

Schoenberg's Playlist

Listening to Vienna at the Beginning
of the 20th Century

Friday, January 28

8:00 p.m.
Barnes Hall

Saturday, January 29

5:00 p.m.
Johnson Museum

Sunday, January 30

3:00 p.m.
Barnes Hall

Xak Bjerken, director

Presented by the Department of Music, this festival is funded in part by grants from the Department of Music, Cornell Council for the Arts, Johnson Museum of Art, Center for European Studies, German Studies, and the Institute for German Cultural Studies.

2011

**Concert I: Friday, January 28
8:00 PM, Barnes Hall**

Pre-concert talk at 7:15 PM with Michael Friedmann, Roger Moseley, and Mike Lee

<i>Vöglein Schwermut</i> , op. 10, no. 3 (1901)	Alexander Zemlinsky (1871–1942)
<i>Der Tag wird kühl</i> (1896)	
<i>Hain in diesen paradiesen</i> , from <i>Book of Hanging Gardens</i> , op. 15 (1910)	Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951)
<i>Bild der Liebe</i> , from <i>Eight Early Songs</i> (1904)	Anton Webern (1883–1945)
<i>Am Ufer</i> , from <i>Five Songs</i> (1908)	
<i>Dies ist ein Lied</i> , from <i>5 Lieder aus Der siebente Ring</i> , op. 3 (1908)	
<i>Sommerfäden</i> , op. 2, no. 1 (1901)	Franz Schreker (1878–1934)
<i>Spuk</i> , op. 7, no. 4 (1902)	

Rachel Calloway, mezzo-soprano
Xak Bjerken, piano

String Quartet, op. 3 (1910)	Alban Berg (1885–1935)
<i>Langsam</i>	
<i>Mäßige viertel</i>	

Daedalus Quartet:
Min-Young Kim, violin; Ara Gregorian, violin
Jessica Thompson, viola; Raman Ramakrishnan, cello

Intermission

Variations for Piano, op. 27 (1936)	Webern
<i>Sehr mäßig</i>	
<i>Sehr schnell</i>	
<i>Ruhig Fließend</i>	

Mike Lee, piano

Quartet No. 3 in A Major, op. 4 (1909)	Karl Weigl (1881–1949)
<i>Innig bewegt</i>	
<i>Kräftig bewegt</i>	
<i>Sehr langsam</i>	
<i>Stürmisch</i>	

Daedalus Quartet

Concert II: Saturday, January 29, 5:00 PM
Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art

Food for purchase (cash only) by Dano's Heuriger on Seneca

Exhibition of Wassily Kandinsky's "Kleine Welten" lithographs (1922) in the Study Gallery

Romance in D Major for violin and piano, op. 23 (1910)

Karol Szymanowski
(1882–1937)

Nicholas DiEugenio, violin
Xak Bjerken, piano

Four Pieces for clarinet and piano, op. 5 (1913)

Alban Berg
(1885–1935)

Maßig
Sehr langsam
Sehr rasch
Langsam

Richard Faria, clarinet
Xak Bjerken, piano

Three Pieces for String Quartet (1914)

Igor Stravinsky
(1882–1971)

Dance
Eccentric
Canticle

Daedalus Quartet:
Min-Young Kim, violin; Ara Gregorian, violin
Jessica Thompson, viola; Raman Ramakrishnan, cello

Intermission

Five Piano Pieces, op. 23 (1923)

Arnold Schoenberg
(1874–1951)

Sehr langsam
Sehr rasch
Langsam
Schwungvoll
Gigue

Michael Friedmann, piano

Emperor Waltz (1889, arr. 1921, or 1925?)

Johann Strauss, Jr.
(1825–1899)
arr. Schoenberg

Juliana Pepinsky, flute
Richard Faria, clarinet
Daedalus Quartet
Xak Bjerken, piano

**Concert III: Sunday, January 30
3:00 PM, Barnes Hall**

La chevelure, from *Les Chanson de Bilitis* (1898)

Claude Debussy
(1862–1918)

Nacht, from *Seven Early Songs* (1905–08)

Alban Berg
(1885–1935)

Die stille Stadt, from *Five Songs* (1910)

Alma Mahler
(1879–1964)

Warm die Lüfte, from *Four Songs*, op. 2 (1910)

Berg

Das Ständchen, from *Six Simple Songs*, op. 9 (1911)

