners can learn to listen well or if only those with the proper disposition can do so. If anything, the essay reflects Hoffmann's methodology in his earlier criticism for the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* rather well. Finally, as already noted, other differences between the early and late writings may be a matter of genre rather than of outlook.

⁷³"Es ist gewiß, daß Beurteilungen der Art dazu führen können, daß man gut *hört*.—Gut hören ist nämlich wohl, wenn Anlage dazu da, zu erlernen, selbst gut machen freilich nicht" (*Werke*, III, 721).

⁷⁴See Werner Keil, "Dissonanz und Verstimmung: E. T. A. Hoffmanns Beitrag zur Entstehung der musikalischen Romantik," *E. T. A. Hoffmann-Jahrbuch* 1 (1992/93), 119–32.

⁷⁵Charlton builds above all on the interpretation of the word *Anlage* in the quotation above, though Hoffmann uses the word ambiguously at best. While it could refer to the *willingness* to listen well, it also refers to the *ability* to listen. Although Charlton and Clarke's translation can be read both ways, they use a phrase that normally implies willingness in English: "Listening well is a skill which may be acquired, if one is so disposed, but composing well oneself is certainly not" (Charlton, *Hoffmann's Musical Writings*, p. 426). The translation here, though less idiomatic, aims at the ambiguity of the German phrase.

Although it would be possible to debate further fine points in his criticism and fiction, it should be clear that Hoffmann did evolve over the course of his career, in tone if not in fundamental principles. It is impossible to ascertain whether he modified his tone in response to his new sense of financial security, to the relative peace and quiet that followed the tumultuous Napoleonic Wars, to his greater social integration in Berlin, to the criticisms of Jean Paul and the numerous reviews, or to the repetition of these critiques by even close friends like Fouqué. Nor is it necessary to do so. The important point is not that Hoffmann exchanged one mode of thought for another, but rather that he could and would shift his arguments in different contexts. Although he demanded complete commitment and passion in musical matters throughout his life, he was willing to advocate a variety of different musical styles and genres when the occasion called for it.

As this article has shown, some of the most quoted lines in Hoffmann scholarship do not do full justice to his attitudes toward music. Single statements often show only single sides of his thought and hide its nuances. In particular, Hoffmann criticized his own high ideals, and this self-criticism was itself essential to their very maintenance. There were, moreover, at least two basic models of metaphysics that could underpin a common Romantic repertoire of images, phrases, and key terms. By tending

toward a positive idealism, Hoffmann emphasized his distance from the doctrines and politics of religious establishments. He was ambivalent about the mixture of art, religion, and politics that some Romantics sought. Finally, Hoffmann was willing to present the relationship between artist, performer, and listener in a variety of ways. While he did not give up his commitment to Beethoven or to the absolute value placed on the sublime experience, he could move toward a less exclusive aesthetic of simplicity and feeling linked to simple melodies.

Given the wit and humor of Hoffmann's prose, along with all the literary techniques that go with these typically Romantic faculties, it is no mystery that he appears today in very different guises, from David Charlton's eminently practical musician of Romantic sensibility to Stephen Rumph's ardent nationalist, from Holly Watkins's champion of modern musical analysis to Mark Evan Bonds's idealist, from Eckart Kleßmann's deeply religious writer to Klaus-Dieter Dobat's harbinger of realism, and from Rüdiger Safranski's skeptical fantasist to Hartmut Steinecke's skilled practitioner of literary techniques, not to mention Barbier, Carré, and Offenbach's amorous alcoholic. While Hoffmann may not have agreed with all these views, he may well have found a certain pleasure and even irony in their plurality and diversity.

APPENDIX:

Translation of Jean Paul Friedrich Richter's Preface to E. T. A. Hoffmann's *Fantasiestücke in Callot's Manier* (1814)¹

Preface

This preface, which has been solicited from me for the following book, I would perhaps clothe to advantage in a review, especially as authors' own prefaces are normally nothing but open self-reviews. It will also please the honorable author of this work that in

this way the review appears almost earlier—perhaps nine or so pages earlier—than the book itself, while other authors must already thank God and the literary newspapers if the reviews finally come in after the books have long disappeared, either through death or by going out of print. But now the review itself is to be copied out.

