“NIGHT AND SILENCE – WHO IS HERE?”:

THE IMPACT OF VOCAL VARIETY IN ARNOLD SCHOENBERG’S EARLY *SPRECHSTIMMEN*

by

FRANZISKA BRUNNER

(Under the Direction of Naomi Graber)

ABSTRACT

In *Harmonielehre*, Arnold Schoenberg wrote repeatedly about his conception of sound as a means of direct expression. This dissertation examines Schoenberg’s use of *Sprechstimme* within the musicological field of vocality. It explores and traces Schoenberg’s early uses of vocal variety. It also shows the diverse timbral palette *Sprechstimme* encompasses. And finally, it identifies various structural, expressive, and dramatic functions of *Sprechstimme* in *Gurre-Lieder* and *Pierrot lunaire*. Research at Viennese archives and the study of sources and secondary literature related to *Sprechstimme* performance will show how Schoenberg revolutionized the expressive capacity of the voice.

INDEX WORDS: Arnold Schoenberg, Gurre-Lieder, Pierrot lunaire, Sprechstimme, Timbre, Vocality

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DEDICATION

An meine Familie, mit Liebe aus Wien.

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INTRODUCTION

Like Shakespeare's Puck from *A Midsummernight's Dream* (who gives this dissertation its title), Schoenberg's Pierrot is a trickster figure, constantly appearing in multiple guises throughout the melodrama. Their shifting identity provides for a freedom of expression not afforded to characters whose dramatic range is more limited. Puck and Pierrot are both amorphous figures who cannot be pinned down, and who are always in transition. For Schoenberg, such ephemerality had a certain beauty.

> Beauty exists only from that moment on when the unproductive begin to miss it. Before that it does not exist, for the artist does not need it. To him integrity is enough. To him it is enough to have expressed himself. To have said what had to be said; according to the laws of *his* [*sic*] nature. [...] But beauty, if it exists at all, is intangible; for it is present only where someone whose perceptive power [*Anschauungskraft*] alone is capable of creating it does create it, through this power alone, and creates it anew each time as often as he perceives. With this perception beauty exists; as soon as the perception is over, it is gone again. Everything else is idle talk. The other beauty, that which one can possess in strict rules and strict forms, that is the beauty the unproductive yearn for. To the artist it is of little interest, like every fulfilment; to the artist the yearning itself is enough, whereas the mediocre want to possess beauty. Nevertheless, beauty does give of itself to the artist without his having sought it; for he was indeed striving only for integrity. [...] [N]othing is beautiful in itself [...] it

> becomes beautiful or ugly according to who is handling it,
> and how.[1]

In this passage from *Harmonielehre*, Schoenberg wrote about his conception of sound as a means of direct expression, in this case with regard to non-harmonic tones in chords. The above passage speaks to Schoenberg's idea of sound having a specific function—to communicate—which exists beyond strict rules and forms, and that it is the listener's responsibility to hear and understand that communication.

Schoenberg expects his listener to go beyond being competent in a style by being open to the experience of something new and unfamiliar. Robert Hatten proposes the notion of style competency, that he defines as follows: "competency in semiosis presupposed by a work, and necessary for its understanding as a work of music."[2] Style competency posits an ideal listener, who gleans meaning and expression by recognizing familiar musical structures and markers in the music. This is only true for common practice music. For Schoenberg, we see a shift in the ideal listener. He exposes his listener to unfamiliar sounds and expects them to steep in the discomfort of direct

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[1] Arnold Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, trans. Roy E. Carter (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), 325. "Die Schönheit gibt es erst von dem Moment an, in dem die Unproduktiven sie zu vermissen beginnen. Früher existiert sie nicht, denn der Künstler hat sie nicht nötig. Ihm genügt die Wahrhaftigkeit. Ihm genügt die Wahrhaftigkeit. Ihm genügt es, sich ausgedrückt zu haben. Das zu sagen, was gesagt werden mußte; nach den Gesetzen *seiner* Natur. […] Aber die Schönheit, wenn sie überhaupt existiert, ist unfaßbar, denn sie ist nur dort vorhanden, wo einer, dessen Anschauungskraft allein imstande ist, sie hervorzubringen, allein durch diese Anschauungskraft sie schafft, sie jedesmal neu schafft, so oft er schaut. Mit dieser Anschauung ist sie da, sowie die zu Ende ist, hört sie wieder auf. Alles übrige ist Gerede. Die andere Schönheit, die man besitzen kann in festen Regeln und festen Formen, diese Schönheit ist die Sehnsucht der Unproduktiven. Dem Künstler ist sie nebensächlich, wie jede Erfüllung, denn dem Künstler genügt die Sehnsucht, aber die Mediokren wollen die Schönheit besitzen. Dennoch gibt sich dem Künstler die Schönheit, ohne daß er sie gewollt hat, denn er hat ja nur die Wahrhaftigkeit angestrebt. […] [N]ichts ist an sich schön […] [häßlich oder schön wird der Ton] je nachdem wer und wie man ihn behandelt. German from Arnold Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, (Vienna and Berlin: Universal Edition, 1922), 393. Emphasis in original. All uncredited translations are my own.

[2] Robert Hatten, *Musical Meaning in Beethoven: Markedness, Correlation, and Interpretation*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 293–4.

expression, without the comfort of familiar structural markers like regular meter and conventional harmonic progressions.

Indeed, Schoenberg hoped his listener would be more attuned to "beauty" rather than "structure." This is the beauty of pure expression, as contrasted with the banal beauty of aesthetic pleasure. The former is intimately connected with timbre, or "tone-color." In 1960, composer Erich Forneberg wrote,

> As in Edvard Munch's painting "The Scream," where out of the wildly moving swirl of lines, a woman condenses into a human-like figure and thus becomes a scream itself. So also is the smallest particle of sound in Schoenberg's *Pierrot* score an image of a human in a border zone between sense and insanity, heightened to the point of excessive exaltation. As such it becomes the carrier of a sound body, which—seen from the point of view of the soul—cannot be other than what it is in Schoenberg's hypertrophic conception, in the same way that one cannot imagine the grandiose Bible scene from Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* in any other way than in the manner inspired by Schoenberg's "speech melody."[3]

Forneberg's insight can be related to Schoenberg's thinking about timbre, especially vocal timbre, as this dissertation will show. Schoenberg thought about musical sounds beyond mundane conceptions of beauty, reconfiguring it as a tool in the service of expression and the sublime. The ephemeral nature of beauty Schoenberg describes is

[3] "Wie in Edvard Munchs Bild, 'Geschrei' aus dem wildbewegten Gewoge der Linien sich eine Frau zu einer menschenähnlichen Gestalt verdichtet und damit selber zum Schrei wird, wo ist auch das kleinste Tonpartikelchen der Pierrot-Partitur (Schoenbergs, d.V) ein bis ins Exzessive-Exaltierte gesteigertes Abbild des Menschen in der Grenzsituation zwischen Sinn und Irrsinn; es wird damit zum Träger eines Klangleibes, der — vom Seelischen her gesehen — nicht ander sein kann, als er sich in der hypertrophen Konzeption Schönbergs gibt; wie man sich auch die grandiose Bibelszene aus Alban Bergs "Wozzeck" nicht anders als in der von Schönbergs 'Sprechmelodie' her inspirierten Art denk kann." Erich Forneberg, "Schönberg und die Anfänge der Neuen Musik," *Musica* XXIV (1960): 75, cited in Gabriele Beinhorn, *Das Groteske in der Musik: Arnold Schönbergs "Pierrot lunaire"* (Pfaffenweiler: Ccntaurus-Verlagsgesellschaft, 1989), 157–8.

directly linked with timbre and the voice more broadly, whose unnotatable-ness was a puzzle that seemed to challenge Schoenberg throughout his career. Timbre depends on its own performance to exist; while elements like pitch, dynamics, and tempo can be read and imagined, the "sound-ness" of sound resides in the timbre. Isabel Van Elferen summarizes,

> Letting impressionist and expressionist compositional efforts converge in the ineffable musical quality of timbre, and explicitly referring to tone colour melody as the music of the future, Schoenberg's [*Harmonielehre*] culminates here in what could be considered a *timbral imperative*, the urgently and teleologically formulated call on composers to focus on timbre as the highest and most ineffable form of musical expression. He describes tone colour as sensory, intellectual, and spiritual: instead, he hopes that timbre's ineffability will evoke illusions, dreams, and a new kind of vitality.[4]

For Schoenberg, music's expressiveness lies not on the page, but in its hearing, indicating that timbre and other properties of the voice is a key component of that expressiveness.

Offering particular insight into this aspect of Schoenberg's compositional thought are his eleven *Sprechstimme* pieces.[5] *Sprechstimme* ("speaking voice") is the audible declamation style, and the term *Sprecher* ("speaker") functions in the same way as the label "soprano" in indicating a specific voice part. Schoenberg referred to the notation as the *Sprechmelodie* ("speech-melody"). Like "soprano," *Sprecher* (the voice part assigned to realize the *Sprechmelodie*) encompasses multiple sets of timbres and vocal effects. It

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[4] Isabella van Elferen, "Drastic Allure: Timbre Between the Sublime and the Grain," *Contemporary Music Review* 36 no. 6 (2017): 620.

[5] *Gurre-Lieder* (1901/11); *Die Glückliche Hand*, op. 18, (1910–1913); *Pierrot lunaire*, op. 21 (1912); *Moses und Aron* (1926–32); *Ode to Napoleon*, op. 41 (1942); *Die Jakobsleiter* (1917–22/45, unfinished); *Von heute auf morgen*, op. 32 (1928–29); *Kol Nidre*, op. 39 (1938); *A Survivor from Warsaw*, op. 46 (1947); *Psalm 130* "*De Profundis,*" op. 50B (1950); *Moderner Psalm*, op. 50C (1950, unfinished).

carves paths beyond "strict rules" of traditional vocal production and musical form, allowing for raw and direct expression of emotions.[6] The focus on expression rather than Brahmsian melodic beauty lies at the core of the work. The notation alone is not sufficient for analyzing the expression in *Sprechstimme*, it must be heard. Due to its ephemeral nature, both the performer and the listener are key components of this communicative matrix.[7]

This dissertation shows the wide range of structural, expressive, and dramatic functions that the voices of Schoenberg's *Sprechstimmen* and *Sprechmelodien* perform. The many sounds and functions of *Sprechstimme* evolved across the composer's career. By the time he composed *Ode to Napoleon*, op. 41, at the latest, Schoenberg imagined using *Sprechstimme* as a means of expressing the full palette of human emotions:

> From [Erich Bentley's] records no such sonority emerges which shows whether this voice has the compass as to pitch, and the number of shades, essential to express one hundred and seventy kinds of derision, sarcasm, hatred, ridicule, contempt, condemnation, etc. which I tried to portray in my music.[8]

Here, I focus on two of Schoenberg's earliest works for *Sprechstimme*: *Gurre-Lieder* and *Pierrot lunaire*, in order to trace the roots of this aspect of Schoenberg's compositional thought. Considering *Sprechstimme* as a fluid performance style featuring a variety of timbres and effects allows us to develop a richer, more

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[6] See Friedrich Cerha, "Zur Interpretation der *Sprechstimme* in Schönbergs *Pierrot lunaire*," in *Schönberg und der Sprechgesang*, ed. Rainer Riehn and Heinz-Klaus Metzger, Musik-Konzepte (München: Edition Text + Kritik, 2001), 112–113. Schoenberg also used "narrator."

[7] Nina Sun Eidsheim, *The Race of Sound: Listening, Timbre, and Vocality in African American Music* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2019), 24–25.

[8] Arnold Schoenberg to Heinrich Jalowetz September 8, 1943. Copies of correspondence are available through the Arnold Schoenberg Center Vienna, in hard copy and through a digital database, unless otherwise noted.

meaningful understanding of the composer's differing performance instructions and notation forms. I draw on recent work in voice studies, applying approaches developed in primarily popular music-focused scholarship to the classical tradition, inviting discourse about the diverse roles of Schoenberg's *Sprecher*, roles which Austrian composer Friedrich Cerha, among others, has hinted at but not explored in depth.[9] The goals of my research are: 1) to explore and trace Schoenberg's early uses of the voice and to add to the Schoenberg research on *Sprechstimme*; 2) to show the diverse timbral palette *Sprechstimme* encompasses; and 3) to identify the various structural, expressive, and dramatic functions of *Sprechstimme* in two of Schoenberg's early melodramas.

Christian Martin Schmidt suggests that Schoenberg never strictly defined "*Sprechgesang*," (which is a misnomer for *Sprechmelodie*).[10] Schmidt bases his claim on two examples: 1) the fact that the foreword to *Pierrot* is anything but "consistent and meaningful" and 2) that Schoenberg never developed a suitable notation form.[11] In this dissertation, I show that Schoenberg did not consider his *Sprechstimme* static, thus, he could not provide a universal explanation or notation form.

Arnold Schoenberg's adaptation and development of *Sprechstimme* from his predecessors opened the gateway to a multifaceted palette of modern extended vocal technique. In effect, Schoenberg's unique and innovative use of the voice launched a

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[9] Cerha, "Zur Interpretation der *Sprechstimme* in Schönbergs *Pierrot lunaire*."
[10] I avoid the use of the misnomer *Sprechgesang* (speaking song) because Schoenberg clearly indicates that he wants anything but song. Richard Kurth, "*Pierrot lunaire*: Persona, Voice, and the Fabric of Allusion" in *The Cambridge Companion to Schoenberg*, ed. Jennifer Shaw and Joseph Auner (Cambridge etc. 2010), 126.
[11] See Christian Martin Schmidt, "Art. Arnold Schönberg (Chapter VII: Sprechgesang)," in *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart: Allgemeine Enzyklopädie der Musik*, Second Revised Edition, ed. Ludwig Finscher, Personenteil 14, (Kassel etc., 2005), 1632–1634.

vocal revolution, which led to widespread experimentation among composers and the development of increasingly agile vocal technique among vocalists. Still, recent scholars have largely ignored *Sprechstimme*'s pivotal role in changing the parameters of vocal performance in the classical music idiom during the twentieth century. Despite significant research into Schoenberg's use of instrumental timbres and peripheral comments on his ideas about timbre and the voice, scholars have lacked the proper tools for approaching *Sprechstimme*.[12] Voice studies offer a way to bridge that gap. The field of voice studies extends beyond Schoenberg, emphasizing an interdisciplinary approach to analyzing music. Specifically, the applicability of voice studies lies in its precise attention to issues of vocal timbre, production, and analysis of the significance of the vocal parts within musical works.

Timbre and Voice Studies

In her article, "The Paradox of Timbre," Cornelia Fales draws attention to the "timbre-deafness" of the West and to the non-specific language about timbre when it is discussed.[13] This inattention to timbre exists for a number of reasons, including the fact that timbre is not well captured in the notation. The lack of specific language for describing musical timbre may arise from the fact that timbre has not been considered as a legitimate means for musical analysis. In contrast to pitch, which is judged as correct or incorrect, timbre is judged as pleasing or unpleasing. Fales notes that timbre is often a

[12] See, for example, Alfred Cramer, "Schoenberg's Klangfarbenmelodie: A Principle of Early Atonal Harmony," *Music Theory Spectrum* 24, no. 1 (2002): 1–34; Julia Kursell, "Experiments on Tone Color in Music and Acoustics: Helmholtz, Schoenberg, and Klangfarbenmelodie," Osiris 28, no. 1 (2013): 191–211; Jonathan Dunsby, *Schoenberg: Pierrot lunaire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
[13] Cornelia Fales, "The Paradox of Timbre," *Ethnomusicology* 46, no. 1 (January 2002): 56–95.

matter of taste and is viewed as too subjective to deserve serious scholarly attention, even in musics that are dominated by timbre rather than pitch, such as Tuvan throat singing, Aboriginal didgeridoo music, Ghanaian balafon music, and Whispered Inanaga of Burundi. She suggests that the listeners might experience the power of music without considering timbre, since it is processed subconsciously.[14]

Still, Fales argues for the validity of timbre as a subject for analysis. Fales proposes timbre as an analytical tool, one hitherto neglected by scholars in favor of volume and especially pitch, which can be measured objectively in terms of amplitude and frequency, respectively. The subjective experience of timbre results in powerful musical experiences that do not exist in the external acoustic world but are the result of the listeners' individual processing of sound events. She emphasizes first that timbre is a tool used daily to analyze a subject's surroundings: not only sound sources and their location but also the environment that the sound travels through to the subject.[15] Timbre links the inner world of the subject's mind or perception with the acoustic real world. While sound sources are perceived and identified by the brain, the source that is identified does not necessarily coincide with the version that exists in the real world.[16] For example, hearing a growling sound could indicate the presence of an actual animal alarming the listener, but the sound could also originate from a human character in a movie. Fales then explains that timbre is the primary means of identifying a source.[17] To summarize the first two points, source identification by timbre happens on an instinctual

[14] Ibid., 77.
[15] Ibid., 59.
[16] Ibid., 58.
[17] Ibid., 59.

level, helping subjects to survive in their surroundings without relying on conscious processing. Finally she argues that the perception of musical timbre challenges the brain's subconscious processing of sounds to a greater degree than a perception of a non-musical timbre, which may result in music registering differently.[18] With musical timbre, a degree of control can be exercised by a skilled performer who may manipulate the timbre.[19] Thus Fales argues that the perception of timbre depends on the listener's biases, which recalls Schoenberg's suggestion in the opening quotation, that there is such a thing as an ideal listener.

Fales's most important contribution to my study is the conceptualization of timbre as a "distinctly ongoing, dynamic feature of music with the same clarity as pitch and meter," a feature that requires deliberate effort but encourages scholars to grapple with it to "gain richer perspectives on perception and cognition more generally."[20] Attending to the timbral variations within *Sprechstimme* as a primary feature that informs the interpretation rather than as a secondary feature or consequence (of pitch, for example) allow us to unlock a potential in the vocal part composed by Schoenberg that many scholars have hesitated to explore. By tapping into the listener's immediate experiences of the voice and its timbres, the performer can elicit both subtle and drastic reactions for a more vivid interpretation of the *Sprechmelodien*. The degree of control the performer can exercise depends on the type of timbral manipulation they undertake: whether they

[18] Ibid., 77.
[19] Ibid., 65.
[20] Harris M. Berger and Cornelia Fales, "'Heaviness' in the Perception of Heavy Metal Guitar Timbres: The Match of Perceptual and Acoustic Features over Time," in *Wired for Sound: Engineering and Technologies in Sonic Cultures*, ed. Paul D. Greene and Thomas Porcello, Music Culture (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2005), 195.

change the sound itself (through musical virtuosity) or the listener's perception of the sound (persuading the listener to hear in a new way).

Katherine Meizel brings the listener more clearly into the analytical frame by emphasizing the "relationship between the singer and the listener [as] another crucial theme" in her recent book on multivocality.[21] Over the course of her book she frames the singing voice as a negotiation of identity; voice is fluid and constructed, changing over the course of a singer's lifetime. In an earlier article, she noted that vocality includes qualities beyond timbre and practice: "[Vocality] encapsulates the entire experience of the speaker or singer and of the listener, all of the physiological, psychoacoustic, and sociopolitical dynamics that impact our perception of ourselves and each other."[22] Meizel alerts us to the applications of studying the voice and creates space to interrogate vocal sonority—including, but not limited to timbre—for meaning, both in how such bodies are produced and how they are received (heard). In what follows, I examine multiple facets of the voice, including timbre, effect, and textual sonorities.

Nina Eidsheim, like Fales, addresses Western culture's preoccupation with things that can be captured and preserved in musical notation, and, like Meizel, she focuses on the listener while also observing that the relationship between the performer and the listener is shaped by cultural contexts and codes. She observes the emphasis listeners place on features which can be notated, such as pitch, rhythm, and duration, while ignoring the ever-shifting experience of music. Eidsheim's "Sensing Voice Materiality

[21] Katherine Meizel, *Multivocality* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2020), 10–11.
[22] Katherine Meizel, "A Powerful Voice: Investigating Vocality and Identity," *Voice and Speech Review* 7, no. 1 (January 1, 2011): 267.

and the Lived Body in Singing and Listening" analyzes the underwater singing of performance artist Julia Snapper. She argues that the subjective experience of music (e.g., the listener's body, and cultural and social histories) affects what listeners hear as much as the musical score. In her words:

> ...*what* we hear depends as much on our materiality, physicality, and cultural and social histories, as it does on so-called objective measurements (decibel level, soundwave count, or score) which are themselves mere representations. Indeed, the experience of sound is a triangulation of events wherein physical impulses (sonic vibrations), our bodies' encultured capacity to receive these vibrations, and how we have been taught to understand them are at constant play and subject to negotiation.[23]

This type of critical reflection leads one to question the potential impact of *Sprechstimme*'s unique characteristics beyond its superficial strangeness. Indeed, Schoenberg's *Sprechmelodie* in *Pierrot lunaire* hardly captures the entirety of its effect, forcing the question of what other tools might be useful analytically. Investigating Schoenberg's *Sprechstimme* as a multi-sensory experience allows us to investigate *Sprechstimme* as intentionally unfixed and un-notatable, between genres (cabaret and Lied), genders, and narrative planes.[24]

I take up Fales's, Eidsheim's, and Meizel's challenges, addressing timbre and other sonic effects "with the same clarity as pitch and meter," demonstrating both their

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[23] Nina Eidsheim, "Sensing Voice: Materiality and the Lived Body in Singing," *The Senses and Society* 6, no. 2 (2011): 149.

[24] For the most comprehensive study of development of *Sprechstimme* notation across Schoenberg's career, see Christian Martin Schmidt, "Das Problem Sprechgesang Bei Arnold Schönberg," *Pierrot Lunaire: Albert Giraud, Otto Erich Hartleben, Arnold Schoenberg—Une Collection d'études Musico-Littéraires/A Collection of Musicological and Literary Studies/Eine Sammlung Musik-Und Literaturwissenschaftlicher Beiträge*, La République Des Lettres 20 (Leuven, Belgium: Peeters, 2004).

structural and expressive functions, with attention to the composer, the performer, and the listener. Schoenberg's voices, especially *Sprechstimmen*, cue the audience to the extraordinary nature of the literary personas. The strangeness of the solo vocal roles in *Sprechstimme* works marks extraordinary aspects of the settings they portray, and conveys emotions in extreme situations. In 1936, Schoenberg remarked that "Supposing times were normal—normal as they were before 1914—then the music of our time would be in a different situation."[25] I believe the same applies to *Sprechstimmen* in general, namely that had the dramaturgy in the works been less fragmented and "normal," then the voices would have been more conventional too. However, the score markings, the letters he wrote about these works, and the texts Schoenberg chose all indicate that he did not intend for the *Sprechstimme* to fit within pre-existing parameters of voice.

In Chapter Two, I look at the roots of *Sprechstimme* through *Gurre-Lieder*. I begin by connecting *Sprechstimme* to Schoenberg's interest in the vocal writing of his predecessors and with the notion of melody. Schoenberg's early innovations to vocal writing connect Schoenberg's early vocal thinking with the contemporary "Jung Wien" circle of artists, writers, and intellectuals. An analysis of Schoenberg's Lied "Die Beiden" demonstrates an early exploration of vocal declamation and calls the authority of the score into question. Most importantly, this chapter lays the groundwork for the idea that *Sprechstimme* serves functional purposes by looking at ways it demarcates structural organizations in *Gurre-Lieder*, highlighting a dramatic highpoint and apotheosis.

[25] Quoted in Charles Rosen, *Arnold Schoenberg* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1996), preface.

Chapter Three serves as the analytical chapter, with close examinations of *Pierrot lunaire*. Schoenberg's expressive tendencies are well known but are unexplored in the scholarship. As Jonathan Dunsby observes,

> *Pierrot lunaire* represents the most thorough working out of Schoenberg's concept of melodrama as it had evolved in *Erwartung* and the yet unfinished *Die Glückliche Hand*. It reveals a hitherto unparalleled wealth of means by which text and music are joined in a complementary relationship, thus creating a unity from which nothing can be subtracted. […] The reciting voice, furthermore, is a useful mediator, since its gestures, originating in speech, are made to enter into the musical substance of the work, where they are subject to further interpretation and elaboration.[26]

While this is true, Dunsby does not elaborate further about the significance of the voice. I build on Dunsby to explore how the voice is used "to enter into the musical substance of the work." This chapter builds on the history of melodrama and *Sprechstimme* established in Chapter Two and begins to look at the potential of extended vocal technique as akin to an auxiliary instrument. The authority of the score is established as secondary to expression, for which the full range of the human voice is necessary. I demonstrate how Schoenberg used *Sprechstimme* to create coherence by looking at its structural function in both the large and small scale forms.

In Chapter Four, I address the performance of *Pierrot lunaire*. As Allen Lessem notes, Schoenberg may have turned to melodrama for its expressive potential:

> In view of the parallel [...] between Expressionism and the general climate of early German Romanticism (with its roots in eighteenth-century Sturm und Drang), it is not surprising that Schoenberg was attracted to a genre that had already shown its usefulness as a sensitive recorder of

[26] Jonathan Dunsby, *Schoenberg: Pierrot lunaire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 163.

> emotional nuance and as a means of rendering explicit the mysterious nether-regions of the imagination.[27]

Schoenberg explores these "nether-regions" not only in *Pierrot*, but also in *Sprechstimme* works throughout his career (e.g., *Ode to Napoleon* op. 41, *A Survivor from Warsaw* op. 46). Voice as an embodied phenomenon is an ideal instrument for communicating "emotional nuance" and laying bare the "nether-regions" because it is the only human instrument in these works. Building on research in the field of voice studies, I consider the subjective bodily experiences of the work. The chapter begins with an examination of Schoenberg's thinking about expression leading up to the composition of *Pierrot*. I consider Albertine Zehme's conception of the body as a mode for expression and as the site for creation of a vocalic body more generally. I then look at the voice and the performative body, the figure Pierrot, and how his emotions, experiences, and thoughts are conveyed to the audience through a vocalic body. Finally, I examine the listener's experience of that vocalic body and the variety of identities it renders, which, as the opening quotation from Schoenberg suggests, is critical. Finally, I review the reception of the early performances to draw conclusions about the repercussions of the performer's sonic connection to the listener, of the "hideous and illogical, ear splitting ugliness," as one Arthur M. Abell of the *Musical Courier* described it in 1912.[28]

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[27] Alan Lessem, *Music and Text in the Works of Arnold Schoenberg: The Critical Years 1908–1922* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1979), 65.

[28] Arthur M. Abell, *Musical Courier*, November 6, 1912, 5, cited in Arnold Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke, Abteilung VI: Kammermusik*, ed. Reinhold Brinkmann, Division 1 (Melodramen und Lieder mit Instrumenten), Series B, vol. 24 (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne; Vienna: Universal Edition, 1995), 259.

Chapter 2

"Hush! What could the wind want?":

Roots and Early Innovations of Schoenberg's *Sprechstimmen*

Gurre-Lieder, Schoenberg's first work to include *Sprechstimme*, is composed in a tonally extended, Late-Romantic style, with a text by Danish poet Jens Peter Jacobsen. Schoenberg set Robert Franz Arnold's German translation. The work consists of three parts, and tells the story of Danish king Waldemar the Great's (b. 1131) passionate love affair with Tove, who is murdered by a falcon at the command of jealous Queen Hedwig,[1] and the subsequent torment and healing that Waldemar experiences. Part I depicts the affair and alludes to the murder. Part II depicts Waldemar internally grappling with his grief and rage. Finally, Part III depicts him in a series of surreal vignettes as he overcomes his grief: first riding through the night with an army of undead horsemen which he summons from the church graveyard to hunt for vengeance for Tove's death; second Klaus Narr, a jester figure who is also summoned from the grave, weaves a curious text about his previous life and current aspirations for entering heaven, followed by a brief instrumental interlude; and finally the *Sprechstimme* enters at the point of transition, as a storm begins. The *Sprecher* functions as a narrator in the penultimate section of Part III, depicting a cathartic storm just before sunrise and the dawn of a new day, a moment that serves as a transition to the final chorus of the piece. Schoenberg

[1] Alban Berg, *Gurre-Lieder Führer*, Universal-Edition, 1913.

marks this section as a "melodrama," to be performed as *Sprechstimme* over the orchestral accompaniment with strict rhythm but only approximate pitch accuracy.[2]

The vast vocal variety that would appear in later *Sprechstimmen* is already present in this early work. Indeed, in 1912 Schoenberg described the melodrama of *Gurre-Lieder* to his publisher Emil Hertzka as "the key to my entire development. It shows sides of me which I do not reveal later on, or, from a different approach. It explains how everything had to happen as it did later on, and that is enormously important for my work—that one can follow the man and his development from that point on."[3] While Schoenberg may be trying to build up a piece he recently published, his claim holds up to scrutiny. Schoenberg built on aspects of *Gurre-Lieder* such as alternative vocal production and the structural function of timbre and vocality in his later works. It is these aspects I explore here.

Schoenberg composed the bulk of *Gurre-Lieder* between March 1900 and March 1901. The project began as a few songs (scored for solo soprano and tenor with piano accompaniment) for a song cycle competition held by the Vienna Tonkünstlerverein. His student Dika Newlin reported Schoenberg retelling that he submitted the first nine pieces half a week too late, thus determining their fate.[4] The implication was that the failure of the first nine pieces as a song cycle led Schoenberg to expand the work to include more

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[2] Arnold Schoenberg to Alban Berg, 14 January 1913. Juliane Brand, Donald Harris, and Christopher Hailey, eds. and trans., *The Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence: Selected Letters* (New York: Norton, 1987), 143, cited in Soder, 6.

[3] "Dieses Werk ist der Schlüssel zu meiner ganzen Entwicklung. Es zeigt mich von Seiten, von denen ich mich später nicht mehr zeige oder doch auf einer anderen Basis. Es erklärt, wie alles später so kommen mußte und das ist für mein Werk enorm wichtig: daß man den Menschen und seine Entwicklung von hier aus folgen kann." Schoenberg to Emil Hertzka at Universal Edition, August 19, 1912.

[4] Dika Newlin, *Schoenberg Remembered: Diaries and Recollections* (New York: Pendragon Press, 1980), 225.

text and a bigger orchestra. The critical edition (*Gesamtausgabe*) disputes this claim, documenting that the first nine pieces, which are idiomatic to the piano, were never a closed song cycle, as evidenced by the transitions added to the sixth, seventh, and eighth pieces after the initial composition and a sketch which shows that Schoenberg planned to set Jacobsens entire cycle of poems from the start.[5] Schoenberg orchestrated most of the piece between 1901 and 1903, while also working as Kapellmeister at Ernst von Wolzogen's cabaret Überbrettl in Berlin. In 1903, he moved back to Vienna with his wife and daughter, only returning to the piece in 1910/11 to add the final chorus and finishing touches. The critical edition entry suggests that Schoenberg notated the *Sprechstimme* towards the end of the composition phase, after writing the "Lied des Bauern," the first "Männerchor," and the last of Waldemar's songs.[6] By the time he finished orchestrating the work, it had evolved to include a massive ensemble, scored with varying degrees of textural density. *Sprechstimme* in the "melodrama" (the only section that uses the technique), appears at a pivotal point in Part III of the work, as protagonist King Waldemar's grief over the loss of his beloved gives way to relief and the promise of a new day. The piece premiered in the Vienna Musikverein on February 23, 1913 with Ferdinand Gregori as the speaker.[7]

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[5] Arnold Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke, Abteilung V: Chorwerke*, ed. Ulrich Kramer, Division 3 (Gurre-Lieder), Series B, vol. 16 (Mainz: Schott Music GmbH & Co. KG; Vienna: Universal Edition, 2008), 4.
[6] Ibid., 11.
[7] Schoenberg had also considered Albertine Zehme, who premiered *Pierrot lunaire* in 1912, for the *Gurre-Lieder* role ahead of the 1913 premiere. Schoenberg allowed her to perform the role following the premiere after expressing dissatisfaction with Gregori's vocal timbre and rhythmic inaccuracy. See Brand, *The Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence: Selected Letters*, 206.

Schoenberg was avidly experimenting with instrumental timbre by 1909, and was aware that audiences would not yet be able to tune into this characteristic in the way that they could to melody. Nonetheless, he utilized the ambiguity of *Sprechstimme*. Thus, analyzing it as a disembodied performance style is necessary to hearing and performing it properly. *Sprechstimme* is not strange for the sake of being strange; its otherness holds power, potential, meaning. Each use of this disembodied voice does something—it creates an uncanny effect, which both alienates and entices the listener.[8] Hearing *Sprechstimme* instead of the expected singing or speaking voice is jarring, but the constantly shifting manner in which Schoenberg composes the vocal part makes it difficult to "look" away.

The current chapter traces the development of Schoenberg's *Gurre-Lieder* from earlier musical sources such as the Lieder of Brahms, Mahler, Wagner, and Wolf, especially as Schoenberg used them in *The Fundamentals of Musical Composition*. It also looks at Schoenberg's innovations to the use of voice early in his career and inspects those innovations as the seeds for later developments in *Pierrot lunaire*, op. 21. Finally, looking closely at *Gurre-Lieder* brings attention to the evolution of Schoenberg's *Sprechmelodien* as a slow and naturally changing process which is firmly rooted in previous explorations.

[8] "Uncanny" is used here to denote the unsettling, anxiety-inducing effect related to something just beyond the familiar.

The Roots of *Sprechstimme*

The myriad older forms and genres in *Pierrot lunaire* hint at Schoenberg's enduring links to the past and will be discussed in the subsequent chapter. Some scholars have already explored the predecessors to Schoenberg's *Sprechstimme* innovations. The extent of Schoenberg's work in and around cabaret is evident in his letters and in the writings of Ernst von Wolzogen, who owned and operated one of Germany's first cabarets, the Überbrettl. Jennifer Goltz has traced the influence of cabaret on Schoenberg's *Sprechstimmen* most extensively.[9] Her dissertation, "The Roots of *Pierrot lunaire* in Cabaret," explores Schoenberg's forays in early Berlin cabaret, as both Kapellmeister and composer. Further, Goltz explores Pierrot's roots in Viennese and Munich cabaret, both of which had been heavily influenced by French cabaret, and traces his evolution from *Commedia dell'arte* into a cabaret figure. With the focus clearly on cabaret, Goltz does not venture into other potential influences of Schoenberg's vocal repertoire.

