

The Modernist Kaleidoscope:  
Schoenberg's Reception History  
in England, America, Germany and Austria  
1908-1924

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of Doctor  
of Philosophy in the Department of  
Music in the Graduate School  
of Duke University

2014

ABSTRACT

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## *Abstract*

Much of our understanding of Schoenberg and his music today is colored by early responses to his so-called free-atonal work from the first part of the twentieth century, especially in his birthplace, Vienna. This early, crucial reception history has been incredibly significant and subversive; the details of the personal and political motivations behind deeply negative or manically positive responses to Schoenberg's music have not been preserved with the same fidelity as the scandalous reactions themselves. We know that Schoenberg was feared, despised, lauded, and imitated early in his career, but much of the explanation as to why has been forgotten or overlooked. As a result our own reception of Schoenberg's music is built upon inherited fears, hopes, and insecurities that are now nearly a century old. In order to more fully approach these musical works and their composer it is necessary to attempt to separate his reputation from the sound of the music.

This dissertation, which studies Schoenberg's reception from 1908 through 1924 in the United States, Britain, and Austria and German through select works (Opp. 10, 15, 16, 17), contributes to the field by uncovering additional primary sources, including previously unknown performances and reviews. My work interacts with larger trends in musicology, including questioning the narrative of atonality, assessing the value of social and artistic movements (e.g. expressionism) as applied to music, and examining how the reception of a work is the combination of many factors – from the aural to the political – which intertwine to form our idea of a musical text. Ultimately, through a study based on close musical analysis employing elements of set-class theory, the methodology of *Rezeptionsästhetik*, and a

focus on historical context, I present an interpretation in which Schoenberg's reception is strongly determined by early critical responses from Vienna, where conservative views of music's role in society combined with undercurrents of anti-Semitic thought to brand Schoenberg as mentally unstable and his music as socially detrimental.

## *Dedication*

To my husband, Adam Michael Neill

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## *List of Abbreviations*

ASC	Arnold Schoenberg Center
JAMS	Journal of the American Musicological Society
JASI	Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute

## *Acknowledgements*

This work is the product of support from a number of individuals and institutions over a course of many years. The project owes more to the support and advice that I have received during my time at Duke than I can possibly convey in these few words.

My very greatest appreciation and admiration, first of all, goes to my advisor, Larry Todd. Without his unfailing encouragement and dedication, both to my own development as a scholar and to the advancement of this dissertation, my graduate experience would have been something very different. It is no overstatement to say that without his reassurance and wisdom this project would not have come to fruition. I could not have asked for a better mentor.

I owe thanks to my dissertation committee, for their candid feedback on my work over the past several years. I feel grateful to have a group of accomplished scholars knowledgeable not only of the context from which Schoenberg emerged, but also of the legend that he left behind. Special thanks are due to Philip Rupprecht, whose thorough and detailed suggestions and analytical expertise are appreciated, and for his work as Director of Graduate Studies during a particularly challenging time in my dissertation process. I thank John Supko for his thoughtful and thought-provoking feedback, and for his perspective as a composer and a scholar. Thanks to Jacqueline Waeber, who prompted me always to consider the project within a larger context. I am especially indebted to Severine Neff, whose knowledge and support were invaluable for this work from the very earliest stages. I thank her for her guidance at the Arnold Schoenberg Center during the June 2012, for reading

chapter drafts, and, specifically, for direction to many analytical sources for Op. 10. Her kindness and generosity has defined my relationship to the field of Schoenberg research, and I am very grateful for her contributions to my development as a scholar.

To the Arnold Schoenberg Center in Vienna I am extremely grateful. My experience in the city, the archives, and in Mödling was the highlight of my dissertation work, due in no small part to the kindness and hospitality of Therese Muxeneder and Eike Fess. Being in Vienna was the single most helpful experience in understanding Schoenberg, his music, and his context. For that opportunity, I owe thanks to Duke University and the Summer Research Fellowship, funded by John Hawkins Noblitt Fellowship. Funding from Duke in the form of the James B. Duke Fellowship, the Dissertation Research Grant, and travel grants, which facilitated presentation of this work at its early stages, was also instrumental. Similarly, support from the Beinecke Scholarship Fund made much of my research and writing possible.

Thanks to Carl Leafstedt for reading drafts, suggesting edits, and providing support over the past decade. His steady nature and sensibility have been a beacon throughout trying times, and I feel extremely lucky to have entered into musicology under the advice of such an admirable and kind person.

I owe Heather Sullivan a debt of gratitude for her passion as a teacher and a scholar, which shaped my own relationship to German language and literature. Her guidance sparked a love for the study of language and history that can be acutely sensed in this work.

I also want to express my gratitude to a number of my fellow graduate students for reading my work, calming my anxieties, and reminding me what I love about music. Thank

you Yana Lowry, Paul Sommerfeld, Karen Cook, Katharina Uhde, Rebecca Geoffroy-Schwinden, Kirsten Santos-Rutschman, and Steven Pysnik.

Laura Williams, thank you so much for finding an overwhelming amount of obscure sources, and for your support throughout this process and at the defense. Enormous thanks are due to Jane Hawkins, who was chair of the department during an integral time in my graduate career and a calming presence during the most hectic of times. To the administrative staff in the music department, especially Gretchen Hoag and Christy Reuss, I give my deepest appreciation. Without you both, I would not be able to write these acknowledgments at all.

Finally, thanks are due to my family, who supported me throughout my time at Duke with words of encouragement and motivation. Thanks to my mom and dad, Susan and Wes James, and to my brother, Adam Lewis Robinson. To my husband, Adam Michael Neill, even the deepest thanks seem lacking. You saw me through the long nights and early mornings, the restless holidays and weekends, and the most arduous challenges and setbacks with steadiness and love. This is for you.



## *Introduction: Setting the Stage for a Difficult Reception History*

This dissertation examines salient trends in Arnold Schoenberg's reception history from 1908 to 1924 in Great Britain, the United States, Austria, and Germany through four representative compositions (Opp. 10, 15, 16, 17). The period between the composition of the cornerstone *Second Quartet*, Op. 10 (1908) and the seminal monodrama *Erwartung*, Op. 17 (1909) encompassed some of the most dynamic and productive years for Schoenberg. These years were also some of his most difficult, both personally and professionally. Completing the survey are the song-cycle, *Book of the Hanging Gardens*, Op. 15 (1908/1909), also known as the *George-Lieder*, and the symphonic *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, Op. 16 (1909). These selections not only represent different moments in Schoenberg's career, but they also represent various genres, compositional techniques, and theoretical ideals, despite their very close chronology. From the spring of 1907, when Schoenberg began sketching the *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10, to the autumn of 1909, when he completed *Erwartung*, Op. 17, his musical aesthetic, ideological motivations, and lifestyle changed immensely.<sup>1</sup> From the premiere of Op. 10 in December 1908 to the premiere of *Erwartung* in June 1924, even more significant changes had taken place in Schoenberg's musical style and his biography and in the world in which he was living. Comparing the reception of these four works written within a short period of

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<sup>1</sup> The first sketches of the *Second String Quartet* are found in the so-called third notebook. A sketch of the opening theme of the first movement is dated 9 March 1907 under the indication "Streichquartett" in Schoenberg's hand. The finished short score of *Erwartung* is dated 12 September 1909. See: *Skizzen und Teile der Ersten Niederschrift im sogenannten III. Skizzenbuch*, ASC MS 77, Reihe B, Band 20, pp. 111-112. *Erwartung*, Op. 17, *Erste Niederschrift*, ASC MS17, archive number 2367-2386, Reihe B, Band 6/2, pp. 2-31.

time across geographical boundaries not only brings into focus the cultural forces at work behind music criticism, but also puts the role of genre, audience expectations, and the personal preconceptions of listeners and critics into relief.

This study focuses on the so-called critical years of 1908 to 1924, often cited as the expressionist period in Schoenberg's music (see Chapter 4). 1908 marks the first performance of one of Schoenberg's atonal pieces, the *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10. The year 1924 was not only the year of Schoenberg's fiftieth birthday, but it was also an artistic turning point as *Neue Sachlichkeit* swept through Germany, eclipsing expressionist tendencies. 1924 was also an important year for Schoenberg, personally, because of his marriage that year to his second wife, Gertrude Kolisch. Throughout these years, during which Schoenberg's style changed from extended post-romantic harmonies to free atonality and then to the nascent beginnings of twelve-tone technique, his reputation took center stage, to the detriment, one could argue, of the reception of his music. Characterizations as a "musical anarchist,"<sup>2</sup> and "the enemy of form and style"<sup>3</sup> preceded the sound of his music in many cases. The primacy of Schoenberg's reputation over his music has been especially true in the United States and to a certain extent in Britain as well, where Schoenberg's name was known long before his music was.<sup>4</sup> American music critics who had heard Schoenberg's music in Europe – frequently in Vienna or Berlin – sent reports like those quoted above to American newspapers. Their opinions were strongly influenced by those already in the air in Europe, which were rarely a reflection simply of the sound of the music. Americans from across the

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<sup>2</sup> James Huneker, "Schoenberg, Musical Anarchist, Who Has Upset Europe," *New York Times* (Jan 19, 1913).

<sup>3</sup> M.D. Calvocoressi, "The Classicism of Arnold Schönberg," *Musical Times* (April 1, 1914).

<sup>4</sup> See: Sabine Feisst, *Schoenberg's New World: The American Years* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), especially chapter 2.

nation eagerly lapped up the reports of scandalous dissonance and the fistfights or tragic wailing it inspired.

A last minute cable to the *El Paso Herald* (El Paso, Texas) from March 1914 reported on Schoenberg's "Cubist" music underneath the tantalizing subtitle, "Who Can Last the Longest?"<sup>5</sup> The article relayed how Schoenberg's music caused audiences to flee the concert hall with their hands covering their ears, noting how "one half of the audience is there to see how the other half endures the affliction and to enjoy the fearful responses." The unnamed author teases, "Certainly a Schoenberg program is great fun," without once mentioning what was actually on program, the sound of the music, or even the performers involved.<sup>6</sup>

According to a 1910 census, El Paso had fewer than forty thousand inhabitants, although there were likely more people living in the city during 1914 as refugees from the decade-long Mexican Revolution.<sup>7</sup> Certainly in relation to the surrounding area El Paso would have seemed a bustling metropolis, but it was hardly the demographic that is normally associated with early twentieth-century German music, least of all that of Schoenberg. More likely there would have been an audience for, or at least an interest in, Schoenberg in the Hill Country to the east, settled by German and Austrian immigrants. But stories of Schoenberg's dissonant music, his supposedly sinister motives, and the scenes of pain and anguish that his music caused were of interest to a vast majority of the public, no matter where they lived or if they had ever heard his works. It was the scandal to which readers clung, not the sound of the music or even the truth of the report. Scandal was the lowest common denominator for

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<sup>5</sup> "Wails Greet What Cubist Calls Music," *El Paso Herald*, 14 March 1914.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Texas State Historical Association, "City Population History from 1850-2000," [texasalmanac.com](http://texasalmanac.com), accessed 22 September 2014.

newspaper audiences regardless of their musical literacy. Articles about Schoenberg always found an audience, even if his music did not.

The example of El Paso is an outlier in terms of demographics and geography, but it is one of many instances where American audiences heard of Schoenberg's reception before they heard anything of his sound. James Huneker's characterization of Schoenberg as a "musical anarchist," published in the *New York Times* in January 1913 was particularly influential in America during the early decades of the twentieth century. Huneker's impressions were printed verbatim and almost in their entirety in a March 1913 article in the Springfield, Massachusetts *Springfield Sunday Republican*.<sup>8</sup> A report from Colorado Springs in October 1914 echoed Huneker's words, noting that the local music club performed a program "of works by European radicals, including compositions by that modern 'musical anarchist,' Arnold Schoenberg," in which Op. 6 and Op. 11 were featured.<sup>9</sup> When Huneker died in 1921 his personal library was donated to the New York Public Library where readers continued to be influenced by his individualistic and strong-willed glossing left on the margins of his books and scores.

Despite strong opinions and colorful style, Huneker was not an enemy of Schoenberg. In calling the composer a "musical anarchist," however, Huneker was tapping into a sentiment that had a much darker side in some circles of music criticism. In July 1913 an article from the *New York Mail* was reprinted in the *San Diego Union* in which the phrase "musical anarchist" refers to the popularity of black ragtime musicians among white audiences and the "degradation" of musical culture through essentially non-white influences.

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<sup>8</sup> "Of Music and Musicians: News, Criticism, Notions. Huneker Hears Schoenberg," *Springfield Sunday Republican*, 9 March 1913, p. 82.

<sup>9</sup> "Colorado Springs Musical Club Completes Program," *Colorado Springs Gazette*, 18 October 1914, p. 22.

Although the description of “the average popular ragtime ‘coon song’ of the present” as “rubbish of the basest description” may initially seem distant from negative characterizations of Schoenberg and his music, the two are not so different.<sup>10</sup> The fear of corruption through the influence and popularity of the musical Other – be it the co-option of African-American music or the dissonance of a self-taught Jewish Viennese composer – was ever-present in music criticism in the early twentieth century in both art and popular genres.

What these examples indicate are the complex networks of references, citations, and intertextuality within a single faction of reception history: published reviews by music and culture critics. Mapping onto this network is the vast web of cultural and social reactions and movements lacking significant documentation. General fears of losing cultural power emerged as globalization and modernity allowed for an increasing awareness of the fragility of a multitude of political and social systems. Each country had its own complicated history and public consciousness that framed reactions to Schoenberg and his music; these factors were not static but were constantly changing throughout the period from 1908-1924. In this way the observable patterns of Schoenberg’s reception in Austria and Germany, Britain, and the United States are strikingly varied. Like a kaleidoscope, Schoenberg’s reception history is determined by the observer, often comprising the same information but appearing different at each turn.

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<sup>10</sup> “Wail of Discordant Ragtime,” *San Diego Union*, 6 July 1913, p. 4.

## *Reception History and Rezeptionsästhetik*

As a study of reception history this dissertation relies on previous works of reception studies, both within and outside of the field of musicology. The primary methodological model is the work of Hans Robert Jauss and the Konstanz School – literary theorists focused on the audience rather than the creator. Roland Barthes’s 1967 essay “The Death of the Author” is, of course, an important supplement to Jauss’s perspective. In introducing Jauss’s work, Paul de Man explains the interaction of poetics and hermeneutics within literary theory. Poetics is, briefly, the study of the techniques used in literature; hermeneutics is the study of interpretations, traditionally used in regards to biblical texts, but also applied to secular works. These two approaches can be mapped onto musicological discussions quite neatly by substituting music theory for poetics. We study the technical components of a composition, noting its harmony, tonality, thematic treatment, instrumentation and the like; we also consider the meaning and reception of these works, both through contemporary and later interpretations. More often than not these two methodologies are viewed as isolated and mutually exclusive ways to approach a text. In many ways this perception is a fallacy. As de Man notes, the two are incredibly entangled. He describes literary theory as “the continued attempt to disentangle this knot and to record the reasons for failing to do so.”<sup>11</sup> This dissertation is a corresponding attempt to separate the threads of the reception of Schoenberg’s free atonal works, seeking to parse out those elements that correspond to theory – to the actual sound of the music – and those that belong to interpretation, often

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<sup>11</sup> Paul de Man, “Introduction,” in *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, translated by Timothy Bahti (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1982), x.

based in personal distaste and political struggles. De Man notes that Jauss's *Rezeptionsästhetik* ultimately is an exploration of how these two elements cannot be separated, rather than a solution. For my project, the result is the same.

For a multitude of reasons, including the passage of time and loss of detail and the subjective nature of human interaction and memory, it is simply not possible to totally dissect Schoenberg's reception history into neatly categorized pieces. Rather, the value of this exploration – like any reception history – lies in understanding its limits and the places where our curiosity rubs against the boundaries of what can be known and explained. What follows is an attempt to clarify the elements and forces at work behind the reception of selected works by Schoenberg, which necessarily includes moments where the threads of interpretation and musical sound cannot be untangled and, as de Man notes, a report of why this failure occurs. To be clear, the failure of separating out personal distaste from musical taste is not a failure of the project. Quite the opposite, it proves the value of this study. Scholarly pursuit often steers toward the difficult and the uncertain. We ask questions that almost always cannot be fully or explicitly answered, and, in part, this is how we know they are questions that are worth asking.

If it were simple to separate the reception of Schoenberg's music from the reception of Schoenberg's personality (or perceived identity), we would not still have cultural commentators questioning our lingering fear of him, or textbooks that mention his notoriety already in the second or third sentence.<sup>12</sup> That Schoenberg was (and is?) a figure to be feared and distrusted is part of the discourse about his music that we present to the public, to

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<sup>12</sup> Norman Lebrecht, "Why We're Still Afraid of Schoenberg," *La Scene Musicale*, 8 July 2001.

undergraduate students in music history sequences, and to other musicologists, theorists, and performers in our characterizations of him. We should undoubtedly be aware of the controversy surrounding Schoenberg's music in the first part of the twentieth century, and we should absolutely share this information with wider circles, but it is crucial also to qualify the sources and impetuses of past fears as well as our own uncertainty about certain elements of Schoenberg's reception. This awareness of our inherited biases has implications not only for Schoenberg and his music, but also for our presentation of music history in general. Understanding the context and details of reception shape our perception of the musical canon and its formation, of identity as represented and created by music, and of the forces by which cultural and social hegemony work to reinforce or subvert power relationships.

Any comprehensive understanding of a reception history of a composer as complex and polemical as Schoenberg deserves a degree of clarification. The study of reception history is an imprecise science at best, due in no small part to the ambiguous definition of the term and a relatively recent development as a methodology. Reception theory has its origins with the Konstanz school in 1960s. In the last two decades of the twentieth century the so-called New Musicology picked up Jauss's torch and used the methodology of literary theory to approach Western music and, especially, its canonization (e.g. Joseph Kerman's seminal 1985 text, *Contemplating Music: Challenges to Musicology* and Lawrence Kramer's influential book from 1990, *Music as Cultural Practice, 1800-1900*). Although the term *Rezeptionsästhetik* is difficult to define and translate effectively, the main goal of this type of methodology is to understand a text (i.e. a poem, a composition, a painting) by studying the



experience of its receivers. While this approach sounds simple enough, inherent in Jauss's thought is the notion that realizing this goal is in fact an impossible task. What he has termed "the horizon of expectation" is the phenomenon in which the "true" experience is unattainable. The reality of a reception history is inaccessible both to those who experienced it firsthand and to those who study it through "objective" scholarship. Theoretically there was, for example, one single truth of what happened at the premiere of the *Second String Quartet*. But this truth existed only in theory – no one perceived everything that happened precisely as it happened. Every reaction was subjective and every recollection inherently incomplete. As historians we will never know exactly what happened during that premiere, but – as Jauss and reception theorists would also argue – neither did those who were present at the time. Jauss offers no real solution to this dilemma other than suggesting an acceptance of the "dialectic of understanding as a complex interplay between knowing and not-knowing."<sup>13</sup> These bittersweet circumstances leave the reception historian in a sort of Schopenhauerian loop of yearning, constantly seeking more concrete information while simultaneously understanding the necessary limitations of the methodology.

What has made Jauss's work especially interesting for musicologists is the implication of the close relationship between reception history and the historical canon. Canonization is, in fact, the point of departure for many of the earliest reception history studies by musicologists.<sup>14</sup> For Jauss, *Rezeptionsästhetik* was a study of value judgments applied to a given

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<sup>13</sup> Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, translated by Timothy Bahti (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1982), xii.

<sup>14</sup> E.g. Zofia Lissa, Friedhelm Krummacher, Carl Dahlhaus, H.H. Eggebrecht, Lucy Beckett, Gerhard Herz, Robin Wallace, Ludwig Finscher.

historical text and an attempt to come closer to understanding how canonization is largely determined by the value system of the receiver. As he writes:

The quality and rank of a literary work result neither from the biological or historical conditions of its origin, nor from its place in the sequence of the development of a genre alone, but rather from the criteria of influence, reception, and posthumous fame, criteria that are more difficult to grasp.<sup>15</sup>

Not surprisingly, the first composers to which this methodology was applied were those with dramatic reception histories (e.g. Beethoven, Chopin, and Bach). They were also – importantly – composers that were well within the traditional classical canon. Their path to canonization may have been varied and inconsistent, but their place within the canon was not. With Schoenberg, however, the situation was somewhat different. At the time that musicology focused on reception history in earnest (i.e. New Musicology), Schoenberg was still considered a very recent composer, and his place within the canon was based primarily on his innovations, especially the twelve-tone system. If we understand the musical canon to be the repertoire that is frequently performed in concert halls, then Schoenberg’s place is much more tenuous than if we consider canonization based on, for example, which composers are highlighted in a music history textbook. Since the earliest days of critical reception studies about Schoenberg, his influence and importance has been almost without question, but, like early reviews, the sound of his music is frequently overlooked. Additionally, much of the early focus on Schoenberg’s reputation was from scholars and composers who had personal relationships with him.<sup>16</sup> These sources were approaching the “horizon of expectation” from the opposite end as scholars like Eggebrecht and Lissa, who

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<sup>15</sup> Hans Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, 5.

<sup>16</sup> Recent examples include Dika Newlin and Alexander Ringer; earlier examples include Egon Wellesz, Alban Berg, and Anton Webern.

were removed from their subjects of study (Beethoven and Chopin, respectively) by a significant amount of time. Sources with personal connections to a subject are problematic in certain ways, and invaluable in others. While they are obviously biased they also represent a counterbalance to the overwhelmingly negative and aggressive responses of music critics, both contemporary and recent. There have never been any scholarly books, in other words, that postulate that Schoenberg was inconsequential and his music worthless. In some ways this dichotomy has furthered the stereotype of Schoenberg as a cerebral or esoteric composer, only understood by the most discerning and intelligent listener and unfit for consumption by the masses.

Part of the ambiguity associated with any reception history of music is that the understanding of the ‘reader’ can be structured to include an extremely broad group. Commonly considered are audience reactions – especially at premieres and early performances – critical responses in journals and other print media, and contemporary thoughts by peer composers, musicians, and artists (e.g. Kandinsky’s relationship with Schoenberg). It is important to note that – especially when considering a composer like Schoenberg, whose commentary is nearly as prolific as his output – the author’s opinion is often very influential in the reception. It can even become a part of the inherited musical text over time. As Carl Dahlhaus notes “literature about music...forms an integral part of music as a historical event, and even as a perceived object.”<sup>17</sup> Schoenberg’s musings, for example, on the significance of a particular work within his aesthetic, were frequently parroted by critics and repeated in conjunction with any mention of the work. We see this especially with

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<sup>17</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, *Schoenberg and the New Music*, trans. Derrick Puffet et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 5.

Schoenberg's declaration that *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15 was a new frontier in his musical development – a sentiment now frequently attached to discussions of the work itself and analyzed as a part of the musical text. In this way, his opinion became solidified – in a certain sense validated through constant external repetition – and was incorporated as part of the work.

Jauss outlines an understanding in which recreating an experience is impossible, perhaps even undesirable. Therefore, reception history's methodology does not seek to collect all possible reactions to an artistic text and then extract a single truth from them. A reception history is not a catalogue of reactions. It is not a collection of data, but rather a collection of interpretations, and a subsequent study and interpretation of these many interpretations. It is also not a solution to a certain problem of studying history. Adopting or adapting Jauss's methodology will not suddenly make clear the muddy and tangled forces at work beneath the superficial glossy narrative of history often encountered at first glance. It is not a formula or equation where historical facts can be entered to produce a comprehensive and comprehensible explanation. Rather, what becomes increasingly clear in a study of reception, and particularly of Schoenberg's receptions, is the complexity and volume of forces at work in a single moment. To this end, one method of interpretation is to judge the general patterns shaping a number of individual responses. In other words, it is not the individual experience that is particularly significant but the larger trends of thought that are reflective of a certain generation, geographical area, cultural segment, or philosophical ideal. These threads are what a study of a reception history aims to uncover.

My work will not attempt to recreate the exact circumstances of Schoenberg's reception, or even to assess the validity of these reactions, but rather to make them known and suggest how unspoken cultural and societal convictions have a strong effect on our understanding of who Schoenberg was and the ways in which he and his music are relevant, not only to his own context, but to ours as well. It is neither possible nor practical to create a comprehensive picture of any specific reception, let alone of the reception of many works over a period of years. But it is worthwhile to pursue the picture's creation, acknowledge and explore the reasons that it cannot be created, and search for significant threads that may help explain why Schoenberg's reputation was what it was, in order to incorporate this awareness into our understanding of Schoenberg and his music.

### *The Modernist Kaleidoscope, the Modernist Crisis*

More than almost any other epoch, modernism has been the center of debate regarding its character, defining features, and representative figures. This controversy has been so persistent that it has now become one of the most recognized characteristics of modernism itself. This debate stems, in part, from the cloudy and convoluted relationship between modernism and postmodernism – a symptom of our own working-out of our historical place and significance. Adding to the difficulty in defining modernism is the fractured nature both of the subject and our understanding of it. Modernism was a point at which history, or at least our perception of it, seemed to shatter and lose its narrative drive. As Peter Gay has argued, it is much easier to find an example of modernism than a definition of it, making the entire era potentially seem like a series of artistic works rather

than a cohesive whole.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, the relationship between modernism and music is complicated. Imbuing a piece of music with theoretical values or cultural characteristics is almost never a direct relationship, making a study of modernism in music especially tenuous and reliant on specific musical works, which often exhibit radically different aesthetics. When understanding Schoenberg in his own context, we must consider if there is such a thing as musical modernism and if it is different from modernism writ large.

In music scholarship modernism is often a qualifier of style and intention more than anything else, and usually has little to do with historical or geographical positioning. Schoenberg was a modernist and so was Debussy, but nearly exact contemporaries Rachmaninoff and Vaughan Williams were usually not considered as such, not because of their distance from continental Western Europe, but because of their musical style. Namely, it is a lack of dissonance, a lack of cosmopolitanism and an adherence to a traditional aesthetic or to folk styles that have kept Rachmaninoff and Vaughan Williams out of modernist circles. These characteristics – dissonance and cosmopolitanism – have typically been considered to be modernist in nature because of an association of Schoenberg, especially in his serial works, as the epitome of musical modernism. Andrew Timms challenges the equation of musical modernism with atonality that has long been implicit in musicological texts on modernism.<sup>19</sup> In doing so he tests our understanding of modernity, forcing us to consider musical modernism as more than the Second Viennese School, or more than Schoenberg vs. Stravinsky amidst a sea of backward looking composers. What

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<sup>18</sup> Peter Gay, *Modernism: The Lure of Heresy from Baudelaire to Beckett and Beyond* (London: William Heinemann, 2007), 1.

<sup>19</sup> Andrew Timms, “Modernism’s Moment of Plenitude,” in *The Modernist Legacy: Essays on New Music*, ed. Björn Heile (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 13.

results from this challenge is a view of musical modernism that incorporates many more aesthetic styles and composers than our previous conceptions ever had. When we broaden and complicate our understanding of musical modernism it begins to correlate more closely to cultural modernism – a fractured, non-linear movement.<sup>20</sup>

Solid and immutable characteristics of modernism are nearly impossible to pin down, either in the cultural or a musical movement. The entirety of modernism is in some ways a constant and elusive shifting of values, styles, and appearances. Modernism, and German modernism in particular, is understood as a point when inquiry and expression came to the fore – a movement that rejected boundaries and authoritative form and sought liberation from normative expectations.<sup>21</sup> Yet, it is important to remember that even the narrowest definition of modernism necessarily encompasses a passage of time that creates a fluid and living meaning.

As historians we must reconcile our desires to categorize and label historical periods and cultural movements with the undeniable messiness of human history. In short, we have to accept the dialectic inherent in history. Our inquiries often lead us further into these dialectical corners, and modernism is a prime example of this dilemma. The deeper the investigation the more complicated, inconsistent, and contradictory the entirety seems to become. The result is an environment in which seemingly opposite figures can share the

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<sup>20</sup> Peter Gay suggests that middle-class financial support allowed a flourishing of diverse artistic styles in a way that would not have been possible in previous eras of patronage, which demanded beauty above all. Schoenberg did not receive financial support from the middle class in a general sense, but he had important connections in Gustav and Alma Mahler, for example. See: Peter Gay, *Modernism: The Lure of Heresy from Baudelaire to Beckett and Beyond* (London: William Heinemann, 2007), 18-19.

<sup>21</sup> See also: Robin Holloway, “Modernism and After,” in *Reviving the Muse: Essays on Music After Modernism*, ed. Peter Davidson (Brinkworth: Claridge, 2001), 93-111. David Metzger, *Musical Modernism at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2009).

same modernist label. Consider, for example, J. P. E. Harper-Scott's 2006 book arguing for modernist qualities in Elgar and his music. The difference between the sound of Elgar's music and Schoenberg's is immense, but if we understand musical modernism as a movement not inherently related to aesthetics and style, but rather to an ideology or a way of understanding the world, then the two composers can share the title of modernist. If, in Timms's view, we consider musical modernism as separate from the false narrative of the inevitability or primacy of atonality, then we are able to further contextualize Schoenberg and his music within a larger framework. In that context, Schoenberg is an example of one type of modernism, but he is not the only figure of modernist music.

Pericles Lewis identifies modernism by noting that, "contemporary scholars often describe modernism, understood as a cosmopolitan movement in literature and the arts reflecting a crisis of representation."<sup>22</sup> One of the most appropriate examples of this crisis is that of language and the question of meaning.<sup>23</sup> This crisis of representation, Lewis continues, "has its roots in other crises: of faith, of reason, of liberalism, of empire."<sup>24</sup> To this list I would add the crisis of tonality – one manifestation of the modernist crisis in the musical world. Certainly it is the most relevant crisis where Schoenberg is concerned. These crises had as a common root an inherent pessimism and distrust of symbols and representation, but representation was a topic of philosophical debate and inquiry long

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<sup>22</sup> Pericles Lewis, "Introduction," in *The Cambridge Companion to European Modernism*, edited by Pericles Lewis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 1-2.

<sup>23</sup> Especially relevant to discussions of language is Karl Kraus, for whom language, even in the most minute and seemingly insignificant detail, represented the state of the world.

<sup>24</sup> Lewis, "Introduction," 1-2.



before the modernist period.<sup>25</sup> For the German-speaking world, Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation* (first published 1819) was a seminal text in considering the role of representation, especially in the arts. Schopenhauer, of course, recalled earlier philosophies by Kant. In another vein, semiotics and the work of Ferdinand de Saussure explored the role between language and reality, an inquiry that would be continued and brought into Schoenberg's circle by Karl Kraus. The modern crisis of representation, like so many aspects of history, was a movement arrived at by different means and at different points in various disciplines, but the challenging of symbols and signs to represent meaning was shared. In an atmosphere where the role of language, the most fundamental means of communication and representation for society, was being questioned, it was inevitable that other means – music, visual arts, social structure and behavior – also come under scrutiny.

European modernism also exhibited two seemingly contradictory but interlinked characteristics: a belief in its universality (i.e. relevance beyond a national level) and a conviction of self-isolation. Modernist musicians, artists, and philosophers simultaneously understood their objective to be one of a universal collective, while comprehending their own position as a perpetual outsider. As Lewis observes, “it is notable that for virtually every modernist... the “center” seemed to be elsewhere.”<sup>26</sup> This was a particularly relevant feature for citizens of the diverse Habsburg Empire, although it was by no means limited to Central Europeans.

Ideologically, modernism was an attempt to overcome the mundane through an idealization of reality – a new manifestation of anti-bourgeois sentiment. Inherent in this

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<sup>25</sup> There is no agreement upon precise dates for modernism, but it is generally described as beginning in the late nineteenth century.

<sup>26</sup> Lewis, “Introduction,” 5.

attempt was a belief that the new was always better than the old. As Gay writes, “the untried is markedly superior to the familiar, the rare to the ordinary, the experimental to the routine.”<sup>27</sup> At the same time, in their critique of the past modernists were constantly in conversation with their own history, giving the movement an unrelenting tension between past, present, and future. Reinhold Brinkmann described this pre-occupation with historical narrative as “self-reflectivity as a truly modernist stance.”<sup>28</sup> This backward-looking futurism is especially relevant to Schoenberg, who was raised in a historically-conscious city, listening to and learning from music of the past, writing at one point in a late Romantic style, and later teaching tonal theory. Schoenberg’s retrospective elements have long been part of scholarly discussions regarding his reception history, marked by Willi Reich’s 1974 book, *Arnold Schönberg, oder Der conservative Revolutionär* and Hans Eisler’s contribution in 1924, “Arnold Schönberg, der musikalische Reaktionär,” to a dedication to Schoenberg on his fiftieth birthday.<sup>29</sup> The titles are reminiscent of Schoenberg’s own remarks to Thomas Mann in a letter from January 1939 in which he wonders whether, “perhaps I am a progressive conservative.”<sup>30</sup> Whether Schoenberg was essentially conservative with radical elements or vice versa, the combination of past and future in his music has frequently been noted, especially in his early twelve-tone compositions, such as the *Suite for Piano*, Op. 25 (1921-1923), which features Baroque dance forms.

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<sup>27</sup> Gay, *Modernism*, 2.

<sup>28</sup> Reinhold Brinkmann et al., ed. *Music of My Future: The Schoenberg Quartets and Trio* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 2000), 8.

<sup>29</sup> Hans Eisler, “Arnold Schönberg, der musikalische Reaktionär,” *Musikblätter des Anbruch*, 13 September 1924, 312-313.

<sup>30</sup> Letter to Thomas Mann, 15 January 1939, ASC L4M3.

Through understanding the traits of modernism, one realizes that many of Schoenberg's notable quirks (his overzealousness to clarify music through words, his persistent sense of seclusion, a belief in a higher universal purpose behind his music, even his oscillation between history and future potential) are indicators that are congruent with modernism, rather than proof of his anomalous nature. Rather than a figure of insurmountable isolation, or a prophet leading modern music to its salvation, Schoenberg was part of the most pervasive and influential movements of the twentieth-century. His complete embodiment of these extremely contextual ideals has meant, ironically, that he is viewed more often as a lonely hero than a component of a cosmopolitan method of thought.



It is because of this often skewed and distorted view of Schoenberg within his historical context that I refer to the metaphor of the Modernist Kaleidoscope. I use the term here purposefully in regards to Schoenberg's music and his reception history, but also in regards to our current understanding of modernism. The analogy has particular significance in relation to this study – ranging from the small-scale of Schoenberg's musical techniques to a larger reflection of the tropes and ideals of modernism. On the most superficial level, a kaleidoscope is a visual tool – an arrangement of light and color that is dependent on a viewer (a perspective). This correlates not only to the dominance of sight over sound in much of modern culture (even in regards to music), but also to Schoenberg's own

connections as a painter.<sup>31</sup> A kaleidoscope functions by reflecting light through colored glass off mirrors set at various angles into the eyes of the observer. These closely set mirrors are another apt metaphor for Schoenberg's reception history, which has a tendency to seem amorphous and constantly dynamic. Although the colored glass is stable – its objective appearance and properties never change – it appears to be shifting, changing shape, even disappearing at moments. In the same way, Schoenberg's reception can be understood as a phenomenon (though certainly not as immutable as a piece of glass) that is constantly being reflected. Sometimes what eventually makes it to the viewer's eyes is a reflection of a reflection, like the copied and repeated reviews Americans read in the early years of the twentieth century.<sup>32</sup>

The analogy of mirrors is also fitting considering the self-reflective nature of Schoenberg's understanding of himself. In a typically modernist way, he was keenly aware of his position in an historical continuum and understood how his own portrayal of his identity could be repeated (reflected) as truth. By turning a certain way – and emphasizing some characteristics of his personality and his music over others – he could control what was available to the mirrors of history, and subsequently to the receiver. Again, there is theoretically some Ur-Schoenberg at the center of the Modernist Kaleidoscope, but the many forces at work (Schoenberg's positioning of himself, the historical moment of the

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<sup>31</sup> Schoenberg's significant though ultimately short-lived foray into painting began around 1907. In the Summer of 1908, painting became intensely important in his personal life. It was at this time that the relationship between himself, wife Mathilde Schoenberg, and friend Richard Gerstl, which had come about through painting lessons, became devastatingly complex, ending in Gerstl's suicide in November of the same year. Beginning 18 December 1911, Schoenberg's art was displayed at the *Erste Ausstellung der Redaktion Der Blaue Reiter* in Munich alongside the works of Wassily Kandinsky, Gabriele Münter and others.

<sup>32</sup> For a contemporaneous discussion of the relevance of authenticity in the realm of early twentieth-century art see: Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations*, ed. by Hannah Arendt and trans. by Harry Zohn. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968.

listener, and the cultural and social milieu) have made this unavailable. In this way, Jauss's "horizon of expectation" is metaphorically represented. To borrow from Kant, we are constantly interacting with the phenomenal-Schoenberg, but are permanently unable to perceive the noumenal-Schoenberg, the Schoenberg-*an-sich*.

On another level, the characteristic patterning that results from the reflections within the kaleidoscope is also appropriate as a comparison to modernism, and especially Schoenberg, for whom pattern and repetition were important concepts. Despite the persistent notion that Schoenberg never repeated himself, repetition and recollection were crucial elements of his music. The mosaic or collage is often referred to as a practice beginning from modernist thought. For modernists, the mosaic acted as a form, not merely as the negation of form. We find a similar concept in Schoenberg's monodrama *Erwartung*, where the rejection of form constitutes a form itself. Related to the mosaic is the oft-repeated statement that modernism in music was the point at which a dominant musical style no longer existed, but was replaced by disintegrated and highly individualized styles, characterized by a tendency towards experimentalism. Arnold Whittall calls it "the fractured, fragmented condition of musical modernity."<sup>33</sup> The relevance of the kaleidoscope should be clear – a visual representation of the fractured mosaic of musical modernism.

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<sup>33</sup> Arnold Whittall, "Schoenberg Since 1951: Overlapping Opposites," *The Musical Times* 142 (Autumn 2001): 19.

## CHAPTER 1:

### *Second String Quartet, Op. 10*

Although Schoenberg's music had faced criticism before 1908, the premiere of his *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10 was a turning point in his polarized public reputation throughout continental Europe and abroad. The premiere of Op. 10 took place on 21 December 1908 in Vienna's Bösendorfer-Saal, presented by soprano Marie Gutheil-Schoder and the Rosé Quartet, an ensemble led by Mahler's brother-in-law, violinist Arnold Rosé. The riotous premiere transformed into a weeks-long press war between Viennese critics. Because of its scandalous premiere the work became instantly infamous, and its controversy has remained an immutable fixture in Schoenberg's reception since that point. The extreme reactions quickly reached a height of sensationalism against which Schoenberg's later premieres were inevitably compared, and soon outrage or disgust were considered par for the course with a Schoenberg performance. On the relatively few occasions nothing noteworthy happened, critics seized on the calm reception itself as newsworthy.

The chaos of the premiere was the result of many converging preconceptions and agendas, spurred on by musical factors and personal biases. Musically, the *Second Quartet* challenged the long-standing and culturally significant genre of the string quartet in the city

that considered it to be the highest pinnacle of musical absolutism. Not only was the harmonic language of Op. 10 radical, but the inclusion of Stefan George's text in the final two movements seemed a deliberate disavowal of the string quartet as absolute music. Even before the soprano enters, the *Second Quartet* confronted this genre boundary by the inclusion of the folksong "Ach, du lieber Augustin" in the second movement scherzo. The "Augustin" quotation provoked a confusion that continues to resonate in today's literature, as scholars still debate the intention and context of the folk song.<sup>1</sup>

Adding to any chafing against musical irritants were the countless personal, political, and cultural expectations and prejudices at work in the minds of listeners. Schoenberg's ability to find success outside the model of university training was undoubtedly irksome to Vienna's musically educated and the institutions they represented. Indeed, it was likely this lack of formal education that, in part, prompted Schoenberg to consider string quartet at this moment in his career. When Schoenberg and his family moved back to Vienna from Berlin in spring 1903 it was under considerable financial duress. In Berlin he had been conducting at the "Überbrettl" cabaret and teaching harmony at the Stern conservatory but he lacked the financial support from friends that had been available in Vienna. Thus his return to Vienna was not prompted by a specific opportunity there, but rather by the deficiency of a social safety net in Berlin. Back in Vienna he and Zemlinsky began teaching harmony in the

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<sup>1</sup> Bojan Bujić, *Arnold Schoenberg* (London: Phaidon, 2011), 60-1.  
Ethan Haimo, *Schoenberg's Transformation of Musical Language* (New York: Cambridge University Press), 227-230.  
Frisch, Walter, *The Early Works of Schoenberg, 1893-1908* (Berkeley: University of California, 1993), 266.  
Arnold Whittall, *Schoenberg Chamber Music* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1972), 21-22.  
Willi Reich, *Schoenberg: A Critical Biography*, trans. Leo Black (New York: Praeger, 1971), 34.

winter of 1904/5 at the Schwarzwald school where Elsa Bienenfeld taught music history.<sup>2</sup> Through this connection Schoenberg came into contact with several musicology students from the University of Vienna who attended his lectures at the recommendation of Guido Adler, among whom were Anton Webern, Heinrich Jalowitz, and Egon Wellesz.<sup>3</sup> Around the same time Alban Berg began studying with Schoenberg as well. Like his teacher, Berg had no formal musical education.<sup>4</sup>

One of Schoenberg's goals in Vienna was to obtain a position teaching theory at a conservatory. He applied to the *Akademie für Musik und darstellende Kunst* at a level similar to a *Privatdozent*. In order to get an academic job Schoenberg realized that in lieu of a pedigree he needed an excellent portfolio. In a letter to Karl Wiener, the president of the Academy, from February 1910 Schoenberg wrote:

Since the Academy has university status, I imagine it must be possible to treat such an application in the same way as is customary at universities, where a certain degree of scholarly (in my case, artistic) achievement makes one eligible for such an appointment.<sup>5</sup>

A look at Schoenberg's oeuvre from 1903 (when he returned to Vienna) to 1910 (when he contacted the Academy) shows prolificacy and a determined focus on chamber and orchestral works – weightier academic compositions. Such instrumental works of considerable heft include *Pelleas und Melisande* (1902-3), *String Quartet No. 1*, Op. 7 (1905), *Kammersymphonie I*, Op. 9 (1906), and, of course, the *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10 (1907/8).

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<sup>2</sup> Elsa Bienenfeld (1877-1942) was the first woman to be awarded a doctorate from the Institut für Musikwissenschaft der Universität Wien with a dissertation on Wolfgang Schmelztl. She also studied theory with Schoenberg and published analyses and reviews of his music.

<sup>3</sup> Bujčić, *Arnold Schoenberg*, 50-1.

<sup>4</sup> Douglas Jarman, "Berg, Alban" *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, Oxford University Press.

<sup>5</sup> Letter to Karl Wiener, 19 February 1910, ASC L81.

Translation by Eithne Wilkins et al. in Erwin Stein, ed., *Arnold Schoenberg Letters* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 26-7.



These compositions could be the artistic achievements to which Schoenberg was referring in his letter to Karl Wiener. Douglas Jarman also supports the idea that a string quartet would have been appealing to an academic institution considering hiring a theorist:

In the case of Schoenberg and Berg, it is not too fanciful to suggest that the sense of having a stake in the claim as descendants of this great tradition was also compounded by personal factors, since both composers were trained outside those musical institutions – the Hochschule für Musik, the Vienna Academy and the University – that were regarded as embodying that tradition.<sup>6</sup>

The string quartet carried significance both as a genre for the university-educated and as a tradition of the great composers to whom Vienna owed its musical identity. These implications, along with the fact that Schoenberg had access to the Rosé quartet through his connection with Mahler, explain why he turned to this genre twice in a matter of a few years. The status of the quartet as an academic genre may also have been part of the reason why the Viennese public would have been particularly resistant to Schoenberg's efforts, both in 1905 and 1908.

In addition to the issue of educational assimilation, Schoenberg's alliances with Mahler and with his own students, who could be vocal and fanatical at times, had the consequence of gaining him enemies by association. There was also an overarching fear of encroaching modernism weighing heavily on fin-de-siècle Vienna, perceived with increasing clarity by those who felt threatened by it. Though no reports following the Op. 10 premiere directly address Schoenberg's Jewishness – in fact there are very few during this entire period that mention it explicitly at all – it was an undeniable part of the general dislike of his musical

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<sup>6</sup> Douglas Jarman, "The Austro-German Quartet," in *The Twentieth-Century String Quartet*, ed. Douglas Jarman (Tadmorden, Lancs, UK : Arc Music, 2002), 13.

radicalism. For many listeners in Vienna and elsewhere modernism was not only a catch-all term for unrelenting progress and the inevitable downfall of humanity, but it was also closely linked with a fear of being overwhelmed and outnumbered by the Other. In Vienna the greatest signal of otherness was Jewishness or perceived Jewishness.

## *The State of the String Quartet ca. 1908*

In a landscape that Max Reger described as comprising ‘Brahmsian Fog’ and Wagnerian ‘white heat,’ the string quartet in particular became a battleground for musical aesthetics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>7</sup> With the injection of extra-musical ideas into the symphony in the nineteenth century – both through the addition of text and through form dictated by non-musical parameters, as in the programmatic concert overture, Lisztian symphonic poem, and Straussian tone poem – chamber music, and the string quartet most of all, came to be understood as the final stronghold of absolute music.<sup>8</sup> The string quartet represented the aesthetic values of absolute music, to the point that it held special significance as an historic artifact for some. Carl Dahlhaus took this view a step further in his 1980 text *Nineteenth-Century Music* (trans. 1989) by arguing that, “after Beethoven, string quartets resembled fossil specimens of an extinct genre.”<sup>9</sup> Like much of Dahlhaus’s writings, this assertion has the sort of bombastic panache that makes it enviably

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<sup>7</sup> Cited in: Frisch, Walter, *The Early Works of Schoenberg, 1893-1908* (Berkeley: University of California, 1993), 3.

<sup>8</sup> Haimo, *Schoenberg’s Transformation of Musical Language*, 24.

<sup>9</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 28.

Dahlhaus’s position is countered by contemporary Paul Griffiths: “More than any other sort of music in the western tradition, the string quartet has enjoyed the stability yet also the capacity for constant renewal of a living species.” Paul Griffiths, *The String Quartet* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1983), 7.

quotable. But behind this flair is a kernel of truth and part of the explanation of why Schoenberg's *Second Quartet* created a scandal in its first performance. Fossils are organic matter that is no longer living, no longer dynamic. To say that the string quartet was a fossil after Beethoven is to argue that it was no longer changing. Rather than asserting that the string quartet was an irrelevant or past-its-prime genre, I understand Dahlhaus's statement to be an observation that composers in the second half of the century did not (or would not) expand the musical features of the quartet beyond what Beethoven had employed. In Dahlhaus's view, the string quartet became an artifact, unable to sustain new theories within the constraints of four voices, four movements, and the formal considerations (such as sonata form) that relied upon tonality and motivic development for their structure. By claiming to write a string quartet in the first decade of the twentieth century, a composer was implicitly entering into a covenant to write a piece for two violins, viola, and cello, in which each of the parts was – allegedly – in conversation with each other, consisting of four movements, where the first followed sonata-allegro form, and which featured a slow movement and an intermezzo or scherzo. Any gentle tampering with these elements would evoke surprise, or perhaps even interest from a musically knowledgeable audience. Severe infringement of these boundaries, however, would be less easily tolerated. Long before Dahlhaus's claims, the question of modernizing the string quartet was on the minds of early twentieth-century Viennese cultural critics. Writer and philosopher Richard von Kralik asked in 1907, "whether it is even possible to make the string quartet, with the conventional arrangement of four instruments, compatible with modern theories."<sup>10</sup> Kralik does not

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<sup>10</sup> Richard von Kralik, "Konzerte," *Das Vaterland*, 48, Vienna, 10 February 1907.

explicitly say which theories he means, but we can suppose he was referring to expanding tonality and instrumentation, as in Mahler's music, for example, or extra-musical content, as in the case of Strauss.

Dahlhaus's assertion that the string quartet was no longer changing after Beethoven is only partially correct. It would be more accurate to say that the strict expectations placed on a quartet in the Viennese tradition during this point allowed for very little variation. It is important to note that not all scholars agree upon the extent of Beethoven's influence on the string quartet shortly after his death. As Antonio Baldassarre cautions:

It does not necessarily follow that, in surveying the history of the string quartet after Beethoven, the works of succeeding generations are to be seen merely as attempts either to measure up to Beethoven's challenge or to sidestep it.<sup>11</sup>

Paul Griffiths also notes that instead of adapting the quartet during the second half of the nineteenth century, many composers turned to other string ensembles, as evidenced in Brahms's *String Sextet, No. 1*, Op. 18 (1860), *Piano Quintet*, Op. 34 (1864), and *String Sextet, No. 2*, Op. 36 (1865).<sup>12</sup> Dvořák's arrangement of his song cycle *Cypresses* (1865) for string quartet under the title *Echo of Songs*, B. 152 (1887) is yet another variation on the string quartet tradition. Not only is *Cypresses* an example of self-quotation, it also includes a programmatic element, and contains a non-normative twelve movements. This tendency to slip into other genres is partially due to the narrowness of the string quartet – that it may only comprise two violins, viola, and cello. Add one more instrument and you are writing a

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“Ob es überhaupt möglich ist, das Streichquartett mit der konventionellen Zusammenstellung der vier Instrumente, modernen Theorien dienlich zu machen.”

All translations by the author unless otherwise specified.

<sup>11</sup> Cliff Eisen, et al., "String quartet," *Grove Music Online*, Oxford University Press, accessed July 30, 2014.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

quintet, add two and it becomes a sextet and so on. Such works would then not be considered string quartets, would not be incorporated into the canon as such and consequently could not change the genre. It should also not be assumed that a strictness of features implied a lack of musical works. Although the string quartet may have been static in certain ways, it was certainly being composed in the late nineteenth century. A quick glance at the repertoire shows the importance of Brahms, Dvořák, and Reger, among others, from the 1860s through the turn of the twentieth century. The codification of the string quartet in the nineteenth century began to slowly erode in works such as Dvořák's "American" quartet, Op. 96 (1893), which used pentatonic motives, and Debussy's quartet (1893) which used a combination of chromatic, tonal, and whole-tone harmonies and expanded the timbral profile of the string family.

That Schoenberg was a native Viennese composer writing a string quartet for a Viennese audience added another layer of implicit responsibility. Vienna took the string quartet very seriously. As Christoph Wolff has claimed, "one cannot find any other place in Europe...that could even remotely compete with Vienna when it comes to the overall importance of the quartet genre."<sup>13</sup> For Viennese listeners, the string quartet was a representation of their historical musical identity as the city of Brahms, Beethoven, Mozart and Haydn.<sup>14</sup> Considering Schoenberg's deep sense of historical inevitability as an heir to this Viennese musical tradition, it is no surprise that he returned to the string quartet repeatedly throughout his compositional career as he shaped his own relationship to the genre. Before the Op. 10 quartet, Schoenberg composed the *String Quartet, No. 1*, Op. 7 (1905) and his

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<sup>13</sup> Christoph Wolff, "Schoenberg, Kolisch, and the Continuity of Viennese Quartet Culture," in *Music of My Future: The Schoenberg Quartets and Trio*, ed. Reinhold Brinkmann et al. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 2000), 14.

<sup>14</sup> Jarman, "The Austro-German Quartet," 3.

early D Major Quartet (1897), which were representative of the ‘fossilized’ genre. Even though Op. 7 was one continuous movement and, as later explained, written to a secret program, it still presented itself as absolute music.<sup>15</sup> In the *Second Quartet*, however, the inclusion of the soprano in the final two movements breaks several of the promises of the work as a string quartet. It is no longer a work for strings, or even a quartet, and the addition of text means the piece is no longer absolute music. Yet it is also not a work for solo voice with accompaniment or simply program music. The question of whether or not contemporaries viewed Op. 10 as program music is especially important in Vienna, considering the influence of Eduard Hanslick’s strong negative opinions about extra-musical content. Hanslick’s criticism, which reverberated throughout the imperial city even into the first decade of the twentieth century, shaped and reflected the views of Viennese listeners, who were famously conservative in their preferences.<sup>16</sup>

In a 1912 interview for Prague’s German language newspaper *Bohemia*, conducted by a correspondent identified as A. St., Schoenberg addressed the issue of program music. When asked if his absolute music, *Verklärte Nacht* and the two quartets (according to the interviewer), was also based on a program, Schoenberg answered: “No way...And since

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<sup>15</sup> The programmatic element of Op. 7 is a text of Schoenberg’s invention identified in Sketchbook I by Christian Martin Schmidt in 1986. The text expresses anxiety and despair over a romantic relationship, including a yearning to be engulfed and absorbed, similarly to George’s “Entrückung.” For further discussion see: Christian Martin Schmidt, “Schönbergs very definite-but private Programm zum Streichquartette Opus 7,” in *Bericht über den 2. Kongress der Internationalen Schönberg-Gesellschaft: Die Wiener Schule in der Musikgeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Internationalen Schönberg-Gesellschaft, Bd. 2, ed. Rudolf Stefan et al. (Wien: Elisabeth Lafite, 1986); 233-34.

