

Versioning Strauss

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There are few songs dedicated to their composer's mother like Richard Strauss's "Frühlingsfeier," op. 56, no. 5 (TrV 200).¹ This 1906 setting of Heinrich Heine's three-verse poem describing bare-breasted maidens mourning the death of Adonis is a far cry from the more Mama-friendly version by Robert Franz (op. 39, no. 1; 1867). The varied strophic form of Franz's song, with its incessant compound rhythms, modest vocal line, and melancholic minor key, seems to emphasize the vernal, even

the virginal (ex. 1). Strauss, by contrast, harnesses the lust and grief of the young women. To say this is a "setting" of the poem indeed seems far too demure.² Heine's rhyme scheme is wrenched apart by the vocal line, the refrain "Adonis!" gaining momentum—and altitude—each time. The piano's surging accompaniment is very easily imagined for orchestra, but Strauss did not produce an orchestral arrangement until 1933. The coincidence of the song's composition with that of Strauss's *Salome* (they were both begun in 1903; the opera premiered in Dresden on 9 December 1905 and the song was completed on 22 September the following year) makes this seem more like a sketch for the

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¹In fact all of the op. 56 songs were dedicated to Strauss's mother except the first, "Gefunden," which was for his wife Pauline in commemoration of his receiving an honorary doctorate from the University of Heidelberg on 8 August 1903. There is no mention of the songs in Strauss's published *Briefe an die Eltern, 1882–1906*, ed. Willi Schuh (Zurich: Atlantis, [1957]), but one reason for the dedication might have been his father's death on 31 May 1905.

²Ernest Newman described Strauss's song as corybantic in a review of a performance by Tilly Koenen, noting that the piano part—played by Coenraad Bos—was "superhumanly difficult"; "Music in London," *Manchester Guardian*, 20 May 1908, 6.

Allegro agitato

mf

Das ist des Früh - lings trau - ri - ge Lust! Die blü - hen - den

mf

Con Pedale

5

cresc.

Mäd - chen, die wil - de Schaar, die stür - men da - hin, mit flat - tern - dem Haar und

cresc.

9

f

Jam - mer ge - schrei und wo - gen - der Brust: "A - do - nis! A - do - nis!"

f

Example 1: Robert Franz, "Frühlingsfeier," op. 39, no. 1.

stage, in the manner of Wagner's Wesendonck Lieder, than the concert repertoire discussed elsewhere in this issue.³

Yet it is precisely this generic blurring that brings into focus questions of time, place, and

subjectivity in Lieder composition and performance in the far reaches of the nineteenth century. For many of his contemporaries, Strauss's songs were the least interesting part of his oeuvre. Ernest Newman thought they compared poorly with those of Hugo Wolf and Max Reger, describing them as too theatrical, self-conscious, and artificial.⁴ Newman included "Frühlings-

³According to Norman del Mar, the three Heine settings were finished after a three-year hiatus in work on op. 56 caused by the "composition and launch" of *Salome* (Richard Strauss: A Critical Commentary on His Life and Works [London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1978], III, 352). During this same period Strauss also finished his expanded modern edition of Berlioz's *Grand traité d'instrumentation et d'orchestration modernes*.

⁴Newman was referring to the songs he then knew, from op. 10 to op. 56; see Barbara Ellingson Petersen, "Ton und Wort": The Lieder of Richard Strauss (PhD diss., New York University, 1977), 280.

feier" among Strauss's "pretentiously empty" songs (the others were "Mein Auge" op. 37, no. 4 [1898] and "Auf ein Kind," op. 47 [1900]).⁵ However, they were popular among performers—perhaps why Newman described them as merchandise rather than music⁶—and in early-twentieth-century America were classified as "classic" alongside Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, and Hugo Wolf, despite Strauss's still being alive.⁷ Writing in this decade, Susan Youens observed that the ubiquity of a handful of songs, "coupled with the composer's occasional descent into post-'Ride of the Valkyries' noise-noise-and-more-noise, have led many to condemn Strauss's songs as inferior to those of Brahms, Wolf, and Mahler."⁸ A song such as op. 56, no. 5, certainly counts as "noisy"; beyond questions about its quality, does this also in some way preclude its categorization as a Lied?

The generic blurring mentioned above is not simply a question of "Frühlingsfeier" sounding operatic in style and scope. It also has to do with the issues raised by a song, seemingly conceived for voice and piano, being rearranged for voice and orchestra decades later. There are, as well, considerations about the extent to which Strauss wrote for particular voices. His earlier songs are generally assumed to have been composed for performance by his wife Pauline (who retired from concertizing in 1906), whereas the orchestration of "Frühlingsfeier" was apparently inspired by the Romanian soprano Viorica Ursuleac.⁹ And then there is the pres-

ence of the composer as pianist and conductor. While the mature Strauss on the podium came across as relatively undemonstrative, he was notorious for improvising accompaniments and interludes between songs in recital, destabilizing notions of his scores being fixed.¹⁰ What, or which version, of "Frühlingsfeier" should be taken as Strauss's song? The pragmatic but perhaps least interesting response would be to say that there is no reason to decide. More poetically, and problematically, the conversion from piano to orchestra—the negotiation between singer and singer, score and improvisation, live performance and recording—opens up a space in which the way song is interpreted *as* song might be interrogated, and prompts a number of questions about the significance of time and place in changing conceptions of authorial or performative subjectivity.

