ANTON WEBERN AND MAINSTREAM MUSIC CULTURE IN THE UNITED STATES, 1923–1987

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This dissertation, the first dedicated study of the reception of the music of Anton Webern in the United States, focuses on moments at which U.S. musicians, scholars, and institutions have sought to render Webern's music accessible to mainstream classical music audiences. The first chapter covers the circulation of Webern's music in the United States during the 1920s and 30s, a period that saw the emergence of a transatlantic culture of new music. The second chapter documents several forgotten encounters between Webern and U.S. middlebrow culture at midcentury, including efforts to portray Webern's works as music for children. The third chapter argues for the centrality of U.S. recordings to the establishment of Webern's legacy, while the final chapter focuses on the experiences of Hans Moldenhauer, a German-American émigré who lived in Spokane, WA and forged a transatlantic network of Webern studies during the second half of the twentieth century. Together these disparate historical moments constitute a new history of Webern's music, in which it appears not as challenging, hyper-intellectual, or esoteric, but rather as intelligible, accessible, and appealing.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

David Hislop Miller is a musicologist and performing musician. He earned a B.A. in music from Harvard College and recently completed a Ph.D. in musicology at Cornell University. His article "Modernist Music for Children: Three Sketches of Anton Webern in the Midcentury United States" will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Journal of Musicology*. As a performer on Baroque and modern double bass, viola da gamba, and violone, David has appeared with groups such as the Handel and Haydn Society, Arcadia Players, Trinity Wall Street, Music at Marsh Chapel, and New York Baroque Incorporated. His other musical interests include the intersection of performance and analysis, the music of Schütz and Schein, pedagogy, music and mountains, and historical performance.

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There are a great many people without whom I would not have been able to complete this project. Thanks are due first and foremost to my committee members at Cornell University: Neal Zaslaw, David Yearsley, and Roger Moseley. Their insight at every stage of my work has been essential and their support through the inevitable ups and downs of a doctoral program has been much appreciated. Many other members of the Department of Music faculty assisted me at various points, including Xak Bjerken, Ariana Kim, and Steve Spinelli, as did Aaron Sachs, a Cornell faculty member in the Department of History whose writing course was a turning point for me. I would also like to thank Department of Music staff members whose support has been invaluable, including Colette Larkin, Fumi Nagasaki-Pracel, and Christopher Riley, as well as the Cornell offices that have supported my research throughout the years, including the Department of Music, Graduate School, American Studies Program, and Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies.

The other institution of higher education with which I have been affiliated, Harvard University, also played a key role in the process of writing my dissertation. Anne Shreffler, who advised my undergraduate thesis on Webern, graciously agreed to join my committee several years ago. Her expertise, advice, and support since then have been exceptional in every sense of the word. Anne also introduced me to the members of the writing group that she leads, whose comments on my work over the past two years have been consistently helpful. Here would also seem the appropriate place to extend my gratitude towards

Harvard faculty member Christopher Hasty, whose course on twentieth-century analysis sparked my interest in Webern's music a decade ago.

Throughout the course of my research I have benefitted greatly from the expertise and assistance of the staffs of various library and archives. Chief among that group is the staff at Cornell's Sidney Cox Library of Music and Dance, including Bonna Boettcher, Bill Cowdery, Eric Feinstein, and Lenora Schneller. Like many graduate students before, I have appreciated their competence, warmth, and patience. I have also been lucky enough to interact with a number of librarians and archivists at institutions in the United States and abroad: the staffs at Harvard University's Houghton Library, the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, the Music Division of the Library of Congress, and the University of Washington; Janet Hauck at Whitworth University; Cheryl Gunselman and Trevor Bond at Washington State University; Grace Hansen at the Harry Ransom Center; Clemens Zoidl at the Ernst Krenek Institut; Reinhard Widerin at the Archiv der Zeitgenossen; Elke Fess at the Arnold Schönberg Center; and finally Sabine Hänggi-Stampfli, Felix Meyer, and Simone Obert at the Paul Sacher Stiftung, where I spent a productive month in the summer of 2018. All of these individuals have inspired with me with their knowledge and generosity.

My research and writing have also been informed by conversations with a variety of individuals. These include: Regina Busch and Miriam Quick, scholars with whom I eagerly discussed my work; Jamie Currie, who generously read and commented on my second chapter at a crucial stage in its development; and Michael Dellaira, whose opera *The Death of Webern* inspired my afterword. I was

grateful to twice have the opportunity to present my work at the annual meetings of the New York State-St. Lawrence chapter of the American Musicological Society, which helped me develop key sections of my second and fourth chapters.

The latter chapter was shaped by my conversations with two individuals in the state of Washington: Donivan Johnson, longtime friend of Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer, and Mary Moldenhauer, who was likewise a friend of Hans and Rosaleen and later Hans' wife. Spending time with Donivan and Mary in Spokane during the summer of 2017 was one of the most meaningful experiences of my professional life. I later sent a draft of my work to each of them; I don't think I've ever been prouder of something I wrote than when Mary, upon reading my portrayal of Rosaleen Moldenhauer, commented that "it is almost as if you had known her." Towards the end of writing this dissertation, I was lucky enough to make contact with two more individuals with direct connections to the history I document: Electra Slonimsky Yourke and Caryn Glasser. My thanks are due to them both for their openness and generosity.

Even with all of this generosity behind me, I feel confident that the process of writing my dissertation would have been substantially more difficult without the support of my graduate student colleagues, both in the Department of Music and at Hans Bethe House. That support was occasionally quite concrete, such as run-throughs of conference papers, consulting on German translation with Dietmar Friesenegger, or the many hours I spent discussing my work with Matthew Hall. More often, though, it took the form of friendship and camaraderie. Academic work is too often too solitary, but the company of my fellow graduate

students made it feel mercifully less so. I would also like to thank Erica Ostermann, my friend and boss at Bethe House, who gave me the opportunity to find a home at Cornell.

Finally there are the people closest to me, my family. First there is my brother, Nathan Miller, and my sisters-in-law, Ann Miller and Ililan Abebe, all of whom have supported me in innumerable ways over the years. Special thanks are due to Nathan for providing top-notch copyediting of a great many documents. Then there is Rediet Abebe, my wife and best friend, whom I met just a few months after beginning work on my dissertation. Her confidence in my ability to bring this project to fruition never wavered, even when mine sometimes did. Being together as we have both marched towards the finish line has made the challenges of writing a dissertation that much more bearable, the joys that much more meaningful. Last but not least are my parents, Nancy and David Miller. They went to incredible lengths to foster my love of music growing up; to say that they went above and beyond does not even do it justice. Indeed it was they who drove me an hour and a half each way to an orchestra rehearsal where I first heard Webern's music. They have also been and continue to be exceptional role models in their work ethic and determination, traits I have called on frequently over the last several years. And they didn't bat an eye when I told them that I planned to spend a good chunk of my young adulthood studying a composer whose music they did not find especially pleasing. For that, and for much else, I am grateful.

David H. Miller
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Preface

It is impossible to complete a dissertation without answering a version of the same question many times over: "What are you writing about?" People want to know what could be so pressing, so interesting that it is worth several years of one's attention. Like many before me, then, I have whittled the synopsis of my dissertation down to its most essential elements: Anton Webern, an Austrian composer from the first half of the twentieth century; modernist, atonal music; that music's reception in the United States; an emphasis on public-facing presentations of the music. Most are satisfied with this explanation. For those who already know something about Webern, however, a second question often follows: "So do you like Webern's music?"

I imagine that some scholars might find this inquiry annoying or irrelevant. But for me it is exactly the right question to ask. If it is unusual to ask whether musicologists like the music that they are studying, this is only because there would seem no need to ask. One can assume that scholars of Franz Schubert or Hildegard von Bingen or Aaron Copland like the music to which they have devoted their professional lives, even if such affection is not acknowledged directly. That assumption is safe since most people—scholars or otherwise—like the music of Schubert and Hildegard and Copland. To ask whether or not I like Webern's music is thus to acknowledge, if only implicitly, an important truth: that most people, most of the time, have *not* liked it. Indeed one of the chief pleasures of the following pages is the breathtaking variety of means by which critics have insulted Webern's works over the years. Among many other things, Webern's

music has been likened to the creaking of old floors, the jabberings of barbarians, and meaningless abstractions. The disdain that it has attracted over much of its history makes its support by those individuals whose work I chronicle below that much more remarkable. Perhaps the central question of my dissertation, in fact, is this: why would anyone have devoted so much time, energy, and money to promoting music that almost no one else seemed to want?

One answer to that question has less to do with Webern's music and more to do with the people who promoted it. In this way my work resembles David C. Paul's *Charles Ives in the Mirror: American Histories of an Iconic Composer*, which has been one of my primary models. Paul defines his focus as "not the historical Ives but the way he has been imagined by critics, composers, performers, and scholars who have been moved to speak or write about him." Such a study makes "principals" out of figures who might otherwise be considered secondary next to a famous composer like Ives (or Webern).[1] Since the principals of my dissertation came from a variety of times, places, and backgrounds, what moved them to promote Webern's music varied accordingly. There is little evidence that Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, one of the key figures of Chapter 1, possessed any particular affinity for Webern's music when she chose to commission the String Quartet, op. 28; but she supported it all the same as part of her catholic approach to the sponsorship of new music. Leonard Bernstein did not care for Webern's music either, but he applied his trademark charm to presenting Webern's music

[1] David C. Paul, *Charles Ives in the Mirror: American Histories of an Iconic Composer*, University of Illinois Press (2013): 2. Another, related model for my work has been the "paraphrase" portions of Bettina Varwig's *Histories of Heinrich Schütz*. See: Bettina Varwig, *Histories of Heinrich Schütz*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

after his friend Gunther Schuller convinced him to play it. Robert Craft is best remembered as the amanuensis of Igor Stravinsky, one the Second Viennese School's chief historical foes; and yet, as I argue in Chapter 3, Craft's recording project changed the course of Webern reception in the second half of the twentieth century. Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauers' decades of work on Webern, the subject of Chapter 4, were motivated in part by Hans' desire to maintain ties to a Germanic cultural heritage he had lost when he emigrated to the United States in 1938. Since these figures are interesting not only because of their connection to Webern but also on a purely human level, I devote considerable time to their stories, even when those stories appear tangential to the larger story of Webern's music.

Yet none of these individuals promoted Webern's music entirely on their own; as Paul argues, "no interpretive act takes place in a vacuum." Instead, he continues, all that which falls into the category of "reception"—interpretation, promotion, criticism, circulation—is "constrained by 'practices and assumptions' that the interpreter shares with other people."[2] Thus, while I typically begin with on-the-ground details of concerts, festivals, recordings, and publications, those details often reveals insights into much broader topics. Chapter 1, for example, takes place within the context of a transatlantic exchange of new music that emerged during the interwar period; Chapter 2 situates Webern's music within midcentury middlebrow culture; Chapter 3 demonstrates the crucial role played by recordings in disseminating modern music; and Chapter 4 considers the

[2] Paul, *Charles Ives in the Mirror*…4. Paul cites the work of Stanley Fish and David Hollinger in his discussion of this issue.

influence of the space race on popular culture in the early 1960s. These topics provide important context for the reception of Webern's music, but the inverse is also true; the unusual means by which Webern's music entered into middlebrow culture, for example, reveals something about that music and something about the middlebrow. Every moment that I document thus operates on three levels simultaneously. There are the lives of musicians, critics, patrons, and writers; there is Webern's music, in its various forms and presentations; and there are the innumerable aspects of twentieth-century U.S. culture at large. It is therefore my hope that my work might contain something of interest even for those whose answer to "Do you like Webern's music?" is "No."

* * *

The four chapters are presented in a loosely chronological format, with significant overlap between Chapters 2–4, all of which include long sections devoted to the events of the 1950s and 60s. This overlap is a product of the chapters' thematic foci, as well as an indication that the contents of each chapter do not relate in a straightforward manner. The recording projects documented in Chapter 3 and the scholarly work considered of Chapter 4 were, for example, parallel processes that occurred around the same time; but they did not necessarily have a causal relationship to one another. Even so, it is the case that several developments in later chapters were shaped by the developments of earlier chapters. As such narrative arc may lightly be traced across the dissertation and, though each chapter could stand on its own, each is enriched by the others. Chapter 1, meanwhile, stands somewhat apart from the other three

chapters, with only minimal chronological overlap between it and Chapter 2. This opening chapter functions as a study of the U.S. circulation of Webern's music during the 1920s and 30s, but it also serves as a more general introduction to the topic of Webern's music in the United States. It thus sets the stage for the developments of the later chapters while also fulfilling some of the functions of a conventional academic introduction.

Towards the end of the final chapter I arrive at what Kathryn Bailey has called "[t]he most important single event in the progress of Webern scholarship."[3] In 1986 Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer's collection of Webern materials, which they had kept largely to themselves for over two decades, was made available to other scholars following its transfer to the Paul Sacher Stiftung in Basel, Switzerland.[4] Thereafter followed a wave of new Webern scholarship in the 1990s, led by Bailey (whose *The Twelve-Note Music of Anton Webern: Old Forms in a New Language* was published in 1991), Anne Shreffler (*Webern and the Lyric Impulse. Songs and Fragments on Poems of George Trakl*, 1994), and Julian Johnson (*Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, 1999).[5] These scholars and others of the period drew heavily on the sketches, diaries, unpublished

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[3] Kathryn Bailey, "Introduction," in *Webern Studies*, ed. Bailey, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1996): xv

[4] Other portions of the Moldenhauers' massive collection were transferred to other locations, including the Library of Congress, Harvard University, and various institutional libraries in their home state of Washington. With few exceptions, however, all materials relating directly to Webern ended up in Basel.

[5] *The twelve-note music of Anton Webern: old forms in a new language*, 94–152, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991; Anne Shreffler, *Webern and the Lyric Impulse: Songs and Fragments on Poems of Georg Trakl*, Clarendon Press, 1994; Julian Johnson, *Webern and the transformation of nature*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. All three of these authors published further material on Webern, as did others; the three books cited here are intended to serve as representative samples of the scholarship of the period.

compositions, and other materials that the Moldenhauers had discovered in the 1960s. They also presented arguments that challenged long-held conceptions of Webern and his music. Whereas the composers of the Darmstadt generation had portrayed Webern as a precursor to total serialism in writings such as Karlheinz Stockhausen's "Structure and Experiential Time," Bailey demonstrated how Webern built on compositional traditions of the past by employing familiar Classical forms like rondo and variations.[6] Whereas an academic emphasis on "complex and difficult analyses" had led Webern to appear "more cerebral than sentient," Shreffler argued for the centrality of poetry and vocal music in Webern's oeuvre, proposing lyricism as a lens through which to understand both his vocal and instrumental works.[7] Whereas Webern's works were once considered the epitome of abstraction, Johnson revealed their roots in Romantic program music. Shreffler's book was hailed as "a breath of fresh air in the antiseptic laboratory of more traditional Webern studies" and the same could well have been said of much other scholarship of the period.[8] "At last," proclaimed Bailey in 1995, "perhaps Anton Webern is coming of age."[9]

It was about a decade later when I first became familiar with Webern's music. Since the work of Bailey, Shreffler, and Johnson was by that time well established, I took for granted that Webern's music could be lyrical, neoclassical, or nature-worshipping just as much as it could be mathematical, severe, or

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[6] Karlheinz Stockhausen, "Structure and experiential time," *Die Reihe* 2 (1958): 64–74.

[7] Kathryn Bailey, "Coming of Age," *The Musical Times* 136 (Dec. 1995): 647.

[8] Wayne Alpern, "Review Article, "Will the Real Anton Webern Please Stand Up?": Anne C. Shreffler, *Webern and the Lyric Impulse* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994)," *Music Theory Online* 4.2 (1998).

[9] Bailey, "Coming of Age," 648.

abstract. One of the first things that piqued my interest in Webern was his lifelong love of mountaineering, a fact that would have been considered trivial in an earlier era, if it was considered at all. In the years that followed, however, I began to wonder whether these new scholarly conceptions of the composer had taken hold beyond the academy. It often seemed that the Webern of public consciousness—the Webern that existed in textbooks and program notes and radio programs—was not the same Webern I had read about in the scholarship of the previous decade. A few scholarly findings filtered out, particularly those related to the collection of Webern juvenilia discovered by the Moldenhauers in the early 1960s; thus the orchestral tone poem *Im Sommerwind*, which plays a central role Johnson's book, achieved modest success as a repertory piece. Yet works like *Im Sommerwind* were usually cited not in order to recontextualize Webern's later music, but rather to serve as evidence of a road not taken.[10] "*Im Sommerwind* is a very atmospheric piece, well worth hearing," wrote *The Guardian*'s Stephen Moss in 2007, "if only to recognise the tradition from which Webern was to depart." Moss continues to sum up what often seems to be the public consensus on Webern:

> At this point, I should probably talk about serialism, 12-note theory and atonality, but I'm not a musician and I don't understand them. I did ask a musician friend to explain serialism and she seemed to be talking English when she did so, but nothing stuck - other than that Webern, Schoenberg and the so-called Second Viennese School were interested in the

[10] *Im Sommerwind* as a "road not taken" is the subject of one of the most imaginative pieces of Webern scholarship to date: Derrick Puffett, "Gone with the summer wind, or, What Webern lost: Nine variations on a ground," in *Webern Studies*, ed. Kathryn Bailey, 32–73, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

> mathematical relationship of notes rather than in keys. I need you expert bloggers to help me here, please.[11]

Despite the scholarly advances of the 1990s, then, the public image of Webern in many sectors remained closer to the laboratory than to fresh air.

It was this gap between the scholarly and popular conceptions of Webern that motivated me to undertake a reception history focused on public-facing presentations of Webern's music, the "mainstream music culture" of my title. By demarcating the boundaries of my study in this way, I follow the work of Christopher Chowrimootoo and others in investigating the phenomenon of "middlebrow modernism," a topic I discuss further in Chapter 2.[12] This focus distinguishes my work from other reception histories of Webern's music, which have tended to track the circulation of that music among composers, musicians, and intellectuals. Giselher Schubert's 1983 study, for example, is primarily concerned with the compositional reception of Webern's music from the 1920s through the 1960s.[13] While reception histories like Schubert's rely on sources such as scores, analyses, and trade publications, I instead privilege those sources that were aimed at a wider audience, including concert programs, festival booklets, recordings, newspaper articles, popular press publications, and much

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[11] Stephen Moss, "Building a classical music library: Anton Webern," *The Guardian*, April 23, 2007.

[12] See, for example: Christopher Chowrimootoo, "Middlebrow Modernism: Britten's Operas and the Great Divide," Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University (2013); Christopher Chowrimootoo, "Reviving the Middlebrow, or: Deconstructing Modernism from the Inside," in "Round Table: Modernism and its Others," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 139 (2014): 187–193; Jennifer DeLapp, "Speaking to Whom? Modernism, Middlebrow, and Copland's Short Symphony," in *Copland Connotations: Studies and Interviews*, 85–102, Woodbridge, Suffolk, United Kingdom: Boydell & Brewer, 2002.

[13] Giselher Schubert, "Zur Rezeption der Musik Anton von Weberns," in *Die Wiener Schule heute*, 63–86, Mainz: Schott Musik International, 1983.

else. It was an encounter with one of these sources several years ago that sparked my entire project: Nicolas Slonimsky's "The Orchestral Score," an article written for the Children's Page of an October 1936 issue of the *Christian Science Monitor*, which I discuss in Chapter 2 (Figure 10). Slonimsky presented his youthful readers with an adapted version of the score of Webern's famously brief op. 10 no. 4 (which is all of six measures long). German words were translated into English, all parts were written non-transposing treble clefs, and drawings of the instruments appeared next to their first entrances; a mechanical metronome even sat beside the tempo marking.

Slonimsky's article is emblematic of the kinds of subjects I have chosen. It is engaging and fun, qualities that I have prioritized throughout. It is an example of my ground-up approach to writing history; I arrived at my broader topic in large part because I knew that, whatever I ended up writing about, "The Orchestral Score" was too good to omit. The article is also one of many subjects I consider that hold interest not only for their public impact, but also for their genesis. How did Slonimsky think to put a score of Webern's music into an article for children in the first place? Answering questions like these requires a second category of sources: "behind-the-scenes" materials such as correspondence, drafts, and contracts. These kinds of materials provide a look at the working processes of Slonimsky, Coolidge, Craft, the Moldenhauers, and many others. In many instances private documents reveal these individuals grappling with the inherent tension of a crafting a public-facing presentation of Webern's music. Simply put, the reception that Webern's music faced for most of its history—a reception that

was not only negative but also tended to emphasize the music's most obscure qualities—posed a problem for those who sought to promote it to a mainstream, non-specialist audience. As will become clear in the pages that follow, solving this problem inspired remarkable creativity on the part of Webern's advocates.

* * *

Restricting my focus to public-facing presentations of Webern's music is one of two filters I have applied to my reception history; the other is a focus on the circulation of that music in the United States. Studies of European composers and musicians working and living in the United States are numerous, especially with regards to the early and mid-twentieth century. Some of these studies cover only a selected portion of an artist's association with the United States, as is the case with Mary H. Wagner's *Gustav Mahler and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra Tour America* and H. Colin Slim's *Stravinsky in the Americas: Transatlantic Tours and Domestic Excursions from Wartime Los Angeles (1925-1945)*.[14] Others, such as Luther Noss' *Paul Hindemith in the United States* and Sabine Feisst's *Schoenberg's New World: The American Years*, cover the entirety of a composer's time in the United States.[15] While many of these studies rely on similar kinds of materials—correspondence, journalism, diaries, sketches—how such materials are organized varies widely. Slim, for example, presents a strictly chronological narrative, while Feisst structures her study around topics such as Schoenberg's teaching and

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[14] Mary H. Wagner, *Gustav Mahler and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra Tour America*, Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2006; H. Colin Slim, *Stravinsky in the Americas: Transatlantic Tours and Domestic Excursions from Wartime Los Angeles (1925-1945)*, University of California Press, 2019.

[15] Luther Noss, *Paul Hindemith in the United States*, University of Illinois Press, 1989; Sabine Feisst, *Schoenberg's New World: The American Years*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

publishing careers. In other cases the materials themselves vary; one of the earliest examples of the genre, William Juhasz' *Bartok's Years in America*, consists almost exclusively of unabridged interviews with close friends of the composer.[16] These studies have not, additionally, been restricted to composers. Among the vast literature on the migration of European intellectuals to the United States during the 1930s and 40s are several monograph that focus on the musical side of that migration, including Dorothy L. Crawford's *A windfall of musicians: Hitler's émigrés and exiles in southern California* and the anthology collection *Driven into paradise: The musical migration from Nazi Germany to the United States*.[17] Scholarship of this kind is a key point of reference for my work, as several of the musicians I discuss were part of the "musical migration," including Rudolf Kolisch and Hans Moldenhauer.

Yet the case of Webern and the United States differs from all of these studies in one unavoidable way: Webern never set foot in the United States. That fact may account for the dearth of scholarly inquiries into the materials that I consider, many of which—Slonimsky's article, the Moldenhauers' work, Craft's recordings—have been widely available and well known for decades. Webern's physical absence also means that the story of his music and the United States is more complicated, or at least differently complicated, than the cases of Schoenberg, Stravinsky, or any other composer who had the opportunity to shape

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[16] William Juhasz, *Bartok's Years in America*, Washington, D.C.: Occidental Press, 1954.

[17] Dorothy L. Crawford, *A windfall of musicians: Hitler's émigrés and exiles in southern California*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011; Ed. Reinhold Brinkmann and Christoph Wolff, *Driven into paradise: The musical migration from Nazi Germany to the United States*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999.

the reception of their music in person. As I document in Chapter 1, Webern attempted to encourage the U.S. circulation of his music on several occasions, but he possessed neither the funds nor the influence to make much of an impact from across the Atlantic. Instead he was forced to rely on the goodwill of U.S.-based advocates like Kolisch and Adolph Weiss, who though dedicated were few and far between. Webern might well have made it to the United States in the years following the Second World War; as I will discuss further, he pondered emigrating at several points during the 1930s. But his accidental death at the hands of U.S. soldier in 1945 foreclosed that possibility for good.

The pairing of Webern and the United States is not an obvious one, just as the pairing of Webern and mainstream music culture may seem incongruous. Yet this unusual combination of parameters has yielded some remarkable results. During the 1920s and 30s, for example, U.S. critics frequently drew on animal metaphors to describe Webern's music, likening it to insects, protozoa, and the howling of cats. In 1950 and 1951 the first the U.S.-based recordings of Webern's music were released by Dial Records, a label better known for recording the music of bebop greats like Charlie Parker. In 1966 Webern's *Kinderstück* (*Children's Piece*), a one-minute-long work for solo piano, was premiered in front of an audience of thousands at Lincoln Center by a nine-year-old pianist named Caren Glasser. That same year Webern became the center of a fierce debate over the future of new music at a Webern festival in Buffalo, New York, one of several such festivals held in such improbable U.S. locales as Hanover, New Hampshire and Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

These moments, along with the many others I discuss below, form an alternative history in which the reception of Webern's music prior to 1986 is both more interesting and more varied than has previously been recognized. Though they may be more different than they are alike, furthermore, these moments do share one thing in common: Webern's music. And that common thread is not arbitrary. While some of the reception trends documented below apply to the broader categories of modernist music or serial music or even just classical music, each of the moments I describe was also shaped by the idiosyncratic qualities of Webern's compositions, which reappear in different guises time and time again. Almost from the first moment Webern's music was performed in the United States, for example, critics gravitated towards its most exceptional quality: extreme brevity. Fascination with Webern's musical miniatures has never ceased since; in 1967, to cite just one of the many colorful turns of phrase that Webern's brevity has inspired, Michael Steinberg observed that "Bruckner can hardly clear his throat in the span of time in which Webern carries a whole chapter from beginning to end."[18] Much scholarship on Webern has emphasized his relationship to groups of composers, in particular the Second Viennese School of which he was a part and the Darmstadt generation that he inspired, and any reception history of Webern's music would be hard-pressed to avoid these groups. Yet one lesson of my work is that the reception of Webern's music was often just that: the reception of Webern in particular and not of the Second Viennese School or modernist music more generally. In many of the

[18] Michael Steinberg, "Webern's Tricky 'Variations' Foil Symphony," *Boston Globe* (November 11, 1967).

moments that I document, what was said about Webern's music could not have been said about any other music.

One final motivation of my work, then, is to see what insights into Webern's music might be gleaned from this motley collection of interpretations and interventions. I seek to move beyond reception history and identify presentations of Webern's music that resonate into the present. Might we able to take something from Slonimsky's playful, childlike approach to Webern's music? Could it be fruitful to listen to Craft's recordings with fresh ears, dated though the performances may appear at first? Which of the Moldenhauers' strategies for promoting Webern's music might be useful in the ongoing work of promoting contemporary music? Regardless of their particular answers, these questions stretch our ears and our minds. Nor must the questions be limited to music; contained within the following pages are lessons on zealotry and prejudice, struggle and perseverance, dedication and generosity. Teasing out these lessons or those related to Webern's music has not been my primary objective and so the lessons emerge only sporadically, more often running beneath the surface. But they are there for those who look.

In considering the role of present-day concerns in the telling of history, I echo Robert Rosenstone, who argues that works of history are too often written

> as if to cater only to those who already want to know about a particular subject and they write off the rest of the public. In the way [historians] hang on to outmoded kinds of narrative and analysis, they seem to assume that you should care about what they have to say, but they don't justify that

> assumption. History is good for you, they imply—but they never say why. And if they don't answer that question, why would anyone else?[19]

At the beginning of this introduction I cited three questions. By now it should be clear what I am writing about, as should the answer to the second question (I do, in fact, like Webern's music). It is the third question— "why would anyone have devoted so much time, energy, and money to promoting music that hardly anyone else seemed to want?"—to which I devote a majority of the pages that follow. But the question is not only "Why did they bother then?" but also "Why should we bother now?" It is my contention that this history and this music are worth bothering to consider, that they can be "good for you," as Rosenstone puts it. I will endeavor to provide the justification that Rosenstone demands, to answer the "why" of it all. Since reception history is about the power of interpretation, I entreat you to do the same: to become engrossed in the past while listening with an ear towards the present.

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[19] Robert Rosenstone, "Space for the bird to fly in," in Keith Jenkins, Sue Morgan & Alun Munslow eds., *Manifestos for History*, Routledge (2007): 17.

Chapter 1: *Webern heard, overheard, and overlooked (1923–1938)*

On January 13, 1924 soprano Greta Torpadie and pianist Rex Tilson performed Anton Webern's op. 4 no. 5 ("Ihr tratet zu dem Herde") as part of an International Composers' Guild concert in New York. The concert was held at Broadway's Vanderbilt Theater, a venue typically reserved theatrical productions that would later host the premiere of Langston Hughes' *Mulatto: A Tragedy of the Deep South*. An advertisement (Figure 1) promised compositions by Berg, Casella, Rieti, Ruggles, Salzedo, Szymanowski, Varese, and "von Webern." But by then Anton was just "Webern," stripped of the aristocratic "von" as a product of the First World War and subsequent dissolution of the Habsburg Empire. This mistake is hardly surprising, for Webern was far from a household name. The International Composers' Guild concert may not have been the very first time Webern's music was heard in the United States, but it was the first time that music was played as part of a public, documented performance.

Confusion over Webern's name continued after the concert. Torpadie and Tilson had followed their performance of "Ihr tratet zu dem Herde" with Alban Berg's op. 2 no. 4 ("Warm die Lüfte"). This pairing, along with the fact that Webern's op. 4 was not published by Universal Edition until 1923, suggests that the Guild's sheet music source was *Der Blaue Reiter Almanach* (The Blue Rider Almanac). In that 1912 publication the two songs appear on adjacent pages, a product of Arnold Schoenberg's association with Wassily Kandinsky, a prominent member of the *Blaue Reiter* group. It was only the second time that Webern's

music had ever appeared in print.[1] Over a decade later, at the New York concert, Berg's song made the stronger impression. The *New York Times*' Olin Downes praised Torpadie's performance while describing the two songs as the work of a single composer "with knowledge and ideals"—Berg.[2] Though the program included both the erroneous "von" and a translation of the song's title ("Dead Flames") that might be generously described as poetic, it at least identified Webern as the composer; Downes scrubbed him from the historical record altogether.[3] The following week Lawrence Gilman of the *New York Herald Tribune* published a reflection on the concert entitled "The Ultra-Modernist Composer and His Public," in which Webern was not mentioned.[4] Any music lover relying on the reporting of the *Times* and the *Herald* would have had no way of knowing that they had missed what might well have been the first public performance of Webern's music in the United States.

But would they have even cared? By 1924 New York had developed into what Carol Oja calls an "international bazaar for modernist music," as is evident from the long list of composers featured at the Guild concert.[5] In that context the difference between Berg and Webern was not especially salient. The two composers were often referred to, either individually or collectively, as

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[1] For more on this publication, see: Mark Carroll, "Hearing is Believing: 'Inner Necessity" and the Songs in the Blaue Reiter Almanac," *Musicology Australia* 32.1 (2010): 3–26.

[2] Olin Downes, "MUSIC: Philharmonic Concert," *New York Times* (January 14, 1924).

[3] Program, January 13, 1924, International Composers' Guild papers, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

[4] Lawrence Gilman, "The Ultra-Modernist Composer and His Public: Innovators in Music and the Problem of Their Reception: The Disturbing Effect of Genius: How Can It Be Recognized? The Need of Freedom and Flexibility of Mind," *New York Herald Tribune* (January 20, 1924).

[5] Carol Oja, *Making Music Modern: New York in the 1920s*, Oxford, Oxford University Press (2003): 182.

"disciples" of Schoenberg. Nor were critics and audiences particularly well versed in the compositional idioms of the Second Viennese School; twelve years separated the publication of the Berg and Webern songs in *Der Blaue Reiter Almanach* from their U.S. premiere at the Guild concert.[6] Downes can be forgiven for conflating the music of Berg with the music of Webern, for in 1924 neither he nor anyone else in the United States had heard much of either.

Even if the sounds of Webern's music were unfamiliar, however, conceptions of that music circulated widely. As Oja argues, "ideas about European modernism often had as much impact as the music itself," and journalism "provided an equally powerful vehicle for transmission" as performances.[7] David Metzer notes, along similar lines, how U.S. press coverage of the 1912 premiere of Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire* in Berlin "disseminated the revolutionary reputation that the work had gained in Europe" and "propagated [Schoenberg's] reputation as a radical even before his compositions were known" in the United States.[8] A parallel process took place with Webern's music. Webern's name appeared in U.S. newspapers as early as 1913, when the *Boston Evening Transcript* published an evocatively titled report on a Viennese concert: "'Hearing' a Futurist Concert in Vienna: Schoenberg, Other 'Ultrists,' a Riot and the Police." What became known

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[6] A similar interval separated the 1912 world premiere of Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire* in Berlin from its U.S. premiere at a Guild concert in 1923, the latter of which is often considered a watershed moment in the history of European modernism in the United States.

[7] Oja, *Making Music Modern*, 54.

[8] David Metzer, "The New York reception of *Pierrot lunaire*: The 1923 premiere and its aftermath," *The Musical Quarterly* 78.4 (Winter, 1994): 679, 671. Schoenberg received far greater U.S. press coverage than Webern prior to the 1920s and his music was performed in the United States years earlier than Webern's ever was. For details on this period of Schoenberg reception, see: Walter B. Bailey, "'For the serious listeners who swear neither at nor by Schoenberg': Music criticism, the Great War, and the dawning of a new attitude toward Schoenberg and ultra-modern music in New York City," *Journal of Musicology* 32.2 (Spring, 2015): 279–322.

as the *Skandalkonzert* was an early-career nadir for Webern, whose Six Pieces for Orchestra, op. 6 were performed alongside music by Zemlinsky, Schoenberg, and Berg.[9] The *Transcript* report included the description of a quiet moment at which a "pretty" U.S. student in the audience "'got the giggles' and attracted to her shamed face the righteous hisses of the earnest young men" whose mission it was to defend modern music." The article prefigured many later reception trends discussed below, including a memorable animal-based analogy; the flute was said to have played a "plaintive little meow, like that of a cat with catarrh."[10] Word of the incident spread far and wide, with reports published in the local papers of places like Eugene, Oregon and Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.[11] By the time of the 1924 Guild concert, then, Webern's reputation as a composer preceded him. "To the relatively small circles of listeners who had actually heard their music, as well as to the considerably larger numbers who knew them only by reputation," describes Joseph Auner, "Schoenberg and his school had become associated with the most extreme radicalism and hypermodernity"—for better or for worse.[12]

Though press coverage of European performances did little to soften the ground prior to Webern's U.S. premiere, the performances themselves were evidence of an increasingly transatlantic music culture, particularly with regards

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[9] A performance of Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder* was also planned, but the riot broke out before it could begin.

[10] H.K.M., "'Hearing' a Futurist Concert in Vienna: Schoenberg, Other 'Ultrists," a Riot and the Police," *Boston Evening Transcript* (April 17, 1913). "H.K.M." refers to H. Kenneth MacGowan.

[11] "Ribaldry At Concert: Blows Are Exchanged Between Performers, Audience, and Tumult Ensues," *Morning Register* (April 20, 1913); "Fight at a Concert," *Saskatoon Daily Star* (June 3, 1913).

[12] Joseph Auner, "Proclaiming the mainstream: Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern," in *The Cambridge history of twentieth-century music*, 228–259, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (2004): 229.

to modernist music. Technological advancements meant that ideas, music, and people all moved across the globe more easily than ever before, and "[m]usicians capitalized on the century's rapidly increasing ease of international travel and communication."[13] A "geographically dispersed modernist movement," Oja argues, "was possible in a way that could not have been the case even a decade earlier."[14] U.S. music culture saw an explosion of the commissioning, performance, and publication of new works by both U.S. and European composers. A bevy of newly formed ensembles devoted to contemporary music led the charge, the International Composers' Guild and League of Composers chief among them. By the end of the 1920s even mainstream ensembles that had previously shied away from modernist music began to commission and program new works.

Webern was keenly aware of the opportunities that this new musical landscape presented. Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer, Webern's biographers and the subjects of Chapter 4, argue that "[t]he Americans whom [Webern] knew personally had instilled in him a sympathy for their country" and that Webern nurtured an "enthusiasm for the proverbial 'land of unlimited opportunities.'"[15] Documents from this period confirm the Moldenhauers' claim. In a 1934 letter to U.S. composer and former Schoenberg student Adolph Weiss, Webern noted how glad he was to hear that both Schoenberg and Weiss had found success in the

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[13] Felix Meyer, Carol Oja, Wolfgang Rathert, and Anne Shreffler, "Introduction," in *Crosscurrents: American and European Music in Interaction, 1900–2000* ed. Meyer, Oja, Rathert, and Shreffler. Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer (2014): 12.

[14] Oja, *Making Music Modern*, 193.

[15] Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern: A Chronicle of His Life and Work*, New York: Random House (1978): 352.

United States. He concluded the letter by expressing his desire to follow in their footsteps and emigrate himself, emphasizing his point with no fewer than three exclamation points; a postscript clarifies that he would also be happy to simply visit.[16] Neither wish would come to pass. As I outline over the course of this chapter, however, Webern did participate in the transatlantic trade of modernist music. Performances of his music in the United States increased in frequency over the course of the 1920s and 30s and included the world premieres of the Symphony, op. 21 (in New York in 1929) and the String Quartet, op. 28 (in Pittsfield, Massachusetts in 1938), both of which were commissioned by U.S. groups. With Weiss' help, Webern's song "Liebste Jungfrau" (op. 17 no. 2) was published in Henry Cowell's *New Music* series in 1930; a few years later Webern conducted a program of works by Cowell and other U.S. composers in Vienna.

Yet none of these developments did much to shape the reception of Webern's music for the better, at least not yet. As the Moldenhauers note, "Webern's faith in America and his belief that perhaps only the New World could provide a fertile ground for his ideas and intentions sounds prophetic in the light of what American initiative was to accomplish in the propagation of his work *after his death*" (emphasis added).[17] Unlike later chapters, then, this chapter contains no clear success stories. More often than not during this period, Webern's music was met with confusion and hostility. Nor did it reach a particularly broad audience; the story of Webern's music in the interwar United

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[16] Letter, Anton Webern to Adolph Weiss, March 21, 1934, Anton Webern Collection, MF 110.1-1293, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, Switzerland.
[17] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*, 352.

States is a story of specialists and connoisseurs, not of mainstream consumption. Even so, the relative failures of this chapter set the stage for the successes I discuss in the ensuing chapters. Though few and far between, Webern's interwar advocates were among the most influential figures in contemporary U.S. music culture, from Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge and Henry Cowell to Serge Koussevitzky and Leopold Stokowski. Their efforts ensured that Webern's music was heard, seen, and discussed, which in turn established trends that would shape the reception of Webern's music for years to come. At the outset of the Second World War Webern's music was no more popular than it had been at the time of the International Composers' Guild concert in 1924. But audiences and critics had learned to identify Webern as the creator of short, strange, and intensely quiet pieces of music. For a composer whose U.S. premiere went almost completely unnoticed, that was a start.

False starts and faint rustlings (1923–1927)

The International Composers' Guild concert in 1924 was not the first attempt to mount a performance of Webern's music in the United States, only the first to find success. Before it came a series of false starts. A *New York Times* article from October 1923 announced a performance of the *Passacaglia*, op. 1 as part of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's upcoming season.[18] Under music director Frederick Stock the orchestra had previously given the U.S. premieres of works such as Mahler's Symphony no. 7 (in 1907) and Schoenberg's Five Pieces for

[18] "Current Notes Afield And Music Overseas," *New York Times* (October 21, 1923).

Orchestra, op. 16 (in 1913). But the planned performance of the *Passacaglia* never materialized. An article by Lawrence Gilman also published in October 1923 mentioned an upcoming performance of the *Passacaglia*, this time by the New York-based State Symphony under Josef Stransky.[19] It was Schoenberg who had recommended the *Passacaglia* to Stransky, reassuring the conductor that it was not a "dangerous" work and citing European performances of "unmitigated success" in a 1922 letter.[20] Gilman reported on one such performance in May 1923, calling the work "sober, reticent, well built" and "pleasant to hear" and reassuring his readers that even "[t]he most ferociously orthodox could listen to it without turning a hair."[21] It was thus with seeming disappointment that Gilman reported, in his end-of-season review of the State Symphony's season, that "Mr. Stransky had promised us the 'Passacaglia' of Webern, the young Austrian modernist; but he did not play it."[22] Why Stransky and Stock decided against performing the work is unknown, but it is possible that they encountered difficulties in procuring a score and orchestral parts, since the work had been published by Universal Edition just one year earlier. These two cancelled performances, along with all other performances of Webern's music discussed in this section, are outlined in Figure 2.

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[19] Lawrence Gilman, "Symphony Society Begins Thursday; Orchestral Plans: Damrosch to Give Stravinsky Work: Second Philadelphia Concert: Plans of State, Boston Symphonies," *New York Tribune* (October 28, 1923).

[20] Erwin Stein, *Arnold Schoenberg Letters*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press (1987): 74.

[21] Lawrence Gilman, "Mr. Gilman on French Orchestras and Conductors," *New York Tribune* (May 27, 1923).

[22] Lawrence Gilman, "In the World of Music and Musicians: Mr. Stransky's New Orchestra And Its First Season's Record: What the State Symphony Played; With Some Fantastic and Impertinent Suggestions for Future Programs," *New York Herald Tribune* (May 18, 1924).

A little more than a year after the International Composers' Guild concert, on January 18, 1925, the Franco-American Musical Society presented a similar Webern selection.[23] Greta Torpadie again performed a single song from op. 4, this time "So ich traurig bin," the fourth song in the set. The Moldenhauers cite the performance as the song's world premiere, even though it (like the rest of op. 4) was composed a decade-and-a-half earlier, in 1908–1909.[24] Webern was aware of this performance and was in fact an honorary member of the Society's advisory board along with Berg and Schoenberg, although there is no evidence that he ever engaged with the Society directly.[25] As with the previous year's performance, critical response was thin; in the sole review of the concert, Gilman dismissed songs by Webern and Berg as "tame and feeble triflings."[26]

The performances of selections from op. 4 in 1924 and 1925—likely the first two performances of Webern's music in the United States—thus did not make much of an impression on U.S. audiences. In the two years that followed, however, a handful of performances would begin to shape the U.S. reception of Webern's music. The first came just one month after the Franco-American Musical Society concert. On February 8, 1925 a concert of the International Composers' Guild included the Five Pieces for String Quartet, op. 5, performed by the Letz Quartet. Downes, though sharply critical of the program as a whole, did

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[23] The Franco-American Musical Society later changed its name to Pro Musica.

[24] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*, 707. The appendix to Oja's *Making Music Modern*, an indispensable resource, does not list the performance as a premiere of any kind (371). This is probably a result of scholarly conservatism on Oja's part; Oja notes that she attempted to verify all claims regarding premieres, but was not always able to do so (367).

[25] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*, 284

[26] Lawrence Gilman, "Music: New Music by Franco-Americans and Others at Aeolian Hall," *New York Herald Tribune* (January 19, 1925).

not address Webern's music in particular; he described the playing of the Letz Quartet as "musicianly," a positive-if-vague evaluation.[27] Paul Rosenfeld quipped that Webern's music was "less heard than overheard," arguing that the second op. 5 piece was the only to possess "colour and movement," while the others bored with their "painfully sustained understatements" and "*pianissimo espressivos.*"[28] Gilman was more positive in his assessment, describing the pieces as "remarkable studies in the effect of sustained pianissimi," full of "an otherworldly tenderness" and "fragile loveliness."[29] Taken together, Rosenfeld and Gilman's reviews mark the beginning of one strand of Webern reception in the United States. By focusing on the sustained quiet of op. 5 and employing words such as "otherworldly," "understatement," and "fragile," Rosenfeld and Gilman laid out an approach to Webern's music that would grow increasingly prevalent in the years to come.

Eighteen months later, October 1926 saw two more aborted performances of Webern's music. Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra had been scheduled to present the U.S. premiere of the Five Pieces for Orchestra, op. 10 in an October 19 performance at Carnegie Hall. The *New York Times* and *New York Herald Tribune* both announced the program, calling Webern a "favorite pupil" of

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[27] Olin Downes, "MUSIC: International Composers' Guild," *New York Times* (February 9, 1925). Downes discussed the performance again in a February 15 piece entitled "How America's Composers Fare With Internationals," in which he bemoans the apparent lack of a modern U.S. composer to compete with the great composers of Europe.

[28] Paul Rosenfeld, "Musical Chronicle," *The Dial* (April 1925).

[29] Lawrence Gilman, "Music: More New Music From the International Composers' Guild," *The New York Herald Tribune* (February 9, 1925).

Schoenberg.[30] Two days before the performance, however, the *Herald Tribune* ran an announcement noting the removal of the work from the program.[31] As Aaron Copland explained in a letter to Nicolas Slonimsky the next day, Stokowski was forced to cancel the Webern pieces since the orchestral parts had yet to arrive from Europe.[32] The Pro Arte Quartet, meanwhile, was set to perform op. 5 at the opening concert of the League of Composers' fourth season on October 28. But at some point in the ten days leading up to the concert Berg's String Quartet, op. 3 replaced the Webern pieces.[33] The switch may have been motivated by the fact that the Webern pieces had been heard the previous year at a concert of the International Composers' Guild—the League's chief competitor—whereas the Berg quartet had not yet been played on either series. Indeed a *New York Times* announcement from October 24 claimed that the performance was the U.S. premiere of the Berg quartet, while Gilman noted that the work was "probably new hereabouts."[34]

The Five Pieces for Orchestra, op. 10 finally received their U.S. premiere the following month, at a November 19 performance by Serge Koussevitzky and the

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[30] "Philharmonic Opens Its Season: Philadelphians Here Oct. 19," *New York Herald Tribune* (October 10, 1926): E7. "PROGRAMS OF THE WEEK: Mengelberg and Philharmonic Return—Elman Heads His Quartet," *New York Times* (October 10, 1926).

[31] "Philadelphia Orchestra: Two Changes in Tuesday's Program Announced," *New York Herald Tribune* (October 17, 1926).

[32] Letter, Aaron Copland to Nicolas Slonimsky, October 18, 1926, Aaron Copland Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress.

[33] A loose-leaf ad for the League's season, held in the League of Composers/ISCM records at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, shows the Webern pieces printed but crossed out by hand. An October 17 ad in the *New York Times* lists Webern among the featured composers, but an otherwise identical ad a week later features Berg's name instead.

[34] "Berg and Bartok." *New York Times* (October 24, 1926); Lawrence Gilman, "Another Modernist to the Front," *New York Herald Tribune* (October 24, 1926). In a situation similar to that of "So ich bin traurig," discussed above, the appendix's to Oja's *Making Music Modern* does not cite this performance as the work's U.S. premiere, though it may have well have been.

Boston Symphony Orchestra. Koussevitzky did not face the same difficulties as Stokowski in procuring parts, since he had conducted the work's world premiere in June of the same year at the International Society for Contemporary Music festival in Zürich.[35] The Boston program included three other works premiered in Zürich, by Alexandre Tansman, Hans Krása, and William Walton, before concluding with a performance of Beethoven's Symphony no. 5. The latter, as a reviewer from the *Christian Science Monitor* noted, was included "for obvious reasons."[36] Webern's work was considerably older than the three other premieres. Though he composed op. 10 between 1911 and 1913, the work's premiere had been delayed by the onset of the First World War. Unlike the performances of opp. 4 and 5, then, there was no multi-year gap between the world premiere of op. 10 and its U.S. premiere, with the latter taking place less than six months after the former.

The critical response to op. 10 echoed the reception of op. 5 in its emphasis on the sparse textures and pervasive quiet of Webern's music. The *Christian Science Monitor* described the op. 10 pieces as "mere shadows of sound, as fugacious as vapor," while the *Boston Herald*'s Philip Hale considered them "dabs

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[35] The Zürich premiere inspired Theodor W. Adorno's first essay on Webern. For a contemporary reprint of that essay, see: Theodor W. Adorno, "Anton Webern: Zur Aufführung der fünf Orchesterstücke in Zürich," *Musik-Konzepte* Sonderband (November 1983): 269–271.

