

**PARODY LOST AND REGAINED
RICHARD STRAUSS'S DOUBLE VOICES**

Robert Raphael Gibson

Doctor of Philosophy

New College

University of Oxford

Trinity Term 2004



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As an international student, the opportunity to embark upon doctoral study at Oxford was contingent upon the support of a range of funding bodies. The Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (United Kingdom) very kindly endowed an Overseas Research Student Award and the University of Sydney most generously granted a travelling scholarship (Hannah Fullerton). My sincere thanks are extended to both organisations, for without their very considerable help this study would never have got off the ground. In addition, I received an Oxford Overseas Bursary from the University of Oxford and an overseas study grant from the Wagner Society in New South Wales (Sydney); assistance generously offered and gratefully received.

Various members of the Faculty of Music at Oxford read bits and pieces of this dissertation as a work-in-progress in the course of having my status as a doctoral student approved and confirmed. The criticism, comments, and advice of Dr. Nicholas Marston, Dr. Suzannah Clark, and Dr. Roger Allen were extremely helpful and greatly appreciated. Professor Richard Parish and Dr. Nicholas Cronk from the Faculty of Modern Languages at Oxford kindly made time available to discuss questions concerning Molière and seventeenth-century *comédie-ballet*. At the University of Regensburg, I presented a spoken version of a very early draft of the *Rosenkavalier* chapter and would like to thank Professor David Hiley and Dr. Rainer Kleinertz for their thoughtful and useful feedback. I am also grateful to have been granted the opportunity to present an abridged version of the *Rosenkavalier* chapter at the Graduate Colloquium in the Music Faculty, Oxford, and the Musicology Workshop at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, University of Sydney. In both

cases, the audience sat patiently through a barrage of ‘sugary’ waltzes and remained in a fit enough state by the paper’s end to offer challenging and considered questions and comments.

Thanks are extended to John Wagstaff, librarian at the Music Faculty Library, Oxford, for his assistance in procuring a full orchestral score of the 1912 version of *Ariadne auf Naxos*. This was by no means an easy task. Special thanks are offered to Hans Cronier for his untiring efforts to secure on my behalf a video recording and *Programmheft* of the 2001 production of *Ariadne auf Naxos* from the Salzburg Festival. Charming though the administrative staff of the Salzburg Festival were, I believe that actually getting the *Programmheft* from archive to outgoing mail-tray was a feat that required countless telephone calls and endless reminder messages. Hans, your dogged persistence is exemplary.

Finally, I owe a huge debt of gratitude to Dr. Peter Franklin, my doctoral supervisor. Peter has the uncanny knack of knowing when to put the pressure on and when to hold off (fortunately, he held off for a long time). He was always able to find the right words at the right moments and his confidence in the project was tremendously reassuring. Peter’s perceptive observations and (sometimes demanding) suggestions are ample proof of the seriousness of purpose that he brings to the role of *Doktorvater*. Any errors, inconsistencies, and oversights which remain in this study are entirely my own responsibility. It has been my great pleasure to work with Peter as a student and also as a colleague at St. Catherine’s College, Oxford. Attending a performance with him of *Die schweigsame Frau* on a superb (if slightly blustery) summer evening at Garsington in 2003 is—and I’m sure will remain—one of the fondest memories of my time in the United Kingdom.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
ABSTRACT	v
INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter	
I STRAUSS, PARODY, AND THE BURLESQUE IN THE <i>BURLESKE</i>	16
II ‘EINE WIENERISCHE MASKERAD’: UNMASKING <i>DER ROSENKAVALIER</i>	84
III <i>PARODIA ABBANDONATA</i> : THE TWO <i>ARIADNES</i>	163
IV HOLY ART AND ITS DECEPTIONS	237
LETZTE AUFZEICHNUNG	314
BIBLIOGRAPHY	329

PARODY LOST AND REGAINED
RICHARD STRAUSS'S DOUBLE VOICES

Robert Raphael Gibson

Doctor of Philosophy

New College

University of Oxford

Trinity Term 2004

ABSTRACT

This thesis argues the case for the parodic voice in a range of works by Richard Strauss. In doing so, it challenges the long-held view of Strauss as a composer whose music has little to offer beyond superficial grandeur and shallow sentimentality; music which may be impressive in some respects but, ultimately, remains stubbornly one-dimensional. Parody—a double-voiced device—plays with texts and subtexts and, by definition, insists upon the presence of dimensions additional to the one located on the surface. Thus, the grandly pompous or sweetly sentimental exterior of a given passage may function within a context in which the pomposity or sentimentality is undone, critiqued, or, at very least, dented by the critical presence of a parodic voice. Indeed, I argue that we should be particularly sceptical of reading at face value those episodes in Strauss's works where the trivial, the banal, or, very often, the sublime is (apparently) projected, for this is frequently a cue for the parodic.

The emergence of Strauss's parodic voice can be traced to a work relatively early in his career: the *Burleske* for piano and orchestra (1886). Here, in this quasi

piano concerto (or, indeed, anti-piano concerto) we find double-voiced strategies used to telling effect. This study therefore takes the *Burleske* as its starting point and uses the work as a means of introducing parody theory generally. Subsequent chapters consider in detail specific episodes in *Der Rosenkavalier* (1910), *Ariadne auf Naxos* (both the 1912 version and the 1916 revision), and *Intermezzo* (1923). Thus, the body of works that form the core of this investigation are firmly rooted in the period of Strauss's so-called 'volte-face', the post-*Elektra* period when the composer was conventionally thought to have turned his back on progressive trends and produced one shallow, empty, irrelevant work after another. Examination of the composer's parodic voice suggests otherwise.

INTRODUCTION

In March 2002 a 'Classical top ten' was announced in the United Kingdom based upon data drawn from the BBC Radio 4 programme 'Desert Island Discs'—a programme in which interviewees (accomplished and/or prominent figures in various fields of endeavour) nominate their most cherished musical works, the recordings they would take with them to the proverbial desert island.¹ The top ten was compiled from works nominated on the programme in the period 1992-2002. The results were both predictable and surprising. Surprising, for instance, in that Vivaldi did not feature at all (nor did Bach and nor did Pachelbel) but predictable in that Beethoven's Ninth Symphony was placed at the top of the list (or, at least, its fourth movement was, the 'Ode to Joy'). The number two spot was won by the slow movement from Schubert's Quintet in C, and third place went to 'Soave sia il vento' from *Così fan tutte* (on the strength of this, Vienna 1790-1828 emerges as a kind of desert island unto itself). In fact, both Beethoven and Mozart scored exceedingly well, each with one further work in the top ten: the 'Pastoral' Symphony was placed fourth, and the slow movement from Mozart's Clarinet Quintet was ranked eighth. Conspicuously absent from the list were composers who rose to prominence in the generation or so after the deaths of Beethoven and Schubert: Berlioz, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Chopin, Liszt, Wagner, Verdi, Bruckner, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Dvořák. *Nul points*. Composers who were born around 1860—Puccini, Mahler, Debussy, Sibelius—fared hardly better. That is, with two notable exceptions: Elgar and Richard Strauss. Like Beethoven and Mozart,

¹ Various newspapers and magazines published the top ten. My source is the *Observer* (London), Sunday 17 March, 2002, 12. The list was drawn up to mark the programme's sixtieth anniversary.

Elgar and Strauss each garnered not one but two entries in the top ten: Elgar with the Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1 (sixth place) and the first movement of the Cello Concerto (ninth); Strauss with ‘Beim Schlafengehen’ from the *Four Last Songs* (fifth) and the Act III trio, ‘Marie Theres’!... Hab’ mir’s gelobt’, from *Der Rosenkavalier* (tenth).² (The one remaining place, seventh, went to Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue*.³) Thus, six composers filled ten places, the Austro-Germanic tradition dominated the field (five works in the top five, two in the remaining five) and while three composers lived into the twentieth century, all six were born in either the eighteenth or the nineteenth.

Indeed, the three composers born in the eighteenth century—Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert—have long enjoyed the sort of cultural privilege and esteem affirmed by their elevated ranking in the ‘Desert Island Discs’ charts. These are composers who traditionally have been granted serious musicological study on account of the significance of their compositions as aesthetic objects and as works charged with cultural and historical value (value which, we might add, is itself determined by cultural and historical values). But while the remaining three composers—Elgar, Strauss, Gershwin—obviously enjoy the support of would-be desert island dwellers, in the field of music scholarship they have been less warmly embraced. The conventional narrative of Western music might explain the presence of Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert in the ‘Desert Island Discs’ top ten as testimony

² *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Così fan tutte*, the only two operas which feature in the top ten, happen to be the two works investigated in chapter two of this thesis.

³ The full list, then, in order: 1. Beethoven, Ninth Symphony, 4th movement; 2. Schubert, Quintet in C, slow movement; 3. Mozart, *Così fan tutte*, ‘Soave sia il vento’; 4. Beethoven, Sixth Symphony, ‘Pastoral’; 5. Strauss, *Four Last Songs*, ‘Beim Schlafengehen’; 6. Elgar, Pomp and Circumstance March No. 1; 7. Gershwin, *Rhapsody in Blue*; 8. Mozart, Clarinet Quintet, slow movement; 9. Elgar,

to the enduring quality of their music, its universal appeal and on-going relevance. The presence of Elgar, Strauss, and Gershwin, on the other hand, might be said to confirm the suspicion that these composers pandered to popular taste and excelled in writing music that was slick but shallow (the puffed up grandiloquence of the Pomp and Circumstance March, the tugged heart-strings of the *Rosenkavalier* trio). In other words, the latter three wrote music that was intended to win this kind of approval whereas the approval won by the former three rests on the integrity of their music and its commitment to higher values.

One of the principal aims of this thesis is to challenge the perception of Strauss as a composer of shallow music (or, more correctly, *uncritically* shallow music), music that wears its brilliance on the outside as if to mask a vacuous interior. Indeed, the metaphor of the mask is one that recurs in the chapters that follow. By focussing above all on Strauss's use of parody (and related double-voiced devices), the notion of the mask is confronted head on: parody, after all, involves the imitation of something else—be it a specific work or a general style or idiom—it entails the 'wearing of a stylistic mask', as Fredric Jameson reminds us.⁴ My objective is not to lay bare the 'truth' that lies behind the mask—indeed, I am not at all convinced that this is where truth resides—but, rather, to highlight the rather more complex procedures at work; to draw attention to subtle and fluid interactions between parodic and non-parodic voices in Strauss's music and to consider how parodic *processes*—the dynamic *play* with double voices—confuse musical signs and gestures such that a seemingly unequivocal (and quite often banal) surface texture can operate within a larger and more complex

Cello Concerto, first movement; 10. Strauss, *Der Rosenkavalier*, 'Marie Theres'! ... Hab' mir's gelobt'.

web of contingencies, contingencies which complicate and fracture what appears (superficially) to be mono-dimensional.

Two questions spring immediately to mind: why Strauss? why now? In attempting to address the former, I can offer, firstly, a brief slice of personal history. Strauss's music has long fascinated me. Like so many others who grew up in the wake of Stanley Kubrick's film *2001: A Space Odyssey*, I was initially impressed by the monumental force of the opening of *Also sprach Zarathustra* without having any idea who the composer was. I eventually found out his name and was struck by both its familiarity—everyone's heard of Strauss—and also its otherness—isn't his first name supposed to be Johann? The first complete works by Strauss that I came to know were the *Four Last Songs* and immediately they posed a problem: although extraordinarily beautiful and tremendously moving, I was disturbed by the fact that they were written in the late 1940s. This seemed to me to be dishonest. How could anyone offer such ripe, voluptuous vocal paragraphs thirty-five years after *Pierrot Lunaire*? Strauss, thus, became a guilty, complicated pleasure. Things became increasingly more problematical when I became deeply attached to *Salome* and *Elektra* and, somewhat later, developed a fondness for *Der Rosenkavalier*. As someone who believed wholeheartedly in the rightness of the modernist agenda, I was disturbed by my willingness to accept both 'expressionist Strauss' and 'rococo Strauss'. The history books told me that he 'sold out' the former when he embraced the latter (the implication being that he sold his soul in the process) and I couldn't help think that I too was 'selling out' by deriving pleasure from a work that ran

⁴ Fredric Jameson, 'Postmodernism and Consumer Society', in *Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster (London: Pluto, 1985), 114. Jameson's discussion of parody (and pastiche) is taken up in chapter two.

contrary to history (isn't this, after all, contrary to the natural order of things, contrary to nature itself?).

But my guilt-ridden enjoyment of Strauss's music was also tempered by disquiet at some of its characteristic features. This is music that did not entirely convince. Certain aspects of certain works troubled me: the episodes of shamefaced mickey-mousing in *Till Eulenspiegel* (film music of a most trivial kind before its time), the infantile passages of tone painting in *Don Quixote*, the cheapness of Salome's dance, the boulevard music that crops up all too frequently in *Der Rosenkavalier*, the embarrassing outburst that is 'Musik ist eine heilige Kunst' in the *Vorspiel* to *Ariadne auf Naxos*, the hollow bombast of the closing scene of *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. Some of these episodes are discussed in the chapters that follow where I argue that in their cheapness/triviality/popular appeal they carry out critical work (work which runs *contrary* to the shallowness that they ostensibly project). This thesis, then, is in some ways an attempt to fathom those aspects of Strauss's music that puzzled, intrigued, and infuriated me. In these shallows, I argue, there is the potential for depth.

Perhaps what I am describing above is what some have referred to as the 'enigma' of Strauss—the difficulty of squaring particular aspects of Strauss's music with the rest of it or, to those who knew Strauss personally, the difficulty of squaring the man with the music. After attending a performance of Strauss conducting the *Symphonia domestica*, Romain Rolland noted, 'one always wonders how *that* can have come out of *this*'.⁵ Mahler, at around the same time, remarked in a letter to his wife Alma that, 'I don't myself know what to make of Strauss. How is one to explain

⁵ Diary entry, 25 March 1906; *Richard Strauss and Romain Rolland. Correspondence. Together with Fragments from the Diary of Romain Rolland and other essays and an Introduction by Gustave*

his unequalness and jumbling together of bad and good?’⁶ That Strauss himself found aspects of his own music problematic—its sentimentality in particular—is a point suggested by conductor Fritz Busch:

The lack of genuinely warm feeling which Strauss’s music often shows was recognised by the composer himself; he knew exactly the places where his music became sentimental and trashy. Nothing annoyed him more than when conductors, among them some quite famous ones, wallowed in his lyrical outpourings and thus unpleasantly brought his sins before his eyes. He himself, the older he grew, passed ever more indifferently and unemphatically over such passages when conducting, as if he were ashamed of having composed them. His inconsistency showed itself in his continuing to write such things.⁷

Anyone familiar with the film footage of Strauss conducting passages from *Der Rosenkavalier* in Munich’s Prinzregententheater on 10 June 1949 (the day before his eighty-fifth birthday) will recognise (at least in part) the phenomenon described by Busch: Strauss conducts some of the opera’s richest and most grandly scored music in a cool, detached, matter-of-fact fashion. However, one need not necessarily arrive at the conclusion that this is a sign of Strauss being ‘ashamed’ of what he had written. I am rather more inclined to read the apparent anomaly between the luxurious sounds and the elderly Strauss’s inscrutable visage and perfunctory time beating as further signs of what I argue are the workings of a double-voiced discourse: the play of delivering the sentimental and, at the same time, resisting it; offering something with one hand and taking it away with the other; presenting the mask that hides the disguise.

Samazeuilh, ed. Rollo Meyers (London: Calder and Boyars, 1968), 140. Rolland was a great admirer of the *Symphonia domestica*, in his estimation Strauss’s finest tone poem.

⁶ Letter of 16 (?) January, 1907; Alma Mahler, *Gustav Mahler: Memories and Letters*, trans. Basil Creighton, ed. Donald Mitchell and Knud Martner, 4th ed. (London: Cardinal, 1990), 287. Mahler follows with, ‘But all the same my opinion of *Salome* holds good’.

⁷ Fritz Busch, *Pages from a Musician’s Life*, trans. Marjorie Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1953), 173.

The ‘jumbling together of bad and good’ that Mahler found puzzling in Strauss’s music is, ironically, an oft-repeated early criticism of the works of Mahler (or, to put it more tactfully, not so much the ‘jumbling together of bad and good’ but his predilection for the pointed juxtaposition of the commonplace and the lofty). Indeed, the case that I present for Strauss’s music in this thesis is grounded in the examination of qualities which we very often think of as being typically Mahlerian: recourse to naïve and popular idioms, intertextual dialogues (music that refers to other music), the subtle play of parody and irony.⁸ While early critics of Mahler’s works were often perplexed by precisely these features, they are among the aspects of his music that have been prized by subsequent commentators. Take, for instance, Mahler’s predilection for parody and irony. The critical response that greeted the first performance in Vienna of Mahler’s First Symphony (November 1900) was marked by repeated references to its parodic and ironic tone: Max Kalbeck, in a generally favourable review, described the work as a *Sinfonia ironica* while Robert Hirschfeld, in a somewhat less favourable review, complained of the symphony’s ‘trivial themes and crashing explosions’ and described it as both a ‘parodistic symphony’ and a ‘symphonic parody’.⁹ The same work was later esteemed by Arnold Schoenberg as ‘the first manifestation of irony in music’.¹⁰ More recently, Stephen E. Hefling has acclaimed Mahler as ‘the first composer for whom irony is a fundamental and

⁸ See Henry-Louis de La Grange, ‘Music about Music in Mahler: reminiscences, allusions, or quotations?’, in *Mahler Studies*, ed. Stephen E. Hefling (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 122-68.

⁹ Karen Painter, ed., *Mahler and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 284-98, esp. 292 and 298.