Contrary to the assumptions of adaptation theories of the type primarily used in film studies, the hierarchy of original text and subsequent reworking in the case of the various iterations of Strauss's song is unclear.¹¹ There is no sense in which the composer, on orchestrating his song, might be considered to be committing an act of infidelity. Nor does Peter Szendy's description of arrangers as presenting an opportunity for "hearing double"—experiencing "their hearing of a work" along with a presumed original—quite convince when considering an "arrangement" by the composer.¹²

ägyptische Helena. Strauss dedicated *Friedenstag* to Ursuleac and her husband, Clemens Krauss.

¹⁰On Strauss as conductor, see Roswitha Schlötterer-Traimer, "Kapellmeister und Dirigent," in *Richard Strauss-Handbuch*, ed. Walter Werbeck (Berlin: Metzler, 2014), 18–28; on Strauss as accompanist, see Alfred Orel, "Richard Strauss als Begleiter seiner Lieder," *Schweizerische Musikzeitung* 92 (1952): 12–13. Strauss's activities as a pianist are the topic of doctoral work being undertaken by Carson Becke at the University of Oxford.

¹¹Robert Stam, for example, begins his "Introduction: The Theory and Practice of Adaptation" by pointing out that adaptations of literary texts for the cinema habitually describe them in pejorative terms, as vulgarizations, violations, and even desecrations (*Literature and Film: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Film Adaptation*, ed. Robert Stam and Alessandra Raengo [Oxford: Blackwell, 2005], 1–52; here 3). See also Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Adaptation* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 3–4.

¹²Peter Szendy, *Listen: A History of Our Ears*, trans. Charlotte Mendell, foreword by Jean-Luc Nancy (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 36.

⁵Ernest Newman, *Richard Strauss* (London: John Lane, 1908), 95.

⁶*Ibid.*, 90.

⁷For more on Strauss's American reception, see Linda L. Tyler, "'Commerce and Poetry Hand in Hand': Music in American Department Stores, 1880–1930," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 45 (1992): 75–120; and Wayne Heisler Jr. and Laura Tunbridge, "Elisabeth Schumann and Richard Specht: Strauss before Sixty," *Opera Quarterly* 31 (2015): 273–88.

⁸Susan Youens, "'Actually, I like my songs best': Strauss's Lieder," in *The Cambridge Companion to Richard Strauss*, ed. Charles Youmans (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 152.

⁹Ursuleac created the leading soprano roles in Strauss's *Arabella* (1933, Dresden), *Friedenstag* (1938, Munich), and *Capriccio* (1942, Munich) and sang the title role in the public dress rehearsal of *Die Liebe der Danae* (1944, Salzburg). She also appeared in *Elektra*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and *Die*

It seems a slightly different model is needed to enable one to keep track of the changes while remaining open to the multiple manifestations of music as text and act. In computer programming there is a process called “versioning” in which projects are assigned individual numbers or codes that allow just that. There can be “branches” of development away from the “master” as well as opportunities to “merge” them, facilitating the creation and management of multiple releases of a product—which may entail improvements, upgrades, or customizations. Some projects start from 1.0, others move toward 1.0 while never intending to reach it. The process seems a useful way to sort and acknowledge the creative narrative of a song’s conception and reception. Here, then, I propose to discuss the implications of versioning Strauss.

0.9

Heine was not one of Strauss’s favored poets for musical treatment. Among the 158 songs composed between 1885 and 1948, he only figures eight times.¹³ There are three instances in op. 56 (“Frühlingsfeier,” “Mit deinen blauen Augen,” and “Die heiligen drei Könige aus Morgenland”) and “Der Einsame,” op. 51, no. 2, also from 1906; an early setting of “Im Vaters Garten heimlich steht ein Blümlein” (1879), and two of the *Fünf kleine Lieder*, op. 69 from 1918 (“Waldesfahrt” and “Schlechtes Wetter”). As his source Strauss did not use only the *Buch der Lieder* on which most composers depended.¹⁴ “Frühlingsfeier” comes from a sequence entitled *Romanzen* from Heine’s later

collection *Neue Gedichte* (1844). These twenty-four poems were produced after Heine’s move to Paris in 1831 and the imposition of a ban on his work—along with that of other “Young Germans”—as subversive by the German Federal Assembly four years later. While many of the texts continue the poet’s preoccupation with lost love, the older, unhappily married Heine also bewails the tragedy of wedding the wrong person. The poems of the *Neue Gedichte* furthermore look outwards, toward current literary trends and national habits, as in the satirical epic *Deutschland: Ein Wintermärchen*.

The relatively scant representation of Heine in Strauss’s output was in keeping with German attitudes to the poet at the time. Heine remained popular—new editions were published regularly—and he was respected by many literary figures, although, as Anthony Phelan points out, “the iconoclasm of his poetics . . . presented a major problem for the modernist aesthetic.”¹⁵ Karl Kraus was the foremost of Heine’s literary antagonists. In a series of essays running from “Um Heine” (“About Heine,” 1906) to “Heine und die Folgen” (“Heine and the Consequences,” 1910), Kraus associated Heine with, as Phelan puts it, “a failure of authenticity.”¹⁶ For Kraus, Heine had corrupted the German language through his emphasis on style over content. What’s more, he was a journalist—a hack, even—and, worse still, a conduit of foreign influence through the French feuilleton.¹⁷ There were allusions in Kraus’s Heine essays to the architect Adolf Loos’s “Ornament und Verbrechen” (“Ornament and Crime,” 1908); both commentators expressed concerns over the devaluation of the substance of art in favor of craft and commerce. The Jewish Heine was also depicted by Kraus as being

¹³Strauss’s youthful *Tagebuch* noted his reading of Heine alongside Goethe, Wagner, and Schiller; see Katharina Hottmann, “Die andern komponieren. Ich mach’ Musikgeschichte!” *Historismus und Gattungsbewusstsein bei Richard Strauss: Untersuchungen zum späteren Operschaffen* (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 2005), 75. According to Michael Walter, Strauss contemplated Heine’s *William Ratcliff* as a source for an opera in the 1880s; see *Richard Strauss und seine Zeit* (Laaber: Laaber Verlag, 2000), 210.