Schoenberg's notion of *Klangfarbenmelodie* also has implications for *Sprechstimme*, especially as it shows the composer's interest in timbre. As Alexander Ringer has observed in his *Grove* entry on "Melody," Schoenberg's experimentation with shifting timbres in *Klangfarbenmelodie* did not wholly replace changing pitches. Ringer writes "...the disembodiment of traditional melodic continuity at the behest of the 'tone-colour melody,' postulated by Schoenberg as early as 1911, appears to be a function of omnidirectional sonorous forays that issue from and return to a small number of stable

[9] Jennifer Goltz, *The Roots of* Pierrot lunaire *in Cabaret* (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2005).

pitch centres, not unlike the circular harmonic excursions of the mature Wagner."[10] The idea that "traditional melodic continuity" might be sacrificed in favor of tone color melody has obvious implications for *Sprechstimme*, and its notation in *Sprechmelodie*. We might thus consider *Sprechmelodie* a renewed attempt at reaching beyond the confines of nineteenth-century melodic construction and organization in the same way that atonality was an effort to extend traditional harmonic language.

Ringer's reference to Wagner here is telling. The role of Lieder in Schoenberg's conception of *Sprechstimme*, especially Late-Romantic Lieder, has been underestimated to date. For example, the use of vocal range, and in performance, timbre, to denote different characters in a single singer traces back at least to Schubert's "Erlkönig." Schoenberg builds on this idea. Using examples from his predecessors, Schoenberg articulates his understanding of the tradition on which he builds in *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, which Schoenberg worked on between 1937 and 1948, and which was published posthumously in 1967.[11] *Fundamentals of Musical Composition* contains a collection of ideas from Schoenberg for novice composers for constructing tonal melodies. Rather than reflecting on his own compositional practice, Schoenberg compiles ideas on (both vocal and instrumental) melody drawn from the works of his Romantic and Post-Romantic predecessors.[12] Notably, he rarely talks about pitch; rather his focus is on contour, declamation, and expression, all of which are important to *Sprechstimme*. Most of Schoenberg's writing in the eleventh chapter of *Fundamentals of Musical*

[10] Alexander Ringer, "Melody," *Grove Music Online*, ed. Deane Root, accessed 15 September, 2020, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.
[11] Arnold Schoenberg, "Melody and Theme," in *Fundamentals of Musical Composition* (London: Faber and Faber, 1967), xiv.
[12] Ibid., 98–115.

Composition, titled "Melody and Theme," assumes the reader wishes to write tonal, singable melodies, but he recognized that older concepts were inadequate for evaluating twentieth-century music. Schoenberg contextualizes his move away from traditional musical beauty:

> Prior to the great changes which began in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, aestheticians could define melody in terms of beauty, expressiveness, simplicity, naturalness, tunefulness, singability, unity, proportion, and balance. But taking into account the development of harmony and its influence on every concept of musical aesthetics, it is obvious that earlier definitions of "theme" and "melody," "melodious" and "unmelodious," are no longer adequate.[13]

However, rather than focusing on twentieth-century examples and modern rules, Schoenberg points to highly expressive late nineteenth-century Lieder, which often break compositional rules, as models for good melodic writing.

Schoenberg had originally presented th extensive explanation of melody in *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*[14] to the American Musicological Society in 1940.[15] The chapter shows his understanding of writing for voice and recognizes the potential of the voice as an expressive medium. Schoenberg emphasizes that melodies must be singable. His first singing-related remarks indicate that note values should be long enough for the voice to develop a "full sound," by which he meant traditional singing. Second, the composer should cross registers smoothly to maintain the "unity of tone quality," or to sustain the timbre. For Schoenberg, appropriate register use, discussed

[13] Ibid., 99.
[14] Ibid., 98–115.
[15] TBK 1, folder 6a, Arnold Schoenberg Center, Vienna. TBK 1 contains early drafts and materials for *Fundamentals of Musical Composition* which strongly correspond to the final version.

in the second section, requires the composer to carefully consider the structure of a piece. Each vocal register serves a specific role within the melody or the piece. Register and range affect timbre by requiring a change in the vocal cords (tightening or loosening) which in turn changes the sound quality or timbre (e.g., from strained and shrill to growling or raspy). One would not describe the low range as "shrill" or the high range as "growly," indicating that timbre, along with pitch, changes with registral shifting. While approximating pitch is sufficient, Schoenberg had specific conceptions of how each vocal register should function and what would be conveyed to the audience through its use. He regards the highest register as "vulnerable" and strenuous for the singer, thus it should be reserved for climaxes.[16] According to Schoenberg, the middle register is the "most convenient" register, but one which is limited dynamically.[17] The lowest register, he maintains, is "not capable of extreme expression" although it is stronger than the middle register. The third section addresses intonation and by implication pitch accuracy, but since that is not relevant to *Sprechstimme*, it will not be discussed in further detail here.[18]

Still, these rules may be disregarded for dramatic purposes. According to Schoenberg, Wagner led the way in this regard: "Such treatment of the voice is largely attributable to Richard Wagner, who, for dramatic purposes, often went beyond the limits of the voice."[19] Schoenberg uses Eva's monologue "O Sachs! Mein Freund!" from Act III of *Die Meistersinger* to illustrate this point. He marks passages of large leaps (often sevenths) that violate rules of good voice leading and involve considerable registral

[16] Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, 98.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid., 101.

shifting, but are nevertheless justified by the intense emotion of the situation.[20] He locates similar passages in Brahms, Mahler, and Wolf.[21] Passages like these pepper especially dramatic moments in Schoenberg's early *Sprechstimme* writing, especially in *Pierrot*, as I show in the following chapter. Several of Schoenberg's innovations extend other Wagnerian techniques. The endless melodies, chromatic harmonies, and operatic sense of drama in his *Wesendonck-Lieder* were already present on the stage of Wagner's earlier *Gesamtkunstwerke* and return, heightened, to the operatic stage in *Tristan und Isolde* (in fact, Wagner called the songs "Träume" and "Im Treibhaus" of the *Wesendonck-Lieder* "studies for Tristan and Isolde").[22] Furthermore, Wagner treats the music as subservient to the text and drama, which means that the melodies are malleable; they often meander chromatically to illustrate a character's wandering state of mind, for example, in "Der Engel" in the *Wesendonck-Lieder*. In mm. 14–16, as the voice shifts from talking about angels to talking through the pain and loneliness those angels were said to relieve, the melody (heretofore entirely diatonic) becomes increasingly chromatic.

Schoenberg does something similar in his *Sprechstimme* pieces, where the melodies often unfold to suit the imagery and drama of text. In the *Gurre-Lieder* melodrama, frequent shifts in vocal timbre, orchestral texture, and tempo depict first the excitement of the storm and then both calm and joyful observations of nature before the sunrise, as I demonstrate below. Wagner's efforts towards textual clarity also foreshadow Schoenberg's approach to declamation. Early in his career, Schoenberg focused largely

[20] Ibid., 107.
[21] Ibid., 100–1, 107.
[22] The indication "Studie zu Tristan und Isolde" already appeared on the first page of "Im Treibhaus" and "Träume," pages 8 and 14 respectively of the 1863 Schott edition of the *Wesendonck Lieder*.

on the rhythmic aspects of *Sprechmelodien*, as in the case of *Gurre-Lieder*. In *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, Schoenberg writes this with regard to melody:

> Since the consequent is a varied repetition of the antecedent, and since variation does not change all the features but preserves some of them, distantly related motive-forms might sound incoherent. THE PRESERVATION OF THE RHYTHM ALLOWS EXTENSIVE CHANGES IN THE MELODIC CONTOUR. […] This rhythmic unification permits far-reaching changes of the melodic contour in slow tempo, and promotes comprehensibility in rapid tempo.[23]

What Schoenberg underscores here is the importance of rhythmic accuracy, despite flexibility in the melodic contour. Later his melodic contours became more varied, but the focus on clear declamation also increased, for example in *Ode to Napoleon*, op. 41. Each of these characteristics translates directly to Schoenberg's writing in *Pierrot*, in which text painting, constantly shifting scenes, and a novel ensemble each push Wagner's ideas a step further.[24]

If Wagner inspired the structure of Schoenberg's melodies, Brahms provided a framework for maintaining coherence in context of the larger work. Peter Burkholder writes,

> When new resources were called into play for programmatic, pictoral or coloristic reasons, there was no potential limit for the evolution of the musical language or for its comprehensibility. Even works which transcended tonality, such as Stravinsky's early ballets, found

[23] Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, 30, emphasis in original.
[24] Siglind Bruhn's book *Arnold Schoenberg's Journey from Tone Poems to Kaleidoscopic Sound Colors* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2015) looks at each of these features in detail, but without linking them to Wagner. Constantin Grun argues that "Schönberg generally does not adopt the Wagnerian model of a declamatory singing voice and melodically leading instrumental line, but he is already somewhat influenced by it." In the original: "Schönberg übernimmt also nicht prinzipiell das Wagner'sche Modell aus deklamierender Singstimme und melodisch führender Instrumentallinie, zeigt sich aber bereits etwas von diesem beeinflußt." In *Arnold Schönberg und Richard Wagner: Spuren einer außergewöhnlichen Beziehung / Arnold Schönberg und Richard Wagner,* p. 173.

> enthusiastic audiences… While Wagner and Liszt provided new musical tools, Brahms helped establish the framework for using these tools, and his assumptions concerning what music is and does have been played out in succeeding generations. Thus it was Brahms the traditionalist rather than Wagner the revolutionary who created and confronted the central problem for composers of the twentieth century: the integration of a progressive musical language with an allegiance to the tradition of Bach, Mozart, Haydn and Beethoven.[25]

Burkholder summarizes a line of thought stemming from Schoenberg, who clearly considered Brahms to be at the root of musical progressivism and like Brahms reinvigorates old techniques with new musical language.[26] Although not speaking of Lied in this context, Schoenberg uses similar language in the "Melody and Theme" chapter of *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, which primarily concerns vocal melody, "the concentration of the main idea in a single melodic line requires a special kind of balance and organization, only partly explicable in terms of technique."[27] Elsewhere Schoenberg gives Brahms's song "Der Gang zum Liebchen" as an example of good melody. It demonstrates this melodic balance; the melody is tethered to the tonic throughout, moving a sixth above and below before cadencing on B-flat4.[28] Establishing these outer boundaries creates a center of gravity that acts as a resting point in the melody. Schoenberg seems to be aware of the voice having a kind of "center," an idea which he emphasizes further when he indicates that a vocalist who does not have the full range to

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[25] Peter Burkholder, "Brahms and Twentieth Century Classical Music," *19th-Century Music* 8, no. 1 (1984): 82.
[26] This is clearest in "Brahms the Progressive" (1933), reprinted in Arnold Schoenberg, *Style and Idea*, ed. Dika Newlin (New York: Philosophical Library, 1950), 52–101.
[27] Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, 99.
[28] I am using American Standard/Note-Octave convention for naming pitches, which designates the lowest C on a standard piano as C1, and pitches that octave receive the same number. The next highest C (and pitches within that octave) is labeled C2, etc. See Chelsea Hamm and Bryan Hughes, "American Standard Pitch Notation," *openmusictheory*, https://viva.pressbooks.pub/openmusictheory/chapter/aspn/.

perform *Pierrot* might compress all the intervals to perform the role. The single-line staff notation in *Ode to Napoleon*, op. 41 and *A Survivor from Warsaw*, op. 46 seem to underscore this as well. There is a direct parallel with the development of *Sprechstimme*, which clearly fits Burkholder's "programmatic, pictorial, or coloristic reasons" (among others, e.g., expression). Schoenberg packaged progressive musical ideas as regards timbre and vocal melody—if not also orchestration, subject matter, and staging—into something digestible for his audience, at least some members of it.

Schoenberg's examples in *Fundamentals of Musical Composition* also demonstrate that he paid attention to the way Brahms also manipulates timbre and tessitura in the vocal part to bring more attention to the text. The center in the vocal line shifts from E4 (mm. 1–8, where the narrator declares that the protagonist is on his way to his beloved) to a higher range centering around B4 (mm. 14–21, as he nervously remembers her rejection and subsequently implores breezes and doves to stop one another from carrying his beloved away) before returning to E4 (m. 22, to a wordless ending). Although the meter remains 3/4 throughout, at m. 14 the pulse shifts according to the text as well, namely from a swaying 2+2+2 division in the accompaniment (marked "con grazia") to a lighter but more urgent waltz feeling as the protagonist's excitement rises and he hurries to meet his beloved beginning at m. 14 (marked "animato"). Brahms also uses motivic repetition and variation to create a psychological impact.[29] Schoenberg does something similar from the beginning of the *Gurre-Lieder* melodrama (in which *Sprechstimme* occurs), where the increasingly higher starting pitches of the *Sprecher* and

[29] Heather Platt, "The Lieder of Brahms," *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied*, ed. James Parsons (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 201.

the faster, more compact rhythmic divisions create a sense of acceleration and increasing unrest. Especially the voice, in both Brahms and Schoenberg, becomes tighter and more pressed as the words become faster, the pitch rises, the emotional intensity increases, and there are fewer places to breathe. Schoenberg's melodies similarly rely on motivic repetition and variation to establish coherence in an atonal context, for example with motivic connections in the songs like "Angst und Hoffen" in *The Book of the Hanging Gardens* and in the "Nacht" passacaglia in *Pierrot.*

In *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, Schoenberg differentiates between vocal and instrumental melody, in that the former should be singable, especially in reference to Brahms and Mahler. He points out the contradictions in the vocal writing of Brahms, who had argued that "the melody of a song should be such that one could whistle it (i.e., without accompaniment, without the support of an explanatory harmony)," but then composed the virtually un-whistlable "Der Gang zum Liebchen."[30] Schoenberg writes similarly of Mahler, noting that *Das Lied von der Erde* and "Lied des Verfolgten im Thurme" illustrate that "not only the intervals and the rapid tempo, but especially the passionate expression, makes the impression of an instrumental, rather than a vocal, melody."[31] The rapid tempo Mahler chose to express the heightened emotional state, combined with chromatic intervals, causes difficulties with intonation for a whistler or, as the case may be, a vocalist. An instrumentalist, e.g., with a fingerboard or keys to rely on, would presumably be better equipped to navigate these passages effectively. Moreover, the speed of both excerpts indeed forces the singers to spit out the melodies, as they strain

[30] Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, 99.
[31] Ibid., 99–100.

to achieve a volume that can overcome the thick orchestral texture. This suggests Schoenberg valued that "passionate expression" more than the vocal beauty that would be produced with a simpler melody.

For Schoenberg, the orchestral nature of Mahler's accompaniments is his greatest contribution to the genre, and likely inspired Schoenberg to use a varied color palette. Mahler's relatively simple forms are supported by detailed motivic development, as are Schoenberg's.[32] Mahler's early songs, like Schoenberg's *Sprechstimme* pieces, use an expansive vocal tessitura, which demonstrates an interest in timbral variety.[33] The challenges faced by the *Sprecher* in the *Gurre-Lieder* melodrama, for example at m. 822 as the orchestra picks up speed and density, are nearly identical. Finally, Mahler's use of dance rhythms, military motives, and chorale-like passages bring out the mundane in the world as material of interest, as James L. Zychowicz notes. Schoenberg draws on this in the melodrama of *Gurre-Lieder*, as he describes the effects of a passing storm on reeds, trees, and insects.[34]

Although he is not as prominently represented in the *Fundamentals of Musical Composition* chapter as other other composers, Hugo Wolf was also an important influence on Schoenberg's vocal writing. Hugo Wolf's Lieder, perhaps the most progressive leading up to the turn of the twentieth century, apply winding chromatic vocal lines, strict declamation, through-composed forms, and vastly shifting vocal colors to connect the Romantic Lied with modernism, all of which foreshadow Schoenberg's

[32] Ibid.
[33] James L. Zychowicz, "The Lieder of Mahler and Richard Strauss," *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied*, 247.
[34] Ibid., 252.

Lieder and eventually *Sprechstimmen*. Wolf, whom Schoenberg only mentions briefly in *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, achieves the greatest variety in the vocal part most closely resembling Schoenberg's use of voice. In "Grenzen der Menschheit," the last of Wolf's 51 *Goethe-Lieder*, the composer establishes a recitative-like style. The through-composed melody follows the contour of regular speech patterns, which results in irregular phrase lengths and realistically set rhythms which resemble Schoenberg's speech-like text setting in his early *Sprechstimmen*.[35] Also speech-like are the repeated pitches and small intervals which predominate, shaping a smooth contour. Presumably, the most extreme case occurs in mm. 55–62 of "Grenzen der Menschheit," as the composer depicts a mortal man with a repeating, shouted A5 for 6 measures, before moving to a floating, gentle, smoothly sung chromatic line at m. 74, (standing in stark contrast to the previous section) as a representative of God, to whom man ought not compare himself.

Schoenberg's writing on melody shows the influence of all of these composers. Justifying and clarifying Schoenberg's extension of the term "melody" into *Sprechmelodie* lays the foundation for the rest of this dissertation. The following chapters will explore how Schoenberg puts his developments of the idea of melody into practice. Increasing attention to the vocal variety that emerges in Schoenberg's use of *Sprechstimme* is the first step.

[35] Stein argues that the rhythm of the vocal line is entirely dictated by the subtle nuances of the verse (1971, 12).

Abstraction of Melody

Schoenberg's abstract and innovative view of melody-as-contour makes up the final examples in the *Fundamentals of Musical Composition* chapter. In keeping with his description of melody as intervals plus latent harmony, these drawings represent two-dimensional music (rhythmically unspecified changing intervals). The published drawings in *Fundamentals of Musical Composition* include excerpts in chronological order from Bach's *English Suites No. 3* (Sarabande and Gavotte) and *No. 4* (Sarabande); Haydn's *String Quartets* op.76 (/1–II, /4–IV, /5–I, /5–II); Mozart's *String Quartet* K.V. 575–III, *Symphony* K.V. 543–II, *The Marriage of Figaro* ("Non sa più cosa son"), *Piano Sonatas* (K.V. 333–I and K.V. 281–III); Beethoven's *Piano Sonatas* (op. 2/I–II, op. 7–IV, op. 10/I–III, op. 22–II, and op. 57–I), as shown in Figure 2.1.[36] The title, composer, key, time signature, number of measures, and sometimes the label "period" or "irregular period" appear as an indexed list immediately following the drawings. The contours appear independently from the specific titles, so each contour conveys an idea of melody, with its source cited at the end of the chapter. Rhythm and metrical divisions are accounted for alongside the contour lines, but harmony is not, indicating rhythm was important to Schoenberg's own conception of melody, but that harmony was not. This has far-reaching implications for the importance of pitch accuracy in *Sprechstimme*—if there is no need for melody to conform to the harmony, then only approximate pitch is necessary. As long as the contour is clear, exact pitch is secondary. Furthermore, these

[36] Images used under fair use.

drawings illustrate Schoenberg's idea of "line," an idea that was specific and significant for him, as Alexander Ringer observes.[37]

The contours show abstract ascents and descents in the melodic line, freed from actual pitches. Schoenberg's careful markings show formal divisions, climaxes, and relative rhythmic activity. The gestures that emerge never show exact repetition, specific intervals, clefs, or pitches as we might expect of melody. The contours show relative register, balance in melodic structure, and cadences, which fit with Schoenberg's idea of melody.[38] The thick line seemingly fixed on a staff visually represents all transpositions as well. This abstraction distances the "melody" from any specific tonality. The published drawings only show part of Schoenberg's thought process, however.

[37] See, for example, Alexander L. Ringer, "Klang und Farbe, Melodie und Linie," in *Arnold Schoenberg: Das Leben im Werk* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2002), 99–107.
[38] Schoenberg writes about cadence contour on pp. 29–30 of *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*. Key characteristics contrast with the previous section: rhythmic acceleration, abandonment of characteristic elements which increase tension, a return to the middle register from the climax, and "liquidation of motival obligations."

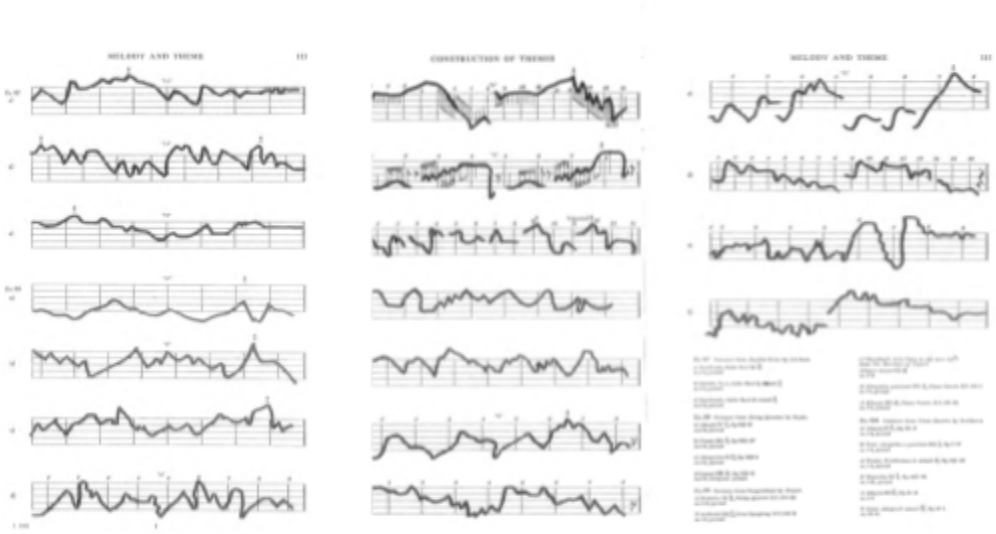

Figure 2.1: Fundamentals of Musical Composition *113–115*

Three earlier sets of sketches are preserved at the Arnold Schönberg Center, each of which provides further detail on the contours. Prior to the printed *Fundamentals of Musical Composition* publication came a handwritten original in pencil, with pink colored pencil annotations (TBK1_f15_067 and TBK1_f15_068, or "Contours 1"); a photocopy of Contours 1 with a slight blue tint and annotations in light blue and purple pencil (TBK1_f11_1r and TBK1_f11_1v, or "Contours 2"), mounted on card stock; and a handwritten set of the contours on green graph paper (TBK1_f11_2v, TBK1_f11_3r, and TBK1_f11_3v), which I will call "Contours 3."

The original version, Contours 1, was the source for the Contours 2 copy. It clearly shows erasure marks of penciled-in note heads and stems in most of the examples, including many that disappeared on the copy.

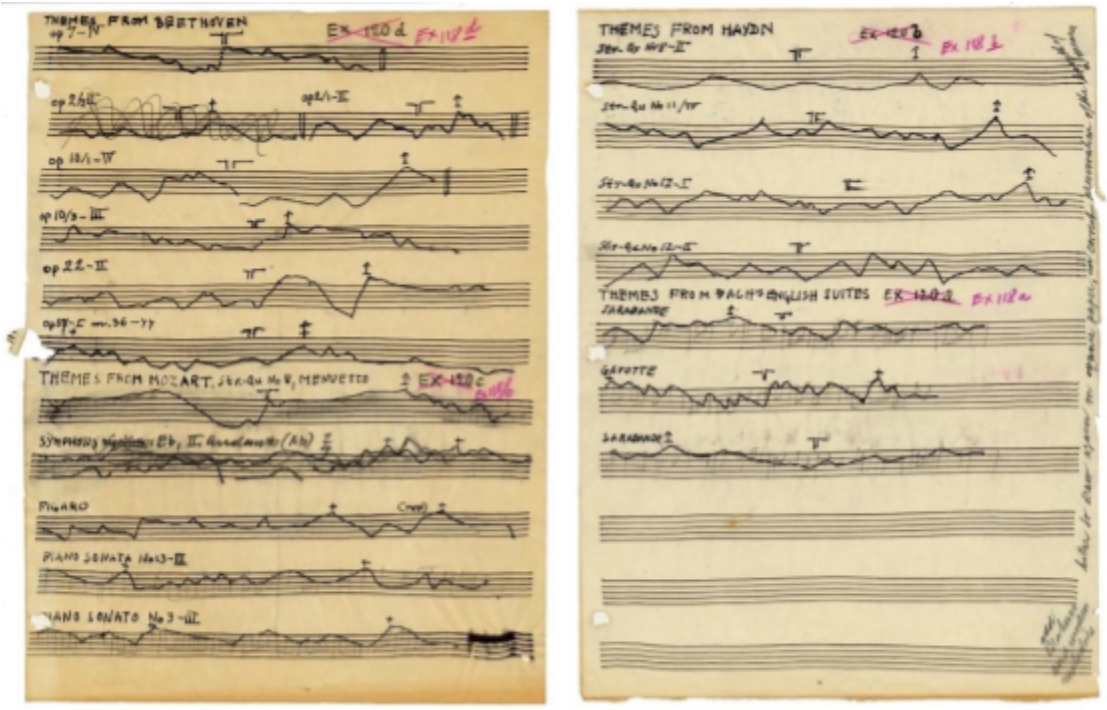

Figure 2.2: Contours 1 from TBK1_f15_067 and TBK1_f15_068

The rhythms were not accurately spaced, but rather indicated with filled or empty noteheads and changing flags. Aside from the impressions left by the pencil, the smudged phrase markings, most notably by the second and third Haydn examples, also support the conclusion that Schoenberg had notated the melody before tracing and erasing the exact pitches.

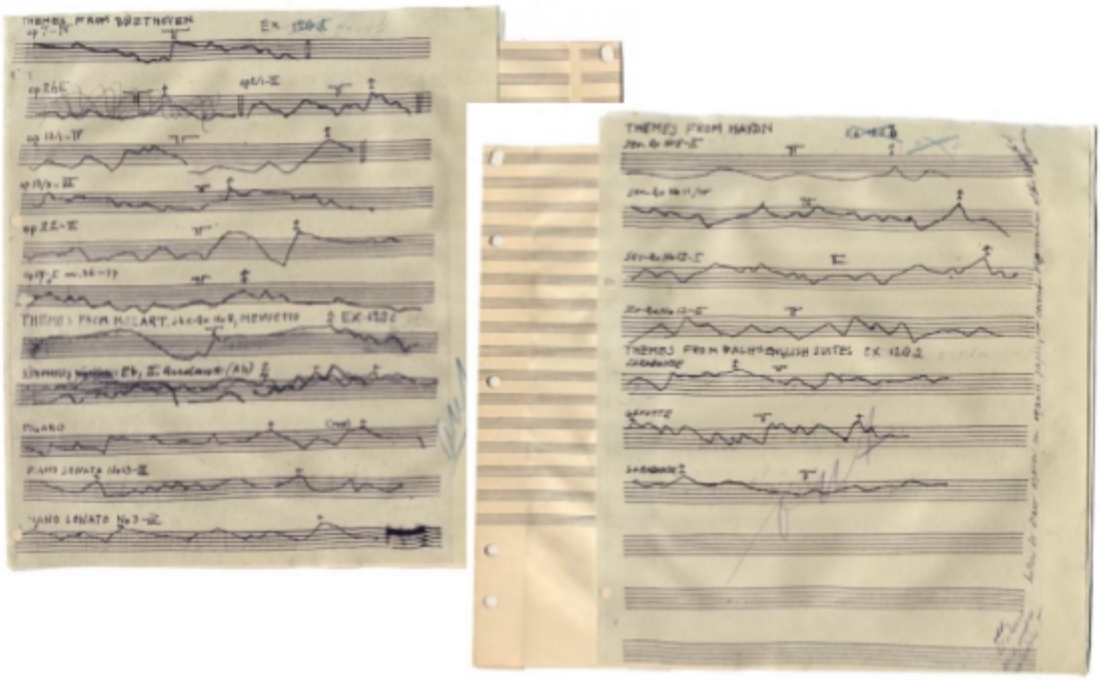

Figure 2.3: Contours 2 from TBK1_f11_1r and TBK1_f11_1v

The successor to those contours, Contours 2, is a copy with a slight blue tint. It includes multiple lines on a single staff (for Mozart's Symphony in E-flat), but in this case they are not parallel. The lines are a relatively uniform width as in the published version. One notable change between this version and the subsequent Contours 3 is the order of the pieces. It becomes apparent that Schoenberg did not begin with the works in chronological order. Fig. 2.2 shows that he began by sketching the contours of the Beethoven melodies, then Mozart, followed by Haydn, and finally Bach. Close examination revealed small, stem-like markings under the Mozart Piano Sonata Nos. 13–III and 3–III, as well as on the three Bach examples, which shows that Schoenberg sometimes penciled the melodies in before tracing them with ink and subsequently the original notation. The margin note on the side reads "better to draw again on square paper, in correct proportion of the length of a measure," indicating that Schoenberg's motivation for redrawing the contours on graph paper (Contours 3) came from a desire to represent the horizontal (rhythmic) proportions of the melodies. Schoenberg's attention to rhythm was meticulous at this stage, and the contour closely represents the melody both vertically (pitch) and horizontally (rhythm). Another noticeable shift is the continuity of the lines. The contours are entirely uninterrupted, or the phrases are connected through dotted lines, while later versions show the melodic gestures as separate from one another.

Finally, Contours 3 shows not only the characteristics visible in the published version, but also more details underneath the lines. The contour lines of the Bach and Haydn examples are thin colored pink pencil markings traced over with thick black marker. The wide spacing of the staves in the published version is evidently due to the

green graph paper Schoenberg used. Unlike the published contours, Contours 3 includes lines of different widths and varied ink saturation, which might refer to changes in texture. In Schoenberg's Example 100f, two parallel contours appear on the same staff. The titles of each work appear by the example, instead of indexed at the end. Based on the example numbers, the order of the pieces remains the same as in the published version, although the page of Beethoven examples was first in the folder instead of last.

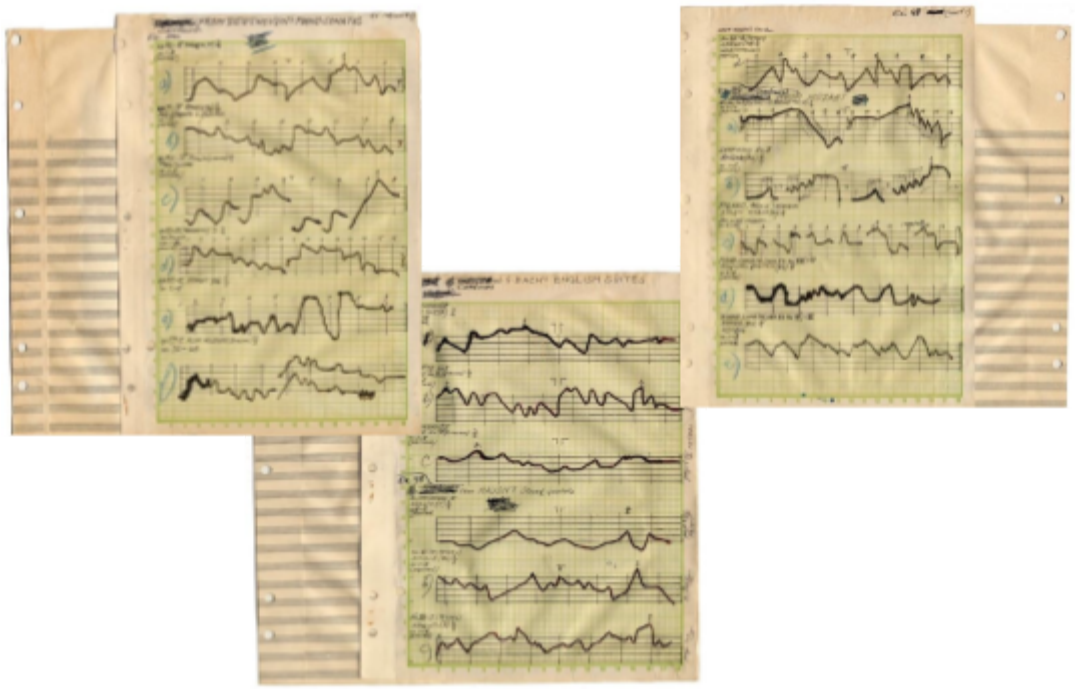

Figure 2.4: Contours 3 from TBK1_f11_2v, TBK1_f11_3r, and TBK1_f11_3v

Several conclusions can be drawn from these three drafts. The contours become decreasingly specific and prescriptive as Schoenberg moves towards the published version. He began with specific pitch notation, then abstracted the melodies further and further from their original pitch-bound form. The final version represents exact vertical proportions without pitches. Schoenberg also reproduces the horizontal proportions of the examples by maintaining the spacing dictated by the rhythm. He moves from approximate rhythmic notation to primarily non-specific rhythmic gestures before creating the horizontally accurate representations published in *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*. Especially noteworthy is how well these drawings fit with the notation style Schoenberg used for his late *Sprechmelodien*, in which rhythmic notations center around a single staff line without denoting exact pitches or intervals. In both the contour drawings and the *Sprechmelodien*, the independence of the melodic line comes to the fore visually.