¹⁰ Quoted in Henry-Louis de La Grange, ‘L’envers et l’endroit: ironie, double-sens, ambiguïté dans la musique de Mahler’, in *Gustav Mahler et l’ironie dans la culture viennoise au tournant du siècle: actes du colloque de Montpellier 16-18 juillet 1996*, ed. André Castagné, Michel Chalon, and Patrick Florençon (Calsenau-le-Lez: Climats, 2001), 80 and 96.

relentlessly recurring element of his works'.¹¹ Hefling introduces his study of irony (and, to a lesser extent, parody) in Mahler by citing the work of Theodor W. Adorno, a figure whom he cites as having 'underscored more than any other critic' that 'the intrusions, ruptures, overtaxing inauthenticity, and brokenness of Mahler's music are directly intertwined with its frequently ironic stance'.¹²

While a champion of Mahler, Adorno, of course, was a detractor of Strauss. For Adorno, Strauss's music was little but show—it 'soars, yet is down to earth'¹³—music in which appearance stands in for substance ('he has perfected appearance in music and made music as transparent as glass'¹⁴). In his Strauss essay of 1924 ('Richard Strauss at Sixty'), Adorno (who was just twenty-one at the time) claims that 'the entire depth of his [Strauss's] music consists of the fact that its whole world is nothing but surface, that it floats loose on the surface of the world instead of letting go of an admittedly fragmentary reality of external things in the fruitless chase after that inner reality which is, by itself, quite unreal'.¹⁵ Strauss's unwillingness to grapple with idealist objectives and imperatives, his refusal to embark upon 'the fruitless chase' after 'inner reality', is an issue to which Adorno returns in his later (and longer) Strauss essay, the essay of 1964 written to mark the hundredth anniversary of composer's birth:

Unlike his mentor Nietzsche, Strauss, the antimetaphysician, does not challenge metaphysics as ideology, nor does his tone include the slightest trace of sorrow at its futility. His sounds frolic in the merely existent like glistening fish in water. His

¹¹ Stephen E. Hefling, 'Techniques for Irony in Mahler's *Oeuvre*', in *Gustav Mahler et l'ironie dans la culture viennoise au tournant du siècle: actes du colloque de Montpellier 16-18 juillet 1996*, ed. André Castagné, Michel Chalon, and Patrick Florençon (Calselnau-le-Lez: Climats, 2001), 99.

¹² Ibid., 100.

¹³ Theodor W. Adorno, 'Richard Strauss. Born June 11, 1864', trans. Samuel and Shierry Weber, *Perspectives of New Music* 1 and 2 (Part I, Fall-Winter 1965; Part II, Spring-Summer 1966), I, 14.

¹⁴ Theodor W. Adorno, 'Richard Strauss at Sixty', trans. Susan Gillespie, in *Richard Strauss and His World*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 414-15.

¹⁵ Ibid., 409.

expressiveness confines itself to whatever its model chances to be and renounces the ideal which once informed great music, when its productive imagination was devoted to creating the Absolute; of this ideal, only the unusual survives. Strauss's positivism permanently displays what is current, just as his scores in general possess the character of a display.¹⁶

Although there is no explicit reference to Mahler in the passage above—Mahler, that is, as the counter-example to Strauss—it is difficult to read this excerpt (and, indeed, much of Adorno's critique of Strauss) without sensing implicitly that, for Adorno, the vices of Strauss are measured against the virtues of his slightly older contemporary.¹⁷ While Strauss might not exhibit the 'slightest trace of sorrow' at the futility of musical metaphysics, Mahler was constantly struggling to come to terms with precisely that impossibility; it was Mahler, not Strauss, who remained 'devoted to creating the Absolute', and it is Mahler's music that is marked by complexity, depth, and contradiction, as opposed to the mere 'display' that marks Strauss's ephemeral offerings.¹⁸

Mahler once remarked in a letter to his wife that, 'my day will be when his is ended'¹⁹, the 'his' being a reference to Strauss. And, of course, Mahler's day did indeed come, thanks in large measure to the lead taken by Bruno Walter and Leonard Bernstein in the concert hall and Adorno in the academy. What is more, as Mahler predicted, his ascendancy appeared to mark a concomitant decline in the prestige formerly afforded Strauss. Certainly, in the realm of music scholarship, Strauss until

¹⁶ Adorno, 'Richard Strauss. Born June 11, 1864', I, 22-3.

¹⁷ Adorno's *Mahler: Eine musikalische Physiognomik* appeared in 1960, a few years before the second Strauss essay.

¹⁸ Ernst Bloch is another philosopher of music who, like Adorno, championed Mahler and considered Strauss, by comparison, to be a composer of negligible worth. Indeed, Bloch discusses Mahler and Strauss side by side in *Essays on the philosophy of music*, trans. Peter Palmer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 36-9.

¹⁹ 31 January 1902; Alma Mahler, *Gustav Mahler*, 221.

quite recently was seen as a figure of marginal importance in twentieth-century music, someone who was unquestionably of lesser significance and interest than Mahler.

But in the past decade or so an increasing number of scholars have turned their attention to Strauss and reconsidered long-established notions of him as a master of the superficial, a composer who had little (if anything) worthwhile to say after *Elektra*, a composer who lived out his last forty years as a musical has-been. In the words of Leon Botstein:

The last quarter of the twentieth century has experienced a Strauss revival, in part because audiences and composers have begun to rethink the character of twentieth-century musical aesthetics in ways that make midcareer Strauss very much part of it. Strauss may emerge as less a transition figure than a forerunner. A convincing account of twentieth-century aesthetic history might place Richard Strauss (and not Arnold Schoenberg) in the centre of 'the twentieth century as we know it'.²⁰

Here, then, is part of the answer to the second of my two questions posed above: why now? While it is not my intention to place Strauss 'in the centre' of a revisionist history of twentieth-century music, this thesis nevertheless belongs to the project of recent musicological endeavour (a project in which Botstein's essay holds a seminal place) which argues the case for Strauss as a composer worthy of serious study, a composer whose relevance to music history did not end in 1909 with *Elektra*. Indeed, as Botstein suggests, it is the postmodern climate of recent times that has afforded conditions sympathetic to the reconsideration of Strauss.

This is not to suggest, however, that recent Strauss scholarship has turned its back on the body of criticism hostile to Strauss—the work of Adorno, for instance—in the quest to present him as a newly packaged, problem-free composer. On the

²⁰ Leon Botstein, 'The Enigmas of Richard Strauss: A Revisionist View', in Gilliam, *Richard Strauss and His World*, 15. Although Botstein dates the so-called 'Strauss revival' from the last quarter of the twentieth century, in music scholarship it can hardly be said to have commenced before the publication in the early 1990s of two collections of essays edited by Bryan Gilliam (one of which contains

contrary, scholars such as Botstein, James Hepokoski, Michael P. Steinberg, Timothy L. Jackson, Sander Gilman, Carolyn Abbate, Lawrence Kramer, Linda Hutcheon and Michael Hutcheon, and Peter Franklin have been keen to wade into the murky, problem-infested waters that have long swirled around Strauss and his works (the sorts of problems identified by Adorno: Strauss and programme music, Strauss and *fin-de-siècle* decadence, Strauss's relationship with modernism and the avant-garde, Strauss's relationship with the Nazi regime) precisely for the purpose of addressing Straussian problems in all their complexity.²¹ And complex they are. For a composer formerly written off as an ornament in the history of twentieth-century music (and, indeed, a composer of ornaments), Strauss has more recently been shown to be a composer of relevance, someone whose works touch upon and engage in key issues in the century's aesthetic, ideological, and political discourses.

Nevertheless, as is apparent from the work of the scholars listed above, recent Strauss scholarship has focussed principally on the compositions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and, jumping ahead by a few decades, those of the 1930s and 1940s. With the exception of Botstein's essay, there has been no critical

Botstein's essay): *Richard Strauss and His World*, and *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1992).

²¹ James Hepokoski, 'Structure and Program in *Macbeth*: A Proposed Reading of Strauss's First Symphonic Poem', and Michael P. Steinberg, 'Richard Strauss and the Question', in Gilliam, *Richard Strauss and His World*, 67-89 and 164-89 respectively; Hepokoski, 'Fiery-Pulsed Libertine or Domestic Hero? Strauss's *Don Juan* Reinvestigated', and Timothy L. Jackson, 'The Metamorphosis of *Metamorphosen*: New Analytical and Source-Critical Discoveries', in Gilliam, *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives*, 135-75 and 193-241 respectively; Sander Gilman, 'Strauss and the Pervert', in *Reading Opera*, ed. Arthur Groos and Roger Parker (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 306-27; Carolyn Abbate, 'Opera, or the Envoicing of Women', in *Musicology and Difference*, ed. Ruth A. Solie (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 225-58; Lawrence Kramer, 'Culture and Musical Hermeneutics: The *Salome* Complex', *Cambridge Opera Journal* 2 (1990), 269-94, and 'Fin-de-siècle fantasies: *Elektra*, degeneration and sexual science', *Cambridge Opera Journal* 5 (1993), 141-65; Linda Hutcheon and Michael Hutcheon, 'Staging the Female Body: Richard Strauss's *Salome*', in *Siren Songs*, ed. Mary Ann Smart (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 204-21; Peter Franklin, 'Strauss and His Contemporaries: Critical Perspectives', in *The Richard Strauss Companion*, ed. Mark-Daniel Schmid (Westport and London: Praeger, 2003), 31-61.

examination of the works of the intervening decades. Moreover, while all of these studies involve detailed examination of particular aspects of the composer and/or his compositions and/or reception, their essay-length form is such that they cannot enlarge their critique beyond the limits of the small scale.

Large-scale studies of Strauss have indeed appeared in recent years—four of them in one year, 1999, the fiftieth anniversary of the composer’s death—but they have had a biographical focus and have tended either to sing the composer’s glory (Kennedy) or shout his condemnation (Boyden) and have generally paid lip-service to the recent wave of scholarly interest in Strauss and his works.²² As one would expect, Strauss’s anniversary year was also the catalyst for the publication of new Strauss studies in Germany but, as with the recent large-scale English-language studies, they hold a marginal place among what can be considered truly innovative in recent Strauss scholarship.²³ Walter’s monograph, for instance, is highly schematic, and although it devotes separate headings to a number of relevant topics (Strauss’s opportunism, for example, and his anti-Semitism), it fails to address them in sufficient depth. This is also a curiously lopsided volume: the last decades of the composer’s life and career are dispensed with in a surprisingly brief closing chapter. Werbeck’s study, on the other hand, is impressive in its attention to detail—in reconstructing the chronology of Strauss’s tone poems from initial sketches to finished works—but the

²² Michael Kennedy, *Richard Strauss: Man, Musician, Enigma* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Matthew Boyden, *Richard Strauss* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999); Bryan Gilliam, *The Life of Richard Strauss* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Tim Ashley, *Richard Strauss* (London: Phaidon, 1999). The latter two monographs attempt to present a more balanced picture of the composer than the former two and, as such, are largely successful, although Gilliam’s study includes a good number of careless factual errors.

²³ Two large-scale German publications of recent years include Michael Walter, *Richard Strauss und seine Zeit* (Laaber: Laaber Verlag, 2000) and Walter Werbeck, *Die Tondichtungen von Richard Strauss* (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1996). Recent collections of essays include Hanspeter Krellmann, ed., *Wer*

author avoids engaging with the works at a deeper critical level. He presents us with a mass of factual information but we are left wondering what it all means.

It is my intention, then, to present in this thesis a large-scale study that focuses in particular on works which recent critical writing has tended to ignore: *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Intermezzo*. Discussion of the operas is preceded by the examination of an early work, the *Burleske* for piano and orchestra, mainly for the purpose of introducing parody theory and for presenting the case for Strauss as a parodist from the time of his earliest maturity. As I explain in the first chapter, commentators have long made passing mention of the parodic tone that very frequently informs Strauss's compositions (either in part or in whole), but Strauss's recourse to parody and, in particular, the critical work that parody carries out in his compositions, have never been the subject of serious examination.

By utilising parody as the means to open up Strauss's compositions to critical investigation, I am acknowledging, a priori, that these works operate on levels deeper and richer than the exterior they present. I reject, therefore, Adorno's claim that Strauss's works are 'nothing but surface'. Given that parody is a double-voiced device—that it communicates two (possibly more) simultaneous layers of meaning—it declares, by its very nature, the presence of sub-surface events. Voice, of course, is a term that has gained currency in recent musical scholarship. Edward T. Cone's *The Composer's Voice* and Carolyn Abbate's *Unsung Voices* are foremost among recent (or relatively recent) studies which examine the possibility of multiple voices in

war Richard Strauss? (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1999), and Bernd Gellermann, ed., *Richard Strauss und die Moderne* (München: Münchener Philharmoniker, [1999]).

musical works.²⁴ Both studies consider, in particular, the function of voice in the process of musical narration. Although I take up the notion of voice, it is not for the purpose of examining narration but, rather, attitude and tone. As such, the term functions for my purposes as it generally does for literary theorists: the presence of a parodic (or ironic) voice in a literary work is one that is marked by attitude and tone, qualities which are inscribed in the writing and are perceptible to the (astute) reader. I argue, then, that Strauss's parodic voices are likewise marked by cues in the text (in this case, the musical text), that they are instances where the composer signals (through a variety of means) the presence of a voice additional (and contrary) to the one that is heard on the music's surface.

It would be negligent to conclude this introduction without offering an explanation of my title: 'Parody Lost and Regained' (indeed, I would hope that the title proposes more than merely a parodic rendering of Milton). 'Parody lost', as applied here, can be understood in several respects. Above all, it implies that Strauss's parodic voices have been lost both in the course of the performance history of his works and in the history of Strauss scholarship. As discussed in chapter two, *Der Rosenkavalier* seems in particular to have suffered this fate; that over the course of time its parodic voices have been minimised to an ever greater extent (relative to the maximisation of the opera's sentimental and nostalgic qualities) to the point where it may be genuinely surprising to discover that the work contains significant elements of parody at all (elements which, on occasion, work against the sentimental and the nostalgic). In my discussion of *Ariadne auf Naxos*, however, I argue that parody was

²⁴ Edward T. Cone, *The Composer's Voice* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974); Carolyn Abbate, *Unsung Voices* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991). Mention must

lost in the revision process in which the original opera of 1912 was transformed into the work better known to us today, the revised opera of 1916. In this case, it was not the opera's reception that erased (or, at very least, muffled) its parodic voices but, rather, the efforts of the composer himself (who may, indeed, have been prompted to do so in response to the generally poor reception of the original work).²⁵ As for 'parody regained', the most obvious implication here is for this thesis. My objective in highlighting Strauss's skilful use of parody is to reclaim Strauss from the oblivion to which music scholarship had until quite recently consigned both him and his works.²⁶ Finally, it is well to remember that just as parody can be lost in performance, so too can it be regained. Strauss's operas have not only interested a new generation of music scholars, they have attracted a new generation of opera producers who, like their scholarly counterparts, have been struck by the relevance, sophistication, and complexity of works previously thought to be so encumbered by their performance history as to offer little scope for reappraisal. It is not at all inconceivable that, in the fullness of time, that which has been lost in performance will be regained. Early signs are promising.

also be made of Abbate's 'Elektra's Voice', in *Richard Strauss: Elektra*, ed. Derrick Puffett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 107-27.

²⁵ Nevertheless, I also point out that, as if to compensate for the loss of parodic moments in the *opera seria*, the *Vorspiel* of the 1916 version presents its own occasions of parody.

²⁶ One is reminded of a comment made by Stravinsky: 'I would like to admit all Strauss operas to whichever purgatory punishes triumphant banality. Their musical substance is cheap and poor; it cannot interest a musician today'; Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1959), 83.

CHAPTER I

STRAUSS, PARODY, AND THE BURLESQUE IN THE *BURLESKE*

‘The genius of the *Burleske* is that it shows Strauss using parody as an act of homage’.¹

‘Strauss’s *Burleske* decidedly has some genius in it, but in other respects it’s horrifying’.²

In his discussion of the adolescent Mendelssohn, Charles Rosen points out that ‘every young composer imitates, as Bach had imitated Buxtehude and Vivaldi, and Mozart had imitated Haydn and Johann Christian Bach’.³ What is extraordinary in the case of Mendelssohn, according to Rosen, is that he chose the music of *late-period* Beethoven (‘the most eccentric and imaginative works of the final years’) as the model upon which to fashion his teenage forays into the chamber music repertory. Rosen explains further the inescapable presence of Beethoven (above all) in the musical imagination of German composers of Mendelssohn’s generation:

For Mendelssohn, Beethoven was the new point of departure, and a German composer could not afford to ignore him, as Chopin and Verdi were able to do. Gradually a body of classical work had been assembled from Mozart and Beethoven. That is why composers like Hummel, Schubert, and Mendelssohn not only learned from their forerunners but display that learning proudly: they deliberately quote from the new classical canon just as poets of the eighteenth century displayed quotations from the classical Latin poets for the pleasure of connoisseurs. Later, with Brahms, this was to become a basic principle of composition.⁴

¹ Michael Kennedy, *Richard Strauss: Man, Musician, Enigma* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 50.

² Letter from Hans von Bülow to Johannes Brahms (11 January 1891), quoted in Willi Schuh, *Richard Strauss: A Chronicle of the Early Years 1864-1898*, trans. Mary Whittall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 107.

³ Charles Rosen, *The Romantic Generation* (London: HarperCollins, 1996), 570.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 582.

I would argue, however, that more is at stake here than the mere display of learning, for by quoting from the newly canonic repertory nineteenth-century composers were not only demonstrating their indebtedness to a 'classical' source but staking their own claim in that repertory, declaring the status of their masterwork-derived creations as music worthy enough to sit beside the acknowledged 'greats'. By borrowing from the canon one was able not only to inscribe the canonic into one's music but (ideally) to inscribe one's music into the canon.

The canon of orchestral music was quite firmly in place by the final third of the nineteenth century and both composers and audiences were well aware of who was and was not a member of the club. How could Brahms's Symphony no. 1 (1876) *not* be taken seriously when it so obviously (and so respectfully) took up the sound world of Beethoven's symphonies? This is music that was *calculated* to win the soubriquet 'the Tenth'.⁵ Indeed, the *hommage* makes plain, on the one hand, the indebtedness of the succeeding composer to the preceding one and, on the other, the precocious skill of the succeeding composer in taking up, exposing, and manipulating the styles, gestures, idioms, and techniques of the esteemed model. Composer B was not in the business of being mistaken for composer A (we are not concerned with musical forgeries here) but he was rather keen to have himself and his work projected into A's celebrated orbit.⁶ The *hommage* pays homage to a figure or a particular work from the past but, in doing so, hopes also to reflect well upon its own condition.