¹⁴Susan Youens points out that until the First World War “most composers behaved as if Heine had died immediately after completing the *Buch der Lieder* and the *Neuer Frühling* section of the *Neue Gedichte*” (*Heinrich Heine and the Lied* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007], xvi).

¹⁵Anthony Phelan, *Reading Heinrich Heine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 113; in his chapter “How to Become a Symbolist: Heine and the Anthologies of Stefan George and Rudolf Borchardt,” Phelan explores the ways in which George’s editorial interventions portrayed Heine in a negative light.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁷Karl Kraus, *Heine und die Folgen: Schriften zur Literatur*, ed. Christian Wagenknecht and Eva Willms (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2014), and Ruth Esterhammer, *Kraus über Heine: Mechanismen des literaturkritischen Diskurses im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Würzburg: Königshausen und Neumann, 2005).

all too eager to assimilate and gain success in capitalist society. The anti-Semitic strains of these arguments are clear, and together with the protests against proposed memorials to the poet at the end of the nineteenth century, they forewarn of Heine's vilification by the Third Reich.¹⁸ They also resonate in a Straussian context, for the reception of the composer's works has circled around similar themes of ornament and historical reflexivity at the expense of what some consider authentic modernity.¹⁹ Kraus, for one, had defended Oscar Wilde's *Salome*, but in later years was derisive about Strauss's collaborations with Hofmannsthal, using terms of mercantilism similar to those in his critiques of Heine.²⁰

Against this backdrop, Strauss's decision to set Heine at all seems a little odd. From his near contemporaries the only other major composers to do so were Hugo Wolf and Edvard Grieg, both of whose songs date from earlier in the nineteenth century; Alban Berg included two Heine settings in his *Jugendlieder* of 1901–04; Mahler did not set any Heine beyond an early, abandoned attempt at "Im wunderschönen Monat Mai."²¹ In the previous decade

Strauss had tended toward living poets, many of whom he knew personally, such as Karl Henckell, Richard Dehmel, and John Henry Mackay. After 1900 he turned to earlier Romantic generations more frequently—from Johann Wolfgang von Goethe to Achim von Arnim, Clemens Brentano, Friedrich Rückert, and Ludwig Uhland. Heine might simply fit in with that retrospective sampling of poets. The *Romanzen* sequence of the *Neue Gedichte*, however, pursues a trend evident in the last two parts of the *Buch der Lieder* that may have resonated with the composer of an operatic adaptation of *Salome* (and, subsequently, of *Elektra*): the ironic modernization of myth. For example, the final five-poem cycle, "Unterwelt," begins with Pluto complaining that Hades has become hell because of his nagging wife Proserpina.

The young women mourning the beautiful Adonis are in keeping with that recasting of mythical figures. What "Frühlingsfeier" lacks, unusually for Heine (and to a slightly lesser extent for Strauss), is irony.²² Or, if irony can be detected, it is in a surplus of expressive and erotic intensity.²³ This springtime is suffused with tragedy and death; the language is heavily laden with epithets. Strauss was often drawn to poetic and musical expressions of sexual desire, most obviously in his operas and tone poems, but even at times in the usually less explicit realm of the Lied (for instance in his selection of poems from Dehmel's *Weib und Welt* [1896]). Perhaps the appeal of this un-Heine-like poem was simply its similarity to Salome's lust for the lifeless body of Jochanaan. Salome sings to the prophet's severed head of his beauty, of his body like a column of ivory, whiter than anything in the world; his hair blacker than anything in the world; his lips

¹⁸See, for instance, Carl Paasch, *Die jüdische Dämon* (Leipzig: Carl Minde, 1890), discussed by Youens in *Heinrich Heine and the Lied*, xix.

¹⁹Leon Botstein contrasts Schoenberg and Strauss according to Loos's criteria, declaring the latter to have "embraced ornament and decoration as musical techniques" in his "The Enigmas of Richard Strauss: A Revisionist View," in *Richard Strauss and His World*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 3–32; n. 58. Wayne Heisler Jr. invokes Loos to more sophisticated ends in his discussion of Strauss's Rameau adaptations in *The Ballet Collaborations of Richard Strauss* (Rochester: Rochester University Press, 2009), 118. Adorno's Kraus-reliant essay "Die Wunde Heine" ("Heine the Wound," 1956) could also be read fruitfully in tandem with his criticism of Strauss, for its emphasis on commodification, but that goes beyond the time frame of this article.

²⁰See Sandra Mayer, "Visions of *Salome*, Visions of Wilde: Critical Readings of Oscar Wilde's *Salome* in Early Twentieth-Century Vienna," in *Performing Salome, Revealing Stories*, ed. Clair Rowden (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2013), 49–70, here 61–64; Wilma Abeles Iggers, *Karl Kraus: A Viennese Critic of the Twentieth Century* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), 50, and Heisler, *The Ballet Collaborations*, 130.