Schoenberg's Contemporaries and their Influence on *Sprechstimme*

Even before developing special notation for *Sprechstimme*, Schoenberg was exploring alternate modes of musical declamation under the influence of artistic and literary movements in Vienna at the *fin-de-siècle*, especially the group known as "Jung Wien." In his article, "The Coinage of 'Jung Wien,' in the Study of Austrian Letters," George M. O'Brien demonstrates that the term "Jung Wien" is applied inconsistently and the members of the group were not clearly defined. The nomenclature includes "varied combinations of upper and lower case, italics, quotation marks, hyphen, space, or

junction."[39] Confusingly, the term was interchangeably with "Jugendstil" in the 1960s, and its definition is further muddied by its broad use in reference to literature and the arts ranging from Impressionism, Symbolism, Neo-Romanticism, Decadence, *fin-de-siècle* literature, literary Secession, literary snobs, literary aesthetes, "die Moderne," and "die Wiener Avantgarde." O'Brien found that the members of this group were vaguely defined, with Hermann Bahr clearly at the center, the most prominent members being Hugo von Hoffmansthal and Stefan Zweig, and consistently included Arthur Schitzler, Peter Altenberg, Richard Beer-Hofmann, and Felix Salten, among many others who were less consistently identified.[40] This mostly Jewish group often met in Café Griensteidl until its destruction in 1897 and later in Cafe Central.[41]

O'Brien summarizes, citing Walter Perl's conclusion that Jung Wien consisted of "rather lively and rounded personalities who, after the perhaps somewhat playful early period, took their place in the spiritual life of the time without exception."[42] A quotation from Carl Schorske concludes the chapter:

> *Jung-Wien* was the literary movement which about 1890 challenged the moralistic stance of the nineteenth-century literature in favor of sociological truth and psychological—especially sexual—openness (Schorske, 212).[43]

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[39] George, M. O'Brien, "The Coinage of 'Jung Wien' in the Study of Austrian Letters," *Modern Austrian Literature* 15, no. 1 (1982): 85–96.

[40] In the exhibit Arnold Schönberg und Jung Wien in 2018, Therese Muxeneder drew on a letter signed by the group as a point of departure for connecting the musicians, visual artists, and the literary circle. (Exhibit website: https://www.schoenberg.at/index.php/de/ausstellung-jung-wien.)

[41] In *Jewish Women in Fin de Siècle Vienna,* Alison Rose describes the remarkable shift from the salon, run by the likes of Berta Zuckerkandl, Eugenie Schwarzwald, and Alma Mahler, to the male dominated café culture.

[42] "Es zeigt sich, daß die jungen Wiener keineswegs blasse Aestheten (wie es George sehen wollte) oder müde Dekadenzerscheinungen waren, sondern lebendige und gerundete Persönlichkeiten, die nach der vielleicht etwas spielerischen Frühperiode ausnahmslos ihren Platz im geistigen Leben der Zeit einnahmen." O'Brien, 91.

[43] Schorske, 212, cited in O'Brien, 95.

In contemporary artistic circles, one finds not only an increased shift in focus from three-dimensional to two-dimensional painting, but also limited detail, with flowing but sparse lines and few muted colors (e.g., as in the works of Kolo Moser and Adolf Loos). This style contrasts with the Secessionist work of Gustav Klimt and his contemporaries, which came before.

The influence of Jung Wien on Schoenberg is evident in the song "Die Beiden," with a text by Hugo von Hoffmansthal, completed on April 2, 1899. The source text was printed on a page with a Jung Wien design in the border. The song is in standard notation, and seems conventional at first.[44] However, Schoenberg's curious handwritten note in the top margin of the manuscript indicates "less sung, than declaimed, descriptive, performed; as if read from an old picture."[45]

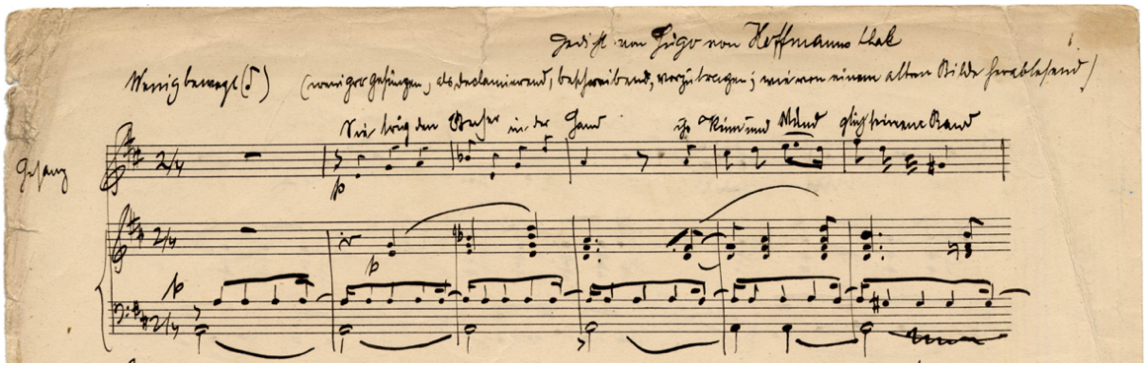

Figure 2.5: "Die Beiden," Niederschrift der Ersten Fassung MS 65, 475

[44] In the *Gurre-Lieder* (1901–1911) Schoenberg uses a system of x-noteheads akin to Engelbert Humperdinck's. I suspect that the round noteheads correspond more to the more resonant sound of *Sprechstimme*, compared with plain speech, than they do with actual pitches.

[45] This is from the first autograph (erste Niederschrift) of the piece. At the top right, Schoenberg writes "weniger gesungen, als deklamierend, beschreibend vorzutragen; wie von einem alten Bild herablesend." Thanks are due to Therese Muxeneder for bringing this source to my attention. It is reprinted as a footnote on p. 96 of Series A, Volume 2 in the critical edition (*Sämtliche Werke*).

This marking shows the first signs of exploration with vocal tone color, flexibility of interpretation, and attention to expression. As evidence of Schoenberg's early thinking about alternative vocal colors and his first compositional step away from traditional singing, it is necessary to consider "Die Beiden" as part of the development of *Sprechstimme*.

Compared with the later supernatural and symbolist *Sprechstimme* texts, the Hofmannsthal text Schoenberg sets in "Die Beiden" is relatively straightforward. Yet the sexual undertone of the lyrics is thinly veiled, like many Jung Wien texts: a young woman carries a pitcher brimming with wine, careful not to spill it; a young man forces the young mare on which he sits to stand still, with his steady hand; and as he takes the vessel, they both become weak and shake, causing wine to spill to the ground.

Die Beiden

Sie trug den Becher in der Hand
ihr Kinn und glich seinem Rand
so leicht und sicher war ihr Gang,
kein Tropfen aus dem Glase sprang.

So leicht und fest war seine Hand:
er saß auf einem jungen Pferde
und mit nachlässiger Geberde
erzwang er, daß es zittern stand.

Und doch, wenn er aus ihrer Hand
den leichten Becher nehmen sollte,
dann war es beiden viel zu schwer:
denn beide zitterten so sehr,
daß dunkler Wein zur Erde floß.[46]

[46] Gesamtausgabe, Reihe A, Bd. 2, pp. 96–98 and online in the Arnold Schönberg Center's music manuscript database at http://archive.schoenberg.at/compositions/werke_einzelansicht.php?werke_id=167&herkunft=allewerke.

Leonard Forster's prose translation reads:

The Two

She carried the cup in her hand—
her chin and mouth were like its rim—
her gait was so light and assured,
not a drop spilled out of the cup.

His hand was equally light and firm;
he rode on a young horse,
and with a careless movement
he made it stand still, quivering.

But when he was to take the light cup from her hand,
it was too heavy for both of them:
for both trembled so much that no hand found the other hand,
and dark wine flowed on the ground.[47]

The poem is short and simple with a linear and chronological progression from start to finish. There is only one literary perspective: a third-person narrator, who views the scene from the outside rather than participating in it. The clear, syllabic declamation and simple accompaniment foreground the text.

Poetic genre is important to Schoenberg's text setting. In the first chapter of *The Composer's Voice*, Edward T. Cone cites and elaborates on the three traditional genres of poetry (lyric, dramatic, and narrative [e.g., epic]), from Aristotle's *Poetics III*. "In the lyric, the poet speaks in his own voice; in the drama, he speaks only through the voices of his characters; in the narrative he combines both techniques."[48] Cone further argues that

> all music, like all literature, is dramatic; that every composition is an utterance depending on an act of impersonation which it is the duty of the performer or performers to make clear…the art of song…exploits a dual form of utterance, related to but not to be confused with the

[47] Leonard Forster, *The Penguin Book of German Verse* (Rutherford: Penguin Publishing Group, 1988).
[48] Edward Cone, *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), p. 1.

> dual medium of voice and instrument. It combines the explicit language of words with a medium that depends on the movements implied by nonverbal sounds and therefore might best be described as a continuum of symbolic gestures.[49]

The case of "Die Beiden," then, is a prime example of a dramatic setting, in which the vocalist both speaks in his own voice and speaks through the figurations of the characters. The vocal personas, each of which encompass only part of the story, express themselves "at least as much by melody as by speech…by tone-color as by phonetic sound."[50] Schoenberg would later retool this strategy in the composition of *Sprechstimme* melodramas, like those in *Gurre-Lieder* and *Pierrot lunaire*. Indeed, most of his *Sprechstimme* compositions are dramatic or narrative, while his more traditionally sung compositions tend toward the lyric, suggesting Schoenberg saw a connection between style of declamation and poetic mode. Given that Hofmannsthal and other writers in his circle also focused on drama and theatre rather than only poetry, this suggests a link between *Sprechstimme* and Jung Wien.

The song consists of three distinct sections, which correspond to the three stanzas in the poem. The gentle first section (mm. 1–12) seems to depict the girl in the narrative. The melody consists of legato, even eighth-note rhythmic patterns with minimal sustained notes. With the exception of the word "Mund" (mouth), which consists of two notes instead of one, the melody is entirely syllabic throughout. Slurs marked in the accompaniment influence sensitive vocalists to connect the pitches in the vocal line of the first section as well. This section features a melodic range of C4–F5, with a dip below to

[49] Ibid., 17.
[50] Ibid., 9–10.

A3 in preparation for the final cadence. Chromatic alterations (B-flat and F-natural) in the melody, which can be read as feminine characteristics, create some D-minor moments.[51] This mode mixture only gives way to a cadence on D-major at the end of the section in m. 12. Arpeggiations hovering around the dominant A3, over a dominant pedal tone on A2, further allow this modal flirting to unfold. However, arrivals on a D-major 6-4 chord which appear every two measures set the first section in D-major. While the melody moves away from the A4 in both directions, the wave-like motion of the melody avoids large leaps, allowing the voice to cross the octave-and-a-half range with ease. Together with the syncopated undertow of the accompaniment, the protagonist's grace is mirrored by the smoothness of her vocal line and consistently light, almost breathy timbre, while her uncertainty is hinted at through the chromatic alterations. The middle section (mm. 13–22) features a faster, more staccato, melody with an uneven, dotted sixteenth rhythm. Repeated notes in the melody are a stark contrast to the long-breathed melody in the first section. Skips by fifth dominate the melodic contour of the second section, and contrast with the wave-like movement of the first section. The melodic range spans the same distance as the first section, C4–F5, although without the dip down to the dominant A3, and with an overt emphasis on A4. The martial, percussive rhythm typically associated with soldiers, combined with a lower melodic range seems to suggest the male figure in the text. Dense block chords underscoring the melody push rhythm further into the foreground. Despite a lack of dynamic markings, the block chord accompaniment also forces the vocalist to sing louder in order to be heard. The resulting increase in effort of

[51] Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 55–58.

the voice is another notable contrast to the opening section, and allows the vocalist to take up more sonic space and have a more commanding presence in this section. Together, the first two sections comprise roughly half the piece. In the final section (mm. 23–49), the narrator, who previously described the young woman and then the young man, switches position and describes them as one in both words and sound. A smoother melody returns, albeit with a more meandering, explorative contour. The thicker texture, especially in the accompaniment, contrasts with the earlier sections and suggests multiple narrative figures. The pulsing bassline and chords leading up to a climax at m. 34 allude to the young couple's sexual union, even though it is not in the text. The vocal color softens at the next entrance, as the accompaniment thins out and the narrator observes that the cup has suddenly "become too heavy" for the pair to hold.

As in fully developed *Sprechstimmen* that would follow, the performance indication for the vocal part for "Die Beiden" is gender fluid, marked simply "Gesang" (song). The text, like some later *Sprechstimmen*, is from a third-person narrator's point of view. The impulse towards simplicity and a focus on color rather than elaborate ornamentation that characterized painting in the era is also evident. The foregrounding of dramatic narration combined with vocal evocation of affect in "Die Beiden" forms a bridge between the *Sprechstimme* of *Gurre-Lieder* and *Pierrot lunaire*.

Predecessors of Schoenberg's *Sprechstimme* Notation

Non-singing, non-speaking voices were not new at the turn of the twentieth century, and they have appeared frequently since: in cantillation and chanting, recitative,

cabaret declamation, dramatic readings, and scat-singing. However, in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna, the tendency toward mixing speech with music increased. The most famous predecessors of Schoenberg's melodramatic use of *Sprechstimme* include older "melodramas" like the one at the beginning of Act II Ludwig van Beethoven's *Fidelio* (1805), the "Wolf's Glen scene" in Carl Maria von Weber's *Freischütz* (1821), Robert Schumann's *Zwei Balladen,* op. 122 (1852), Franz Liszt's *Leonore* (1857/58), Richard Strauss's *Enoch Arden* (1897), and the one most relevant to *Gurre-Lieder*, Engelbert Humperdinck's *Königskinder* (1897), which the composer initially conceived as a melodrama and reworked into an opera by 1910.[52] Schoenberg's early attempts at writing *Sprechmelodie*, that is, composing *Sprechstimme* parts, would significantly deviate from and build on these works.

All of these composers were experimenting with and shifting the notation of non-sung, melodrama texts. Beethoven notated the melodrama in *Fidelio* by breaking off the staff and inserting text in front of white space between the measures of music; the staff lines stop. Weber subsequently primarily notated rhythm in the "Wolf Glen's scene" of *Der Freischütz*, with a single recitative-style repeated pitch on the five line staff. Schumann continued the staff notation in *Zwei Balladen*, writing the text loosely above the staff over both held fermate and moving passages. In *Leonore*, Liszt employed this technique as well, interspersing it with blocks of spoken text which are set apart from the musical score. Strauss's notation contained both freely metered passages like Beethoven, loosely metered passages (centered around catchwords that align with the music) that are

[52] For an overview of melodrama predating Schoenberg's first use, see Mathias Nöther, *Als Bürger Leben, als Halbgott Sprechen: Melodram, Deklamation, und Sprechgesang im wilhelminischen Reich* (Köln: Böhlau, 2008).

more similar to Schumann, and metered syllabic declamation like that seen in Strauss (e.g., Allegro moderato: "An einem herbstlich gold'nen Abend…", p. 5 of the 1898 Forberg score). At each stage, Schoenberg experimented more with the rhythmic potential of the non-sung lines. The piece that ultimately most resembles *Gurre-Lieder*'s notation, however, is Humperdinck's *Königskinder*, which uses an x-notehead notation, in which the usual oval at the end of the stem is replaced with an "x." Whether Schoenberg knew Humperdinck's score or not, the coincidence in the choice of using the x instead of standard oval noteheads is too stark to ignore.

Engelbert Humperdinck (1854–1921) composed the fairy tale melodrama, *Königskinder* in 1897, but soon revised it into an opera, taking out the *Sprechstimme*, between 1907 and 1910. In the first act, the King's Son meets a young Goose-Girl, who is held captive by an evil Witch, and they fall in love. The Witch is then visited by the townsfolk (including a Fiddler), who ask for help identifying a new ruler. The Witch prophesies that the ruler will be the first person—man or woman—to enter the town gates on the following day at noon. The Fiddler then suggests that the Goose-Girl should marry the King's Son, and that the pair of them rule the town, but the Witch protests and explains that the girl is not royal. However, after hearing the Witch tell the love story of the Goose-Girl's parents, the Fiddler proclaims that as a result of their devotion and hardship, they were indeed of noble blood. As the second act begins, the Goose-Girl enters the town the following day, again meeting the King's Son, and thus presumably secures her fate. But she is instead driven away by the townspeople, who do not acknowledge the Witch's prophecy. In Act III, the town's children attempt to bring the

couple back, but the King's Son and the Goose-Girl ultimately die in each other's arms, nearly starved, after eating poisoned magic bread which the Witch had forced the girl to bake in the first act.

The notation for Schoenberg and Humperdinck's *Sprechstimmen* appears to be the same, but differences in execution are immediately evident in the scores. Humperdinck's *Sprechstimme* notation modifies the round noteheads of standard notation into an "x," as shown later in Figure 2.7. In *Gurre-Lieder*, Schoenberg uses nearly identical notation to Humperdinck's, using x-noteheads, shown below in Figure 2.6, although he uses traditional round noteheads for half-notes, while Humperdinck retained the x-noteheads for half notes as well.

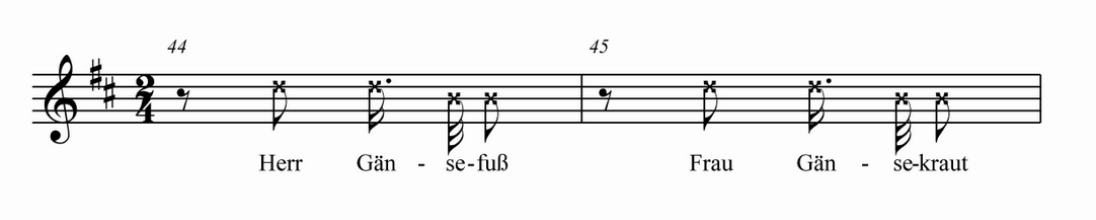

Figure 2.6: Notation in Gurre-Lieder *Part III mm. 44–45*

Schoenberg's use of *Sprechstimme* in *Gurre-Lieder* deviates from Humperdinck's *Königskinder* in several other, less obvious ways. Schoenberg's *Sprecher* exclusively performs in *Sprechstimme*, and no other characters employ that technique. Conversely, Humperdinck's characters use a mix of *Sprechstimme*, singing, and speech. Schoenberg reserves *Sprechstimme* for the melodrama, preceding the choral finale. In contrast, *Sprechstimme* in *Königskinder* permeates the entire work and is not assigned to a single character. Humperdinck uses *Sprechstimme* for every main character: the Goose-Girl, the Witch, the King's Son, and the Fiddler. Most of the other characters also have purely

spoken (unmeasured) text, text marked "half-sung," text marked with x-noteheads, as well as purely sung text. Further, Schoenberg's *Gurre-Lieder Sprechmelodie* does not require exact pitches, while Humperdinck wanted exact pitches and rhythms which were to fit with the accompaniment.[53]

Humperdinck's homorhythmic harmonic support suggests an expectation of pitch accuracy from the vocalists and helps to ensure accurate intonation. He usually doubles the *Sprechstimme* in the orchestra or gives reference pitches which align with the vocal part every few beats. The piano reduction in Figure 2.7 shows one example of the orchestral doublings in *Königskinder*, both the pitch and the rhythm of the voice reappear in the instruments.[54] This implies that the performer should closely match the instrumental line, which should be clearly audible to the performer, even if the timbre of the voice deviates from traditional singing into something more speech-like.

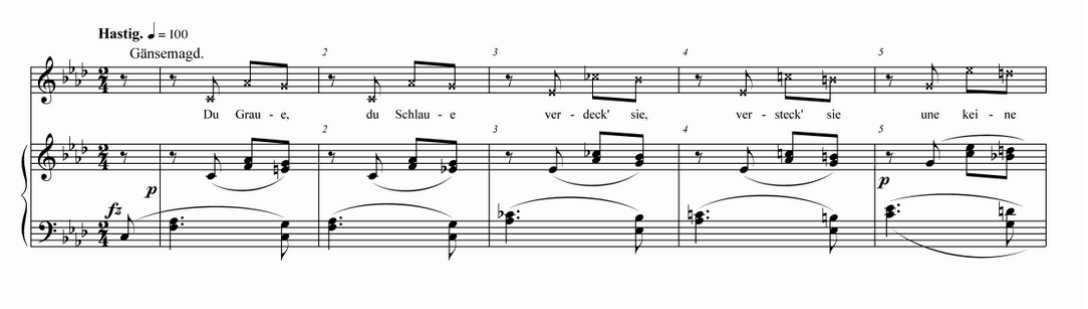

Figure 2.7: Doubling of voice in accompaniment of Humperdinck's Königskinder*, mm. 1–5*

In contrast, the noteheads of the *Gurre-Lieder Sprechmelodie* do not correlate with the orchestral accompaniment, the pitches and rhythms generally are not doubled. The noteheads show a melody which is rhythmically independent of the accompaniment; the

[53] Julia Merrill, *Die Sprechstimme in der Musik: Komposition, Notation, Transkription* (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2016), 53.
[54] Engelbert Humperdinck, *Königskinder* piano reduction with text and connecting prose (Brockhaus: Leipzig, 1912).

rhythm maintains the alignment of the parts, but does not double the voice part. This implies that, for Schoenberg, contour was more important than exact pitches, and that the vocal line alone is responsible for the melody, rather than subordinate to the orchestra.

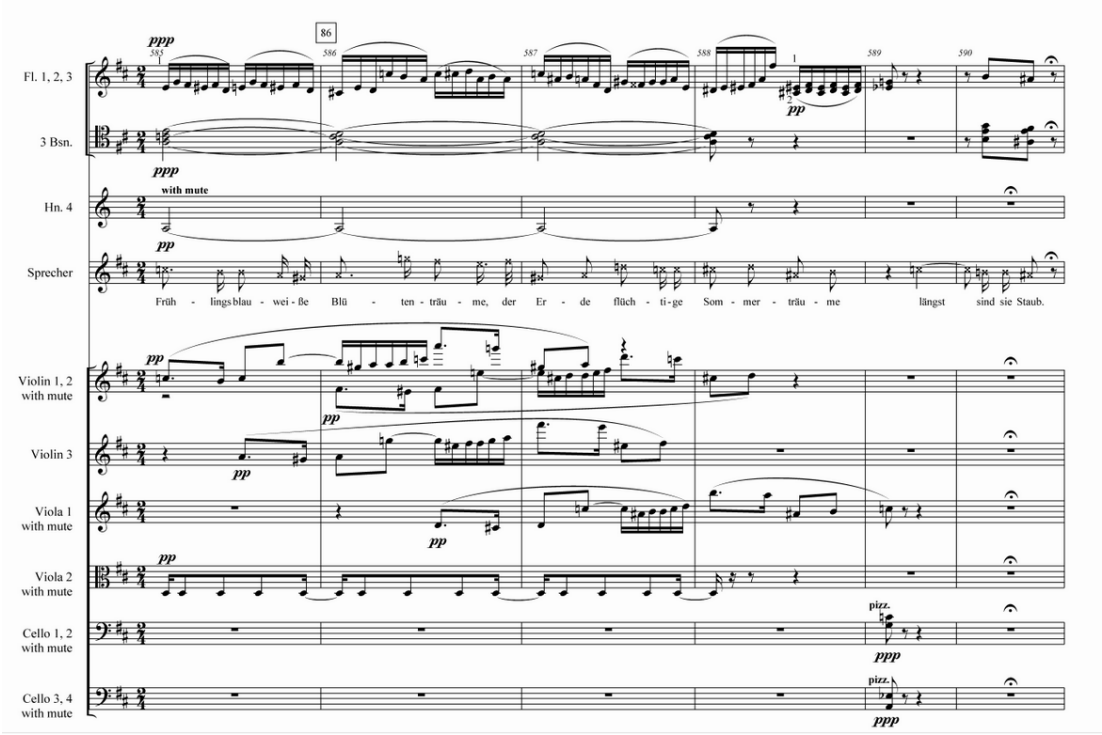

Figure 2.8: Independence of Sprechmelodie *in* Gurre-Lieder *from mm. 584–590*

Schoenberg clearly cared more about contour than pitch accuracy in *Gurre-Lieder*. This is clear from two sources: the first is the set of line drawings from *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, which post-date *Gurre-Lieder* but crystalize ideas that emerged in the piece, discussed earlier. The second is an early instruction regarding *Pierrot*, in which Schoenberg briefly considered asking performers for pitch accuracy (a decision he later reversed). On January 14, 1913, he wrote to Alban Berg that the pitches in the *Gurre-Lieder* melodrama "should in no case be taken as seriously as with the *Pierrot* melodramas."[55] Furthermore, Avior Byron and Matthias Pasdzierny have demonstrated that exact pitch, or even contour, were not the essential features of *Sprechmelodie* for Schoenberg, since Erika Stiedry-Wagner, a vocalist with whom Schoenberg worked for decades, and with whom he made the first recording of *Pierrot lunaire* in 1940, often varied both.[56] In 1913, after the premiere of *Pierrot lunaire*, as *Gurre-Lieder* was being prepared for the premiere, Schoenberg wrote to Berg that the *Gurre-Lieder Sprechmelodie* should not be as "gesangsartig" (song-like) as in *Pierrot lunaire*; the pitches are merely to be hinted at." Indeed, regarding *Pierrot*, Schoenberg writes,

> Though shown in absolute pitch notation, the intervals are only meant to be relative. The initial note is so short that it is of no harmonic consequence. The reciter is therefore free, not only to transpose his part according to the type of his speaking voice and regardless of the other instruments, but also to narrow down his intervals, so as to accommodate them within his individual (speaking) compass and tessitura. What is essential is that the proportions of the melodic line be retained: a high note has to be relatively high, a low note relatively low; a fourth

[55] "Wegen der Melodramen in den *Gurreliedern*: hier ist die Tonhöhen-Notation keinesfalls so ernst zu nehmen, wie in den *Pierrot* Melodramen."
[56] Avior Byron and Matthias Pasdzierny, "Sprechstimme Reconsidered Once Again: '… though Mrs. Stiedry is never in pitch,'" *Music Theory Online* 13, no. 2 (June 2007).

> must be a wider leap than a third, and a minor second a smaller step than a second.[57]

This emphasis on contour rather than pitch accuracy is one of Schoenberg's most innovative ideas, and starkly differentiates it from *Königskinder* and previous melodramas. The rhythmic and tonal independence of Schoenberg's early *Sprechstimmen* add an entirely new dimension to the works while Humperdinck's vocal line, which seems to merely ornament or enhance the instrumental parts. Rather than Humperdinck's pitched speaking, Schoenberg sought new vocal possibilities through the use of a non-singing and rapid articulation of consonants. The faster delivery speeds and increasingly even contour results in relatively smooth connections between notes, which he would draw out to an even greater degree subsequently, with the *portamenti* and slides in *Pierrot lunaire*.[58]

Timbral Explorations

Gurre-Lieder not only calls for a wide range of voices for the main characters (Waldemar is a tenor, Tove a soprano, Waldtaube a mezzo soprano or alto), but also an additional tenor and bass as side characters (Klaus Narr and Bauer respectively), as well as the unnamed *Sprecher*. The performer and performance of the *Sprecher* part are flexible. Seven vocal soloists on stage create a striking array of coloristic potential, covering a broad range and expressive variety. Additionally, Schoenberg requires three

[57] Quoted in Erwin Stein, *Orpheus in New Guises* (Westport: Hyperion Press Inc., 1979), 88, cited in Soder, 55. Originally published in the Schoenberg Issue of *Pult und Taktstock* (Vienna, March/April 1927).
[58] Aiden Soder distinguishes slides (without vibrato) from *portamenti* (with vibrato).

men's choirs, to which he assigns the role of Waldemar's Men, and a mixed choir, whose dramatic role he does not designate.

Schoenberg uses timbre—both instrumental and vocal—to create large-scale divisions in the piece and to reinforce the large-scale narrative. Unlike many of Schoenberg's later *Sprechstimme* pieces, the narrative of *Gurre-Lieder* is relatively straightforward, told chronologically, and the audience is clear on who is speaking/singing (whether a character or the narrator). Part I consists of solo love songs passed between the two voices of King Waldemar and his beloved Tove. The vocal profile of the lovers rests firmly in traditional singing. The Waldtaube's initial entrance announcing Tove's murder at the end of Part I marks a turning point from love to rage, after which Waldemar curses God and spirals out of control. The vocal timbres and effects shift as wildly as his emotions throughout Parts II and III from lyrical floating declarations of love and mourning (e.g., "Mit Toves Stimme flüstert der Wald") to strident and spitting vengeful rage (e.g., "Du strenger Richter droben"). Several other soloists and a chorus accompany Waldemar's search for revenge before the next stark shift in vocal writing in the melodrama. The *Sprechstimme* is the final vocal solo. Its blended, speech-song sounds stand apart from what came before, and prepares the stage for the entrance of the chorus at the end.

Much of the interpretation of the *Sprechmelodie* is left up to the performers. Although most of the voices in *Gurre-Lieder* are assigned traditional voice parts, Schoenberg leaves the *Sprecher*'s voice type open, marked simply "Sprecher" or speaker, in the autograph. This assignment could be either masculine or feminine, as it was not yet

customary to include the gender inclusive "-In" at the end of masculine nouns to allow for female variants. Schoenberg cast it in treble clef, which typically indicates a higher voice, however, the high and low points of the line fall within a comfortable range for most vocalists, so the clef is not critical in identifying the type of vocalist. Although at the premiere, Ferdinand Gregori (an actor without musical training) performed the *Sprecher* part, in 1950, Schoenberg also recommended Erica Stiedry-Wagner (who was his preferred performer for *Pierrot)*, Hans Nachod (who had also sung Waldemar), Wilhelm Klitsch (who sang in *Die Jakobsleiter*), and his daughter Nuria for the role.[59] This represents another point of contact with the past; many of his predecessors, including Johannes Brahms (e.g., op. 72 marked simply "für Singstimme"), Gustav Mahler (*Lieder nach Texten von Friedrich Rückert*, marked "für eine Singstimme"), and Hugo Wolf (e.g., "Blumengruss" No. 24, marked "Gesang"[60]) also avoided assigning specific voices to their songs. This flexibility means that the songs are transposable and that the octave is not fixed. Thus, Schoenberg's *Sprechstimmen* challenge standard schemas of voice classification. In *Gurre-Lieder,* Schoenberg assigns specific voice parts to most of the soloists. However, the mystical Waldtaube might be a mezzo soprano or alto, and the *Sprecher* has no further indications whatsoever.[61] Avoiding range or gender

[59] Arnold Schoenberg to Thor Johnson, on July 24, 1950. This contradicts the indication, for example in the letter to Alban Berg on February 2, 1913, which indicated that the speaker should be masculine.
[60] Not in the first edition but still during his life (1860–1903): *Neue Musik-Zeitung*, 1897, no.1 (Stuttgart/Leipzig: Carl Grüninger, 1897): plate C.G. 97.
[61] Schoenberg did have preferences, however. He did not want Zehme performing the *Gurre-Lieder Sprecher*. In a letter to Alban Berg on February 2, 1913 he wrote: "Dear Friend, Mrs. Zehme may not perform the speaker. Not only, because her voice is insufficient. But also because the part doesn't suit her. But especially: because this must be a masculine speaker. The speaker can only be a woman in an emergency. Should this emergency arise, then I will appoint someone." In the original: "Lieber Freund, Frau Zehme darf nicht den *Sprecher* machen. Nicht nur, weil sie stimmlich nicht ausreicht. Sondern auch weil ihr die Partie nicht liegt. Vor Allem aber: weil das ein *Sprecher* (ein masculinum) sein muss. Nur im

assignment of the vocalist leaves the role open for more interpretation and coloristic nuance, especially if one accepts that the notation for *Sprechstimme* is primarily concerned with rhythm, contour, and horizontal alignment, rather than vertical placement of the notes. Furthermore, unlike more traditional vocal parts, which imply specific tone colors in traditional singing, decisions about the execution and variety of tone colors of *Sprechstimme* are open to performers.[62] Compared to *Pierrot*, Schoenberg gives very few verbal instructions with regards to the *Sprecher*'s timbre and delivery, indicating that he might have sought more control in later pieces.

Challenges of *Sprechstimme*

Schoenberg's conceptions of "good" melody (described in *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*) still hold in his *Sprechmelodie* in unique and intriguing ways. Given that he used the term "*Sprechmelodie*" to describe the notation of *Sprechstimme*, many of these concepts are useful for understanding the practice. But *Sprechstimme* also posed challenges to Schoenberg's ideas of "good" melodic writing. Schoenberg addressed the issues that arise from *Sprechstimme* mostly by emphasizing the importance of contour and rhythm rather than pitch accuracy, as we saw above. The issues of intonation are resolved by freeing the *Gurre-Lieder Sprechstimme* from specific frequencies; there can be no incorrect pitches in this case. The way Schoenberg writes the rhythm also mitigates the issue of intonation. The rhythms of the *Gurre-Lieder Sprechmelodie* are not only

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Notfall darf es eine Frau sein. Sollte dieser Notfall eintreten, dann werde ich jemanden nennen. Aber ich wünsche, dass ein Mann gefunden werde!!"

[62] For example, the transitions between notes, use of and degree of vibrato, and shading of tone colors on sustained syllables are left up to the performer.

independent of the accompaniment, but often in opposition to it. The rhythms in the melody do not align with the accompaniment, and the voice part rarely begins on a strong beat (for example see Figure 2.8). The rhythms follow the natural speech rhythms of the text so neither single durations (e.g., straight eighth notes) nor complex rhythmic patterns repeat (as in the example from Wolff in *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*). The x-shaped noteheads, which are performed as relative rather than absolute pitch, the harmonic independence of the melodic line, and the non-repetitive nature of the strictly notated rhythmic part all point to a vocal line which is not bound by accurate intonation. By removing the pitch constraints, Schoenberg provides the performers with freedom to focus on musical expression without the distraction of pitch accuracy.

Schoenberg addresses a second challenge, range, in the *Gurre-Lieder Sprechmelodie* with the unspecific noteheads as well. Due to its non-diastematic nature, Schoenberg's *Gurre-Lieder Sprechstimme* does not require a specific vocal range or sex. Both females and males across the spectrum of vocal ranges and musical training, including actors and singers, have performed and recorded the vocal role, including not only Benjamin de Loache, Günter Reich, and Thomas Quastoff but also Werner Klemperer, Eva Pilz, and Klaus Maria Brandauer. This trend would continue with Schoenberg's later *Sprechstimmen* pieces.

Schoenberg addresses the problem of achieving smooth registral shifts in the *Gurre-Lieder Sprechstimme* by leaving some aspects of contour largely up to the vocalist. Again, the unspecified pitches afford the vocalist the freedom to adjust the transitions, both pitches and intervals, so that they are comfortable and can be performed without

noticeable interruptions. Although he indicates mostly small intervals in the *Gurre-Lieder Sprechmelodie*, they are not essential to smooth registral transitions, since the voice is not singing and the pitches do not have to be accurate.

