

Abstracts

Wolfgang Rathert: Ives' legacy

Charles Ives' music and personality occupy an unusual position in 20th century music history. The reasons for this can be found partly in his artistic isolation during his active compositional phase (1902–1918), which led to delayed and controversial reception of his work. However, it is Ives' view on music which even today constitutes a challenge, as it defies conventional and traditional ideas about what music »actually« is or what it should be like, and steadily transcends the boundaries between »art« and »life«. Ives' ambiguous conception of art derives firstly from the historical circumstances of American music at the end of the 19th century, and secondly from the innovative aesthetics of »potentiality« which developed out of Transcendentalism.

*

Lucie Fenner: Memories of the College Years. Musical borrowing in *Calcium Light Night* and *TSIAJ* by Charles Ives

The use of borrowed tunes represents a characteristic side of Ives' music. This compositional peculiarity becomes especially evident in works like *Calcium Light Night* for Theatre Orchestra and *TSIAJ*, 2nd movement of the *Trio for Violin, Violoncello, and Piano*. Both pieces consist almost entirely of borrowed fragments. Moreover they are based on a similar programmatic background – memories of the composer's college years. The observed connection between personal reminiscences and certain borrowed melodies indicates an integrative aesthetic approach. Memory as a central and complex motive not only determines Ives' choice of borrowings but leads to the phenomenon of montage in the examined compositions.

*

Giselher Schubert: Charles Ives' Sonata No. 1 for Piano

Charles Ives' 1st sonata for piano is overshadowed by his 2nd sonata *Concord, Mass. 1840–1860*. It shows, however, several unmistakable characteristics: Its seven movements are grouped as a symmetrical arc, the usual scherzo is replaced by a ragtime with the same function, it quotes hymns, and it has a program. Furthermore, the only extant score is a score completed by Lou Harrison. The origin and history of the work, the fact that it has a program, its »open« harmonic design, its numerous ossia-sections and the scarcity of

dynamic instructions suggest investigating the work from the point of view of compositional ›contingency‹. This allows us to relate the kind of its thematic processes or the questions of form and performance to modi of expression like ›frenzied arrest‹, ›kaleidoscopic stasis‹ etc., which express a common experience in modern societies.

*

Dorothea Gail: Charles Ives' Symphony No. 4

The meaning of Ives' 4th Symphony can be examined on different levels. Programmatic content can be conveyed through mimesis, analogy or the imagined texts of the quotations of the songs. Different hermeneutic interpretations are being developed based on an analysis of the structure of quotations in the second movement. For an active listener, the musical sense results in the theses that the vertical and horizontal musical structure is a metaphor in the sense of Ricœur. Meaning is constructed on the metalevel by the listener: the reflection of the multiple perception itself and of the possibilities of life.

*

Denise von Glahn: »The Sylvan in the City: *Central Park in the Dark*«

Until recently, Charles Ives has been associated almost exclusively with nineteenth-century, rural America. Numerous programmatic works celebrating sites he revered attest to his New England roots. Ives' urban »place pieces«, however, reveal another powerful influence: that of the twentieth-century city. *Central Park in the Dark*, written in 1906 while Ives was a young business man in Manhattan, exposes the unique opportunities the city presented to Ives to work through musical and aesthetic problems. Ives writes the sounds of the Central Park into his piece, and in the process reconciles the sylvan and the city, and the evanescent and the permanent.

*

Dieter Schulz: Concord and American Transcendentalism in Ives's Aesthetics

In *Essays Before a Sonata* (1920), Ives draws heavily on the philosophical tenets of American Transcendentalism as formulated by Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and other intellectuals based in and around Concord, Massachusetts, from the late 1830s through the Civil War. The ideas Ives adopted primarily from Emerson include (1) the concept of art as a visionary enterprise designed to offer glimpses of transcendence by reproducing the

creative principle at work in nature, (2) the notion of the artist as a representative of aspirations shared by all of us, (3) the provisional and fragmentary status of the work of art, (4) the belief in the cultural potential of America, which thanks in part to its very »poverty« may be more likely than Europe to bring forth a truly visionary art.