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Schönbergs Zeichen: Wege zur Interpretation seiner
Klaviermusik (review)

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Schönbergs Zeichen: Wege zur Interpretation seiner Klaviermusik. By Jean-Jacques Dünki. (Publikationen der Internationalen Schönberg-Gesellschaft, Band 6.) Vienna: Verlag Lafite, 2006. [152 p. ISBN 3-85151-074-7. €34.] Music examples, facsimiles, tables, appendix, bibliography, compact disc.

Despite the burgeoning literature on Arnold Schoenberg, the performance of his music has received comparatively little scholarly attention. The principal contribution in this area, a compendium of essays (*Die Lehre von der musikalischen Aufführung in der Wiener Schule: Verhandlungen des Internationalen Colloquiums Wien 1995*, ed. Markus Grassl and Reinhard Kapp [Vienna: Böhlau, 2002]), has recently been supplemented with articles by Roland Jackson ("Schoenberg as Performer of his own Music," *Journal of Musicological Research* 24, no. 1 [January–March 2005]: 49–69) and Avior Byron ("The Test Pressings of Schoenberg Conducting Pierrot lunaire: Sprechstimme Reconsidered," *Music Theory Online* 12, no. 1 [February 2006]; <http://mto.societymusictheory.org/issues/mto.06.12.1.byron.html>, accessed 21 February 2007). Jean-Jacques Dünki's study of Schoenberg's piano music, the latest in the newly revived series entitled "Publikationen der Internationalen Schönberg-Gesellschaft" (now edited by Matthias Schmidt), is the first published monograph devoted exclusively to the topic of Schoenberg performance practice. His scholarly work notwithstanding (*Der Grad der Bewegung: Tempovorstellungen und -konzepte in Komposition und Interpretation 1900–1950*, ed. Jean-Jacques Dünki, Anton Haefeli and Regula Rapp [Bern: Peter Lang, 1998]), it is made clear from the outset, both in Rudolf Stephan's preface and in Dünki's own introduction, that his approach is that of a performer: having already released recordings of piano music by Berg and Webern, the book includes a compact disc containing performances of all of Schoenberg's completed works for piano.

As indicated by the title, the author considers performance indications ("Vortragszeichen") the "key to interpretation and expression" (p. 9). For Dünki, such indications or signs embrace all aspects of notation

—pitch, duration, dynamics, articulation, phrasing, rests, etc.—and demand a contextual reading: for instance, he notes that while an accent may be considered in isolation, it is through its interaction with all other performance indications that it acquires its complete effect (p. 13). Thus, according to Dünki, the appropriate interpretation entails close reading of the score. This is not to suggest, however, that one is subject to the text, but rather that the text is central to the interpretation: he posits that "the score is like a landscape, in which the performance indications represent signposts" and that it is therefore incumbent on the interpreter to choose his/her own path (p. 16). Dünki casts his net widely to explore these interpretative issues and advocates the study of a variety of sources: musical scores and compositional sketches; writings such as textbooks, essays, notes, and letters; recordings; and, in contrast to much current scholarship, sources emanating from members of the Viennese School—writings, comments, reports of Schoenberg's teachings and performances, and, most importantly, performances of his music, some of which were supervised by the composer.

Schönbergs Zeichen divides into four chapters, each of which is subdivided into several short sections. The first is loosely entitled "key concepts" ("Schlüsselbegriffe"), and contains a presentation of, and a brief commentary on topics as diverse as Schoenberg, (performance) indication and symbol, reading and understanding, interpretation and performance, "modern classics" ("Klassiker der Moderne"), innovation and tradition, the Viennese School, and written and oral records. Although some of the earlier topics are treated in a generalized way—the section on Schoenberg begins somewhat curiously with a substantial citation from the entry in the 1999 edition of *Meyers Großes Taschenlexikon* (p. 12)—and rely primarily on exposition, the final portion of the chapter, devoted to the composer's comments on markings, notation and performance, takes a different stance, providing a valuable inventory of Schoenberg's writings on these and related topics together with the numbers under which they are cataloged at the Arnold Schoenberg Center Private Foundation in Vienna.