Walter B. Bailey, *Programmatic Elements in the Works of Schoenberg* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1984), 129-131.

Mark Benson, “Schoenberg’s Private Program for the String Quartet in D Minor, Op. 7,” *The Journal of Musicology* 11/3 (Summer 1993); 374-395.

<sup>16</sup> For a more detailed discussion of program music in Vienna see: Walter B. Bailey, *Programmatic Elements in the Works of Schoenberg* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1984).

then [*Pelleas*] I haven't written any program music at all...whoever understands me understands me without words."<sup>17</sup> Like any quote by Schoenberg (or any source), this motivation behind this assertion must be considered within its context. Program music would have been viewed as antiquated at the time that Schoenberg made these remarks. As Jarman writes:

By 1909-10 programme music had become unfashionable...and by the end of the First War it had become totally outmoded – swept away, with all the other trappings of Romanticism, by the 'New Objectivity.'<sup>18</sup>

This perspective can be seen in Schoenberg's answers as he not only claims that he had not written program music since *Pelleas*, but also fails to correct the interviewer on the programmatic elements of *Verklärte Nacht*.<sup>19</sup>

To understand if Op. 10 is program music (based on the poetic content of the final two movements) it is crucial to clarify the program/absolute music dichotomy as it pertains to the early twentieth century. John C. Crawford and Dorothy L. Crawford have suggested that with the advent of expressionism – for which an explicit date is not given, but likely meant to be the first decade of the twentieth century – program music and absolute music dovetailed:

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<sup>17</sup> C19120229\_a\_r A. St. „Bei Arnold Schönberg: Eine Unterredung vor Zugsabgang,“ *Bobemia*, 2 March 1912. “Keineswegs...Und seither habe ich keinerlei Programmmusik geschrieben...Wer mich versteht, der versteht mich ohne Worte.“

N.B. “C19120229\_a\_r” and corresponding citations refer to the file names of newspapers that are owned by the Arnold Schoenberg Center, Vienna (hereafter ASC) as part of Schoenberg's estate and have been digitally formatted. The file names are searchable through the ASC's archive pages.

<sup>18</sup> Jarman, “The Austro-German Quartet,” 17.

See also: Carl Dahlhaus, *Schoenberg and the New Music*, trans. Derrick Puffett et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 99.

“...the tradition of programme music, the very tradition that was the quickest to become obsolete in the twentieth century and which fell into disrepute as representing all that was bad in the nineteenth century.”

<sup>19</sup> At that point he would not yet have disclosed the hidden program to Op. 7.

Expressionism marks the end of the nineteenth-century concept of program music... While the new music is never without content, there is no longer a literary program, or narrative, for the personal and psychological content of expressionist music is not expressed in a linear way<sup>20</sup>

According to this understanding, *all* expressionist works are programmatic (i.e. extra-musical), and to describe them as so is superfluous. Whether or not a piece of music is or can be expressionist is another matter (see Chapter 4). What keeps Op. 10 from becoming only program music is its tight motivic unity, as Ethan Haimo has identified.<sup>21</sup> Op. 10, like *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15 that would come after it, is not structured solely around George's texts. The form of the *Second Quartet* is still musically, not textually derived. Dahlhaus, too, understood a similar breakdown of the boundary between form and expression in the genre of the quartet, arguing that:

It had become virtually impossible to strike the precarious and mutually conditioned balance between subjectivity of expression – as in late Beethoven – and rigorous objectivity of form; composers saw almost no escape from the trap of succumbing either to musical academicism or to programmatic confessions.<sup>22</sup>

As Dahlhaus sees it, these two forces paralyzed composers attempting to write a string quartet, ossifying the genre. If we accept that by the end of the nineteenth century the string quartet was an antiquated – if not completely dead – genre, then Schoenberg was clearly attempting to resurrect it. Nowhere is this clearer than in the *Second Quartet* where extra-musical content and motivically-derived form coexist.

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<sup>20</sup> John C. Crawford and Dorothy L. Crawford, *Expressionism in Twentieth-Century Music*, (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993), 16.

<sup>21</sup> Haimo, *Schoenberg's Transformation of Musical Language*, especially Chapter 11.

<sup>22</sup> Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 28.





Knowing what pieces audiences likely had heard by the time of the Op. 10 premiere is another important part of understanding the quartet's reception history. The structure and character of these works would be the standard against which new pieces were compared. This comparison would have taken place between the new work and the seminal works of previous centuries and also between the new work and contemporaneous pieces. Most likely, audiences would have referred to Reger's three quartets, Op. 54 (published 1902) and Op. 74 (published 1904), to Zemlinsky's Quartet No. 1 (1896), and certainly to Debussy's sole quartet (premiered 29 December 1893 in Paris), which garnered thoroughly mixed reviews at its premiere, but did not provoke anything approaching a riot. Debussy's quartet – coincidentally and arbitrarily also designated as Op. 10 – was one of the most innovative string quartets in recent memory for 1908 audiences. Earlier examples would have been Brahms's and Dvořák's string quartets, perhaps even Hugo Wolf's D Minor quartet (composed 1878, published 1903) and César Franck's D Major Quartet (1889), which strongly influenced Debussy's work. Audiences would have also understood that any piece designated as a string quartet was generically related to cherished tradition of the string quartets of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.

For Op. 10, however, the most frequently made comparison would have been to Schoenberg's other string quartets – especially Op. 7 (1905), which was frequently performed alongside the *Second Quartet* and had a similarly contentious premiere. Understandably, an audience would approach a composer's second quartet with expectations

based on his first. Musically, Op. 7 differs from Op. 10 most obviously in its one movement form, although Op. 7 is actually a condensed, non-stop four movement work. Many critics found the quartet impossible to listen to simply because of its colossal dimensions – over forty-five minutes in performance. Heinrich Schenker, staunch defender of the Viennese classical tradition, called the work “a singular protracted desecration [*Frevel*]” in a diary entry from February 1907.<sup>23</sup> Op. 7 also set a precedent for the Op. 10 in terms of reception.

Although there was not all out protest, Elsa Bienenfeld noted in her review that:

The work found vehement applause, which the composer and his interpreters deserved and which spurred harsh utterances of discontent and a demonstration from an opposing party.<sup>24</sup>

The seeds of the Op. 10 riot were already sown at the Op. 7 premiere almost two years earlier, but not until the end of 1908 would the slow boil of contention that had been building against Schoenberg finally overflow.

## *Op. 10 Premieres in Vienna*

The world premiere of the *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10 in Vienna on 21 December 1908 produced one of the most scandalous receptions in the early twentieth century. The criticism and chaos that it created not only affected Schoenberg psychologically, but it had a significant impact on his image, both domestically and internationally, as a figure of extreme radicalism. On that memorable date Schoenberg’s identity as a revolutionary was solidified.

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<sup>23</sup> Heinrich Schenker, Diary entry, 5 February 1907. Cited in: Martin Eybl, *Die Befreiung des Augenblicks: Schönbergs Skandalkonzerte 1907 und 1908 : Eine Dokumentation*, (Vienna: Böhlau, 2004), 91.

“Ein einziger langgezogener Frevel.”

<sup>24</sup> Elsa Bienenfeld, “Rosé-Quartett,” *Neues Wiener Journal*, No. 15, 6 February 1907, p. 13.

“Das Werk fand stürmischen Beifall, der dem Komponisten und seinen Interpreten galt und durch starke Mißfallenäußerungen einer gegnerischen Partei zu einer Demonstration wurde.”

The scene at the premiere of the *Second String Quartet* was the climax of an increasingly difficult relationship between Schoenberg and Vienna, preceded by tumultuous performances of the *String Quartet No. 1*, Op. 7 and the *Kammersymphonie*, Op. 9. More than any other performance of Schoenberg's music, the premiere of Op. 10 drew an incredible amount of contemporary press and analysis. Over a century later this premiere still stands as one of the most studied moments in Schoenberg's life and career. My aim is to supplement the existing discussion on these initial performances and to trace their relevance throughout the reception history of Op. 10 and subsequent works by Schoenberg in the critical years encompassing his so-called free atonality (1908-1924).<sup>25</sup> To advance this goal, my analysis will highlight the social, political, cultural, and interpersonal threads at work in these situations and their historical significance for the reception of Schoenberg and his works, as we understand them today.

In considering the reception history of Op. 10 across the period of 1908-1924 and between the geographic locations of continental Europe, Great Britain, and the United States, we must set boundaries and understand that both time and space were at play in how different audiences understood this work. Vienna in 1908 was not Vienna in 1924, neither was it London in 1908 and so on. Despite the convenient temptation of dissecting history into a grid with date and location corresponding linearly, events neither unfolded nor have we perceived them in this way. Rather, our reception of these various performances forms an intricate web that includes variables ranging from the personal to the international. For this reason, I divide my discussion of the early performances of Op. 10 chronologically as

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<sup>25</sup> For further information regarding the events surrounding the premiere and the "second premiere" in Vienna see: Severine Neff, ed., *The Second String Quartet in F-sharp Minor, Op. 10: Authoritative Score, Background and Analysis, Commentary* (NY: W. W. Norton, 2006).

well as geographically, and consider the reception of the work before the First World War separately from that during and after the conflict.

To understand the premiere and early performances of Op. 10 in Vienna (21 December 1908, 25 February 1909, 12 October 1910, and 29 June 1912, respectively) we need to know the musical tastes and experiences of the individuals involved. For those critics known by name this task is relatively simple. The main players of the press at the premiere – Hans Liebstöckl (musical correspondent for *Die Reichswehr* and *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt*), Ludwig Karpath (*Signale* and *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*), Paul Stauber (*Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt*), Julius Korngold (*Neue Freie Presse*), and Max Kalbeck (*Neues Wiener Tagblatt*) – were quite vocal after the performance in their reviews, and their opinions and musical preferences are well documented. Nevertheless, these music critics constituted only one part of the picture of a reception history. They generally dominate discussions of reception because their opinions were widely circulated and preserved and are easy to reconstruct. As for other musically literate audience members – perhaps, as Schoenberg would have surely agreed, even more educated and experienced than the critics – piecing together their reactions is more complicated. Spoken opinions are inevitably lost almost immediately, even if captured in the perspective of the receiver and reiterated at a later date with varying degrees of veracity. With an understanding of the complexity inherent to reception, this study will focus on the critical reaction to Schoenberg's works and the ways that they influenced and interacted with larger trends of public reception.

In the very first years of the twentieth century, Viennese musical life was still feeling the hangover of the division between Brahms's neo-classicism and the New German School,

although the fog was clearing and the white-hot heat now a dying ember. Critics who were well-established ca. 1908 were mostly of Schoenberg's own generation, having come to age at a time when choosing a faction and aligning with one side of the divide was expected. This same mindset of discord and loyalty became a part of critics' self-identification. One especially enlightening statement came from Ludwig Karpath, music critic for *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*:

In Vienna everyone knows that Kalbeck is a Brahmsian, Korngold steadfastly belongs to no party, and that I am with body and soul a Wagnerian and a patron of all new composers.<sup>26</sup>

Despite Karpath's assertion that he supported all new composers, Schoenberg clearly did not feel the same, calling Karpath blind and willfully ignorant and revealing how the critic fell asleep at the premiere of *Pelleas und Melisande*.<sup>27</sup> Karpath was also accused in anonymous reports of being one of the aggravators at the Op. 10 premiere – a claim that he vehemently denied, although he admitted to participating in the riot, arguing that, “there is a substantial difference between inciting, to some extent, a demonstration and being carried along with many others.”<sup>28</sup>

Op. 10 garnered an incredible amount of press in the days and months following its premiere. Like the riot itself, many of the reviews and notices placed in Viennese and foreign papers had little to do with the music. In fact, the day after the premiere *Neues Wiener Journal*

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<sup>26</sup> “Beiträge zur musikalischen Kritik. ‘Der Fall Schönberg’,“ *Neue Musik-Zeitung*, 30/12, Vienna, 18 March 1909, pp. 261-262.

“In Wien ist jedem bekannt, dass Kalbeck ein Brahmsianer ist, Korngold streng genommen zu keiner Partei gehört, und dass ich mit Leib und Seele Wagnerianer und der Förderer aller neueren Komponisten bin.“

<sup>27</sup> Arnold Schoenberg, “Eine Rechtsfrage,” 16 January 1909, ASC T71.01.

<sup>28</sup> „Beiträge zur musikalischen Kritik. ‚Der Fall Schönberg,‘ *Neue Musik-Zeitung* 30/12, Vienna, 18 March 1909, 261-262.

„Es ist nun wesentlich verschieden, ob man eine Demonstration gewissermaßen inszeniert oder ob man von vielen anderen mitgerissen wird.“

ran an article on the performance in a section reserved for local news “because it was a local matter, not an artistic one.”<sup>29</sup> Even after the second premiere in February 1909, Dr. Ferdinand Scherber, a contemporary composer and critic for *Die Zeit* and *Wiener Blätter*, sent a letter to the *Neue Musik-Zeitung* addressing the December performance. Scherber wrote that, “the vexing ‘Schoenberg Affair’ really has nothing to do with [confusion], yes I contend that it had nothing at all to do with art.”<sup>30</sup> Scherber instead insisted that the riot could be traced back to Mahler, who had left Vienna the previous fall to honor a contract to conduct the New York Metropolitan Opera House but returned to Vienna briefly in the summer of 1908. Mahler’s departure from Vienna meant that, in large part, frustrations intended for him were now displaced onto Schoenberg. Several sources assert that the scandal was singular in the history of Viennese concert life and that, “it came to a proper scandal during the performance of a composition, the instigators having come already obviously riled up with anger about other issues.”<sup>31</sup> That the riot was unique is perhaps true in the degree of upset it caused, but assuredly not in the kind, since vocal audiences were a staple in Viennese concert life at this time. Many articles focused solely on the behavior of the attendees and who exactly was to blame for the situation. Those writers with sympathies for the composer frequently pointed out the inexcusable behavior of the protesters, citing the customary practice of sitting in silence or even exiting the concert hall during an offensive piece of

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<sup>29</sup> “Ein Skandal im Bösendorfersaale,” *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, No. 352, 22 December 1908.

“...weil es sich eben nur um einen ‘lokalen’, nicht künstlerischen Vorfall handelt.”

<sup>30</sup> Ferdinand Scherber, „Beiträge zur musikalischen Kritik. ‚Der Fall Schönberg,“ *Neue Musik-Zeitung*, 30/12, Vienna, 18 March 1909.

“Die leidige ‘Affäre Schönberg’ ...hat damit wirklich nicht zu tun, ja ich behaupte, dass sie überhaupt mit der Kunst nicht zu tun hat.”

<sup>31</sup> “Ein Skandal im Bösendorfersaale,” *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 22 Dec. 1908

“Es kam zu einem regelrechten Skandal während der Aufführung einer Komposition, deren Urheber auch schon mit andern Erzeugnissen öffentliches Ärgernis erregt hatte.”

music. Both supporters and detractors mentioned a group of young Schoenberg “worshippers” (*Anhänger*) as the instigators.

It seems that the trouble began after the uneventful first movement, which a contemporary critic called “quite tame for a Schoenberg work.”<sup>32</sup> It was at this point that supporters cheered the work prematurely and overzealously. David Josef Bach, who knew Schoenberg from childhood and was a music critic for Vienna’s *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, wrote how “just after the first movement, some [of the Schoenberg group] started screaming wildly and applauding, which then triggered a backlash.”<sup>33</sup> Schoenberg supporters were likely reacting not only to previous experiences, such as the Op. 7 premiere, but also to the negative chatter that had arisen pre-concert. A review in the *Neues Wiener Journal* mentioned “a large portion of the audience, who held inflammatory discussions in the foyer against the work of Schoenberg to be performed, even before the concert began.”<sup>34</sup> Without a doubt many of those who participated in the disruption of the concert arrived that evening with the intention to do so. Most concert-goers in Vienna had an idea of what Schoenberg’s music would sound like, and Op. 10 was certainly not so musically different from previous works to warrant such an uproar. Richard Batka, who studied musicology with Guido Adler at the

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<sup>32</sup> “Tagesneuigkeiten. Lärmszenen im Konzertsaal,” *Fremden-Blatt*, No. 352, 22 Dec. 1908.

After the New York premiere of Op. 10 on 6 January 1924 a review noted that the first movement was “astonishingly conventional.” See: “League of Composers,” *Musical Courier*, 10 January 1924, pp. 26-27.

<sup>33</sup> David Joseph Bach, „Feuilleton. Der neueste Fall Schönberg,” *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, No. 2, 2 January 1909, pp. 1-2.

“So erzeugten jene schon nach dem ersten Satze ein geradezu tolles Beifallsgeschrei, das den Gegenschlag auslöste.”

Other articles corroborate this story. The *Neuer Wiener Tagblatt*, No. 32, from 22 December 1908 traced a similar narrative: “Schluß des ersten Satzes. Da werden im Stehparterre Beifallsrufe laut. Dies ist das Signal zum Skandal, der wie eine Lawine anwächst, abflaut, wieder anhebt und schließlich in ein Fortissimo ausklingt.” In the same way, Vienna’s *Fremden-Blatt*, No. 352, from 22 December 1908 explains: “Schon nach dem ersten...Satz wurde der Beifall, der erscholl, mit energischen Zischlauten beantwortet.”

<sup>34</sup> “Rosé Quartett,” *Neues Wiener Journal*, No. 5450, 22 December 1908.

“Ein großer Teil des Publikums, welcher schon vor dem Konzert gegen das aufzuführende Werk von Schoenberg aufrührerische Reden im Foyer hielt.“

University of Vienna and who wrote for and edited the *Prager Tagblatt* and *Der Merker*, noted in an article in Vienna's *Fremden-Blatt* that, "one certainly knows in Vienna what there is to expect from a Schoenbergian composition, and what to fear, for that matter."<sup>35</sup> It seems unlikely – indeed, unbelievable – that someone would have attended the premiere with no knowledge of Schoenberg or his works and with a completely open mind only to be so overwhelmed by the music as to disregard all concert etiquette. This power to destroy social norms and control listeners against their will was precisely the implication that detractors were aiming at in order to characterize Schoenberg as a dangerous and destructive force.

Karpath also conveniently used this as an excuse for his conduct:

So I only want to cite as evidence [for my behavior] that I suffered physical pain, and, like a hopeless martyr, against my best intentions to overcome the worst, I still had to cry out.<sup>36</sup>

Just as the second movement was beginning, the audience – primed for an incident – broke into laughter, perhaps prompted by a sneeze or a chuckle from one person or another. Laughter continued throughout the scherzo, drowning out most of the music and putting the Rosé Quartet in the awkward position of performing for a rowdy and dissenting public. It seems that the "Augustin" quotation was not the catalyst for this outbreak, and, indeed, the folk song is, surprisingly, not mentioned in any reviews of the premiere at all. The inclusion of soprano in the final two movements was, however, further cause for excitement. When Gutheil-Schoder appeared on stage there was a brief pause in the commotion, since

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<sup>35</sup> Richard Batka, "Zum Schoenberg-Skandal im Bösendorfer-Saale," *Fremden-blatt* (Vienna), 24 December 1908. "Man weiß in Wien nachgerade, was man von einer Schoenbergischen Komposition zu hoffen, beziehungsweise zu fürchten."

<sup>36</sup> Ludwig Karpath, *Signale* (Berlin), 6 January 1909.

"...so will ich damit nur den Beweis liefern, dass ich physische Schmerzen ausstand, und wie ein arg Gepeinigter, trotz aller guten Absicht selbst das Schlimmste zu überwinden, nun doch aufschreien mußte."



she was well-respected as a singer of the Court Opera, but the riot soon started up again with even more fervor. The reviewer for the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* characterized the soprano part as simply adding more chaos, writing “it was her task to perform the vocal part of the cacophony. The witches’ dance of the third movement began.”<sup>37</sup> The strangeness of describing the somber and melodic *Litanei* – a plea for release from earthly suffering – as a witches’ dance reflects the lengths that critics were willing to go to in order to represent Schoenberg and his music as unnatural and dangerous. The addition of the voice to the quartet proved enough by some accounts to sway those undecided audience members against the work. As the *Neue Freie Presse* article notes, “after the third movement, which allowed a singing voice to enter into the string quartet, the indifferent joined vehemently into the fight between the parties.”<sup>38</sup>

Apparently the commotion was so great that the fourth movement was delayed and once it finally started was interrupted by cries of “Stop! Knock it off! We won’t let ourselves be fooled! [*Wir lassen uns nicht narren!*]” according to Karpath.<sup>39</sup> As a verb, *narren* can mean to be fooled or to be hoaxed, while *Narr* (plural *Narren*) as a noun means a fool or a madman. The double meaning of this cry is that the audience rejected the “hoax” that Op. 10 was truly music, hence they refused to be deceived, but it was also a personal jab at Schoenberg’s

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<sup>37</sup> “Ein Skandal im Bösendorfersaale,” *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 22 December 1908.

“Ihre Aufgabe war es, den vokalen Teil der Kakophonien auszuführen. Der Hexentanz des dritten Satzes beginnt.”

<sup>38</sup> “Lärmszenen während eines Konzerts im Bösendorfer Saale,” *Neue Freie Presse*, No. 15927, Vienna, 22 December 1908.

“Nach dem dritten Satz, der eine Singstimme (Frau Gutheil-Schoder) dem Streichquartett hinzutreten lässt, mengten sich in den Kampf der Parteien heftige Schlußrufe der Unbeteiligten.”

<sup>39</sup> Ludwig Karpath, *Signale*, Berlin, 6 January 1909.

According to an article titled “Lärmszenen im Konzertsaal” published in Vienna’s *Fremden-Blatt* on 22 December 1908: “...die Aufführung des zweiten Gedichtes geradezu in Frage stand und erst nach längeren Hostilitäten ermöglicht war.”

sanity. Max Kalbeck – the “Brahmsian” whose distaste for Schoenberg and his music was at best thinly concealed – wrote in the *Neues Wiener Abendblatt* that, “thusly the composition and others like it is not an aesthetic, but rather a pathological case.”<sup>40</sup> This trope of mental instability continued well into the reception of Op. 10. After a performance on 3 October 1916 in Dresden (the only performance during the war from which reviews are extant), the critic identified only as W. Pz. wrote:

Whenever an artist is tormented by such fearsome pathological states, as were exhibited with chilling ugliness in the string quartet Op. 10 played at the start, then his friends should encourage him to seek treatment rather than burdening strangers with the responsibility.<sup>41</sup>

Dr. Paul Marsop, in his criticism of the riot, asserted that it was the instigators that were the pathological force, noting how “the blindly raging hatred that the reactionary ‘confusion-agitators’ [*Konfusionserregern*] incite against modern musical art and composers is essentially pathological.”<sup>42</sup> Continuing the metaphor of disease and insanity was Marsop’s characterization of the inciters as *Erregern*, a term that can also refer to pathogens. The focus on mental and physical wellness was not only a powerful image with which to attack an enemy, but a reference to the rapidly developing fields of both psychology and epidemiology in the late nineteenth century and their effect on public discourse. Both insanity and disease theory were also forceful tools for eugenicists. That the Jewish body and mind were unalterably diseased was a widely-held belief in fin-de-siècle Vienna, and references to

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<sup>40</sup> Max Kalbeck, *Neues Wiener Abendblatt*, 24 December 1908.

“So ist auch die Komposition und ihre Art kein ästhetischer, sondern ein pathologischer Fall.”

<sup>41</sup> W. Pz., “Arnold-Schönberg-Abend,” *Dresdner Neueste Nachrichten*, 5 October 1916.

“Wenn eine Künstler von so fürchterlichen pathologischen Zuständen gepeinigt wird, wie sie in dem zu Anfang gespielten Streichquartett Op. 10 mit abschreckender Häßlichkeit geschildert werden, dann sollten seine Freunde ihn der Genesung zuführen und nicht Fremde damit belästigen.”

<sup>42</sup> Paul Marsop, „Anmerkung. Aus Wien kam jüngst,“ *Neue Musik-Zeitung*, 21 January 1909, p. 161. „Der blindwütige, von den reaktionären „Konfusionserregern“ aufgestachelte Haß gegen moderne Tonkunst und Tonkünstler wird nachgerade pathologisch.”

Schoenberg's unstable mental facilities would have been perceived as a clear attack on his race.<sup>43</sup> As a result, the trope of insanity would continue to recur throughout Schoenberg's reception history.<sup>44</sup>

Although there were negative characterizations in the press following the premiere – Karpath and Kalbeck, for example – the overwhelming reaction from critics and journalists was that the riot was unwarranted. Many pieces echoed the sentiment that it was incredibly disrespectful to the Rosé Quartet, Gutheil-Schoder, and, indeed, Schoenberg to not give the piece a fair listening. According to a report published the next day, “one must reject in the most forceful way such conduct by the audience against the work of a serious composer.”<sup>45</sup> Batka similarly asserted that the audience has “the right to be enthusiastic, but no right to protest” during a performance, although “there is always the choice to express one's unhappiness with the *performance* but not with the *work* [emphasis original].”<sup>46</sup> Marsop, too, echoed this same idea:

Whatever one likes to think about Schoenberg, like every artist not lost in baseness of cabaret and the cesspool of operetta he has, at the very least, the right to be heard in peace before one judges his work.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> See: Sander L. Gilman, *The Case of Sigmund Freud: Medicine and Identity at the Fin de Siècle* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

<sup>44</sup> See: Peter Davidson, “...the madness that is believed...’ A Re-evaluation of the Life and Work of Arnold Schoenberg,” in *Reviving the Muse: Essays on Music After Modernism*, ed. Peter Davidson (Brinkworth: Claridge, 2001), 55-82.

<sup>45</sup> “Rosé Quartett,” *Neues Wiener Journal*, 22 December 1908.

“Man muß aufs heftigste ein solches Betragen des Publikums gegen das Werk eines ernsten Künstlers zurückweisen.”

<sup>46</sup> Batka, “Zum Schoenberg-Skandal im Bösendorfer-Saale,” *Fremden-blatt*, 24 December 1908.

“Es gibt ein Recht des Enthusiasmus, aber kein Recht der Entrüstung.”

“...es steht im höchstens frei, seiner Unzufriedenheit mit der *Aufführung*, nicht aber seine mit dem *Werke* auszudrücken.“

<sup>47</sup> Marsop „Anmerkung. Aus Wien kam jüngst,“ *Neue Musik-Zeitung*, 21 January 1909, p. 161.

“Was man auch über Schönberg denken mag: wie jeder Künstler, der sich nicht in die Regionen der Gemeinheit, also des Tingeltangels und des Operettensumpfes verliert, hat er doch zum mindesten das Recht darauf, in Ruhe gehört zu werden, ehe man über sein Werk urteilt.”

That Op. 10 did not even receive a fair listening actually worked in Schoenberg's favor, with critics calling for a repeat performance, which was given in February of the next year.

## *Analysis*

The long history of analyzing and studying Op. 10 began with an article released on 20 February 1909 in the Viennese journal *Erdegeist*. This publication, which was probably written by Schoenberg's student Heinrich Jalowetz and his brother-in-law Alexander von Zemlinsky, as Severine Neff and Mark Devoto have previously suggested, preceded the so-called second premiere on 25 February 1909 by only a few days.<sup>48</sup> Unlike the reception history, which evened out fairly rapidly so that performances of the work were no longer cause for concern, analytical discussions of the work have remained contentious. The main points of disagreement in the Op. 10 concern form (especially of movements 1 and 3); the extent to which F# Minor functions as an overarching tonic, both for the individual movements and the piece as a whole, and to which extent tonality can be understood as an organizational factor; and the relationship between Schoenberg's personal and artistic experiences, particularly in regards to the meaning and motivation of the "Augustin" quote in the scherzo and the first line of "Entrückung:" "Ich fühle luft von anderem planeten." Like many of Schoenberg's works, the *Second Quartet* has proved to be a fertile subject for

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<sup>48</sup> Neff, *The Second String Quartet in F-sharp Minor, Op. 10: Authoritative Score, Background and Analysis, Commentary*, 250.

Mark Devoto, "Translator's Remarks to 'Arnold Schoenberg's F# Minor Quartet: A Technical Analysis,'" *JASI* 16/1-2 (June & Nov. 1993); 293-322.

musicological and theoretical study long after audiences overcame their shock and indignation at its sound.

The first movement, which was all but dismissed by contemporary critics in practically every country during the first twenty years of its performance, has presented something of a formal conundrum for modern theorists. It was analyzed initially in the 1909 *Erdgeist* article as observing sonata form, and essentially all theorists in the past one hundred years have agreed on this point. Haimo, for one, writes that, “the first movement of the String Quartet, Op. 10 is probably the clearest example of a traditional sonata form in any of Schoenberg’s compositions.”<sup>49</sup> Still, identifying the exact moments at which the development and, especially, the recapitulation occur has proved more troublesome. The *Erdgeist* article argues that the recapitulation begins at m. 159 with the entrance of Theme B (Ex. 1). Regarding the earlier return of Theme A at m. 146, the article notes that, “in this way the reprise is thematically suggested in the midst of the development.”<sup>50</sup> After Theme A returns at m. 146 in F Major the harmony shifts back to F# Minor through a focus on C#, arriving

Example 1: Schoenberg, *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10, Mvt. 1, thematic index



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<sup>49</sup> Haimo, *Schoenberg’s Transformation of Musical Language*, 220.

<sup>50</sup> Devoto, “Arnold Schoenberg’s F# Minor Quartet,” p. 297.

“So wird noch im Gang der Durchführung die Reprise thematisch angedeutet.”



at the home key at m. 159 where Theme B enters at its original pitch level. According to this understanding, in which the recapitulation begins at m. 159, the earlier return of Theme A at m. 146 in the viola is a sort of false recapitulation, since the theme appears there in F major, or what would be  $\flat\hat{1}$  of the home key of F# Minor. Arnold Whittall agrees with the placement of the recapitulation at m. 159, citing as evidence the *ritardando* of mm. 146-159.<sup>51</sup>

In contrast, Walter Frisch, Severine Neff – who works from Schoenberg’s analysis of the quartet from 1949 – and, to a certain extent, Ethan Haimo, understand the recapitulation as beginning at m. 146. As Neff explains, Schoenberg considered  $\flat\hat{1}$  an acceptable key area – one that was hinted at as early as m. 3 of the movement in the first violin.<sup>52</sup> It is this offsetting of the thematic and tonal recapitulations that creates formal dissonance in the work. In my analysis I agree with Neff and Haimo, both of whom understand the recapitulation to be non-traditional – some elements of the exposition are reprised at m. 146 while others do not return until m. 159. This staggered recapitulation creates the effect of a fracture in the form, as if the development has created an imbalance and the recapitulation no longer lines up properly. This sense of a break or gap is analogous to what Michael

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<sup>51</sup> Whittall, *Schoenberg Chamber Music*, 21.

<sup>52</sup> Neff, *Second String Quartet*, 129.

Cherlin terms “time shards” in his metric and rhythmic analysis of Schoenberg’s works, and is yet another example of Schoenberg’s simultaneous adherence to and denial of traditional musical elements.<sup>53</sup>

Movement one is structured in sonata form, with a two-part exposition (mm. 1-89), development (mm. 90-145), and a recapitulation (mm. 146-233). Section one of the exposition (mm. 1-42) works with Themes A and B, while section two (mm. 43-89) is based on Themes C and D (Ex. 1). At m. 90 the development begins with Theme A. Except for the first few bars (m. 90-99) the development works exclusively with themes from the second section of the exposition (Themes C and D) – what would traditionally be an alternate key, usually the dominant. As the *Erdgeist* article first noted, this return of the opening theme at the beginning of the development (mm. 90-99) recalls classical sonata form, in which the exposition would be repeated.<sup>54</sup> Schoenberg was likely following Brahms’s example here, as in the first movement of his fourth symphony, where the development begins with a reprise of the first theme (m. 145). In Op. 10, the opening theme sounds distant and distorted at the beginning of the development, despite the literal repetition at pitch for two bars. Here Theme A is alienated through the timbre of strings playing *sul ponticello* and an initial harmonization of D Minor. As in the beginning of movement where Theme A disintegrates into octave Cs almost as soon as it starts, so, too does it fall apart quickly at the opening of the development into what Neff terms the “Luft” chord (0257), consisting of {C#, F#, E, B}.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Michael Cherlin, *Schoenberg’s Musical Imagination* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 180.

<sup>54</sup> Devoto, “Arnold Schoenberg’s F# Minor Quartet,” 296.

<sup>55</sup> Neff, *Second String Quartet*, 132.

Throughout the movement Theme A is volatile and fragile, never lasting more than a few measures at a time, despite being described as “a hymnlike passage that might almost have been written by Mendelssohn,” in a review of the American premiere in New York in 1924.<sup>56</sup> By contrast, Theme B is much more stable, fulfilling its lyrical potential in long phrases supported by ongoing accompaniment. The juxtaposition of the tenuous first theme and the steady second aligns not only with Cherlin’s metric analysis of time shards, but also with Frisch’s understanding of the reversed roles of consonance and dissonance in the piece. Frisch explains:

Schoenberg’s bold stroke here – one that has implications not only for sonata form but for his entire musical style – is to reverse the expected associations of tonality/consonance with stability, and of atonality/dissonance with instability.<sup>57</sup>

The tonal F# Minor first theme soon becomes linked with unpredictability, while the more tonally ambiguous second theme represents fulfilled expectations – metrically, rhythmically, and melodically. The structural instability inherently present in this theme is expressed through its rapid dissolution into F Minor and is reinforced throughout the first part of the exposition (Ex. 2). The second time that Theme A occurs (mm. 8-11), it stutters, repeating the pattern of the second bar, before stalling and throwing the cello down a diminished octave (m. 11-12). Here Theme B enters and stabilizes the exposition, pinned down by a chromatic but rhythmically predictable accompaniment. The pattern continues, with Theme A entering, faltering, and falling apart, culminating in the “Luft” chord just after the start of

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<sup>56</sup> “League of Composers,” *Musical Courier*, 10 January 1924, pp. 26-27.

<sup>57</sup> Frisch, *The Early Works of Arnold Schoenberg*, 260.



the development. Each time the tonal Theme A destabilizes, it is a chromatic element that enters to steady the movement.

Example 2: Schoenberg, *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10, Mvt. 1, harmony mm. 1-5.

etwas langsamer anfangen - - - 2 - - - 3 - - - 4 - - - 5 - - -

By far the most frequently addressed aspect of the second movement is the “Augustin” quotation (beginning at m. 165). This section has been interpreted as containing a number of musical or personal significances, ranging from a musical joke to a forewarning of the breakdown of tonality to a declaration of marital despair. American critics, especially, tended to find the quotation darkly humorous. After the New York premiere, one review called it “a tremendously funny joke (!) in the shape of a few snatches from Du Lieber Augustin.”<sup>58</sup> Another reviewer explained the quotation as a sort of inside joke, calling the scherzo:

A movement of a lively and ironical kind, in which is heard a parody of “Ach, du lieber Augustin.” This, of course, is very witty. When it comes on, the initiate are expected to laugh in an informed manner, while the uninitiate [*sic*] will incur the scorn of those with special comprehension of the composer’s meaning, because they are only laughing at what they consider a

<sup>58</sup> “League of Composers,” *Musical Courier*, 10 January 1924, pp. 26-27.

ridiculous thing occurring in the midst of an extremely long and discordant piece of music.<sup>59</sup>

The reviewer's characterization implied that he did not consider himself to be part of the initiate. It's unclear who exactly would have gotten the joke, considering that contemporary Viennese critics did not seem to react to the passage with understanding. Whatever the meaning of "Augustin," Schoenberg undeniably handles the quotation with incredible skill, transitioning from the coarse and macabre folk tune to a variation of Theme C from the second part of the exposition of the first movement (mm. 44-46) in a matter of sixteen measures. By keeping the theme from earlier in the second movement (m. 65) as an accompaniment above "Augustin" and altering the intervallic content of the tune slightly (Ex. 3), the folk melody morphs back into an agent of cyclical unity.

**Example 3: Schoenberg, *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10, intervallic content of "Augustin," Mvt. 2 and Theme C, Mvt. 1**



The entrance and subsequent dissolution of "Augustin" is disorienting for a number of reasons. After grinding to a near-halt, the quartet jolts into triple meter for the first time in the movement – the home meter of movement one – and trips into one of Cherlin's time shards. Stuck on a surreal expressionist carousel, the tune takes on an eerie quality in its unrelenting forward motion and stark juxtaposition between the D Major melody (parallel

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<sup>59</sup> "League of Composers," *The New York Times*, 7 January 1924.

major of the movement's D Minor tonal influence) and the chromatic accompaniment. At no point is there anything normal or convincing about the intrusion of the theme into the diegesis of the quartet. Like a song mis-remembered or heard through a dream, or an image distorted in water, the "Augustin" melody never integrates itself into the second movement. Rather, it merely grazes the surface of the work and momentarily influences some of the lines.

Example 4: Schoenberg, *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10, Mvt. 2, comparison of opening theme (mm. 7-9) and "Augustin" accompaniment (mm. 165-168)

The image displays two musical excerpts. The top excerpt, measures 7-9, is a single staff in D minor (one flat) with a treble clef. It features a melodic line starting on G4, moving chromatically down to D4. The dynamics are marked 'pp'. The bottom excerpt, measures 165-168, consists of two staves in D minor. The upper staff is marked 'sehr zart' and 'pp', showing a melodic line that is chromatic and somewhat fragmented. The lower staff is also marked 'pp' and shows a chromatic accompaniment. The key signature changes to D major (two sharps) for measures 166-168, which is noted as being 'off-key' in the text.

Throughout the entire section the first violin plays a fragment of the movement's first theme (Ex. 4). From mm. 165-170 both the first violin and cello remain uncommitted to the new tune, accompanying in chromatic lines that simulate off-key amateur street players. At m. 169 the second violin also falls out of character, so to speak, and back into the chromatic realm of the Op. 10, taking the folk melody with it in m. 171 by altering the intervallic content to anticipate the theme from movement one. By this point the cello is playing a more conventional oscillating accompaniment that could be heard as the secondary

dominant and tonic in the folk tune's D Major, but it is stuck in this pattern, irrespective of the melody, which is now fully a variation of Theme C leading into an exact repetition of the same theme.

The small-scale treatment of "Augustin" is impressive, as is the larger significance of the melody for the quartet as a whole. The introduction of a song melody bridges the categorical differences between the purely instrumental first movement, structured on sonata form, and the vocal third and fourth movements.<sup>60</sup> The text of "Augustin," in which the protagonist loses all his worldly possessions and relationships, is also reminiscent of the trajectory of George's poems as Schoenberg arranges them. Concerning the significance of the song for Schoenberg, personally, there is much less certainty. Frisch suggests that:

The intrusion of this popular song, especially of its last phrase, "Alles ist hin," serves, as is often remarked, as a kind of self-referential commentary on the disintegration of the musical language.<sup>61</sup>

Reinhold Brinkmann shared Frisch's assessment, arguing that:

We find the "Augustin" quote, an ironic use of the popular Viennese song in the trio of the Scherzo movement, reflecting on the perceived state of tonality both as a compositional principle and as a symbolic representation of the Western musical tradition.<sup>62</sup>

In regards to the "Augustin" quotation being a commentary on the end of tonality, the evidence is speculative. It is tempting to view Schoenberg's musical style retrospectively, as a steady march toward atonality and the abandonment of a less sustainable, inferior system, but this understanding is incorrect. The complete dissolution of tonality was not a reality, for musical history or for Schoenberg himself, and even in 1908 his sentiments towards tonality

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<sup>60</sup> Neff, *Second String Quartet*, 150.

<sup>61</sup> Frisch, *The Early Works of Arnold Schoenberg*, 266.

<sup>62</sup> Reinhold Brinkmann, "Schoenberg's Quartets and the Viennese Tradition," In *Music of My Future: The Schoenberg Quartets and Trio*, ed. Brinkmann et al. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 2000), 8.

do not fit with the lyric “all is lost.” As Haimo argues, “[Schoenberg] felt he was an agent of forward moving development, not a catalyst for disintegration and thus viewed what he was doing in positive, not negative terms.”<sup>63</sup> In fact, at a time of such personal crisis, compositional style was one aspect of his life where it was certain that not all was lost.

However, I do believe that Frisch’s and Brinkman’s assertions are partially correct. Schoenberg’s *treatment* of the “Augustin” theme brings to light the un-tenability of the folk idiom within the world of the *Second Quartet*. “Augustin” represents something much greater than its own lyrics here. Any other Viennese street song would have had the same effect, but none was so deeply ingrained with the identity of the city as the “Augustin” tune. Instead of the death of tonality or, even, the death of a marriage, the incompatibility of the folk tune and the environment of the quartet is a commentary on modernism, the passing of an era, and the rapidly transforming lifestyle of Viennese citizens. Fin-de-siècle Vienna was a time when the Ringstrasse was recently completed and the city was becoming more connected and noisier than ever. Automobile traffic increased – 1908 was even the year of the so-called Great Automobile Race from New York City to Paris – and was deafening on cobblestone streets where sound ricocheted between increasingly high buildings. As historian Peter Payer notes, “by the turn of the century, residents were commenting about the high level of background noise in the city and complaining about the difficulty of getting one’s bearing acoustically.”<sup>64</sup> The effects on daily life were significant, including the formation of anti-noise committees (*Antilärmverein*, 1909). In reviews of Schoenberg’s music, critics seized on the increasing awareness of sound and its potential evils. In Kalbeck’s antagonistic article in the

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<sup>63</sup> Haimo, *Schoenberg’s Transformation of Musical Language*, 228.

<sup>64</sup> Peter Payer, “The Age of Noise: Early Reactions in Vienna, 1870-1914,” *Journal of Urban History* 33/5 (July 2007); 776.

*Neues Wiener Abendblatt* after the premiere, the timely issue of noise pollution came to the fore as he disparaged Schoenberg's musical abilities:

For the composer's honor we want to assume that he is tone-deaf and therefore not musically in his right mind and doesn't know what sort of deplorable evil he suffers from. Otherwise the quartet would have to be qualified as a musical public nuisance and its author handed over to the authorities [*Sanitätspolizei*].<sup>65</sup>

By alluding to the detrimental effects on physical and mental well being of excessive noise, Kalbeck at once reduces Schoenberg's music to mere sound and condemns him as a hazard to society while openly slandering his competency as a composer. As far as "Augustin" is concerned, the issue of noise has a clear correlation. In the city during the first decade of the twentieth century it would have been increasingly difficult to hear the characteristic *Kaufrufe* of street traders and merchants that at one point dominated the aural landscape of downtown. One can easily imagine walking through the center of town and catching a strain of a street song only to have it drowned out by passing traffic. This is very much what happens with "Augustin" in the second movement. If the lyric "*alles ist hin*" truly was specifically important to Schoenberg, then it makes sense that it would have been in a larger context of a changing world. Bojan Bujic notes in his biography of Schoenberg, how the composer "tended to sublimate chaotic everyday experience into an ordered process."<sup>66</sup> The

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<sup>65</sup> Max Kalbeck, *Neues Wiener Abendblatt*, 21 December 1908.

"Zu Ehre des Komponisten wollen wir annehmen, daß er klangtaub, also musikalisch unzurechnungsfähig ist und nicht weiß, an welchem beklagenswerten Übel er leidet. Sonst müßte das Quartett als grober musikalischer Unfug qualifiziert und sein Verfasser von der Sanitätspolizei in Anklagenzustand versetzt werden."

<sup>66</sup> Bujic, *Arnold Schoenberg*, 66.

transformation of a bawdy tune into a commentary on current anxieties is precisely one such sublimation.<sup>67</sup>

For these same reasons the “Augustin” quotation is not related primarily to the Gerstl-affair either. There is no denying the immense effect on Schoenberg of the crisis of his wife’s infidelity with a close friend, but the crisis was not the sole reason for any and all of his actions during 1907-1908, as it sometimes is presented. First of all, it seems that Schoenberg’s interest in poetry and expressionism would have led him to something more poignant than a ditty about a drunken fool to express his despair. Moreover, the reconciliation between Schoenberg and Mathilde – to the extent that there was one – took the form of silence and repression. As Neff has noted, after Gerstl’s suicide, “[Schoenberg] immediately forbade his inner circle to speak of Mathilde’s relationship with the painter and reduced references to Gerstl in his own diary to the letter G.”<sup>68</sup> The aim was to erase Gerstl and his actions completely, and for good reason. Not only was it likely less emotionally and psychologically painful for Schoenberg simply to expunge Gerstl from the narrative of his life, but it was much better for his public image, too. Manuel Gervink suggests that:

Schoenberg was reputed to be the most evil modernist in Vienna. One would have published with the greatest delight that this Schoenberg, who many had thought for a long time already to be in the loony-bin, now had had his own wife run away from him.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Schoenberg’s tendency to rarify the mundane reflects Mahler’s habit of juxtaposing the banal with the divine. Mahler’s own connection with “Augustin” – as a street song that he heard in the midst of a bitter and violent fight between his parents – stands as one such example and adds a further layer to the significance of the song for Schoenberg. See: Stuart Feder, *Gustav Mahler: A Life in Crisis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 229-30.

<sup>68</sup> Neff, *The Second String Quartet in F-sharp minor, Opus 10*, 109.

<sup>69</sup> Manuel Gervink, *Arnold Schönberg und seine Zeit* (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 2000), 132.

„Schönberg war dort [Vienna] mittlerweile als der übelste Modernist verschrien. Man hätte es öffentlich voller Genuß ausgebreitet, daß diesem Schönberg, den man ja eigentlich schon längst in der Irrenanstalt gesehen habe, nun auch noch die eigene Frau davongelaufen wäre.“

As a matter of personal pride and self-preservation it was in Schoenberg's interest to make as few references to Gerstl as possible. It would have been surprising, then, for him to write Gerstl and the affair prominently into a piece of music that would be premiered in Vienna. Ultimately I agree with Haimo's conclusion in his analysis of Op. 10 that "Schoenberg's marital crisis was a terrible tragedy, one that embittered or destroyed three lives. But it was a personal tragedy, not an agent of artistic change."<sup>70</sup> The significance of "Augustin" lay primarily in Schoenberg's treatment of the theme, as a pre-existing melody that transformed itself into a theme from the first movement of the quartet.



Op. 10 is cyclically unified, with themes from all previous movements featured, either in nearly repeated or varied forms, with the exception of "Entrückung." Critics at the work's premiere perceived this thematic development, even before the score was published. Elsa Bienenfeld, who likely had seen the manuscript, noted that, "the thematic inventions are powerful and rich...nothing is arbitrary but rather the opposite, realized with the greatest consistency and with the utmost system."<sup>71</sup> Despite this overall unity, there remains a divide, both chronological and ideological, between the first two movements and the final two. Most obviously this is the result of the addition of soprano to movements three and four. The decision to add voice was one that Schoenberg made only after completing the first

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<sup>70</sup> Haimo, Ethan. *Schoenberg's Transformation of Musical Language*. 278.

<sup>71</sup> Elsa Bienenfeld, "Zur Aufführung des Quartetts von Arnold Schönberg," *Neues Wiener Journal*, 25 December 1908, pp. 24-25.

"... die thematische Erfindung kraftvoll und reich ist... in ihrer Verarbeitung nichts willkürlich, sondern im Gegenteil mit der größten Konsequenz, mit der äußersten Planmäßigkeit durchgeführt ist."



movement (1 September 1907) and beginning the second. As Haimo asserts, “In the first stage of work, there is no evidence that Schoenberg had intended the quartet to be anything other than a purely instrumental work.”<sup>72</sup> Because of Schoenberg’s teaching schedule during the academic year, he focused on composing the quartet during the summers of 1907 and 1908. In the interim, from the winter of 1907 to early spring of 1908, he was composing the first two movements of *Three Piano Pieces*, Op. 11 as well as *Two Songs*, Op. 14 and some of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15. During these years Schoenberg’s musical style was developing rapidly and, as a result, the first movement of Op. 10 stands somewhat apart from the final three movements. Not only is movement one purely instrumental but it is also based on traditional sonata form and held together in tight motivic unity. The form of movements two, three, and four are comparatively looser. Movement two is tripartite in structure, with the first section containing an exposition and development of three themes, the second being the trio in cut time (mm. 98-194), and the third a reprise of section one.

Movement three, “Litanei,” is a theme and variation set plus coda, structured in a very general sense on George’s poem, in that the variations relate to the poem’s strophes (see Appendix 2). But, as Alan Philip Lessem notes, the text is not the ultimate source of form:

Since Schoenberg continues to hold fast to procedures of developing variation already worked out in earlier instrumental works, and to a traditional formal scheme (sonata-allegro) supported by tonal elements, the text must be considered as serving only as a guiding inspiration to the flow of musical thought<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Haimo, *Schoenberg’s Transformation of Musical Language*, 211.

<sup>73</sup> Lessem, *Music and Text in the Works of Arnold Schoenberg: The Critical Years, 1908-1922* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1979), 36.

The first five strophes of the poem are all encapsulated within their own variation and are separated from each other by instrumental interludes of varying lengths. The final three strophes (part of the coda) occur in quick succession with no instrumental breaks. These phrases do not always correspond exactly with the meter, leading the strophes to enter mid-bar in most cases. Musically, the voice is the agent of change within the movement, introducing new material. The strings, while not strictly relegated to the role of accompaniment, are performing variations and amalgams of themes from the previous two movements and, in the coda, from the recently introduced vocal material. "Litanei" opens with Theme A from movement one, now transposed into E $\flat$  Minor followed by the scherzo's second theme (Ex. 5). At mm. 4-5 a brief foreshadowing of the vocal theme occurs with a descending major third from B $\flat$  to G $\flat$ . The opening bars are then repeated at mm. 8-11 with the theme now in the first violin. This eight-bar theme is present in each of the variations of this movement until the coda (m. 49) at which point it disappears completely and is replaced by the vocal theme.

Example 5: Schoenberg, *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10, Mvt. 3, "Litanei," mm. 1-4, opening theme as compilation of Theme A (Mvt. 1) and the second theme of Mvt. 2

Example 6: Schoenberg, *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10, Mvt. 3, "Litanei," soprano theme, mm. 13-16



The instrumental prelude that begins the movement leads to the first strophe of George's poem and the opening theme from the soprano (Ex. 6), which provides new material for development and transformation and becomes the basis of the five variations and the coda for this movement. Later, at m. 58 – the climax of George's poem where the protagonist begs for release from pain and longing – this vocal theme is found in the violins. At this point the coda is already underway and the at-pitch repetition of the vocal theme in

Example 7: Schoenberg, *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10, Mvt. 3, "Litanei," mm. 69-end, vocal theme in strings

Musical notation for Example 7: Schoenberg, *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10, Mvt. 3, "Litanei," mm. 69-end, vocal theme in strings. The notation shows four staves (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass) with dynamic markings (f, ff, fff) and slurs.

Example 8: Schoenberg, *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10, Mvt. 3, "Litanei," mm. 28-29, instrumental theme in soprano



the quartet signals the complete transfiguration of the work from a string quartet to a new genre with voice. The influence of the vocal line upon the strings is complete as they adopt her theme, echoing it in imitation at the end of the movement even after the voice is no longer participating (Ex. 7) Exchange also happens between the earlier instrumental themes and the vocal line. At m. 28, for example, the beginning of the third strophe opens with a variation of the opening melody (i.e. theme A from Mvt. 1) sung by the soprano (Ex. 8).

In coming to terms with the addition of a voice to the string quartet genre, contemporary critics referred to the obvious precedent of Mahler. After the second premiere, Max Vancsa, who had earned a doctorate in Austrian history from the University of Vienna in 1890, recalled:

Just after the third [movement], in which the excess reached a climax and in which, clearly after Mahler's example, the voice of Ms. Gutheil-Schoder ruthlessly joined the tearing apart of the four instruments.<sup>74</sup>

Richard Batka, after the same performance, wrote that, "It is meant to be serious throughout, even with the addition of the solo voice into chamber music. Mahler did this in his first symphonies, but ultimately abandoned it again."<sup>75</sup> It seems that Batka and Vancsa

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<sup>74</sup> Max Vancsa, "Arnold Schönberg-Abend," *Die Wage* (Vienna), 27 February 1909, p. 211.

"Erst nach dem dritten, in welchem der Exzeß den Höhepunkt erreicht und in welchem sich, frei nach Mahlers Vorbild, zu dem Auseinanderspiel der vier Instrumente die Stimme der Frau Gutheil-Schoder erbarmungslos gesellte."