⁵ A soubriquet popularised by Hans von Bülow; David Brodbeck, *Brahms: Symphony No. 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 84-6.

⁶ The finale of Hummel's Piano Sonata in F minor, Op. 20, includes a quotation from Mozart's Symphony no. 41. Rosen makes the point that 'Hummel quotes the *Jupiter* because it is a famous masterpiece and elevates his coda into the empyrean'; *Sonata Forms*, rev. ed. (New York and London: Norton, 1988), 367.

On 1 October 1885, Richard Strauss, who was then aged twenty-one, began his professional career when he took up the sought-after post of assistant to conductor Hans von Bülow in the provincial German town of Meiningen.⁷ Under Bülow, Meiningen's ducal court orchestra came to be regarded as one of the finest ensembles in Germany; its prestige and renown were wildly disproportionate to the town's status.⁸ Barely a fortnight after Strauss commenced his assistantship (which carried the rather grand title Hofmusikdirektor), Johannes Brahms arrived in Meiningen for a series of concerts including the première of his Fourth Symphony.⁹ Since the early 1880s Bülow and the Meiningen orchestra had forged a close association with Brahms. The fact that the Fourth Symphony received its première in Meiningen is testament to that association (and also to the stature of the orchestra). As we shall see, the conjunction of Brahms and Bülow in Meiningen was to have a direct bearing upon the composition of Strauss's *Burleske*.

Brahms's works had not featured prominently in Strauss's musical upbringing, an education which dished up large portions of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert and meagre rations of living composers. Strauss's father, Franz, who was principal horn player in the Bavarian Court Orchestra, made no secret of his lack of interest in most contemporary music and his abhorrence of *Zukunftsmusik* and took it upon himself to steer his son away from what he regarded as potentially pernicious

⁷ Strauss was invited to take up the post. Gustav Mahler, Felix von Weingartner, and Louis Nicodé all expressed interest in the position; Michael Walter, *Richard Strauss und seine Zeit* (Laaber: Laaber Verlag, 2000), 59.

⁸ To be fair, Meiningen was also celebrated for its court theatre which staged not only the classics but also recent works such as Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. Indeed, Duke Georg II of Saxe-Meiningen directed plays himself and took as his wife the actress Ellen Franz who, ennobled, was granted the title Freifrau von Heldburg; Schuh, *Chronicle*, 103. For a contemporary assessment of both theatre in Meiningen and the town's orchestra, see Eduard Hanslick, 'The Meiningen Court Orchestra', in *Eduard Hanslick: Music Criticisms 1846-99*, trans. Henry Pleasants (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1963), 231-5.

musical influences. Nevertheless, excursions away from *Vaterstadt* Munich provided Strauss with excellent opportunities to acquaint himself with repertoire neglected or discouraged in the family home. A trip to Berlin during the winter of 1883-4, for example, allowed Strauss to form his own, untrammelled opinion about the music of Brahms and, after attending performances of the Third Symphony, he had the courage to declare to his father that the work 'is completely wonderful and you too would find it splendid'.¹⁰ Some days later, Strauss confessed to his friend Ludwig Thuille: 'I'm beginning to get very attached to Brahms as a whole, he's always interesting and very often really beautiful as well'.¹¹ Strauss's first letter home upon arriving in Meiningen in September 1885 records his 'joy' at the prospect of Brahms coming to town around the middle of the following month.¹²

Canonic works (both current and impending) were on the agenda right from the start of Strauss's tenure in Meiningen. The orchestra's rehearsal schedule for the first week included the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies and Fourth and Fifth Piano Concertos by Beethoven, Mozart's Requiem and C-minor Piano Concerto (K. 491), Brahms's First and Third Symphonies, his two Piano Concertos, and the *Tragic Overture*.¹³ The following week brought further immersion in the Brahms *oeuvre* with Strauss

⁹ According to a letter from Strauss to his father (18 October 1885), Brahms arrived on 17 October; Richard Strauss, *Briefe an die Eltern*, ed. Willi Schuh (Zürich: Atlantis, 1954), 62.

¹⁰ '...die ganz wunderschön ist und auch Dir ganz famos gefallen wird'; letter of 30 January 1884, *ibid.*, 37.

¹¹ Letter of 8 March 1884; Schuh, *Chronicle*, 68.

¹² 'Am 15. kommt, denkt Euch meine Freude, Brahms, um hier zum erstenmal seine Vierte Sinfonie zu probieren, das wird herrlich'; letter of 30 September 1885, *Briefe and die Eltern*, 56. As pointed out above, Strauss cites 17 October as Brahms's arrival date in a subsequent letter to his father.

¹³ Brahms's Fourth Symphony may also have been in rehearsal in the first week of October, but this is not altogether clear from Strauss's letters to his parents. Among Strauss's duties in Meiningen was sole responsibility for the town Choral Society, hence the inclusion of Mozart's Requiem in this list. Raff's *Fatherland Symphony* and chamber music by Brahms, Davidoff, and Franck were also rehearsed in the first week; *ibid.*, 56-8. In a letter written to Brahms on 25 September 1885, Bülow mentions that it is the Duke's wish that the October concerts strongly feature the music of Beethoven in order to draw

conducting rehearsals of the Violin Concerto and a performance of the A-major Serenade, Op. 16. While Strauss was not particularly enamoured of the latter work (he described it as ‘ungrateful’), he was full of praise for the former and, tellingly, ranked it as a concerto worthy to stand beside Beethoven’s.¹⁴ Within a matter of days, however, it was Brahms’s turn to hear the music of the youthful Hofmusikdirektor. On 18 October Strauss conducted a performance of his Symphony in F minor Op. 12 and at the same concert appeared as solo pianist in the Mozart C-minor Concerto for which he had written his own cadenzas. This was not the first performance of Strauss’s Second Symphony: it received its première in New York City in December 1883 and the first German performance took place in Cologne in January 1884.¹⁵ Nevertheless, its inclusion in the Meiningen programme meant that newcomer Strauss was presented before his audience (and Germany’s pre-eminent symphonist) as a young musician of considerable promise: conductor, soloist, and composer.¹⁶

Bülow was full of enthusiasm for Strauss’s symphony and declared his Meiningen debut an outstanding success (‘downright breathtaking’).¹⁷ According to one critic, the first movement of the F-minor Symphony ‘recalled Brahms’¹⁸, a point evidently not taken up by the esteemed composer in his post-concert discussion with

as large an audience as possible; Hans von Bülow, *Die Briefe an Johannes Brahms* (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1994), 56.

¹⁴ Letter to Strauss’s mother, 28 October 1885; *Briefe an die Eltern*, 66.

¹⁵ Hermann Levi conducted a performance in Munich in November 1885, a month after the Meiningen concert, and performances took place in Berlin, Dresden, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Leipzig, Bremen, Basel, and Cologne over the next four years; Schuh, *Chronicle*, 131.

¹⁶ Strauss the composer was not entirely unknown in Meiningen: his Horn Concerto Op. 11 was premièred there earlier that same year, 4 March 1885.

¹⁷ Letter of 20 October 1885 to publisher Eugen Spitzweg: ‘Strauss: *homme d’or*. Symphony capital. His playing—like his conducting début—downright breathtaking. If he wants to, he can step into my shoes tomorrow, with H. H.’s consent’; Schuh, *Chronicle*, 99.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 100, unnamed critic.

Strauss who was later to record that Brahms offered the following comments and advice:

In his laconic manner he said to me 'Quite nice', but then added the following memorable piece of advice: 'Take a good look at Schubert's dances, young man, and try your luck at the invention of simple eight-bar melodies'.[...] I also remember clearly a further criticism made by the great master: 'Your symphony is too full of thematic irrelevancies. There is no point in this piling up of many themes which are only contrasted rhythmically on one triad'.¹⁹

In a subsequent letter home, Strauss mentioned that Brahms made some 'very interesting' comments about his symphony but he took care to avoid mentioning specific details in order not to provoke yet another reproachful letter from his overbearing father.²⁰

On 25 October, exactly a week after Strauss's Meiningen triumph, Brahms took charge of the baton and conducted the première of his Fourth Symphony. Brahms's Violin Concerto, performed by the celebrated virtuoso Adolph Brodsky, also featured on the programme. It is clear from Strauss's correspondence that he had the highest regard for both of these works and that the fervent admiration for Brahms's music kindled during the Berlin trip more than eighteen months previously had not wavered in the slightest.²¹ Strauss's letters also record the enthusiasm and interest he had for

¹⁹ Richard Strauss, 'Reminiscences of Hans von Bülow', in *Recollections and Reflections*, ed. Willi Schuh, trans. L. J. Lawrence (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1953), 123-4. *Recollections and Reflections* is a partial translation of *Richard Strauss: Betrachtungen und Erinnerungen*, ed. Willi Schuh (Zürich: Atlantis, 1949). Sometimes I cite from one and sometimes from the other. It is important to note that many of the entries in *Recollections and Reflections* are abridged, a fact not indicated at any point in the volume.

²⁰ To no avail: Franz Strauss heard the specifics of Brahms's comments from two of Strauss's friends who happened to be at the concert, Ludwig Thuille and Count Seilern, and dashed off a letter fully in support of Brahms's counsel; *Briefe an die Eltern*, 64-5.

²¹ In a letter to his mother on 12 October, Strauss points out that he will conduct Brahms's Violin Concerto on the 25th, yet in letters home after the concert he makes no mention of having done so. It seems far more likely that Brahms conducted the work: Bülow invited him to do so in a letter of 7 October 1885; Bülow, *Briefe an Johannes Brahms*, 57. In a letter to his father of 24 October, Strauss writes of Brahms's Fourth Symphony in exceptionally praiseworthy terms: 'Seine neue Sinfonie ist nun allerdings ein Riesenwerk, von einer Grösse der Konzeption und Erfindung, Genialität in der Formbehandlung, Periodenbau, von emientem Schwung und Kraft, neu und originell und doch von A bis Z echter Brahms'; *Briefe an die Eltern*, 63-4.

the company of Brahms; he describes one particular two-hour meeting with the composer as ‘unforgettable’.²²

But closer familiarity with Brahms and his music was not the only influential experience of Strauss’s first month in Meiningen. Alexander Ritter, second Konzertmeister of the Meiningen orchestra, passionate Wagnerite and equally passionate Brahms detractor, extended the hand of friendship to Strauss very shortly after he arrived in town. Ritter, who was also a composer, was to become an important figure in Strauss’s life over the next ten years. Julie Ritter, Alexander’s mother, offered financial support to Wagner throughout the 1850s and both mother and another son, Karl, are mentioned on a number of occasions in *Mein Leben*. Ritter’s wife, Franziska (née Wagner), was a niece of the composer’s and, through her, close contact with the Wagner family was maintained.²³ At the same time that Strauss was writing letters home full of praise for Brahms and his works he was conveying favourable impressions of Alexander Ritter, ‘a very nice, kind, cultivated man’.²⁴ Both Brahms and Ritter were exactly the same age (born 1833) and belonged roughly to the same generation as Strauss’s father (born 1822). Together with Bülow (born 1830), this was a formidable group of paternal figures for the young Strauss.

By December 1885, Brahms having long since departed Meiningen, Strauss was seeing a ‘great deal’ of the ‘very cultivated’ Ritter and, indeed, spent Christmas that year with Ritter *en famille*.²⁵ Strauss was by this time the sole conductor in

²² ‘Dienstag nachmittag sassen Grosser und ich über zwei Stunden in Brahms’ Zimmer bei hochinteressanten Gesprächen, ein für mich unvergesslicher Nachmittag’; *Briefe an die Eltern*, 67.

²³ In a letter to his father of 6 March 1886, Strauss mentions that Franziska Ritter has taken an Italian journey with Wagner’s children; *ibid.*, 89.

²⁴ Letter of 12 October 1885: ‘[Ritter] ist persönlich ein sehr netter und lebenswürdiger, gebildeter Mann’; *ibid.*, 60.

²⁵ Letter of 20 December 1885: ‘[Ritter ist] ein reizender, sehr gebildeter Mensch und mit dem ich viel verkehre’; *ibid.*, 73.

Meiningen for Bülow had tendered his resignation at the end of November and was on a tour of Russia. It would be incorrect to suggest that Strauss was an early convert to Ritter's anti-Brahms position; yet it seems clear that there was a waning in his devotion to Brahms once the euphoria of the October visit had passed. Brahms's next visit to Meiningen, in early April 1886, provoked none of the enthusiasm that was so clearly evident in Strauss's correspondence at the time of the earlier tour. It is not that Strauss expressed in writing any hostility towards Brahms and his music but, rather, in most instances he simply failed to discuss the composer and his works beyond stating the mere facts.²⁶ Nevertheless, the programme of the 2 April concert is telling: Brahms conducted his Fourth Symphony and *Variations on a theme by Joseph Haydn* while Strauss conducted the Prelude and 'Liebestod' from *Tristan und Isolde*.²⁷ Given that Strauss was now responsible for the orchestra we may presume that this provocative programme was of his own making (albeit with the approval of the Duke).²⁸ In his report of the event to Bülow in St Petersburg, Strauss compared Brahms's conducting unfavourably with Bülow's but expressed his pleasure at hearing the Fourth Symphony 'afresh' and declared it 'the most powerful utterance in instrumental music since Beethoven'.²⁹ While, on the face of it, this seems complimentary enough, Strauss, of course, is reporting to Bülow exactly what he knows Bülow wants to hear. He also discreetly circumvents taking sides in the Brahms-Wagner controversy by recognising Brahms's significant contribution to the

²⁶ In a letter to his father of 6 April Strauss writes not one single word about Brahms's Fourth Symphony, the work he praised so highly the previous October; *ibid.*, 91-2.

²⁷ The 'Liebestod' was sung by Therese Malten, the first Kundry. The programme also included Strauss's C-minor Concert Overture (TrV 125) and songs by Brahms. Letter from Strauss to Bülow, 7 April 1886; *Hans von Bülow and Richard Strauss: Correspondence*, ed. Willi Schuh and Franz Trenner, trans. Anthony Gishford (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1955), 30.

²⁸ In a letter of 13 January 1886 to conductor Franz Wüllner, Strauss writes: 'Herr von Bülow's departure means that I can direct and manage things here exactly as I like'; Schuh, *Chronicle*, 106.

field of 'instrumental music'. Slightly more than a week after this concert Strauss left Meiningen for good and, after an Italian holiday and a period of time devoted to composition, took up the post of third Kapellmeister in Munich.

Strauss's five-month term in Meiningen yielded a modest number of compositions: he completed the Eight Songs Op. 10 (begun in August, just prior to taking up the Meiningen post), *Der Bardengesang* (for male chorus and orchestra, now lost), the cadenzas for the Mozart C-minor Concerto (also lost) and, most importantly, the *Burleske*.³⁰ For piano soloist and orchestra, the single-movement *Burleske* was begun in early November 1885 and finished by the end of February the following year. In other words, it was commenced in the period immediately following Strauss's rapture over the visit by Brahms and worked on in the four-month period when Bülow, for the most part, was on tour and Strauss's friendship with Ritter intensified. Lasting approximately twenty minutes in performance, the *Burleske* is conventionally regarded as a work in which the presence of Brahms is deeply felt, a point reinforced by Strauss himself who, late in life, cited it as a product of his short-lived devotion to Brahms, his *Brahmsschwärmerei*.³¹ What is not altogether clear, however, is whether Brahms's presence is to be understood as a positive or negative force. Put another way, do the work's 'Brahmsian' characteristics operate as homage or parody? Is Strauss drawing upon the newly canonic in order to signify his continuity with it or is his purpose to contest it?

²⁹ Letter of 7 April 1886; *Hans von Bülow and Richard Strauss: Correspondence*, 30.

³⁰ A Rhapsody in C-sharp minor for Piano and Orchestra was commenced but later abandoned. The lost *Bardengesang* (TrV 144) of 1886, a setting of Kleist, should not be confused with the extant *Bardengesang* (TrV 219) of 1905, a setting of Klopstock.

³¹ Richard Strauss, 'Aus meinen Jugend- und Lehrjahren', in *Betrachten und Erinnerungen*, 207.

It is not at all difficult to locate passages in the work which conjure up the sound world of Brahms, sometimes to the extent of near quotation. Indeed, this has been well commented upon in the Strauss literature. Ernest Newman pointed out the resemblance between the piano entry at the opening of the *Burleske* and the theme of Brahms's D-minor Ballade Op. 10, no. 1³², a connection echoed by Norman Del Mar.³³ More recently, R. Larry Todd has argued that there are both motivic and thematic links between the *Burleske* and the Scherzo of Brahms's Second Piano Concerto.³⁴ (We should recall that both of the Brahms concertos were played in Meiningen very shortly after Strauss's arrival, only a matter of weeks before work on the *Burleske* got underway.) Even when he is not alluding to Brahms in his thematic or motivic material, Strauss refers to the elder statesman by other means.

The first orchestral *tutti* (Example 1.1) recalls Brahms in its use of hemiola: bars 5-8 comprise four bars of notated 3/4 but the bass, bassoon, and horns in bars 5-6 hammer out one bar of 3/2, thereby disturbing the symmetry of the phrase. This material returns in bar 13 but Strauss takes the rhythmic ambiguity further by suggesting two bars of 3/2 (bars 13-16), two bars of 3/4 (17-18), two bars of 2/4 (19-20¹), and one bar of 3/4 (19²-20¹). At this point the soloist enters (with the Brahms Ballade head motive) and enunciates a nine-bar theme. Rather than taking Schubert as his model and inventing 'simple eight-bar melodies', as Brahms advised him to do, Strauss clearly has taken Brahms as his model and would seem to be doing everything possible to avoid the regularity of the eight-bar phrase. The use of textures typical of

³² Ernest Newman, *Richard Strauss* (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1908), 35.