A comparison of the recordings with baritone Benjamin de Loache from 1932 (which was influenced by the performances of the piece in 1920s under Schoenberg's supervision)[63] and baritone Hans Herbert Fiedler's recording from 1965 demonstrates how the notation gives singers the flexibility to solve the problems in the ways that best suit their own voices. Both master the transitions effectively; while de Loache carefully tracks the musical development of the intensifying storm vocally, Fiedler uses stark vocal contrast to demarcate structural turning points within the melodrama, (which is also underscored by the instrumental shift from stirred, forward-pressing full orchestra to gushingly romantic drawn-out violin slurs).[64] The contrast in interpretation also underscores the vocalists' differing priorities which might be traced to their training: de Loache had trained as a singer first, while Fiedler became interested in opera only after a great deal of practice as an actor and radio speaker.[65]

Finally, Schoenberg's *Sprechmelodien* account for vocal difficulties with fast delivery. Vocal melodies, Schoenberg indicates, must allow time for the vocalist to develop a full sound,[66] which dictates long durations and relatively slow tempi.

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[63] Olga Stokowski wrote to Schoenberg about how pleased she and her husband were about a performance they had seen Schoenberg conduct at the Vienna State Opera on June 12, 1920.
[64] The strongest shifts occur at "Still, was mag der Wind" in m. 849 and "Auf luftigem" in m. 884, discussed below.
[65] Notably, Fiedler had previously performed the speaker role of Moses at the premiere of Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron* in 1954.
[66] Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, 99. Schoenberg does not explain what he means by "full sound," but he likely means a sound that is not breathy.

Challenges arise when a lot of text is to be delivered quickly, when the music is faster than the vocalist can sing, or when the text is consonantly heavy with few prolonged vowels. *Sprechstimme* avoids the prerequisite for a constant full sound of singing, which makes it an ideal way of delivering long passages of difficult text quickly, especially at the beginning and end of the melodrama, enabling singers to free up energy for diction, to clarify the meaning of the text for alternate timbres and effects, or to bury unimportant words by giving them less support. Indeed, the melodrama packs 47 lines into under five and a half minutes. Using *Sprechstimme* removes the performative requirements of the traditional singing, allowing the performer to make practical decisions about how to best execute the *Sprechmelodie*. The resulting timbres and effects are much more fluid and varied than a singing voice would be.

Voice and Form

Although *Sprechstimme* posed challenges, it also presented opportunities. Schoenberg exploited the voice's flexibility relative to most instruments, exploiting the special characteristics unique to voice to create a blend that was more varied than either voice or instrument on its own. The *Sprechstimme* has room for unprecedented vocal variety but Schoenberg employs it to serve many different purposes.

The voice possesses several qualities which instruments do not. First, relative to instruments, each human voice offers much more timbral flexibility than an individual instrument. The soft, fleshy structures of the vocal tract can be lengthened and shortened, tightened or expanded, and otherwise manipulated (through facial movements of the

cheek and brow bones as well as musculature in the face). The timbral possibilities encompassed by changing mallets or crooks in a horn pales in comparison. Second, the coloristic differences from voice to voice are naturally much more significant than from instrument to instrument within a family. The physical body and training of each individual vocalist differs, so the resulting performances are more varied than instrumental performances by default. Forcing voices to fit a uniform ideal vocal sound for Schoenberg's *Sprechstimmen* in general or for a specific piece undermines this extraordinary quality.

Schoenberg exploits this vocal variety to demarcate the form of the movement, however it is up to the performer to realize this variety. Due to differences in vocal qualities and artistic decisions, the performances will inevitably vary broadly, even more broadly than an instrumental interpretation. Generally speaking, de Loache smooths over section breaks while Fielder splits the sections. For example, de Loache begins with strictly separated syllables and moves gradually to more legato connections as the tempo increases and the orchestra gains volume.[67] In contrast, Fiedler sustains a significantly more staccato declamation style well into the melodrama. At almost exactly the middle of the text ("Hush. What could the wind want?" "*Still! Was mag der Wind nur wollen?*"), he shifts suddenly to a smoother declamation style with linked syllables which connect the registers more smoothly.

Even finer gradations can be made. The *Gurre-Lieder* melodrama can be divided into three distinct sections based on vocality. Schoenberg's writing encourages vocalists

[67] In a letter to Thor Johnson on July 24, 1950, Schoenberg accused de Loache of singing all the time, in response to the 1949 RCA Victor recording conducted by Leopold Stokowski.

to use the shifts in performance to underscore the narrative. Despite many interpretive differences in the recordings of the melodrama by de Loache and Fiedler, both perform three distinct sections: from the beginning to "Still! Was mag der Wind nur wollen?" at m. 849 in the autograph score facsimile; from "Still!" to "Auf luftigem Steige wirbelt er frei" at m. 884; and from "Auf luftigem" in m. 917 at the choral entrance of "Seht die Sonne" to the end of the melodrama. Each section has a distinct vocal profile which aligns with the changing instrumentation.

The first section builds in dramatic intensity. De Loache reflects the building pressure of the storm by gradually increasing his vocal intensity from speaking to chanting to howling and finally wailing. While de Loache creates large timbral shifts steadily, Fiedler's approach is much more subtle but abrupt. He maintains a more speech-like timbral profile even at higher volumes in the opening passage, but allows moments of timbral variety including shouting to shine through on specific phrases. For example, he almost howls on "Welch Ringen und Singen!" and switches to a wetter, more sibilant sound on "springen die Frösche nach feuchten Verstecken." The timbral profile of the second section is much more uniform than the first. The narrative settles into an emotional reflection with sweet melodic strings in the accompaniment. De Loache's delivery is smooth and timbrally consistent, bordering on traditional singing. Fiedler's performance is also more settled, but distinct from de Loache's legato approach in that he articulates each syllable, separating them for declamatory clarity. The third section bubbles with hope and renewal. Wind instruments join the strings from section two to depict the cleansed, refreshed world. As the storm settles, pizzicato strings punctuate

pastoral melodies which build in volume towards the sunrise in the choral finale. The vocal timbres of both performers return to a palette akin to part one, but at a higher dynamic to match and project over the orchestra's increasing volume. De Loache sustains a rich and varied palette of timbres, ranging from moments of extreme delicacy (e.g., on "ach…war das Licht und Hell" at m. 893) to shouting at full volume on "erwacht" at m. 913). Fiedler's interpretation also becomes more diverse in the third section. He maintains his crisp declamation, but softens it somewhat. He struggles noticeably to project over the orchestra and occasionally uses vibrato amid the spat consonants, leading up to a loud and phlegmy ending on "erwacht" before the entrance of the final chorus. This analysis shows that while Schoenberg clearly wrote three sections, each vocalist is allowed a great deal of latitude in interpretation.

Scholars have attempted to determine the "song-ness" of a vocalization based on the degree of vibrato used by the vocalist. For example, Aidan Soder writes "The impression, or perception, of singing results from the presence of vibrato. [...] The absence of vibrato however, does not exclusively mean that the sound produced will be *Sprechstimme*."[68] This is insufficient, however, because several vocalists used vibrato to perform *Sprechmelodie* with Schoenberg's approval; the vibrato aligned with his conceptualization of *Sprechmelodie* which he thought of as strictly non-singing. It is a misconception to assume that vibrato distinguishes singing from speaking and should thus be avoided in the execution of *Sprechmelodie*. De Loache's clearly vibrated longer note values in *Gurre-Lieder* were influenced by Schoenberg's 1920 *Pierrot lunaire*

[68] Aidan Leigh Soder, "Arnold Schoenberg's *Pierrot lunaire*: A Study of Sprechstimme and Vocal Performance Practice through Sound Recording," (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms International [UMI], 2006), 20.

performance in Vienna. Vocalist Erika Stiedry-Wagner, with whom Schoenberg worked for over two decades, had used vibrato in her renditions of *Pierrot lunaire.* Rather than avoiding it altogether, vibrato can be used selectively as one of many sonic possibilities in executing *Sprechstimme*.

The *Gurre-Lieder Sprechstimme* loses some of the projection power that a singing voice would have in exchange for a clear delivery of the text, while the articulation of the consonants, few elongated vowels, and deliberate speech-rhythm contribute to the declamatory clarity. The *Gurre-Lieder Sprechstimme* lacks the vast array of colors found in later *Sprechstimmen*, however, the seeds for Schoenberg's later experiments with vocal writing are present. The suggested *Sprechmelodie* is notated on the staff with primarily stepwise intervals. While the *Gurre-Lieder Sprechstimme* is less able to travel large distances and "fill" large rooms than a singing voice, its vocal range increases as it moves away from traditional singing, since the fullness of tone is no longer essential.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown that Schoenberg's use of *Sprechstimme* immediately goes beyond the work of his predecessors and contemporaries in terms of imagination and expression in vocal writing. There is no question that the vocal timbres and effects possible with the *Gurre-Lieder Sprechstimme* surpass what was possible with traditional singing or spoken vocal deliveries. From this study, previously unrecognized nuances of *Sprechstimme* emerge as key components of Schoenberg's compositional toolbox at this

early stage in his career, supporting the idea that the *Gurre-Lieder* melodrama serves, as Schoenberg claims, as a key to later developments.

Glimpses of ways in which Schoenberg would use *Sprechstimme* strategically already appear in *Gurre-Lieder*. First, the structural contrast between the *Sprechstimme* and the choral finale as the sun rises marks an important moment in the piece. Second, the narrator's apprehension and increasing agitation during the turbulent melodrama points to *Sprechstimme*'s heightened potential for emotional expression. Third, the *Gurre-Lieder Sprechstimme* is the first of many Schoenbergian characters whose otherness is marked by its timbral difference, influencing the listener's interpretation of the drama.

Following the composition of *Gurre-Lieder* Schoenberg developed *Sprechmelodie* into a viable tool which would lend itself to repeated reinvention: he employed it to varying degrees in ten further works. For the remainder of his career following *Gurre-Lieder*, Schoenberg not only exploits the vast array of sounds possible with this voice, but he uses *Sprechmelodie* strategically to serve specific roles both dramatically and structurally, as can be seen in *Pierrot lunaire*.

Chapter 3

"A bright metallic sound":

Sprechstimme as a Structural and Dramatic Device in *Pierrot lunaire*

Gurre-Lieder shows only the beginning of Schoenberg's lifelong use of *Sprechmelodie*. In *Gurre-Lieder*, *Sprechstimme* writing lasted a mere five and a half minutes, whereas in *Pierrot*, it lasts for all twenty-one movements of a thirty-three minute piece. The extended use of *Sprechstimme* led to a more in-depth exploration of vocal possibilities. Vocal sonority is a rarely addressed issue in Schoenberg studies. In this chapter, I will show how Schoenberg created his vocal variety through phonemes, register, dynamics, articulation, and performance instructions. When all of these factors are properly considered, it is evident that *Pierrot* features a range of shifts in the voice no less striking than the more obvious shifts resulting from the changes in instrumentation that occur from movement to movement and that these vocal shifts depend on both the composer and the performer. I discuss how Schoenberg advances the technique by increasing the vocal variety the *Sprechstimme* carries in *Three Times Seven Poems from Albert Giraud's Pierrot lunaire*, op. 21 and I explore how he uses this vocal variety strategically to organize his compositions and to sustain forward momentum in works of increasing length. Finally, I show how Schoenberg continued to build on *Gurre-Lieder*'s use of the voice for dramatic purposes.

Review of Literature

Hartmut Krones's 2002 encyclopedic entry on *Pierrot lunaire* provides a good introduction to the piece.[1] Krones summarizes the background of its genesis, instrumentation, and makes important connections between *Pierrot* and the culture of contemporary Vienna which are too often breezed over. Most importantly, Krones notes "the instrumentation, whose sounding otherness, transparency, and fragility are often seen as typical for the 'musical *Jugendstil*' includes eight instruments in the end, for which only 5 players are needed. With the *Sprechstimme* (Recitation), there are nine 'instruments.'"[2] Krones's keen observations about the instrumentation have two gaps: first, the *Sprechstimme* also exhibits the *Jugendstil* "otherness, transparency, and fragility" that characterizes the rest of the ensemble. Second, considering the voice as a singular timbre (*Klangfarbe*) and comparing it to a single instrument rather than (at least) a family fails to capture the coloristic range it makes possible, and which Schoenberg surely considered. Examining the voice unveils it as a major component of *Pierrot*'s *Jugendstil* aesthetics.

The most important study in English on *Pierrot lunaire* is Jonathan Dunsby's monograph *Schoenberg: Pierrot lunaire* (1992).[3] The 1989 article focuses primarily on trends in music theory of the 1980s, with *Pierrot* as a case study. Dunsby calls attention

[1] See *Arnold Schoenberg – Interpretationen seiner Werke*, ed. Gerold Gruber (Lilienthal: Laaber Verlag, 2002), 232–252.
[2] "Besetzung, deren klangliche Differenzheit, Transparenz und Fragilität oft als typisch für den „musikalischen Jugendstil" gesehen wurde, umfasst letzten Endes acht Instrumente, die aber lediglich fünf Spieler benötigen. Mit der Klangfarbe der Sprechstimme (Rezitation) handelt es sich daher um neun „Instrumente." Ibid., 299. On Schoenberg's connection to contemporary artistic movements like the *Jugendstil*, see Chapter Two of this dissertation.
[3] Jonathan Dunsby, *Schoenberg: Pierrot lunaire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). See also Jonathan Dunsby, "'Pierrot lunaire' and the Resistance to Theory," *The Musical Times* 130 (1989): 732–6.

to the overemphasis on highlighting traditional forms in *Pierrot* (e.g., the Passacaglia in "Nacht" and the various canons in "Der Mondfleck" and "Serenade"):

> The "syllabicism" of *Pierrot* is among its most memorable features. Syllabicism is, moreover, a virtually unavoidable consequence of the use of Sprechstimme, for melisma without discrete pitches can be achieved only by *glissando*, which is a slender resource. However, it has to be borne in mind that Schoenberg was exceptionally sparing with vocal melisma throughout his career. Rather than thinking of Sprechstimme as a cause of the syllabicism in *Pierrot*, it is probably more accurate to assume that Schoenberg's syllabicism was a compositional habit that had primed him with a felicitous approach to the challenges of devising a sustained musical recitation.[4]

Also important is Alan Lessem's *Music and Text in the Works of Arnold Schoenberg: The Critical Years, 1908–1922*, published in 1973, which includes a substantial section on *Pierrot.* Lessem looks primarily at gestural and motivic connections between the words and the music. He insists on the expressive value of Schoenberg's music and acknowledges the *Sprecher*'s twofold role as "both orator and member of a musical ensemble."[5] He succeeds in drawing out the vast array of effects in *Pierrot lunaire*, but only mentions timbre in regard to instruments, and even those indications are extremely brief. I expand this idea, applying Lessem's emphasis on expressiveness to the voice. Lessem also elucidates the *Zeitgeist* of *fin de siècle* Vienna with ties to relevant literary trends. While he addresses each of the melodramas, Lessem's analyses are problematic in that they attempt to designate motives as carrying specific meanings, which comes across as extremely reductive. The analysis addresses isolated segments of each melodrama in order to establish gestural links between them, but does not take a broad view, either of individual movements or of the piece as a whole. His

[4] Dunsby (1992), 32.
[5] Lessem, *Music and Text in the Works of Arnold Schoenberg*, 136.

discussion of individual melodramas is limited to brief observations dealing primarily with the pitch content of the instrumental parts, and never with the voice. To a great extent, Lessem excludes the voice from the "*Pierrot* ensemble" altogether.

However, although these sources are foundational in *Pierrot lunaire* scholarship, they do not address vocal timbres and effects at any length, a lacuna I hope to correct with my project. Two scholars are key to my work: Aidan Soder and Avior Byron, both of whom account for the idiosyncratic possibilities for realizing the *Sprechmelodie*.[6] In Sprechstimme *in Arnold Schoenberg's* Pierrot lunaire*: A Study of Vocal Performance Practice*, Soder argues for flexible interpretations of the vocal score, prioritizing expression over accurate reproduction of the notation. Soder provides historical context for her performance guide and provides valuable commentary on the available recordings. In her analysis, Soder addresses the nuance and range of timbres and effects encompassed by *Sprechstimme*, acknowledging speaking, singing, and many gradations between. Calling attention to elements of *Sprechstimme* like vibrato, characterization, and the appropriate voice type for *Pierrot* (which Schoenberg never explicitly addressed) sets the stage for performers to be curious about the potential of *Sprechstimme* beyond the score and prepares the way for my more detailed sonic study.

Byron's body of work repeatedly questions the authority of the score, especially in regard to pitch accuracy. In "The Test Pressings of Schoenberg Conducting *Pierrot lunaire*: *Sprechstimme* Reconsidered," Byron compares different takes of *Pierrot lunaire* from the 1940 recording session with Schoenberg and Erika Steidry-Wagner. In

[6] See Avior Byron, "The Test Pressings of Schoenberg Conducting Pierrot lunaire: Sprechstimme Reconsidered," *Music Theory Online* (MTO) 12, no.1 (2006) and Aidan Soder, *Sprechstimme in Arnold Schoenberg's* Pierrot lunaire*: A Study of Vocal Performance Practice* (Lewiston, Queenston, Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2008).

comparing the different takes, Byron comes to the conclusion that Schoenberg accepted notably differing interpretations of the work with regard to pitch accuracy and consistency in adhering to the score within a three-day span. Further, he argues that "the *Sprechstimme* enigma is greatly clarified when one understands that there are simultaneously two types of notation in *Pierrot lunaire*: one for the instruments that tends towards a reproduction of a sound object, and another for the *Sprechstimme* which involves a process of greater real-time interaction between performer and score."[7] The argument that the *Sprechstimme* score must be considered as adhering to its own set of rules, independent of the traditional instrumental, is central to my analysis. In the article, "*Sprechstimme* Reconsidered Once Again: '... though Mrs. Stiedry is never in pitch,'" Byron elaborates on the idea that Schoenberg's accepted performances deviate from the notated score. He also posits that Schoenberg's conception of *Sprechstimme* over time changed, as recordings became more common and could be used to check the pitch accuracy of a performance.[8] He shows a clear preference by Schoenberg and his circle (including Alban Berg, Anton Webern, and Alexander Zemlinsky) for actress and singer Erika Stiedry-Wagner over singer Marie Gutheil Schoder. Byron notes,

> In summary, despite some criticism of Stiedry-Wagner's vocal abilities, mostly concerning her vocal range, there was almost no comment by Schoenberg and members of his circle accusing her of not reproducing the notated pitch in a precise manner. The compliments that she received from them show the approval for and often great satisfaction with her *Sprechmelodie*.[9]

[7] Byron (2006), abstract.
[8] Avior Byron and Matthias Pasdzierny, "Sprechstimme Reconsidered Once Again: '... though Mrs. Stiedry is never in pitch,'" Music Theory Online (MTO) 13, no. 2 (June 2007).
[9] Byron (2007), 15.

Byron also published a draft of a chapter called "Evaluating *Sprechstimme*" on his blog on August 28, 2009, in which he reconsiders his previous work on pitch accuracy in *Sprechstimme* in light of two performance guides by Soder (2008) and Phyllis Bryn-Julson with Paul Mathews (2009).[10] Byron uses four case studies to demonstrate the varying degrees of pitch accuracy in early recordings (Erika Stiedry-Wagner, Ellen Adler, Ethel Semser, and Jeanne Héricard), noting that the less accurate performances received more enthusiastic reviews. Byron does not make the leap to the effect of shifting interpretations, pitch accuracy, and range on timbre and vocal effects; however, his detailed analyses of the recordings prepares a way for my analysis of *Sprechstimme*, which follows in this chapter.[11]

Further studies useful to my project appeared in *Musik-Konzepte*'s collection of essays called "Schönberg und der *Sprechgesang*." Friedrich Cerha's essay "Zur Interpretation der Sprechstimme in Schönbergs *Pierrot lunaire*" explores the performance instructions and options for *Sprechstimme*. Cerha summarizes the exact instructions Schoenberg indicated for *Sprechstimme* performers, which includes clear differentiation between sung and spoken tones, the importance of rhythmic precision, and the extent of performers' interpretive freedom. He considers the many pre-*Pierrot* pieces that combine spoken word and music and its increasing importance in the late nineteenth century.

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[10] Avior Byron, "Evaluating Sprechstimme: what early recordings tell us - the chapter," Bymusic blog, August 28, 2009, http://www.bymusic.org/blog/2008/06/blog/2009/04/blog/index.php?option=com_mojo&Itemid=36&p=109. See also Aidan Soder, *Sprechstimme in Arnold Schoenberg's Pierrot lunaire: A Study of Vocal Performance Practice* (Lewiston, Queenston, Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2008) and Phyllis Bryn-Julson and Paul Mathews, *Inside Pierrot lunaire: Performing the Sprechstimme in Schoenberg's Masterpiece* (Lanham, Maryland, Toronto, Plymouth UK: The Scarecrow Press, 2009).

[11] Phylis Bryn-Julson and Paul Mathews's study also takes the fluidity of Schoenberg's conception of *Sprechstimme* into account. They write, "Chronological analysis of remarks and notations about *Sprechstimme* are, in the end, not a matter of what Schoenberg wanted but rather when he wanted it." Bryn-Julson and Mathews, 14.

Cerha surveys the scores for keys to interpretation and gives advice for contemporary performers. His most important observation, and a significant lead for this dissertation, is the claim that Schoenberg *requires* the full range of the human voice. He distinguishes three types of *Sprechstimme* in *Pierrot lunaire* at which, in his opinion, no single performer will excel equally: youthful-lyrical, ironic-satirical, and expressive-dramatic. Cerha does not articulate the timbral and vocal differences that are largely responsible for the changes in affect. I seek to combine Cerha's observations about the affective nature of *Sprechstimme* in the three large sections of *Pierrot*, with observations from Dunsby regarding the gaps, to date, in approaching and analyzing *Pierrot*. As indicated by his title, Cerha focuses on *Pierrot* and does not seek to apply his ideas to other *Sprechstimme* works. This is the starting point for my examination of *Sprechstimme* as a multifaceted and multifunctional vocal technique.

David Smyth's 1980 article "The Music of *Pierrot lunaire*: An Analytic Approach" offers an analysis of *Pierrot* by using a close reading of "Eine blasse Wäscherin" as a model for how one might analyze the cycle, providing a useful example for analyses of individual movements, if not for the function of the voice within those movements specifically. He categorizes previous descriptions of the work, which he intends to move beyond, but he does not address voice in detail.[12] Like Smyth, my study zooms in on moments within *Pierrot*, allowing me to draw more general conclusions. In the thesis which preceded this article, Smyth directly addresses "Der Dandy," which I also chose for one of my examples.[13] He acknowledges a tripartite musical structure

[12] David H. Smyth, "The Music of *Pierrot lunaire*: An Analytic Approach," *Theory and Practice* 5, no. 1 (July, 1980).
[13] David H. Smyth, *Schoenberg's Pierrot Lunaire: Chronology, Form, and Set Structures* (M.A. thesis, Cornell University, 1978).

mirrored in the three poetic stanzas, which guided my own analysis. Smyth also accepts that the pitch content of the vocal part is of limited importance. He writes, "Since the pitch material actually projected by the reciter is ambiguous and changeable, the musical structure of the cycle should be sought first in the instrumentalists' parts."[14] As with most other commentators, Smyth does not comment on vocal timbres and effects in either the dissertation or the article, instead analyzing motivic relationships within the melodrama. Smyth argues that the musical form should be sought in the instruments first. I, however, disagree. While Smyth's assertion makes sense from the standpoint of the score, it fails to reflect the experience of the listener, who is immediately confronted with the changing vocal timbres and effects. As with Lessem, it dismisses the voice as an integral part of the ensemble, and thus, the soundscape.[15]

Schoenberg on *Pierrot lunaire*

Schoenberg composed *Dreimal Sieben Gedichte aus Albert Girauds "Pierrot lunaire"* op. 21, between March and July 1912, during his second stay in Berlin (the first was between 1901 and 1905). The impetus for composing *Pierrot lunaire* came from singer and actress Albertine Zehme, who commissioned him to write music for at least twenty of the poems, many of which she selected. Translator Otto Erich Hartleben

[14] Smyth's categories are "1) the poetry and its images, 2) the *Sprechstimme* technique [by which he seems to mean performance guides], 3) the instrumentation, [and] 4) the music itself [which seems to refer to pitch and motivic content, or some combination the categories]," Smyth, 9.
[15] Schoenberg was wary of having too big a deal made out of the voice part, he did not want it perceived as a soloist; Smyth uses Schoenberg's comment that he was "a little annoyed by the idea of over-emphasis on the speaker" on p. 9 to exclude the voice from his analysis. However, no evidence suggests that the vocalist should be secondary to the instruments. Excluding the voice from the ensemble in this way creates the need for my study, one which also severs the voice from the instrumental texture to some degree, in order to re-establish its significance and value within the greater whole.

substantially altered—some argue improved[16]—the original Giraud poems. Schoenberg worked exclusively from this German translation for the 21 poems he set to music. The finished collection premiered at the Choralion-Saal in Berlin on October 16, 1912.[17]

Schoenberg began keeping a diary during this period, which began on January 20, 1912 and which would become a main primary source for *Pierrot* research. Instead of regular daily entries, Schoenberg usually wrote recapitulatory entries which covered several days. On January 25, Schoenberg made the first entry about *Sprechstimme*, after learning from Emil Gutmann that Albertine Zehme intended to commission him to compose a cycle to Giraud's *Pierrot lunaire*.[18] Two remarks stand out from these entries. First, Schoenberg notes that he had started feeling old two years prior, when he was 36. He writes that he had begun to worry he would never compose again, that he had become too collected, and hoped that he would regain some of his impetuousness since he had begun composing again: "I suddenly stopped feeling young two years ago. I have become curiously even-tempered! It shows in my conducting too. My aggressive side is missing, the quick outburst and aggression, transgression."[19] Second, and almost within the same

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[16] Susan Youens, "The Text of Pierrot Lunaire: An Allegory of Art and the Mind," *From Pierrot to Marteau*, proceedings from the conference and concert of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute at University of Southern California School of Music, March 14–16, 1987, 30–31.

[17] Zehme was familiar with Hartleben's translation of the Giraud poems prior to commissioning Schoenberg. She had performed a setting of the poems by Otto Vrieslander in March of 1911, in the same hall.

[18] In his diary under the entry "28.1," Schoenberg notes that Gutmann mentioned a possible commission, however the work genesis in the complete edition dates the entry January 25, 1912. Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke, Abteilung VI,* Div. 1, Ser. B, vol. 24, 225.

[19] Arnold Schoenberg, *Berliner Tagebuch*, ed. Josef Rufer (Berlin: Propyläen Verlag, 1974), 33–34. "I had already thought of the possibility that I would never compose again. There seemed to be different reasons for it. The persistence of my students, who are always on my heels [...] my preoccupation with the theoretical [...] One absolutely dries up in the process. And maybe that is why I suddenly stopped feeling young two years ago. I have become curiously even-tempered! It shows in my conducting too. My aggressive side is missing, the quick outburst and aggression, transgression. Maybe it is better, since I am now composing again after all." In original, "Ich hatte schon an die Möglichkeit gedacht, daß ich überhaupt nie wieder komponiere. Es schien viele Gründe dafür zu geben. Die Hartnäckigkeit, mit der mir meine Schüler auf den Fersen sind [...] die Beschäftigung mit Theoretischem [...] Dabei trocknet man entschieden aus. Und vielleicht ist das der Grund, warum ich mich plötzlich seit zwei Jahren nicht mehr so jung fühle. Ich bin merkwürdig ruhig geworden! Auch beim Dirigieren zeigte sich's. Mir fehlte das Aggressive an mir.

pen stroke, Schoenberg writes that spring is always his best period for composition.[20] Zehme's commission of *Pierrot lunaire* created a sense of rejuvenation and gave Schoenberg a boost in creativity and musical curiosity. This renewed inspiration to compose resulted in a heightened exploration of musical boundaries, especially the voice, based on ideas which had already begun to take root in the years leading up to *Pierrot*.

This exploration of timbre in particular comes out in the ensemble as well as the voice. The *Pierrot* ensemble is a distillation of *Gurre-Lieder*'s orchestral variety into a six-piece ensemble. Instead of employing a gargantuan orchestra, Schoenberg chose salient colors from the winds and strings: flute (doubling on piccolo), A and B-flat clarinet (doubling on bass clarinet), violin (doubling on viola), cello, and piano. He omits percussion and brass and he expects the vocalist to blend as a member of the ensemble rather than as a soloist; according to Rudolf Kolisch Schoenberg considered "the speaking voice [to be] equivalent to any other instrument," and that it "ought to be one of the voices and not a solo with the accompaniment."[21] The scaled-down instrumental group of *Pierrot* is easier for the vocalist to project over, so balance problems occur less frequently than in *Gurre-Lieder*. Rather than reducing the vocal variety, however, the smaller ensemble allows the effects and shifts in timbre to shine through prominently.

Despite the relatively small size of the group, the ensemble did not begin even with six instruments. Zehme commissioned a piece for voice and piano, possibly with two other instruments.[22] As he composed, Schoenberg began including additional

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Das rasche Aus-sich-hinaus-Gehen und Angreifen, Übergreifen. Vielleicht wird das besser, da ich ja jetzt doch wieder komponiere."

[20] Ibid.

[21] Joan Allen Smith, "Schoenberg's Way," *Perspectives of New Music* 18 (Spring/Summer 1980): 277–278. Also cited in Aidan Soder, *Sprechstimme in Arnold Schoenberg's* Pierrot lunaire: *A Study of Vocal Performance Practice* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellon Press, 2008), 9 footnote 13.

[22] From the contract between Zehme and Schoenberg, dated March 10, 1912. He began composition two days later.

instruments, which he added over the course of composition of several of the early pieces.[23] Table 3.1 shows the pieces in order of composition, which differs significantly from performance order. In the order of composition, the melodrama which featured the instructions "sung" (*gesungen*), marked in grey, were spread out across the first half of the work. This singing voice can be regarded as one of several vocal "auxiliary instruments." By the time the pieces were in the final order, they were condensed down to the first third, or Part I, with m. 10 of "Nacht" being the only exception. By the time he composed the third piece ("Der kranke Mond") it is evident that Schoenberg thought of recombining the instruments to vary the timbre, since he reduces the ensemble instead of adding more instruments, and he asks the flute to double on piccolo. Schoenberg also used mutes and related auxiliary instruments, which expanded the timbral potential of the ensemble. Schoenberg expands from three sound sources in the first piece ("Gebet an Pierrot"– piano, voice, and clarinet) to four in the second ("Der Dandy" – piano, *Sprechstimme* and singing voice, clarinet, piccolo), and then to five in the fourth ("Eine blasse Wäscherin" – piano, *Sprechstimme* and singing voice, clarinet, flute, violin) after reducing the ensemble in the third piece he composed ("Der kranke Mond"). He reached a maximum number of musicians at "Rote Messe," the sixth piece he composed, and number eleven in the final order.

[23] In a letter from April 24, 1912, Anton Webern writes to Alban Berg that Schoenberg will use other instruments in addition to the piano: flute, clarinet, violin, cello, oboe, and that one is only with flute. Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke, Abteilung VI,* Div. 1, Ser. B, vol. 24, 229. See Dunsby (1992), 23 for a table of the evolving instrumentation, keeping in mind that the final order of the melodramas does not correspond to the order of composition. "Gebet an Pierrot" has piano, clarinet, and voice. In the second piece ("Der Dandy") Schoenberg adds piccolo. Then flute for "Der kranke Mond." And so forth, until there are a total of six musicians (including the vocalist) with nine instruments (piano, flute, piccolo, clarinet in A, clarinet in B-flat, bass clarinet, violin, viola, and cello, as well as a notable number of mutes and extended techniques). Dunsby also notes the progression from few instruments being used, to all instruments being used simultaneously.

Table 3.1: Comparison of the Compositional Order of Pierrot lunaire *with the Final Order*

	Compositional Order	Final Order
1	Gebet an Pierrot	Mondestrunken
2	Der Dandy	Columbine
3	Der kranke Mond	Der Dandy
4	Eine blasse Wäscherin	Eine blasse Wäscherin
5	Columbine	Valse de Chopin
6	Rote Messe	Madonna
7	Mondestrunken	Der kranke Mond
8	Parodie	Nacht
9	Valse de Chopin	Gebet an Pierrot
10	Madonna	Raub
11	Raub	Rote Messe
12	Serenade	Galgenlied
13	Heimfahrt	Enthauptung
14	Galgenlied	Die Kreuze
15	Nacht	Heimweh
16	Heimweh	Gemeinheit
17	Enthauptung	Parodie
18	Der Mondfleck	Der Mondfleck
19	O alter Duft	Serenade
20	Gemeinheit	Heimfahrt
21	Die Kreuze	O alter Duft
shading indicates singing timbres		

Schoenberg considered each timbre critical. When asked about creating a piano reduction of the work, he responded that "*Pierrot lunaire* can only appear as a score! A piano reduction is unthinkable! [...] Even more so in these works, where the color

[means] everything, the notes meaning nothing at all."[24] In this quotation, Schoenberg emphasized not just the timbral variety, but its meaning or significance. The variation of the timbral profiles of the melodramas, through the combination or absence of instruments, results in new coloristic combinations for each number.[25]

In the vocal writing, Zehme's influence manifests in both theoretical and practical contexts. Zehme strongly believed in and documented her thoughts about the expressive capacity of the speaking voice.[26] As an actress and singer, Zehme had more colors at her disposal than the average bel canto singer. Aidan Soder writes: "It is, perhaps, no wonder that many of the early interpreters of *Pierrot* were actresses—women who were more accustomed to using a wider range and inflectional palette of speech than singers, and could better understand the flexibility of tone required for the work."[27] Zehme studied voice with Carl Heine, William Wauer, Julius Kniese, Cosima Wagner, and Frank King Clark, who influenced her ideas on and execution of *Sprechmelodien*. She had trained as an actress first so, unlike a singer, she was accustomed to projecting her speaking voice and creating many different colors to reflect, for instance, characters of different ages or social classes. Zehme's contributions will be discussed further in the following chapter; for now, it is important to note that, by setting many different vignettes, Schoenberg took advantage of Zehme's ability to create starkly different characters and settings.