[36] L.A.S., "From Zurich to Boston," *Christian Science Monitor* (November 20, 1926). Koussevitzky's decision to conclude with the Beethoven symphony may have been influenced by a letter he received from playwright and literary critic Frederick J. Pohl in 1925. Pohl argued that concerts featuring modern music should be organized "psychologically" rather than chronologically, so as to finish "in the grand style…that is, with music that produces harmony of soul, an uplifting, unifying emotion," and so as to avoid "the final bad taste, the disquieting effect left…by certain music of some modern composers." See: Letter, Frederick J. Pohl to Serge Koussevitzky, February 3, 1925, Serge Koussevitzky Archive, box 114, Music Division, Library of Congress.

of pale colors expressive of the inaudible."[37] When Koussevitzky and his orchestra repeated the program at a League of Composers concert in New York the following week, Gilman described the pieces in similar terms: "the faintest tonal exhalations, scarcely perceptible tonal wraiths, mere wisps and shreds of sound, fugitive astral vapors—so brief and so evanescent."[38] In fact Gilman had used nearly identical language to describe the performance of op. 5 at the International Composers' Guild concert the previous year: "tonal wraiths, mere wisps and shreds of sound, evanescent astral vapors."[39] Downes was more negative in his evaluation of op. 10, arguing that it contained not even "an ounce of creative impulse."[40] The program note accompanying the performance did little to counter Downes' claim, employing adjectives such as "pale" and "tenuous" to describe the work and contending that one could detect "only the slightest tangible melodic content" within it.[41] The contrasting opinions of Gilman and Downes were also evident in their responses to the extraordinary brevity of the op. 10 pieces. Gilman described the six-measure-long fourth piece as "Lilliputian," while Downes mockingly referred to it as "commendably short."[42] I discuss that piece, as well as the similarly brief op. 6 no. 3, in Chapter 2.[43]

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[37] L.A.S., "From Zurich to Boston; "Slonimsky, *Lexicon of Musical Invective*, 249.

[38] Lawrence Gilman, "Music: Week-End Dallyings with Modernists of Various Sorts," *New York Herald Tribune* (November 29, 1926).

[39] Gilman, "Music: More New Music…"

[40] Olin Downes, "Music: Boston Symphony Orchestra," *New York Times* (November 28, 1926).

[41] Program, November 27, 1926, League of Composers/ISCM records, JPB 11-5, box 8, Music Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

[42] Gilman, "Music: Week-End Dallyings…"; Downes, "MUSIC: Boston Symphony Orchestra…"

[43] For a philosophical and aesthetic approach to very brief pieces of music in the first part of the twentieth century, including works by Webern, see: Simon Obert, *Musikalische Kürze zu Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 2008.

One unusual response to the brevity and quiet of op. 10 came in the form of a host of animal-based analogies. The *Boston Post*'s Warren Storey Smith, for example, argued that "[i]nevitably these faint rustlings, these tiny squeaks and tittering called to mind the activities of insects."[44] Whether or not Downes and Gilman read the *Post* review, both critics kept up the animal theme when op. 10 was performed in New York. Downes contended that, "if audiences and critics were Cuviers who could reconstruct from a single bone the entire anatomy of an animal, they might be able from this sketch of a sketch to reconstruct the musical architecture Webern had in mind." Seeing as they were not, he concluded, "the music is meaningless."[45] Gilman outdid Storey Smith by likening Webern's pieces not to insects but to microscopic protozoa, describing a trombone's descending minor ninth with a biting turn of phrase: "the amoeba weeps."[46] All of these analogies positioned the unusual features of Webern's musical style negatively, as the absence of something rather than the presence of something; if insects produce but "tiny squeaks," one can only wonder what sounds an amoeba makes. There were, to be sure, other perspectives on Webern's music. In a review of the Zürich festival for *Modern Music*, the League of Composers' in-house publication, Copland argued that the few notes contained within op. 10 were necessarily "filled with meaning." This quality, he contended, engendered a "breathless"

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[44] Slonimsky, *Lexicon of Musical Invective*, 249.

[45] Downes, "MUSIC: Boston Symphony Orchestra…"

[46] Gilman, "Music: Week-End Dallyings…" The figure Gilman refers to, in m. 4 of the fourth movement of op. 10, is in fact not a minor ninth but its enharmonic equivalent, an augmented octave. Earlier versions of op. 10 no. 4 included a glissando between the two notes, which might have made the weeping quality even more prominent. See: Felix Meyer and Anne C. Shreffler, "Webern's Revisions: Some Analytical Implications," *Music Analysis* 12.3 (October 1993): 360 ff.

listening, a turn of phrase that echoed Schoenberg's earlier claim that Webern could "express a novel in a single gesture, a joy in a breath."[47] Interpretations of this kind would become more prominent in the work of figures such as Nicolas Slonimsky and Leonard Bernstein, as I document in Chapter 2. For the time being, however, phrases like "faint rustlings" and "tonal wraiths" represented an emerging consensus on Webern's music that largely skewed negative.

Critics gravitated towards the brevity and quiet of opp. 5 and 10 because those features were what stood out amidst a sea of new musical styles. When Koussevitzky and his orchestra took their program of new music to New York in November 1926, they entered into a musical environment in which concertgoers enjoyed access to a remarkable breadth and diversity of modern music. Koussevitzky led op. 10 at a League of Composers concert on November 27; an International Composers' Guild followed on the very next day. The League concert took place at Town Hall, on 43rd Street between 7th Avenue and 6th Avenue; the Guild concert took place at Aeolian Hall, on 42nd Street between 6th Avenue and 5th Avenue. On consecutive evenings at concerts around the corner from one another, then, audience members had the chance to hear music by Bartók, Carlos Chávez, Eugene Goossens, Louis Gruenberg, Krása, Ildebrando Pizzetti, William Grant Still, and Webern. With so much other music to get a handle on, it is no surprise that many simply filed Webern's music under "short" and "quiet" and moved on to the next piece.

Yet even at the same two concerts Webern's music resisted such pat

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[47] Aaron Copland, "Playing safe at Zurich," *Modern Music* IV.1 (November-December 1926): 28–31.

categorization. The Guild concert featured the U.S. premiere of Webern's Five Spiritual Songs, op. 15, a work that does not exhibit the "aphoristic" qualities found in opp. 5 and 10. Downes supplied his usual hatchet job, calling the songs "dull and ugly music."[48] Henreitta Straus claimed that they contained "neither melody, harmony, or rhythm," though she conceded that the vocalist, Mina Hager, was "an excellent musician."[49] Indeed Hager's performance inspired a pair of in-depth engagements with Webern's songs that transcended critical clichés. The first, an article entitled "The Standards of Vocal Tone," was published in the *Christian Science Monitor* five days after the Guild concert. The article's unsigned author mused on the historical development of vocal technique, comparing Webern's op. 15 to Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire,* which was in fact an inspiration for Webern's work.[50] They concluded that both composers went too far in expanding on the vocal writing of Wagner, even if the experimental impulse behind the two works was laudable:

> The procedure is simply enough explained from a historical perspective. Both composers employ an exaggerated form of the Wagnerian declamation. They have made the voice produce effects which modern composers of better judgment, even they themselves in other works, bring about by means of instruments.
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> But no doubt the experiment had to be made. A characteristic of those engaged in the modern quest is that they push every method of expression to the farthest consequences, and leave the public to respond as it will.[51]

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[48] Olin Downes, "MUSIC: More of the Ultra-Modern," *New York Times* (November 29, 1926).

[49] Henrietta Straus, "N.Y. MUSIC WORLD STRETCHED ON RACK OF ULTRA-MODERNISM: League of Composers and International Composers' Guild Shatter Sensibilities Of Critic, Who Is Move To Bitter Thoughts," *The Baltimore Sun* (December 12, 1926).

[50] In a series of letter to Schoenberg, Webern describes how *Pierrot* served as a model for Webern's opp. 13–15. See: Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*, 266–267.

[51] "The Standards of Vocal Tone," *Christian Science Monitor* (December 4, 1926).

The author's comments echo the reception of *Pierrot lunaire*, which was likewise viewed as overcooked Wagner at the time of its U.S. premiere in 1923.[52] As I discuss in Chapter 3, furthermore, the suggestion that Webern's vocal lines would be better executed by instruments would become a recurring theme in the reception of the composer's vocal music.

A second response to the performance of op. 15 was even more unusual in it depth and creativity. In a February 1927 essay published in *The Dial*, Paul Rosenfeld's praise for the op. 15 songs was effusive:

> They are indeed songs of the spirit. There is sweat and anguish in the broken, stammering, piping sounds uttered by the seven instruments, flute, clarinet, bass clarinet, trumpet, harp, violin, and viola of Webern's accompaniment, and half spoken, half intoned by the singer of the childish-mystical verses. Desire has escaped the clutch of the bowels with half of its forces spent, and wavers haggard and blinded toward the projected goal, star or high-ethereal flute-note. That is the day, inexpert in God, as it is the day from which the five ghostly poems stem: the closing Middle Ages racked by fears and obsessed by thoughts of pain, death, and the devil. Webern's light volumes, filigree forms, and great variety of tenuous sound; his bodiless melodies pale and simple as the inflections of nuns, children, and aged brothers; his movements that are fleet, even, and cheerful, as the paces of sisters-of-mercy, actually provoke comparison with certain of the naive and mystically relaxed devotional pictures of the school of Cologne, so nakedly does the music communicate the state painfully freed from self-conceit and the tyranny of the individual will. The tone is simultaneously ethereal and popular. Like scars gape the wide intervals. The words march light and swift as in unemphatic speech. Not even the sudden dynamic volumes of Webern's other characteristic pieces break the even plane of humble sonorities. Since it is persistently the child, the virgin, the old man in the human breast that sings, intense feeling is present only for the few who know how to hear. But it is present, alternately meek and static, and sweet and warm as in no other composition of Webern's shown in New York.[53]

The passage is a prime example of Rosenfeld's tendency towards "painting a

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[52] Metzer, "The New York reception of *Pierrot lunaire*…" 678.

[53] Paul Rosenfeld, "Musical Chronicle," *The Dial* (February 1927).

wash of images rather than specifically describing music," a trait that sometimes drew criticism from his peers.[54] But Rosenfeld did eventually arrive at a crucial point. Not only did op. 15 lack the "sudden dynamic volumes" heard in Webern's "other characteristic pieces"—the recently performed opp. 5 and 10, the latter of which Rosenfeld discussed in the same article—but it was also "sweet and warm as in no other composition of Webern's shown in New York." It is a simple enough observation to note that op. 15 does not sound like Webern's aphoristic instrumental pieces, but it is one that other critics failed to make. Rosenfeld went on to discuss the one piece of music that op. 15 did resemble, *Pierrot lunaire*:

> Could this medley of the prose and poetry of music, of the voice of speech and that of song have been created had not Dreimal Sieben Lieder des Pierrot Lunaire preceded it? Obviously not, the first minute replies. The expressions are closely related, and Schoenberg's came first. Probably, yes, the second, the more reflective one, joins in, so subtly removed from both the sound-quality and the feeling of his master's marvelous [sic] and copse-green cycle are Webern's songs. It is very likely that had Webern never encountered Schoenberg he still would have given something equivalent to the German primitiveness of these Geistliche Lieder. What in the elder's characteristic rhythm verges on the hysterical, in the younger man's becomes simultaneously more ethereal and homely.[55]

For Rosenfeld—and perhaps for the first time in the United States—Webern was no mere "disciple" or "favorite pupil" of Schoenberg, but an artist in his own right.

But Rosenfeld—"the period's most illustrious critic of new music"—was exceptional.[56] The image of Webern as the follower of Schoenberg who composed short and quiet pieces stuck, even if works like opp. 4 and 15 were neither particularly short nor particularly quiet. Few, it would seem, heard what

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[54] Oja, *Making Music Modern*, 303.
[55] Rosenfeld, "Musical Chronicle."
[56] Oja, *Making Music Modern*, 303.

Rosenfeld heard in the long and lyrical lines of the op. 15 songs. The two works that received by far the most extensive press coverage during this period, opp. 5 and 10, are two pinnacles of Webern's aphoristic composition; thus discussions of austerity, quiet, brevity, and sparseness dominated. The trend continued at the U.S. premiere of the Four Pieces for Violin and Piano, op. 7, performed by Barbara Lull and Aaron Copland at the New School for Social Research in December 1927.[57] In the lone review of the concert, Alfred Frankenstein of the *Chicago Tribune* described the four pieces as "strange little things" in which the violin "scarcely seems to play." Frankenstein complained that every time the piano "got going," the piece was immediately over. "From both instruments," he concluded, "the sound waves went out in the shape of question marks."[58]

The other U.S. performance of Webern's music in 1927 offered something different in the form of the *Passacaglia*, op. 1. The work, twice programmed and cancelled in 1923, finally received its U.S. premiere on March 8, 1927, performed by Leopold Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra at Carnegie Hall. The *Passacaglia* is one of just two tonal works in Webern's published oeuvre, the other being the op. 2 chorus *Entflieht auf leichten Kähnen*. While critics had often

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[57] U.S. violinist Arthur Hartmann corresponded with Webern and Schoenberg about a planned performance of op. 7 in 1914, at which time Hartmann was living in Paris. But the performance was canceled following the outbreak of the First World War and there is no evidence that Hartmann ever performed the work, either in Europe or the United States. See: Felix Meyer and Anne Shreffler, "Performance and revision: the early history of Webern's Four Pieces for violin and piano, Op. 7," in *Webern Studies*, ed. Kathryn Bailey, 139–142, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

[58] Alfred Frankenstein, "America Stars in Modernist Concert," *Chicago Tribune* (January 1, 1928). A program for this concert can be found in the Henry Cowell Papers at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, box 166, folder 9. Advertisements suggest that Copland intended to program op. 7 as part of a series of concerts that took place at the New School in early 1928, but it is not clear whether a performance ever actually took place.

recoiled at the stark modernity of Webern's later compositions, then, the nearly twenty-year-old *Passacaglia* showed its age at the Carnegie Hall performance. The conservative Downes argued that the piece is "already considered a little passé by our advance guard," though he proudly proclaimed himself "old-fashioned enough to think highly of the sweep and the passionate mood" of the work's closing measures.[59] Gilman noted how "Webern mixes his colors with brains," presumably a reference to orchestration, but was less enthusiastic about the work as a whole. He expressed his distaste "passacaglias that have not aged in the wood," that is "unless Stokowski decants them," though he did not clarify whether the conductor was successful in doing so.[60] Still, the relatively more positive reception of the *Passacaglia* is noteworthy. An outlier within Webern's body of work, the *Passacaglia* is the exception that proves the rule; critics received it more favorably than any of the other Webern works they had heard precisely because it sounded nothing like those works. Like op. 15, furthermore, it attracted far less attention than opp. 5 and 10. In these ways—a focus on instrumental music rather than vocal music and on works viewed as radically modern (opp. 5 and 10) rather than those that continued and transformed past traditions (the *Passacaglia*)—the reception of Webern's music from 1924 to 1927 anticipated trends that would remain in place for years to come.

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[59] Olin Downes, "MUSIC: The Philadelphia Orchestra," *New York Times* (March 9, 1927).

[60] Lawrence Gilman, "MUSIC: Mr. Stokowski Exhibits a New Variety of Music," *New York Herald Tribune* (March 9, 1927).

The Symphony, op. 21 (1929)

On December 18, 1929, Webern's Symphony, op. 21 received its world premiere at a League of Composers concert in New York. Composed independent of any prospective performance, the Symphony was published by Universal Edition in June 1929, some six months before the premiere. It was only after receiving a letter from the League requesting a work for chamber orchestra that Webern thought to send op. 21, as composing a new work to meet the League's October deadline would not be feasible. On September 20 Webern recorded details of the honorarium accompanying the commission in his diary, a sum of $350 that constituted "an enormous amount compared to Webern's ordinary earnings."[61] On October 31 he wrote to Claire Reis, the League's co-founder, to express his gratitude. In the same letter he requested information about the performance and explained that the work could be performed with full string sections or with solo strings; this letter and a translation can be found in Figures 3 and 4.[62] Webern also corresponded with Alexander Smallens, the conductor of the premiere. In a letter of December 26 Webern expressed regret that he had not been able to write before the premiere and explained once again the performance practice question regarding the strings.[63] He also asked for a report on

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[61] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*, 326.

[62] A translation of the letter was printed in a January 1963 issue of *Musical America*. See: "Previously Unpublished Composers' Letters as Written to Claire R. Reis," *Musical America* 83 (January 1963): 16.

[63] Letter, Anton Webern to Alexander Smallens, December 26, 1929, League of Composers/ISCM records, box 7, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

preparations for the premiere, including whether the Symphony was difficult to play and how many rehearsals were held.[64]

Webern did not ask Smallens how the work was received, which may have been for the best. Though the world premiere of op. 21 is emblematic of the United States' arrival as a "major international center" of modern music, the country was still only a few years removed from being "years behind in hearing the newest European compositions."[65] So while the *New York Herald Tribune*'s Francis D. Perkins claimed that "[t]he League audience must be the most progressively-minded and the most favorable to latter-day music of our various concert gatherings," it is not surprising that Webern's work was too much even for them.[66] Joan King of the *Chicago Tribune* likewise reported that "even those who were sufficiently advanced in modernism" to appreciate the first half of the program, consisting of music by Alfredo Casella, Paul Hindemith, and Eugene Goossens, "had had enough" when it came to op. 21.[67] Though it did not reach the level of famous Webern scandals in Vienna and London, the performance was reportedly met with "laughter," "jeers," "periodic bursts of mirth," a "little hissing," and the devolution of "snickers" into "guffaws."[68] Critics too were displeased, expressing their disdain for the work with some colorful turns of

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[64] If Smallens replied to this letter, that reply has been lost.

[65] Oja, *Making Music Modern*, 46.

[66] Francis D. Perkins, "Season Opened By Composers' League Here: Offers Contemporary Music for Various Instrumental Combinations in Town Hall: Casella's Serenata Given: Smallens and Goosens Conduct the Varied Program," *New York Herald Tribune* (December 19, 1929).

[67] Joan King, "Gotham Reception of Old Verdi Opera Is Enthusiastic," *Chicago Tribune* (December 29, 1929)

[68] Downes, "MUSIC: The League of Composers," 31; David Metzer, "The League of Composers: The Initial Years," *American Music* 15.1 (Spring, 1997): 54; Perkins, "Season Opened By Composers' League Here…"; Slonimsky, *Lexicon of Musical Invective*, 250.

phrase. For Downes the Symphony was nothing more than "whispering, clucking, picking."[69] For the *New York Evening Post*'s Oscar Thompson, it suggested "odd sounds in an old house when the wind moans, the floor creaks, the shades rustle and the doors and windows alternatively croak and croon." Thompson did admit—sarcastically, it would seem—that the work at least possessed "Webern's cardinal merit of brevity."[70]

The program note accompanying the performance could not have helped matters. In his letter to Claire Reis, Webern suggested that he might have time to write something for the League's program. Yet the note's vague language, inaccurate details, and tenuous stylistic comparisons all suggest that its author could not have been the composer:

> Written at the request of the League of Composers this Symphony is typical of the style of Webern's *Orchestral Pieces*—a sort of tonal *pointilisme*. In color, melodic contour and orchestration it is composed of tonal fractions, "differentials", and evolved from the most slender and finely drawn fragments.[71]

Webern did not write the Symphony at the request of the League. With its twelve-tone construction and cool aesthetic, furthermore, it does not particularly resemble Webern's two sets of orchestral pieces, opp. 6 and 10. The inscrutable phrase "tonal fractions" provided fodder for at least one critic; Samuel Chotzinoff echoed the animal analogies used to describe op. 10 in referring to op. 21 as "the fractional sounds uttered at night by the sleeping inhabitants of a zoo."[72] The

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[69] Downes, "MUSIC: The League of Composers," 31.
[70] Slonimsky, *Lexicon of Musical Invective*, 250.
[71] Program, December 18, 1929, League of Composers/ISCM records, box 8, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.
[72] Slonimsky, *Lexicon of Musical Invective*, 250.

reference to "most slender and finely drawn fragments," a phrase that echoes earlier references to "mere wisps and shreds of sound" and "evanescent astral vapors," also became a target. Downes damningly suggested that the Symphony did not represent "finely drawn" or "evanescent" musical fragments, but rather "[t]he ultimate significance of nothing."[73]

Follow-up performances of op. 21 fared little better. An October 1931 performance in Philadelphia under the baton of Leopold Stokowski turned into a minor scandal when, during one of the work's quieter moments, an audience member sneezed. Laughter rippled through the hall—what the *Philadelphia Inquirer* described as a "Gurgle Followed by Giggles"—and ultimately crescendoed into "the familiar 'razzberry' or 'Bronx cheer.'"[74] Stokowski stormed off the stage "[w]ith a lordly gesture" and "intense emotion in his every line and movement," only to return and restart the work after extended applause from the audience; "SNEEZE ANNOYS STOKOWSKI," declared the *New York Times*.[75] Copland painted a slightly more favorable picture of the Symphony in a report published in *Modern Music* about a performance of the work at the International Society for Contemporary Music festival in Oxford later in the same year. Webern's music, he noted, possessed "a wonderful poignancy" and "sensitivity," the composer displaying "absolute mastery over the means he employs." But

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[73] Downes, "MUSIC: The League of Composers."

[74] Linton Martin, "It's Not to Be Sneezed at, So Stokowski Halts Music: Gurgle Followed by Giggles Causes Conductor to Halt Orchestra, Depart in Wrath; Returns and Finishes Concert," *Philadelphia Inquirer* (October 25, 1931); "Modern Piece Brings Hisses for Stokowski," *Minneapolis Tribune* (October 26, 1931).

[75] Special to the Herald Tribune, "Philadelphia Audience Coughs at Modern Music: Stokowski Has Temperamental Clash With Objections," *New York Herald Tribune* (October 24, 1931); Special to The New York Times, "SNEEZE ANNOYS STOWOSKI: Philadelphia Audience Hisses as He Leaves Hall in Middle of Music," *New York Times* (October 24, 1931).

Copland also wondered whether op. 21 was so limited in terms of "emotional scale" and "musical means" as to render it dull and lacking in variety. Even at a festival of contemporary music, the work was deemed a "problem-child."[76]

The legacy of the op. 21 premiere is, then, murky at best. The reception of the work was strongly negative and the premiere seems to have had little or no impact on the reception of Webern's music more generally. Though it is tempting to view the premiere as the culmination of a half-decade of performances of Webern's music in New York, there is little evidence to support such an interpretation. The work was received in much the same way as those Webern works heard in the preceding years. In fact, as I discuss further in Chapter 3, no one seems to have even noticed that the Symphony was the first of Webern's first twelve-tone works to be performed in the United States—a fact underscored by the greater length of the work as compared to, for example, the Five Pieces for Orchestra, op. 10. Employing a revolutionary compositional language, as it turned out, made little difference; op. 21 was just another strange, quiet piece from the composer of strange, quiet pieces.

Henry Cowell and the New Music Society (1930)

As Figure 2 makes clear, performances of Webern's music in the United States during the interwar period were concentrated in northeastern cultural centers, especially New York. Western U.S. cities would become important sites for performances of Webern's music in the decades following the Second World War;

[76] Aaron Copland, "Contemporaries at Oxford, 1931," *Modern Music* (November-December 1931): 18.

Robert Craft's performances and recordings in Los Angeles during the 1950s are discussed in Chapter 3, while the Washington-based activities of the International Webern Society during the 1960s and 70s are the focus of Chapter 4. Until that time, however, little of Webern's music was heard outside of the Northeast. The one notable exception was the New Music Society, a Californian counterpart to groups like the League of Composers and International Composers' Guild, founded by U.S. composer Henry Cowell in 1925.

Though geographically removed, Cowell and his Society maintained close ties to the activities of the musical avant-garde in both the northeastern United States and Europe. Cowell performed his own piano works on a tour of Europe in 1923, meeting Bartók, Schoenberg, and Webern along the way. In Berlin, he performed as part of a concert series run by Melos, a contemporary music society led by conductor and Second Viennese School collaborator Hermann Scherchen. Like the New Music Society, Melos published a periodical featuring sheet music and articles in addition to organizing concerts; Rita H. Mead cites Melos as a possible inspiration Cowell's group.[77] Cowell stopped in New York on his way back from Europe, performing works of his own composition at Carnegie Hall and Town Hall in February 1924. Cowell's performances attracted considerably more attention than the performance of Webern's op. 4 no. 5 had received the previous month, as is evident from the verbose headline of the *New York Herald Tribune*'s report on the Carnegie Hall concert: "Cowell Displays New Method of Attacking Piano: California Composer, Giving Program of Own Works, Uses Fist and

[77] Rita H. Mead, "The amazing Mr. Cowell," *American music* 1.4 (Winter, 1983): 68.

Forearm to Conjure Novel Effects: Better Heard Than Seen: "Tone Clusters" Now and Then Impressive, Oftener Muddle and Confusing." The final section of the review is subtitled "Did Not Employ Nose."[78] Many of the musicians Cowell encountered on his tours to Europe and New York would later play crucial roles in the establishment and development of the New Music Society, which began presenting concerts in Los Angeles in 1925 before moving to San Francisco in 1927. Webern's Four Pieces for violin and piano, op. 7 were presented at a Society concert on November 27, 1928, as part of a program that also included music by Charles Ives, Robert Mills Delaney, and Carlos Chávez.[79] Critical coverage was sparse. The lone review, published in *Musical America*, discussed the familiar topic of brevity:

> These sketches are so brief [that Cowell] request[ed] to play each twice—in order to familiarize the auditors with the content. The first is charming in its exotic atmosphere. It does not comprise more than a dozen measures—if that many—and three notes tell most of the tale. The second is barbaric, primitive. The third combines the two styles, and the fourth might be titled "A Questioning and a Caress."[80]

Webern's music was not heard again on a New Music Society concert until

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[78] F.D. Perkins, "Cowell Displays New Method of Attacking Piano: California Composer, Giving Program of Own Works, Uses Fist and Forearm to Conjure Novel Effects: Better Heard Than Seen: "Tone Clusters" Now and Then Impressive, Oftener Muddle and Confusing," *New York Herald Tribune* (February 5, 1924).

[79] For a facsimile of the first page of the program for this concert, see: Rita H. Mead, *Henry Cowell's New Music, 1925—1936: the Society, the music editions, and the recordings*, Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press (1981): 104.

[80] Majory M. Fisher, "Jurgen is Given in San Francisco: Taylor's Scores Receives Plaudits as Best of Program," *Musical America* (December 15, 1928): 13. It is tempting, given the description of "a caress," to wonder whether this performance was of one of the early, unpublished version of op. 7 no. 4, which end with a glissando down over the entire G string. Given the year and the fact that the revised version of the piece (which ends instead with a seven-note descending figure) had by then been published by Universal Edition, this seems unlikely. For more on this topic, see: Meyer and Shreffler, "Performance and revision…" 166–169.

1947.[81] Webern was, however, named an honorary member of the Society's board of advisors, an addition suggested by Ives.[82]

More significant for Webern was the Society's quarterly periodical, *New Music*. As the announcement of the periodical's first issue proclaimed, *New Music* distinguished itself from publications like *Modern Music* by publishing "not articles on music, but music itself."[83] *New Music* focused on music by contemporary U.S. composers, which Cowell felt was especially underexposed. The periodical was meant to boost that music's circulation abroad, thereby ensuring that the transatlantic trade of modern music was not one-directional.[84] When a work by Roy Harris planned for the October 1930 issue fell through, however, Webern was commissioned for a replacement, becoming the first European composer published in *New Music*.[85] The commission was facilitated by Adolph Weiss, a U.S. composer who studied with Schoenberg in Berlin and whose music was published in the same issue. As with the League of Composers commission, Webern initially contemplated sending a new work; in a letter of June 1930, he told Weiss that he planned to compose a short piano piece.[86] But Webern eventually settled on an existing composition: op. 17 no. 2, "Liebste

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[81] Mead, *Henry Cowell's New Music…*357.

[82] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*, 671.

[83] Mead, *Henry Cowell's New Music…*62.

[84] Oja, *Making Music Modern*, 192.

[85] As Cowell described to Ives the following year, the occasional publication of European compositions would become a feature of *New Music*: "I think that about once a year, we might do some European work, as we did the Webern last season, and it gives New Music very high standard[s] to have represented, only the very best of the Europeans." See: Rita H. Mead, "Cowell, Ives, and 'New Music,'" *The Musical Quarterly* 66.4 (October, 1980): 550.

[86] Letter, Anton Webern to Adolph Weiss, June 13, 1930, Anton Webern Collection, MF 110.1-1279, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, Switzerland.

Jungfrau," a song for soprano, violin, clarinet, and bass clarinet composed in 1925. He explained to Weiss that he had chosen "Liebste Jungfrau" rather than a new piece so as to expedite the publication process and ensure that U.S. musicians had the opportunity to get to know his music. He also entrusted Weiss with editing responsibilities and requested that Weiss take special care with the work.[87] Though Universal Edition owned the rights to op. 17, the company had yet to publish "Liebste Jungfrau" and granted *New Music* permission to distribute the song in the United States under the title "Geistlicher Volkstext" ("Sacred Folk Text"). Cowell sent $100 to Webern on September 23, 1930 (Figure 5); whether this represents some kind of fee for Universal Edition or, as Mead suggests, an honorarium for the composer, is not clear.[88] Webern received a copy of the *New Music* issue in December 1930 and was impressed by its striking visuals.[89] As Mead describes, the edition's dimensions were an oversized "10 1/4 (super) in. by 13 3/4 (super) in., the color was an unusual magenta with black ink, and the design was big, bold, and striking."[90] Along with the receipt of a letter shortly thereafter in which Weiss spoke of potential conducting opportunities in the United States, the publication of "Liebste Jungfrau" appeared to Webern as evidence that "America beckoned," which was particularly significant given his recent lack of success in Vienna.[91]

But the conducting opportunities never materialized, and at least one *New*

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[87] Letter, Anton Webern to Adolph Weiss, July 13, 1930, Anton Webern Collection, MF 110.1-1282, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, Switzerland.
[88] Mead, *Henry Cowell's New Music…*151.
[89] Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*, 350–351.
[90] Mead, "The amazing Mr. Cowell," 71.
[91] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*, 351.

Music customer was none too happy with "Liebste Jungfrau." Mrs. Donald Myrick of Santa Barbara responded to the issue with a letter to Cowell: "[k]indly discontinue sending me 'New Music' when my paid up subscription expires. I believe you would be safe in offering a large prize to anyone who can sing 'Geistlicher Volkstext' ['sacred folk text,' as the song was titled in *New Music*] by Anton Webern published in your last issue."[92] Mrs. Myrick had a point. As with much of Webern's vocal music, the technical challenges of "Liebste Jungfrau" are considerable, most spectacularly evident in the two consecutive descending major sevenths with which the soprano line concludes (m. 20).[93] Just as "Liebste Jungfrau" was beyond the reach of all but the most capable professional vocalists, however, *New Music* was purposefully oriented not towards a general audience but towards composers, performers, and academics. As Virgil Thomson explained in a 1947 article commemorating the twentieth anniversary of *New Music*,

> [b]ack in 1927, if you will remember, composers everywhere were writing "advanced" music, and concerts of it were rife…Nevertheless, very little of the new music was being printed… Mr. Cowell's periodical was founded on the principle that what composers mostly needed at that time was access to the texts of one another's works.[94]

The potential significance of *New Music* for composers is clear in the case of "Liebste Jungfrau," Webern's first twelve-tone work published in the United States. Yet that occasion likely appears more momentous in retrospect than it did at the time; Cowell may not even have been aware of the work's twelve-tone

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[92] Letter, Mrs. Donald Myrick to New Music, October 20, 1930, New Music Society papers, folder 222, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

[93] Demanding vocal lines became a prominent theme in the reception of Robert Craft's complete works recording project, discussed in Chapter 2.

[94] Virgil Thomson, "COWELL'S MAGAZINE," *New York Herald Tribune* (November 2, 1947).

make-up, though he was aware of the method generally.[95] Even so, it was difficult for U.S. musicians at the time to learn much about Webern beyond what could be gleaned from the occasional big-city concert or newspaper article. As seen in the cancelled performance of op. 10 described above, furthermore, scores published in Europe were often difficult to obtain. Though it was just one song, then, *New Music*'s publication of "Liebste Jungfrau" achieved something significant in "furnishing to persons capable of performing or of reading music the composer's exact musical text."[96]

Webern later attempted to have his Quartet, op. 22 published in *New Music* as well, to no avail.[97] As conditions in Austria worsened later in the 1930s, Weiss wrote to Cowell describing a "lovely but pathetic" letter he had received from Webern, whose "sad plight" prompted Weiss to ask Cowell whether it might be possible to fund a U.S. trip of some kind for Webern.[98] Though that trip never came about, Cowell and Webern did collaborate once more when Webern conducted music by Cowell, Weiss, Carl Ruggles, and Wallingford Riegger for a 1932 concert of the Pan-American Association of Composers in Vienna. The two composers butted heads when Webern, displaying his typical perfectionism, insisted that the program be trimmed on account of inadequate rehearsal time.[99] But the performance was ultimately a success, and the *Christian Science Monitor*

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[95] Mead, *Henry Cowell's New Music…*152.
[96] Thomson, "COWELL'S MAGAZINE."
[97] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*, 676.
[98] Letter, Adolph Weiss to Henry Cowell, Henry Cowell Papers, box 17, folder 12, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.
[99] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*, 377–378.

published a favorable review by Second Viennese School member Erwin Stein.[100] Years later, Cowell described the experience an encounter with "one of the most forceful people I'd ever seen."[101]

The strong impression left by Webern on Cowell may help to explain the considerable effort expended by the *New Music* staff to establish and maintain the U.S. copyright of "Liebste Jungfrau." An initial copyright was established by Cowell, in Webern's name, in 1943.[102] In 1958 *New Music* editor Vladimir Ussachevsky ensured that the copyright was renewed prior to its expiration, now in the names of two of Webern's daughters—Maria Halbich and Amalie Waller—following the composer's death in 1945.[103] The renewal was the product of painstaking research. In addition to the copyrights themselves and letters of thanks to the copyright office, the papers of the New Music Society include envelopes and slips of paper scribbled all over with information about the names and whereabouts of Webern's daughters as well as other relevant bits of information, from a note regarding Universal Edition's publication of op. 17 in 1955 to a reminder to consult with someone at New York University's law school.[104] Such efforts may appear excessive in light of the fact that the copyright was surely of little financial consequence, but Cowell and the New Music Society

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[100] Erwin Stein, "Modern Music in Vienna," *Christian Science Monitor* (April 9, 1932). Stein's writings on Webern for the *Monitor* are discussed further in Chapter 2.
[101] Joel Sachs, *Henry Cowell: A Man Made of Music*, Oxford: Oxford University Press (2015): 192.
[102] Certificate of Copyright Registration, March 29, 1943, New Music Society papers, folder 248, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.
[103] Letter, Vladimir Ussachevsky to Register of Copyrights, Library of Congress, September 19, 1958, New Music Society papers, folder 207, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.
[104] Envelope, Marquis-Who's Who, Inc. to Vladimir Ussachevsky, August 28, 1958, New Music Society papers, folder 207, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

took their mission of supplying modern music to performers and composer seriously. And their efforts did bear fruit. The archives of the New Music Society can be accessed at the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts' Special Collections Reading Room. A copy of the *New Music* edition of "Liebste Jungfrau" sits one floor down on the shelves of the library's circulating collection, ready to be checked out, played, sung, and heard.

Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge and the String Quartet, op. 28 (1938)

By the time their partnership produced the 1938 premiere of the String Quartet, op. 28 in Pittsfield, MA, Webern and Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge had been in contact for well over a decade. Coolidge, a prolific patron of modern music, held a composition competition in 1924 for a work of chamber music with one or more vocal parts.[105] Webern submitted his Five Spiritual Songs, op. 15, but did not win.[106] In 1928 the Austrian music critic Paul Stefan solicited a $100 donation from Coolidge on Webern's behalf.[107] Two years later, around the same time he was arranging for Webern's "Liebste Jungfrau" to be published in *New Music*, Adolph Weiss contacted Coolidge to inquire as to whether she might commission a work from Webern. Webern had previously expressed his enthusiasm at the prospect of a Coolidge commission in the same letter in which he first discussed

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[105] The most comprehensive source of information on Coolidge and her patronage is the work of Cyrilla Barr, especially her biography of Coolidge: *Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge: American patron of music*, New York: G. Schirmer, 1998.

[106] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*, 272. The winner was Wallingford Riegger's *La Belle dame sans merci*.

[107] Ibid., 304.

the *New Music* publication.[108] In Weiss' letter to Coolidge he referred to her as "a liberal benefactor of composers and the musical art" and noted that Webern was working on a quartet for "piano, violin, flute and saxophone," likely the Quartet, op. 22 (which features clarinet instead of flute).[109] Unfortunately Coolidge had no commission too offer at the time, though she took care to explain that she harbored no prejudice against Webern or his music:

> It is not that I do not appreciate his talent nor that I have anything but a feeling of friendship for him whom I met so pleasantly when I was in Vienna nearly three years ago, but I have in mind at present nothing further in the way of commissions or festivals than those which I have already arranged for Chicago next October, and do not see any prospect of being able to use such [a] composition, even if I felt able to commission it — which I am sorry that I do not.

Coolidge concluded her letter by ensuring Weiss—with perhaps an excess of optimism—that "since Mr. von Webern is so well known everywhere…he should certainly be able to find the right patrons and the right audiences for his music."[110]

Seven years later a commission finally materialized thanks to the intervention of violinist Rudolf Kolisch, a close associate of Webern's in Vienna who had been a member of the *Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen* (Society for Private Musical Performances) and had recently emigrated to the United States himself.[111] On Kolisch's advice Coolidge wrote to Webern on

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[108] Letter, Webern to Weiss, June 13, 1930

[109] Letter, Adolph Weiss to Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, May 15, 1930, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation Collection, box 103, folder 24, Music Division, Library of Congress.

[110] Letter, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge to Adolph Weiss, May 31, 1930, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation Collection, box 103, folder 24, Music Division, Library of Congress.

[111] The Kolisch Quartet was one of several European quartets who relocated to the United States during the 1930s. For more on this topic, see: Walter Levin, "Immigrant musicians and the

November 23, 1937, requesting a piece for five wind instruments ("preferably without piano") to be performed at her chamber music festival the following September. She offered him $750, a sum equal to more than $13,000 when adjusted for inflation.[112] Coolidge and Webern exchanged several letters ironing out the details of the commission. In his initial reply, Webern proposed that he submit a string quartet rather than a work for winds, as he was already underway composing the former.[113] Coolidge agreed, though she noted that "I do not read German fluently enough to understand completely your letter of the fifteenth of December" (Webern, who did not speak English, went on writing in German all the same).[114] A few months later Webern sent a radiogram to Coolidge to inform her that the quartet was finished and to request immediate transfer of the commission fee "to avoid great loss through later exchange," a reference to the struggling Austrian economy.[115] Several more letters followed in which Webern explained that he was at risk to lose as much as a third of the fee due to the ever-worsening exchange rate. He requested that Coolidge make up for the difference by wiring him an additional fee, but evidence suggests that she was

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American chamber music scene, 1930–1950," in *Driven into paradise: The musical migration from Nazi Germany to the United States*, ed. Reinhold Brinkmann and Christoph Wolff, 322–339, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1999.

[112] Letter, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge to Anton Webern, November 23, 1937, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation Collection, box 103, folder 16, Music Division, Library of Congress.

[113] Letter, Anton Webern to Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, December 15, 1937, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation Collection, box 103, folder 16, Music Division, Library of Congress. Webern wrote to Kolisch a week later to thank him for arranging the commission. See: Letter, Anton Webern to Rudolf Kolisch, December 2, 1937, Rudolf Kolisch Collection, box 1, folder 9, Music Division, Library of Congress

[114] Letter, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge to Anton Webern, January 13, 1938, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation Collection, box 103, folder 16, Music Division, Library of Congress.

[115] Radiogram, Anton Webern to Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, April 13, 1938, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation Collection, box 103, folder 16, Music Division, Library of Congress.

hesitant to do so. No letter from Coolidge to Webern after she received the manuscript in May 1938 survives; Webern wrote to Kolisch in August of the same year to offer an extended explanation of the money he had lost.[116] Especially in this last letter, the desperation and anxiety that Webern experienced over the matter is painfully evident.

The Kolisch Quartet premiered the String Quartet, op. 28 at a Thursday morning concert on September 22, 1938, as part of the twentieth anniversary season of Coolidge's Berkshire Festival of Chamber Music. The festival was held at South Mountain Concert Hall, a venue that Coolidge built to host her festival in 1918. Nestled on a wooded hillside outside of Pittsfield, MA, the hall lies just a few miles down the road from Tanglewood, where Serge Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra took up summer residence in 1937. It was designed to resemble a church, with a cupola and *porte cochère* outside and pews instead of seats inside. Indeed South Mountain became something of a pilgrimage site for devotees of modern chamber music, hosting the premieres of new works by many of the most prominent U.S. and European composers of the day (wild post-concert fêtes featuring Coolidge's inimitable dancing also became the stuff of legend). It was thus barely an exaggeration when, decades later, Kolisch argued that Coolidge "really created chamber music in America."[117]

Webern's correspondence with Coolidge and Kolisch in the months leading up to the premiere of op. 28 included many observations on the work's musical

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[116] Letter, Anton Webern to Rudolf Kolisch, August 17, 1938, Rudolf Kolisch Collection, box 1, folder 10, Music Division, Library of Congress.

[117] Richard Dyer, "'She created US chamber music,'" *Boston Globe* (December 21, 1975).

content. In a well-known passage from his final letter to Coolidge, Webern described the work as "purely lyrical" and made reference to the two- and three-movement piano sonatas of Beethoven.[118] Webern also sent a detailed analysis to Kolisch, along with a bevy of performance practice instructions.[119] He might, then, have been disappointed to learn that critics at the premiere gravitated towards surface-level observations of the Kolisch Quartet's performance. The *New York Times*' Jay Rosenfeld noted that "[t]he Kolisch Quartet played with assiduous care and accuracy, such that we felt the music was being portrayed faithfully," but also conceded that "the leaps from profound sonorities to the thin higher timbres of the instruments occurred too many times to give any intimation of the composer's intentions." Perhaps on account of the famous performers, Rosenfeld focused on the demands that op. 28 places on the members of the quartet:

> The instruments were continually called upon to make use of the extremes of their mechanical means. There were whispered single notes pianissimo, followed by notes, not phrases, to be played with full power, immediately followed by a rest or, at best, a nose-dive to the quietest tone.[120]

Lawrence Mason, reporting on the concert for Toronto's *Globe and Mail*, likewise focused on instrumental technique, claiming that the work comprised "nothing but pizzicati, harmonics and glissandi!"[121] A reviewer from the *Christian Science*

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[118] Letter, Anton Webern to Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge, May 3, 1938, Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation Collection, box 103, folder 16, Music Division, Library of Congress.
[119] Letter, Anton Webern to Rudolf Kolisch, April 19, 1938, Rudolf Kolisch Collection, box 1, folder 9, Music Division, Library of Congress; Letter, Webern to Kolisch, August 17, 1938.
[120] Jay Rosenfeld, "BERKSHIRE FESTIVAL: Twentieth Anniversary of Programs Under The Auspices of Mrs. Coolidge," *New York Times* (October 2, 1938).
[121] Lawrence Mason, "Music in the Home—Concerts—The Drama," *The Globe and Mail* (October 1, 1938).

Monitor hit on many similar observations while also pointing out the work's extreme contrasts, wondering aloud whether Webern "is playing some game of kitty-corner in which one flits from the most profound sonorities to the thinnest timbres, from the most restrained pianissimo to the most forceful attacks, from muted whispers to vicious pizzicato, all within the limits of single bars."[122]

Rosenfeld noted that the eight-minute-long op.28 was an "almost garrulous" utterance for Webern considering that "some of his previous quartet movements last less than a minute," a reference to the Five Pieces for String Quartet, op. 5 and the Six Bagatelles for String Quartet, op. 9.[123] The same comparison was suggested by Elliott Carter in his review, for *Modern Music*, of a repeat performance of op. 28 in New York later the same year. Carter claimed that "[f]ormerly everyone thought of Webern as the composer of tiny pieces…that sounded like a hasty visit to the insect house at the zoo," echoing the critical responses to op. 10 cited above. Unlike Rosenfeld, however, Carter heard differences between Webern's earlier music and op. 28 that went beyond duration. He argued that op. 28, "though still very tenuous and delicate, has a real and not merely an odd character," which distinguished it from Webern's earlier works. According to Carter the quartet possessed "a transparency and sensitiveness to sonority distinguish it from other twelve-tone works; they make

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[122] Special to the Christian Science Monitor, "Reunion at South Mountain," *Christian Science Monitor* (October 4, 1938). Later the same year there was a similar reaction to the Kolisch Quartet's performance of Webern's Five Pieces for String Quartet, op. 5 in a review written by Edward Cone, then a student at Princeton University. The performers, Cone notes, "displayed their skill at exploiting to the full the resources of the stringed instrument." See: E.T. Cone, "KOLISCH STRING QUARTET RENDERS SECOND RECITAL: Ensembles Astonishes Audience With Technical Virtuosity, Reviewer Says of Last Night's Concert," *The Daily Princetonian* (November 19, 1938).

[123] Rosenfeld, "BERKSHIRE FESTIVAL…"

it absorbing if puzzling listening."[124] Carter's comments evince, for the first time since Paul Rosenfeld's review of the op. 15 songs in 1927, an awareness of the stylistic differences between Webern's early aphoristic works and his later works. No such awareness was evident in the critical response to the 1929 premiere of the Symphony, op. 21, despite its being written in a similar style—twelve-tone and neoclassical—to op. 28. But Carter was even more of an insider than Rosenfeld. Like those of Copland before him, Carter's evaluations of Webern's music far outpaced most others in their depth and sensitivity, and were thus exceptional in every respect. That most of the critics who lacked Carter's perspective could not hear what he heard in op. 28 is precisely the point.

What's in a name

Memory of the op. 28 premiere lingered in western Massachusetts. A 1955 performance of the work at South Mountain received both local and national press coverage.[125] Jay Rosenfeld, who had reviewed the work's premiere for the *New York Times*, reviewed the later performance for the *Berkshire Evening Eagle*. Rosenfeld himself felt that the work could not "be said to have become more lucid by the passage of time," but he conceded that it seemed "less experimental," its strangeness diminished "by reason of the fact that it by now is no longer a single example of its kind." By 1955, Rosenfeld concluded, contemporary music had

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[124] Elliott Carter, "Coolidge crusade; WPA; New York season," *Modern Music* XVI.1 (November-December 1938): 34.

[125] See, for example: Harold Schonberg, "Music: Bay State Barn: Converted Farm Building Near Pittsfield Scene of Chamber Music Concert Series," *New York Times* (July 31, 1955): 52.

caught up with Webern.[126] Indeed, as I will detail in Chapters 2–4, Webern's music found considerably more success in the second half of the twentieth century than it ever did in the first. In many cases that success was the product of a direct reversal of the trends that had dominated the reception of Webern's music during the interwar period. Whereas critics mocked the extreme brevity and quiet of pieces like the Five Pieces for String Quartet, op. 5 in the 1920s, those same features would later be celebrated by the likes of Nicolas Slonimsky and Leonard Bernstein; whereas Paul Rosenfeld and Elliott Carter were alone in noting that Webern's oeuvre contained incredible variety, the differences between Webern's earlier and later music would become critical for the likes of Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer. The events of this chapter thus serve as a starting point from which and a backdrop against which the developments of the following chapters take place.

At the same time, however, these events were not merely a prequel to later developments involving Webern's music in the United States. Rather they were part of the process, a beginning, even if they may not appear to be at first. To be sure, none of the performances of Webern's during the 1920s and 30s were met with much acclaim. Yet, as I have documented, those performances did grant Webern some degree of name recognition. If familiarity is a prerequisite for acceptance, then name recognition matters, even when the name in question possesses mostly negative associations. Thus, while perhaps no single performance of this period can be deemed a success, the performances *en masse*

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[126] Jay Rosenfeld, "New Music Quartet Plays Concert at South Mountain," *The Berkshire Evening Eagle* (August 1, 1955): 4.

did accomplish something. What that something was can be demonstrated by contrasting the first U.S. performance of Webern's music during the interwar period with the last. The former, you will recall, was a 1924 International Composers' Guild concert from which Webern's name was almost scrubbed away entirely. The latter, the 1938 performance at South Mountain, had a different effect. Though Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge passed away in 1953, the concert hall she built at South Mountain still hosts a series of chamber music concerts in September and October of each year. The concerts feature fewer world premieres than they once did, now favoring standard repertoire by Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and the like. But the series' publicity materials include a long list of composers whose works were premiered at South Mountain. And on that list is the name of Anton Webern.

Chapter 2: *Modernist music for children: Webern and midcentury middlebrow culture (1936–1966)*

"Pretty special stuff, isn't it?" With these words Leonard Bernstein described Webern's op. 6 no. 3 during the very first Young People's Concert he ever conducted for the New York Philharmonic, in January 1958. Whether or not he believed what he said is unclear. Webern represented an atypical programming choice for Bernstein, who considered the music of the Second Viennese School symptomatic of "the growing gap between composer and listener."[1] After he omitted Webern from his 1957 *Omnibus* program on modern music, however, he received a chiding letter from his friend Gunther Schuller:

> That brings me to the subject of Webern. Since most of the young generation of European composers, certainly the important ones, are greatly under his influence (much more so than Schönberg's), omitting him in your portrait of modern music tilts the argument heavily to one side. Mind you, I appreciate the problems involved. It would be hard, on a program directed primarily at a nationwide audience of laymen, to spend time talking about a composer almost totally unknown—even as a name—in America.[2]

Schuller acknowledged that Webern remained a relatively anonymous figure in the United States, particularly among "laymen." But Schuller felt that Webern's popularity among the composers of the Darmstadt School ("the young generation of European composers") made him an indispensable part of the postwar

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[1] Alicia Kopfstein-Penk, *Leonard Bernstein and His Young People's Concerts*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, (2015): 151. An essential document of the "growing gap"—Milton Babbitt's "Who Cares if You Listen?"—was published in a February 1958 issue of *High Fidelity*.