Erich Korngold
(1897–1957)

Rachel Calloway, mezzo-soprano
Xak Bjerken, piano

Sonata in G Major for violin and piano, op. 6 (1913)

Korngold

Ben moderato, ma con passione

Scherzo: Allegro molto – Trio; Moderato cantabile

Adagio, Mit tiefer Empfindung

Finale: Allegretto quasi Andante

Joseph Lin, violin
Miri Yampolsky, piano

Intermission

Fêtes, from *Nocturnes* (arr. 1909)

Debussy
arr. Maurice Ravel

Yiran Wang and Xak Bjerken, pianos

Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen (1896, arr. 1920)

Gustav Mahler
(1860–1911)

I. *Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht*

II. *Ging heut morgen übers Feld*

III. *Ich hab' ein glühend Messer*

IV. *Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz*

arr. Schoenberg

Rachel Calloway, mezzo-soprano
Jeff Meyer, conductor

Juliana Pepinsky, flute; Richard Faria, clarinet;
Joseph Lin, Nicholas DiEugenio, violins; Zachary Slack, viola;
John Haines-Eitzen, cello; Nicholas Walker, bass;
Roger Moseley, piano; Daniel Anastasio, harmonium;
Cayenna Ponchione, percussion

Schoenberg's Playlist

Between 1918 and 1921, Arnold Schoenberg established and directed the *Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen in Wien*, or Viennese Society for Private Musical Performances. The Society presented a widely eclectic group of works almost weekly, including some of the seminal works of the twentieth century. From a distance of nearly 100 years, "Schoenberg's Playlist" re-presents and discusses this music that resides in the twilight zone of tonality's dissolution, and attempts to resurrect a mode of listening that re-focuses our ears on the narrative quality of each composition within its own musical language and idiom.

In the wake of World War I, and in response to the scandals that simultaneously marred and defined the reception of Schoenberg's works, the composer, along with his students and friends, created an alternative context for musical performance that shielded avant-garde composers from the attacks of traditionally oriented Viennese critics and concert-goers. As you can see in Roger Moseley's "social network" below, this community included many of the leading artists of the day, and they were unusually supportive of each other in promoting the activities and goals of the *Verein*. In many ways, the concert programs presented there are source documents of what has ever since been known as "new music"; to explore them today is to excavate the roots of modernism. For much of the twentieth century, Schoenberg's Second Viennese School was considered the leading compositional school of modernism, but the musical influences from which it sprang are far more diverse than its legacy and reputation might imply. Schoenberg was keenly interested in music written in vastly differing harmonic, stylistic, and nationalistic languages from his own; he went so far as to withhold his own compositions from being performed during the Society's first year. In this sense, the Society brought Viennese musicians and interested concert-goers up to date with new music written elsewhere in war-torn Europe. The Society's very first concert, for example, featured works by two foreign composers, Debussy and Scriabin, as well as a performance of Mahler's Seventh Symphony (arranged for piano duet!).

Roughly two-thirds of the works I have programmed here are from the original *Verein* programs, and all are by composers represented in the original concerts. While choosing works to perform over the last few months (one of the most delicious assignments I have ever undertaken), I was struck by a few common themes that might help orient your ears as listeners. Much of this music is nocturnal in character, dark and rich in timbre, characterized by slow tempi and extreme dynamics (such as indications to play at a barely audible *pppp*). The scores are dense with highly detailed and ambiguous directions for the performers, such as in one Schoenberg song where the composer writes "extremely soft, very expressive, remaining calm, yet always growing"—all to be conveyed within a single bar! This is music in the midst of transformation, supercharged with newness, detaching itself—sometimes gently, at other times savagely—from traditional tonal centers. I hope our love of this music and the performances speak well of this amazing and singular point in musical history. Enjoy!

– *Xak Bjerken*

The Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen in Wien: Publicizing Privacy

The history of modernism is often narrated as a succession of iconoclastic individuals, each of whom innovated—and thus transgressed—a little more boldly than his predecessors. **Arnold Schoenberg** not only fits this mold; he cast himself in it. The self-proclaimed "emancipator of dissonance" knew that his music would alienate many, but this merely strengthened his conviction that it needed to be written. While he was serving in the army during World War I, a superior officer reportedly asked if he was "this notorious Schoenberg," to which he replied: "Beg to report, sir, yes. Nobody wanted to be, someone had to be, so I let it be me."

