

LECTURE NOTES: MAHLER, ADAGIETTO MOVEMENT OF FIFTH SYMPHONY

For Yale Summer course 2005 and (possibly) Mannes keynote 2007?

Need lecture title: The scope and limitations of Schenkerian analysis.

Felix Salzer, Hans Weisse's unpublished Tristan, Other? My Tristan Prelude analysis for Irene DeLiege. (along with Nattiez and Lerdaahl).

HANDOUTS

Introductory Comments

Mahler's dates: 1860-1911 (51)

The Yale connection: Mahler in New Haven at Woolsey Hall w/NY Philharmonic in 1910. Reported in Yale Daily News—no mention of Mahler as composer. Frontpage column alongside success of Yale wrestling team against Harvard!

Yale composers: Luther Noss book.: name of most famous Yale composer. Cole Porter entered Yale as a Freshman in 1909. Did he hear the Mahler performance? Should have been in the Cole Porter movie "Delovely." Mann's Death in Venice. Movie by

Date of Fifth Symphony 1901-1902. Mahler married Alma in 1902. The Adagietto is often regarded as a musical expression of Mahler's love for Anna Schindler. In a moment, I will discuss a document related to her connection with the work.

Did Schenker hear Mahler's music? Schenker's dates: 1868?-1935.. What would his opinion have been? Brahms? Schenker and Mahler buried in the Zentralfriedhof, Jewish section [check this]

Published Schenker-oriented Mahler analyses are few in number. Why? Failure to match Schenkerian paradigms—e.g., the Ursatz. For Schenker, would have been "foreground music, like Wagner." Exceptions: John Williamson. "The Structural Premises of Mahler's Introductions . . ." Music Analysis. Vol. 5/1. 1986. My article: "Middleground Motives in the Adagietto of Mahler's Fifth Symphony". 19th Century Music VIII/2 (1984), upon which my lecture draws to some extent.

on score

N.B. Dieses Adagietto von Gustav Mahlers Liebeserklärung an Alma!
Statt eines Briefes sandte er ihr dies im Manuscript, weiter kein Wort dazu. Sie hat es [ver tauscht ?] und schrieb ihm: Er solle kommen !!! (beide haben mir dies erzählt.
W.M. [?]) (Check Kaplan ms. comments by Hefling.)

Translation:

Nota bene. This Adagietto (of) Gustav Mahler's declaration of love for Alma! Instead of a letter he sent her this in manuscript, with no further no word. She understood and wrote to him that he should come. Both told me this. W.M.

On score (Alma's hand?)

Liebe, innige, zarte, aber leiste!!! [With love, soul, delicate, but with the greatest feeling!]

W.M. [Willem Mengelberg (1871-1951), Conductor of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw 1895-1945 and friend of Mahler and Schoenberg . Became Nazi sympathesizer]

Left margin (text by Mahler?):

VI I: Wie ich dich liebe,
Du meine Sonne,
ich kann mit Worten Dir's nicht sagen
Nur meine Sehnsucht
Kann ich Dir klagen
Und meine Liebe
Meine Wonne!

Translation:

How I love you,
You, my sun,
I cannot tell you in words.
Only my longing
Can I express to you
And my love
My ecstasy!

Note: There is a basic question of chronology here.

The editing is presumably by Alma. When did Mahler compose the Adagietto—in relation to the date when he met Alma?

Alma Schindler Mahler (1879-1964)

When did she Marry Gustav? Madeleine has her bio.

My anecdote: Gertrud & Alma: "My Fair Lady"

My lecture on the Adagietto of the Fifth Symphony

PERFORMANCE: The issue of tempo—manuscript page on Handout, with Mahler's additions to Alma's beautiful copy.

PLAY CD OF KAPLAN RECORDING

ANALYSIS

1. Alma Mahler's copy—page one on handout
2. Discuss features of my Schenker-like reading of the Adagietto

Mahler and Schenker

Mahler not included in Schenker's list of Genie. Not in Salzer's book. Not mentioned by Jonas & Oster. Why? Foreground music, like Wagner—i.e., lacks "depth" John Williamson's Analysis in Music Analysis (Seventh Symphony).

Anecdotal Postscript

Never met Alma, but knew Gertrud through family connection. Overheard telephone conversation between Gertrud and Alma in New York—1957? At time I was working on English translation of the libretto of Schönberg's Moses und Aron published by Schott in pv score.

BMI: Alma Mahler and Gertrud Schoenberg—"My Fair Lady"

shape your future life, in every detail, entirely in accordance with my needs and desire nothing in return save my *love!*”

Mahler was on the brink of returning to Vienna and the powerful feelings expressed in the letter evoked a sense of urgency: “I must have your answer to this letter before I come to see you on Saturday.” Alma received the letter on 20 December, scarcely six weeks since they had met. Paradoxically, the outrage she solicited in those confidantes with whom she shared the letter seemed only to increase her resolve. Thus she externalized her deep resentment, at least for the time being, and while kindling the reaction in others, pursued her romantically informed rebellion. “After all, I wanted him. I calmed down and wrote him a letter promising what he wanted me to promise.”³⁶

Back in Vienna the following day, Mahler drafted a further letter containing a halfhearted attempt to undo or at least mitigate the ultimatum. Its main message was what “must be decided between us. I await the answer my servant will bring in a state of suspense and anguish such as I have never known.”³⁷ It was the first of only two occasions on which Mahler anxiously awaited a decision from Alma, his fate hanging in balance. When the situation recurred during their marital crisis a decade hence, the issues of uncompromising loyalty and devotion and the promise never to leave him were revived. But this time there was no question as to Alma’s response, and she met urgency with her own urgency, running into the street to give her answer to the messenger.

By Christmas Eve, the uncertainty was over, with Mahler sending Christmas greetings “for the first and last time.” St. Anthony reverted from preaching to piety as Mahler pronounced his sacred blessing: “I bless you, my beloved, my life, on this day, the children’s day, in whom the seed of earthly as well as divine love strikes root wherever the seed falls. May my life be a blessing to yours.”³⁸

In the same spirit, late in 1901 Mahler was completing the Adagietto of his Fifth Symphony. He would later reveal to Willem Mengelberg that this was a love song without words for Alma. On his own copy of the score, Mengelberg wrote:

N.B. *This Adagietto* was Gustav Mahler’s *declaration of love* for Alma! Instead of a letter, he sent her *this* in manuscript form; *no*

Adagietto from Mahler’s Fifth Symphony, Mengelberg’s score.

*other words accompanied it. She understood and wrote to him: He should come!!! (Both of them told me this!) W.M.*³⁹

Over the holiday Alma and Gustav were engaged and wedding plans made. Of her promise to Mahler, Alma would write, “And I have kept my word. . . . And yet, somewhere in me a wound kept smarting.”⁴⁰

Ruhig, nicht schleppend.

Voice

PIANO

nicht zurückhaltend

5

pp

Nun seh' ich wohl. war - um, so dunk - le Flam - men ihr

pp

9

sprühet mir in man - chem Au - gen - blik - ke, o Au - gen!

13

pp

Au - gen!

p sari

Gleich - sam, um voll in ei - nem

pp

p

Example 1a: Nun seh' ich wohl, from Kindertotenlieder.

Example 1b: Motivic Features of Nun seh' ich wohl.

Example 2: Basic Motives in the Foreground of the Adagietto.

Played by Bernstein - conducted the Mahler at Kennedy's funeral.

Saker didn't like Mahler.

E 74th 2 blocks from Mannes.

Near Henry

Fonda.

1957 - working English trans.

of Moses und Aaron.