³³ Norman Del Mar, *Richard Strauss: A Critical Commentary on his Life and Works*, 3 vols. (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1962-72), I, 37.

BURLESKE

Richard Strauss
(1864–1949)

Allegro vivace.

5 10

Kleine Flöte.

2 große Flöten.

2 Oboen.

2 Clarinetten in B.

2 Fagotte.

2 Hörner in F.

2 Hörner in D.

Trompeten in F.

4 Pauken.

Allegro vivace.

Pianoforte Solo.

Violine I

Violine II.

Bratsche.

Violoncell.

Baß.

Allegro vivace.

Example 1.1: bb.1-35.

³⁴ R. Larry Todd, 'Strauss before Liszt and Wagner: Some Observations', in *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1992), 7-11.

15 20 Solo.

This musical score is for a string quartet, consisting of four staves (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass). The music is written in a key with one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The score is divided into two systems. The first system starts at measure 15 and ends at measure 20. The second system starts at measure 21 and ends at measure 26. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The dynamics *ff* (fortissimo) and *p* (piano) are used throughout. The word 'Solo.' is written above the first staff at measure 20 and above the second staff at measure 24. The second system includes the markings 'pizz.' (pizzicato) and 'arco' (arco) for the string parts.

Example 1.1 (cont.)

the music of Brahms are also prevalent. Strauss reproduces in the piano writing Brahms's preference for thickly-scored textures and chords voiced in thirds and sixths. In the orchestral writing too we find textures typical of Brahms's music. An especially obvious example of the influence of Brahms is the theme which appears at bar 288 (Example 1.2). Not only is this orchestral *tutti* strongly reminiscent of Brahms's style—with its syncopated rhythm, thick texture, and massed strings soaring to upper registers—it is strongly reminiscent of the orchestral writing in Brahms's most recent symphonic work, the Meiningen-premiered Fourth Symphony.

It has been argued, however, that Brahms is not the only composer whose stylistic fingerprints make an impression on the score of the *Burleske*, and that the imprint of Wagner is also evident at various strategic points (not surprising, perhaps, given the contrary influences upon Strauss at this time). Todd cites a reference to *Tristan und Isolde* in the cadenza (the *calando* passage at bars 957-63, Example 1.3) and argues that 'the *martellato* passage toward the end, with its insistent tremolo on D and rising octaves in the bass, sounds like a droll re-enactment of the storm from *Die Walküre*'³⁵ (Example 1.4). Other commentators have repeated these observations.³⁶ The conventional view, at least in recent scholarship, is that Strauss is here targeting Brahms and Wagner through his parodic treatment either of actual thematic material by these composers or characteristics redolent of their style: '[the *Burleske*] is one of the earliest pieces to use the historical canon as a source for parody [...] the composer

³⁵ Ibid., 13

³⁶ Bryan Gilliam, *The Life of Richard Strauss* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 39; Scott Warfield, 'From "Too Many Works" to "Wrist Exercises": The Abstract Instrumental Compositions of Richard Strauss', in *The Richard Strauss Companion*, ed. Mark-Daniel Schmid

rit. Tutti. 290 a tempo, vivo. **L**

8. rit. a tempo, vivo Tutti.

rit. ff a tempo, vivo **L**

Example: 1.2: bb. 284-305

(Westport and London: Praeger, 2003), 209; *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed.,

The musical score is written for a large ensemble, including strings, woodwinds, and brass. It features complex rhythmic patterns, dynamic markings like *ff* and *ffp*, and a *Solo.* section for a woodwind instrument. The tempo is marked **300**. The score is divided into three systems. The first system includes a woodwind solo section. The second system features a woodwind solo section. The third system continues the ensemble's complex rhythmic patterns.

Example 1.2 (cont.)

s.v. 'Burlesque: Instrumental Music', by Erich Schwandt.

sempre quasi Cadenza

910

Pfte. *ff*

920

930

mf

cresc.

940

ff

950

dim.

calando

960

Li a tempo, ma tranquillo

970

laggiero

pp.

Br.

Baß.

pizz.

Example 1.3: bb. 904-972

1030

The musical score is divided into three systems. The first system includes staves for Kl. Fl., Gr. Fl., Ob., Clar., Pauk., Pfte., Viol. I., Viol. II., and Br. The second system includes Gr. Fl., Ob., Clar., Fag., F-Hör., D-Hör., Tromp., and Pauk. The third system includes Pfte., Viol. I., Viol. II., Br., and Vol. The score features various musical notations including notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *mf* and *f*. A rehearsal mark with the number 8 is present above the Pfte. staff in the third system.

Example 1.4 (cont.)

takes clear delight in burlesquing Brahms (with the piano concerti) and Wagner'.³⁷ Elsewhere, it has been suggested that the reworking of Brahms is not so much mockery but, rather, 'parody as an act of homage'.³⁸ 'Parody' might appear to be an inappropriate term in this latter case—the notion of parody as homage—but, without necessarily wishing to concur with this interpretation of the *Burleske*, the word is not inevitably incorrect. While 'parody' is a term that can lay claim to ancient origins, its complex etymology has given rise to a wide range of usage in the modern period. Before we can proceed with a closer investigation of the *Burleske* and its parodic strategies, it is necessary, therefore, to examine the term 'parody' more closely and to consider in detail its theoretical applications.

The Nature of Parody

The prefix 'para' can be understood to mean both 'against' and 'beside'. This ambiguity is apparent in parodies from the ancients onwards—the entire history of the form (or technique) in other words. Margaret A. Rose, in her discussion of the ancient Greek word 'parodia' (παρωδία), points out that 'the ambivalence of great parody—from Aristophanes to today—of apparent empathy with and distance from the text imitated—can thus be said to be implied in the classical term itself'.³⁹ Rose, citing Fred W. Householder, refers to Aristophanes's admiringly parodic treatment of

³⁷ Gilliam, *Richard Strauss*, 38-9. It should be noted, however, that there is a difference in Strauss's treatment of these two composers: the sound world of Brahms is literally woven into the fabric of the *Burleske* whereas the Wagner references are momentary.

³⁸ Kennedy, *Richard Strauss*, 50.

³⁹ Margaret A. Rose, *Parody//Meta-Fiction* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), 33. In her analysis of the etymology of parody in *Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), Rose cites the research of classicist F. J. Lelièvre in her discussion of the multiple meanings of the prefix 'para': 'Lelièvre writes that "παρά" may be said to develop two trends of meaning, being used to express such ideas as nearness, consonance and derivation as well as

the works of Euripides as an ancient case in point.⁴⁰ Linda Hutcheon, in presenting a case for rethinking the meaning of parody in light of certain trends in modern and, more particularly, postmodern art, argues that parody as it has been understood in more recent times favours the ‘beside’ rather than ‘against’ position in the interpretation of the ambiguous prefix ‘para’.⁴¹ For example, she uses the term ‘loving parody’ in her description of Peter Greenaway’s film *The Draughtsman’s Contract*: ‘In its attention to visual and verbal detail, this film is a loving parody of eighteenth-century painting and Restoration comedy’.⁴²

Putting the attitude of the parodist aside for one moment, both Aristophanes’s treatment of Euripides and Greenaway’s references to eighteenth-century art forms highlight the fact that, in some way or another, parody deals with the past, be it recent or distant. A parodist takes up, exploits, imitates, comments upon, and refashions an earlier work or idiom. Again, if we may cite ancient usage, the practice of ‘singing in imitation’, of presenting an ode which imitates another—a para-ode—is known to be among the earliest parodic practices.⁴³ (Utilising terminology coined by French literary theorist Gérard Genette, we may refer to the model upon which the parody is based, the material taken up by the parodist, as the ‘hypotext’ and the parody itself as the ‘hypertext’.⁴⁴) In engaging with the past, the parodic hypertext necessarily forms a relationship, however peculiar or skewed, with a given tradition or set of values

transgression, opposition, or difference”, and that “in compounds a synthesis of these two forces may sometimes be found”, 48.

⁴⁰ Rose, *Parody//Meta-Fiction*, 33.

⁴¹ Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody* (New York: Methuen, 1985).

⁴² *Ibid.*, 7.

⁴³ Rose, *Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern*, 7-8. Rose cites the research of Householder.

⁴⁴ Gérard Genette, *Palimpsestes: La Littérature au second degré* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1982). Rose, in *Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern*, utilises terminology suggested by Siegfried J. Schmidt in which text-world one (TW1, the work of the parodist) is contrasted with text-world two (TW2, the work being parodied), 40-2.

(even if its objective is to deride that tradition and criticise those values). At a fundamental level, therefore, parody fosters continuity. In using a pre-existing work, style, or practice as its focal point, the work of parody enters into a dialogue with the past.

Particularly ironic in the case of parody which strongly ridicules the piece, tradition, or practice upon which it is based, is that it ensures the preservation of that which it sets out to scorn. This is a point addressed by Thomas Mann in his discussion of one of the key works of literary parody, Cervantes's *Don Quixote*:

As for *Don Quixote*, it is indeed a strange product: naïve, unique, arbitrary and sovereign in its contradictions. I cannot but shake my head over the single tales scattered through it, so extravagantly sentimental they are, so precisely in the style and taste of the very productions that the poet had set himself to mock.⁴⁵

Parody therefore draws attention to and makes use of something which the parodist might be attempting to dismantle. It both constructs and deconstructs (or, perhaps more accurately, reconstructs *while* it deconstructs); the parodist builds something new with building materials, in part, taken from something old. In Hutcheon's words, it is 'both a re-creation and a creation'.⁴⁶ The dual components that comprise the work of parody point out the fact that it is a double-voiced discourse; it says one thing but it means another (it can appear to be conferring compliments when in fact these are to be taken as insults). What separates parody from irony then (which, after all, also operates on the principle of the double voice; one thing is said but another is meant) is the use of pre-existing material, be it a work, style, or practice. Parody is intertextual *and* double voiced. The composer (or author) transmits two messages to

⁴⁵ Thomas Mann, 'Voyage with *Don Quixote*', in *Cervantes: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Lowrey Nelson Jr. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969), 56.

⁴⁶ Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody*, 51.

be decoded—the hypotext and the hypertext—and the reception of the hypertext is therefore conditional upon being understood in relation to the hypotext.⁴⁷

In order for parody to operate successfully, for the hypertext to carry out its referential function, the object, tradition, or idiom that forms the hypotext should, ideally, be sufficiently well-known. ‘Parodists do not waste their talents on obscure productions’, Isaac D’Israeli astutely reminds us.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, given that a parody contains within it the work, style, or practice which it in fact parodies, it has been argued that the reader (or, presumably, listener) can come to know a formerly unknown hypotext through its incorporation in the new work. Rose argues this point in a lucid summary of the dynamics of parody reception:

The work to be parodied is ‘decoded’ by the parodist and offered again (or ‘encoded’) in a ‘distorted’ or changed form to another decoder, the reader of the parody, whose expectations for the original of the parodied work may also be played upon and evoked and then transformed by the parodist as part of the parody work. If the reader of the parody already knows and has previously decoded the parody target, they will be in a good position to compare it with its new form in the parody, but if they do not already know the target text of the parodist, they may come to know it through its evocation in the parody itself, and to understand the discrepancy between it and the parody text through the latter.⁴⁹

Presumably, the recipient would grasp an unknown hypotext far more easily in the case of general parody (parody of things such as genre and style) than in the case of specific parody (parody of a particular pre-existing work or text). We may cite as an example of the former Donna Elvira’s aria ‘Ah fuggi il traditor’ from Act I of *Don Giovanni*—a parody of a histrionic old-style *seria* aria—and, as an example of the latter, a brief passage in the opening scene of *Das Rheingold*, thought by at least one

⁴⁷ See Rose, *Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern*, 41-2.

⁴⁸ Isaac D’Israeli, ‘A Chapter on Parodies’, in Walter Hamilton, *Parodies of the Works of English and American Authors*, 5 vols. (London: Reeves and Turner, 1884-9); quoted *ibid.*, 57.

⁴⁹ Rose, *Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern*, 39.

commentator to parody both a segment of text from Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots* (the love duet) and music of the love duet, no. 5, from Auber's *Fra Diavolo*.⁵⁰

Implicit in Rose's comments is the view that the hypotext moves through two stages in its transformation from original form to the one grasped by the reader. It is first received by the parodist who 'decodes' it, fashions it otherwise, then passes the transformed work, the hypertext, on to the second receiver, the reader. It would seem that the degree to which the hypotext is apparent to the receiver of the parodist's work is therefore dependent upon *how* the parodist has received it in the first place and the extent to which it has been utilised, distorted or concealed in the hypertext. One could therefore argue that the hypotext potentially exists in two forms, one concrete, the other rather more abstract: the text taken up by the parodist and the text *as read* by the parodist. For instance, while Peter Carey's 1998 novel *Jack Maggs* takes Dickens's *Great Expectations* as its hypotext, Carey, writing from the perspective of a post-colonial Australian author, considers Dickens's character Magwitch, the convict transported to the antipodes, in a manner far removed from the original author's Victorian vantage point. The (ideal) reader of Carey's novel, it could be maintained, makes a connection not only with *Great Expectations* but with Carey's reading of *Great Expectations*. In addition to incorporating the hypotext in the newly fashioned work, the author presents a critique of it. The hypertext is both a text unto itself and a work of criticism.

It should be clear from Rose's comments above that the reader is no mere passive receiver of the double-voiced text but, rather, is implicated in a critical dialogue with it. Whether or not the parody works as parody is, crucially, dependent

⁵⁰ Jean-Jacques Nattiez, *Wagner Androgyne*, trans. Stewart Spencer (Princeton: Princeton University

upon the active involvement of the recipient in picking up the signals from the parodist and locating meaning (and very often humour) in the disjunction between the one text and the other. Hutcheon goes so far as to describe the reader as a co-creator in the parodic process:

Readers are active co-creators of the parodic text in a more explicit and perhaps more complex way than reader-response critics argue that they are in the reading of all texts. While all artistic communication can take place only by virtue of tacit contractual agreements between encoder and decoder, it is part of the particular strategy of both parody and irony that their acts of communication cannot be considered complete unless the precise encoding intention is realized in the recognition of the receiver. In other words, in addition to the usual artistic codes, readers must also recognize that what they are reading *is* a parody, and to what degree and of what type.⁵¹

The degree to which the reader is able to decipher the parodic codes naturally depends upon the depth to which they are embedded in the hypertext and the subtlety with which the author presses them into service (a discreet form of parody will obviously carry more understated signifiers than blatant caricature). We shall have cause to notice that on occasion the parodic intent of Strauss was not always grasped by either critics or audiences.

The task of the receiver in unravelling interpretive cues in the text is potentially complicated in those examples of parody which refer to a target which lies outside the two-way hypotext-hypertext dialogue. It is possible, for example, for a hypotext to be brought into play purely as a *means* for parody but for it not, in fact, to act as the *object* of parody. In other words, the parodic work (the hypertext), which we might call text B, draws upon and alludes to the hypotext, which we might call text A, but does not do so in order to comment upon (or possibly mock) A but, rather, in order to offer a critique of C. The point can be illustrated by means of a literary example. In

Press, 1993), 64-8.

⁵¹ Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody*, 93.

section III of T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* we find a very clear-cut allusion to Spenser's 'Prothalamion'. But Eliot transforms parodically the idyllic, serene Thames landscape of the Spenser ('Against the Bridall day, which is not long: / Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song') in his rendering of a bleak, dystopian panorama ('The river's tent is broken; the last fingers of leaf / Clutch and sink into the wet bank. The wind / Crosses the brown land, unheard. The nymphs are departed. / Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song'). As Simon Dentith points out:

Eliot's parody of Spenser has as its polemical target not the 'Prothalamion', but the contemporary (1920s') state of the Thames, London, and indeed civilisation. Spenser's poem provides Eliot with a kind of standard by which to measure the ugliness of the modern world. [...] This is the predominant direction of the parody in the poem: using Spenser to belittle the contemporary world. It may be, however, that some of Eliot's sexual scepticism about 1920s' London seeps back to Spenser's poem, which does not remain uncontaminated by its association with *The Waste Land*. Despite this possibility, it is clear that, overwhelmingly, the parody is polemically directed towards the world, and it draws on the authority of the parodied text to establish its own evaluative stance.⁵²

The parodic work can therefore be far more equivocal than it might appear to be on first acquaintance. Directions, targets, and idioms are bound up in exchanges which do not necessarily follow simple, well-established codes and patterns. As the discussion above reveals, the parodic dialogue is potentially broader and richer.

Inevitably, the issue of the comic arises in discussion of parody and, in particular, the extent to which the humorous ought to be present in any parody worthy of the name. Some scholars argue that, in keeping with the way in which the ancients understood parody, there should, of necessity, be some humorous effect that comes from the gap between the hypotext and its re-creation in the hypertext. One oft-cited example from the ancient world is Hegemon of Thasos's mock-epic poem the

⁵² Simon Dentith, *Parody* (London: Routledge, 2000), 18. Carey's treatment of *Great Expectations* in *Jack Maggs* surely operates in a similar way, his parodic handling of Dickens's novel is a means to explore issues within it but also beyond it (see Dentith, 181-3).

Batrachomyomachia. In this work, the poet has utilised the form and metre of the heroic epic poem but, crucially, not the content: the battle waged in Hegemon's work is not between gallant human warriors but, rather, frogs and mice. An elevated form and idiom—the Homeric style no less—has been applied to inappropriate subject matter with comic effect arising from the incongruity between style and content.

Aristotle, in his *Poetics*, refers to Hegemon as the first writer of parodies.

Householder, on the basis of Aristotle's discussion, concludes that the ancients understood a parody to be 'a narrative poem of moderate length, in epic metre, using epic vocabulary, and treating a light, satirical, or mock-heroic subject'.⁵³

Aristophanic scholiasts, according to Householder, considered parody to be 'a device for comic quotation'.⁵⁴ (Aristophanes, as referred to above, made occasional parodic references to Euripides, a dramatist he admired but whose style he would, on occasion, apply to incongruous, comic ends.)

