

Ross - Schoenberg

Arnold Schoenberg was classically self-trained as a child, absorbing most of the material from encyclopedias or listening to other performances. He worked various musical jobs: conducting a choir, orchestrating operettas, writing sentimental songs. In 1901, he became the musical director for the Bunte Theater but returned to Vienna to recruit pupils in composition.

Schoenberg early music had a luxurious tone, although there are some unexplained dissonances and chords that fail to resolve. Mahler and Strauss both found Schoenberg's music innovational and "the music of the future".

Schoenberg let poetry guide his music. His most crucial literary encounter was with Stefan George's poetry, particularly the sheer density of the poet's imagery that did not permit easy access, but was rather a labyrinth of sensual secrets.

Schoenberg's voyage to the atonal world was set to George's *Year of the Soul* collection (concerned with an intense scene of farewell). Most of the piece is not in the home key in B minor and it's supposed that this piece was related to Schoenberg bidding farewell to Mahler.

Schoenberg's mental stability faltered when one of his circle men, Richard Gerstl, committed suicide after Schoenberg found out he was having an affair with his wife. Afterwards, Schoenberg struggled with thoughts of suicide and his music slowly transitioned to the style we are most familiar with; his Second Quartet's first movement was written in a late-Romantic style whereas the second movement was a hallucinatory Scherzo. In the last 2 movements, a soprano joins the string players, singing George poems that describe emotions of grief and agony.

As Mahler and Strauss were both leaving the world, Schoenberg entered a creative frenzy, composing several works.

Count Harry Kessler's response to *The Rite of Spring*

The Rite of Spring was extremely unconventional. The aristocrats and wealthy listeners were loud and made fun of the premiere. Some other composers began telling the wealthy listeners to be quiet.

Nadia Boulanger

Lili and Nadia Boulanger were both women composers that leaned on each other. However, Lili died at an early age due to a lung infection and was thus unable to complete her opera. After her younger sister's death, Nadia moved towards pedagogy, becoming a composition teacher.

Stravinsky Octet

Wrote the ensemble for winds because they were rigid (cold and less vague). Mentions that strings lend themselves to more subtle nuances and build an 'emotive' basis.

However, Stravinsky's goal with the Octet was to create a musical composition based on objective elements. The octet of flute, clarinet, bassoons, trumpets, and trombones create a complete sonorous scale (creating a rich register). The difference of volume because of the instruments renders an evident musical architecture.

Stravinsky purposefully only marked forte or piano, nothing inbetween.

Stravinsky sought to realize a musical composition which are emotive in themselves (manifested in heterogeneous play of movements and volumes).

Also mentions that musical composition where emotive basis is the nuance will eventually be deformed. Music where emotive basis resides in the form of the composition will risk little in the hands of the performers.