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Schoenberg as Strauss

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For Schoenberg, writing waltzes was certainly an act of remembering. The pervasiveness of the waltz in Schoenberg's oeuvre reminds us that the composer was not so removed from the world of light music (at least, not so far as he and historiography would sometimes have it) and from the world of that most famous of Viennese dances. Schoenberg's lifelong interest in the waltz connects to the conjoined themes of reminiscence and legacy – to recollections of the past and to that which is handed down from that past. These themes are particularly apposite as we contemplate and celebrate the 150th anniversary of Schoenberg's birth. Drawing in part on the work of Russian cultural theorist Svetlana Boym, I argue in this article that Schoenberg and his music, while certainly radically modern, were also profoundly shaped by a particular type of nostalgia – by a longing for a past time and place that also shapes the present and future – and that to a large extent this nostalgia is symbolized in Schoenberg's music by the waltz. The focus of this article is Schoenberg's arrangements waltzes by Johann Strauss and ongoing close relationship to the genre of the nineteenth-century Viennese waltz, even as he was taking his initial steps in the direction of an audacious aesthetic paradigm shift towards dodecaphony.

On Nostalgia

It is a truism that, for Schoenberg, composing and arranging waltzes is a nostalgic activity. But what is nostalgia? Some scholars have suggested that, in its oldest form, nostalgia is essentially a primordial, Edenic experience, a bittersweet feeling relating to the notion of a divinely-created ideal time and place – "the home of human beings, the home of us all" – to which there was no possibility of return.[1] The term itself derives etymologically from two words: *nostos,* meaning "return home," and *algia*, meaning "longing."[2] It is not an authentically Greek word, despite the fact that it is sometimes linked to Homer; the linguistic origins of the compound word "nostalgia" date from the late seventeenth century, where it first appears in a Swiss medical treatise by Johannes Hofer as a technical term for homesickness.[3] As the Russian cultural theorist Svetlana Boym observes, nostalgia was once considered a malady typified by an all-consuming "mania of longing" for home, for the absent homeland.[4] And as the philosopher Helmut Illbruck insists, it was not merely "a sentimental longing…but a deadly disease caught by and consuming those cut off from their homeland."[5] However, the naming of nostalgia as a disease in 1688 does not mark the actual birth of this phenomenon, which can be traced back to classical antiquity. Plato, for instance, meditates in the *Symposium* upon the nature of longing for that which is absent; and the pain of being separated from one's homeland is acutely rendered in the later exile literature of Roman writers like Ovid and Seneca.[6] The condition that Johannes Hofer comes to name "nostalgia" is also rather far removed from the more contemporary sense of the word, which implies the problem of memory and the disturbances that accompany painful memories of a distant home-

1 Deena Weinstein, "Constructed Nostalgia for Rock's Golden Age: 'I Believe in Yesterday'," *Volume!* 11, no. 1 (2014). http://doi.org/10.4000/volume.4314. Accessed May 8, 2024.
2 Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), xiii.
3 Helmut Illbruck, *Nostalgia: Origins and Ends of an Unenlightened Disease* (Evanston, IL.: Northwestern University Press, 2012), 5.
4 Boym, *Future of Nostalgia*, 4.
5 Illbruck, *Nostalgia*, 3.
6 Illbruck, *Nostalgia*, 7–14 *passim*.

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land or the past. In the later seventeenth century, by contrast, nostalgia was a problem of the imagination – it was "symptomatic of an afflicted imagination" and was caused by "the strength of the imagination alone."[7]

The development of German Romanticism in the nineteenth century represents a turning point for nostalgia, a period during which it moves from the medical realm decisively into the literary-poetic world, wherein longing and homesickness become dominant and defining tropes. Indeed, longing itself is given a particularly privileged status in nineteenth-century German poetry, literature, and, of course, music, such that the very activity of longing becomes more important than the longed-for thing: in this romantic context, notes Susan Stewart, "the nostalgic is enamored of distance, not of the referent itself."[8] Longing itself thus becomes a kind of fetish in Romantic literature, poetry, and music, superseding the acquisition of the lost object or the lost home in favor of a perpetual, unresolved yearning. Through the nineteenth century, nostalgia evolves, or dissolves, into what Illbruck describes as a certain vagueness of "romantic dissatisfaction" that is "different from nostalgia's original pathology" of being plagued by memory.[9] Romantic nostalgia becomes detached from the notion of distance from and yearning for home; rather, it is characterized by a yearning for yearning itself. There is no pleasure attained from finding one's way back to a particular home; instead, pleasure is derived from contemplating the failure to find one's way back. The lost or distant home can only retain its special qualities – its magical, dream-like sense – as long as it remains distant. Sigmund Freud's theory of fixation clarifies the psychological processes of this quintessentially romantic activity of keeping the distant home or the longed-for object forever distant. Fixation describes a condition in which a traumatic memory – a memory of a real event, comparable to a real place – is held at bay by a neurotic patient who becomes caught in a loop of repetition, thereby indefinitely stalling or suspending memory in a (pleasurable) symptomatic circuit.[10]