²¹Alma Mahler included a setting of "Ich wandle unter Blumen" as the fifth of her *Fünf Lieder*. Adorno claimed that Heine's poetry prefigured Mahler's music; see Ulrich Plass, *Language and History in Theodor W. Adorno's Notes to Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 148.

²²A musically orientated discussion of Heine's irony can be found in Benjamin Binder, "Robert, Clara and the Transformation of Poetic Irony in Schumann's *Lieder*: The Case of 'Dein Angesicht,'" *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* 10 (2013): 1–28.

²³The violence of the erotic bond in this poem is noted by Klaus Briegleb in Heinrich Heine, *Sämtliche Schriften*, ed. Klaus Briegleb, Günter Häntzschel, Karl Pörnbacher, Walter Klaar, and Karl Heinz Stahl, 7 vols. (Munich: Carl Hanser, 1968–76), VI, 937.

redder.²⁴ Adonis's body, in Heine's telling, is just as white and beautiful, though the color red comes from his spilt blood rather than his lips.

Das ist des Frühlings traurige Lust!
Die blühenden Mädchen, die wilde Schar,
Sie stürmen dahin mit flatterndem Haar
Und Jammergeheul und entblößter Brust:
"Adonis! Adonis!"

Es sinkt die Nacht. Bei Fackelschein
Sie suchen hin und her im Wald,
Der angstverwirret widerhallt
Vom Weinen und Lachen und Schluchzen und Schreien:
"Adonis! Adonis!"

Das wunderschöne Jünglingsbild,
Es liegt am Boden blaß und tot,
Das Blut färbt alle Blumen rot,
Und Klagelaut die Luft erfüllt:
"Adonis! Adonis!"

(This is Spring's sad pleasure!
The wild horde of girls in the bloom of youth,
Rushes in with streaming hair,
Howls of woe and bared breasts:
"Adonis! Adonis!"

Night falls. By torchlight
They search back and forth in the wood,
Which echoes with the alarmed confusion
Of tears, laughter, sobs and cries:
"Adonis! Adonis!"

The wondrously fair image of a youth,
Lies pallid and dead on the ground;
His blood tints all the flowers red,
And cries of pain fill the air:
"Adonis! Adonis!"

—Translation Lionel Salter (1994)

I.O

Strauss's first version of "Frühlingsfeier" is not, on paper, particularly long: Heine's three verses are contained within sixty-eight measures of common time, marked *Leidenschaftlich*

²⁴"Dein Leib war eine Elfenbeinsäule auf silbernen Füßen. Er war ein Garten voller Tauben in der Silberlilien Glanz. Nichts in der Welt war so weiß dein Leib. Nichts in der Welt war so Schwarz wie dein Haar. In der ganzen Welt war nichts so rot wie dein Mund."

bewegt. There are two measures each of piano prelude and postlude, with brief interludes of varying lengths separating the verses. The three verses become progressively more expansive. Verse 1 takes twelve measures, verse 2 sixteen, its extra material resulting from Strauss's extending the time taken over the fourth line, which lists the women's tears, laughter, sobs, and screams. The final verse, marked *molto tranquillo*, is more substantial. It lasts for thirty measures, almost half the song, and introduces new melodic material and repetitions of the women's cries of "Adonis!"

Barbara Petersen grouped "Frühlingsfeier" among the songs that describe "songs or singing by lyrical singing"; here Strauss "portrays human sobbing, crying out, laughing, and lamenting through a combination of vocal and instrumental effects as well as the recurrent 'Adonis' which serves as a song refrain."²⁵ Another way to explain this would be to say that Strauss's harmonic and melismatic word-painting picks up on Heine's accumulating adjectives. The first move away from the tonic of C# minor to the relative major occurs at "Die blühenden Mädchen," and the first break from declamatory vocal writing to melisma at "die wilde Schar" (see ex. 2).

Harmonically, "Frühlingsfeier" is not as free-roaming as other songs by Strauss, though it shares their predilection for enharmonic shifts, inversions, and auxiliary notes. The first verse is relatively stable—as mentioned it begins firmly in C# minor and its closing twofold cry of "Adonis!" moves between tonic and dominant. The ensuing six-measure interlude remains in G# major. The vocal writing for the second verse quickly turns to the ascending triplet phrase heard first in m. 7, now extended to climax through "Weinen und Lachen und Schluchzen und Schreien"; the line moves swiftly through E♭ minor through A major to G minor and finally to the B♭ vocal highpoint, which grates against the seventh chords beneath it before the music subsides into E major (this music is shown in its orchestral form in ex. 5). The final verse continues in that key, with voice and piano moving together in a more

²⁵Petersen, "Ton und Wort," 110.

Leidenschaftlich bewegt

p *cresc.* *f* *p* *cresc.*

3
Das ist des Früh - lings trau - ri - ge Last! Die

5
blü - hen - den Mäd - chen, die wil -

7
de Schar, sie stür - men da - hin

p *f* *mf* *cresc.*

Example 2: Richard Strauss, "Frühlingsfeier," op. 56, no. 5 (voice and piano), mm. 1–16.
(Examples 2–6: Copyright by Boosey & Hawkes, Bote und Bock GmbH.
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9
mit flat - tern - dem Haar und Jam - mer - ge - heul und ent -

11
blöß - ter Brust:- "A - do

13
nis! A - do

15
nis!"

The musical score is written for a voice and piano. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into four systems, each with a measure number (9, 11, 13, 15) at the beginning of the vocal line. The vocal line is in a soprano or alto clef. The piano accompaniment is in a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The piano part features complex arpeggiated figures, often with triplets and slurs, and dynamic markings such as *sfz*, *f*, and *ff*. The lyrics are in German and describe a scene of grief and lamentation.

