

***Kreisleriana*, (8 fantasies for the piano), Opus 16, by Robert Schumann (1810–1856)**

In his diary for 1828, Schumann wrote “Tones are words, but on a higher level...music is the higher power...every composer is a poet, only at a higher level.” Schumann’s passion for writing and literature is present throughout his mature works. Here in *Kreisleriana*, Schumann recalls E. T. A. Hoffman’s most illustrious fictional character, *Kapellmeister Johannes Kreisler*, who featured as a conductor with an eccentric, genius, wild—yet tender and ardent—personality, in a publication of Hoffman’s by the same name, *Kreisleriana*.

In 1839, Schumann expressed that of his works between Op. 15 and Op. 20—exclusive to the piano; *Kreisleriana* his favourite. Composed in eight movements (linked tonally by the keys of D minor, G minor and B-flat major) soon before his short relocation to Vienna in 1838, Schumann embodies *Johannes Kreisler’s* unpredictable personality into a suite of contrasting fantasy pieces, alternating between the brilliant and the lyrical, and the furious and affectionate.

The dedicatee, Frédéric Chopin, had little to say about the composition, except that he favoured the title page of the published score, in which he is depicted seated at the piano, whilst shoulder to shoulder with two angelic figures. In return, Chopin dedicated his Ballade in F major Op. 38, to Schumann.