A brief discussion of wit and quotation in Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* includes reference to the Greek practice of inventing verses 'resembling well-known lines', something he describes as 'a trick styled parody'.⁵⁵ It would appear that ridicule and mockery were also possible in ancient parody but that they were deemed incidental and not fundamental to parody as it was commonly understood.⁵⁶ Rose cautions that, in any case, modern definitions of words such as ridicule and mockery, with the implication of intense scorn and derision, should be tempered in respect to

⁵³ Fred W. Householder Jr., 'Parodia', *Journal of Classical Philology* 39 (1944), 3-4; quoted in Rose, *Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern*, 12.

⁵⁴ Householder, 'Parodia', 5; quoted *ibid.*, 20.

⁵⁵ Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, trans. H. E. Butler, 4 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960), II, 493.

⁵⁶ Rose, *Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern*, 20-29.

ancient notions of parody where both admiration for and gentle mockery of the hypotext could exist at one and the same time in the work of parody.

In an attempt to deliver a definition of parody which acknowledges both its ancient roots and subsequent history, Rose offers the following:

Parody in its broadest sense and application may be described as first imitating and then changing either, and sometimes both, 'form' and 'content', or style and subject-matter, or syntax and meaning of another work, or, most simply, its vocabulary. In addition to, and at the same time as the preceding, most successful parodies may be said to produce from the comic incongruity between the original and its parody some comic, amusing, or humorous effect, which, together with the changes made by the parodist to the original by the rewriting of the old text, or juxtaposition of it with the new text in which it is embedded, may act as 'signals' of the parodic nature of the parody work for its reader.⁵⁷

She later presents a single-sentence definition of parody: 'parody may be defined in general terms as *the comic refunctioning of preformed linguistic or artistic material*'.⁵⁸ As we can see from both her long and short definitions, Rose considers the comic to be an essential feature of parody. Dentith, on the other hand, excludes any specific mention of the comic in his definition of parody: 'Parody includes any cultural practice which provides a relatively polemical allusive imitation of another cultural production or practice'.⁵⁹ Before offering his definition, Dentith warns that 'discussion of parody is bedevilled by disputes over definition, a fruitless form of argument unless matters of substance are at stake'.⁶⁰

Given the ancient roots of the word, its transliteration in different European tongues, and the many parody-like forms, techniques, and devices which have entered the lexicon since ancient times (pastiche, travesty, spoof...), Dentith makes a point of being as inclusive as possible in his definition and of emphasising dynamic cultural

⁵⁷ Ibid., 45.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 52.

⁵⁹ Dentith, *Parody*, 9.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 6.

practice over more narrow claims based primarily upon etymology. Hutcheon describes parody as ‘a form of imitation, but imitation characterized by ironic inversion, not always at the expense of the parodied text [...] parody is, in another formulation, repetition with critical distance, which marks difference rather than similarity’.⁶¹ Mention was made above of Hutcheon’s use of the term ‘loving parody’ in her discussion of the film *The Draughtsman’s Contract*, which gives some indication of her position *vis-à-vis* parody and comic humour. She argues that definitions which insist upon the need for comic effect are ‘restrictive’, and that ‘a more neutral definition of repetition with critical distance’ allows for ‘the range of intent and effect possible in modern parodic works’.⁶² Hutcheon is not necessarily excluding the possibility of humorous effect in works of parody but, unlike Rose, she does not consider the comic to be a mandatory requirement.⁶³

As applied to music and used in music historiography, the word parody has been understood to signify the comic (possibly including ridicule) as well as the non-comic. The parody mass (*Parodiemesse*), for example, a term first popularised by nineteenth-century German musicologists and applied to sixteenth-century masses of a certain type, is a mass which takes as its basis a pre-existing polyphonic work, most often a motet. It is a parody in the sense that a hypotext (a motet, or, more usually, a part thereof) is incorporated into a newly-written hypertext (a polyphonic mass

⁶¹ Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody*, 6.

⁶² Ibid., 20. One should note the subtitle of Hutcheon’s study, *The Teachings of Twentieth-Century Art Forms*. She discusses the ancient etymology of parody and includes many references to the parodic in the early modern period (post-Middle Ages) but is drawn, in particular, to painting, architecture, literature, and music of the twentieth century.

⁶³ Rose, in fact, is critical of definitions of parody which broaden our understanding of the word to include non-comic parody. In response to Hutcheon’s claims for parody she writes: ‘Hutcheon is one of those critics who have reduced the traditional linkages of parody with comedy, so that the distinguishing peculiarity of parody as a *comic* form of “double-coding” has conveniently gone missing

ordinary) with little or no attempt to disguise or deny the intertextual link between the two. The ambiguous prefix 'para' is here understood to mean 'beside', for the mass setting stands as a quasi-homage to the musical worth and integrity of the motet (and, by implication, its composer). The latter work does not mock or contest the authority of the model, there is no suggestion of the comic in the relationship between hypertext and hypotext nor is there the implication of either critical distance or the polemical. This is parody of a purely neutral, uncritical, non-comic type. In fact, it is quite possibly *too* neutral to carry the term parody and for this reason scholars have made various (largely unsuccessful) attempts to have it replaced by ones less weighed down by suggestions of the pejorative.⁶⁴

Unlike the so-called parody mass, the parody opera exhibits qualities that are far more recognisably parodic. Popular from within a few decades of opera taking up residence in public theatres, the parody opera was a sung theatrical work which subjected the operatic high style to popular and jocular treatment. *The Beggar's Opera*, John Gay and Johann Pepusch's hugely successful ballad opera, with its play on high/low inversions, is a particularly well known English example of the type. In early eighteenth-century France, the courtly *tragédies lyrique* of Lully were treated parodistically in the less elevated fair theatres of Paris, and in nineteenth-century Vienna operas as popular and varied as *Die Zauberflöte*, *La Cenerentola*, and *Tannhäuser* enjoyed a second life in parody versions. Operas of this type are unquestionably parodic in that they clearly show a debt either to a specific hypotext or

by the time she identifies parody with the post-modern via their apparently common use of the double or dual code'; *Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern*, 239.

⁶⁴ For an account of the rise of the term 'parody mass' and a list of proposed alternatives, see Lewis Lockwood, 'On "Parody" as Term and Concept in 16th-Century Music', in *Aspects of Medieval and*

to a specific idiom and they create a critical space between their own condition and that of the text or idiom upon which they are based. In addition, they use satire (which, I should point out, is not a requisite for parody) as a means of articulating their relationship with the work or practice that forms the hypotext. This was made absolutely clear in the case of those eighteenth-century *intermezzi* which, placed between the acts of an *opera seria*, actually made comic references to character and situation in the principal work on the programme. In other words, that which was treated with seriousness in the opera was presented in parodic form in the *intermezzo* that ran parallel with it.⁶⁵

But moments of parody are also possible within operas which we might otherwise regard as non-parodic. Indeed, such moments can be tremendously effective dramatically. *Così fan tutte*, for example, contains several celebrated examples of *seria*-like numbers—numbers which are very subtly at odds with the *buffa* genre to which the opera rightfully belongs—which beg all sorts of questions about the seriousness with which we are to take the characters who sing them (Fiordiligi's Act I aria 'Come scoglio' is an especially noteworthy example). The occasional parodic number in a work not otherwise given over to parody potentially offers mixed messages loaded with interpretive possibilities.⁶⁶ The case of *Così fan tutte* and the subversive parodic manoeuvres contained within it is taken up and discussed in greater detail in chapter two of this thesis.

Renaissance Music: A Birthday Offering to Gustave Reese, ed. Jan LaRue et al. (New York: Pendragon Press, 1978), 560-75.

⁶⁵ *New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, s.v. 'Parody', by Elisabeth Cook and Stanley Sadie. See also Michael F. Robinson, *Naples and Neapolitan Opera* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 184-5, 195.

Strauss and Parody

The word 'parody' has been applied by a range of commentators to a wide variety of compositions by Strauss. We have already noted discussion of the *Burleske* and its so-called use of 'parody as homage'; elsewhere it has been described as a work in which 'Brahms is affectionately parodied throughout'.⁶⁷ A reference to Strauss's first opera, *Guntram*, in a recent history of opera claims that it 'is so indebted to Wagner as to be a parody'.⁶⁸ *Der Rosenkavalier*, with its Mozartian echoes, is sometimes said to offer a parody of the eighteenth century. Willi Schuh, however, draws connections between Strauss's opera and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and claims that it is *Tristan und Isolde* Act II that is parodied in the opening scene of *Rosenkavalier*.⁶⁹ Donald Tovey is less specific when he states that the duet which closes *Rosenkavalier* 'is a kind of parody of the past too gentle to be called caricature'.⁷⁰ The issue of parody is often raised in respect to *Ariadne auf Naxos* (the 'parody and sentimentality',⁷¹ of the *Vorspiel* for instance); *Arabella* has been said to have 'touches of parody',⁷² (indeed, one commentator goes so far as to suggest that it is almost a parody of *Der Rosenkavalier*⁷³); *Die ägyptische Helena* has been described as a 'mythological parody',⁷⁴ and *Friedenstag* as an 'unintentional Wagnerian parody'.⁷⁵

⁶⁶ For further discussion see Mary Hunter, 'Some Representations of *opera seria* in *opera buffa*', *Cambridge Opera Journal* 3 (1991), 3-25.

⁶⁷ Tim Ashley, *Richard Strauss* (London: Phaidon, 1999), 35.

⁶⁸ Paul Griffiths, 'The Twentieth Century: To 1945', in *The Oxford History of Opera*, ed. Roger Parker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 192.

⁶⁹ Willi Schuh, 'Die Entstehung des *Rosenkavalier*', *Trivium* 9 (1951), 77-79. This is discussed in detail in the following chapter.

⁷⁰ Donald Francis Tovey, *The Classics of Music. Talks, Essays, and Other Writings Previously Uncollected*, ed. Michael Tilmouth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 142.

⁷¹ Kennedy, *Richard Strauss*, 213.

⁷² Matthew Boyden, *Richard Strauss* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999), 294.

⁷³ Norman Lebrecht, *The Companion to 20th-Century Music* (London: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 339.

⁷⁴ Gilliam, *Richard Strauss*, 130.

⁷⁵ Michael P. Steinberg, 'Richard Strauss and the Question', in *Richard Strauss and His World*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 178.

All manner of parodic references have been claimed for *Also Sprach Zarathustra*. Romain Rolland thought that one of its themes seemed ‘to be an unconscious parody of a tune from *Faust* set to a dance rhythm’⁷⁶; the fugue in *Zarathustra*, which appears at the ‘Von der Wissenschaft’ section, has been said ‘to parody the artificial and the academic’⁷⁷; while elsewhere it has been argued that the lush, rapturous string writing of the ‘Von der Hinterweltlern’ section offers *faux* sublime in place of genuine transcendence for it is to be understood as a ‘parody of religion’.⁷⁸

As these examples demonstrate, Strauss’s recourse to parody is a long-held view in published criticism and commentary of his works. Strauss’s parodic modes would seem to range from the respectful to the cheerful to the mocking (apparently implemented with varying degrees of intent) and to encompass general styles and idioms, complete works, and parts thereof. Nevertheless, as we can infer from the comments above, actually pinpointing Strauss’s parodic voice is a slippery matter, possibly subjective, open to conjecture and not much given to scrutiny. Indeed, the word ‘parody’ is thrown about a lot in Strauss studies (irrespective of whether or not in all cases it is the correct term) but little if any attention is devoted to the critical work that parody carries out in Strauss’s music. Parody is not impotent: on the contrary, it has the capacity to engage in critique of a most trenchant kind. At the same time, its equivocal nature, shifting perspectives (affirming while at the same

⁷⁶ Romain Rolland, ‘Fragments from Romain Rolland’s Diary’, in *Richard Strauss and Romain Rolland: Correspondence. Together with Fragments from the Diary of Romain Rolland and other essays and an Introduction by Gustave Samazeuilh*, ed. Rollo Myers (London: Calder and Boyers, 1968), 111.

⁷⁷ Leonard B. Meyer, *Style and Music: Theory, History, and Ideology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 222.

⁷⁸ Bryan Gilliam, ‘Richard Strauss’, in *The Nineteenth-Century Symphony*, ed. D. Kern Holoman (New York: Schirmer, 1997), 355.

time contesting), its play of intertextuality, and the web of contingency it spins between author(s), performer, and audience make it rich for investigative study.

Parody and Burlesque

Before returning to the examination of Strauss's *Burleske*, it remains to examine meanings attached to the word 'burlesque' and to situate the word within the study of parody. The French word burlesque arose in the seventeenth century from the sixteenth-century Italian *burlesco*, itself based upon the root, *burla*, meaning ridicule or mockery. Unlike the ancient term parody, burlesque is therefore of considerably more recent origin. Joseph Addison, writing in the early eighteenth century, provides a useful summary of the word as it was then understood:

The two great Branches of Ridicule in Writing are Comedy and Burlesque. The first ridicules Persons by drawing them in their proper Characters, the other by drawing them quite unlike themselves. Burlesque is therefore of two kinds, the first represents mean Persons in the Accoutrements of Heroes, the other describes great Persons acting and speaking like the basest among the People.⁷⁹

Addison here sets up a distinction between what subsequent commentators have termed 'high' and 'low' burlesque. In the former, the commonplace is presented in incongruously elevated terms (a base figure takes on the speech and demeanour of a hero), while in the latter it is the elevated that is coarsened (the heroic figure is presented as rough low life). Given the similarity between Addison's definition of burlesque (a definition which was to prove enduring and influential) and certain types of parody in ancient Greece (for example, Hegemon's battle of the frogs and mice, referred to above) we find that burlesque and parody came to be regarded by some

⁷⁹ Joseph Addison, *The Spectator*, 15 December 1711; quoted in Rose, *Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern*, 57.

commentators as so closely congruent as to be synonymous or very nearly so.⁸⁰

Indeed, parody has not only been described as a 'species' of burlesque (perhaps incorrectly) but defined as 'the high burlesque of a particular work (or author) achieved by applying the style of that work (or author) to a less worthy subject'.⁸¹

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines burlesque as 'that species of literary composition, or of dramatic representation, which aims at exciting laughter by caricature of the manner and spirit of serious works, or by ludicrous treatment of their subjects; a literary or dramatic work of this kind'.⁸² Used as a verb, burlesque means 'to turn into ridicule by grotesque parody or imitation'. We should note, therefore, that while burlesque is intertextual in its workings, it seemingly does not permit that aspect of homage (however slight) which can appear in the parodic dialogue between hypotext and hypertext (allowed by the ambiguous prefix 'para') but, rather, demands that the newer text deride the old.⁸³ Its purpose is to amuse, mock, and ridicule. A parody might, in fact, do none of these things but, then again, and rather confusingly, it might. While burlesque could therefore be thought of as a type of parody (an especially blunt type), parody is not necessarily the equivalent of burlesque and is surely not a species of burlesque. Nevertheless, it is appropriate to include burlesque in a study of parody and, indeed, to include related techniques and devices such as irony, travesty, and pastiche, given that they all operate in multi-voiced and/or intertextual terms and that practitioners and consumers, unlike etymologists and

⁸⁰ For a detailed discussion see Rose, *Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern*, 54-68.

⁸¹ John Davies Jump, *Burlesque* (London: Methuen, 1972), 2. Jump also applies the term burlesque to describe ancient parodic practice: 'High burlesque flourished in the Classical literature of Greece and Rome', 37.

⁸² *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd. ed., prep. J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

(some) theorists, apply and get (respectively) the effect without necessarily concerning themselves with strict, unwavering definitions and matters of species and genera. Ulrich Weisstein argues the case that all ‘imitations with a vengeance’—travesty, mock-heroic, burlesque—be thought of as classes of parody.⁸⁴ Sometimes the subtle differences between these various practices do matter, but not always. As Dentith reminds us, ‘parody forms part of a range of cultural practices which allude, with deliberate evaluative intonation, to precursor texts’, and although these ‘cultural practices could conveniently be arranged as a spectrum, according to the evaluations that differing forms make of the texts that they cite’, to do so would ‘tend to invite analyses of texts of a reductively pigeon-holing kind’.⁸⁵

Of course, one aspect of the burlesque which needs to be addressed is the fact that, unlike parody, it exists in music composition as a particular (if not particularly well-defined) type. It would appear to be a work that strives for comic, possibly grotesque, effect by playing with expectation and distorting conventional practice. It can also present as musical argument manifestly incorrect writing such as parallel fifths and octaves, again for comic purposes.⁸⁶ The composer, in other words, asks that performer and audience enter into a bargain in which it is understood that the material presented is not to be read at face value (it is *not* an attempt at a serious work) but, rather, that it signifies something else (an attempt by a skilled composer to write music of a peculiar, perhaps even unskilled, kind). Examples can be found in

⁸³ Rose argues that, unlike parody, burlesque does not make its target a significant part of itself (*Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern*, 51) and Hutcheon distances burlesque from parody on the basis that, unlike parody, it involves ridicule (*A Theory of Parody*, 40).

⁸⁴ Ulrich Weisstein, ‘Parody, Travesty, and Burlesque: Imitations with a Vengeance’, in *Proceedings of the 4th Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association, 1964*, ed. François Jost, 2 vols. (The Hague: Mouton, 1966), II, 802-11.

⁸⁵ Dentith, *Parody*, 6.