¹This translation is based on the second, revised editions of the *Fantasiestücke in Callot's Manier*, published in 2 vols. by C. F. Kunz (Bamberg: Kunz, 1819). With one nugatory exception, Jean Paul's preface differs in the first and second edition only in punctuation, orthography, and *Sperrdruck* emphasis. The two most important modern editions of Hoffmann's writings follow the first and second editions respectively: E. T. A. Hoffmann, *Sämtliche*

Werke, ed. Hartmut Steinecke, et al., 6 vols. in 7 (Frankfurt am Main: Deutscher klassiker Verlag, 1985–2004), II/1, 11–16; E. T. A. Hoffmann, *Fantasie- und Nachtstücke*, 6th printing [*Sämtliche Werke in Einzelbänden*, ed. Walter Müller-Seidel and Friedrich Schnapp] (Düsseldorf: Artemis and Winkler, 1996), pp. 7–11. These editions contain further commentary and annotations.

Fantasy-Pieces in Callot's Manner. With a Preface by Jean Paul. 8^o Bamberg, C. F. Kunz. Two Parts.

We will not excuse the tardiness of our review at length, for it has not hurt him who has read the book, and he now simply receives a different judgment to complement his own. He who has not read the book can now be happy that we bring him to read it and force him to do so. In any case, German literary newspapers and journals should keep the rule in better view that, just as authors do with their works, they should hold back their reviews for some time, if not always necessarily for the Horatian nine years.² The German public will know best its profit from this practice and will pay the late fees. In such situations, good writers who are long forgotten will become familiar with the benefits of the critical *poste restante*, and they will not be forgotten again. For if, according to d'Alembert, the easy retention of a verse is a sign of its value, it is even more the case with the retention of an entire book in the more mercurial than iron memory of the public. Just as Cicero said of Caesar that he forgot nothing except insults, so in a similar and beautiful way the public lets nothing fade from memory so quickly as books, for they are the true insults that hundreds of writers inflict twice yearly upon the public.³ All in all, it is normally the case that many individuals are insulted all at once, rather than a few quite frequently. Similarly, a population is more often and more rudely insulted than its prince.

So as not to extend the retarding of the review through its justification any longer, let us without further ado comment on the title. It could be more correct. More properly it would read as *artistic novellas* [*Kunstnovellen*],⁴ for Callot's painterly or

²Horace's advice to his reader in the *Ars poetica*: "Yet if ever you do write anything, let it enter the ears of some critical Maecius, and your father's, and my own; then put your parchment in the closet and keep it back till the ninth year. What you have not published you can destroy; the word once sent forth can never come back" (Horace, *Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1991], lines 386–90).

³Books normally were published in time to appear at two yearly book fairs at Easter and at the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels, at the end of September.

⁴Jean Paul's annotation: "However, 'The Magnetiseur' (no. 6) is in a different category. It is a ripping tale [*Erzählung*] filled with cheeky Romanticism, plan, and with powerful shapes."

rather writerly manner does not rule over this book, either with its errors, or, except in a few places, with its grandeurs. In the first essay, the author has himself spoken best on this painterly Gozzi and body-giver [*Leibgeber*] to color.⁵ Just as humor stands above the joke, so Callot seems to stand over the prosaic Hogarth as a poetic caricaturist and a Romantic anagrammarian of nature.