[2] Nigel Simeone, ed., *The Leonard Bernstein Letters*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, (2013): 356–57.

contemporary music scene. Despite Bernstein's avowed preference for "one side" of modern music—tonal works—he heeded Schuller's advice.[3]

Schuller's assertion that Webern was "almost totally unknown" in the United States was accurate, at least in the case of the Six Pieces for Orchestra, op. 6. The work had not been a part of the modest flowering of performances of Webern's music that took place in the United States during the 1920s and 30s, discussed in Chapter 1. In fact, the U.S. premiere of op. 6 did not occur until 1957, when the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra performed it under conductor William Steinberg. The work garnered applause that, as one critic reported, was "not confined to a handful of self-designated avant-garde students in the second balcony."[4] A few weeks later the orchestra brought op. 6 to New York. The work was again received positively, though the *New York Times*' Howard Taubman conceded that it was "difficult to music to grasp."[5]

Bernstein may have felt similarly to Taubman, for he prefaced his orchestra's performance of op. 6 no. 3 with a disclaimer:

> Now here we're going to play you a tiny little piece by a modern composer named Webern, who writes music that's so special in its sounds and in its meaning that a lot of people don't understand it at all and just call it crazy modern music. But I know that very often young people can understand this kind of music better than older people, so I'd like to take a chance and play it for you, crazy as it is, and see what you think of it.[6]

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[3] Bernstein conducted op. 6 on several subscription concerts in 1958 and programmed Webern's op. 10/1 on another Young People's Concert in 1964. The latter Young People's Concert, "Farewell to Nationalism," took place on November 30, 1964.

[4] James B. Ball, "Orchestra In Fine Concert: Pianist Firkusny Acclaimed; Webern Pieces Win Applause," *The Pittsburgh Press* (October 26, 1957).

[5] Howard Taubman, "Music: Welcome Guests: Pittsburgh Symphony on Yearly Visit," *New York Times* (November 13, 1957).

[6] "Leonard Bernstein: Young People's Concerts | What Does Music Mean (Part 3 of 4)," April 25, 2011, video, 14:59, https://youtu.be/ajKVWJ_dj8M?t=14m31s. The portion of the program dealing with Webern begins at 14:31 and continues into part 4 of the series.

Op. 6 no. 3 opens with a plaintive viola solo and concludes, some fifty-five seconds later, with shimmering celesta and muted trumpet over murmuring sixteenth-notes in the harp. "Pretty special stuff, isn't it?" Following the performance Bernstein emphasized the exceptional qualities of Webern's music. "You see if you even sneeze or cough you're liable to miss it. It's so delicate and so deep inside that you mustn't even breathe while it's going on!" He probed the audience's aesthetic response: "What did you think of it? Did you think it was ugly? Think it was funny? Think it was pretty? Did it make you have feelings?" After the last question, the cameras broadcasting the concert cut to a girl in the audience nodding in assent. "Well that's wonderful, because you see that's just the wonder of music, that it can make…different people have different kinds of feelings." And with that he moved on. The theme of that first Young People's Concert was "What Does Music Mean?" Bernstein, perhaps fearing that his audience would conclude that op. 6 no. 3 possessed no meaning at all, was content to demonstrate that Webern's music meant *something*, that it was "special" and "deep inside" even if it was also "crazy."

"Special" and crazy"; the space between these two designations is a key element of the approach to Webern's music that I document in this chapter. The musicians discussed below took the qualities of Webern's musical style that had most often baffled concertgoers—extreme brevity and sparse textures, as seen in Chapter 1—and rebranded them as qualities that could be intuitively appreciated by anyone, even children. Deploying the rhetoric of childhood as a marketing tool, they tapped in to a strand of U.S. middlebrow culture in which children's

programs frequently courted adult audiences. If children could take something from Webern's music, these musicians suggested, so too could adults. I begin with an analysis of Bernstein's performance of op. 6 no. 3, which also serves as an introduction to midcentury middlebrow culture in general. I then backtrack to 1936 and Nicolas Slonimsky's creative presentation of the fourth of Webern's Five Pieces for Orchestra, op. 10 as part of his Children's Page series for the *Christian Science Monitor*. Thereafter I turn to Webern's *Kinderstück* (*Children's Piece*) for piano; composed in 1924, the *Kinderstück* did not receive its world premiere until 1966, when it was performed by a nine-year-old pianist. Each of these moments reveals connections to different aspects of middlebrow culture, including elements both whimsical (talking instruments and funny jingles) and troubling (gendered stereotypes and exclusionary rhetoric). But the central role of children brings these three disparate moments together. For in each case those who advocated on behalf of Webern's music—Bernstein, Slonimsky, and even Webern himself—reached the same conclusion: that the best way to make that music accessible and appealing to adults was to first do the same for children.

Middlebrow modernism (1958)

Bernstein's performance of op. 6 no. 3 serves as an apt introduction to strategies for promoting Webern's music found in each of the three moments I document in this chapter. One such strategy involved attempting re-contextualize aspects of Webern's musical style that usually vexed audiences. Like many before him, Bernstein emphasized the brevity of Webern's "tiny little piece." But whereas

most critics of the period either mocked this quality or were simply bewildered by it, Bernstein celebrated it. He claimed that op. 6 no. 3 was so brief that "if you even sneeze or cough you're liable to miss it"—which was exactly what made it so special. Bernstein continued on to address the sparse textures and pervasive quiet of op. 6 no. 3, features that were often interpreted negatively, as the absence of substantial musical material. For Bernstein, by contrast, the sparseness and quiet of op. 6 no. 3 indicated not an absence but the presence of a delicacy that even a single breath might sully. Precisely those qualities that made Webern's music stand apart from typical concert fare, Bernstein argued, were what made it worth paying attention to ("so special in its sounds and in its meaning that a lot of people don't understand it at all.") In this way Bernstein provided an example of a phenomenon, identified by Daniel Tracy, in which modernism's tendency to "upend aesthetic norms and patterns" became "itself a conventional reading pleasure to be pursued by readers."[7]

Yet the most notable part of Bernstein's introduction of op. 6 no. 3 was his claim that "very often young people can understand this kind of music better than older people." In making this comparison Bernstein turned his attention from the children in the audience to the adults sitting beside them. As Sharon Gelleny describes, the latter group constituted a significant proportion of his audience:

> A great irony surrounding the Young People's Concerts is that, despite the program's name and its original conception as a children's show, fan mail revealed a strong interest in the show on the part of adult viewers. In fact, by 1964, after the series was moved to primetime, most of the viewers were

[7] Daniel Tracy, "Middlebrow modernism: Professional writing, genre, and the circulation of cultural authority in U.S. mass culture, 1913–1932," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (2008): 4.

> adults, with children and teenagers comprising only 11% and 6% of the television audience, respectively.[8]

Nor were the Young People's Concerts the only educational music program to cultivate an adult audience. The decades preceding the Second World War saw an array of "increasingly popular listening lessons billed as 'music appreciation'" grow to become "not just…education for children but also a veritable music-appreciation industry targeting adults."[9] One product of that industry—and an important predecessor of the Young People's Concerts—was the *Music Appreciation Hour*, an NBC radio program that ran from 1928 to 1942; the *Hour* drew four million adult listeners each week along with seven million children.[10]

In their cultivation of adult audiences, programs like the *Music Appreciation Hour* and the Young People's Concerts overlapped with midcentury middlebrow culture, something Bernstein made reference to (if only obliquely) at a 1959 Young People's Concert:

> [S]ome people use the word high-brow, which means that only very smart, well-educated people can dig it, but we know that's wrong because we all know a lot of people who aren't exactly Einsteins who dig Beethoven the most.[11]

Joan Shelley Rubin's landmark study of the middlebrow defines it as a set of initiatives "aimed at making literature and other forms of 'high' culture available to a wide reading public" which flourished in the United States and United

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[8] Sharon Gelleny, "Leonard Bernstein on television," *Journal of Popular Music Studies* 11–12 (1999): 56.

[9] Rebecca Bennett, "Debating Music "Appreciation" outside the American Classroom, 1930–1950," *Journal of Historical Research in Music Education* 33.2 (2012): 128.

[10] Joseph Horowitz, *Classical Music in America: A History of Its Rise and Fall,* New York: W.W. Norton & Company (2005): 404.

[11] "Leonard Bernstein: Young People's Concerts | What is Classical Music (Part 1 of 4)," May 5, 2011, video, 14:47, https://youtu.be/QJ1b6hSUosU?t=4m44s.

Kingdom during the early- and mid-twentieth century.[12] A more recent definition from Melissa Sullivan and Sophie Blanch expands the middlebrow to include an "aesthetic mode" employed by artists, "consumption practices that negotiate among both intellectual and whimsical tastes," and "dissemination and transmission practices that aim for success with a large cross-section of the public."[13] The Young People's Concerts fall into this latter category. Like many middlebrow programs in the postwar United States, their target audience was members of the growing middle class. As Randal Doane notes, the middlebrow afforded middle class adults the opportunity to align their working-class tastes with their newly elevated economic status.[14] Educational music programs could be pressed in service of this upwardly mobile agenda. Parents could listen to the *Music Appreciation Hour* or watch the Young People's Concerts alongside their children without having to fear revealing their own lack of knowledge. If a potentially negative connotation of the word "middlebrow" was that it dumbed down high art for the masses, these programs tactfully sidestepped the issue.[15] To be sure, not every educational program cultivated an adult audience, but many capitalized on the rising tide of middlebrow culture to court adults at the same time as educating children.

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[12] Joan Shelley Rubin, *The Making of Middlebrow Culture* (The University of North Carolina Press (1992): xi.

[13] Melissa Sullivan and Sophie Blanch, "Introduction: The Middlebrow – Within or Without Modernism," *Modernist Cultures* 6 .1 (2011): 2.

[14] Randel Doane, "Bourdieu, Cultural Intermediaries and *Good Housekeeping*'s George Marek: A case study of middlebrow musical taste," *Journal of Consumer Culture* 9 (2009): 156.

[15] Debates over whether "middlebrow" held a positive or negative connotation raged almost from the start. Two pieces of writing are often credited with tipping the balance towards the negative: a letter from Virginia Woolf to the editor of the *New Statesman & Nation*, written in 1932 but not published until 1942, and Dwight Macdonald's "Masscult and Midcult," published in 1960.

While middlebrow programs expanded the audience for "high" art along socioeconomic lines, that expansion often relied on stagnation or even regression in other domains. Doane, for example, argues that "the representation of middlebrow taste for the *nouveau* middle class" in postwar U.S. culture "reflected and produced anew the symbolic boundaries of whiteness." In fact, Doane contends, classical music's esteem was partially "contingent upon a self-distancing from – and thereby denigration of – the ludic expressivity of the working class and, in many cases, Black American arts."[16] Indeed, video recordings of the Young People's Concerts show that the audience, like the orchestra, was a sea of white faces. Though Bernstein made some efforts to incorporate non-white musical traditions, in particular jazz, even these efforts often adopted a Eurocentric approach. A similarly narrow perspective was evident at a Young People's Concert a month after the performance of op. 6/3, in which Bernstein claimed that U.S. composers had imbibed the influence of "French, Dutch, German, Scotch, Scandinavian, [and] Italian" folk music; all other musical traditions of the world he simple referred to as "all the rest."[17] Here it is worth recalling that the terms "highbrow," "lowbrow," and "middlebrow" themselves have origins in phrenology, a racist pseudoscience.

Many middlebrow programs were also restrictive in terms of the repertoire they performed and promoted. As Bernstein's hesitancy to program Webern's music makes clear, some middlebrow producers saw modernism as rendering

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[16] Doane, "Bourdieu, Cultural Intermediaries…" 156.

[17] "Young People's Concert: What is American Music?" https://leonardbernstein.com/lectures/television-scripts/young-peoples-concerts/what-is-american-music.

impossible the already challenging task of making classical music accessible; Walter Damrosch, conductor and narrator of the *Music Appreciation Hour*, refused to program contemporary works since he felt that "children should not be confused by experiments."[18] Some modernists, meanwhile, viewed middlebrow culture as "hopelessly compromised by popular ideology and driven by the morally and intellectually bankrupt needs of the market"; Theodor Adorno and Virgil Thomson both published attacks on music appreciation programs.[19] At other times, however, modernism and the middlebrow functioned in tandem. As Sullivan and Blanch point out, recent scholarship has revealed many instances of symbiotic relationships between the two, such that "the borders between modernism and the middlebrow no longer seem rigid."[20] Christopher Chowrimootoo likewise describes the operas of Benjamin Britten as examples of "middlebrow modernism" and even argues for an examination of "the extent to which even the music of Schoenberg, Berg and Webern was implicated in 'middlebrow' compromise or eclecticism."[21] Yet Britten's operas, with what Chowrimootoo describes as their "pleasures of consonance, lyricism, and theatrical spectacle," make for much more intuitive examples of middlebrow

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[18] Horowitz, *Classical Music in America*…404.

[19] Thomas Gordon Perrin, "Across the Great Divide: Modernism and the Middlebrow, 1945–1960," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago (2011): 4–5. See also: Theodor W. Adorno, "Analytical Study of the NBC 'Music Appreciation Hour,'" *The Musical Quarterly* 78 (1994): 325–377; Virgil Thomson, "The Appreciation-racket," in *The State of Music*, 121–131, New York: William Morrow and Company, 1939. As Tracy points out, "professed modernist oppositions to…'the market'" sometimes served as "rhetorical strategies for entering the market." See: Tracy, "Middlebrow modernism," 8.

[20] Sullivan and Blanch, "Introduction: The Middlebrow – Within or Without Modernism," 5.

[21] Chowrimootoo, "Reviving the Middlebrow…" 192.

modernism than the music of the Second Viennese School.[22] How, then, might Webern's music be marketed as a middlebrow product?

Bernstein produced two responses to that question. The first, discussed above, was to celebrate (rather than denigrate) the most idiosyncratic aspects of Webern's musical style—brevity, sparseness, and quiet. The second revolved around Bernstein's claim that "very often young people can understand this kind of music better than older people." It was not the first time he had made such a claim. As Alicia Kopfstein-Penk notes, Bernstein frequently asserted that children "might be more open to the avant-garde" than adults since they "were not so set in their tastes."[23] Bernstein's assertion rested on the concept of *tabula rasa*, or "blank slate," the idea that humans are born with little to no mental content. Though it can be traced back centuries, tabula rasa is most closely associated with John Locke and the Enlightenment, an era in which many experts locate "the origins of contemporary childhood studies."[24] Over the course of the nineteenth century the concept was subsumed within a Romantic and sentimental discourse on childhood, of which William Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood" is frequently cited as a prime example. By the turn of the twentieth century the "blank" minds of children were often viewed as purer than those of adults; as Michelle H. Philips notes, an "essentialist view of childhood as redemptive, virtuous, originary, and universal" was widespread in

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[22] Chowrimootoo, "Middlebrow Modernism…" 28.

[23] Kopfstein-Penk, *Leonard Bernstein and His Young People's Concerts*, 159.

[24] Anna Mae Duane, "Introduction. The Children's Table: Childhood Studies," in *The Children's Table: Childhood Studies and the Humanities*, ed. Duane, Athens, GA, The University of Georgia Press (2013): 3.

both the United States and the United Kingdom at the time. A "golden age" of children's literature featuring the likes of *The Secret Garden* and *Winnie the Pooh* helped popularize an image of childhood as "a beloved space set apart from the disenchanted adult world of labor, materialism, and managed time."[25]

Philips' study concerns a group of literary modernists who sought to challenge this idealized image of childhood, but it was equally possible for modernists to harness its power in service of their own agenda. If children were viewed as "redemptive, virtuous, originary, and universal," then Bernstein's claim that children possessed less developed tastes than adults was really a suggestion that children were less "disenchanted" than adults, that they understood Webern's music more readily than adults because they harbored fewer biases against it. In this way Bernstein's presentation of op. 6 no. 3 is an example of a subgenre of middlebrow modernism in which children—or, to be more precise, the idea of children—played a central role. If children could find meaning in Webern's music, Bernstein suggested, so too could any adult—provided they approached it with the open mind of a child. Childhood served as "a legible pattern of behaviors" available to "all ages," which Bernstein implicitly asked his adult audience to perform.[26] Bernstein's strategy was buoyed by the emphasis he placed on brevity, sparseness, and quiet, all qualities that could be easily grasped by children and musically inexperienced adults alike. Even more essential to that strategy was the potent marketing power that children held. As Margaret Peacock

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[25] Michelle H. Philips, *Representations of Childhood in American Modernism*, London: Palgrave Macmillan (2016): 2–3.

[26] Robin Bernstein, "Childhood as Performance," in *The Children's Table: Childhood Studies and the Humanities*, ed. Anna Mae Duane, Athens, GA, The University of Georgia Press (2013): 204.

notes in her study of Cold War-era consumption practices, "no image carried so much cultural power as that of the child" in the postwar United States.[27] Anna Mae Duane argues, even more broadly, that defining childhood always serves as "a means of defining and distributing power and obligation."[28] Bernstein's comments evince an understanding of the power of childhood. By defining childhood in terms of openness to works like op. 6 no. 3, Bernstein attempted to harness that power to create a new adult audience for Webern's music.

"Modernistic" music according to Nicolas Slonimsky (1936)

While Bernstein expressed ambivalence towards the music of Second Viennese School at various points throughout his career, Nicolas Slonimsky was a full-throated supporter of all manner of modernist music from the beginning. After emigrating from Russia in the early 1920s, Slonimsky settled in Boston, where he took a job as Serge Koussevitzky's personal secretary. In his spare time Slonimsky pursued a conducting career of his own, serving as the director of the Chamber Orchestra of Boston, "a new little orchestra which promoted ultra-modern music."[29] But audiences were not always receptive to his initiatives. After a guest conducting the Los Angeles Philharmonic in December 1932, Slonimsky was invited to lead the orchestra's eight-week season at the Hollywood Bowl the following summer. He programmed several modernist works—including Schoenberg's *Begleitmusik zu einer Lichtspielszene* and Varèse's *Ionisation*—to

[27] Margaret Peacock, "Cold War consumption and the marketing of childhood in the Soviet Union and the United States, 1950-1960," *Journal of Historical Research in Marketing* 8.1 (2016): 87.
[28] Duane, "Introduction. The Children's Table: Childhood Studies," 1.
[29] Nicolas Slonimsky, *Perfect Pitch: A Life Story*, Oxford: Oxford University Press (1988): 114.

disastrous results. The musicians resisted and reviews were "sour." Worst of all, the works frequently precipitated the mid-performance "flight of puzzled and indignant audience members." Slonimsky was branded "a dangerous musical revolutionary" in the press and the debacle brought his conducting career to "an inglorious end."[30]

After his failure to promote modernist music to adults, Slonimsky turned his attention to an audience both more youthful and more personal. Slonimsky and his wife Dorothy Adlow had recently welcomed their first child Electra and he enthusiastically embraced a new role as his daughter's tutor. Slonimsky "concentrated all [his] capacity for gimmicks on Electra," teaching her Latin (that is, until she went to school and realized that none of her classmates spoke Latin at home), the musical modes, and composition (Lukas Foss was reportedly impressed with a seven-year-old Electra's theme and variations set).[31] The family lived on Boston's Hemenway Street, in the heart of a cultural district that included the Museum of Fine Arts, the New England Conservatory, Symphony Hall, and, at that time, the Boston Opera House. Adlow worked at the nearby *Christian Science Monitor* as an art critic and in 1936 arranged for the mostly out-of-work Slonimsky to write articles on music for the *Monitor*'s Children's Page:

> I started a series of articles on the children's page of the paper, in which I attempted to present rules of music theory in a graphic manner, using simple diagrams and vivid illustrations. Some of them were rather corny.[32]

Beginning with fundamentals such as scales and rhythm before progressing to

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[30] Ibid., 140–141.
[31] Ibid., 144–146.
[32] Ibid., 146.

more advanced topics such as form and counterpoint, Slonimsky's articles were peppered with limericks, catchphrases, and rhyming couplets that were indeed often corny.[33] In "Fitting Chords to Melody," for example, he reinforced the prohibition against parallel fifths and octaves with the following, particularly cringeworthy lines:

> Consecutive octaves or fifths in good harmony
> Ought not to be used lest ears they might harm any.[34]

At other times, as when demonstrating the non-existence of triple sharps, Slonimsky's verses tended towards the absurd:

> I thought I saw a triple sharp,
> Haranguing from a tree;
> I looked again, and found it was
> A humble-looking flea.
> Alas! I said, that isn't fair
> To Mr. Chimpanzee.[35]

There was even a poem recounting the tale of a performer driven mad by the impossibility of playing the celesta either quickly or loudly.[36] Years later (and with characteristic self-deprecation) Slonimsky admitted that his puns were "outrageous," his jingles "inexcusable."[37]

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[33] Some of Slonimsky's verses resemble those of British humorist Ogden Nash, who wrote poems to accompany Saint-Säen's *Carnival of the Animals*, a staple of young people's concerts.

[34] Nicolas Slonimsky, "Fitting Chords to Melody," in *The Road to Music*, New York: Dodd, Mead & Company (1960): 38. *The Road to Music*, first published in 1947, is a compilation of Slonimsky's articles for the *Monitor*'s Children's Page.

[35] Nicolas Slonimsky, "The Musical Alphabet," in *The Road to Music*, New York: Dodd, Mead & Company (1960): 4.

[36] Nicolas Slonimsky, "Fiddles, Horns, and Drums," in *The Road to Music*, New York: Dodd, Mead & Company (1960): 104–105.

[37] Slonimsky, *Perfect Pitch*…146–147.

Yet it was not Slonimsky's verses but his illustrations that often served as his articles' *pièce de résistance*. Some of these illustrations were goofy in the mode of Slonimsky's wordplay, a fact he freely admitted:

> How could I have stooped so low as to make a drawing of two nuts on two opposite sides of a stalk and next to it a drawing of two notes on a stem at an interval of a second, and caption the result, 'Nuts and notes'?[38]

The illustration in question (Figure 6) is nothing if not memorable. But other illustrations were more than just goofy, displaying a deft application of the visual medium to pedagogical purposes. "About Triads and Harmony," for example, featured color-coded rectangles that readers could cut out and rearrange in various ways to demonstrate the syntactical function of harmonies built on different scale degrees (Figure 7). In "Shapes of Musical Pieces," meanwhile, Slonimsky ingeniously translated nested musical structures into a drawing of a girl holding a chocolate bar (Figure 8).[39] Other illustrations may appear less charming from a modern perspective. In "Ways of a Sonata," for example, Slonimsky explicated key relations in sonata form into a world map in which the United States was the tonic, Europe the dominant (Figure 9). Though clearly aimed at a U.S. audience, this configuration privileged the music of the European tradition in much the same way that Bernstein's Young People's Concerts often did; given his work with the Pan-American Association of Composers during the

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[38] Ibid., 146.

[39] "A Musical Piece in Three Parts, Each One of Which Has Three Parts," began the caption beneath the illustration, "Is Like the Cover of a Chocolate Bar Which Shows a Girl Holding a Chocolate Bar With a Cover Showing a Girl Holding a Tiny Chocolate Bar Showing a Girl Holding Such a Tiny Chocolate Bar That You Can Hardly See if the Girl on the cover of That Very Tiny Chocolate Bar Is Holding a Microscopic Chocolate Bar With the Same Cover."

early 1930s, Slonimsky's assigning of Latin America to "relative keys" is somewhat surprising.

But the most enduring image to come out of Slonimsky's children's series was not a nut, or a chocolate bar, or a map, but a score. On October 5, 1936, Webern's op. 10 no. 4 appeared as part of an article by Slonimsky entitled "The Orchestral Score." There is reason to believe that Slonimsky was already well acquainted with op. 10. He had likely been present when Koussevitzky led the U.S. premiere of the work in 1926, discussed in Chapter 1. Earlier that year, furthermore, Slonimsky's future employer had published a glowing report on the world premiere of op. 10 in Zürich:

> The last concert brought to many of us an unexpected and entirely delightful adventure. Anton Webern raised his baton before a chamber orchestra which included a guitar, mandolin, cow-bells, and that horrible instrument, the harmonium. From the silence there escaped into sound wafts of strangely beautiful colour. The ear caught wraith-like wisps of melody which, as smoke, eddied for a moment and then dissolved. A sudden shimmer of iridescence where form and colour become one—and then silence gently withdrew from us that of which we had scarcely become aware. Only a true musical poet could give us these fugitive glimpses of a new and fascinating world of sound.[40]

Critics who attended the Boston premiere also responded positively. Though they expressed bewilderment at the strange, hushed pieces, they gave Webern the benefit of the doubt. The *Monitor*'s reviewer argued that "if we hear enough of this music, we may be able to follow the path of Schönberg and his associates."[41] A *Boston Globe* reviewer, meanwhile, prefigured Bernstein's presentation of op. 6 no. 3 in noting that "[o]ne felt yesterday perfectly assured that these little pieces,

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[40] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*…293–94.

[41] L.A.S., "From Zurich to Boston," *Christian Science Monitor* (November 20, 1926).

queer as they sound measured by comparison with standard music, would grow rather than pall upon one with frequent repetition."[42] As discussed in Chapter 1, however, critics who attended a second performance of the work at a League of Composers concert in New York the following week responded less positively; "N.Y. Music World Stretched on Rack of Ultra-Modernism," began one review, "League of Composers…Shatter Sensibilities Of Critic, Who Is Moved to Bitter Thoughts."[43] Slonimsky took note. Lawrence Gilman's memorable description of a trombone phrase in op. 10 no. 4—"the amoeba weeps"—would later be anthologized in Slonimsky's *Lexicon of Musical Invective*.[44]

What a difference a decade made. When the score of op. 10 no. 4 appeared as part of Slonimsky's 1936 article in the *Christian Science Monitor* (Figure 10), it looked different than it had on Koussevitzky's podium. The score sported a simplified format in which German words were translated into English (though Italian words remained unchanged) and all nine instruments were written in non-transposing treble clefs. Most intriguingly, drawings of each instrument adorned their first entrances, with a mechanical metronome sitting beside the tempo marking. The text of Slonimsky's article also focused on instruments, highlighting the outstanding qualities of each in turn. First the mandolin, which gives out a "thin, tinkling sound"; then the viola, or, "a grown-up Violin"; after that the trombone, the only instrument with the remarkable ability to double in size;

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[42] P.R., "Modern Music at Symphony Concert," *Boston Globe* (November 20, 1926).

[43] Henrietta Straus, "N.Y. Music World Stretched on Rack of Ultra-Modernism," *Baltimore Sun* (December 12, 1926).

[44] Gilman, "Music: Week-End Dallyings…" For Slonimsky's reprinting of Gilman's review, see: Nicolas Slonimsky, *Lexicon of Musical Invective*, New York, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. (2000): 249–250.

then the snare drum ("[a]ll the world loves the Drum"); and finally the celesta, with its "sweet metallic tones." Slonimsky argued that op. 10 no. 4 was composed expressly "so that every instrument would have a chance to play a few notes *SOLO*, which means all alone, so that other instruments would either wait or play very softly."[45] Slonimsky thus adopted the same strategy that Bernstein would later use to promote op. 6 no. 3. The ultra-thin texture of op. 10 no. 4, a problematic bug for earlier critics, became for Slonimsky the music's defining feature, that which afforded each instrument its moment in the sun.

"The Orchestral Score" is a fun and lighthearted article meant, ostensibly, for children. Yet, like Bernstein's Young People's Concerts, the article also contained an implicit message for any parent who might be reading along with their child. Slonimsky's presentation of op. 10 no. 4 constituted a repudiation of the largely negative response Webern's music had faced in the decade-and-a-half since it landed in the United States. Instead of a weeping amoeba, op. 10 no. 4 became a playful procession of instruments. This interpretation was made possible through the adoption of a childlike listening practice that valorized openness and curiosity. Listening in this way, Slonimsky suggested, could help adults and children alike understand something most critics had missed: that Webern's music possessed a range of potential meanings as rich and as varied as that of any music.

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[45] Nicolas Slonimsky, "The Orchestral Score," *Christian Science Monitor* (October 5, 1936).

Though Slonimsky's article resembles Bernstein's approach to Webern's music in many ways, it connected to one aspect of middlebrow culture that the Young People's Concerts did not: cartoons. Midcentury cartoons frequently featured classical music. Like "The Orchestral Score," furthermore, cartoons often deployed images of instruments as pedagogical tools. In 1946 Disney created an animated short based on Sergei Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf* as part of the anthology film *Make Mine Music*. At the outset of the film, each instrument in the score briefly appears on screen before transforming into the character it represents: the flute into Sasha the bird, the oboe into Sonia the duck, and so on. In the following segment of *Make Mine Music*, instruments no longer represent characters but simply *are* the characters; anthropomorphized jazz instruments dance, juggle, and chase each other around, all to the music of the Benny Goodman Quartet (Figure 11).[46] Much like the instrument drawings in "The Orchestral Score," the instruments of *Make Mine Music* were intended to educate the audience and render the music more accessible. "The pictures of the instruments are our own little invention," Slonimsky admitted, "but they make the whole thing so much clearer."[47]

If instruments-as-visual aids were thought to make classical music more accessible, so too was the expert guidance of conductors, who often appeared in midcentury cartoons. However up-and-down Slonimsky's conducting career may

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[46] Benny Goodman Quartet, "Make Mine Music – After You've Gone," March 27, 2010, video, 2:49, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6eZD7_DSLZA. Disney had employed anthropomorphized instruments once before, in 1935's *Music Land*, a *Silly Symphonies* short starring the warring instrument residents of the "Land of Symphony" and the "Isle of Jazz."

[47] Slonimsky, "The Orchestral Score."

have been, it allowed him to position himself as an authoritative holder of privileged musical insights. Beside the text of "The Orchestral Score" sits a silhouette of Slonimsky conducting during his 1932 tour with the Pan-American Association of Composers (Figure 12). The image is reminiscent of a silhouette of Leopold Stokowski that appears at the beginning of 1940's *Fantasia*—"[s]tanding on an Olympian podium, the conductor towers over the performance as Zeus."[48] In each case the message is the same: the conductor possesses knowledge that qualifies him to guide the audience through the complexities of classical music. Some of the appeal of "The Orchestral Score" thus stems from the way in which it brings its readers behind the curtain and makes the conductor appear more approachable. By demystifying the score, Slonimsky suggested that readers need not put all their trust in, as he put it, "the man who can read all the notes."[49] In this way "The Orchestral Score" can be thought of as a distant cousin of the many midcentury cartoons that satirized the exalted image of the conductor. After Stokowski's brilliant entrance at the outset of *Fantasia*, for example, Mickey Mouse fails to conduct his orchestra of broomsticks during the film's famous sequence set to Paul Dukas' *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*. Mickey encounters a similar problem in 1935's *The Band Concert*, in which Donald Duck repeatedly interrupts his conducting of Rossini's *William Tell* Overture. Some Warner Bros. cartoons, including 1941's *Rhapsody in Rivets* and 1959's *Baton Bunny*, likewise featured conductors as beleaguered protagonists. At other times—as in 1943's *A*

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[48] Mark Clague, "Playing in 'Toon': Walt Disney's "Fantasia" (1940) and the Imagineering of Classical Music," *American Music* 22 (2004): 96.
[49] Slonimsky, "The Orchestral Score."

Corny Concerto, starring Elmur Fudd as a Stokowski stand-in—pretentious maestros were the objects of sharp satire (Figure 13).[50]

Yet "The Orchestral Score" differed from midcentury cartoons in one significant way. Most cartoons that employed classical music relied on a limited repertoire of canonic works and thus did not foster middlebrow modernism (*Fantasia*, with its segment featuring Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, is a notable exception).[51] But Slonimsky made middlebrow modernism a central component of his writing. While his series for the *Monitor*'s Children's Page included plenty of warhorses, modernist works were also well represented. In a series focused on musical fundamentals, Slonimsky validated modernist compositional techniques at every opportunity. He introduced his readers to a "newfangled scale" that produced "an unusual modernistic effect," but smartly refrained from uttering that scale's scary-sounding name—octatonic.[52] He reminded readers that "what may be a Dissonance yesterday may be a Consonance today."[53] As in the case of "The Orchestral Score," modernist works with unusual features were often cited as examples of core musical concepts. The locomotive-inspire pulsing of Arthur Honegger's *Pacific 231*, for example, served to demonstrate polyrhythm.[54]

But Slonimsky did not merely cite modernist works; he also fashioned his

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[50] As Daniel Goldmark notes, every facet of concert hall culture "became a subject for parody and (occasionally) ridicule" in midcentury cartoons. See: Daniel Goldmark, "Classical Music and Hollywood Cartoons: A Primer on the Cartoon Canon," in *The cartoon music book*, ed. Daniel Goldmark and Yuval Taylor, A Cappella Books (2002): 108.

[51] Goldmark, "Classical Music and Hollywood Cartoons," 128.

[52] Nicolas Slonimsky, "Scales, or Tonal Ladders," in *The Road to Music*, New York: Dodd, Mead & Company (1960): 19.

[53] Nicolas Slonimsky, "Music Pleasant and Unpleasant," in *The Road to Music*, New York: Dodd, Mead & Company (1960): 90.

[54] Nicolas Slonimsky, "How to Understand Rhythm," in *The Road to Music*, New York: Dodd, Mead & Company (1960): 23.

series into a soapbox upon which he could advocate for modernist music in general, an approach that would have been familiar to *Monitor* readers. Erwin Stein, a former Schoenberg pupil living in London, penned several *Monitor* articles during the same period in which he too advocated for modernist music. Yet the approaches of the two writers could scarcely have been more different. Stein frequently adopted a defensive stance, claiming that Webern wrote "not what people want to hear but what he has to say" and therefore preferred "to remain aloof…than sacrifice his convictions."[55] He praised Webern as a steward of "the great Viennese tradition," but his insistence that the Second Viennese School was "far ahead" of its time did little to make the composer's connection to that tradition clear.[56] Slonimsky, on the other hand, allowed the music of Webern and other modernists to mingle with familiar works by Bach, Beethoven, Brahms and the like. Modernist works, he suggested, were not only just as good as canonic works, but also just as essential to the musical education of children. Unlike Stein's articles, furthermore, Slonimsky's writings on modernism never smacked of condescension:

> Children are progressive and have a healthy curiosity. So I decided that…I would not talk down to my audience, whether they be children or adults. When I find that a "modernistic" example suits my purpose, I quote it, along with the rules and regulations for traditional music. When I feel like using a polysyllabic word, I use it…I treat my readers with healthy respect.[57]

Slonimsky's articles are indeed chock-full of "modernistic" works and polysyllabic words that probably challenged some readers. But the articles are

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[55] Erwin Stein, "The Music of Anton Webern," *Christian Science Monitor* (June 8, 1937).
[56] Erwin Stein, "Catching up with Schönberg," *Christian Science Monitor* (September 15, 1934).
[57] Slonimsky, *The Road to Music*, vii.

also infused with a can-do spirit quite apart from Stein's attitude. Slonimsky's sign-off from a 1938 article, the last of his first Children's Page series, typifies that spirit: "If even a small part of the 24 stories on music that I have written here will remain in the memory of the reader, it will prove that appreciation of music can be communicated without too much painstaking study."[58]

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"From far and wide the letters come."[59] Thus was the widespread popularity of the *Music Appreciation Hour* described in a 1940 article in *The Rotarian*, the in-house publication of the service organization Rotary International. The same could have been said of the response to Slonimsky's Children's Page articles. Letters of appreciation and admiration poured in from across the globe, providing a glimpse of the "consumption practice" side of middlebrow culture described by Sullivan and Blanch.[60] Readers such as Chicago dance pedagogue Mary Wood Hinman wrote to request copies of articles they had missed or to inquire as to whether the articles would be published in a book form.[61] Music teachers from places like Burbank and Urbana wrote to thank Slonimsky for providing them with valuable classroom materials, praising the articles' clarity and simplicity. Two letters arrived from Australia; in one, Winfred R.G. Steber bemoaned the backwards state of music education in New South Wales.[62] There

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[58] Nicolas Slonimsky, "About Modern Music," *Christian Science Monitor* (January 3, 1938).
[59] Doron K. Antrim, "Music Master to Millions," *The Rotarian* (April 1940).
[60] Sullivan and Blanch, "Introduction: The Middlebrow – Within or Without Modernism," 2.
[61] Letter, Mary Wood Hinman to Nicolas Slonimsky, April 22, 1937, Nicolas Slonimsky Collection, box 134, Music Division, Library of Congress.
[62] Letter, Winfred R.G. Steber to Nicolas Slonimsky, February 16, 1938, Nicolas Slonimsky Collection, box 134, Music Division, Library of Congress.

was even a letter from Harold Witt, an inmate at the Illinois State Penitentiary.[63]

Jennie F. W. Johnson of Delavan, Wisconsin joined her fellow music teachers in praising Slonimsky's articles as "simple and understandable." The articles had been instrumental in Johnson's middlebrow quest to develop the residents of her "small unmusical town" into music lovers of taste and erudition. When a farmer's wife asked her what counterpoint was, she told Slonimsky, "I explained as simply as I could when the next week appeared your column, illustrated upon the very subject." Johnson, the only resident of Delavan with a *Monitor* subscription, developed a system so as to ensure that maximum edification was squeezed from each issue. The magazine section of the paper was sent to a "young lawyer" who later passed it on to a teenage "shut in"; the Children's Page was given to a farm family on the outskirts of town who passed it on to another family, and so on and so forth.[64]

But Slonimsky had no bigger fan than Webern himself. Following the publication of "The Orchestral Score," Slonimsky sent Webern a copy. On 14 January 1937 the composer responded:

> Sehr geehrter Herr Slonimsky,
> Ihre freundlichen Nachrichten und Ihre Zusendung brachten mir ganz besondere Freude. Ich danke Ihnen herzlichst. Zu hören, dass Sie sich bemühen, Kindern meine Musik begreiflich zu machen und dass das auch gelingt, freute mich ungemein und wirkte geradezu tröstlich auf mich. Und auch, dass Sie [an] Hand einer Partitur von mir Kindern eine solche Anlage erklären, ist ein freundlicher Gedanke und es beglückt mich, dass in diesem Zusammenhang Noten von mir auf einer Kinder gewidmeten Seite (The Children's Page) erschienen sind. Ja gewiss, hätten die "Großen"

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[63] Letter, Harold Witt to Nicolas Slonimsky, Nicolas Slonimsky Collection, box 134, Music Division, Library of Congress.

[64] Letter, Jennie F. W. Johnson to Nicolas Slonimsky, February 5, 1937, Nicolas Slonimsky Collection, box 134, Music Division, Library of Congress.

> (Erwachsenen) nicht so viel Vorurteile, wäre es längst anders.[65]
>
> MUCH ESTEEMED MR. SLONIMSKY:
> Your friendly letter with enclosures brought me very special joy. To realize that you have taken the trouble of making my music accessible to children and that you have actually succeeded in doing so gives me uncommon satisfaction and real consolation. That you used my own score to arrange it for children is a friendly thought on your part and it makes me happy that the notes that I have written appear on the Children's Page, dedicated specially to children. Yes, it is true that if the so-called adults, the grown-ups, had as few prejudices as children, then everything would be quite different.[66]

Webern's enthusiasm is not surprising, as Slonimsky's article played into the Romantic discourse of childhood innocence that was central to the composer's creative outlook. Among Webern's favorite books, for example, was Peter Rosegger's *Waldheimat* ("forest homeland"), a series of sentimental stories recollecting Rosegger's "childhood days and childhood home" in the Austrian province of Styria.[67] Webern was also intimately familiar with the many compositions of Gustav Mahler that take children and childhood as their subject; he conducted Mahler's Symphony No. 4, a work often described in terms of childhood innocence, on several occasions.[68] It follows, then, that Webern arrived at the conclusion that "if the so-called adults, the grown-ups, had as few

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[65] Letter, Anton Webern to Nicolas Slonimsky, January 14, 1937, Nicolas Slonimsky Collection, box 169, folder 4, Music Division, Library of Congress.

[66] Nicolas Slonimsky, *Music Since 1900*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (1971): 1316. Slonimsky's translation of Webern's letter takes a few liberties but is generally accurate and in the spirit of the original. Later in the same letter, in a passage that was not included in *Music Since 1900*, Webern provided Slonimsky with information on the composition and premiere of op. 10.

[67] Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, 80–81.

[68] For details of Webern's engagement with Mahler's Symphony No. 4, see: Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*…183, 380, 396. Themes of childhood in that symphony have been discussed by many, but the most focused treatments of this topic are: Ryan R. Kangas, "Classical Style, Childhood and Nostalgia in Mahler's Fourth Symphony," *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* 8.2 (2011): 219–236; Raymond Knapp, "Suffering Children: Perspectives on Innocence and Vulnerability in Mahler's Fourth Symphony," *19th-Century Music* 22.3 (1999): 233–267.

prejudices as children, then everything would be quite different." This pronouncement is an example of what, according to Robin Bernstein, was a commonly held view on the relationship between youth and adulthood: "It's all downhill from the first breath: to grow is to lose sacred childhood innocence, and each day the juvenile human develops, the essential child dies off a little."[69] Webern saw in Slonimsky's article affirmation of this perspective and of his music, and so he embraced Slonimsky's brand of middlebrow modernism.

Webern rarely made children the explicit subject of his works in the same way that Mahler did; the *Kinderstück*, to which I will turn shortly, is one exception. Though many of Webern's works are associated with childhood, that association is usually under the surface, evident only from correspondence, sketches, or diary entries; I discuss this topic further in Chapter 4. What is not obvious from Webern's letter to Slonimsky, for example, is that op. 10 was already children's music long before it appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor*. According to Julian Johnson, the "extreme fragmentation and erosion of the melodic voice" in aphoristic pieces such as op. 10 no. 4 has often been viewed as "a bleak annihilation of the subjective voice." This view, Johnson argues, is a misinterpretation. As Johnson points out, Webern once reported that most of his pre-World War I works were composed in response to the death of his mother in 1906. Instead of fragmentation and erosion, then, Johnson hears in aphoristic pieces like op. 10 no. 4 "the angelic presence which Webern identified with the

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[69] Bernstein, "Childhood as Performance," 205.

continuing sense of his mother's memory."[70] This personal association with op. 10, even more than discourses of childhood innocence, may help to explain why Slonimsky's article so delighted Webern. As an adult and father himself, Webern still identified as his mother's son; Slonimsky's article, likewise, encouraged its adult audience to rediscover a childlike way of listening. Op. 10 no. 4, once music *of* children—or of one child, Webern—became in Slonimsky's vision music *for* children. In each case, "children" meant the young and the old alike.

Proud to have gained Webern's approval, Slonimsky mentioned the composer's letter in the foreword to *The Road to Music*, anthologized it in *Music Since 1900*, and told the whole story all over again in his autobiography, *Perfect Pitch.* And so "The Orchestral Score," an esoteric piece of music history, lived on. In October 1981, as part of their 100th anniversary season, the Boston Symphony Orchestra performed Webern's op. 10 in a series of subscription concerts.[71] A program note accompanying the performances made reference to "The Orchestral Score," as did a 1983 *Christian Science Monitor* article by Hans Moldenhauer entitled "A composer's children."[72] In 1996, on the occasion of Slonimsky's death, a *Monitor* obituary noted that "[o]nly Nicolas would have obtained a musical gem by the controversial Anton von Webern for the Monitor's Children's Page." Slonimsky, it claimed, was like the children for whom he wrote—"but with a universe of learning as his playground."[73]

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[70] Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, 127.

[71] The performances took place on October 2, 3, and 6, 1981.

[72] Hans Moldenhauer, "A composer's children," *Christian Science Monitor* (November 30, 1983).

[73] Roderick Nordell, "'Lexicon of Musical Invective' Author Leaves Bright Legacy," *Christian Science Monitor* (January 10, 1996).

Kinderstücke (1966)

Around the time that Slonimsky fashioned Webern's op. 10 no. 4 into music for children, he did the same with Arnold Schoenberg's *Piano Piece*, op. 33a. This time he had one particular child in mind—his infant daughter Electra—and the music served a more particular purpose:

> When Electra would demand a bottle, I would sit down at the piano and play a Chopin nocturne, completely ignoring her screams. I would allow for a pause, and then play on the piano Schoenberg's Opus 33a, which opens with a dodecaphonic succession of three highly dissonant chords. I would then rush in to give Electra her bottle. Her features would relax, her crying would cease, and she would suck contentedly. This was to establish a conditioned reflex in favour of dissonant music.[74]

Slonimsky's commitment to modernism was beyond doubt, however suspect his parenting methods might have been. His anecdote calls to mind an oft-repeated tale about Schoenberg and the performance of twelve-tone music by children:

> It was apparently a fancy of Schoenberg's that someday schoolchildren would be taught to sing twelve-tone melodies. This raises some enormous questions and problems. First, from where would such a repertoire of singable tunes be drawn?[75]

Slonimsky answered that question with Schoenberg's op. 33a, but a different Second Viennese School piano piece might have served his purposes even better: Webern's *Kinderstück* (Children's Piece). But Slonimsky did not even know that the *Kinderstück* existed. At the time, almost no one did.

Webern composed the *Kinderstück* in 1924. The work was intended for a planned set of children's pieces, but the other *Kinderstücke* never materialized,

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[74] Slonimsky, *Perfect Pitch*…145.

[75] George Rochberg, "Reflections on Schoenberg," *Perspectives of New Music* 11 (1973): 74–75.

and the one that was left was put on a shelf.[76] Unpublished and unknown, the *Kinderstück* was lost amidst the chaos and confusion of Webern's death in 1945. Over two decades later Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer discovered it among a collection of "muddled music manuscripts" hidden away in a Viennese attic.[77] In May 1966 Hans Moldenhauer wrote to Edward Downes, the New York Philharmonic's program annotator (and son of Olin Downes), with information on how to procure a score of the *Kinderstück*.[78] Two months after that the piece was performed as part of a Lincoln Center festival in honor of Igor Stravinsky. According to Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer the *Kinderstück*'s world premiere at the Stravinsky festival, more than four decades after its composition, constituted nothing less than an "unlikely resurrection on the glamorous stage of Philharmonic Hall in New York City."[79]

And it wasn't just the stage that was glamorous; the festival's roster of artists reads like a who's who of twentieth-century music. Leonard Bernstein, Ernest Ansermet, Robert Craft, and even the 84-year-old Stravinsky all took the podium. Elizabeth Schwarzkopf sang; Andre Watts played a piano concerto. Aaron Copland narrated what must be the most star-studded performance of *The Soldier's Tale* on record, with Elliott Carter playing the soldier, John Cage the devil. Over the course of three weeks in July, the festival presented a series of

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[76] Felix Meyer, "*Anton Webern: Kinderstück M. 266*," in *Canto D'Amore: Classicism in Modern Art and Music 1914–1935*, ed. Ulrich Mosch, Gottfried Boehm, and Katharina Schmidt, Basel, Switzerland: Paul Sacher Stiftung (1996): 356.

[77] Raymond Ericson, "New Webern Haul Found in a Dark Attic," *New York Times* (April 10, 1966).

[78] Letter, Hans Moldenhauer to Edward Downes, 19 May 1966, *New York Philharmonic Leon Levy Digital Archives*, http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/20d560a0-1349-40b7-96d3-22a17d9c8032?search-type=singleFilter&search-text=Moldenhauer&doctype=businessRecord.

[79] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*…666.

themed concerts that juxtaposed Stravinsky's music with the music of varied times, places, and traditions: "Stravinsky and the 18th Century," "Stravinsky and Italian Music," "Stravinsky and the Dance," etc. The penultimate concert, "Stravinsky and Recent Years," featured a program selected by Stravinsky himself, with music by younger composers like Milton Babbitt and Pierre Boulez. Following the second intermission, Lukas Foss conducted the New York premiere of Boulez's *Eclat*. As Foss exited the stage, pianist Caren Glasser entered to perform the *Kinderstück*. Compared to the starry names that preceded her at the festival, Glasser was an unknown quantity; but then again she was just nine years old. A resident of the town of Great Neck on Long Island, Glasser was a piano student in Juilliard's Preparatory Division.[80] Her performance at the Stravinsky festival was confirmed in mid-July, when her parents were sent a letter with details about logistics, compensation, equipment, and sound checks. Glasser was paid $50.00 and received four complimentary tickets in exchange for her performance; Stravinsky, who conducted his *Symphony of Psalms* on the following evening, was paid $5000.00.[81]

Though 42 years in the making, Glasser's performance of the *Kinderstück* barely lasted 42 seconds. Like most of Webern's music, the *Kinderstück* is short, quiet, and full of silence. Two notes rarely sound simultaneously, producing a

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[80] Slonimsky, who published an essay bemoaning the rise of the child prodigy in 1948, may have had something to say about Glasser's performance. See: Nicolas Slonimsky, "Musical Children: Prodigies or Monsters?" *Writings on Music Volume Four: Slonimskyana*, New York and London: Routledge (2005): 301–07.