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[24] "Pierrot lunaire kann nur in Partitur erscheinen! Ein Klavierauszug ist undenkbar! [...] Mehr noch aber bei diesen Werken, wo die Farbe alles, die Noten gar nichts bedeuten [...]". Arnold Schoenberg to Emil Hertzka, July 5, 1912 (Arnold Schönberg Center, Wien, Universal Edition Collection). Emphasis in original.
[25] See, for example, Dunsby (1992), 23.
[26] See also, Franziska Brunner, "Shifting Sprecher: Functional and Timbral Diversity in *Gurre-Lieder* and *Pierrot lunaire*, op. 21," *JASC* 14 (2017): 65–84.
[27] Soder, 12.

Creating Coherence in *Pierrot*

Schoenberg continued to think and write about *Pierrot lunaire* for several years after the work's premiere in ways that show he continued to refine the work's innovations. This means that the score does not necessarily transmit all the relevant performance information about *Pierrot*, and other documents such as correspondence and recordings should be taken into account. The remarks on the relationship between free use of the twelve tones and *Pierrot* are written into the margins or affixed as a separate page in Schoenberg's copy of Ferruccio Busoni's *Entwurf einer neuen Ästhetik der Tonkunst* (written in 1906, published in 1916). In this "draft" (*Entwurf*), Busoni outlines a utopian ideal of music which breaks away from traditional structure. Schoenberg and Busoni's relationship and exchange of ideas predates this text, however. The two composers corresponded most actively in the period leading up to the composition of *Pierrot* (starting 1909), sharing their ideas about their goals for the future of music.[28] After reading Busoni's *Entwurf einer neuem Ästhetik der Tonkunst* in 1916 or shortly thereafter, Schoenberg wrote the entire flute melody of "Der kranke Mond" into Busoni's book "as an example of pure freedom in music, which could arise without the need for the new scalar systems that Busoni had proposed" in his draft.[29]

Schoenberg's notes in his copy of the essay make clear that he applied these ideas to *Pierrot,* even though they were made sometime after 1916, meaning that Schoenberg made them after *Pierrot*'s completion. He begins by addressing the flute solo in "Der

[28] Schoenberg's most famous response to Busoni is a manifesto about moving away from "stylized" and "sterilized" forms to direct expression, dated August 13, 1909. Schoenberg would later be appointed to succeed Busoni as instructor for a Meisterklasse for composition at the Preußische Akademie der Künste in Berlin in 1926.

[29] Bryan R. Simms, *Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern: A Companion to the Second Viennese School* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 139.

kranke Mond," stating that whether the melody is beautiful or even good is not the focus of this discussion (even though he believed the melody is beautiful). Rather, he focuses on whether the melody coincides more with the divine freedom of the floating spheres than what has "sprung forth from the prison of the twelve-tone rows" (*ob* [*die Melodie*] *nicht der göttlichen Freiheit des schwebenden Rundes mehr entspricht, als was dem Gefängnis seiner Tonreihen entspränge!*).[30] By using the twelve tones equally in *Pierrot*, Schoenberg argues, he does not have to force himself into the "Procrustean bed of motivic phrasing" nor does he have to account for cadences or sections, phrase beginnings or endings.

This is not to say that Schoenberg does not employ "motivic phrasing" in *Pierrot*, but rather, that by avoiding tonality, the melodic development is less confined to a specific harmonic or motivic direction. Thus, he finds expressive freedom as a result of the free atonal melodic/harmonic framework in *Pierrot*. Schoenberg relies on other musical elements like contour to help denote form. This is also true of the instrumental parts, which often rely more on pitch than the vocal line. Taking the flute melody of "Der kranke Mond" as an example, Schoenberg establishes a point of rest through repetition of the pitch E4 in m. 2. The absence of the E pitch class throughout the rest of the melodrama, combined with the frequent use of the lower neighbor E-flat/D-sharp, creates tension, which thwarts the listener's expectations of a resolution to E.[31] For example, the long D-sharp6 in m. 21 begs to move upwards by half step, but instead moves downwards by a third. Starting at m. 24, Schoenberg begins to use neighbor note motion around E, with F-natural4 occurring three times on metrically and agogically strong

[30] The mention of tone rows in this quotation pushes the date forward from after 1916 to after 1921.
[31] The pitch class does appear elsewhere, but always on the weak beats and otherwise deemphasized, e.g., the E-natural4 eighth-note triplet in m. 15 at *pppp* is hardly noticeable.

beats, which resolves to E4 in the final measure, but then continues downward to E-flat4. The return to pitch class E happens immediately at the beginning of the next melodrama, "Nacht," which marks the beginning of Part II. Thus, Schoenberg creates tension and cohesion without tonality and motivic working out. Just as the flute part relies on pitch contour rather than tonality or motivic work to create this cohesion, the use of *Sprechstimme* means that the vocal part must employ an unconventional method of creating and maintaining coherence. For Schoenberg, timbre appears to have fulfilled some of that function through predictable timbral consequences of registral shifting, as I discuss below.

Schoenberg insisted that the voice could not be left out (among other places, in the correspondence about choreographer Léonide Massine's idea to choreograph an instrumental arrangement of *Pierrot*), so the piece is incomplete without the voice; as I show below, the voice participates in and clarifies important structural markers with its uniquely broad variety of sonorities.[32] Analyzing form through the lens of vocal timbres and effects opens several new avenues for exploration. The voice enhances formal elements created by the instruments. Furthermore, audible contrasts in the voice create sonic units, which are usually more drastic than instrumental timbre contrasts, and thus

[32] My translation: "I cannot understand Massine's intention, this is not a rejection, but rather, I am asking for a more detailed explanation. I see the following problems: 1. Surely the recitation cannot be just left out. 2. Is it possible to dance and recite simultaneously, since it is expected that a) the noise of the dancers [would drown out] my delicate instrumentation b) but a stronger instrumentation would drown out the speaker. So you see, I have either imagined it wrong, or I have yet to experience it. In any case: maybe Mr. Massine will write me what he intends. But precisely, so that I can distinguish. Once again: I do not refuse under any circumstances, I just do not understand yet." In original: "Massines Absicht kann ich nicht verstehen–das soll keine Ablehnung sein, sondern besagen, dass ich um nähere Erklärung bitte. Zunächst sehe ich folgende Probleme: 1. die Recitation kann doch wohl nicht wegbleiben?! 2. Ist es möglich gleichzeitig zu tanzen und zu sprechen, da doch voraussichtlich a) der Lärm des Tänzers meine zarte Instrumentation b) eine stärkere Instrumentation aber den Sprecher erdrücken müsste. Sie sehen also, dass ich entweder auf ganz falschem Weg mir eine Vorstellung zu bilden bestrebt bin, oder erst eine neue Erfahrung machen müsste. Jedenfalls: vielleicht schreibt mir Herr Massine was er vorhat. Aber genau so dass ich unterscheiden kann. Nochmals: Ich lehne keinesfalls ab, verstehe nur noch nicht."Arnold Schoenberg to Egon Wellesz, May 30, 1922.

easier to hear. The combination of semantic and paratextual information the voice carries allows for nuanced intersections and dramatic moments, which the instruments alone are unable to create. The voice also simultaneously acts as a member of the ensemble, a member who is knitted tightly into traditional compositional frameworks, while also exhibiting the extraordinary flexibility afforded only to the voice. Returning to "Der kranke Mond," this melodrama provides an illustration of this phenomenon. Even without the need for pitch accuracy, the *Sprechmelodie* participates in the elucidation of the structure, as "Der kranke Mond" demonstrates. The melody slides down from F3 to E3, at the lower extreme of the vocal line at m. 15. This extraordinarily low register indicates the performer should try to reach beyond the low point of their range.[33] Even if the vocalist does not produce an E3, this drastic change in timbre produced by vocal strain will be striking and mark this moment as structurally important. The written E3 helps clues the vocalist to the moment's importance in the structure, so that they can coordinate with the ensemble, even if the actual sounding pitch is different. This point in the music also transitions the listener from Pierrot's surface world into his subconscious underworld for Part II. In what follows, I show how Schoenberg uses vocal timbres and effects to intensify structurally significant points.

Another way Schoenberg creates coherence in *Pierrot* is with the use of older forms, genres, and techniques, though in his typical fashion, he combines them with innovative techniques to enhance dramatic effect. The range of genres from dance forms (waltz in "Valse de Chopin" and polka in "Parodie"), counterpoint studies (passacaglia in "Nacht," fugue and double canon in "Mondfleck," canon in "Parodie" and "Valse de

[33] Albertine Zehme was 55 when she began working with Schoenberg, so this low range may have been realistic for her voice.

Chopin," and crab canon in "Parodie"), developing variation in "Galgenlied," pieces for solo instruments, and sung- and recitation-pieces with varied instrumental accompaniment, "for which I was cautious not to invent the name 'chamber music songs,'" is evidence of a composer trying to find creative inspiration and freedom within the demands of coherence. Schoenberg also includes a range of historical styles in *Pierrot lunaire*. The Baroque manifests in the fugue and canon passages. The Middle-Romantic style appears in "Valse de Chopin," yet all in *fin-de-siècle* musical language. *Pierrot* also spans the gamut of styles from leisurely dance music to highly cerebral compositional exercises. Further, it exhibits a menagerie of timbral groupings from unaccompanied solo to full 6-piece mixed instrumental/vocal ensemble.[34] Thus, Schoenberg integrates traditional forms and techniques alongside progressive harmonic strategies to avoid conforming to genre norms. As in the case of melody, the search for freedom comes with the need to invent new signposts.

"Parodie" illustrates the ways Schoenberg combines older techniques and vocal innovations for dramatic purposes to paint a picture of the Duenna. The elderly governess, wearing a red dress and a gray updo held together by knitting needles, pines after Pierrot. In this piece Schoenberg uses timbral shaking in both the voice and the ensemble as signs of old age which, because of the canon, infuses the piece. Typical signs of vocal aging include difficulty maintaining a steady pitch, resulting in a quiver.[35] Other signs include more sustained tremors, increased breathiness, and sometimes a change in

[34] "Wie z.B. insbesondere aus meinem Pierrot lunaire die Tanzformen Walzer und Polka, die Kontrapunkt-Studien der Passacaglia, Doppelfuge mit Kanon und Krebs des Kanons und dergl.; der [recte: die] Stücke für Soloinstrumente (kranke Mond) und Gesangs- und Rezitations-Stücke mit Begleitung verschiedener Instrumente, für welche den Namen „Kammermusiklieder" nicht zu erfinden, ich vorsichtig genug war." Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke, Abteilung VI,* Div. 1, Ser. B, vol. 24, 301.
[35] Depending on the performer's interpretation, this quiver might also signal the "painful" love.

pitch.[36] These physical changes in the vocal folds result in changes in an unstable or weak sound, indicating more advanced age.[37]

Schoenberg's use of vocal tremor as both word painting and as an element of humor is an innovative vocal and rhythmic feature, which has been overlooked. Vocal detail like this not only functions as a unifying device throughout the work, but also links the voice with the instruments. The semitone tremor is a main characteristic of the melody and continually returns because of the canon, destabilizing both pitch and rhythm throughout the piece. The tremor first appears in the viola as upper neighbor thirty-second notes on beat three of the first measure, followed closely by the clarinet on the downbeat of m. 2, where the figure is expanded into a sixty-fourth note double neighbor. By the middle of the second measure, the voice brings the upper neighbor tremor clearly to the foreground on the word "blank" (shiny, bright). While the most common iteration of this tremor is a semitone, the abrupt and sometimes oscillating contour matters more than the exact pitches here as well. The second iteration is already a figure which includes whole steps as well, ultimately resulting in a minute change in the shape of the line. The viola's grace notes in m. 4 further destabilize the rhythm. By m. 6 the figure explodes in the viola before landing on "murmelnd" (murmuring) in the voice. The expanded triplet upper neighbor on "liebt" (loves) and "Pierrot" is immediately parroted, mockingly, in the viola. At this point, Schoenberg seems to be using the tremor figure literally, to parody the old woman's love of Pierrot. The canon keeps compounding the shake figure until m. 22, the climax at the end of the piece. By juxtaposing this

[36] These observations are based on verbal information provided by the University of Georgia Speech and Hearing Clinic.
[37] Joseph C. Stemple, Nelson Roy, and Berniece K. Klaben, *Clinical Voice Pathology: Theory and Management*, 6th ed. (San Diego: Plural Publishing, 2020), 101.

comedic element against the restrictive, presumably serious canon, Schoenberg uses vocal effects strategically to create drama. He expands a simple text painting device into a meaningful tool which upsets the perceived rigidity of counterpoint.

The Voice and Large-Scale Form in *Pierrot*

A closer look at the *Sprechmelodie* and its realization in Stiedry-Wagner's recording of each of the three parts shows that each has a unique vocal profile. George Perle has convincingly broken down the narrative of *Pierrot*, which aligns with the three structural units of the "three times seven" in the title. Alan Lessem summarizes: "In the first part, Pierrot is shown as the poet of sick despair (5) and suffering martyrdom (6), enthralled by an overripe moon inducing an illusory intoxication (1 and 3) and evoking tantalizing erotic phantasmagoria (2 and 4), inevitably self-defeating (7). The second part again presents Pierrot as a martyr (14) now the victim of paranoid fantasies (8 and 10), of visions of horrible punishment (11) and a grotesque end (12 and 13). A necessary escape from this self-created nightmare is granted Pierrot in the third part, in which he gives himself over to slapstick buffoonery (16, 18, and 19), sentimentality (15 and 17), and a healing nostalgia (20 and 21) for the happier times of old."[38]

Schoenberg's vocal writing supports this narrative structure. Part I depicts the evening transitioning to night. Here, Schoenberg uses the middle range, a mix of *Sprechstimme* and sung vocalization, and longer rhythmic values. In contrast, Part II takes place in the dead of night, delving into Pierrot's devious side and describing nightmarish scenes of pranks and crimes he committed and which simultaneously

[38] Lessem, 128; George Perle, "Pierrot Lunaire," in G. Reese and R. Brandel, eds., *The Commonwealth of Music* (New York: Norton, 1964), 308.

torment him. Schoenberg creates the suffocating atmosphere of night with an increased use of the low range, frequent written *glissandi*, and a higher concentration of harsh consonants. Schoenberg's reordering of the pieces directly impacted the consonant saturation. As dawn breaks, Pierrot appears to recover from his tormented thoughts and returns to familiar territory in Part III. Musically, this translates to more frequent use of the high range, longer note values overall, limited verbal instructions, and a much greater saturation of vowels than before.

However, as *Sprechstimme* is a product of both the composer's notation and the performer's interpretation, the latter must also be taken into account in any analysis of the sound. To do this, I draw on both scholars who have already analyzed Schoenberg's recordings with Stiedry-Wagner, as well as several who look at vocality in recordings. From these readings I specifically draw the idea of text as vocables, meaning it exists as pure sound outside of its semantic meaning.[39] Despite its notoriously poor sound quality, Erika Stiedry-Wagner's 1940 CBS recording of *Pierrot lunaire* with Schoenberg conducting is an essential resource for vocalists with regard to the execution of the consonants in this part. Stiedry-Wagner rehearsed and toured the piece extensively with Schoenberg. Even in places where she is difficult to hear over the ensemble due to the poorly placed microphone, the consonants cut through. Her recorded voice certainly documents what Schoenberg tolerated, if not what he preferred. I use this recording to demonstrate how changes in vocality underline structural elements in *Pierrot lunaire*.

[39] See Byron, 2006, 2007, and 2009; Jon W. Finson, "Performance Practice in the Late Nineteenth Century, with Special Reference to the Music of Brahms," *The Musical Quarterly* 70, no. 4 (Autumn 1984), 457–475; Mark Katz, "Portamento and the Phonograph Effect" *Journal of Musicological Research*, Vol. 25 (New York: Routledge, 2006), 211–232; Jacob Smith, "Rough Mix," *Vocal Tracks: Performance and Sound Media* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 115–64; William R. Bauer, "Louis Armstrong's 'Skid dat de dat': Timbral organization in an early scat solo" *Jazz Perspectives* 1, no. 2 (November 2007), 133–165.

A number of factors contribute to the range of sonorities a voice can produce. Vocal range and changing concentrations of consonants and vowels inevitably influence timbre, since the physical properties of the sounding body, the mouth, the lips, soft and hard palettes, larynx, etc., change alongside those factors. Verbal instructions explicitly call for changes in timbre and vocal effects and furthermore vary in density throughout the work. A lack of verbal instructions in *Sprechstimme* may lead to less vocal variety, or more interpretative freedom, depending on the performer. All of these factors need to be considered simultaneously and play a critical role. While each may play a role, they do not all need to be engaged in order for timbre and vocal effects to play vital innovative roles in a *Sprechmelodie*.

Textual sonority was clearly important to the composer, as Schoenberg's reordering of the Giraud poems appears to have stemmed not only from a narrative, but also from a timbral motivation. Schoenberg wrote all of the numbers in which he uses the timbre indication "gesungen" during the earlier phases of composition; they were numbers three, four, five, seven, nine, and ten in the order of composition, as shown in Table 3.1. When he reordered them, he consolidated the melodramas containing the instruction "gesungen" all into Part I; in the end they were numbers one, two, four, five, six, and seven. The Stiedry-Wagner recording is helpful in deciphering exactly what Schoenberg meant by "gesungen" in this context. Stiedry-Wagner realizes this instruction using a combination of what Schoenberg called a "full sound" (which likely means the opposite of breathy, although Schoenberg never explicitly defines this phrase), vibrato, and power.[40]

[40] Schoenberg, *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, 99.

Schoenberg's attention to vocalic detail extended to sonically defining each of the three Parts of the piece. The defining feature of Part I is frequently shifting vocal timbres and effects between movements and within movements, which creates an unsettling atmosphere. This is partly accomplished with verbal instructions, that is, the written instructions in the score. These instructions are absent in "Valse de Chopin" and "Der kranke Mond," but the other five melodramas include them, rendering the entire part a kaleidoscope of different timbres and sonorities. Indeed, the part features the most quickly shifting verbal instructions, which gives it an unsettling atmosphere. Sometimes several changes take place in a single measure, as is the case in m. 17 of "Der Dandy."

Throughout Part I Schoenberg uses a combination of single words and phrases to guide the performer's interpretation. Especially in the penultimate melodrama of this part, "Madonna," he turns to entire phrases of verbal instructions similar to those found in Gustav Mahler's symphonic scores (e.g., Schoenberg writes "very high but exceptionally tender" in m. 10 and "beginning very calmly, growing immensely little by little" at m. 16).[41] "Der Dandy" is the most extreme case of density of instruction, in which Schoenberg includes ten verbal indications over the course of 31 measures, as shown later in Table 3.3. These changes occur in bursts at mm. 6, 8, 16–18, and finally at m. 30, which further creates a second layer of instability between the vocally homogenous and varied parts. Although it is up to the performer to realize these instructions within their own vocal capacities, any interpretation that stays true to Schoenberg's instructions will result in a wide variety of timbres and effects over a short period of time. In the Stiedry-Wagner recording, each of the timbral shifts marked in the score is clearly executed by the vocalist, described in more detail below. For now, it is sufficient to say

[41] In original: "sehr hoch aber äußerst zart"; "Sehr ruhig beginnend, nach und nach mächtig steigernd."

that Stiedry-Wagner, while largely ignoring pitches and even contours, paid close attention to the verbal instructions on vocal expression, indicating their importance. For the listener, the already strange opening becomes increasingly strange and unstable as Pierrot loses his footing/grounding in reality. The added changes keep the listener engaged with the possibilities of *Sprechstimme* which they might otherwise tune out.

The constant shifting of vocalities in Part I mirrors the shifting of perspectives in the narrative, demonstrating that the voice is dramatic as well as structurally functional. In "Mondestrunken," an omniscient narrator describes a poet drinking moonbeams, slowly becoming intoxicated. "Colombine" introduces the female clown, who is traditionally Pierrot's love interest, and whose relevance can only be gleaned from the *Commedia dell'arte* tradition rather than the context provided in the score.[42] Colombine does not have her own voice, we hear only Pierrot's intoxicated, dreamy observation of her. In Stiedry-Wagner's performance, the narrator's voice in "Colombine" sounds more subdued than the one in "Mondestrunken." The melodrama is timbrally consistent throughout with only one drastic shift, at m. 33, where the mood changes from melancholy observation to more aggressive fantasizing, mirrored in the vocal timbre by a shift from smooth, rich narration to drier, punched notes in the Stiedry-Wagner recording, punctuated further by the staccato wind accompaniment. It is complemented by the addition of staccato clarinet and flute over the original violin and piano accompaniment. The dream state of this second number contrasts starkly with the subsequent melodrama "Der Dandy" as well, which is filled to the brim with timbral vocal shifts and effects as the protagonist's flamboyant nature emerges (described in more detail below). This

[42] Both are stock characters of this professional Italian theater tradition which began in the 16th century. Pierrot is known for his mischievous behavior and white mask while Colombine is a confidently seductive and independent character who is traditionally performed without a mask.

shifting of characters throughout the piece, conveyed by the timbre and effect, does not allow the audience to settle or identify with any one figure.

Part I is made even more sonically unstable by the use of longer rhythmic values. While sustained notes tend to lend stability in the Romantic repertoire, Schoenberg uses them in a way which creates instability. Longer rhythmic values in *Sprechstimme* are inherently destabilizing because pitches are not sustained, even though the sound is, leading to unfamiliar vocal movement. Schoenberg's instructions for *Sprechstimme* dictate that the initial note should be left immediately after it begins.[43] This produces a failed sense of arrival, and timbres and pitches that are still in flux when one might expect stability. Furthermore, Schoenberg uses longer durations (which I define as at least twice the note value of the tempo indication) often occurring outside of the middle range more regularly than they occur within it, which strains the voice, projecting a sense of discomfort. These moments often act as upper or lower limits to the melodic lines, creating new and unfamiliar sonorities that exist outside of the sonic space Schoenberg establishes throughout most of the piece. These destabilizing long durations often occur in the middle of phrases (e.g., the C-sharp4 half note in m. 20 of "Colombine" or the F-natural5 tied quarter notes in m. 19 of "Valse de Chopin"). In both of these pieces, Stiedry-Wagner firmly executes the sustained notes on the metrically weak beats as written, further destabilizing the melodrama.

A few long durations occur on metrically strong beats, highlighting important words within the songs. One such example appears in "Colombine" at mm. 25 and 26, where each measure contains a half note (followed by a quarter note) on the downbeat

[43] "…singing tone unalterably stays on pitch whereas the speaking tone gives the pitch but immediately leaves it again by falling and rising." See Arnold Schoenberg, *Pierrot lunaire*, op. 21 (Los Angeles, Belmont Music Publishers, 1990), preface.

over the words “Wun-der Ros-en” (magical roses). This recurs at m. 30 on “Blüten” (blossoms). These words are important because they not only repeat the refrain in the text but also the half note-whole note rhythm. Giraud portrays Pierrot’s lust for Colombine symbolically with these images of the flowers.[44] In the recording, Stiedry-Wagner creates a sense of arrival on both “Wunder Rosen” and “Blüten” by relaxing the intensity of the sound and settling into the words.

Another defining feature of Part I is its middle-range vocalizations, which fall primarily between C4 and B4. The middle range allows the vocalist the most relaxed, natural performance style, without the strain of the upper and lower extremes of range which are required in other parts of the piece. Just over 5% of notated pitches move below C4 and 26% move above B4.[45] Five of the seven melodramas of Part I span less than two octaves, so the overall range is relatively narrow within the context of the work. A characteristic example is in “Valse de Chopin,” which begins with vocal tacit, followed by five measures of mid-range *Sprechmelodie* before moving to three measures in the upper range, and returning again to the middle range. Following the rests in mm. 14–15, the voice enters in the high range and descends to the middle range twice, which is again followed by rests. The final part of the melodrama follows suit, again beginning in the upper range and descending to the middle range. Stiedry-Wagner brings out the timbral variety in these passages by emphasizing the shifts into upper range, shifts which Schoenberg emphasizes by placing them on downbeats. The thick orchestration (flute, A

[44] This is not an uncommon connection at the time since many symbolist poets used floral imagery euphemistically to stand in for sex organs (e.g., Stefan George’s *Das Buch der hängenden Gärten* and Charles Baudelaire’s collection of poems *Les Fleurs du Mal*). As an active member of Vienna’s literary circles, Schoenberg was most likely aware of this connection as well. He admired George and not only set many of his poems but also owned George’s translation of Baudelaire’s *Fleurs*.

[45] These calculations account for changes in duration, since the perceived time spent in each range is at least as relevant as the number of times each pitch occurs for determining the range and defining the timbral profile of a part.

clarinet, and piano) forces her to use a louder volume and a more full voice, even at the first upper range entrance in m. 10 which is marked *piano*.

Schoenberg also creates vocal contrast throughout Part I by varying the consonant saturation in each number. While he did not write the poems, Schoenberg created consistent sonic profiles by rearranging the poems. These profiles result from the consonants (or their absence) in each part of the musical work, which suggests a keen interest from Schoenberg in the way the words sound. Certainly, the sounds of words were part of the musical discourse in Vienna and Berlin at the *fin de siècle*. In the German speaking world, "Konsonanten-Spuckerei" was used derogatorily to refer to a declamatory style preferred and promoted by Richard and Cosima Wagner in Bayreuth.[46]

Table 3.2 shows the "Onset Vowels and Consonants;" I use "onset" in the literary sense to refer to the beginning of each of the thirteen lines in the rondeau form. These are the most prominent parts of the text because they are usually the beginnings of sentences or clauses. The maximum possible number of different line onsets in a rondeau form is 10 (13 lines total, one of which is repeated twice and one of which is repeated once). The minimum is 1 (if the repeated lines and all other lines begin with the same onset). R, Z, T do not appear at the onset until the second set. P appears only on Pierrot's name until number 14. "Plötzlich" appears in 17, 18, 19.

The melodramas in Part I begin with a lot of /b/, /d/, /g/, and /sh/ consonants as well as a significant number of /a/ and /e/ vowels. All of these onsets are perceived as "soft." The same holds true for the rest of the consonants across the rest of the lines, not just at the onset (i.e., there are no /z/ or /r/ sounds as there will be in Part II). In addition

[46] Christian Thielemann refers to this term as "notorious" (*berüchtigt*) in "Mein Leben mit Wagner." The term refers to a forced declamation style in which the consonants are over-articulated in a poor attempt to make them clear and keep them from being swallowed by the vocalists.

to the previous sounds, /f/, /l/, /m/, /n/, and /w/ ("w" sounds like English "v" when spoken in German) dominate Part I. The sonic haze created by these sounds enhances the failed sense of arrival mentioned earlier. Stiedry-Wagner's training as an actress is evident in the clear but soft declamation she uses in Part I. The warm, pleasant external presentation of Pierrot in the beginning sets up a stark contrast to the intimate but harsh consonants of Part II.

Table 3.2. Onset Vowels and Consonants

	B	D	F	G	H	K	L	M	N	P	R	S	SH	T	V	W	Z	tot.
1	1	7		4														12
2	1	6		1				1				2						11
3		1	1				1	3		1			1					8
4	1	1					1		1				1		1	2		8
5		1	2		2	1		1								4		11
6	2	3		1	1								2					9
7	2	8		1									1					12
8			3								1	1	1	2				8
9		2			2			1		3	1		2				1	12
10	3	3							1		3	3						13
11	3	2						1	1			1					5	13
12		4		1				2					2			2		11
13		3		1						1							1	6
14	1	2	2		3		1			1				1				11
15		3				2	3					1						10
16	1	4			1							2					1	9
17		2										3	3					8
18										1	1	1				2		5
19			1			3		4		1				1	1	1		12
20		6				1		1	1			2	1					12
21	3	1							1									5

a	e	i	o	u	tot.
				1	1
1			1		2
1	2	1		1	5
	3	1		1	5
1	1				2
2		2			4
1					1
2	1			2	5
			1		1
					0
					0
1		1			2
3	2		1	1	7
	1	1			2
2				1	3
1		2		1	4
1	1	3			5
3	4			1	8
			1		1
				1	1
2	2		3	1	8

Part II is sonically differentiated from Part I in a number of ways, as Pierrot's mischief comes to light. The vocal writing is less varied than Part I, and throughout Part II creates a relentlessly horrifying and smothering atmosphere which suffocates the listeners. Schoenberg creates this continuity by anchoring tones in the low range, introducing a new darker vocal palette for which he develops new notation, and predominant use of harsh syllables heard seldomly or not at all in Part I.

The most immediately noticeable shift in Part II is the lower range. Part I ends with five trilled syllables on "to-des kran-ker Mond!" which descend across a major ninth

from C-sharp4 to F-sharp3 before returning up to a half note F-natural3 dotted half note, approximately in the middle of the overall C4–B4 range. This is the first indication of the descent into darkness. The first melodrama of Part II, "Nacht," immediately drops to the low range, first in the accompanying piano, cello, and bass clarinet, and then in the voice. The instruments Schoenberg uses here have the lowest possible ranges of the ensemble including doubling. The voice enters on a written D-flat4 and descends, returning repeatedly to the middle range only to be drawn down further and further below the staff to the lowest point of the piece, E-flat3. This descent downwards from an already low range, combined with the slow opening tempo, creates an unusually haunting affect which marks the entrance to Part II. The critical edition includes an *ossio* part an octave higher, with the note "the lower notes if possible," which indicates that Schoenberg considered the potential vocal challenges of performing this range.[47] This trend continues for the rest of the part. A much greater saturation of low pitches and the accompanying vocal strain, along with changes in notation (including *glissandi*) mark Part II: nearly 14% of pitches fall below C4, while only 20% fall above B4. There is a clear slant towards not only the lower range, but longer durations in the low range. Of these seven melodramas, five exceed a two-octave range while only two fall within it.

In contrast to Part I, there are very few sustained notes in Part II, and those which are sustained are shorter, and the number of such notes decreases over the course of the part. "Nacht" has the most sustained tones, with nine notes which are at least a half-note long. The following melodrama ("Gebet an Pierrot") has only five. The next ("Raub") has only one. There are no sustained notes in the next two melodramas, and only one in m. 10 of "Die Kreuze" at the end of the part. The rhythmic acceleration contributes to the

[47] In original, "gesungen (womöglich die tieferen Noten)."

chaotic soundscape in Part II by keeping the listener disoriented. The listeners' opportunity to hear the technique unfold is largely missing from Part II. Instead, the listeners are expected to adapt to the barrage of sound confronting them quickly and relentlessly.

The same five trilled syllables which marked a shift in range at the end of Part I also mark a stylistic shift in Schoenberg's *Sprechmelodie* notation within *Pierrot*. Instead of relying primarily on verbal instructions as he had in Part I, in Part II Schoenberg attempts to represent some of the vocal changes visually with musical notation (verbal instructions do appear in Part II, albeit less frequently than in Part I). He instigates the shift beginning with the last measures of Part I and the first measures of Part II. The five consecutive trills in the last two measures of the *Sprechmelodie* in "Der kranke Mond" are one such change; the effect is indicated through musical notation rather than verbal instruction. The overall effect is a thin and shivering end to the most starkly scored melodrama in the piece, introducing the general sonic atmosphere of Part II, corresponding to its more disturbing dramatic thrust.

After the transition away from Part I, trills again appear in the second piece of Part II "Gebet an Pierrot." In this case, they appear over two sets of tied eighth notes, which do not appear to be noteworthy at first glance. However, as mentioned, the nature of *Sprechstimme* is to move once a tone has begun, so the idea of a tied note is contradictory. Both occur in the middle of a measure, so a quarter note would have sufficed. It appears that Schoenberg wanted to cue the singer to perform the constant oscillation characteristic of trills, rather than hitting the pitch then immediately moving

away, as is typical of most *Sprechmelodie* realization. The effect is a shaking tone which stays relatively close to the starting pitch rather than moving away.

Another marking common in Part II is the *glissando*, which does not appear in Part I. Although the written *glissandi* appear to be the same as each other, they do not sound alike because they are to be executed at different dynamics. While in Stiedry-Wagner's recording the effect of a pianissimo *glissando* plea at m. 9 of "Gebet an Pierrot" is light and airy, resulting in a quivering effect which hints at desperation, the full fortississimo *glissando* at m. 11 in "Rote Messe," which begins only a minor third higher, forces her to shriek "zerreißt" to be heard over the ensemble. By the time Schoenberg uses the written *glissandi*, however, the listener might become numb to the special effects of the *Sprechstimme*. The unwritten slides between pitches, which are indicated in the performance instructions, saturate the texture so much that the written *glissandi* do not stand out, even though there are distinct effects: the *glissandi* have a roughly-marked arrival point in the range, while the slides simply end wherever the vocalist decides to leave off. Perhaps Schoenberg wanted to indicate a specific direction and duration of the tone, which is not specified by the standard notation in *Pierrot*.

In some cases in Part II, Schoenberg felt the need to create new notation. In the last measure of the *Sprechmelodie* in the third melodrama "Der Dandy" he briefly uses an alternate notation shown in Figure 3.1, where the notehead is also replaced with flags, so there are beams at one end of the stem and flags (of the same note value) at the other end.