⁸⁶ *New Grove*, ‘Burlesque’.

the literature from the early eighteenth century onwards. ‘Le Gaillard-Boiteux’ from François Couperin’s eighteenth clavecin *ordre* is prefaced with the direction ‘Dans le goût Burlesque’, and the final movement from the twenty-third *ordre*, ‘Les Satires; Chevre-pieds’, carries the instruction ‘Vivement et dans un goût burlesque’. Leopold Mozart wrote a *Sinfonia burlesca*, an unusually low-lying chamber work scored for two violas, two cellos, bassoon, and violone; and in the early nineteenth century we find three mirlitons, drum, violin, and piano brought together in Méhul’s *Ouverture burlesque*. In the period after Strauss’s *Burleske* we find the ‘Rondo-Burleske’ third movement of Mahler’s Ninth Symphony and works titled burlesque by, amongst others, Bartók and Reger.⁸⁷

A much stronger tradition in music is attached to the related, but by no means synonymous, term ‘scherzo’. From the Italian for ‘joke’, itself based upon the German *Scherz* and *scherzen* (‘to joke’), the scherzo, although potentially taking a number of forms, is more strongly defined in music—thanks, in particular to Haydn and Beethoven—than the burlesque. This is not to say, however, that we find a uniformity of style when looking at works carrying this title. In the nineteenth century, for example, scherzo was a term applied to works as diverse stylistically as Chopin’s schizophrenically intense and lyrical solo piano scherzos, the fleet-footed type favoured by Mendelssohn (notably in his incidental music to *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*), and the leaden scherzo of Brahms’s Fourth Symphony. This last example in particular illustrates the extent to which the scherzo, unlike the burlesque,

⁸⁷ Bartók’s Op. 2, the *Scherzo* for piano and orchestra, was originally titled *Burlesque*. Although Maurice Hinson states that ‘this work was probably written under the influence of Strauss’s composition of the same name’ (*Music for Piano and Orchestra*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993, 23), I would argue that it has little or none of the insubordinate tone of

was far more likely to ask, or even demand, that it be taken seriously. The nineteenth-century scherzo mocks neither its own condition nor the stuff of music.

Strauss's *Burleske*

Brahms and his Fourth Symphony bring us back to Strauss and Meiningen. It has already been mentioned that both of Brahms's piano concertos were rehearsed during Strauss's first week in Meiningen and it has also been pointed out that a theme from the second of these—appropriately from the scherzo movement, the first instance of a piano concerto containing such a movement—appears to have had a strong bearing upon the shape and character of one of the themes of the *Burleske*.⁸⁸ But these points, while noteworthy, do not necessarily get us very far in any discussion of the utilisation, let alone the meaning, of parody in Strauss's work. A more useful area of investigation might start by considering the implications of the title. When Strauss began work on his composition for piano and orchestra he called it a scherzo; by the time of its completion, however, he refers to it as a burlesque.⁸⁹

This, in itself, is significant. The former term sets up continuity with the venerable tradition of 'greats' in Austro-German music from Haydn to Brahms and proposes an eminently respectable compositional type to be explored by a promising twenty-one-year-old composer, especially since, to date, he has already contributed to other respectable forms such as the symphony and concerto. When Strauss wrote to

Strauss's work and that, if indeed it was written under the influence of Strauss's *Burleske*, Bartók failed to grasp exactly what it was in Strauss's work that provoked the title.

⁸⁸ The *sostenuto* theme which appears at b. 324, the start of the development.

⁸⁹ Compare Strauss's letter to his father of 7 November 1885—announcing commencement of work on his 'Scherzo for Piano and Orchestra'—with the letter to his mother of 24 February 1886—announcing the completion of his 'Burleske'; *Briefe an die Eltern*, 68 and 88. In the latter he mentions the work on two occasions, it is initially described as a piano concerto. In a letter to Bülow (7 April 1886), Strauss describes the work as his 'Piano Burleske'; *Hans von Bülow-Richard Strauss: Correspondence*, 31.

his arch-conservative father in early November 1885 to inform him of the commencement of work on the scherzo, he no doubt knew that papa Strauss would have received the news favourably. The latterly adopted term, however, has no points of connection with lofty works of the Austro-Germanic tradition and immediately suggests that something *disrespectful* is afoot. A scherzo is not inherently intertextual; the title suggests a work that is in a quick tempo. A burlesque, on the other hand, refers to something beyond its own condition—it records a process in which *something else* is burlesqued. A work in which musical practices are mocked was not seen to be particularly problematic in the eighteenth century—an occasional, intimate joke shared perhaps among composers, players, and connoisseurs (think of Mozart's *Ein musikalischer Spass*)—but with the elevated status accorded the artist and the artwork in the nineteenth century a work of this kind was potentially seen as an attack upon values of a serious kind. Furthermore, burlesque carries with it the taint of the popular theatre. As a stage entertainment the burlesque borrowed from works given high cultural value and coarsened them to make them palatable to the masses (or, put another way, showed how the cultural products of and for the élite were pompous and pretentious).

To even the most casual listener (or, indeed, observer in the concert hall), one of the most striking features of the *Burleske* is the extent to which a solitary player at the back of the orchestra, the timpanist, asserts authority and control far in excess of the instrument's limited pitch and remote position. A work for solo instrument and orchestra normally takes as its command post the middle and front of the performing area, the space in other words occupied by the soloist and conductor. But this authority, indeed this space, is challenged in the *Burleske*. The four-bar, four-note (A,

D, E, F) timpani motto offered at the outset (Example 1.1) exerts an influence in the work well beyond what might at first appear to be mere introductory, inconsequential material. This opening idea was present right from the start of Strauss's work on the *Burleske*, for he quotes it in the letter to his father referred to above.⁹⁰ Indeed, not only does Strauss cite the motto, he also mentions that it is to be played by the 'pedal timpani', a clear indication of his thinking at this initial stage. 'Truly remarkable', writes Todd, 'is the manner in which this timpani figure reappears throughout the movement to articulate its principal structural divisions, and in which, indeed, its pitches are continually subsumed and reworked in the thematic material'.⁹¹ The second bar of the opening timpani theme (E, D, F), for instance, provides the motif from which the second subject is derived (a connection made explicit in the bars immediately preceding rehearsal figure D, the appearance of the second subject, Example 1.5); and, as Todd suggests, the timpani figure, either in whole or in part, marks the division between the exposition and development (along with subdivisions within the exposition), signals the close of the development, and heralds the arrival of the recapitulation. (Del Mar describes the form of the *Burleske* as either 'full sonata form' or 'extended sonata rondo form'⁹²; but we could also describe the form as a 'sonata deformation' given that a new theme appears at the start of the development (b. 326) and the section as a whole gives the impression of a slow, brief middle movement.⁹³)

⁹⁰ See n. 89.

⁹¹ Todd, 'Strauss before Liszt and Wagner', 11.

⁹² Del Mar, *Richard Strauss*, I, 38.

⁹³ For clarification of the term 'sonata deformation', see James Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 4-9.

It might be countered that Strauss is here simply using a solo instrument to act very occasionally as a foil to the principal solo instrument, the piano, and that the timpani is merely a colouristic device written in to paper over the cracks at strategic points. I would contend that more is at stake here and that Strauss uses the timpani as a means of opening up an argument in which he not only offers a critique of the very nature of the concerto but of the social conditions in which the concerto conventionally operated. (It is hardly an accident that the authority of the piano soloist is questioned by one of the least likely instruments in the orchestra ever to be given the opportunity to take on an extended solo role, ever actually to play a concerto.) This, I argue, is what is being parodied in the *Burleske*; the allusions to Brahms and Wagner merely function as a means to that end (and even then only partially) for, contrary to received opinion, this is not a work in which Strauss parodies his German masters (at least not directly) but, more shockingly, parodies structures and power positions that were held dear by bourgeois musical culture.

It is often remarked that the word ‘concerto’ stems from the Latin *concertare*, meaning both ‘to contend, dispute, debate’ and also ‘to work together with someone’ (like the word parody, concerto is the all the richer for its ambivalence). The concerto thus brings together separate entities—soloist(s) and orchestra—for the purpose of both disputation and agreement. It plays with strategies of power and control. A recent analysis of the second movement of Mozart’s Piano Concerto in G major K. 453 has argued that the work presents in its form, key, and thematic material—its total content in other words—socially grounded meaning: ‘the eighteenth-century concerto is usually concerned with a soloist and a large, communal group, the orchestra. It thus enacts as a spectacle the dramatic tensions between individual and society, surely one

of the major problematics of the emerging middle class'.⁹⁴ According to this reading, there are aspects of the solo part in K. 453 which can only be considered to be irregular in respect of the conventions of classical form and style; rather than have the movement follow a trajectory set by the piano soloist, the wayward soloist is pulled into line by the rule-bound *tutti*; in other words, the individual, the pianist, is forced to submit to the will of the majority, the orchestra.

We probably think of the nineteenth-century piano concerto as a form which acts out the opposite scenario in the power play between soloist and orchestra. With the rise of the superstar performer and the idolatrous cult of the virtuoso came a concerto in which the soloist was virtually omnipotent.⁹⁵ The so-called 'double exposition' of the eighteenth-century concerto was abandoned and replaced by an opening in which the soloist seized control right from the start, challenging the orchestra to keep up and follow. A conductor was pressed into service to meet this end.⁹⁶ Far from merely demonstrating virtuosity for its own sake, the romantic concerto in the hands of composers eager to present themselves as artists of superior bearing (as opposed to composer-performers who were driven primarily by market forces of supply and demand) was fully endowed with the *gravitas*, monumentality and, in appropriate places, lyricism that characterised the symphony in this period. Indeed, with the rise of the tripartite symphony concert around the middle of the

⁹⁴ Susan McClary, 'A Musical Dialectic from the Enlightenment: Mozart's *Piano Concerto in G Major*, K. 453, Movement 2', *Cultural Critique* 4 (Fall, 1986), 138.

⁹⁵ 'Mood, expression, the stirrings of the soul and even a sense of melancholy could be realized as a solo instrument worked against, resisted, displaced, led and triumphed over orchestral sound. The concerto's solo instrument functioned as a metaphor of the individual's engagement with the conflict between freedom and order'; *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., s.v. 'Concerto: The 19th Century', by Leon Botstein.

⁹⁶ To the surprise of all, Hans von Bülow made a point of conducting Brahms's First Piano Concerto from the keyboard, common practice in the eighteenth century but highly unusual in the second half of

century, the concerto, as the middle item on the programme, was placed in the company of the overture and the symphony. It might even be argued that composers' first essays in this form tended to overplay the seriousness which the piano concerto from the mid-century onwards claimed for itself—one need only think of the introductory bars of Brahms's Piano Concerto no. 1 in D minor (1859), Grieg's A-minor Piano Concerto (1868), and Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto no. 1 in B-flat minor (1875). With a fortissimo roll of the timpani (or, in the case of the Tchaikovsky, a fortissimo horn fanfare) and emphatic minor-key sonorities, we are commanded by the sheer boldness of the gestures to sit up and take notice.⁹⁷

Turning once more to the beginning of Strauss's *Burleske*—which, as a single-movement work for piano and orchestra, is a concerto in unconventional, but not unprecedented, form (as early as Weber's *Konzertstück* for piano and orchestra (1821), nineteenth-century composers had been experimenting with the single-movement concerto)—we find quite the opposite taking place. The timpanist is freed from the cliché of the opening forceful downbeat thud and, both enigmatically and playfully, marks the commencement of the work with the quietly-enunciated, four-bar theme discussed above. With the entry of the piano at bar 21 comes the nine-bar principal theme, at once robust, rhythmically incisive and virtuosic. The pianist, in other words, wrests from the timpanist the role of soloist by the act of 'playing the soloist'. But there is something slightly askew about the piano soloist's material;

the nineteenth. Hanslick draws attention to Bülow's feat in 'The Meiningen Court Orchestra', *Music Criticisms*, 233.

⁹⁷ The timpani roll at the start of the Grieg concerto commences *pianissimo*, moves through a mighty *crescendo* arriving *sforzando* at the downbeat of the second bar at which point the piano enters *fortissimo*. The Brahms concerto commences with a *fortissimo* timpani roll but, rather unusually for a concerto of this period, withholds the arrival of the piano until the conclusion of the opening orchestral episode. Despite the considerable demands it places upon the soloist, it has been described as an 'anti-virtuoso' concerto; *New Grove Dictionary*, 2nd ed., 'Concerto: The 19th Century'.

despite its minor key and virtuosic pianism, it is only partially successful in capturing the profound (or pseudo-profound) idiom of the romantic concertos cited above.⁹⁸

We seem to be given the suggestion of something only to have it hastily snatched away and replaced by something quite the contrary. The vigorous four-bar phrase on and around the tonic chord with which the theme commences (as mentioned previously, claimed by Newman and Del Mar to be a quote from Brahms's D-minor Ballade) is answered by an unruly cascade of chromatic scales, a kind of musical *non sequitur* (Example 1.1). That the answering phase is introduced by a shrill upward scale on the solo piccolo (bb. 24-5) makes its purpose all the more forceful. That the opening theme is then repeated makes it clear that these oddly paired phrases were not, in fact, in error, and that all subversive meaning is intentional.

An oft-repeated conclusion that has been drawn from Strauss's use of the Brahms quotation is that it is Brahms himself who is being mocked by the irreverent context in which the Ballade citation finds itself. But this presumes far too much of the audience. Successful parody, as has already been discussed, demands that the hypotext be sufficiently well known for the receiver to make the intertextual connections. Surely this criterion is not met in this case. I would argue that while Brahms may to some degree be implicated in the parodic dialogue set in motion by the opening of the *Burleske* (and more, in fact, for the metrical sleights of hand than any specific quotation), Strauss's sights are here set on offering a critique of the piano concerto; above all, of exposing the falseness of the elevated claims made for it by the concert culture of the period, a culture in which composers, conductors, performers,

⁹⁸ It might be significant that of all minor keys Strauss has chosen D, the key of profound musical statements in the nineteenth century from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony through to Brahms's First

and audience are all implicated. We should not forget that Strauss performed in public a Mozart concerto a matter of only a few weeks before he commenced work on the *Burleske*. He had lived with K. 491 for months and had come to know as a performer not only the mechanics, but also the meaning of the concerto. At one point, Strauss asks that the pianist deliver a solo phrase ‘*con umore*’ (b. 179; in the recapitulation, b. 634)—it follows a general pause, a moment where material of rather more consequence might be expected—and, a little further on, he asks that a particularly forceful solo passage be played ‘*pomposo*’ (b. 276).⁹⁹ Of course, it is with knowing humour and knowing pomposity that the pianist delivers these phrases, for the performer of the *Burleske* is not the object of ridicule (even if the soloist sometimes has to offer the ridiculous) but, rather, is invested with the task of directing the ridicule elsewhere, of holding the mirror up to everyone else in the room and have them ask what it is that they expect (or, indeed, demand) from a work for piano and orchestra.

When the solo timpani returns with the opening motto shortly before the onset of the transition section (still in the exposition), it presents material that was formerly its own now in dialogue with the solo piano (bb. 70-73). The four-bar introductory theme is divided between them bar by bar (Example 1.6). Evidently, these two soloists, one from the front of the orchestra, the other from the back, are not

Piano Concerto (recently heard in Meiningen). D minor is also the key of Strauss’s First Symphony and his Violin Concerto Op. 8.

⁹⁹ Ernest Newman was perplexed by the ‘*con umore*’ marking and evidently did not recognise it as one detail among many of Strauss’s mocking purpose in the *Burleske*: ‘Already [in the *Burleske*] we see he has the notion—which later on he will carry to an extreme—that music can be almost as definite as words or pictures. He tells the pianist, for example, to play a certain phrase “*con umore*”, without at the same time telling him how to do it. The “humour” obviously exists only in the mind of the composer, and in that of the pianist if he can persuade himself that he sees it. The phrase in itself is just mildly graceful, and it is safe to say that not a single person who has heard the *Burleske* has ever dreamt that it was meant to be humorous’; *Richard Strauss*, 36.

Gr.Fl.

Ob.

Clar.

Fag.

D-Hör.

Pauk.

Pfte.

f

dim.

dim.

dim.

8

70

p

p

p

p

p

pp

p

f

8

Example 1.6: bb. 62-85.

80 Tutti.

This musical score page, labeled '80' at the top center, contains two systems of staves. The first system includes staves for Kl.Fl., Gr.Fl., Ob., Clar., Fag., F.Hör., D.Hör., Tromp., and Pauk. The second system includes Pfte., Viol.I., Viol.II., Br., Vcl., and Baß. The score is written in a key with one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. It features various musical notations including notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *ff* (fortissimo) and *pizz.* (pizzicato). The word 'Tutti.' appears at the beginning of the second system. The bottom of the page is labeled 'Example 1.6 (cont.)'.

Example 1.6 (cont.)

antagonists after all but are co-conspirators (at least for the time being) in the larger act of subversion that is taking place. Indeed, as has already been mentioned, the piano takes up and extends a motif drawn from the timpani theme and in doing so fashions the second subject (Example 1.5). The motif develops into a full-blown waltz; the ‘*con umore*’ passage referred to above is in fact its dying strains, a waltz peroration. The concert hall is mistaken for a salon, a ballroom.¹⁰⁰

Banter between timpanist and pianist is largely dispensed with in the middle section of the *Burleske*, no doubt because of the pitch limitations of the timpani—it never wavers from the four notes enunciated at the outset and therefore has little to offer in unstable modulatory passages.¹⁰¹ But Strauss exploits the instrument’s limited pitch to both emphatic, amusing, and telling effect in the late stages of the recapitulation when, in an effort to bring the work to a close, the timpanist, in conjunction with all players with the exception of the pianist, hammers out, *fortissimo*, what appears to be final cadential material.¹⁰² The pianist, however, exerting the authority of soloist, will not be drawn to the close set up by the other players—despite the fact that the entire exposition has been resolved in the recapitulation, that we have had a cadenza-like solo passage (bb. 740-771), that the final cadence has been prepared by a prolonged dominant pedal (bb. 787-810); that, in other words, all the signals for closure are in place—and insists that there is still more

¹⁰⁰ Writing in the *Neues Wiener Tagblatt* in 1925, Strauss recalled an evening in Meiningen when Bülow played through his ‘beautifully bound collection’ of Johann Strauss waltzes, the occasion when Strauss claims he first came to know the music of his Viennese namesake; ‘On Johann Strauss’, *Recollections and Reflections*, 77.

¹⁰¹ There is only one point in the entire work where Strauss notates a pitch for the timpani other than one of the four stated in the opening bars. This occurs in bb. 818-820, the pitch in question is a thrice repeated b flat. A note in the score, however, points out that the b flats can be omitted entirely if the player is using non-chromatic timpani.

to be said. Resounding D minor timpani and orchestral gestures (*feroce*) are answered (*tranquillo*) on the piano by a series of remote chords (E-flat major, E major). The pianist, that is to say, steers the tonality away from the tonic, away from closure, and conquers the pitch-handicapped timpanist by the sheer range of tones (and therefore keys) available on the piano. By this means, the solo pianist is able to subdue (*poco più tranquillo*) and finally silence all opposition (Example 1.7). Against the odds, the single figure obliterates the multitude, the omnipotent soloist of the romantic piano concerto has been shown to be literally invincible.