[81] Letter, Clara Simons to Mr. and Mrs. Alex Glasser, July 14, 1966, *New York Philharmonic Leon Levy Digital Archives*, http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/ba6ac930-8e7e-4842-838c-93d0be88c31c?search-type=singleFilter&search-text=Artist+Contracts%3A+Conductors+and+Soloists&doctype=businessRecord.

light and airy texture. The tempo marking is *Lieblich* (lovely). The one discernible motive is a single note repeated two or three times in quick succession—*tap, tap, tap*—such that the music begins to sound like Morse code.[82] Had the *Kinderstück* been performed in New York at the time of its composition, the critical reception would likely have been negative, as was the case for the vast majority of Webern's works heard in the United States during the 1920s and 30s. Perhaps measuring Webern's music against the even more radical music elsewhere on the program, however, critics responded more favorably in 1966. The *New York Times*' Howard Klein, for example, described Glasser's performance of the *Kinderstück* as the evening's

> one moment of warmth. She pecked her way through the…piano solo like an accomplished little musician and then delighted the audience by throwing in an encore, the short arrangement of the trumpet tune from Stravinsky's ballet, "Petruchka."[83]

Carman Moore of *The Village Voice* deemed Glasser "very poised" and found the *Kinderstück* "short, lean, and beautiful of phrase."[84] Lukas Foss, the festival's artistic director, was also pleased with the performance, writing to Glasser's parents to tell them that "[w]e were all charmed to have your talented daughter taking part in the Stravinsky Festival." Foss continued on to report his confidence that Glasser would "be growing up into a fine musician."[85]

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[82] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*…313.

[83] Howard Klein, "Philharmonic Festival Offers Music Chosen By Stravinsky," *New York Times* (July 23, 1966).

[84] Carman Moore, *The Village Voice* (July 23, 1966).

[85] Letter, Lukas Foss to Mr. and Mrs. Alex Glasser, July 28 1966, *New York Philharmonic Leon Levy Digital Archives*, http://archives.nyphil.org/index.php/artifact/4004cef5-bef5-4f9c-b08e-797f46e65e57?search-type=singleFilter&search-

Though successful, Glasser's performance also brings to light further potential pitfalls of a children-oriented brand of middlebrow modernism. Consider, for example, the language employed by Klein and Foss. Words like "little," "delighted," and "charmed" make clear, if only implicitly, that Glasser was not simply young, but a young girl. The *New York Post*'s Jay S. Harrison was more explicit in his review, referring to Glasser as both a "lass" and a "wench."[86] Gender played a key role in both middlebrow culture and educational programs targeted at children. Sullivan and Blanch note that "the middlebrow's perceived ties to domesticity inevitably attached it to women's culture," while Andres Huyssen documents a nineteenth-century cultural trope in which women were associated with mass culture, men with high art.[87] Beverly Lyon Clark likewise points out that "[f]rom the start…reading and play were seen through the lens of gender" in the realm of children's literature.[88] It is thus not surprising that this particular subgenre of middlebrow modernism, which blended aspects of both worlds, often displayed disconcerting treatment of girls. The response to Glasser's performance is far from the only example of this phenomenon. Bernstein and Slonimsky both seem to have understood how effectively images of girls could be used to advance their artistic agendas; consider Slonimsky's girl with a chocolate

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text=Stravinsky+Festival+programming&doctype=businessRecord&sort-order=asc&sort-column=npb:SortRecordGroup&page=2.

[86] Jay S. Harrison, "Stravinsky Festival Offers Program of Modern Music," *New York Post* (July 23, 1966).

[87] Sullivan and Blanch, "Introduction: The Middlebrow – Within or Without Modernism," 3; Andreas Huyssen, "Mass Culture as Woman: Modernism's Other," *After the great divide: modernism, mass culture, postmodernism*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press (1986): 44–64.

[88] Beverly Lyon Clark, "Introduction," *Girls, Boys, Books, Toys, Gender in Children's Literature and Culture*, ed. Clark and Margaret R. Higonnet, Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press (1999): 1.

bar and the anecdote about his daughter Electra, or Bernstein's habit of trotting out his daughter Jaime during Young People's Concerts. Indeed an unsavory truth about the intersection of middlebrow modernism and children's programs is that girls, much more so than boys, often served as precocious props for conductors and pedagogues—who were almost always men. Whoever decided to have Glasser give the premiere Webern's *Kinderstück* likely understood how powerful this strategy could be.

It seems apt, then, to conclude discussion of the *Kinderstück*'s premiere by letting Glasser speak for herself. On August 1, a little over a week after her performance at Lincoln Center, Glasser wrote a letter to Stravinsky. The letterhead sported drawings of a vine along the top border, with a rose bouquet pictured in the upper left-hand corner. "Dear Mr. Stravinsky," Glasser began, "[i]t was indeed an honor to perform the Trumpet Tune from the Petruchka and the World Premier [sic] of Webern's Kinderstuck [sic] in your presence at N.Y. Philharmonic Hall on July 22nd. Meeting you was an experience that I shall never forget." Echoing Lukas Foss' prediction, she expressed her hope that she would "grow up to be able to perform [Stravinsky's] magnificent music." "Please send my fondest regards to Mrs. Stravinsky," Glasser concluded, "who was so kind to me that night."[89]

* * *

Though the program note accompanying Glasser's performance recounted the Moldenhauers' discovery of the *Kinderstück* in Vienna the previous year, it

[89] Letter, Caren Glasser to Igor Stravinsky, August 1, 1966, Igor Stravinsky Collection, MF 141.1, 000852, Paul Sacher Stiftung.

contained little information about the work's musical qualities, the only mention a one-word descriptor so often applied to Webern's music: "brief."[90] It seems likely, then, that most of the audience at Lincoln Center that night went home without knowing that the *Kinderstück* was, in fact, Webern's first completed work to employ that bogeyman of twentieth-century composition: the twelve-tone method. Compared to most of Webern's other twelve-tone works, the *Kinderstück* is an essay in simplicity. The entire piece is contained within six consecutive statements of the P_0 row form. Beginnings of phrases frequently coincide with new statements of the row, resulting in close synchronization between surface texture and serial construction. Since the *Kinderstück*'s reemergence, many have interpreted this simplicity as evidence that the piece was an experiment with a new compositional method that Webern had yet to master. The Moldenhauers, for example, viewed the piece's "Morse code" effect as a byproduct of Webern's excessively strict application of the twelve-tone method:

> In the strict application of the method, all twelve notes of the chromatic scale must be introduced before any is sounded a second time, except when a given note is immediately repeated. This exception produces a "Morse code" effect peculiar to many early compositions in the idiom and conspicuous also in the *Kinderstück*.[91]

Seen in this light, the *Kinderstück* appears as historically significant, but relatively unimpressive in terms of compositional craft.

This focus on the *Kinderstück*'s relationship to the twelve-tone method has obscured a different and equally significant interpretative angle. As noted above, many of Webern's works engage with themes of childhood, but such engagement

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[90] Program, "Jul 22 / Festival / Dufallo."

[91] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*…313.

is nearly always under the surface and concealed from audiences (as in the case of op. 10). The *Kinderstück* is an exception to this rule and can thus be viewed as evidence in support of Chowrimootoo's claim that even members of the Second Viennese School sometimes participated in the "active cultivation of (as opposed to principled disdain for) audiences."[92] As the examples of Bernstein and Slonimsky make clear, identifying children as the target audience of a musical work or program could be an effective method of courting audiences young and old alike. Webern is not usually viewed as a composer who was particularly interested in courting audiences; recall Erwin Stein's claim that Webern composed "not what people want to hear but what he has to say."[93] Yet Webern declared his desire for his music to be *fasslich* ("comprehensible" or "graspable") on many occasions. Such declarations can ring hollow in the face of his most challenging music, but perhaps the *Kinderstück*'s foregrounding of childhood themes indicates that it should be considered differently from Webern's other works. If that is the case, the work might then serve as an example of the way in which the middlebrow functions, in the words of Sullivan and Blanch, as an "aesthetic mode."[94]

Clemens Kühn offers a perspective on the *Kinderstück* that serves as evidence of this hypothesis. Instead of tying the "Morse code" effect to Webern's application of the twelve-tone method, Kühn argues that the *Kinderstück*'s repeated notes ease the technical burden placed on young pianists while

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[92] Chowrimootoo, "Reviving the Middlebrow…" 192.
[93] Stein, "The Music of Anton Webern."
[94] Sullivan and Blanch, "Introduction: The Middlebrow – Within or Without Modernism," 2.

simultaneously engaging in a childlike play. He likewise interprets the "D.C. ad libitum" at the bottom of the score not as a structural marker, but as an invitation to play:

> *Und am Schluß mag "D.C. ad libitum" nicht nur die Aufforderung meinen, sich durch öfters Spiel immer besser einzuhören, sonder auch die kindliche Lust spiegeln, ein schon bekanntes Spiel immer wieder zu spielen.*
>
> And at the end, "D.C. ad libitum" could be understood not only as a prompt to become more familiar through repeated playing, but also as a reflection of the childlike joy of playing an already familiar game over and over again.[95]

As with Slonimsky, Kühn's childlike perspective on Webern's music results in a reappraisal of and refocusing on the music's surface. Precisely those surface features that earlier commentators identified as irregular or problematic—the extreme brevity and idiosyncratic collection of orchestral instruments in op. 10 no. 4, the *Kinderstück*'s repeated notes—are valorized as engaging, graspable, and even potentially fun. Slonimsky and Kühn's focus on the music's surface also stands in marked contrast to a long-running tradition of uncovering hidden features of Webern's music, evident not only in the attention paid to the *Kinderstück*'s twelve-tone construction but also in the numerous music-theoretical exegeses of op. 10 no. 4.[96] The approaches to Webern's music taken by Slonimsky and Kühn might therefore be understood as examples of what Jani Scandura calls "reading literally":

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[95] Clemens Kühn, "Zwölfton- oder -Musik?" in *Musikwissenschaft zwischen Kunst, Ästhetik und Experiment: Festschrift Helga de la Motte-Haber zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Reinhard Kopiez et. al., Würzburg, Germany: Königshausen & Neumann (1998): 335. Translated by the author.

[96] For two prominent examples of the latter, see: Allen Forte, *The Structure of Atonal Music*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1973; David Lewin, *Musical Form and Transformation: Four Analytic Essays*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993.

> Reading literally is thought to be the most naive of interpretive practices, the least well informed…Yet what if reading literally could amount to something like a method, a method that is experiential and childlike, not so much resistant to the symbolic order as unsure of its parameters.[97]

Scandura's proposed method calls to mind other, similarly oriented forms of reading, including Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus' "surface reading" and Nicola Humble's "sitting back."[98] Though these concepts do not align perfectly with one another, they are all examples of the way in which the middlebrow can serve as "a form of reading practice."[99] Scandura suggests that the naiveté and joy of childhood are virtues, worth aspiring to even if ultimately inaccessible (or not fully accessible) to adults. To read literally is not to read like a child, but to read while imagining oneself as a child. Put another way, the *Kinderstück* rewards "the adult who apprehends the work simultaneously from an imagined perspective of the idealized Child who delights in its strangeness," reveling in Kühn's "childlike joy" and "familiar game," as well as "from a more knowing perspective."[100] The latter constitutes a common approach to Webern's music; that the former might also be viable is the most remarkable thing about the *Kinderstück*.

High and low

The power of middlebrow modernism, as Christopher Chowrimootoo argues, lies in its ability to engender a "compromise or ambivalence in the relationship

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[97] Jani Scandura, *Down in the Dumps: Place, Modernity, American Depression*, Duke University Press (2008): 24.
[98] Stephen Best and Sharon Marcus, "Surface Reading: An Introduction," *Representations* 108 (2009): 1–21; Nicola Humble, "Sitting Forward or Sitting Back: Highbrow v. Middlebrow Reading," *Modernist Cultures* 6.1 (2011): 41–59.
[99] Sullivan and Blanch, "Introduction: The Middlebrow – Within or Without Modernism," 2.
[100] Knapp, "Suffering Children…" 264.

between high and low." That ambivalence, in turn, allows us "to hear nuance in even the most radical cases of avant-garde extremism."[101] As Chapter 1 made clear, Webern's music was viewed as one such radical case from the moment it arrived in the United States; each of the three moments I have documented in this chapter introduced some of the nuance of which Chowrimootoo speaks. Leonard Bernstein's presentation of op. 6 no. 3 acknowledged the oddness of Webern's "tiny little pieces" but found in them joy instead of confusion. Nicolas Slonimsky heard in op. 10 no. 4 not a frustratingly quiet series of insect noises, but a delightful parade of instruments in the manner of a midcentury cartoon. And Caren Glasser's performance of the *Kinderstück* prompted the question of whether even Webern—the avant-garde extremist himself—may have maintained a more nuanced relationship with mass culture than is normally assumed. These moments confirm that a children-oriented brand of middlebrow modernism can shed new light on Webern's works, that the process itself can be rewarding independent of any resultant growth in audience.

That process is not without its drawbacks. Throughout this chapter I have paused to point out moments at which efforts to promote middlebrow modernism resulted in (likely unintended) negative consequences. Though the Young People's Concerts sometimes made room for modernist music, they rarely did the same for music that was not part of a European cultural tradition; Slonimsky exhibited a similar bias in his "Ways of a Sonata" world map. The reception of Glasser's performance, meanwhile, was wrapped up in gendered

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[101] Chowrimootoo, "Middlebrow Modernism…" 15.

discourses that influenced many middlebrow programs, including some produced by Slonimsky and Bernstein. It is likely that all of these issues were, in part, a result of negligence; in devoting so much energy to crossing class boundaries or making avant-garde music more accessible, purveyors of middlebrow modernism may have overlooked other parameters. But they were also, in part, an unavoidable component of a subgenre of middlebrow modernism that rested on certain ideas about childhood. All of the moments I have documented rely, to recall Michelle Philips' description, on an image of children as "redemptive, virtuous, originary, and universal." It is the last of these descriptors that is most crucial. The efforts of Bernstein, Slonimsky, and even Kühn all placed Webern's music within an imagined world in which childhood is akin to an idealized and abstracted sonic playground. Divorced from the pains that accompany any particular childhood—appearing, in Philips' words, as "a beloved space set apart from the disenchanted adult world of labor, materialism, and managed time"—their vision of childhood was universal.[102] By definition, then, it ignored the many particular contexts of childhoods in the United States.

That these issues should arise in relation to the music of Anton Webern is fitting. The same features of brevity and sparseness that made Webern's music ripe for the middlebrow modernism treatment turned off many listeners. Yet Webern exhibited an unwavering belief in the righteousness of his music, convinced that it could and should attract a mass audience. Arnold Schoenberg's "fancy" that "someday schoolchildren would be taught to sing twelve-tone

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[102] Philips, *Representations of Childhood in American Modernism*, 2–3.

melodies" is typical of this attitude.[103] Similar anecdotes have been relayed about Webern: "[Webern] told a friend that it would take fifty years before the public caught up with his music. At the end of that time, Webern said, the public would be whistling his melodies."[104] This combination of difficult, esoteric music and an unceasingly positive outlook on the future of that music is a product of Webern's tendency towards naiveté, ignorance, and obliviousness—traits most painfully evident in his late-in-life support for the Third Reich, a topic I discuss at length in Chapter 4. Viewed in this light, Webern's letter to Slonimsky reads less like an enthusiastic expression of support and more like an out-of-touch manifesto.

It would be too pat, however, to take these issues as reasons to dismiss entirely Slonimsky's article, or the *Kinderstück*, or any other examples of middlebrow modernism. To critique "overweaning paradigms" in this way, Chowrimootoo argues, can "easily become as unvarying as the paradigms themselves," making them appear "more coherent and unassailable than they really are."[105] Middlebrow modernism is certainly neither. If there is anything of value in the three moments I have documented, furthermore, then it is at least worth attempting to work through the critiques. Perhaps a childlike state of open-mindedness need not result in childish obliviousness; perhaps it is possible to advocate passionately for modernist music without adopting Webern's zealousness. If so, then what remains is more than three isolated historical

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[103] Rochberg, "Reflections on Schoenberg," 74–75.

[104] Harold C. Schonberg, "Kindness Kills: Webern's Most Ardent Disciples May Succeed in Destroying His Ideals," *New York Times* (June 10, 1962). Schonberg's account may be a distortion of a more familiar anecdote involving postmen. See: Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*…543.

[105] Chowrimootoo, "Middlebrow Modernism…" 5.

moments; what remains is an approach to Webern's music that can be productive in the present. Fifty years have come and gone since Webern's death, and it appears no easier to whistle op. 6 no. 4, or op. 10 no. 4, or the *Kinderstück*. In the stories of Bernstein, Slonimsky, and Glasser, however, we may find good reason to keep listening.

Chapter 3: *Robert Craft, Dial Records, and sounding Webern (1950–1979)*

On January 26, 1950, the New York Philharmonic presented a four-composer program led by conductor Dimitri Mitropoulos at Carnegie Hall. The concert opened with Cherubini's Overture to *Anacréon* before pianist Robert Casadesus played Beethoven's "Emperor" Concerto. After intermission came Webern's Symphony, op. 21, heard in New York for the first time since its world premiere at a League of Composers concert in 1929, discussed in Chapter 1. The concert concluded with Rachmaninoff's *Symphonic Dances*. By the time that latter work began, however, the audience had shrunken somewhat. Two U.S. composers named John Cage and Morton Feldman slipped out of the hall after Webern's work, not interested in sitting through the Rachmaninoff. They bumped into each other in the lobby:

> I was more or less catching my breath in the empty lobby when John came out. I recognized him, though we had never met, walked over, and as though I had known him all my life said, "Wasn't that beautiful?" A moment later we were talking animatedly about how beautiful the piece sounded in so large a hall. We immediately made arrangements for me to visit him.[1]

According to another report, Cage left the concert "shaking with excitement."[2]

It's a good story. It is not, however, particularly revealing with regards to the reception of Webern's music more generally. Of course Cage and Feldman enjoyed the Symphony; what did everyone else think? In a review of the concert written for the *New York Herald Tribune*, Virgil Thomson argued that the other

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[1] Morton Feldman, *Give My Regards to Eighth Street*, Exact Change (2004): 4.

[2] Michael Hicks, "'Our Webern': Cage and Feldman's Devotion to Christian Wolff," in *Changing the System: The Music of Christian Wolff*, Burlington, VT: Ashgate (2010): 10.

works on the program "sounded gross beside Webern's spun-steel."[3] A reviewer from *New York Times* deemed the Symphony "music of discipline and character, with a touch of lyricism—yes, lyricism!—in places." But while critics responded positively, the audience's reaction was more mixed. The *Times* reported that "a sizable segment of the audience exercised its prerogative to dislike the composition," hissing and booing, with one audience member going so far as to loudly shout "no!" during the performance. Others defended Webern's work; "[a] good many people applauded, and some seemed to step up the volume of their applause when it became clear that the nay-sayers were intent on making themselves heard."[4] Thomson attempted to explain the audience's response by referring to the world premiere of the work over two decades earlier: "Anton Webern's Symphony…was 'advanced' music when first played here twenty years ago; and it still is. For all the worldwide spread of the twelve-tone technique that has taken place since then, it would be hard to find today five living adepts of it whose writing is so firm and so sophisticated."[5] The *Times* critic felt differently, arguing that "music written in the twelve-tone system is no longer wholly foreign to our ears," as evidenced by "quite a few people" in the audience who were "absorbed by the score."[6]

This final comment is revealing. Whether or not Webern's music was "no longer wholly foreign to our ears," those audience members who were "absorbed

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[3] Virgil Thomson, "Star-Dust and Spun-Steel," *New York Herald Tribune* (January 27, 1950).

[4] H.T., "HISSES, APPLAUSE FOR WEBERN OPUS: Philharmonic Audience Openly Expresses Mixed Reaction—All Approve Casadesus," *New York Times* (January 27. 1950). "H.T." refers to Howard Taubman.

[5] Thomson, "Star-Dust and Spun-Steel."

[6] H.T., "HISSES, APPLAUSE…"

by the score" were engaging not only their ears but also their eyes. Perhaps unintentionally, then, the *Times* critic hit on a theme that has long been central to the reception of Webern's music: that it is better consumed visually than aurally. Many discussions of Webern's works have employed language similar to that used to described *Augenmusik* ("eye music"), a term most often used in reference to early music that possesses "a symbolic meaning that is apparent to the eye but not to the ear." Examples include the black notation used by Josquin in his *Nymphes des bois*, a lament on the death of Ockeghem, or the comically tiny note values of the "Lilliputian chaconne" in Telemann's *Der getreue Music-Meister*. Since the significance of *Augenmusik* lies in its notation, Thurston Dart argues, it is primarily "the concern of composers and performers rather than listeners."[7] Webern's music has often been interpreted along similar lines, thought to possess a meaning accessible only to those with the ability to read scores. In 1938, for example, a critic at a London performance of the String Trio, op. 20 quipped that the performers' "suggestion of confidence" was the only way that audience members could tell whether or not the performers were playing the right notes.[8] The Symphony, op. 21, which Webern composed using a palindromic twelve-tone row (Figure 14), has been the subject of much similar commentary. A. Peter Brown argues that "only a few listeners will perceive the form" of the work, while Kathryn Bailey observes that "[t]he ingeniously

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[7] Thurston Dart, "Eye music," *Grove Music Online,* 2001, accessed September 20, 2019, https://www-oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.library.cornell.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000009152.

[8] N.C., "Music in London: Webern's String Trio," *The Guardian* (December 16, 1938). "N.C." refers to Neville Cardus.

constructed palindrome which is formed by the nine sections of the second movement is a marvel to be admired *only by those who examine the score* and analyze the row structure" (emphasis added).[9] Anne Shreffler sums up this issue, which affects most if not all of Webern's twelve-tone works, by noting that "[s]ince row structure is generally not perceptible except after studying the score, the music's traditional formal organization is difficult to hear."[10]

Though some have argued that Webern's music can be understood through listening alone, even these commentators have often acknowledged the difficulties inherent in doing so. As Erwin Stein argued in 1929's "The Art of Anton Webern,"

> whoever wishes Webern's musical ideas to produce their effect must listen with the utmost attention from end to end. These ideas do not meet you half way; you yourself must find your way to them.

Stein was among Webern's staunchest historical advocates, so he suggested that those who would overcome these difficulties would be rewarded with music of "nobility, tenderness and intensity."[11] But difficulties worth overcoming are difficulties all the same. Willi Reich, another frequent proponent of Webern's music, had this to say in a program note for the 1931 performance of op. 21 at Oxford, discussed in Chapter 1:

> The score is very clear, and attentive readers will encounter no special difficulty in mastering its contents. But a far more difficult problem confronts listeners, who have to take in Webern's wonderful music at the

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[9] A. Peter Brown, *The Symphonic Repertoire Volume IV: The Second Golden Age of the Viennese Symphony*, Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press (2003): 876; Kathryn Bailey, "Webern's Opus 21: Creativity in Tradition," *Journal of Musicology* 2.2 (Spring, 1983): 192.
[10] Anne Shreffler, "Anton Webern," in *Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern: A companion to the Second Viennese School*, ed. Bryan R. Simms, Westport, CT: Greenwood (1999): 288.
[11] Erwin Stein, "The Art of Anton Webern," *Christian Science Monitor* (June 22, 1929).

> pace at which it is played. It is only by repeated hearings that one can fully comprehend the subtly carried-out linear structure of the work.[12]

Reich attempted to arm the audience with some of the knowledge they might have gleaned from a score, printing the work's twelve-tone row in the program booklet. In a review of the same performance, Aaron Copland echoed Reich by referring to op. 21 as "eminently music one should not attempt to criticize after one hearing," a position that he claimed was also held by Webern himself.[13] Copland went on to argue that work might have benefitted from a performance in a smaller venue:

> It is to be regretted that the piece was presented in Queen's Hall, as its quality was decidedly too intimate for a large auditorium…to how much limitation of the emotional scale and of the musical means may a work be subjected—that is to say, when the idiom is more familiar, will one able to differentiate between the various parts of what now appears to be of so even a tenor?[14]

The *New York Times* critic at the 1950 Carnegie Hall performance of op. 21 expressed a similar sentiment: "It is a piece that would sound better in a smaller hall. Written with the most sparing use of instruments and notes, its texture is thin and its design cryptic."[15]

Feldman and Cage, as noted above, had instead felt that the work sounded beautiful "in so large a hall" as Carnegie.[16] But the two composers had access to key resources that most listeners lacked. They possessed, for example, the musical-technical knowledge to read and analyze Webern's scores in the manner

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[12] Anton Webern collection, MF 111.1–001894, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, Switzerland.
[13] Copland, "Contemporaries at Oxford," 18; Copland, "Playing safe at Zurich," 29.
[14] Copland, "Contemporaries at Oxford," 18.
[15] H.T., "HISSES, APPLAUSE…"
[16] Feldman, *Give My Regards to Eighth Street*, 4.

described by Bailey. A few months after Cage and Feldman's chance meeting, Cage met the young U.S. composer Christian Wolff and was overjoyed to find that Wolff also harbored affection for the composer of the Symphony, op. 21—"He is sixteen and his favorite composer is Webern." Cage taught Wolff for a time thereafter, often tasking him with labeling row forms in Webern's works; needless to say, this kind of engagement was available only to a select few. Nor were scores of Webern's music widely available at the time. In fact even Cage had been forced to copy out op. 21 by hand from the New York Public Library's score, complaining that it was "nowhere to be bought."[17] Those interested in becoming familiar with Webern's musical style were thus forced to get by on live performances; recordings were, as I will discuss further below, all but nonexistent at the time. Yet concert programs featuring Webern's works were not much more prevalent, especially outside of the new music circles in which Cage and Feldman moved. What's more, concerts offered only "one hearing" and could be hindered by the acoustics of large concert halls. More often than not, then, the repeated and attentive listening of the kind advocated by Reich, Copland, and Stein was simply impossible. Webern's music was difficult to access—whether visually or aurally—which only made it that much more difficult to understand

But all that was about to change. The New York Philharmonic's performance of op. 21 took place on January 26, 1950. Six days earlier and about a mile west across midtown Manhattan, at WOR Studios in Hell's Kitchen, Rudolf Kolisch and

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[17] Hicks, "'Our Webern'…" 10.

the Pro Arte Quartet had recorded Webern's opp. 5 and 9 for a small label called Dial Records. The Pro Arte's performances were the first recordings of Webern's music to be produced in the United States as well as the first to circulate widely outside of Europe. A few months later, in April 1950, a young conductor named Robert Craft performed the music Webern for the first time at a concert of the New York-based Chamber Art Society; seven years after that, Columbia Records released a four-LP set of the complete works of Webern under Craft's direction.[18] Many of the works heard on the Columbia set had been neither recorded nor performed in the United States. With these two releases, then, U.S. audiences were granted aural access to the breadth and diversity of Webern's oeuvre for the first time. Just as crucial was the opportunity that these recordings afforded to listen to Webern's music in the quiet of one's home (rather than in a too-large concert hall) and repeated many times over (rather than as part of a one-off live performance); put another way, Webern's music became audible and repeatable for the first time. The Dial and Columbia releases thus made possible a new way of knowing Webern's music, setting the stage for the subsequent reappraisals and reinterpretations that I discuss in Chapter 4. Along the way they increased the audience for Webern's music to a degree that the more isolated advocacy efforts discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 could not, helping to bring it to a wider audience than ever before.

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[18] As would be discovered just a few years after the release of the Columbia set, Webern actually composed many more works that were unknown at the time. Those works, and their discovery by Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer, are discussed in Chapter 4.

First steps "off-trail": Decca, Paradox, and Dial Records (1939–1951)

If an audience member had left the Carnegie Hall performance of op. 21 in January 1950 wanting to hear more of Webern's music, a trip to their local record shop would have yielded few options.[19] If they were lucky, they might have encountered the Kathleen Washbourne Trio's performance of Webern's String Trio, op. 20, released by the British label Decca in 1939—the first commercial recording of Webern's music. The Washbourne album also holds the distinction of being the only recorded performance of Webern's music that Webern himself ever heard after he was sent a copy by Erwin Stein, who was then living in London. Stein lamented that Rudolf Kolisch had not been available to record the work, but noted that the release nevertheless constituted a "rehabilitation" of op. 20 just one year after an incident at a London performance of the work in which a cellist had declared it unplayable and walked off the stage mid-concert. Webern's attitude toward the Washbourne Trio's performance was similar:

> The recording of my Trio is, as a recording, very good. But the performance! I recognize the presence of diligence and the best of intentions, but not really my music. I am convinced, however, that it would have turned out much better if one had given the players a few pointers. Nonetheless, I certainly respect the accomplishment.[20]

Yet the Decca release appears to have had little impact in the United States. Though it may have been distributed through Decca's U.S. branch, there is no

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[19] Miriam Quick has assembled a thorough discography of recorded performances of Webern's music that includes the early recordings I discuss here as well as several overlapping and minor releases. See: http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:dobYqHXgVQwJ:charm.cch.kcl.ac.uk/redist/xls/Weberndiscog.xls+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=us.

[20] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*, 518–519. For an account of the London incident, see: Ibid., 503.

evidence that it received any press coverage in the United States. Even if the record did reach U.S. audiences, furthermore, op. 20 makes for a challenging entrée into Webern's oeuvre. One British critic described the work as "music which is a closed book to 999 out of every thousand listeners."[21] A slightly more optimistic review promised that some listeners who were "repelled at first" would find that "at a third or fourth hearing obscurities will clarify and the deeply sincere intention of the composer become more evident."[22]

Almost a decade after the Decca release, Peter Stadlen's performance of the Variations for Piano, op. 27 at the Darmstadt *Fereinkurse* was recorded—but the recording was not released commercially until 2006.[23] The only other recording available to a Webern aficionado in January 1950, then, was a performance of the Three Little Pieces for Cello and Piano, op. 11 by Seymour Barab and William Masselos. The performance appeared on an album entitled *A recital of new music*, released early in 1950 by Paradox Records, a small independent label similar to Dial. The album also included music by Henry Cowell, Alexander Tcherepnin, Miriam Gideon, George Perle, and Ben Weber. It arrived in record shops shortly after the Carnegie Hall performance of op. 21, with one critic describing the op. 11 pieces as "pocket editions, so to speak, of the even more attenuated Symphony performed here by the adventurous Dimitri Mitropoulos with the Philharmonic

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[21] Desmond Shawe-Taylor, "Gramophone Notes," *The New Statesman and Nation* (July 15, 1939): 102.

[22] A.R., "Review, Kathleen Washbourne String Trio," *The Gramophone* (August 1939): 108. "A.R." refers to Alec Robinson.

[23] That performance, as well as Stadlen's influential interpretation of op. 27 more generally, are discussed in two recent articles: Nicholas Cook, "Inventing tradition: Webern's piano variations in early recordings," *Music analysis* 36.2 (July 2017): 163–215; Nicholas Mathew, "Darmstadt pianism, 'historically informed' Webern, and modernism's vanishing performer," *Keyboard perspectives* 3 (2010): 49–73.

last week."[24] Another critic, from *Billboard*, described Barab and Masselos' performances as "skillful and wholehearted," exhibiting "felicity and prescience." But he also noted that "[f]ew of even the highest browed spinners" would feel comfortable tackling the album's avant-garde selections; those familiar with modern styles, he contended, would "certainly find this disk worth investigating—let others beware."[25] Along similar lines, a critic from *The Saturday Review* bemoaned the braininess of the album's liner notes, which written by none other than Milton Babbitt: "Obtrusive annotations are accurate but forbidding; we could be wooed more effectively!"[26] Despite these complaints, the reception of Barab and Masselos' album was generally positive. As with the earlier recording of op. 20, however, *A recital of new music* did not serve as an especially easy introduction to Webern's music. Appropriately enough, the first recording of Webern's music to circulate widely in the United States was a performance of his briefest opus, what one reviewer described as "an experimental curiosity couched in the frugal, bare-bones style that was [Webern's] contribution to the history of music."[27]

In this context, the two Webern albums released by Dial Records in 1950 and 1951 represented a significant step forward in terms of access to Webern's music. The first Webern album included the Pro Arte Quartet's performances of

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[24] Jerome D. Bohm, "RECENT RECORDS: More Modern Music Listed by Columbia, Paradox and Capitol," *New York Herald Tribune* (February 12, 1950).
[25] "Album reviews," *The Billboard* (March 18, 1950): 115.
[26] Edward Tatnall Canby, "The New Recordings," *The Saturday Review* (March 11, 1950): 39. On sentence of Babbitt's notes reads: "It is the absence of a predefined functional unit that gives rise logically to the features which are mistakenly considered idiosyncratic."
[27] A.W.P., "Review, *A recital of new music*," *American Record Guide* (February 1950): 201.

opp. 5 and 9 as well as the Symphony, op. 21 led by René Leibowitz, whose *Schoenberg and His School* had been released in an English translation in 1949, in a performance originally recorded for the Paris-based Blue Star Records. The second Webern album featured the Four Songs, op. 12, the Quartet, op. 22, the Concerto, op. 24, and the Variations, op. 27. Both were part of Dial's "Library of Contemporary Classics" series, a project that lasted three years and produced eighteen albums, with music by Webern, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Bartók, Berg, Cage, and Hovhaness. Dial, founded by Ross Russell in the mid-1940s, was initially focused on recording jazz but changed direction after the departure of Charlie Parker from the label in 1948. Russell had recently been introduced to the music of the Second Viennese School by Louis Gottlieb, a musicologist at UCLA and former Schoenberg student. When Blue Star offered Dial a master tape of a recording of Schoenberg's Chamber Symphony, op. 9 in exchange for the European distribution rights to some of Dial's jazz recordings, Russell saw it as an opportunity to pursue the new direction he sought. Since the label had found success with bebop, which Russell viewed as "the avant-garde of jazz," he reasoned that it could do the same with what he referred to as "off-trail" contemporary classical music. Russell was confident that Dial's audience would be open to this change, in part because he felt that it was his own "exposure to bop that made contemporary classical music sound this way"—that is, sound "right." With the recordings of Schoenberg's op. 9 secured, Russell contacted the composer directly to inquire about recording more of his music. Schoenberg responded enthusiastically, expressing his hope that "through recordings, his

works could become more widely known in his adopted homeland."[28] And so the Library of Contemporary Classics was born.

Dial's two Webern albums were made possible by the participation of performers with expertise in the music of the Second Viennese School. As Nicolas Cook argues, performers "occupied an increasingly vital role in the production and dissemination of new music" during this period since "abstractly conceived new music relied so heavily on translation into viable performance practice."[29] Rudolf Kolisch, for example, was a close associate of Webern's who had previously advocated on behalf of his music in the United States, as discussed Chapter 1. Kolisch represented what Cook and Miriam Quick identify as a prewar, Viennese modernist tradition of performance stemming directly from the composers of the Second Viennese School themselves through initiatives such as the Society for Private Musical Performances.[30] René Leibowitz, the other lead performer behind Dial's first Webern album, was by contrast a representative of what Quick terms the "avant-garde 'Darmstadt'" practice of the postwar era.[31] As Cook and Quick discuss, these two schools of performance produced markedly different renditions of Webern's music; the Darmstadt approach yielded performances that tended to be more rigid, literalistic, and dispassionate than

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[28] D.J. Hoek, "Beyond Bebop: Dial Records and the Library of Contemporary Classics," *ARSC Journal* 44.1 (Spring 2013): 70–75.
[29] Cook, "Inventing tradition…" 189.
[30] Miriam Quick, "Performing modernism : Webern on record," Ph.D. dissertation, King's College London, 2011. For more on this topic, see: Markus Grassl and Reinhard Kapp, ed., *Die Lehre von der musikalischen Aufführung in der Wiener Schule*, Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2002.
[31] Quick, "Performing modernism…"

those produced by performers of Kolisch's school, with the latter's expressivity standing out by comparison.

Another prominent musician involved with the first Dial Webern album, though not as a performer, was Gunther Schuller. As an advisor to Russell, it was Schuller who had suggested that Dial engage the Pro Arte Quartet. Russell wrote to Kolisch in July 1949, describing how Dial intended to "explore musical trails ignored by the large concerns," especially the Second Viennese School. Russell noted that Dial had previously specialized in "contemporary jazz" and "the so-called bebop movement" and was thus "in a position to do the same sort of job with contemporary serious music."[32] Kolisch agreed to Russell's plan, but felt that marketing the music of the Second Viennese School might require the label to cultivate a new clientele:

> Your sales expectancy is probably based on the assumption that a part of your usual customers, the adherents of advanced jazz, will also be interested in advanced serious music. While this is undoubtedly true, a far greater clientele exists outside of this circle (I have just received a letter from Lyon and Healys in Chicago asking me to help them find recordings of the Schönberg Quartets for which they have received many demands.) The question now would be how to reach these groups.[33]

Kolisch suggested recording the Five Pieces for String Quartet, op. 5; Russell agreed, but Webern's brief works posed a problem. Dial intended to release the Library of Contemporary of Classics on LPs. As Russell explained to Kolisch, this medium offered many advantages ("unbreakable, easy to store, plays without interruption") as compared to older technologies. Whereas the duration of an

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[32] Letter, Ross Russell to Rudolf Kolisch, July 22, 1949, Rudolf Kolisch Papers, 1886–1978, item 184, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

[33] Letter, Rudolf Kolisch to Ross Russell, September 12, 1949, Ross Russell papers, box 19, folder 14, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.

"average string quartet" was perfect for one side of an LP, however, Russell felt it would be "silly" to devote an entire side to the op. 5 pieces, which typically last around twelve minutes.[34] For this reason Russell suggested that the Pro Arte Quartet also prepare Webern's Six Bagatelles for String Quartet, op. 9. Kolisch reluctantly agreed, noting that the preparation of op. 9 in addition to op. 5 would require "great effort" on the quartet's part.[35]

After the Pro Arte recorded opp. 5 and 9 in January 1950, Kolisch wrote to Russell to report his "feeling of something good and important accomplished."[36] Russell felt similarly and reported that early edits of the recordings sounded "wonderful, very clear," and were "even better than we thought."[37] Critics agreed. Jerome D. Bohm of the *New York Herald Tribune* felt that the Pro Arte played "with its customary discernment and sensitivity," while the *New York Times*' Carter Harman was particularly taken with the quartet's rendering of op. 9: "You will find no conventional sustaining parts in this music, now striving for grand sweep, but there is a remarkable sense of spaciousness, variety and poignance [sic] for all the nakedness of medium. The Pro Arte Quartet gives an inspired

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[34] Letter, Russell to Kolisch, July 22, 1949.

[35] Letter, Kolisch to Russell, September 12, 1949. Kolisch also suggested recording Webern's Four Pieces for Violin and Piano, op. 7, but Russell was under the impression that Marc and Anahid Ajemian had already recorded the work for Victor, thus making it a less desirable project. Russell told Kolisch that the Ajemians recorded op. 7 for Victor, but the performance was ultimately released on MGM and not until 1955, when it appeared on an album alongside Kurt Weill's Concerto for violin and wind orchestra, op. 12. See: Letter, Rudolf Kolisch to Ross Russell, November 14, 1949, Rudolf Kolisch Papers, 1886–1978, item 1034, Houghton Library, Harvard University; Letter, Ross Russell to Rudolf Kolisch, December 12, 1949, Rudolf Kolisch Papers, 1886–1978, item 184, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

[36] Letter, Rudolf Kolisch to Ross Russell, February 8, 1950, Rudolf Kolisch Papers, 1886–1978, item 1034, Houghton Library, Harvard University

[37] Letter, Ross Russell to Rudolf Kolisch, February 11, 1950, Rudolf Kolisch Papers, 1886–1978, item 184, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

reading."[38] The *Times* also named the album as one of their records of the year for 1950.[39] More than a half-century later, the Pro Arte's performances still evince commitment, energy, stylishness, and clarity—none of which should come as a surprise. Under Kolisch's leadership, the Pro Arte was one of few U.S. ensembles with the chops and experience necessary to tackle Webern's music. Just three years earlier, for example, the quartet's performance of op. 5 at New York's Hunter College had been praised by Virgil Thomson. In the Pro Arte's reading, Thomson contended, the op. 5 pieces "could not be more beautiful, more expressive or more implacable."[40]

The other side of Dial's first Webern album, the René Leibowitz-led performance of the Symphony, op. 21 did not garner the same level of praise. One critic felt that Leibowitz's interpretation demonstrated a "dedicated exactitude," while Harman deemed it "a fine reading" and a third critic detected "a semblance of dryness"—all of which are apt descriptions of what is a generally flat performance.[41] In this way the difference in critical responses to the Pro Arte and Leibowitz-led performances mirrors the discourse surrounding the "Viennese" and "Darmstadt" performance traditions noted above. That difference may have also accounted for Schoenberg's displeasure with several of the Leibowitz-led

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[38] Jerome D. Bohm, "RECENT RECORDS," *New York Herald Tribune* (June 25, 1950); Carter Harman, "RECORDS: ATONAL: Schoenberg, Berg, Webern Music Now Available," *New York Times* (July 9, 1950).

[39] Howard Taubman, "RECORDS: THE YEAR IN RETROSPECT," *New York Times* (December 31, 1950).

[40] Virgil Thomson, "MUSIC: Double-Header," *New York Herald Tribune* (January 27, 1947).

[41] Richard F. Goldman, "Reviewed Work(s): Webern…" *The Musical Quarterly* 40.4 (October 1954): 633; Harman, "RECORDS: ATONAL…"; W.G. Rogers, "Records in Review," *Press and Sun-Bulletin* (June 18, 1950).

performances of his music released by Dial. "He believes in the *school* of atonality," Schoenberg wrote to Russell in January 1950, "but I believe only in the music." Webern and Berg, he added, "are to me great composers, I would almost say: in spite of [and not because of] their belonging to the method of composing with twelve tones."[42] If nothing else, however, Leibowitz's performance of op. 21 granted listeners the ability to repeat the music many times over and begin to sense the relationships between what Edward Tatnall Canby called "these widespread tones" and what Harman described as "scattered, lonely pinpricks of sounds."[43] Echoing the sentiments of Reich and Copland cited above, Canby argued that this kind of access to Webern's music was essential, for without it the music became "necessarily meaningless, squeaky, merely exotic."[44]

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Dial's second Webern album also included a performance led by Leibowitz, this time the Concerto for Nine Instruments, op. 24, recorded in-house at Dial's New York studios. Jacques-Louis Monod, a 24-year old pianist who had been a student of Leibowitz's at the Darmstadt *Fereinkurse*, also played a prominent role on the album. It was Monod who first introduced Webern's music to Bethany Beardslee, a soprano featured on the album and one of relatively few U.S. soloists to appear on the Library of Contemporary Classics series. Beardslee was renowned for her performances of contemporary music and is remembered today as, among other

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[42] Letter, Arnold Schoenberg to Ross Russell, January 3, 1950, Ross Russell papers, box 19, folder 14, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.
[43] Edward Tatnall Canby, "The New Recordings," *The Saturday Review* (August 19, 1950): 41; Harman, "RECORDS: ATONAL…"
[44] Canby, "The New Recordings."

things, the first performer of Milton Babbitt's *Philomel* (1964), a work that she commissioned. She sang the Four Songs, op. 12 on the Dial album, accompanied by Monod, and the two went on to earn a reputation as first-rate interpreters of the music of the Second Viennese School. In 1951 they mounted an all-Webern concert in New York, with Beardslee singing Webern's op. 16. That concert was followed by several more New York performances in 1952, in which Beardslee added opp. 17 and 25 to her repertoire. Though she had no way of knowing it at the time, Beardslee later learned that these performances were the world premieres of all three works.[45] Critics praised Beardslee's "astonishing accuracy and style," reporting that she "nonchalantly handled the impossible skips of the songs, sang perfectly in tune throughout, and even showed that she had a beautiful voice, something that not all singers of modern music own."[46] Monod, it was also reported, accomplished the impressive feat of accompanying Beardslee from memory.[47]

The most extensive critical response to Dial's second Webern album was penned by Robert Craft, who would begin his own Webern recording project just a few years later. Craft was not impressed with the album's performances and felt that they did little more than establish standards "which at this time represent this music as well as could be hoped." Citing Leibowitz's connection to the Second

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[45] Bethany Beardslee, *I sang the unsingable: my life in twentieth-century music*, Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press (2017): 70–71. The 1951 concert is described as part of the chapter "Work with Jacques," which serves as a good introduction to the Beardslee-Monod partnership.
[46] P.G-H., "Concert and Recital," *New York Herald Tribune* (March 17, 1952); H.C.S., "Concert Devoted to the Works of Webern Presented by New Music String Quartet," *New York Times* (December 29, 1952). "H.C.S." refers to Harold C. Schonberg.
[47] H.C.S., "Concert Devoted to the Works of Webern…"

Viennese School, Craft also expressed surprise at the large number of "[m]usical misreadings" in a performance "thus waxed in the name of orthodoxy."[48] Whatever the performances' failings, however, Craft echoed Canby's earlier comments by acknowledging the Dial albums' crucial role in providing access to Webern's music:

> The performance of the Concerto, Opus 24, conducted by René Leibowitz, fails, in the first movement at least, to convey the "expressionist" content, without which it is stark and meaningless. But, as this "expressionism" is perhaps unrealizable without the study Mr. Leibowitz's very disc affords future performers, we will not quibble with the achievement.[49]

Craft's sentiments were shared by other reviewers. Though Webern's music "may prove a more difficult listening problem" than that of other modern composers, Harman argued, the experience of getting to know his music through the Dial recordings was "ultimately rewarding."[50] Harman's comment echoed Leibowitz's liner notes, in which the conductor stated that "we may begin by admitting that [Webern] is the most inaccessible of all contemporaries." Webern's "lack of mysticism" and "insistence upon musical dialectic," Leibowitz continued, had "alienated a listening public conditioned by Romanticism." But he argued that this reputation was not well earned and that Webern's music was in fact "neither difficult to understand nor perform." [51] Richard F. Goldman, writing for *The Musical Quarterly*, found the Dial records to be compelling evidence in favor of Leibowitz's argument: "Leibowitz…is without doubt right when he insists that

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[48] Robert Craft, "More Webern," *The Saturday Review* (January 26, 1952): 56.
[49] Craft, "More Webern," 56.
[50] Harman, "RECORDS: ATONAL…"
[51] René Leibowitz, Liner notes for *Webern: Concerto for Nine Instruments*, Dial Records, 1951, vinyl LP.

Webern's music is by no means 'inaccessible.' He pleads for familiarity, and in these records provides the means to attain it."[52]

As the many reviews I have cited thus far indicate, the two Dial albums drew considerably more attention than the handful of recordings that preceded them. Whether or not Ross Russell was correct in believing that bebop fans would embrace the music of the Second Viennese School, the mere fact that the Dial albums were covered in publications as mainstream as *Billboard* and the *New York Times* indicates their circulation beyond a niche audience (a copy of one of the albums was owned by a young Frank Zappa).[53] At the same time, however, the albums presented a relatively limited view of Webern's oeuvre. They featured either "aphoristic" works (opp. 5 and 9) or multi-movement, twelve-tone instrumental works (opp. 21, 22, 24, and 27). These two styles of compositions were the same that had been recorded prior to the Dial albums, on the Paradox and Decca releases. The one work on the Dial albums that belonged to neither style was the Four Songs, op. 12, sung beautifully by Bethany Beardslee. But the songs appear to have been almost an afterthought. Beardslee sent Russell translations of the texts, but they were not published, and op. 12 received a scant paragraph in the album's liner notes.[54] One critic even assumed that the songs were simply "thrown in for good measure."[55] Thus, while the Dial albums represented a step forward in terms of aural access to Webern's music,

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[52] Goldman, "Reviewed Work(s): Webern…" 633.
[53] Frank Zappa with Peter Ochiogrosso, *The Real Frank Zappa Book*, New York: Simon & Schuster (1989): 34.
[54] Letter, Bethany Beardslee to Ross Russell, Ross Russell papers, box 19, folder 14, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.
[55] Goldman, "Reviewed Work(s): Webern…" 632.

those wishing to hear the full breadth of the composer's output—the Romanticism of op. 1, the lyricism of opp. 14 and 15, the new directions of the late cantatas—would have wait. Or more to the point: those without both access to scores and the ability to read them would have had no way of knowing that such breadth even existed.