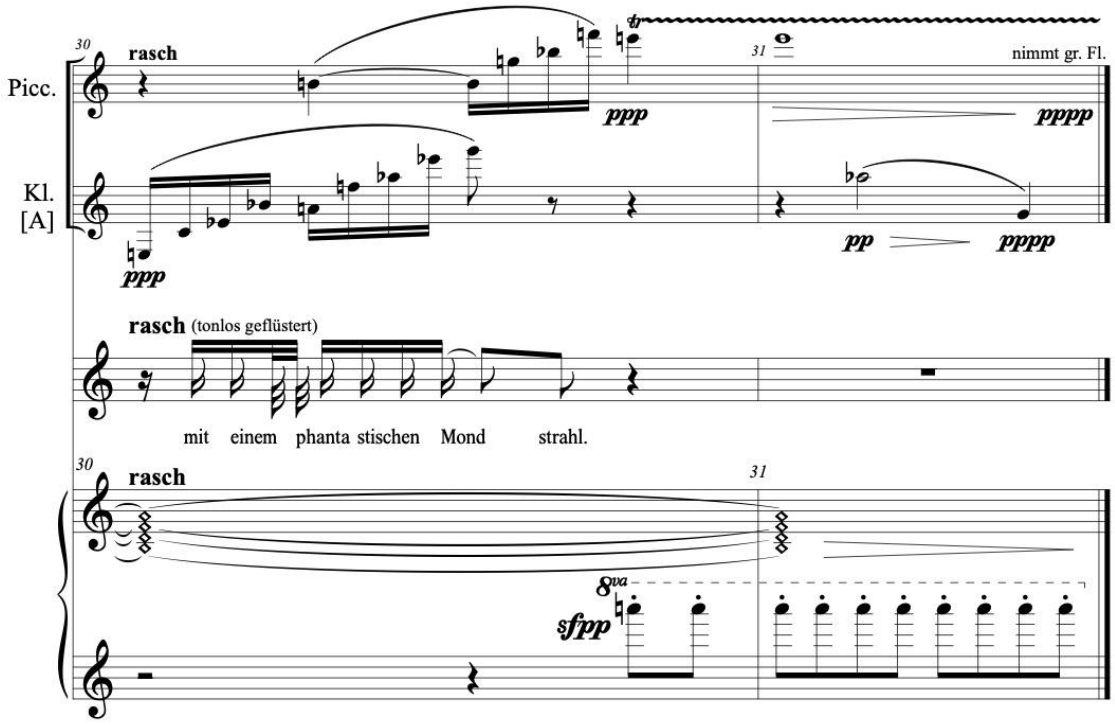

Figure 3.1 Alternative notation of "tonlos geflüstert" in "Der Dandy" mm. 30–31

Stiedry-Wagner executes this measure as nearly whispered *sotto voce* (which is voiced) rather than as an unvoiced whisper, which is how she performs m. 8 (which is also marked "tonlos geflüstert" but is notated in the standard *Sprechmelodie* notation used throughout *Pierrot*). Schoenberg presents a round open note head accompanied by the verbal timbre instruction "tonlos" in mm. 8 and 9 of "Raub." The sixteenth notes move quickly between "ton" and "tonlos," to which the notation corresponds. The open circular note heads only appear in these two measures, heightening the impact of the verbal instructions. The timbral effect is a hollow but penetrating whisper. This special notation as well as the aforementioned trills and *glissandi* dwindle again in Part III, in which a single mordent appears in m. 6 of "Gemeinheit," as Pierrot begins to bore into Cassander's skull with a cranial drill.

In Part II, Schoenberg uses a different portion of his sound palette with the syllables he groups together. Unlike Part I, where the majority of the syllables at the onsets of the lines were soft, the poems of Part II are fraught with aggressive /t/ stops, hissing /s/ and buzzing /z/ sounds, and rolled /r/ syllables. The prominent /b/, /d/, and /g/ syllables from Part I are significantly reduced in Part II and are replaced by many /n/, /p/, /s/, and /z/ syllables. While there are the same number of /f/ and /sh/ onsets, the /sh/ sound becomes significantly more pronounced in Part II, which contributes to the altered sound of the part as well. Moreover, Part II marks the addition of /t/, /z/, and /r/ syllables at both the onsets and throughout the lines. The increased sibilant and plosive sounds result in both noisier types of syllables and a more noticeable contrast between the sounds. In the 1940 recording, Stiedry-Wagner's execution of the /r/ and /z/ consonants throughout Part II, neither of which had been used as onsets in Part I, jut out noticeably from the texture. The hissing and spitting interruptions to the flow of the lines draw attention from the meaning of the words to their sounds.

In addition to the change in the types of consonants used at the onset, there is a noticeable shift in the number of vowel onsets as well: there are fewer. Of the three parts, Part II has the fewest vowel onsets overall. The vowel onsets that do exist cluster in greater numbers near the beginning and end of the part. In "Gebet an Pierrot" and "Raub" there are no vowel onsets at all. Within the lines, the sustained vowels are noticeably fewer. The ones that are sustained are truncated by shorter note values and faster tempi. The absence of vowels, the harder articulations, shorter note values, and faster tempi force the singer to spit out the consonants.

The breathlessness of Part II gives way to yet another vocal profile in Part III as Pierrot survives the night and returns to familiar surroundings. The increasingly smooth vocal timbres from the middle and high ranges depict an arrival in comfort and tranquility for the character. The most upper-range activity occurs in Part III, with 38% of the written pitches occurring above B4, while only about 4% fall to the bottom of the range below C4. This change in range, as well as the longer durations, sparse verbal instructions, and softer syllables creates the most intimate section of the work.

Throughout Part III, the vocalist has time to develop Schoenberg's "full sound." The composer facilitates this by setting the text with slower tempi and longer rhythmic durations. In general, the starting tempi in Part III are consistently at about quarter = 126, although "Heimweh" is noticeably slower at quarter = 56–70 and "Mondfleck" feels faster at eighth = 144.[48] The *Sprechmelodie* in Part III clearly adheres to the quarter note pace set in the tempo markings. This is a stark contrast to Part II, in which the tempi range from quarter = 56 to quarter = 126, and in which most of the tempo indications are obscured by predominantly sixteenth-note movement throughout the vocal part. The resulting vocal sounds are more full-bodied and lyrical, which contrasts with the frantic full immersion from Part II.

Overall, Schoenberg progressively reduces the use of written instructions for the vocalist throughout the work. The overarching narrative moves from the initial inebriation in "Mondestrunken," through intoxication to sobriety and independence by the end. As the protagonist transcends the clutches of society and its addictions, Schoenberg includes fewer vocal variations. In Part III, there is only one explicit verbal

[48] Schoenberg rarely stays in the tempo he sets at the beginning, instead using a variety of expressive markings to change tempo. Here, the tempi given at the beginning of each melodrama merely provide a point of reference.

instruction: m. 14 of "Gemeinheit" is marked "beiseite" (aside). The other markings in the *Sprechmelodie* are expressive markings, in italics, which are more subjective (e.g., "very tenderly" or "dry)."[49] Even the expressive markings occur seldomly, with a maximum concentration of three in "Mondfleck." As a result of the reduced verbal instructions, the vocalist has even more freedom to draw expressive conclusions about the pieces.

Part III also makes use of new collections of syllables. In contrast to the other two parts, Part III has a striking number of lines which start with vowels. There are 30 instances, compared with 20 in Part I and only 17 in Part II. There are significantly fewer /r/, /t/, and /z/ onsets than in Part II which is balanced by an increase in /l/, /k/, /s/ onsets. Part III has the most diverse onsets, with every syllable in the chart except /g/ appearing at least once. Within the lines, a predominance of /f/, /g/, /l/, /s/ emerges. Overall, these shifts in the text result in a lighter atmosphere than in Part II. In the absence of percussive consonants, the buoyancy of the vowels continues unimpeded. When combined with the rhythmic asymmetry of dotted notes, they skip playfully; when paired with a sustained duration they soothe. For example, Stiedry-Wagner's gentle execution of "Heimweh" with lines like "Lieblich klagend ein krystallnes Seufzen aus Italiens alter Pantomime" contrasts starkly with the aggressively spat consonants of "Finstre schwarze Riesenfalter töteten der Sonne Glanz" from "Nacht" in Part II.

The distinguishing characteristics of the large divisions, including changes to the range, rhythm, and consonant saturation in the *Sprechstimme* underscore the narrative. Each part, though sometimes subtle, comprises a number of compounding features, which lead to distinguishable profiles. Part I consists of long durations, mid-range vocalizations,

[49] In original: "sehr zahrt"; "trocken."

soft onsets which parallel the onset of night, whereas Part II depicts unmistakable darkness. Pierrot's uncertainty and fear in the low vocal range is marked by instability through shorter, more hectic rhythmic durations overall, sparse sustained notes, aggressive consonants, and features increased use of special effects, some of which required new musical notation. The redemptive Part III is marked by a return to smoother vocal line including frequent vowel onsets, more use of the middle and upper range, a fuller vocal sound, and playful rhythmic asymmetry. Throughout *Pierrot lunaire*, Schoenberg uses the diverse vocal profile available within *Sprechstimme* to parallel Pierrot's descent into and out of darkness. He also applies this vocal toolset to mark form and create drama on a micro level, within individual movements, as I will show in the next section.

The Voice and Small-Scale Form in *Pierrot*

In art song, poetic structure is often reflected musically, through both melody and harmony, but also timbre (e.g., Schubert's "Erlkönig" or Wolf's "Feuerreiter"). In "Der Dandy," Schoenberg preserves Giraud's rondel form, which consists of 13 lines in which lines 1 and 2 repeat in lines 7 and 8, and line 1 repeats an additional time in line 13, as shown in bold below.

Der Dandy

Mit einem phantastischen Lichtstrahl
Erleuchtet der Mond die krystallnen Flakons
Auf dem schwarzen, hochheiligen Waschtisch
Des schweigenden Dandys von Bergamo.

In tönender, bronzener Schale[5]
Lacht hell die Fontäne, metallischen Klangs
Mit einem phantastischen Lichtstrahl

Erleuchtet der Mond die krystallnen Flakons.

Pierrot mit wächsernem Antlitz
Steht sinnend und denkt: wie er heute sich schminkt?[10]
Fort schiebt er das Rot und des Orients Grün
Und bemalt sein Gesicht in erhabenem Stil
Mit einem phantastischen Mondstrahl.

The Dandy

With a fantastic light ray
The moon illuminates the crystalline flasks
On the holy, sacred, ebony wash-stand
Of the taciturn dandy of Bergamo.

In a sounding bronzen bowl[5]
The fountain's metallic sound laughs brightly,
With a fantastic light ray
The moon illuminates the crystalline flasks

Pierrot, with waxen countenance,
Stands musing and thinks: how to do his makeup tonight?[10]
Rejecting the red and the green of the east
He paints his face sublimely
With a fantastic moonbeam.

The written text results in a repetition of phonemes and syllables in performance, which help the listeners orient themselves at the beginning, middle, and end of each piece, whether they understand the German text or not. Even in translation and despite other changes, the unity established by these repeated phonemes remains apparent. Each of the 21 melodramas includes the sonic repetitions inherent to this form. The triple and double repetition respectively of the first two lines in each melodrama intensifies the presence of those sounds beyond those in the rest of the text. In addition to creating similar sounds and sound patterns with the strategic placement and repetition of phonemes and syllables, the repeated emphasis in speech also affects the rhythm. In *Pierrot* this is especially true since Schoenberg sought to accurately represent the natural

rhythms of speech with *Sprechstimme*.[50] However, Schoenberg balances this unity with vocal variety, maintaining the drama of the text as well.

"Der Dandy" is a prime example to demonstrate the ways Schoenberg manipulates internal vocal timbres and effects. It not only exhibits the sonic unity inherent to the phonemic structure of the rondel form, but it is also the most extreme case of the frequently shifting timbres that is characteristic of the first seven melodramas. In the text, an omniscient observer describes Pierrot's surroundings—a black dressing table with a crystal bottle (presumably a perfume bottle), lit by moonbeams—as he considers what makeup to put on—red or orient green—before finally choosing to paint himself with the white moonbeam. Table 3.3 shows the variety of verbal instructions.

[50] In the foreword to *Pierrot*, Schoenberg wrote that "Maintaining the rhythm as accurately as if one were singing, i.e., with no more freedom than would be allowed with singing melody;" which is the only characteristic of *Sprechmelodie* which remains unchanged throughout his career.

Table 3.3 Verbal Instructions in "Der Dandy"

Measure No.	**Verbal Instruction**	**Text**	**Translation**
1	gesprochen (implied)	*Mit einem phan-...*	With a fan-...
6, beat 1	gesungen	*schwar-zen*	black
6, & of 2	gesprochen	*hochheiligen*	sacrosanct
8, beat 1	tonlos geflüstert	*Waschtisch*	washing stand
8, beat 4	mit Ton gesprochen	*des schweigenden...*	of the silent...
16, & of 2	gesungen	*Mit einem phan-*	With a fan-
17, beat 1	tonlos	*tastischen*	tastic
17, beat 3	gesungen	*Licht-*	light-
17, beat 4	gesprochen	*strahl*	beam
18, & of 1	(fast gesungen, mit etwas Ton, sehr gezogen, an die Klarinette anpassend)	*erleuchtet der Mond die Krystallnen Flakons. ...*	the moon lights the crystal bottles
30, e of 1	tonlos geflüstert	*mit einem phantastischen Mondstrahl.*	with a fantastic light beam

The notation changes in “Der Dandy” and verbal instructions in the score as well as the audible changes by Stiedry-Wagner on the recording provide ample evidence of the drastic vocal variety Schoenberg imagined to create the atmosphere for Part I. As with the overall form of the 21 melodramas, the first section of “Der Dandy” builds tension through instability, the second intensifies it, and the third resolves it. This is evident in the ranges of each part as well as the durations, articulations, verbal instructions, and recording evidence.

Schoenberg often requires timbral shifts back to back, resulting in bursts of the new sounds. This occurs throughout Section 1. The first verbal instructions in “Der Dandy,” “gesungen” (sung) followed by “gesprochen” (spoken), appear in m. 6. In m. 8 Schoenberg changes the vocal technique again, to “tonlos geflüstert” (whispered tonelessly) and back to the default “mit Ton gesprochen” (spoken with tone). Stiedry-Wagner carefully articulates these shifts in the recording, despite the deviations to the written pitches and contour. To realize “gesungen,” Stiedry-Wagner manifests a relaxed, smooth, fully voiced timbre. For “gesprochen,” she shifts back to the neutral but slightly more tense-voiced *Sprechstimme* timbre. Next, she whispers for “tonlos geflüstert,” followed by a return to the neutral voiced *Sprechstimme* timbre for “mit Ton gesprochen,” all over the course of only three measures or about eight seconds. Stiedry-Wagner highlights the character’s unstable nature by moving from one timbral extreme to another, even though such indications are not necessarily in the text or verbal instructions. The opening two lines of “Der Dandy” are almost shouted, with loud, strained, thin notes in the high range. Stiedry-Wagner highlights this by performing the *glissandi* as falls coming off the first two elongated syllables (TA and “STRAHL”). In the

second line, Stiedry-Wagner suddenly puts space between the words rather than gliding from syllable to syllable. Instead of gliding off the elongated syllables of the refrain ("MOND" and "KONS") she shakes the pitch, which creates the effect of a quivering body. "Auf dem schwarzen..." features legato connections between the notes with many *portamenti*. The volume continues to drop from the beginning, reaching a low point at the whisper on "Waschtisch," where she emphasizes the first "SH" sound. Stiedry-Wagner drops the whisper for phonated (voiced) sounds, as Schoenberg indicates, at "Des schweigenden..." (Of the silent...), and proceeds with a relatively monotone story-telling sound, creating an intimate atmosphere in which to encounter the protagonist for the first time. The continuing shifts in intensity, resonance, and volume in this section create a sense of instability. Pierrot seems flighty, unfocused, and is hard to identify or categorize as a result.

The vocal entrance of "Der Dandy" is by far the most dramatic of the work, with the elongated ascent to "TA," which bursts out of the texture in Stiedry-Wagner's recording. This "TA" should be striking in every performance since the *Sprechmelodie* ascends from C-sharp4 below the staff to F5, and the syllable is further emphasized by a fortepiano marking. Pierrot's flamboyant grand entrance evokes the idea of the visual description of the protagonist putting on his makeup, giving the character a grandiose air and emphasizing his vanity and arrogance. The way the consonants jump out of the texture and the quick chameleon-like shifts from one timbre to another indicated by the verbal instructions throughout the melodrama also highlight these characteristics. This uneven and unpredictable timbral succession also contributes to the unstable atmosphere of the first section of the melodrama by drawing in and disorienting the listener.

Section 2 of "Der Dandy" has its own sonic profile, which intensifies the unstable atmosphere of Section 1. In lines 5 through 8 (Section 2), /m/ and /e/ again appear at the onset, but now at the end of the stanza. Here the text links the image of water with its sound as it "laughs" in the bronze bowl or sink on Pierrot's vanity table.

s	L	s	s	L	s	s	s	L
mit	EIN-	em	phan-	TA-	stisch-	en	Licht-	STRAHL

s	L	s	s	L	s	s	L	s	s	L
er-	LEUCH-	tet	der	MOND	die	kry-	STA-	llnen	fla-	kons

Figure 3.2 Syllable length in "Der Dandy" mm. 16–20

Schoenberg increases the number of long syllables in Section 2, adding one long syllable to the seventh line and two to the eighth. In the final line, he reduces the number of long syllables to one, rushing through the rest with sixteenth notes and two thirty-seconds. The whole section is more subtle, with an immediate shift in character at the beginning of line 5 which is followed by continuously shifting vocal sonorities. Range plays a particularly important role in the profile of Section 2. The range of the middle section extends from C-sharp4 to A-flat5, which is the upper limit of the melodrama. Only one articulation marking, a legato on "Licht-," occurs in Section 2. Once again, Schoenberg sets quickly shifting verbal instructions beginning with a change from "gesprochen" (spoken, which is the standard and implicit verbal instruction for the use of *Sprechstimme* throughout the work), to "gesungen" (sung) in m. 16 , followed by "tonlos" (toneless, which Stiedry-Wagner performed as a loud whisper under Schoenberg's direction), back to

"gesungen" (sung), and finally back to "gesprochen" (spoken) in m. 17. Immediately following the timbral palindrome (spoken-sung-toneless-sung-spoken), Schoenberg indicates "fast gesungen, mit etwas Ton, sehr gezogen, an die Klarinette anpassend" ("almost sung, with some tone, very drawn out, adjusting to the clarinet"). As with the Duenna's tremors in "Parodie," we see links between the vocal and instrumental sonorities. Lines 5 and 6, like the opening lines, are strained loud, but in the middle range they sound less thin, as Stiedry-Wagner projects over the flute drone. Unlike the opening two lines, Stiedry-Wagner's interpretation of "In tönenender..." is marked by continuous phonation so it sounds much more legato, with each new syllable starting immediately, rather than being spaced like the first two lines. Several tones jut out upward from the otherwise smooth texture, creating a laughing effect. In addition to the increased agogic accents discussed before, these characteristics (the jutting notes) result in an uncertain middle section, intensifying the instability because the listener can no longer orient themselves to what the median timbre is, which means, timbrally speaking, not knowing which way is up, so to speak. Lines 9 through 13 make up Section 3, which shows a decrease in activity. The text explicitly homes in on Pierrot's thoughts as he puts aside red and green for the moonbeam makeup. There is only one elongated syllable which accents "Mond" of "Mondstrahl" (moonbeam).

s	s	s	s	s	s	s	L	s
mit	ein-	em	phant-	as-	tisch-	en	MOND-	strahl

Figure 3.3 Syllable length in "Der Dandy" m. 30

The range of the third section, C-sharp4 to F-natural5, falls between those of the other two sections, creating a sense of equilibrium between the two. Thus, range becomes a

stabilizing force. There are no articulation markings beyond the ties and slurs which occur in all three sections, leading to a decrease in the number of sonorities used, and thus more stability. In Section 3, the only verbal instruction appears in the *Sprechstimme*'s last measure, in which Schoenberg asks the performer to execute "tonlos geflüstert" (whispered tonelessly). This aligns with the previously mentioned shift to the stems with flags at both ends. The fast, toneless execution results in an extremely sibilant ending in which "phantastischen" and "s[h]tral" jut out of the texture.

On the recording, Stiedry-Wagner's timbre remains consistent for the first four lines of this section. She uses the same consistent, fully voiced, mid-range vocal timbre she used in line 4 of the poem before shifting to a whispering timbre for the (line 2) refrain in the last line. Rather than dismantling the third section with more new effects, Schoenberg returns to some of the earlier timbres to create a rounded timbral profile. The whispers in the last line, especially "phantastischen," also draw the listener's memory back to the earlier "Waschtisch" in the third line. The familiarity of these timbres has a stabilizing effect. Schoenberg briefly hints at an arrival on a small scale, without resolving the building tension of Part I in the larger form.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have shown the myriad of ways in which Arnold Schoenberg uses the voice to create coherence and drama, in both the large tripartite form of the entire piece and small scale forms within the melodramas of *Pierrot*. The coherence results from the re-sounding of various timbres and effects throughout the work, such as the internal repetition of the whispered timbre in "Der Dandy." The drama comes from the

detailed vocal evocation of characters, such as the Duenna's tremor. The compositional toolbox Schoenberg develops in *Pierrot* represents a significant evolution to the color palette and techniques in *Gurre-Lieder*. Recordings and the extensive performance history with Erika Stiedry-Wagner suggest that Schoenberg preferred working with vocalists who prioritized expression over pedantic realization of the score. Schoenberg's dramatic use of the voice manipulates the listener's perspective in an almost Schubertian manner. It creates not only new vantage points but atmosphere and physical sensation. I have demonstrated that Schoenberg's use of voice goes far beyond expression to achieve structural organization and, more importantly, dramatic functions in *Pierrot*. The extension of traditional uses of the voice in classical music and the utility of *Sprechstimme* as a carrier of meaning continues even further, however, as demonstrated in the next chapter with a critical approach to the elements of the body in *Pierrot.*

Chapter 4

"The Plaintive Sigh of Crystal": Pierrot's Bodies

In the previous chapter, I demonstrated Schoenberg's application of vocal timbres and effects to create structure. I used a combination of traditional and novel analytical techniques to show that Schoenberg's use of *Sprechstimme* as a structural device in *Pierrot lunaire* is a central aspect of this work. Further, I demonstrated how Schoenberg's employment of *Sprechstimme* also affects the atmospheres and sensations experienced by the audience, by creating an immersive listening experience. However, the implications of Schoenberg's new sound palette extend beyond formal and dramatic implications.

In this chapter, I will draw on the strategies and theories of voice studies, especially those related to timbre studies, embodiment, and the role of the listener, to illuminate aspects of *Pierrot lunaire* that have not been previously addressed, drawing on primary sources including correspondence, monographs, and recordings. First, I take into account the composer's voice, influences on his thinking when composing *Pierrot*, as well as the performer's voice, and the recordings of the performers' voices. I also explore Pierrot's voice as an *acousmêtre*, as a voice that implies an unseen body; even though the performer is visible to the audience in traditional performances, during the premiere, Albertine Zehme made herself a blank slate, leaving it up to the voice to project a body but existing and acting on the audience in its own right.[1] Finally, I unpack Pierrot as a

[1] Michael Chion, *The Voice in Cinema*, ed. and trans. Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 21.

vocalic body as described by Steven Connor, assessing the impact of the sonic connection from the performer to the listener, and the impact of that connection on the listener's body.

Schoenberg on Color and Expression

Isabella Van Elferen calls for a more idealist approach to timbre and sonority than materialists I have cited thus far, which aligns with Schoenberg's thinking. For Van Elferen, a two-fold timbral paradox exists, which includes not only a paradox of material and immaterial, but also of signification and non-signification.[2] Timbre as an object and its production and the (idealist) aesthetics of the sound produced are never addressed together, she argues; further, timbre can be used to represent sensory experiences but also goes beyond text painting. It can only function as a signifier but never as the signified. This gap in perception opens a space that allows access to the sublime, which exists beyond language but not understanding. My work approaches both sides of Van Elferen's paradox: I unpack Schoenberg's own idealist approach to timbre, which opens up new expressive possibilities of the sublime for him.[3]

The voice is an embodied phenomenon. When a composer reads texts aloud to himself repeatedly before setting them to music, this is a form of embodiment. Schoenberg often set texts by other writers, so how he heard the text in his head, or how he read the text out loud, filtered the poet's voice through Schoenberg's. Performers add

[2] Isabella Van Elferen, "Drastic Allure: Timbre Between the Sublime and the Grain," *Contemporary Music Review* 36, no. 6 (2017): 614–632.
[3] Both Schoenberg's correspondence with Wassily Kandinsky in 1911–1912 and his theoretical writing in *Harmonielehre* (1911) suggest that during the period leading up to the composition of *Pierrot*, Schoenberg was moving in a new direction whose ultimate goal was the untethered expression of emotion.

another layer of embodiment. A vocalist's idiosyncrasies manifest in the sound they produce; their instrument is an ever-changing product of its environment and training. Musical recordings register a vocalist's breathing, articulations, rasp, and even fatigue. When these recordings become text for studies for future performers, the tendency of the student is to reproduce the recording artist's vocal idiosyncrasies alongside phrasing and other interpretive decisions. Of course, a mature performer avoids simply copying, in favor of integrating and developing ideas to create their own interpretation. Even in doing so, the recorded bodies influence the vocalizing ones.

In between the composition of *Gurre-Lieder* and *Pierrot lunaire*, Schoenberg encountered several ideas and styles of vocal performance that influenced his thoughts on vocal performance. He had certainly heard various declamation styles in the cabarets of both Berlin and Vienna, and likely recognized some potential in a non-singing voice in both cities. Schoenberg had been living in Berlin around 1901 and conducting a small ensemble at Ernst von Wolzogen's cabaret Überbrettl.[4] During this time, he composed a number of cabaret songs and became intimately familiar with the non-traditional vocal sounds of the diseuse (i.e., female cabaret performers who performed songs and texts), which were common in the cabaret.

[4] Aidan Soder summarizes the literature surrounding Schoenberg and cabaret. Most importantly, she cites Pierre Boulez who connects *Pierrot lunaire* with Schoenberg's early musical career in the cabaret in Berlin in Pierre Boulez, *Orientations: Collected Writings*, trans. Christian Bourgois (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, translation by copyright Faber & Faber, 1986). Julie Pedneault-Deslauriers examines the connection between the Pierrot figure and cabaret, especially in the French tradition, in her article "Pierrot L.," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 64, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 601–645.

Schoenberg strongly expressed a change in aesthetic direction to Ferruccio Busoni in a letter from August 13, 1909, in which he rejected constructed music in favor of direct expression. He wrote,

> I aspire to: complete liberation from all forms of all symbols of coherence and of logic, thus: away from the "motivic work." Away from harmony, as cement or building block of an architecture. Harmony is expression and nothing else than that. Then: Away from pathos! Away from 24-pound continuous music; from built and constructed towers, boulders and other gigantic clutter. My music must be short. Concise! in two notes: not building, but "expressing"!!! And the result I hope for: no stylized and sterilized permanent feelings. There is no such thing in humans: it is impossible for humans to have only one feeling at a time. One has thousands at once. And these thousands add up as little as apples and pears add up. They diverge. And this colorfulness, this multiformity, this illogic that shows our sensations, this illogic that shows the associations, [this illogic] that shows some rising blood wave, some sensory or nervous reaction, [this illogic] I want to have in my music.[5]

Schoenberg employs both the multiplicity of human emotions and color, visual or musical, as means of expressing that multiplicity he mentions here in *Pierrot lunaire*. He seems to view the inherently indefinable, which includes timbre, as a toolbox for approaching direct expression without the barriers of logic, symbol, or language. The

[5] Arnold Schoenberg to Ferruccio Busoni August 13, 1909. In original: "Weg von der Harmonie, als Cement oder Baustein einer Architektur. Harmonie ist Ausdruck und nichts anderes als das. Dann: Weg vom Pathos! "Ich strebe an: Vollständige Befreiung von allen Formen von allen Symbolen des Zusammenhangs und der Logik also: weg von der "motivischen Arbeit" Weg von der Harmonie, als Cement oder Baustein einer Architektur. Harmonie ist Ausdruck und nichts anderes als das. Dann: Weg vom Pathos!Weg von den 24pfündigen Dauermusiken; von den gebauten und konstruierten Thürmen, Felsen und sonstigen gigantischem Kram. Meine Musik muss kurz sein. Knapp! in zwei Noten: nicht bauen, sondern "ausdrücken"!! Und das Resultat, das ich erhoffe: keine stylisierten und sterilisierten Dauergefühle. Das giebts im Menschen nicht: dem Menschen ist es unmöglich nur ein Gefühl gleichzeitig zu haben. Man hat tausende auf einmal. Und diese tausend summieren sich sowenig, als Aepfel und Birnen sich summieren. Sie gehen auseinander. Und diese Buntheit, diese Vielgestaltigkeit, diese Unlogik die unsere Empfindungen zeigen, diese Unlogik, die die Associationen aufweisen, die irgend eine aufsteigende Blutwelle, irgend eine Sinnes- oder Nerven-Reaktion aufzeigt, möchte ich in meiner Musik haben."

wide range of timbres available in the voice was especially appealing to Schoenberg, as demonstrated by his lifelong exploration of *Sprechstimme*.

This is not to say timbre is indescribable, but it can only be described through metaphors with the other senses (sweet, bright), or through description of the production (strained, nasal).[6] We can only describe it through subjective analogy that contributes to its indefinable nature. For Schoenberg, timbre was indefinable and had the expressive potential to surpass language, as he wrote in *Harmonielehre*, a few years after the letter to Busoni. Here, he further makes the case for timbre (*Klangfarbe*) as having the power to express the inexpressible. He writes,

> The evaluation of timbre, the second dimension of sound, is thus in an even more undeveloped, disordered state than the aesthetic evaluation of [pitch]. Nevertheless, one dares to line up and relate the sounds merely according to the feeling, and it has not yet occurred to anyone to demand a theory to determine the laws according to which this ordering may be done. It cannot be done for the time being. And as one can see, it is also possible without a theory.[7]

Schoenberg admits that a theory of timbre was both impossible (at least "for the time being") and unnecessary, because listeners relate to the sounds subjectively, "merely according to the feeling." This idea of timbre's defiance of theory makes it an ideal medium for unmediated expression. The liberation from logic, pathos, and musical "clutter" in favor of direct expression (of complex, multifaceted, colorful, and deeply

[6] Van Elferen, "Drastic Allure," 615.
[7] Arnold Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 506. "Die Bewertung der Klangfarbe, der zweiten Dimension des Tons, befindet sich also in einem noch viel unbebauteren, ungeordnetern Zustand als die ästhetische Wertung dieser letzgenannten Harmonien. Trotzdem wagt man unentwegt, die Klänge bloß nach dem Gefühl aneinanderzureihen und gegenüberzustellen, und noch nie ist es jemandem eingefallen, hier von einer Theorie zu fordern, daß sie die Gesetze, nach denen man das tun darf, feststelle. Man vermag es eben vorläufig nicht. Und wie man sieht, geht es auch ohne das."

embodied intertwining of emotions and sensations) manifests from the first moments of *Pierrot lunaire*, most prominently in the voice. As Van Elferen mentions, all of these factors play into the concept of the sublime: expression and freedom from logic.

Schoenberg also had an extensive letter exchange with Wassily Kandinsky on painting and color from August 26, 1911 to December 18, 1912. Most significantly, in the letter from December 14, 1911, Schoenberg confirms that he agrees with Kandinsky's parallels between visual and musical colors: "You are absolutely right about so much. Especially what you say about color compared to musical color."[8] Further, Schoenberg had written to Kandinsky earlier in the year that he would need to see the black and white photographs Kandinsky sent of his own paintings in color. He continues that he hesitates to send black and white photos of his works to Kandinsky, because the effect of his paintings depends on color, not only beautiful colors but expressive colors, and that he is unsure if the viewer would get anything out of a black and white reproduction:

> Thank you again very much for the images. As I said: I liked the portfolio very much. I understand the photographs less at the moment. One would have to see them in color. And that is why I hesitate to send you some photographs of my paintings. You may not know that I paint too. But I care so much about the color (not the "beautiful" color, but the expressive color, expressive in harmony), that I don't know if anyone who sees the reproductions has anything of it. Friends believe in it, but I am unsure.[9]

[8] Arnold Schoenberg to Wassily Kandinsky, December 14, 1911. In original: "Sie haben mit so vielem unbedingt recht. Insbesondere was Sie über die Farbe sagen im Vergleich mit der musikalischen Farbe."
[9] Schoenberg to Kandinsky, January 24, 1911. In original: "Ich danke Ihnen nochmals sehr für die Bilder. Wie gesagt: die Mappe hat mir sehr sehr gefallen. Die Photografien verstehe ich einstweilen weniger. Das müßte man wohl in der Farbe sehen. Und deshalb zögere ich, Ihnen ein paar Fotografien von meinen Bildern zu schicken. Sie wissen vielleicht nicht, daß ich auch male. Aber mir kommt es so sehr auf die Farbe (nicht auf die "schöne" Farbe, sondern auf die ausdrucksvolle, im Zusammenklang ausdrucksvolle) Farbe an, daß ich nicht weiß, ob jemand etwas davon hat, der die Reproduktionen sieht."

Here, Schoenberg links color/timbre to expressivity, as he would again in *Harmonielehre* later in the year.