<sup>75</sup> Richard Batka, "Der Schönberg-Abend," *Fremden-blatt*, 26 February 1909.

were referring to the inclusion of melodies from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* in Mahler's first four symphonies, and the addition of a soprano in the final movement of the fourth symphony. Mahler's choice to add programmatic material and text has precedents in the genre of the tone poem, and his inclusion of the voice refers, of course, to Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* as well. As Paul Griffiths has noted, it was a radical leap on Schoenberg's part to transfer this technique to the string quartet. In Griffiths words:

Within the context of the string quartet, Schoenberg's introduction of a soprano voice was obviously a quite revolutionary move, for which the symphonic precedents in Beethoven, Liszt and Mahler are hardly any preparation<sup>76</sup>

In fact, when it comes to adding extra-musical material to chamber music ensembles, Schoenberg was his own model, referring back to the program of Richard Dehmel's poetry for *Verklärte Nacht*, Op. 4 from 1899.

While "Litanei" almost exclusively uses recycled and repurposed thematic material from the first two movements, the final movement, "Entrückung" contains no pre-existing material. Haimo notes that part of the reason may be because Schoenberg possibly planned it as the final movement of a three-movement quartet.<sup>77</sup> This is certainly one part of the explanation. In addition, I consider the completely new material of the final movement to be a conscious decision and not simply a result of tacking on an extra movement for balance.<sup>78</sup> "Entrückung" was completely finished more than two weeks after "Litanei," around 27 July

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"Es ist durchaus seriös gemeint, auch mit der Heranziehung des Sologesanges in die Kammermusik. Das hat Mahler in seinen ersten Symphonien gemacht, aber schließlich wieder aufgegeben."

<sup>76</sup> Paul Griffiths, *The String Quartet* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1983), 164.

<sup>77</sup> Haimo, *Schoenberg's Transformation of Musical Language*, 267-268.

<sup>78</sup> Frisch suggest that, "The thematic material of the third movement...comes almost exclusively from the preceding two movements; in this sense, the movement functions as a cyclic return. The coda of the finale is clearly intended to round off the quartet as a whole." Frisch, *The Early Works of Arnold Schoenberg*, 259.

1908, the same time frame as the scherzo. Schoenberg was working with the second movement alongside “Entrückung” and he surely would have noticed that the cyclical unity of the work suddenly dropped off at its last movement. Rather, “Entrückung” is the moment where the influence of the text meets a larger musical commentary about the sustainability and relevance of tonality. Significantly, Schoenberg reversed the order of the texts “Litanei” and “Entrückung” as they appeared in George’s *Der Siebente Ring*. Doing so created a narrative in which “Litanei” represents the last dying moments of a being and “Entrückung” is the postlude – the rapture, as the title is sometimes translated. The final poem is a description of a soul moving away from earth to be reunited with the forces of the universe (see Appendix 2).<sup>79</sup> Despite George’s Catholicism, the text is not overtly religious, but rather has more in common with Schopenhauer’s view of an afterlife in which all beings and their desires are dissolved and united. For George the text was deeply autobiographical, a wish to be reunited with his young apostle and lover, Maximilian Kronberger, who died of meningitis just short of his sixteenth birthday. Schoenberg would not have known this narrative, but even if he did it would not have shaped his interpretation of the poem in a significant way. Rather, the significance of “Entrückung” within the quartet is that of progress and development.

To represent a shift away from earth and from reality, the text required an aesthetic that was different, even from the preceding movements. The lack of key signature and the atonality of the movement contribute to this shift. At work, too, were the lack of familiar motivic themes and the eerie, unearthly timbral quality. From the very beginning the contrast

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<sup>79</sup> See also: Judith Ryan, “‘Ich fühle luft von anderem planeten’: Schoenberg Reads George,” in *Music of My Future: The Schoenberg Quartets and Trio*, ed. Reinhold Brinkmann et al. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 2000), 88.

between “Entrückung” and “Litanei” is evident. The dynamic moves from fortississimo, the loudest dynamic of the work, to muted pianississimo, the very softest. Where “Litanei” ended on a resonant E $\flat$  Minor triad, “Entrückung” enters devoid of tonality, expressing all twelve chromatic pitches in just over two beats. The literal ascension of pitches through the four strings mimics the rising of the soul in the poem and sets the aural atmosphere apart from the preceding three movements, which all began with discernable themes. After a twenty-measure introduction, the voice enters as the lowest pitch of the ensemble, mirrored by the cello. Strangely unaffected by the chromatic opening and the atonal accompaniment, the vocal line moves slowly through a D Minor melody, as if adjusting to the new environment and only slowly shaking off tonality. After the final self-referential cry of, “I am but a drone of the holy voice,” the piece ends with over forty measures of pure strings. During these final moments the quartet continues with the melody first introduced by the voice (mm. 135-137) and ends with a rhythmically augmented reprise of the opening, ascending figure. Here, though, instead of leading to C $\natural$ , the line leads to C $\sharp$  and a final fading F $\sharp$  minor chord, consonant but out of place (Ex. 9). The protagonist (the soprano) has long ago left and become united with the universe; those still present and listening are ultimately reminded that they are still surrounded by what is familiar.

Example 9: Schoenberg, *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10, Mvt. 4, "Entrückung," opening and mm. 152-end





## *The “Second Premiere,” Pre-war Vienna and Germany*

Vienna’s next opportunity to hear Op. 10 was just over two months after the premiere, on 25 February 1909.<sup>80</sup> At this performance the *Erdgeist* analysis, which explained the form of the work and included a thematic index, was handed out to audience members.<sup>81</sup> One review even noted that the score and analysis was so ubiquitous that the sound of pages turning was overwhelming, writing, “actually the only disturbance that evening was the eager rustling of pages of the score, which were to be found in the hands of everyone in the know.”<sup>82</sup> As many contemporary reviews noted, and as Paul Stefan later recalled in his dedication to Schoenberg on the composer’s fiftieth birthday (1924), this silence was partly the result of a disclaimer on the concert tickets:

We let it be printed on the admission tickets that each purchaser was bound and committed to preserve peace during the performance, and we were

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<sup>80</sup> Elsa Bienenfeld noted in her review of the premiere that a rumor was circulating already of a second performance. Neff notes that this was scheduled for 8 January 1909 but was delayed. A notice in the *Fremden-Blatt* (Vienna), p. 10 from 7 January 1909 reads: “Chamber singer Marie Gutheil-Schoder has contracted such a bad cold during her trip to Munich that she was compelled to cancel both her concerts in this city.” “*Kammersängerin Marie Gutheil-Schoder hat sich auf der Reise nach München eine so heftige Erkältung zugezogen, daß sie genötigt war, ihre beiden Konzerte in dieser Stadt abzusagen.*”

<sup>81</sup> See: Neff, *Second String Quartet*, 250.

<sup>82</sup> Wilhelm von Wymetal, “Arnold Schönberg-Konzert,” *Vossische Zeitung* (Berlin), 4 March 1909. “Tatsächlich war denn auch die einzige Störung des Abends das eifrige Umblättern der Partituren...die sich in den Händen aller Wissenden befanden.”



determined not to allow a repeat of what had happened before. But it was quite different this time.<sup>83</sup>

Owing to this admission and a sympathetic audience (some two-thirds of the audience were Schoenberg supporters), the concert suffered none of the same fiery protests as the premiere, even though many people showed up precisely to have front row seats to a scandal. Producer for the Vienna Opera Wilhelm Von Wymetal noted the behavior of the few detractors in attendance in his review:

There was hardly a trace of anything from the opposition, other than that five people silently left the hall after the third movement and that an obviously well prepared ironist shouted out a sarcastic “Very beautiful!” right after the sounding of the last tones.<sup>84</sup>

Despite this markedly calmer reaction, listeners were not immediately won over by the quartet. The concert opened with *Verklärte Nacht*, Op. 4, which amassed great applause both for the performers and for Schoenberg. Op. 10, however, was met with skepticism as many critics suggested that because it was music of the future, it would only be fully appreciated at a later time, just as *Verklärte Nacht* had become one of Schoenberg’s most beloved pieces after a rough critical start. Richard Batka, in his estimations of the quartet said it was “perhaps like compost that fertilizes the seeds of the future...possibly very admirable for the history of art,” while still asserting that the work was an “unsuccessful experiment.”<sup>85</sup> Paul

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<sup>83</sup> Cited in: Ursula Rauchhaupt, ed. *Schoenberg, Berg, Webern: Die Streichquartett: Eine Dokumentation* (Hamburg: Polydor International, 1971), 149.

“Wir hatten auf die Eintrittskarten drucken lassen, daß jeder Käufer verpflichtet sei und sich besonders verpflichtet, während des Spieles Ruhe zu bewahren; und waren entschlossen, eine Wiederholung dessen, was geschehen war, nicht mehr zu dulden. Aber es kam ganz anders.”

<sup>84</sup> Wilhelm von Wymetal. “Arnold Schönberg-Konzert.” *Vossische Zeitung*. Berlin. 4 March 1909.

“Von der Opposition war kaum etwas zu spüren, außer, daß fünf Leute nach dem dritten Satz geräuschlos den Saal verließen und daß ein sichtlich wohl-vorbereiteter Ironiker nach dem Ausklingen des letzten Tones rasch ein höhnisches ‘Sehr schön!’ in den Saal rief.”

<sup>85</sup> Batka, “Der Schönberg-Abend,” *Fremden-Blatt* (Vienna) 26 February 1909.

Stauber, part-time music critic and full-time detractor of Schoenberg's music, who was one of the riot-leaders at the premiere, speculated at Schoenberg's insincere motives: "The effect that Schoenberg intends – to bluff the audience, was also achieved yesterday."<sup>86</sup> Stauber's comment hearkens back to the cries of "*Wir lassen uns nicht narren!*" from the premiere, of which he was undoubtedly a part.

In the April edition of *Die Musik* Richard Specht wrote an article reviewing the February performance.<sup>87</sup> For Specht, at least, the February performance clarified the sincerity and structure of the quartet:

After this interpretation and after an exact working-through of the score there can remain no doubt about the seriousness of the work, in which each measure the defiant unyielding, fanatic, logical personality of its composer is expressed, and which is joined with a strict logic that goes, indeed, so far that it never eliminates or simplifies harmonic crashes of the sharpest type.<sup>88</sup>

What Specht picks up on is the same element of logic that later theorists and scholars would acknowledge as Schoenberg's complete integration of motives, and which would, especially in the later twelve-tone works, be described as total amalgamation of vertical and horizontal elements. In Op. 10 the primary determining factor is motivic and formal development, rather than adherence to tonal relationships. Dissonances like the ones that Specht mentions result from Schoenberg's focus on contrapuntal lines rather than tonal harmonies.

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„Diese Kompositionen gleichen vielleicht dem Kompost, der die Saat der Zukunft düngt, und sind kunstgeschichtlich möglicherweise überaus verdienstlich.“

<sup>86</sup> Paul Stauber, "Theaterzeitung," *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt*, 26 February 1909.

„Der Effekt, den Schönberg beabsichtigt: das Publikum zu bluffen, ist auch gestern erreicht worden.“

<sup>87</sup> Specht's April article in *Der Merker* is very similar in content and tone to one that he published in *Erdgeist* on 20 March 1909 under the title "Neue Musik."

<sup>88</sup> Richard Specht, "Wien: Arnold Schönbergs neues Quartett," *Die Musik*, No. 13, April 1909 (Erstes Aprilheft), p. 63.

„Nach dieser Interpretation und nach genauem Durcharbeiten der Partitur kann kein Zweifel über den Ernst des Werkes bestehen, das in jedem Takt die trotzig unnachgiebige, fanatisch konsequente Persönlichkeit seines Tondichters ausspricht, und das mit einer strengen Logik gefügt ist, die freilich so weit geht, dass sie sich niemals um harmonische Zusammenstöße schroffster Art schieert.“

At the time of the February performance the Viennese press was still preoccupied with the premiere; a drawn-out exchange in *Neue Musik-Zeitung*, for example, lasted well into March 1909. This discussion was mainly concerned with the motivations behind the protest and in placing blame, and was full of letters to the editor from critics seeking to clear their names of previous accusations. Because of this protracted exchange, many rowdy critics from the premiere were likely not in attendance at the February concert, Karpath and Kalbeck among them. Despite the new atmosphere, the performance from February 1909 remained very much in the shadow of the premiere.

The next performance for which multiple reviews exist is from 12 October 1910 when *Verklärte Nacht*, Op. 4, *String Quartet No. 1*, Op. 7 and the *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10 were performed at the Heller art salon where Schoenberg's paintings were also on display. Stauber was also in attendance at this performance and he wrote a scathing and sarcastic review in the *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt*. In the article Stauber refers to Schoenberg's "paintings" (with condescending quotation marks) as the next work from the "master of cacophony," while offering the back-handed compliment that, "this music goes wonderfully with these pictures."<sup>89</sup> The two other critical reviews – from Paul Stefan and Josef Reitler, both students of Schoenberg – also say very little about the music itself. Stefan admits that "music for a first listening, Schoenberg's is certainly not," and he notes that Op. 10 is now, less than two years after its premiere, completely outmoded.<sup>90</sup> Writing about both the Op. 7 and Op. 10 string quartets Stefan asserts that:

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<sup>89</sup> p. st. [Paul Stauber], „Schönberg-Abend,“ *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt*, 13 October 1910.

<sup>90</sup> Paul Stefan, „Schönberg-Abend,“ *Der Merker*, October-December 1910.  
„Eine Musik für das erste Hören ist die Schönbergs freilich nicht.“

They are not what Schoenberg wants now. His later works, the piano pieces just published by Universal Edition [Op. 11], the Lieder of George performed last year [Op. 15] and the dramas all surpass the quartet with voice.<sup>91</sup>

Reitler is also laconic in his discussion of Op. 10, writing that, “the quartets [Opp. 7 and 10], incidentally, have been exhaustively discussed at earlier performances.”<sup>92</sup> Less than two years after its premiere, Op. 10 was not only out-of-date, but was understood to have been exhaustively analyzed. This assessment speaks not only to the rapid development of Schoenberg’s musical style ca. 1909, but also to the short memory of cantankerous Viennese audiences. When the *Second String Quartet* was next performed in Vienna, the occasion was a concert for living Austrian composers presented by the *Akademischer Verband für Literatur und Musik* on 29 June 1912. At this concert the quartet was received as a familiar work, and the audience did not protest. R. S. Hoffmann wrote in *Der Merker*:

The much-debated quartet in F-sharp with voice has forfeited much of its terrors. One gets accustomed to nothing so quickly as to dissonances; and the motivic and atmospheric content is so intense and rich and so strongly dictated by the form that one wistfully greets this work like the last cape before one approaches the view, far from home, of the strange sea of an unknown future.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

„Sie sind nicht mehr, was Schönberg heute will. Seine späteren Werke, die von der Universal-Edition eben verlegten Klavierstücke, die im vorigen Jahre aufgeführten Lieder nach George und die Dramen gehen selbst über das Quartett mit Gesang hinaus.“

The “dramas” that Stefan refers to are perhaps *Erwartung*, Op. 17, if he had seen a manuscript or sketch, or the text to *Die Glückliche Hand*, Op. 18, which Schoenberg finished in June 1910.

<sup>92</sup> r. [Josef Reitler], “Schönberg-Abend im Kunstsalon Heller,” *Neue Freie Presse*, 30 October 1910, p. 16.

„Über die Quartette ist gelegentlich früherer Aufführungen Erschöpfendes gesagt worden.“

<sup>93</sup> R. S. Hoffmann, „Österreichische Lebende Komponisten,” *Der Merker* 3/15, 1 August 1912, p. 596.

“Das Quartett in Fis mit Gesang, das vielumstritten, hat viel von seinem Schrecken eingebüßt. An nichts gewöhnt man sich so rasch, wie an Dissonanzen; und der motivische und Stimmungsgehalt sind so stark und reich und so festgefügt die Form, dass man dieses Werk wehmütig wie ein letztes Vorgebirge grüßt, ehe man den Blick weg von der Heimat den fremden Meeren einer ungewissen Zukunftzuwendet [sic].”

Sympathetic critics were quick to point out the tendency of audiences to decry new works only later to accept them into the canon, and not only in regards to Schoenberg. Writing after the premiere, Elsa Bienenfeld mentioned this tradition of conservatism in Vienna noting that, “Beethoven was rebuked because he was no Mozart...But if Beethoven was no Mozart, Brahms and Wagner no Beethoven, so was each of them fortunately himself.”<sup>94</sup> In some ways the protests against Schoenberg’s music were preceded by a long history of reluctance to accept new music in Vienna. To be sure, the attacks on Schoenberg, especially the deeply personal and injurious critiques on his sanity and even his physique, were unparalleled. Vienna may have been practiced in its rejection of progressive composers, but the extreme hatred and abhorrence directed at Schoenberg was the result more of personal and cultural prejudice than musical taste.

Before the war, Op. 10 was performed in Germany at least once, on 2 January 1911 in Munich’s Jahreszeitensaal by Gutheil-Schoder and the Rosé Quartet.<sup>95</sup> There are no known reviews of this performance, but Schoenberg mentions in an interview with the Prague newspaper *Bohemia* in March of the next year that, “my F sharp minor quartet was

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<sup>94</sup> Elsa Bienenfeld, “Zur Aufführung des Quartetts von Arnold Schönberg,” *Neues Wiener Journal*, 25 December 1908, pp. 24-25.

„Beethoven wurde getadelt, weil er kein Mozart war... Aber wenn Beethoven kein Mozart, Brahms und Wagner keine Beethoven waren, so war jeder glücklicherweise er selbst.”

<sup>95</sup> Neff, *Second String Quartet*, 309.

Wassily Kandinsky was in attendance for this performance and was motivated to paint *Impression III* as a result of his experience hearing Op. 10. This interaction also resulted in Kandinsky inviting Schoenberg to participate in the Blue Rider exhibition.

See also: Konrad Boehmer, ed., *Schönberg and Kandinsky: An Historic Encounter* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 1997). Esther da Costa Meyer, et al., eds. *Schoenberg, Kandinsky, and the Blue Rider* (New York: The Jewish Museum, 2003).

Anja Göbel, *Der Blaue Reiter: Schönberg und Kandinsky im Wandel der Zeit: Berührungspunkt zwischen Musik und Malerei zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Hamburg: Disserta, 2013).

Wassily Kandinsky, *Der Blaue Reiter* (Munich: Piper, 1914).

Arnold Schoenberg, *Arnold Schoenberg, Wassily Kandinsky: Letters, Pictures, and Documents*, ed. Jelena Hahl-Koch, trans. John C. Crawford (London: Faber & Faber, 1984).

performed in Munich without the any demonstration at all.”<sup>96</sup> That Schoenberg’s work was received with little fuss in Germany compared to the protests in Vienna is typical of his reception history. Vienna’s cultural identity as the city of music, and Schoenberg’s pursuit as Viennese composer of a radical new aesthetic without academic training meant that Vienna had a much greater investment in the perception of his works than did Germany.

### *Pre-war London*

The first performance of Op. 10 in Britain took place at Bechstein Hall (known as Wigmore Hall after 1917) on 10 June 1914, presented by the London String Quartet. Also on the concert was Vaughan Williams’s *Phantasy Quintet*, which received its world premiere that afternoon, and Debussy’s *String Quartet in G Minor*, Op. 10. Schoenberg’s music was presented first in the U.K. in the form of his *Three Piano Pieces*, Op. 11, introduced by American pianist Richard Buhlig on 23 January 1912. By the time that Op. 10 was played, London had already heard the Op. 7 quartet played by the Flonzaley Quartet on 1 November 1913, and had experienced the *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, Op. 16 twice – at the premiere on 3 September 1912 and again on 17 January 1914 when Schoenberg conducted the work himself. Both Opp. 11 and 16 received mostly negative reviews, although Op. 16 was better accepted at its second performance. This second performance may have been more successful because Schoenberg was present and Britons were too polite to dislike the work to his face, though it is also certain that the composer conveyed a more nuanced

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<sup>96</sup> A. St. „Bei Arnold Schönberg: Eine Unterredung vor Zugsabgang,“ *Bohemia*, 2 March 1912. „...mein Fis-moll Quartett, wurde in München ohne die geringste Demonstration aufgeführt.“

understanding of the work to the orchestra. In fact, Op. 10 had a certain amount of bad press to overcome at its first performance due to an article in *The Times* from January 1914, which was published just before the repeat of Op. 16. In that article outlining Schoenberg's stylistic development, the writer noted that, "as a fact the first quartet seems to us a far finer and more spacious production than Opus 10, though at present we can only judge of the latter by reading the score."<sup>97</sup> After the premiere of the *Second String Quartet*, another article ran in *The Times* – perhaps by the same, anonymous author – which read:

As a whole, the work strikes one as far more speculative than the early quartet (Op. 7), and as having far less genuine creative impulse behind it. Schönberg's intellectual resource is unbounded; one does not doubt that he could make a logical defence [*sic*] of his most far-fetched combinations of sound, but one misses the sense of beauty so apparent in the sextet and even more the big sweeping lines of rhythm which make one trust him in the first quartet.<sup>98</sup>

The reference to logic as an explanation for unconventional sonorities is reminiscent of Specht's April 1909 article and shows a trend of depicting Schoenberg and his music as rational, sometimes to a fault.

In the sparse reviews for the *Second String Quartet* performance in June 1914, the *Three Piano Pieces*, Op. 11 are frequently referenced as an important part of Schoenberg's reception history in Great Britain. Reviewers likely drew comparisons between the quartet and Op. 11 because both were works for chamber ensemble or solo performer, easily accessible to the general public in their published forms, and the two had adjacent opus numbers. In actuality Op. 11 was chronologically much closer to Op. 16 than to the quartet.<sup>99</sup> Articles in *The Times*

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<sup>97</sup> "Arnold Schönberg. Stages of Musical Growth," *The Times* (London), 17 January 1914, p. 11.

<sup>98</sup> "London String Quartet: An Enterprising Programme," *The Times* (London), 11 June 1914.

<sup>99</sup> Schoenberg wrote Op. 10 mostly during the summers of 1907 and 1908; Op. 11 Nos. 1 and 2 were written February 1909 and No. 3 was completed in August 1909; Op. 16 was written from May to August 1909.

and *Pall Mall Gazette* reflect how much Schoenberg's reputation in 1914 rested on Op. 11, noting:

The selection of this work (op. 10) is especially interesting, because it happens to be the last composition published before the famous three piano pieces (op. 11), which made Schoenberg one of the most controversial composers of the day.<sup>100</sup>

Another recalled Op. 11 as “those three piano pieces in which he definitely announced himself as an apostle of dissonance.”<sup>101</sup> Curiously, the article characterizes Schoenberg as “standing on the edge of the precipice just making up his mind to take the leap which must either be justified by a soaring flight or result in a fatal fall,” without identifying which outcome occurred.<sup>102</sup> By that point both the performances of Op. 16 and those of Op. 11 should have given a hint as to which direction Schoenberg's development led. Unlike Viennese critics, however, some of whom were quick to condemn Schoenberg, British critics were more measured in their responses, and chose to leave the final verdict to history.

The concert was structured as a so-called Schoenberg Sandwich, with the quartet in the middle of two other pieces that were either more conventional (Vaughan Williams's pentatonic and folksy *Phantasy Quintet*) or already established in the canon (Debussy's nearly twenty year old quartet). Debussy's quartet, which had a cool reception in Paris, was more readily accepted in London in December 1907. Of that performance critic Arthur Symons wrote in *Saturday Review*:

Here, if anywhere, is a new kind of music, not merely showy nor willfully eccentric...but filled with an instinctive quality of beauty, which can pass from mood to mood, surprise us, lead us astray, but end by leading us to the enchantment in the heart of what I have called the wood....here is an

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<sup>100</sup> “London String Quartet: A Schoenberg Work,” *Pall Mall Gazette*, 11 June 1914.

<sup>101</sup> “London String Quartet: An Enterprising Programme,” *Times* (London), 11 June 1914.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*



achievement of a new kind... You may begin by hating it, but you will surrender.<sup>103</sup>

That Debussy's music found an audience in Britain was likely an element that worked in favor of Schoenberg's second quartet. Although the two works are superficially disparate, they share a progressive element, and a positive reception of Debussy's work hints at the openness of British audiences to new music at this time.

Like Op. 10, Debussy's quartet is cyclically unified, and both pieces experiment a great deal with both harmony and timbre. Where Schoenberg's Op. 10 stutters, though, Debussy's quartet is compelled by perpetual motion, especially the first and second movements, moving swiftly and easily even through sections in 15/8 meter. This strong sense of meter and forward motion is uncharacteristic of Schoenberg. Even in the rhythmically busy opening of Op. 7 a two-beat silence breaks in as early as m. 10, stopping the work's momentum before it has really begun. Debussy's quartet is impressionistic, with large, sweeping forces of sound; Schoenberg's is pensive, focusing on minutiae. Most obviously, Debussy's quartet is a true string quartet, without voice, in four separate movements. It is also written in Debussy's characteristic harmonic language – a combination of triadic, chromatic, modal, and whole-tone elements all structured within the frame of tonality. The opening theme of the final movement is the closest to something that Schoenberg could have written, akin to a chromatic, Wagnerian melodic line from *Pelleas*. Debussy's quartet is progressive in its use of phrasing to obscure meter (Mvt. 1, mm. 1-10), and its rapid transformation of harmonic areas. The piece begins in G minor but by m. 39

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<sup>103</sup> Roger Nichols, "The Reception of Debussy's Music in Britain up to 1914," in *Debussy Studies*, ed. Richard Langham Smith (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 1997), 142.

the melody is in C $\flat$ , and by m. 51 the theme is in E Minor. When the opening theme returns at m. 61 it is transposed down a half-step to F $\sharp$  Minor. The quickly transforming key areas give Debussy's harmonic language a sense of fluidity. The key areas themselves are not abnormal in tonal language of the late nineteenth century, and the work is certainly still tonally derived, but the pace at which new key areas appear and disappear is novel. In a way, Debussy's approach would set the stage for Schoenberg's Op. 10, which abandons its tonic in a record two and a half measures. Debussy's timbral experiments within the string quartet genre, such as the combination of arco and pizzicato in movement two, or instructions to play in a high position on the violin's G string (Mvt. 2, mm. 111-122), and the use of mutes in the third movement, while certainly not extending technique did broaden the sound palette of the string family. Schoenberg's *Second String Quartet* would pick up this mantle through the use of *sul ponticello* (Mvt. 1, m. 90), shadowy staccato and spiccato bowing (Mvt. 2, m. 5;17), extremely soft dynamics (Mvt. 4, opening), and, of course, the inclusion of vocal timbre.

### *Post-war Reception: Vienna and New York City*

When the Habsburg Empire collapsed late in 1918 Austria-Hungary suffered an enormous amount of instability, reflected in its complex history of political and civil struggle. In September 1919 the Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye was signed, resulting in the creation of the *Republik Österreich* and significant loss of territory and population through the creation

of independent states comprising ethnic minorities (e.g. Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia).<sup>104</sup>

Austria became a country less than a third of the size of the previous Empire and lost eighty percent of its population in the process. Vienna was now the seat of an Empire that did not exist. Amazingly, in the midst of this upheaval and civil discord, the Rosé Quartet performed Op. 10 on 8 December 1920 in the Redoutensaal of the Hofburg, the one-time imperial residence turned public concert hall.<sup>105</sup>

A review published by Géza Molnár<sup>106</sup> in Budapest's German-language *Pester-Lloyd* the day after the concert introduced Schoenberg as, "the leader of the German Extremists," but noted that, despite the dissonances and stop-and-go feeling of the work, "the completely exhausted audience could not pull themselves together for a protest."<sup>107</sup> Although the audience may have been weary of protesting music, it is far more likely that they were drained from four years of war, which led to poverty and starvation on a massive scale. As Maureen Healy notes, by 1917 Vienna was suffering a catastrophic food shortage and regular workers were only allotted (although they didn't always receive) 830 calories per day – not even enough to sustain a child.<sup>108</sup> With the loss of the food-producing lands to the east as part of the peace treaty, the situation could not possibly improve. When Molnár writes that

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<sup>104</sup> Anthony Bushell, *Polemical Austria: The Rhetorics of National Identity: From Empire to the Second Republic* (Cardiff: University of Wales, 2013), 141.

<sup>105</sup> An article from *Neue Freie Presse* on 8 December 1920, p. 12 reads: "The idea to use the Redoutensäle for the cause of the Burgtheater and the Opera emerged immediately after the revolution."

*"Der Gedanke, die Redoutensäle für die Zwecke des Burgtheaters und der Oper zu benützen, ist unmittelbar nach dem Umsturz aufgetaucht."*

<sup>106</sup> Molnár was a Leipzig trained musicologist who specialized in Hungarian music. He taught at the Academy of Music in Budapest from 1900, and in 1904 his book *The Theory of Hungarian Music (A magyar zene elmélete)* was published in Budapest.

<sup>107</sup> Géza Molnár, „Theater, Kunst und Literatur: Ein Quartett von Schönberg,“ *Pester Lloyd*, 9 December 1920, p. 4.

„Arnold Schönberg, dem Führer der deutschen Extremen.“

„Das vollkommen erschöpfte Publikum aber konnte sich zu einem Protest nicht mehr aufrufen.“

<sup>108</sup> Maureen Healy, *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire: Total War and Everyday Life in World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 31.

the Viennese audience could not organize a demonstration, he means that the people attending literally were not physically or emotionally well enough to create a scene. At that point there were far more basic needs to be met, and it was a much wiser use of energy to protest rationing or push through market crowds than to create a commotion over a performance.

In his analysis of Op. 10, Molnár noted the cyclical unity and motivic development that earlier critics and analysts had mentioned, although with a much less positive view of Schoenberg's contrapuntal writing:

The theme – at first hearing – was rather harmless, downward leaping minor sevenths and diminished fifths are barely present, and it does not yet succeed in annoying the listeners. But the motives are then, unfortunately, reinterpreted harmonically and metrically a hundredfold and made unclear and, without any sense of overbearing responsibility, contrapuntally chained up to each other.<sup>109</sup>

Molnár understood counterpoint to serve a harmonic purpose, but in the quartet it did not, making it superfluous and bothersome. During his study in Leipzig, Molnár may have worked with Hugo Riemann, which would explain both Molnár's conventional view of counterpoint and his expression that the “*todmüde*” quartet had “no worthwhile point of view.”<sup>110</sup> Due to a lack of known reviews of this performance, it is not clear whether

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<sup>109</sup> M[olnár], „Theater, Kunst und Literatur: Ein Quartett von Schönberg,“ *Pester Lloyd*, 9 December 1920, p. 4. „Die Themen – einzeln gehört – wären ziemlich harmlos, abwärts springende kleine Septimen und verminderte Quinten sind nur spärlich vorhanden, und noch gelingt es nicht, den Hörer wesentlich zu verstimmen. Aber die Motive werden dann, leider, harmonisch-metrisch hundertfach umgedeutet und verundeutlicht [sic.] und miteinander ohne überreiztes Verantwortlichkeitsgefühl kontrapunktisch verkettet.“

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

“...zu keinem lohnenden Aussichtspunkt.”

See also: Lynne M. Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music from Liszt to Bartók* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 128.

Molnár's view was representative of critics who may have attended the concert.<sup>111</sup> During this period, although there were more musical performances than would be expected of a dismantled nation, there were relatively few reviews published.



The Lenox String Quartet and soprano Ruth Rodgers gave the American premiere of Op. 10 on 6 January 1924 in New York. Also programmed were Arnold Bax's *Piano Quartet* in one movement (1922), Bartók's *Sonata No. 2* for violin and piano (1922), and Lord Berner's *Valses bourgeoises* (1917). A concert review in *New York Times* found Schoenberg's quartet, the oldest piece by almost a decade, to be the most agreeable:

This work proved superior to the other serious compositions on the program, for flashes of true beauty, for technical dexterity, for a constructive scheme planned before and not after the composer put pen to paper and so felt by the audience. Yet, how labored it is, how naïvely pretentious, how self-conscious, self-tortured!<sup>112</sup>

Again Op. 10 is compared with *Verklärte Nacht*, even though *String Quartet No. 1* was performed in New York City at least as early as 26 January 1914, as reported both in *New York Times* and the German-language circular *New Yorker Staats-Zeitung*. Like European critics before them, Americans valued Schoenberg's legitimacy based on the success and popularity of *Verklärte Nacht*, while admitting that Op. 10 was "not the half so natural and spontaneous" as the earlier work.<sup>113</sup> *Verklärte Nacht* was one of the most, if not the most, popular and frequently played works of Schoenberg's oeuvre, and, considering the recent

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<sup>111</sup> A search of *Neue Musik-Zeitung*, *Neue Freie Presse*, *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt* for the week of the concert came up empty.

<sup>112</sup> „League of Composers,” *The New York Times* 7 January 1924.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

reworking for string orchestra (1917), was increasingly accessible to different performing ensembles. It was also the model example in Schoenberg's career of a piece that was disliked at the outset but eventually claimed a place in the canon. This fact was known throughout continental Europe, Great Britain, and the United States and was often cited. As one New York critic noted:

Remembering how placid the once disturbing *Verklaete [sic] Nacht* now sounds it may be that one will come to admire these things that sound so vague and unimportant today.<sup>114</sup>

This reluctance to condemn a work prematurely is echoed throughout Schoenberg's reception history in the United States, Britain, and Germany, especially.

The League of Composers – a society created the year before to promote contemporary music – presented the New York premiere.<sup>115</sup> The League of Composers would later give the American premiere of *Die glückliche Hand*, Op. 18 in April 1930, six years after the 1924 world-premiere in Vienna. Because the League of Composers presented themselves as a group primarily interested in modern music from around the world, their patrons were also open to new music and therefore far less likely to be offended. American audiences were also far less tied in their identity to the happenings in art music. This relative indifference, combined with Americans' lack of passion for rioting, especially about art, meant that the premiere in the United States was extremely calm. In addition, most Americans – and certainly those living in New York City and attending a classical music concert – were doing well financially during the so-called roaring twenties. A socially content, well-fed audience with little investment in the future of art music will always be less

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<sup>114</sup> "League of Composers," *Musical Courier*, 10 January 1924, pp. 26-27.

<sup>115</sup> <http://leagueofcomposers.org/history/>

likely to protest than one that is hungry, fearful of the future, and intertwined with the current state of musical affairs.

## CHAPTER 2

### *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten, Op. 15*

In the program notes to the world premiere of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15 (Vienna, 14 January 1910), Schoenberg confessed the new direction in which the *George-Lieder* had taken him. He explained:

With the George songs I have for the first time succeeded in approaching an ideal of expression and form that has been in my mind for years...now that I have set out along this path once and for all, I am conscious of having broken through every restriction of a bygone aesthetic.<sup>1</sup>

He continued by speaking of inevitability – claiming that despite being aware that his works would be criticized he could write no other way. This trope of inescapable evolution was one that he would revisit throughout his life. *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* was not the first and would not be the last piece that Schoenberg claimed to be the beginning of a new and profound ideology or style. In fact, new beginnings are a defining characteristic of much of Schoenberg's life and music in his representations of himself and in portrayals by both

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Auner, *A Schoenberg Reader: Documents of a Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 78. “Mit den Liedern nach George ist es mir zum erstenmal gelungen, einem Ausdrucks- und Form-Ideal nahezukommen, das mir seit Jahren vorschwebt...nun ich aber diese Bahn entgeltig betreten habe, bin ich mir bewusst, alle Schranken einer vergangenen Ästhetik durchbrochen zu haben.”



contemporary and later biographers and scholars. Earlier, in 1907, for example, he described his *Kammersymphonie*, Op. 9 as “a real turning-point of my career.”<sup>2</sup>

Schoenberg’s claim regarding the success of the *George-Lieder* dates from the beginning of 1910, but just months earlier, in August 1909, he had admitted to Busoni that he had not yet composed the type of music that he strove to write. In Schoenberg’s words: “It will perhaps take a long time before I can write the music I feel urged to, of which I have had an inkling for several years, but which, for the time being, I cannot express.”<sup>3</sup> Both assertions were written after Op. 15 was already completed. It is unclear whether Schoenberg changed his perspective on whether Op. 15 achieved his artistic goals, or if the later program note was a deliberate move to further solidify his reputation as a progressive composer with a purposeful trajectory. After the calamity of the December 1908 premiere of the *Second String Quartet*, it would have been advantageous for Schoenberg to present his music as having moved in another direction. Audience members and critics who had attended or heard news of the Op. 10 scandal may have been more likely to give the *George-Lieder* a fair listening if the performance was prefaced by a disclaimer that they were part of a new aesthetic.<sup>4</sup> Even if the result was a more dissonant style of composition, introducing Op. 15 as separate from the *Second String Quartet* could have prompted listeners to reconsider their preconceptions for how the work would be received, and possibly lessen the expectation of scandal.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 78.

See also: Manuel Gervink, *Arnold Schönberg und seine Zeit* (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 2000), 127.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 78.

<sup>4</sup> In this way, Schoenberg’s program note is not unlike Monteverdi’s disclaimer prefacing his fifth book of madrigals (1605), in which he addresses the thoughtfulness of his compositions to defend against Artusi’s criticism of the manuscripts.

It is tempting to read Schoenberg's characterizations of his works as continuously novel and innovative as a shameless marketing strategy (for a potentially unmarketable product), but all of his concerns about being undervalued as a composer and left behind by history were fears that he came by honestly, if not always reasonably. Despite appearing overzealous in his attempts to situate himself historically, Schoenberg's self-promotion was one of his most admirable characteristics, and one that was invaluable for his career. In the first decade of the twentieth century his international reputation was slowly growing, but had not yet peaked. He remarked upon his newfound fame in the fall of 1911, when he wrote from Berlin to his publisher Emil Hertzka: "You cannot imagine how famous I am here. I am almost too embarrassed to mention it. I am known to everyone."<sup>5</sup> Schoenberg spent the majority of his career up until the premiere of the *George-Lieder* in Vienna or its surrounding suburbs, although he also spent significant time in Berlin, teaching at the Stern Conservatory and conducting the Überbrettl cabaret. During these early years, spent predominantly in and under the influence of Viennese musical culture, Schoenberg was acutely sensitive to the reactions of Viennese critics and much of his understanding of his own position in the musical culture was determined by a small group of people. This led to a well-documented distaste for the city on Schoenberg's part, characterized by dismissal of the musical and intellectual abilities of critics. As he wrote in 1912 to Kandinsky:

You know that I was to go to the Vienna Academy as professor and that I declined. But not, as I would have liked, in order to "devote myself completely to composition"...But rather because I considered it unsuitable

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<sup>5</sup> Letter to Emil Hertzka, 31 October 1911, Wiener Stadt Bibliothek, UE Archiv #71.

"Sie glauben gar nicht, wie "berühmt" ich hier bin. Ich schäme mich ja selbst fast, es zu gestehen. Überall kennt man mich."

that I, who left Vienna for a reason of primary importance, should go back for a reason of secondary importance.<sup>6</sup>

Schoenberg's difficult relationship with his birthplace was never more strained than the time between the December 1908 world premiere of the *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10 and his later relocation to Berlin in September of 1911. During this time period, as he was composing *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, Schoenberg was also coming to terms with living in a city that he felt animosity towards, but to which he had been forced to return years earlier for financial reasons.

## *Novelty, Authenticity, Conversion*

When Schoenberg asserted in the 1910 program notes that he had made a compositional breakthrough – despite having expressed his self-doubt to Busoni mere months before – he was preemptively countering criticism of the work by trying to direct the audience's reactions. The declaration prepared listeners to understand that his setting of the text would be based on expression, not base “parallelism,” as he would refer to it in the 1912 essay “Das Verhältnis zum Text.” On a small scale, Schoenberg was likely motivated to anticipate his audience's criticism in order to avoid another contentious incident and subsequent press war. On a larger scale, there was a constant background pressure to prove

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<sup>6</sup> Auner, *A Schoenberg Reader*, 112-113.

Letter to Kandinsky, 19 August 1912, Gabriele-Münter- und Johannes-Eichner-Stiftung, Munich. “Daß ich als Professor nach Wien an die Akademie sollte, wissen Sie. Und daß ich abgelehnt habe. Aber nicht, wie ich es gerne möchte, um mich “ganz meinem Komponieren widmen zu können” ...Sondern, weil ich es für unangemessen hielt, daß ich, der von Wien wegen der Hauptsachen fortgegangen ist, wegen einer Nebensache wieder zurückgehen soll.”

that he was creative, not least of all to rebuff the stereotype of the Jew as base imitator that was becoming increasingly widespread in fin-de-siècle Vienna and throughout Europe.<sup>7</sup>

During the period that he was composing the *George-Lieder* and, indeed, throughout his life, Schoenberg insisted upon the authenticity of his musical language. This claim was surely related to his Jewishness as it was perceived by early twentieth-century Vienna. As Wolfgang Maderthaner and Lisa Silverman identify, Jews were faced with suspicion regarding their legitimacy as a culture:

[A] motif central to modern anti-Semitism [was], namely, that of Jews as destroyers of organic, “authentic” culture, whose success in doing so included the erasure of the very boundaries that distinguished Jews from others. Modern antisemites had long considered Jews the bearers of undesired progress.<sup>8</sup>

The real threat that Jews were perceived to pose by some was not their status as an Other, but their ability to assimilate convincingly. In this understanding, the greatest danger was that Jewishness could subversively and silently transform German culture. Already present fears in the wider European consciousness about Jews being the source of degenerate industrialism and modernism combined with the acute distress of the uncertainties of life and the excesses of fin-de-siècle culture. Together these prejudices and anxieties worked against Schoenberg as a Jew and an autodidact and against his music, which he consciously framed not only as progressive, but also as an inevitable outgrowth from the traditional Germanic musical culture of Bach and Mozart. For Schoenberg in 1909, Germanness would

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<sup>7</sup> Most widely known to musicians as presented in Wagner’s “Das Judentum in der Musik” (1850/1869). See also: Deborah Holmes et al., ed., *Interwar Vienna: Culture between Tradition and Modernity* (Rochester, NY: Camden, 2009).

<sup>8</sup> Wolfgang Maderthaner and Lisa Silverman, “Wiener Kreise: Jewishness, Politics, and Culture in Interwar Vienna,” in *Interwar Vienna: Culture between Tradition and Modernity*, ed. Deborah Holmes et al. (Rochester, NY: Camden, 2009), 61.

have been compatible with Jewishness. Jews – converted or otherwise – under Habsburg rule could identify simultaneously as citizens of the Austrian Empire, participants and partakers of German culture, and also as Jews.<sup>9</sup> However, for those with anti-Semitic sympathies, it would have been difficult to tolerate a Jewish composer co-opting *Deutschtum* and using it as a facade for the agenda of corrupted modernism.

Further complicating the relationship between perceived authenticity, creativity, and Jewishness was Schoenberg's conversion to Lutheranism on 25 March 1898. At the turn of the century, Vienna was the capital city of the Catholic Habsburg Empire, and home to the third largest population of Jews in all of Europe.<sup>10</sup> This dissonance led many Jews, up to eighty percent of whom were émigrés, to convert to Protestantism – essentially exclusively Lutheranism. As Sander L. Gilman notes, “Protestantism was the preferable religion for Jewish converts in Vienna, since one was legally considered a Christian while not being a Catholic.”<sup>11</sup> In Schoenberg's case it has long been noted that his conversion was primarily political – as was his reconversion to Judaism in 1933 – rather than religious. However, being legally Christian was a different matter than passing for Christian, and in the first decades of the twentieth century Jewish converts were passing only with dwindling success. Cumulative social and cultural anxieties and mounting anti-Semitism meant that Jewish converts were increasingly subject to doubts about actually being what they represented

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<sup>9</sup> Deborah Holmes and Lisa Silverman, “Introduction: Beyond the Coffeehouse. Vienna as a Cultural Center between the World Wars,” in *Interwar Vienna: Culture between Tradition and Modernity*, ed. Deborah Holmes et al. (Rochester, NY: Camden, 2009), 11.

<sup>10</sup> Maderthaner, ““Wiener Kreise”: Jewishness, Politics, and Culture in Interwar Vienna,” 67.

<sup>11</sup> Sander L. Gilman, *The Case of Sigmund Freud: Medicine and Identity at the Fin de Siècle* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 71.

themselves to be. These doubts, in turn, were surreptitiously transferred as critiques of authenticity in Schoenberg's music.

The prevailing thought was that Jewishness was a disease, for which conversion was a treatment, if not a complete remedy. As the twentieth century wore on, however, this understanding slowly disintegrated. As Gilman notes in his discussion of Freud's relationship with his own Jewishness, "it is clear that conversion was understood as an illusion, a claim for the cure of something that could not be cured."<sup>12</sup> In fact, the language of illness shifted onto converts as Jewishness came to be seen as an immutable characteristic rather than a religious identity. Because of this understanding, as Gilman notes, "labeling converts as 'sick' becomes a widely used trope of the fin de siècle."<sup>13</sup> This same diagnosis was given to Schoenberg's music – a barely concealed allusion to his Jewishness. As a Dutch critic identified as Rutters wrote in 1920 after hearing the Op. 16:

We shall wait and see what kind of effect his residence in Amsterdam will have on him. It may be a health-cure for him. For this music is not so very museful [*sic*] as it is sick.<sup>14</sup>

Whatever the motivations that led Schoenberg to constantly fashion himself as the leader of the cutting edge of musical progress, clearly he believed deeply in the inescapable and divinely-inspired development of his music. Schoenberg was also extremely successful in convincing others of this advancement, sometimes to the detriment of his reception. One clear advantage of this tactic, however, was that it could not be said that his style was

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<sup>12</sup> Gilman, *The Case of Sigmund Freud*, 69.

As Gilman notes later: "By the close of the nineteenth century, European physicians were convinced that most mental illnesses were of organic origin and that racial (as well as familial) degeneracy played a major role in predisposing any individual to rise," 15.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 84.

<sup>14</sup> Rutters, *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 22 Oct 1920, cited in: Paul Op de Coul and Rutger Schoute, "Schoenberg in the Netherlands," *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* 6/2 (Nov. 1982), 158.

stagnant. Indeed, critics commented that if the current Schoenberg did not suit, one might only wait for a more pleasing one to come around in the next development.<sup>15</sup>

## *Composing the George-Lieder*

10 March 1908.....	Op. 15, No. 5
15 March 1908.....	Op. 15, No. 4
29 March 1908.....	Op. 15, No. 3
13 April 1908.....	Op. 15, No. 8
28 April 1908.....	Op. 15, No. 7
April 1908 – May 1908.....	Op. 15, No. 6
27 September 1908.....	Op. 15, No. 13
September 1908 – 28 February 1909.....	Op. 15, No. 15
Unknown (March 1908 – March 1909).....	Op. 15, No. 1
	Op. 15, No. 2
	Op. 15, No. 9
	Op. 15, No. 10
	Op. 15, No. 11
	Op. 15, No. 12
	Op. 15, No. 14

**Figure 1: Composition Timeline of Op. 15**

The *George-Lieder* seem to have been composed in three distinct time periods: first during the Spring of 1908, then again in the Fall of 1908, and finally in the Spring of 1909.

As Figure 1 shows, eight of the fifteen Lieder have definitive dates of composition, while the other seven do not. For my study, I will be analyzing those songs that are dated, and

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<sup>15</sup> See Chapter 3:

“Konzerte: Arnold Schönberg: Sonntag mittag fand im Harmoniumssaal.”

„Wir wollen hoffen, daß Schönbergs jetzige Music die auf die Spitze getriebene Realisierung des theoretischen Grübelns des Komponisten ist und daß seine zukünftige Kunst von seinem warmblütigen Gemüt und seiner sonst so reichen Phantasie „gemußt“ wird und in blühender musikalisch-sinnlicher Erfindung in die Erscheinung tritt.“

Rasch, “Nach der Arnold Schönberg-Matinée.”

„Aber, wie schon erwähnt, ist es nicht menschlicher und künstlerischer, der Hoffnung Raum zu lassen, daß wir vielleicht noch „einen dritten Schönberg“, eine Klärung des für unsren Gaumen augenblicklich ungenießbaren Mostes zu erwarten haben?“

considering them with their chronological counterparts and in relation to the entire song-cycle. Ethan Haimo summarizes the lack of information regarding the timeline of the remaining seven songs:

We have no idea how the eight undated songs fit into the chronology, some or all of them could have preceded the first stage, or served as a bridge between the second and third stages, or followed what appears to be the last stage. The point is, we simply don't know.<sup>16</sup>

Considering the collections of songs in this way will elucidate Schoenberg's methods of text setting, including evolutions or inconsistencies, and his compositional style during a highly dynamic period in which he suffered Mathilde's adultery with Gerstl and the traumatic premiere of the *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10 in December 1908. Songs Nos. 3 through 8 were composed during a period of ten weeks, making them a natural choice for considering as a unit and as representative of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15.

### *Spring 1908 – Op. 15, Nos. 3-8*

The spring of 1908 was a productive and transitional time for Schoenberg. During the summers of 1907 and 1908 he was composing the *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10, but his increased teaching responsibilities during the spring meant for easier focus on smaller compositions like the Op. 15 song cycle.<sup>17</sup> Between March and May 1908 Schoenberg wrote six songs on six consecutive poems by George. 1908 was also an important year for

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<sup>16</sup> Ethan Haimo, *Schoenberg's Transformation of Musical Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 244-245.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 273.



Schoenberg as a painter, having recently befriended Richard Gerstl. Gerstl, who painted the Schoenberg family and traveled with Schoenberg and his wife Mathilde to their summer vacation at Traunsee, would – in this same year – become part of one of the greatest crises of Schoenberg’s life. The affair between Mathilde Schoenberg and Gerstl that summer not only tore the family apart, but also prefaced a difficult period of introspection for Schoenberg and eventually Gerstl’s suicide in November 1908. This was the personal backdrop against which the Op. 15 song cycle was composed. In light of these extreme events it is natural to question whether these circumstances translated into obvious differences in the music from the start of composition in the spring of 1908 until the completion of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* in spring 1909. The simple answer is that there is no conclusive relationship between what was happening in Schoenberg’s private life and the way that he was composing, at least not on this small scale. There is not enough difference between the dated and undated pieces to show that specific experiences effected compositional method. If this were the case then scholars would have already posited a convincing chronology for the undated pieces.

While the stylistic markers are not definitive enough to afford dates to the remaining songs, there are clear instances of cyclical unity within the spring 1908 collection. The main theme of Op. 15, No. 3 (29 March 1908), for example, appears in the earlier song No. 4 (15 March 1908) in the piano accompaniment (m. 21), as shown in Example 10. A related inverted gesture appears in the later composed No. 6 (April/May 1908) in the accompaniment in m. 6 (Ex. 11). A similar figure appears in earliest dated song, No. 5 (10 March 1908), where it functions as a countermelody in the piano accompaniment that has

grown out of the descending motion of the first four bars (Ex. 12). In this instance the intervallic content is slightly altered, but the shape is the same. Immediately after this first iteration in mm. 7-8 of song No. 5 the direction of the final half step is inverted, moving down from C# to C instead of ascending a half step, further developing the main motif.

Example 10: Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 3, m. 1 and Op. 15, No. 4, m. 21



Example 11: Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 6, m. 6



Example 12: Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 5, mm. 5-6



Harmonically, the spring 1908 compositions of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* employ a combination of sonorities. Frequently triadic, though not tonal, Nos. 3 through 8 use the tonally ambiguous set class (014) in addition to whole tone elements, often in the form of augmented triads. The final harmonies of each piece provide a clear example of this mixture of harmonies. Nos. 3, 6, and 8 end with triads or major thirds (D $\flat$  Major, B $\flat$ -D, and D-F $\sharp$ , respectively). In No. 4 the final D $\flat$  Major chord of the previous song returns as the last

sonority, but with an added fourth and sixth in the form of another major third (G-B) (Ex. 13). No. 5 ends with (0148) and a non-chord tone A $\sharp$  as the final pitch of the vocal line, and

**Example 13: Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 4, final sonority**



No. 7 concludes with the same harmonic motive that opened the piece – G $\flat$ <sup>+</sup> followed by (016) as F $\flat$ -B $\flat$ -E $\flat$ . This combination of chromatic, whole-tone, and triadic elements also occurs within the body of the songs, giving the cycle the sense of free-atonality for which Schoenberg’s music of this period was known. The final two measures of No. 3, for example, which concludes on a D $\flat$  Major triad, includes (0268) and (026) in rhythmically strong positions (Ex. 14). Instead of moving down by a fourth, the stepwise motive in m. 24 – which first appeared at the beginning of the piece – floats upward in a whole-tone inspired sonority. True to the D $\flat$  Major chord that ends the piece, No. 3 is also one of the most triadic songs in *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*. Measures 17-18, for example, consist almost exclusively of pitches related by third (Ex. 15), but these chains of major triads do not hint at any tonic. Despite their triadic nature, they are part of an intensely atonal section. An analogous example is m. 2 of song No. 7, which features descending minor thirds, also negating a sense of tonic (Ex. 16).

Example 14: Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 3, mm. 23-26

Musical score for Example 14, measures 24-26. The score is in 2/4 time and features a piano accompaniment. Measure 24 begins with a piano (*pp*) dynamic. Measure 25 is marked *rit.* and includes a *dolce* instruction. Measure 26 features a *(026)* marking. The piano part consists of chords and moving lines in both hands, with a melodic line in the right hand that is sustained across measures 25 and 26.

