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promotion, composition,
performance, understanding
and dissemination of
new and contemporary
music ...*

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XLI: 6, November–December 2011

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The “Other” Schoenberg

By Richard Brooks

Arnold Schoenberg and his first wife, Mathilde von Zemlinsky, had two children: Gertrude and Georg (1906-1974). In 1923 Matilda died and shortly thereafter Schoenberg married Gertrude Kolisch, with whom he had three more children. In the 1930s Schoenberg was, of course, compelled to leave Europe and he settled, ultimately, in the United States where he died in 1951.

Georg was, by all accounts, a talented musician. He studied the French horn and became good enough to be an occasional substitute in the Vienna Philharmonic. Like many young musicians of the day, he earned the bulk of his meager income as a music copyist. Being the first son of a famous (perhaps, infamous?) composer is usually a difficult situation. In this case, it was made rather more so because the father was a highly autocratic, egomaniacal individual who expected great things from his son. It was difficult for Georg to measure up, not only to his father's expectations but also to his own sense of destiny. He tried many occupations: musician, poet, actor, and playwright, but did not achieve much success. To complicate the father-son relationship even further, Georg fell in love with and married Anna Sax. Anna had

been a servant in the Schoenberg home several years earlier, and Arnold did not consider this an advantageous match. Even so, a daughter was born, named Gertrude (“Susi”), and she still resides in Moedling near Vienna.

In 1933, when it became apparent that staying in Europe was unsafe, Schoenberg left the country with his second wife. Their three children were all born afterwards. It is clear from letters and family recollections that Schoenberg loved Georg, his first-born son, and tried to help him leave as well. However, there were not enough funds to pay for transport for Georg and his wife and daughter, and Georg would not leave them behind. So they remained in Austria.

Although, Georg was technically only a half-Jew and had been baptized a Lutheran, the Nazis declared him a Jew. As a result he could not continue to earn his living, barely subsistent as it was, through music copying. Luckily, he was employed by a local greengrocer to load and unload produce, drive his truck, and keep his accounts (Georg excelled at mathematics). This was physically exhausting work that affected his hands and nearly crippled him. However, it saved

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About the Newsletter

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How to Submit Items to the Newsletter

Articles: The Newsletter welcomes submissions of articles to run in future issues. Articles, if accepted, may be edited for length and content. Please include a photo with all submissions if possible (photo may be of author).

Member News + Photos: Please send all member news and activities with a photo. Submitted items may be edited.

Ideas/Suggestions: The Editors welcome any other ideas or suggestions.

Submit to the newsletter via email at: newsletter@societyofcomposers.org



Upcoming SCI Events

2013 Region I Conference August 15–17, 2013

Portsmouth, NH

Hosted by PARMA Recordings as part of the PARMA Music Festival

2013 Region IV Conference October 17–19, 2013

Eastern Kentucky University
Richmond, KY

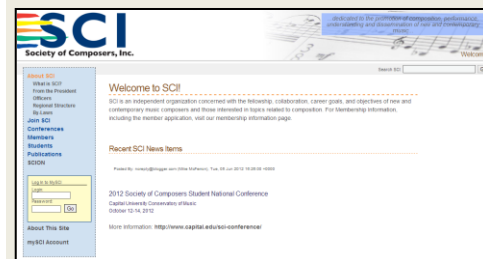
Host: Thomas Couvillon
Thomas.Couvillon@eku.edu

2014 Region VIII Conference March 7–8, 2014

University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, WA

2014 Region V Conference March 27–29, 2014

Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo
Hosts: Christopher Biggs and Lisa Coons



Internet & Email

www.societyofcomposers.org

- Conference dates and submission guidelines
- Contact information and links to member web-pages
- Student chapters and opportunities
- CDs and journals produced by SCI
- Details on SCI such as membership, contacts for officers, regional structure, by-laws, newsletter archives and more...

SCION

SCION is a listing of opportunities on our website exclusively for members. It is updated on a continual basis so that it may be checked at any time for the most current notices. In addition, members are emailed on the first Monday of each month to remind them to visit the site for new or recent postings. The large number of listings is easily managed by a table of contents with links to the individual notices. In-depth coverage; contest listings in full; all items listed until expiration; this is a valuable resource that you may print in its entirety or in part at any time.