In a book chapter entitled, "Convergences: Music and the Visual Arts," Walter Frisch assesses this convergence between sound color and visual color, and Schoenberg and Kandinsky's influence on one another. He notes that Kandinsky's synesthesia "is more interested in sound as reflected in timbre or instrumental color" rather than a pitch to color correspondence.[10] He continues, citing Kandinsky's January 18 letter to Schoenberg, confirming Schoenberg's influence on Kandinsky: "In your works, you have realized what I, albeit in uncertain form, have so greatly longed for in music. The independent progress through their own destinies, the independent life of the individual voices in your compositions, is exactly what I am trying to find in my paintings."[11] Kandinsky's subsequent description of a new kind of "harmony" in painting, which is to be founded not on a schematic or "geometric" structure, but rather on something "antilogical" corresponds closely with Schoenberg's move away from structure into "Unlogik."[12]

That Schoenberg extends the idea of visual color to sound color, and that he might also consider a greater variety of vocal colors than he had previously used thus appears reasonable. Certainly, he emphasized the importance of "color" in *Pierrot*, as mentioned

[10] Cited in Walter Frisch, "Convergences: Music and the Visual Arts," *German Modernism: Music and the Arts,* California Studies in 20th-Century Music (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 118.
[11] Ibid., 119.
[12] Ibid.

previously, writing to Emil Hertzka that "A piano reduction is unthinkable [...] the color means everything, the notes mean nothing at all…"[13]

The Performer's Body

Yvon Bonenfant considers how listening to timbral difference can lead to an understanding of the dynamics of "power" in a piece of music, especially one which includes performative freedom and opportunities for creative listening to non-melodic elements.[14] Bonenfant encourages listeners to find what is strange or new about a work, and strives to help the listener develop a new set of listening emphases that deviate from simply listening to form, rhythm, melody, and harmony as a primary interest in order to achieve a "virtuosic listening."[15] For Bonenfant, the recognition of timbral differences is important to understanding the balance of power between composer and performer. With that in mind, I now turn to the first Pierrot: Albertine Zehme.

The emphasis on a broad spectrum of coloristic possibilities is especially notable in *Pierrot lunaire*, which was written specifically for actress Albertine Zehme, who was also independently interested in the expressive potential of the voice beyond traditional singing techniques. Most scholarly literature ignores Zehme's possible influence on Schoenberg's use of the voice, citing merely her contributions of having commissioned and performed *Pierrot*. Most notably, her influence on which 21 of the 50 original poems

[13] "Pierrot lunaire kann nur in Partitur erscheinen! Ein Klavierauszug ist undenkbar! [...] Mehr noch aber bei diesen Werken, wo die Farbe alles, die Noten gar nichts bedeuten [...]." Schoenberg to Emil Hertzka July 5, 1912, cited in Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke, Abteilung VI,* Div. 1, Ser. B, vol. 24, 233. Emphasis in original.
[14] Yvon Bonenfant, "Queer Listening to Queer Voices," *Performance Research* 15, no. 3 (2010): 77.
[15] Ibid., 77–78.

Schoenberg chose was clearly documented in the correspondence collected in the critical edition and largely ignored since.[16] Her ideas about voice are evident in several documents dating from around 1907, prior to meeting Schoenberg. This positions her as a possible influence on the composer, as Richard Kurth and Phyllis Bryn-Julson together with Paul Mathews have suggested, but not explored in depth.[17] Indeed, many of the differences between Schoenberg's *Sprechstimme* writing in *Gurre-Lieder* and *Pierrot lunaire* may be a result of Zehme's influence.[18]

Even before meeting Schoenberg, Zehme had devoted considerable effort to raising the status of spoken performance or melodrama to a recognized form equal to high art. She studied with numerous teachers who valued declamation as an expressive medium. According to a brief unpublished autobiographical summary, her instructors from 1891 until about 1893 included Cosima Wagner and Julius Kniese, who wanted a text-centric school of singing, with a strong focus on clear declamation.[19] She also studied with Dr. Carl Heine and William Wauer. In 1911 Zehme studied with American

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[16] Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke, Abteilung VI,* Div. 1, Ser. B, vol. 24.

[17] Zehme was born on January 7, 1857, and died on May 11, 1946. For further biographical information on Zehme, see Phyllis Bryn-Julson and Paul Mathews, *Inside Pierrot lunaire: Performing the Sprechstimme in Schoenberg's Masterpiece* (Lanham, Maryland, Toronto, Plymouth UK: The Scarecrow Press, 2009) xi–xii, 21, 31–33. Bryn-Julson and Mathews hint at Zehme's view of herself as an artist and her possible influence, e.g., p. 88. Similarly, Richard Kurth suggests it in "Pierrot Lunaire: Persona, Voice, and the Fabric of Allusion," in *The Cambridge Companion to Schoenberg*, ed. Jennifer Shaw and Joseph Auner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 124.

[18] Zehme had exclusive performance rights until April 30, 1915, per her commission contract with Schoenberg. The contract reads "Mr. Arnold Schönberg will compose at least twenty poems as melodrama [...] for Mrs. Albertine Zehme from the poetry cycle "Pierrot Lunaire" [...], and commits to completing them by the beginning of the 1912/13 season. [...] Mr. Arnold Schönberg grants Mrs. Albertine Zehme the sole right to perform these poems in all countries until 30 April 1915 [...]." In original: "Herr Arnold Schönberg komponiert für Frau Albertine Zehme aus dem Gedichtszyklus "Pierrot Lunaire" […] mindestens zwanzig Gedichte als Melodrama […], und verpflichtet sich, diese bis zu Beginn der Saison 1912/13 fertigzustellen. […] Herr Arnold Schönberg räumt Frau Albertine Zehme das alleinige Aufführungsrecht dieser Kompositionen bis zum 30. April 1915 für alle Länder ein [...]." Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke, Abteilung VI,* Div. 1, Ser. B, vol. 24, 227.

[19] This unpublished essay is held at the Leipziger Stadtbibliothek.

singer and vocal coach Frank King Clark.[20] After she had started studying with Clark, Zehme performed some of Otto Vrieslander's *Pierrot* settings, a straightforward set of Lieder.[21] The text was printed in the program, suggesting that Zehme wanted the audience to understand it. The emphasis on the importance of the text in *Pierrot* is generally attributed to the composer, but in light of this evidence, it should be considered that Zehme was at least in line with this emphasis, if not the reason for it.

There are two known essays of Zehme's that delineate her ideas on voice. The program notes for the Vrieslander concert include an essay called "Why I Must Speak These Songs" ("Warum ich diese Lieder sprechen muss.").[22] Zehme's short essay was printed a year before her first meeting with Schoenberg in 1912. The title suggests some distinctions from the text-centric Lied tradition and an affiliation with poetic performance, implying a justification for her performance style. The booklet documents her artistic vision for voice without Schoenberg's influence.

Another publication was printed in 1920, after nearly a decade of collaboration between Zehme and Schoenberg. It is a 40-page book on singing based on her studies with Frank King Clark called *The Foundations of Artistic Speaking and Singing with Complete Relaxation of the Larynx: for Self-Study*.[23] As is already evident in the pamphlet's table of contents (Table 4.1), she tried to explain the practical execution of

[20] Clark had worked in Chicago, New York, Paris, and Bayreuth, before coming to Berlin. He taught Zehme from 1911–1914 and likely influenced her performances of Schoenberg's works.
[21] This performance took place in the Choralion-Saal in Berlin on March 4, 1911. *Pierrot lunaire* premiered one and a half years later in the same hall.
[22] In the program for her concert on Sunday, March 4, 1911 at 8:00 p.m. in the Choralion-Saal, Berlin (Stadtbibliothek Leipzig) and published in Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke, Abteilung VI,* Div. 1, Ser. B, vol. 24, 306–307.
[23] Albertine Zehme: *Die Grundlagen künstlerischen Sprechens und Singens mit völliger Entlastung des Kehlkopfes: Für den Selbstunterricht* (Leipzig, 1920).

declamation. She based her discussion of the technique and the potential for heightened vocal expression for performers using her work with Clark in particular.

Table 4.1 Table of Contents, Die Grundlagen künstlerischen Sprechens und Singens

I.	I.
Die Mängel der bisherigen Stimmbildung	The Shortcomings of Vocal Training to Date
Die Verdrängung der italienischen Stimmbehandlung durch den Konsonantenkult	The Displacement of Italian Vocal Training by the Cult of Consonants
Der Weg zur Beseitigung der Mängel durch Wiederaufnahme der italienischen Sprachmethode	The Way to Eliminate the Deficiencies by Resuming the Italian Vocal Method
Das Clarksche System der Neubildung	Clark's System of Neologism
a) Die Atmung	a) The Breath
b) Der Kehlkpof und seine völlige Entlastung	b) The Larynx and Its Total Relaxation
c) Der Vokalismus	c) Vocalism
d) Der Konsonantismus	d) Consonantism
e) Die Funktion der Zunge	e) The Function of the Tongue
f) Die Lippen und die Nase	f) The Lips and the Nose
g) Die Kopf- und Körperresonanzen	g) Head and Body Resonances
h) Das Stützen des Tones	h) The Support of the Sound
i) Der Kehlkopf	i) The Larynx
j) Zusammenfassung	j) Summary
II.	II.
Die Clarkschen Übungen zu Tonbildung	Clark's Exercises on Tone Development
Gelegentliche Clarksche Aussprüche	Clark's Occasional Utterances
III.	III.
Über lyrischen, melodramatische und dramatischen Vortrag	On Lyrical, Melodramatic and Dramatic Performance
Über Sprachmelodie	About Speech Melody
Ein Beitrag zum Thema "Lampenfieber"	A Note on the Topic of "Stage Fright"
Der Künstler und der Zuhörer	The Artist and the Listener
Über wahres Künstler- und Menschentum	About True Artistry and Humanity

Reinhart Meyer-Kalkus concludes that Zehme, despite preferring speaking voices for the highest expression of emotion, advocated equality between declamatory and singing voices on the grounds that they had different uses: expression and beauty, respectively.[24] For Zehme the singing voice, "this ideally beautiful instrument," was unfit for the role of expressing extreme emotions. Only the speaking voice could achieve "unrestricted freedom of tone," which in her view was necessary for illustrating the most extreme emotions.[25] Like Schoenberg, Zehme felt that "beauty" sometimes interfered with the unrestricted freedom required to express the full range of human experience.

I discovered a third, earlier essay that sheds further light on Zehme's conceptions of performance. On March 15, 1907, the modern literature journal *Das literarische Echo* published Zehme's article, "Exchange of Viewpoints: Lyrical and Dramatic Performance Style," which contains her thoughts on lyrical, melodramatic, and dramatic vocal performance nearly five years before she first tried to contact Schoenberg about composing music for Giraud's Pierrot poems.[26] The article also predates her work with Clark. In the 1907 article, Zehme delineates between lyric performance (recitation of a narrative) and dramatic performance (acting/depicting a scene by an actor): "While the actor works with real means, the reciter will have to look for his expressive material in the realm of the ideal." The actor has his entire body at his disposal, while the reciter has only the voice. Yet Zehme argues this is enough. She then argues for the expressive capacity of the voice as a "medium for emotion with inexhaustible richness": "Whether it

[24] See Reinhart Meyer-Kalkus, "Sprechmelodien in 'Pierrot Lunaire': Arnold Schönbergs Zusammenarbeit mit Albertine Zehme," *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* 90 (April 15/16, 2000): 54.
[25] Albertine Zehme, "Why I Must Speak These Songs."
[26] Albertine Zehme, "Meinungsaustausch: Lyrischer und dramatischer Vortragsstil," *Das literarische Echo* 9, no. 12, March 15, 1907. No page numbers available.

is a sound wave of ecstatic air or a moan from the deepest chest, you can call it a musical leitmotif. And how much finer and more delicate the shades of linguistic tones, compared to the musical ones."[27] Zehme calls attention to the vocal nuances which are possible and seems to regard the reciter's expression as a form of acting, distilled down to a voice. In this article, Zehme also insists that the reciter must be musically skilled and have a good grasp of rhythm, thus setting them apart from actors: "The performance of lyrical poems is inconceivable without musical talent. An unmusical person can be a great actor if he has a sense for physical-dramatic movement and knows how to use all motoric resources wisely. The artist, however, who wants to recite lyrical poems and melodramas, must be able to find a leitmotif for the words!"[28]

There are many points of contact between Zehme's article and Schoenberg's innovations in *Pierrot lunaire*. It was published between the composition periods of *Gurre-Lieder* and *Pierrot lunaire*, and is one of very few sources that might shed light on which ideas, both in *Pierrot* and subsequent *Sprechstimmen* works, were Schoenberg's and which might have originated with Zehme. Specifically, the change from a flat contour, a relatively even timbral profile, and a relatively uniform execution in *Gurre-Lieder* to the extraordinary range of sonorous possibilities of *Pierrot lunaire*'s vocal part was likely inspired by Schoenberg's exposure to Zehme's polychromatic vocal

[27] Ibid., "Ob es nun eine Schallwelle ekstatischer Luft ist oder ein Stöhnen aus tiefster Brust,—man kann es musikalisches Leitmotiv nennen. Und um wie viel feiner und zarter sind die Schattierungen sprachlicher Töne im Vergleich zu den musikalischen."
[28] Ibid., "Der Vortrag lyrischer Gedichte ist ohne musikalische Begabung nicht denkbar. Ein unmusikalischer Mensch kann ein bedeutender Schauspieler sein, wenn er Sinn für körperlich-dramatische Bewegung besitzt und alle motorischen Hilfsquellen klug zu benützen versteht. Der Künstler jedoch, der lyrische Gedicht und Melodramen vortragen will, muss imstande sein, ein Leitmotive zu den Worten zu finden!"

palette. Furthermore, this sense of rhythm was particularly important given that Schoenberg wished the performer of *Pierrot lunaire* to remain relatively still, so that the keen "sense of physical-dramatic movement" must be communicated through the voice, and "the rhythmic declamation of the text" as Zehme puts it. In this, Zehme clearly connects the idea of expression to the body; the voice is an audible expression of that body. And finally, she notes the effect of delivery speed on expression. She reiterates "He must especially have a sense of rhythm—how much expression the speech-tempo alone gives the content, e.g., Maestoso."[29] These ideas prioritize the intelligibility of the text and align her thinking with Schoenberg's later thinking on voice in the composition of *Pierrot lunaire*. Evidence that intelligibility was a priority for Schoenberg exists, for example, in the program of the premiere, in which the poems were printed, as was common for Lieder, to make the distorted syllables comprehensible. However, as the letters from Schoenberg to Zehme are lost, and some of their exchanges were in person during rehearsal or by telephone, it is difficult to determine which ideas they shared or discovered from each other, or which ultimately developed from either communal or independent thought.[30]

Zehme remained interested in *Sprechstimme* after *Pierrot lunaire*'s completion. She helped to finance performances of *Gurre-Lieder*. She even went to great lengths to

[29] Ibid., "Er muß [sic] vor allem rhythmisches Gefühl haben" and continues "– wie viel Ausdruck gibt das Sprechtempo schon allein für den Inhalt, z. B. Majestoso [sic]." See also Albertine Zehme. *Die Grundlagen künstlerischen Sprechens und Singens* (Leipzig: Carl Merseburger, 1920), 34.
[30] After Zehme receives "Gebet an Pierrot," she writes to Schoenberg in mid-March 1912 that she does not want to disturb him by phone – thereby suggesting both that she could call him and that perhaps she had disturbed him in the past (undated letter, The Library of Congress). Based on other letters, Zehme conducted much of her business by phone. Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke, Abteilung VI,* Div. 1, Ser. B, vol. 24, 228.

attempt to secure the role of *Sprecher* for herself for the 1913 premiere. By that time she had already performed several other works for reciting voice, including *Pierrot lunaire*.[31] While Schoenberg chose actor Ferdinand Gregori for the premiere of *Gurre-Lieder* instead, he allowed her to perform the *Sprecher* subsequently in Leipzig.

The Voice Creates a Body

Zehme's theories reinforce the idea that Pierrot's unseen body is a key to the experience of the work, but in *Pierrot* it is up to the voice to create that body. At the premiere of *Pierrot*, she wore a baggy white pant-costume, which aligned with the image of Pierrot at the turn of the twentieth century.[32] According to reviewers, this obscured her body. Schoenberg explicitly opposed the use of gestures and pantomime.[33] In either case, the body of the performer is more or less negated, and the responsibility to project the drama and characters falls entirely on the voice.

In what follows, I connect *Pierrot lunaire* to scholarship on the power of the voice, specifically the *acousmêtre,* to convey information and to prompt an imagined

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[31] *Pierrot lunaire* premiered on October 16, 1912 in Berlin's Choralion-Saal.

[32] "There I see in front of me the podium narrowed down to a very small space by green protective walls; in the half-darkened hall, illuminated by colorful spotlight, Mrs. *Albertine Zehme* enters in the white garb of a half-male, half-female Pierrot." In original, "Da sehe ich vor mir das bis auf einen ganz kleinen Raum durch grüne Schutzwände verenge Podium; ih betritt im halb verdunkelten Saal, von buntem Rampenlicht beleuchtet, Frau *Albertine Zehme* im weißen Gewande eines halb männlichen, halb weiblichen Pierrots." Emphasis in original. From Otto Taubmann, *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, October 10, 1912, German reprinted in Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke*, *Abteilung VI*, Div. 1, Ser. B, vol. 24, 248. "At yesterday's first performance, only the reciter Ms. *Zehme* could be seen, standing in front of a black wall in a white Pierrot outfit. " In original, "Bei der gestrigen erste Aufführung war nur die Rezitatorin Frau *Zehme* zu sehen, die im weißen Pierrotkleide vor einer schwarzen Wand stand." Emphasis in original. From H.W.D., *Berliner Allgemeine Zeitung*, October 10, 1912, German reprinted in Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke*, *Abteilung VI*, Div. 1, Ser. B, vol. 24, 249. "Finally it squeezes through a crack in the wall. A Niobe in matinee and pantaloons." In original "Endlich zwängt's sich durch einen Wandspalt. Eine Niobe in Matinee und Hosenrock." G. St. [?], *Die Welt am Montag*, Berlin, October 14, 1912, German reprinted in Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke*, *Abteilung VI*, Div. 1, Ser. B, vol. 24, 252.

[33] Arnold Schoenberg, *Pierrot lunaire*, op. 21 (Los Angeles: Belmont Music Publishers, 1990), preface.

body in the mind of the listener. Drawing on this scholarship and history, I offer my own analysis of Pierrot's imagined body based on my experience of Stiedry-Wagner's performance. I do so to offer a template of future analyses rather than to establish who or what Pierrot actually is. Any combination of performer and listener will create a different body or bodies for the title character. I adapted these authors' strategies for questioning what information the voice holds. Drawing on Nina Eidsheim and Yvon Bonenfant, I consider the impact of the voice on the subjective experience of the audience and apply them during my assessment of the recordings. Jarman-Ivens's work sparks several questions relevant to timbral investigations of *Sprechstimme*: What does the voice sound like? What might the varied timbres in the *Sprecher*'s voice signify?

In a chapter entitled "Diamanda Galás: One Long Mad Scene," Freya Jarman-Ivens addresses the performance art of vocalist, pianist, and composer Diamanda Galás, whose versatile, often "monstrous" voice breaks gender and genre norms. Her (internal [e.g., singing multiphonics] and external [e.g., filters, pedals]) timbral manipulations span the gamut, from physical manipulations of the vocal tract, to live electronic manipulation of the amplified sounds.[34] Jarman-Ivens's examination of Galás's extreme vocals is relevant to the examination of *Sprechstimme*, which listeners often reduce to its ugliness from the earliest reviews.[35] She also dissects the layers of useful information for studying vocal timbres carried by recordings, which is foundational to my project. I adapt her approach in my analysis of Stiedry-Wagner's recording.

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[34] See Freya Jarman-Ivens, *Queer Voices: Technologies, Vocalities, and the Musical Flaw* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 135–141, for her explanation of internal and external technologies employed by Diamanda Galás.

[35] See, for example, Otto Taubmann's October 10, 1912 review for the *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, who describes his initial reaction to the vocal "shredded hysterical aberration (*Unnatur*)."

Key to Jarman-Ivens's argument is a connection between the voice and the body. Here, she builds on Roland Barthes's foundational article "The Grain of the Voice." Barthes's drew attention to the ways voice and vocality influence our musical experience.[36] With this idea, Barthes shifted the discourse on musical sound by suggesting that, instead of changing language to talk about listening, the sound object should be changed from abstract qualities like pitch and rhythm to something more immediate: sound and timbre. He rests his analysis on the basis of the power of voices to project a set of unique, bodily characteristics, rather than the beauty of traditional singing, a power that is beyond the scope of traditional analysis, especially in cases that lie outside of the norms of "good" singing:

> Listen to a Russian bass (a church bass—opera is a genre in which the voice has gone over in its entirety to dramatic expressivity, a voice with a grain which little signifies): something is there, manifest and stubborn (one hears only *that*), beyond (or before) the meaning of the words, their form (the litany), the melisma, and even the style of execution: something which is directly the cantor's body, brought to your ears in one and the same movement from deep down in the cavities, the muscles, the membranes, the cartilages, and from deep down in the Slavonic language, as though a single skin lines the inner flesh of the performer and the diction of the language.[37]

"Grain" refers to the part of timbre which links a voice to the body, the part that indicates a physical presence making sound. Barthes preferred to hear grain, that is, to hear a performer's breathing or mouth opening and closing, the scratchiness of a performer's throat, or the manipulation of phonemes and transitions between the phonemes by a

[36] Roland Barthes, "The Grain of the Voice," in *Image, Music, Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 179–89.
[37] Barthes, 1977, 183.

performer, or what we might call "vocality."[38] These are sounds that are normally ignored or criticized in vocal production because their audibility runs contrary to traditional singing, which was rooted in "pure, resonant, sweet tones." Critiques of classical singing invoke bodily descriptions to denote flaws in the voice, for example "chesty," "guttural," and "nasal."[39] Barthes, however, makes his evaluation "outside of any law, outplaying not only the law of culture, but equally that of anticulture, developing beyond the subject all the value hidden behind 'I like' or 'I don't like.'"[40]

Steven Connor takes Barthes's concept one step further, assessing not only how the body produces a voice, as is commonly accepted, but also, how the voice often produces a body.[41] For example, the voice often produces a body in the course of story-telling, impersonation, ventriloquism, or even when one imagines the person at the other end of a phone call. While the imagined body is related to the body of the vocalist, the voice does not fully expose or replicate the body producing it. Mladen Dolar further articulates an inherent gap between the voice and body. He writes,

> ...the voice never sounds like the person emitting it, there is always a gap, a "Verfremdung," a mismatch. There always seems to be ventriloquism at work, as if ventriloquism was the standard use of the voice that we overlook by mere habit (and overhear when the habit drops its guard a bit). The voice as an intruder is endowed with a spectral nature, something both intimate and external.[42]

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[38] Jarman-Ivens, 2011, 12.
[39] Grant Olwage, "The Class and Colour of Tone: An Essay on the Social History of Vocal Timbre," *Ethnomusicology Forum* 13, no. 2 (2004): 215.
[40] Barthes, 1977, 188.
[41] Steven Connor, 2001, 80.
[42] Mladen Dolar, "What's in a Voice?," in *Resonant Bodies, Voices, Memories*, eds. Anke Bangma, Deirdre M. Donoghue, Lina Issa, and Katarina Zdjelar (Berlin: Revolver Publishing, 2008), 203.

Following Dolar, the voice becomes a fluid, flexible, relatively blank screen on which the vocalist can project characters.

Dolar's concept of the voice as a blank screen is related to Michel Chion's concept of the *acousmêtre*, which comes out of Chion's "acousmatic presence," a sound without a source that cannot be seen, e.g., an offscreen radio in a film. The *acousmêtre* is an extension of this, Chion explains. "When an acousmatic presence is a voice, and especially when this voice has not been visualized—that is, when we cannot yet connect it to a face—we get a special being, a kind of talking and acting shadow to which we attach the name *acousmêtre*."[43] The *acousmêtre* relies on the audience to imagine the body. Although there is a body on stage in *Pierrot lunaire*, the voice is rendered an *acousmêtre* because that body is negated by the absence of a costume and pantomime. At the same time, the *acousmêtre* is more powerful than a voice with an obvious bodily source. It depends on its disembodiment for the ability to be everywhere, to see everything, to know everything, and to have complete power.[44] Its ubiquitous, panoptic, omniscient, omnipotent existence renders the *acousmêtre* enticing for the perceiver, in that it entices them:

> Being in the screen and not wandering the surface of the screen without entering it, the *acousmêtre* brings disequilibrium and tension. He invites the spectator to *go see*, and he can be *an invitation to the loss of the self, to desire and fascination*.[45]

The *Sprechstimme* has one foot in the scene, as the character Pierrot, and one foot out, as the observer and narrator. The voice both fits within the parameters of the *acousmêtre* and

[43] Chion, 21.
[44] Ibid., 24.
[45] Ibid.

invites the audience to "go see" Pierrot and imagine his body. I will return to the power of the *acousmêtre* in my discussion of the reception of the premiere. For the present analysis, I draw on Chion's observation that voices can evoke specific bodies in the mind of the listener.

Nina Eidsheim notes that the process through which listeners construct that imaginary body is culturally dependent. She reminds us that bodies and voices are often mismatched, and that the listener makes certain culturally-contingent assumptions about the body of the character based on the sound of the voice. "A person's vocal timbre cannot be entirely unmediated," she writes, "and the (many possible) meanings we derive from any given vocal timbre are not imminent. It is the space between the not-entirely-unmediated and the not-immanent—the performed articulation—and its impact on the physical body of the singer (whether this "body" is constructed through a computer application or belongs to a "live" singer).[46] Eidsheim complicates the *acousmêtre*, noting that "The premise of the acousmatic question is that the voice is stable and knowable," but "the reason we ask *Who is this?* when we listen to voices, is precisely because we cannot know the answer to that question."[47] She argues that, while listeners seek to identify a source, to know a lot about a vocalizer and possibly their identity, or to glean unmediated information (e.g., about health, mood, or emotional state) from the voice, this desired knowledge is impossible to gain because of "the voice's

[46] Nina Eidsheim, "Synthesizing Race: Towards an Analysis of the Performativity of Vocal Timbre," *TRANS* 13 (2009), https://www.sibetrans.com/trans/article/57/synthesizing-race-towards-an-analysis-of-the-performativity-of-vocal-timbre.
[47] Nina Eidsheim, *The Race of Sound: Listening, Timbre, and Vocality in African American Music (Refiguring American Music)* (Durham, London: Duke University Press, 2019), 2–3.

inability to be unique and yield practical answers."[48] Instead, the listener imagines a body that belongs to the *acousmêtre* based on enculturated ideas of race, gender, class, health, etc.—a range of signifiers that both composers and performers can draw upon to accomplish their desired response.[49]

While Eidsheim notes that such imagined bodies say more about the listener than the vocalist, both composers and performers can draw on these auditory signifiers of bodies to achieve their desired effect on the audience. The construction of the imagined body is thus a collaboration between these three individuals. Throughout, I link my observations with other well-known phenomena, both in music and in the history of *Pierrot*, to try to account for these assumptions. Still, they are only assumptions, and any construction of the imagined body is contingent upon the listener.

The *acousmêtre* is a familiar presence in Western art music, in which it serves different roles. In some cases it confirms the existence of an unseen physical body, as in the case of Samiel in Weber's *Der Freischütz* or John the Baptist long before he appears on stage in Strauss's *Salome*. In each case, the eerie sound of a voice without a body renders a supernatural figure whose physical embodiment is secondary to their power: Samiel, whose magic Kaspar needs for casting magical bullets, and the pre-messianic prophet who predicted Christ's coming. In the same stroke, the absence of a voice might also suggest the absence of a physical body, as in the Orpheus myth, where the absence of Eurydice's voice as she follows Orpheus out of the underworld causes him to doubt her presence.

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[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid., 30.

These points considered, *Pierrot lunaire* was written for a specific body (Zehme's), aspects of the character are disembodied, and must be recreated onstage through the voice. At the premiere, Zehme deflected attention away from her own body with a baggy costume, so that even though her body was visible, the listener could imagine any body they pleased. The non-descript body of the performer renders the voice acousmatic. Schoenberg understood the voice of the performer was more important than the specific body, as is apparent in his manuscript. The *Pierrot lunaire* manuscript only includes a time signature which shows how time should be counted in the music, but no clef that might indicate range.[50] Part of the reason for this is that Schoenberg wrote this *Sprechmelodie* for a specific vocalist. In later versions, he marks the score with a treble clef. However, this vocal part spans two and half octaves and is outside the comfortable vocal range for most vocalists, male or female. Schoenberg assigns the part to an ungendered "Rec" (abbreviation of "Recitation") in the autograph manuscript; in the published 1914 Universal Edition score, the title page indicates that it is "For a *Sprechstimme*."[51] While he maintains x-noteheads in the draft, Schoenberg later moves the x to the stem and returns the oval notehead to its proper place.

In terms of performance, the part has been recorded by actresses, as well as a range of classically-trained female singers including sopranos, mezzo sopranos, and altos. Curiously, no men have recorded this piece, despite the figure of Pierrot being presumably male. To my knowledge, Schoenberg never excluded the possibility that a

[50] See Autographe Erstniederschrift (Reproduktion) of *Pierrot lunaire - Dreimal sieben Gedichte aus Albert Girauds „Lieder des Pierrot Lunaire" (deutsch von Otto Erich Hartleben)*, available through the Arnold Schönberg Center.
[51] In original: "Für eine Sprechstimme." Arnold Schoenberg, *Dreimal sieben Gedichte aus Albert Girauds Pierrot lunaire*, (Vienna, Leipzig: Universal Edition, 1914), cover.

non-female vocalist might perform *Pierrot*. In fact, he may have considered the part gender neutral; in 1944, Schoenberg wrote to Felix Greissle that Eduard Steuermann thought baritone Mack Harrell should be able to learn the part, and implies that Harrell could perform both *Pierrot lunaire*, op. 21 and *Ode to Napoleon*, op. 41 on a recital in Chicago.[52] Musical characteristics support the idea that the role need not necessarily be performed by a woman, and that he thought Harrell's voice could handle both *Pierrot* and *Ode*. If one takes into account typical octave-transposition for male voices, the vocal part is within the capabilities of most mezzos and baritones, though the E-flat3/E-flat2 at the lower end might strain both. Sopranos and tenors would have further trouble with the low notes, but the strain contributes to the drama. But based on multiple takes during Schoenberg's 1940 recording of *Pierrot* with Erika Stiedry-Wagner, pitch accuracy was of secondary importance to other characteristics like tone colors.[53] If the body of the performer is not specific, it follows that something else is creating Pierrot's presence.

The multiplicity of identities and bodies *Pierrot*'s performer must evoke further obscures that performer's physical body. They are constantly shifting between perspectives and genders, leaving it up to the listener to reconstitute them. Even the character Pierrot himself contains multitudes, aside from the other bodies that appear throughout *Pierrot lunaire*. Pierrot's historical multiple identities originate in the *Commedia dell'arte*. Craig Wright notes the transformation of the *Commedia dell'arte*

[52] Schoenberg to Greissle, August 21, 1944 "Steuermann thinks Mr. M[a]c[k] Harroll [sic] should be able to learn Pierrot in time."
[53] See Avior Byron and Matthias Pasdzierny, "Sprechstimme Reconsidered Once Again: '... though Mrs. Stiedry is never in pitch,'" *Music Theory Online* 13, no. 2 (June 2007), and Avior Byron, "The Test Pressings of Schoenberg Conducting *Pierrot lunaire*: Sprechstimme Reconsidered," *Music Theory Online* 12, no. 1 (2006).

tradition's sad Italian clown into an "alienated modern artist."[54] In *Sad Clowns and Pale Pierrots*, Louisa E. Jones notes that "Pierrot is no longer the joking rascal of funambulist tradition; he has become a poet, an artist."[55] In the context of French painter Antoine Watteau's Pierrot (1718/1719), Julie-Ann Plax considers the transformation of the Pierrot figure from a sad clown, "whose costume masks an inner suffering" to Verlaine's 1884 poem "Pierrot," in which "the duped innocent becomes something dreadful: 'His eyes are holes of phosphorescent light, / And the flour makes more awful / The bloodless face with the pointed nose of one about to die.'"[56] She notes that Baudelaire had preceded him in fusing Pierrot with macabre imagery in *Les fleurs du mal* (published 1857, with translations by Stefan George). "Instead of finding a haven of happiness, love, and beauty, the pilgrim in Baudelaire's voyage finds a nightmare of pain, death, and decay."[57] In the 1892 Hartleben translation of the Giraud text set by Schoenberg, the protagonist appears as a poet (1, 6, 14), lover (2), flaneur (3), consumptive/suffering artist (5), criminal grave-robber (10), executed (13), torturing Cassander (16), scoundrel at the gallows (12), as well as a priest (11), possibly a painter, with a spot on his smock (18), musician (19), and traveler (20).[58]

In *Pierrot lunaire*, the identity of the *acousmêtre* shifts in every movement, taking on these numerous identities. Through these shifting perspectives, the gender of Pierrot's

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[54] Craig Wright, *Listening to Western Music,* 7th ed. (Boston: Schirmer, 2014), 344.
[55] Louisa E. Jones, *Sad Clowns and Pale Pierrots, Literature and the Popular Comic Arts in 19th-Century France* (Lexington: The French Forum, 1984), 195.
[56] Julie Ann Plax, *Watteau and the Cultural Politics of Eighteenth-Century France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 36.
[57] Alban Berg's "Der Wein" (1929) is a concert aria setting Stefan George's translation of three poems from "Le Vin," which Schoenberg owned a score of.
[58] Schoenberg received the 56 Hartleben poems hand copied in an unknown hand on the front and back of 35 pages of letter paper which are now housed at the Arnold Schoenberg Center, MS21: 710–727.

body is repeatedly called into question. Anyone familiar with the title presumes the clown to be masculine. Yet in the premiere, Zehme's costume caused her to appear gender-less, or masculine, until the end of the second measure, when the vocalist begins to perform. Once the voice sounds, her voice outs the performer as female. Contemporary critics recognized this ambiguity. On October 10, 1912 Otto Taubmann wrote in the *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, "Mrs. Zehme, in the white garb of a half masculine, half feminine Pierrot. Behind the barriers, it begins to sound...an uninterrupted succession of increasingly confusing, initially repulsive and insulting to any artistic sensibility, but which, the longer one listens, has the exhilarating effect of a caricature."[59]

The female body on stage does not evoke a male character until the third melodrama, where Pierrot is introduced, since the first two melodramas are merely narrative, while in the third, Pierrot speaks in the first person. Even the title of the work, *Three Times Seven Poems from Albert Giraud's Pierrot Lunaire*, obscures the context, despite the now colloquial title *Pierrot lunaire*. Melodramas 1 ("Mondestrunken") and 2 ("Colombine") are narratives describing the moonbeams and someone's (at this point the listener does not know whose) desire for Colombine. Only in the third vignette is Pierrot the Dandy unveiled as a male figure. Pierrot's body originally appeared to be male or gender neutral due to the baggy costuming. From the first vocalization, a female voice is heard, albeit misbehaving. And when listening closely one realizes that in the text, a

[59] "Ich lasse mir die Vorgänge des Abends nochmals durch den Sinn gehen. Da sehe ich vor mir das bis auf einen ganz kleinen Raum durch grüne Schutzwände verengte Podium; ihn betritt im halb verdunkelten Fall, von buntem Rampenlicht beleuchtet, Frau Albertine Zahme im weißen Gewande eines halb männlichen, halb weiblichen Pierrots. Hinter den Schutzwänden beginnt es zu tönen...eine ununterbrochene Folge wirrerer, anfangs abstößt und jedes künstlerische Gefühl beleidigt, je länger man aber zuhört als Karikatur und damit unmittelbar erheiternd wirkt...." Otto Taubmann, *Berliner Börsen-Courier,* October 10, 1912, in Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke, Abteilung VI,* Div. 1, Ser. B, vol. 24, 248.

genderless narrator is speaking throughout most of the work. Assigning masculinity to the Pierrot body based on the title, the figure's history, or the presumed narrative flattens a character with many dimensions.