Example 15: Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 3, mm. 17-18

Musical score for Example 15, measures 17-18. The score is in 2/4 time and features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line includes the lyrics "den, der noch". The piano accompaniment is marked *ff* (fortissimo) in both measures. The piano part consists of chords and moving lines in both hands, with a melodic line in the right hand that is sustained across measures 17 and 18.

Example 16: Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 7, mm. 1-2

Musical score for Example 16, measures 1-2. The score is in 6/8 time and features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked "Nicht zu rasch ( $\text{♩}$  ca 80)". The vocal line includes the lyrics "Angst und Hof-fen wech-selnd mich be-klem-men,". The piano accompaniment is marked *f* (forte) in both measures. The piano part consists of chords and moving lines in both hands, with a melodic line in the right hand that is sustained across measures 1 and 2.

Song No. 4, “Da meine Lippen reglos sind und brennen,” relies heavily upon (014) as a structural sonority throughout the song, although it does end with an altered D $\flat$  triad. As the voice imitates the accompaniment in mm. 6-8 it outlines a melodic (014) as A $\flat$ -E-G. A similar gesture is then transferred into the bass as a descending arpeggiation of (013) and (014) in mm. 11-16 (Ex. 17). In mm. 23-24 this figure is abbreviated to a leap of a minor ninth from C to B in the bass. The outlined minor ninth/augmented octave, condensed into a quick, droplet figure, returns in the later-composed No. 14 (Sept. 1908 – March 1909) under the text “Tritten” (Ex. 18). Set class (014) also plays an important harmonic role in No. 5 – the one song of the spring 1908 set that clearly ends with a sonority containing (014) as {B, D, E $\flat$ }.

Example 17: Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 4, bass line, mm. 11-16



Example 18: Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 14, bass line, mm. 4-5

The image shows a musical score for two staves. The top staff is a vocal line in treble clef, and the bottom staff is a piano accompaniment in bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B $\flat$ ). The vocal line has lyrics: "- raub; vom Zer-schel - - len rei-fer Quit - - ten, von den Trit - - - ten der Ver -". The piano accompaniment features a prominent descending arpeggiated figure in the bass, with dynamic markings of *ppp*. The figure is labeled with measure numbers 4 and 5 above the vocal line.

Like the other songs in this spring 1908 collection, No. 5 uses a combination of harmonic elements, including triads, whole-tone sonorities and (014) – that is, harmonies containing a semitone and a major and minor third <014>. No. 5, “Saget mir,” opens with the piano accompaniment in four-voice texture moving between shifting harmonies containing (014) or whole-tone elements (Ex. 19). This passage seems to be directed by the melody in the soprano, which is mimicked in the upper voice of the piano. The melody descends by step first from F# to D and then from C# to A, creating a composite, octave-displaced stepwise descent following the pattern HHWHWHH. If this same pattern of half and whole steps were extrapolated down to the octave F# the result would be a nine-note scale consisting of pitches {F#, G#, A, Bb, B, C#, D, E, F}. Other than this opening descent, however, this scale does not play a role in creating the harmonic elements of the song. Rather, the piece is constructed from flawless counterpoint of non-tonal harmonies. As Example 19 shows, Schoenberg consistently moves the upper three voices against the bass creating extremely smooth voice-leading as the harmonies shift underneath. Despite the chromatic sound and lack of tonality, this opening passage is rigorously structured on traditional principles of four part writing.

**Example 19:** Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 5, voice-leading and harmony, mm. 1-4

Songs Nos. 6 through 8 were composed after a break of a couple weeks and are not as chronologically close as Nos. 3 through 5. Like their earlier counterparts, they also exhibit shared characteristics with each other, most noticeably quicker tempi and faster rhythmic diminutions as compared to Nos. 3 through 5. Songs Nos. 3 through 5 feature mainly longer note values, with an occasional sixteenth-note passage; the next three songs frequently employ 32<sup>nd</sup> notes, quick upbeats, and running sixteenth-note figures (Exx. 20-22). These three songs still follow in the harmonic footprint of Nos. 3 through 5, using a combination of sonorities containing (014) as well as whole-tone collections, though triads are much more rare here than in the songs written in March of 1908. Intense dynamics and small rhythmic diminutions also seem to be characteristic of works written after March 1908. Op. 15, No. 6, “Jedem Werke bin ich fürder tot,” is the first song in the cycle to begin with a forte dynamic and accent markings over each syllable – a strong beginning that would have been uncharacteristic of the March 1908 collection. Although some of the text of these later songs

Example 20: Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 6, mm. 8-9

The image shows a musical score for Schoenberg's "Das Buch der hängenden Gärten", Op. 15, No. 6, measures 8-9. The score is written for voice and piano. The vocal line is in the upper staff, and the piano accompaniment is in the lower staff. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The vocal line begins with a forte dynamic (ff) and an accent over the first syllable. The piano accompaniment begins with a forte dynamic (ff) and a piano dynamic (p). The lyrics are: "- bot, von al - len Din - gen ist nur die - ses". The score includes various musical notations such as accents, dynamics, and phrasing slurs.

Example 21: Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 7, mm. 12-13

Musical score for Example 21, showing vocal line and piano accompaniment for measures 12 and 13. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are: "Freu - de von mir weh -". The piano accompaniment is in grand staff with a key signature of one flat. Measure 12 features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Measure 13 features a melodic line in the right hand with a triplet of eighth notes and a bass line in the left hand.

Example 22: Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 8, mm. 9-12

Musical score for Example 22, showing vocal line and piano accompaniment for measures 9 through 12. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are: "- det, seit ich dir ge - hö - re. Rich - te, ob mir". The piano accompaniment is in grand staff with a key signature of one flat. Measure 9 features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Measure 10 features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Measure 11 features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Measure 12 features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings: *ff* in measure 9, *p* in measure 10, and *rit.* in measure 9.

calls for a more forceful sound there were also opportunities for such expression in Nos. 3 through 5 that Schoenberg chose not to represent. This is one case where the chronology of composition does seem linked to a slightly different aesthetic.

Song No. 6 opens with harmonies that all contain (014), and the top pitch of each chord (D#, E, G) also spells a descending (014) over the course of the two bars (Ex. 23). These exact pitches recur in m. 16 as the descending figure, now arpeggiated, representing the fleeing pictures indicated in the text (Ex. 23). In this reiteration of the harmony there is one small change: the G $\sharp$  from the third sonority is flattened by a half step, now G $\flat$ , so that



the resulting set class is (0247). No. 6 also presents running sixteenth notes characteristic of the April 1908 group of songs, outlining whole-tone collections. In m. 6, for example, the ascending figure in the left hand of the piano unfolds two consecutive (0248) harmonies, if the G of the second group is omitted as a sort of appoggiatura (Ex. 24).

**Example 23:** Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 6, harmony mm. 1-2 and recurrence m. 16

Musical score for Example 23, showing piano accompaniment for measures 1-2 and measure 16. The score is in G major (one sharp). The bass clef part shows chords and a melodic line. Labels (0147), (0146), (0145), (0147), (0146), and (0247) are placed below the notes. A red circle highlights a specific note in the final measure.

**Example 24:** Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 6, m. 6

Musical score for Example 24, showing a single melodic line in measure 6. The line consists of two groups of sixteenth notes. Labels (0248) are placed below each group. A slur is placed over the second group, and a sharp sign is placed above the final note.

## *Spring 1909 – Op. 15, No. 15*

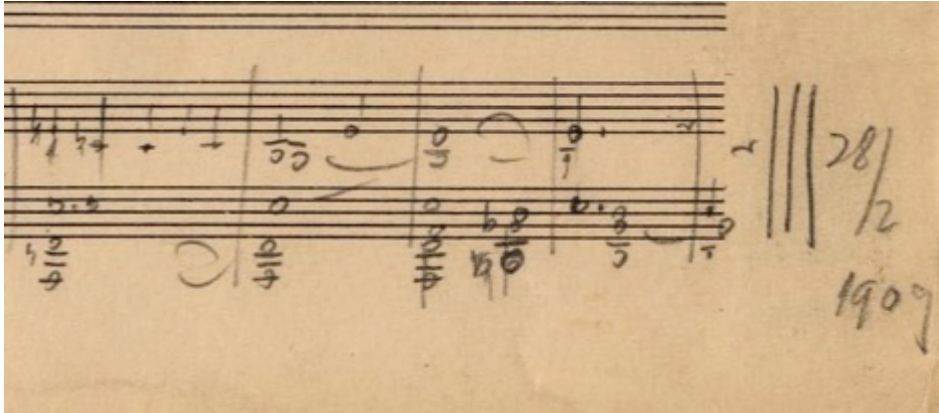


Figure 2: Schoenberg, Op. 15, No. 15, *Erste Niederschrift* [First Draft], ASC, MS 15, 420

The final song from Schoenberg's Op. 15, "Wir bevölkerten die abenddüstern Lauben," is the latest known composition of Op. 15. It is the only song in the cycle that scholars can say with certainty was written in 1909; at the end of a sketch of Op. 15, No. 15, Schoenberg wrote the date: 28/2 1909 (Figure 2). This places this song after the catastrophic premiere of the Op. 10 quartet on 21 December 1908. It was just weeks after Gerstl's suicide that Schoenberg faced the defining moment of the world premiere of his *Second String Quartet*, which he had completed during the disastrous summer vacation at Traunsee. A potent mixture of personal and political motives combined to yield one of the most scandalous performances in modern history. Schoenberg desperately tried to keep the premiere going, stepping out on stage to encourage the Rosé Quartet and weeping soprano Martha Winternitz-Dorda to finish the performance even as the audience loudly fled the

concert hall, screaming and hissing. It was an incident from which Schoenberg never really recovered, particularly in light of his already-rocky relationship with Vienna’s musical elite.

Though the text is not much longer than the preceding fourteen poems, No. 15 is nearly five minutes in length – double that of many of the other Lieder, primarily as a result of more focus on the piano and slower text declamation. The poem “Wir bevölkerten den abenddüstern Lauben” is about thirty percent longer than the other fourteen poems in the collection, with twelve lines compared to the seven or eight of the others. Like the songs from spring 1908, No. 15 continues to use harmonies built on triads and (014), but the use of whole-tone sonorities is limited. Just like No. 6, No. 15 ends with a major third (B $\flat$ -D), which, in this case, originates in the melody of the first measure as part of a descending B $\flat$  major triad over (025) spelled as A-E-G (Ex. 25). Set class (025) is the defining harmonic element of the opening of No. 15 (Ex. 26) and it recurs throughout the piece as a structural element,

Example 25: Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 15, m. 1

Mäßig (♩ = 60)

1

Example 26: Schoenberg, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15, No. 15, opening harmonic progression



lending organization to this longer song. The same harmonic progression reappears in mm. 15-16 underneath an altered melody. It returns in mm. 25-26 in a lower register, rhythmically altered and abridged, then again in mm. 32-33 and from mm. 41 to the end, almost exactly as in the beginning but rhythmically augmented and three octaves lower.

The main theme of the accompaniment in No. 15 shares its characteristic dotted rhythm with that of No. 3. Throughout “Wir bevölkerten den abenddüstern Lauben,” however, this familiar recurrent melody never appears in the vocal line in any form. If we consider the many instances of imitation and shared melody between the piano and voice in the prior fourteen songs, this is unusual. It is perhaps an allusion to the final departure of the woman from the protagonist – that they are in the same space, but share little with each other. Ultimately they are two different beings fated to remain separate. Seven songs (Nos. 3-7; 9-10) exhibit a close relationship between the accompaniment and the vocal line, either in the form of imitation or with the piano playing the same melody simultaneously with the soprano. Along with the simpler rhythmic divisions and slow tempi, the melodic treatment in Nos. 9 and 10 may indicate that they were composed not long after the spring of 1908. Nos. 1 and 2 and 11 through 13 could then potentially be from any point between fall 1908 and spring 1909. As Ethan Haimo has noted, however, there is no conclusive evidence available to support this hypothesis, and this assumption is based on speculation that songs composed during the same time period shared similar characteristics.

## *Text Setting and Expressionism*

When Schoenberg wrote “Das Verhältnis zum Text” in 1912, he was in the midst of a prolific period of vocal music composition. Throughout his career, Schoenberg was drawn to vocal works – his first compositions were Lieder and his last were choral works – and the so-called free-atonal period was no exception. Between 1908, when he began composing Op. 15, and 1912, he composed four major works featuring the voice: *Erwartung*, Op. 17 (1909); *Die Glückliche Hand*, Op. 18 (1910-1913); *Herzgewächse*, Op. 20 (1911); and *Pierrot lunaire*, Op. 21 (1912). Of these pieces, only *Die Glückliche Hand* was set to text that Schoenberg himself wrote. The others used previously existing independent texts, except for *Erwartung*, which was commissioned and written by Marie Pappenheim. The issue of setting text – especially preexisting and by other authors – loomed large in Schoenberg’s mind during this time.

For Schoenberg, the aim of text setting was to compose based on “parallelism on a higher level.”<sup>18</sup> Rather than attempting to represent the superficial aspects of a text, the artist should strive to understand and express the “real content.”<sup>19</sup> One obvious reason for acknowledging omission of the most apparent features of a text in favor of a deeper, hidden meaning was to deflect criticism. Schoenberg notes in the opening of the “Das Verhältnis zum Text” that, regarding the advanced skills needed to analyze vocal works, “it is nothing

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<sup>18</sup> Arnold Schoenberg, “The Relationship to the Text,” in *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, ed. Leonard Stein, trans. Leo Black (London: Faber & Faber, 1975), 145.

<sup>19</sup> See also the discussion of “Entrückung” in Chapter 1. Manuel Gervink has asserted that Schoenberg did not choose George’s texts primarily for their content, writing: “In choosing a poetic text for a song, the content was not the only and also not the primary consideration for Schoenberg.”

„Zur Auswahl eines Gedichttextes als Liedvorlage war für Schönberg nicht nur und auch nicht in erster Linie dessen Inhalt entscheidend.“

Manuel Gervink, *Arnold Schönberg und seine Zeit* (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 2000), 131.

but a comfortable way out of this dilemma when a music critic writes of an author that his composition does not do justice to the words of the poet.”<sup>20</sup> In the case of Op. 15, however, there is no existing criticism that reflects this sentiment. Quite to the contrary, after the February 1912 German premiere one Berlin critic praised the Op. 15 for capturing perfectly George’s poetry:

The peculiarly individual world of feeling and fantasy in Stefan George’s “Book of the hanging Gardens“ is realized with such astounding sameness of character, brevity, frailty and clarity in Schoenberg’s music that one can hardly think of these poems any more without this (indeed, exactly this) music.<sup>21</sup>

One must imagine that there would be no higher praise in Schoenberg’s mind than to have completely embodied the expression and character of the text being set, especially considering his view as expressed in “The Relationship to the Text” a few years later.

In *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Schoenberg’s compositional aesthetic is complementary to George’s Symbolism, though the music does not represent a clear one-to-one correlation to the poetry. Schoenberg strove to capture the essence of the George text, but he was also writing clearly within the established norms of the song cycle genre. Op. 15 displays characteristic techniques such as text painting and imitation between the voice and piano accompaniment. In the first song, for example, the text “mythical creatures spill into the marble lake spit from the brown gorge,” is followed by a quick descending figure

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>21</sup> C19120204\_h, “Arnold Schönberg veranstaltete ein Konzert mit eigenen Kompositionen ...” [1912]. „Die seltsam individuelle Gefühls- und Phantasiewelt von Stefan Georges „Buch der hängenden Gärten“ wird mit so erstaunlicher Stimmungseinheit, Knappheit, Zartheit und Anschaulichkeit von Schönbergs Musik realisiert, daß man sich diese Gedichte ohne diese (aber auch nur gerade diese) Musik nicht mehr denken kann.“

suggestive of rushing water spilling into a lake (No. 1, m. 16).<sup>22</sup> Similarly, song No. 6 features a decorated escape figure (m. 16) after the text “that images which flourish in beautiful darkness, flee when the cold clear morning looms.”<sup>23</sup> Imitation between the parts is also quite common in the song-cycle, particularly in opening phrases, such as No. 9 where the vocal line enters with the same melodic material that the piano had set up in the first six bars.

Aside from correlation, Schoenberg also presents the idea of counterpoint as an effective method for representing textual meaning in “The Relationship to the Text”:

*This* parallelism, or one even more profound, can also be present when externally the opposite seems to be presented – that, for example, a tender thought can be expressed by a quick and violent theme because the following violence will develop from it more organically.<sup>24</sup>

Unsurprisingly, as “The Relationship to the Text” was written as part of *Der Blaue Reiter* almanac, this statement parallels Kandinsky’s thoughts on form and color as presented in *On the Spiritual in Art* (written 1910, published 1911):

On the other hand, if a form does not fit the colour, the conjunction should not be considered “inharmonious” but rather as a new possibility and, therefore, as harmony.<sup>25</sup>

We know that Schoenberg read at least this part of *On the Spiritual in Art* by the end of 1911, because he mentioned it in a letter to Kandinsky dated 14 December 1911:

You are definitely right about so much. Especially what you say about color in comparison to musical color (timbre). That matches exactly with my own sentiments. Of the greatest interest to me is your theory of form.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> “Fabeltiere aus den braunen Schlünden Strahlen in die Marmorbekken speien, draus die kleinen Bäche klagend eilen.”

<sup>23</sup> “...dass die Bilder immer fliehen, die in schöner Finsternis gediehen wann der kalte, klare Morgen droht.”

<sup>24</sup> Schoenberg, “The Relationship to the Text,” 143.

<sup>25</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, *On the Spiritual in Art* (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, 1946), 46-7.

<sup>26</sup> Letter to Kandinsky, 14 Dec. 1911, Gabriele-Münter- und Johannes-Eichner-Stiftung, Munich, Germany.

One such moment of opposition between the text and the music occurs as the opening theme of No. 3 returns in the final five bars (mm. 22-26) of the song. Although the recapitulation of familiar material is not in itself shocking – this was certainly one of Schoenberg’s most used techniques in the free atonal compositions – it is ironic considering that the text finishes with the plea, “spare with merciful patience those who still stumble on foreign paths.”<sup>27</sup> Overlapping with the soprano’s declaration of unknown places is none other than the most familiar motive and the reassuring G, which was an aural beacon throughout the song. This G sounded first as repeated octaves in the left hand (mm. 1-3) and later as G6 in the accompaniment (mm. 7; 9; 16-17). In another example, the entire tone of Op. 15, No. 14 is in opposition with the text. The violence of the “kick of the annihilator late in the year,” of the “smashed ripe quinces” and thunderstorms is offset by the delicate, fragile sound of this pianissimo song and the *sehr gebunden* vocal part. The accompaniment begins pianissimo and ends pianissississimo, playing all chords without the pedal so each quiet sound disappears almost instantaneously.

There is a shared essence between the surreal aural landscape of Schoenberg’s music and the eerie atmosphere of George’s hanging gardens. Like the gardens, which seem spacious but are in fact a sort of natural prison, the musical texture of Op. 15 sounds open, with extreme pitch range in both the piano and soprano lines and a wealth of whole-tone harmonies throughout, but is rigorously and thoughtfully structured. As scholar R. C. Ockenden suggests, “limited worlds like the park or garden are rarely seen as positive in

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“Sie haben mit so vielem unbedingt recht. Insbesondere was Sie über die Farbe sagen im Vergleich mit der musikalischen Farbe. Das stimmt mit meinen eigenen Empfindungen überein. Höchst interessant ist mir Ihre Theorie der Formen.”

<sup>27</sup> “...und schon mit erbarmender Gedulden, der noch strauchelt auf so fremdem Stege.“



George's poetry."<sup>28</sup> At the same time the poet's relationship with nature was not clear-cut.

Ockenden continues by noting that:

George's poetry reveals an abhorrence of nature unless it is tamed by human activity; that nature remains an alien and hostile force with which George could not establish a satisfactory relationship. Nature is for George 'das Andere.'<sup>29</sup>

Scholar and George biographer Robert Norton explains the poet's distaste for nature as stemming from his need to control all aspects of the world as well as himself. Norton writes:

George's antagonistic attitude toward the natural realm is not a superficial air but, at least in part, another expression of his inability to abide by the idea that there was some external power he could not completely dominate, that something could resist his efforts to control it.<sup>30</sup>

In this sense, George's understanding of nature is congruent with Schoenberg's understanding of music, and especially tonality and technique. Like a garden or a park, the tonal language of the nineteenth century was fast growing too restrictive. And like the autumnal, gray and decaying hanging gardens, this old musical language was infertile and self-destructive. Yet, Schoenberg's continued use of organizing systems, by motive, melody, counterpoint, or the later twelve-tone and serial techniques, made it clear that he believed in the necessity of order and the importance of the composer's touch to organize musical material. Unlike a pristine and manicured park, however, Schoenberg would have likely argued in favor of a more English garden, in which each plant was able to grow to its own organic and expressive potential.

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<sup>28</sup> R. C. Ockenden, "Komm in den totesagten park und schau' Some aspects of nature and nature imagery in Stefan George's poetry," *Oxford German Studies*, edited by J.M.S. Pasley. V. 2 (1966), 91.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>30</sup> Robert E. Norton, *Secret Germany: Stefan George and His Circle* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 169.

Expressionism at its most fundamental level is a negotiation of the space between the internal and the external – a timely topic in early twentieth-century Vienna. An essential aspect of the crisis of modernism was, in fact, a collapse of the separation between public and private. As Holly Watkins writes:

Schoenberg's release of unconscious impulses into the compositional process mimicked a psychological breakdown in which inner and outer realms were no longer distinguishable – a breakdown that the sociologist Georg Simmel believed to imperil city dwellers.<sup>31</sup>

As part of a restructuring of identity that challenged the Germanic sense of *Innigkeit*, modernist figures in Schoenberg's milieu reacted in various ways. The architect Adolf Loos, whose plain-faced buildings opposed the overwhelming decadence of imperial Vienna, stripped away the external completely and retreated behind organic simplicity.<sup>32</sup> This same struggle, laced with troubling and heavy terms like “organicism,” is evident both in Schoenberg's discussion of text setting and Kandinsky's theory of color. Like the façade of a building, which everyone could easily see and understand, there was an obvious and superficial aspect to both music and painting. But, most importantly, there was also a core, which was less apparent to the untrained spectator. It was this core that Schoenberg was striving to reach and express.

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<sup>31</sup> Holly Watkins, *Metaphors of Depth in German Musical Thought: From E.T.A. Hoffmann to Arnold Schoenberg* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 18.

<sup>32</sup> Café Museum – designed by Loos in 1899 and located near the Vienna Secession Building – was frequented by Schoenberg's circle.

## *Stefan George*

*Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, Op. 15 was set to the earliest text of George's that Schoenberg ever used, dating from 1895. It seems that Schoenberg's foray into George's poetry originated with *Der siebente Ring* (1907), from which selections are used in the final two movements of Op. 10. The *Second String Quartet* (1907-1908) was contemporaneous with its text; the *George-Lieder* were not. By the time of the Viennese premiere of Op. 15 in 1910, the poetry was already fifteen years old. While this may initially seem like a negligible amount of time, considering the trajectory of both Schoenberg and George's lives during these years as representative of the scale of cultural change occurring, 1895 and 1910 were worlds apart. During these fifteen years Schoenberg went from an unknown amateur to a well-respected pedagogue and lecturer, and a figure of international controversy. George developed from part of Mallarmé's circle to the center of his own, and he shed his French-sympathies for a more nationalistic Teutonic agendum.

Both George and Schoenberg had difficult relationships with their native countries and being accepted by their public. While Schoenberg made concerted efforts throughout his life to distance himself from Austria, and Vienna especially, George ended up consciously embodying the Prussian spirit after a youthful flirtation with French culture. Both men also envisioned themselves as leaders of progressive artistic movements, inspired by divine power.<sup>33</sup> In the same way as Schoenberg saw that it was his path to give the world a new

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<sup>33</sup> See: Alan Philip Lessem, *Music and Text in the Works of Arnold Schoenberg: The Critical Years, 1908-1922* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1979), 37.

"For both Schoenberg and George, dedicated to art with almost religious consecrations, the role of the artist was that of priest-legislator for his fellow man."

music, so did George believe that he was the authority of the future of poetry. George's formalism and neo classicism contrasted sharply with late-Romanticism and was likely a pull for Schoenberg, who, in the first decade of the twentieth century, was cultivating a new musical style that incorporated classical forms. George's poetry in 1895, when *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* was published, was only just post-Symbolist, still imbued with indirect description, metaphor, strong imagery, and evocative expression. In many ways it was the perfect complement to Schoenberg's aesthetic ca. 1909. Both styles focused on sensation rather than object, and suggestion rather than explanation.

Schoenberg was also likely drawn to the fantastical elements of George's poetry, which biographer and scholar Robert Norton describes as "the realization of a surrogate and superior reality, as the creation of a separate realm in which the poet enjoyed an unchallenged supremacy."<sup>34</sup> Schoenberg's atonality, especially the later twelve-tone-technique, is such an example of a world in which the ultimate authority belonged to the composer, who was both creator and judge. Considering the unstable events of his life at the time, it makes sense that he would have been drawn to an alternate and fantastical reality so attuned to the emotional and physical experience of one person. Schoenberg was a deeply emotional man and this was especially evident in the music and art that he created and also in the written documents created at the time. Schoenberg and George also shared a fascination with numerology. Op. 15 includes exactly fifteen poems, taken from George's own division of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* into groups of ten, fifteen, and six poems based

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<sup>34</sup> Robert E. Norton, *Secret Germany: Stefan George and His Circle* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2002), 149.

on narrative development.<sup>35</sup> The second section, which Schoenberg set, focuses on the kingly protagonist falling in love with an unavailable woman.<sup>36</sup>

Despite these shared interests and artistic and personal tendencies, there are aspects of George's art and character that are at odds with Schoenberg's. Perhaps the greatest differences between the two men were George's homosexuality and his later association with the anti-democratic *Konservative Revolution* of the Weimar period. Even before the First World War George displayed an extreme distaste of mass culture and the general public that, according to some sources, sometimes approached anti-Semitic sentiment. As Melissa Lane and Martin Ruehl suggest:

The Master himself, while he declared that all loyal disciples, whether Catholic, Protestant or Jew, were of his race, also professed that Jews were a different type of people, whose ability to experience things was not as deep as that of others.<sup>37</sup>

Others note that many of those in George's closest circle were of Jewish descent, including Ernst Morwitz, who was an especially intimate confidant.<sup>38</sup> George's relationship with his Jewish friends and his opinion of Jews in general was made even more complicated and convoluted when his work was appropriated, especially after his death, into the *Blut und Boden* ideology. George himself disliked Hitler and the National Socialists, turning down a position offered to him by Josef Goebbels via a message delivered by Morwitz. George's

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<sup>35</sup> Op. 15 contains 15 poems. Op. 21 (1912) contains 21 poems. George's interest in numbers also applies to *Der siebente Ring*, published 1907.

<sup>36</sup> For George the poetic trajectory was likely at least partially auto-biographical, mirroring his relationship with Ida Coblenz – the only woman he was ever romantically involved with, who ended up marrying Richard Dehmel.

See: Jens Rieckmann, ed. *A Companion to the Works of Stefan George* (Rochester, NY: Camden, 2005), 10.

<sup>37</sup> Melissa S. Lane and Martin A. Ruehl, *Poet's Reich: Politics and Culture in the George Circle* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2011), 7.

<sup>38</sup> See: Ritche Robertson, "George, Nietzsche, and Nazism," in *A Companion to the Works of Stefan George*, ed. Jens Rieckmann (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2005), 196.

distaste for the Nazi regime may have had more to do with his feelings about bourgeois society and mass civilization than an ethical disagreement about the treatment of Jews. Yet, George's reception history, especially of works from the Weimar period, remains unalterably colored by the political and moral decisions of the National Socialists.

One of the most pervasive qualities of George's life was a feeling of alienation. In France he was German, in Germany he was a southerner and a Catholic. He disavowed society but kept a close and loyal group of friends, including an ever-rotating roster of beautiful young men that he could adore and who, in turn, would worship him as an artistic master. George's sense of rootlessness was one that he shared with Schoenberg – a Jew in Vienna, an Austrian in Germany, and a central European in America. Schoenberg scholar Bojan Bujić notes that, Schoenberg “is singled out as an originator of the alienation and dissolution that affects Modernism in general.”<sup>39</sup> In fact, estrangement is a characteristic that many modernist figures display. Pericles Lewis argues that one of the “concerns that were crucial to the modernists themselves,” was “the delights and dangers of rootlessness.”<sup>40</sup> Similar to George, Schoenberg dealt with a sense of isolation by retreating into a group of faithful followers. Unlike George, however, Schoenberg's music was a very public display of estrangement, and characterized him as outsider. George, in turn, saw himself as above society rather than outside it. As Norton writes, “George's professed Germanness ... had more to do with George's powerful desire to set himself apart, so as to set himself above, anyone he saw as a competitor.”<sup>41</sup> George's ultimate conformity to a German identity was

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<sup>39</sup> Bojan Bujić, *Arnold Schoenberg* (New York: Phaidon Press, 2011), 217.

<sup>40</sup> Pericles Lewis, “Introduction,” in *The Cambridge Companion to European Modernism*, ed. Pericles Lewis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 2.

<sup>41</sup> Norton, *Secret Germany: Stefan George and His Circle*, 147.

not a surrender of his own identity. Instead, “rather than integrating himself into Germany, he resolved instead to make Germany itself yield to the image of what he thought it should be.”<sup>42</sup> Where Schoenberg distanced himself from Vienna and Austria in order to follow his own truths, George pressured Germany to become what he wished it to be for himself. This adaptation of German culture to suit his own needs was a later development for George, one that was not contemporaneous with *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*.

A sense of alienation is translated quite literally into the text of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, which is set in a timeless, pseudo-Persian context. Pulling from oriental resources was a familiar tactic in German literature since Goethe’s *West-östlicher Divan* (published 1819). Fetishization of the East became increasingly popular, and increasingly devoid of meaning, as it was co-opted by nineteenth century bourgeois music and literature alike. In George’s hand, however, the relationship with the near and far East was turned on its head. As Erika and Michael Metzger argue:

The Book of the Hanging Gardens, however, represents the transposition of personal experience into the oriental realm and not, as is the case with Goethe’s successors, the importation of a pseudo-Persian philosophy and poetry into the German poetic idiom.<sup>43</sup>

Part of this reversal may be attributed to George’s own awareness of being an outsider – that he found it natural to be at home in a foreign time and place. But it is also in keeping with his domineering relationship not only with his circle, but also with all of *Deutschtum*, to graft his own story onto another form in order for it to suit his own vision and serve his own purpose.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 156.

<sup>43</sup> Michael M. and Erika A Metzger, *Stefan George* (New York: Twayne, 1972), 81.

A sense of eerie pessimism pervades George's *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, due in part to the surreal, hostile atmosphere of the gardens. Existing in an eternal autumn, the hanging gardens are filled with imagery of physical and emotional pain more akin to Tartarus than to a garden in Persia. Like Tantalus or Sisyphus, the ruler in these poems finds his lover ever out of reach – untouchable – despite his many futile attempts. Similar to the Greek underworld, it is an unseen force that controls the gardens, pushing away the protagonist and the woman. It is time, the changing of seasons, which inevitably tear apart the two characters. In the final poem, at the moment that the woman “goes forever,” the flowers and ponds immediately disintegrate, the grass rots, and leaves die and crumble. The reader gets the impression that it is the change of seasons that necessitates or forces the woman's departure, rather than her departure causing the change of seasons. The penultimate poem addresses this as the protagonist pleads with the woman to stop speaking of the late summer thunderstorms and the overripe fruit and dying leaves that signal autumn. She notices these signs of an unstoppable transition that will push her out of the garden.

The sense of unavoidable decay that permeates *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* is indicative of George's understanding of the transitional and ephemeral nature of the world and especially of good things. As Ockenden notes, “Although the pastoral poems of the *Bücher* had evoked idyllic and heroic antiquity, George was aware that this was a realm to which he could only make a temporary excursion.”<sup>44</sup> In reference to inevitable death and tragedy in George's life and poetry, many scholars cite the sudden and unexpected passing of Maximilian Kronberger in 1904. Maximilian, whom George called Maximin, was his favorite

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<sup>44</sup> Ockenden, “Komm in den totgesagten park und schau,” 98.



pet, and George considered him to be a manifestation of the divine. The boy, who had turned sixteen only a day before his death from meningitis, was soon elevated to cult status by George. For the rest of his life George carried Maximin's death with him, and the experience colored his works from 1904 on. Scholar G.R. Urban even cites Maximin's death as the catalyst for what he considers George's disavowal of music:

Both before and after 1904, musical sound called up dreamlike and somber associations in George's mind. But before 1904 it was part of his lyrical creed to lay himself open to this influence, while after that date the prophetic view imposed a ban on the conscious enjoyment of sorrow.<sup>45</sup>

George's turn away from music after Maximin's death adds a further layer of significance to Schoenberg's use of his poetry in the Op. 10 quartet.

In terms of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*, however, the relationship with Maximin does not factor in; George did not meet the boy, who would have been seven years old when the text was published, until ca. 1903. The pessimism expressed in *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* must have had another source. Likely this cynicism was an inherent part of the poet's personality, shaded by his budding break from Mallarmé and the French Symbolists around this same time. Scholars Erika and Michael Metzger attribute George's pessimism to a poorly concealed fear that his hopes for the future might never materialize:

Behind all the varieties of historical experience George tries to recapture, and behind all the masks through which he tries to speak in a more certain voice, is his mind carrying the knowledge that it is fated to see too much.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> G.R. Urban, *Kinesis and Stasis: A Study in the Attitude of Stefan George and His Circle to the Musical Arts* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1962), 138.

<sup>46</sup> Metzger and Metzger, *Stefan George*, 85.

Like George's foreshadowing of the horrors of the National Socialists, autumnal imagery and unseen forces in *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* are an omnipresent reminder that the world is not as idyllic as it seems.

## *Reception of Early Performances*

*Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* was Schoenberg's third work based on a text by the mystical poet. In 1907 he set the final two movements of his *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10 to texts from George's *Der siebente Ring* (published 1907), and by December of 1907 had written the first of his *Zwei Lieder für Gesang und Klavier* Op. 14 on a text from *Das Jahr der Seele* (published 1897). Unlike the premiere of the *Second String Quartet*, which was disastrous by all accounts, the Op. 15 was greeted with cautious interest in Vienna and Berlin. One reason for this stark difference in reception was the expectations of listeners. Audiences in Vienna and Berlin had very specific expectations as to what a song-cycle and a string quartet should look and sound like. Social and cultural values and precedents of genre and concert culture gave audiences a set of parameters against which they were unconsciously comparing *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*. Knowing that the work was a song cycle, listeners would have expected a German text sung in a lyrical manner by a solo vocalist accompanied by piano. And this is precisely what they heard.

The song cycle as a genre was strongly rooted in nineteenth-century Romanticism, including examples such as Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte* (1818), Schubert's *Winterreise* (1828), Schumann's *Dichterliebe* (1840), and Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* (1884-1885). Schoenberg's *Buch der hängenden Gärten*, though different in pitch content, was very much

within the constraints of this tradition. In terms of rhythm, form, thematic transformation, and text treatment there is little that would not have been found in *Winterreise* or *Dichterliebe*. And, indeed, one could argue that Müller's and Heine's poetry was more disturbing (though also more familiar) than George's. Because Op. 15 followed these understood standards, it was afforded more leniencies in regards to other novel aspects, such as the pantonal language and the odd text. Even within the traditional and nationalist genre of the Lied audiences could tolerate strange, potentially homoerotic text by an antisocial post-French-Symbolist poet. In contrast, it was much more difficult to accept any sort of text in the string quartet – the stronghold of absolute music – as evidenced by reactions in December 1908. The early reception of Op. 15 gives insight into the dynamic process of listening in the early-twentieth century when audiences had limited opportunities to hear a given work. In the case of Op. 15, the score was not even published until 1914 – five years after its creation and several years after the earliest performances in Austria and Germany (Vienna: 14 January 1910 and July 1912; Berlin: 4 February 1912 – originally planned for 28 January 1912, but delayed because of Martha Winternitz-Dorda's schedule).

## *Vienna*

For Austrian audiences, music was an identity marker – a matter of cultural and physical survival in the waning days of the Habsburg Empire. Early-twentieth-century Vienna and the city's patronage of the arts fostered a heavy, self-imposed reputation of musicality for its citizens. The seat of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was built from rigid social strata, rife with racial tension and anxiety about surrounding political and military

forces. For Germans, however, when it came to the prickly and egotistical Viennese composer, there was far less at stake. Where Germans could simply smile in confusion at Schoenberg's music, Austrians were compelled to action. The high-stakes of musical culture were a factor in the resulting chaos of the Op. 10 Viennese premiere – Vienna's reliance upon music as a framework of social structure meant that alterations of musical form threatened the larger organization of culture. A breakdown of genre translated almost directly into a breakdown of society. When instigated by a Jewish autodidact, this alteration was impossible to accept. As Maderthaner and Silverman note:

Modern antisemites had long considered Jews the bearers of undesired progress, representatives of an urban, bourgeois, industrial condition. They were seen as proponents of individualism and abstract rights thought detrimental to the “healthy” nation-state. According to some of the most powerful anti-Semitic stereotypes, Jews were linked to the dangerous threats of modernity.<sup>47</sup>

Given the underlying prejudice by early-twentieth-century Viennese that Jews were attempting to destroy society, it was a clear outrage to see it happening in the Empire's most important artistic field.

Published reviews of the July 1912 concert were varied. The two-day concert, presented by the *Akademischer Verband für Literatur und Musik*, claimed to represent living Austrian composers, but some critics took issue with the choice of composers who represented their culture.<sup>48</sup> Of the program, which featured Schoenberg and his Second Viennese School pupils Alban Berg and Anton Webern, one reviewer asked:

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<sup>47</sup> Maderthaner et al., “Wiener Kreise: Jewishness, Politics, and Culture in Interwar Vienna,” 61.

<sup>48</sup> Interdisciplinary association of students and their friends, established in 1908 to promote avant-garde art, literature, music, and cultural events.

Are there really no other living composers in Austria worth considering other than those presented in the evenings by the *Akademischer Verband*? Is there really only Schoenberg and his school anymore?<sup>49</sup>

Over the course of two evenings – one featuring solely Lieder – fourteen composers were featured. Two – Bruno Walter and Paul Graener – were Germans; the other twelve were citizens of the Austrian Empire and six were native Viennese. To say that Schoenberg and his pupils dominated the program was a gross overstatement. Like all the other composers featured, Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern each had one piece performed.

According to reviews, one evening included Lieder by Schoenberg, Bruno Walter, Paul Graener, J.B. Foerster (Czech), Franz Mittler (Viennese), Carl Lafite (Viennese), and Josef Reiter (Austrian).<sup>50</sup> The other evening featured a variety of vocal and instrumental pieces by Karl Goldmark (Hungarian), Robert Fuchs (Austrian), Richard Mandl (Czech), Julius Bittner (Viennese), Zemlinsky (Viennese), Franz Schreker (born in Monaco but considered Viennese), Josef Suk (Czech), Vítěslav Novak (Czech), Berg, and Webern.<sup>51</sup> The review of the instrumental evening was by musicologist and Mahler specialist Richard Specht, who was well respected in the Viennese musical community. Specht, too, questioned the contents of the program, suggesting that young composers like Berg and Webern should have been omitted and, predictably, challenging Mahler's exclusion, since he should have still been living had it not been for his chance death from a "malicious illness."<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> C191207\_c, K., "Akademischer Verband für Literatur und Musik," *Fremden-blatt* (Vienna), 4 July 1912. "Leben denn in Österreich {wir}klich keine anderen berücksichtigenswerten Tonkünstler, als die in {den} Abende des Akademischen Verbandes aufgenommenen? Gibt es wirklich nur mehr Schönberg und seine Schule?"

<sup>50</sup> C191207\_a, "Von neuen Liedern," 1912.

<sup>51</sup> C191207\_b\_1 und C191207\_b\_2, Richard Specht, "...darum handelte, die repräsentativen," [*Fremdenblatt*], Nr. 183, 7 July 1912.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

Despite these misgivings about the programming of the event, Specht was relatively positive about the Op. 15 in particular. His review relays confusion about the song-cycle, but reluctance to judge the work after one hearing:

That for me it is like this with Schoenberg's...fifteen songs after George's poetry I cannot hide; it's such that I'm convinced that the deficiency lies with me if I cannot approach these songs, in which individual expressions still grasp with strange urgency, and if they appear to me monotonous and gray.<sup>53</sup>

Characterizing Op. 15 as abstract, unapproachable, and monotone is not as negative as it may initially sound considering the atmosphere of George's poetry. The hanging gardens themselves have a surreal, distant feeling, and are indeed graying with the approaching winter. We feel a sense of inevitable transformation throughout the fifteen poems – culminating in the separation of the lovers and the change of seasons – but they are, at the same time, a static environment without time or place. It is easy to imagine the gardens as existing in monotony, forever on the cusp of autumn and without past or future. What Specht does identify in Op. 15 is urgent and individual expression. This is without a doubt Schoenberg's main goal for the composition, as it was George's for his poetry. As one of the first pieces of what some scholars would later consider to be high expressionism in Schoenberg's oeuvre, *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* attempts to convey the truth of a personal and emotional situation, without regard to what he would later term *Stil* (as opposed to *Gedanke*). Despite his own ambivalence, Specht finishes his review by suggesting that

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

„Dass es mir mit Schönbergs...fünfzehn Liedern nach Georgeschen Dichtungen ebenso geht, darf ich nicht verschweigen; ebenso wenig, dass ich davon überzeugt bin, dass die Unzulänglichkeit an mir selbst liegt, wenn ich diesen Gesängen, in denen einzelne Wendungen jetzt schon mit merkwürdiger Eindringlichkeit ergreifen, nicht nahe kommen kann und wenn sie mir eintönig und grau schienen.“

Schoenberg's latest works required the audience to wait and listen, and in his estimations, "up until now, when it comes to Schoenberg, this waiting has always been worth it."<sup>54</sup>

## *Berlin*

The German premiere of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* on 4 February 1912 in Berlin at the Harmoniumsaal took place during an evening dedicated to works by Schoenberg. The concert included five early songs, *Sechs kleine Klavierstücke*, Op. 19, *Herzgewächse*, Op. 20, and a piano transcription of Schoenberg's *Fünf Orchesterstücke*, Op. 16. Four of the early songs ("Verlassen," "Am Wegrand," "Mädchenlied," and "Der Wanderer") were excerpted from *Acht Lieder für eine Singstimme und Klavier*, Op. 6 (1903-1905) and the other, "Waldsonne," was part of *Vier Lieder für eine Singstimme und Klavier*, Op. 2 (1899). These same five songs were performed a little over two years earlier at the 1910 premiere of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* in Vienna, and were also sung then by Martha Winternitz-Dorda.

For many critics and journalists who attended the performance, the concert atmosphere was more remarkable than the music itself. As one reporter noted, "the scandalous scenes that took place in Vienna were not repeated in Berlin."<sup>55</sup> We can assume that he was referring to the 1908 premiere of the *Second String Quartet*, and not the 1910 premiere of Op. 15. Berlin critics were not sure what to make of the Op. 15 at this performance; once again the authenticity of the work and the sincerity of the composer were

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

„bis jetzt hat sich dies Warten bei Schönberg noch immer gelohnt.“

<sup>55</sup> Clippings C19120204\_h, "Arnold Schönberg veranstaltete ein Konzert," 1912.

"...die Skandalszenen, die sich bei Schönberg Konzerten in Wien ereigneten, wiederholten sich in Berlin nicht."

brought into question. In an attempt to understand Schoenberg's motivations, one author made the following suggestion:

What we heard the other night was, as in the song cycle "The Book of the hanging Gardens," for example, either unspeakably boring or...so eccentric and far-fetched that we leave room for the idea that the author wanted to make fun of his listeners.<sup>56</sup>

The sense that Schoenberg may have been mocking his audience was relevant considering the Op. 10 premiere, and the inclusion of the Viennese street-song "Ach, du lieber Augustin," in the scherzo, which critics later interpreted as a joke. Perhaps not wishing to fall prey to a similar trick, Berlin critics gave measured and polite responses to the work, all the while wondering about its intended effect.

Continuing the trope of sensationalism, another critic began his review with four question marks and a bombastic disclaimer that, "only under the protection of twice doubled question marks do I attempt to enter into the devastatingly dangerous waterway that Arnold Schoenberg controls."<sup>57</sup> Painted as a conniving and treacherous mastermind, Schoenberg controls a powerful force – in this case water as a metaphor for musical style. A waterway is intended as a means of commerce, transportation, and progress, but it can also be deadly. Again the allegory of the destructive Jew returns; Schoenberg's music poses a hazard to the structures that it reinforces. In reference to the Op. 15 the same critic had this to say:

The role of the accompanying piano is incomprehensible to me. Without sense or reason – at least in my humble opinion – it comes suddenly in with

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<sup>56</sup> C19120204\_b, "Arnold Schönberg gilt zur Zeit," 1912.

"Was wir neulich hörten, war, wie z.B. der Liederzyklus „Das Buch der hängenden Gärten“ entweder unsagbar langweilig, oder ... so verschoben und gewaltsam an den Haaren herbeigezogen, dass wir der Meinung Raum geben, der Autor habe sich über seine Hörer lustig machen wollen."

<sup>57</sup> C19120204\_d, "Aus Berlin: Arnold Schönberg," *Signale*, 7 February 1912.

"Nur unter dem Schutze der zweimal gedoppelten Fragezeichen wage ich mich auf das gefährliche Fahrwasser, das Arnold Schönberg verheerungsdrohend beherrscht."<sup>57</sup>



ragged, rhapsodic fragments, vanishes just as suddenly, acts like a madman, and babbles ten seconds later like a half-witted child.<sup>58</sup>

As was often the case in reviews of his music, it was Schoenberg's personality that was really under attack. In this excerpt his sanity is questioned, under the guise of a critique of the piano writing, and he is represented as simple-minded and childish – easily perceived as an ill-concealed jab at his short stature. Still, Schoenberg did have some support from Berlin music critics. Perhaps falling a bit under the spell of Schoenberg's cult of loyalty, one reviewer proclaimed that, regarding the Second Viennese School: "Well, I have to say, I'm ready to go to bat for them."<sup>59</sup> Overall, as they are represented by these existing reviews, Berlin critics were not necessarily kinder to Schoenberg than their Viennese counterparts, but they were less likely to extrapolate their feelings about the sound of his music as a greater social threat. In Berlin Schoenberg's music was not necessarily greeted with open arms, but there was a sense that there was space, too, for his aesthetic in a way there was not in Vienna. As Schoenberg wrote in a letter to Karl Kraus in the beginning months of 1909:

The Viennese music critics, with very few exceptions, are of such incompetence and ignorance that one can now evaluate them only on the basis of the extent or lack of damage they cause. Moreover, most of them actually understand their trade in this sense: producing advertising for a popular artist or stirring up opinion against an unpopular one.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

„Die Rolle des begleitenden Klaviers ist mir unbegreiflich. Ohne Sinn und Verstand – immer auf meinen bescheidenen Verstand bezüglich – kommt es mit abgerissenen rhapsodischen Fragmenten plötzlich hinein, verschwindet ebenso plötzlich, gebärdet sich hier wie toll und stammelt zehn Sekunden später kindlich einfältig.“

<sup>59</sup> C19120204\_a, "Aus Berlin wird uns berichtet," *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 8 February 1912.

"Nun, ich muß sagen, ich bin bereit, für sie eine Lanze zu brechen.“

<sup>60</sup> Cited in: Auner, *A Schoenberg Reader: Documents of a Life*, 61.

Letter to Karl Kraus, [12 January] 1909, Wienbibliothek im Rathaus, IN 200.083.

In Vienna Schoenberg felt singled out by the press, but in Berlin even negative reviews left the impression that there was a place for his music within the cultural scene. This freedom is one of the main reasons that Schoenberg left Vienna for Berlin in 1911 and only returned when called to military duty in 1915.

### *Other Early Performances (Paris, Buenos Aires, US, UK)*

Genre poses a major difficulty in tracing the reception history of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten*. Because a song cycle only requires two performers (the vocalist and the pianist) it is much easier to organize a performance than of a large orchestral work like Op. 16 or a stage production like *Erwartung*. It is also less likely to be well documented.

Performances would have been in intimate settings, often by invitation only for a specific audience or society, and, as can be seen in the Berlin premiere, could be changed at the last minute with minimal disturbances, and may have been more informal, lacking programs or press releases. For this reason there are likely more performances of Op. 15 between its 1910 premiere and 1924 than are currently known, either through extant reviews, programs, or mention by Schoenberg himself. And just as chamber performances can often accommodate more change than large-ensemble concerts, so too are they more susceptible to cancellation because of the absence of a performer. An orchestral piece missing one violinist can still be performed, but Lieder without a vocalist cannot. This was precisely the case with the would-be Parisian premiere of Op. 15 planned in 1912.

In November 1911 Schoenberg wrote to his Universal publisher, Emil Hertzka, relaying his plans for upcoming performances, and mentions “Paris: sextet [*Verklärte Nacht*, Op. 4], II. Quartet [Op. 10], George-Lieder [Op. 15] (an entire evening)...that’s not bad at all.”<sup>61</sup> About six weeks later Schoenberg confirmed the information with Zemlinsky, although he still did not mention an anticipated date, writing only, “The main thing, though, is an entire evening of me in Paris. Organized by the Lejeune-Quartet, whom I don’t know personally: sextet, George-Lieder, II. Quartet.”<sup>62</sup> There is no more mention of this performance until a letter to Zemlinsky in early March that states:

In contrast, the Paris evening has fallen to pieces somewhat. The singer has cancelled and so only the sextet will be played – the Second Quartet and the George-Lieder will be omitted.<sup>63</sup>

The idea of a French premiere for Op. 15 seems to be all but abandoned at that point. The next piece in the story of Paris and the *George-Lieder* is a mention by singer Marya Freund during the summer of 1913. Freund performed in the Viennese premiere of *Gurrelieder* earlier that year on 23 February 1913. She was in Paris at the time and wrote to Schoenberg about the possibility of a *Gurrelieder* performance there. In her letter we read, “And I’m quite happy and proud, because people speak often of you in Paris,” and signed the letter with the response, “Of course I would like to have the George-Lieder! And soon, please!”<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Letter to Emil Hertzka (UE), 17 Nov. 1911, Wiener Stadt Bibliothek, UE Archiv #74.

“Paris Sextett, II. Quartett, George-Lieder (ein ganzer Abend)...Das ist ja gar nicht so schlecht.”

<sup>62</sup> Letter to Alexander Zemlinsky, 29 Dec. 1911, ASC L7Z3.

“Die Hauptsache aber ist ein ganzer Abend von mir in Paris. Veranstaltet von einem mir persönlich unbekanntem Lejeune-Quartett: Sextett, George-Lieder, II. Quartett.”

<sup>63</sup> Letter to Alexander Zemlinsky, 5 March 1912, ASC L7Z3.

“Dagegen ist der Pariser Abend zum Teil ins Wasser gefallen. Die Sängerin hat abgesagt und so wird nur das Sextett gespielt das II. Quartett und die George Lieder entfallen.”

<sup>64</sup> Letter from Marya Freund, 10 June 1913, ASC L13F6.

“Und bin überhaupt froh und stolz[,] denn man spricht sehr viel von Ihnen in Paris. Natürlich möchte ich die Georgelieder haben! Und bitte bald!”

It's likely that there were other performances of Op. 15 that either did not occur or left no evidence of their existence. This is especially probable regarding early performances in the States and Great Britain, where performers would have been less likely to be in direct contact with Schoenberg, and therefore no correspondence would reference a concert as was the case with Paris. The earliest known American performance of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* was presented by The Friends of Music in the Library of Congress and performed by soprano Ada MacLeish in conjunction with the Gordon String Quartet on 20 February 1934. A pianist is not listed on the program, but may have been one of the quartet members. The concert took place at "The Residence of Mr. and Mrs. William Phillips," about whom scant information is available, but who likely lived either in Washington D.C. or in a surrounding Virginia or Maryland suburb.

MacLeish seems to have been one of the instigators for the Op. 15 performance and the connection with the Library of Congress. She studied voice and piano in Paris at some point between 1911 and 1917, and then again from 1922 to 1930, after marrying Archibald MacLeish – poet and Librarian of Congress – in 1917.<sup>65</sup> If indeed Freund was accurate in her representation of Schoenberg's fame in Paris ca. 1913, then it is possible that MacLeish was introduced to Schoenberg's music first in the French capital. Schoenberg's arrival on the east coast in the fall of 1933 may have spurred an interest in performing his music.