Example 2 (*continued*)

regular, quarter-note rhythm. With the third line's mention of Adonis's spilt blood, however, the surging triplet figures return and the verse wrenches back toward the original tonic of C# minor.

More distinctive are particular rhythmic gestures and melodic contours in the song. Petersen notes the importance of rhythmic repetition in the refrain of "Adonis!" just as striking to the ear is the triplet first heard at the *forte* that ends m. 1.²⁶ The piano part (echoed to some extent by the vocal line) is marked by a constant wavelike motion that repeatedly swells up through two octaves, and then up through another two and then some—almost like white horses, if you can bear the thalassic analogy—before tumbling back down through the triplet rhythm (as seen in ex. 2). Newman complained about "the deluge of black notes that rain upon the page . . . pounds upon pounds of notes from which we can hardly squeeze a half-ounce of feeling or even meaning."²⁷ The Wagnerian vocal style, and the "deluge" of notes from the piano, is all too much, resulting in what Newman refers to as "superfluity . . . [a] pretentious emptiness." At the root of Newman's criticism it seems is that Strauss overstretches the boundaries of a Lied for voice and piano, to the point where it bursts and deflates.

The near constant presence of that piano figuration, though, makes the stately melody that opens the third verse seem all the more like a moment of repose, as Adonis's beautiful, supine body is gazed upon ("Das wunderschöne Jünglingsbild, es liegt am Boden"; ex. 3, mm. 38–47). The melodic leap up the octave and subsequent linear descent are also marked. It is a moment of what Slavoj Žižek—after Pierre Bayard—might call "plagiarism of the future": in it can be heard something of the music of *Der Rosenkavalier*,²⁸ particularly the "Presen-

tation of the rose" in act II, and, from the end of the opera, the E-major passage after the Marschallin's final "Ja, ja," when the violins play a similar motif to the piano's triplet anacrusis, and the upper and lower strings echo the distinctive rising octave of the song's "schöne." There are occasional moments, Bayard contends, when we encounter an idea in a work of art that seems somehow out of place—that would belong better to a generation, or several generations, down the line. Examples he gives include Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, which reads as a novel out-of-kilter with the eighteenth century but in keeping with postmodern literary trends; the moment when Voltaire's *Zadig* seems to become Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, deducing all manner of details from what seems to be a blank canvas; and Guy de Maupassant being prompted to remember, through an everyday sensation, something from his childhood, making him seem like Proust *avant* Proust.

The example from Strauss given here is less extreme, and it is questionable whether a composer's self-anticipation is as significant, particularly for someone prone to reusing similar melodic gestures and harmonic progressions throughout his career. Yet the fact that this musical moment reaches out beyond the song in which it is encountered encourages a consideration of the ways in which Strauss's revisitations of works might inform interpretations of his output as a time-shifting continuum in which the notion of versions can expand. A "branch" from the original version of "Frühlingsfeier" would thus eventually bear fruit in *Der Rosenkavalier*. (Perhaps, then, the opera is version 1.1.0.)

I.I.3

Strauss completed the orchestration of "Frühlingsfeier" on 3 September 1933, while he and Pauline were staying at the Hotel Rez in Bad Wiessee. The new version was premiered by Viorica Ursuleac, with Strauss conducting the Berlin Philharmonic, on 12 October. In November, Strauss was appointed president of the *Reichsmusikkammer*. His political stance during the 1930s continues to be a source of schol-

²⁶Ibid., 151.

²⁷Newman, *Richard Strauss*, 95.

²⁸Žižek used the term to gloss the title of Pierre Bayard's *Le Plagiat par anticipation* (Paris: Minuit, 2009) in the former's talk "Plagiarism of the Future," given at the Deutsches Haus, New York University on 19 October 2010. Michael Kennedy detected shades of Sophie's and Octavian's duet in another op. 56 Heine song, "Mit deinen blauen Augen," but not in "Frühlingsfeier." *Richard Strauss* (London: Dent, 1976), 214.

37 *molto tranquillo*
Das wun - der - schö - ne Jüng - lings - bild, —

43 *molto tranquillo*
— es liegt am Bo - den blaß und tot, — das Blut — färbt al - le

p dolce espr.

sf

espr.

Example 3: Richard Strauss, "Frühlingsfeier," op. 56, no. 5 (voice and piano), mm. 38–48.

arly debate; as Bryan Gilliam observes, he "showed little courageous opposition" to the Nazi regime.²⁹ He tended instead toward cooperation and accommodation as a means to shield his family and in the hope that he could continue to work with Jewish artists such as Stefan Zweig. Themes of resistance have been read into his operas from this time, but his songs remain somehow aloof.³⁰ Returning to orchestrate music he had composed almost thirty years earlier seems on the surface indicative of a desire to escape from the world around him.³¹

²⁹Bryan Gilliam, *The Life of Strauss* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 145.

³⁰Pamela M. Potter, "Strauss's *Friedenstag*: A Pacifist Attempt at Political Resistance," *Musical Quarterly* 69 (1983): 408–24, and Albrecht Riethmüller, "Stefan Zweig and the Fall of the Reich Music Chamber President, Richard Strauss," in *Music and Nazism: Art under Tyranny, 1933–1945*, ed. Michael H. Kater and Albrecht Riethmüller (Laaber: Laaber Verlag, 2003), 269–91.