"A long time unbettered": Craft, Stravinsky, and Columbia Records (1950–1957)

In a review of Dial's two Webern albums, Richard Goldman argued that the label

> deserves the thanks of every musician for making available, in first-rate performances, excellently recorded, most of the major instrumental works of Webern. Undertakings of this kind are a benefaction. One hopes that the response will be such as to encourage this company to give us, in equally authoritative performances, the remainder of Webern's music.[56]

But Dial never released any further Webern albums. For the first few years following the release of the two albums, in fact, the number of recorded performances of Webern's music barely increased. In December 1953 Columbia released a recording of the Juilliard Quartet performing the Five Movements for String Quartet, op. 5. The group had performed the work at a 1951 concert organized by Bethany Beardslee and Jacques Monod, and it would remain in their repertoire for years to come. The following year saw the release of a recording of op. 27 by Jeanne Manchon-Theis, who, like Peter Stadlen, had studied the work with the composer himself.[57] Two years after that a performance of op. 21

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[56] Ibid., 632.

[57] Glenn Gould also recorded op. 27 in 1954, but the recording was not released until the 1990s. For more on the many and varied performing traditions associated with op. 27, see the articles by Cook and Mathew cited above. For more on Gould's performances of the work, see: Nicholas Cook, "Seeing sound, hearing the body: Glenn Gould plays Webern's piano variations," in *Collected*

featuring the *Orchestre du Domaine Musical* under the direction of Pierre Boulez was released by Vega. But these latter two releases were European in origin and there is no evidence that they received U.S. press coverage. All three post-Dial releases, furthermore, featured works that were already available on the Dial albums. Thus in 1956, a half-decade after the release of Dial's second Webern album, access to recorded performances of Webern's music had scarcely increased. That same year Arthur Berger wrote an article for the *New York Times* in which he argued that the core repertory of modern music was surprisingly well represented on recordings. The exception to that rule, Berger noted, was Webern. Berger deemed it a "shocking" omission given Webern's stature, though he conceded that Webern's works tended to be "not commercially rewarding." According to Berger the recordings of Webern's works on "the extinct Dial label" were now "collector's items, found now and then in the shops" but otherwise of limited significance.[58]

For a time, then, Goldman's wish for recordings of "the remainder of Webern's music" went unfulfilled. But in 1957 Columbia Records released a four-LP set of Webern's complete works under the direction of Robert Craft. The album had been in the works for years and—as with the Dial albums—the musicians behind it form an important part of the story. Foremost among them was conductor Robert Craft. Born in Kingston, NY in 1923, Craft first encountered Webern's music while studying at the Juilliard School during the 1940s:

Work: The Oxford handbook of sound and image in Western art, 124–137, New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

[58] Arthur Berger, "BASIC MODERN WORKS ON LP," *New York Times* (March 25, 1956).

> The outstanding musical experience of the school year was a visit by René Leibowitz, proselytizing for the music of Anton Webern and conducting his Concerto for nine instruments as an illustration to an analytical talk about the work. This event changed my life, and from that day I tried to learn all available music by the composer, which was very little.[59]

Having noted the lack of access to Webern's music, Craft set to work rectifying the situation. In 1950 he conducted works by Webern and Schoenberg at two concerts of New York's Chamber Art Society. For the first concert Craft led the work he had heard Leibowitz conduct at Juilliard—the Concerto for Nine Instruments, op. 24—in its first public performance in the United States (one critic praised the work's "blobs of instrumental color."[60]) The second concert featured Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire* performed by an ensemble that included Second Viennese School stalwart Eduard Steuermann on piano, as well as Webern's Three Songs, op. 18 with soprano Madelyn Vose. Though not marked as such at the time, the performance of op. 18 likely constituted the work's world premiere.[61] These two concerts contributed to a small flowering of performances of Webern's music in New York in 1950 and 1951, which also included the New York Philharmonic's performance of op. 21, the release of Dial's first Webern album, and the performances of Beardslee and Monod, one of which Craft attended. Still, the unmarked premieres of op. 18 (in Craft's second concert) and opp. 17 and 25 (by Beardslee and Monod) make clear the relatively low profile of Webern's music.

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[59] Robert Craft, *An Improbable Life*, Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press (2002): 54.
[60] H.C.S., "CHAMBER ART UNIT HEARD IN CONCERT: Robert Craft Conducts Group in Music by Mozart, Webern, Stravinsky, Schoenberg," *New York Times* (April 30, 1950).
[61] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*…713.

On the other side of the country, Craft promoted Webern's music through his appearances as a guest conductor for the Evenings on the Roof, a Los Angeles concert series founded by Frances and Peter Yates in the late 1930s. The Evenings were designed to take advantage of the influx of émigré musicians into Los Angeles while simultaneously reforming the city's conservative music culture, which had seen the departure of Henry Cowell's New Music Society to San Francisco (discussed in Chapter 1) and rebuffed Nicolas Slonimsky's adventurous Hollywood Bowl programs (discussed in Chapter 2).[62] Even with that mission in mind, however, Peter Yates had to be persuaded to program Webern's music. Yates agreed to do so only after Craft promised to program Webern "in smaller amounts," such that the Evenings would not come to be "categorized [as] a festival of Webern."[63] Indeed Webern's music often challenged the series' audiences. At a concert in 1952, for example, the Quartet, op. 22 was performed once before intermission and once after. Critic Albert Goldberg felt that the work "didn't make a great deal more sense the second time," though he admitted that "at least one could more easily sense the design and appreciate the skill which enabled the composer to write such powerful economy."[64] Craft's promotion of Webern at the Evenings on the Roof culminated in an all-Webern concert in 1954, the program of which included opp. 7, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 24,

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[62] For more on the genesis of the Evenings on the Roof, see: Dorothy L. Crawford, *Evenings On and Off the Roof: Pioneering Concerts in Los Angeles, 1939–1971*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1995.

[63] Letter, Robert Craft to Peter Yates, February 20 [1951], Peter Yates Papers, box 3, folder 47, University of California San Diego.

[64] Albert Goldberg, "SCHOENBERG'S SEPTET FEATURE OF CONCERT," *Los Angeles Times* (February 25, 1952).

and 27. Goldberg, who was frequently hostile towards modern music, noted the unusually large audience in attendance before taking a swipe at the program:

> Quite likely so many Webern pieces were never heard together before, and more than likely they never will be again, at least in this community, so that anyone who feels that way about it could properly call the occasion an historical one. You could also, with equal propriety, call it a pretentious bore.[65]

Other reports suggest that many in the audience also found the performances less than stimulating. Yet with one notable exception—film composer Miklos Rozsa storming out midway through the concert—the audience's response was more muted than anything else. Pianist Leonard Stein was disappointed, having hoped for a stronger response, whether positive or negative: "Some of them must have hated it; and how much better it would have been for them to boo."[66]

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Looming behind Craft's promotion of Webern's music was Igor Stravinsky, whose amanuensis, collaborator, and friend Craft had been since 1948. The longstanding antagonism between Stravinsky and the Second Viennese School has been covered extensively elsewhere; suffice it to say that, according to Craft, Stravinsky "did not know a single measure of music by Schoenberg, Berg, or Webern, had no copy in his library of any of their pieces, and did not understand the meaning of a tone-row" when Craft and Stravinsky first met.[67] But things began to change following Schoenberg's death in July 1951. On a trip through

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[65] Albert Goldberg, "Webern Pieces Make 'Musical' History," *Los Angeles Times* (February 9, 1954).

[66] Crawford, *Evenings On and Off the Roof*…106.

[67] Robert Craft, "Assisting Stravinsky: On a misunderstood collaboration," *The Atlantic* (December 1982).

Europe in October of that ear, Craft and Stravinsky stopped at a Baden Baden radio station to listen to an old broadcast of Webern's Variations for Orchestra, op. 30. Stravinsky, Craft noted, asked to hear the work "*three times!*" The composer later "sat through the rehearsals" for the Craft's all-Webern concert in 1954 with "his nose in the score," then "came to the concert and did the same over again."[68] According to one source, rehearsals for the Evenings were sometimes even held in Stravinsky's house.[69] The series thus afforded Stravinsky the opportunity to become "intimately acquainted with the music of one member of the Viennese triumvirate for whom he had complete sympathy."[70] That acquaintance soon bore fruit, in the form of Stravinsky's first twelve-tone composition. Several of these works, including the *Three Songs from William Shakespeare* and *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas*, were written expressly for performance at the Evenings on the Roof. While many viewed this shift in Stravinsky's compositional approach as a tacit approval of the music of the Second Viennese School, Stravinsky provided something more explicit in 1955 when he penned an epigraph for an issue of *Die Reihe* dedicated to Webern:

> Doomed to a total failure in a deaf world of ignorance and indifference he inexorably kept on cutting out his diamonds, his dazzling diamonds, the mines of which he had such a perfect knowledge.[71]

Stravinsky's epigraph has since been reproduced many times over, in newspaper articles, program notes, liner notes, and academic publications. In what would

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[68] Robert Craft, *Stravinsky: Chronicle of a Friendship*, Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press (1994): 67, 106.
[69] Eric Salzman, "LIASON MAN BETWEEN STRAVINSKY AND SCHOENBERG," *New York Times* (January 4, 1959).
[70] Crawford, *Evenings On and Off the* Roof…256.
[71] Igor Stravinsky, "[Foreword]," *Die Reihe* 2 (1955): vii.

have been an unthinkable turn of events just a few years earlier, Igor Stravinsky wrote what might well be the single most famous statement on the music of Anton Webern.[72]

Almost as soon as Stravinsky's interest in Webern's music became known, however, suspicions arose as to whether Stravinsky himself was truly the driving force behind his change of heart. Journalists depicted Craft as a "liaison man between Stravinsky and Schoenberg" and the former's "revisionist enthusiasm for Webern and Schoenberg" raised eyebrows.[73] Stravinsky appeared to be "no longer quite himself," as if "on alien territory," Paul Henry Lang argued. Lang even went so far as to claim that "what [Stravinsky] is doing now after a glorious career fairly contradicts his past."[74] According to Charles Joseph, reactions like Lang's were common. "Stravinsky 'going serial,'" Joseph writes, "was the equivalent of Bob Dylan 'going electric' a decade later— it just wasn't right." "Such betrayals," he continues, "shook the foundations of deep musical beliefs."[75] Assessing Craft's role in all this was difficult because, as Stephen Walsh puts it, Craft's recounting of events was often "highly ambiguous."[76] In 1956 Craft noted in his diary that neither he nor anyone else "could lead *that* horse [Stravinsky] to water, if it didn't want to go, let along make it drink."[77] In 1959, furthermore, Craft claimed that he "didn't take [Webern's] music and slip it on [Stravinsky's]

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[72] The other contender would be Schoenberg's preface to Webern's Six Bagatelles for String Quartet, op. 9.

[73] Salzman, "LIASON MAN…"; Stephen Walsh, *Stravinsky: The Second Exile: France and America, 1934–1971*, University of California Press, 2008, 399.

[74] Lang, "The Puzzle of Stravinsky."

[75] Charles Joseph, *Stravinsky Inside Out*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press (2001): 248.

[76] Walsh, *Stravinsky: The Second Exile*…333.

[77] Craft, *Stravinsky: Chronicle of a Friendship*, 64.

desk"; instead he "simply played it at all [his] concerts and [Stravinsky] was there listening."[78] That same year saw the publication of Craft's *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky*, the first of a long series of published dialogues between the two men, which only served to muddy the waters even further.

Debates over Stravinsky's engagement with serialism, as well as Craft and Stravinsky's working relationship more generally, continue to rage. What is not up for debate is the essential role Stravinsky played in helping Craft's project be realized. For while the initial impetus to perform Webern's music may well have come from Craft, the Columbia project would have had little chance of succeeding without Stravinsky's involvement. Craft's Evenings on the Roof concerts, for example, achieved an elevated status with musicians and critics thanks to Stravinsky's involvement. Those concerts in turn became a key step toward the realization of the Columbia album. Since union fees for recording projects were higher than the fees for rehearsals and live performances, rehearsals for the Evenings and even the performances themselves served as de facto rehearsals for upcoming studio sessions. The all-Webern concert on February 8, 1954 was followed by a recording session covering many of the same works on February 12, with Stravinsky in attendance.[79] Marni Nixon (who would later become famous for her work as a ghost singer in Hollywood blockbusters) and Leonard Stein likewise performed Webern songs in November 1955 before recording the same works shortly thereafter, with Stravinsky once again taking in the recording

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[78] Jay S. Harrison, "Robert Craft and His Unique Life: Aid-De-Camp to Igor Stravinsky," *New York Herald Tribune* (December 20, 1959).
[79] Craft, *An Improbable Life*, 161.

session.[80] This arrangement meant that a large numbers of the performers featured on the Columbia records were L.A. natives and Evenings of the Roof regulars; in addition to Craft, Nixon, and Stein, this group included soprano Grace-Lynne Martin.

But cost-cutting measures like these were not always enough. According to Craft, since "union rules did not permit the larger pieces—the three cantatas [opp. 26, 29, & 31] and the orchestral works [opp. 1, 6, 21 & 30]—to be performed in our concerts, I had to rehearse each player and singer individually in his or her home." Convincing players to agree to this procedure, in which individual parts to large works were "rehearsed alone and feeling like ciphers," proved to be "the most difficult task" of the entire project. Craft was also dismayed to find that most of the musicians held a "generally negative attitude toward Webern," though many "became engrossed in the music" over time and were ultimately "proud of their performances and recordings." Even after the musicians came onboard, however, Craft faced the additional hurdle of physically getting to each player for one-on-one rehearsal sessions. Here Stravinsky provided a key assist. "After solving the logistic problems of borrowing the Stravinsky automobile to adjust to the musicians' schedules," Craft reported, "I had to drive countless miles" to each of their homes.[81]

Beyond persuading individual musicians to work on the album. Craft also required the support of institutions; it was in this context that Stravinsky's support proved essential. Since many of Webern's works had yet to be published,

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[80] Crawford, *Evenings On and Off the* Roof…160.
[81] Craft, *An Improbable Life*, 166–167.

Craft was forced to copy from photostats of Webern's manuscripts owned by Universal Edition in Vienna. Universal was willing to grant Craft access "only because Stravinsky personally requested it." The process that followed, in which Craft had to "extract the instrumental parts, transposing some of them in the process," was among the "most arduous" work the young conductor had ever undertaken ("not part of the dream," he later noted). In addition to liaising with Universal Edition, Stravinsky helped convince Columbia to sign off on the project, as Craft explained:

> Columbia Records was persuaded to release the four-record, long-playing Webern album only on my guarantee to pay for it from future, but predictably never-forthcoming, royalties. Stravinsky helped by refusing to record his own music unless Columbia supported the Webern undertaking. His generous gift…was responsible for the introduction to the public of this most influential of twentieth-century composer's work, whose music was only rarely performed in concerts, if at all.[82]

Stravinsky remained involved throughout the recording process. Craft claimed that the composer attended ""every rehearsal, every session, every moment of editing" and on one occasion "even made us take out a rest when he said he knew intuitively it did not belong there."[83] This assistance was necessary since, according to Stravinsky, the album was recorded without "any assistance from a musical or engineering supervisor." Craft was thus responsible for "[n]ot only the musical performance…but [also] every aspect of the production."[84]

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[82] Ibid., 166–167.

[83] Harrison, "Robert Craft and His Unique Life…"

[84] Igor Stravinsky, "Introductory Interview with Igor Stravinsky," in *Anton von Webern: Perspectives*, ed. Hans Moldenhauer and Demar Irvine, Seattle: University of Washington Press (1966): xxv ff. Joseph questions whether this interview was really conducted with Stravinsky or was instead ghost-written by Craft. See: Joseph, *Stravinsky Inside Out*, 257.

In the project's final stages Stravinsky came through with a crucial assist one last time. Craft had gone over budget due to the time required to rehearse Webern's challenging music as well as some unforeseen complications; he later recalled scouring all of the secondhand piano shops in Los Angeles for a "proper harmonium" and affixing a homemade device to a tenor saxophone so as to produce "a non-existent low note." In the end Craft ran out of studio time with the Concerto, op. 24, the Variations for Orchestra, op. 30, and Webern orchestration of the *Ricercata* from Bach's *Musical Offering* still left to record. Stravinsky stepped in and convinced Columbia to let him donate a bit of studio time left over from one of his own projects.[85] Amazingly, the three remaining works were rehearsed and recorded in a mere three hours. Craft described the experience as "the final agony of time, when…you must do a masterpiece such as the Concerto, Op. 24, in a few minutes and so play it straight through and produce your worst performance." "Still," he concluded optimistically, "many of the performances may be a long time unbettered."[86]

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Craft was right. Despite the uphill battle of its production, the album registered an immediate impact upon release. One indication of the reach of the album's circulation is the variety of types and locations of publications in which it was reviewed. Academic publications such as *Musical Quarterly* and *Music & Letters*

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[85] One indication of Stravinsky's financial commitment to the project is the fact that the contracts between Craft and Columbia are held in the Stravinsky collection of the Paul Sacher Stiftung. See: Igor Stravinsky Collection, MF 001999 ff., Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, Switzerland.

[86] Robert Craft, Liner notes for *Anton Webern: The Complete Music*, Columbia Records, 1957, vinyl LP.

published reviews, as did audiophile magazines like *Billboard* and *High Fidelity* and weekly periodicals like *Musical America*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, and *The Saturday Review*. Major newspapers like the *New York Times* and *Los Angeles Times* covered the album, but so too did local papers in Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Tucson, Arlington Heights (IL), and Uniontown (PA). The album also circulated abroad, with Craft even receiving positive feedback during a trip to the South Pacific two years after its release:

> Another plane, eastbound, has landed, meanwhile, and one of its passengers, a Swiss, introduces himself to me with: "I want to thank you for your Webern records." On Wake Island![87]

In England the album was covered by *The Guardian* and *The Sunday Times*, while Ernst Krenek published a German-language review in *Melos*. Krenek also wrote to Craft to congratulate him:

> I should like to congratulate you upon the Webern album. I was lucky enough to get a copy—it seems they are selling rapidly. So far I have played only the Symphony, which I found not only very clear, but also intense and sinewy, in welcome contrast to the pseudo-ethereal style that has already become a kind of convention for Webern's music. I am eagerly looking forward to playing the whole set.
>
> Your study on Webern is excellent in its fresh approach to a subject which in my opinion those who were too close to it have so far found too touchy to deal with intelligently.[88]

Krenek, whose mention of a "pseudo-ethereal style" seems to be a nod to the Darmstadt performance practice discussed above, was not the only big name to write with approval. Craft also received letters from Pierre Boulez and Edgard Varèse, as well as Universal Edition publisher Alfred Schlee, who called receiving

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[87] Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Dialogues and a Diary*, Doubleday (1963): 116.
[88] Robert Craft ed., *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence, Volume 2*, New York: Knopf (1982): 328.

the album "one of the greatest events of my life." "What you have accomplished and professed here," Schlee continued, "is, I dare say, unique."[89]

What this array of responses suggests is the same thing that nearly every critic who reviewed the album noted: Craft's project was a big deal. Alfred Frankenstein called it "[a]n epical undertaking, and one that has been accomplished with epical success."[90] Others deemed it "[a]n event in the annals of recording" and "[m]usical history" in the making.[91] Reviews often included a passing reference to Webern's growing popularity among the postwar avant-garde; Harold Rogers, for example, noted that the album's importance "may not be appreciated by music lovers in general, but…will be considered significant by the music world in particular."[92] Several critics also noted that Columbia was taking a risk by devoting considerable resources to such a niche product. Paul Little of the *Arlington Heights Herald* deemed the album "a labor of love," undertaken "without thought of commercial profit."[93] John K. Sherman of the Minneapolis-based *Star Tribune* likewise described Webern's music as among the "least commercial" ever written, while Roger Maren boldly predicted that "record shops will not be swamped with orders."[94] Yet many critics also wondered whether the album might constitute a step towards popularizing Webern's

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[89] Craft, *Stravinsky: Chronicle of a Friendship*, 165, 209–210, 172.

[90] Alfred Frankenstein, "From Contrapuntal Kaleidoscopy to *Klangfarbenmelodie*…in Thirty-three Steps," *High Fidelity* (May 1957): 64.

[91] Harold Rogers, "Full Output Conducted By Robert Craft: Recordings," *Christian Science Monitor* (April 23, 1957); "Composer's Recordings Released," *The Morning Herald* (April 18, 1957).

[92] Rogers, "Full Output…"

[93] Paul Little, "Needle in the Groove," *Arlington Heights Herald* (May 2, 1957).

[94] John K. Sherman, "Lifetime Output on 8 Sides: Webern Revealed as One of Century's Greats," *Star Tribune* (July 28, 1957); Roger Maren, "The Music of Anton Webern: Prisms in Twelve Tones," *The Reporter* (May 30, 1957).

works. The reviewer from Uniontown (PA) argued that, while "Webern's followers have not been legion" (albeit "intensely devoted"), the release of the Columbia album meant that "his admirers must rapidly increase."[95] Sam Hood of *The Pittsburgh Press* felt that "Webern's pen seems to have been tipped in radiation," thus making his music a tough sell for audiences. But Hood also conceded that Craft's album was valuable because it afforded the opportunity to judge Webern's music on its own merits: "no longer will musicologists, theorists, atonal cultists or even the critics of Webern have the final say. Webern's music—all of it—can now rise or fall strictly on its own."[96]

"Strictly on its own"—the idea that Craft's recordings provided a newly direct kind of access to Webern's music was another common thread throughout the reviews. Some saw the album as an opportunity to transcend academic approaches to Webern's works, which tended to ignore the actual sound of the music. Desmond Shawe-Taylor, for example, noted that "[n]o recent composer is more venerated among young musicians, or less familiar to the general public, than Anton Webern." Webern's music had been "extolled by the left and ridiculed by the right, analysed and dissected and discussed almost out of existence"; all that remained was "that we should actually hear it."[97] Edward Arthur Lippman argued that the album was important because Webern's scores "require realization in sound perhaps more than any others…while they are visually

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[95] "Composer's Recordings Released."
[96] Sam Hood, "Complete Webern Works Available," *The Pittsburgh Press* (May 19, 1957).
[97] Desmond Shawe-Taylor, "The Complete Webern," *The Sunday Times* (January 3, 1960).

simple, they stubbornly resist the auditory imagination."[98] Edward Downes agreed: "Mr. Craft…rightly keeps emphasizing that the ear must accept the music first. Until it does, all the graphs and diagrams, in which some twelve-tone analyses revel, are meaningless." Downes described his surprise at finding that the sound of the Six Pieces for Orchestra, op. 6 was in fact "so close to the familiar romantic idiom," something that had not been obvious from his perusal of the score.[99] Other revelations were more basic. Several reviewers—among them Ernst Krenek—noted with surprise that over half of Webern's output consisted of vocal music.[100]

One point on which critics did not agree was how best to take advantage of the repeat listenings that the album made possible. "There is reward here," argued Hunt Ryan, "for the listener who is willing to give the music patient, thoughtful attention."[101] Shawe-Taylor likewise felt that the opportunity to "spend some weeks in close contact with Webern's own mind" by listening to the record dismissed "any lingering notions" of the composer as "a mere extremist or eccentric." Such an impression, he argued, was often the result of hearing "an isolated broadcast—very possibly, an inadequate one—of a single work."[102] Peter

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[98] Edward Arthur Lippman, "Reviewed Work(s): Webern: The Complete Music by Robert Craft and Webern," *The Musical Quarterly* 44.3 (July 1958): 416.

[99] Edward Downes, "RECORDS: WEBERN: Complete Works of 12-Tone Composer Whose Influence Continues to Grow," *New York Times* (April 28, 1957).

[100] Ernst Krenek, "Neue Musik auf Schallplatten: Der ganze Webern in drei Stunden," *Melos*; Downes, "RECORDS: WEBERN…"; Frankenstein, "From Contrapuntal Kaleidoscopy…"; Hood, "Complete Webern Works Available."

[101] Hunt Ryan, "Works of Webern," *Baltimore Sun* (May 12, 1957).

[102] Shawe-Taylor, "The Complete Webern."

Yates used his experience with Webern's music from the Evenings on the Roof to make a similar point:

> By recording the complete works of Webern on four records, Robert Craft has solved the problem posed by Igor Stravinsky during the 1953 "Evenings on the Roof" (Los Angeles) series from which this project stems. During the rehearsal before the program, Stravinsky, raising his head for a moment from the scores, in which he had been continuously engrossed, came over to ask me whether at the concert each work might be performed twice…In my opinion Webern's music, unlike much of Schoenberg, is ideally adapted to the intimacy of recording.[103]

Though many critics valorized repeat listening, others warned against listening to too much of Webern's music at one time. Since the brief works were thought to be the result of compositional compression, they were viewed as dense and difficult to digest. Frankenstein argued that they exhibited "the highest degree of intensity within the minimum span of time," while Downes contended that they possessed "an inner concentration, an almost tortured intensity, in which every note and every silence counts."[104] This "super concentrated style," according to Hood, meant that "a little of [Webern's] music goes a long way." For this reason Hood issued a warning to his readers: "do not expect to listen to all four LPs—with an exact playing time of three hours, eight minutes and nine seconds—at one sitting. One has to cultivate Webern."[105] Edward Greenfield offered similar advice: "one should not try and listen to too much at one sitting."[106] But it was Albert Goldberg who offered the most memorable take on the problem of repeated listening of Webern's music, setting an amusingly low bar for success:

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[103] Peter Yates, "Anton Webern Complete," *The Saturday Review* (May 11, 1957).
[104] Frankenstein, "From Contrapuntal Kaleidoscopy…"; Downes, "RECORDS: WEBERN…"
[105] Hood, "Complete Webern Works Available."
[106] Edward Greenfield, "Gramophone Records," *The Guardian* (January 24, 1961).

"as you listen to piece after piece in this notable collection, its nightmarish fascination tends to increase and become more absorbing, though it takes a good deal of listening to be able to distinguish one piece from another."[107]

Something significant is missing from the reviews that I have cited thus far: the performances. Indeed several critics noted that, since they had heard so little of Webern's music up to that point, it was a challenge to form much of an opinion as to the quality of the performances. "The work of Robert Craft and his corps of instrumentalists and singers is difficult to evaluate," admitted Ronald Eyer of *Musical America*, "because there is so little precedent for the reviewer to refer to."[108] Rogers, meanwhile, found the performances convincing and authentic—"as far as one can say who is unfamiliar with this music."[109] Another issue was Craft's liner notes, which stated that most of the album consisted of "recorded performances" presented with little or no editing. Craft conceded that "[m]istakes are inevitable in such a procedure," even going so far as to identify a handful of incorrectly played notes. But he also argued that this approach yielded performances with "a quality of excitement that compensates for much."[110] Several critics viewed these comments as exhibiting "unusual candor" and "appealing honesty" on Craft's part, though one argued that some performances "really demand the apologies that Craft gives."[111] The critical response may also

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[107] A.G., "RECORDS REVIEW," *Los Angeles Times* (June 16, 1957). "A.G." refers to Albert Goldberg.
[108] Ronald Eyer, "Evolution of a Composer—Complete Works of Webern," *Musical America* (July 1957): 28.
[109] Rogers, "Full Output…"
[110] Craft, Liner notes for *Anton Webern: The Complete Music*.
[111] Eyer, "Evolution of a Composer…"; Rogers, "Full Output…"; Maren, "The Music of Anton Webern…"

have been shaped by Craft's account of the laborious process of making the album; phrases like "formidable accomplishment" and "forbidding undertaking" pepper the liner notes.

The only aspect of the album's performances to receive anything more than this general praise was the singing, mirroring the attention paid to the vocal portion of Webern's oeuvre. "The male and female singers are accurate and secure in their parts," wrote Eyer, "and their diction (German) is perfectly clear."[112] Marni Nixon and Grace-Lynne Martin, who split Webern's many challenging soprano solos between them, earned consistently high praise. Yates complimented the "unique timbre" of Nixon's voice and the "broader line and vibrant singing" of Martin's performances.[113] Several other critics noted that the two singers faced an "appallingly difficult" task in tackling Webern's vocal lines.[114] According to Shawe-Taylor, Nixon and Martin were up to the challenge, singing "not only with astounding accuracy, but with positive charm and grace."[115] Downes called their performances "astonishing" and claimed that they had achieved "what one would have said was impossible": singing "Webern's cruel vocal lines neatly, accurately, with expression and without screaming."[116] Krenek agreed, calling Nixon's performance "excellent" in his letter to Craft."[117] As was the case with Bethany Beardslee and Jacques Monod, furthermore, Nixon

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[112] Eyer, "Evolution of a Composer…"
[113] Yates, "Anton Webern Complete."
[114] Frankenstein, "From Contrapuntal Kaleidoscopy…"
[115] Shawe-Taylor, "The Complete Webern."
[116] Downes, "RECORDS: WEBERN…"
[117] Craft ed., *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence,* 328.

and Leonard Stein continued to receive acclaim as performers of Webern's music for years to come.

"An excelsitude of incomprehension" and "an unqualified success" (1979)

In spite of the uncertainty over how to evaluate the performances, then, the initial reception of the Craft album was overwhelmingly positive. And that reception lasted. In the years that followed recordings of Webern's music became much more prevalent, with notable releases from the likes of the LaSalle Quartet (whose box set of Second Viennese School string quartets was released in 1971) and soprano Dorothy Dorow (who released performances of Webern's opp. 14–18 in 1978). Yet when Columbia another album of Webern's complete works in 1979, this time led by Pierre Boulez, it was clear that Craft's project had remained the gold standard. Many critics began their reviews of the Boulez album by acknowledging the precedent set by Craft's album. Peter G. Davis, for example, claimed that it was

> unthinkable to discuss the new Boulez recordings of Webern without also reconsidering the Craft versions, recordings that had an incalculable effect on attitudes to Webern's music—and on contemporary music in general—during the late 1950's and 60's.[118]

Alan Rich, along similar lines, noted that Craft's recordings emerged at a time when Webern's music was "much discussed, but little heard." Though he conceded that the "music of Webern still may not be whistled on every street

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[118] Peter G. Davis, "Accomplished New Versions of Webern," *New York Times* (May 13, 1979).

corner," Rich argued that it had "moved a considerable distance toward its rightful place in the repertory" in part thanks to Craft's efforts.[119]

At the same time, however, most critics agreed that the Craft album did not compare favorably to the new Boulez release. As would be expected from the decade-plus gap between the albums, many noted that the earlier album was the inferior of the two in terms of audio quality. The interpretive qualities of Craft's performances were also called into question. Davis, for example, argued that "beauty emerges only fitfully on the Craft records" and that the "lack of a deeply felt musical impulse behind the performances no doubt had its own deleterious effect as the sound of these rather mean-spirited renditions settled into our ears at the time." Though he acknowledged that "[i]t would be unfair to heap too much blame" on Craft, since Webern's music was "not exactly second nature" to musicians of the time, he nevertheless felt that "the mechanical nature of the playing, the almost complete disregard of the composer's subtle dynamic markings and the dogged sense of getting the notes right at all costs made a pretty poor case for the music."[120] Rich was even harsher. The title of his review of the Boulez recording contained a not-so-subtle dig: "Webern Anew: Genius Over Craft." He went on to call the Craft album "wrongheaded," "tidy and prissy," "an excelsitude of incomprehension," and "a monstrous falsification of the sound—indeed, of the underlying aesthetic—of Webern's music." The album's purpose, Rich argued, had not been the sincere promotion of Webern's music but

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[119] Alan Rich, "Webern Anew: Genius Over Craft," *New York Magazine* (April 9, 1979).
[120] Davis, "Accomplished New Versions of Webern."

rather "to suggest a furtherance of this implausible entente between the aesthetic of Stravinsky and that of Viennese atonality."[121]

Rich's criticism of the Craft album were especially biting, but it was only an exaggerated example of the consensus regarding the difference between the two albums. This impulse to compare the albums, in turn, tended to distort the history of the Craft album. A review of the Boulez set in *The Hartford Courant*, for example, stated that the Craft album "was not generally considered to be an unqualified success for reasons of inadequate preparation time and less than ideal recorded sound."[122] Yet, as detailed above, "an unqualified success" was precisely what the Craft album was considered to be at the time of its release. Or take Davis' comments on the vocal performances found on the Boulez album, which he viewed as "the most marked improvement here over the earlier set." Davis argued that sopranos Halina Lukomska and Heather Harper sang "the various lieder with a musical sensitivity and feeling for the text that totally escaped Mr. Craft's singers, Marni Nixon and Grace-Lynne Martin, who sound like programmed robots by comparison."[123] Davis was evidently unaware that Nixon and Martin had, in fact, received more praise than any other performers featured on the Craft album.

Another distortion resulting from the appearance of the Boulez album was a trend of critics associating Craft's album with the Darmstadt style of performance practice common to the postwar years. The Craft-led performances were

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[121] Rich, "Webern Anew: Genius Over Craft."
[122] Bruce Taylor, "Boulez Realizes Webern," *The Hartford Courant* (August 5, 1979)
[123] Davis, "Accomplished New Versions of Webern."

described as hard, dry, rigid, stiff, unimaginative, or "a mere spelling out of the notes," all of which was said to correspond to a Darmstadt-era image of Webern as a cerebral "arch-structuralist."[124] There are several issues with this narrative, the first of which is the obvious fact that Robert Craft was by no means a member of the Darmstadt School. As Tim Page notes, there is a certain irony to Boulez having contributed to the critical association of Craft with Darmstadt. Perhaps that association was only the result of comparing the Craft performances with what Page describes as "interpretations of a startling and radiant beauty" on the Boulez album. Or perhaps the intervening two decades led critics to forget that it was not Craft but Boulez,"the frosty, hyper-cerebral structuralist," who had done "more than [anyone] else to establish meticulously organized Webernism as a secular religion."[125]

Categorizing Craft's album as a product of Darmstadt performance practice also ignores Craft's artistic ideals for the project, as stated in the album's liner notes. In many instances Craft portrayed Webern's music in a way utterly dissimilar to what later critics purported to hear in the album's performances. He emphasized the lyric aspects of Webern's music, drawing comparisons to Schubert and noting that Webern's vocal music is utterly accessible "as soon as one gets in the habit of singing the intervals." He meditated on the relationship between Webern's music and the composer's beloved Alps; a photo of Mittersill adorns the album's inside cover. He discussed the application of Baroque and

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[124] Cook, "Inventing tradition…" 181, 201.

[125] Tim Page, "Webern after Webernism," in *Tim Page on music: Views and reviews*, Portland, OR: Amadeus (2002): 251.

Classical formal models in Webern's serial music: "in no music composed since the classic masters has the perfect necessity of the repeat been so wonderfully calculated." These perspectives anticipated various aspects of the scholarly reappraisal of Webern's music that took place during the 1980s and 90s, as I discuss in Chapter 4. But they share little in common with a Darmstadt-style view of Webern's music. In fact Craft criticized the "mechanical so-called Webernites" of the Darmstadt School for prioritizing intellectual engagement over aesthetic experience and acting as if Webern's music were "written for their analytical purpose" alone. Webern's music must be heard, he argued, since it always appeals first and foremost "to the ear even when [it] is most vainly appealing to the eye."[126] A lack of rehearsal time, inexperienced musicians, or any of the other difficulties that Craft faced could have prevented his album from living up to these ideals. In this way Craft's program notes might well serve as an example of what Nicholas Cook calls "the oblique relationship between talking [or writing] about music and playing it."[127] Still, by ignoring the earlier reception of Craft's album and the views he outlined in its liner notes, the critics of 1979 foreclosed the possibility that the album could contain lyrical performances, evocations of mountain landscapes, and music that appeals to the ear instead of the eye. In a failure of both history and imagination, they succumbed to the idea that the performance practice of the present is necessarily best.

The critical confusion surrounding Craft's album that began in 1979 has since hardened into a well-worn trope. In one recent example, Timothy Day

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[126] Craft, Liner notes for *Anton Webern: The Complete Music*.
[127] Cook, "Inventing tradition…" 201.

claims that the Craft-led performances were stiff and unimaginative since "[i]n the 1950s most orchestral musicians possessed no knowledge at all of any appropriate style for this music" and the recordings "were not based on live concerts."[128] As discussed above, however, Craft did hone his interpretations through live performances, the Evenings on the Roof. Day also claims that the Craft recordings "were recognized as a landmark and saluted by the critics who noted, however 'a certain dryness and lack of sensuousness' in the interpretations."[129] Yet this perspective, common in 1979, was exceptional at the time of the album's release; Day cites one of just two reviews to use the word "dry." In the second of those reviews, furthermore, Humphrey Searle refers only to the audio quality and not to the performances as "dry," complaining that the "hard and dry" sound of U.S.-made recordings tended to "take some of the bloom off the music and make it sound more abstract than it really is."[130] Thus, like the critics of 1979 before him, Day fails to recognize the ever-changing nature of musical taste. But he is in good company. In a 1966 interview, Stravinsky dismissed the Pro Arte Quartet's performances released by Dial Records as "mere curiosities now, studies of the performance limitations (and possibilities of the time) rather than revelations of the music." While the Pro Arte members were ideal interpreters on paper, hailing "from the very *sanctum sanctorum* of the composer," Stravinsky felt that "their performance fails even on the level of

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[128] Timothy Day, *A Century of Recorded Music: Listening to Musical History*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press (2000): 179.
[129] Day, *A Century of Recorded Music*…180.
[130] Humphrey Searle, "Vanguard Music on the Gramophone," *Music & Letters* 38.3 (July 1957): 268.

accuracy."[131] Stravinsky touted Craft's recordings as a huge step up from the Dial recordings; two decades later, critics everywhere touted the Boulez album as a huge step up from the Craft album; what goes around comes around.

Twenty-first century Webern

Beyond questions of performance practice, the critical turn against Craft's album that took place in 1979 and after has obscured an even more significant issue. As Page argues, whether or not the "negative comment" that the album has attracted over the years is warranted, "the greatness of Craft's accomplishment cannot be denied." Page goes on to explain that "greatness" refers not to the musical performances, but to the album's impact:

> Less than 10 years after Webern's death, with most of the music unknown except to the most specialized of specialists, Craft convinced Columbia Masterworks to take a gamble on a four-record set and then, somehow, pulled it together, creating—from scratch, as it were—his own understanding of Webern, conveying it to his musicians and, by extension, to the world. How many recordings have changed so many lives?[132]

Since the album was "for almost a quarter century… the only access most listeners to had to Webern's musical world," Page argues that it "certainly deserves consideration in any discussion of the composer."[133] There were, as noted above, other recordings of Webern's music that appeared in the years between the Craft album and the Boulez album. But Page's point stands. For a long period in the middle of the twentieth century, Craft's album was the primary point of access to Webern's music for a great many listeners.

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[131] Stravinsky, "Introductory Interview…" xxiv–xxv

[132] Page, "Webern after Webernism," 251.

[133] Ibid., 250.

Nor did those listeners consist exclusively of those who were already interested in Webern's music. Craft's album, like all recorded music, bred familiarity in its role as what Arved Ashby calls a "supercharged recollection."[134] This quality, Page argues, provided a crucial means by which non-expert listeners could engage with Webern's music:

> Can one '"love" Webern in the same manner as one "loves" Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, or Chopin, with heart as well as head? I think so. For while it may be helpful for a professional musician to analyze Webern's tone rows, sets, and subsets, the lay listener need not know or care what compositional techniques Webern was using in a given measure any more than it is necessary to understand Bach's complicated and remarkable employment of canonic forms to enjoy his "Goldberg" Variations. What matters is the sounding music—and Webern sounds.[135]

References to the Craft album appeared in places far beyond the circle of composers, musicians, and academics where one might expect to find them. In January 1958, for example, the U.S. poet Elizabeth Bishop wrote to her friend and fellow poet Robert Lowell, singing Webern's praises:

> I bought that Webern you had before I left, and I'm listening to parts every day. I think I'm so smart, because when you played me one piece I immediately thought it seemed like the musical equivalent of Klee. Now, according to the notes, Webern was actually a member of the Blue Rider group…I am crazy about some of the short instrumental pieces. They seem exactly like what I'd always wanted, vaguely, to hear and never had, and really 'contemporary.'[136]

As Simon Obert has documented, the Craft album led to the circulation of Webern's music within popular music circles. During the late 1960s British guitarist Derek Bailey would play it loudly to drive unwelcome guests out of his

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[134] Arved Mark Ashby, *Absolute Music, Mechanical Reproduction*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press (2010): 62.

[135] Page, "Webern after Webernism," 249.

[136] Thomas Travisano, ed., *Words in air: the complete correspondence between Elizabeth Bishop and Robert Lowell*, New York : Farrar, Straus and Giroux (2008): 250.

home (the vocal works, according to Bailey, were especially unpopular) and in 1996 U.S. guitarist Arto Lindsay released an album whose cover mimics the cover of the Craft album.[137] The album even made it into the home of a pair of amateur music collectors named Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer. Almost a decade later the Moldenhauers traveled to Mittersill, the village pictured on the album's inside cover, and discovered a cache of previously unknown Webern manuscripts. Their story forms the basis of Chapter 4.

Craft's album, then, is one of the first presentations of Webern's music to have a significant impact in circles both niche and mainstream, in the United States and beyond. In a 1969 *New York Times* article, Peter Yates cited the album as the first example in support of his claim that "recording has been for composers in recent years the viaduct to reputation." According to Yates, Craft's album was "the first time that a musical reputation of the highest rank [Webern's] was established almost instantly as the result of recording."[138] Yates surely exaggerated; given his relationship with Craft, he was far from an objective evaluator. But it would wrong to dismiss his claim before internalizing its lesson. If the idea that "recording has been for composers…the viaduct to reputation" was bold for 1969, it now seems self-evident. Arved Ashby, for example, has demonstrated how "certain bodies of 'classical' music have had as profound a symbiotic relationship with media as has some pop."[139] Webern may not have been the first composer to have a reputation established in this way, but the Dial

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[137] Simon Obert, "ON THE TOP OF THE EMPIRE STATE BUILDING: ZUR DISKRETEN BEZIEHUNG DES POP ZU ANTON WEBERN," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 173.6 (2012): 47, 48.
[138] Peter Yates, "The Way to Fame Is Round and Round," *New York Times* (March 9, 1969).
[139] Ashby, *Absolute Music, Mechanical Reproduction*, 4.

and Columbia albums are examples of the phenomenon to which both Yates and Ashby refer, of what Ashby calls a "sanguine picture of art music as it connects—and will potentially connect in the future—with early twenty-first-century market technologies."[140]

In the mid-twentieth century, recordings helped to spread Webern's music at a time when—as seen in Chapters 1 and 2—other efforts to promote that music beyond a small circle of connoisseurs were either one-off affairs or simply unsuccessful. But in the twenty-first century, Ashby argues, classical music is "less likely to be heard in a concert hall than as a ringtone or in a video game, or paused, fast-forwarded, and shuffle-played on an MP3 player" (or Spotify or YouTube, we might add).[141] It is difficult to imagine Webern's *ppp* music serving as an effective ringtone; fast-forwarding would, likewise, seem pointless the given brevity of so many of Webern's works. But could not the first movement of the Symphony, op. 21 serve as the atmospheric backdrop to a video game scene? Might it not be useful to pause the music for a moment of reflection after a particularly intense movement of the Five Sacred Songs, op. 15? And why not shuffle the Five Pieces for Orchestra, op. 10, which were after all composed as part of a much larger collection of miniatures? In the years prior to his death in 2015, Craft embraced the possibilities that these features of modern recording technologies could afford. Though his Columbia album has never been released on any medium other than LP, Craft rerecorded Webern's entire oeuvre a half-

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[140] Ibid., 20.

[141] Ibid., 3. The fact that MP3 players are already obsolete, despite Ashby's book having been published less than a decade ago, serves to demonstrate the rapid pace of technological development in this area.

century later for Naxos Classical, a label that primarily distributes its products via the web-based Naxos Music Library.

Shuffle play is, regrettably, not a feature of the Naxos Music Library. But Craft's second set of Webern recordings is also available through iTunes, Amazon, and a variety of other outlets, such that twenty-first century Webern aficionados can shuffle his works to their hearts' content. They can also listen to those works on repeat—and they do. In 2008 an Amazon user named Ray Barnes wrote a review of Boulez's second set of Webern recordings (produced in the 1990s), arguing that "those willing to make the time and effort to "do the homework" and listen to the pieces again and again…will reap the benefits, as with Bach, of great spiritual experience."[142] Whoever Ray Barnes is, what he advocates sounds an awful lot like what was once advocated by Willi Reich and Aaron Copland and Erwin Stein. Another Amazon reviewer inadvertently provided evidence in support of Ashby's claim that "the malleable recording allows the listener to see more, fantasize more, and do more mental spatiotemporal roaming" than "the inflexible concert": "Webern's mature compositional manner is that of a man walking a tightrope whilst carrying a vial brimming with Christ's tears."[143] But my favorite review comes from Jack Jones, who states simply that "it is a treat to

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[142] Ray Barnes, Review of *Complete Webern*, by Pierre Boulez, June 4, 2008, https://www.amazon.com/Complete-Webern-CD-Box-Set/product-reviews/B00004R9F0/ref=cm_cr_dp_see_all_btm?ie=UTF8&showViewpoints=1&sortBy=recent.

[143] Ashby, *Absolute Music, Mechanical Reproduction*, 24; Review, *Complete Works, Opus 1-31*, by Pierre Boulez, December 2, 1999, https://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/B000002707/$%7B0%7D.

strap on the headphones and listen."[144] Indeed it is. Webern's music presents many challenges when encountered in a live performance: the muted moments that can scarcely be heard in large halls, the dense and challenging music that is over before those listening even have a chance to get their bearings, or perhaps (as at the Carnegie Hall performance of the Symphony, op. 21 in 1950) a baffled and hostile audience. It is therefore not difficult to understand why recordings have remained such an attractive way to get know Webern's art. In fact, given that the challenges of live performance persist and recording technologies only continue to improve, the latter may well remain the best way to listen to Webern's short, quiet, strange, and beautiful pieces of music.

[144] Jack Jones, Review of *Complete Webern*,by Pierre Boulez, October 22, 2001, https://www.amazon.com/Complete-Webern-CD-Box-Set/productreviews/B00004R9F0/ref=cm_cr_dp_see_all_btm?ie=UTF8&showViewpoints=1&sortBy=recent.

Chapter 4: *"A Symphony of Mountains"*
Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer and Webern's U.S. legacy

Thousands of miles apart, an ocean between them, two lakes resemble one another. The Königssee, in the southeastern corner of Bavaria, is the third deepest lake in Germany (Figure 15). Lake Chelan, in northern Washington, is the third deepest lake in the United States (Figure 16). Both lakes are long and narrow, just over a mile across on average. Both are flanked by steep mountain walls on three sides, such that most of their shoreline is accessible only by foot or by boat. Glaciers feed both lakes with crystalline waters. The Königssee is surrounded by the Berchtesgadener Alps, a subchain of the Eastern Limestone Alps; Lake Chelan is surrounded by the North Cascades, whose jagged peaks have earned them the nickname "the American Alps."

These parallels would not have been lost on Hans Moldenhauer. A German musician born in 1906, Hans came of age at a time when "[b]eing an Alpine adventurer of any sort was immensely fashionable."[1] His first excursions were in the Allgäu Alps, just a few hours west of the Königssee; in 1938 Hans emigrated to the United States and settled in Spokane, Washington, just a few hours east of Lake Chelan. Both regions were central to Hans' formation of *Heimat*, a German term that loosely translates as "homeland."[2] As Elizabeth Boa and Rachel Palfreyman argue, "human beings can make somewhere other than their

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[1] Tait Keller, *Apostles of the Alps: Mountaineering and Nation Building in Germany and Austria, 1860–1939*, The University of North Carolina Press (2016): 152.

[2] The difficulties of translating *Heimat* into English are well documented; Elizabeth Boa and Rachel Palfreyman argue that the term "bears many connotations, drawing together associations which no single English word could convey." See: Elizabeth Boa and Rachel Palfreyman, *Heimat—A German Dream: Regional Loyalties and National Identity in German Culture, 1890–1990*, Oxford: Oxford University Press (2000): 1.

birthplace into Heimat through the investment of physical labour and a concomitant spiritual attachment," since "Heimat is not a place in itself, but a mental or subjective state of mind arising from a relationship between human beings and places."[3] Thus the European Alps and the American Alps could both be part of Hans' *Heimat*. Clearly, then, *Heimat* need not be constrained by state borders, despite the connotation of the English "homeland"; as Hans was coming of age during the first decades of the twentieth century, German and Austrian mountaineers frequently conceived of the Alps as a *Grossdeutsche* (Greater German) *Heimat* that spanned nations.[4] One of those mountaineers was Anton Webern, whose music would later come to dominate Hans' professional life. For Webern, as for Hans, mountains were "privileged *Heimat* landscapes, their cradling form around valley dwellings a comforting barrier against the outside world," more a home than any single place or nation ever could be.[5]

Yet mountains were not idealized for their own qualities alone. Instead they stood in contradistinction to other, more banal places—"against the outside world." According to Julian Johnson, Webern often struggled to resolve the tension between "the urban centre to which he was attracted for its cultural life but in which he nevertheless felt himself ill at ease" and "a rural *Heimat*," that often took the form of an alpine landscape.[6] This attitude is evident in Webern's account of an ascent of the Dachstein, a prominent peak southeast of Salzburg:

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[3] Boa and Palfreyman, *Heimat—A German Dream*, 6.
[4] Keller, *Apostles of the Alps*…2.
[5] Christopher Morris, *Modernism and the Cult of Mountains: Music, Opera, Cinema*, Farnham: Ashgate (2012): 7.
[6] Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, (1999): 20.