By sacrificing public acclaim for the noble cause of music's advancement, however, the iconoclastic Schoenberg revealed himself to be a traditionalist of a different stripe. His rhetoric of stoical devotion to the art can be traced back to none other than Beethoven, whose deafness isolated him from

Viennese society but eventually led him to be judged by measures other than—indeed, opposed to—popularity. For Schoenberg, Beethoven’s deafness pointed both to the fallibility of perception and to the abiding genius of conception: public rejection could bring with it a form of kudos, and it was only through the vicissitudes of suffering that the peak of creativity could be attained.

The image of Schoenberg in army uniform brings home the lengths to which the aftermath of World War I cast a shadow over cultural life, imbuing terms such as “avant-garde” with all-too-literal meaning, forcing artists and musicians into penury, and polarizing aesthetic conflicts. Even before the war, performances of Schoenberg’s music had elicited sharp disapproval from the Viennese press. Excluded from the powerful institutional dynamics that held sway over Vienna’s most prestigious musical venues and concert series, Schoenberg was forced to seek out alternative ways to promote his own cause and that of modern music.

Schoenberg’s idea of forming a society dedicated to new music can be traced back to 1904, when he—alongside his counterpoint teacher **Alexander Zemlinsky** and under the sympathetic (if somewhat bemused) oversight of honorary president **Gustav Mahler**—established the *Vereinigung der schaffenden Tonkünstler*, or Society of Creative Musicians. In its manifesto, Schoenberg not only called for more performances of contemporary music, but also insisted that their quality must be of the highest standard if the music was to be properly understood: “Numerous, repeated performances of the first order are needed. . . . Such performances need the kind of preparation that is exceptionally exacting and completely in compliance with the composer’s intent.” Schoenberg was at pains to deny any partisan tendencies, claiming that “in the choice of scores to be performed, no specific school or stylistic genre will be given preference.” As it turned out, the *Vereinigung* mounted only five concerts, featuring the music of Mahler, **Richard Strauss**, and **Karl Weigl**, but the seeds of the *Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen in Wien* had been sown; years later, all three composers would reappear on its programs.

The manifesto drafted by Schoenberg’s pupil **Alban Berg** and belatedly issued during the third season of the *Verein* in 1921 reiterated Schoenberg’s avowed impartiality with regard to national schools and styles, but made clear where its focus lay: through meticulous rehearsal, the *Verein* would achieve “the very best performances at the very place where most of the good music was written—in Vienna. We shall reach this goal and the world will become cognizant of it.” But despite this commitment to Vienna’s musical legacy, the *Verein* introduced new principles and rules that reflected Schoenberg’s rejection of the musical etiquette that distinguished traditional Viennese concert life. Non-members of the *Verein* were barred from attending its concerts, and reviews and publicity were expressly forbidden; moreover, all “expressions of approval, of displeasure, and of gratitude” were impermissible. The question of whether the audience “liked” the music was subordinated to the degree to which the composer’s intention could be crystallized, a process in which the listener had to play an active, self-effacing, and challenging role. In Schoenberg’s words, “an artistic impression is substantially the resultant of two components. One what the work of art gives the onlooker—the other, what he is capable of giving to the work of art.”

As for the performers, they were called upon to dedicate their talents to the service of the work, rather than vice versa: virtuosity for its own sake was abjured, and a nominated *Vortragsmeister*, or coach, supervised the detailed preparations for each concert. Schoenberg and his most famous pupils, Berg and **Anton Webern**, initially assumed this role; they were followed by trusted performers such as the pianist **Eduard Steuermann** and the nine-fingered violinist **Rudolf Kolisch**. Webern in particular was greatly enamored with the function of the *Vortragsmeister*, which he deemed “unlimited in purity, clarity, and self-denial”: Mike Lee suggests that Webern’s immersion in the minutiae of coaching and the unlimited nuances of performance had ramifications for his later compositional practice. Indeed, Webern went so far as to suggest that the relationship between *Vortragsmeister* and performance ensembles be taken as a model for the *modus operandi* of the nascent League of Nations.