³¹A similar rhetoric abounds in discussion of the *Vier letzte Lieder*, with the added complication of Strauss's "late style": see, for instance, Timothy L. Jackson, "'Ruhe meine Seele!' and the *Letzte Orchesterlieder*," in *Richard Strauss and His World*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 90–137, and Linda and Michael

Strauss had written to Zweig on 3 September 1933, making no mention of "Frühlingsfeier" (he simply said that he and Pauline were taking the waters of the Bavarian spa town and felt fine) but enclosing a clipping from the *Münchener Zeitung* and suggesting that the paper would accept "a corrective statement." On the same day Zweig wrote from Salzburg explaining that he, Jakob Wassermann, Thomas Mann, and Alfred Döblin had already publicly protested against the event to which Strauss had drawn his attention: the Nazi blacklist of prominent cultural leaders opposed to the regime depriving those named of German citizenship.³²

Strauss's and Zweig's correspondence highlights the composer's apparent naivety about the potential for working with the Nazi system

Hutcheon, *Four Last Songs: Aging and Creativity in Verdi, Strauss, Messiaen, and Britten* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015).

³²Letters of 3 September 1933, in *A Confidential Matter: The Letters of Richard Strauss and Stefan Zweig*, trans. Max Knight, foreword by Edward E. Lowinsky (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 37.

at this stage of his career. The inspiration for orchestrating “Frühlingsfeier” may have come from Ursuleac, who had created the title role in *Arabella* earlier in 1933, but more important, and rarely acknowledged, is the significance of Strauss’s deciding to return to a song setting a poem by Heine. The poet was one of the most high-profile artists of Jewish origin vetoed by the Third Reich. In the late 1920s, the Nazi ideologue Alfred Rosenberg had described him as “lascivious, malicious and in the last analysis uncreative”; by 1936 Wolfgang Lutz’s essay “Schluss mit Heinrich Heine” (Enough of Heinrich Heine) was published in the *Nationalsozialistische Monatshefte*.³³ This prohibition caused problems in the musical world, not least because such great German composers of the past as Schumann were so closely aligned with Heine.³⁴ Strauss’s return to Heine’s poem might not be only a nostalgic move, or one inspired by the singing of Ursuleac. It may have been tinged, if only lightly, with political resistance, or at least, and more characteristically of Strauss, a determination not to let art be sullied by politics.

Self-consciously or not, the sound-world of the orchestral version of “Frühlingsfeier” is unquestionably that of Strauss at his most lavish and, for that reason, seems somewhat regressive.³⁵ It is scored for large orchestra, with

doubled winds, English horn, bass clarinet and contrabassoon, two horns, two trumpets, and three trombones, bass drum and cymbals, harp, and strings that all (with the exception of the basses) play *divisi* throughout. Strauss split what had been shared between hands in the piano part across the lower and upper strings and clarinets (ex. 4); the busyness of the string playing enhances the feeling of surging upwards. All becomes noisier as the song heads toward its climaxes. Trills and glissandi from the strings accompany the line “Weinen und Lachen und Schluchzen und Schreien” (ex. 5) and cymbal and drum join the cries of “Adonis!” (ex. 6).

The orchestration of “Frühlingsfeier” seemed to strip the Lied of all its inhibitions, not least because it is a feat for the singer to be heard above the orchestra. Ursuleac recorded the song with the Staatskapelle Berlin conducted by Clemens Krauss, on 29 May 1936.³⁶ Strauss had resigned his presidency of the *Reichsmusikkammer* the year before.³⁷ The decision to issue a recording of this Heine setting (with help from the fact that poets’ names were rarely included on gramophone labels) bears testimony to the artists’ friendship and to the complexities of working in the Third Reich. Ursuleac’s fine performance, despite the clattering quality of the orchestral reproduction, is a reminder of Strauss’s ear for soprano voices. Ursuleac’s voice is suppler than, if not quite so strong as, the voices of some of the singers who have tackled “Frühlingsfeier” since. There are moments of *rubato* to expressive ends, but nothing as extreme as heard on Lieder recordings from previous decades.³⁸ The orchestral setting could be

³³Both sources were discussed in Harry Slochower, “Attitudes towards Heine in German Literary Criticism,” *Jewish Social Studies* 3 (1941): 355–71. Strauss is unlikely to have been unaware of these attitudes or of Rosenberg’s power; in May 1935 he unwisely sent a postcard of Rembrandt’s *Jacob Blesses His Grandson* with the note “Not yet forbidden by Rosenberg.” See Gilliam, *The Life of Strauss*, 150.

³⁴Youens explains that they focused on works such as the Eichendorff *Liederkreis*, op. 39, or *Frauenliebe und Leben*, and compared Schumann to Wagner, even erasing Heine’s name from programs containing *Dichterliebe* (*Heinrich Heine and the Lied*, xx). For more on Schumann’s reception, see Lily E. Hirsch, “Segregating Sound: Robert Schumann in the Third Reich,” in *Rethinking Schumann*, ed. Roe-Min Kok and Laura Tunbridge (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 51–68.

³⁵The *Vier letzte Lieder*, of course, are no less plush in their orchestration, a feature that is often used as evidence of Strauss’s nostalgic worldview. The inclusion of passages for solo violin and horns in particular is overlain with biographical significance. While Strauss’s later operas are also rarely small-scale in their orchestration, there are instances of more chamber-like scoring, as in *Capriccio* (1942); orchestral works from this period likewise are more modest in scope.

³⁶It was paired with the orchestral version of Strauss’s “Cäcilie,” op. 27, no. 2. The recording (DGG 2923-gn 8) was issued by Brunswick Polydor and has since been re-released on the CD *Lebendige Vergangenheit* (Maestoso, 2011).