Founder of the Gordon Quartet and first violinist Jacques Gordon was also undoubtedly a factor in the programming of Schoenberg on this 1934 concert. Gordon, who was born in Odessa, Ukraine (part of Russia at the time of his birth in 1899) was

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<sup>65</sup> "Obituary: Ada T. MacLeish, Singer, 91, Archibald MacLeish's Widow," *The New York Times*, 1 May 1984.

concertmaster of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra from 1921-1930 under conductor Frederick Stock.<sup>66</sup> Stock not only premiered *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, Op. 16 in Chicago on 31 October 1913, but also gave another performance of *Five Pieces* on 8 February 1934, less than two weeks before the Op. 15 performance in D.C. with Gordon and MacLeish. Gordon's complete tenure with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra is not documented, but even if he were no longer with the orchestra in 1934 he would have undoubtedly been aware of the performance.<sup>67</sup>

Throughout the 1930s and World War II there were performances of Op. 15 in America (see Appendix 3), so it cannot be said that there was a stifling anti-German sentiment that worked against Schoenberg during those years. On the contrary, his Jewish heritage was likely quite effective at garnering sympathy in the States during the Second World War. If indeed there were no earlier performances of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* in the United States, then perhaps it was because of the nationalistic character of *Lieder*. Not only was a *Liederzyklus* very Germanic as a genre, but the German text may not have been appealing to American performers or audiences. As far as Great Britain is concerned, there are no extant documents of any performance of Op. 15 between 1910 and 1924, though Hinneberg-Lefèbre and Steuermann performed the work in London in 1929 after their concert in Berlin.<sup>68</sup> For earlier performances, it seems likely that the situation would have been similar to America and that any concerts either did not have a printed program or the materials were lost.

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<sup>66</sup> Chicago Symphony Orchestra Rosenthal Archives, "Jacques Gordon, CSO Violin," PRM-H-2-9.

<sup>67</sup> Gordon's family did not emigrate to the United States until 1914, so he would not have had knowledge of the 1913 Chicago premiere of Op. 16 at the time.

<sup>68</sup> See: Jenny Doctor et al, ed. *The Proms: A New History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2007).

One of the most unexpected aspects of the reception history of *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* in the first half of the twentieth century were two performances in Buenos Aires in the late 1930s and early 1940s (see Appendix 4). The tie between Argentina and Austria was Argentine composer Juan Carlos Paz, who founded the *Conciertos de la Nueva Música* in 1938.<sup>69</sup> *Conciertos* was similar to Schoenberg's *Verein für musikalische Privataufführung* in its goal to present new and innovative music. Unlike the *Verein*, the *Conciertos* does not seem to be as strict concerning its audience and their behavior. Both groups focused on chamber music, likely because it was easier to pull together into a performance, and both emphasized a variety of composers from different countries. From the inception of the *Conciertos* in 1938 until 1942, Schoenberg's music was performed at eleven separate concerts. This frequency rivals the number of concerts in which Schoenberg was featured in Vienna during any five-year period throughout his life. Paz's work with *Conciertos* coincided with the time that he was studying the work of the Second Viennese school, especially Webern and Schoenberg, and composing serially and using the twelve-tone method. Paz was a pianist and he most frequently presented *Drei Klavierstücke*, Op. 11 (1909); *Sechs kleine Klavierstücke*, Op. 19 (1911); and *Klavierstücke*, Op. 33a (1929). Of these works, Op. 19 was the most frequently performed, featured on five concerts from 1938-1942. In addition to studying and performing Schoenberg's music, Paz also wrote a book about the Austrian composer, *Arnold Schönberg: Or, the End of the Tonal Era* (published 1958), which was the subject of a concert-lecture Paz presented with pianist and conductor Michael Gielen in 1949, partly in honor of

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<sup>69</sup> Susana Salgado, "Paz, Juan Carlos," in *Grove Music Online*, Oxford University Press, accessed April 24, 2014.

the composer's seventy-fifth birthday the previous week (see Appendix 4).<sup>70</sup> Around 1950 Paz's compositional style evolved away from serialism and he seemed to lose interest in performing Schoenberg's music, and with that development performances in Argentina dropped off drastically.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Juan Carlos Paz, *Arnold Schönberg: o, El fin de la era tonal* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Nueva Visión, 1958).

<sup>71</sup> Susana Salgado, "Paz, Juan Carlos."

## CHAPTER 3

### *Five Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 16*

Not until 1969 did Arnold Schoenberg's home city of Vienna first perform his *Fünf Orchesterstücke* (*Five Pieces for Orchestra*), Op. 16. By then, nearly fifty years had passed since the work's premiere, and its composer had been dead for almost two decades. *Five Pieces* received its world premiere in London on 3 September 1912 and its American premiere in Chicago just over one year later in October 1913. By the time of its world premiere, the work had been completed for nearly three years. Throughout 1914, Op. 16 was performed internationally in Boston and Amsterdam, and Schoenberg began the year by making his first appearance in the U.K. when he conducted an encore performance in London on 17 January. Before his ultimately permanent move to the United States (October 1933), Schoenberg's *Five Pieces* were performed throughout the Netherlands (Amsterdam and Groningen, both 1920), Germany (Weimar, 1920; Berlin and Leipzig, both 1922) and the United States (Chicago in 1913, Boston in 1914).<sup>1</sup> The *Verein für musikalische Privataufführung* performed the entire composition in Prague on 13 March 1920, but a Viennese premiere of

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix 5 for a list of significant performances of Op. 16.



the work remained elusive, not only during Schoenberg's European years, but also throughout his life.<sup>2</sup>

Possible explanations for this remarkably international history of early premieres and performances range from the musically specific to the historically obvious. Musically, Op. 16 was written for a large ensemble, and its audiences found its high levels of dissonance both novel and polarizing. Historically, the First World War abruptly cut off the momentum of these early performances. Certainly, the circumstances surrounding the war had an undeniable effect on the performance history of *Five Pieces*, but they were nearly universal throughout Western Europe at the time and not specific to Vienna or Austria. Musical style and historical reality, although part of the equation, cannot completely explain the lack of a Viennese premiere during Schoenberg's lifetime. Atonality was an immutable characteristic of the work no matter where it was performed; war was the inescapable reality of the time. The *Five Pieces* were undoubtedly experimental, but so too were they experimental in London, Boston, Chicago, and Berlin, and yet the work did find an audience in these cities. All obstacles were surmountable except one: the claustrophobic cultural atmosphere of early twentieth-century Vienna. A potent mixture of hierarchical patronage of the arts, of an inflexible social system and cultural tension, of a political and military force often dwarfed by those around it, and of a weighty self-created reputation of musicality, Vienna was incapable

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<sup>2</sup> Bryan Simms mentions an earlier performance of *Five Pieces* in Vienna, which he reported in an email to the author from 10 October 2014 was, "evidently a rehearsal for music that would be performed in Prague [1920]." The concert, which not only featured a reduced orchestra, but was also essentially an open rehearsal, was not a true Viennese premiere of the work:

"An arrangement of Op. 16 for chamber orchestra was performed by the *Verein* at an open rehearsal on 25 February 1920 in Vienna, followed by a performance on 13 March in Prague."

Bryan R. Simms, *The Atonal Music of Arnold Schoenberg 1908-1923* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 74-75.

of celebrating its native son during most of the twentieth century. Ultimately only one cause would seem to account for the delayed Viennese premiere: a swirling pattern of controversy and prejudice around the composer in the city of his birth.

In discussing Op. 16 composer Marcel Dick – a violist and Schoenberg’s student during the 1920s – notes that the frequent foreign performances signified more Viennese animosity towards Schoenberg than the composer’s international status, for “had the general Viennese audiences been eager to hear Schoenberg’s *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, Op. 16 (1909), it would have been impossible, because the Vienna Philharmonic refused to play them.”<sup>3</sup> Thus, the frequency of performance of the *Five Pieces* outside Vienna would seem to betray a larger trend of Schoenberg’s exclusion from his native city, rather than of purely international fame. In a letter dating from 29 September 1922, Schoenberg also noted this bias:

Of conductors ... who have performed the Orchestral Pieces I can (off-hand) mention only some: Wood (London), Stokowski (Philadelphia), Damrosch, Stransky (New York), Stock (America?), Concertgebouw (Amsterdam), Paris – I can’t recall either the names or the orchestras. Boston and Chicago, also San Francisco, were, I think among them. Also some (?) in Germany - as yet *none* in Austria – Zemlinsky (Prague).<sup>4</sup>

Schoenberg’s memory of the details related to the international performances of the *Five Pieces* was not without error, but his conviction regarding the lack of Austrian performances was clear. This seems to imply that, for Schoenberg, performances in his homeland were more significant than those abroad. He was able to forget the minutiae of international performances, but was supremely aware of those that did not occur. Although this letter

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<sup>3</sup> Marcel Dick, “Schoenberg’s *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, Opus 16: The First Performance,” in *Studies in the Schoenbergian Movement in Vienna and the United States: Essays in Honor of Marcel Dick*, edited by Anne Trenkamp et al., *Studies in the History and Interpretation of Music*, v. 26 (Lewiston, NY: E. Mellen Press, 1990), 242.

<sup>4</sup> Arnold Schoenberg, *Letters*, ed. Erwin Stein, trans. Eithne Wilkins and Ernst Kaiser (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 78.

alone does not prove that Viennese culture was the main culprit responsible for this curious reception history, it offers very strong evidence that Schoenberg believed that there was significant prejudice against him in the city of his birth and throughout Austria. His sentiments seemed to convey not only an expectation that his works should be performed in Austria, and preferably relatively soon after their creation, but also annoyance and a suspicion that an Austrian premiere was being deliberately avoided.

### *London and the World Premiere*

Within the context of Schoenberg's complicated relationship with Viennese musical life, the London premiere of the Op. 16 gains even more significance. On 3 September 1912, more than three years after its completion, the *Five Pieces* received their world premiere in Queen's Hall in London under the baton of Henry Wood as part of a Promenade Concert. The *Five Pieces* directly followed Gounod's *Hymne à Sainte Cécile* and preceded the evening's intermission. Also on the program were works by Bizet, Saint-Saëns, Mendelssohn, Brahms and Wagner (see Appendix 6). In keeping with the Promenades' mission to promote contemporary music (as set forth by Henry Wood and Robert Newman), that night's concert also featured works by composers such as Granville Bantock, John Hullah, and Graham Peel. Of the thirteen composers, only five were still alive (Saint-Saëns was nearly eighty years old at the time). Schoenberg was the youngest non-British composer on the program by twenty years – he and Engelbert Humperdinck were the only two living German-speaking composers whose music was performed that night. Schoenberg's presence on the program

was exceptional not only because of his relative youth, but also because of his status as a foreigner.<sup>5</sup>

Many details of this seminal performance remain elusive. It is not explicitly clear how Wood became interested in Schoenberg's music, nor why he decided to program the Op. 16 specifically. Schoenberg's British student, Edward Clark, may have been an important figure in this process. Clark had taken composition lessons from Schoenberg in Berlin during 1911 and, according to David Lambourn, was an integral part of coordinating Schoenberg's visit to London in 1914 to conduct *Five Pieces*. Despite this likelihood, no extant documentary proves Clark's involvement or gives insight into the factors behind Wood's decision. The surviving correspondence between Schoenberg and Wood post-dates the 1912 premiere, and this communication largely concerns the encore performance that Schoenberg would conduct in 1914. In fact, the world premiere of the *Five Pieces* in 1912 seems to have been something of a happenstance – Schoenberg himself did not learn of it until afterwards, and Wood seems not to have known in advance precisely when it would occur. In a reply to Schoenberg on 24 January 1913, Henry Wood explained:

Regarding your Five Orchestra Stücke in the first instance I played them at one of my popular concerts, but it was almost impossible for me to let you know the date of the performance as I kept on rehearsing them continually before hand and was only able to arrange the date of performance a very short time before hand. I do, however, appreciate your great kindness in saying that you would have come over had you known.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> David Lambourn characterizes the placement of Schoenberg's music on this program: "There were ten items on the programme, and with Schoenberg safely tucked between an aria from Saint-Saëns's *Samson et Dalila* and Mendelssohn's Piano Concerto, few people in the audience can have been prepared for what they were about to hear...the impact of the new work was therefore all the more devastating."

David Lambourn, "Henry Wood and Schoenberg," *The Musical Times* 128, no. 1734 (Aug 1987): 422-3.

<sup>6</sup> Letter from Wood to Schoenberg, 24 January 1913, ASC LTW15.

In a 1944 article published in the *New York Times*, composer and conductor Eugene Goossens, who was also a violinist in the 1912 premiere, recalled details of Wood's rehearsal style and preparation of *Five Pieces* that clarify why the premiere may not have been scheduled far in advance:

For close on half a century Wood conducted an annual ten consecutive weeks of nightly three-hour symphony concerts – almost double the length of the hundred-minute programs of today...The rehearsal time allotted Wood for this orgy of music-making was – mark it well – three three-hour rehearsals per week! ...when we played for the first time in 1913 the “Five orchestral pieces” of Schönberg before a horrified audience of “promenaders” ...this baffling novelty also aroused the gravest misgivings among the members of the orchestra during rehearsals, and consequently necessitated three consecutive rehearsals of an hour each (an unprecedented amount of time to be expended on a new work) before it was considered fit for presentation).<sup>7</sup>

Both Goossens's memory and Wood's explanation of the preparation for the Op. 16 premiere seem to imply the precise date of the world premiere may have been uncertain due to increased rehearsal time and potential orchestral mutiny. It is also possible that tension between Wood and the musicians may have made inviting Schoenberg to the premiere an unwise decision, had it even been considered at the time, particularly in light of the general disapproval of his Op. 11 earlier that year.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Eugene Goossens, “Sir Henry Wood at Rehearsals,” *New York Times*, 3 September 1944.

<sup>8</sup> See P. A. Heseltine, “Arnold Schönberg,” *The Musical Standard*, 21 September 1912, 176.

“His [Schoenberg's] work was first introduced into this country by Mr. Richard Buhlig, who gave three of his pianoforte pieces their first English performance in London last January. These evoked a storm of adverse criticism: they were likened by one writer to the efforts of a small child, while another compared them to some original works of pictorial art, recently exhibited by inhabitants of Bedlam!”

The content and Heseltine's characterization of Schoenberg as a child or a madman is reminiscent of a review of Op. 15 from Berlin in February 1912 in which the author likened the work to the babblings of a half-witted child (See Chapter 2).

In the same letter to Wood, Schoenberg must have presented some concern regarding a negative reception of the work. Endeavoring to calm the composer's fears, Wood characterized the performance and the response of the London audience:

There were several musicians present at the performance at Queen's Hall who had heard the work in Vienna,<sup>9</sup> and who were most complimentary to our performance. Please do not imagine that the pieces were not played to the end; they were played in their entirety and listened to in all seriousness, and at the end of the performance there was terrific applause, which completely drowned the slight hissing which proceeded from some half dozen people not in sympathy with your music. I was recalled several times and the orchestra had to rise in a body and acknowledge the applause. *It was the press in London who tried to work up this slight display of unfriendly feeling; they always do this in England but we never take any notice of it* [emphasis added].<sup>10</sup>

Wood's dismissal of the London press makes it clear how divergent opinions were after the Op. 16 premiere. The reactions of critics and journalists were apparently markedly different from those of the typical audience member and from the personal commentary of musicians and composers. While critics were primarily motivated by circulation and publication statistics, musicians were likely more focused on aesthetics (i.e. whether the performance was thoughtful, convincing, and true to the score). Other listeners in turn, especially those attending the Promenade concerts as part of their social duties, might have been most concerned with the direct implication on their lives created by a new style of concert music and new social expectations of musical competency. Many journalists and critics were quick to point out the negative reactions – perhaps because they were more intriguing to readers, perhaps because they echoed what had already been published in Vienna in response to

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<sup>9</sup> In his article "Henry Wood and Schoenberg," David Lambourn writes that, "among the audience were the composers Arthur Bliss, Percy Grainger, Philip Heseltine, Alexander Mackenzie and Charles Wood. Two further composers, Eric Coates and Eugene Goossens, were playing in the orchestra; Arnold Bax attended a rehearsal..." p. 422. It is not clear who of these might have already heard the work and at which performance.

<sup>10</sup> Letter from Wood to Schoenberg on 24 January 1913, ASC LTW15.

Schoenberg's earlier works. These reviews focus on the commotion that Schoenberg's music incited and they clearly favored scandal. Public reaction, on the other hand, was positive enough to encourage Wood and the London Philharmonic to reprogram the *Five Pieces*, and to invite Schoenberg to conduct his work for the first time on 17 January 1914 in Queen's Hall.

Schoenberg's relevance as a musical force was almost immediately secured despite mixed reviews. Reports in print media varied from affected adulation to emphatic condemnation as critics and journalists struggled to judge the confusing novelties of the *Five Pieces*, but none dismissed the work or its composer as inconsequential. Among the most positive reviews, correspondent to the *Musical Standard* Philip Arnold Heseltine (who published his own works under the pseudonym Peter Warlock) proclaimed, "A new star has risen on the musical horizon!"<sup>11</sup> Ernest Newman, whose own reputation as a music critic and biographer was as influential in England as was Richard Specht's in Vienna, decreed, "The next vital development of music will be along the lines of the best of Schoenberg."<sup>12</sup> In the same breath, other reviews and reports recreated a narrative of aural chaos and public confusion, questioning Schoenberg's sanity, morality, and skill. Some critics made little effort to conceal their condescension. The day after the world-premiere of the Op. 16, the London *Daily News* ran the following assessment of Schoenberg's work:

Imagine the scene of the bleating of sheep in *Don Quixote*, the sacrificial procession in *Elektra*, and the scene of the opponents in *Heldenleben*, all played together, and you will have a faint idea of Schoenberg's idea of orchestral color and harmony.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> P.A. Heseltine, "Arnold Schönberg," *The Musical Standard*, 12 September 1912, 176.

<sup>12</sup> Ernest Newman, "The Case of Arnold Schoenberg," *The Nation*, 7 September 1912, 830.

<sup>13</sup> Nicolas Slonimsky, *Music Since 1900*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Schirmer, 1994), 132.

In referencing three works by Strauss the author compares Schoenberg to another contemporary composer – one who is ultimately painted as more successful. For this critic Schoenberg’s music is vaguely reminiscent only of the most animalistic and pedestrian elements of Strauss. Indeed it is barely human – perhaps a commentary on a lack of perceived organization in the work. Author and screenwriter Reginald Pound later characterized the world premiere of *Five Pieces* in simplistic terms of good and evil, casting Schoenberg as a demonic force bent on destroying beauty and order. In his 1969 biography of Henry Wood, he hyperbolized the danger of Schoenberg:

Disruptive forces were swirling and eddying under the broad, bland surface of the established order in music. Those formal solemnities were soon to be mocked by a disturbing new spirit. It was first thrust into the musical consciousness of London on the night in September 1912 when Henry Wood conducted the Queen’s Hall Orchestra in Schoenberg’s *Five Pieces for Orchestra*. To some it seemed that a satanic power was about to commandeer ‘the divine art’.<sup>14</sup>

Here, again, Schoenberg is an agent of destruction, threatening the “established order in music,” and, in turn, the order in society and the greater world. The trope of degenerate modernism returns again, painting the musical status quo as an entity threatened by a malicious and chaotic figure. In addition to being a dangerous force seeking to bring about the fall of music, Pound also characterized Schoenberg as mocking the seriousness of musical order, as if he was not only anarchic but also irreverent. In the absence of theoretical understanding – or perhaps to attempt to supplement it – critics in 1912 and for many years after relied on emotional and psychological description to make sense of many of Schoenberg’s compositions, including *Five Pieces*. Any order or organization seemed to be

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<sup>14</sup> Reginald Pound, *Sir Henry Wood: A Biography* (London: Cassell, 1969), 118.



masked by the work's impenetrable atonality and timbral experimentation. Dissonance and rhythmic complexity were explained in animalistic terms, akin to sheep's bleating, or translated as nonsensical layers of sound, barely able to be considered music.

Evidently wary of dismissing Schoenberg entirely, many reports made sure to note the impossible task of coming to terms with the piece after a single unprepared hearing – a sentiment that British critics would repeat after hearing the *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10 in June 1914. After the premiere of *Five Pieces*, a review in the *Manchester Guardian* read:

It is impossible to give an idea of the music. The endless discords, the constant succession of unnatural sounds from the extreme notes of every instrument, and the complete absence of any kind of idea, which, at one hearing at least, one can get hold of, baffle description.<sup>15</sup>

*The Times* echoed this sentiment in their review, noting that, “whether it has a real message it is simply too early to say.”<sup>16</sup>

Part of the reason that critics and listeners found *Five Pieces* difficult to approach and its “idea” impossible to comprehend was due to the musical aesthetic, which was often dense and lacking repetition, as Berg later noted in his 1924 essay, “Why is Schoenberg’s Music so Difficult to Understand?”<sup>17</sup> This lack of understanding was rarely examined but often extrapolated into a misunderstanding of Schoenberg himself. A review in London’s *The Times* reported that, “Five orchestral pieces by Arnold Schönberg form an essay in dissonance,” and asserted that the performance “was like a poem in Tibetan; not one single soul in the room could possibly have understood it at a first hearing.”<sup>18</sup> The review

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<sup>15</sup> Slonimsky, *Music Since 1900*, 132.

<sup>16</sup> “Promenade Concert: An Essay in Dissonance,” *The Times* (London), 4 September 1912.

<sup>17</sup> Alban Berg, “Warum ist Schönbergs Musik so schwer verständlich?” *Musikblätter des Anbruch* (September 1924); 329-341.

<sup>18</sup> “Promenade Concert: An Essay in Dissonance,” *The Times* (London), 4 September 1912.

effectively challenges Schoenberg's legitimacy and ability as a composer. Either his music was nonhuman cacophony (an "essay in dissonance") and therefore not music at all, or it was so foreign ("a poem in Tibetan") that it was impossible to understand. In either case, Schoenberg was characterized as outside the Western European tradition.

Characterizing Schoenberg's music as "Tibetan" can also be read as a veiled commentary on Schoenberg's Jewishness. As Peg Weiss notes, "in musical criticism since the nineteenth century the epithet Oriental often served as a synonym for Jewish."<sup>19</sup> By connecting the *Five Pieces* with incomprehensible sounds from the Far East, this critic was tapping into a pervasive trope that Jewishness in music was perhaps not music at all, or that it was so far removed from Western European sensibilities that it was incoherent. Another review from London the day after the premiere echoed a similar sentiment, noting that, "in its unintelligibility it is like genuine Oriental music to European ears."<sup>20</sup> This sort of criticism not only undermined Schoenberg's connection to the Austro-Germanic musical canon, but it implicitly questioned his skill and very ability to create music at all, hearkening back once again to the stereotype of the uncreative Jewish musician.

Newman seemed to have a particularly difficult time determining how to contextualize Schoenberg and his music. In one sense, he interpreted the confusion stemming from this performance in a positive light, by arguing that Schoenberg was simply ahead of his time. Newman posed a question to critics and the public alike:

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<sup>19</sup> Peg Weiss, "Evolving Perceptions of Kandinsky and Schoenberg: Toward the Ethnic Roots of the "Outsider,"" in *Constructive Dissonance: Arnold Schoenberg and the Transformations of Twentieth-Century Culture*, ed. Juliane Brand and Christopher Hailey (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 39.

<sup>20</sup> "'Futurist' Music," *Pall Mall Gazette*, 4 September 1912, p. 5.

May it not be that the new composers see a logic in certain tonal relations that to the rest of us seem chaos at present, but the coherence of which may be clear enough to us all some day?<sup>21</sup>

In one sense Newman advocated for Schoenberg, arguing that he “is not the mere fool or madman that he is generally supposed to be,” but rather “a man of undoubted gifts.”<sup>22</sup> But in the same breath he admits, “Schoenberg can write very expressively at times. But he is curiously unequal.” Newman also suggests that the problem may be with Schoenberg’s execution, rather than his idea, proposing “it may be that Schoenberg’s many fumbings prove him simply to be lacking in imagination and vision of the right fire and intensity.”<sup>23</sup> This conclusion seems particularly unlikely considering Schoenberg’s character, and probably would not have been Newman’s impression had he met the composer in person before penning the review.

Reception by critics and journalists is relatively easy to recreate because it exists in the tangible form of print media, widely circulated and preserved. Responses from the audience of September 1912, however, existed only in that moment. They endure now only in a paraphrased state, filtered through the lens of memory or indirectly recorded by others. Published reports noted the abnormally raucous reception by so-called Promenaders that evening, and Henry Wood recalled in his autobiography that the premiere of the *Five Pieces* was one of only two times that he was ever hissed by concert-goers.<sup>24</sup> It is clear that in

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<sup>21</sup> Ernest Newman, “The Case of Arnold Schoenberg.”

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> A report from *The Times* noted: “At the conclusion half the audience hissed. That seems a too decisive judgment, for after all they may turn out to be wrong; the other half applauded, more vehemently than the case warranted, for it could hardly have been from understanding.”

“Promenade Concert: An Essay in Dissonance,” *The Times* (London), 4 September 1912.

Newman also reported the hissing in his article “The Case of Arnold Schoenberg,” writing: “It is not often that an English audience hisses the music it does not like; but a good third of the people the other day permitted

September 1912 a portion of the audience hissed in reaction to the performance of *Five Pieces*. It is not evident, however, exactly what percentage of the listeners displayed this behavior or what was their motivation for doing so. In his monograph about the Henry Wood Proms, David Cox suggests that, despite their reactions, audience members were “glad to hear something by ‘the most talked-of German composer of the day’ (as the programme note of the concert described him).”<sup>25</sup> Cox goes on to speculate that audience members were reacting more to the program notes than to the piece itself, or that their reaction was guided by the tone of the accompanying commentary, which read:

“Schoenberg’s Five Pieces for orchestra – at least as they appear on paper – lead to the conclusion that they are merely experiments in dissonance; protests against all preconceived notions of music and harmony.”<sup>26</sup>

For those who knew nothing of Schoenberg besides the controversy attached to his name this brief note describing a protest against music and harmony essentially gave permission – or even suggested – that they reject the work. It is understandable that they would have been predisposed to dislike the music if they believed, having just read the above statements moments before hearing the work, that it represented a threat to social order and artistic normalcy.

Following the encore performance of Op. 16, there was an increase in seemingly balanced, judicious journalistic response, perhaps because there was more advance notice or because the audience’s expectations of Schoenberg’s music had adapted. Lambourn suggests that the change in attitude was due in part to a more educated audience. He notes the

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themselves that luxury after the performance of the five orchestral pieces of Schoenberg. Another third of the audience was not hissing because it was laughing, and the remaining third seemed too puzzled either to laugh or to hiss.”

<sup>25</sup> David Cox, *The Henry Wood Proms* (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1980), 56.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, 62.

increase of performances of recently composed works in the past year, including, “the first English performances of *Prometheus*, *Petrushka*, *Jeux* and *The Rite of Spring*.”<sup>27</sup> Presumably, exposure to other types of contemporary music would have given listeners greater context for Schoenberg’s style and would have better prepared them for the sound of *Five Pieces* in similar way to how Debussy’s quartet seemed to pave the way for the reception of Op. 10.

Whereas Schoenberg in September 1912 was known in London only for his Viennese scandals and for a single performance of his *Drei Klavierstücke*, Op. 11 earlier that year, Schoenberg in January 1914 was contextualized by performances of other modern pieces, he was a face to a name, and he was the subject of much curiosity in the British musical world, including essays and articles in seven of Britain’s major journals, according to Lambourn.<sup>28</sup> In this respect, the encore performance of *Five Pieces* was well-timed as there seemed to be a movement to reconsider Schoenberg’s music in a new light. That Schoenberg conducted the second performance likely also added to the intelligibility of the work and the success of the concert. This difference in performance is reflected in Newman’s assertion that the second performance “certainly gave every one a very different impression of the work,” which he attributed, in part, to better preparation of the orchestra.<sup>29</sup>

Not all critics were swayed, however, and hyperbolic and inflammatory critiques of Schoenberg’s compositional methods continued to be published. On 24 January 1914

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<sup>27</sup> Lambourn, “Henry Wood and Schoenberg,” 426.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 426.

See especially: Ernest Newman, “À Propos of Schönberg’s Five Orchestral Pieces,” *The Musical Times* no. 852 (February 1, 1914), 87.

“Schönberg’s Music at Queen’s Hall,” *The Times* (London), 19 January 1914.

<sup>29</sup> Newman, “À Propos of Schönberg’s Five Orchestral Pieces.”

London's *Daily Telegraph* ran a review that patched together previous characterizations of Schoenberg's music as animal or industrial noise or an incompetent musician:

To one critic, the music of Schoenberg's *Five Orchestral Pieces* suggested feeding time at the zoo; also a farmyard in great activity while pigs are being ringed and geese strangled. On another the identical section of the work produced the impression of a village fair with possibly a blind clarinetist playing at random. The same listener heard sounds as of sawing steel and the distant noise of an approaching train alternately with the musical sobs of a dynamo.<sup>30</sup>

Schoenberg's music steadily gained performances and advocates, but some critics still yielded to the temptation simply to dismiss his works as unorganized cacophony written by an autodidact who craved attention. Despite everything, scandal still drove the presses for some critics.

The newfound interest and investment in Schoenberg also had significant repercussions as to how audience reactions were interpreted. In his review, Newman emphasized the tendency of London audiences to be polite at all costs:

There were an occasional hiss and a spasmodic giggle or two during the performance of Schönberg's Five Orchestral Pieces at Queen's Hall on January 17; but there was nothing like the noisy disapproval that greeted them at the Promenade Concert of a couple of seasons ago... This was put down by some people to our pleasant English habit of not being rude to an artist to his face, no matter how much we may dislike his art. But I think it meant more than that; people were astonished to find how much of this music they could really understand and enjoy.<sup>31</sup>

It seems quite likely that the oft-noted polite British temperament prevented audience members and music critics from unequivocally discounting the work in the presence of its

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<sup>30</sup> Slonimsky, *Music Since 1900*, 148.

<sup>31</sup> Newman, "À Propos of Schönberg's Five Orchestral Pieces," 87.

An article in *The Times* dating a few days after the 1914 performance also remarked:

"There was applause at the end of each number save the first, but every one knows how much a London audience's applause is worth. It is mostly compounded of nervousness, anxiety to be polite, and affectation."

"Schönberg's Music at Queen's Hall," *The Times* (London), 19 January 1914.

creator. It is one thing to dismiss a piece when the composer is unfamiliar or overseas, but quite another to do so to his face. Whether the applause was genuine or merely good-natured pageantry, the encore performance of *Five Pieces* was far less contentious than the premiere. In a way, this increasingly accommodating reaction reflected the trajectory of Schoenberg's reception history, in England as well as continental Europe and America, throughout the remainder of the twentieth century. His music was not always well-loved, but it was, for the most part, taken seriously.



Despite being relatively well received in 1914, Schoenberg's music did not immediately find an enduring place in British concert halls. This was partially due to timing – the First World War broke out only a matter of months after Schoenberg's first visit to England. Relations between England and Austria cooled significantly and had a huge impact on the types of music being programmed. Lambourn relates the effect of Schoenberg's performance in Britain:

The outbreak of war dealt a severe blow to the progress of the Second Viennese School in Britain. Webern and Berg remained absent from the concert hall in Britain for many years, and the number of performances and articles devoted to Schoenberg began to dwindle. Wood began to cool in his appreciation, while Newman became positively hostile.<sup>32</sup>

The momentum that had been gained from 1912-1914 was abruptly abandoned, and the loss of Henry Wood and Ernest Newman's advocacy was insurmountable for Schoenberg's

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<sup>32</sup> Lambourn, "Henry Wood and Schoenberg," 427.

reception in Britain in the first decade of the twentieth century. Not until the 1920s did Schoenberg regain a presence in the British musical scene, due in no small part to Edward Clark. It was Clark who conducted the English premiere of the *Kammersymphonie*, Op. 9 in May 1921 and the world premiere of *Verklärte Nacht* in its orchestral version in December 1924.<sup>33</sup> In the 1930s this trend continued and in 1931 conductor Sir Adrian Boult performed the Variations for Orchestra, Op. 31 with the BBC Symphony Orchestra. On 14 September 1934, *Five Pieces* returned to the Promenade stage, and in 1936, Boult also conducted the Viennese premiere of Op. 31, which Cox argues was “indeed a notable event for an English conductor.”<sup>34</sup> Even in Vienna, Schoenberg’s greatest advocates seemed to be foreigners.

In 1922 the British Broadcasting Corporation was founded, and just five years later Clark accepted a position within the corporation as music producer, which he held until his decision to leave in 1936. During his time as a BBC music producer, Clark was well known for programming contemporary music, including works by Schoenberg. According to Lambourn:

He invited Schoenberg to conduct performances of *Gurrelieder* in 1928, *Erwartung* in 1931, and the Variations for Orchestra in 1933...his departure...deprived the BBC of a vital link with contemporary European music and Schoenberg was again relegated to the fringes of musical activity until Glock’s appointment in 1959.<sup>35</sup>

A brief glance at the performance history of Schoenberg’s music at the Proms (a major source of programming for the BBC) throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries confirms this assessment (see Appendix 7). Glock clearly had a huge impact on the BBC’s philosophy of programming, similar to that of Wood on the Proms. From 1960 until

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Cox, *The Henry Wood Proms*, 157.

<sup>35</sup> Lambourn, “Henry Wood and Schoenberg,” 427.



present day, Schoenberg was played in nearly every season of the Proms, and quite often multiple times per season. Still, the concerts arranged in honor of the centenary of Schoenberg's birth were largely early works.<sup>36</sup>

The emphasis on Schoenberg's early works in the latter half of the twentieth century is not at all insignificant. In many ways it was early, tonal Schoenberg that was becoming canonized in the repertoire of concert music. Audiences embraced early Schoenberg; theorists and composers embraced atonal and serial Schoenberg. For Schoenberg, being selectively embraced became a trope. As recent as 2004, Richard Taruskin echoed the idea of early Schoenberg works being more accepted by the general musical public by referring to *Verklärte Nacht* (1899) as, "Schoenberg's most popular composition (perhaps his only popular composition)."<sup>37</sup> That certain factions of listeners accept particular aspects of Schoenberg's career and music is an undeniable truth that runs throughout the entirety of his reception history. It is a truth that we may be able to understand more fully within a context of the reception of premieres and early performances of pieces that defined not only Schoenberg's musical style, but his image as well.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> See also: Cox, *The Henry Wood Proms*, 237.

<sup>36</sup> "Apart from the short *Accompaniment to a Film Scene*, the three works heard that season were *Gurrelieder*, repeated from the previous season, conducted by Boulez; the Chamber Symphony No. 1, Op. 9; and *Verklärte Nacht* – all, in fact, early works."

<sup>37</sup> Richard Taruskin, "The Poietic Fallacy," in *The Musical Times* 145 (Spring 2004): 30.

<sup>38</sup> For early twentieth-century British composers, the *Five Pieces* offered an intriguing departure from the norm. There were a few immediate and notable musical responses to Schoenberg's first appearance in London. Gustav Holst seemed particularly to fall under the sway of *Five Pieces* as he composed *The Planets* (1914-1916), which he originally titled 'Seven Pieces for Large Orchestra'.

## *Boston and Chicago and the American Audience*

American critics' reactions to the *Five Pieces* in Chicago (October 1913) and in Boston (December 1914) reflected the ideals of early twentieth-century American musical culture as distinct from their British counterparts. For the American musical elite of this era it was crucial to create an identity independent from European trends. As a result, American music critics were quick to point out the shortcomings of European audiences, conductors, and orchestras in hopes of situating the United States as the new musical center of the Western world. When American orchestras heard more new music than their old-world counterparts, it was considered to be a sign of increasing musical and cultural intellectualism in the United States. This was one reason that Schoenberg found an audience in America in the 1910s and 1920s. Americans were eager to keep up with and keep ahead of European listening trends, especially those that were contentious or dramatic. As a representative of progressive modernism and a composer who had stirred a variety of emotions across the Atlantic, Schoenberg was an ideal example with which to prove the superiority of America's musical taste.<sup>39</sup>

Just weeks before the U.S. premiere of *Five Pieces* in Chicago, music critic for the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Glenn Dillard Gunn called attention to the amount of new music being programmed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra:

The symphony orchestras of Europe make slight effort to represent the advance of art in their regular subscription concerts. Hence it may be

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<sup>39</sup> A similar dynamic occurred in Prague in the 1920s (see Chapter 4).

assumed that the Chicago orchestra will have few competitors for the record of new works performed when the season closes.<sup>40</sup>

Gunn continued with this topic in an article from February 1914, which ran less than four months after the U.S. premiere of *Five Pieces*. The article compared Chicago's Symphony Orchestra with Artur Nikisch's Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra:

Leipsic [sic] has patronized the Gewandhaus concerts for 171 years. Yet we have Schönberg and Strauss and Mahler oftener and know them better than do the music lovers who sit under Arthur Nikisch week after week and year after year. In other words, we are more conversant with the progress of German music than are the Germans themselves...An American orchestra which always has been led by an American conductor ... has played more new German music and played it oftener during the last two decades than one of the oldest and most celebrated German orchestras.<sup>41</sup>

In terms of exposure to Op. 16, Chicago was nearly a decade ahead of any German city. It was not until 7 December 1922 that the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra performed *Five Pieces* in the German premiere of the work.<sup>42</sup> Just three days later Wilhelm Furtwängler, who had likely conducted the Leipzig performance, also presented the Op. 16 with the Berlin Philharmonic. Furtwängler, who assumed the role of lead conductor following Nikisch's death in January 1922, played a major part in bringing Schoenberg's music to the most well-established concert halls and orchestras of Germany. It was he who conducted the world premiere of the *Variations for Orchestra*, Op. 31 with the Berlin Philharmonic on 2 December 1928, just months after its completion.

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<sup>40</sup> Glenn Dillard Gunn, "Keeping Pace with the Futurists in Music," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 5 October 1913.

<sup>41</sup> Glenn Dillard Gunn, "Chicago Hears More New German Music Than Leipsic – Gossip Sharps and Flats," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 15 February 1914.

Roughly three weeks after Gunn's article went to press Leipzig heard the Leipziger Männerchor perform *Gurrelieder* with Schoenberg conducting. Of note is Gunn's invocation of Mahler as a representative of the progress of German music three years after his death, which may indicate a certain amount of delay in the consumption of music in America.

<sup>42</sup> On 4 February 1912, Schoenberg presented a concert in Berlin, which included an eight-hand piano arrangement of Op. 16. Not until 1922 was the full orchestration performed in Berlin.

Perhaps because of an eagerness to seem more sophisticated and intelligent than European audiences, reports of audience reactions from the Chicago performance were considerably milder than those from London, and especially from Vienna in response to Schoenberg's earlier works. American audiences, wary of epigonism, would likely have gone to great lengths to form opinions independent of their European counterparts, and perhaps this is one reason that the United States premiere was less raucous. If Chicago listeners were going to disapprove, then it would be for their own reasons, and not merely to keep in fashion with Vienna.

Like concertgoers in London, the Chicago audience was reportedly confused and overwhelmed by *Five Pieces*. As Gunn reported in the days after the U.S. premiere,

The audience at last week's symphony concerts were too dazed by the absolute newness of his music and too much amused by its surprising eccentricities to be certain of their impressions.<sup>43</sup>

Despite this uncertainty, the performance and the work were applauded.<sup>44</sup> Gunn characterized the Chicago audience as open-minded and cerebral in its reactions to the Op. 16. They may not have completely understood the nuances of the piece that they heard, but they were interested and willing to consider it. Ostensibly, this could be interpreted as a sign that American audiences felt less threatened (or, perhaps, simply less impassioned) by the prospect of new music.

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<sup>43</sup> Glenn Dillard Gunn, "Concerning the New Compositions, the Public and the Orchestra," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 9 Nov 1913.

<sup>44</sup> Glenn Dillard Gunn, "Schoenberg Astonishes the Symphony Patrons," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 1 November 1913.

"Even the conservative matinee audience, though dazed and astonished, was keenly interested by this most novel and original music. A few enthusiasts ventured to applaud. One objector gave vent to a shrill whistle. Several times the whole audience laughed heartily and somewhat derisively. But the general impressions of the public seemed to be concerned with curiosity, wonder, and perplexity."

In another summary of audience reactions, an anonymous letter from a concert-goer to conductor Frederick Stock, dated 3 November 1913, gives a somewhat different account:

I heard a stranger, a woman of mature years, a German, and evidently a lover of music, who happened to sit next to me say, that she liked very much the second and third pieces, but did not comprehend the first and last but that she thought they were all exceedingly interesting. The man next to her, a German, applauded heartily all of the pieces. In my immediate vicinity there were a number who honestly could not help from laughing at some of the effects, and especially some of the curious interjected notes which rang out so unexpectedly; but, for the most part, the people about me seemed profoundly interested and listened intently.<sup>45</sup>

The author's attention to the background of audience members around him and his compulsion to point out their German heritage speaks to the importance of culture and nationality in reactions to Schoenberg's music. The author may have been attempting to lend authority to a sympathetic listening of Op. 16 by citing the German audience members, who, by their inherent musicality, would have been able to assess more accurately than others. Or, perhaps, the nationality of the man and woman were of interest precisely because their reactions went against the current of the majority of German readings of Schoenberg's music.

Among all accounts of Chicago's response to *Five Pieces* there are a variety of reactions registered – usually confusion, laughter, and approval or disapproval. These impressions mirrored those that had been recorded (with a greater degree of intensity) in London just over a year earlier. Chicago audiences were unique in the degree of their responses, if not in type. There was a certain amount of comfort with all reactions except

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<sup>45</sup> Letter to Frederick Stock, 3 November 1913, ASC L26S41.

laughter. To feel amusement in the concert hall seemed to require justification. In a response immediately following the concert, Gunn attempts to explain the outbursts of laughter from the previous night:

It has been suggested that Mr. Stock did not intend the music of Schönberg to be taken seriously. It is not at all certain that the derisive laughter of the audience was unshared by the composer and the conductor. Perhaps the moments that roused the risibilities of the listener were intended to produce just that effect...[but] one ventures to read in Mr. Stock's unusual program not a joke at the expense of Schönberg, but an admonition to the public.<sup>46</sup>

Although Chicago had its own distinct context in which to understand the *Five Pieces*, colored deeply by the situation of concert music in America at the time, the Op. 16 was still met with perplexity and reticence.



Throughout the 1920s and 1930s Schoenberg's music was played with some regularity in Chicago concert halls. The Third Quartet, Op. 30 (1927), was performed by the Gordon String Quartet on 21 September 1928 in South Mountain Concert Hall and then again about seven months later on 25 March 1929 in Blackstone Theater. *Chicago Tribune* correspondent Edward Moore reported on the 1929 performance, writing:

This, they say, is the music of the future. Frederick Stock goes further to say it would have been the music of the past if Beethoven had lived longer. Evidently future concert goers are going to have an interesting time. But it will not be a soothing one.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Gunn, "Schoenberg Astonishes the Symphony Patrons."

<sup>47</sup> Edward Moore, "Musical Novelty, Defying Classifier, Still Makes a Hit," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 25 March 1929.

More than twenty years after his music arrived in Chicago, Schoenberg himself made an appearance, conducting two concerts (8-9 February 1934) that included performances of *Verklärte Nacht* and *Five Pieces*. Moore again reported on the concerts, now with fresh information about Schoenberg as a person to add to the city's understanding of Schoenberg the composer. The article in the *Chicago Daily Tribune* began cryptically:

Arnold Schoenberg, the Viennese composer whose name has long been a synonym for everything dissonant in the whole art of music, is visiting Chicago for the first time.”<sup>48</sup>

Soon, however, it became apparent Schoenberg was not to be feared, and that his music could even be respected:

Mr. Schoenberg is not in the least the bogymen [*sic*] of unpleasant sounds that people used to think he was. He came, he conducted, and he conquered. He received a lot of applause – and not even a single hiss – from the audience, much tapping of bows and at the end a great fanfare from the orchestra.<sup>49</sup>

In regards to the reaction of Chicago audience's at the first hearing of Op. 16, this encore performance was an unequivocal success. Similarly to the second London performance of *Five Pieces*, which Schoenberg also conducted himself, the 1934 concert had a much more amiable outcome, perhaps also because the composer was present.



The Boston Philharmonic was the only orchestra to perform Schoenberg's *Five Pieces* during the First World War. The concert on 18 December 1914 (repeated the next day)

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<sup>48</sup> Edward Moore, “Famed Music Rebel Appears with Orchestra,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 9 February 1934, 17.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

conducted by Karl Muck was the last performance of Op. 16 until several years after the end of the war. It was a matter of precarious timing for the work of an Austrian composer who had been living in Germany to be performed in a major American city. Both Austria and Germany had been at war with Serbia and Russia since the end of July 1914, and Germany's offensive move into France through Belgium in early August forced both France and the United Kingdom into the fray. The United States was still technically at peace in December 1914. The attack of the British passenger ship *RMS Lusitania* by German torpedoes, which resulted in a significant number of American deaths, would not occur for six more months. America and its concert halls were at peace, but cultural tensions were rising.

Despite this volatile historical context, the Boston premiere of *Five Pieces* was reportedly the most calm one to date. Following the first evening's concert, the *Boston Evening Transcript* ran the following assessment of the audience's reactions, authored by the critic identified as H.T.P.:

All things go for granted at the Symphony Concerts – even the music of Arnold Schönberg. In Vienna, Berlin and Munich, audiences have “manifested” over it so energetically that in the double din of applause and hisses it could not be heard for itself. In dull-witted but usually well-mannered London, the five pieces for orchestra that Dr. Muck and his men played yesterday afternoon, provoked boos. In Chicago a year ago some guffawed showily at these same five pieces; others stamped with disapproving feet; and many mouthed bitter adjectives in a loud and firm voice. Yet here at our Symphony Concerts nothing was likely to happen over Schönberg's music and nothing – or almost nothing – did actually happen. Few in this town take music of the performance of music so eagerly and seriously as to show unseemly excitement over either in public; while a breach of good manners at a Symphony Concert is unthinkable, although some ears believed they heard once yesterday a modest and timid hiss.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> H.T.P., “Symphony Concert: Schoenberg's Notorious Pieces Played,” *Boston Evening Transcript*, 19 December 1914.



To some extent, this outcome may have been a disappointment for critics and others looking for a measure of excitement. As the article laments, “In a word, “the day” proved to be no “day” at all.”<sup>51</sup>

The lack of commotion was also likely a surprise considering what the Boston public had heard about Schoenberg and other premieres of *Five Pieces*. Philip Greeley Clapp,<sup>52</sup> writing for the *Boston Evening Transcript* a few days before the performance asserted that the majority of the audience would have already decided whether or not they liked Schoenberg’s music before they heard a note of it.<sup>53</sup> Clapp continued by arguing that most Americans had already prejudged Schoenberg and his music based on reports rather than listening experience. Despite never having heard his music, the audience already had an idea of who Schoenberg was and what his motivations were:

Arnold Schönberg’s compositions are not familiar in this country; they have not needed to be. His free use of more dissonance than his predecessors was long ago dwelt upon by overworked pressmen eager once again to cause the hair of a jaded public to stand on end; reportorial emphasis on lack of triads and resolutions duly impressed worthy souls who knew not the meaning of either term; aspersions as to the sanity of Schönberg were made, proved by reference to his music, and believed by people who had not heard the passages in question. As a result, Schönberg exists today for the American public as a freak, and audiences assemble to learn if he is as shocking, ugly, absurd, or what you please, as he is represented.<sup>54</sup>

Clapp succinctly reports the nature of Schoenberg’s reception in America in the early twentieth century, and his evaluation sheds light on the amazement felt when the

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Clapp also gave a public lecture on the work on 17 December 1914 at Boston University and performed a four hand piano transcription (likely Webern’s) with pianist Chalmers Clifton.

<sup>53</sup> P.G. Clapp, “Schoenberg’s Music Stoutly Championed,” *Boston Evening Transcript*, 16 Dec 1914. This article was apparently circulated far beyond Boston. An Omaha newspaper reprinted much of the article. “Music,” *Omaha Daily Bee*, 16 February 1913.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

performance did not incite a strong reaction – much of the draw of witnessing a Schoenberg performance was the uproar involved.

The Boston musical elite, it seemed, were quite reserved in their response. Friday's audience set the stage by giggling and by Saturday there were outright chuckles from those who had read about the snickering the previous night.<sup>55</sup> Similar to audiences in both London and Chicago, Boston reacted with confusion and humor, though they listened respectfully to the work. As H.T.P notes, “the merest of minorities frankly and courageously applauded all five [movements],” but “the great majority simply read the programme-book as it is the custom to do when one is not interested at the Symphony Concerts.”<sup>56</sup> Schoenberg's music, then, received not worse treatment by many than any other “uninteresting” music would have.<sup>57</sup> As in Chicago, Boston reporters questioned whether the ensuing amusement was not a correct response, or at least one that Muck may have intended. The *Christian Science Monitor* gave the following explanation:

They [readers] must be reminded that the “Five Pieces” were read by a conductor who is perhaps the greatest humorist holding the baton today. So, if the house laughed at the playing of number one of the “Five,” it is possible that there was something to laugh at... Number one is certainly meant to be taken seriously; but so far as this performance counts, it is a failure. The matinee audience, tittering, rejected any message the composer may have meant it to convey. The second, third, fourth and last numbers fared better. They had alert attention. But they did not win approval.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> See: “Boston Hears Symphony Play Modern Music: Friday Afternoon Audience Does Not Approve of Schoenberg at First Presentation Here of “Five Orchestral Pieces,” *Christian Science Monitor* (Boston), 19 December 1918.

<sup>56</sup> H.T.P. “Symphony Concert: Schoenberg's Notorious Pieces Played.”

<sup>57</sup> A review in the *Boston Evening Transcript* printed a similar assessment: “It was becoming... to applaud at the end because the hearing of such strange music had been a novel and titillating experience ... Even in the lobby, there were no cries of pain or rage. Most, as it seemed, had found the experience at least amusing.” “Schoenberg Again,” *Boston Evening Transcript*, 21 December 1914.

<sup>58</sup> “Boston Hears Symphony Play Modern Music,” *Christian Science Monitor* (Boston), 19 December 1918.

This explanation attempts to assess the laughter as contextually appropriate, perhaps deliberately sought after by the conductor. Like Chicago, Boston's primary reaction was laughter or giggles, rather than the surprise and hissing that occurred in London.

This difference in reaction highlights a distinction between American and European modes of musical thought, including what role an audience played in a performance. Because of America's relative newness as a force of musical production and consumption, audiences perhaps felt less invested in the process of concert performance. The role seems to have been more passively receptive than actively critical. They could hear an unfamiliar work like *Five Pieces* and consider it strange and maybe even silly, but for it to be either one of these things was not a concern of their wellbeing. If Schoenberg wrote ugly music, it did not personally affect them in the same way that it affected Europeans, and especially the Viennese. If Schoenberg claimed that his music was to be the music of the future, they could simply disagree and ignore it. These claims did not shake the foundations of American culture or destabilize social or economic structures.

Perhaps part of this disinterest in America had to do with patterns of thought more akin to economics than aesthetics. Americans in the early twentieth century viewed music as a commodity – something to be created, bought, sold, and consumed. It was not a cultural export or a pseudo-religion as it was for the Continent, especially for Austria and Germany.<sup>59</sup> Americans unconsciously viewed music as a phenomenon, which occurred within the ostensibly more logical and clear rules of economy, colored by capitalist and industrialist

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<sup>59</sup> Adorno's *Philosophy of Modern Music* (1948), for example, speaks to the issue of commodification of music, albeit through a highly idiosyncratic lens. See also: Timothy D. Taylor, "Commodification of Music at the Dawn of the Era of 'Mechanical' Music," *Ethnomusicology* 51/2 (2007).

theory. Schoenberg created a product, which the public was allowed to either “purchase” or reject. If it was rejected and disappeared, then this was merely free-market economics working within the world of art. Americans were able to give Schoenberg’s music a try and to judge it with relative indifference, believing that its future was based on the inherent truths of consumerism rather than the holy rules of art as religion.

In both Boston and Chicago, all questions of Schoenberg’s sanity and base depreciations of his character were absent – only referred to in order to dismiss them. As supporter Clapp argued,

As to whether he is freakish, abnormal or insane, that is his private affair, and he must make the best of it without help or hindrance from his reviewers; our critical duty ends when we have estimated his music on its merits.<sup>60</sup>

American music critics saw their role as simply evaluating the quality and effectiveness of the music performed. They did not understand their role to be cultural critics, responsible for the moral direction of their society, as was more often the case in Europe. Author H.T.P. also appraises *Five Pieces* in this manner, noting their significance:

The pieces disclose also a composer of highly individual mind and spirit. From Vienna to Chicago, they have stirred serious study and debate, and these seem Schönberg’s valid titles to perform.<sup>61</sup>

Conductor of the Chicago Symphony, Karl Muck, reportedly had a similar understanding of *Five Pieces* as worthy of fair representation, regardless of aesthetic implications.<sup>62</sup> Clapp summed up his assessment of Schoenberg with a prediction for his future. Dissonance, he

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<sup>60</sup> Clapp, “Schoenberg’s Music Stoutly Championed.”