We may distribute to our author a praise of another type. On the walls of his dark chamber (*camera obscura*), the vinegar-eels of art move boldly and in true color against each other, outlining their circles with clicking tongues. In purely ironic and witty miniaturization, horrid art affectations are painted alongside the arts and enthusiasts of the arts. The outline is sharp, the colors warm, and the whole full of soul and freedom. The author lets his satirical rain of fire come down most thickly on the musical affectations, especially in the excellent *Kreiseriana* (no. 3). Music is actually the most universal art and folk-art, and everyone at least sings, as church-goers and beggars illustrate. Music is the only art that crosses over into the animal realm. And one can unpack this art in every parlor at any time, as long as one carries one's throat or one's fingers with one. There, through the exhibition of one's art, one can win the prizes of all who drink tea around one. As a result, in fashionable cities no foolishness is more natural, forgivable, and common than that the desire to please, especially that of women, strikes its musical peacock's tail before each man who has eyes to see how art and artist melt together into a *single* beauty. What makes the true virtuoso, as here the Kapellmeister Kreisler, so full of ire toward this chamber Charivari is perhaps less the insult to art than the insult toward the artist himself, who as the music director in refined houses has become the local commander of musical ABC-archers. Lowered to the level of the master of pleasures, the music master thinks loudly enough and perhaps writes down, "Could one not please many high and beautiful men and women without the cost of my ears? And should," he continues even more heatedly, "the paradise of art be stolen from men or made fun of by female birds of paradise? And then they stand as angels before it, as if they guarded it faithfully? Oh the devils and their grandmothers!" he then ends wildly. An artist—our author for the sake of example—can easily enough fall into a hatred of mankind through his love of art, and can use the rose wreaths of art as crowns of thorns and belts of barbs

⁵Leibgeber is the name of a character in Jean Paul's novel *Siebenkäs*.

as a means of discipline. But let him collect himself and reflect on the matter! When it gives something up through the love of art, the love of humanity takes strong revenge through the cooling of art itself. For the artist with the yardstick, with the thought, or with the heraldic shield can easily enough forebear love, but not the artist himself, no matter which fine art he chooses.⁶ Love and art live mutually in each other, as brain and heart, each immunizing the other for mutual strength. Several pantheons of art today are for this reason transparent, pure, glittering palaces of ice, outfitted with all conceivable equipment in ice, and even with a bridal bed and an oven. In the last even a little naphtha flame can burn without harm to the tiles of ice.

We now return to our author, whom we have annoyed to satiety with the above, and we return to his anger over the screaming sins against the art of tones, and we go with him to the mute sins of the corporeal arts practiced by the recent historical and mythological heroines of the body [*Gliedermänninnen*]. These women know how to form out their figures to become a wax figure cabinet, and thus to transfigure their bodies even before the Resurrection. Against such, insofar as they use the magic shawl only as a rag for cosmetics and ornament the womanly creator with the creatures, the honorable author has inflamed himself and inveighed well enough in no. 5.⁷ His fiery zeal against misused art is proper. The beautiful and the eternal should never be used as cosmetics of that which is temporal or lacks beauty. The holy icon should never ornament an unholy body. One forgives the desire to please more willingly in the beautiful woman who swears than in the beautiful woman who prays, for with the devil one can have fun, but not, however, with God.

It is not without pleasure that we have noted that for several decades now and in this work as well German satire and irony and wit [*Laune*]⁸—in sum, humor—take more often the British path, and that Swift's and Sterne's little Loretto houses or study rooms have been imported and have become grading houses of our comic salt. We would not want to exchange the current salty spirit, as found in the pamphlets and daily papers, or in the essays of the *Morgenblatt* [*der gebildeten Stände*], the *Zeitung für die elegante Welt*, *Heidelberger Jahrbücher*, the

Literaturzeitungen, etc., for the broad, thick salt pans of the likes of Bahrdr, with their almanacs of heretics, or of the Councilor of War Cranz, the vade mecums of Wetzell, or of the *Allgemeine deutsche Bibliothek*, and so forth. But of course this lightening of the comic style is not for this reason the same thing as the growth of comic wit.