³⁷Ursuleac remained at the Berlin State Opera until the following year, when she moved to the Bavarian State Opera in Munich. Krauss’s career in the Third Reich and the consequences of his friendship with Strauss are discussed in Michael H. Kater, *The Twisted Muse: Musicians and Their Music in the Third Reich* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 46–55, and in Kater, *Composers of the Nazi Era: Eight Portraits* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

³⁸For a discussion of Lieder performance style as captured on early recordings, see Daniel Leech-Wilkinson, “Singing,” *The Changing Sound of Music: Approaches to Study-*

Leidenschaftlich bewegt

2 gr. Fl.

Picc.

2 Ob.

Eng. Hn.

1

Cl. in A

2

Bass Cl. in A

1

Bsn.

2

Contra Bsn.

1, 2

Hn. in E

3, 4

2 Trpt. in A

1, 2

Trb.

3

Timp.

Cym.

Harp

Voc.

Leidenschaftlich bewegt

1

Vn.

2

1

Vla.

2

1

Vc.

2

Cb.

Example 4: Richard Strauss, "Frühlingsfeier," op. 56, no. 5 (voice and orchestra), mm. 1–2.

26 27 28 29 30

2 gr. Fl. *f sfz* *dim.* *pp* *ff*

Picc. *mf* *pp*

2 Ob. *f sfz* *dim.* *p sfz* *ff*

Eng. Hn. *f* *dim.* *ff*

1 *f* *mf* *p sfz* *ff*

Cl. in A 2 *f* *ff*

Bass Cl. in A *f* *ff*

Bsn. 1, 2 *f sfz* *dim.* *p sfz* *ff*

Contra Bsn. *ff*

1, 2 *f sfz* *ff*

Hn. in E 3, 4 *ff*

Trpt. in A 1, 2 *ff*

1, 2 *ff*

Trb. 3

Timp.

Cym. *mf*

Harp *f* *dim.* *p*

Voc. Wei - nen und La - chen und Schluch - zen und

1 *f sfz* *dim.* *gliss* *p* *sfz*

Vn. 2 *f* *dim.* *gliss* *p* *sfz*

1 *f* *dim.* *gliss* *p* *sfz*

Vla. 2 *f* *dim.* *gliss* *p* *sfz*

1 *f* *dim.* *gliss* *p* *sfz*

Vc. 2 *f* *dim.* *gliss* *p* *sfz*

Cb. *f sfz* *dim.* *gliss* *ff*

Example 5: Richard Strauss, "Frühlingsfeier," op. 56, no. 5 (voice and orchestra), mm. 26–30.

29 a 2

2 gr. Fl. *p* *f*

Picc. *f*

2 Ob. *p* *f*

Eng. Hn. *p* *f*

1 Cl. in A *mf*

2 Cl. in A *mf*

Bass Cl. in A *mf*

Bsn. 1, 2 *f* *cresc.*

Contra Bsn. *f* *cresc.*

1, 2 Hn. in E *p* *f* *cresc.*

3, 4 Hn. in E *p* *f* *cresc.*

Trpt. in A 1, 2 *p* *f*

1, 2 Trb. *f*

3 Trb. *f*

Timp.

Cym.

Harp *gliss.* *gliss.* *f*

Voc. Schrei en:

1 Vn. *mf* *f*

2 Vn. *mf* *f*

1 Vla. *p* *cresc.* *f*

2 Vla. *p* *cresc.* *f*

1 Vc. *p* *cresc.* *f* *gliss.*

2 Vc. *p* *cresc.* *f* *gliss.*

Cb. *p* *cresc.* *f*

Example 5 (continued)

59 60 61 62 63

2 gr. Fl. *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

Picc. *ff*

2 Ob. *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

Eng. Hn. *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

1 *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

Cl. in A *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

2 *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

Bass Cl. in A *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

Bsn. 1, 2 *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

Contra Bsn. *ff*

1, 2 *ff*

Hn. in E *ff*

3, 4 *ff*

Trpt. in A 1, 2 *ff*

1, 2 *ff*

Trb. *ff*

3 *ff*

Timp. *ff*

Cym. *p* *cresc.* *ff*

Harp *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *gliss.*

Voc. *nis!* *A* *do*

1 *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

Vn. *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

2 *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

1 *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

Vla. *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

2 *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

1 *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

Vc. *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

2 *mf* *fz* *cresc.* *ff* *ff*

Cb. *ff*

Example 6: Richard Strauss, "Frühlingsfeier," op. 56, no. 5 (voice and orchestra), mm. 59–63.

62

ritard.

2 gr. Fl. *p* *cresc.* *f*

Picc. *p* *cresc.* *f*

2 Ob. *p* *cresc.* *f*

Eng. Hn. *p* *cresc.* *f*

1 *p* *cresc.* *f*

Cl. in A 2 *p* *cresc.* *f*

Bass Cl. in A *p* *cresc.* *f*

Bsn. 1, 2 *p* *cresc.* *f*

Contra Bsn. *p* *cresc.* *f*

1, 2 *p* *cresc.* *f*

Hn. in E 3, 4 *p* *cresc.* *f*

Trpt. in A 1, 2 *p* *cresc.* *f*

1, 2 *p* *cresc.* *f*

Trb. 3 *p* *cresc.* *f*

Timp. *p* *cresc.* *f*

Cym.

