

FRANZ LISZT
A GUIDE TO RESEARCH
SECOND EDITION

MICHAEL SAFFLE

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once again, for Sue

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M.S.
22 October 2003

Using this Book

In the chapters that follow, each book and article cited separately is identified by author(s), title, editor(s), and/or translator(s), if any; publication information (place, publisher, year, and number of pages, if a book; periodical title, volume, date, and page range, if an article); and ISBN, ISSN, and/or Library of Congress shelf-numbers, if available. An example: the first volume of Alan Walker's Liszt survey study might be identified as

Walker, Alan. *Franz Liszt: The Virtuoso Years, 1811–1847*, rev. ed. Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press, 1987. xxv, 481 pp. ISBN 0801494214.

Because Walker's survey comprises three volumes, however, the revised "Virtuoso Years" installment is actually identified as

Walker, Alan. *Franz Liszt*. 3 vols. ML410.L7W27 (series).
Vol. 1: *The Virtuoso Years, 1811–1847*, rev. ed.; Cornell University Press, 1987. xxv, 481 pp. ISBN 0801494214.

NB: The original edition of Walker's volume was published by Alfred A. Knopf of New York City in 1983; information about earlier or other editions usually appears in descriptions of items rather than in their bibliographic identifications.

Each book and article separately identified and described below is also assigned a number. Thus "1" refers to Walker's three-volume survey study (see above); "2" to the 1968 edition of Peter Raabe's two-volume *Franz Liszt* (the original 1931 edition is identified in the annotation); and so on. In certain cases, portions of longer studies are described separately and therefore have been assigned numbers of their own. Thus Walker's essay "Liszt and the Literature," which appears as an introduction to his first volume, is identified as

180. Walker. "Liszt and the Literature." In item 1, vol. 1, pp. 3–29.

Cross-referenced books and articles are identified by asterisks (*) as well as item numbers; Walker's essay, for example, would be cross-referenced as

* Walker, "Liszt and the Literature." Described as item 180.

Books published in multi-volume series are identified by series title and number (if any) immediately after author(s), title(s), editor(s), and/or translator(s) names. Thus

18. Watson, Derek. *Liszt*. “The Master Musicians.”

or

23. Leroy, Alfred. *Franz Liszt: L’homme et son oeuvre*. Musiciens de tous les temps, 5.

or

53. *Franz Liszt*, ed. Heinz-Klaus Metzger and Reiner Riehn = *Musik-Konzepte* 12 (1980).

Quotation marks are employed whenever series titles might be confused with book titles. Equals signs are employed whenever periodical volumes or issues have been given over to separately titled Lisztian publications.

Because LC (Library of Congress) shelf-numbers vary from library to library, those given below have either been confirmed through the Library’s own on-line catalog or are reprinted as they appear on CIPs (Copyright Information Pages) in the publications themselves. ISBNs (International Standard Book Numbers) and ISSNs (International Standard Serial Numbers), of course, are the same throughout the world. In the pages that follow, ISBNs pertain whenever relevant to hard-cover rather than paperback editions.

Certain abbreviations and typographical practices are employed vis-à-vis works titles. Many of Liszt’s compositions, for example, are identified using abbreviated titles: thus “the *Faust* symphony” (instead of *Eine Faust-Symphonie in drei Charakterbildern*) and “B-minor Sonata” (as well as Sonata in b minor). In book and article titles, italics are replaced by double or single quotation marks; thus

70. Roberts, Wesley. “Has it Been Ten Years Already? Surveying the First Decennium of the ‘Journal of the American Liszt Society.’”

or

98. Short, Michael, and Michael Saffle. “Compiling Lis(z)ts: Cataloging the Composer’s Works and the ‘New Grove 2’ Works List.”

Square brackets identify material interpolated into direct quotations. Parentheses separate item and/or page numbers from other portions of annotations.