Since the nineteenth century, as Boym notes, nostalgia has evolved into "the modern condition," manifesting itself as "part of the teleology of progress."[11] It is a longing for an earlier, better time that arises from the Industrial Revolution; in the modern age, this longing comprises "a mourning for the impossibility of a mythical return, for the loss of an enchanted world with clear borders and values."[12] In this modern sense, nostalgia is a longing for "a different time" and functions as "a rebellion against the modern idea of time, the time of history and progress."[13]

Modern nostalgia also has something of a dialectical character. Boym describes nostalgia as both "retrospective and prospective," and insists that nostalgia dwells in the past and desires reconnection, even as it works to re-envision and recreate the lost home and the lost past in the present. "Fantasies of the past," Boym argues, "determined by needs of the present, have a direct impact on the future."[14] This temporalizing function derives from the two types of nostalgia: restorative and reflective. Restorative nostalgia seeks to rebuild the past, to return to the past-as-truth. In terms of music, we might think, for example, of the modern historical performance movement, or of contemporary popular music that continues to fetishize bygone musical

7 Illbruck, *Nostalgia*, 42.
8 Susan Stewart, *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 145. One need only think here, for instance, of *Tristan und Isolde* to recognize the essential character of nostalgia in nineteenth-century art and music: the idea in *Tristan*, which is clarified by the harmonic-narrative schema, is obviously to prolong and enjoy the suffering caused by absence and memory, not to resolve it.
9 Illbruck, *Nostalgia*, 153.
10 Illbruck, *Nostalgia*, 178–179.
11 Boym, *Future of Nostalgia*, xvi.
12 Boym, *Future Nostalgia*, 8–10 *passim*.
13 Boym, *Future Nostalgia*, xv.
14 Boym, *Future Nostalgia*, xvi.

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traditions – folk music, blues – along with the antiquated technology associated with them, such as analogue soundboards and tube amplifiers.

The 2014 documentary series *Sonic Highways,* featuring the Foo Fighters, is a striking example of musical restorative nostalgia. The show traces the band members' journey from one legendary musical city to another – Chicago, Nashville, Seattle, New Orleans, etc. – where they visit famous music studios and performance venues and encounter famous performers of the past. The band concomitantly released an album entitled *Sonic Highways*, with each song having been recorded in a different iconic studio in a different city. The idea, as an *L.A. Times* review asserted, was for the Foo Fighters to gain "respectability by proxy"; I would argue that it was also an exercise in restorative nostalgia – in revivifying their music via a direct connection with the past.[15]

Reflective nostalgia, on the other hand, "dwells […] in the imperfect process of remembrance."[16] Restorative nostalgia strives to assuage nostalgia's symptomatic ache of "temporal distance and displacement," whereas reflective nostalgia can be ironic and humorous – in the case of music, composers and musicians whose work is heterogeneous in its constitution, its aesthetic/musical elements drawn freely from a variety of traditions and styles – and cherishes "shattered fragments of meaning," with the past becoming a space offering "a multitude of potentialities."[17] Björk – the singer/composer whose music draws freely from a wide range of genres and traditions, and who frequently juxtaposes elements of historical Icelandic music with contemporary electronica in her work – provides perhaps one of the best examples of reflective nostalgia in contemporary popular music. Björk's music juxtaposes representations of rural and urban Iceland in her music, and in doing so expresses a romantic longing for Iceland's past – its rural heritage and natural landscapes. At the same time, however, Björk characterizes her music as possessing a kind of protean, coming-into-being quality that mirrors the contemporary, ongoing evolution of Icelandic society and culture.[18]

Krystine Batcho, in tracing the historical development of nostalgia from a dangerous psychiatric disorder in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to a subset of melancholia through the nineteenth century, arrives at a contemporary view of nostalgia that regards it as a yearning for the past – for something that is no more –rather than homesickness, but also as a blended cognitive–emotional phenomenon that combines memory and feelings. Ultimately, she counterpoises nostalgia's bittersweetness with the notion that nostalgia can be a positive experience, and can play an important role in the understanding of self:

> Nostalgia may constitute an attempt to restore direction and meaning to life when an individual has been displaced from all former links. Nostalgic remembering connects the components of self over time. Therefore, nostalgia has been viewed as an important vehicle for developing, maintaining, or restoring a sense of self-identity by weaving the threads of one's life history.[19]

This idea of nostalgia as forging connections – between time, place, and self – is crucial, as I argue below, in understanding Schoenberg's view of himself in relation to the past and the future, and to understand the role played by the waltz in his music.

15 See Lorraine Ali, "Foo Fighter's Sonic Highway Album, HBO Show a Trip into Mediocrity," *L.A. Times* November 11, 2014. http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/music/la-et-ms-foo-fighters-sonic-highway-review-20141111-story.html. Accessed September 23, 2023.