John Bilotta, SCION Editor
scion@societyofcomposers.org

scimembers

scimembers is a member-driven e-mail mailing list that is intended to facilitate communication between members of the Society on topics of concern to composers of contemporary concert music. It conveys whatever notices or messages are sent by its members, including announcements of performances and professional opportunities, as well as discussions on a wide variety of topics. For more information, including how to join and participate in the listserv:

<http://www.societyofcomposers.org/publications/listserv.html>

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Membership Information

For complete details, please visit
<http://www.societyofcomposers.org/join/membership.html>.

Full Membership (\$55/year): Eligible to submit scores to the National Conferences, regional conferences, SCI Recording Series, SCI Journal of Music Scores. Access to the SCI Newsletter in electronic form. Optional subscription to [scimembers], the SCI listserv and all other SCI publications. Eligible to vote on Society Matters and in elections for the National Council.

Joint Membership (\$75/year): Same benefits as full members

Senior Membership (\$27.50/year): Open to those 65 years of age or older, or retired. Same benefits as full members.

Associate Membership (\$27.50/year): Open to performers and other interested professionals. Receives the SCI Newsletter in electronic form and can participate in national and regional conferences.

Student Membership (\$27.50/year): Eligible to submit to national and regional conferences and to vote in society matters. Access to all SCI publications.

Student Chapter Membership (\$17.50/year): Same benefits as student members, but only available on campuses having Student Chapters.

Institutional Membership (\$25/year): Organizations receive hard copy of the SCI Newsletter and other mailings.

Lifetime Membership (\$1100 or \$120/year for 10 years): Benefits the same as full members, for life.

Executive Committee

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The "Other" Schoenberg

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his life. On several occasions he was notified by the Gestapo to pack a bag and get ready to be sent to the "East." Each time the grocer and his wife pleaded with them that Georg was essential to their livelihood, as there were no other young men around to drive their truck and deliver fruit and vegetables; without him everything would rot. He was spared, and lived in Moedling until his death in 1974. For more details about his quite remarkable life, see the memoirs of his nephew Arnold Greissle-Schoenberg (schoenbergseuropeanfamily.org).

Georg composed music throughout his life. He had hoped to have success in the musical theater and wrote some songs. One of them, "*Es steht eine Linde: Wienerlied*", written after the end of the war was published and, apparently, became quite popular. That was his only public acknowledgment. According to his daughter, he destroyed quite a few manuscripts before he died but, fortunately, several works have survived. There is the lieder cycle *Sieben Balladen*, songs in a kind of Kurt Weill style, with texts by a friend, Fred Eggarter. These had to be composed prior to 1938 because Eggarter "disappeared" at that time. (It was later discovered that Eggarter had escaped to South America.) Dating the other works is more difficult.

There are four extended solo piano works, *Vier Klavierstuecke*, dated August–October 1944, and dedicated to Olga Novakovich, a family friend and former student of Schoenberg. Georg stayed with Novakovich for a while after his mother died.

There are two sets of six movements each for a wind quintet consisting of English horn, B-flat clarinet, French horn, and bassoon. One manuscript is labeled "*Sechs Stuecke fuer Blaeserquartett*," and the other is marked simply "*Blaesserquartett*." There are no dates, but I surmise that they were written in the late 1940s, after the war, or early 1950s. The ballads are youthful works, but the piano works and the wind quartets are the work of a gifted and mature composer.

The most significant work is "*Mein Lebenslauf*," a forty-five minute cantata for baritone voice, SATB chamber chorus, and orchestra. Georg Schoenberg, as far as we know, never orchestrated it but it is clear from his inscription, as well as occasional notations of instruments throughout the composi-

tion, that he intended to. He wrote the text himself and, as the title indicates, it is autobiographical. It is a major work; both the text and the music are excellent. There is pathos, humor, seriousness, self-mockery, and a clever use of quotations from songs of his day. The musical structure, including an impressive fugal finale, is quite masterful.

There seems to have been a public performance of one of the wind quintet sets a short time after his death, but otherwise he never had the chance to hear any of his pieces. Beginning in the 1990s, Nancy Bogen, Artistic Director of The Lark Ascending, whose husband is Georg's nephew and the oldest grandson of Arnold Schoenberg, began to systematically premiere all of the extant works in New York. Subsequently, the piano works have been premiered in Vienna, and the ballads will be performed in the summer of 2013 in Vienna and in Traunkirchen at the Villa Spaun where Georg spent several summers as a youth. For the premiere of "*Mein Lebenslauf*" in New York, Nancy asked me to make an arrangement for a small ensemble. I chose to use the same combination that Arnold Schoenberg used in *Pierrot Lunaire*.