But from here to the close of the work Strauss makes it clear that his objective is to re-inscribe concerto conventions in order to ridicule them. For a start, the massive half-close which sets up the (third) piano cadenza is an incredibly dense dominant-ninth chord rendered absurd by both volume (*fortissimo*) and articulation (trills in virtually all parts) (Example 1.8). Having been silenced by the piano soloist in their earlier altercation, the orchestra here shrieks a misshapen concerto cliché. That the cadenza which follows makes use of the ‘Tristan’ chord (Example 1.3) does not necessarily point to Wagner as the object of derision (as suggested above); the quotation might be incongruous but it is surely too brief and inconsequential to carry malicious intent (with its different voicing—the characteristic augmented ninth between the outer parts has been replaced by a compound diminished fifth—it is also an inexact quotation). In keeping with classical concerto practice, the cadenza alludes to themes heard previously in the movement (Strauss here reveals the influence of his recent performance of K. 491 for which, as pointed out above, he wrote his own

¹⁰² This antagonistic dialogue is prefigured in the concluding bars of the development (bb. 478-495): the insistent tonic-dominant figure on the timpani signals the inevitable recapitulation but the pianist initially resists and refuses to return to the home key.

630 **Gg**

non div.

non div.

Gg *sf*

Example 1.7: bb. 825-892.

Solo. 840 feroce

, tranquillo

The musical score consists of three systems of staves. The first system has 10 staves. The second system has 2 staves. The third system has 8 staves. The score is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 2/4 time signature. The tempo is marked '840' (likely 840 beats per minute). The mood is marked 'Solo.' and 'tranquillo' at the beginning, and 'feroce' (fierce) later in the piece. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'mf' (mezzo-forte) and 'ff' (fortissimo). There are also some performance instructions like 'Solo.' and 'tranquillo' written above the staves.

tranquillo
Solo.
mf

feroce

tranquillo feroce

Example 1.7 (cont.)

850

tranquillo feroce , tranquillo poco più tranquillo,

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system consists of ten staves. The first four staves are for vocal parts, and the remaining six are for piano accompaniment. The tempo markings 'tranquillo', 'feroce', 'tranquillo', and 'poco più tranquillo' are placed above the staves. The piano part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, with dynamic markings 'p' and 'ff'. The second system also consists of ten staves. The first four staves are for vocal parts, and the remaining six are for piano accompaniment. The tempo markings 'tranquillo', 'feroce', 'tranquillo', and 'poco più tranquillo' are placed above the staves. The piano part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, with dynamic markings 'mf' and 'ff'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and accidentals.

tranquillo feroce tranquillo poco più tranquillo

tranquillo feroce tranquillo poco più tranquillo

Example 1.7 (cont.)

Hh *un poco animato* 860

Pfte. *mf* *dimin.*

Viol. I. *pizz.*

Viol. II. *pizz.*

Br. *pizz.*

Vcl. *pizz.*

Baß. *pizz.*

Fag. 870 *pp*

F. Hör. *pp*

Pauk. *pp*

Pfte. 880 *string. e cresc.*

quasi Cadenza

890

Example 1.7 (cont.)

a tempo 900

a tempo

arco

a tempo

ii⁶/₅

V⁹/₇
#

Example 1.8: bb. 893-903

cadenzas) but the *tranquillo* reverie of recalled themes eventually gives way to aggressive, pounding, chromatic writing (Example 1.4, claimed by some to be a parody of the opening of *Die Walküre*: but where is the characteristic downbeat quintuplet of Wagner's *Vorspiel*?) and it appears that all is in place for the emphatic closing cadence denied several minutes previously. But in a final attempt to show that this is not, after all, a piano concerto but a parody of one, the omnipotent soloist is denied going out in a blaze of glory. The *fortissimo* bravura chromatic scales head to nowhere in particular and the soloist finally has to make do with decidedly unimpressive arpeggiando chords, each one quieter than the one before. A final *pianissimo* scuttle up the keyboard and it is all over, save for a barely audible—but inevitable—concluding tonic rap on the timpani. Pretensions to grandeur give way to Mendelssohnian fairy music; the soloist, finally, is rendered impotent.¹⁰³

Del Mar, in his comprehensive study of Strauss's music, protests that in spite of the *Burleske*'s many attractive qualities, 'its seventeen minutes are just five too many'.¹⁰⁴ Subsequent commentators have echoed this view.¹⁰⁵ But given that the *Burleske*'s proportions go awry in the final stages of the work—from the forceful move away from the tonic at the end of the recapitulation (Example 1.7) until the close of the cadenza at the so-called *Walküre* reference approximately one hundred and eighty bars later—it could be argued that there is meaning in the disproportion,

¹⁰³ We should note that in addition to playing against the concerto cliché of the loud and violent drive to the final cadence, the *Burleske* eschews the redemptive major-key ending found in repertory minor key piano concertos such as Brahms no. 1, Tchaikovsky no. 1 and the Grieg concerto. Strauss's Violin Concerto Op. 8 (1882) is another example of the standard type: it commences in D minor but its rondo final movement is in D major and concludes with a *prestissimo* section which builds from *pianissimo* to *fortissimo*.

¹⁰⁴ Del Mar, *Richard Strauss*, I, 39.

¹⁰⁵ See, for example, Alan Jefferson, *The Life of Richard Strauss* (Newton Abott, Devon: David and Charles, 1973), 53; and Michael Kennedy, *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 'Strauss, Richard'.

that a concerto convention is used to excess in order to point up the critical direction of the work. In other words, the overlong final section is poorly judged if the *Burleske* itself is to be judged an attempt to join the ranks of piano concertos of its era; but, should we accept that its purpose is that of a concerto parody, we have to reconsider the ‘fault’ of its distorted dimensions.¹⁰⁶

As discussed above, the paradox of the parodic work is that it contains within it that which it sets out to critique (the hypotext is *in* the hypertext). ‘Even in mocking, parody reinforces’, writes Hutcheon: ‘in formal terms, it inscribes the mocked conventions onto itself, thereby guaranteeing their continued existence’.¹⁰⁷ That is to say, a parody of a nineteenth-century piano concerto is going to *be* a nineteenth-century piano concerto, at least up to a point. The signals of parodic intent together with the signs of that which is being parodied will coexist in the one work for parody critiques from within the style/idiom/practice that is being parodied. It has already been mentioned that the solo piano part in the *Burleske* is occasionally marked ‘*pomposo*’ and ‘*con umore*’, but it should be noted that even more frequently we encounter the marking ‘*espressivo*’¹⁰⁸—that is, the pianist is asked to meet the requirements of the piano as an expressive, cantabile instrument.

This serves as a reminder of parody’s fluid, equivocal nature and of the potential for a relationship with the hypotext which plays with ambiguity (critical *and* admiring at the same time). (Of course, an *espressivo* marking is just a sign—like any marking in a musical score—its meaning is conditional upon context and its realisation is

¹⁰⁶ Del Mar cites the cadenza’s sixty-bar improvisation ‘on a single chord of the dominant minor ninth’ as a defect; *Richard Strauss*, I, 39.

¹⁰⁷ Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody*, 75.

¹⁰⁸ Three bars after rehearsal figure A, eight bars after A, two bars after C, at D, five bars before F. Most of these markings reappear at the equivalent point in the recapitulation.

conditional upon performance. It could conceivably be used to ironic effect.) It also serves as a reminder of the potential fragility of parody as a mode of discourse; that the subtlety of its workings and its highly contingent *modus operandi* (none more so than in performance) have the potential to obscure its presence to a greater or lesser degree. Del Mar, for example, refers on several occasions to both wit and the ‘satirical side of Strauss’s character’ as revealed in the *Burleske*, but beyond this he makes no comment on the larger meaning of these features. He seems to read the work, in other words, as a concerto and not an anti-concerto and, as a result, finds it not entirely successful. Ashley, on the other hand, rightly comments that ‘essentially the piece is a colossal joke, turning the grandiloquence of the nineteenth-century concerto on its head’.¹⁰⁹ In a work such as the *Burleske* it is crucial that soloist and conductor recognise the subversive gestures that are called into play and that the work is performed with a knowing attitude (of course, it is ironic that the two key figures in the power relationship that Strauss attempts to undermine are fundamental to the realisation of the work’s agenda: the mighty are called upon to bring themselves—or, at least, the apparatus they embody—low).

Strauss and Bülow

In the mid-1880s, Meiningen, it should be remembered, was home to not only one of the leading pianists of the age but, in the same person, one of the leading conductors. The *Burleske* was written by an apprentice to this figure, by someone in the shadow of the ‘great man’ but someone bold enough to question the power hierarchies of the musical culture in which he found himself and in which he, of course, was also a

¹⁰⁹ Ashley, *Richard Strauss*, 35.

participant. Hans von Bülow was a figure who was at the very centre of bourgeois concert life and who believed wholeheartedly in its moral imperative. He was a pupil of the individual who perhaps more than anyone else epitomised the grand celebrity performer of the nineteenth century, Franz Liszt¹¹⁰; but, unlike Liszt, Bülow was not content to play the part of the showman: he made his audiences work hard in the name of artistic enrichment. In the 1880s, for example, he was given to performing a programme which consisted solely of the last five piano sonatas of Beethoven, a sizeable chunk of the emerging canon in one indigestible sitting.¹¹¹ Of contemporary composers, it is well known that for a time Bülow was devoted to Wagner (he spent years preparing the vocal score of *Tristan und Isolde*), was later drawn to Brahms, and was also an enthusiastic supporter of Tchaikovsky. Significantly, Bülow's name is linked to one of the archetypal concertos of the nineteenth century, Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto—he was soloist for the world première performance, an event which took place in Boston on 25 October 1875 under the baton of the composer himself. Bülow, in fact, is the dedicatee of Tchaikovsky's concerto. It comes as no surprise, therefore, to find that Bülow regarded the *Burleske* with horror.

Strauss includes no mention in his letters home of Bülow's response to the *Burleske* which, had he encountered it in late 1885 or early 1886, he would have known only from glancing at the manuscript or possibly from trying his hand at the solo part of the as yet unfinished composition. Given that Strauss avoided reporting unfavourable comments on his works to his ever-critical father, it could well be that Bülow expressed his displeasure and that it was never recorded by Strauss at the time.

¹¹⁰ It hardly needs to be pointed out that Bülow was the first husband of Liszt's daughter, Cosima.

¹¹¹ During Strauss's stay in Meiningen Bülow performed the solo part in Rubinstein's Third Concerto and a Rhapsody for Piano and Orchestra by Liszt; *Briefe an die Eltern*, 81.

But, equally, it could also be that Bülow had no acquaintance with the work during the time it was being written; after all, he left Meiningen at the end of November 1885 (the month in which Strauss embarked upon the *Burleske*) and returned a fortnight into the new year to prepare his late-January farewell concert (at which point the *Burleske* was still a work-in-progress).¹¹² In an oft-cited letter to Bülow written on 7 April 1886 (who at this point was in St Petersburg), Strauss reports on a run through of the *Burleske* in the days just prior to his leaving the position in Meiningen:

Perhaps it will interest you to know that I recently went through my piano *Burleske*, which is happily finished, a couple of times with the orchestra, and found it, to be sure, inhumanly difficult. The accompaniment is certainly rather overloaded and the piano part too finicky, I shall make some cuts in the orchestration, then, with a first rate (!) pianist and a superior (!) conductor, perhaps the whole thing won't be quite such 'pure madness' [*reine Unsinn*] as I really thought [it] at the first rehearsal. After the first play through I was completely discouraged...¹¹³

Many years later, when Strauss was in his seventies, he claimed that Bülow rejected the *Burleske* on the grounds that its technical demands were too great for his small hands (but when did Bülow see the work? had he only seen it as a work-in-progress?). In addition to describing it as 'unpianistic' (*unklaviermässig*), Strauss claims that Bülow flatly refused to devote weeks of study to a work as 'intractable' (*widerharriges*) as this.¹¹⁴ But it seems difficult to accept that one of the most accomplished piano virtuosos of the nineteenth century, a person who tackled some of the most difficult works on offer and who was devoted to long and challenging

¹¹² Del Mar claims that 'Bülow, for whom it was written, had seen the Lisztian piano part before he left [Meiningen] and stated categorically that it was unplayable'; *Richard Strauss*, I, 36. I am rather sceptical of this claim given the lack of documentation and also the fact that the work was not completed until three or four weeks after Bülow left Meiningen for good.

¹¹³ *Hans von Bülow-Richard Strauss: Correspondence*, 31-2. Gilliam implies that Strauss played through the work in the presence of Brahms; the implication is misleading (furthermore, his dates for the commencement and completion of the work are incorrect): 'Begun in January, it [the *Burleske*] was completed by April and, with Brahms in Meiningen for a visit, Strauss played through the mostly completed piece with the orchestra'; *Richard Strauss*, 38.

¹¹⁴ Strauss, 'Aus meinen Jugend- und Lehrjahren', *Betrachtungen und Erinnerungen*, 207 and 217. It is thought that Strauss wrote this recollection in the period 1935-40.

recitals, would have come to grief with the technical demands of the Strauss *Burleske*. Furthermore, given Bülow's prestige, surely Strauss would have modified the piano part if, indeed, Bülow's opposition to the work was based purely on matters of technique (especially if, as some commentators imply, Bülow first encountered the *Burleske* in the period when Strauss was still composing it, when changes could be made to the solo part without too much difficulty). Nevertheless, Strauss's claim is allowed to stand unchallenged in the literature (as is the claim that Strauss actually wrote the *Burleske* for Bülow, a point I would query, given not only the content of the work but the chronology of its composition).

It is clear that, even if Bülow had no first-hand experience of the *Burleske* in 1885-6, he was more familiar with it than he cared to be in the early 1890s. Four years after it was completed, the *Burleske* received its première on 21 June 1890 in Eisenach under the baton of Strauss and performed by pianist and composer Eugen d'Albert, the person to whom it is actually dedicated.¹¹⁵ The occasion was the Tonkünstlerversammlung of the Allgemeiner Deutscher Musikverein. Early the following year d'Albert performed it in Berlin, this time with Bülow on the conductor's podium. In a letter to Brahms written on 11 January 1891 (the day before the concert took place), Bülow sums up his attitude to the *Burleske* when he writes that, although 'decidedly brilliant', it is 'horrifying'.¹¹⁶ Indeed, Bülow's disapproval of the *Burleske* forms part of a larger discussion of other works currently on the concert programme in Berlin—Georg Vierling's oratorio *Konstantin* and an unnamed work by Crepiren—all of which he dismisses as a 'motley of stupidity and

¹¹⁵ Schuh claims that at d'Albert's request Strauss simplified the solo part and made some cuts (although he does not provide documentation of this); *Chronicle*, 107.

madness'.¹¹⁷ In a letter to his wife, Bülow described the *Burleske* as 'interesting' but 'for the most part ugly'.¹¹⁸

When Eugen Spitzweg of the music publishing house Joseph Aibl sought Bülow's opinion on whether or not to accept the *Burleske* for publication, Bülow advised against: 'Ever since he [Strauss] has turned into an exclusive Bayroutrider and a decided Brahms-Thersites—he has only my most impersonal sympathy, that is, when he produces a beautiful work of art. That category does not include the *Burleske*, if truth be told'.¹¹⁹ Accordingly, Spitzweg did not consent to publication despite the fact that the Aibl firm had enjoyed success with not only recent and progressive works such as *Aus Italien* and *Don Juan* but a great many of Strauss's pre-*Burleske* compositions including the Piano Sonata in B minor, Violin Concerto, Horn Concerto, and Symphony in F minor.¹²⁰ Bülow recognised full well, irrespective of the alleged influence of Bayreuth, that Strauss's *Burleske* mocked the romantic cult of the virtuoso performer, that it undermined the integrity of the concerto while at the same time pretending to endorse it and, with flippant gestures, questioned strongly held notions of musical transcendence. He was hardly going to offer his imprimatur to an upstart attack on the musical culture in which he had staked

¹¹⁶ 'Strauss's *Burleske*, entschieden genial, aber nach andrer Seite hin erschreckend'; Bülow, *Briefe an Johannes Brahms*, 80. See Mary Whittall's translation in n. 2.

¹¹⁷ 'Dieses panaché von Blöd- und Wahnsinn'; *ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Schuh, *Chronicle*, 107. Schuh incorrectly attributes this letter to the period immediately after the première of the *Burleske* in Eisenach. In fact, it was written on 10 January 1891, immediately prior to the Berlin performance conducted by Bülow, see E. H. Mueller von Asow, *Richard Strauss: Thematisches Verzeichnis*, 3 vols. (Wien: Doblinger, 1955-74), III, 1207.

¹¹⁹ Letter of 14 January 1891; Schuh, *Chronicle*, 107. Mary Whittall, the translator of Schuh's *Chronicle* offers the following comments on 'Bayroutrider': '*Baireitknecht*. As so often with Bülow, it's impossible to render in translation all he packs into one biting word. *Baireit* = Bayreuth (perhaps the Prussian gentleman mocking Franconian pronunciation); *Knecht* = labourer, menial, serf etc.; *Reitknecht* = a groom, mounted attendant'.