In "Nachricht von den neuesten Schicksalen des Hundes Berganza" (no. 5), the author notes only that he gives a sequel to Cervantes' tale of the two dogs Scipio and Berganza. He has produced something good, and he portrays his dog in conversation with a man often more humoristically than Cervantes himself. Properly guided and egged on, his dog bites deeply into the calves of the theater men (directors) who mangle the poet in order to satisfy the players (and even the onlookers), and who behave toward their characters like the Turks who strike off the noses of their statues so that they do not come to life. He who cannot lengthen should never dare to shorten, and even a Goethe would never seek to give to Schiller by taking away. However the circumcised of art cheekily circumcise the artist and unashamedly let the stage alternate between the pulpit and the pillory of genius. We admit that, if we were ourselves writers of tragedies or comedies, we would persecute and vilify the theatrical revisers [*Umdrucker*] and defilers of our holy Sabbath Sunday and muse hours more than we would persecute any pirate printer [*Nachdrucker*]. For with such hours devoted to the muses, we had hoped to influence posterity in the parterre and in paradise in a fine and beneficial manner.

It would have been polite of the honorable author if he had explained the allusions to Cervantes' tale, at least with *one* note. But authors today are not polite. Goethe at times looks on his contemporaries [*Mitwelt*] as a posterity [*Nachwelt*] about whose future lack of knowledge an immortal does not need to worry. Similarly, Horace did not shine light on himself *ad usum Delphini* with *notis variorum*. So the modern Goethes (we may speak with pride of their number) do not let Goethe get ahead of them, but rather presuppose a thousand things. For example Tieck presupposes the most necessary explanations in his Old-German novel, *Frauendienst*. In general, one is today rude toward half the world, if the reading world is so large. Tables of contents (often of printing errors), chapter divisions, explanatory notes, page numbers, indexes, also prefaces (for example to this book) and paragraph indentations (as here) are normally missing in more recent times. The reader must resort to his own devices, for his author is rude.

As the boundaries of the Institute do not permit us more complete judgment, so we must confine

⁶Jean Paul plays on the term Hoffmann used to criticize connoisseur critics in "Beethovens Instrumentalmusik": the "artists with the aesthetic yardstick" (ästhetische Maßkünstler).

⁷That is, the "Nachricht von den neuesten Schicksalen des Hundes Berganza" (Account of the Recent Fortunes of the Dog Berganza).

ourselves to the most necessary.⁸ According to that normal critical practice in which the nameless reviewer must reveal the name of the author who has kept it back, we report then that the honorable author is called *Hoffmann* and is music director in Dresden. His friends and those who know him promise and assure us that a great musician will appear in him, as do the musical knowledge and enthusiasm in the book itself. All the better and all the more rare! For up to now the sun god always threw poetic talent with the right hand and musical talent with the left to two men who stood so far apart from each other, that still to this moment we await the man who can both write and compose a true opera.

⁸Jean Paul momentarily falls from the conceit that the "review" appears in the *Jenaische allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* rather than as the preface to a book published by Kunz's *Neues Leseinstitut*.

Abstract.

E. T. A. Hoffmann spoke with the conviction of one who thought to reveal the essence of music. However, the bold and emphatic character of his words masked the subtleties and the variations of his positions. This article examines their nuances from two perspectives. It first examines the literary techniques he used to present his ideas and to give them substance. He presented his ideas in alternately enthusiastic and satirical tones. He used words connotatively, and he dealt different positions to different

We have nothing further to add, except that the preface to the book is written by a different but yet still familiar hand. However, for reasons that every person of tender sensibility will guess on his own, we will say nothing of it except this: the manner of its author is well enough known.

Frip.⁹

I too know nothing more to add except the wish that I had submitted just such a preface as *Frip* a review. Now the world can be content. I wish it and myself only the promised quick continuation in Callot's most audacious manner.

Bayreuth, 24 November 1813

Jean Paul Friedr. Richter



⁹Jean Paul used this acronym of his given and pen names in many reviews.

narrators and characters. Second, the article discusses the course of his career and the cast of his writings. After he received critiques of his high-handed attitudes in the *Fantasiestücke* (1814) and after he rejoined the Prussian bureaucracy, he changed the tenor if not the foundations of his positions. In its appendix, the article offers the first English translation of the most striking of the critiques: Jean Paul's preface to the *Fantasiestücke*.

Key words: E. T. A. Hoffmann, Jean Paul, idealism, irony, Romanticism.