

SPEAKER'S ABSTRACTS

Listening to Arnold Schoenberg: Compositions, Teachings, and Writings

Commemorating the 150th anniversary of the birth of Arnold Schoenberg

Joseph Auner (Tufts University)

Title: "In the 'Second Room,' Schoenberg's Technological Imagination"



"In the 'Second Room,' Schoenberg's Technological Imagination" is about Schoenberg's intensive engagement throughout his life with a wide range of technologies for working with music and sound. With the formulation of what I am calling "Schoenberg's technological imagination," I argue that in unique and distinctive ways compared to his contemporaries, Schoenberg used technologies as tools to expand and transform all aspects of his ways of creating and thinking about music. Still more fundamentally, I will explore how Schoenberg's technological imagination embodies his commitment to thinking about thinking, to approaching thinking itself as a technology, to regard the mind and all its capacities—conscious and unconscious, rational and emotional—as a creative resource to be explored and expanded, rather than just as an unexamined mental space we inhabit.

Katharina Bleier (University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna) and **Therese Muxeneder** (Arnold Schönberg Center, Vienna, Austria)

Title: "Schoenberg Goes Digital Humanities"

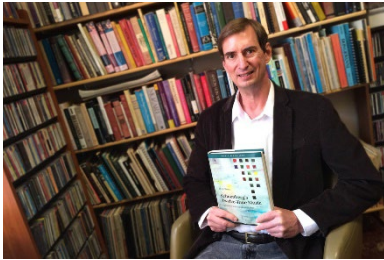


With the advent of new Digital Humanities methods, editorial standards have fundamentally changed. Digital tools have become standard in editorial practice, offering a wide range of possibilities for editing music scores and texts, such as correspondences. Digital editions provide new options for presenting transcriptions and text-critical markup, particularly through the integration of digital copies of letters. By digitally linking these letters and enriching the content with indexes, musical examples, and other sources, the content can be organized more flexibly. The inclusion of metadata also enables cross-project data utilization. However, in the case of correspondence, it is essential to consider the specific nature of the letter corpus, whether it is business or private correspondence, as well as its role as a medium of individual communication.

Arnold Schönberg's correspondence with his publishers, Universal Edition and Dreililien, spanning almost five decades, serves as a representative example of the advantages and challenges posed by digital editions.

Jack Boss (University of Oregon)

Title: "Schoenberg's *Pelleas und Melisande*: Unhappy Ending as Resolution of the 'Musical Idea'"



The literature on Schoenberg's tone poem *Pelleas und Melisande* has concerned itself with negotiating the conflict between two stylistic directions: understanding the work as a blow-by-blow leitmotivic account of Maurice Maeterlinck's story, or as a two-dimensional sonata form. Or does *Pelleas* somehow find a balance between program music and absolute music?

My contribution will be to suggest that a large-scale narrative (as Carl Dahlhaus recognized) spans the piece, involving a problem that is presented, elaborated through several stages, leading to further problems, and eventually "resolved." Like many of the other texts Schoenberg set in his early years, Maeterlinck's *Pelleas* gave him an opportunity to present a "musical idea." This Idea motivates both Schoenberg's depiction of the program and his divergences from the usual patterns of sonata form.

I will trace the progress of the Idea and story through several detailed "snapshots," discussing leitmotives and key areas. These will illustrate Golaud's initial problem of not being able to force his way into a happy relationship with Melisande (inability to reach D major and settling for F major), complications created by Pelleas's appearance and the blossoming love between him and Melisande (E major), and further elaborations caused by Golaud's violent actions resulting in Pelleas's death as well as Melisande's coma and death (Cf minor and Eß minor). All these elaborations lead to a final resolution that is not happy: Golaud alone and torturing himself by rehearsing what he did in his mind over and over (the final D minor cadence).

Avior Byron (Independent Scholar)

Title: "Was Schoenberg Performer-Chauvinistic?"



This paper examines the question of whether Arnold Schoenberg could be considered a performer-chauvinist, challenging a commonly cited quote reported by Dika Newlin that has been interpreted as evidence of such tendencies. By analyzing Schoenberg's writings on performance alongside Newlin's account, this study aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of his attitudes towards performers and performance.

Schoenberg's own works reveal a complex perspective on performers and their roles in music. While he held strong opinions about the interpretation of his compositions, these views were rooted in a deep respect for the artistic process, musical integrity, and performers he admired. This paper argues that Schoenberg's relationship with performers was not chauvinistic, but rather indicative of his broader philosophical and aesthetic commitments.