<sup>61</sup> H.T.P., “Symphony Concert: Schoenberg’s Notorious Pieces Played.”

<sup>62</sup> See: Reginald Pound, *Sir Henry Wood: A Biography* (London: Cassell, 1969), 118-9.

“Conducting the American premiere of the same work, Karl Muck, of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, remarked: ‘I can’t tell you whether we’ve played music, but I assure you we’ve played every one of Schoenberg’s notes, just as they are written.’”

argued, was certainly high in *Five Pieces*, but history tells that this aspect could be overcome through frequent listening. At the point dissonance would no longer be a stumbling block to comprehension and appreciation and the works could be understood, at least by a “small public.”<sup>63</sup>

## *Germany Hears Five Pieces*

Germany had its first taste of *Five Pieces* via an eight-hand piano arrangement of the first, second, and fourth movements performed by Louis Closson, Louis T. Grünberg, Eduard Steuermann, and Anton Webern on 4 February 1912 in Berlin’s Harmoniumsaal. The concert also included *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* Op. 15, several early Lieder, and *Sechs Klavierstücke*, Op. 19. Critical reports unequivocally praised Martha Winternitz-Dorda’s vocal capabilities in her performance of the *George-Lieder*, but reactions to the compositions themselves were less enthusiastic. The concert was given before a musically educated, if somewhat small audience in an intimate setting. The atmosphere was completely different from those of performances in Queen’s Hall in London and Orchestra Hall in Chicago.

News of disastrous and violent reactions to Schoenberg’s music in Vienna in recent years was well known in Germany, and many reviews directly addressed the Berlin audience’s behavior. Scandalous conduct, such as the instance in which a music critic supposedly boxed the ears of an over-enthusiastic young man who was applauding Schoenberg’s music, was

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<sup>63</sup> Clapp, “Schoenberg’s Music Stoutly Championed.”

“Schönberg, then, will eventually be recognized by a small public, who it is to be hoped, will not misstate the accident of their sympathy ... for a proof of mental superiority over the rest of mankind.”

noticeably absent amongst the self-possessed German listeners.<sup>64</sup> One reporter implied that Schoenberg's reputation in Berlin as a lecturer and professor lent him more credibility as a composer of worth and honest intention.<sup>65</sup> Yet another journalist implied that Schoenberg's prior achievements were enough to garner him respect, asking: "Do we want to completely forget, then, what Schoenberg has already achieved?"<sup>66</sup> German composer Hugo Rasch argued that in terms of the "doubt upon Schoenberg's mental integrity...this question seems to me unacceptable."<sup>67</sup> Another critic suggested that the audience considered the works in earnest, but hesitated to react strongly one way or the other because of a lack of complete understanding after one hearing, echoing earlier British critics:

Each took in this music in the manner that its creator asked of his best and brightest – with respect – perhaps with the feeling that it accomplishes/exhibits something which cannot be fully understood at first glance.<sup>68</sup>

In general, Berlin's critics were more optimistic about the direction in which Schoenberg was taking his music, and they were more analytical of his theoretical work, both in a traditional sense of harmonic understanding, as represented by *Harmonielehre* (Leipzig, Vienna: Universal, 1911), and in a more experimental sense, as represented in his most

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<sup>64</sup> C19120204\_c "Konzerte: Arnold Schönberg: Sonntag mittag fand im Harmoniumssaal," February 1912. „Sensationen, wie man sie in Wien erlebte, wo ein erster Kritiker neufeindlicher Richtung einen allzu demonstrative jubelnden Jüngling ohrfeigte, gab es nicht.“

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

“Whoever has heard only one or another of Schoenberg's lectures on composition at the Stern Conservatory must have come to the realization that he is associated with very worthwhile artistic advances.”

„Wer nur den einen oder andern von Schönbergs Vorträgen über Kompositionslehre im Sternschen Konservatorium gehört hat, mußte zur Erkenntnis kommen, daß er es da mit einer sehr wertvollen künstlerischen Erscheinung zu tun hatte“

<sup>66</sup> C19120204\_e Hugo Rasch, "Nach der Arnold Schönberg-Matinée," *Signale* (Berlin), 1912.

“Will man denn ganz vergessen, was Schönberg schon geleistet hat?”

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

„Der zweite, der wohl vielen Hörern aufgestiegen sein mag, betrifft Zweifel an Schönbergs geistiger Integrität. Doch auch diese Frage scheint mir unzulässig.“

<sup>68</sup> C19120204\_h "Arnold Schönberg veranstaltete ein Konzert mit eigenen Kompositionen," 1912.

„Man nahm diese Musik, wiewohl ihr Schöpfer sein Kühnstes und Letztes bot, mit Achtung auf, vielleicht in dem Gefühl, das sich hier etwas vollzog, dem man nicht mit dem ersten Blick bis auf den Grund sehen kann.“

recent compositions. For German audiences and reporters there was less of a threat from Schoenberg's ideas and more of a general resistance to the sound of his music. As one Berlin critic declared, "In theoretical matters I agree with Schoenberg, but in practice I must abandon him."<sup>69</sup> Another critic, writing for the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, questioned why Schoenberg's technique should be not be fairly considered.

Who tells us that the triad-theory is the only universal one, that it even is the only one at all? Schoenberg's principle of diatonic *Zweiklänge* is undoubtedly viable for development, and can bring us a new world of rich musical art. Schoenberg sees the goal before him. Whether or not he will reach it is a secondary question.<sup>70</sup>

*Zweiklang* literally translates as dyad (i.e. two pitches sounding simultaneously), but this definition lacks the critic's implication of the *Zweiklang* as an alternative to the triad. It seems more meaningful to understand *Zweiklang* as a sonority that is more ambiguous in its harmonic function or direction (e.g. a perfect fifth, which does not signify major or minor).

*Zweiklang* does not appear to have been an important concept for Schoenberg, but it was a pivotal one for contemporary painter Wassily Kandinsky. Kandinsky used the terms *Doppelklang* and *Zweiklang* to indicate a moment when two conflicting systems coexist, as in, in his examples, a point and a plane, or realism and abstraction. As he explains in his 1926 work *Point and Line to Plane*, *Zweiklang* is a dialectic:

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<sup>69</sup> C19120204\_a "Aus Berlin wird uns berichtet," *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 1912.

"So trete ich theoretisch für Schönberg ein, wende mich in der Praxis aber von ihm ab.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

"Wer sagt uns, daß die Dreiklang-Theorie die einzig seligmachende, daß sie überhaupt die einzige ist? Schönbergs Prinzip der diatonischen Zweiklänge ist zweifellos entwicklungsfähig, kann uns eine neue Welt reichster Tonkunst bringen. Schönberg sieht ein Ziel vor Augen. Ob er es erreichen wird, ist eine sekundäre Frage."

Thus, a chord is sounded ... which exists apart from their practical, purposive connection. It is the balancing of two worlds that can never attain equilibrium. It is a purposeless revolutionary state – the writing is disturbed by the presence of a foreign body that cannot be made to relate to it.<sup>71</sup>

Though the journalist likely intended a more pedestrian definition of the term, the inclusion of Kandinsky's theories broadens an understanding of *Five Pieces* as a work in which dissonance is purposeful and unresolved.

In addition to what could be arguably described as a more level-headed approach to Schoenberg's music and theoretical perspectives, German journalists who reported on this concert seemed unconvinced of the certainty of Schoenberg's future trajectory. Although it was clear to them that he had progressed from "harmless" early compositions to something much more experimental (if only matching in intensity other advances on the arts), they were unsure that he would continue to become more radical. In essence, the Op. 16 was representative of what would perhaps come to be known as merely a phase. In the words of one reporter:

We would hope that Schoenberg's current music represents the extreme pinnacle of his theoretical brooding, and that his future art will come out of necessity from his warm-blooded mind and his otherwise rich fantasy, in order that his flourishing sensuous musical discoveries will reappear.<sup>72</sup>

Rasch wrote a similar statement in a review in *Signale*, noting that "we perhaps may still expect 'a third Schoenberg'."<sup>73</sup> The effect of these two interpretations – that

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<sup>71</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, "Point and Line to Plane," in *Complete Writings on Art*, ed. Kenneth C. Lindsay and Peter Vergo (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), 541.

<sup>72</sup> "Konzerte: Arnold Schönberg: Sonntag mittag fand im Harmoniumssaal."

„Wir wollen hoffen, daß Schönbergs jetzige Music die auf die Spitze getriebene Realisierung des theoretischen Grübelns des Komponisten ist und daß seine zukünftige Kunst von seinem warmblütigen Gemüt und seiner sonst so reichen Phantasie „gemußt“ wird und in blühender musikalisch-sinnlicher Erfindung in die Erscheinung tritt.“

<sup>73</sup> C19120204\_e Rasch, "Nach der Arnold Schönberg-Matinée." *Signale* (Berlin), 1912.



perhaps the music would come to be better understood later, and that it may only reflect a momentary lapse in Schoenberg's judgment – was that critics in Germany responded to the *Five Pieces* with more caution and restraint than those in London or in America.

In response to what could be gleaned from the *Five Pieces* through the lens of the piano transcription, only two things appeared certain: Schoenberg's music was intense and passionate, but at the same time ugly and nonsensical. The Berlin journalist identified as G.G. acknowledged that, "Intensity of expression exists in Schoenberg music to a white-hot degree," including in this, "the three Orchestral Pieces with their sudden, colossal thunderstorms, their tones playing in sunlight and their thousands of colorful oddities."<sup>74</sup> Many other critics were less generous, and quibbled, "I hear sounds without comprehending their connection," and suggesting that listening to Schoenberg's music was akin to trying to understand another language, because, "he speaks Chinese; I have to guess from his gestures what he wants."<sup>75</sup> This critique in particular is similar to the one published in the *London Times* (September 1912), which suggested that the Op. 16 was as incomprehensible as a Tibetan poem. Again, it is worth mentioning the underlying connection between Orientalism and Judaism, and the combining of distinct cultures into a generic, othered foreigner.

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"But, as previously mentioned, is it not more humane and artistic to leave room for the hope that we perhaps may still expect "a third Schoenberg" – a cleansing of our palate of the current inedible must [i.e. crushed grapes in the process of wine-making]?"

„Aber, wie schon erwähnt, ist es nicht menschlicher und künstlerischer, der Hoffnung Raum zu lassen, daß wir vielleicht noch „einen dritten Schönberg“, eine Klärung des für unsren Gaumen augenblicklich ungenießbaren Mostes zu erwarten haben?“

<sup>74</sup> C19120204\_h G.G., "Arnold Schönberg veranstaltete ein Konzert mit eigenen Kompositionen," 1912.

„Intensität des Ausdrucks ist in Schönbergs Musik bis zu weißglühenden Grad vorhanden... Die drei Orchesterstücke mit ihren jähren, kolossalen Gewittern, ihren im Sonnenlicht spielenden Tönen und ihren tausend bunten Seltsamkeiten.“

<sup>75</sup> C19120204\_d "Aus Berlin: Arnold Schönberg," *Signale* (Berlin), no. 6, 1912, 180.

"Ich höre Klänge, ohne ihren Zusammenhang zu erfassen.. er redet chinesisich; ich muss aus seinen Gesten erraten, was er will."

The same critic continued by noting that, “For a few seconds there is a flash of genius, then everything sinks back down into long stretches of barren grayness.” He termed the Op. 16 “a tragic-comic spectacle,” and, as he sarcastically noted, an example of “great *Katzenmusik*.”<sup>76</sup> Perhaps worst of all, he declared that the sound of the Op. 16 awakened horrible visions and nightmares of a world without light and happiness. His concluding statement was less than optimistic:

[An art] which does not know youth, happiness, or light, which blocks out the best of part of life, and draws itself close only to night and shadows, grief, doubt, the gloomy feelings. And this should be the art of the future????<sup>77</sup>

Despite not being driven to riot, German critics still worried about the potentially destructive elements of Schoenberg’s music, even if they did not signify complete societal downfall. For all the hyperbole and clever derisions in Berlin’s critical response, Hugo Rasch provided a voice of reason by concluding that, “one cannot dismiss the Schoenberg-Problem, as it so often happens, with a few unkind, dismissive words.”<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

„[Eine Kunst] die keine Jugend, keine Freude und kein Licht kennt, dem besten Teil des Lebens sich verschliesst, sich nur von Nacht und Schatten, von Gram, Verzweiflung, den dunklen Gefühlen nährt. Und dies sollte die Kunst der Zukunft sein????“

See also: C19120204\_e P.E., “Arnold Schönberg gilt zur Zeit bei einer geringen Minorität”

“We are absolutely in thorough opposition to this – music (one is almost afraid to call it that), given that we could not even once understand the pointless accumulation of confused and deformed cacophony.”

„Wir stehen dieser – Musik (fast scheut man sich, den Namen zu nennen) durchaus ablehnend gegenüber, da wir die zwecklose Anhäufung ganz wirrer und häßlicher Kakophonien nun einmal nicht einsehen können.“

C19120204\_e Rasch, “Nach der Arnold Schönberg-Matinée,” *Signale* (Berlin), 1912.

<sup>78</sup> C19120204\_e Rasch, “Nach der Arnold Schönberg-Matinée,” *Signale* (Berlin), 1912.

“Und doch kann man das Problem Schönberg nicht, wie das so oft geschieht, mit ein paar wegwerfenden, lieblosen Worten abtun.“



The German premiere of the orchestral version of *Five Pieces* took place on 11 June 1920 in the *Deutsches Nationaltheater* in Weimar (see Figure 3). Schoenberg's Op. 16 appeared directly after intermission, preceded by the world premiere of Hermann Grabner's *Vorspiel für großes Orchester*, Hermann Unger's *Ländliche Szene für kleines Orchester*, Op. 24, and Walter Braunfels's *Zwei Gesänge für Bariton und Orchester*, Op. 27, featuring Berlin's Julius vom Schiedt as the soloist. The world premiere of Georg Kiessig's *Tondichtung für Orchester* "Ein Totentanz," Op. 21 completed the concert conducted by Peter Raabe.<sup>79</sup> Schoenberg would have been the most well known composer on the program by far, and yet this German premiere has all but slipped away in the narrative of the *Five Pieces*. There are no known reviews of the performance, and all that survives of the event is a concert program and a brief and bitter mention in a review of the Berlin premiere.<sup>80</sup> The 1922 Berlin premiere on 10 December (and an encore performance the next day) were far more important in terms of journalistic and critical response for Schoenberg's reception history than the Weimar premiere. Even the Leipzig premiere a few days earlier on 7 December 1922 created little noise in the historical narrative of the receptions of Op. 16.

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<sup>79</sup> In 1931 Raabe published the first comprehensive catalogue of Liszt's works.

<sup>80</sup> Pisling, "Schönbergs Fünf Orchesterstücke Op. 16. Philharmonisches Konzert," *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, 14 December 1922.

„Das Weimarer Tonkünstlerfest 1920 brachte dann die erste deutsche Aufführung.“  
Program available through the digital archive of the Thüringisches Hauptstaatsarchiv  
[http://archive.thulb.uni-jena.de/ThHStAW/receive/ThHStAW\\_performance\\_00003578](http://archive.thulb.uni-jena.de/ThHStAW/receive/ThHStAW_performance_00003578)



Figure 3: Selection of a program from the German premiere of *Five Pieces*, Op. 16 in Weimar on 7 November 1919

Perhaps the reviews from Weimar and Leipzig have yet to be found, but it is also possible that there were fewer responses to these performances because there was less interest in those cities. Berlin, which had been home to Schoenberg for more than six years (1901-1903; 1911-1915), and which had hosted the Op. 16 piano reduction a decade earlier, was likely more invested in the composer and his prominence in concert halls. Both the *Sechs Klavierstücke* Op. 19 and *Pierrot lunaire* had found their world-premieres in Berlin (on 4 February and 9 October 1912, respectively).

Perhaps because of this history, the Berlin premiere of *Five Pieces* brought out some negative feelings regarding the circumstances of its world premiere in London. As the critic for the *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung* known as Pisling lamented:

I have been itching to talk about Schoenberg. Although Schoenberg is German-Austrian, the world premiere of the *Five Orchestral Pieces*, Op. 16 (1909) did not take place either in Austria or in Germany, but instead in – London under Coates.<sup>81</sup> That was before the war. The Weimar Musicians Festival in 1920 brought then the first German Performance. I was allowed to report on it in this paper. My enthusiasm has since that point not only not decreased, it has, quite to the contrary, increased.<sup>82</sup>

Journalist Kurt Singer, reporting for *Vorwärts*,<sup>83</sup> characterized Schoenberg's importance in Germany with the following statements:

Without a doubt Arnold Schoenberg is in Germany one of the most revolutionary musicians, a force and a flame. Never before has one burned down antiquity for the believers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and bravely illuminated for the youth of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His Orchestral Pieces Opus 16 are the dividing walls between then and now. This is the banishing of the gods of every holy music world, the demolition of facades of form, the exile of metrical symmetry, the rupture of tonality.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Perhaps a mistaken reference to composer and violist Eric Coates, who performed in the ensemble at the London premiere.

<sup>82</sup> Pisling, "Schönbergs Fünf Orchesterstücke Op. 16. Philharmonisches Konzert," *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, 14 December 1922.

„Es juckt mich schon in den Fingern, über Schönberg zu sprechen. Obwohl Schönberg Deutsch-Oesterreicher ist, fand die Uraufführung der bereits im Jahre 1909 entstandenen Fünf Orchesterstücke op. 16 weder in Oesterreich noch in Deutschland, sondern in - London unter Coates statt. Das war vor dem Kriege. Das Weimarer Tonkünstlerfest 1920 brachte dann die erste deutsche Aufführung. Ich durfte über sie an dieser Stelle berichten. Meine Begeisterung hat sich seither nicht nur nicht verringert, sie hat im Gegenteil zugenommen.“

He continued by noting: „So, then, the atonal-period-Schoenberg has finally found his way into the Philharmonic Concerts, much to the joy of progressive friends of art, and much to the chagrin of those guardians of tradition”

„So hatte denn der Schönberg der atonalen Periode endlich Einzug in die Philharmonischen Konzerte gehalten, fortschrittlichen Kunstfreunden zur Freude, Traditionsbütern zum Verdruß.“

<sup>83</sup> Newspaper of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, published in Berlin. Founded 1876 and banned during Nazi era. Infamously lost a libel suit brought by Hitler (1923) for suggesting that he was funded by American Jewish businessmen.

<sup>84</sup> Kurt Singer, "Das Klang-Erlebnis: Konzertumschau von Kurt Singer," *Vorwärts* (Berlin), 14 December 1922. „Zweifellos ist Arnold Schönberg in Deutschland einer der umwälzendsten Musikernaturen, eine Kraft und ein Flamme. Nie brennt Altes nieder für die Gläubigen des 19. Jahrhunderts und leuchtet kühn für die Jünger des 20. Jahrhunderts. Seine Orchesterstücke Opus 16 sind die Grenzscheide zwischen einst und jetzt. Das ist

The performance of an atonal orchestral work by an internationally acclaimed group known for musical excellence was quite an occurrence. Despite the fact that it was composed fifteen years earlier, the Berlin premiere of *Five Pieces* at the *Philharmonie* was a watershed moment. The Berlin premiere was the first performance that Op. 16 had with a world-class European orchestra with a powerful reputation. The contributions by Amsterdam, Chicago, and Boston should not be diminished, but for a composer of an Austrian and German musical environment, being performed by the Berlin Philharmonic was a crowning achievement. The success was even sweeter, and yet also more ironic, considering Schoenberg's attempts to premiere *Five Pieces* with the Berlin Philharmonic in 1909. When Schoenberg wrote to Richard Strauss in July hoping to arrange a performance, only three of the movements were complete. With some hope, perhaps, Schoenberg finished the final two movements by August. Strauss's reply on 2 September 1909 was that a performance in Berlin was impossible. The music was too experimental and the audience too conservative. Regardless of the finer details of the responses from listeners in Berlin, the premiere itself was a victory, although perhaps too little too late in the eyes of the composer.

Certainly there were negative reactions to *Five Pieces* in Berlin as well. The audience was engaged in their reception of the work, expressing the extremes of approval and disapproval like those that had created scandal a decade earlier in Vienna.<sup>85</sup> But the public

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Entgötterung jeder heiligen Musikwelt, Zertrümmerung der Formfassade, Verbannung des metrischen Gleichmaßes, Zerbersten der Tonart.“

<sup>85</sup> See: O.T., “Aus dem Konzertsälen,” *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, 13 December 1922.

“On the surface the performance produced the familiar and certainly awaited occurrences: thunderous applause on the one hand, raucous rejection, sharpened by hisses and whistles, on the other.”

„Nach außen hin löste die Aufführung die gewohnten und mit Sicherheit erwarteten Erscheinungen aus: tosenden Beifall auf der einen, lärmende, durch Zischen und Pfeifen verschärfte Ablehnung auf der anderen Seite.“

was not as conservative as Strauss had estimated fifteen years prior – there was interest in the Op. 16 and consideration for its artistic value, despite its difficult and dissonant aesthetic. As journalist O.T. of the *Berliner Börsen-Courier* remarked, “Clearly this Schoenberg, like all of his late works, is not what one is generally comfortable calling “beautiful music.”<sup>86</sup> Although it was not beautiful, the author argues that it might still be artistically valid:

But in art the ugly, the artistically ugly, also has its validity and it would be unfair to reject a work of art only on this respect, because it is ugly to our local senses. Therefore the question would remain open, where in art the beautiful ends and the ugly begins. As is well known, other times have often found beautiful what before was considered ugly, or vice-versa; and not only different times, but also different peoples, even different individuals perceive things differently from each other in this respect, as they always have. So when I then say that I personally find the pieces ugly, then that in no way says that they really are.<sup>87</sup>

The article concludes with an assessment that the audience in Berlin in 1922 was far too close to artistic and musical movements of the twentieth century to accurately judge or understand them. Berlin’s duty was to perform the works and to listen to them “after the whole world has already gotten to know them.”<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

„Sicher ist dieser Schönberg, wie all seine Spätwerke, nicht das, was man allgemein „schöne Musik“ zu nennen gewöhnt ist.“

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

„Aber in der Kunst hat auch das Häßliche, das künstlerisch Häßliche, seine Berechtigung, und es wäre ungerecht, ein Kunstwerk nur deshalb abzulehnen, weil es im ortsüblichen Sinne häßlich ist. Dabei wäre immer noch die Frage offen, wo in der Kunst das Schöne aufhört und das Häßliche beginnt. Bekanntlich haben andere Zeiten oft schön gefunden, was vorher als häßlich galt, oder umgekehrt; und nicht nur verschiedene Zeiten, sondern auch verschiedene Völker, ja verschiedene Individuen empfinden in diese Hinsicht ganz voneinander abweichend und haben es seit je getan. Wenn ich also sage, ich persönlich finde die Stücke häßlich, so will das keineswegs sagen, daß sie es wirklich sind.“

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

„Jedenfalls mußten diese Stücke auch in Berlin einmal gespielt werden, nachdem bereits die ganze Welt sie kennen gelernt hat.“

## *Vienna's Cold Shoulder*

Regarding the *Five Pieces*, Vienna was silent. There are no known reviews or reports of the Op. 16 published in Vienna during the 1910s and 1920s, not even news reports of foreign performances and their reception. There are many possible reasons for the lack of commentary and acknowledgment from Vienna during this time. The two major scandals that occurred – first in December 1908 with the premiere of the Second String Quartet, and then with the so-called *Skandalkonzert* at the end of March 1913 – inevitably soured the relationship between the composer and the Viennese public. From September 1911 until October 1915, Schoenberg was living in Berlin, partly from a need to escape Vienna. The feeling was apparently mutual.

Another explanation for the lack of recorded information about Schoenberg's reception history in Vienna during this time was the curious state of Viennese newspapers at the end of the long nineteenth century. Newspapers in the capital city of the empire were notoriously out of touch with the day-to-day lives and recent developments of its citizens. As Emil Brix noted in the forward to *Zeitungen im Wiener Fin de Siècle*, the first page of *Neue Freie Presse* for the first publication of the new century devoted space to two bafflingly insignificant occurrences. The first concerned a suspected cirrhotic kidney in a Russian admiral, the second the sudden death of a *Gymnasium* professor who fell off a chair while playing a game of cards.<sup>89</sup> The almost comical counterpoint of these reports against the timely events of 1900 demonstrate how potentially unreliable Viennese newspapers were as historical records of important cultural happenings and movements. In keeping with its

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<sup>89</sup> Sigurd Paul Scheichl and Wolfgang Duchkowitsch, ed, *Zeitungen im Wiener Fin de Siècle*, 8.



character, the city simply ignored those people and issues that it did not wish to address. Vienna's silence about Schoenberg during this time did not reverse the heated animosity of concert riots, but expressed the same sentiment in yet another fashion.

## *Mengelberg and the Netherlands*

Perhaps the most overlooked aspect of the Op. 16 reception history is the role that the Netherlands played in the 1920s. Willem Mengelberg, conductor of the Concertgebouw Orchestra and a champion of both Mahler's and Strauss's music, was the single most influential figure in bringing Schoenberg's music to Amsterdam. Here again, Mahler's presence as Schoenberg's mentor and advocate was felt, long after his death and far from Vienna. On 12 March 1914, Schoenberg conducted the Concertgebouw Orchestra as they played the first notes of Op. 16 heard in the Netherlands. The *Five Pieces* appeared in the evening's program after Mozart's Symphony in D Major K. 385 and Beethoven's Eighth Symphony. This would be the only performance of the Op. 16 in the Netherlands until after the Great War, during which Austrian and German works were prohibited in concert halls.

The earliest extant correspondence between the two men dates from 4 March 1914 – just before the Netherlands premiere of Op. 16 on 12 March 1914 – but its content refers only to a planned performance of *Gurrelieder* later the same year. The majority of the written communication between Mengelberg and Schoenberg dates from 1919-1920. Schoenberg lived in Holland during the Concertgebouw's 1920-1921 season and he was involved in the Mahler festival during May 1920, which was presented in honor of Mengelberg's Jubilee. The

relationship between the two was generally cordial – appearing rather intimate at some points and more strained at others. For the most part it is clear that Mengelberg was a strong force in promoting Schoenberg’s works abroad and that he campaigned for multiple performances of Schoenberg’s works by the Concertgebouw.

Although *Pelleas und Melisande* was the first Schoenberg piece heard in the Netherlands, *Five Pieces* was the newest composition to be frequently programmed. *Verklärte Nacht* was, of course, a perennial favorite, but it did not give audiences an accurate taste of Schoenberg’s later musical style. What is remarkable about Mengelberg’s practice of programming the *Five Pieces* is that it was part of his attempt to present a more contemporary view of Schoenberg to the Amsterdam audience. It was this very issue of timeliness that drew ire from some Dutch critics. As critic and journalist Constant van Wessem wrote in 1920:

No, I do not believe in the future of Schoenberg’s futurism: this future is already over, and Schoenberg, who has not composed anything in nearly nine years, must realize this himself.<sup>90</sup>

While van Wessem’s declaration of nine unproductive years was not factually correct, it did indeed point out the age of the *Five Pieces* and questioned the relevance of pre-war artistic endeavors in a post-war concert hall. This critique is another prime example of the tension between past and future in Schoenberg’s reception and how he was simultaneously considered revolutionary and out of date. Despite van Wessem’s claim that Schoenberg’s *Five Pieces* were already antiquated in 1920, they were programmed four times that year in Amsterdam (21 March, 25 March, 21 October, and 24 October) and once in Groningen (27

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<sup>90</sup> *De Telegraaf*, 22 October 1920.

October). These many performances not only solidified Schoenberg's international reputation, but they brought the lack of a Viennese premiere into even more distinct relief.

Mengelberg seems to have suggested a further performance in Rotterdam at some point, but the director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic, C. de Monchy, quickly nixed the idea. In a letter to Mengelberg, de Monchy wrote, "we prefer not to consider Schoenberg after receiving such an odd review from London."<sup>91</sup> Although it is not stated precisely which review de Monchy read, the impact of early negative reviews upon potential performances and premieres is clearly shown. News of raucous concerts in Vienna and disapproving audiences in London echoed quickly throughout the all-too-small world of concert music in the early twentieth century. There is no way of knowing exactly how many potential performances never took place because of reports of earlier undesirable responses. In his rejection, De Monchy's implicitly acknowledges the dramatic reputation of Schoenberg's Op. 16, explaining that, "I certainly will not declare that one has to be scared by this...But we have only 7 concerts, and we would deplore sacrificing an evening."<sup>92</sup>

### *Early Twentieth-Century Analysis of Five Pieces*

Relatively few reviews and commentaries featured technical analysis of *Five Pieces*, and it was even more rare that a critic seemed to have consulted a score before penning a review. Perhaps the genre of concert reviews did not lend itself to in-depth analysis of the workings

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<sup>91</sup> Berthold Türcke, "The Schoenberg-Mengelberg Correspondence," in *JASI* 6/2 (Nov. 1982), 183.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 183.

of a piece, or perhaps writers were unwilling to direct their articles in a theoretical direction. What resulted was a large number of publications that spoke in very general terms about Op. 16, rarely citing specifics and often relying on emotional language and personal impressions. As Berlin journalist O.T. wrote, “it is even more perplexing that these individual pieces (I am thinking about Nr. 2) decidedly provoke a sense of something that one must characterize as “mood.”<sup>93</sup> As genuine as such descriptions of musical mood or atmosphere were to their authors, they are of little value in discussing the implicit features of *Five Pieces* and were the sort of criticisms that Schoenberg denounced as those of *Stimmungskritiker* in his 1909 essay “About Music Criticism.” In that essay, Schoenberg argues that the layman-turned-critic reported not from knowledge or experience, but from insecurity:

A musician goes to a newspaper only when he is unfit to be even a ‘professor’ of singing or the piano. That was how these emergency mood-critics rose to power. Their calling had been to the remotest fields of reporting, and now they became the chosen ones of art. If a court reporter had once been a choirboy, that was enough qualification to review music. The only excuse for the ensuing lack of standards is the helplessness and insecurity of the ignorant *parvenu*.<sup>94</sup>

This assessment of the contemporary critical scene reflects Schoenberg’s understanding of the music critic as untrained and unskilled, solidified by his experience after the 1908 scandal surrounding the premiere of his *String Quartet* No. 2, Op. 10, which predated the essay.

Still, there is an essence of truth in Schoenberg’s questioning of the purpose of a music critic. Judging by early twentieth-century examples, the music critic was

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<sup>93</sup> O.T., “Aus dem Konzertsälen,” *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, 13 December 1922.

„...stutzig macht ferner die Wahrnehmung, daß die einzelnen Stücke (ich denke an Nr. 2) entschieden etwas auslösen, das man als „Stimmung“ charakterisieren muß.“

<sup>94</sup> Arnold Schoenberg, “About Music Criticism,” in *Style and Idea*, ed. Leonard Stein, trans. Leo Black (Berkeley: University of California, 1984), 193.

usually a writer of opinions, whose motivations lay in protecting their own relevance and career. They were not especially reliable as voices of public reactions, for they felt the journalistic pressure to capture and retain the attention of their readership. In this way, their own reactions and opinions were often mistakenly extrapolated to represent the views of an entire population. Schoenberg noted this tendency as well, suggesting that, “If he [the critic] feels himself in accord with part of the public, even a small part, then he says the whole public was indignant or enthusiastic.”<sup>95</sup> Not surprisingly, reviews containing true analysis were in the minority and, therefore, analytical appreciation of *Five Pieces* would not have been widely disseminated. In the words of critic P.G. Clapp, “It is always easier to pooh-pooh than to analyze, and the former attitude takes better with the crowd.”<sup>96</sup>

## *Form*

Those critics that supplemented their reviews with analytic work often chose to begin by discussing the form of *Five Pieces*, a natural way to begin explaining an unfamiliar work to an audience. One Boston critic noted that, “a technical analysis of the “Five Pieces” is not an essentially different undertaking from one of a Brahms symphony.”<sup>97</sup> In many respects, this is accurate. Within the realms of rhythm and voice-leading (not considering

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid. 196

<sup>96</sup> Clapp, “Schoenberg’s Music Stoutly Championed.”

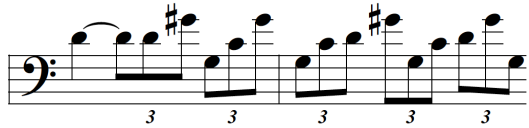
<sup>97</sup> “Boston Hear Symphony Play Modern Music: Friday Afternoon Audience Does Not Approve of Schoenberg at First Presentation Here of “Five Orchestral Pieces,” *Christian Science Monitor* (Boston), 19 December 1914.

pitch content) Schoenberg is certainly no more revolutionary than Brahms. In terms of form there is a qualification that must be added, which is that form in *Five Pieces* is influenced by tradition. But this aspect of the composition is not always immediately apparent because the parameters that Schoenberg is using to define form are different than those of the past. *Five Pieces* presents timbre as a structural element of form; even when thematic material defines form, it is often condensed and altered in such a way as to be disguised from listeners. Recapitulations as such are often abruptly approached, leaving untrained listeners unprepared for a return of familiar material. One such example occurs in movement two, “Vergangenes” (mm. 77), where five bars of oscillation precede the return of the first theme.

Each movement of *Five Pieces* can be broadly categorized as tripartite (ABA): containing an introduction of material, a moving away from it, and then returning to familiar material in some way. The entire work is also cyclically related, with themes from prior movements reappearing in later ones. In “Peripetie,” for example, the horns’ first entrance in mm. 3 is closely related to the entrance of the cello ostinato in “Vorgefühle” (mm. 26) (Ex. 27-28). The pitches {G, C, G#} – an arpeggiation of (015) – are prominent in both selections. In “Das obligate Rezitativ,” a line reminiscent of Theme B from “Vorgefühle” (see Ex. 33 for thematic index of Mvt. 1) is heard in the third trombone (Ex. 29). The bracketed pitches in Example 30 share the same intervallic content as the final four pitches of Theme B (Ex. 29). Also in “Das obligate Rezitativ,” a permutation of Theme B from movement two, “Vergangenes” (see Ex. 35 for thematic index of Mvt. 2) occurs in the clarinet in D (Ex. 31-32). Both selections share semitone neighbor-note motion expressed through a distinct dotted rhythm. This recollection of the “Vergangenes” Theme B is

especially prominent at this moment in “Das obligate Rezitativ” because trombones, directed to play forte, are one of only a few moving parts.

Example 27: Schoenberg, *Five Pieces*, Op. 16, Mvt. 4, mm. 3-6, French horns (at pitch)



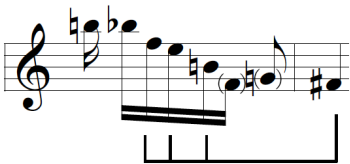
Example 28: Schoenberg, *Five Pieces*, Op. 16, Mvt. 1, mm. 26, cello



Example 29: Schoenberg, *Five Pieces*, Op. 16, Mvt. 1, mm. 4-5, Theme B, clarinet in A (at pitch)



Example 30: Schoenberg, *Five Pieces*, Op. 16, Mvt. 5, mm. 94-96, clarinet in D (at pitch)



Example 31: Schoenberg, *Five Pieces*, Op. 16, Mvt. 2, mm. 12-13, Theme B, clarinet in D (at pitch)









Example 34: Schoenberg, *Five Pieces*, Op. 16, Mvt. 1, mm. 79-83 and mm. 96-99, trombone, Theme O



Theme A is the first to return in the development in the oboe and clarinet, eleven measures after the ostinato is established and a fifth higher than the initial statement. The following ten measures present Themes B, D, and G simultaneously. Theme B is in the piccolos and first flute above a rhythmically altered theme D in violins while the second flute sounds Theme G. Throughout the remainder of this first development it is Themes A and B are most frequently used. They are altered, as in m. 51-53 when the interval content and rhythm of Theme A are varied, and they are inverted, as in the case of Theme B in the piccolos at mm. 51-52. At the exact midpoint of the development (mm. 71) a climactic break – the first departure from the eighth-note motion since its onset – precedes the second development. Leading into this midpoint break is a unison theme by the strings (mm. 73-77) identical to what had first entered as a motive-turned-ostinato in the cellos (m. 26).

This ostinato theme (Theme O, Ex. 34) is both new and familiar. It is similar to the expositional themes in intervallic content, but not in character or rhythm. Like Themes A and C it begins with seconds and thirds, then introduces the consecutive perfect fourth and tritone that are characteristic of Themes B and E. Theme O, played in straight eighths and then quarter notes, is devoid of the sharp rhythmic personality of the initial seven themes. The entrance of Theme O in the trombone occurs above the already established eighth-note ostinato in the strings and the same pattern in quarter notes in the harp, xylophone, and timpani. In this way, Theme O functions as both melody and its own accompaniment. At m. 94 Theme O transforms itself the next motive of the second development (Ex. 34). This motif is also both new and familiar – the same intervallic and rhythmic content first appeared in mm. 15-16 in the French horns as a commentary to Theme F. Now, at m. 94,

this transformation of O is imitated throughout the orchestra, first in the trombones and then in all the strings, with the oboes echoing the theme in sixteenth notes as it first appeared in the exposition.

The strings' octave rendering of the Theme O motive stops the ostinato and precedes the short recapitulation, which begins with Theme B in the piccolo and flute (m. 105). Wayward cellos then sound Theme C (mm. 110-112) as the orchestra skids into a decelerating and increasingly tense semitone oscillation pattern, awaiting the next direction. Like a skipped record restarting in the wrong place, bassoons enter *wieder rasch* with the pattern from m. 24 that had immediately preceded the entrance of the ostinato. The opening tempo and the ostinato return for four brief bars before the sudden end of the movement.

Section	Themes
A (mm. 1-25)	A-G (Ex. 33)
B	
First dev. (mm. 26-78)	A-G
Second dev. (mm. 79-105)	O (Ex. 34)
A <sup>1</sup> (mm. 105-128)	B, C

**Figure 4: Form and thematic treatment in Op. 16, Mvt. 1**

The form of “Vorgefühle,” summarized in Figure 4, is straightforward when considered on these terms. However, because of the quick succession of new themes and the permutations of returning themes, it is difficult for a listener to grasp, especially without

repeated hearings and knowledge of the score. Critic P.G. Clapp, who did analyze the score in 1914, also noted many of these elements:

The formal treatment is free but very firmly knit; it is said that Schönberg consciously aims at a “purely thematic” structure – that is, music in which not only the principal themes themselves, but all accompaniment figures besides have thematic value and are developed – and this end he very nearly attains. His sense of climax and proportion can be ranked perfect; very remarkable is his knack of brevity, which enables him to write a complete and highly developed piece of only a few minutes’ duration.<sup>98</sup>

Indeed the proportions of “Vorgefühle” make sense, particularly the division of the development, though the movement lasts just over two minutes in performance. This condensation of thematic material and lack of literal repetition is precisely what Berg would identify in 1924 as the main obstacle to understanding Schoenberg’s works. Ten years earlier, the most perceptive music critics were sensing the same feature. As a German writer identified as G.G. wrote after the Berlin performance of piano arrangements:

If the old forms were built on the principle of quantity, then the new ones are built on that of quality. Where earlier, for example, the number of measures (quantity) in the consequent must correlate to that of the antecedent, now a chord or a tone can carry the counterweight of many measures, so long as its qualitative meaning is strong enough.<sup>99</sup>

For the majority of listeners in the early twentieth century, however, *Five Pieces* likely seemed formless and, perhaps, also theme-less.

The form of “Vergangenes,” like “Vorgefühle” is thematically driven. However, rather than expositional and developmental sections, each new section introduces a theme

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<sup>98</sup> Clapp, “Schoenberg’s Music Stoutly Championed.”

<sup>99</sup> G.G., “Arnold Schönberg veranstaltete ein Konzert mit eigenen Kompositionen.”

„Werden die alten Formen nach dein Prinzip der Quantität ausgebaut, so die neuen nach dem der Qualität. Wo früher beispielsweise die Taktzahl (Quantität) des Nachsatzes der des Vordersatzes genau entsprechen mußte, kann jetzt ein Akkord, ein Ton, mehreren Takten das Gegengewicht halten, so fern ihre qualitative Bedeutung stark genug ist.“

that is used cumulatively with the other themes (Fig. 5) (Ex. 35). As Figure 5 shows, the available thematic material for each section increases with the addition of a new theme until section 5, where Theme A returns in a quasi-recapitulation, and where Themes A, B, and C are sounded in quick succession. Theme A is in parenthesis for sections 3 and 4 because its permutation has a weaker connection to the original theme at these points.

Example 35: Schoenberg, *Five Pieces*, Op. 16, thematic index for Mvt. 2

[A]



[B]



[C]



[D]



Section	Themes
1 (mm. 1-9)	A
2 (mm. 1-22)	B, A
3 (mm. 22-47)	C, B, (A)
4 (mm. 47-76)	D, C, B, (A)
5 (mm. 76-92)	A, B, C

Figure 5: Form and thematic treatment in Op. 16, Mvt. 2

Movement three, “Farben,” by contrast, is driven formally by timbre and harmony. It is the so-called *Klangfarbenmelodie* chord (01348) and its permutations that structure the movement into an ABA form (Ex. 36).<sup>100</sup> The same pitches {C, G#, B, E, A} that begin “Farben” return at m. 32 and again in the final measure, each with slightly varied voicing and different instrumentation. The recurrence of the *Klangfarbenmelodie* chord signifies the exposition, recapitulation, and end of the movement.

Example 36: Schoenberg, *Five Pieces*, Op. 16, Mvt. 3, *Klangfarbenmelodie* chord



## Rhythm

Many critics found rhythm to be a guiding light in their initial understanding of *Five Pieces*; it was a concrete and non-revolutionary aspect of Schoenberg’s music. London critic Ernest Newman asserted that, “While Schönberg throws all the conventions of harmony to the winds, he clings tenaciously...to simple figures of rhythm.”<sup>101</sup> Those that studied the score carefully also came to a similar conclusion, as in the case of Boston Symphony conductor, Philip Clapp. A local publication reported:

<sup>100</sup> A (mm. 1-11); B (mm. 12-31); A<sup>1</sup> (mm. 32-44).

<sup>101</sup> “Schönberg’s Music at Queen’s Hall,” *The Times* (London), 19 January 1914.

Mr. Clapp told how the “Five Pieces” first came into his hands two years ago and how he found them puzzling and very hard to read from the orchestral score. As he worked them out he felt a torture through hearing an imagination the dissonances that would sound from the orchestra. As he kept on, however, he found a strong rhythmic feeling and was able to distinguish characteristic thematic bits.<sup>102</sup>

Although metrically complex, the *Five Pieces* do not present the listener with any rhythms that could not be found in Brahms’s music. It was the instrumentation and dissonance that accompanied these rhythms that was new. The score of Op. 16 is visually complex, but the resulting rhythms of the orchestra are simple; rhythms are merely divided up between instruments in a way that appears fragmented, another presentation of the modernist mosaic. To the listener, a first impression of the rhythmic character of *Five Piece* is based on the opening of “Vorgefühle.” The first 25 bars of this movement (the better part of a minute) allow no metric signposts for the listener. Not until m. 26 does the rhythmically regular ostinato enter and clarify the pulse, although the meter remains ambiguous. It is easy to understand how critics and listeners could have initially found the music to be without any rhythmic system.

Large scale divisions of time in *Five Pieces* – above the level of bar and meter – follow a pattern of ebb and flow. Time is not constant. There are moments of driving rhythm, such as the ostinato in “Vorgefühle,” and moments of stasis. Stasis is represented alternately through silence (near-silence) or through repetition of small motives, such as in “Vergangenes” mm. 72-76 or “Peripetia” mm. 8-10. Many of these small motives are in the form of oscillation between two pitches, often a half step apart. On the concept of time in Schoenberg’s music, Cherlin’s “time shards” – moments of regular pulse that are rendered

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<sup>102</sup> “Schoenberg and his Music Topic of Philip G. Clapp,” *Christian Science Monitor* (Boston), 18 December 1914.

eerie because of their artificially antiquated sound – are frequently found in *Five Pieces*. In Cherlin’s words: “In Schoenberg’s practice, the regular yet *unheimlich* pulse-streams are shards of time, reminiscent of but alien to the way that time used to go.”<sup>103</sup> The strangest rhythmic moments are the most traditional ones, because they stick out. In *Five Pieces* time shards are most acutely sensed during moments of oscillation, when rhythm is constant and predictable. One of the first examples can be found in “Vorgefühle” in the recapitulation at mm. 114-120. Here all other elements are subdued and the constancy of the eighth-note rhythm is emphasized in all parts. Against the rhythmic diversity that precedes and follows it, this moment is strangely predictable, though not stable.

Distinct rhythms, such as that of Theme A in “Vorgefühle,” can suggest or comprise themes unto themselves. When this double dotted rhythm returns throughout the movement, it is a clear indication of familiarity even amongst the chaos of pitches. In the same way, unfamiliar and unexpected rhythms can add to a sense of disorientation. In “Vorgefühle” the eighth notes of the ostinato figure are a constant and comforting presence, so the moments that they are absent or altered are prominent to the listener. In mm. 95-96, for example, they are briefly transformed into triplets and disappear, adding to the dynamic character of this moment.

Each of the five movements can be understood as a combination of more and less rhythmically driven moments, with some clear points of metric implication. Often the implied meter is not the one notated. Both the first and second movements move from rhythmic instability to rhythmic predictability and back. “Farben” mirrors this process, as it

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<sup>103</sup> Michael Cherlin, *Schoenberg’s Musical Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3.



progresses from steadiness to unpredictability. Movement four is a terraced or cyclical building of rhythmic normalcy. The final movement, likely in connection with its title “Das obligate Rezitative” is paced non-metrically as a type of musical prose.

## *Harmony and Melody*

One of the greatest challenges involved in constructing a reception history is the recreation of a sound event. It is all but impossible to know what was performed in 1912 and 1914 at those early concerts featuring *Five Pieces*. It is even more difficult to comprehend what the audience heard and how they perceived the sound. Adding to this challenge is the unreliability of many early sources and critics. Every writer had varying degrees of musical competency, and their estimations of what was performed were often ambiguous or misguided, and sometimes blatantly false. One clear exception to this rule is P.G. Clapp, who clearly reviewed the score in advance and with much consideration. Although much of his writing leans more toward flowery recollection of themes and entrances than true analysis, it still offers a glimpse into the perceptions of a musically educated audience member with a strong motivation to understand the piece.

Two days before the Boston premiere, Clapp published a piece in the *Boston Evening Transcript* attempting to prepare audiences for what they would hear. His publication is detailed, and clearly identifies musical elements and specific movements. Of “Vorgefühle” he wrote:

The first piece, though without key-signature, is recognizably in D minor... There ensue short passages of a restless and sinister character alternating with slower passages of melancholy pleading. Bassoons establish a drone bass of D, A, C-sharp; 'celli, later violas and still later violins play a long theme (4-8 time) in which the restless spirit prevails.<sup>104</sup>

Clapp's claim of the D Minor sonority of the first movement is an educated guess, considering Schoenberg's partiality to the key, evidenced in the *String Quartet No. 1*, Op. 7 (1905) and *Verklärte Nacht*, Op. 4 (1899), which Clapp would have likely been familiar with. Clapp also picked up on the (015) drone {D, A, C#}, which begins in m. 23 and lasts throughout the movement. While Clapp may have been implying that {D, A, C#} could be interpreted as a minor-major seventh on the tonic, it is far more likely that he was making the connection to D Minor in order to legitimize the work. Connecting *Five Pieces* to Schoenberg's earlier D Minor works, which had been received well, would resonate with audiences. Connecting Schoenberg to tonality in general, particularly in 1914, would have mediated his post-1908 reputation as a destructive force against musical conventions.

In fact, as would be expected of a work composed in 1909, the first movement – particularly the introduction (mm. 1-25) – is remarkably successful at rejecting any sense of central tonality. The very first theme played by the cellos (Ex. 33, Theme A) and supported by the oboes would suggest A Major, albeit over a highly chromatic harmony and countermelody. These first three measures may imply A Major melodically, but they are held together harmonically by (015) (Ex. 37). Not only is the counterpoint smooth – all non-harmonic pitches (i.e. those not a part of (015) sonorities) are neighbor tones – but (015) is metrically accented as well. Theme A ends on the same pitches as the (015) drone, with the

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<sup>104</sup> Clapp, "Schoenberg's Music Stoutly Championed," *Boston Evening Transcript*. 16 December 1914.

addition of G# from the second oboe. Should a listener still hear D Minor despite these elements, the possibility is negated in m. 4 when an A# trill prevails in the woodwinds.

**Example 37: Schoenberg, *Five Pieces*, Op. 16, Mvt. 1, mm. 1-3, reduction**

(015) (015) (015) (015)

In the same publication, Clapp explains Schoenberg's technique as, "not so much contradictory to the accepted harmonic practice as it is different from it," and he suggests that, "Schönberg has devised a system of chord-structure based on superimposed perfect fourths instead of the customary superimposed alternate major and minor thirds."<sup>105</sup> This statement directly contradicts his assessment of "Vorgefühle" as being essentially in D Minor. There are two likely explanations for Clapp's assessment: it was either a confusion with the quartal harmonies of *Kammersymphonie* Op. 9 (1906), or another deliberate attempt to de-mystify Schoenberg's harmonic practice by substituting an unknown (superimposed fourths) for a known (superimposed thirds). Many contemporary reviewers searched for terms and phrases to explain Schoenberg's harmonic style and found their traditional vocabulary lacking, though it was clear that the work was not based on expanded tonality. As

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<sup>105</sup> Clapp, "Schoenberg's Music Stoutly Championed," *Boston Evening Transcript*. 16 December 1914.

a Berlin report to Leipzig noted, “in all of these works one could search a long time for triads. Overtones and neighbor tones are acting in the role of the old primary tones.”<sup>106</sup>

Rather than a harmonic system built on thirds or fourths, *Five Pieces* is characterized by reliance upon certain set classes. Set classes (015), (016), and (01348) are the most significant sonorities of the piece. These sonorities are established early, repeated frequently, and emphasized through various means of accent. In “Vorgefühle” the (015) trichord is established as the very first accented harmony in m. 1 and later featured as a drone through pitches {D, A, C#}, present throughout the remainder of the movement. In the second development, (mm. 78-88) the French horns move by step in and out of (015) and ascend chromatically to (015) expressed as {E, G#, D#} (Ex. 38). The movement concludes with {D, A, C#} held above ostinato celli.

**Example 38: Schoenberg, *Five Pieces*, Op. 16, Mvt. 1, mm. 78-93, French horns, reduction**

mm. 78-85

(015) (015) (015) (015) (015)

<sup>106</sup> C19120204\_g “Dr. Kl. Kompositionen von Arnold Schönberg: Aus Berlin wird uns geschrieben,” *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten*, 1912.

“In allen diesen Werken wird man lange nach Dreiklängen suchen. Die Zwischentöne, die Nebentöne sind an die Stelle der alten Haupttöne getreten.“

In “Vergangenes” D-centrality continues as the movement begins on (016) as {D, A, G#} with an added non-harmonic tone in the countermelody of the trumpets. This set class is one of the main building blocks of the movement’s harmony. The other is F#, which appears as a frequent pedal point (e.g. mm. 10-17, celesta, second flute, piccolo). At the end of the fourth section (mm. 74-76), (016) returns in harp, celesta, and strings on the same pitches, now sounded in harmonics by the strings. This same instrumentation and voicing will conclude the movement as brass and woodwinds sound an altered eleventh chord.

“Farben” is built from set class (01348) – the *Klangfarbenmelodie* sonority. It appears first as {C, G#, B, E, A} at the beginning of the movement and also at the start of the recapitulation (m. 32) as well as the final chord (Ex. 39). During the B section (mm. 12-31) the same set class is also present, but only at different transposition levels, signifying the move away from the familiar during the development. Section B presents (01348) as built on C $\flat$  and D (Ex. 40). The pitch content of these transpositions is centered around C, like a large scale mordent, moving from C to C $\flat$  to D and back to C during the course of the movement. This progression not only solidifies C as a central pitch, but also emphasizes the role of the stepwise motion as a structural element. Section B can be read as large-scale non-tonal dominant – a sonority that functions to set up a return to the C transposition, but does not follow tonal hierarchy.