The second chapter is similarly broad in its choice of topics. Dünki begins by consid-

ering Schoenberg's view of a number of his musical predecessors, drawing attention to ways in which they shaped his compositional process and, moreover, his performance ideal. In his discussion of Bach, for instance, he quotes from the well known letter to Fritz Stiedry (who conducted his 1922 orchestrations of two of Bach's chorale preludes), in which Schoenberg prioritized the necessity for creating "transparency" ("Durchsichtigkeit," p. 30), a trait, as Dünki tells us, that is equally relevant to the performance of Schoenberg's piano music.

Following a discussion highlighting various points of contact between Schoenberg and his contemporaries (Reger, Zemlinsky, and Gershwin), Dünki focuses in the remaining sections of the second chapter on broader issues relating to performance. As well as noting Schoenberg's comments and advice to performers, he quotes from reports by various members of the Viennese School to provide an attractive synthesis of Schoenberg's practice as conductor and rehearsal director: Erwin Ratz on the attention he devoted to voice leading and phrasing when conducting the Chamber Symphony, op. 9; Eugene Lehner (violinist of the Kolisch Quartet) on his insistence in rehearsals on "clarity"; Erich Schmid on the importance of the piano in the composition classes in Berlin in 1930; Lorna Truding, who attended Schoenberg's composition seminar at the Schwarzwald School in Vienna in 1917, on the role of music analysis in interpretation and performance; and the pianists, Eduard Steuermann and Else C. Kraus on, amongst other topics, the composer's preference for a sparing use of the pedal to render clearly the polyphonic fabric of the work (pp. 51–53). Dünki pursues this last line of thought in a section on fingering, in which he outlines and discusses the challenges involved in performing this music without the aid of the pedal and proposes, in an appendix to that section, strategies for overcoming Schoenberg's "legato (ohne Pedal)" designation and connecting dyads in op. 23, no. 4, to produce a "quasi-legato" effect (pp. 56–61).

One of the most refreshing aspects of Dünki's inquiry is the fact that he actively engages with Schoenberg's compositions written for instruments other than the piano. He points to correspondences be-

tween "Peripetie" of the *Fünf Orchesterstücke*, op. 16, and the third of the *Drei Klavierstücke*, op. 11 (pp. 46–47), and suggests that consideration of the instrumentation of the Serenade, op. 24 might prove useful for the interpretation of the contemporaneous *Fünf Klavierstücke*, op. 23 (p. 128). Most interesting, however, is Dünki's detailed account of the annotations Schoenberg made on the score of the Second String Quartet, op. 10 for the occasion of the French premiere of the work in 1909 (the document, which has thus far received little attention in the literature, is housed in the Paul Sacher Foundation in Basel). According to Dünki, these annotations can also inform the performance of the piano music (pp. 100–04).

The fruits of the author's archival research are apparent from the many fresh insights concerning the interpretation of various performance indications. This is particularly the case in chapter 3, where he addresses various parameters in isolation—pitch, rhythm/meter, tempo, dynamics, phrasing and articulation, main and subsidiary voices ("Haupt- und Nebstimmen"), sound and sound color, and expression. Yet, despite offering advice about realizing Schoenberg's graduated accentual patterns and, specifically, the difference between *marcato* and *martellato* accents (pp. 83–85), such nuances are rendered somewhat academic in a performance of the "Präludium" from the *Suite für Klavier*, op. 25 that fails to observe Schoenberg's basic dynamic differentiation at the beginning of the piece. Furthermore, as suggested in the discussion of the opening of each work in the final chapter (pp. 113–115), the performance of this and other pieces evidences an assumption on Dünki's part that the melody is given in the right hand and the accompaniment in the bass, something that is at odds with the polyphonic style of composition alluded to by Steuermann and Kraus. Bearing in mind Erwin Stein's description of op. 23, no. 1, as a "three-part invention" ("New Formal Principles," in *Orpheus in New Guises*, trans. Hans Keller [London: Rockliff, 1953], 66), performance of these pieces should ideally reflect Schoenberg's injunction to Stiedry to "take care that all voices are well-balanced dynamically, to achieve transparency in the total sound" (Josef Rufer,