There are also shifts in narrative perspective—between first ("I"), second ("you") and third ("he/she/it") person—and shifts in instrumentation. For the sake of the analysis I have chosen to focus on the first person, that is, on instances in which Pierrot speaks as himself using personal pronouns ("MEIN Sehnen," "MEINER Verse," and "MEIN Sinne...macht MICH froh....berauschest wieder MICH...MEINEM Unmut geb ICH preis; aus MEINEM sonnumrahmten Fenster beschau ICH frei,") in numbers 2 ("Colombine"), 6 ("Madonna"), and 21 ("O alter Duft") respectively. The use of the first person implies personal experience rather than mere observation. It conveys a more credible account of the character's subjectivity than a narrator. As every performer will create different bodies based on their own interpretation and vocal color, I analyze Stiedry-Wagner's recording of the piece as an example of the possibilities within the piece.

One way to describe Pierrot's body from the voice lies in speech pathology. In a clinical setting, the sound of the voice is used to diagnose physical disorders alongside other advanced analytical tools (e.g., laryngeal electromyography [computer analysis of vocal cord vibrations] or visual tools like laryngoscopy, stroboscopy, MRI, X-ray). The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association's CAPE-V Scale (Consensus Auditory-Perceptual Evaluation of Voice) assesses vocal roughness, breathiness, strain, pitch, loudness, and resonance. The goals of analyzing audio-perceptual characteristics of the voice in this way are primarily to determine the severity of a physiological problem

and secondarily to contribute to "hypotheses regarding the anatomic and physiological bases of voice problems and to evaluate the need for additional testing," but I use it for descriptive purposes only.[60] Using the CAPE-V Scale parameters, I analyzed the recording of Schoenberg conducting Erika Stiedry-Wagner in September 1940 for deviations in severity, roughness, breathiness, strain, pitch, and loudness. These parameters are defined as follows:

[60] American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, "Consensus Auditory-Perceptual Evaluation of Voice (CAPE-V) Purpose and Application," asha.org, https://www.asha.org/siteassets/uploadedFiles/ASHA/SIG/03/CAPE-V-Procedures-and-Form.pdf.

Table 4.2 Definitions of Vocal Attributes in the CAPE-V Scale

Definitions of Vocal Attributes in the CAPE-V Scale	
OVERALL SEVERITY	Global, integrated impression of voice deviance.
Roughness	Perceived irregularity in voicing source.
Breathiness	Audible air escape in the voice.
Strain	Perception of excessive vocal effort (hyperfunction).
Pitch	Perceptual correlate of fundamental frequency. This scale rates whether the individual's pitch deviates from normal for that person's gender, age, and referent culture. The direction of deviance (high or low) should be indicated.
Loudness	Perceptual correlate of sound intensity. This scale indicates whether the individual's loudness deviates from normal for that person's gender, age, and referent culture. The direction of deviance (soft or loud) should be indicated.

The audience hears Pierrot speak for the first time in "Colombine," although he will not "appear" onstage until the following melodrama, "Der Dandy," in which his body is described in the text for the first time. Flute, clarinet, violin, and piano accompany the voice in "Colombine." This is Pierrot, the lover; the text describes moon blossoms which Pierrot would like to pluck, pull the petals from, and scatter into Colombine's hair. Throughout the track, the performer is encouraged to use the high range. The overly gentle, high-pitched voice could be read as Stiedry-Wagner's vocal rendition of the much younger, adolescent Pierrot reminiscent of pants roles like Mozart's Cherubino in *Le Nozze de Figaro*. Vocal deviations (to use language from CAPE-V Scale) occur in vocal breathiness and pitch. Stiedry-Wagner's breathiness increases towards the middle of the track and is especially noticeable at 41 seconds "weißen Wunderrosen," suggesting Pierrot's faintness, perhaps due to physical weakness or due to his arousal as he begins to fantasize about dropping the white moon-blossom petals on Colombine's hair.

Pierrot speaks next in "Madonna," the sixth melodrama, accompanied by flute, B-flat bass clarinet, cello, and piano. This is Pierrot the poet, as implied by the text "Climb, oh mother of all pain, onto the altar of my verses."[61] This is also one of the most viscerally painful melodramas, in which the Pierrot voice directly addresses the Madonna, "the mother of all pain." Pierrot seems to speak at, rather than to her; he does not expect a response. He describes, in the second person, a horrific scene of the Madonna's physical and emotional maternal suffering as she holds her dead son in her

[61] "Steig, o Mutter aller Schmerzen, auf den Altar meiner Verse!" The poet figure was first mentioned by the narrator in melodrama 1; he returns in melodrama 14, "Die Kreuze," when the narrator observes that verses are the crosses on which poets are crucified.

torn-off hands. Her meager breasts bleed, cut by an angry sword; the "eternally fresh wounds resemble eyes red and open." As he observes the grim scene, Pierrot's voice exposes the rawness of his emotions.

Stiedry-Wagner's voice begins bitterly, severely, with a dry, tight sound, especially compared with the effervescent ending of "Valse de Chopin" immediately before it, and intensifies in harshness throughout the movement. While Stiedry-Wagner's voice strains and her pitch skips all over her range, there is little roughness or breathiness. This is the first truly nightmarish vignette, in which Pierrot witnesses the Madonna in agony. The strained, pain-filled voice underscores Pierrot's reaction as he witnesses the mother's anguish described in the text. The descending legato vocal lines from the beginning to m. 12 seem to sigh, and then weep, shuddering on the elongated syllables (e.g., "Steig" [climb], "Mutter" [mother] and "Schmerzen" [pain]). The weeping turns to aggression at m. 12, where the vocalist's strain increases dramatically, and her jaw seems to tense. The volume in the score increases from *ppp* (which Stiedry-Wagner never quite achieves in this melodrama) to *mf*, which results in a harsher timbre, as she struggles to balance her volume with the ensemble. This indicates an extremely tense physical state. One can almost see Pierrot's clenched jaw and hunched shoulders. Such a body would produce a harsher sounding voice. At m. 16, Schoenberg marks "ziemlich voll" (quite full) which aligns with the most tormented line of the melodrama: "in the torn off hands, you hold your son's corpse."[62] The suddenly full timbre forces the vocalist to engage her abdomen, which mirrors the convulsions of Pierrot's body caught in the grips of disgust.

[62] In original, "In den abgezehrten Händen hältst du deines Sohnes Leiche."

The vocal line continues to get louder, with higher notes bursting out of the now disjunct vocal line twice in m. 18 and again in m. 21, as if his gorge were continuing to rise. The notation cues this by a leap into the upper range in both cases. The crescendo to m. 19 breaks down at the *pesante* marking, as if Pierrot were collapsing from exhaustion. Stiedry-Wagner's vocal tension signals the emotional strain Pierrot experiences in observing this scene.

The final time Pierrot speaks, in no. 21 "O Alter Duft," has the most timbrally diverse instrumentation of the melodramas. Three players switch instruments in the middle of the piece: flute switches to piccolo, A clarinet switches to B-flat bass clarinet, violin switches to viola, while cello and piano remain consistent throughout. Additionally, the viola and cello are each played with and without mutes. However, the voice has a relatively uniform profile with one lone verbal instruction "sehr innig" (heartfelt, intimately). In Stiedry-Wagner's performance, the CAPE-V Scale parameters remain at "mild" (lowest) deviation, her vocalizations staying consistent throughout the melodrama, with the exception of the volume increase at the "sehr innig" indication.

In this movement, Pierrot seems to have come back to himself. There is by far the most use of self-referential personal pronouns in this movement, which had been absent since "Madonna." When he finally reaches home in number 21, Pierrot speaks his reflections on his mischief as he is overcome by the scent of old memories and gratitude for his discomfort. The lack of vocal deviations by the vocalist and the consistency of tone which arise both from Schoenberg's lack of verbal instructions and smooth melodic contour create a sense of arrival. The uneasiness which builds towards Part II settles as

Pierrot returns, matured, lower with a steady pace, to a first person point of view. Pierrot's body at rest, as his adolescent vocal breaks and erratic speech patterns settle into relatively even eighth and quarter notes.

The three previous examples demonstrate how the voice accentuates a unique aspect of the bodies within the individual movements. The unusually high voice in "Colombine" cues the listener to Pierrot's youth. In "Madonna" the subject's pain is transmitted to the listener by the *Sprecher*'s choice of vocal timbres. In the score, Schoenberg asks the performer to move across registers in even eighth notes. In Stiedry-Wagner's recording, the thinness of the upper range makes it sound particularly vulnerable. Schoenberg occasionally interjects longer notes which act as resting points at the beginnings and endings of phrases. Those resting points interrupt the steady movement forward and convey a sense of struggle. Finally, "O alter Duft" paints a sonic picture of Pierrot's arrival at a new stage of life, where he is still tempted by his curiosity, but is much more settled and predictable.

The Body and the Listener (Pierrot and the Audience)

Along with theorizing the connection between the voice and the performer's body, Barthes also posited that voice could serve to connect the body of the performer with the body of the listener. Barthes argues that "If I perceive the 'grain'…I am determined to listen to *my relation* with the body of the man or woman singing…".[63] For Barthes, both

[63] Barthes, 188, cited in Meizel, "A Powerful Voice," 269 (Meizel's emphasis).

producing and hearing a voice is a deeply embodied and subjective phenomenon.

Similarly, Steven Connor writes:

> My voice comes from me first of all in a bodily sense. It is produced by means of my vocal apparatus–breath, larynx, teeth, tongue, palate, and lips. It is the voice I hear resonating in my head, amplified and modified by the bones of my skull, at the same time as I see and hear its effects upon the world...If my voice is one of a collection of identifying attributes, like the colour of my eyes, hair, and complexion, my gait, physique, and fingerprints, it is different from such attributes in that it does not merely belong or attach to me. What a voice, any voice, always says, no matter what the particulars local import may be of the words it emits, is this: this, here, this voice, is not merely a voice, a particular aggregation of tones and timbres; it is voice, or voicing itself. Listen, says a voice: some being is giving voice.[64]

He codifies this idea in his concept of the "vocalic body," which leaves the body of the vocalist, travels through space and time to the listener, vibrating their eardrums.[65]

> The principle of the vocalic body is simple. Voices are produced by bodies, but can also themselves produce bodies. The vocalic body is the idea—which can take the form of dream, fantasy, ideal, theological doctrine or hallucination – of a surrogate or secondary body, a projection of a new way of having or being a body, formed and sustained out of the autonomous operations of the voice.[66]

This "new way of having or being a body" is incorporeal but nevertheless reaches out to touch the listener. The vocalic body relates to the concept of the *acousmêtre* in that it is a manifestation of the *acousmêtre*'s power. The character of Pierrot is a "dream," "fantasy,"

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[64] Steven Connor, *Dumbstruck: A Cultural History of Ventriloquism* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 3–4.
[65] Connor, *Dumbstruck*, 13–14, and Connor, "Violence, Ventriloquism and the Vocalic Body," in *Psychoanalysis and Performance*, eds. Patrick Campbell and Adrian Kear (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 80–83.
[66] Connor, "Violence, Ventriloquism and the Vocalic Body," 80.

"ideal," or "hallucination" like the ones Connor mentions. Connor continues, "The power of the voice derives from its capacity to charge, to vivify, to relay and amplify energy."[67] Since Pierrot exists solely as sound, he is purely energy, transduced as sound waves and other sensory experiences.

What, then, is the relationship between Pierrot's body and the listener's body? The listener's impression of it comes from a combination of semantic descriptions in the text (e.g., in "Der Dandy": "Pierrot, with a waxy face" ["Pierrot mit wächsernem Antlitz"]) and the vocalist's execution of Pierrot's viewpoints and emotion, both of which must be vocalized to "exist" for the audience, who cannot see the score. The body of the character Pierrot and of the listener are intricately linked. The vocalic body that constitutes Pierrot reaches out from the vocalist to the listener. The listener receives and hears these vibrations in real time, responding to the sounds almost as they occur.

Just as voices being issued differ from performer to performer and from day to day, so do the reactions which result in the listener. Different bodies have different physical reactions to the music. Different states of mind or listener perspectives can further influence what they hear. This is apparent from the reviews of the premiere. Many reviewers commented on the unusual timbres and sounds in the performance. Several themes emerge in the reviews. Some listeners experienced a bodily response to the music, and reacted negatively. Others had a less visceral reaction, but still felt the experience unpleasant. Still others applauded the innovations.

[67] Ibid., 82.

As described in the introduction, Schoenberg's ideal listener is attuned to the "intangible" beauty that relies on expression rather than aesthetic pleasure, and is "capable of creating it anew" with every performance, without reference to "strict rules or forms."[68] Schoenberg's ideal listener is expected to be open to unfamiliar sounds and the discomfort that results from direct expression. The audience members at the premiere fell into this category of "ideal listeners" to varying degrees. The level of comfort and discomfort, especially in terms of bodily reactions to *Pierrot*, were evident from the time of the premiere and are documented in the reviews. Merely being uncomfortable does not qualify the reviewer as an ideal listener, rather, it is their openness to and acceptance of that discomfort.

In cases where the listener experienced a bodily reaction, the voice is evidence that the body onstage is somehow "wrong:" ill, animalistic, genderless. Those who failed to appreciate the vocal virtuosity Schoenberg demands dismissed the work as something ugly, at worst. They reacted viscerally and imply that you might become affected as a listener. One such case appears between the reviews of *Das kleine Journal* and the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*. The first reviewer, possibly Walter Dams, recalls an encounter with a fellow audience member:

> An evening in the Choralion Hall can be registered as completely superfluous. […]. Someone asked me, "Is this a madhouse?" "No," I instructed him, "look around the room, study the physiognomies and you will know where you are." The stranger smiled understandingly. After a while (the ear-splitting tuning and practicing of the instruments was never-ending, and a lady recited a poem, i.e., she "howled" like a dog caught by the tail) — after a while, therefore, the stranger said in a friendly manner: "I

[68] Arnold Schoenberg, *Theory of Harmony*, trans. Roy E. Carter (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1978), 325. For a full discussion of this quotation, see Chapter 1, 1–3.

> find it very cozy here. Tell me, is there no bar here? I'd like some bitters." — "Are you feeling sick?" I asked mockingly. And then I explained to the vividly affected person that there couldn't be a bar. This seemed incomprehensible to him. "Serious pursuit of art?" he muttered questioningly to himself. I felt sorry for him, the bitterly disappointed stranger. And while the lady was still "howling" and the musicians were still tuning and practicing, I led him to Aschinger. Here we both got better. That's why I called this concert superfluous. Because I think everything that makes a healthy person sick is unnecessary and superfluous. Other people might say: To cause nausea also means business. Well, that's fine with me, I'm not related to any of them.[69]

He remarks on the acoustic nature of the performance, calling it "ear-splitting" and referring to the "tuning" of the instruments and the animalistic "howling" of the vocalist, but soon turns to the physical sensation it creates. The reviewer muses that the nausea his counterpart experiences results from the music and that anything that makes a healthy person sick is unnecessary. He interprets the bodily response as being indicative of excess. Both he and his companion seek to anesthetize their experience with alcohol. For the reviewer, this surging physical response elicited by Pierrot's vocalic body indicates excess in the art and becomes a negative point of critique for him. This

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[69] In Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke, Abteilung VI,* Div. 1, Ser. B, vol. 24, 252. [Walter Dams?], *Das Kleine Journal*, Berlin, October 14, 1912, "Als vollkommen überflüssig ist ein Abend im Choralion-Saal zu buchen. […]. Jemand fragte mich: "Sind wir hier denn im Irrenhaus?" "Nein", belehrte ich ihn, "sehen Sie sich gefälligst im Saal um, studieren Sie die Physiognomien und Sie werden wissen, wo Sie sich befinden" Der Unbekannte lächelte verständnissinnig. Nach einer Weile (das ohreneinigende Stimmen und Üben der Instrumente wollte kein Ende nehmen und eine Dame trug Gedicht vor, d. h. sie "jaulte" wie ein Hund, dem man den Schwanz eingeklemmt hat) — nach einer Weile also sagte der Unbekannte freundlich: "ich finde das sehr gemütlich hier. Sagen Sie mal, gibt es denn hier keinen Ausschank? Ich möchte gern einen Magenbittern verlöten." — "Wird Ihnen schlecht?" doch keine Schapsausschank [sic] geben könnte. Dies schien ihm unbegreiflich. "Ernste Kunstausübung"? murmelte er fortwährend fragend vor sich. Er tat mir leid, der bitter enttäuschte Unbekannte. Und während die Dame immer noch "jaulte" und die Musiker immer noch stimmten und übten, führte ich ihn zu Aschinger. Hier wurde uns beiden besser. Deshalb nannte ich dieses Konzert überflüssig. Denn ich halte alles, wovon einem gesunden Menschen übel wird, für unnötig und überflüssig. Andere Leute sagen vielleicht: Übelkeit erregen haißt auch ä Geschäft. Nun, von mir aus gerne; ich bin ja mit keinem von ihnen verwandt."

reviewer, possibly Walter Dams, might be an ideal listener, in that he is made uncomfortable by the performance however, he does not latch on to the expressiveness.

Similarly, J. C. Lusztig of the *Berliner Morgenpost* considered the work abhorrent, citing the unnatural musical sensation generated by the work and the lack of aesthetic beauty and technical complexity.

> Many of those present probably considered this event to be a bad joke after the external impression it made. But that is not the way to look at it. Rather, it is a bitterly serious symptom of how deeply the fashionable sickness of unnatural musical sensation has begun to nest in certainly not unintelligent people. [...] But his music is not only torturous, but also excessively boring. [...] And then it comes into consideration that it is actually very, very strange to want to work exclusively through the means of the ugly, the repulsive. Up on the podium, Mrs. Albertine Zehme struggled to speak the terrible verses to the screeching instruments set up behind a pitch-black Spanish wall. In the spirit of the composer, she performed her painful task well.[70]

Pierrot's vocalic body inflicts pain on Lusztig, but not in the way he prefers. He is bored by the sensations the music causes, unlike the previous critic, who needed to medicate his agony. Alongside his discomfort, Lusztig muses about the strangeness of using the ugly and repulsive as a medium for expression. He cannot be an ideal listener, since he gets caught up in Zehme's struggles rather than his own, and rejects the impact

[70] In Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke, Abteilung VI,* Div. 1, Ser. B, vol. 24, 249. J. C. Lusztig, *Berliner Morgenpost*, October 10, 1912, "Viele von den Anwesenden haben wohl diese Veranstaltung nach dem äußeren Eindruck, den sie ausübte, als schlimmen Scherz empfunden. So aber ist die Sache denn doch nicht zu betrachten. Sie ist vielmehr ein bitter ernstes Symptom dafür, wie tief die Modekrankeit des unnatürlichen musikalischen Empfindens sich in gewiß nicht unintelligenten Menschen eingenistet hat. [...] Seine Musik ist jedoch nicht nur qualvoll, sondern auch maßlos langweilig. [...] Und dann kommt noch in Betracht, daß es eigentlich sehr, sehr sonderbar ist, ausschließlich durch die Mittel des Häßlichen, des Abstoßenden wirken zu wollen. [...] Oben auf dem Podium mühte sich Frau Albertine Zehme, die fürchterlichen Verse zu den hinter einer pechrabenschwarzen spanischen Wand aufgestellten kreischenden Instrumenten zu sprechen. Im Sinne des Komponisten hat sie ihre peinvolle Aufgabe gut gelöst."

of Pierrot's vocalic body. Even for listeners who do not recount their physical reactions to the performance, the voice was central to their experience of the work.

Max Marshalk of the *Vossische Zeitung* responded directly to Zehme's performance style and choices:

> Albertine Zehme, [...] wearing a Colombine costume [...] was neither technically nor mentally up to the task of reciting the poem by Giraud-Hartleben. She severely endangered the effect because her performance, of which one did not know, or which was a failed speech or a failed singing, almost always seemed parodistic. The music itself, [...] was excellently interpreted by the gentlemen [instrumentalists][...]. I can imagine that an ingenious reciter with the new melodrama—shall I repeat what I have often said about the legitimacy of this art form?—could be successful; only it would have to be possible to make the music sound quieter, more shadowy.[71]

He considers her technically and emotionally unfit for the role and argues that her inadequacy strongly threatens the effect of the piece. For him, the *Sprechstimme* had a parodistic effect—he was unclear if she was bad at speaking or singing—but he maintains that the male musicians did a fine job. The piece *could* be a success given the right, presumably male, reciter with quieter, more shadowy music. Marschalk's comments suggest that he was overwhelmed by Zehme's timbral range and expression, which he wanted to be more hushed. His remark also indicates a degree of, albeit glib, frustration at the inability to place her technique in either speaking or singing, which

[71] In Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke, Abteilung VI,* Div. 1, Ser. B, vol. 24, 250. Max Marschalk, *Vossische Zeitung,* Berlin, October 11, 1912, "Albertine Zehme, [...] im Colombinen-Kostüm [...] zeigte sich der Aufgabe, die Gedicht von Giraud-Hartleben zu rezitieren, weder technisch noch geistig gewachsen. Sie gefährdete sehr stark die Wirkung, weil ihr Vortrag, von dem man nicht wußte, oder er eine mißlungenes Sprechen oder ein mißlungenes Singen darstellte, fast durchweg parodistisch wirkte. Die Musik selbst, [...] wurde von den Herren [...] ausgezeichnet interpretiert. Ich kann mir denken, daß ein genialer Rezitator mit dem neuen Melodrama—soll ich über die Berechtigung dieser Kunstform oft gesagtes wiederholen?—Erfolge haben könnte; nur müßte es möglich sein, die Musik leiser, schattenhafter erklingen zu lassen."

would allow him to evaluate the performance based on more familiar criteria. Marschalk gets too overwhelmed by the unfamiliarity of the piece to feel anything other than frustration, so he does not fit the profile of Schoenberg's ideal listener either.

Some listeners who liked the work liked it because of the technical intricacy of the timbre from the very beginning. That is, listeners at the turn of the century recognized the virtuosity of Schoenberg's vocal part, and at least to some degree, the meaning implied by the uncanniness of Pierrot's voice. Paul Ehrlich, responded with enthusiasm and amusement:

> Choralion Hall. Yesterday (Wednesday) we had great fun, we lucky contemporaries, who were allowed to enjoy the "Three Times Seven Poems" from Albert Giraud's "Pierrot Lunaire" (in which the Germanization of O. E. Hartleben) with the music of Arnold Schönberg. An unforgettable evening! How Mrs. Dr. Albertine Zehme in the Pierrot costume interpreted these poems of the moonstruck fool with the array of her highest and deepest voice recited all the many lyrical oddities of the "horse doctor of the soul," the "snowman of lyricism," the "skull drill," the "knitting needles," the "plaster stain" and how she recited the truly magnificent verses: "With grotesque giant bow." One has to have seen and heard it.[72]

Ehrlich's review recalls an unforgettably whimsical evening. Zehme's expansive use of her vocal range to strategically execute the "lyrical oddities" in the text fascinates him. Indeed, Ehrlich considers both seeing and hearing important to the performance,

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[72] In Schönberg, *Sämtliche Werke, Abteilung VI,* Div. 1, Ser. B, vol. 24, 249. Paul Ehrlich, *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, October 10, 1912, (the same text was also published in *Der Tag*, Berlin, October 10, 1912), "Choralionsaal. Einen köstlichen Spaß haben wir gestern (Mittwoch) erlebt, wir glücklichen Zeitgenossen, die wir die „Dreimal sieben Gedichte" aus Albert Girauds [sic!] „Pierrot Lunaire" (in der der Verdeutschung von O. E. Hartleben) mit der Musik Arnold Schönbergs genießen durften. Ein unvergeßlicher Abend! Wie Frau Dr. Albertine Zehme im Pierrotkostüm diese Poesien des mondsüchtigen Narren mit dem Aufgebote ihrer höchsten und tiefsten Stimme rezitierte, wie sie all die vielen textlichen Merkwürdigkeiten vom „Roßarzt der Seele", dem „Schneemann der Lyrik", dem „Schädelbohrer", den „Stricknadeln", dem Gipsfleck" und wie sie die wahrhaft herrlichen Verse: „Mit groteskem Riesenbogen....[...]." Das muß man gesehen und gehört haben."

indicating that for him the visual embodiment, the spectacle of *Sprechstimme* was as thrilling as the sound. The nuttiness and range of expression that Ehrlich observes is precisely what Schoenberg was musing about as he wrote the conclusion to *Harmonielehre*. Of the reviewers I have presented, Ehrlich is the closest to Schoenberg's ideal listener. He was open to being uncomfortable and attentive to expression.

Conclusion

The evidence I presented in this chapter clearly demonstrates that the voice was important to both Schoenberg's and Zehme's ideas of the characters in *Pierrot Lunaire*, prior to and during the inception of *Pierrot*. The documentation of their innovative individual thinking lays the groundwork for their collaboration on the novel uses of timbre in this work, especially given the fact that the work is recited and not enacted, and that the expressiveness and characterization in the piece comes entirely through its sound, especially the voice. New conceptions of vocality clarify their thinking, providing a framework that elaborates their ideas about how voices can create and project all of the various bodies and expressions required for a successful performance of *Pierrot*. The reception of the work indicates that Schoenberg and Zehme were (more or less) successful; even critics who did not enjoy the piece were affected by Zehme's voice, though some were more aligned with Schoenberg's concept of the ideal listener than others. Examining Schoenberg's and Zehme's ideas about voice leading up to and during their collaboration is critical to grasping the expression of *Pierrot* and helps to explain the

divergence between rigid realization of score and the extraordinarily colorful realizations that took place in early performances.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

In 1911, Schoenberg wrote,

> If it is now possible to let formations (which we call melodies) take shape from tone colors (which differ according to pitch), [from] successions whose interrelationship calls forth an impression which is similar to thought, then it must also be possible to fashion successions from the tone colors of other dimensions, from what we simply call tone color, whose internal connections operate with a type of logic entirely equivalent to the logic which suffices for us with the melody of pitches.
>
> That seems like a fantasy of the future, and it probably is. But one that I firmly believe will come true.[1]

In this dissertation I have tried to explore how this thinking applies to Schoenberg's uses of vocal tone color. He thought of timbre and melody as linked and *Sprechstimme* draws on that link. I explored the pleasures of the senses, mind, and soul which Schoenberg set about expressing with *Sprechstimme*. Further, I demonstrated the utility of the *Sprechstimme* as a structural and dramatic device. Finally, I drew attention to vocal timbre as a central and critical component of *Gurre-Lieder* and *Pierrot lunaire*, which deserves greater attention and closer scrutiny.

This study raises the possibility of timbre as an analytical tool, which accounts not only for the vocal sounds, but their function as part of a larger compositional system of

[1] "Ist es nun möglich, aus Klangfarben, die sich der Höhe nach unterscheiden, Gebilde entstehen zu lassen, die wir Melodien nennen, Folgen, deren Zusammenhang eine gedankenähnliche Wirkung hervorruft, dann muß es auch möglich sein, aus den Klangfarben der andere Dimension, aus dem was wir schlechtweg Klangfarbe nennen, solche Folgen herzustellen, deren Beziehung untereinander mit einer Art Logik wirkt, ganz äquivalent jener Logik, die uns bei der Melodie der Klanghöhen genügt. Das scheint eine Zukunftsphantasie und ist es wahrscheinlich auch. Aber eine, von der ich fest glaube, daß sie sich verwirklichen wird." Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre*, 507.

pitch, melody, harmony, rhythm, meter, and form. Approaching voice in this way uncovers new aspects of a work which has fascinated scholars since its inception, and about which a great deal of research has already been generated.

At the core of this dissertation, I unpacked the functions of *Sprechstimme*, which are explicitly non-harmonic, and takes vocal timbre and sonorities as the subject of analysis, rather than pitch, harmony, or form as has been previously done. In Chapter Two, I looked at Schoenberg's point of departure with *Sprechstimme*, links his early use of *Sprechstimme* with ideas about melody which were contemporary to that time, and traces his innovations from the very first use. This departure sets the precedent for Schoenberg's extraordinary uses of voice to cue the audience to the unusual nature of literary personas. The voice serves to both heighten the drama and delineate the structure of *Gurre-Lieder*. In Chapter Three, I analyzed the structural applications of *Sprechstimme* in further detail and looked especially at vocal tone color's capacity for creating coherence. In *Pierrot*, the authority of the score clearly emerges as secondary to the expression. In Chapter Four, I deepened the investigation of voice as a subject of analysis further still, looking especially at the *Sprechstimme*'s expressive capacity. I addressed Schoenberg and Albertine Zehme's bodily experience of the work, looks at how vocal sonority is used to convey the Pierrot figure, and illustrates how the voice connects the listener's body with the performer.

I have showed some of the ways in which Schoenberg's *Sprechstimmen* function in the service of structure, expression, and drama in this dissertation. I have shown that vocal timbre and effect is critical for expressing human experiences and emotions: fear, uncertainty, love, loss, and how Schoenberg simultaneously uses that expressive element

to create structural cohesion. This dissertation also made clear the central roles of both performers and the live, embodied, fleeting experiences of their performances for realizing the full potential of *Sprechstimme*.

Still, there is much work left to be done, especially in terms of the relationship between the performer and the score. My study of Schoenberg's uses of the voice demonstrates how he reconfigured the voice as a tool for direct expression of a wide range of human experience; as a tool whose purpose supersedes antiquated notions of beauty, but rather strives to reach the sublime. The unnotatable-ness of the *Sprechstimme* that repeatedly challenged Schoenberg throughout his career is directly related to the ephemeral nature of beauty. A direction for further research might be to explore how Schoenberg's changing notations for *Sprechstimme* reflect his evolving ideas of the voice. Preliminary investigation into Schoenberg's other works for solo *Sprechstimme* (*Ode to Napoleon* and *A Survivor from Warsaw*) indicates that the *Sprechstimme* functions I have uncovered in the early stages of Schoenberg's career are sustained. Further study of both these works, and the remaining seven *Sprechstimme* pieces, with a focus on the voice are merited. This study also opens unexplored performance possibilities for vocalists. Considering *Sprechstimme* as a flexible vocal style which depends on a great variety of vocal timbres and effects unlocks a new layer of potential in Schoenberg's evolving performance instructions and *Sprechstimme* notations. New realizations might include more male-identifying vocalists, an increase in older performers whose voices have changed, or performers who are more comfortable with the rhythms than the pitch of these scores.

Further investigation might also include a gender studies approach to the impact of *Sprechstimme*. Slippages between persona, gender, and time/place abound in *Pierrot.* The vocal part in particular makes it difficult to place the Pierrot figure squarely within a single gender or genders. While the text of *Pierrot* is often misunderstood as the voice of a single first-person figure, attention to the voices clearly shows changes in perspective across genders. While Pierrot appears to be masculine, the *Commedia dell'arte* clown figure is already gender ambiguous, with a skull cap and baggy costume that obscures the gender of the body beneath it. In Schoenberg's depiction of the character, the two and a half octave range allows for the envoicing of both male and female characters. The *Sprecher*'s performance of multiple other stock *Commedia* characters (through the narrator who describes Colombine, Cassander, and the Duenna) through the vocal part alongside the ambiguous body of Pierrot increases the androgynous nature of the figure. The *Sprechstimme* in Pierrot's voice is neither here nor there, much like the protagonist. He is also completely displaced by the other figures who enter and sonically disappears while the narrator describes them such as "Eine blasse Wäscherin," which describes a pale washer woman, or "Galgenlied" and "Parodie," which both describe the Duenna. Freya Jarman-Ivens argues that the "voice (particularly the singing voice) is a potentially rich site for the emergence of queer, of queer spaces" (*sic*) and that this potential is realized when attention is brought to those sonic spaces.[2] These sonic spaces can be manipulated internally (e.g., the vocal tract itself) or externally (e.g., production technology). She accesses this queer space in the voice by questioning both conscious and nonconscious processing of voice. *Pierrot* is ripe with possibility for this type of research.

[2] Freya Jarman-Ivens, *Queer Voices*, vii.

Ultimately, theory—musical or otherwise—can only account for so much. There is something ineffable about the voice that cannot be described in language, but that can only be felt. Both Schoenberg and Zehme understood this, and my research has shown that the functions of *Sprechstimme* are means to an end, which are entirely secondary to the experience of the works. Schoenberg ends *Harmonielehre*, as often cited, proclaiming just that: "Tone color melodies! What fine senses that distinguish here, what highly developed mind that may find pleasure in such subtle things! Who dares to demand theory here!"[3]

[3] Schoenberg, *Harmonielehre,* 507. "Klangfarbenmelodien! Welche feinen Sinne, die hier unterscheiden, welche hochentwickelte Geist, der an so subtilen Dingen Vergnügen finden mag! Wer wagt hier Theorie zu fordern!"

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