The ascetic elitism of the *Verein* reflected Schoenberg’s view that the evaluation of music was a matter for professionals rather than the masses, and that it could only be carried out under appropriate acoustical, ideological, and technical conditions. These factors, combined with the elevation of the private at the expense of the public and the emphasis on repetition, might suggest that Schoenberg and his collaborators were striving for an ideal that would eventually be realized through the tech-

nology of the hi-fi recording, and even the potential for solitary, repetitive contemplation afforded to the beheadphoned iPod listener.

From this perspective, the concept of “Schoenberg’s Playlist” recognizes the possibility not only that an awareness of the historical and cultural contexts in which this music was performed at the *Verein* can inform our understanding today, but also that latter-day innovations and developments can illuminate the past. Likewise, the concept of mapping out part of the social network that sustained the *Verein* is not merely an anachronistic attempt to drag Schoenberg into the Facebook era, but rather a means of illustrating that even—perhaps especially—such a hyper-individualistic composer as Schoenberg relied heavily on the efforts, skills, and collective goodwill of many other musicians, administrators, and financiers in his ambitious attempt to renovate the stale performance traditions that had, in his view, suffocated Vienna’s proud heritage of musical innovation and quality. In other words, the “privacy” that Schoenberg valued so highly could only exist to the extent that his social network “publicized” it.

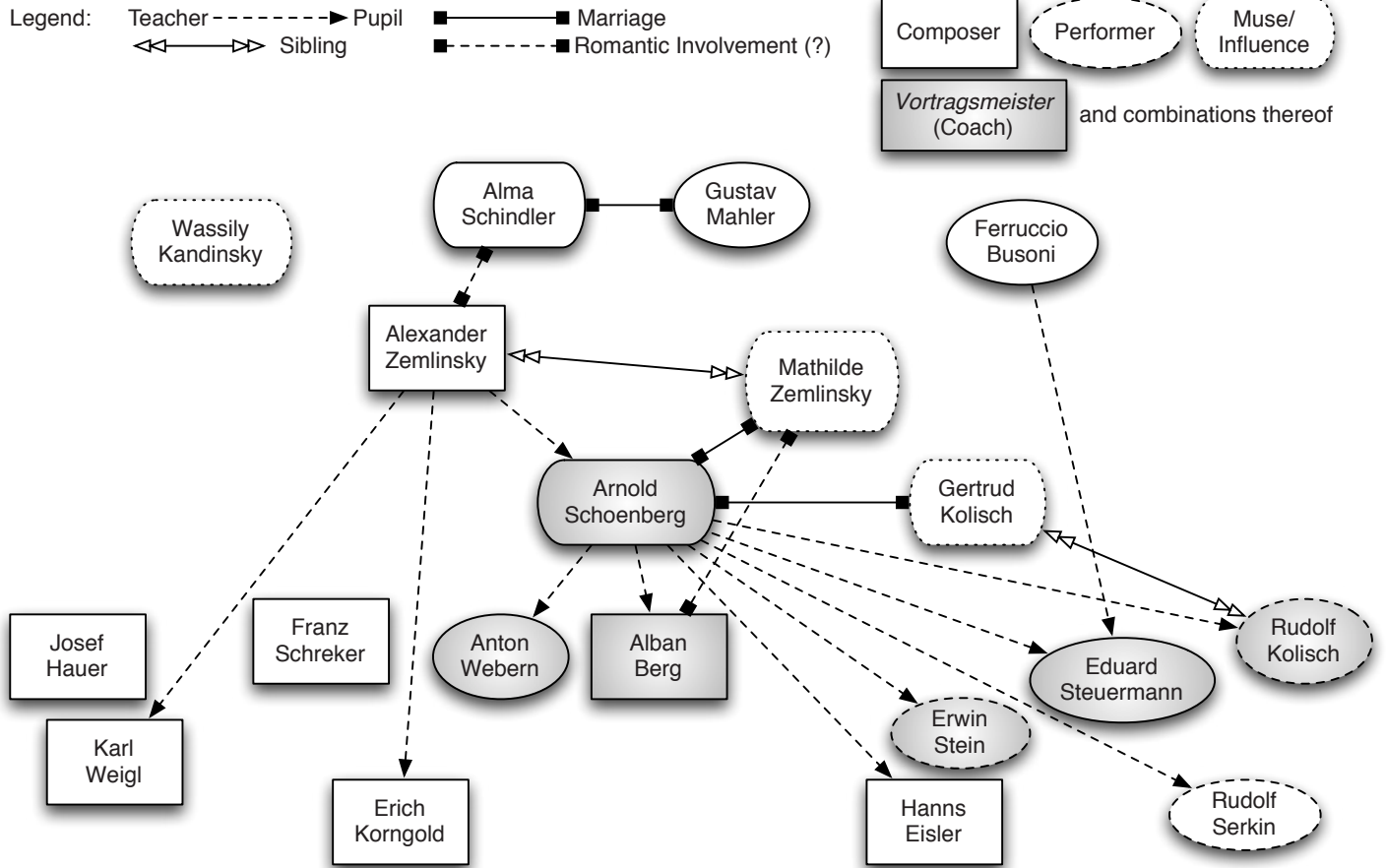
As Mike Lee observes, the activities of the *Verein* constructed a paradoxical relationship between composers, performers, and audience, many of whose roles overlapped. The involvement of Webern and other *Vortragsmeister* was predicated on the conviction that the higher the standard of performance, the more easily the audience would accept the music; and yet the degree of the audience’s comprehension was rendered indecipherable by Schoenberg’s injunction against feedback of any kind. Thus the whole endeavor resembled an act of faith: the composers’ painstakingly crafted messages were conscientiously bottled, then cast into inscrutable waters.