Georg apparently had no instruction in composition from his father, and his style is more like his uncle Zemlinsky—a highly chromatic tonal palette. There is a very interesting movement in one of the wind quartets where he tries his hand at twelve-tone technique. However, it's not the way his father used it. Instead, he gives each of the four instruments its own twelve-note row. These are repeated several times very precisely (including one example of retrograde), but after about 15 measures he abandoned this and continued in a freely composed manner.

Georg Schoenberg is not a "great" composer—how many of us achieve that? But he was gifted and skillful and, when given the chance, audiences enjoy it. He deserves greater recognition. To help accomplish this I am, with his daughter's permission, preparing a collected, edited edition of all Georg's music.

Richard Brooks

(Thanks to Arnold Greissle-Schoenberg for providing details about Georg's life as well as correcting any German I may have mangled!)

SCItings

Member News and Activities

Performances, Awards, Commissions, Honors, Publications and other Member Activities.

Matthew Peterson

On September 10, 2011 the Boston Percussion Group performed Peterson's *Thunderheads* for two percussionists in its world premiere at the 2011 Boston Ahts Festival at the Waterfront Stage.

Molly Joyce

The premiere of Joyce's *Royal Tide*, written for flutist Daniel James and percussionist Brian Shank, was given on September 17, 2011 in the Paul Recital Hall at The Juilliard School.

Carrie Leigh Page

The Arizona State University Symphony Orchestra and guest soloist Allison Stanford performed the world premiere of Carrie Leigh Page's "Rock Branch" from *Everyday Arias* at the ASU Gammage Auditorium in Tempe, Arizona on September 19, 2011.

Timothy Melbinger

Four premieres of Melbinger's music were given at Penn State Altoona's Misciagna Family Center for the Performing Arts on September 22, 2011. The program included *The Opal Dream Cave* for mezzo-soprano and oboe, *Sonata for Tuba Solo*, *Twelve Preludes* for piano and *World Domination: Phase Two* for percussion solo.

Ken Davies

Crossroads for two trombones and piano was premiered by trombonists Ben McIlwain and Craig Watson and pianist Ellen Elder on October 2, 2011 at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.

Alvez Barkoskie IV

The premier of Barkoskie's *Five Bagatelles for Brass Quintet* was given on October 3, 2011 by City Limits Brass at the Butler School of Music at the University of Texas at Austin.

Martin Halpern

The world premiere of *Mrs. Middleman's Descent*, a chamber opera with libretto and music by Martin Halpern, was presented at the New York New Church in Manhattan on October 5, 2011. Featured in the cast were Alisa Thomason as Mrs. Middleman, Jim Trainor as Mr. Middleman, Marty Coyle as Manny and Adonis, Kathryn Allyn as Mrs. Leary, and Sarah Materniak as the nun. The pianist was Earl Buys, stage director Jamibeth Margolis, and music direction by the composer.

Alex Temple

The premiere of Temple's *Liebeslied* was given new-music singer Mellissa Hughes and the American Composers Orchestra, who commissioned it for their SONiC (Sounds of a New Century) Festival on October 14, 2011.

Brett L. Wery

The premiere of Wery's *Letters From Cohoes* took place on October 15,

2011 in Cohos Music Hall by Musicians of Ma'alwyck. *Letters* is a four movement song cycle for baritone, flute, harp and string quartet. It tells the story of Eva Tanguay, the resident ghost at Cohoes Music Hall in Cohoes New York.

Larry Barnes

At the KMTA Kentucky Composer Concert on October 16, 2011, in Brock Auditorium on the campus of Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond, the premiere of Barnes' solo piano work, *Vocalise for an Orchid Moon*, was performed by University of Louisville pianist Denine LeBlanc.

Robert Langenfeld

The premier of Langenfeld's Symphony No.2, "New Horizons" by the Platte City Band took place on October 23, 2011 under the direction of Professor Emeritus Mr. Al Sergel III at the Platte City Highschool in Missouri.

Rand Snell

The St. Petersburg Opera Chamber Ensemble premiered Snell's chamber work *The Afterparty* on October 30, 2011 at Hillsborough Community College, Ybor City Campus, Tampa.

Jeffrey Jacob

Jacob's *Wanderer Fantasy for Piano and Large Orchestra* was premiered October 30, 2011 by the American Youth Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Daniel Spalding (with the composer at the piano) at the Rachel Schlesinger Concert Hall in Alexandria, Virginia.