

**SCHONBERG'S "PIERROT LUNAIRE" IS GIVEN  
A TRULY WORTHY PERFORMANCE IN VIENNA**

**And This Very "Modern" Work, While Failing to Enthuse Some, Is Regarded by the Majority Who Have Heard It as a "Masterpiece"—Furtwängler Conducts New Work by Braunfels—Kauder's String Quartet Played from Manuscript—Other Items of Interest**

Vienna, May 15, 1921.—For the second time Arnold Schönberg's name stands in the center of musical events in Vienna. As last year, when his "Gurrelieder" entered triumphantly the "sacrosanct" precincts of the former Imperial Opera (after having waited on the periphery for nearly two decades), so the splendor of this springtime is made more resplendent by the first really worthy production of his "Pierrot Lunaire."

Many years separate the composition of these two works, and the distance is evident both in content and in style. The first belonging for the most part in Schönberg's early period—now generally "accepted"—is firmly rooted in Wagner and seeks to impress by volume the accumulation of sound; the second, in the advanced Schönbergian idiom, diffuses an atmosphere no less elevating, by the most economical—one might say ascetic—means. And yet there is an inner relationship between the two; in spirit they

In short, "Pierrot Lunaire" is a masterpiece which is worth traveling to hear—as we did.

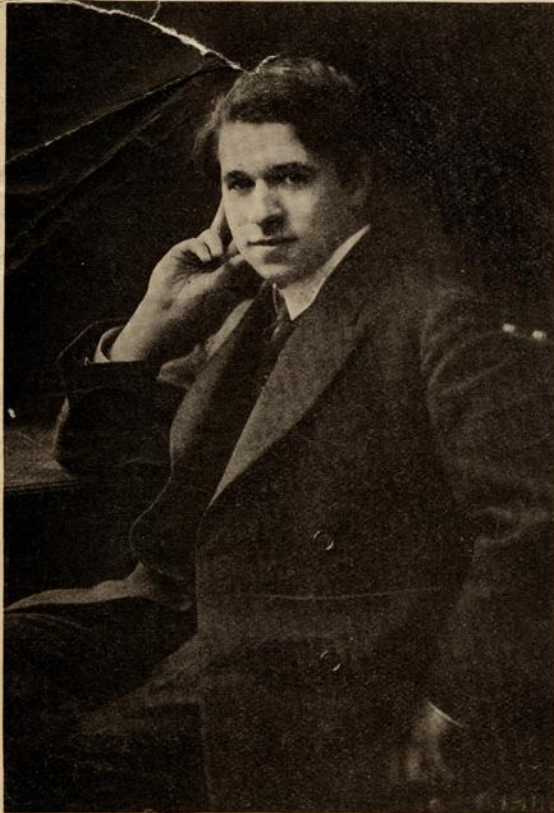
That the performance, being prepared under Schönberg himself, was perfect, goes without saying. His sticklerdom is well known. But surely Erika von Wagner put in her part something more than the technical perfection that comes after thirty ensemble rehearsals (preceded by forty solo ones). She rose to a splendid majesty of emotion in her poetic and essentially musical reading of this fearfully difficult part, hovering somewhere between speaking and singing. Eduard Steuermann at the piano, eminent as interpreter of ultra-modern music and especially Schönberg, produced remarkable effects of vibration, and the rest of the company all did their parts with a precision and an adeptness that speaks volumes for their devotion

many places in a new light. Although he uses some of Wagner's orchestra retouchings, Furtwängler does nothing that would not be "Beethoven." What really places these performances on so high a plane is the clearness and depth of Furtwängler's readings. The orchestra plays with an absolute devotion to its conductor; he suggests to the musicians every musical phrase and accentuation, so that one has the impression that Furtwängler plays upon a wonderful instrument like a great virtuoso. The soloists were members of the Staatsoper. They, and above all Furtwängler, were the center of enthusiastic ovations, which found no end even when the lights of the hall were turned off.

YES AND NO.

The preceding evening Furtwängler conducted a new work by Walter Braunfels, "Phantastische Erscheinungen eines Themas von Berlioz." This young composer belongs to the new Munich school, but in no sense shows the influence of its high priest, Pfitzner. Public and critics were unanimous in their praise of this work, which stands out among recent compositions, especially by its beauty of sound.

Quite a different fate befell Korngold's symphonic overture, "Sursum Corda." The audience rejected the work absolutely and indulged in a remarkable demonstration of hostility—the hisses being barely broken by a few hand-claps. The work, surely enough, contains certain good



ERWIN STEIN,

The conductor of the Viennese production of Schönberg's "Pierrot Lunaire."



EDUARD STEUERMANN,

Pianist, who is the leading Schönberg interpreter in Europe, and who participated in the production of Schönberg's "Pierrot Lunaire" in Vienna. (Photo by Wenisch, Prague.)