Schoenberg’s curation of the *Verein* played an important role in his development as a composer. While he wrote almost no new music during the years in which the *Verein* was active, in the wake of its disbandment he first deployed his method of writing serial, or twelve-tone, music. This suggests that his absorption in the music of other composers was a crucial element in Schoenberg’s formulation of serialism. In particular, it is telling that the music of Josef Hauer featured relatively prominently on the *Verein*’s programs. Hauer had established his own “law of the twelve tones” as early as 1919; his music surely had an influence on Schoenberg, despite (or perhaps illustrated by) Schoenberg’s sniffy dismissal of his efforts in 1923: “Hauer looks for laws. Good. But he looks for them where he will not find them.” Schoenberg’s self-mythologizing narrative of the misunderstood genius, neglected by the public and thus condemned to plow his own furrow, reads differently from this perspective: his own innovations gained traction from his deep engagement with the work of colleagues and students, while the audience’s small size and “apathy” in the face of his music were ordained by the very statutes of the *Verein*!

Schoenberg hardly mellowed with age. As late as 1946, he summed up his disdain for the judgment of the musical public with a notorious aphorism: “If it is art, it is not for all, and if it is for all, it is not art.” His uncompromising brand of modernism might still sit uneasily with today’s audiences, but the type of musical engagement advocated by the *Verein* can be understood, as Xak Bjerken suggests above, as an appeal to open-mindedness and a warning against the rush to judgment. In any case, Schoenberg’s dogged faith in the vindication that posterity would bring him stands in poignant counterpoint with the ravages of the twentieth century, hinted at by the bare fact that his aphorism issued from Los Angeles rather than Vienna. The social network that underpinned the *Verein* is a snapshot of its time, but it also hints at the future that was to scatter it far and wide. Kolisch, Steuermann, Zemlinsky, **Hanns Eisler**, **Erich Korngold**, **Béla Bartók**, **Rudolf Serkin**, and Schoenberg himself emigrated or were exiled to the U.S. once the Nazis had come to power; the musical and the political again proved to be inextricable, but sadly not in accordance with Webern’s sunny idealism. Europe’s loss was North America’s gain, however; in manifold ways, the influence of the *Verein* resonated throughout U.S. concert life over the second half of the twentieth century via the practice and pedagogy of both composition and performance. The experience of playing, hearing, and contemplating this music in twenty-first-century Ithaca thus holds the promise of affirming connections to the past even as it revels in its departures from tradition—a combination of which Schoenberg just might have approved.

– Roger Moseley

The Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen in Wien: A Social Network



OTHER PROMINENT COMPOSERS FEATURED ON VEREIN PROGRAMS

France	Germany	Central Europe	Russia
Erik Satie	Richard Strauss	Josef Suk	Modest Musorgsky
Claude Debussy	Max Reger	Béla Bartók	Alexander Scriabin
Maurice Ravel	Hans Pfitzner	Karol Szymanowski	Igor Stravinsky

Song Translations

Concert I

Zemlinsky: Vöglein Schwermut (Christian Morgenstern, trans. John H. Campbell)
A black-bird flies across the world,
singing so sorrowfully of death . . .
Whoever hears it, hears nothing else,
whoever hears it, hears such sadness,
they fear the sun may shine no more.

