Metareference is a feature which is to be found in numerous texts by the Danish author Hans Christian Andersen, predominantly in the form of intertextual references. However, his two novels *Only a Fiddler* (1845) and *Lucky Peer* (1871) also contain intermedial references through which the works’ metareferential character is established. These novels are characterised by their manifold references to music, which can also be understood as literary self-reference, as music is conceived of as a medium of narration in both texts. *Only a Fiddler* in particular suggests an analogy between literature and music which goes beyond merely considering both forms of language. The lack of social and economic recognition for the artist likewise refers to music as well as to literature. This very lack is articulated in the text and accompanied by counterexamples, while the differences between literature and music in terms of performance are not addressed thematically but are rather shown through the storyline. The direct communication between musician and audience during a performance is largely unachievable in literary communication, and the differences in the respective courses of education of musicians and poets are used to make narratable the education of an artist as the development in technical skill and craft.

1. Instead of approaching the topic of metareference in literature and music systematically or through actual comparison, I would like to limit myself to an analysis of self-reflectivity in a specific group of literary texts in which the intermedial reference to music plays a significant role. In a paper on “Metafiction and Metamusik”, Werner Wolf has already characterized “intermedial references, for instance the relation between literary texts and music embodied in verbal descriptions of musical compositions”, as “self-reference in the broad sense” (2007: 305). In examining novels by Hans Christian Andersen, I would like
to pursue this and examine the contexts and conditions which engender metareferentiality in intermedial references to music, as well as the ways in which such references differ from purely intra-literary self-reference. After briefly looking at self-referentiality in other works by Andersen, I will base my argument primarily on the analysis of *Only a Fiddler* (1837) with a short digression to an earlier Andersen poem set to music by Robert Schumann.

2.

Hans Christian Andersen became internationally renowned first and foremost as an author of fairytales. However, his *Tales and Stories*, which he wrote incessantly from 1835 onward, constitute only a small part of his literary œuvre. While he gained world fame as a master of this particular genre, he also wrote six novels, numerous travel books, poems and plays. Already his first book, the humorous travelogue *A Walking Tour from Holmen’s Canal to the Eastern Point of Amager in the Years 1828 and 1829* (Andersen 1829/1986), bears witness to Andersen’s inclination for metareference. Following a path of a mere few miles, the journey described takes but a few hours, and not two years, as the title implies. In fact, it takes all of one single night: that of New Year’s Eve, 1828. Being an uneventful expedition, it hardly provides the opportunity for narratorial hetero-reference which one would expect from a travelogue. Instead, the narrator elaborately describes who he writes the self-same travelogue. In so doing, he at the same time allows the book itself to have its say, as the subtitle of Chapter 6 announces:

The book tells the story of its childhood, its schooldays at the bookbinder, its release to the Gyldendal Bookstore, its first semester, and finally its first excursion into the world. – The clock strikes 12.²

Such an approach displays all the signs of metareflexive narration, because the text not only discusses itself, but also reflects on itself and its mediality. Furthermore, Andersen ignites a firework of intertextual references, from the Bible to the authors of the German and Danish Romantic period, and thus simultaneously locates his text within the