16 Boym, *Future of Nostalgia*, 41.

17 Boym, *Future of Nostalgia*, 49.

18 See Nicole Dribben, *Björk* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009).

19 Krystine Irene Batcho, "Personal Nostalgia, World View, Memory, and Emotionality," *Perceptual and Motor Skills* 87 (1998): 412.

Music as a Memorative Sign

Music, of course, plays a vital role in nostalgia. It is among the most potent "memorative signs," a powerful aspect of nostalgia as memory, as that which points backwards to both a geographical location and to the feelings associated with it. Acting as a memorative sign, Boym observes, "the music of home is the permanent accompaniment of nostalgia."[20] The notion of music as a memorative sign comes directly from Rousseau, who uses it in his *Dictionnaire de musique* to describe the emotional effects of music – specifically, of the *ranz-des-vaches*, the simple folk melodies of Swiss mountain herdsmen – on Swiss troops. Rousseau observes that the tune, as "music of home," with its evocations of utopian pastoral life, was forbidden amongst these troops because of its powerful nostalgic impact; it was rumored to cause soldiers to burst into tears, to desert their posts, and even to die from sentimental longing. However, these effects – popularly known as aspects of *Schweizerheimweh* – were not attributable to the music as such, but rather the associations it stirred up.

The effects of the tune, asserted Rousseau, "come solely from habit, from memories, from a thousand circumstances which, recounted by this tune to those who hear it and recalling for them their country, their old pleasures, their youth, and all their ways of living, arouse in them a bitter pain from having lost all that."[21] The novelist Étienne Pivert de Senancour's response to Rousseau in the early nineteenth century is a properly romantic one, asserting that the primal power of music – the *ranz-des-vaches*, in this case – is not to merely trigger a series of associations or stimulate imaginative memory, but to directly affect the emotions by "painting" nature, by enrobing the listener in sound – a "sonorous envelope," in contemporary, post-Freudian terms – that emulates the pre-symbolic idyll of the mother-child unity, that recalls the "sonorous womb, a murmuring house" that is the root of all [musical] nostalgia.[22]

Waltzes and Nostalgia

We can readily recognize Schoenberg as a nostalgic, as an artist with an awareness of and an anxiety over temporality. That is, in both his music and in his writings, one hears and sees a pronounced and thoroughgoing concern for the past, the present and the future. In his compositions, this concern is manifested in numerous ways, but perhaps no more acutely than in his frequent recourse to waltzes. Waltzes in Schoenberg's music – and specifically his Strauss arrangements, themselves symbols or "memorative signs" of a particular time, place and attitude – serve as a locus of memory for the composer.[23] They also exemplify Boym's typology of nostalgia. The Strauss waltzes, and the cluster of waltzes in Schoenberg's oeuvre that bookend them, manifest the fundamental ambivalence of nostalgia – its "looking back, looking forwards" quality, the superimposition of two places and times: "home and abroad, past and present, dream and everyday life."[24] This ambivalence in turn epitomizes Schoenberg's own views, and his own place in history and historiography: caught somewhere between tradition and modernity, past and future, between memory and progressive vision.

20 Boym, *Future of Nostalgia*, 4.
21 Quoted in Illbruck, *Nostalgia*, 88.
22 Quoted in Illbruck, *Nostalgia*, 90. Regarding the "sonorous envelope," see David Schwartz, *Listening Subjects: Music, Psychoanalysis and Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997). For Schwartz, the experience of the sonorous envelope relates to a kind of primordial nostalgia: a longing for the undifferentiated, all-enfolding oceanic landscape/soundscape of the womb.
23 "Loci of memory" is Michael Cherlin's coinage. See note 39.
24 Boym, *Future of Nostalgia*, xiv.

Waltzes, of course, would have provided much of the aural backdrop of Schoenberg's early years as a musician growing up in Vienna. The waltz is generally viewed as commonplace and ubiquitous in Viennese cultural history, and as somehow essential to the experience of coming of age in what would have been, for Schoenberg, the twilight years of Imperial Vienna. Dating back to the courtly dances of the sixteenth century, and to even older Austrian folk dances, the waltz was the most popular dance in Europe in the early nineteenth century, with many of the major composers of the period – including Beethoven, Weber and Schubert – writing and publishing waltzes in some form. The waltz as a European dance is thought to have derived either from the *volta* – a Renaissance court dance belonging to the galliard group of dances – or from the folksy Austrian–Southern German Ländler, and seems to have first appeared sometime in the mid-eighteenth century. The waltz had definitively made its way into European art music by 1770, and would eventually replace the minuet in instrumental compositions.[25] Haydn was among the earliest Classical composers to contribute to what would soon be characterized as Vienna's waltz craze, composing a sonatina for piano in 1766 with a "*Mouvement de waltze*" instead of a minuet; Mozart would follow soon after, famously including a waltz in the ballroom scene in *Don Giovanni* in 1787.[26] Later in the nineteenth century, the demand for waltzes in Vienna became so great that it gave rise to several generations of specialist dance music composers, beginning with Michael Pamer, who would influence Joseph Lanner and Johann Strauss I.[27]