Except for Russian words and titles, which are transliterated, all citations to languages other than English appear below as they do in the sources consulted. In the index, the German “ß” is alphabetized as “ss”; all other foreign-language characters and diacritical marks are ignored in alphabetization.

Finally, a caveat: even in this information-inundated age, with “everything” [*sic*] available on the Internet, more than a few Liszt publications are surprisingly difficult to locate. Only with considerable difficulty was the present author able to secure examination copies of items 88, 230, 233, and so on. These and other studies were unavailable in American libraries. Other studies could not be located for (re)examination, including Nunzio Di Bella’s *Il compositore Salvatore Auteri Manzocchi dall’amicizia con Franz Liszt al Conservatorio di Parma* (Parma, 1997). Still other studies were located too late to be included in the pages that follow. These comprise items mentioned in Chapter 1 (note 10) as well as Mária Eckhardt, “Franz Liszt als Bearbeiter und Vermittler von Werken Robert Schumanns,” in *“Neue Bahnen”*: *Robert Schumann und seine musikalische Zeitgenossen*, ed. B. R. Appel [Schumann Forschungen, 7] (Mainz, 2002); pp. 29–40; and Christian Ueber, *Liszt’s Zwölf Etüden und ihre Fassungen (1826–1837–1851)* (Laaber, 2002).

I

Introducing Liszt

LISZT IN 1,000 WORDS

Franz Liszt was born on 22 October 1811 at Raiding, today located in Austria's Burgenland. He received his first piano lessons from his father, Adam Liszt, an employee of the celebrated Eszterházy family. Young Franz was quickly acclaimed a prodigy, and in 1820 a group of Hungarian magnates offered to underwrite his musical education. Shortly thereafter the Liszts moved to Vienna, where Franz studied piano and composition with Carl Czerny and Anton Salieri. Performances there earned Liszt local fame; even Beethoven expressed interest in him.

Seeking additional opportunities for his son, Adam took Franz to Paris, where the boy worked briefly with Ferdinando Paër and Anton Reicha. Concert appearances in England and France proved extremely successful, and by 1830 Liszt had published several piano pieces and drafted at least one concerto. In Paris he made the acquaintance of Hector Berlioz, Frédéric Chopin, Heinrich Heine, Victor Hugo, and Felicité Lammenais; in 1832 Liszt also heard Paganini perform and—so the story goes—immediately resolved to master every aspect of keyboard technique.

Sometime during the early 1830s Liszt fell in love with the Comtesse Marie d'Agoult, a married woman who later established a reputation for herself as a historian. In 1835 the couple fled to Switzerland, where for a while Liszt taught at the recently established Geneva Conservatory. For several years the lovers lived comparatively secluded lives, interrupted by travels through the Alps and Italy. By 1838 the young composer had published several important works, including

his *Apparitions*, the first version of his *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*, fantasies on themes from operas by Auber, Meyerbeer, and Pacini, and transcriptions of pieces by Rossini and Schubert. Immediately thereafter the comtesse gave birth to Liszt's children: Blandine, Cosima, and Daniel. Only Cosima—who was married first to Hans von Bülow, then to Richard Wagner—was destined to enter musical history. Blandine died in her twenties after marrying a diplomat; Daniel died in Berlin in 1859.

By 1839 Liszt's appearances as a concert artist had grown into a full-time career, and during the 1840s he performed in almost every corner of Europe. Honors were showered upon him: the University of Königsberg made him a doctor of music, and Budapest's citizens presented him with a hero's sword. Unfortunately, Liszt and d'Agoult quarreled more and more frequently, and they separated in 1844. Meetings with artists such as Schumann and Wagner stimulated Liszt's imagination, however, and during these "years of transcendental execution" he managed to compose dozens of works, including his earliest songs and sacred pieces.