Harp *p cresc.* *gliss.* *f*

Voc. *ritard.* *nis!* A - do

1 *p* *cresc.* *f*

Vn. 2 *p* *cresc.* *f*

1 *p* *cresc.* *f*

Vla. 2 *p* *cresc.* *f*

1 *p* *cresc.* *f*

Vc. 2 *p* *cresc.* *f*

Cb. *p* *cresc.* *f*

Example 6 (*continued*)

one reason why fewer liberties with tempo were taken, but this is a song in which keeping momentum going is vital. The other effect of the orchestration is to make “Frühlingsfeier” sound even more operatic. Although the song’s clear stanzaic structure and its use of a refrain preclude it from being fully convincing as a “bleeding chunk,” the noisy orchestration is nonetheless reminiscent of the arrival of Bacchus in the opera-within-the-opera of Strauss’s *Ariadne auf Naxos*.

I.O.O

The orchestral version of Strauss’s “Frühlingsfeier” seems to fulfill the promise of its original for voice and piano, which Newman, among others, heard as straining at the limits of the Lied. Those limits involve history as well as genre. Strauss’s decision in 1933 to return to a song he composed in 1906, on a poem from the first half of the nineteenth century, indicates the palimpsest-like aspect of Lied composition and performance and, in so doing, enables some broader concluding thoughts on “singing subjects.”

Version 1.1.3 of “Frühlingsfeier” does not erase Version 1.0, although to some ears and for some purposes it might seem superior. In other words, Strauss’s “versioning” encourages an interpretation of his song on a continuum inflected by opportunities for more-or-less meaningful adaptation—composing for his wife, or for Ursuleac, or for the potential subversiveness of singing Heine at the *fin de siècle* or in Nazi Germany. It also encourages, once more, a consideration of the historiographic situation of Strauss’s songs. The stylistic proximity of “Frühlingsfeier” and *Salome* aside, on the whole the songs that use nineteenth-century poets sit uncomfortably with claims for the composer as a modernist. Many of these Lieder harbor the backward-looking stances of *Der Rosenkavalier* or *Ariadne auf Naxos* or of the songs from the 1940s. No wonder Strauss could already be considered “classic” when included in vocal recitals during the interwar period.

There were ways, though, in which Strauss adopted a very different persona in Lied composition than his nineteenth-century forebears did. His personal circumstances were doubtless important—indeed he wrote whole pieces about them, from *Sinfonia domestica* to *Intermezzo*—but the kind of anguish and disappointment detected in Schubert’s or Schumann’s songs, features that encourage biographical readings and divinations of “the composer’s voice,” are rarely found (with the notable exception of the *Vier letzte Lieder*).³⁹ There has also rarely been the emphasis on intimacy that prevails in discussion of other composers’ Lieder, perhaps because the voice types Strauss favored were operatic, especially when the songs were furnished with orchestral accompaniments. In terms of scale and subjectivity, Strauss stands apart from convention.

The temporality of Strauss’s songs is not straightforward either. They do not often stage moments of reminiscence within them and, unlike the songs of Strauss’s contemporary Mahler, they show little interest in the folkish, with its associated archaisms. The passages that are reminders of other works in the op. 56 set refer not to pieces from the past but of the future. Strauss’s orchestral versions were very much of the present, responding to the availability of a particular singer and the prospect of performance. By listening to the Ursuleac recording, it is possible to hear alongside historical practices a continuity of performance habits. Although, as mentioned, the voices that sing “Frühlingsfeier” today may be larger, the way in which they interpret the music—their versioning—is not so very different. The complexities of Strauss’s songs serve as a reminder that this composer could invoke tradition without being over-reverential; that he could be modern in attitude rather than style; and that even the least worldly of texts could be tainted by politics. Keeping track of the different manifestations of “Frühlingsfeier” without insisting on privileging a certain version of the song encourages a flexibility of interpretation so that, in this instance, 1.0 and 1.1.3 can exist side by

ing *Recorded Musical Performances* (London: CHARM, 2009), chapter 4, www.charm.kcl.ac.uk/studies/chapters/chap4.html.

³⁹Berthold Hoeckner, “Poet’s Love and Composer’s Love,” *Music Theory Online* 7 (2001), <http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.01.7.5/mto.01.7.5.hoeckner.html>.

side. Song, made up of different parts (words, music, performance), is more often dissected than allowed to expand and accrue meaning through the versioning process. The example of Strauss's "Frühlingsfeier" suggests the benefits of acknowledging the varying layers of compositional and performance history to create, as John Donne would have it, "one equal music."



Abstract.

Strauss's song "Frühlingsfeier," op. 56, no. 5, was originally composed for voice and piano in 1906 and orchestrated in 1933. Its choice of poet—Heinrich Heine—is unusual in the context of the literary trends and political attitudes in Germany at the contemporaneous moments. "Frühlingsfeier" resembles Strauss's opera *Salome* in subject matter:

female grief for a beautiful man. The corybantic musical style of Strauss's setting is emphasized in its orchestral version, which was intended for the soprano Viorica Ursuleac, who recorded it in 1936.

Strauss's stature as a Lieder composer—despite the popularity of many of his songs—has often been queried. However, what seems on the surface to be a continuation of the late-Romantic tradition is subtly inflected by his poetic decisions and by musical renderings that need to be understood as part of a flexible continuum between versions of the song. Past and present are of less concern than being able to move fluidly between past, present, and future. Such movement opens up the possibility of a less rigid interpretation of Strauss's historical standing that allows his songs to be considered as other than simply regressive. Keywords: Richard Strauss, Heinrich Heine, orchestration, Third Reich, Romantic song.

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