While Vienna's waltz craze was already underway in the first decade of the nineteenth century and a number of dancing palaces were open and popular by 1810, the watershed moment for the waltz seems to have come with the Vienna Congress of 1814–1815. The opening of the Congress included a series of "lavish balls [and] for the remainder of the assembly, the waltz reigned supreme."[28] As Mark Knowles argues, waltzing served not so much as a diversion or mere social occasion, but rather took on an important political aspect: the Congress participants came to realize, notwithstanding their misgivings about the immorality of the waltz, that "to succeed in the delicate negotiations of the Vienna Congress, they had to participate in the endless round of balls and entertainments that dominated the affair."[29] The Congress, in addition to doing the work of dividing up Europe in the wake of Napoleon's defeat, also served as "propaganda" for the waltz, helping it to rapidly spread across the continent and to dominate fashionable society in Europe for decades to follow.[30]

While the popularity of the waltz as a dance may have been somewhat on the wane in Europe towards the mid-nineteenth century, it continued to be immensely popular in Vienna, where it matured into a respectable genre for serious composers, increasing in length and formal complexity, ultimately becoming a symbol of Vienna's so-called "Golden Age." The waltz had already decisively crossed over into German concert music – beginning with Johann Hummel's *Deutsche Tänze* of 1807 and Weber's *Aufforderung zum Tanz,* of 1819, for example – and into opera and operetta, and would ultimately play a major role in both the virtuoso solo piano and symphonic repertories of the latter part of the nineteenth century. In terms of its basic musical elements, the waltz grew from a modest tune set in binary form and cast in a rudimentary tonic-dominant dualism into a large-scale work typically consisting of a slow introduction, followed

25 Peter Gammond and Andrew Lamb, "Waltz," *The Oxford Companion to Music, Oxford Music Online,* Oxford University Press, accessed June 10, 2023. http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e7260.
26 This waltz is in fact a *Deutscher Tanz*, labelled more colloquially as "Teitsch" in Mozart's score: a fast, spinning dance associated with German peasantry—in sharp contrast to the slower, courtly *Allemande*—that Richard Taruskin identifies as the "progenitor of the waltz." See Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 491.
27 Gammond and Lamb, "Waltz." Lanner and Strauss I both played in Pamer's orchestra, before moving on to form their own ensemble.
28 Mark Knowles, *The Wicked Waltz and Other Scandalous Dances* (London: McFarland & Company, 2009), 27.
29 Knowles, *The Wicked Waltz*, 27.
30 Knowles, *The Wicked Waltz*, 28.

by a linked series of waltz themes, and ending with a summative coda. The tempo of a Viennese waltz is typically very fast – so fast, in fact, that nineteenth-century physicians warned dancers of the dangers to the brain, heart, and spine from spinning too violently – and includes a characteristic anticipation of the second beat of the measure, with the third beat consequently slightly delayed.[31]

At the end of the nineteenth century, the waltz assumed its now-familiar equivocal nature, becoming simultaneously a symbol of Viennese gaiety and a means of escape from a darker reality: a demonstration of the most carefree hedonism, behind which lurked melancholia and a growing sense of anxiety. The waltz, then, becomes a symbol for a very Viennese ambivalence that marks the turn of the century: it is the city of light and darkness, of public cheer and private despair, a city on the brink of what the Austrian novelist Herman Brosch famously called the "joyful apocalypse."

Schoenberg and the Waltz

While it may be something of a truism to say that Schoenberg was familiar with waltzes simply by dint of being Viennese, it is certainly the case that the waltz, along with other types of popular, light music heard in Vienna's public spaces, would have been an essential part of his formative years. Schoenberg began his rather limited formal musical education in 1882, when he began studying the violin. As a young violin student, Schoenberg played and arranged, among other things, simple waltz tunes. Indeed, one of Schoenberg's earliest compositions, dating from the first year of his violin lessons, is a small collection of waltz duets for two violins, the so-called "*Alliance-Walzer*," (although these juvenile waltzes are closer in character to *Ländler* than to the more sophisticated Straussian ballroom waltzes).[32] Fifteen years later, Schoenberg composed a much more substantial group of ten waltzes for string orchestra.[33] The young Schoenberg's circle of friends, moreover, included a number of fellow musicians who were themselves directly connected to the waltz tradition – especially via operetta – including Oskar Straus, Edmund Eisler and Alexander von Zemlinsky. Schoenberg is also reputed to have maintained a life-long love for the music of Franz Léhar, the famed Austro-Hungarian operetta composer who wrote many waltzes (and who in turn admired Schoenberg).[34]

Schoenberg's personal library attests to his familiarity with the waltz.[35] It contains Beethoven's *Diabelli Variations*, Op. 120; two separate editions of Schubert's *Sämtliche Tänze*, which includes many waltzes and *Ländler*; and Zemlinsky's *Walzer-Gesänge*, Op. 6. Additionally, there are many works by Johann Strauss II, including a collection entitled *Drei Walzer,* comprising the *An der schönen blauen Donau, Wein, Weib und Gesang*, and *Du und Du*; a chamber arrangement of *Rosen aus dem Süden;* a piano arrangement of the *Kaiserwalzer*; an orchestral arrangement of *An der schönen blauen Donau,* a collection of waltzes arranged for piano entitled *6*

31 On the musical characteristics of the Viennese waltz, see Gammond and Lamb, "Waltz." See also Andrew Lamb," Waltz (i)," *Grove Music Online.* 2001a. https://www-oxfordmusiconline-com.login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000029881. Accessed September 25, 2023.