> The diffused light on the glacier was quite remarkable (caused by the overcast sky and the fog). Just a few paces in front of you snow and fog blended together into a completely undifferentiated screen. You had no idea whether you were going up or down hill. A most favourable opportunity to contract snow-blindness! But wonderful, like floating in space.[7]

Rather than fearing the dangerous situation in which he found himself, Webern relished the chance to "float in space," as alpine landscapes provided him with a respite from the realities of life below. Johnson argues that Webern analogized this environment to the mental abstraction required to make art:

> For him, the silence and unbounded spaciousness of the high mountain landscape and the thin air of an intensely abstract activity of the mind were related parts of the same reality. In both, the abnegation of the everyday life of the valley was allied to a quest for a clarity and purity of perception and expression that was the proper goal not only of art but [also] of life.[8]

Hans held similar views; Spokane, a culturally rich city surrounded by hills and forests, was well suited to resolve the tension that he too felt.[9] In "A Symphony of Mountains," an article he wrote for the American Alpine Journal shortly after his arrival in Spokane, music and mountains appear as an "escape":

> In the end, we will have found the world of mountains (as in the world of music) to be a mirror of the human soul, a reservation set aside along the dusty road of life. So that we may escape to see and feel creation which will stand the vanity of times and people, when fires rage and temples burst, and destruction rains over a maddened world.[10]

Given the year in which "A Symphony of Mountains" was published—1942—it is

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[7] Kathryn Bailey, *The Life of Webern*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1998): 130–131.

[8] Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, 212–213.

[9] A friend of the Moldenhauers told me that the source of Hans' "real attachment" to Spokane was "the geography." Donivan Johnson, interview with the author, Metaline Falls, WA, July 2017.

[10] Hans Moldenhauer, "A Symphony of Mountains," *American Alpine Journal* (1942). The article is structured so as to resemble that of a Classical symphony: "Prelude 1941 (Grave)," "Rock (Allegro)," "Ice (Andante maestoso)," and "Snow (Presto)." Hans published a second article for the journal in 1943. See: Hans Moldenhauer, "Song of Wandering," *American Alpine Journal* (1943).

not difficult to imagine what Hans was referring to when he spoke of raging fires and bursting temples.

But if mountains provided an escape from everyday life, they also harbored reminders of its problems. Hans treasured his American Alps, yet the North Cascades only acquired that nickname after white settlers expelled Native Americans from the region; "Chelan," it turns out, is a transliteration of a Salish word meaning "deep water." In the influential 1893 essay "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," U.S. historian Frederick Jackson Turner argued that the displacement of Native Americans throughout the western United States was an essential step in shaping "the rugged individualism and exceptional ingenuity that defined the American character."[11] Though Turner's views have been roundly dismissed by modern historians, they resonated with German and Austrian mountaineers at the time. Like the white settlers of Washington, many mountaineers advocated for the expulsion of unwanted populations from their "frontier," the Alps. Anti-Semitism flourished in the mountains, where "[a]lpine purity became a metaphor for racial purity," a fact that could not have been lost on Hans, who left Germany in large part because his wife Margot was Jewish.[12] Though the idea of *Heimat* may not be intrinsically racist, it was easily brought into alignment with "the anti-Semitic doctrine of the rootless Jew."[13] The Königsee lies just a few miles south of the village of Berchtesgaden, a Nazi

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[11] Keller, *Apostles of the Alps*…216. For the original Turner essay, see: Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in *The Frontier in American History*, 1–38, New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1921.

[12] Ibid., 132.

[13] Boa and Palfreyman, *Heimat—A German Dream*, 7.

stronghold and favorite retreat of Adolf Hitler. In these ways, too, the two lakes resemble one another.

Nor was music exempt. Webern's works have often been described in terms befitting a mountain peak: "[e]mpty spaces of silence are punctuated here and there by isolated notes passed among the staves. Vocal lines are jagged, rocky, encompassing octaves in a single measure. There is little contact with the ground."[14] What Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer contributed to Webern studies, however, was the insight that Webern's music did not transcend life but was rooted in it. The Moldenhauers revealed that many of Webern's compositions were meditations on personal traumas rather than abstract exercises. They documented the painstaking and often banal work that Webern undertook to construct his music. They showed how, even as his music was denounced by the Nazis, Webern sympathized with the tyrants whose war later killed him. And they discovered that his death was not some grand conspiracy but merely a tragic accident. As a result of the Moldenhauers' work, Webern's music became something less exalted and less perfect than the music that Hans described in "A Symphony of Mountains" or the mountains that Webern described in his letters. But it also became music more firmly grounded in place and time. In the process it became open to a greater variety of interpretations and greater breadth of audiences than ever before.

Death and a gift (1959–1961)

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[14] Edward Rothstein, "High Sounds and Silence," *New York Times* (March 4, 1979).

In the opening paragraphs of "A Symphony of Mountains," Hans reflected on what it was like to be a German man climbing mountains in Washington:

> While marching on, it seems quite hard to stop and to remember, in all the forward-swing of a new life that just began, in an entirely new world, in the endeavor to adjust oneself, and under the constant influence of fresh experiences. It is not to be done without an outspoken reluctance to sit down and recall old mountains of the old countries, while from all around comes the cry of summits never climbed before
>
> It always has been this way, so that new impressions make the older fade. Therefore, I will not even try attempting to lift the full shrine of a treasure that is still buried under the weight of these last years, years overflowing with exciting news, with shifts of home, of deeds, and men. But I shall at least wipe the dust from the most loved of golden memories and glance again at a collection, more precious than any other goods which I could salvage from the débris over there.[15]

This passage is revealing not only for how it describes the challenges presented by Hans' transcontinental *Heimat*, but also for its choice of metaphor. Hans claimed that his collection of memories was "more precious than any other goods," but in the years that followed he began to build up a more physical collection in the form of music manuscripts, a pursuit that had interested him since his youth.[16] In 1943 Hans married Rosaleen Jackman, a Spokane native two decades his junior; he and his first wife Margot had divorced the previous year. Hans and Rosaleen bought a Craftsman-style house in Spokane's South Hill neighborhood and installed an extensive system of shelving in the basement to house their ever-growing collection.

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[15] Moldenhauer, "A Symphony of Mountains."

[16] Jon Newsom notes that as a boy Hans was "was teased by his father for his preoccupation with his 'little bits of paper.'" See: Jon Newsom, "Introduction," The Moldenhauer Archives - The Rosaleen Moldenhauer Memorial, Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/collections/moldenhauer-archives/articles-and-essays/guide-to-archives/introduction/.

In February 1958 the Moldenhauers acquired the manuscript of a voice and piano arrangement of Webern's Six Songs on poems of Georg Trakl, op. 14.[17] The manuscript had previously belonged to Hugo Winter, a Jewish manager at Universal Edition who emigrated to New York in 1939. The manuscript was a gift to Winter from Webern, who gave similar gifts to several of his Jewish friends as they prepared to flee Europe.[18] The Moldenhauers acquired it from Winter's son Richard, presumably by way of a purchase, though few details regarding this exchange survive; Hans used the term "acquisition."[19] The manuscript sparked the Moldenhauers' interest in Webern, which to that point had been all but nonexistent; Hans had encountered Webern's music as a child in Mainz, Germany, finding it "as elusive…as it was formidable" and developing a "casual and cursory" familiarity but "little additional rapport."[20] After acquiring the Winter manuscript the Moldenhauers purchased a copy of the recently released Webern recordings led by Robert Craft, the music filling their house "at first with unaccustomed sounds until, by slow degrees, it was absorbed."[21]

The following summer Hans and Rosaleen undertook a "field trip" aimed at expanding their collection. Since Hans had recently been diagnosed with *retinitis pigmentosa*, causing the gradual deterioration of his eyesight, Rosaleen drove. From Italy they traveled north into Austria, taking the Großglockner High Alpine Road over the main chain of the Alps. Named after the nearby Großglockner,

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[17] Moldenhauer, *The Death of Anton Webern*…21 ff.
[18] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*…517.
[19] Moldenhauer, *The Death of Anton Webern*…21.
[20] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*…16; Moldenhauer, *The Death of Anton Webern*…21.
[21] Moldenhauer, *The Death of Anton Webern*…30.

Austria's tallest peak, the road was built in the 1930s—around the same time that Webern ascended the Großglockner. It traverses the Hochtor Pass, which leads over the spine of the Central Eastern Alps. As they drove higher and higher the Moldenhauers encountered harsh conditions, not unlike those that Webern had once encountered on the Dachstein:

> While our little car rounded one hairpin curve after the other, valley and forests fell below. With the height, there grew an atmosphere of loneliness and foreboding, echoing in the thunder of the waterfalls and reflected by the bleakness of the boulder fields. The drifting fog, which had enveloped crests and peaks, was creeping over rocks and glaciers. A mood of gloom had come to linger, pervading us with strange anxiety…At last, we reached what appeared like a ridge and, a little beyond, the height of the pass. There was no view, no joy, no rest. The world was full of menace and austerity.[22]

As the Moldenhauers descended the other side of the pass, Hans glanced at the map and noticed a nearby village with a name he recognized from a photograph that adorned the liner notes of Craft's album: Mittersill.

But Mittersill lay thirty miles west of Bruck, the village at which the road over the Großglockner let out. The Moldenhauers had been traveling all day and would already be arriving late at a friend's house outside of Salzburg. Hans left the decision on whether or not to make the detour to Mittersill to the driver:

> Beyond all doubt, Rosaleen was fatigued already, and with a drive in darkness yet to come, I did not ask and felt that now it was *her* move. But the decision, though unspoken, was already made. We jumped into the car. Rosaleen pressed the starter. She headed *west*, to Mittersill.

Once there, the Moldenhauers sought out Webern's grave, met a priest who showed them the village's death ledger, located the house in which Webern died, and began the investigations that would culminate with the publication of *The*

[22] Ibid, 2.

Death of Anton Webern: A Drama in Documents two years later. In the opening pages of that book, Hans noted that "there would have been no story" without Rosaleen's initiative. As such, he felt, the book "justly [belonged] to her."[23]

If this part of the story—the Moldenhauers happening upon Mittersill the summer after they had first become acquainted with Webern's music—sounds almost too good to be true, the remainder of *The Death of Anton Webern* makes clear that the book's insights were hard-earned. The third chapter, "The Search," recounts in painstaking detail the research undertaken to clarify the circumstances of Webern's death. The chapter reproduces nineteen letters between Hans and various Armed Forces officials, as Hans traded on his veteran status in an attempt to acquire the contact information of former soldiers. The following chapter, "The Truth," contains the book's primary discovery: that Webern was collateral damage in a U.S. Army raid aimed at Benno Mattel, the composer's son-in-law and a dealer of black market goods. The way in which this chapter recounts the cruel randomness of Webern's death is affecting. So too are a series of letters reproduced in the book's final pages. Hans corresponded with Helen Bell, the widow of Raymond Bell, a cook in the U.S. Army and the man who killed Anton Webern. In one particularly disheartening letter, she describes how Raymond came home from the war wracked with guilt, took up drinking, and died from alcoholism ten years later; "[j]ust as in Greek tragedy, the slayer became a victim equally with the slain."[24]

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[23] Ibid, 3–4.

[24] Dika Newlin, "Review: *The Death of Anton Webern; A Drama in Documents* by Hans Moldenhauer," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 16.1 (Spring, 1963): 108.

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An excerpt from *The Death of Anton Webern* was printed in the *New York Times* on Christmas Day 1960, to promote the book's forthcoming publication.[25] A few months later Hans wrote to Igor Stravinsky to ask if the composer would contribute a few words. Stravinsky obliged and his statement appeared on the book's dust jacket:

> Thanks to the persistence and devotion of Hans Moldenhauer we now have an explicit and veracious account of the tragic death (and equally tragic later years) of this great master. I have always thought of Anton Webern as a tragic hero because of his remoteness, but reading these documents, one thinks only of a person very near and dear to us and to the art of our time.[26]

The Death of Anton Webern was received positively upon its release, in no small part thanks to the paucity of details regarding Webern's death that had been available prior to the Moldenhauer's findings. A *New York Times* story from November 1945, two months after Webern's death, was entitled "Austrian Composer Slain Mysteriously" and reported that Webern had been shot after leaving his son-in-law's house to smoke a cigarette—basically correct (in fact it was a cigar). But the article offered no further information, noting that "no motive for the shooting has been found."[27] Further investigations followed but yielded little. In 1946 Nicolas Slonimsky corresponded with the *Archivdirektor* of the Musikverein in Vienna on the matter, only to have the director confirm that

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[25] Hans Moldenhauer, "THE LAST EVENING OF ANTON WEBERN'S LIFE: Investigation of the Composer's Death Shows Shooting Was Accidental," *New York Times* (December 25, 1960).
[26] Letter, Igor Stravinsky to Hans Moldenhauer, May 10, 1961, box 52, the Moldenhauer Archives at the Library of Congress.
[27] By Wireless to The New York Times, "Austrian Composer Slain Mysteriously," *New York Times* (November 4, 1945).

Webern had "really been killed by an American soldier, when he went out of his house in the darkness to smoke a little," as the *Times* had already reported.[28] An air of mystery developed around the case and "speculation… about the exact circumstances surrounding Webern's death" grew rampant.[29] Some suspected that it was the product of a plot by the U.S. Army; in a review of a Craft-led Evenings on the Roof concert in 1954, Albert Goldberg claimed (incorrectly) that Webern had been murdered by his son-in-law.[30] Though the Moldenhauers' research revealed that Webern's death was more an accident than anything else, it still made for a gripping story not lacking in drama. Former Schoenberg student Dika Newlin even went so far as to give the narrative it an alluring name: "The Webern Murder Mystery."[31]

The book's style and methodology, on the other hand, did not elicit the same positive reactions. A reviewer from the *Sydney Morning Herald* noted that "[t]here are times when Dr. Moldenhauer's comments on the letters stress the obvious and one wishes that he had let them speak for themselves, since they contain enough material for a dozen tragedies."[32] Peter Heyworth of *The Observer* went even further:

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[28] Letter, Heding Krain to Nicolas Slonimsky, December 11, 1946, box 243, folder 55, Nicolas Slonimsky Collection, Music Division, Library of Congress.

[29] Dika Newlin, "Review: *The Death of Anton Webern; A Drama in Documents* by Hans Moldenhauer," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 16.1 (Spring, 1963): 108.

[30] Albert Goldberg, "Webern Pieces Make 'Musical' History," *Los Angeles Times* (February 9, 1954).

[31] Newlin, "Review: *The Death of Anton Webern*…" 108. Newlin played a key role in the postwar U.S. reception of the Second Viennese School, furnishing the English translation of René Leibowitz´s *Schoenberg and his school*. For more on this topic, see: Elizabeth L. Keathley, "'Dick, dika, dickest': Dika Newlin's 'thick description' of Schönberg in America," *Journal of the Arnold Schönberg Center* 4 (2002): 309–324.

[32] Joel Greenberg, "MYSTERY KILLING SOLVED," *Sydney Morning Herald* (July 28, 1962).

> We owe much to Dr. Moldenhauer's pertinacity. But he has blown what should have been an article into a book and his narrative lacks the restraint and dignity of Mrs. Bell's letter. Effusive, sententious and incorrect, his style can only be described as Professor's Americanisch.
>
> As English is not his native tongue, I should not have felt "obligated" to mention this failing had not Dr. Moldenhauer, in a singularly pompous and gratuitous little footnote to a very civil answer to one of his inquiries that is in fact couched in clear, if homely, English, underlined that he had left unchanged "idiosyncrasies of expression, as well as errors in grammar and vocabulary." Doctor, heal thyself.[33]

Heyowrth's anti-German bias notwithstanding, it is easy enough to identify which aspects of Hans' writing he found objectionable. Elements of the book, especially its autobiographical sections and sweeping statements about fate, love, and faith, can sometimes seem Romantic or un-academic, as the passage quoted above makes clear; another reviewer referred to these sections as "literary lapses."[34]

Yet the passion that Hans displayed for his subject was not merely the result of writerly idiosyncrasies. *The Death of Anton Webern* opens midway through the Moldenhauers' 1959 field trip, in the Austrian village of Heiligenblut. Situated at the foot of the Großglockner, Heiligenblut's name translates as "holy blood," and its appearance at the start of *The Death of Anton Webern* serves as an indication of the religious language that follows throughout the book. Several pages later, for example, the Moldenhauers' trip referred to as both a "pilgrimage" and a "crusade."[35] At one point Webern is imagined wearing a

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[33] Peter Heyworth, "WHO KILLED ANTON WEBERN?" *The Observer* (April 29, 1962).

[34] Charles Kent, "Reviewed Work(s): *The Death of Anton Webern; A Drama in Documents* by Hans Moldenhauer; *Anton Webern; Einführung in Werk und Stil* by Walter Kolneder," *Notes* 19.3 (June 1962): 436.

[35] Moldenhauer, *The Death of Anton Webern*…42

"crown of thorns."[36] It is, at first blush, absurd to compare Anton Webern to Jesus Christ, to liken Mittersill to Jerusalem, or to describe a scholarly pursuit in terms befitting a religious quest. But the Moldenhauers had a reason to view their work on Webern in this way, for the fruits it bore went far beyond solving a murder mystery. In June 1960, "virtually in the hour when [he] wrote *Finis*" on the book, Hans received a letter from Amalie Webern Waller, Webern's eldest daughter. Waller had caught wind of Hans' research on her father's death and wished to contribute her side of the story.[37] This initial contact with Waller would be the key to the Moldenhauers' two decades of work on Webern's music, from international festivals and bestselling publications to the discovery of lost musical treasure—none of which would have been possible without *The Death of Anton Webern*. No wonder, then, that towards the end of his life Hans would again discuss his chance encounter with Anton Webern in quasi-spiritual terms, referring to it simply as "a gift."[38]

It happened at the World's Fair (1962)

How—and for how much—the Moldenhauers came to personally own an archive's worth of Webern materials is not clear. As with the manuscript they purchased from Richard Winter in 1958, discussed above, details of their dealings with Amalie Waller in 1961 and the years thereafter are few and far

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[36] Ibid, 118.
[37] Ibid, 110.
[38] Donivan Johnson, interview with the author, Metaline Falls, WA, July 2017.

between. In the introduction to 1979's *Anton von Webern: A Chronicle of His Life and Work*, Hans had this to say on the matter:

> My findings, first announced in *The New York Times* and subsequently published in book form [*The Death of Anton Webern*], were corroborated by Webern's eldest daughter, Mrs [sic] Amalie Waller, to whom I had submitted the results of my research. Several months later, quite unexpectedly, Mrs Waller informed me that she had in her possession music manuscripts, diaries, and other writings of her father and asked for my assistance in placing them. During the early summer of 1961, arrangements were completed to acquire these materials for the Moldenhauer Archives.[39]

Vague phrases like "arrangements were completed" fill Hans' writings on the acquisition of the Webern materials, as well as discussions of the manuscripts of many other composers that the Moldenhauers acquired over the years. The Moldenhauers restricted access to their Webern collection over the course of the following two-plus decades, which would later become a divisive issue. For the time being, however, the musical world was surprised and excited to learn that a trove of Webern materials had been unearthed: diaries, sketchbooks, countless letters, an original stage play (*Tot*), photographs, and—most significantly—several dozen previously unknown and never-performed compositions, the majority of which dated from Webern's student years. These findings were announced in a pair of *New York Times* in September 1961, which also noted that the Moldenhauers planned to unveil the new Webern works to the public at the First International Webern Festival the following year.[40] That festival would be

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[39] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*...13.

[40] Eric Salzman, "UNHEARD SCORES OF WEBERN FOUND: U.S. Musicologist Acquired Them From Composer's Family in Austria," *New York Times* (September 4, 1961); Hans Moldenhauer, "RICH WEBERN LEGACY CONTAINS UNKNOWN COMPOSITIONS," *New York Times* (September 17, 1961).

held concurrently with the summer of 1962's marquee event, which conveniently for the Moldenhauers was being held just on the other side of the Cascades: the Seattle World's Fair.

In May 1962 U.S. novelist Thomas Pynchon wrote a letter to his friend Kirkpatrick Sale, detailing a weekend of cultural activities in Seattle:

> I was to a Webern festival last weekend. Can you think of anything festive about the music of Webern? [N]either can I. It had nothing to do with the Seattle World's Fair, thank god.

Pynchon sought to distance the Webern Festival from the World's Fair, the latter of which he viewed as nothing more than "an excuse for merchants in town to make money, is all it is." "Those who own businesses are profiting," Pynchon continued, "but the Consumer, that great, mindless majority of whom I am one, is getting screwed (as we say)." He worried that the World's Fair organizers would raze the city's "best parts"—"the dirty bricks and gargoyles and Victorian excesses of old Seattle"—only to replace them with what he referred to as "glass and aluminum parallelopipeds [sic]." Whereas Pynchon saw the World's Fair as the product of staid cultural homogeneity and capitalism run amok, he described the Webern Festival as the work of "loonies," a festival held in honor of "a poor bastard shot in '45 by one of our own dumb, drunk GI's, a poor bastard who was also a great composer even if he was a German and wrote in 12 tones." "Nuts like this," Pynchon concluded, "aren't very frequent."[41] But Pynchon did not know the whole story. Whatever their differences, the Webern Festival and the Seattle World's Fair shared timing and location was purposeful; the Moldenhauers

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[41] Letter, Thomas Pynchon to Kirkpatrick Sale, May 28, 1962, Thomas Pynchon Collection, box 2, folder 1, Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin.

sought to harness the popularity of the latter to increase publicity for the former. Following publication of the two *New York Times* articles in September 1961, Hans received a letter from Eugene Ormandy, conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Ormandy sought further information on the newly discovered "composition for large orchestra"—*Im Sommerwind* (*In the Summer Wind*)—which he was "most anxious" to conduct.[42] Hans offered Ormandy the opportunity to premiere the work, on one condition: that the performance take place in Seattle the following year.[43] Ormandy agreed and the world premiere of Webern's *Im Sommerwind* was scheduled for Friday, May 25, 1962. The performance would simultaneously serve as the kick-off event of the Webern Festival and a World's Fair event, as it was to be held at the Seattle Opera House, a newly constructed building on the fairgrounds.

As the performance neared, Hans penned a preview of the Webern festival for *Music of the West*:

> Coinciding with the Seattle World's Fair, and constituting one of its most significant cultural contributions, the First International Webern Festival will evidence a vital phase of musical esthetics in our time, as formulated in its syntax by one of the now "classic" masters of the century. It also will open vistas of new dimensions in our art which may well become known as the music of the space age.[44]

Hans was not the first to employ this kind of language to describe Webern's music; recall, for example, Virgil Thomson's description of the Symphony, op. 21

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[42] Letter, Eugene Ormandy to Hans Moldenhauer, September 7, 1961, The Moldenhauer Archives at Harvard University, box 2, item 107.
[43] Letter, Eugene Ormandy to Stanley Chaple [sic], October 30, 1961, The Moldenhauer Archives at Harvard University, box 2, item 107.
[44] Hans Moldenhauer, "First International Webern Festival to be Held in Seattle," *Music of the West* 17.8 (April 1, 1962): 4.

as "spun-steel" and "pure star-dust" following the Carnegie Hall performance of that work in January 1950.[45] But the phrase "music of the space age" was, in this case, a calculated play to align the Webern Festival with the future-oriented outlook of the World's Fair. What had initially been conceived of as a "Festival of the West" was rebranded as both "the Century 21 Exposition" and "America's Space Age World's Fair," the latter a response to the Soviet Union's launch of *Sputnik* in 1957.[46] Technological leaders like Boeing and IBM sponsored some of the most popular pavilions. Many of the most popular attractions—including the "World of Tomorrow" and its glass "Bubbleator," the monorail, and the newly constructed Space Needle—were designed to showcase new technologies. The fair's futuristic aesthetic permeated pop culture for years to come. It inspired *The Jetsons*, which premiered later the same year, while the Space Needle's revolving restaurant figured prominently in a movie filmed on the fairgrounds, the Elvis Presley vehicle *It Happened at the World's Fair*.

Despite Hans' rhetoric, however, the Webern Festival and the World's Fair made for an awkward pairing—a fact made plain at the opening night performance of *Im Sommerwind*. While the World's Fair looked forward to the 21st century, *Im Sommerwind* revealed a young Webern firmly rooted in the 19th century. In a review of the concert, the *New York Times*' Harold C. Schonberg described the work's influences as follows: "Wagner and Richard Strauss, plus the Schoenberg of 'Gurrelieder.' Some César Franck comes into play, too, for the

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[45] Thomson, "Star-Dust and Spun-Steel."

[46] John Findlay, *Magic lands: western cityscapes and American culture after 1940*, University of California Press (1992): 218.

opening suggests 'Les Eolides.'"[47] *Im Sommerwind*'s lush textures, sweeping melodic gestures, and relaxed pacing do indeed bring to mind any number of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century compositions; what the work does not particularly resemble is Webern's published compositions, any of which might be more credibly interpreted as space-age music. *Im Sommerwind*'s focus on nature—its title and program are borrowed from a Bruno Wille poem of the same name—also stands in stark contrast to the fair's technological urbanism. According to Julian Johnson, Wille's poem is representative of a nineteenth-century aesthetic that presented nature as "a sacred, religious mystery" while looking down on the "unnatural" aspects of urban life.[48] Following Wille, Webern's *Im Sommerwind* constitutes "the most substantial and overt demonstration of the extent to which [he] inherited conventional devices of nineteenth-century nature music."[49] The World's Fair, by contrast, worshipped not nature but science, to such a degree that "science assumed at Century 21 some of the functions once reserved for religion."[50] There was even a "space-gothic" arch standing near the center of the fair, designed to evoke a medieval cathedral.[51] For audience members arriving at the Opera House after a ride on the monorail or dinner atop the Space Needle, hearing *Im Sommerwind* would have been like stepping into the past.

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[47] Harold C. Schonberg, "WEBERN FESTIVAL BEGINS IN SEATTLE: 1904 Work Given Premiere by Philadelphia Orchestra," *New York Times* (May 27, 1962).
[48] Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, 71, 62.
[49] Ibid, 60–61.
[50] Findlay, *Magic lands*…234.
[51] Ibid, 238.

Webern devotees in the audience might have been tempted to listen for "occasional phrases or devices that seem to foreshadow the works of [Webern's] maturity."[52] And they may have heard some. Johnson, for example, argues that "so many elements of this piece are preserved in the later ones" that an ignorance of *Im Sommerwind* engenders "a selective deafness to central elements" of Webern's mature works.[53] Malcolm Hayes suggests, less plausibly, that the absence of trombones and tuba in the work's score is evidence of Webern's desire to find "a path beyond the glutted sumptuousness that was the Achilles' heel of the late-Romantic orchestral style."[54] It seems more likely, however, that members of the Webern Festival delegation would have been struck by how little *Im Sommerwind* resembles the Webern that they knew. To be sure, the D1 with which the work begins, played muted and *pianississimo* by half of the double bass section, is Webernesque enough. Perhaps that opening reminded some in the audience of similarly abyssal beginnings to other Webern works, such as the low bass drum roll that begins the *marcia funebre* movement in op. 6. But any such illusions would have been disrupted immediately thereafter with the entrance of the rest of the low strings on a D-Major triad. The following seven measures of *Im Sommerwind* present that triad sustained and unadorned, an articulation of a "fullness" that much of Webern's later music would preserve "only negatively—through memory and allusion."[55] By the moment of the first harmonic shift in m.

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[52] Edward T. Cone, "Webern's Apprenticeship," *The Musical Quarterly* 53.1 (January, 1967): 39.
[53] Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, 63.
[54] Malcolm Hayes, *Anton von Webern*, London: Phaidon Press Limited (1995): 46.
[55] Ibid, 156.

9, it would have been obvious that *Im Sommerwind* was unlike anything in Webern's published oeuvre.

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A few months after the *Im Sommerwind* premiere, Hans received a letter of gratitude from Ernst Krenek, who had been in attendance:

> If the combination of the two W.F.s (Webern Festival and World's Fair) may have raised some eyebrows, the initiators of the Festival must be praised for having accomplished remarkable feats of organization and coordination…If we raised our eyebrows, it was only to admire Mt. Rainier, which we were lucky enough to contemplate for fifteen majestic minutes.[56]

Krenek made reference to Rainier Vista, a promenade on the campus of the University of Washington that frames the tallest peak of the Pacific Northwest. Rainier Vista was the product of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, a sort of regional version of a World's Fair hosted by the university in 1909. The exposition transformed the campus from a heavily forested plot of land on the outskirts of the city to an orderly collection of promenades, fountains, and sculptures (Figure 17). Following its opening night concert, the Webern Festival shifted to the university for three days of lectures and performances. Hans found it a suitable venue. The campus's "majestic mountain scenery," he argued, "would have inspired Webern himself in his intense love for Alpine heights."[57]

Webern's love of nature was made obvious at the festival's second concert on Saturday night (Figure 18). The concert opened with the world premieres of four previously unknown compositions, all of which predate Webern's op. 1:

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[56] Letter, Ernst Krenek to Hans Moldenhauer, August 7, 1962, The Moldenhauer Archives at Harvard University, box 2, item 91.

[57] Moldenhauer, "First International Webern Festival…"

Three Poems (1899–1903), Three Songs after Poems by Ferdinand Avenarius (1903–1904), the String Quartet (1905), and Five Songs after Poems by Richard Dehmel (1906–1908). As with the performance of *Im Sommerwind* the previous night, contrasts between rural and urban discourses abounded. The first piece on the program was "Vorfrühling" ("Early spring"), Webern's earliest extant song. In what might have made for a surprising start to an all-Webern concert, "Vorfrühling" begins with an open fifth (Eb-Bb) in the left hand of the piano. A recurring device of nineteenth-century nature music, the open fifth functions in "Vorfrühling" as an evocation of "the wonder provoked by a sleeping landscape" described in the song's text.[58] The same open fifth returns toward the end of "Vorfrühling," which closes with a repetition of mm. 1–4. The ascending figure on "Leise tritt auf" ("softly it appears") is now marked *so zart als möglich* (as gently as possible), and the song concludes on the soprano's high Eb as the open fifth below fades away (Figure 19). The repetition of the opening bars makes for simple yet arresting conclusion, what the Moldenhauers would later describe as "an up-sweep of the human voice like a breath in the pure air of early spring."[59]

"Nachgebet der Braut" ("Night prayer of the bride"), the next song on the program, begins and ends on a major triad but employs a considerably more complex harmonic language than "Vorfrühling." As Johnson suggests, the differences between the two songs may stem from the fact that "Nachgebet" dates from 1903, after Webern's move to Vienna:

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[58] Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, 52.
[59] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*…60.

> It seems reasonable to suggest that this song was a product of his new life in Vienna to the same extent that the majority of the early songs are hymns to the beauties of the landscape surrounding the Preglhof. The majority of these are concerned with landscape as a metaphor of peace and spaciousness. Yet the first song he wrote after moving to Vienna is fast-moving, passionate, anxious, and full of a new, highly erotic longing not evidenced in many of the other songs.[60]

More songs from the same period followed, as did the world premiere of the single-movement String Quartet (1905). In one sense the quartet is nature music in the mold of "Im Sommerwind" and "Vorfrühling"; Webern's inspiration for the work was a triptych of alpine landscapes by the Italian painter Giovanni Segantini. But the quartet also reflects Webern's move to Vienna to an even greater degree than "Nachgebet der Braut," as it is one of the first products of Webern's studies with Schoenberg beginning in the autumn of 1904. The ending of the work, a "prolongation of an inflected but otherwise static tonic chord," bears some resemblance to the ending of *Im Sommerwind*.[61] Beyond that, however, the quartet's chromatic harmony and dense counterpoint—both features largely absent from *Im Sommerwind* and the early songs—make clear why it is often referred to as "Webern's *Verklärte Nacht.*"[62]

Following the quartet were five settings of poems by Richard Dehmel, the poet who had inspired Schoenberg's *Verklärte Nacht*. Composed between 1906 and 1908, these songs were the latest of Webern's unpublished works performed

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[60] Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, 56–57.

[61] Ibid, 78.

[62] Bailey, *The life of Webern*, 82. This comparison dates at least as far back as a talk delivered by James Beale at the First International Webern Festival. Beale not only compared the quartet's musical language to that of *Verklärte Nacht*, but also cited a direct quotation from Schoenberg's work. See: James Beale, "Webern's Musical Estate," in *Anton von Webern: Perspectives*, ed. Demar Irvine, Seattle and London: University of Washginton Press (1966): 23–27.

at the festival. Three of the songs—"Am Ufer," "Himmelfahrt," and "Helle Nacht"—were composed in 1908, the same year in which Webern completed his formal study with Schoenberg and composed the Passacagalia, op. 1 and *Entflieht auf leichten Kähnen*, op. 2.[63] Mezzo-soprano Grace-Lynne Martin, who had been featured on Craft's Columbia recordings a few years earlier, performed the songs with pianist Leonard Stein. In a lecture earlier the same day, Stein emphasized the songs' role as "a link in the evolution of Webern's style."[64] Though he argued that the "first most characteristic formulation" of Webern's mature style was found in the Stefan George settings published as opp. 2 & 3, he detected intimations of that style in the Dehmel songs.[65] Stein focused his attention on "Helle Nacht," the only song of the set that lacks a conventional tonal ending:

> And, most significant of all…"Helle Nacht" ends on an unresolved chord, which comes from the ending chord of the opening phrase: an augmented triad superimposed on a tritone. Webern retains the key signature of D minor for this song, and to certain extent we might assume that the final chord represents the leading tone of that key, C sharp. But, unlike all the other songs, the lack of consequences of traditional harmony and of triadic emphasis throughout this song abnegates once and for all any definite affinity or necessity for a tonal center. Thus we are led, in this last Dehmel song, to the threshold of the "true" Webern style, and to his mature manner of expression and use of musical means.[66]

Stein's perspective on "Helle Nacht" and the Dehmel songs more generally was influential. The Moldenhauers would later argue that "the Dehmel songs occupy a crucial position on the threshold of a fundamental change in harmonic concepts,"

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[63] Johnson finds connections between the Passacaglia and several of the Dehmel settings. See: Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, 87—95.

[64] Leonard Stein, "Webern's Dehmel Lieder of 1906-8," in *Anton von Webern: Perspectives*, ed. Demar Irvine, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press (1966): 55.

[65] Stein, "Webern's Dehmel Lieder of 1906-8," 57.

[66] Ibid, 61.

and several other scholars have also emphasized the songs' role in Webern's turn toward atonality.[67]

Stein's interpretation of "Helle Nacht" is worthy of some skepticism. It is probably too pat to suggest that the ending of the final song of the last set of works Webern composed before his first published work should lead directly to the threshold of his mature style. Many of the "transitional" features that Stein points to in the Dehmel songs are, after all, also present in opp. 1 & 2. Stein's account of Webern's development also demonstrates a clear bias towards atonal music; in recent years scholars have begun to appreciate Webern's early tonal works on their own terms and not merely as steps along the way to something better.[68] Still, the breathlessness with which Stein described the ending of "Helle Nacht" speaks volumes. Just halfway through the festival's first full program, a new image of Webern had emerged. For those familiar with Webern's published output, the tonality found in the Passacaglia and *Entflieht auf leichten Kähnen* had already hinted at some connection to the musical language of the past; as Malcolm Hayes puts it, the major triad with which the latter work ends serves as "the last visible promontory of a familiar land, slipping now behind the horizon."[69] What the unpublished works heard on May 26 made clear—and what

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[67] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*…93. See also: John F. Doerksen, "Toward atonality: Pitch structure in Webern's *Dehmel songs*," M.M. dissertation, University of Alberta, Edmonton, 1990; Robert W. Wason, "Signposts on Webern's path to atonality: The *Dehmel Lieder* (1906-08)," in *Music theory in concept and practice*, 409–432, Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 1997; Matthew Alan Kull, "Structure and stylistic evolution in Anton Webern's *Dehmel Lieder* (1906–1908)," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 2003.

[68] See, for example: Sebastian Wedler, "Thus spoke the early modernist: *Zarathustra* and rotational form in Webern's string quartet (1905)," *Twentieth-century music* 12.2 (September, 2015): 225–251.

[69] Hayes, *Anton von Webern*, 82.

so excited Stein—was that the hints of opp. 1 & 2 were only the tip of the iceberg. If Stein exaggerated the teleological nature of Webern's development, it is easy to understand why. If Webern's revolutionary musical language had previously seemed to appear out of thin air, it now possessed a rich genealogy encompassing everything from "Vorfrühling" to "Helle Nacht."

* * *

After intermission the concert proceeded with *Entflieht auf leichten Kähnen*, op. 2. Throughout the remainder of the concert and the four additional performances that followed at the festival, most of Webern's published works were performed, with the exception of those works requiring prohibitively expensive performing forces (e.g. the *Passacaglia*). The question of "what Webern's influence means to the present decade" was also addressed, in the form of Stein's "post-Webern" piano recital, which included works by Messiaen, Stockhausen, Boulez, Babbitt, and others.[70] As Harold C. Schonberg noted, Webern's relationship to that collection of composers was already a "well-raised issue."[71] Schonberg's take on that issue was grim; ten days later he published another article entitled "Kindness Kills: Webern's Most Ardent Disciples May Succeed in Destroying His Ideals." Schonberg questioned whether the composers following after Webern focused on the right aspects of his music:

> The chances are that Webern will appeal, in the long run, only to a refined taste. His music may be too abstruse, too forbidding ever to attract a mass audience. For he is a highly abstruse composer. And it is this abstruse

[70] Harold C. Schonberg, "Music: Webern Festival in Seattle: Controversial Figure Is 3-Day Theme," *New York Times* (May 30, 1962).
[71] Schonberg, "Music: Webern Festival…"

> quality that seems to be the thing, more than anything else, that has attracted his followers.[72]

But Schonberg also conceded that works like *Im Sommerwind* proved that Webern "did not turn to serial technique because he had no other means of expression," that he had a "melodic gift," and that "he could write traditional music with the best of them."[73] Among the many World's Fair posters to feature the Space Needle, one set the building against the backdrop of snowy Mt. Rainier (Figure 20). Webern's music, as it turned out, had as much to do one of these icons of the Pacific Northwest as it did with the other.

In the same letter in which he recalled Rainier Vista, Ernst Krenek thanked Hans for organizing the Webern Festival and took stock of its significance:

> To me, who had witnessed the harrowing difficulties besetting the performances of Webern's music in his life time and who had heard time and again that this music was accessible only to a select group, one of the most exhilarating aspects of the Webern Festival was the observation [of] how well entirely uninitiated young musicians understood and projected this supposedly esoteric music.
>
> It was also very impressive to notice how thoroughly some American musicologists have acquainted themselves with Webern's music and its theoretical implications. Especially the keen remarks of the participating scholars on the original and unusual features of Webern's youthful works justified the demonstration of those works in the academic atmosphere of the university.[74]

In the short term, the festival's impact was likely felt only by the sorts of people Krenek mentions, since attendees mostly consisted of academics, composers, and performers who were already interested in Webern's music—"[n]uts like this," to borrow Pynchon's terminology. Whether or not that music could attract a

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[72] Schonberg, "KINDNESS KILLS…"

[73] Schonberg, "Music: Webern Festival…"

[74] Letter, Krenek to Moldenhauer, August 7, 1962.

broader audience remained an open question. Schonberg was clearly skeptical; Krenek was more optimistic. Francean Campbell took Krenek's side in an aptly titled review ("Festival would have astonished composer himself") for the Vancouver-based paper *The Province*. Campbell argued that the Webern Festival occurred because "it is believed by the few that Webern's music should be brought to the many, that in time that music can be brought close to its audience and revealed for its beauty, its strength, and its originality." Though she conceded that these goals were "still perhaps a long way off," Campbell felt that the festival "at least brought it nearer, and made a little history in doing so." She even interviewed one of "the many" in attendance, a musical novice from New Orleans who described Webern's music as "a land you've dreamed of and never seen"—not quite "space-age music," but something like that.[75]

Ernst Krenek and the International Webern Society (1962–1968)

In addition to concerts, symposia, and exhibitions, the program of the First International Webern Festival included the founding assembly of the International Webern Society. Among those in attendance was Amalie Webern Waller. Eugene Ormandy introduced Waller from the stage prior to the *Im Sommerwind* premiere, though he had initially been hesitant to do so, since he felt that Webern's music should "speak for itself."[76] Waller also delivered an address

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[75] Francean Campbell, "Festival would have astonished composer himself," *The Province* (June 2, 1962).

[76] Letter, Eugene Ormandy to Hans Moldenhauer, April 30, 1962, The Moldenhauer Archives at Harvard University, box 2, item 107. Press coverage of the event confirms that Ormandy

at the Webern Society assembly, thanking all those involved in the efforts to honor her father's legacy and singling out Hans in particular:

> *Aber meinen ganz besonderen und innigsten Dank sprach ich hier vor ihnen allen, Herrn Dr. Hans Moldenhauer aus. Eine höhere Macht war bestimmend dafür, dass wir einander begegneten. Es war er, der durch seine Verehrung zu Anton Webern mit ungeheure Mühe, Arbeit und Fanatismus eine Gesellschaft ins Leben gerufen hat, deren Geburtstag wir heute erleben dürfen. Allein seine Initiative war es, dass es heute in Seattle ein Webern-Archiv gibt, die Webern Festspiele stattfinden und eben je die Gründungsversammlung der "Internationalen Webern Gesellschaft" konstituiert wurde.*[77]
>
> But I give my most special and heartfelt thanks, here before all of you, to Dr. Hans Moldenhauer. A higher power ordained that we should meet one another. It was he, who through his honoring of Anton Webern with enormous effort, work, and fanaticism brought into being a Society, the founding of which we experience today. It was through his initiative alone, that there is now a Webern archive in Seattle, that the Webern festival took place, and that the founding assembly of the International Webern Society was called.[78]

Waller exaggerated somewhat; while Hans had certainly been the driving force behind the Webern Festival and the formation of the Society, these were not accomplished "through his initative alone." He was aided not only by Rosaleen, but also by a wide network of collaborators. The Society's articles of incorporation listed four names as the founding incorporators: Demar Irvine, a professor of music at the University of Washington; Paul Pisk, a former Schoenberg student who later emigrated to the United States and taught at several U.S. universities; Wallace McKenzie, a professor at Louisiana State University and the first person to publish a dissertation on Webern's music; and

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introduced Waller and *Im Sommerwind*. See: Herbert Whittaker, "Showbusiness: Seattle World's Fair Is Friendly, Modest Exhibition," *The Globe and Mail* (May 28, 1962).

[77] Address, Amalie Waller, May 27, 1962, Anton Webern collection, MF 111.1, item 002437, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, Switzerland.

[78] Translated by the author.

Hans.[79] The latter three men also served on the Society's board of directors; between the board and the list of charter members, the Society involved many musicians who had previously advocated for Webern's music in the United States and whom I have discussed in this and previous chapters, including Leonard Bernstein, Pierre Boulez, Henry Cowell, Robert Craft, Rudolf Kolisch, Ernst Krenek, and George Rochberg.[80]

Some of these appointments were honorary in nature; there is no evidence, for example, that Boulez was ever involved with the Society directly. But Ernst Krenek would become a key figure in several of the five additional Webern festivals that the Society put on during the 1960s and 70s: Salzburg/Mittersill (1965), Buffalo (1966), Dartmouth, NH (1968), Vienna (1972), and Baton Rouge, LA (1978). Like Hans, Krenek had emigrated to the United States in 1938, and in the summer of 1965 he returned to his native Austria for the Second International Webern Festival. The festival, which was meant to serve as memorial to Webern on the twentieth anniversary of his death, began with three concerts at Salzburg's Mozarteum as part of the annual Salzburg Festival. The Viennese ensemble "die reihe" performed two concerts of chamber music and orchestral works under the direction of Friedrich Cerha. The LaSalle Quartet, a U.S-based group made up of German émigrés, presented a concert of Webern's music for string quartet that was preceded by a lecture on the Six Bagatelles, op.

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[79] Articles of incorporation, International Webern Society, Rudolf Kolisch Papers, 1886–1978, item 2197, Harvard University.

[80] Ibid. Letters to Hans from Henry Cowell and Leonard Bernstein accepting charter memberships in the IWS can be found here: Anton Webern collection, MF 111.1, items 002712 and 002741, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, Switzerland.

9 by György Ligeti.[81] These performances received extensive press coverage and were broadcast on three different radio stations; even *Newsweek* sent a reporter.[82] Since the programs included the European premieres of many of the previously unpublished works that had first been performed in Seattle, critical response echoed the response to that earlier festival:

> Das morsche Schlagwort bleibt: dass Webern von den dreien der Wiener Schule am wenigste vom überzüchteten Wagner-Gefolge übernommen hat. Zu diesem Thema bracht allerdings das zweite Konzert der "reihe" Neues.[83]
>
> *The faded buzzword remains: that Webern, of the big three of the Second Viennese School, has taken the least from the overbred Wagner following. But the second concert of "die reihe" brought something new to this theme.*[84]

Yet the Salzburg performances were ultimately a prologue to the festival's main event, which was to be held a few hours' drive to the southwest: the dedication of a memorial plaque outside of Am Markt 101, the Mittersill house in which Webern died. The plaque had been financed by Universal Edition, Webern's former employer, and was sculpted by Anna Mahler, daughter of Gustav Mahler. The younger Mahler had been briefly married to Krenek during the 1920s and it was Krenek who recommended her to Hans after two other sculptors were

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[81] Further information on the three Salzburg concerts can be found in the online archive of the Salzburg Festival. See: https://archive.salzburgerfestspiele.at/en/archive.
[82] Anton Webern collection, MF 111.1, items 002511, 002513, and 002514, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, Switzerland. The *Newsweek* review of the festival was published on August 16, 1965.
[83] "Webern schlägt Mussorgsky," Anton Webern collection, MF 111.1, item 002511, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, Switzerland.
[84] Translated by the author.

unable to take on the project.[85] It was Krenek, too, who delivered the dedicatory address at the unveiling of the plaque on August 5, 1965.

When Hans first asked him to speak at the plaque dedication, however, Krenek expressed trepidation over celebrating Webern in Mittersill. The Mittersill "natives," he feared, possessed "not the slightest idea who this illustrious dead man in their midst was."[86] The situation was further complicated by the involvement of Josef Polnauer, a close friend of Webern's. Polnauer, a Jew, had remained close with Webern in the years following the *Anschluss* of 1938 before he was forced to spend the final three years of the Second World War in hiding.[87] Paul Pisk suggested that Polnauer might wish to speak at the Mittersill celebration, noting that he had "mellowed considerably from his erstwhile Bärbeissigkeit" (a term that might be translated as "bear-like grumpiness.")[88] But Krenek was skeptical. Though he admitted that Polnauer possessed a suitably "folksy" demeanor and "knew Webern's personality and circumstances of life better than anybody alive," he also feared that Polnauer might become "too belligerent" in the process of defending Webern.[89] Krenek concluded that it wasn't worth the trouble, but Hans decided to "jump" and ask Polnauer anyway. Hans also asked Amalie Waller to speak with Polnauer and explain that the

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[85] Letter, Hans Moldenhauer to Ernst Krenek, January 16, 1965, Ernst Krenek Institut, Krems, Austria.

[86] Letter, Ernst Krenek to Hans Moldenhauer, March 3, 1965, The Moldenhauer Archives at Harvard University, box 2, item 91.

[87] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*…503, 531, 545.

[88] Letter, Hans Moldenhauer to Ernst Krenek, February 28, 1965, Ernst Krenek Institut, Krems, Austria. The Moldenhauers would later describe Polnauer as having a "choleric temperament." See: Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*…530..

[89] Letter, Krenek to Moldenhauer, March 3, 1965.

purpose of the festival was to bring Webern home rather than "eine Lanze zu brechen" (a German idiom meaning "to take up arms on behalf of someone.")[90] In the end Krenek's skepticism had been warranted. Polnauer sent a pessimistic reply to Hans, suggesting that a police presence might be required at the dedication to keep out "yokels" and "vacationers." Polnauer's attitude frustrated Krenek: "[i]f neither natives nor tourists are expected to have any understanding, then why put up any plaque at all?" Krenek even compared the potential for residual Nazi sympathies in Mittersill to simmering racial tensions in the southern United States, by way of an oblique reference to the Selma-Montgomery protest marches that had taken place earlier that month: "I did not go to Alabama to be hit over the head, so why should I go to Mittersill to be laughed at by the local Nazis?"[91]

Krenek eventually got over his frustration, admitting that Polnauer's pessimism clashed with his own naively optimistic view of his home country: "[p]erhaps I am guilty of that wishful thinking which made me hope between 1933 and 1937 that Austria was a little different from…well, whatever it was, and that it is now a little different from what it was then."[92] Krenek apologized to Hans while also suggesting that his relationship with Polnauer possessed a

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[90] Letter, Hans Moldenhauer to Ernst Krenek, March 11, 1965, Ernst Krenek Institut, Krems, Austria.