ERIKA VON WAGNER,

The famous Viennese actress and singer, and the "speaker" in Schönberg's own production of his "Pierrot Lunaire."

are akin: the same ecstatic elevation mixed with that uncanny, shadowy atmosphere of fantastic romance; the same strange tale of the sweet, oppressive terrors of the human heart.

NO TRIADS.

Being written shortly before the war, "Pierrot Lunaire" is a very "modern" piece of music. To the ordinary pedestrian and to the traditionalist it is perhaps not music at all, in the ordinary sense, for there is not a consonance—a triad—in it from beginning to end. But the "modernist" and the—let us say—biological musician, in contradiction to the historical thinker in the more limited sense, knows that the difference is merely one of degree, not of kind. It is clear that to appreciate this kind of music one must unlearn rather than learn; there are absolute laymen who naturally savor the "delightful pains" of music without hankering after its "painful delights," as Carl Engel has put it.

For those who do not know, let us reiterate that "Pierrot Lunaire" consists of "three times seven" poems by Albert Giraud, translated into German by Otto Erich Hartleben. Schönberg has set it for a skeleton score of one speaker, piano, flute alternating with piccolo, clarinet (sometimes bass-clarinet), violin (sometimes viola), and cello—six performers in all, with a conductor (who might possibly be dispensed with). These parts move with—apparently—the greatest freedom, rhythmically harmonically, melodically—in a constantly changing fluid—one of musical sound—color, line and form. The basic element in construction is the colored line rather than the colored plane, the pure color rather than the mixture—and these many strands of gossamer (transparent), forming their own background, except for a delicately broken pointillage of luminous chords, weave a wondrous web of atmosphere. But not atmosphere alone, for this music is not reflective only; it is expression—expressionistic impressionism, to use a paradox. Every note in it is expressive, weighed and tested before being permitted to speak. It is the highest economy of means, and a richness withal—the wealth of precious stones that gain by solitude.

A MODERN MASTERPIECE.

Rarely do more than two instruments besides the piano play together, never more than four in all; yet there are movements of sound which in intensity are not surpassed by the orchestra nor in the suggestive power of their realism, as in the fourteenth poem, "The Crosses," where the music "bleeds" with gruesome beauty. One of the finest pieces, "The Sick Moon," is assigned to the speaker and a solo flute, and leaves nothing unsaid. One might go on and cite piece after piece, stanza after stanza: the spookish "Moon Spot," the gruesome "Behheading," with its marvellously beautiful instrumental postlude; the bitter-sweetly sentimental "Nostalgie," the grotesque "Gallows Song,"

to the author and his work. Erwin Stein, the mentor of the Schönberg circle, conducted.

The composer himself acted as master of ceremonies in an otherwise most unceremonious concert. Four performances were given in all, and each one, despite the difficulties of admission, were sold out. It is rumored that the little "company" is to go on tour with the work—perhaps even to America. It is to be fervently hoped, however, that "Pierrot" will never be given except in that rarefied atmosphere in which alone it can live.

The performances of "Pierrot Lunaire," although given in an obscure retreat (the school-house headquarters of the Schönberg "Verein") and although the ordinary Viennese knew nothing about them, were nevertheless the event of the season-end. For the rest, musical activity is drawing to its close. Remarkable in the last two weeks were three brilliant concerts by the Tonkünstler Orchestra under Wilhelm Furtwängler.

FURTWÄNGLER A FAVORITE.

This wonderful man has to divide his time between Berlin, Frankfurt, Stockholm and Vienna. Each visit to Vienna means six successive concerts—a real trial of physical strength both for orchestra and conductor. The second concert of the last group was devoted to Beethoven's ninth symphony. As Furtwängler presented it, it appeared in

qualities, but it is too thickly orchestrated, which rather harms its contents and accentuates its lack of formal balance. Korngold's domain obviously is operatic composition and he should not leave it. Besides this the three Furtwängler concerts brought us nothing new, but were remarkable for excellent performances.

WEINGARTNER EARNS FRESH LAURELS.

The Philharmonic concerts, too, have come to a close, and Weingartner has earned new laurels at the last two. (Continued on page 35.)

**Mrs. E. B. McCONNELL**

(Minnie M. McConnell)

**Teacher of Voice**

returns to New York from coast to coast tour and announces opening of studios July 1

AT

**839 West End Avenue, New York**

Telephone Riverside 4093

**Chamber Music Art Society**

STRINGS

- Cyril Cowbin - Violin
- Karl Krauter - Violin
- Nicolai Moldavan - Viola
- Percy Such - Violoncello
- Emil Mix - Contra Bass
- Charles Hart

WOOD--WINDS

- Georges Grisez - Clarinet
- John Wummer - Flute
- Rene Corne - Oboe
- Ugo Sabolini - Bassoon
- Josef Franzl - French Horn
- Pianist

Artists:

Touring Canada and Eastern States, Oct., Nov., Dec., 1921

Middle West and the South, Jan., Feb., March, 1922

Address: EMIL MIX, 391 CENTRAL PARK WEST

Phone: Riverside 6292

NEW YORK CITY