All thru' the night it rests
on the finger of death.
He caresses the bird solemnly and urges it:
Fly, my little bird! Fly, little bird!
And again it flies soaring over the world.

Zemlinsky: Der Tag wird kühl (Paul Heyse, trans. Emily Ezust)
The day grows cool, the day grows pale,
the birds are brushing over the grass.
Observe how the blades tremble
from the sweep of their wings
and gently wave without stopping.

And late in the evening, love wafts
over the rosebed of my heart.
Its branches whisper and quiver
and lovely thoughts weave themselves
into my secret night-prayers.

You distant heart, come soon to me
or else we will both grow grey and old,
or else in my heart there will grow
many weeds, thorns and sorrows.
The night grows long, the night grows cold!

Schoenberg: Hain in diesen Paradiesen
(Stefan George)
Woodland in these paradises
alternates with flowery meadows,
halls, gaily painted floorstones.
Beaks of slender storks ruffle
pools that opalesce with fish.
Rows of birds dull gleaming warble
on the jutting roofs
and the golden rushes murmur,
Yet my dream pursues only one thing.

Webern: Bild der Liebe (Martin Grief, trans. Rachel Calloway)
Surrounded by the forest of flowering trees
laughing in the life of love's dream
near and far joined him at the same time
until he vanished from the magic kingdom.

Webern: Am Ufer (Richard Dehmel, trans. Joel Ayau)
The world becomes silent,
except for the sound of your blood;
into its bright abyss sinks
the distant day,

without a shudder; the glow embraces
the highest land, in the sea struggles
the distant night.

It does not delay; from the flood springs up
a little star, your soul drinks
the eternal light.

Webern: Dies ist ein Lied (Stefan George, trans. Emily Ezust)
This is a song
for you alone:
of childish beliefs,
of pious tears. . .
through morning gardens it floats
on light wings.
Only for you
would it like to be a song
that moves the soul.

Schreker: Sommerfäden (Dora Leen, trans. Rachel Calloway and Celia Barry)
When the summer time ends,
The light changes into dusk,
The blessing of Autumn's day in the hands,
The silent Mrs. Lovely moves through the grove.

And with quiet love-talk,
Strewn like a lovely graceful trail. . .
White, soft filaments of summer
She scatters throughout Nature. . .

Wisps of summer move through the countryside,
Quietly they approach and dissipate.
Pious wishes quietly sent.
May they give this instruction:

"Summer threads, float hither!
Greet me from near and far to my lovely,
True Beloved;
Summer' gossamer, float hither!"

And Mrs. Lovely smiles softly,
And summer's filaments
Make their enigmatic journey
Gleaming to the loved ones there. . .

Schreker: Spuk (Dora Leen, trans. Christopher Hailey)

In moonlight glimmer, in magic shimmer
The elves start to dance in a ring;
Faraway plays a tune of old days,
Scraped on an old fiddle string.

And towards the inn with impatient mien
Hastens the woodman on nocturnal trails.
In town they dance as candle flames prance,
Merriment sounds through the vale.

A young girl's gaze, her longing betrays,
From dancing her cheeks are so red;
In moonlight rays a pale young face
Is kissed by the elves until dead.

Concert III

Debussy: La chevelure (Pierre Louys, trans. Peter Low)

He told me: "Last night I had a dream.
Your hair was around my neck,
it was like a black necklace
round my nape and on my chest.

"I was stroking your hair, and it was my own;
thus the same tresses joined us forever,
with our mouths touching,
just as two laurels often have only one root.

"And gradually I sensed,
since our limbs were so entwined,
that I was becoming you
and you were entering me like my dream."

When he'd finished,
he gently put his hands on my shoulders,
and gazed at me so tenderly
that I lowered my eyes, quivering.

Berg: Nacht (Carl Hauptmann, trans. Emily Ezust)

The clouds embrown the night and valley;
the mists float above, the water rushing gently.
Now all at once they unveil themselves:

O listen! pay heed!

A broad land of wonder has opened up.
Silver mountains rise up, fantastically huge,
silent paths lit with silver
from the hidden lap of the valley;
and the noble world is so dreamily pure.
A mute beech stands by the path,
black with shadows; a breeze from a distant,
lonely grove wafts gently by.