By re-examining primary sources in context, this research seeks to contribute to the ongoing discourse on Schoenberg's legacy. It challenges simplistic interpretations of performers as "victims" and composers as "oppressors," highlighting the multifaceted nature of Schoenberg's interactions with the musical community. Ultimately, this paper raises intriguing questions about the dynamics between composers and performers in artistic collaboration.

Sabine Feisst (Arizona State University, Evelyn Smith Professor of Musicology)

Title: "Reflections on Diversity Lacunas in Schoenberg's Rapport with American Composers"



In researching Arnold Schoenberg's American years, I have always been curious about how Schoenberg related to American musicians from marginalized communities: musicians experiencing discrimination based on socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, race, and ethnicity. Little is known about this topic. At certain times in his life, Schoenberg himself grappled with socioeconomic challenges; and he struggled with pariahism and a sense of not belonging as a result of anti-Semitic bias in Austria and Germany and his expulsion from Nazi Europe in 1933. Furthermore, he established himself as a musical outsider and was often identified and treated as such by others, not least because of his provocatively innovative music. Perhaps for these reasons, he served as an inspiration for marginalized musicians who saw him as their ally and mentor. In this paper I explore whether and how Schoenberg was able to reach across diversity barriers as a composer and teacher in the United States by examining his rapport with a range of female and queer composers as well as with composers of color.

Fusako Hamao (Independent Scholar)

Title: "A Theatrical Adaptation of Arnold Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire* in Postwar Japan: The Dramaturgical Impulse Behind the Music"



In 1955, playwright and director Tetsuji Takechi adopted Arnold Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire* into an avant-garde play in collaboration with a group of young artists, staging it at a venue modeled after a Greek amphitheater in Tokyo. Although this production was regarded as an epoch-making theatrical experiment in postwar Japan, it is still unclear how the play progressed from scene to scene. In this study, I attempt to identify the scene sequence by examining the slides and photographs taken during the dress rehearsal and explore how Takechi interpreted Schoenberg's arrangement of Albert Giraud's three-times-seven poems to create a play with a three-act structure (introduction, confrontation leading towards a climax, and resolution).

J. Daniel Jenkins (University of South Carolina)

Title: "The Orchestration of Counterpoint in Schoenberg's *Weihnachtsmusik*."



In this paper, I detail my approach in arranging Schoenberg's *Weihnachtsmusik* (1921) for wind ensemble. I will explain how my decisions were guided by Schoenberg's writings about orchestration, counterpoint, and the musical idea. The presentation will conclude with a complete recording of the wind ensemble version (ca. 5 minutes).

Elizabeth Keathley (University of North Carolina at Greensboro)

Title: "Cleo Laine Performs Schoenberg's Jazz Masterpiece, *Pierrot lunaire*"



In 1974, 100 years after Schoenberg's birth, RCA issued an LP of *Pierrot lunaire* performed in English by the Jamaican-British jazz singer Cleo Laine (b. 1927) with the Nash Ensemble of London. The album garnered one of Laine's five Grammy nominations, the only one for a classical vocal performance (the other four were in jazz and popular music categories; she won once). In spite of its Grammy nomination, the reception of the recording was mixed.

The Cleo Laine *Pierrot* recording was distinctive in a number of ways, including her contralto voice and her use of the microphone for expressive effects, and it provokes many questions, including how this jazz singer came to perform the work of a composer famously ambivalent about jazz, and what affinities between jazz and Schoenberg's music the recording reveals. What, if anything, can jazz teach us about appreciating this composition and Schoenberg's music more generally?

Benjamin Levy (University of California, Santa Barbara)

Title: "A Correspondence and its Limits: Schoenberg and Webern Reflected in their Letters"

Drawing on passages from their letters, this paper provides illuminating glimpses into the evolving relationship between Schoenberg and Webern. Excerpts regarding their reading of Balzac and Strindberg, their evolving religious and philosophical beliefs, and their reactions to current events serve as the starting point for both historical observations and reconsiderations of their music. While these two figures are familiarly compared as influential pioneers of twelve-tone composition, and contrasted in the ways they applied the technique, a close look at their

correspondence across the decades shows the nuances of their complexly intertwined lives and legacies.