32 See "Alliance Walzer," Arnold Schönberg Center. https://archive2.schoenberg.at/compositions/werke_einzelansicht.php?werke_id=424&herkunft=allewerke. Accessed July 21, 2023.

33 See Therese Muxeneder, "Walzer für Streichorchester (1897)," Arnold Schönberg Center. ,https://www.schoenberg.at/index.php/en/the-news-2/walzer-fuer-streichorchester-fragment. Accessed May 8, 2024. Daniel Guberman has made a case for these waltzes comprising a sophisticated cycle, and claims that—though their tonal scheme and intertextual references—they reveal aspects of Schoenberg's mature musical thought and even foreshadow Schoenberg's eventual destruction of tonality just over a decade later. This is even more evidence for the overall importance of waltzes in Schoenberg's oeuvre. See Guberman, "Cyclic Coherence in Schoenberg's Early Waltzes for String Orchestra," *Tempo* 67, no. 265 (2013): 57–68.

34 Leon Botstein, "Schoenberg and the Audience: Modernism, Music, and Politics in the Twentieth Century," in *Schoenberg and His World*, ed. Walter Frisch (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 32.

35 See "Library Catalogue," Arnold Schönberg Center. http://schoenberg.at/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1266&catid=101&lang=en&Itemid=1059. Accessed May 8, 2024.

Behrümte Walzer, which includes *Frühlingsstimmen*, *Wiener Frauen*, *Kuss-Walzer*, *Rosen aus dem Süden*, *Lagunen-Walzer*, and *Myrthenblüten*. The library also includes a large mixed collection of songs and waltzes by Strauss, Léhar, Robert Stolz, Leo Fall, and others, entitled *110 Wiener Lieder und Tänze*. What should we make of this collection of waltzes in Schoenberg's library? It demonstrates, yet again, that Schoenberg was by no means unfamiliar with or intolerant of light music; moreover, it suggests Schoenberg would have had more than a passing familiarity with some of the most iconic pieces of the Viennese waltz repertory.

Schoenberg's own waltzes fit into five distinct categories: original waltzes as stand-alone pieces; original waltzes that make up movements or sections of larger works; unidentified waltzes included within a piece; waltz arrangements; and fragments and sketches. The waltzes comprising part of Schoenberg's juvenilia – the "*Alliance-Walzer*," and the ten waltzes for string orchestra, mentioned above – would fall under the heading of original waltzes as distinct pieces. These are virtually the only stand-alone original waltzes in Schoenberg's oeuvre. Some of the waltzes that form a part of larger works are quite well-known, including: the famous waltz from Schoenberg's Op. 23 piano pieces (the putative first 12-tone piece); the "Valse de Chopin" from *Pierrot Lunaire,* Op. 21; one of the songs from the collection of Schoenberg's cabaret songs, the *Brettl-Lieder,* "Arie aus dem Spiegel von Arcadien," which begins with the marking "Langsamer Walzer"; likewise, "Serenade" from *Pierrot Lunaire* is marked "Sehr langsamer Walzer" (both, then, I take to be designated, original waltzes that form part of a larger work). Significant unidentified waltzes that are part of larger works include: Op. 16, no. 5 ("Das obligate Rezitativ");[36] and the song "Mahnung" from the *Brettl-Lieder*, which is clearly set to a waltz accompaniment.

By far, the majority of Schoenberg's waltzes are of the unidentified variety, either in the form of extended passages, relatively brief fragments, or allusions – "masked" waltzes, as Carl Dahlhaus evocatively suggests.[37] These can readily be found throughout Schoenberg's oeuvre: there are, for instance, waltzes to be found in three of the four string quartets; in both the Violin Concerto, Op. 36 and the Piano Concerto, Op. 42; in his operatic works, including *Moses und Aron*, *Die glückliche Hand*, Op. 18, and *Von heute auf morgen*, Op. 32*;* in much of his chamber music from the early 1920s, including the Serenade, Op. 24, the Wind Quintet, Op. 26, and the Suite, Op. 29;[38] and in the apocalyptic and autobiographical String Trio, Op. 45. It is this latter piece that offers a particularly cogent entrée into the theme of nostalgia and the waltz.