Example 39: Schoenberg, *Five Pieces*, Op. 16, instrumentation of (01348) at original pitch

Example 39 shows the instrumentation for three measures of Schoenberg's *Five Pieces*, Op. 16, at the original pitch. The score is in 8/8 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The instrumentation is as follows:

Measure	Upper Staff (Treble Clef)	Lower Staff (Bass Clef)
m. 1	eng hn, fl tpt, fl	bn, cl bn, hn va, cb
m. 32	hn, vn eng hn	cl, vc tbn, va bcl hn
m. 44	vn tpt, vn, fl cl	hn, tpt eng hn, tbn hn, va, cb, cbn

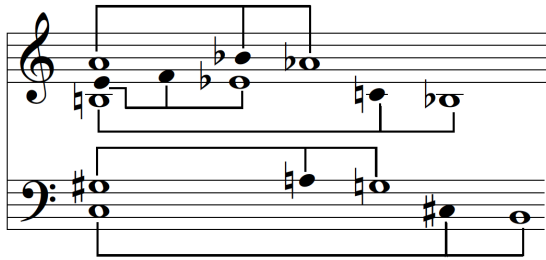
Example 40: Schoenberg, *Five Pieces*, Op. 16, Mvt. 3, transpositions of (01348) in section B

Example 40 shows the transpositions of sonority (01348) in section B of Schoenberg's *Five Pieces*, Op. 16, Mvt. 3. The score is in 8/8 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The transpositions are as follows:

Measure	Transposition
m. 1	C
m. 12	C <sub>b</sub>
m. 20	D
m. 32	C
m. 44	C

Like the voice-leading surrounding (015) in “Vorgefühle,” “Farben” is characterized by smooth, stepwise counterpoint. This feature is especially audible in the opening measures of the piece, when rhythm, dynamics, instrumentation, and voicing are unchanging. For the first seven measures, the five-voice texture moves only by step, and no more than two voices are moving at any time. The underlying structure of this section is a canon based on (013) – motion up by half-step and then down by step (Ex. 41). After establishing {C, G#, B, E, A} as the “home” sonority, the upper voices begin to shift (starting with the flute in m. 4) as the lowest pitches (C, G#, B) maintain a drone. Not until m. 6 does a lower voice (horn) move, and from mm. 6-8 the flute and English horn hold a stable fourth {E<sub>b</sub>, A<sub>b</sub>}.

Example 41: Schoenberg, *Five Pieces*, Op. 16, Mvt. 3, (013) canon



Though this analysis reveals that the dissonant vertical structures of *Five Pieces* result from smooth and carefully constructed counterpoint, this feature was not always clear to contemporary critics and audience. London critic Ernest Newman, after hearing *Five Pieces* at its world premiere, proclaimed precisely the opposite:

He writes a seemingly reckless sort of counterpoint, regardless of the dissonances made by the clashing of the parts...I, for one, decline to believe that much of Schoenberg's counterpoint is anything more than a deliberate piecing together of themes that have no vital imaginative connection with each other<sup>107</sup>

Newman's assessment is an interesting example of an attempt to understand Schoenberg's music based on counterpoint, and was novel for an early-twentieth-century analysis. Newman is correct in his assertion that Schoenberg's counterpoint results in dissonances, and it certainly would not have been scored well as an academic exercise. But writing a correct harmonic exercise was surely not Schoenberg's goal here. We know from *Harmonielehre* that he was well versed in the rules of proper voice-leading and that writing "reckless" counterpoint was out of character for him. To the rare audience member trained in species counterpoint and sensitive to dissonances on strong beats, *Five Pieces* would have certainly seemed haphazard, but it is, in fact, judiciously constructed.

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<sup>107</sup> Newman, "The Case of Arnold Schoenberg," *The Nation*. 7 September 1912.

## *Instrumentation*

Timbre often comes to the forefront of discussions of “Farben,” but all of *Five Pieces* is significant in terms of instrumentation and orchestration. Clapp advocated for this feature by noting that, “Schönberg is also a colorist in orchestration; he knows the tonal quality of each instrument, and combines different qualities marvelously.”<sup>108</sup> Eugene Goossens, who had performed as a violinist at the London premiere, recalled the orchestration of *Five Pieces*:

His instrumentation is as revolutionary as his harmonic scheme; grouping of instrument families is abandoned, and the entry of each instrument is concealed as much as possible, so as to make a more perfectly blended orchestral colouring.<sup>109</sup>

Particularly noticeable are the xylophone in “Vorgefühle” and “Vergangenes,” and the celesta in all movements except “Peripetia.” In addition to an extended use of percussion instruments, *Five Pieces* also showcases unusual techniques from the more standard orchestral instruments. Harmonics, flutter tongue, a combination of *arco* and *pizzicato* (Mvt. 1, m. 35, cello), mutes, directions for trumpets to hold their bells high (Mvt. 1, m. 95), and specifications for fingerings for strings (Mvt. 2, m. 36, where second violins are instructed to play theme C *sul G*) are just some of the directions given to achieve a certain timbre. Some instructions are explicit, as for the English horn at m. 71 of “Vergangenes” when the score commands: “If it is not possible to play the dynamic *ppp*, then don’t play; you must be softer than the strings.”<sup>110</sup> Similarly, “Farben” begins with a warning to the conductor:

It is not the duty of the conductor in this piece to invite those voices that seem to him (thematically) important to play out, or to mediate apparent

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Goossens, “Sir Henry Wood at Rehearsals,” *New York Times*, 3 September 1944.

<sup>110</sup> “Wenn die Stelle nicht *ppp* möglich ist, bleibt sie weg; sie muss schwächer klingen als die Streicher.”



unbalanced mixtures of sound. Where a voice should play out more than the others, it is accordingly instrumented and the sounds should not be toned down. In contrast, it is your duty to watch that each instrument plays the precise dynamic that is prescribed to them; exactly (subjective) what their instrument is accorded and not (objectively) what supports the composite sound.<sup>111</sup>

Such instructions negate any possibility of considering Schoenberg's compositional decisions to be reckless in any way, and give, perhaps, some insight into why his orchestral pieces did not often find performances. His works called for complicated ensembles, and precise adherence to the directions of the score.

In terms of specific reactions to the sound of Op. 16, there was a clear opinion after the February 1912 performance in Berlin that the piano arrangement did not do the work's timbral aspects justice. One of Berlin's more skeptical critics, a writer for *Signale* who prefaced his review with an admission that he could not understand Schoenberg's music despite his self-diagnosed proficiency in modern music, argued that, "at least on the piano they are impossible to take seriously."<sup>112</sup> Another critic writing for the *Frankfurter Zeitung* echoed these sentiments, going further to explain why the transcription was lacking.

Indeed, the most ambitious works, the three *Orchestral Pieces*, were heard in a poorly created arrangement for two pianos. This made it impossible to judge them. Precisely the pastel colors of instrumentation could have given life to the tones; in this black-and-white translation it appears the work was robbed of its best parts.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> "Es ist nicht Aufgabe des Dirigenten, einzelne ihm (thematisch) wichtig scheinende Stimmen in diesem Stück zum Hervortreten aufzufordern, oder scheinbar unausgeglichen klingende Mischungen abzutönen. Wo eine Stimme mehr hervortreten soll, als die anderen, ist sie entsprechend instrumentiert und die Klänge wollen nicht abgetönt werden. Dagegen ist es seine Aufgabe darüber zu wachen, dass jedes Instrument genau den Stärkegrad spielt, der vorgeschrieben ist; genau (subjektiv) seinem Instrument entsprechend und nicht (objektiv) sich dem Gesamtklang unterordnend."

<sup>112</sup> C19120204\_d "Aus Berlin: Arnold Schönberg: ???? Nur unter dem Schutze der zweimal gedoppelten Fragezeichen," *Signale* (Berlin), no. 6, 1912, p. 180.

„Gänzlich ablehnen muss ich die drei Orchesterstücke vom Jahre 1909, die in einer achthändigen Bearbeitung für zwei Flügel dargeboten wurden. Wenigstens auf den Klavieren sind sie unmöglich ernst zu nehmen.“

<sup>113</sup> "Aus Berlin wird uns berichtet."

To judge by Webern's four-hand transcription for two pianos (September 1912), any eight-hand transcription that was performed in Berlin earlier that year would have impressed as monochromatic in comparison to the orchestral version. As the critics rightly mentioned, the timbral monotony of two pianos could only very poorly represent the timbral variation and experimental combinations present in the *Five Pieces*. Combined with the total inability of a piano to produce a crescendo throughout a tone, the entire character of the work would have been altered. Also, despite the technical capabilities of Clossen, Grünberg, Steuermann, and Webern, who were all fine pianists in their own right, there must have been inevitable difficulties putting the ensemble together, particularly in regards to timing and tempo. Any discrepancy between the articulations of the four performers would only have exaggerated a sense of formlessness, dissonance, and confusion in the minds of the audience. One critic's response to the performance sarcastically relays this confusion: "The misters Closson, Grünberg, Steuermann and others must have had to take great care to execute their unmusical responsibilities."<sup>114</sup> In many ways it is not difficult to imagine that this performance of the eight-hand piano transcription bore little resemblance to the London orchestral premiere in September of that year.

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„Freilich, die anspruchsvollsten Sachen, drei Orchesterstücke, kamen in einem dürftig andeutenden Arrangement für zwei Klaviere zu Gehör. Da läßt sich unmöglich urteilen. Gerade die Pastellfarben der Instrumentation konnten den Tönen Leben geben; in dieser Schwarz-Weiß-Uebertragung erschienen sie des Besten beraubt.“

<sup>114</sup> C19120204\_b P.E., "Konzerte. Arnold Schönberg gilt zur Zeit bei einer geringen Minorität als der kommende musikalische Messias," 1912.

„Die Herren Closson, Grünberg, Steuermann u. a. mußten für die Ausführung ihrer unmusikalischen Aufgaben sorgen.“

## CHAPTER 4

### *Erwartung, Op. 17*

In a frenzy of compositional activity during the summer of 1909 Schoenberg completed his first stage work, *Erwartung*, Op. 17, on a rapidly written text by Viennese medical student Marie Pappenheim. Declared “un-performable” after its composition, *Erwartung* was finally premiered fifteen years later (1924) in Prague’s *Neue Deutsche Theater* under Alexander Zemlinsky, Schoenberg’s ally and erstwhile brother-in-law. Unlike the riots and deeply personal criticism that Schoenberg’s music had garnered in Vienna, the German-language newspaper articles that form the basis of critical reaction to the premiere show that Prague responded graciously. In stark contrast to the cool, skeptical, and sometimes hostile reception that Schoenberg’s earlier atonal works had received, not only in Vienna, but also throughout continental Europe, Great Britain, and the United States, *Erwartung* was considered by almost all critics to be an example of highly individualized expression and a masterwork of the stage.

The delayed premiere and subsequent success of *Erwartung* invites the question of whether Schoenberg’s music was simply too far ahead of its own time to be appreciated. Although part of the explanation for *Erwartung*’s successful premiere may be attributed to a

greater willingness on the part of listeners to accept a more dissonant, less thematic style of composition, no less crucial is the social and political atmosphere that surrounded the German-speaking minority in Prague and shaped their musical identity during the mid-1920s. The continued marginalization of the German-speaking population in the First Republic of Czechoslovakia, of which a significant portion were Jewish, was mirrored by waning cultural representation. German theaters and opera houses were faced with a markedly smaller budget than their Czech counterparts, if they were not shut down altogether.<sup>1</sup> In this context, nationalism was undoubtedly a part of the openness of this small German-speaking community to the premiere of an opera in their native tongue by one of Europe's most well-known composers.

### *A Long-Awaited Success: Op. 17 Premieres in Prague*

It was an unpredictable curiosity that Schoenberg's most concentrated effort to break with musical tradition – so radical that it could not be performed for fifteen years and Schoenberg himself could not sustain its style – would become an immediate success at its premiere. *Erwartung's* reception stands in contrast with many accounts of riotous premieres and performances, from the 1908 premiere of the *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10, to the 1912 premiere of *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, Op. 16 in London, to the 1913 *Skandalkonzert* brawl. Schoenberg's reputation as a catalyst for fistfights and bad manners led to some audience

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<sup>1</sup> Pamela Tancsik, et al., "Zemlinsky's Impact on Contemporary Opera During his Stay in Prague Between 1911 and 1927," in *Zemlinsky Studies*, ed. Michael Frith (London: Middlesex University Press, 2007), 19-20.

members attending only for the sake of a scandalous show. Against this backdrop, and considering the radical form, genre, harmony, and thematic treatment (or lack thereof) in *Erwartung*, the overwhelmingly supportive response is even more surprising.

That *Erwartung* had been declared completely unplayable by other theaters was a common thread throughout reviews of that first performance, but there is not any explicit evidence that the work's difficulty accounted for its failure to find an earlier performance. What is clear is that Schoenberg tirelessly tried to secure a premiere for the work, but was unsuccessful time and again. As early as the end of 1909, just months after finishing the score, Schoenberg contacted Max Marschalk of Dreililien Verlag to try to get *Erwartung* published, indicating that the conductor of the Mannheim *Hoftheater*, Artur Bodanzky, had expressed interest in performing the work. Marschalk and Dreililien passed on *Erwartung*, and there is neither an extant response nor an initial request from Bodanzky.<sup>2</sup> The following summer Schoenberg sent a request to Austrian painter Max Oppenheimer asking him to sketch set designs for the work. By autumn 1911 there were still no prospects of a premiere. Berg sent a hopeful letter that September, noting that Webern had plans to visit Richard Strauss, and perhaps he would be interested in *Erwartung*.<sup>3</sup>

The next winter Schoenberg was in contact with Erhard Buschbeck, who would organize what would come to be known as the *Skandalkonzert* the next year, and who was a member of the *Akademischer Verband für Literatur und Musik*, the group that had facilitated

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<sup>2</sup> Letter from Max Marschalk, 8 January 1910, ASC, L12D11. Schoenberg wrote to Bodanzky in August 1913 noting, "you had at one time the intention to perform my monodrama 'Erwartung,'" and asking whether it would be a possibility for the upcoming season. Letter to Artur Bodanzky, 16 August 1913, ASC L8V.

<sup>3</sup> Letter from Alban Berg, 8 September 1911, ASC L10B6.

performances of Opp. 10 and 15 a few months prior.<sup>4</sup> Schoenberg wrote to Buschbeck from Berlin, mentioning that he would return to Vienna for a premiere of *Erwartung*, even if it were delayed until the next year.<sup>5</sup> Schoenberg had just turned down a position at the Vienna Academy a few months prior because of his unwillingness to live in Vienna. Given his disdain for and distrust of the city – and especially its music critics – based on years of disastrous performances and personal attacks, a performance of a major stage work in Vienna at that time would have been a significant risk, especially when the work was as stylistically radical as *Erwartung*. The following correspondence between Buschbeck and Schoenberg focuses only on the upcoming Viennese premiere of *Gurrelieder*. Again in summer 1913 Schoenberg tried to find a venue for *Erwartung*'s premiere, corresponding with Otto Neumann-Hofer, founder of the *Deutsche Opernhaus* in Charlottenburg. Neumann-Hofer had requested the text and piano reduction of the work, which Schoenberg sent promptly the very next day, but no further correspondence exists between the two, and the performance never came to fruition.

It seems that Schoenberg next worked towards a premiere in the spring and summer of 1922, writing with Marya Freund regarding a performance in Paris, perhaps with Milhaud, who had given the French premiere of *Pierrot lunaire* the previous winter.<sup>6</sup> In a letter to Alma Mahler, however, Schoenberg was adamant that he conduct the premiere himself.<sup>7</sup> At that

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<sup>4</sup> The *Watschenkonzert*, also known as the *Skandalkonzert*, was a performance on 31 March 1913 by the Viennese *Konzertverein*. The concert became so riotous that it had to be ended before a performance of Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* could take place. Schoenberg's only work on the program was the quartal *Kammersymphonie* Op. 9. Webern's *Six Pieces*, Op. 6 and two of Berg's *Altenberg Lieder* were also performed before a fistfight allegedly broke out between Buschbeck and a protester.

<sup>5</sup> Letter to Erhard Buschbeck, 4 December 1912, private collection, transcription at ASC.

<sup>6</sup> Letter from Marya Freund, 22 April 1922, Library of Congress and ASC L13F6.

<sup>7</sup> Letter to Alma Mahler, 5 July 1922, Library of Congress and ASC L81X.

point, some thirteen years after its completion, Schoenberg must have been concerned that *Erwartung* receive a premiere at the highest musical caliber, and with an artistically viable interpretation. The work needed to be performed, but it could not be performed badly. By October of that year, progress seemed to be coming with Freund, for she relates that she visited Schoenberg in Mödling and read through *Erwartung* with him at the piano.<sup>8</sup> Two months later, however, after receiving an indignant protest from Freund that she had heard nothing further, Schoenberg replied that a Paris performance of *Pierrot* was cancelled “for political reasons.”<sup>9</sup> These same political difficulties were likely the reason that *Erwartung* did not find a premiere in France.



During Alexander Zemlinsky’s time as director of the *Neues Deutsches Theater* (hereafter NDT) in Prague he conducted or facilitated Schoenberg’s conducting of many of his substantial ensemble works, including *Pelleas und Melisande* (1912, Schoenberg cond.), *Second String Quartet*, Op. 10 (1912), an arrangement of *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, Op. 16 (1920), *Gurrelieder* (1921, Zemlinsky cond.), and *Pierrot lunaire* (1922, Schoenberg cond.). Zemlinsky not only knew Schoenberg and his music well enough to ensure a successful premiere of *Erwartung*, but he was dedicated to making Prague a center of musical culture. Premiering a work by the controversial composer, a work that others were supposedly too afraid to undertake, was as beneficial to Zemlinsky and the German minority in Prague as was a successful performance for Schoenberg himself.

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<sup>8</sup> Letter from Marya Freund, 24 October 1922, Library of Congress and ASC L13F6.

<sup>9</sup> Letter to Marya Freund, 30 December 1922, ASC L2F2.

Zemlinsky accepted the position in Prague in the wake of losing an all-but-guaranteed position at Vienna's *Hofoper* after Mahler's death in 1911. At the time, Prague was culturally underdeveloped – overshadowed by the imperial capital of Vienna and the center of the Kingdom of Hungary in Budapest, both of which enjoyed significant cultural and economic growth during the nineteenth century. Prague was the second largest city in the Kingdom of Austria, but only by a wide margin. By 1919 it would become the capital of an independent country, the First Republic of Czechoslovakia. At the time that Zemlinsky came to work at the NDT, the German minority was becoming increasingly disenfranchised. The processes by which German speakers had lost their cultural power accelerated in the 1880s and 1890s, as Germans left the Czech-dominated areas of the Habsburg Empire and Czech and Slovak nationalism intensified. One particularly significant change occurred in 1892, when Czech aldermen declared that all street signs be in Czech, replacing those in German, which had displayed the imperial black and yellow of the Habsburgs.<sup>10</sup> For the hegemony of German culture in the area, this was a major blow. Nothing is quite so alienating as being surrounded by another language in every part of life, and this was becoming the reality for those Germans that did not speak Czech – roughly six percent of the population in Prague by 1921, at which point Czechoslovak was the official language of the country.<sup>11</sup> It follows that the number of those who could not speak or read Czech would have been even higher at the time that the law was enacted in the 1890s, when Prague was still part of the Austrian Empire.

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<sup>10</sup> Gary B. Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague 1861-1914* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2006), 1.

<sup>11</sup> Tancsik, "Zemlinsky's Impact on Contemporary Opera," 15.



In October 1918, with the Austro-Hungarian Empire all but defunct following the First World War, politician and Czechoslovakia's first president, Tomáš Masaryk, and the Czechoslovak National Council in Paris declared the country an independent democracy.<sup>12</sup> At the same time the United States rejected Austria-Hungary's peace proposal, which would have granted autonomy to the Czech population within Austria-Hungary, leaving the Empire more intact.<sup>13</sup> While Masaryk's government has largely been viewed as an example of enviable equality and democracy in the interwar period, historians and sociologists have recently presented a more complex understanding of Czechoslovakia's First Republic.<sup>14</sup> For the German minority who found themselves increasingly remote, both physically and culturally, this inequality was especially tangible. But because so much of the new nation's economy was driven by manufacturing, industry, and agriculture that was owned by Germans, the German minority could not be completely isolated from society.<sup>15</sup> The vast majority of that twenty-three percent of the Czechoslovakian population that was German lived in Sudetenland. These Germans were surrounded mostly by other German speakers, nestled into the southeastern crook of Germany and on the periphery of Austria's First Republic. Effectively exiled to the fringes of a new country in which they were now the minority, many Sudeten Germans sought support from Germany and Austria as radical German nationalism became increasingly appealing. With the global economic crisis in the

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<sup>12</sup> Jan Bažant, Nina Bažantová, and Frances Starn, ed., *A Czech Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 242.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 242.

<sup>14</sup> See: Melissa Feinberg, *Elusive Equality: Gender, Citizenship, and the Limits of Democracy in Czechoslovakia, 1918-1950* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2006).

Andrea Orzoff, *Battle for the Castle: The Myth of Czechoslovakia in Europe, 1914-1948* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2009).

<sup>15</sup> Bažant, *A Czech Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 246.

late 1920s and early 1930s, which negatively affected the export-driven economies of Sudeten Germans to a greater degree than the center of Czechoslovakia, anti-Czech sentiment grew even more fervent.

This geographical divide, combined with the extremely small percentage of Germans actually living in Prague meant that the Czech political majority could easily and justifiably minimize the cultural impact of German art within the capital. The years leading up to *Erwartung*'s premiere saw German and Czech cultures existing in even more distant and hostile circles than before. In November 1920 Czech nationalists occupied Prague's *Deutsche Landtheater*, leaving the city with only the NDT as a venue for German-language productions.<sup>16</sup> In addition, Zemlinsky and the NDT worked with a considerably smaller budget than the Czech National Theater and the two venues had an agreement to perform mutually exclusive repertoire. All this meant that by the time *Erwartung* was eventually premiered – it was delayed first a year and then again two full days in the fourteen-day festival – German-speaking audiences were primed for a cultural and musical success, even if it meant accepting a work by one of the most polarizing composers in the German musical world. In fact, the unconventional nature of the monodrama likely made it even more appealing to those listeners, who were eager to give evidence not only of the advancement and ingenuity of German culture, but also of Prague as its center.

German musicologist and critic Hans Schnoor went a step further and deemed Schoenberg the future of German music, writing:

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<sup>16</sup> Tancsik, "Zemlinsky's Impact on Contemporary Opera," 20.

Schoenberg still signifies the destiny of the new German music, signifies the last safe foothold for grasping its essence, history, future potential for development.<sup>17</sup>

As Joy Calico has shown in her recent book, Schnoor studied with Riemann and primarily worked on the music of Carl Maria von Weber.<sup>18</sup> Despite his supportive tone in 1924, Schoor would come to be at the center of a scandal after disparaging *A Survivor from Warsaw* in the mid-1950s. In June of 1956, nearly five years after Schoenberg's death, Schnoor referred to *A Survivor* as a hate-song, with the implication that it was a piece of Zionist propaganda meant to threaten "decent Germans [*anständigen Deutschen*]."<sup>19</sup> Schnoor's about-face is not as surprising as it may first seem. If he truly did believe Schoenberg to be the future of German music, then he likely faced extreme internal conflict when he himself became a member of the Nazi party (albeit not a critical agent) in May 1932.<sup>20</sup> In Schoenberg, Schnoor apparently had a musical hero – one who had further to fall as admiration turned to loathing. Schoenberg's re-conversion to Judaism in July 1933 would have been a huge affront to Schnoor's political sensibilities; composing a work in memory of victims of the Holocaust would have been even more intolerable. Although, as Calico as suggested, Schnoor went through de-nazification after the end of the Second World War, his anti-Semitic sentiments persisted.

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<sup>17</sup> C19240606\_v Hans Schnoor, „Arnold Schönberg: Zur Uraufführung des Monodrama „Erwartung“ am Deutschen Landestheater in Prag,“ June 1924.

“Schönberg bedeutet noch immer Schicksal der neuen deutschen Musik, bedeutet einen letzten sicheren Halt bei Erfassung ihres Wesens, ihrer Geschichte, ihrer künftigen Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten.”

<sup>18</sup> Joy Calico, *Arnold Schoenberg's A Survivor from Warsaw in Postwar Europe*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 31.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 31-32.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

Although Schnoor's story eventually led him to attack Schoenberg, in 1924 he was a strong supporter, and one of many who positively reviewed the premiere of *Erwartung*. When compared to reviews by non-German critics, the extent to which German reviews praised *Erwartung* becomes even clearer. Viennese musicologist Carl Johann Perl deemed it a work "that belongs to the few great ones."<sup>21</sup> Perl, who translated writings by the Christian philosopher St. Augustine, seemed an unlikely advocate of Schoenberg's music, but his review in Germany's *Westfälische Neueste Nachrichten* was glowing. Another anonymous review published in the Prague *Montagsblatt* called the "shocking power of persuasion" in *Erwartung*, "the result of a highly admirable daring, creative potency, which has no peer in modern music [Schoenberg's underline]."<sup>22</sup> Countless praises similar to these were printed by German-speaking music critics in papers throughout Czechoslovakia, Germany, and Austria.

In contrast to this enthusiasm, English-speaking critics were alternately antagonistic and unimpressed. Olin Downes wrote in the *New York Times*: "His music is extremely involved, worked out with the most laborious and hyper-refined attent-detail [*sic*]. It is very ugly, and it has absolutely no oxygen."<sup>23</sup> Downes, a champion of Sibelius's music, was notorious for his distaste of the Second Viennese School; he likely visited Prague primarily for the weeklong Smetana festival that preceded the International Music Festival. Slightly less caustic, but still thoroughly unenthused was British music critic Edwin Evans's

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<sup>21</sup> C19240606\_g Carl Johann Perl, „Schönbergs ‚Erwartung‘“, *Westfälische Neueste Nachrichten*, 13 June 1924. „Ein Werk trat in die Erscheinung, das zu den wenigen großen gehört.“

<sup>22</sup> C19240606\_o „Das deutsche Theater zum Musikfest“, *Montagsblatt* (Prague), June 1924.

„Die erschütternde {sic} Ueberzeugungskraft, mit der die Musik diese Gefühlsvorgänge zum Tönen bringt, ist die Auswirkung einer höchsten Bewunderung herausfordernden schöpferischen Potenz, die in der modernen Musik nicht ihresgleichen hat {Schoenberg's underline}.“

<sup>23</sup> Olin Downes, "The Prague Smetana Celebration and the International Music Festival," *New York Times*, 6 July 1924.

assessment that *Erwartung* was disappointing compared to *Pierrot lunaire* and that, “in its theatrical aspect is somewhat old-fashioned.”<sup>24</sup> Evans’s understanding of the work as old-fashioned was completely the opposite of what German-language reviews expressed. In those reviews *Erwartung* was touted as “spiritual opera-theater without convention,” a work in which Schoenberg “rejected the necessity of a plot through his achievement,” and Perl said that it was a “revolutionary break with all previous concepts of opera-drama.”<sup>25</sup> Evans’s musical preferences steered more towards Debussy and Stravinsky than Schoenberg, and it is possible that he considered *Erwartung* to be an outdated work simply because it was composed fifteen years prior. In contrast to Evans’s dismissal, German-language reviews of *Erwartung* sought to emphasize the monodrama’s novelty and complexity alongside Schoenberg’s musical genius in a way not mirrored in foreign reviews.

Many of these same German-language reviews also praised Schoenberg’s genuine artistic sensitivity. One critic wrote that Schoenberg’s “spiritual counterpoint” was “conveyance of inner, creative visions in sound matter, improbably tender reflexes from the soul.”<sup>26</sup> Another recollected that his “inner rightness...was based in the power and necessity

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<sup>24</sup> Edwin Evans, “The Prague Festival,” *The Musical Times*, 1 July 1924, p. 612.

<sup>25</sup> C19240606\_b „In Prag, anlässlich des Internationalen Musikfestes,“ Fragment, 1924 „konventionslosen, geistigen Operntheater.“

C19240606\_a „Arnold Schönberg: Erwartung,“ Fragment, 1924.

„Er verneint durch seine Tat die Notwendigkeit einer Handlung.“

C19240606\_g Perl, „Schönbergs ‚Erwartung‘.

“Das Werk ist in jeder Beziehung abseitig und bricht revolutionär mit allen bisherigen Begriffen der Operndramatik.“

<sup>26</sup> C19240606\_b „In Prag, anlässlich des Internationalen Musikfestes.“

„Dies nervöse, klangliche Vibrato, diese spirituelle Kontrapunktik sind nie und nimmer das Resultat artifizierlicher Vervollkommnung: sie sind Uebertragungen [sic] innerer, schöpferischer Vorstellungen in Klangmaterie, unwahrscheinlich zarte Reflexe aus dem Seelischen.“

of primary intuition.”<sup>27</sup> Musicologist Adolf Aber commended the “extraordinary agitated, breathtaking power” of *Erwartung*, writing:

Only a Schoenberg has the ability to make musically manifest the subtlest and last sensations of a human heart in a single moment, with all their intermediate stages and changes.<sup>28</sup>

That Aber was Jewish may have impacted his impression of Schoenberg’s music in Prague, where fully one third of the German-speaking inhabitants were Jewish.<sup>29</sup> Certainly, Aber was a champion of contemporary music, in addition to being friendly with Strauss, but he was likely also sensitive to the social environment of the Jewish minority within the German minority and the importance that the success of a Jewish Viennese composer could carry. In this way, Aber’s praise seems even more significant, given how frequently Schoenberg was attacked for being uncreative, both before and after 1924. In fact, even in the overwhelmingly positive reviews of *Erwartung*’s premiere, there is evidence of the persistent tendency to accuse Schoenberg of unsophisticated imitation. In the last paragraph of a review by Adolf Weissman, Schoenberg crossed out a line that reads, “but Schoenberg wanted naturalism of the stage, like one who wants to forcefully scramble together [*erraffen*] theater that he doesn’t have in himself.”<sup>30</sup> Weissman’s use of the unusual verb *erraffen* is a clear pun on the verb *affen*, meaning to ape or imitate. In a tangential way Weissman refers

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<sup>27</sup> C19240606\_c „Auf eine solche hat Arnold Schönbergs ‚Erwartung‘ etwa fünfzehn Jahre warten müssen,“ *Neue Züricher Zeitung*, 1924.

„Nur festgestellt mag werden, daß das, was vom Papier her sich als so schwer und kaum ausführbar zeigte, in Wirklichkeit jene Selbstverständlichkeit und innere Richtigkeit erwies, die ohne weiteres überzeugt, weil ihr – jenseits alles Spekulativen – die Kraft und Notwendigkeit der primären Intuition zugrunde liegt.“

<sup>28</sup> C19240606\_m Adolf Aber, „Der Ausklang des Festes,“ *Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten*, June 1924.

„Nur ein Schönberg hat die Fähigkeit, auch feinste und letzte Empfindungen eines Menschenherzens, mit allen ihren Zwischenstufen und Veränderungen in jedem einzigen Augenblick, musikalisch sinnfällig zu machen.“

<sup>29</sup> Tancsik, “Zemlinsky’s Impact on Contemporary Opera,” 15.

<sup>30</sup> C19240606\_e Adolf Weissman, „Aber da ist Zemlinsky,“ 1924.

„Schönberg aber wollte Naturalismus der Bühne; wie einer, der krampfhaft das Theater, das er nicht in sich hat, erraffen will.“

back to Wagner's critique of Mendelssohn, who Wagner argued could only mimic [*nachahmen*] Bach.<sup>31</sup> Wagner's main argument was that Jewish musicians could only imitate the true creativity of German composers, criticizing the "aping [*nachäffend*] language of our Jewish music makers," and refusing to allow them the title of composer.<sup>32</sup> Weissman's cunning allusion to Wagner's text combines with his own explicit criticism that Schoenberg swept together theatrical elements alien to his abilities to suggest that Schoenberg is not even capable of being musical because of his Jewishness.

One particularly perceptive review from the premiere understands *Erwartung* as a veiled critique on the death of culture in Western Europe. The anonymous review, published in *Neues Wiener Journal*, suggests:

Maybe this 'Erwartung' that Schoenberg wrote fifteen years ago was the anticipation of today's world-soul [*Weltseele*], which stumbled over the corpse of occidental culture on the path to peace through love.<sup>33</sup>

Undoubtedly this reviewer is looking back to a pre-war work through a post-war lens. At a time when the passion of late Romanticism gave birth both to master works like *Erwartung* and a devastating war, it was natural to look back with skepticism. Writing, too, in a Viennese journal shortly after the fall of the Habsburg Empire, and likely suffering residual food rationing and economic stagnation would have put a dullness on the shine of *Erwartung's* aesthetic.

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<sup>31</sup> Richard Wagner, *Das Judentum in der Musik* (Leipzig: J. J. Weber, 1869), 27.

"...unsren alten Meister Bach als nachzuahmendes Vorbild..."

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

"Nur ist bei dieser nachäffenden Sprache unsrer jüdischen Musikmacher eine besondere Eigenthümlichkeit bemerkbar..."

<sup>33</sup> C19240606\_q „Nicht minder stark war der Eindruck von Schönbergs Monodram.“ *Neues Wiener Journal*. June 1924.

"Vielleicht war diese „Erwartung“, die Schönberg vor fünfzehn Jahren schrieb, die Voraussetzung der heutigen Weltseele, die auf dem Wege zum Liebesfrieden über den Leichnam der abendländlichen Kultur stolpert?"

Despite the obviously different judgment passed on Schoenberg and his music, the positive reviews from Prague had the same impetus as the negative ones from Vienna. The same forces that drove critics to declare Schoenberg insane, dangerous, or untalented also were at work behind the extremely positive reaction of *Erwartung's* premiere in Prague in 1924. In nearly every case it was a deep-seated fear or anxiety that prompted audiences to react a certain way when faced with Schoenberg's music. Fear of isolation and loss of cultural power both caused Viennese to reject his *Second String Quartet* in 1908 and also caused German-speakers in Prague to welcome *Erwartung* as a symbol of a promise of (regained) cultural dominance. The reactions of these early performances became embedded in the idea of Schoenberg that we have inherited. These reactions and their underlying fear – not the actual sound of the music itself – are what have primarily shaped an understanding of Schoenberg throughout the remainder of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries. For the most part the reasons for the fear and anxiety were long ago forgotten, but the impact on Schoenberg's reputation continues. An awareness of these undercurrents allows a consciously shaping and reshaping of our own reactions to Schoenberg and his music that is less intertwined with the fears and hopes from nearly a century ago.

## *Analysis*

In 1964, Carl Dahlhaus noted that analyses of *Erwartung* have typically departed from one of two main understandings: the work as an example of expressionism or as a work



based on a principle of athematicism (sometimes described as non-repetition).<sup>34</sup> His suggested solution was analysis that viewed the work's polyphony as its main expressive element.<sup>35</sup> Dahlhaus built his argument on Adorno's idea, expressed in *Philosophy of New Music*, that the dialectical aspects of *Erwartung* (e.g. expression and athematicism) relied upon each other, understanding expression and form as part of an 'interdependence of extremes' inherent to the work. Dahlhaus viewed *Erwartung* as an athematic work (although motifs are still emphasized) structured on the principle of a lack of structure, which is articulated through polyphony and counterpoint. He explains the form as built from interlocking motivic sections.<sup>36</sup> Stuckenschmidt understood the monodrama in a similar way: he described it as "a train of motives bound together for long stretches."<sup>37</sup> Schoenberg seems to have disagreed with this understanding, if his crossing out of a similar passage in a 1924 review from the work's premiere is any indication. The review, published in the *Arbeiterzeitung*, is part of the collection from Schoenberg's estate, now housed at the ASC, and is undated and anonymous. Part of the section stricken through by Schoenberg reads: "In great multiplicity constantly new motif-structures string themselves together, bound as a whole to a unity that follows inner rules."<sup>38</sup> Throughout Schoenberg's collection of reviews of *Erwartung*, many lines are crossed out at points when the reviewer addresses elements that

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<sup>34</sup> Carl Dahlhaus, *Schoenberg and the New Music*, trans. Derrick Puffett et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 149.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 149.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 152.

<sup>37</sup> Hans Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg: His Life, World, and Work*, trans. Humphrey Searle (London: John Calder, 1977), 120.

Bryan Simms notes that this idea stemmed from an earlier 1931 essay "Arnold Schönberg's 'Erwartung,'" published in *Der Scheinwerfer*.

<sup>38</sup> C19240606\_d „Schönberg hat diesen Text mit einer Musik durchtränkt,“ *Arbeiterzeitung*, 1924. "In größter [Vielheit] reihen sich immer neue Motivgebilde aneinander, die sich als Ganzes zu eines, innerlichen Gesetzen folgenden Einheit verbinden."

Schoenberg apparently disagreed with or found irrelevant. In this way, it seems clear that a reading of *Erwartung* as a work structured on interlocking motives was one that Schoenberg did not support, but the context of this sentiment is crucial.

One explanation for this seeming inconsistency is that Schoenberg considered a motif to be fundamentally different from what Dahlhaus and Stuckenschmidt understood it to be. Likely Schoenberg understood motif to be a concept that was too closely tied to tradition and to the formal restrictions that he was attempting to overcome in 1909. This was certainly the sentiment that he projected in the well-known letter to Busoni from 18 August 1909, sent just days before he began work on *Erwartung*: “I strive for: complete liberation from all forms, from all symbols of cohesion and of logic. Thus: away with ‘motivic working out.’”<sup>39</sup> To Schoenberg in 1909, expression was of the highest importance; he must have expected that the music would convey this philosophy to listeners, even fifteen years later. With this goal in mind, he considered a reading of *Erwartung* as a work unified by constantly new motivic ideas to be incompatible with the “liberation from all symbols of cohesion” that he sought at this point. This was yet another crucial moment in his career where he was consciously transitioning to a new style.

From Dahlhaus’s perspective in the mid 1960s, however, when serialism was fetishized to an incredible degree and Schoenberg was often considered more a mathematician than musician, some analysts consciously focused on the parts of his music that were unified by quasi-traditional musical means, albeit with a new aesthetic outcome. Dahlhaus’s conception of recurring motivic building blocks in *Erwartung* – a view that is

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<sup>39</sup> Auner, *A Schoenberg Reader: Documents of a Life*, 70.

shared by many theorists in the past fifteen to twenty years – is a valid one, even if Schoenberg did not understand the work in this way.<sup>40</sup> Certainly Schoenberg did not develop “proper” themes in a traditional sense in *Erwartung*, and the motifs that are present in the music do not symbolize anything. There are no Wagnerian *Leitmotiven* and no opening, closing, or transitional themes – nothing that represents any imposed formal rules. *Erwartung* does not display the sort of tight motivic development evident in the Op. 10 quartet, but there are elements in the work – including motivic ones – that emphasize the work as a whole concept. Even if the main goal was expression rather than adherence to form, the mind’s insistence on creating subconscious unity is still significant. The mind in this case being understood as both that of the composer and creator and that of the listener. Even the stream of consciousness is not totally random, and our brains inherently search for meaning and organization, no less in sound than anywhere else.

Following Dahlhaus’s call to action, a significant majority of analysts have understood *Erwartung* to exhibit interconnectedness between expression and motivic usage. Malcolm MacDonald refers to it as “free association” of thematic material, at once reflecting the compositional principle of a non-developmental theme and situating it as a characteristic of an expressive goal and an underlying unity throughout the work.<sup>41</sup> Since the premiere and Adorno’s later declaration of the work as athematic, analysis has taken a turn to arguing for motivic unification within *Erwartung*. Herbert H. Buchanan’s 1967 article was one example of an analysis that argued for unity in *Erwartung* based upon elements from Op. 6, No. 6,

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<sup>40</sup> See: Malcolm MacDonald, *Schoenberg* (Oxford University Press, 2008), 257-8.

Bryan R. Simms, *The Atonal Music of Arnold Schoenberg 1908-1923* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 98.

<sup>41</sup> MacDonald, *Schoenberg*, 256.

MacDonald’s choice of “free association” as a term also has implications for his own understanding of the work’s relationship to psychology.

alluded to starting at m. 410.<sup>42</sup> Buchanan understood *Erwartung*'s motivic elements as stemming from "Am Wegrund," whose text "*Tausend Menschen ziehen vorüber*" is cited in the monodrama. An extreme case of motivic reverse engineering can be found in composer and musicologist José Maria Garcia Laborda's 1981 study, in which the entire work is broken down and catalogued into "moment-forms." Laborda's text is astoundingly thorough but also seems to leave out the experience of the listener and, in fact, also that of the composer. Recalling Schoenberg's admonishment to Arthur Locke in 1938 that the analysis of tone rows was not the main point of his works, but rather the "musical imagination," it seems that there is much to be lost by focusing too intently on the trees and missing the forest, so to speak.

It has been a consistent challenge to theorists and musicologists to propose a comprehensive method of analyzing and understanding Schoenberg's non-serial atonal works. Schoenberg thought of his music as creative and in terms of combinations of sound and timbre, especially in 1909. The backlash against describing *Erwartung* as athematic was the blossoming of analyses that sought to connect miniature motives throughout the work in order to prove underlying thematic unity. In part this seems to have been an effort to counter an assumption that *Erwartung* is only a psychological piece, with no structure or direction – that it is a work of randomness. Neither view – that of formal unity or of pure

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<sup>42</sup> Herbert H. Buchanan, "A Key to Schoenberg's 'Erwartung' (Op. 17)," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 20/3 (Autumn 1967); 434-449.

There continued, of course, to be those who disagree. Buchanan's article was a direct response to one by Philip Friedheim published in *JAMS* the year prior, which continued to argue that *Erwartung* is athematic. Bojan Bujic's recent biography describes the work as "non-repetitive," although he avoids a direct discussion of athematicism.

Philip Friedheim, "Rhythmic Structure in Schoenberg's Atonal Compositions," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 19 (1966); 59-72.

Bojan Bujic, *Arnold Schoenberg* (New York: Phaidon Press, 2011), 73.

expression – is beneficial to understanding the work through the listener’s experience. Instead of focusing too much on one musical or contextual element of the work (e.g. the relationship to psychoanalysis, the use of pre-existing themes, the tonal or atonal harmonic background) I propose approaching the music as purposeful sound. As a study in reception history, my analysis in this project takes the position of attempting to better understand each piece of music as sound received by an audience. Of course, it is impossible to recreate the experience of those early audiences, let alone what any individual was hearing at any given point. Yet, it is still better to analyze the music with a focus on how an educated and musically literate audience member may have received it than to consider music either as a static text or as an artifact of abstract compositional intention. This is not at all to discount close formal and harmonic analysis, but only to explain that for my purposes they must be grounded in the experience of the music and not solely in the score.

This struggle between creativity and technique – what could be framed in terms of Schoenberg’s style and idea – is characteristic of the tension in Schoenberg’s reception history, not only in the pieces discussed in this study, but throughout his entire oeuvre. Schoenberg received criticism from both sides; he was condemned for not following the rules of composition (with an implicit judgment that perhaps he did not even know the rules, certainly before the 1911 publication of *Harmonielehre*), and he was dismissed for composing mathematically or systematically, especially in regards to the twelve-tone method. In each case there was an accusatory tone, implying that Schoenberg had somehow cheated the system, either by skirting the rules or by relying too much on them. The challenge for

scholars now is to understand these inherited debates as part of the reception history of the work without letting them become part of the musical work itself.



*Erwartung* is not written in a traditional form but neither is it totally unstructured, as was supposed at the premiere. Reviews noted that the monodrama “contained no cohesive form with a consistent theme,” and called the form “a puzzle... without beginning or end,” noting that the only organization was a dramatic climax, possibly the high B in m. 193.<sup>43</sup> However, the work is clearly divided into four scenes (Scene 1, mm. 1-37; Scene 2, mm. 38-89; Scene 3, mm. 90-124; Scene 4, mm. 125-426). The structure seems to have been primarily Schoenberg’s decision. In the early, undated, handwritten text of the libretto in Pappenheim’s hand with Schoenberg’s markings, he added fourteen roman numerals throughout in blue pencil.<sup>44</sup> These divisions do not correspond to the four eventual scenes, though their exact placement in the finished score is imprecise because of changes to the text and because very little musical content appears on the libretto where they were noted. By the time that the text was to be sent to Universal Edition in September 1910, the four scene changes of the final edition are shown in an unfinished typescript.<sup>45</sup> The scenes

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<sup>43</sup> C19240606\_d „Schönberg hat diesen Text mit einer Musik durchtränkt.“

„Die Musik enthält zwar keine geschlossenen Formen mit einheitlicher Thematik.“

C19240606\_f F.A. „Arnold Schönberg: Erwartung – Ravel: Die spanische Stunde,“ 1924.

„Und die Form dieser ein Rätsel scheinenden und noch lange ein Rätsel bleibenden Musik? Sie ist wie die Begebenheit ohne Anfang und ohne Ende.“

<sup>44</sup> “Skizzen innerhalb der handschriftlichen Textvorlage Marie Pappenheims,” ASC, T80.15, archive number 2401-2426.

<sup>45</sup> “Unvollständiger Durchschlag des Typoskript des Textbuchs mit Eintragungen Pappenheims,” ASC, T80.15, archive number 2427-2431.

correspond roughly to the narrative development, with the Woman remarking upon the scenery, especially the moonlight (Scene 1), entering the forest and alternately seeing and feeling things that are not there and trying to comfort herself (Scene 2 and 3), and then finding her lover's corpse and struggling to comprehend his death (Scene 4). There is no significant relationship between the music and the scenes; no themes are specific to a certain scene or idea. Scene 1 does rely much more on string and woodwind timbres than the rest of the work and textual references to the moon are often preceded or followed by celesta, but there exists no formulaic consistency or deeper meaning behind these gestures. Celesta does not appear, for example, in a pseudo-Wagnerian manner at significant points in the drama as a signifier for "moon" and some corresponding idea to the Woman.

Mapping onto the narrative form of four scenes, the musical form of *Erwartung* is in six sections of varying lengths, each ending with total silence (Fig. 6).<sup>46</sup> Because of the lack of thematic repetition or development the silence delineating these sections is crucial for the listener's perception of form. All four scenes are contained within the first formal section, and the final five sections all occur during Scene 4. Each of these six sections ends with dense, chromatically packed chords of between eight and ten pitches.

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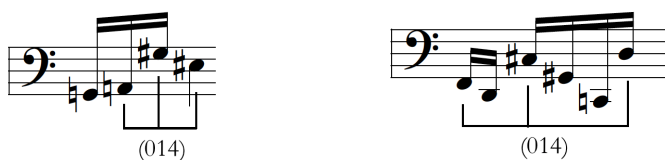
<sup>46</sup> MacDonald refers to the work as occurring "in a series of six great waves, each building to a major climax" in MacDonald, *Schoenberg*, 256. MacDonald does not elaborate on the specific divisions that he has in mind; it is possible they are the same as those I outline. Walter and Alexander Goehr took another approach in their 1957 chapter in *European Music in the Twentieth Century*, arguing that the work is bipartite, divided at m. 270. Goehr and Goehr's understanding is similar to the aforementioned contemporary understanding of the structure as containing a single dramatic high point.

Section	Inclusive Measures(Scene)	Text and Melodic Climaxes
1	mm. 1-157 (Scenes 1-4)	“Das ist er!” (high B)
2	mm. 159-171 (Scene 4)	“Es muss schon spät sein”
3	mm. 171-193 (Scene 4)	(mini pause m. 172 “Ich wusste”) “Hilfe” (high B)
4	mm. 193-374 (Scene 4)	“hast du sie sehr geliebt?”
5	mm. 374-403 (Scene 4)	“aber ich allein in meiner Nacht?” (C#)
6	mm. 404-426 (Scene 4)	“ich suchte”

Figure 6: Division of *Erwartung*, Op. 17 into six sections

The sections are further divided texturally through a combination of a quasi-lyrical style, moments of ostinato, and punctuating gestures. These punctuating figures usually lead into the next downbeat, they are often voiced in low brass, woodwinds, and strings, and they coincide with the rising anxiety and sudden horrified realizations of the Woman. Such a figure first occurs in m. 11 in muted trombones above the words “*ich fürchte mich*” (“I’m frightened”). We next hear a similar gesture at m. 22, just before the woman calls herself a coward for her own fear of the dark night, then again at m. 43 when she thinks that someone touched her and runs away in fright, arms wrapped tight around herself. All these figures are linked by a common intervallic motive, an arpeggiation of (014) expressed as {A, G#, E#}, {F, C#, D} and {C, F#, F}, respectively (Ex. 42).

Example 42: Schoenberg, *Erwartung*, Op. 17, (014) in early punctuation figures: trombone m. 11; bassoon m. 22;





Not every punctuation figure throughout the monodrama uses (014) explicitly. Some are rising or falling chromatic figures, out of which (014) could be extracted, but the set-class is not a defining characteristic of the sound profile in those instances. Set classes (014) and (016) form the basis of harmonic and melodic elements throughout *Erwartung*, but it is important to analyze the work on its own terms. For this reason my analysis begins from the listener's perspective, focusing on moments that are brought out in the music itself and those that sound tangentially connected. The goal is to explore how these moments are connected for the listener – what do we perceive in them that makes us recognize repeated elements and understand unity? The trichords (014) and (016) are sonorities that are incredibly flexible, and a determined analyst could carve out these sonorities from any number of examples that may not necessarily be relevant to how they are realized and foregrounded in the music. The examples to which I refer that include (014) and (016) are those that are emphasized by other musical means – timbre, dynamics, instrumentation, metric accent, and rhythmic duration. Analysis of any music must begin from the listener's perspective, since the “text” is sound and music itself and not simply the score. This is true of Schoenberg's works in general and of *Erwartung* in particular.

Parsing Schoenberg's intentions is, of course, an impossible task, and one that may initially seem to hold little value to understanding a work. My goal is not to reconstruct and promote Schoenberg's understanding of his works above all others, but to contextualize his compositional process. When considering *Erwartung* it is crucial to remember that Schoenberg was a composer steeped in the history and sound of German romanticism who wrote about and taught tonal theory. The work is not tonal, but tonality is the fulcrum upon

which the free atonal compositions pivot. Tonality is the reference point, even through its own negation. While much about Schoenberg's compositional method will remain unknown, we can be almost certain that he was not thinking in terms of Forte's set-classes. The symbols (014) and (016) make for a tidy way to reference a sonority that is prevalent and, indeed, fundamental throughout the monodrama, but they give no indication of how the work could have been understood by the composer and his contemporaries. Furthermore, I do not use them with the intention that they represent anything other than shorthand for referring to groups of intervals.

What (014) and (016) have in common is that they both contain a semitone and two building blocks of tonality – either the major and minor third, or the perfect fifth and tritone, respectively. Like Schoenberg's style at this point, as a development from extended tonality, these sonorities are distortions of tonal shadows. They both imply and negate a sense of possible underlying tonality. To be clear, Schoenberg's *use* of these set-classes does not imply a tonic or even a tonal center, but their implicit characteristics could. The trichord (014) could be, for example, the tonic, leading tone, and minor third in a minor key; the trichord (016) could be the tonic, leading tone, and fourth. For anyone steeped in tonality as Schoenberg and his contemporaries were, these tonal relationships would have been the standard against which listeners were – perhaps unknowingly – measuring these works.

These moments of tonal shadowing are present throughout *Erwartung* – throughout much of Schoenberg's free atonal works – in the form of isolated triads or distorted tonal motion. M. 96 in the strings, for example, is an enharmonically spelled F# major triad that slides chromatically to what could be explained as a C minor/major seventh chord with an

omitted fifth {C, E $\flat$ , (G), B} – actually another instance of the familiar (014). Another example is m. 102 where violins and oboes move from a potential C minor seventh (without a third) to an F augmented triad over a harmony of F $\sharp$  - both major and minor third present – with an added fourth. Neither of these examples is tonal, but they are triadic. A listener saturated in extended harmony would hear the potential for tonal motion, even if none were actually performed. It seems reasonable to understand Schoenberg's harmony as stemming from tonality but also necessarily negating it. Take the harmony of m. 102 – the altered F $\sharp$  sonority – which not only rejects modality through the inclusion of both A and A $\sharp$ , but also includes an added fourth to further obscure tonal references. Furthermore, the combined harmony at that moment contains every chromatic pitch from F $\sharp$  to C $\sharp$ , except G $\sharp$ . The compound sonority is thoroughly chromatic and atonal, but the constituent parts are frequently triadic. Voice-leading and timbre bring out these triadic elements.