Weimar was only one of many German towns Liszt visited in 1841, but he returned the following year to receive an appointment as "Kapellmeister extraordinary" to the grand-ducal court. After meeting the Princess Caroline zu Sayn-Wittgenstein during a tour of Ukraine in 1847, he suddenly retired from the concert stage, spent some months in seclusion with her, then settled in Weimar to devote himself to composition and conducting. For more than a decade Liszt lived in a house known as the Altenburg, much of that time with the princess; he gave recitals, taught himself orchestration, conducted performances of his own and others' music, and composed almost all his principal works for orchestra as well as dozens of songs and piano pieces, including the B-minor Sonata. Although his productions of *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin* failed to impress Weimar's conservative citizens, Liszt became one of Wagner's most loyal admirers and apologists, Wagner—at least sometimes—one of Liszt's closest friends.

Weimar never entirely approved either of Liszt's artistic activities or his alliance with Sayn-Wittgenstein, and as the 1850s drew to a close the composer found himself subjected increasingly to criticism from local officials and the musical press. The disastrous reception of Peter Cornelius's *Barber of Baghdad* prompted him to resign his court appointment in December 1858, and three years later he settled in Rome. The princess planned to join him after Pope Pius IX confirmed her petition for a divorce from her Russian husband, but permission was later withdrawn and no wedding took place. Instead, in 1865, Liszt took minor orders in the Catholic church and began work on his *Missa choralis*. By the end of the 1860s he had completed *Christus* as well as a second oratorio on the life of St. Elisabeth of Hungary.

In 1869 Liszt accepted an invitation to return to Weimar and settle in the Hofgärtnerei, a small house on the city's outskirts. He still spent part of each year in Rome, however; and when his appointment as a Royal Hungarian Counselor

in 1871 required him to visit Budapest regularly, he began what he later called his *vie trifurquée* (or “three-cornered life”). During the 1870s and 1880s he gave more of himself to pedagogical activities. Hundreds of pianists flocked to study with him—first in Germany, then at the Academy of Music he helped establish in Budapest.

Old age brought Liszt increased respect from the Western musical world. His influence over its future also grew: Grieg showed him his famous piano concerto in 1869, Borodin visited him during the early 1870s, and the young Debussy heard him play at a private recital in Rome. Yet Liszt’s last years were mostly unhappy: his children were dead or estranged from him, his health began to deteriorate, and he fell prey to depression. Wagner’s unexpected death in 1883 reminded him of his approaching end, and his last works include a series of harmonically progressive piano pieces, several of them written in memory of his former friend. Three years later Liszt undertook a final European “summer” tour, stopping in England, Belgium, and France before arriving in Bayreuth to visit Cosima and attend a performance in the recently completed Festspielhaus. Already, however, he had become very ill, and on 31 July 1886 he died just before midnight. The Princess Sayn-Wittgenstein, with whom Liszt corresponded almost to the day of his death, survived him by less than a year.

LISZT STUDIES PAST AND PRESENT

Three decades ago Alan Walker stated that, “Of all the great nineteenth-century composers, Liszt alone still remains to be fully explored” (item 38, p. xiii). A flood of books and articles has appeared since Walker wrote those words, but his statement cannot yet be altogether discarded. Liszt remains an enigmatic figure, more written about (and against) than understood. Today, of course, we understand him better than we once did. But much remains to be learned. And interpreted.

The evolution of Liszt studies since the middle of the nineteenth century resembles the evolution of many other humanistic specialties during the same period. Like them, Liszt scholarship has gradually become both more comprehensive and more precise. But Liszt studies has also evolved in its own way. A plethora of nineteenth-century publications had the effect of bringing research almost to a halt during the fifty years separating 1886 (the year of Liszt’s death) and the 1930s. The so-called “Liszt legend”—the assumption that Liszt was a kind of musical saint—also stayed the hands of debunking biographers during most of those years, then drove some of them to attack their subject with more enthusiasm than common sense. Only since the mid-1970s has Liszt studies won recognition throughout Europe and the United States as a field for reputable musicological investigators. And only during the past decade has a “postmodern Liszt” begun to emerge from the workshops of younger and, often, more innovative Liszt specialists.