Composed in the late summer of 1946, Schoenberg's String Trio, Op. 45 is famous not only as one of Schoenberg's greatest twelve-tone works, but also because its composition coincides with a traumatic event in Schoenberg's life, namely a near-fatal heart attack he suffered at the beginning of August 1946. This medical/existential crisis is woven into the Trio, which, as a kind of death-bed confessional serves as a work of memory in which traumatic events are recalled and reflected upon. Key to this piece are the waltz fragments that surface, disappear and return. According to Michael Cherlin, the waltz is "the central image in the String Trio," and the waltz fragments offer a multiplicity of meanings: they number among the "loci of memory" in the Trio that stand in defense against death; they can be interpreted psychoanalytically, as signifying the return of repressed memories; and they exemplify the ongoing troping to which the waltz has been continually subjected in the twentieth century.[39] Cherlin hints strongly towards Rousseauian nostalgia and his notion of music as a "memorative sign" when he claims that, for a

36 See Bryan Simms, *The Atonal Music of Arnold Schoenberg, 1908–1923* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 81. Simms describes Op. 16, no. 5 as an "orchestral waltz."

37 Carl Dahlhaus, *Schoenberg and the New Music*, trans. Derrick Puffett and Alfred Clayton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 104.

38 See Alexander Carpenter, "A Bridge to a New Life: Waltzes in Schoenberg's Chamber Music," in *Schoenberg's Chamber Music, Schoenberg's World*, ed. James Wright and Alan Gilmore (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2009), 25–36.

39 Michael Cherlin, *Schoenberg's Musical Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 328–338 *passim.*

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Viennese composer like Schoenberg, the waltz – even a fragment or a suggestion – is necessarily "saturated with memory"; "a sense of nostalgia," Cherlin observes, "bitter or otherwise" unavoidably accompanies the waltz whenever it appears in Schoenberg's music.[40]

Schoenberg as Strauss: Waltz Arrangements

Schoenberg was in fact a prolific arranger, though at first largely out of necessity. In order to make ends meet in the early years of the twentieth century, Schoenberg undertook the hard work of orchestrating and arranging operetta and light music – about six thousand pages of score, by his own estimate – first at the Überbrettl in Berlin in 1901-1902, and then for Universal Edition upon his return to Vienna in 1903. Later in his career, during the 1920s and 1930s, he would arrange a substantial amount of serious music, including a handful of Bach's choral and organ works, some of Mahler's symphonic and vocal music, chamber music by Brahms, some instrumental music by Monn and Handel, and a number of Lieder and folksongs. Some of these arrangements were for Schoenberg's Society for Private Musical Performance, which was active between 1919 and 1921. His first two Johann Strauss waltz arrangements were undertaken for a special fundraising concert for the Society on May 27, 1921. Held in the Schwarzwald School in Vienna's Innerestadt, the concert featured waltz arrangements by Schoenberg, Webern and Berg, scored for string quartet, piano and harmonium. Schoenberg supplied *Rosen aus dem Süden* and *Lagunen-Walzer;* Berg arranged *Wein, Weib und Gesang*, and Webern contributed *Schatzwalzer.* Schoenberg's selections were both originally derived from Strauss operettas: the *Lagunen-Walzer* comes from *Eine Nacht in Venedig*; *Rosen aus dem Süden* is taken from *Das Spitzentuch der Könige*. Schoenberg may have chosen these waltzes for their popularity – especially *Rosen aus dem Süden* – but also because he had copies of both in his personal library, as noted above (a chamber arrangement and a piano reduction of *Rosen aus dem Süden,* and a piano reduction of *Lagunen-Walzer*).[41] The sheer scope of *Rosen aus dem Süden*, along with its harmonic, thematic and formal variety, likely also attracted.[42]

After the concert, in which the composers themselves also performed, the scores were auctioned off. This concert – which was extensively rehearsed – was a performance of great historical import, notwithstanding the typical downplaying or outright neglect it receives in musicological literature.[43] While the arrangements served a practical purpose, namely to raise money for the Society, the concert represented a striking, if not outright scandalous clash of tradition and modernity, as the vanguard of musical modernism presented meticulous, even reverential arrangements of quintessentially Viennese light music. Ironically, this concert was also hosted in a building designed by Vienna's controversial, prototypical modernist architect and enemy of historicism, Alfred Loos.

40 Cherlin, *Schoenberg's Musical Imagination,* 328.

41 Therese Muxeneder claims the waltzes were all chosen by Schoenberg from a popular anthology of piano reductions, published by Cahn in Leipzig, which is not in Schoenberg's library. See Muxeneder, "Walzer von Johann Strauss," Arnold Schönberg Center (2009). http://schoenberg.at/index.php/en/faq-2/walzer-von-johann-strauss. Accessed December 31, 2023.

42 At 143 measures, the coda is more than quadruple the length of the introduction, at least twice as long as each of the waltz groups, and contains new melodic material.

43 It was a "legendary" event, as Therese Muxeneder has observed, fuelled by the "curiosity of the stylistic opposites of Strauss vs. Viennese School." See Muxeneder, "Walzer von Johann Strauss." It is interesting to note that this concert of Strauss waltzes preceded the celebratory unveiling of Edmund Heller's now-famous golden Strauss Denkmal in Vienna's Stadtpark—for which the Vienna Philharmonic, conducted by Arthur Nikisch, played a program of some of Strauss' most popular waltzes—by just a few weeks. See Clemens Hellsberg, "History of the New Year's Concert," *Wiener Philharmoniker* (2017). https://www.wienerphilharmoniker.at/en/newyearsconcert/tradition-and-history. Accessed May 9, 2024.