[91] Letter, Ernst Krenek to Hans Moldenhauer, March 27, 1965, The Moldenhauer Archives at Harvard University, box 2, item 91. Krenek's likening of the situation in Alabama to that in Austria is particularly noteworthy given his complicated relationship to African-American musical traditions. See: Jonathan Wipplinger, "Performing race in Ernst Krenek's *Jonny spielt auf*," in *Blackness in opera: How race and blackness play out in opera*, University of Illinois Press (2009): 249, 252; Richard Taruskin, "The golden age of kitsch," in *The danger of music and other anti-utopian essays*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press (2009): 259.

[92] Letter, Krenek to Moldenhauer, March 27, 1965.

specifically Austrian quality to which Hans might not be privy: "I guess I was a little irritated by Polnauer's attitude, but please understand (if you can) that this is a sort of intramural Austrian business, for Polnauer is basically a very dear and trusted friend."[93] Krenek adopted a similarly conciliatory tone in his dedicatory address. Employing language reminiscent of that found in Hans' "A Symphony of Mountains," he denounced the "madmen and villains" who had "scattered their glowing coals over the cities and countries" during Europe's "night of guilt." He provided a reminder that the mountains offered no escape from the problems of the world; Webern, he lamented, had "hoped to escape the avalanche of fire and thought to be safe in his beloved mountains, in the serene stillness of Mittersill," only to find that hope met in a way "cruelly different from what he had dreamed." Krenek also noted how Webern's tragic end robbed him of the opportunity to experience the flowering of his musical legacy:

> Maliciously misjudged in his own country, Webern was driven into bitter loneliness. In his own country he had to be slain at the hands of one of the lowliest of the host that had come to liberate that country of the tyrants who most fervently hated Webern's musical endeavors…He did not live to see how a new generation of composers made his way of musical thinking the principle of world music today.

Though *The Death of Anton Webern* had revealed Webern's death to be an accident, Krenek concluded his address by acknowledging that such an accident was only possible in wartime. With Polnauer's cynical view of the Mittersill locals perhaps in mind, he offered an apology to those Austrians present: "I am standing here as an Austrian-born American citizen to beg forgiveness for the blind and

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[93] Letter, Ernst Krenek to Hans Moldenhauer, April 4, 1965, The Moldenhauer Archives at Harvard University, box 2, item 91.

irresponsible action of punishing power."[94] The plaque still stands outside of Am Markt 101, though the street has since been renamed as *Anton-Webern-Gasse*.

* * *

Following Krenek's address the LaSalle Quartet performed; the entire dedication ceremony was broadcast on Radio Salzburg.[95] Afterwards festival attendees crossed the bridge over the Salzach river in the center of Mittersill and celebrated a memorial mass at the Annakirche. Cesar Bresgan conducted the church choir in music of Michael Haydn and Heinrich Isaac; a brass band played Schubert arrangements. Peter Ehrenstrasser, a Mittersill priest who had been present in the village at the time of Webern's death, delivered a eulogy that quoted the famous "*Selig sind die Toten*" ("blessed are the dead") passage from Revelation 14:13, which has been set to music by composers such as Schütz and Brahms.[96] Later the ceremonies moved down the street to Mittersill's other church, the "*Heiliger Leonhard*," behind which Webern is buried. Hans laid a wreath on Webern's grave. Those in attendance, who numbered several dozen, were "deeply moved."[97]

Krenek, too, was moved by his time in Mittersill. His composition *Instant Remembered*, which he composed for the Fourth International Webern Festival in Dartmouth, NH, serves as a musical counterpart to the memorial plaque outside

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[94] Address, Ernst Krenek, August 5, 1965, The Moldenhauer Archives at Harvard University, box 23, item 1410.

[95] A recording of that broadcast is held at the Paul Sacher Stiftung. See: AW CD 4, Anton Webern collection, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, Switzerland.

[96] A transcript of Ehrenstrasser's eulogy can be found here: Anton Webern collection, MF 111.1, item 002588, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, Switzerland. Ehrenstrasser himself passed away just a few months later.

[97] Newsletter 4, International Webern Society, Moldenhauer Archives, Whitworth University.

of Am Markt 101.[98] Scored for soprano, narrator, and chamber orchestra, the work consists of a series of vocal settings interspersed with readings of texts by Plato, Kierkegaard, Goethe, and Rilke. All of the texts are reflections on time and memory, as is evident from the opening lines, written by Krenek himself:

> Im stillen Mittersill stand still die Zeit.
> Augenlicht zerbricht ein Augenblick,
> Nacht ist blind und schweigt den Schall im stillen Tal von Mittersill.
>
> *In still Mittersill time stood still*
> *The light of the eye shatters an instant*
> *Night is blind and silences the sound in the still valley of Mittersill.*[99]

The word "*Augenlicht*" is a reference to Webern's *Das Augenlicht* for chorus and orchestra, op. 26. "*Augenblick*"may have a double meaning: besides the obvious meaning (the "instant" of Webern's death in Mittersill), it could refer to the line "O Meer des Blikkes mit der Tränenbrandung" ("O the ocean of a glance with its surf of tears!"), the musical and textual climax of *Das Augenlicht*.[100] *Instant Remembered* also employs an orchestra similar in size and composition to that of *Das Augenlicht*; both orchestras feature a modest number of woodwind and brass instruments along with harp, celesta, plucked instruments such as guitar and mandolin, percussion, and strings without double basses. Krenek uses the orchestra in distinctly Webernian fashion, constructing a "changing web of instrumental timbres" to enfold the wide-ranging vocal line.[101] But the aspect of

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[98] Krenek first suggested Dartmouth as a possible venue in 1965. See: Letter, Krenek to Moldenhauer, April 4, 1965. Krenek had previously composed a *Symphonic Elegy* for Webern in 1945–46.

[99] Translated by the author.

[100] Translation of *Das Augenlicht* by Kathryn Bailey. See: Bailey, *The life of Webern*, 266.

[101] Will Ogdon, "A Master Composer and a Foremost Musician of Our Time," in *Horizons Circled: Reflections on My Music*, University of California Press (1974): 8.

Instant Remembered most indebted to Webern is a prerecorded excerpt played by six violins, three cellos, and piano. Krenek composed a two-part canon for these instruments, to be played simultaneously but at three different speeds. He stipulated that the recording should be played for a few minutes before the first reading and after the last reading, while also serving as background to the other readings. As Michael Steinberg noted after hearing the work's premiere at the Dartmouth festival, the recording serves as a strong reminder of the work's memorial function:

> The first music heard is an elaborate perpetual, mensurational canon for string trio. It comes over on tape, it is very much, and consciously, in the manner of Webern, and by its quietly insisted recurrences it subtly causes Webern's own presence to be strongly felt all through 'Instant Remembered.'[102]

Canon is ubiquitous in Webern's twelve-tone works, including *Das Augenlicht*.[103] Krenek's decision to record a canon on magnetic tape thus represents a synthesis of Webern's compositional praxis and techniques of electronic music employed by some of Webern's most important successors. *Instant Remembered*, in other words, served as a means of enacting an encounter between Webern and the next generation—the real-life impossibility of which Krenek had bemoaned at his address in Mittersill.

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[102] Michael Steinberg, "The arts at Dartmouth: Music festival with a special character," *Boston Globe* (August 18, 1968).

[103] See: Kathryn Bailey, "Canon," in *The twelve-note music of Anton Webern: old forms in a new language*, 94–152. Krenek's interest in canon might also have been borne out of his interest in the music of Johannes Ockeghem. Krenek published a monograph on Ockeghem in 1953, which was proofed by Robert Craft. See: Joseph, *Stravinsky Inside Out*, 242.

"Webern und die Folgen" (1966–1978)

The Third International Webern Festival was held in Buffalo, NY in October 1966. The festival included the world premieres of a handful of Webern works that the Moldenhauers had discovered late in 1965, among them several early songs and Webern's orchestrations of songs by Schubert. With the State University of New York at Buffalo's Center of the Creative and Performing Arts fast becoming a hub of new music, however, more attention was paid to Webern's influence on the composers that followed him.[104] At one panel discussion, for example, several composers questioned Webern's relevance to the younger generation:

> The panel, speaking from their own compositional concerns, seemed about evenly divided on the question of whether or not Webern left a legacy. They were unable, generally, to talk with each other in the same terms. Cornelius Cardew…stated flatly that he felt Webern had not influenced him. Another composer from the Center, Maryanne Amacher…pointed out that composers were now more interested in great masses of sonority than in Webern's pointillism, and that, anyway, it was more important to get out and create music than to spend time discussing influences.[105]

Henri Pousseur offered a different perspective. Pousseur, whose *Quintette à la mémoire d'Anton Webern* was performed at the festival, spoke "eloquently" about the ways in which Webern had influenced him.[106] Though he conceded that Webern's music is "written like classical music, with classical notes…played with classical instruments in a classical concert room and so forth," he argued that it

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[104] Peter Yates, who had organized the Evenings on the Roof in Los Angeles at which Robert Craft conducted many Webern works, was appointed chair of the university's music department in 1968. For more on new music in Buffalo during this period, see: Renée Levine Packer, *This Life of Sounds: Evenings for New Music in Buffalo*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

[105] Bruce Carr, "Report from Buffalo: The third international Webern festival," *Current Musicology* (January 1, 1967): 117–119.

[106] Carr, "Report from Buffalo…" Pousseur's *Quintette* borrows a twelve-tone row from Webern's op.22.

possessed an internal newness that implied "a radical change of practices." Webern's music, Pousseur continued, "implies that musical practice can once more become a meditation about the conditions of our life together."[107] Eloquent indeed, but Cardew was not impressed. He argued that Webern's music was too concerned with abstract machinations to be of interest to younger composers who cared more about the material qualities of sound:

> [W]hen Webern writes a chord containing all the twelve notes, as a product of a very complex kind of manipulation of lines, he just touches it, you know, he just touches this chord, like in the Second Cantata. And it's a kind of exquisite dissonance…now, I feel that we need things in larger quantities. I think if we're going to have pain in music, we need it to be really painful and not exquisite.

Lukas Foss, who served as the panel's moderator, wrapped up the discussion with a memorable *bon mot*: "Sometimes fathers are horrified by all those who claim to be [their] children."[108]

Disagreements like these had been foreseen by Krenek. In March 1965, Hans wrote to Krenek after receiving a letter from Foss, who was then serving as director of the Center of the Creative and Performing Arts and who wished to host a Webern festival.[109] Though Krenek found Foss to be "extremely capable and competent," he also felt that certain precautions ought to be taken if a festival were to be held in Buffalo:

> A condition should be, however, that there will be no so-called 'avant-garde' Umfang (such as [Foss] has cultivated lately—the John Cage type of sophomoric pranks and 'pop' art) but a serious consideration of the works of an intermediate generation (of which, of course, I consider myself to be

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[107] AW CD 13, Anton Webern collection, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, Switzerland.
[108] AW CD 13.
[109] Letter, Hans Moldenhauer to Ernst Krenek, March 29, 1965, Krenek Institut, Krems an der Donau, Austria.

> a member). It seems to me only fair that not only the Gabblings [sic] of Webern's (doubtful) grandchildren, but also the relatively mature speech of his sons be perceived.[110]

In the end neither grandchildren nor sons were especially well represented on the Buffalo program; besides Pousseur's quintet, two works by Foss and Pierre Boulez were the only contemporary offerings. Cardew (a "grandson," if anything) did give the second public hearing of Webern's *Kinderstück* following its premiere by Caren Glasser that summer, discussed in Chapter 2; one critic deemed Cardew's performance of the musical miniature "perfunctory."[111] Otherwise the main event was a performance by the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Foss. Rather than focusing on Webern's legacy, this concert emphasized his place in the Austro-German tradition. In addition to Webern's Schubert song orchestrations, the program included the Five Pieces for Orchestra, op. 10 and Two Songs, op. 13 sung by Marni Nixon, who had been featured on Craft's Columbia album. On either side of the Webern works were Mahler's *Nachtmusik I—Scherzo—Nachtmusik II* from the Symphony no. 7 and Wagner's *Funeral Music* from *Die Götterdämmerung*.

As a Schubert-Wagner-Mahler-Webern program suggests, the nature of Webern's relationship to the musical institutions of his home country was a point of contention at the Buffalo festival. Steinberg claimed that Hans' "sense of justice" had been "formed and sharpened by his own experiences as a refugee from Nazi Germany" and that he thus felt Vienna did not "deserve the honor of a Webern premiere." Steinberg also reported on a letter from Wilhelmine Webern,

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[110] Letter, Krenek to Moldenhauer, April 4, 1965.
[111] Carr, "Report from Buffalo…"

the composer's widow who died in 1949, that was included as part of the festival exhibition: "There was a bitter letter from the widow about Vienna's continuing neglect of Webern's music after his death—she called him Toni."[112]

* * *

Discussions of Webern's relationship to Austrian music culture continued at the Fourth International Webern Festival at Dartmouth College two years later. The festival program included the first U.S. screening of an Austrian film entitled *Die Wiener Schule: Schoenberg Berg and Webern*. For Craig Stinson of the *Christian Science Monitor*, the film was "a flagrant example of civic hindsight":

> The city of Vienna—which offered no more recognition or hospitality to Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern than it had to Mozart—now takes enormous pride in those geniuses who were once in its midst…to speak of the Austrian capital's role in the development of 20th-century music as anything more than a coincidence of locale strikes this observer as more than slightly presumptuous.

Stinson went on to call Webern "that most un-urban of musical geniuses," who "himself now stands like a mountain in the landscape of 20th-century music," and argued that Dartmouth made for a better venue for Webern's music than Vienna since the former was "one of the few places in the United States where it's possible to walk out of a fine concert hall almost directly into the woods."[113] Joan Peyser, in an article for the *New York Times* published a month later, echoed many of Stinson's claims. According to Peyser, Amalie Waller had transferred Webern's musical estate to the Moldenhauers because she was "[d]iscouraged by her own country's neglect of her father." But the primary purpose of Peyser's

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[112] Michael Steinberg, "Webern Festival: Fine Songs and Quartet In Posthumous Premieres," *Boston Globe* (November 13, 1966).
[113] Craig Stinson, "Webern: festival for a genius," *Christian Science Monitor* (August 14, 1968).

article, entitled "Two Masters Who Were in Conflict," was to reveal that the relationship between Webern and Schoenberg was something "far more complex than has generally been known."[114] Peyser conducted interviews with Hans, Waller, and Krenek, painting a picture of Schoenberg as an overbearing and domineering teacher. Hans would later challenge Peyser's portrayal of the relationship between Webern and Schoenberg in a letter to the editor of the *New York Times*, claiming that the two composers enjoyed a "close, sincere and lasting" friendship, that Webern demonstrated "absolute devotion and unceasing loyalty to his erstwhile teacher," and that "[e]sthetic [sic] discussions engaged in within the fraternity of composers should not be construed as personal conflicts."[115] But Hans protested too much; in *Anton von Webern: A Chronicle of His Life and Work*, published a decade later, the Moldenhauers presented the Webern-Schoenberg relationship in a manner largely similar to Peyser.

In spite of the objections voiced at both the Buffalo and Dartmouth festivals, a Webern festival did eventually come to Vienna. In 1972 the International Webern Society and the Österreichische Gesellschaft für Musik collaborated to host the Fifth International Webern Festival. The festival did not include the premieres of any "new" Webern works, instead revisiting aspects of the previous four festivals. There was a dedication of a plaque outside of Webern's house in Maria Enzersdorf, a Viennese suburb, to match the plaque that had been dedicated at the 1965 festival in Mittersill. As had been the case at that

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[114] Joan Peyser, "Two Masters Who Were in Conflict," *New York Times* (September 8, 1968).
[115] Newsletter 10, International Webern Society, Rudolf Kolisch Papers, 1886–1978, item 2197, Harvard University.

earlier festival, several performances were given by the ensemble "die reihe" under the direction of Friedrich Cerha. There was also a session on "*Webern und die Folgen*" ("Webern and his followers"), mirroring the composers' forum at the 1966 festival in Buffalo. But the most notable event at the 1972 event was something new, a roundtable discussion of "*Quellenlage und Editionsfragen*" ("source conditions and edition questions") that included Hans, Cerha, Hans Eggebrecht, Reinhold Brinkmann, Elmar Budde, Karl Füssl, Rudolf Gerlach, Wallace McKenzie, Don Roberts, and Rudolf Stephan. The central topic of discussion was how to proceed with plans for a Webern *Gesamtausgabe* (complete edition). Participants disagreed over which of the many unpublished compositions and fragments discovered by the Moldenhauers ought to be included. Some were concerned that spreading knowledge of these works to a wider public might weaken Webern's reputation.[116] These debates, as well as the prolonged efforts to transfer the Moldenhauers' collection to an institutional library, delayed the completion of a complete Webern edition; that work continues to this day as a collaboration between the University of Basel and the Paul Sacher Stiftung.[117]

The last Webern Festival took place in February 1978 at the Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. With the premieres of a few minor compositions (the String Trio Movement (1925) and the Scherzo and Trio for string quartet (ca. 1904)) at the Louisiana festival, one of the original functions of the festivals—to

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[116] Horst Weber, "Der fünfte Internationale Webern-Kongress in Wien (12. — 17. März 1972)," *Die Musikforschung* (April/Juni 1972): 192–193.
[117] See: https://en.anton-webern.ch/.

perform the new Webern works discovered by the Moldenhauers—had been completed. Whether or not the festival fulfilled another one of their purposes—to bring Webern's music "to the many" and "close to its audience," as Francean Campbell put it in her review of the first festival—is more difficult to assess.[118] The festivals received progressively less attention over the years and there is no doubt that they were aimed at a niche audience. But it would also be wrong to dismiss them as merely the esoteric gatherings of a small band of devotees. The six festivals not only drew greater attention to Webern's music, but they also proved that Webern's short and severe compositions could serve as the centerpiece of a festival—something that was far from obvious at the time of the first festival. And the idea of a Webern festival has persisted. The centennial of Webern's birth in 1983 saw festivals in Vienna, West Virginia, Louisiana, Washington, and Idaho.[119] In 1995, on the fiftieth anniversary of Webern's death, the Juilliard School mounted a festival to perform his complete works; a similar festival took place at Trinity Church Wall Street in 2017 and 2018.

One person who was keenly aware of the Webern festivals' significance was Amalie Webern Waller. Waller, who had been present at four of the first five festivals, passed away during the six-year interval between the Vienna and Louisiana festivals. A photograph from the 1968 festival in Dartmouth shows Waller standing in grassy field with Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer (Figure 21). Hans is smiling broadly, looking directly at the camera; Rosaleen's face is hidden

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[118] Campbell, "Festival would have astonished composer himself."

[119] These festivals are discussed in Newsletter 21 of the International Webern Society. See: Newsletter 21, International Webern Society Records, box 3, folder 18, Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University.

beneath shadows, though she appears to be saying something to Waller; Waller is staring off into the distance, as if absorbed in thought. She is holding a flower, much as her father often did, and she has a gentle, peaceful smile on her face. Though Waller would not live to see the Moldenhauers' work completed, she knew that work was already well on its way, that the festivals she helped make possible had already begun securing her father's legacy. *Das Augenlicht*, the Webern work that inspired Krenek's *Instant Remembered*, was dedicated to Amalie Waller. When the Moldenhauers' *Anton von Webern: A Chronicle of His Life and Work* was finally published in 1979, so too was it.

Perspectives and chronicles (1966–1978)

1978 saw not only the final Webern festival, but also the publication of the Moldenhauers' magnum opus: *Anton von Webern: A Chronicle of His Life and Work*. The Webern festivals and the Moldenhauers' publications had been intertwined from the beginning. Two of the festivals led directly to publications: *Anton von Webern: Perspectives*, published by the University of Washington Press in 1966 and largely comprised of papers delivered at the 1962 Webern Festival; and a 1972 issue of the *Österreichische Musikzeitung* with a similar relation to that year's festival in Vienna.[120] The festivals and the publications also shared an important function: providing public access to the Moldenhauers' Webern collection. Such access was otherwise limited since efforts to transfer the collection to various institutional libraries, including those of the University of

[120] Moldenhauer and Irvine, eds., *Anton von Webern: Perspectives*; *Österreische Musikzeitschrift* 27.3 (1972).

Washington and Northwestern University, had all failed.[121] The Moldenhauers' Spokane archive was in theory always open to scholars, as Anne Shreffler notes, but in practice access was often difficult to arrange.[122] Kathryn Bailey has even argued that the six Webern festivals and the Moldenhauers' various publications from the 1960s and 70s together served as a means of permitting "a carefully rationed supply of sketch materials and unpublished works to seep into circulation" without allowing unfettered access."[123] Bailey's claim hits on a topic too expansive to address fully in this context, but suffice it to say that the truth was more complicated. Behind-the-scenes documents reveal that the Moldenhauers were indeed often reluctant to part with their cherished collection. But failed negotiations were frequently also the product of legitimate differences of opinion between the Moldenhauers and the institutions with which they were negotiating.[124] The festivals and especially the publications thus played a crucial role in making the Moldenhauers' collection at least somewhat accessible during this period.

Anton von Webern: Perspectives included the first complete catalogue of the Webern collection, described by reviewers as "tantalizing" and "richly

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[121] The latter sale came close enough to being completed that it was reported on in the press. See: Thomas Willis, "The hunt and prizes of an archivist," *Chicago Tribune* (October 31, 1971); "Notes for NOTES," *Notes* 29.1 (September 1972): 25.

[122] Shreffler, *Webern and the Lyric Impulse*...viii.

[123] Bailey, *The Life of Webern*, xv n.

[124] See, for example, an extended exchange between Hans and various professors and administrators at the University of Washington during the early 1960s: box 31, folder 8, University of Washington School of Music records, 1850-2018, Special Collections, University of Washington.

suggestive."[125] Scholars and performers already had access some of the works listed in the catalogue thanks to Carl Fischer, which published editions based on manuscripts in the Moldenhauers' collection throughout the 1960s. Unfortunately the Fischer editions' accelerated publication led to a number of errors and shortcomings. Edward Cone, for example, expressed disappointment that the reasoning behind the groupings of several early songs was not made clear: "[b]ecause of the special interest of these works to scholars, it is all the more to be regretted that care was not taken to make the edition as accurate and as useful as possible."[126] George Perle took an even stronger stance on the Fischer publications, arguing that efforts to create performable editions of some of Webern's incomplete early works by filling in "missing" notes and phrase markings equated to an "unconscionable falsification" not up to the standards of a "sophisticated and responsible performer."[127]

Anton von Webern: Sketches, published in 1968, granted more direct access to the Webern collection in the form of facsimile reproductions of 47 of the 422 pages of Webern's sketchbooks in the Moldenhauers' possession. As Hans explained in the foreword, those 47 pages were selected for a particular purpose:

> The present volume…contains the drafts of the unknown compositions. Included are incipits of works that were never completed as well as movements that were intended for known compositions but were abandoned. Also reproduced are sketches for pieces originally intended to be independent but eventually absorbed into other works.

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[125] Peter Odegard, "Review: *Anton von Webern: Perspectives* by Hans Moldenhauer and Demar Irvine," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 21.2 (Summer, 1968): 231; Beekman C. Cannon, "Review: *Anton von Webern: Perspectives* by Hans Moldenhauer and Demar Irvine," *Journal of Music Theory* 11.2 (Winter, 1967): 292.

[126] Cone, "Webern's Apprenticeship," 51.

[127] George Perle, "Webern's Twelve-tone Sketches," *The Musical Quarterly* 57 (January, 1971): 2.

Scholars jumped at the opportunity these sketches provided. Krenek contributed an extended commentary to the publication, in which he took the first steps toward making sense of the sketchbooks' many fragments and unidentified movements. In 1975 Roger Smalley published a trilogy of articles in Tempo, taking advantage of what he saw as the chance to access "[t]he fundamental nature of [Webern's] creative personality" by investigating how he "grapples with these basic compositional decisions." Smalley's studies were just the beginning; since then sketch study has become a dominant mode in Webern scholarship.[128]

But compositional sketches and the insights gleaned from them are scholarly concerns. Of more interest to a wider public audience were the non-musical contents of the Moldenhauers' Webern collection: dates, diary notes, and recordings of "birthdays, travel, excursion, and the like."[129] Personal documents like these formed the basis of the Moldenhauers' *Anton von Webern: A Chronicle of His Life and Work*, published in 1978 after nearly two decades of work. Amalie Waller had first suggested writing a biography of Webern at the 1962 festival, though Hans initially thought the project "foolhardy" because of its massive scope.[130] Indeed many reviewers of the *Chronicle* commented on the dissonance between Webern's ultra-brief compositions and the book's 800-plus pages. That

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[128] Virtually all post-Moldenhauer Webern scholarship engages with Webern's sketches to some degree. Julian Johnson, Felix Meyer, and Anne Shreffler, all of whom I have cited at several points, have been particularly prolific in this area.

[129] Ernst Krenek, "Commentary," in *Anton Von Webern: Sketches (1926–1945): Facsimile Reproductions from the Composer's Autograph Sketchbooks in the Moldenhauer Archives*, Carl Fischer, 1968, 1.

[130] Larry Young, "Moldenhauers find triumph in a once-doubtful venture," *The Spokesman-Review* (January 6, 1979).

length was the result of the Moldenhauers' decision to write a "chronicle" rather than a biography.[131] Focusing on "collecting rather than interpreting," the Moldenhauers presented a hyper-detailed narrative of Webern's life and meticulously constructed accounts of the genesis, performance, and reception of his music. The book also includes many extended quotations, most from Webern himself, which the Moldenhauers felt were essential giving readers a sense of Webern's personality: "we have made it a point to quote copiously from Webern's correspondence and notebooks, and to that extent…the biography actually…assumes the character of being autobiographical. Throughout the book Webern will speak directly to you in his own vivid style…"[132] This approach was met with a mixed response. Many reviewers were thankful for more direct access to primary source documents than would otherwise be possible, though Arnold Whittall expressed hope that "the liberality with which Webern's own unpublished letters are quoted here will not hinder their collected publication later" and Newlin noted that a complete edition of the letter was still lacking, as it remains to this day.[133] Reactions to the Moldenhauers' decision to eschew "explanation [and] analysis"—to focus on "collecting rather than interpreting," as

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[131] For a related discussion of the historical "chronicle," see: Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.

[132] Lecture, Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer, Sixth International Webern Festival, Saturday, February 18, 1978, audio recording in International Webern Society Records, box 4, folder 22, Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University, 12.

[133] Arnold Whittall, "Reviewed Work(s): *Anton von Webern: A Chroncile of His Life and Work* by Hans Moldenhauer," *Music & Letters* 61.1 (January 1980): 94. Dika Newlin, "Reviewed Work(s): *Anton von Webern: A Chronicle of His Life and Work* by Hans and Roslaeen Moldenhauer," *Notes* 36.1 (September, 1979): 97.

they put it—were likewise varied.[134] Whittall argued that the book "rightly" excluded "specialized interpretation," of which there was already "a mountain."[135] The *New York Times*' Edward Rothstein, by contrast, was disappointed that the Moldenhauers "[stopped] short of interpreting the life or considering the important esthetic questions raised by the music." Rothstein also argued that the "overwhelming amount of detail" sometimes obscured the important points, especially since certain details were presented "without the necessary historical perspective."[136]

Whatever failings they identified with regards to the Moldenhauers' methodology, most reviewers acknowledged that the act of bringing together life and work itself constituted a challenge to "the widely accepted image of Webern as a cold intellectual who dehumanized music in order to make it obey absurd cerebral calculations."[137] Newlin, for example, began her review by taking a jab at arcane analyses of Webern's music:

> Perhaps your idea of the most appropriate style of response to Webern and his music is Harold Oliver's inspiring sentence in *Perspectives of New Music*: "Also, however, IVA2 → (t) IA1, IVA3 → (t) IA2 and IB2, IVA4 → (t) IA3, IVA5 → (t) IB1, and finally, IVA6 → (t) IIC1."…If so, you'll probably hate this book.[138]

Rothstein in reference to the "secret programs" behind many of the works that the Moldenhauers discovered, was surprised to learn that "the study of the life

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[134] Paul Griffiths, "A Webern Winter: Concerts and Chronicles," *The Musical Times* 120.1633 (March, 1979): 214.
[135] Whittall, "Reviewed Work(s)…" 93.
[136] Rothstein, "High Sounds and Silence."
[137] Krenek, "Commentary," 1.
[138] Newlin, "Reviewed Work(s)…"

behind such abstract music is so revealing."[139] Linking Webern's life with his music was a priority for the Moldenhauers; a lecture they delivered at the final Webern festival, consisting of excerpts from the forthcoming *Chronicle,* was titled "Extra-musical Associations in Webern's Compositions."[140]

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Yet no other component of the *Chronicle* received as much attention as its thirtieth chapter: "Webern and 'The Third Reich' (1938–1941)."[141] In this chapter the Moldenhauers documented both Webern's attempts to aid his Jewish friends and colleagues during the 1930s and 40s and his naive idealization of Nazism. The latter took the form of letters praising Hitler and *Mein Kampf*, pan-German sentiments, and personal connections to Nazi Party members, all of which had come up frequently in the course of the Moldenhauers' research.[142] "Webern's blindness to the nastiness of the Third Reich has never been a secret," Donal Henehan noted in response to this chapter, "but it still comes as a shock to see the story spelled out so vividly by the Moldenhauers."[143] Henehan and others grappled with the question of whether or not the chapter's revelations had any bearing on interpretations of Webern's music:

> Does it matter that Mozart wrote vulgar letters to his wife, that Beethoven drove his nephew to attempt suicide, or that Wagner was a deadbeat?

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[139] Rothstein, "High Sounds and Silence."

[140] Lecture, Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer, Sixth International Webern Festival.

[141] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*…515–532.

[142] The Paul Sacher Stiftung's Webern collection includes a number of "Erinnerungen" (remembrances) of Webern that the Moldenhauers solicited as a part of their research process, many of which touch on this topic. See: Anton Webern collection, MF 110.1, items 002202–002694, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, Switzerland.

[143] Donal Henehan, "The Painful Facts of Webern's Blindness to Nazi Oppression," *New York Times* (June 10, 1979).

> Obviously most of us think so, or biographies of composers would not be so popular with the public or treated so seriously by scholars. Somehow, we are convinced that how an artist lives, and when and where, has something to do with the artist's works, even though the relationship may be shadowy or totally baffling.[144]

Shadowy though the relationship between Webern's Nazi sympathies and his music may be, many reviewers felt compelled to consider it, especially since links between Webern's life and work was such a prominent theme elsewhere in the *Chronicle*. George Perle, for example, argued that twelve-tone music "stood for order and authority"—just like the Third Reich.[145] Rothstein likewise argued that "Nazism provided an authority, promised a destiny, recognized his elevation above the herd, and offered its own Nature mysticism; it echoed his musical ideology."[146] Henehan went even further:

> To indulge in provocative speculation for a moment, what would you say to the possibility that Webern's entire esthetic, and hence the ruling esthetic of the musical culture that deified him after World War II, could be traced directly to his—and his generation's—yearning for a return to 'discipline' and 'order.'[147]

A desire for order and discipline, Henehan suggested, might make artists such as Webern particularly susceptible to fascism. Henehan's view was not unique; the potential resonance between serialism and fascism was a commonly debated topic long before the publication of the *Chronicle* and so it remains. Richard Taruskin, for example, notes that Schoenberg's formulation of the twelve-tone method exhibited "traits of authoritarian intransigence, fealty to rigid social hierarchy, and…the aggressive propagation of a national hegemony," all of which

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144 Henehan, "The Painful Facts…"
145 Perle, "Webern's Twelve-tone Sketches."
146 Rothstein, "High Sounds and Silence."
147 Henehan, "The Painful Facts…"

it shared with fascism.[148] Others have dismissed a one-to-one equivalence between serialism and fascism as simplistic and uncritical, but the potential resonances between the two ideologies have been considered by many.[149]

Webern's relationship to fascism received further attention throughout the 1980s and 90s. In 1987 an interview with violinist Louis Krasner, with whom Webern worked in the 1930s, shed further light on the latter's Nazi sympathies. In 1991 Fred Prieberg published research revealing that Webern had received a small payment from the Nazi *Reichsmusikkammer*; Kathryn Bailey subsequently devoted several pages to the topic of Webern and fascism in her 1998 biography of the composer.[150] These revelations were met with "dismay, denial, and denunciation," particularly because, as Taruskin argues, assumptions about the relationship between Webern and the Nazis prior to the publication of the *Chronicle* "had been the exact opposite of what turned out to be the case."[151] In one recently published interview, for example, the LaSalle Quartet's Walter Levin noted that his ensemble was "very receptive to composers who the Nazis had branded as 'degenerate,'" of whom Webern was one. "If Webern hadn't been killed in that terrible accident," Levin continued, "it's likely that no would have been interested in him twenty years later."[152] Whether or not Levin's claim is

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[148] Richard Taruskin, "The Dark Side of Modern Music," *New Republic* (September 5, 1988).
[149] For another Webern-specific discussion, see: Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, 219 ff.
[150] Fred Prieberg, "Die krummen Rücken," in *Musik und Macht*, Frankfurt am Main: Fischer (1991): 225–279; Bailey, *The life of Webern*, 168 ff.
[151] Richard Taruskin, "Is There a Baby in the Bathwater? (Part II)," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 63.4 (2006): 323.
[152] Robert Spruytenburg, *The LaSalle Quartet: Conversations with Walter Levin*, Boydell Press (2014): 228.

accurate, there is no question that the Nazi's rejection of Webern's music and his subsequent death have tended to shield him from criticism on this matter, at least outside of scholarly circles. "The standard ploy now with regard to Webern is to relieve him of responsibility for his political sympathies," Taruskin argues, "by claiming that they were, yes, 'inevitable.'"[153]

Some have traced the origins of the "ploy" that Taruskin describes back to the Moldenhauers' work; Julian Johnson, for example, argues that the Moldenhauers displayed a "calculated 'apolitical' stance" on the subject of Webern and Nazism.[154] At the time of the *Chronicle*'s release, however, most were satisfied with the Moldenhauers' treatment of the topic. Tom Sutcliffe of *The Guardian* sensed an impulse to "protect Webern from the less heroic aspects of his personality" in the Moldenhauers' writing, but concluded that "their archivists' accuracy wins out over their tact."[155] Whittall felt the conclusion reached by the Moldenhauers at the end of the chapter, which connected Webern's Nazi sympathies to his "chauvinistic belief in the supremacy of German music," to be "eminently sane."[156] But the most persuasive response to "Webern and 'The Third Reich'" came from *The New Yorker*'s George Steiner. As Steiner put it, the Moldenhauers laid out the evidence of Webern's connections to the Third Reich "with absolute scrupulousness," but they also exhibited a "palpable" discomfort in doing so.[157] That discomfort should not come as a surprise. For

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[153] Taruskin, "Is There a Baby in the Bathwater? (Part II)," 322.
[154] Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, 219.
[155] Tom Sutcliffe, "Archives of the future," *The Guardian* (February 22, 1979).
[156] Whittall, "Reviewed Work(s)…" 95.
[157] George Steiner, "Wien, Wien, Nur Du Allein," *The New Yorker* (June 25, 1979).

Hans, in particular, the combination of his personal experiences as an émigré and troubling revelations about the composers to whom he had devoted most of his professional life seems to have been the cause of significant stress. He felt an ambivalence "toward not Webern the artist but the man whose national loyalty and unshaken pride in his noble lineage during the Nazi regime." He deemed Webern was "morally questionable" and often "recalled the anger it caused him, which Rosaleen, who occasionally even suggested that he abandon the biography, could not fully share."[158] If the Moldenhauers left some of the work on this topic to later scholars, simply broaching the topic in the first place demanded considerable commitment.

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One last aspect of the *Chronicle* deserves mention. While I have referred above to "the Moldenhauers' publications," the *Chronicle* was actually the first of those publications to list Rosaleen as a co-author, though she had worked closely with Hans on all previous publications. Several of the *Chronicle*'s reviewers took note of the essential role Rosaleen played in completing the book, as a product of Hans' *retinitis pigmentosa*: "[b]ecause of a severe visual impairment, Hans Moldenhauer has been aided throughout by his wife, Rosaleen."[159] But acknowledgements like these undersold Rosaleen's contributions. In order to be able to read the primary sources on which the *Chronicle* is based, Rosaleen learned both modern German and "the old Gothic script handwriting which

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[158] Newsom, "Introduction," xxvi.
[159] Rothstein, "High Sounds and Silence."

cannot be read even today by most Germans."[160] As they toiled for years on the book, Hans and Rosaleen would often sit across from one another at a long table. Rosaleen read aloud from Webern's letters and diaries; Hans listened, then dictated back to her as she typed.[161] During the Moldenhauers' lecture at the last Webern festival in 1978, it was Rosaleen who read the excerpts from their new book aloud; her voice on the recording of that lecture serves as a striking reminder that the *Chronicle* was not the work of Hans Moldenhauer alone, even if it is often referred to in those terms.[162]

Hans recognized the significance of Rosaleen's contributions better than most. Echoing the acknowledgment of Rosaleen in *The Death of Anton Webern*, the introduction to the *Chronicle* (which, unlike the rest of the book, Hans wrote alone) concludes with an expression of gratitude towards Rosaleen:

> …the all-important rôle of Rosaleen, my wife and colleague of many years. The book could never have been written without her full collaboration in every aspect, from research to proofreading. It was she who constantly encouraged me by her own patience and endurance, by her faith and devotion, and by her acceptance of a challenge which, under the circumstances, seemed a foolhardy undertaking. In the end neither of us dared to let the other down.[163]

At the eleventh hour, Hans decided to change the listing of the book's authors from "Hans Moldenhauer in collaboration with Rosaleen Moldenhauer" to "Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer." According to Hans, he saw that the first version had

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[160] Young, "Moldenhauers find triumph in a once-doubtful venture."
[161] Mary Moldenhauer, discussion with the author, Spokane, WA, July 2017.
[162] Lecture, Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer, Sixth International Webern Festival.
[163] Moldenhauer and Moldenhauer, *Anton von Webern*…19.

"already invited the danger of having Rosaleen's part in the book ignored," an oversight that he felt "must be forestalled."[164]

I had similar oversights in mind when I chose to refer to the Moldenhauers either collectively or by their first names; referring to Hans as "Moldenhauer" while using Rosaleen's first name seemed an unacceptable imbalance. I have, of course, devoted a greater number of words to Hans, a consequence both of the relative dearth of information available about Rosaleen and the importance of Hans' identity as a German-American émigré. But it is my hope that this chapter can serve as something of a corrective to narratives of the Moldenhauers' work that have tended to erase Rosaleen or minimize her role. In 2017, a group of scholars active on Twitter popularized #ThanksForTyping as a way to highlight the frequently unacknowledged labor of wives who supported their husbands' academic endeavors through typing and a myriad of other tasks. As Allison Miller points out in a recent article on historian Richard Hofstader, it can sometimes be difficult to separate out the contributions of spouses to jointly undertaken work; it is clear that many wives did much more than type, but exactly what is harder to say.[165] The Moldenhauers represent one of these cases. Though it is impossible to know exactly what Hans and Rosaleen's respective contributions were, it is

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[164] Letter, Hans Moldenhauer to Wallace McKenzie and Paul Hedwall, January 3, 1979, International Webern Society Records, box 3, folder 10, Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University. In a letter to the same pair a few months later, Hans noted that Rosaleen had done much of the "leg work" in organizing the Webern Festivals, and that "that kind of women's legs usually escapes notice." See: Letter, Hans Moldenhauer to Wallace McKenzie and Paul Hedwall, April 28, 1979, International Webern Society Records, box 3, folder 10, Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University.

[165] Alison Miller, "'Thanks Are Due Above All to My Wife'," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (February 11, 2018), https://www.chronicle.com/article/Thanks-Are-Due-Above-All-to/242517?cid=wcontentgrid_hp_6.

undeniable that there would have been no books, no festivals, no archives—no "Anton Webern" as we know him today—without her.

Greening

On January 27, 1982, Rosaleen died after a four-year struggle with cancer. A few weeks later Hans wrote to Nicolas Slonimsky:

> It is with great sadness that I have to tell you of Rosaleen's death on January 27, two days before her 56th birthday. "Her courage and determination were exemplary," stated her physician. She had been ill with cancer for four years, but I am certain that you, as everyone else, never received any inkling from her. The memory of your week-long visit with us brightened her last time, and she never failed to tell friends and colleagues of those days spent in your dear company.[166]

Both the *Spokane Chronicle* and *Spokesman-Review* ran obituaries for Rosaleen, the latter penned by Donald Thulean, conductor of the Spokane Symphony.[167] Hans died five years later, on October 19, 1987. A memorial service was held at the Seeley G. Mudd Chapel on the campus of Whitworth College, Hans' alma mater. The Whitworth choir sang hymns, including "Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott," and tenor Tom Tavener sang Mahler's "Liebst du um Schönheit." There was Webern, of course; Tavener sang "Vorfrühling" and the Spokane String Quartet performed the String Quartet (1905). On the inside cover of the service bulletin was a photo of Hans sitting beside the Webern plaque in Mittersill he helped to install, eyes closed and smiling beatifically (Figure 22).

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[166] Letter, Hans Moldenhauer to Nicolas Slonimsky, February 19, 1982, Nicolas Slonimsky Collection, box 152, folder 19, Music Division, Library of Congress.

[167] "Obituaries: Rosaleen Moldenhuaer," *Spokane Chronicle* (February 4, 1982); Donald Thulean, "Thulean's tribute to 'a friend,'" *The Spokesman-Review* (February 21, 1982).

As these observances of their deaths indicate, Hans and Rosaleen had become prominent figures in Spokane. Though this local fame has faded over time, traces of their work remain. Accompanying a 1985 feature on the Moldenhauers in the *Spokane Chronicle* is a photograph of Hans at the piano, absorbed in playing, with a bust of Webern looming over him. The bust was made Josef Humplik, Webern's friend and husband of Hildegard Jone, and it played a key role in the Moldenhauers' research. It was only through searching for the bust that the Moldenhauers happened upon a second trove of Webern materials in the attic of a Viennese house in 1965.[168] During the same trip they discovered a bust of Gustav Mahler that had been owned by Webern and which Hans viewed as "a testimony to Webern's veneration" of Mahler.[169] The bust of Webern, which sat atop the Moldenhauers' piano for many years, is now displayed at the Library of Congress. But a third bust stayed in Spokane. At the Fox Theater, an Art Deco theater in downtown Spokane and the current home of the Spokane Symphony, a bust of Hans Moldenhauer stands in the lobby. Dedicated in 1976, the bust was sculpted by Anna Mahler, who a decade earlier had sculpted the Webern plaque in Mittersill.[170]

The role that these three busts played in Hans' life, and the connections they draw between places as far-flung as Mittersill and Spokane, prove that *Heimat*

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[168] Hans Moldenhauer, "In Quest of Webern," *Saturday Review* (August 27, 1966): 48.

[169] Moldenhauer, "In Quest of Webern," 48.

[170] Announcement, Archives 296, folder 4, Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University. Hans invited Nicolas Slonimsky to the unveiling of the bust. See: Nicolas Slonimsky Collection, box 152, folder 19, Music Division, Library of Congress.

need not be confined by national boundaries. Indeed Hans refused to be classified as either German or American, instead insisting on his dual identity:

> Hans' sound bite answer to that question, and the answer was very important to him, was 'I am an American of German birth and education.' This answer was a distillation of his many agonies over Germany, Hitler, the American educational system as he had experienced it, etc.[171]

> In the approximately fifty years in which he lived in the United States…he was a dedicated and grateful American citizen. At the same time, he neither forgot nor denied his native country of Germany and the European humanism which was so deeply ingrained in him.[172]

> Though his European upbringing and education have stamped themselves indelibly on his tastes and outlook, Dr. Moldenhauer expresses a great pride in being an American, the pride of citizenship by choice rather than by accident of birth.[173]

The busts likewise serve as evidence of the transatlantic nature of twentieth-century classical music culture more generally. Much of this chapter has bounced back and forth between the United States and Europe, and not by accident. Though I have focused on the oft-overlooked U.S. side of his reception, Webern's legacy is a product of both his U.S. and European reception, since each was shaped by the other.

It seems appropriate, then, that after a long sojourn in a vault at Spokane's Old National Bank Building the Moldenhauers' Webern archive finally returned to Europe. In 1984 the collection was purchased by the Paul Sacher Stiftung in

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171 Email, Mary Moldenhauer to Donivan Johnson, December 3, 2006, Moldenhauer Archives, Whitworth University.

172 Program, "A Service of Worship in memory of Hans Moldenhauer (1906–1987)," International Webern Society Records, box 4, folder 19, Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University

173 Klein, "Moldenhauer Appassionata," 38.

Basel, Switzerland.[174] Basel may appear an odd place for the bulk of the world's Webern manuscripts to end up—efforts to move the collection to Vienna earlier in the decade had failed—but in at least one sense the Sacher Stiftung is a fitting home for the collection.[175] The Stiftung's highest-profile collection up to that point had been the *Nachlass* of Igor Stravinsky, which it acquired in 1983. The purchases of both the Stravinsky and Webern collections were facilitated by Albi Rosenthal, a German-British antiquarian who had been a friend of the Moldenhauers for decades; the Stravinsky collection sold for $5.25 million, the Webern collection for an undisclosed amount.[176] Thus Webern's diaries and sketchbooks came to be held in an archive also known for its collection of materials relating to Stravinsky, who—as I discussed in both Chapter 2 and Chapter 3—played a crucial role in Webern's posthumous reception.

Following the transfer of the Moldenhauers' collection to the Sacher Stiftung a body of new scholarship on Webern emerged. Many of these scholars acknowledged the Moldenhauers' role in laying the groundwork for their research; Kathryn Bailey noted that "[n]o consideration of the course of Webern scholarship over the last 50 years can ignore the person of Hans Moldenhauer," while Julian Johnson described how readings the Moldenhauers *Chronicle*

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[174] A few Webern items, including the bust mentioned above, were transferred instead to the Library of Congress. Most of the Moldenhauers' collection of materials relating to U.S. composers was transferred to Houghton Library at Harvard University.

[175] For one of several letters between Hans and various Viennese officials that shed light on these efforts, see: Letter, Hans Moldenhauer to Herrn Hofrat Magister Dr. Franz Patzer, December 28, 1982, International Webern Society Records, box 4, folder 20, Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University.

[176] When I visited the Sacher Stiftung in June 2018, I inquired as to whether it might be possible to view their internal records regarding the purchase of the Webern collection; my request was politely declined.

"provoked questions in me some ten years or so before I began my own work on Webern."[177] As I have suggested at various points above, however, many recent scholarly appraisals of the Moldenhauers' work have been less than favorable. Bailey, in particular, has been critical of both the *Chronicle* and *The Death of Anton Webern*:

> [The *Chronicle*] is an unwieldy book: the way it is organised and its stultifying comprehensiveness—it is a compendium of dates and documents—make it more useful as a reference tool than as a biography. It is an exasperating experience for someone attempting to get a clear view of chronology, and I have met very few people who admit to having read it 'straight through'. I find Moldenhauer's attitude towards the woman who gave him the family jewels irritating (and so, indeed, does at least one of her sisters): he misses no opportunity, and invents several, of extolling the qualities of Amalie Webern and of identifying her repeatedly as Webern's favourite among his children, while largely ignoring the other three. Moldenhauer's high-profile pursuit of Webernalia and his subsequent sequestering of the results for his own use were off-putting to many, as perhaps was the morbid fascination of his first Webern publication.[178]

Bailey later details a meeting with Maria Halbich-Webern, the composer's second daughter, presumably the one irritated by the perceived favoring of Amalie.[179]

These objections are valid. There is little doubt that the Moldenhauers' scholarship, whether in the form of the exhaustive *Chronicle* or the poetic *Death*, does not conform to scholarly conventions of the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. As noted above, furthermore, the Moldenhauers' decision to restrict access to their collection for so long is worthy of scrutiny. Yet all this has obscured the degree to which contemporary Webern scholarship is a product not only of the materials that the Moldenhauers discovered, but also of their

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[177] Bailey, "Coming of Age," 646; Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, viii.
[178] Bailey, *The life of Webern*, xii.
[179] Ibid, xvii.

approach to studying Webern. The monographs of Bailey, Johnson, and Shreffler—works that focused on Webern's engagement with classical formal models, discourses of nature, and lyricism, respectively—would not have been possible without the insights into Webern's compositional process that resulted from the Moldenhauers' discoveries. Beyond this direct causality, however, much of the new wave of Webern scholarship was in the spirit of the Moldenhauers' efforts to present a more capacious and accessible view of Webern's music. Julie Brown, for this reason, characterizes this new scholarship as

> an intentional 'greening' of the Second Viennese School by publishers and authors/editors alike. Certainly, if any theme links Anne C. Shreffler's Webern and the Lyric Impulse: Songs and Fragments on Poems of Georg Trakl and Kathryn Bailey's Webern Studies, it is an apparent desire to regenerate interest in Webern among readers weary of his construction as mathematical, intellectual harbinger of high modernism. In these consciously revisionist books, we are led away from the Webern familiar from opportunistic representations by the Darmstadt School…into the company of Webern the lover of lyric poetry and nature.[180]

Brown's use of phrases such as "intentional 'greening'" and "consciously revisionist" is perceptive. Though they may not always acknowledge it, the Webern scholars of the post-Moldenhauer generation have frequently put forth a purposeful effort to render Webern's music more accessible and approachable—to bring that music "close to its audience," as Francean Campbell once said in the response to the First International Webern Festival.[181]

As I discussed in the preface, whether or not Webern's music is closer to its audience today than it was in 1959 remains an open question, one that I will

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[180] Julie Brown, "Review: *Webern and the Lyric Impulse: Songs and Fragments on Poems of Georg Trakl* by Anne C. Shreffler and Georg Trakl; *Webern Studies* by Kathryn Bailey," *Music & Letters* 79.1 (February, 1998): 144.