The two fundamental sonorities of the work – (014) and (016) – are emphasized from the very opening of the piece, as (016) is expressed harmonically in the first two chords and then melodically in the oboe solo (mm. 1-2) in combination with overlapping (014) arpeggios (Ex. 43). Schoenberg re-emphasizes them throughout the work, both horizontally and vertically. In m. 14, for example, the vocal line is harmonized with (016), then at mm. 30-32 the clarinet melody outlines (014) in a variation with passing tones (Ex. 44). In this example the variation of (014) is not entirely different from how Schoenberg would have varied a traditional theme in a work like Op. 10. There is rhythmic and melodic elaboration,

Example 43: Schoenberg, *Erwartung*, Op. 17, (014) and (016) in opening harmony; (014) in oboe melody, mm. 1-2

Example 44: Schoenberg, *Erwartung*, Op. 17, (014) in clarinet melody, mm. 30-32

but the main element pervades and is emphasized through longer value notes on metrically significant beats. The difference is that, instead of a variation on or development of a central theme, *Erwartung* is based on a trichord with no original or fundamental form.<sup>47</sup> There are many example of this type of motivic unity throughout the work. At other points, use of (014) is only one part of the character profile of a melody or harmony. Often, vertical sonorities are rich and complex, and while these chords contain (014) or (016), their sound is muddled by additional tones. In other cases, the chromatic scale is the primary sonic characteristic. This is evidenced in the *Hauptthema* carried between the first violins, harp, and clarinet at mm. 16-18 (Ex. 45). In this example the voice does outline (016), but the

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<sup>47</sup> Bryan Simms and Allen Shawn both also outline the importance of (014) as a melodic unit. Simms, however, understands the main form to be {C#, D, F}, taken from “Am Wegrund” Op. 6, No. 6, while Shawn sees the opening oboe melody as the main form. My analysis understands (014) as part of the driving motivic material, in combination with (016), but I do not suggest that there is an *ur*-form of either of these set classes upon which all others are variations.

*Hauptthema* is essentially a chromatic wandering between E and G, as the reduction underneath shows.

Example 45: Schoenberg, *Erwartung*, Op. 17, *Hauptthema* mm. 16-18 and reduction

The image displays two staves of musical notation. The upper staff is the original melody from Schoenberg's *Erwartung*, Op. 17, measures 16-18. It features a chromatic line that oscillates between E and G, with various rhythmic patterns and accidentals. The lower staff is a reduction of the same passage, showing the essential chromatic movement. A vertical dashed line marks the beginning of the reduction at measure 16. The reduction is labeled with the number (016) above it. Below the reduction, the lyrics "oh, noch im - mer die" are written.

This *Hauptthema* also exhibits timbral juxtaposition expressed through shared melodies – a characteristic of the monodrama in general. *Erwartung* is one of the most timbrally explorative pieces that Schoenberg wrote, using harmonics in the strings (m. 62), tremolo pizzicato (bass, m. 318), pieces of paper stuck between harp strings (m. 318), and vocal glissandi that mimic screams (m. 44). In addition to manipulating the timbral possibilities of each instrument, Schoenberg also showcases the natural timbral diversity of the orchestra, most often in the woodwind section through weaving melodies and stingers. Dahlhaus noted that Schoenberg's tendency to isolate or carefully combine timbres, which he explained as an avoidance of “mixed colours,” was a conscious decision:

Tone colour is a means of clarification and therefore a function of the polyphony, rather than the polyphony being a function of the richness of orchestral colour.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Dahlhaus, *Schoenberg and the New Music*, 150.

To carry the metaphor further, lacking in the score are the gray-brown shades that characterized the full orchestral style of the early twentieth century. As in the Op. 16 orchestra pieces, each instrumental color is used as thoughtfully as any of the pitches. Sometimes Schoenberg achieves this affect through solo passages, other times through a specific combination of sound, as in the opening (016), comprising flutes, bassoons, harp, celesta, and cello – a sort of proto-Pierrot ensemble. From motive to sonority to timbre, all of the elements of *Erwartung*, even if not forcefully structured, are purposeful in their representation of atmosphere through sound.

## *Expressionism*

That *Erwartung* is the prime example of musical expressionism is a sentiment expressed so often that it seems almost beyond doubt. Scholars from Dahlhaus to Malcolm MacDonald and Bojan Bujić have all stated as much.<sup>49</sup> In contrast to the breadth of scholarly literature that correlates expressionism with *Erwartung*, there have been relatively few in-depth explorations of musical expressionism itself as a movement. The writings of John C. Crawford and Dorothy L. Crawford and of Christopher Hailey, Peter Franklin, and Stephen Hinton stand as notable exceptions.<sup>50</sup> Yet, even in these critical explorations, expressionism is taken as fact; it is understood as a term that has value in relation to Schoenberg's works, including

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<sup>49</sup> MacDonald, *Schoenberg*, 113.

Bujić, *Arnold Schoenberg*, 74.

Dahlhaus, *Schoenberg and the New Music*, 149.

<sup>50</sup> See: Shulamith Behr et al., eds., *Expressionism Reassessed* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1993). John C. Crawford and Dorothy L. Crawford, *Expressionism in Twentieth-Century Music* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993).

*Erwartung*. One of the greatest challenges in discussing expressionism as it relates to music, generally, and to Schoenberg, specifically, is defining and defending a meaning for the term and the movement. From that point we have to consider whether this defined expressionism is the same thing as Schoenberg's expressionism, and if the term has any validity and use in relation to *Erwartung*. I propose that, beyond simply problematizing the term or retroactively forcing meaning in relation to music, we question whether expressionism is even useful in discussions about music, and especially about Schoenberg's music.

Like so many –isms of music, especially in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, expressionism was a term borrowed primarily from the visual arts. Wassily Kandinsky was the closest figure to Schoenberg considered to be an expressionist. Schoenberg's own participation in *Die blaue Reiter* with Kandinsky was the impetus (and is often the justification) for his inclusion in the expressionist camp. Stuckenschmidt was one of the first to make this connection explicit in his 1930 review of *Erwartung*:

In order to do justice to these musical dramas, one must visualize the epoch that they represent. It was the time of early Expressionism; Kandinsky and Franz Marc released the 'Blue Rider'...<sup>51</sup>

Curiously, though, Schoenberg not only epitomizes musical expressionism, but he is very nearly the movement's only member. In its common usage within musicology, expressionism is restricted almost exclusively to Schoenberg's works composed roughly between 1908 and 1923, and those of his pupils at this same time.<sup>52</sup> In this way,

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<sup>51</sup> C19300706\_a Stuckenschmidt, „Schönberg-Abend in der Krolloper.“ 1930.

„Man muß sich, um diesen musikalischen Dramen gerecht zu werden, die Epoche vergegenwärtigen, die sie repräsentieren {sic}. Es war die Zeit des frühen Expressionismus; Kandinsky und Franz Marc gaben den „Blauen Reiter“ heraus...“

<sup>52</sup> There is no agreement upon the exact dates that expressionism encompasses, either in music or in the arts in general. Rumold Rainer, for example, notes that the years 1910-1920 were the expressionist period in music in

expressionism has become an analogy for the term ‘free atonality’ that also encompasses this same time period. Like expressionism, free atonality is defined by what it is not, and in relation to what came before and after it. These works (especially Opp. 10, 11, 15-24) are not tonal, but they are also not serial; atonality alone is too broad, since it also includes the later serial and twelve-tone styles, so free (unstructured) atonality became the term of choice. Likely Schoenberg’s preferred “pantonality” would have been a better term, but free atonality now seems too useful to discard completely. Unlike free atonality, however, expressionism is a description of the purpose or intention of the work rather than of its aesthetic identity. Free atonality is the How; expressionism is the Why.

In music, expressionism has come to describe works that are extreme, emotional, and subjective, often with elements of chaos, created by (mostly) German speaking artists in the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first of the twentieth. The shortcomings of the term expressionism are myriad, in part because expressionists did not self-identify as such and had no overarching manifesto or philosophy and were primarily defined by their relationship to the Romanticism of the past and the *Neue Sachlichkeit* that would come to be in the mid-1920s.<sup>53</sup> As a result, discussions of expressionism often begin from the point of explaining what the term does *not* mean: realism, rationality, and objectivity. Essentially the only shared characteristics are a belief in truth over beauty and a primacy of psychological or emotional reactions, usually played out with great intensity. Expressionists were also (usually) of northern European heritage – primarily German, Belgian, Austrian, or Russian.

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his recent book, *The Janus Face of the German Avant-Garde: From Expressionism toward Postmodernism*. Hinton, in contrast, argues for 1908-1923.

<sup>53</sup> Behr et al., *Expressionism Reassessed*, 3.



Other historical movements exhibit similar ambiguity and are based on rejection of aesthetic rules or principles (e.g. Romanticism), but expressionism suffers more from this denial than other terms for two main reasons. First, our proximity to the time period of expressionism combined with the uncertainty of the nature of the relationship between modernism and postmodernism means that the “objectivity” of historical distance is less strong. Because our own connection with modernism remains unclear, our study of modernists is also tentative. The early twentieth century was also fragmented into many movements and -isms (e.g. Dadaism, Cubism, Futurism, the latter part of Impressionism, and post-Impressionism) with a clouded understanding of how each relates to the others besides originating from different geographic and cultural areas. Further complicating the issue is the use of the term almost exclusively to refer to Schoenberg or his pupils. A movement consisting of only a few people and a time frame of less than fifteen years seems hardly to be an -ism.

The cumbersome nature of the term expressionism is more trouble than the connotation is worth. Although it is simple and convenient to have a single term to refer to Schoenberg’s compositions written between 1908 and 1923, the clarification and explanation that are required to make the intention of its use clear are unwieldy. In certain ways the designation is also arbitrary; *Verklärte Nacht*, which predates the expressionist works by nearly ten years, would undoubtedly qualify as expressionist. With the subjective and tormented representation of the psychological struggles of both the man and woman in Dehmel’s poem and the rich, individualized harmonies and molding of phrases, the work is also written in the nature of expressionism. Furthermore, why not include Stravinsky’s

chaotic and contemporary *Rite of Spring* (besides the obvious inheritance of Adorno's Schoenberg-Stravinsky dichotomy), Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder*, any number of Schubert *Lieder* (maybe expressionism is *Sturm und Drang* minus tonality?) or even Gesualdo's madrigals, which are certainly emotional and dissonant, or Ernst Krenek's works in the 1960s, which are stylistically quite close to Schoenberg's ca. 1909? If a movement is defined primarily by a narrow time span, a geographic location, and specific musical works by a very limited number of composers, it has the effect of being reverse engineered and seeming forced.<sup>54</sup>

One of the main critiques leveled against expressionism in music is that it had very little philosophical grounding as a movement, that the works of music were produced without a similar intention or philosophy, even though historians did not hesitate to impose one. For example, if *Erwartung* is the pinnacle of musical German expressionism, evidenced through its dissonant aesthetic and clearly subjective nature, it does not follow to apply all the principles by which Schoenberg composed that work onto other works that either preceded it or came after. *Five Pieces* is not automatically expressionist because it was completed just before *Erwartung*, for example. It is important, too, not to confuse a strong personality and perceived importance of biographical elements with an artistic movement. Schoenberg was deeply emotional, as evidenced through his own writings, especially from around 1909, as well as through anecdotal confirmation. But Schoenberg's personal emotions are not the same thing as his musical expression. *Erwartung*, certainly, is clearly

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<sup>54</sup> Christopher Hailey has argued a similar position, writing: "Such depictions of musical Expressionism inevitably concentrate upon works rather than aesthetic programmes, upon stylistic hallmarks rather than artistic impulses, arguing backwards from qualities of style." Christopher Hailey, "Musical Expressionism: The Search for Autonomy," in *Expressionism Reassessed*, ed. Shulamith Behr, et al. (New York: Manchester University Press, 1993), 103.

emotionally expressive. We know this from the libretto and the limitation that the monodrama only has one character, so all expression necessarily emanates from her.

However, there is nothing inherently expressionist about “Das obligate Rezitativ,” the final movement from *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, Op. 16, other than that it sounds very similar to *Erwartung* and was composed just a matter of days before. In any other context a work conceived and titled as an obligato recitative would never be described as emotionally expressive. Similarly, as has been argued in previous chapters, the impact of Mathilde Schoenberg’s affair with Gerstl on Schoenberg’s musical works should not be overstated. It is a disservice to Schoenberg and his creativity to affirm that some of his greatest musical achievements were solely or primarily the result of his emotional reaction to his wife’s infidelity. The development of the personalized and particular style that peaked with *Erwartung* was not caused by emotional disturbance. Schoenberg would not have continued to write tonal music had Mathilde been faithful.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, an explanation of atonality as the outcome of extreme distress, and perhaps psychological instability, only serves to further a condescending view of the aesthetic and its composer, as if it was mental abnormality that set Schoenberg onto an atonal path. We may not accept Schoenberg’s own claims that atonality was the only possible outcome of the German musical tradition, but we should honor his agency by understanding it as an aesthetic that came about thoughtfully and purposefully.

The closest that expressionism comes to having an overarching *Weltanschauung* is the purported belief in truth (inner) above beauty (outer). In introducing their study of

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<sup>55</sup> Crawford et al. note that, “It was during and immediately after his marital troubles in 1908 that Schoenberg took his final steps into atonality and the extremes which characterize his expressionist music.” Crawford et al., *Expressionism in Twentieth-Century Music*, 70.

expressionism, editors Shulamith Behr, David Fanning, and Douglas Jarman describe it as “the expressive distortions of reality” that show “the psychological reality behind appearances.”<sup>56</sup> Similarly, Jessica Payette compares Schoenberg’s style in *Erwartung* to *fin-de-siècle* facades hiding the ugliness and utility of both buildings and social constructs. Crawford and Crawford explain expressionism as “an explosive, subjective awareness of anxiety, sordidness, and disorder beneath surface order, well-being, and beauty.”<sup>57</sup> These interpretations all harken back to Watkins’s assertion, quoted in the previous chapter, that expressionism was fundamentally a collapse between personal and private spheres. But expressionism is not as simple as outwardly projecting emotions; it also believes fundamentally in an inner truth, be it psychological, emotional, or otherwise. In this way, expressionism is part humanism and part Jungian intuition, emphasizing the moral value of human beings to pursue truth not through positivistic reasoning, but through emotion and perception. The great irony of expressionism as a collapse of the division between public and private is that it could not be sustained – the burst of emotion and intuition as a result of necessity to seek truth could only further destabilize trust in the outer (public) sphere, and cause a massive recoil back into a deeper *Innigkeit*. The space left empty by the retreating expressionism was filled with the rationalist, realist *Neue Sachlichkeit*, which created an environment where, rather than a division between public and private lives, there was virtually no private sphere at all.

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<sup>56</sup> Behr et al., *Expressionism Reassessed*, 3.

<sup>57</sup> Crawford et al., *Expressionism in Twentieth-Century Music*, 1.

See also: Jessica Payette, *Seismographic Screams, Erwartung’s Reverberations through Twentieth-century Culture*. Dissertation. (Stanford University: UMI Dissertations Publishing, 2008).



In his 1913 book on contemporary composers, Walter Niemann set up a dichotomy between Debussy's Impressionism and Schoenberg's expressionism, arguing that the former represented lightness and nature while the latter was degenerate [*durch und durch entartet*].<sup>58</sup> A description of Schoenberg's expressionism as degenerate now invariably rings with the echo of Nazi censorship. In Niemann's understanding, expressionism is a synonym for all the negativity of modernism, what had been and would continue to be projected onto Jews, especially. In his view Impressionism was passive while expressionism was active. This understanding may seem to be contradictory at first: If expressionism is the artistic manifestation of psychological or emotional realities – which are an inner phenomenon – how can it be more active than Impressionism? What determines agency in Niemann's view is not the source, but the outcome. Impressionism is passive because the outer world enters into the artistic view – the world impresses itself upon the individual; expressionism is active because the artist expresses (literally, “presses out”) himself or herself onto the world. Though the philosophical difference may be clear, the musical manifestation is not. For Niemann, rather than a real difference in *Weltanschauung*, it was nationality and musical aesthetic that differentiated the Impressionists from the expressionists. There is nothing inherent in Debussy's music – in a succession of chords, for example – that is Impressionist, just as Schoenberg's aesthetic is not intrinsically expressionist. Just as did Niemann, so also

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<sup>58</sup> Walter Niemann, *Die Musik der Gegenwart und der Letzten Vergangenheit bis zu den Romantikern, Klassizisten und Neudeutschen* (Berlin: Schuster & Loeffler, 1913), 253.

have we continued to superimpose philosophical qualities upon works of music based on the qualities of their composers and our own musical tastes.

For Niemann, a preference for Debussy's music meant that Impressionism was advantageous and expressionism was detrimental. Expressionism transformed, in Niemann's words, "the psychological [*Das Seelische*] into the pathological sickness of fine-tuned nerve, sense, and sound stimulus; the musical to the bare anarchy of the refusal of tonality," and led to the end of music.<sup>59</sup> To further devitalize Schoenberg, Niemann characterizes him as "one who is, in his deepest essence, entirely feminine."<sup>60</sup> In characterizing Schoenberg as an expressionist – a representative of a movement that aimed, in his view, to destroy music, Niemann gives power to Schoenberg that he cannot bear to let him have. To regain the upper hand, Niemann dismisses Schoenberg as feminine, characterizing him as weak and socially inconsequential, undercutting his ability to dictate the future of music.

While Niemann's view and dislike of Schoenberg on a personal level is extreme, his understanding of expressionism as a synonym for modernism was typical. At the time of *Erwartung's* premiere the terms Impressionist and expressionist were used almost interchangeably to mean The New. Contemporary critics were not themselves agreed as to whether or not *Erwartung* was Impressionistic or expressionistic. This is shown in the reviews from the premiere, in which the work is described as both, "a product of Expressionism based on the principle of atonality," and as "clear and simple, decidedly Impressionistic."<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Niemann, *Die Musik der Gegenwart und der Letzten Vergangenheit*, 255.

„Das Seelische zum Pathologischen krankhaft verfeinerter Nerven-, Sinnes- und Klangreize, das Musikalische zum offenen [*sic*] Anarchismus in der Aufhebung der Tonalität...“

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*,

„Schönberg, eine im tiefsten Kern durchaus weibliche...“

<sup>61</sup> C19240606\_a „Arnold Schönberg: Erwartung.“

Further complicating the discussion is Adorno's understanding of expressionism, as related in his 1948 text *Philosophy of Modern Music*. For Adorno, "society is reflected in the isolation of the Expressionist movement."<sup>62</sup> This isolation is not the ivory-tower isolation of the Romantic genius – indeed, it has very little to do with the composer at all, and more to do with the work. Rather, the isolation comes from a realization that a critique of society is also a critique of the self – the product of that society. A work that criticizes the society that allowed it to happen contains an inescapable critique of itself. In his own words:

If this individuality takes a critical stand upon the work, the work in turn becomes critical of this individuality. If the contingency [*Zufälligkeit*] of individuality protests against the repudiated social law which once gave rise to this individuality, then the work designs schemata intended to overcome this contingency.<sup>63</sup>

Central to this idea are two of Adorno's main philosophical concepts: his distrust of capitalism's (false) promotion of freedom, and his philosophy of negative dialectics. In speaking of "the contingency of individuality," put more plainly as the randomness caused by and also causing individuality, he is espousing a negative dialectic – an anti-positivistic view in which individuality is neither necessary nor predetermined, but rather a product of the way that things *happened* to happen. This individuality only exists because of the society that allowed it to form, and can only critique this society because it was allowed to form in such a way that critique was possible. Yet, paradoxically, the ability to critique is then made

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“...ein Produkt des auf dem Atonalitätsprinzip basierenden Expressionismus.”

C19240606\_q „Nicht minder stark war der Eindruck von Schönbergs Monodram,“ *Neues Wiener Journal*, June 1924.

“...klar und einfach, ausgesprochener Impressionismus.”

<sup>62</sup> Theodor Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, trans. Anne G. Mitchell et al. (New York: Continuum, 2003), 48.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

“Steht die Individualität kritisch zum Werke, so steht das Werk kritisch zu ihre. Protestiert die Zufälligkeit der Individualität gegen das verworfene gesellschaftliche Gesetz, dem sie selber entstammt, so entwirft das Werk Schemata, die Zufälligkeit zu überkommen.“

impossible through the very critique itself (in this case a musical work), which calls for revision of the society. This is the kernel of Adorno's understanding of expressionism's isolation: that it exists in a dialectic where commentary upon greater organizational structures (society, tonality, form) is both necessary and self-defeating. It is the same force that, in his view, made expressionism a necessarily short-lived phenomenon.<sup>64</sup>

In *Philosophy of Modern Music*, Adorno takes as his first cited example Schoenberg's *Six Pieces for Male Chorus*, Op. 35 (1930), which is both outside the chronological bounds that later came to define expressionism and a representation of twelve-tone technique, albeit mixed with tonal elements. Adorno uses the communal nature of the text of this work as proof of Expressionism's societal role. Certainly, one of the advantages inherent in music that seems distant from society is that it is precisely this distance that allows it to comment upon that society. Certainly, Pappenheim's text to *Erwartung* is arguably a critique on the treatment of women by bourgeois Viennese culture, and Schoenberg's music was also constantly interacting with society throughout his career. But, understanding all these elements to be true does not necessitate that expressionism as a movement contained an intrinsic social commentary. In fact, the citation of a work that was written after what scholars generally accept to be Schoenberg's expressionist period further weakens an argument for the expressionism being defined or characterized by its relationship to society. If musical expressionism is the representation of subjectivity and psychology and a reflection of society, then it not only encompasses all of Schoenberg's oeuvre, but most of music throughout history as well. If expressionism still has value in scholarly discussions of

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 49.



Schoenberg's music today, then it is with the understanding that it was used contemporaneously as a catch-all for modernism at a time when art and society were extremely self-aware of their own modernity.

## *Freud and Psychoanalysis*

Much ink has been spilled in scholarship on *Erwartung* about the relationship between the work and Freud's psychoanalysis and whether or not the Woman in the monodrama is a hysteric.<sup>65</sup> None of the premiere reviews make any mention of hysteria. Only Stuckenschmidt's response to the 1930 Berlin performance uses the term, describing the hysteric oscillation of the Woman's emotions. Even this example, though, is one that Schoenberg crossed out.<sup>66</sup> Likely much of the impetus for the persistent characterization of *Erwartung* as a psychological study of a hysteric was Adorno's 1947 assertion that expressionism, of which *Erwartung* was the primary musical example, was "subjective and psychological."<sup>67</sup> But psychology was mostly absent from contemporary discussions of the work. Only one review from the premiere uses the word, arguing that work's "efficacy was

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<sup>65</sup> See: Alexander Carpenter, "Schoenberg's Vienna, Freud's Vienna: Re-Examining the Connections Between the Monodrama *Erwartung* and the Early History of Psychoanalysis," *The Musical Quarterly* 93/1 (March 2010); 144-181.

Robert Falck, "Marie Pappenheim, Schoenberg, and the *Studien über Hysterie*," in *German Literature and Music: An Aesthetic Fusion, 1890-1989*, ed. Claus Reschke et al., (Munich: Fink, 1992).

Elizabeth L. Keathley, "Interpreting *Erwartung*: Collaborative Process and Early Reception," in *The Cambridge Companion to Schoenberg*, ed. Jennifer Shaw et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Lewis Wickes, "Schoenberg, *Erwartung*, and the Reception of Psychoanalysis in Musical Circles in Vienna until 1910/1911," *Studies in Music* 23 (1989); 88-106.

<sup>66</sup> C19300706\_a Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt, „Schönberg-Abend in der Krolloper,“ 1930.

<sup>67</sup> Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, 51.

cramped by the expanse of an overly-sentimental individual psychology.”<sup>68</sup> In other words, Schoenberg’s own personality (here in negative terms) took over the work. Still, even in this explicit use of the term “psychology,” there is little of Freud to be found. Rather, the meaning is colloquial – yet another jab at Schoenberg’s mental stability. Another review notes that the *Woman* is “a study of the high tension of her nerves, feelings, and emotions,” but there is no indication that this was understood to be a psychological study of a hysterical woman.<sup>69</sup> This reviewer seems to mean that Schoenberg’s is creating a closely focused artistic work; instead of a visual study of the human body (e.g. a study of the hand) he offers a sonic study of the human mind.

In regards to this dissertation and the early reception history of *Erwartung*, there is little more to be said of the possible relationship between Schoenberg’s so-called expressionism and Freud’s psychology. Lewis Wickes has shown that Schoenberg had contact with at least three people who were part of Freud’s circle (Dr. David Joseph Bach, Dr. Max Graf, Hugo Heller).<sup>70</sup> Perhaps they spoke often and explicitly about Freud’s theories, perhaps they never did. Not only is there no way to know the extent of this cultural cross-pollination, but there is also no guarantee that Schoenberg’s understanding of the term

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<sup>68</sup> C19240606\_k „Die drei großen internationalen Konzerte,“ June 1924.

„Sehnsucht und Grauen, Ahnung und Schmerz, Verzweiflung und eine Art von Liebestod sind hier in abrupter Wortprägung zu einer typischen Bühnen-Expression verschmolzen, die zwar stimmungsmäßig interessiert, aber der Notwendigkeit theatralischer Darstellung ermangelt und durch die Ausbreitung einer überempfindsamen individuellen Psychologie in ihrer Wirkungskraft beengt wird.“

<sup>69</sup> C19240606\_f F.A., „Arnold Schönberg: Erwartung – Ravel: Die spanische Stunde,“ 1924.

„Sie wird gezeigt in einem Studium der Höchstspannung ihrer Nerven, Gefühle und Empfindungen.“

<sup>70</sup> Wickes, “Schoenberg, *Erwartung*, and the Reception of Psychoanalysis,” 89.

Bach was a friend of Schoenberg’s since their youth and a critic for Vienna’s *Arbeiterzeitung*; he reviewed Schoenberg’s works and was an advocate in the wake of the 1908 *Second String Quartet* scandal. Graf was also a music critic and a member of the intellectual group that often met at Café Griensteidl, which included Schoenberg, Zemlinsky, and Bodanzky. Schoenberg knew Heller from an exhibition of his paintings and music at Heller’s bookstore and art salon (see Chapter 1).

psychology had anything concrete to do with Freud's. Schoenberg's awareness of his contemporary Freud does not mean he wrote psychological music the same way that his knowledge of Otto Weininger did not mean that he wrote misogynist music. Just as scholars have long acknowledged that Marie Pappenheim's *Erwartung* is not Schoenberg's *Erwartung*, so too is Schoenberg's preoccupation with emotions not Freud's psychology. Furthermore, even if Schoenberg were interested in Freud's psychology, his understanding would likely have been just as colloquial and general as was the critic's at *Erwartung*'s premiere.

*Erwartung* may have been psychologically focused, but it is not Freudian; it is certainly expressive, but calling it expressionist adds little value to discussions of the work considering how much effort is needed to preface the term. Rather than attempting to define *Erwartung* *ex post facto* as a representative of some greater movement, we should attempt to reconsider it on its own terms, as a work by an artist based in a musical tradition that he was attempting to make compatible with his own experiences. We can never be fully objective about Schoenberg and his music, but we can strive to understand him from our own perspective, aware of how historical context shaped earlier reviews and reactions.

## *Conclusion: Considering Schoenberg's Reception History Post-1924*

Much of Schoenberg's legacy after 1924 is focused around his serial and twelve-tone compositions and those theoretical and pedagogical contributions that were published posthumously in America (e.g. *Preliminary Exercises in Counterpoint* (1963); *Fundamentals of Musical Composition* (1967); *Structural Functions of Harmony* (1969); *Zusammenhang, Kontrapunkt, Instrumentation, Formenlehre* (1994); and *The Musical Idea: And the Logic, Technique, and Art of its Presentation* (1995)). Yet there was also a rich and active history of his early and free atonal works finding performances in America, Europe, and South America. These performances have not been the focus of much scholarly attention for several reasons. First, over a period of time reactions to these works evened out and, indeed, some (e.g. *Verklärte Nacht*, *Gurrelieder*) became modern classics. As evidenced in previous chapters this mellowing of reception often happened fairly quickly, sometimes as soon as the second or third performance. The influence of Schoenberg's serial systems also began to take on a life of its own shortly after his death through the compositions and writings of younger composers, including Pierre Boulez, Milton Babbitt, Luigi Nono, and Karlheinz Stockhausen.

With the advent of the Darmstadt School, dodecaphony became elevated to a high intellectual status, essentially a litmus test for who was a progressive composer and who was

outdated. By the zenith of Darmstadt, however, serialism had moved away from Schoenberg's aesthetic, influenced mainly by the music of Webern. With his 1952 text, "Schoenberg is Dead," Boulez simultaneously solidified his own historical position and evidenced Schoenberg's immense influence on modern music. Schoenberg was such a towering figure representing serialism that during his life he seemed to hold control of dodecaphony, even when he was no longer composing strictly serial works. In declaring that Schoenberg was dead Boulez acknowledged an inherent freedom felt by younger composers – and, in fact, by older ones as well, if Stravinsky's serial compositions from the 1950s are any indication – to take control of serialism for their own purposes. Of course, Boulez had personal reasons for his backlash against Schoenberg, the object of deep adoration by his teacher, René Leibowitz. Still, nothing is stronger evidence of held cultural power than being rebelled against. If Schoenberg had been inconsequential or outdated, Boulez would not have felt a need to write the text in the first place.

The limits of this dissertation to a certain set of years, compositions, and countries means that much information was necessarily outside of its scope. Yet, this study is also a connection of a number of larger ideas that could each receive dedicated inquiry. Expanding one or more elements is a further turn of the kaleidoscope, highlighting yet another aspect of Schoenberg's complex and dynamic reception history. Considering all of Schoenberg's free atonal works, for example, or including years past 1924 would open up the study exponentially, as would further research on Schoenberg's reception in other countries, such as France, Russia, or Argentina. Undoubtedly the reception of Schoenberg's works in South America is an understudied topic – one that could add further dimension to our

understanding of Schoenberg and his audience. Schoenberg's reception and reputation in small-town America would be an equally fascinating subject. There are likely countless articles like the one from El Paso that was highlighted in the introduction that could shed light on the relationship between the man considered by many to be the most unapproachable and unpopular composer and the average American listener. Furthermore, a look at Schoenberg's present-day reception would be invaluable. To trace the terminology and metaphors used to describe him and his music throughout history would further illuminate the relationship between the earliest reception and our current preconceptions.

Considering Schoenberg's reception history not only allows us to further explore what makes composers or compositions unpopular, but, conversely, what leads works into our musical canon and what keeps them there. Understanding the means by which Schoenberg's music was either oppressed or promoted creates a framework and methodology by which we can assess any number of topics. Analyzing source material surrounding Schoenberg's reception can give insight into the processes by which composers or artists lose or gain cultural significance in our own time. We can also turn our analytical approach back upon ourselves, asking questions about our own values, fears, and hopes as they are reflected in our grappling with historical topics. Ultimately, like any composer of enduring music, Schoenberg provides a vast number of opportunities for further study and reflection.

## *Appendix 1: Early Performances of Op. 10*

- 21 December 1908, Vienna, Bösendorfer-Saal, Marie Gutheil-Schoder, soprano and Rosé Quartet
- 25 February 1909, Vienna, Ehrbar-Saal, Marie Gutheil-Schoder and Rosé Quartet
- 12 October 1910, Vienna, Kunstsalon Heller, Marie Gutheil-Schoder and Rosé Quartet (as part of an exhibition of Schoenberg's paintings)
- 2 January 1911, Munich, Jahreszeitensall, Marie Gutheil-Schoder and Rosé Quartet
- ?? February 1912, St. Petersburg, Sandra Belling and St. Petersburg Symphony members
- 18 March 1912, Prague, Marie Gutheil-Schoder and Rosé Quartet
- 29 (?) June 1912, Vienna, Martha Winternitz-Dorda and Rosé Quartet
- ?? July 1912, Vienna, *Akademischer Verband für Literatur und Musik*
- 9 February 1914, Berlin, Meta Zlotnicha and Louis van Laar et al.
- 10 June 1914, London Bochstein Hall, London String Quartet, Albert Sammons cond.
- 1 May 1916, Vienna Wiener Tonkünstler-Verein, Gertrude Förstel-Links and Rosé Quartet
- 3 October 1916, Dresden, Dresdner Streichquartett **Mvts. 1 and 2 only**
- 11 April 1919, Zürich
- 30 (?) December 1918, Frankfurt, Anna Kämpfert and Rebner-Quartet
- 3 June 1919, Vienna, Mittleren Konzerthaus-Saale, Konzertbureau der Wiener Konzerthaus-Gesellschaft, soprano Frau Hedy Iracema-Brügelmann and Das Feist-Quartet
- 7 January 1920, Düsseldorf, Anna Kämpfert and Rebner String Quartet
- 8 December 1920, Vienna, Rosé Quartet

30 March 1922, Paris, Marya Freund and the Pro Arte Quartet

10 August 1922, Salzburg, Internationale Kammer-Musik-Aufführungen in Salzburg, Félicie Mihacsek-Hüni and Amar-Hindemith-Quartett

10 February 1923, Paris, Marya Freund and Rosé Quartet

6 January 1924, New York, Ruth Rodgers and the Lenox String Quartet

20 February 1924, London, Dorothy Moulton and Hungarian String Quartet

9 September 1924, Lenox, MA (USA), Dorothy Moulton and Lenox String Quartet

21 October 1924, New York, Dorothy Moulton and Lenox String Quartet

19 March 1928, Paris, Ruzena Herlinger and Wiener Streichquartett

5 April 1929, Vienna, Kolisch Quartet

10 November 1933, Cambridge, MA, Olga Averino and Pro Arte Quartet (Brussels)

19 October 1934, Vienna, Margit Bokor and Kolisch Quartet

21 December 1934, Toulon France, Kolisch Quartet, **Mvts. 1 and 2 only**

7 March 1935, Den Haag, Netherlands, Julia Nussy and Kolisch Quartet

28 November 1935, Vienna, Dorothy Moulton and the Pro Arte Quartet

6 January 1937, Los Angeles, Clemence Gifford and Kolisch Quartet

24 April 1937, Paris, Colette Wyss and Kolisch Quartet

12 October 1937, Denver, Clemence Gifford and Kolisch Quartet

17 May 1940, San Jose, student quartet, **Mvt. 1 only**

29 November 1944, Harvard, Norma Farber and members of Boston Symphony Orchestra

23 March 1945, Minneapolis, Nancy Ness and Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra (Dimitri Mitropoulos cond.)

23 December 1945, New York, Astrid Varnay and NBC Symphony Orchestra



## *Appendix 2: Translations<sup>1</sup> of George's Texts, "Litanei" and "Entrückung"*

### **"Litanei"**

Tief ist die trauer, die mich umdüstert,  
ein tret ich wieder Herr! in dein haus..

Lang war die reise, matt sind die glieder,  
leer sind die schreine, voll nur die qual.

Durstende zunge darbt nach dem weine.  
Hart war getritten, starr ist mein arm.

Gönne die ruhe schwankenden schritten,  
hungrigen gaume bröckle dein brot!

Schwach ist mein atem rufend dem traume,  
hohl sind die hände, fiebernd der mund.

Leih deine kühle, lösche die brände,  
tilge das hoffen, sende das licht!

Gluten im herzen lodern noch offen,  
innerst im grunde wacht noch ein schrei..

Töte das sehnen, schliesse die wunde!  
Nimm mir die liebe, gieb mir den glück!

Deep is the sorrow that darkens me,  
I enter again Lord! into your house..

Long was the journey, feeble are my limbs,  
Empty are the shrines, filled only with agony.

Thirsting tongue longs for the wine.  
Hard was the fight, numb is my arm.

Allow rest for faltering steps,  
crumble your bread for a hungry palate!

Weak is my breath calling the dreams,  
Cupped are my hands, feverish my mouth.

Lend your chill, extinguish the fires,  
expunge the hope, send the light!

Embers in the heart still blaze clearly,  
in innermost essence a scream still awakes..

Kill the longing, close the wounds!  
Take from me the love, give me the mercy!

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<sup>1</sup> Translations by the author.

## “Entrückung”

Ich fühle Luft von anderem planeten  
Mir blassen durch das dunkel die gesichter die  
freundlich eben noch sich zu mir drehen.

Und bäum und wege die ich liebte fahlen  
dass ich sie kaum mehr kenne und Du lichter  
geliebter schatten rufer meiner qualen

bist nun erloschen ganz in tiefen gluten  
um nach dem taumel streitenden getobes mit  
einem frommen schauer anzumuten.

Ich löse mich in tönen, kreisend, webend,  
ungründigen danks und unbenamten lobes  
dem großen atem wunschlos mich ergebend.

Mich überfährt ein ungestümes wehen  
in rausch der weihe wo inbrünstige schreie  
in staub geworfner beterrinnen flehen:

Dann seh ich wie sich duftige nebel lüpfen  
in einer sonnerfüllten klaren freie die nur  
umfängt auf fernsten bergeschlüpfen.

Der boden schüttert weiß und weich wie molke.  
Ich steige über schluchten ungeheuer,  
ich führe wie ich über letzter wolke

in einem meer kristallinen glanzes schwimme  
ich bin eine funke nur von heiligen feuer  
ich bin ein dröhnen nur der heiligen stimme.

I feel air of another planet  
Through the dark the friendly faces  
that just turned to me seem pale.

And trees and paths that I loved turn gloomy  
so that I barely know them anymore and You,  
clear beloved shadow, caller of my agony

are now extinguished within deeper glow  
in order to appear after the frenzy of  
contentious rage with a hallowed shiver.

I come loose in sound, orbiting, weaving,  
irrational thanks and unspecified praise  
I resign myself to the great breath.

A fierce gust moves me suddenly  
into an inebriation of devotions where  
beseechers flung onto the dust fervently cry:

Then I see, like a hazy fog lifting itself  
into a sunlit, clear opening only surrounded  
by the most distant mountainsides.

The ground shakes, white and soft like whey.  
I climb over immense chasms,  
I move as if, above the last cloud, I swim

in a sea of crystal brilliance  
I am but a spark of the holy fire  
I am but a drone of the holy voice.

### *Appendix 3: Early Performances of Das Buch der hängenden Gärten, Op. 15*

- 14 January 1910, Vienna, Martha Winternitz-Dorda, soprano; Etta Werndorf, piano
- 4 February 1912, Berlin Martha Winternitz-Dorda, soprano; Eduard Steuermann, piano
- ERSTDRUCKE UND FRÜHE EDITIONEN: Universal Edition, Wien-Leipzig 1914 (UE Nr. 5338)
- 16 January 1929, Mannheim
- 19 January 1929, Berlin, Margot Hinnenberg-Lefèbre, soprano; Eduard Steuermann, piano
- January 1929, London, Margot Hinnenberg-Lefèbre, soprano; Eduard Steuermann, piano
- 20 February 1934 Washington, DC
- 29 March 1935, Los Angeles Calista Rogers, soprano; Shibley Boyes, piano
- 21 November 1935, Vienna Julia Nussy, soprano; Eduard Steuermann, piano
- 12 May 1936, Pasadena, CA Calista Rogers, soprano; Ralph Linsley, piano
- 4 December 1939, Buenos Aires Gabriela Moner, soprano; Juan Carlos Pax, piano
- 14 September 1942, Buenos Aires Gabriela Moner, soprano; Orestes Castronuovo, piano
- 24 April 1945, Los Angeles Irene Hanna, soprano; Leonard Stain, piano
- 26 September 1945, Vienna Elisabeth Hoengen, soprano; H.E. Apostel, Bösendorfer Organ.
- 1 April 1946, St. Paul, MN June Peterson Jeffrey, mezzosoprano; Ernst Krenek, piano

## *Appendix 4: Performances of other works by Schoenberg in Argentina*

Buenos Aires: 11 July 1938, Op. 11 – Juan Carlos Paz, piano

Buenos Aires: 5 December 1938, Op. 19 – Juan Carlos Paz, piano

Buenos Aires: 7 August 1939, Op. 33a – Juan Carlos Paz, piano

Buenos Aires: 25 September 1939, Op. 19 – Juan Carlos Paz

Buenos Aires: 30 October 1939, Op. 11 – Juan Carlos Paz

Buenos Aires: 4 December 1939, Gabriela Moner, soprano; Juan Carlos Paz, piano

Buenos Aires: 21 June 1940, Op. 19 – Juan Carlos Paz

Buenos Aires: 2 December 1940, Op. 14 – Freya Wolfsbruck, soprano, Sofia Knoll, piano

Buenos Aires: 29 May 1941, Op. 19 – Juan Carlos Paz

Buenos Aires: 13 September 1941, Op. 19 – Juan Carlos Paz

Buenos Aires: 14 September 1942, Gabriela Moner, soprano; Orestes Castronuovo, piano

Buenos Aires: 20 September 1949 – Lecture “Arnold Schönberg: El fin de la era tonal.”  
Opp. 11, 19, 23/3, 33a – Juan Carlos Paz, played by Michael Gielen

Buenos Aires: 26 September 1949 – Homage to Arnold Schönberg on his 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary.”  
Opp 11, 19, 23, 33a-b, 25 – Michael Gielen, piano

## *Appendix 5: Early Performances of Five Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 16*

[4 February 1912, Berlin, Erwin Stein 8 hand piano arrangement (mvt 1, 2, 4), Louis Closson, Louis T. Grünberg, Eduard Steuermann, Anton Webern, piano]<sup>2</sup>

April 1912, Peters Edition published

3 September 1912, London, Promenade Concert, Henry Wood cond.

31 October 1913, Chicago, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Frederick Stock cond.

17 January 1914, London, Queen's Hall, Schoenberg cond.

12 March 1914, Amsterdam, Willem Mengelberg cond.

18-19 December 1914, Boston, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Karl Muck cond.

[25 February 1920, Vienna, open rehearsal at *Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen*]

13 March 1920, *Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen*, Prague

21 March, 1920, Amsterdam, *Vergangenes* only

25 March, 1920, Amsterdam, *Vorgefühle* and *Vergangenes* only

11 June 1920, Weimar, Deutsches Nationaltheater, Peter Raabe Conducting

21 October 1920, Amsterdam

24 October 1920, Amsterdam

27 October 1920, Groningen, Netherlands; *Peripetie* and *Vergangenes* only

7 December 1922, Leipzig Gewandhaus

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<sup>2</sup> Brackets indicate performance of arrangements.

10-11 December 1922, Berlin, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Furtwängler cond.

8 February 1934, Chicago

14 Sept. 1934, London, Promenade Concert

21 October 1948, New York City, Carnegie Hall

1 December 1960, New York City, Carnegie Hall

17 March 1969, New York City, Lincoln Center

27-28 March 1969, New York City, Boulez cond.

1969, Vienna, Vienna Philharmonic

## *Appendix 6: Program for World Premiere of Op. 16 in London*

**Tuesday 3 September 1912**

**8.00pm**

**Queen's Hall<sup>3</sup>**

**Engelbert Humperdinck**

*Hänsel und Gretel* Overture

**Bizet**

*Carmen*, Suite No. 1 No. 1 Prélude

*Carmen*, Suite No. 1 No. 2 Aragonaise

*Carmen*, Suite No. 1 No. 3 Intermezzo

*Carmen*, Suite No. 1 No. 5 Les dragons de Alcalá

*Carmen* – Suite No. 2 No. 6 Danse bohémienne Act 2

**Camille Saint-Saëns**

*Samson et Dalila* Recitative & aria 'Samson, recherchant ma présence...Amour! viens aider ma faiblesse!'

Act 2

**Charles-François Gounod**

Hymne à Sainte Cécile

- Alfred Kastner harp
- New Queen's Hall Orchestra (1895-1914, Queen's Hall Orchestra)
- Arthur Catterall violin
- Frederick Kiddle organ

**Arnold Schoenberg**

*Five Orchestral Pieces*, Op. 16 World premiere

**INTERVAL**

**Felix Mendelssohn**

*Concerto for Piano No. 1 in G minor*, Op 25

- Marie Novello piano

**Johannes Brahms**

*Hungarian Dance No. 5 in G minor*. Allegro, WoO 1.5 (orch. Albert Parlow)

*Hungarian Dance No. 6 in D major*: Vivace, WoO 1.6 (orch. Albert Parlow)

**William Aiken**

*Sigh no more, ladies* (arr. Henry Wood) Proms premiere

*Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?* (arr. Henry Wood) Proms premiere

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<sup>3</sup> Information from BBC Proms Archive:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/proms/archive/search/1910s/1912/september-03/2193>

- Gervase Elwes tenor

**Richard Wagner**

*Huldigungsmarsch*, WWV 97

**Granville Bantock**

Comedy Overture *'The Pierrot of the Minute'*

**John Hullah**

*Three fishers went sailing*

- Frederick Kiddle piano
- Violet Oppenshaw mezzo-soprano

**Graham Peel**

*In summertime on Bredon*

- Frederick Kiddle organ
- Gervase Elwes tenor

**Léo Délibes**

*Coppélia* No. 10b Valse Act 2

*Coppélia* No. 10a Entr'acte Act 2



## *Appendix 7: Promenade Performances of Schoenberg's Works*

### **6 Brettlieder**

(2000) Prom 29 - Sunday 6 August, 3.30pm

### **A Survivor from Warsaw, Op 46**

(2001) Prom 67 - Monday 10 September, 7.30pm

### **Begleitungsmusik zu einer Lichtspielszene, Op 34**

(1974) Prom 05 - Tuesday 23 July, 7.30pm

(2001) Prom 51 - Wednesday 29 August, 7.00pm

### **Chamber Symphony No. 1 in E major, Op 9**

(1972) Prom 38 - Tuesday 29 August, 7.30pm

(1974) Prom 18 - Monday 5 August, 9.30pm

(1977) Prom 30 - Monday 22 August, 7.30pm

(1979) Prom 51 - Wednesday 12 September, 7.30pm

(1980) Prom 19 - Tuesday 5 August, 7.30pm

(1984) Prom 31 - Monday 20 August, 7.00pm

(1993) Prom 62 - Monday 6 September, 7.30pm

(1998) Prom 50 - Wednesday 26 August, 10.00pm

### **Chamber Symphony No. 1 in E major, Op 9 (arr. Anton Webern)**

(2001) Proms Chamber Music 04 - Monday 13 August, 1.00pm

### **Chamber Symphony No. 1 in E major, Op 9 (orchestral version)**

(1996) Prom 13 - Tuesday 30 July, 7.30pm

### **Concerto for Piano, Op 42**

(1945) Prom 42 - Friday 7 September, 7.00pm

(1961) Prom 30 - Friday 25 August, 7.30pm

(1971) Prom 35 - Tuesday 31 August, 7.30pm

(1979) Prom 15 - Saturday 4 August, 7.30pm

(1990) Prom 55 - Thursday 6 September, 7.00pm

(1994) Prom 62 - A tribute to Pierre Boulez - Monday 5 September, 7.30pm

### **Concerto for Violin, Op 36**

(1961) Prom 24 - Friday 18 August, 7.30pm

(1962) Prom 20 - Monday 13 August, 7.30pm

(1969) Prom 09 - Monday 28 July, 7.30pm

(2001) Prom 40 - Monday 20 August, 7.00pm

### **De profundis, Op 50b**

(1960) Prom 45 - 86th Anniversary of Schoenberg's Birth - Tuesday 13 September, 7.30pm

(1961) Prom 40 - Wednesday 6 September, 7.30pm

(2001) Prom 38 - Saturday 18 August, 10.00pm

**Die Jakobsleiter**

(1968) Prom 07 - Thursday 25 July, 7.30pm

**Die glückliche Hand, Op 18**

(1978) Prom 34 - Friday 25 August, 7.30pm

(1992) Prom 12 - Monday 27 July, 7.30pm

**Erwartung, Op 17**

(1964) Prom 24 - Friday 21 August, 7.30pm

**Five Orchestral Pieces, Op. 16**

(1912) Prom 15 - Tuesday 3 September, 8.00pm

(1934) Prom 30 - Friday 14 September, 8.00pm

(1958) Prom 12 - Friday 8 August, 7.30pm

(1994) Prom 42 - A tribute to Henry Wood (died 19 August 1944) - Friday 19 August, 7.30pm

(1996) Prom 70 - Thursday 12 September, 7.30pm

(2007) Prom 45 - Friday 17 August, 7.30pm

(2009) Prom 65 - Friday 4 September, 7.00pm

(2010) Prom 66 - Saturday 4 September, 7.30pm

(2012) Prom 71 - St Louis Symphony - Tuesday 4 September, 7.30pm

**Four Songs, Op 22**

(1966) Prom 34 - Tuesday 30 August, 7.30pm

**Friede auf Erden, Op 13 (a cappella version)**

(1963) Prom 12 - Friday 2 August, 7.30pm

(1978) Prom 29 - Monday 21 August, 7.30pm

(1990) Prom 27 - Sunday 12 August, 7.30pm

(1994) Prom 16 - Wednesday 27 July, 10.00pm

(1997) Prom 54 - Thursday 28 August, 10.00pm

(2001) Prom 38 - Saturday 18 August, 10.00pm

**Gurrelieder**

(1973) Prom 20 - Friday 10 August, 7.30pm

(1974) Prom 03 - Sunday 21 July, 7.30pm

(1981) Prom 23 - Monday 10 August, 7.30pm

(1987) Prom 21 - Monday 3 August, 7.30pm

(1994) Prom 01 - First Night of the Proms 1994 - Friday 15 July, 8.00pm

(2002) Prom 13 - Sunday 28 July, 7.30pm

(2012) Prom 41 - Schoenberg – Gurrelieder - Sunday 12 August, 8.00pm

**Lied der Waldtaube from 'Gurrelieder' (chamber version)**

(1970) Prom 41 - Monday 31 August, 7.30pm

(1977) Prom 30 - Monday 22 August, 7.30pm

(1979) Prom 51 - Wednesday 12 September, 7.30pm

(2000) Prom 21 - Sunday 30 July, 7.30pm

**Moses und Aron**

(1965) Prom 02 - Monday 19 July, 7.30pm

(1975) Prom 03 - Sunday 27 July, 7.30pm

**Notturmo for violin and strings**

(2001) Prom 40 - Monday 20 August, 7.00pm

**Pelleas und Melisande, Op 5**

- (1988) Prom 23 - Tuesday 9 August, 7.30pm
- (1995) Prom 51 - Thursday 31 August, 7.00pm
- (2001) Prom 50 - Tuesday 28 August, 7.30pm

**Pierrot lunaire, Op 21**

- (1970) Prom 17 - Tuesday 4 August, 7.30pm
- (1972) Prom 12 - Wednesday 2 August, 7.30pm
- (1978) Prom 50 - Monday 11 September, 9.30pm
- (1985) Prom 14 - Tuesday 30 July, 7.30pm
- (1989) Prom 40 - Wednesday 23 August, 10.00pm
- (1998) Prom 50 - Wednesday 26 August, 10.00pm
- (2001) Prom 59 - Monday 3 September, 10.00pm
- (2012) Proms Chamber Music 7: Debussy & Schoenberg - Monday 27 August, 1.00pm

**Prelude 'Genesis', Op 44**

- (1999) Prom 03 - One Thousand Years of Music in a Day - Sunday 18 July, 2.30pm

**Six Songs, Op 8**

- (1980) Prom 35 - Thursday 21 August, 7.30pm

**Three Pieces**

- (1979) Prom 51 - Wednesday 12 September, 7.30pm

**Variations for Orchestra, Op 31**

- (1960) Prom 23 - Thursday 18 August, 7.30pm
- (1962) Prom 11 - Thursday 2 August, 7.30pm
- (2001) Prom 17 - Thursday 2 August, 7.30pm
- (2004) Prom 67 - Sunday 5 September, 6.30pm
- (2008) Prom 38 - Thursday 14 August, 7.00pm

**Variations on a Recitative, Op 40**

- (1979) Prom 30 - Wednesday 22 August, 7.30pm

**Verklärte Nacht, Op 4 (string orchestra version)**

- (1961) Prom 03 - Tuesday 25 July, 7.30pm
- (1963) Prom 30 - Friday 23 August, 7.30pm
- (1974) Prom 54 - Friday 13 September, 7.30pm
- (1977) Prom 38 - Tuesday 30 August, 7.30pm
- (1988) Prom 14 - Tuesday 2 August, 7.30pm
- (1994) Prom 32 - Thursday 11 August, 7.30pm

**Verklärte Nacht, Op 4 (string sextet version)**

- (2001) Prom 59 - Monday 3 September, 10.00pm

## *Appendix 8: Erwartung Early Performances*

6 June 1924, Prague, Neues Deutsches Theater, Zemlinsky cond. Gutheil-Schoder

22 January 1928, Wiesbaden, Germany, Paul Bekker, E. Maerker

6 July 1930, Krolloper, Berlin, Zemlinsky, Moje Forbacher

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<sup>4</sup> I define contemporary sources as those published or created during Schoenberg’s lifetime (1874-1951).

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## *Biography*

Sarah Elaine Neill graduated summa cum laude with a B.A. in Music and in German Language and Literature from Trinity University in 2009, where she completed an honors thesis with Carl Leafstedt titled, *The Trouble with Nationalism: 'Englishness' in the Quartets of Britten, Tippett, and Vaughan Williams*. She holds a M.A. in Musicology from Duke University (2011), and graduated with a Ph.D. in Musicology and a Certificate in College Teaching from Duke in 2014. Her graduate studies and dissertation work was supported by the Beinecke Scholarship Foundation, the James B. Duke Fellowship, Summer Research Fellowships, the Conference Travel Grant, and the Dissertation Research Travel Grant, which she used to complete archival research at the Arnold Schoenberg Center in Vienna, the Library of Congress, and the New York Public Library.