Schoenberg's Strauss arrangements appear at a propitious time and they portend at once a beginning and an end. During the early 1920s, Schoenberg included a number of waltzes in his own compositions, and it is significant to note that the appearance of these symbols of old Vienna – these "memorative signs" – coincide directly with the advent and development of Schoenberg's twelve-tone method, the would-be guarantor of the future of German music. The Strauss waltz arrangements are preceded, in 1920, by the first sketches of waltzes for Schoenberg's Serenade, Op. 24. These sketches include "*Tanzscene*," which comprises a waltz and a *Ländler*, along with a fragment of a movement labelled "*Tempo zwischen langsamem Walzer* [*und*] *Polacca*" that was never completed. The Strauss waltz arrangements were premiered in late May of 1921. Later that same summer, Schoenberg began work on yet another waltz, a "masked" waltz in the form of a march that would also be included in the Serenade. In the midst of composing all of these waltzes, Schoenberg was reading the work of Josef Hauer, an early theorist of twelve-tone composition.[44] Waltzes and the twelve-tone method are thus curiously, historically coincident. Moreover, what follows shortly thereafter is another waltz, namely Op. 23, No. 5, one of Schoenberg's first twelve-tone compositions. While the Op. 23 waltz was completed in early 1923, and the entirety of Op. 23 was published later that year, the earliest sketch for this waltz dates from the summer of 1921. The waltz, a symbol of Vienna's musical history, a "memorative sign" of a lost past, thus appears at exactly the moment when Schoenberg, as Leo Treitler claims, acutely understood himself to be "carrying the future of German music on his shoulders"[45] and was actively contemplating a way forward, beyond of the impasse of free atonality. The waltz, then, provides a poignant nostalgic moment: a reminder that the way forward always already involves looking back.

Schoenberg completed a third Strauss waltz arrangement in 1925, the centenary of Strauss' birth. It was a version of Strauss' 1889 *Kaiserwalzer*, Op. 437, for a chamber ensemble similar in constitution to the *Pierrot Lunaire* forces: string quartet, piano, flute and clarinet. Indeed, it was intended for the *Pierrot* ensemble's Spanish tour, and it could arguably be interpreted as a kind of subtle critique – even modernizing – of the earlier Strauss arrangements and their mildly "Palm Court" flavor (the 1921 arrangements had featured a standard Viennese salon orchestra complement of string quartet, piano and harmonium). Premiered in Barcelona in April of 1925 as part of a concert of Viennese classical music – it was the final piece on a program that included Beethoven, Schubert, Mahler, and Mozart – the *Kaiserwalzer* arrangement, Alban Berg believed, demonstrated a very specific kind of nostalgia at work: namely, a longing for an earlier political regime.[46] Berg felt that Schoenberg, who was troubled by the growing anti-Semitism in Austria and was frustrated by a lack of viable political options on either the left or the right, "does not properly know where he stands politically. He thinks to build on the old, as quickly as possible, but to do it better. Thus nearly monarchist."[47] This monarchistic nostalgia seems to manifest itself through the addition of new contrapuntal lines to the *Kaiserwalzer,* comprising melodic motives taken from Joseph Haydn's *Kaiserhymne.* Indeed, the quoting of the *Kaiserhymne* in the Strauss arrangement – the motives appear several times – gives credence to Berg's idea that Schoenberg was gazing back nostalgically towards a time that was less fraught with social and political turmoil. While the melodic motives from the *Kaiserhymne* are not immediately apparent – especially

44 Simms, *The Atonal Music of Arnold Schoenberg*, 8.
45 Leo Treitler, "History and Music," *New Literary History* 21, no. 2 (1990): 312.
46 Camille Crittendon has argued that, for the Viennese, waltzes played an important socio-political role: their simplicity served the "ideological function of conveying a feeling of (temporary) social unification." In this respect, the waltz was always already political, insofar as it evoked potent associations for audiences in Vienna, across social classes, "appeal[ing] to a range of ages and social strata, all united for the moment simply by virtue of their common Austrian (or Viennese) heritage." Dancers, forced into a tight embrace in order to resist the centrifugal forces generated by spinning—clinging together to resist being torn apart—thus served as an "apt analogy" for the great socio-political pressures and changes happening in the Empire in the latter part of the 19th century. See Camille Crittendon, *Johann Strauss and Vienna: Politics of Popular Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 110.
47 Quoted in Zoë Lang, *The Legacy of Johann Strauss* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 138.

where they occur stretched out into a cantus firmus, or as inner voices – "there is little question," as Zoë Lang has demonstrated, "that Schoenberg references the imperial era with the juxtaposition of the *Kaiserhymne* and *Kaiserwalzer*."[48]