[181] Campbell, "Festival would have astonished composer himself."

return to in the afterword. In this way, as in so many others, the Moldenhauers' legacy is muddled. They accomplished a great deal, but their contributions have not always been appreciated by their peers; their work received considerable public attention during their lifetime, but has since faded from memory. But a muddled legacy seems about right. Brown's description of 1990s-era Webern scholarship with the term "greening" was derived from the green covers that adorned two scholarly releases.[182] Yet it also calls to mind the contrasting landscapes of summits and valleys of which I spoke above, the former colored with the grey and white of rocks and ice, the latter richly green. The Webern that the Moldenhauers discovered could not match the perfection of the summits, whether due to his admiration of Nazism, the variegated musical output of his student years, or his many personal failings. Those same qualities, however, made Webern into a figure much better suited for life in the valley. As Tim Page puts it, Webern turned out to be "not the One True Faith his acolytes had proclaimed but, rather, a wonderfully original, exquisitely distilled, and enormously distinctive voice among many."[183] The music of this latter Webern has greater potential to shape of the lives of those who receive it and to be shaped by those lives in turn; with imperfection comes mutability. That this reciprocal process can occur with music as strange and challenging as Webern's is one of the central claims of my project, and there is no stronger proof of that claim than the lives of Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer.

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[182] Brown, "Review…" 144.
[183] Page, "Webern after Webernism," 252.

Afterword

On October 10, 2013, the Pocket Opera Players premiered Michael Dellaira's one-act opera *The Death of Webern* at Symphony Space on New York's Upper West Side. Since the chief source for the opera's libretto is *The Death of Anton Webern: A Drama in Documents*, its protagonist is not Webern, but Hans Moldenhauer. Seven of the opera's thirteen scenes are set in Hans' Spokane study and many of *The Death of Anton Webern*'s key moments are dramatized, including the Moldenhauers' initial trip to Mittersill, their correspondence with Amalie Webern Waller and Helen Bell, and research they undertook to discover the true circumstances of Webern's death. Webern himself appears in only two scenes, one of which recreates one of a series of lectures he gave in 1933, later published as *The Path to the New Music*. The opera was well received; after being released on compact disc, it was named one of *Opera News*' top five new works of 2016.

Dellaira's opera serves as a fitting coda to the Moldenhauers' story. The fact that *The Death of Anton Webern* was selected for a opera libretto simultaneously confirms the veritably dramatic nature of the Moldenhauers' discoveries and validates the criticisms of those who have viewed the book's style as overly effusive or Romanticizing. The opera's music also reflects the Moldenhauers' legacy. As might be expected, several Webern works are quoted. Since Dellaira writes in a tonal idiom, however, these quotations are drawn almost exclusively from Webern's early tonal works that the Moldenhauers discovered, including *Im Sommerwind* and the Two pieces for cello and piano (1899). The opera concludes with a most un-Webernian sonority—a C Major triad—though its scoring for

flute, clarinet, percussion, violin, cello, and piano does resembles a classic Webern ensemble. Librettist J.D. McClatchy, meanwhile, repeats the mistakes of many before him in overlooking Rosaleen, who is not given a singing role or even referred to by name. Her absence from the scenes in Hans' study, which was in fact Hans and Rosaleen's study, is particularly egregious.

The Death of Webern is also a reflection of late twentieth and early twenty-first century Webern reception. While the works of Schoenberg and Berg have enjoyed various renaissances, Webern's music has struggled to gain a foothold, and arguably no longer even enjoys the "much discussed, but little heard" status it possessed at various points in its history.[1] In response to a six-night performance of Webern's complete works at the Juilliard School in 1995, critic Mark Swed argued that "today's busy, young, career-minded, big-city virtuosos" possessed neither the time nor the inclination for the "Zenlike focusing on musical minutiae" that Webern's works demanded. Webern's music, Swed continued, was as unwanted by the Juilliard students as it was by contemporary audiences.[2] Perhaps appropriately, then, *The Death of Webern* contains little music that sounds like Webern. The Webern character sings an extended monologue in which he espouses the righteousness of the twelve-tone system, but the accompanying music does not match his manifesto; Dellaira's Webern is more a symbol of a set of ideas than the composer of real, sounding music. Webern's diminished stature with contemporary audiences may also help to explain why his associations with the Nazi Party have garnered relatively little

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[1] Rich, "Webern Anew: Genius Over Craft."

[2] Mark Swed, "Maximal Minimalist Composer's Year," *Wall Street Journal* (March 1, 1995).

attention since their initial reveal in the 1980s and 90s. Debates over the ethics of performing Wagner's music continue to rage, but few spring up over Webern's music; why would they, when it is performed as infrequently as it is. In this one way *The Death of Webern* does not reflect the Moldenhauers' work. McClatchy and Dellaira, apparently forgetting one of the Moldenhauers' chief discoveries, erroneously suggest that Webern "spoke out against Hitler and the forces of evil."

All this paints a pessimistic picture of Webern's place in contemporary U.S. music culture. Nor do the legacies of the other three chapters present much more reason for optimism. The performances documented in Chapter 1 serve primarily as a prelude to the following three chapters; considered on their own, they did relatively little to establish a U.S. audience for Webern's music. The events of Chapter 2 are interesting precisely because they were extraordinary one-off occurrences. For the most part they have not resonated into the present; *Listen*, a music history textbook first published in 1972 and now in its edition, includes a reproduction of Webern's op. 10 no. 4 that resembles Slonimsky's to an uncanny degree but features none of the latter's fun, joy, or childlike spirit (Figure 23). Chapter 3 offers what may be the most promising way forward for Webern's music, as I discussed in the conclusion of that chapter, but U.S. recordings of Webern's music have largely been supplanted by European alternatives since the appearance of Craft's complete works set.

It is tempting, then, to agree with the grim pronouncement at which Swed arrived in his review of the 1995 Juilliard festival: "it seems that we Americans

not only killed him, but worse, after 50 years, have made him irrelevant."[3] But Swed's emphasis on relevancy misses the point. For a period of time while working on this dissertation, I employed the title *From obscurity to endurance: Anton Webern and mainstream music culture in the United States, 1923–1987*. I chose to remove the first half of that title because it implied a progression of events not entirely evident in the history I document. Yet the word "endurance" does seem appropriate. Endurance implies that Webern's music has survived even when it has not flourished—and indeed it has. From the *New Music* edition of op. 17 no. 2 sitting in the stacks of the New York Public Library to advertisements for South Mountain concerts that namecheck the premiere of op. 28, from the many copies of Craft's album still in circulation to Dellaira's opera; the moments I document in this dissertation ensured that, if nothing else, Webern's music stuck around. Endurance is a common, even banal ending to a great many stories; triumph or downfall would sell better. Yet endurance need not be any less meaningful than its more dramatic siblings. Figures like Slonimsky, Coolidge, Craft, and the Moldenhauers attempted to take a fringe musical product and turn it into something mainstream. For the most part, as Harold C. Schonberg predicted in 1962, they did not succeed.[4] But their efforts did help to forestall the fading of Webern's music, a worthy outcome in its own right. Webern's music remains a fringe product, but culture needs fringes just as it needs a mainstream.

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[3] Swed, "Maximal Minimalist Composer's Year."

[4] Schonberg, "KINDNESS KILLS…"

I am grateful, furthermore, for the opportunity that this manner of ending affords me to refocus on the meaty middle of my narrative. When the ending of a story feels anticlimactic, when the "point" or "takeaway" is not entirely clear, there remains no other choice but to view the chapters of that story not as means to an end but as ends in themselves. In this way I model my work after the work of Jani Scandura, to which I referred in Chapter 2. Of her 2008 monograph *Down in the Dumps*, Scandura writes:

> [S]ince I cannot see what is unseeable or say what is unsayable, I have left space for readers to meander, feel, and make connections on their own. While this book is not without argument, what it argues explicitly is not its most important part. One's own immediate and visceral experience in reading is important here.[5]

Academic writing—perhaps especially the rite of passage known as a dissertation—too often fails to leave "space for readers," overlooking their "visceral experience" in order to highlight one's own contributions to scholarly discourse. If my writing contains less of such highlighting than is typical, it is because I do not wish for scholarly discourse to be the endpoint for my work. As I wrote in the preface, I seek to "identify presentations of Webern's music that resonate into the present"—and not just with an academic audience. I share that purpose with many of the historical figures whose work I have documented.

Scandura's approach leaves open the possibility of a story in which the middle matters just as much as the ending—and that is a comfort. An ambivalent ending like the one I have written here does not, to be sure, mean that this dissertation is without argument. It contains arguments about the role the United

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[5] Scandura, *Down in the Dumps*… 22.

States played in shaping Webern's legacy, about the breadth of middlebrow culture, and about Webern's music itself, among many other things. These arguments may well matter for their long-term ramifications or their connections to broader musical-historical topics. As I have detailed above, however, I do not *know* that they matter for those reasons. I cannot "see what is unseeable or say what is unsayable" any more than Scandura or any other historian can; it would be dishonest to suggest otherwise. But I am confident that the stories of Hans and Rosaleen Moldenhauer, Caren Glasser, and Nicolas Slonimsky are valuable. They are funny and moving, optimistic and cynical; they offer new ways of listening to Webern's music and new ways of looking at the world. Putting one's faith in the value of stories like these is idealistic, perhaps naively so, just as it is idealistic to believe that Webern's music can go mainstream—but every dissertation about Webern deserves at least a dash of naïve idealism. These stories are this dissertation's most important part.

* * *

In early December 2019, after an extended search, I was finally able to make contact with Caryn Glasser (she spells her name with a "y" now). We spoke on the phone for about half an hour; she was excited to hear that I was interested in a performance she gave over a half-century ago. A few days later she followed up our conversation with an email, in which she recalled her experience in vivid detail: the way her piano teacher instructed her to interpret the *Kinderstück*'s unfamiliar musical language; the long, nerve-wracking walk across the stage; and the meeting with Igor and Vera Stravinsky after the performance. "I hope this

helps," Caryn wrote to me, "and gives some background into a very unusual experience – who would [have thought] that a newly discovered piece called *Kinderstück*, by a composer I had never played, would end up in my hands? And moreover, meeting and performing a Stravinsky piece in front of the maestro himself…when I think of the one experience in my life that was the most spectacular – this has always been the night."[6]

[6] Caryn Glasser, email to David H. Miller, December 5, 2019.

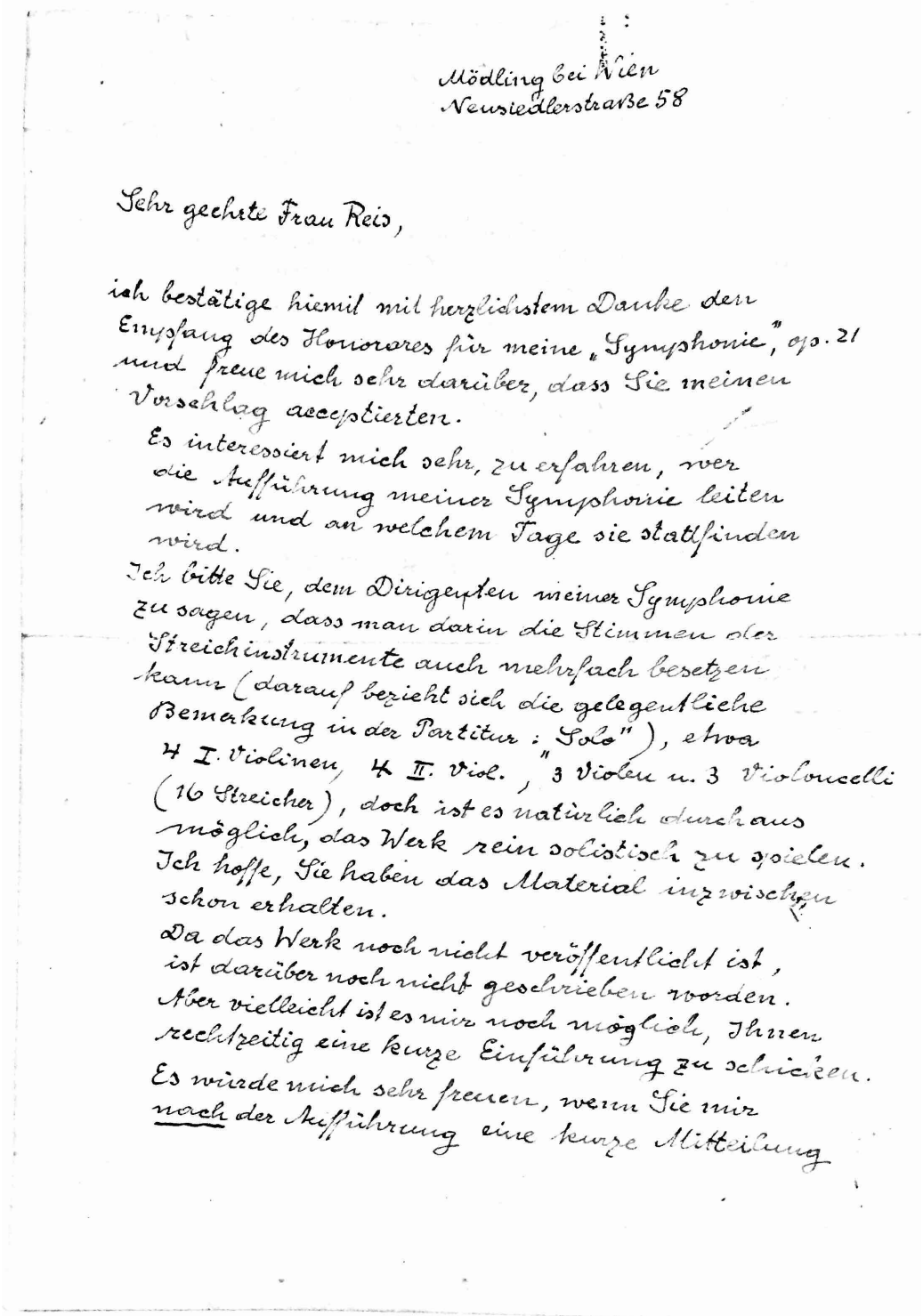
Figures

Figure 1: Advertisement for International Composers' Guild concert, January 13, 1924[1]

[1] Advertisement, "International Composers' Guild," *New York Times* (January 13, 1924).

Date	**City**	**Performers/ Presenting Organization**	**Repertoire**	**Misc.**
October 1923	Chicago	Chicago Symphony Orchestra; Frederick Stock	*Passacaglia*	Cancelled
1923–1924	New York	State Symphony; Josef Stransky	*Passacaglia*	Cancelled
January 1924	New York	Greta Torpadie; Rex Tilson; International Composers' Guild	"Ihr tratet zu dem Herde," op. 4 no. 5	U.S. premiere
January 1925	New York	Greta Torpadie; Franco-American Musical Society	"So ich traurig bin," op. 4 no. 4	U.S. premiere
February 1925	New York	Letz Quartet; International Composers' Guild	Five Pieces for String Quartet, op. 5	U.S. premiere
October 1926	New York	Philadelphia Orchestra; Leopold Stokowski	Five Pieces for Orchestra, op. 10	Cancelled
October 1926	New York	Pro Arte Quartet; League of Composers	Five Pieces for String Quartet, op. 5	Cancelled
November 1926	Boston	Boston Symphony Orchestra; Serge Koussevitzky	Five Pieces for Orchestra, op. 10	U.S. premiere
November 1926	New York	Boston Symphony Orchestra; Serge Koussevitzky; League of Composers	Five Pieces for Orchestra, op. 10	
November 1926	New York	Mina Hager; International Composers' Guild	Five Spiritual Songs, op. 15	U.S premiere
March 1927	New York	Philadelphia Orchestra; Leopold Stokowski	*Passacaglia*	U.S. premiere
December 1927	New York	Barbara Lull; Aaron Copland; New School for Social Research	Four Piece for Violin and Piano, op. 7	U.S. premiere

Figure 2: Performances of Webern's music in the United States, 1923–1927



Mödling bei Wien
Neusiedlerstraße 58

Sehr geehrte Frau Reis,

ich bestätige hiemit mit herzlichstem Danke den Empfang des Honorares für meine „Symphonie", op. 21 und freue mich sehr darüber, dass Sie meinen Vorschlag acceptierten.

Es interessiert mich sehr, zu erfahren, wer die Aufführung meiner Symphonie leiten wird und an welchem Tage sie stattfinden wird.

Ich bitte Sie, dem Dirigenten meiner Symphonie zu sagen, dass man darin die Stimmen der Streichinstrumente auch mehrfach besetzen kann (darauf bezieht sich die gelegentliche Bemerkung in der Partitur: „Solo"), etwa 4 I. Violinen, 4 II. Viol., 3 Violen u. 3 Violoncelli (16 Streicher), doch ist es natürlich durchaus möglich, das Werk rein solistisch zu spielen.

Ich hoffe, Sie haben das Material inzwischen schon erhalten.

Da das Werk noch nicht veröffentlicht ist, ist darüber noch nicht geschrieben worden. Aber vielleicht ist es mir noch möglich, Ihnen rechtzeitig eine kurze Einführung zu schicken.

Es würde mich sehr freuen, wenn Sie mir nach der Aufführung eine kurze Mitteilung

Figure 3: The first page of Webern's letter to Claire Reis, October 31, 1929[2]

[2] Letter, Anton Webern to Claire Reis, October 31, 1929, League of Composers/ISCM records, box 7, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

Mödling bei Wien
Neusiedlerstraße 58

Dear Mrs. Reis,

I hereby confirm with most heartfelt thanks the arrival of the honorarium for my "Symphony," op. 21, and I am greatly pleased that you accept my suggestion.

I am interested to learn who will lead the performance of my Symphony and on which day it will take place.

Please tell the conductor of my Symphony that one can staff the string instruments' parts with several players (this is what the occasional marking "Solo" in the score refers to), perhaps 4 first violins, 4 second violins, 3 violas and 3 cellos; it is, however, of course completely possible to play the work purely soloistically.

I hope that you have already received the materials in the meantime.

Since the work is not yet published, there is not anything written about it yet. But perhaps it would still be possible for me to send you a short introduction in time.

It would please me greatly if, after the performance, you sent me a short message about how the performance went and how my work was received.

I am greatly beholden to the "League of Composers" for the interest it has shown me and I hope that I can yet show my thanks with more than mere words.

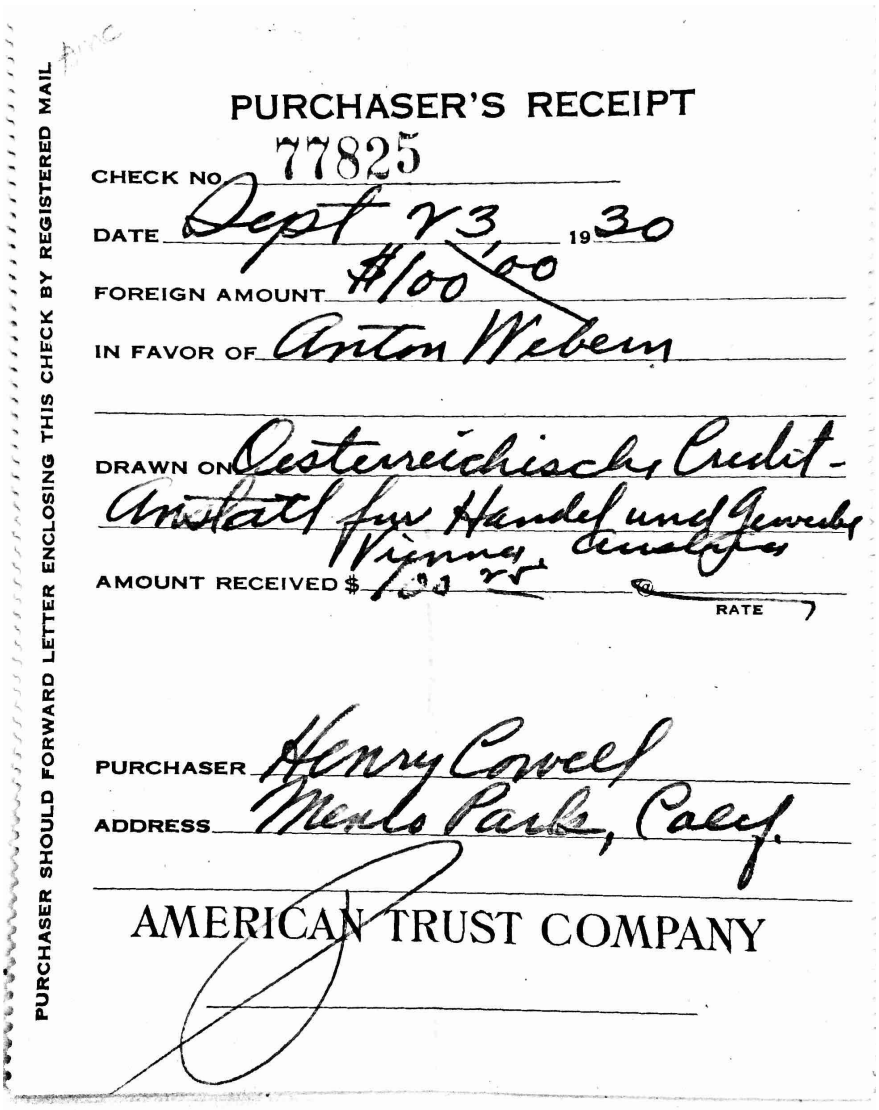
Awaiting your forthcoming communication with the greatest of interest, I remain with the best greetings

Respectfully yours,
Anton Webern

October 31, 1929

Figure 4: Translation of Webern's letter to Claire Reis[3]

[3] Translated by the author.


PURCHASER'S RECEIPT

CHECK NO 77825

DATE Dept 23, 1930

FOREIGN AMOUNT #100 00

IN FAVOR OF Anton Webern

DRAWN ON Oesterreichische Credit-Anstalt für Handel und Gewerbe Vienna

AMOUNT RECEIVED $ 100 00 @ RATE

PURCHASER Henry Cowell

ADDRESS Menlo Park, Calif.

AMERICAN TRUST COMPANY

PURCHASER SHOULD FORWARD LETTER ENCLOSING THIS CHECK BY REGISTERED MAIL

Figure 5: Receipt of payment, Henry Cowell to Anton Webern[4]

[4] Receipt of payment, Henry Cowell to Anton Webern, New Music Society papers, folder 207, New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

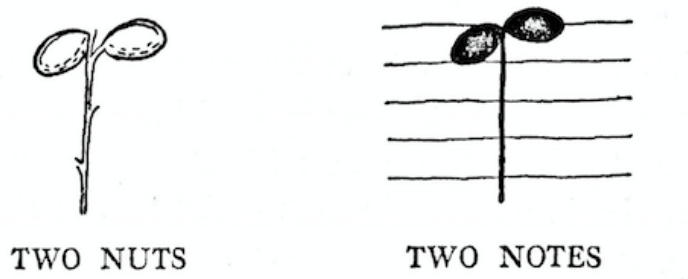


Figure 6: Illustration from "The Interval Hand"[5]

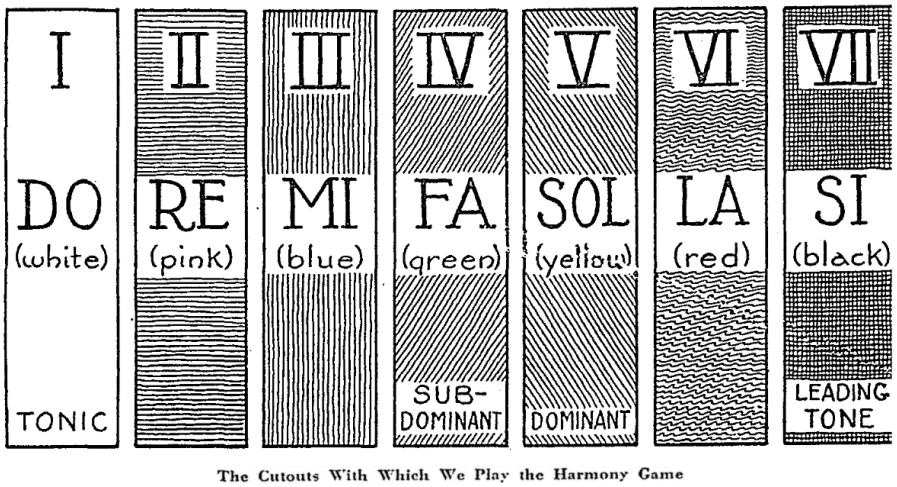


Figure 7: Illustration from "About Triads and Harmony"[6]

[5] Nicolas Slonimsky, "The Interval Hand," in *The Road to Music*, New York: Dodd, Mead & Company (1960): 8.

[6] Nicolas Slonimsky, "About Triads and Harmony," *Christian Science Monitor* (July 6, 1936).

A Musical Piece in Three Parts, Each One of Which Has Three Parts, Is Like the Cover of a Chocolate Bar Which Shows a Girl Holding a Chocolate Bar With a Cover Showing a Girl Holding a Tiny Chocolate Bar Showing a Girl Holding Such a Tiny Chocolate Bar That You Can Hardly See if the Girl on the Cover of That Very Tiny Chocolate Bar Is Holding a Microscopic Chocolate Bar With the Same Cover

Figure 8: Illustration from "Shapes of Musical Pieces"[7]

[7] Nicolas Slonimsky, "Shapes of Musical Pieces," *Christian Science Monitor* (September 7, 1947)

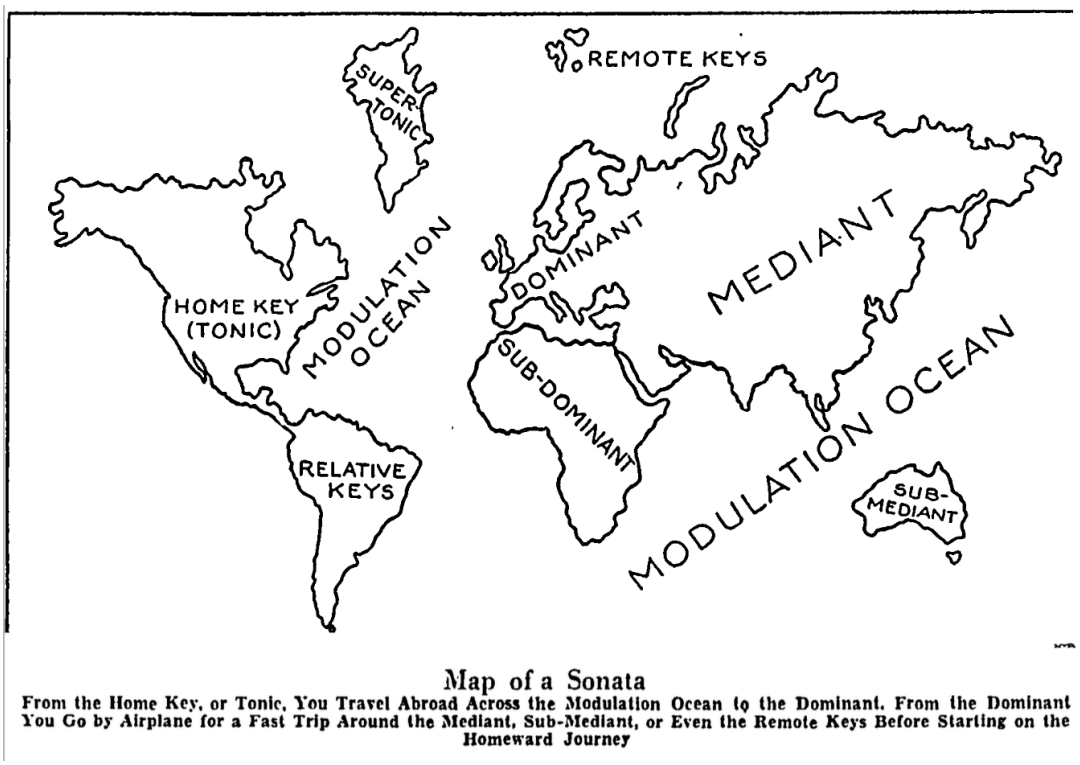


Figure 9: Illustration from "Ways of a Sonata" [8]

[8] Nicolas Slonimsky, "Ways of a Sonata," *Christian Science Monitor* (October 4, 1937).

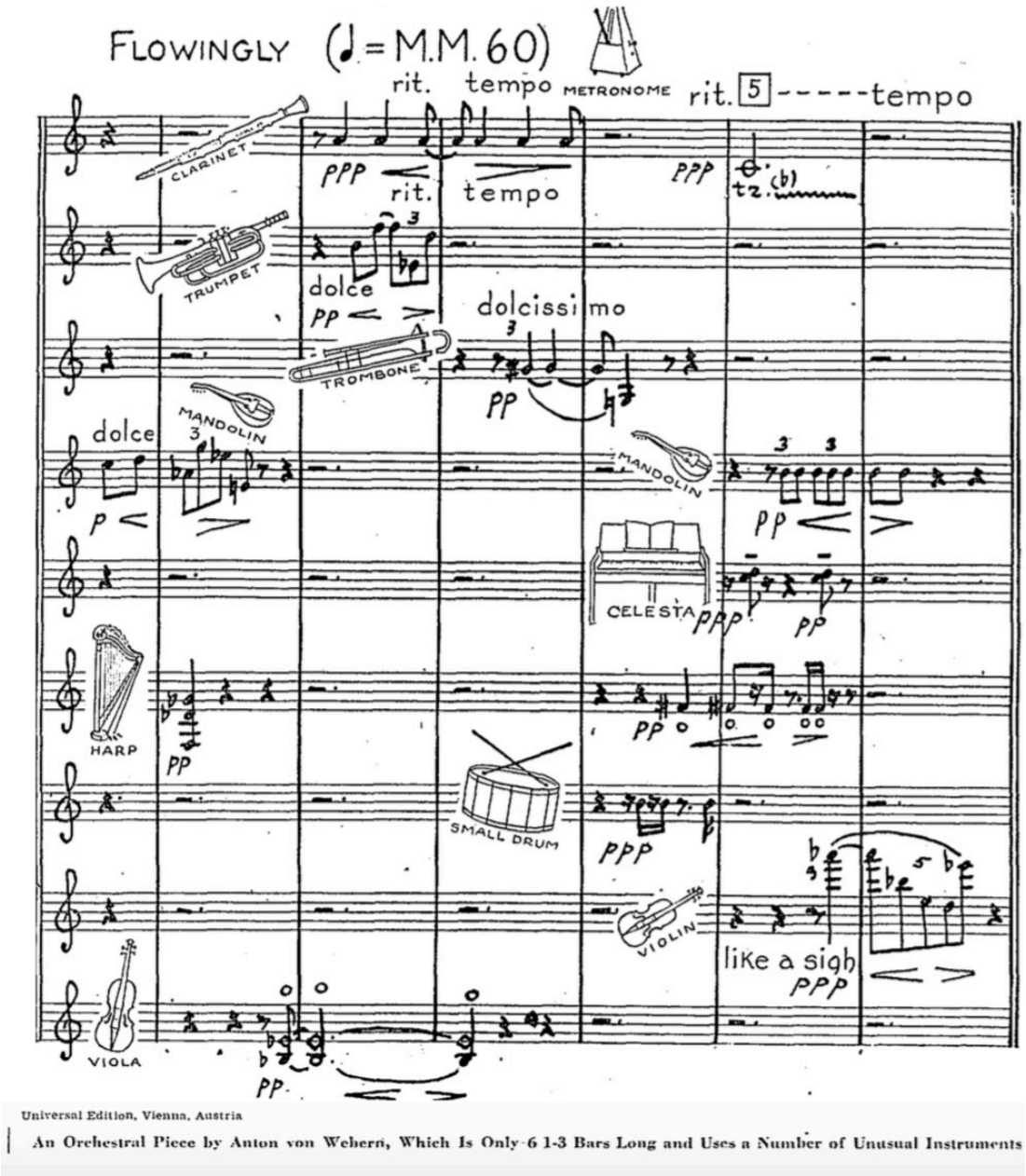


Figure 10: Webern's op. 10 no. 4 as shown in "The Orchestral Score"[9]

[9] Nicolas Slonimsky, "The Orchestral Score," *Christian Science Monitor* (October 5, 1936).

Figure 11: "After You've Gone," from *Make Mine Music*[10]

Nicolas Slonimsky Conducting an Orchestra During One of His European Trips

Figure 12: Silhouette of Slonimsky from "The Orchestral Score"[11]

[10] Benny Goodman Quartet, "Make Mine Music – After You've Gone," March 27, 2010, video, 2:49, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6eZD7_DSLZA.
[11] Slonimsky, "The Orchestral Score."

Figure 13: Elmer Fudd in *A Corny Concerto*[12]

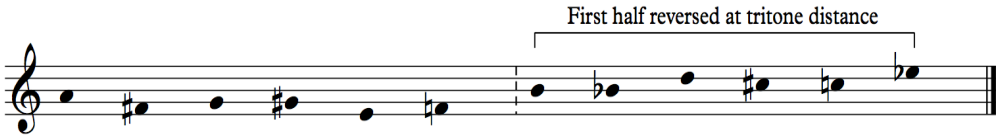


Figure 14: Tone row for Symphony, op. 21[13]

[12] CCCartoons, "A Corny Concerto (1943)," January 31, 2011, video, 8:02, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRcctLL_3FQ.

[13] Marcel Bouvrie, "Palindromic Structures in the Music of Bartók and Webern: the Search for Organic Unity," thesis, University Utrecht, 2016.

Figure 15: The Königssee[14]

Figure 16: Lake Chelan[15]

[14] "Königssee mirror view from Malerwinkel," *Wikimedia Commons*, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:K%C3%B6nigssee_mirror_view_from_Malerwinkel.jpg.

[15] "Stehekin Chelan," *Wikimedia Commons*, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stehekin_Chelan.JPG.

Figure 17: Rainer Vista at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, 1909[16]

[16] University of Washington Libraries Special Collections, "The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition: University of Washington Campus, 1909," https://www.lib.washington.edu/specialcollections/collections/exhibits/ayp.

8:30 p.m. Meany Hall

ALL-WEBERN CONCERT (I)

Three Poems (1899-1903) . . . . . (World Première)*

Vorfrühling (Ferdinand Avenarius)
Nachtgebet der Braut (Richard Dehmel)
Fromm (Gustav Falke)

Three Songs after Poems by Ferdinand Avenarius (1903-04) . . . (World Première)*

Gefunden
Gebet
Freunde

Esther LaBerge, *mezzo-soprano*
Rudolph Ganz, *piano*

String Quartet (1905) . . . . . (World Première)*

University of Washington String Quartet
Emanuel Zetlin, *violin* Vilem Sokol, *viola*
Richard Ferrin, *violin* Eva Heinitz, *'cello*

Five Songs after Poems by Richard Dehmel (1906-08) . . . . (World Première)*

Ideale Landschaft (1906)
Am Ufer (1908)
Himmelfahrt (1908)
Nächtliche Scheu (1907)
Helle Nacht (1908)

Grace-Lynne Martin, *mezzo-soprano*
Leonard Stein, *piano*

INTERMISSION

*Autograph included in the Anton Webern Memorial Exhibition (see page 24).

Figure 18: Program for first half of First International Webern Festival concert on Saturday, May 26, 1962[17]

[17] Program booklet, The Moldenhauer Archives at Harvard University, item 1862.

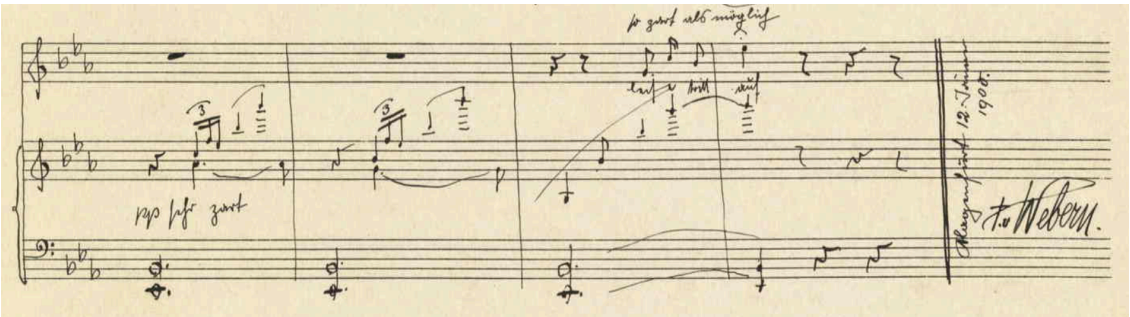


Figure 19: Vorfrühling, conclusion[18]

[18] Library of Congress, "Three Poems for Voice and Piano Vorfrühling, Nachtgebet der Braut, Fromm," https://www.loc.gov/item/ihas.200187474/.

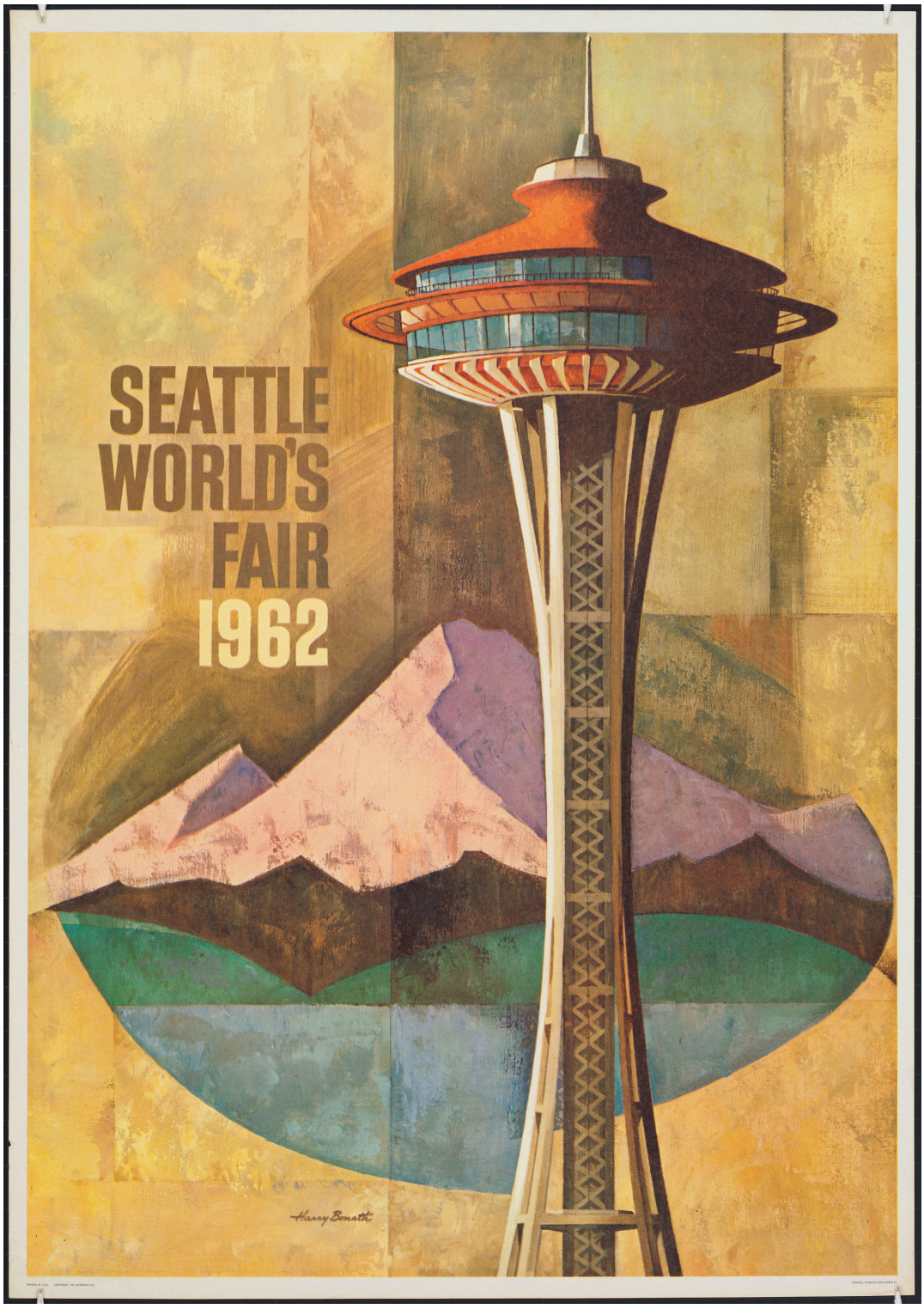


Figure 20: Poster for the 1962 World's Fair in Seattle[19]

[19] Washington State Historical Society, "Seattle World's Fair 1962," http://www.washingtonhistory.org/collections/item.aspx?irn=44076&record=91.

Figure 21: From left to right, Amalie Webern Waller, Hans Moldenhauer, and Rosaleen Moldenhauer at the Fourth International Webern Festival at Dartmouth College in Hanover, NH, 1968[20]

[20] Photograph, International Webern Society Records, box 4, folder 23, Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University.

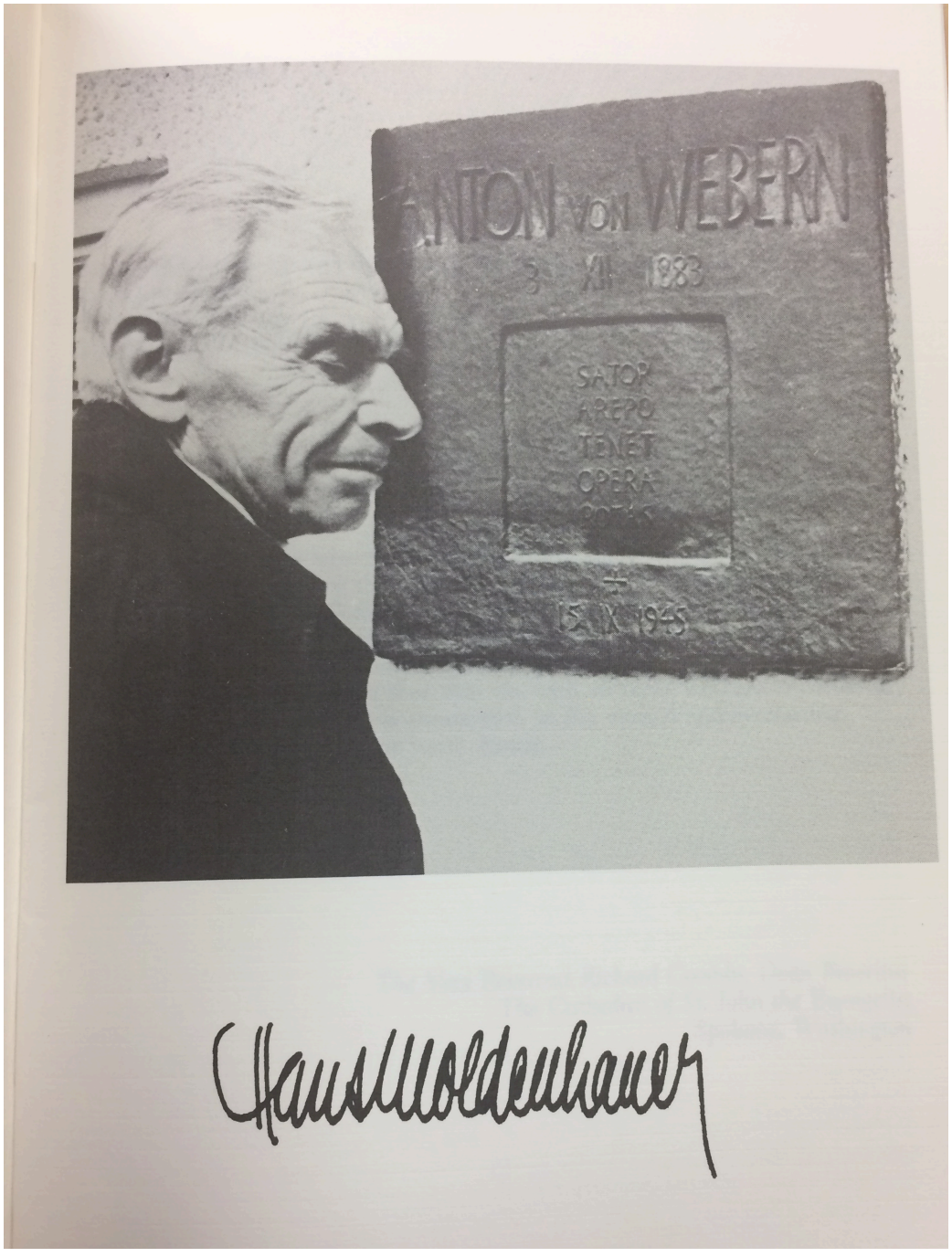


Figure 22: Photo of Hans Moldenhauer at Webern memorial plaque in Mittersill, from the bulletin for Hans' memorial service, November 8, 1987[21]

[21] Program, "Tribute in Memory of Hans Moldenhauer (1906–1987)," November 12, 1987, International Webern Society Records, box 4, Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University

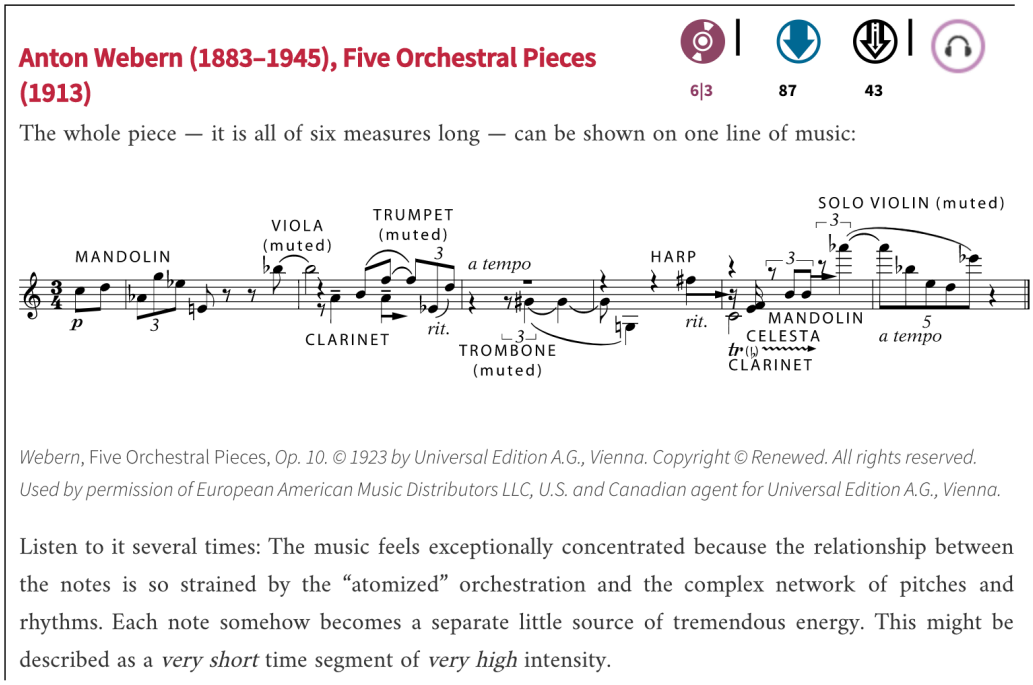


Figure 23: Webern's op.10 no. 4 as seen in *Listen*[22]

[22] Joseph Kerman and Gary Tomlinson, *Listen*, Bedford/St. Martin's (2015): 327.

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[23] N.B. I have chosen not to list one-off primary source documents such as newspaper articles and letters here due to the high number of such documents cited throughout. I have, however, included a list of the archival collections from which I have cited; it follows the works cited page.

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