

Abstracts

Ulrike Thiele: »ein besseres Donaueschingen oder Salzburg in Winterthur«. Walter Braunfels and his Patron Werner Reinhart

Owing to the official performance ban in 1938, Walter Braunfels settled to Überlingen close to Lake Constance and the Swiss border especially because he sought the company of Werner Reinhart from Winterthur. As one of the heads of the family trading enterprise »Volkart Brothers« and a versed amateur clarinetist, Reinhart became a famous Swiss patron of music in the first half of the 20th century and founder member of the »International Society of Contemporary Music« (ISCM/IGNM) besides getting involved with the »Donaueschinger Kammermusik-Aufführungen«. However, the institution Reinhart was related to in the first place was the »Musikkollegium Winterthur«, a music society existing since 1629. From 1918 on, the compositions of Braunfels were performed there constantly and the composer and pianist often was a welcome guest in the Stadthausaal and the Villa Rychenberg. Discussing the rich correspondence between musician and patron, this paper will demonstrate the remarkable change of this relationship – including its interruptions – and characterize Reinhart's patronage in this special case.

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Inga Mai Groote: Contemporariness and Commitment. Braunfels' *Offenbarung Johannis* and its Context

In this contribution, an early choral work of Braunfels, *Die Offenbarung Johannis, Kap. VI* (first performance 1910) is introduced and discussed in the context of its time of origin and with regard to Braunfels' sacred choral works of the 1920s. Braunfels' choice of subject is unusual for the time of the composition; Braunfels interprets it by means of text arrangement, choir treatment, and sophisticated use of various compositional idioms, offering the possibility of a Christian reading. Thus, the composer shows as early as in the *Offenbarung* an at least subcutaneous interest for theological statements as well as a deliberate use of contemporary means of musical composition.

Übersetzung: Claudia Brusdeylins

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Giselher Schubert: »Die klingende Ferne«. On the lyrical-phantasmagorical Play *Die Vögel* by Walter Braunfels

Braunfels' opera *Die Vögel*, written between 1913 and 1919 and first performed in 1920 with Bruno Walter at the conductor's desk in Munich, is his

most well-known and most successful work. In a certain respect, it has also significantly stimulated the rediscovery of his music since the mid-1990s. The libretto after the correspondingly named comedy by Aristophanes was written by Braunfels himself: Not only did he eliminate all virulent allusions and concentrate the plot, he also gave it a mood of quite a ›romantic‹ color, allowing him to include in the libretto a poem by Eichendorff yet avoiding a marked clashing of styles. Stilistically, Braunfels' music mediates quite exactly between Strauss and Pfitzner. He conceives the work as a ›musical opera‹ where music as such operates as the epitome of ›unendliche Sehnsucht‹ (infinite yearning). The music is imbued with a kind of ›aura‹ (Walter Benjamin) which distinguishes it brusquely from the social-realist ›musical opera‹ of the 1920s.

Übersetzung: Claudia Brusdeylins

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Laurenz Lütteken: Prosecution and Self-Ascertainment. *Verkündigung* and the Paradigm of Modernity

Verkündigung is one of Braunfels' main works. It was begun after his deposition, and towards its end it became clear that a performance was no longer an option, either. The work is the conceptional and compositorial self-ascertainment of a composer facing utmost affliction. The composition of an opera in the moment of humiliation is understood, taking recourse to the text by Paul Claudel, no longer as the interaction of the artist with the world, but as the result of an act of grace – which is no longer subject to the control of the active individual. In this way, the tradition of the ›Künstleroper‹ in which the work is placed, receives an idiosyncratic reinterpretation. In some respects, it proves to be the counterpart of Hindemith's opera *Mathis der Maler*.

Übersetzung: Claudia Brusdeylins

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Michael Custodis: Memories – Realities – Decisions. Walter Braunfels after 1945

Following Braunfels's biography from the 1930s to the 1950s the essay focusses on the tensions between the political climate under nationalsocialistic reign and the composer's own conservative aesthetic beliefs, based on unknown archive materials (including correspondence with Hermann Abendroth, Konrad Adenauer, Wilhelm Furtwängler and Hans Pfitzner as well as two denacification files from Braunfels himself). Furthermore his ambitions are considered to contribute to the resurrection of german music life by rebuilding Cologne's music conservatory.