However, in addition to the *Kaiserwalzer*'s variegated forces and imperial cipher, Schoenberg's arrangement also seems to suggest more than a simple longing for an earlier, happier past. Indeed, when examined closely, it becomes clear that a certain ambivalence pervades the work. As Lawrence Kramer has observed, Schoenberg's arrangement is faithful to Strauss on the surface, but at a sub-surface level, it is "contrarian": the waltz is here "reconstituted" so as to foreground structure and motivic design, reflecting the filtering process of the intervening years between its origin and its reconstruction in Schoenberg's hands – and, of course, Schoenberg added contrapuntal lines to the original, thereby drawing attention to the piece as not merely arranged but also as re-composed.[49] Here, Schoenberg treats Strauss and the waltz like he treats Bach or Handel: these composers, viewed through the lens of modernism, are in need of motivic–structural "clarification," across both the vertical and horizontal axes.[50] The waltz is no longer a locus of "pleasant effects," created through "an ensemble of skillfully combined parts"; nor is it unequivocally reminiscent of Vienna's Golden Age; rather, it becomes a metaphor for the socio-political "friction and complexity" of post-Imperial Vienna.[51] As with the Op. 45 waltz, Schoenberg has come full circle in his *Kaiserwalzer* arrangement: the waltz becomes a nostalgic gesture, but one that, in its critical, contrarian character, more clearly – arguably, definitively – combines the restorative and reflective types of nostalgia, exemplifying its fundamental ambivalence, affirming Schoenberg's transition into a new aesthetic phase while remaining rooted in the past.

Conclusion

Considering the role of nostalgia in Schoenberg's music might prove a fruitful way around the high-modernist narrative – handed down via Darmstadt – that still shapes and shadows Schoenberg's legacy to this day. Michael Tippet remarked upon it in Schoenberg's obituary, noting that those who had a particular view of history and progress held that "a waltz…in twelve-tone technique, is an equivocation, a confusion, that the real next step is to find new forms…to match properly the new methods."[52] Schoenberg is, as Alan Pryce Jones described him, also in an obituary, the "startling…innovator" who nonetheless had "roots deep in the soil of Vienna,"[53] a contradictory figure, again, who is not always easily reconciled with the modernist-historical narrative. We can see "Schoenberg as Strauss" perhaps most clearly when we read Schoenberg's waltzes as not merely grotesque or ironic, but rather as nostalgic gestures of complexity and ambivalence, in which reflective and restorative impulses are imbricated. Such an approach to Schoenberg and the waltz exemplifies Boym's "'third way' intellectual history of modernism," which doesn't follow "the logic of crisis and progress but rather involves an exploration of side alleys and lateral possibilities of the project of critical modernity."[54]

48 Lang, *The Legacy of Johann Strauss*, 135.
49 Lawrence Kramer, *Musical Meaning: Toward a Critical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 227. This, too, is arguably a fundamentally contrarian gesture: modernizing Strauss' waltz with counterpoint, a slightly impudent gesture that hints at Boym's notion, cited above, of nostalgia's modern incarnation as "a rebellion against the modern idea of time, the time of history and progress."
50 Kramer, *Musical Meaning*, 227.
51 Kramer, *Musical Meaning*, 227.
52 Michael Tippett, "The Jew Who Died in Los Angeles," *The Listener*, January 17, 1952: 106.
53 Alan Pryce-Jones, "The Background of Old Vienna," *The Listener*, January 17, 1952: 106.

The question "Who is Schoenberg?" seems to be central to much of the recent scholarship concerned with the composer, and this epistemological conundrum is particularly cogent as Schoenberg and his music are revisited in light of the 150th anniversary of his birth. Is Schoenberg an arch modernist, or a staunch conservative? An anarchist or a monarchist? A tonal composer or a dodecaphonist? A relic of Imperial Vienna, or a harbinger of the future? I have tried to argue here that when we invoke "Schoenberg as Strauss," the waltz can become a means by which we are able to reconsider Schoenberg's legacy. If we put aside "the logic of crisis and progress" that pervades the historical narrative of Schoenberg's development and import in favor of the "lateral possibilities" that a "third way" of modernism admits, then ambiguities, ambivalence and other narrative possibilities – including "Schoenberg the nostalgic" – can properly emerge.

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54 Svetlana Boym, *Architecture of the Off-Modern* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2008), 4. In Boym's typology of nostalgia, when both the restorative and reflective types are in play simultaneously, it becomes possible to talk about what she calls the "off-modern" artist—she includes figures like Nabakov, Kundera and Stravinsky in this group. Schoenberg could be fruitfully added to the list of off-moderns. The off-modern artist invokes nostalgia as he "mediates" between modernism and postmodernism (and in so doing can be frustrating for scholars), between the new and the old, seeking the new by looking simultaneously at the past and the future, reveling in ambiguity and contradiction: "reflection and longing, estrangement and affection, go together—[the off-modern tradition] allows us to take a detour from the deterministic narrative of twentieth century history." See Boym, *Future of Nostalgia*, xvii.

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