And from the deep darkness of the valley
flash lights in the silent night.

Drink, my soul! Drink in this solitude!
O listen! pay heed!

A. Mahler: Die stille Stadt (Richard Dehmel, trans. Hyperion Records)

A town lies in the valley;
A pale day fades.
It will not be long
Before neither moon nor stars
But only night shall rule the heavens.

From all the mountaintops
Mists descend upon the town;
No roof nor yard nor house
Nor sound can pierce the smoke,
Not even a tower or a bridge.

But as the traveller felt fear
A tiny light shone below,
And through smoke and mist
And a soft song of praise began
From the mouth of a child.

Berg: Warm die Lüfte (Alfred Mombert, trans. Jakob Kellner)

Warm are the breezes;
Grass grows in sunny meadows,
Listen!

Listen, there pipes the nightingale. . .
I will sing:

High up there in dusky mountain forests,
Cold snow melts and oozes;
A maiden in a grey dress
leans against a damp oaktree;
Her cheeks are ill,

The grey eyes burn
Through the dusky, giant tree trunks.

"He doesn't come yet. He's making me wait" . . .
Die!

The one dies while the other lives:
That makes the world so deeply beautiful.

Korngold: Das Ständchen (Josef Eichendorff, trans. Emily Ezust)

Over the roofs between pale
clouds, the moon gazes across;
a student there in the street
is singing at his beloved's door.

And the fountains murmur again
through the still loneliness,
as do the woods, from the mountain down,
just as in the good old times.

So in my young days,
would I often on summer nights
also play my lute here
and invent many merry songs.

But from her silent threshold
they have carried my love away to rest.
And you, happy fellow,
sing, sing ever on!

Mahler: Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen

(trans. Emily Ezust)

I. Wenn mein Schatz Hochzeit macht

When my darling has her wedding-day,
her joyous wedding-day,
I will have my day of mourning!
I will go to my little room,
my dark little room,
and weep, weep for my darling,
for my dear darling!

Blue flower! Do not wither!
Sweet little bird – you sing on the green heath!
Alas, how can the world be so fair?
Chirp! Chirp!
Do not sing; do not bloom!
Spring is over.
All singing must now be done.
At night when I go to sleep,
I think of my sorrow,
of my sorrow!

II. Ging heut morgen übers Feld

I walked across the fields this morning;
dew still hung on every blade of grass.
The merry finch spoke to me:
“Hey! Isn’t it? Good morning! Isn’t it?
You! Isn’t it becoming a fine world?
Chirp! Chirp! Fair and sharp!
How the world delights me!”

Also, the bluebells in the field
merrily with good spirits
tolled out to me with bells (ding, ding)
their morning greeting:
“Isn’t it becoming a fine world?
Ding, ding! Fair thing!
How the world delights me!”

And then, in the sunshine,
the world suddenly began to glitter;
everything gained sound and color
in the sunshine!
Flower and bird, great and small!
“Good day, is it not a fine world?
Hey, isn’t it? A fair world?”

Now will my happiness also begin?
No, no – the happiness I mean
can never bloom!

III. Ich hab’ ein glühend Messer

I have a red-hot knife,
a knife in my breast.
O woe! It cuts so deeply
into every joy and delight.
Alas, what an evil guest it is!
Never does it rest or relax,
not by day or by night, when I would sleep.
O woe!

When I gaze up into the sky
I see two blue eyes there.
O woe! When I walk in the yellow field,
I see from afar her blond hair
waving in the wind.
O woe!

When I start from a dream
and hear the tinkle of her silvery laugh,
O woe!
Would that I lay on my black bier –
Would that I could never again open my eyes!

IV. Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz

The two blue eyes of my darling –
they have sent me into the wide world.
I had to take my leave of this well-beloved place!
O blue eyes, why did you gaze on me?
Now I will have eternal sorrow and grief.

I went out into the quiet night
well across the dark heath.
To me no one bade farewell.
Farewell! My companions are love and sorrow!

On the road there stands a linden tree,
and there for the first time I found rest in sleep!
Under the linden tree
that snowed its blossoms onto me –
I did not know how life went on,
and all was well again!
All! All, love and sorrow
and world and dream!

Guest Artists