Severine Neff (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Eugene H. Falk Distinguished Professor, Emerita)

Title: “Schoenberg’s Fifth Attempt: *Preliminary Exercises*, Volume I of *Counterpoint*”



In the summer of 1932, sensing that his flight from Nazified Berlin was imminent, Arnold Schoenberg began the monumental task of collecting and cataloguing not only his compositional manuscripts but also thousands of pages of teachings and writings. Among the manuscripts Schoenberg treasured were over fifty writings and teachings about counterpoint written in Europe. They range in size from a single aphorism to four attempts at writing a major book on the subject. Schoenberg worked on his fifth and largest such project in Los Angeles from 1942–44 and from 1948–50: the 120-page book *Preliminary Exercises*, Volume I of *Counterpoint*, which in 1963 Faber & Faber published as *Preliminary Exercises in Counterpoint*. For many years I have been engaged in editing Schoenberg’s complete set of surviving writings on counterpoint, including a revised version of this book, and I shall now discuss some of the discoveries that have emerged.

Schoenberg understood the *integrated* study of the traditional subdisciplines of the theory of tonal music—harmony, counterpoint, and form—as the earliest or “embryonic” stage of compositional study. He held that his teachings in volumes like *Preliminary Exercises* would lead to a comprehensive command of these subdisciplines, creating musicians capable of contributing original musical ideas to their art, whether as composers, performers, or scholars. The first section of my paper will discuss several musical examples in *Preliminary Exercises* exemplifying his teaching of counterpoint as composition.

The second section of my talk will first focus on the writing, editing, and publication history of *Preliminary Exercises*, altogether spanning two decades—from 1942 to 1963. I will discuss Schoenberg’s working relations with Leonard Stein on linguistic matters, the impact of the composer’s health on the progress of his counterpoint book, the signing of a 1948 contract between Schoenberg and Stein dealing with the book’s future publication, and the events ultimately leading to the foregoing text published by Faber & Faber, Ltd., which involved the actions of not only Leonard Stein and composer’s wife Gertrud Schoenberg, but also the team of editors at Faber, mainly Giles de la Mare, the grandson of the British poet Walter de la Mare, whose editing both positively and negatively impacted the final text.

Gordon Root (State University of New York in Fredonia)

Title: “Schoenberg Plays the Blues: The Applications and Mythologies of the Twelve-Tone Method in Popular Culture”



In my commentary for *Models for Beginners in Composition* (2016) I interpret *MBC* as central to what Sabine Feisst has described as Schoenberg's courtship of American audiences during the 30s and 40s (Feisst, 2011). As part of this argument, I explore Schoenberg's apparent sketch pads for portions of *Theme and Variations for Band*, op. 43a within the exercises of *MBC*. I interpret both works as kindred artistic expressions, written for the same college aged Americans as those that Schoenberg taught in his courses at UCLA. In "*Schoenberg Plays the Blues*," I start with this courtship of American audiences, and I ask the simple question: did it work? And if so, what traces of Schoenberg's musical legacy and thought do we find in the public sphere today? In order to provide a robust picture of this legacy, I not only retrace a few familiar examples of twelve-tone music in film and jazz from the 50s through the 70s, but I also explore several new examples from the twenty-first century. Along the way, I touch on examples that add to the popular mythology surrounding Schoenberg's twelve-tone method, as well as examples that more closely align with the historical circumstances of its original conception.

Philip Stoecker (Hofstra University)

Title: "The Unpublished Analyses of Schoenberg's Works in His *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*"



The music of Bach, Brahms, Mozart, and especially Beethoven is extensively analyzed in Schoenberg's 1967 posthumously published book *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*. Schoenberg's own music, however, is minimally represented. Only three of Schoenberg's own works are mentioned in *Fundamentals*: "Traumleben," from the *Eight Songs*, op. 6; String Quartet No. 2, op. 10; and String Quartet No. 1, op. 7. In the various draft versions of *Fundamentals*, however, there are additional excerpts composed by Schoenberg that are discussed in the text but were unfortunately edited out from the published version of the book. These works include *Pelleas und Melisande*, *Verklärte Nacht*, *Gurre-Lieder*, and a passage from the first movement of String Quartet No. 2, op. 10.

Schoenberg's analysis of his String Quartet No. 4, op. 37, is also among the draft materials for *Fundamentals* and was not included in the book. The analysis is notated on a single sheet of staff paper and includes brackets, carats, and braces to highlight the motivic, rhythmic and formal structures of the passage. My talk focuses on Schoenberg's illuminating analysis of his fourth string quartet and how it relates to his interpretations of his *Verklärte Nacht*, *Gurre-Lieder*, and String Quartet No. 1, op. 7 that were written in the drafts of *Fundamentals* but were also left out from the published version of the book. Finally, I speculate about why these analyses were omitted and left unpublished.