The Works of Arnold Schoenberg: A Catalogue of His Compositions, Writings, and Paintings, trans. Dika Newlin [London: Faber and Faber, 1962], 94). Dünki uses Schoenberg's Ibach piano of 1912 (an instrument that is now housed in the "Schönberghaus" in Mödling in the suburbs of Vienna), which may have exacerbated the difficulties of performance, yet there is a discrepancy between his claim that the performances are "sonic illustrations" of the interpretative issues discussed in the book (pp. 10 and 148) and the liberties he acknowledges taking with the interpretation (p. 148).

After completing the *Fünf Klavierstücke*, op. 23, and the *Suite*, op. 25, in 1923,

Schoenberg turned to Steuermann, his faithful interpreter, and Stein, the preeminent propagandist for the Viennese School, to bring his work and ideas to the public; *Schoenbergs Zeichen* reminds us how much performance and theory have diverged in the intervening years, and while it would be idle to ascribe to Dünki the insights of a Rosen or a Brendel, his study successfully explores interpretative questions in an accessible manner, and, to that extent, is a valuable resource for scholar and performer alike.

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TWENTIETH-CENTURY BIOGRAPHY

Mischa Mischakoff: Journeys of a Concertmaster. By Anne Mischakoff Heiles. (Detroit Monographs in Musicology/Studies in Music, no. 46.) Sterling Heights, MI: Harmonie Park Press, 2006. [xxi, 316 p. ISBN 0-89990-131-X. \$65.] Illustrations, appendices, index, compact disc.

What do the St. Petersburg Orchestra, the Warsaw Philharmonic, the New York Symphony Orchestra, the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the NBC Symphony Orchestra, the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra all have in common? They were all led by concertmaster Mischa Mischakoff at one point during his seventy-year career. As indicated by its title, *Mischa Mischakoff: Journeys of a Concertmaster* illustrates Mischakoff's journey from his home in Russia, where he was a student at the St. Petersburg Conservatory to the United States, where he served as the concertmaster of the orchestras listed above.

Written by Mischakoff's daughter, Anne Mischakoff Heiles, this sole biography of Mischakoff reads like a "who's who" of twentieth-century musical life in Russia and the United States. In his role as student, teacher, soloist, concertmaster, and chamber musician he worked with many conductors and instrumentalists, many of whom are even better known than Mischakoff today. This is due in large part to the fact that even though he also had an extensive career as soloist and chamber musician, "Mischakoff personified the concertmaster

as specialist . . . and was the first prominent US concertmaster to do so" (p. xx). His colleagues who chose careers primarily as soloists or chamber musicians retain greater recall by the musical (and non-musical) public today.

The author weaves Mischakoff's story using information from several sources, including, of course, personal knowledge of the subject, interviews with Mischakoff and his contemporaries, books, newspaper articles, reviews, and scrapbooks compiled by Mischakoff himself that documented his career. Along with reproductions of repertoire and personnel lists, correspondence, and programs, the narrative is enhanced by numerous photos, many inscribed personally to Mischakoff, depicting him with his musical colleagues. An overall strength of the book is found in the rich detail Heiles provides about supporting characters, often including birth and death dates and personal history. While this is an immense addition to the context of the narrative, at times it seems as if there is more ancillary detail than first-person information from Mischakoff himself.

Each chapter describes a phase in Mischakoff's life in a geographical and chronological manner. The first two chap-