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Stefan Keym: Unity of Mood or »in scharfen Gegensätzen bewegtes Gefühlsleben«? The Orchestral Songs of Walter Braunfels

Walter Braunfels has written five cycles of orchestral songs. Most of them stem from the 1930s and 1940s in spite of the fact that this genre is considered to have found its peak already in the period of »fin de siècle«. Braunfels preferred the subtitle »Orchestergesang« that was propagated by Friedrich von Hausegger in order to stress the deep fissure between the new genre and the traditional »lied«. However, Braunfels's orchestral songs remain largely faithful to the principles of »lied« aesthetics, such as simplicity, clear form, transparent texture and a preference for short lyrical texts. His use of the orchestra seems to be motivated mainly by the fact that most of the song texts expose a conflict. The orchestra provides Braunfels with the means to express this conflict in a very subtle manner and without breaking completely with the traditional song principle of the »unity of mood«.

This concept which might be called a middle course between tradition and modernity was already established in the early *Three Chinese Songs* op. 19 (1914), based on love poems from Hans Bethge's collection *The Chinese Flute*. It was further developed and transferred into a Christian context in the song cycle *The God-Loving Soul* op. 53 (1936), inspired by texts from the medieval mystic Mechthild von Magdeburg. In this work, Braunfels makes a very sophisticated use of the colours of a chamber orchestra to express the tension between God's »mystical bride« and the world. The late *Japanese Songs* op. 62 (1945) return to another exotic collection of poems by Bethge and dwell on the theme of parting and loneliness.

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Doris Lanz: »Erkenntnis des Überzeitlichen in dem zeitlich Bedingten«. On Walter Braunfels' Chamber Music for Strings from the 1940s and the common Characterisation of his Work as »zeitlos unzeitgemäß«

During the years of his »inner emigration«, Walter Braunfels did not only widen his catalogue of works strikingly in terms of quantity, his productivity was also accompanied by a steady search for new means of expression. Keeping this in mind, the essay looks into three directions: (I) light is shed on Braunfels' tonal language around 1945 by throwing structural-analytical highlights on the final movements of his chamber music for strings, and the findings are then (II) linked to his conception of music grounded as it is in metaphysics. Superior to these aspects is (III) a critical discussion of the prevalent and historiographically detrimental labeling of his work as »zeitlos unzeitgemäß« (timelessly out-of-time).

Übersetzung: Claudia Brusdeylins

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Christian Kämpf: »... wenn uns nichts anderes bliebe als die Spielwelt der Phantasie«. On the fantastic in the work of Walter Braunfels

In the oeuvre of Walter Braunfels the fantastic is obviously present exemplarily in the musical theatre works *Prinzessin Brambilla* and *Die Vögel* or in the variations for orchestra *Phantastische Erscheinungen über ein Thema von Hector Berlioz* and *Don Juan*. In line with this, the early reception soon was focused on the term ›fantastic‹ as a common access to the work of Braunfels. The use of this term, however, implies a reproach of unmodern and romantic aesthetics. In contrast to this the present paper shows that the work of Braunfels can be connected to considerations of Ferruccio Busoni on new musical theatre. Braunfels' focus on southern subjects, also and especially in the realm of the fantastic, seems to be in accordance with thoughts of Friedrich Nietzsche on the idea of a south in music as an opposite standpoint to the Romantic and Richard Wagner.

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Wolfgang Sandberger: An Experiment on the Phantastical. On *Phantastische Erscheinungen eines Themas von Hector Berlioz für großes Orchester* op. 25 by Walter Braunfels

The essay is devoted to the most significant orchestral work by Braunfels which was first performed in Zurich in 1920. Mirrored in *Phantastische Erscheinungen* is, on the one hand, the reception of Berlioz which is so relevant for Braunfels, and on the other hand the attempt following Richard Strauss' *Don Quixote*, to transform the variation form into his own musical form for depicting the phantastic-grotesque. Beyond these programmatic aspects, the phantastic is realised on the constructive-compositorial level even in the constructive ambivalence of the form under an overarching sinfonic construction.

Übersetzung: Claudia Brusdeylins