¹²⁰ Full list *ibid.*, 78. It was to Spitzweg, it should be remembered, that Bülow wrote so glowingly of Strauss following his Meiningen début in October 1885, see n. 17. Oddly enough, in the same letter to

his career and art. As for publication, the *Burleske* did not make it into print until 1894 when it was issued by Steingräber and had the curious distinction of being the only work by Strauss in that firm's catalogue.¹²¹

Several generations after Bülow's highly critical response we find pianist Glenn Gould describing the *Burleske* as an 'irresistible' work (for some of the same reasons, it would appear, that Bülow found it so tremendously resistible). Gould's reference follows a discussion in which he declares his general antipathy towards the piano concerto as a form and practice: 'What bothers me most is the competitive, comparative ambience in which the concerto operates... [an ambience which] from my particular ideological standpoint [I find] suspect'.¹²² He makes an exception for, as he puts it, 'parodistic concerto-commentaries' such as the 'irresistible' *Burleske*.¹²³ Here, precisely, is this notion of the *Burleske* as a parody of a concerto, as a work which offers a commentary on or a critique of a concerto and which requires, ironically, a highly accomplished pianist—a concerto performer—to bring it off.¹²⁴ The informed soloist knows not merely to realise the notes on the page but to perform a performance, to offer an ironic reading of the very role and function of the soloist as that personage is understood (collectively by performer, conductor, orchestra, and audience) in light of the canon, repertory, and bourgeois concert culture (to convey, in other words, the 'critical distance' between practices that Hutcheon refers to in her

his mother in which Strauss mentions that he has completed the *Burleske* (24 February 1886), he claims that Spitzweg wants to print it; *Briefe an die Eltern*, 87. Perhaps a case of wishful thinking.

¹²¹ Schuh claims, incorrectly, that it was published in 1890 (*Chronicle*, 107), an error repeated in Walter (*Richard Strauss*, 65). Asow's *Thematisches Verzeichnis* cites 1894 as the year of publication.

¹²² Glenn Gould, 'Of Mozart and Related Matters: Glenn Gould in Conversation with Bruno Monsaingeon', in *The Glenn Gould Reader*, ed. Tim Page (London: Faber, 1988), 41.

¹²³ Along with the *Burleske*, Gould cites one other work, the Dohnányi *Variations*.

¹²⁴ There are nearly twenty different listings of the *Burleske* in the *RED classical catalogue*, 2003 (London: Red Publishing, 1090). Noted pianists who have recorded the work over the past fifty-five

definition of parody). Put another way, this is instrumental performance conditioned by the *Verfremdungseffekt*. A scherzo, as Strauss well knew, is a convention of the concert hall but a burlesque is a convention of the theatre.

Apprentice Strauss

Prior to writing the *Burleske*, Strauss's development as a composer followed the neat and orderly path of the amateur and apprentice: solo piano music, Lieder, chamber music, choral music, overtures, concertos, and symphonies. The *Burleske* was followed by the symphonic fantasy *Aus Italien* (1886) which, in turn, was followed by the tone poem *Don Juan* (1888), a work which has been claimed to signal 'the dawning of "musical modernism"'.¹²⁵ The *Burleske* might be seen then as a work which stands between Strauss as epigone and Strauss as individual. Ernest Newman has argued that in Strauss's works of 1884-85 'we can plainly see a contest going on within him between the dutiful youth who believes what his masters had told him, and the adventurous young man who is beginning to think for himself. The *Burleske* is an interesting example of this struggle'.¹²⁶ I would suggest that it is more than simply an example of this struggle: it is an *enactment* of it.

A familiar narrative in the Strauss literature is that virtually from the time he completed it, the *Burleske* was a work with which the composer was not entirely pleased.¹²⁷ Arguments in support of this narrative tend to refer to the time lapse

years include Gould, Claudio Arrau, Rudolf Serkin, Friedrich Gulda, Byron Janis, Sviatoslav Richter, and Martha Argerich (with the exception of Gould, these are listed in order of recording date).

¹²⁵ Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), 330.

¹²⁶ Newman, *Richard Strauss*, 35.

¹²⁷ A typical example of this narrative is found in Michael Kennedy's preface to the Eulenburg edition of the *Burleske*: 'Strauss himself regarded it as of little worth, a mere prentice effort, and was probably

between composition and publication, the letter to Bülow cited above in which Strauss, following the run through in Meiningen in April 1886, describes the work as ‘pure nonsense’ [*reine Unsinn*], and also to a letter from Strauss to Alexander Ritter written on 19 October 1890 in which he states: ‘I have left [the *Burleske*] far behind me and can no longer defend [it] with the fullest conviction’.¹²⁸ Of the former letter we can say that Strauss’s point is that, under better conditions, the work might *not* be the ‘pure nonsense’ that it appeared to be in the Meiningen rehearsal (where at one and the same time he played the solo part and conducted), and of the latter it could be argued that Strauss is distancing himself from the work out of respect for Ritter’s arch-Wagnerian sensibilities, for it should be remembered that in 1890 Strauss had not long completed *Tod und Verklärung* (for which Ritter had written an introductory poem) and was at work on the libretto of the opera *Guntram*. Strauss, in other words, was keen to project to Ritter an image of the serious composer engaged in serious work (*Till Eulenspiegel* was still half a decade away).¹²⁹

Indeed, if Strauss did in fact have considerable misgivings about the *Burleske*, why did he sanction its première performance at the 1890 meeting of the Allgemeiner Deutscher Musikverein, a gathering of peers (arguably Strauss’s most critical audience)? Significantly, *Tod und Verklärung* also received its première at that concert. Would Strauss conceivably have imperilled the unveiling of his new tone poem by scheduling it with a work that he was no longer prepared to defend? (The coupling of these two utterly disparate works in première performances seems quite extraordinary—Strauss, in the one, offering musical transcendence and, in the other,

embarrassed by its reminders of his admiration for Brahms whom thereafter he consistently disparaged. Yet towards the end of his life he seems to have relented’, vi.

¹²⁸ Quoted in Schuh, *Chronicle*, 107; also quoted in Asow, *Thematisches Verzeichnis*, III, 1207.

wrenching it away. The two were once again on the same programme, along with other works by Strauss, during the 'Richard Strauss Woche' in Munich in 1910). A glance at the subsequent performance history of the *Burleske* would seem to confirm that Strauss's alleged reservations about it are grounded in fiction and not fact, for, far from being a work of indefensible (and embarrassing) juvenilia, we find Strauss conducting performances of it until well into his old age.¹³⁰

On 26 October 1885, the day following the première of his Fourth Symphony, Brahms took to the podium once more and led the Meiningen orchestra in a performance of his *Variations on a theme by Joseph Haydn* and the *Academic Festival Overture*. In the latter work, Bülow and Strauss joined the ranks of orchestral players and, evidently, turned in very poor performances on the cymbals and bass drum respectively. 'I do not think a greater mess has ever been made of the percussion parts than on the evening when the two conductors took a hand', Strauss was later to write of the event.¹³¹ Bülow wondered whether by assuming the role of cymbal 'soloist' he had performed a concerto.¹³² Strauss may well have taken this experience as his point of departure when he commenced work on the *Burleske* a

¹²⁹ Strauss may also have been keen to project this image to himself.

¹³⁰ Strauss conducted performances of the *Burleske* in Amsterdam and London in 1903 (*Briefe an die Eltern*, 267, 277), in Munich in 1910, 1925, and 1929 (Bernd Gellermann, *Richard Strauss und die Moderne* [München: Münchener Philharmoniker, (1999)], 194, 220, 222), in Vienna in 1924 and 1927 (Götz Klaus Kende, 'Was Richard Strauss in Wien dirigierte', *RS-Blätter* [Neue Folge] 19 [June 1988], 37-8), and in London in 1947 (Del Mar, *Richard Strauss*, I, xii, 36). The *Burleske* was one of only four items conducted by Strauss on his 1947 London tour, the other works were *Don Juan*, *Symphonia domestica*, and the *Rosenkavalier* Waltzes. The concert took place on 19 October in the Royal Albert Hall. The orchestra was the recently formed Philharmonia (Kennedy, *Richard Strauss*, 378). For a list of further performances of the *Burleske* (not necessarily conducted by Strauss) see Asow, *Thematisches Verzeichnis*, III, 1206.

¹³¹ 'Reminiscences of Hans von Bülow', *Recollections and Reflections*, 124. Strauss's reminiscences of Bülow were written in 1910 and his memory seems to be at fault when he writes that the concert which premiered Brahms's Fourth Symphony was concluded with this particular rendition of the *Academic Festival Overture*. In a letter to his mother dated 28 October 1885, Strauss states that the disastrous attempts by he and Bülow to perform the percussion parts took place in a concert on the morning following the Brahms première; *Briefe an die Eltern*, 66.

fortnight later and had the opening theme announced from the far corner of the orchestra.

But Strauss might also have taken from the *Academic Festival Overture* its carnival attitude and intertextual dialogue. Here, the largest orchestra ever scored by Brahms is required to expend its energy on popular tunes and student songs. The composer deemed the most serious in Germany—Breslau University, which conferred the honorary doctorate on Brahms which precipitated composition of the work, described him as ‘*artis musicae severioris in Germania nun princeps*’ (the most famous living German composer of serious music)—turns his attention to *Unterhaltungsmusik* and writes, in his own words, a pot-pourri ‘à la Suppé’.¹³³ This, of course, is the Franz von Suppé of the popular theatre, Brahms’s Viennese contemporary, a composer renowned for his overtures, operettas, and opera parodies such as *Lohengeln, oder Die Jungfrau von Dragant*. Brahms the severe composer is shown to have a lighter side: he plays with incongruity (the tavern in the concert hall, the concert hall in the tavern) and in the tradition of the burlesque, bringing the high style low and the low style high. His orchestration ‘adopts a more popular vein than is normal, with prominent use of trumpets in chorus (see bar 64), celebratory orchestral tutti with triangle, bass drum, cymbals and piccolo, and unison melody with full dress demisemiquaver scales for the violins in a manner much closer to Grand Opera than to Brahms’s orchestral background’.¹³⁴ He presents himself as

¹³² ‘Dabei entwickelte Bülow einen Eifer, als ob er ein Konzert zu spielen hätte’; *ibid.*

¹³³ Michael Musgrave, *The Music of Brahms* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985), 230. The reference here is probably to the overture to Suppé’s operetta *Flotte Bursche* (1863), which contains a number of student songs including ‘*Gaudeamus igitur*’.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

someone other than he normally is and offers a counter-portrait to the serious Doctor of Breslau.

But, for all its bombast, stacked up against Brahms's symphonies, the *Academic Festival Overture* appears trivial, a work for the popular repertory but not the canon. For Brahms, of course, it was a singular experiment, an aberration that was made acceptable to him by the concurrent composition of the *Tragic Overture* for, as he told his publisher Friedrich Simrock, he could not deny his 'melancholy turn of mind'¹³⁵ and felt the need to redeem the light-hearted with the weighty and profound. For Strauss, however, the parodic jocularity of the *Burleske* was not a solitary experiment but the first of many excursions into irreverent, playful realms. The twenty-one-year-old composer with a grounding in classics both old and new emerged from Meiningen with a fresh and distinctive voice; a voice formed in part by these classics (we can believe Strauss when he describes the *Burleske* as a product of his *Brahmsschwärmerei*, above all the uncharacteristic Brahms of the *Academic Festival Overture*) but also formed by a reaction against them and, more particularly, a preparedness to question their assumptions and the assumptions of the culture in which they operated. One concluding irony of a work in which the ironic plays no small part is that, for Strauss, the path away from Brahms led through Brahms.

¹³⁵ Quoted by Wilhelm Altmann, Preface to *Academic Festival Overture* (Leipzig and Wien: Eulenburg, 1926).

CHAPTER II

‘EINE WIENERISCHE MASKERAD’’: UNMASKING *DER ROSENKAVALIER*

On 12 November 1886, almost nine months after he had completed the *Burleske*, Strauss, who since the start of August had been third conductor at the court opera in Munich, led his first performance of *Così fan tutte*. This was the second opera he ever conducted—the first, Boieldieu’s *Jean de Paris*, was performed at the beginning of the previous month. Of all of Mozart’s operas, *Così fan tutte* was especially beloved by Strauss, although, conversely, of all of Mozart’s mature operas this was the one that found least favour with nineteenth-century critics, commentators, and audiences. That it is nowadays a repertory opera is a result of its gradual rehabilitation in the twentieth century, a process in which Strauss played no small part. He considered it an injustice that *Così fan tutte*, with its subtlety and nuance, was allowed to languish in a state of near obscurity and that, if it was performed at all, was usually staged in highly corrupt and distorted versions. The focus of this chapter is Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannsthal’s first truly collaborative effort, *Der Rosenkavalier* (1909-10), an opera which, unlike *Così fan tutte*, has never been anything but a repertory work.¹

I mention Mozart and Da Ponte’s opera at the outset, however, not only because Strauss’s first, intimate acquaintance with it followed closely upon composition of the *Burleske*, but because the sophisticated musico-dramatic workings of *Così fan tutte*—in particular the parodic attitude of some of its apparently serious moments—serve as

useful points of reference from which to consider parodic strategies at work in *Der Rosenkavalier*, especially since the composer of the latter work was so enamoured of the former. We are accustomed to making a link between *Der Rosenkavalier* and the first of the three Mozart-Da Ponte operas, *The Marriage of Figaro*, above all, through the figures of the Marschallin and Octavian, often seen as latter-day embodiments of the Countess and Cherubino. But, attractive though this connection may be, I maintain that it is *Così fan tutte*, the last work of the Mozart-Da Ponte partnership, that provides greater intertextual insights.

In the previous chapter, the point was made that it is not always useful to establish strictly categorical definitions of a range of closely related double-voiced devices—parody, pastiche, burlesque, irony, intertextuality—because, quite apart from the lack of consensus among scholars as to where precise and binding differences between many of these devices actually lie, at least two can exist in the one example at the one time. Thus, the specific context of an intertextual reference might be such that it is more usefully described as a parodic reference and in that parody there might be an ironic attitude. In other words, these terms are not necessarily mutually exclusive but, rather, can operate within a network of contingencies. Nevertheless, I consider it useful, especially in a study of *Der Rosenkavalier*, to make at least a preliminary distinction between two broad but related categories cited above: parody and pastiche. By making this distinction I propose to enter into a discussion of the critical work of the former (which, as the

¹ Given that Strauss's *Elektra* (1906-8) was an adaptation of an extant play by Hofmannsthal (itself based upon the *Elektra* by Sophocles) and was not jointly conceived as an opera by both librettist and composer, I am taking *Der Rosenkavalier* as the first fully-fledged jointly-written work.

chapter proceeds, will encompass intertextuality and irony), firstly by considering the latter.

Pastiche

Fredric Jameson offers the following reflection *vis-à-vis* parody and pastiche:

Pastiche is, like parody, the imitation of a peculiar or unique style, the wearing of a stylistic mask, speech in a dead language; but it is a neutral practice of such mimicry, without parody's ulterior motive, without the satirical impulse, without laughter, without that still latent feeling that there exists something *normal* compared to which what is being imitated is rather comic. Pastiche is blank parody, parody that has lost its sense of humor.²

'Speech in a dead language', 'a neutral practice', 'blank parody'. Jameson's comments form part of a critique of postmodernity in which he argues that the ubiquity of pastiche in art forms since the 1960s represents a 'significant feature' of the capitalist, postmodern landscape. But he takes care to avoid claiming for postmodernism an exclusive contract with pastiche and concedes that it is also a feature of art of earlier times, including modernist art.³

It is a feature of *Der Rosenkavalier*. One of the most controversial aspects of this opera is that Strauss appeared to be re-inventing himself in the likeness of his Viennese namesake, *Walzermeister* Johann Strauss. The *Rosenkavalier* waltzes—together with the tonal language in which they and much of the opera luxuriate—were deemed by some to be a betrayal of the modernist high style that Strauss, with *Salome* and *Elektra* to his recent credit, seemed to be pursuing. Now 'languishing and caressing', now 'banal and trivial' is how one German newspaper critic described the

² Fredric Jameson, 'Postmodernism and Consumer Society', in *Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster (London: Pluto: 1985), 114. Jameson returns to the theme of pastiche as 'blank parody' in his later essay, 'Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism'.

³ In the closing paragraphs of the essay Jameson writes: 'Everything we have described here [pastiche, amongst others] can be found in earlier periods and most notably within modernism proper: my point is that until the present day those things have been secondary or minor features of modernist art, marginal

‘Walzerwellen’ in *Der Rosenkavalier*.⁴ Indeed, the Italian première—which took place at La Scala, Milan, on 1 March 1911, five weeks after the opera was unveiled in Dresden—was an occasion of uproar: a Futurist faction took up position in the theatre and disrupted proceedings with whistles (they had come prepared) and catcalls. ‘Merry Widow!’ was one of the insults shouted at the stage. At the conclusion of Act II, the stalls were littered with thousands of pamphlets thrown from above denouncing Strauss as a traitor to the modernist cause.⁵ Hostilities were resumed in Act III, and when Octavian/Mariandel exclaimed ‘Che bella musica!’ in response to the strains of an off-stage waltz, the theatre erupted into howls of derisory laughter (this is an anecdote recounted by Strauss who personally witnessed the whole débâcle⁶). But it would be wrong to suggest that the opera’s riotous Italian debut was entirely the work of an aggrieved modernist mob. According to Strauss, La Scala had a house rule prohibiting the waltz; so, ironically, conservative members of the Milan opera-going public were likewise affronted by Strauss’s use of a dance that was the staple of operetta and they too voiced their disapproval (one wonders, though, whether they

rather than central, and that we have something new when they become the central features of cultural production’; *ibid.*, 123.

⁴ Otto Sonne, ‘Richard Strauss: *Der Rosenkavalier*’, *Illustrierte* [sic] *Zeitung* no. 3527, 2 February 1911; reprinted in Roswitha Schlötterer, ‘*Der Rosenkavalier* in der Zeitgenössischen Kritik’, in *Musik und Theater im ‘Rosenkavalier’ von Richard Strauss*, ed. Reinhold Schlötterer (Wien: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1985), 227.

⁵ Constantin Brunck, ‘*Der Rosenkavalier* in Mailand’, *Neue Musikzeitung* 32 (1911): 258-9; reprinted *ibid.*, 247-8. Interestingly, both *The Merry Widow* and *Salome* were premièred within weeks of each other in December 1905 (the former in Vienna, the latter in Dresden).

⁶ Richard Strauss, ‘Erinnerungen an die ersten Aufführungen meiner Opern’, in *Betrachtungen und Erinnerungen*, ed. Willi Schuh (Zürich: Atlantis, 1949), 236. Strauss, incidentally, confirms the account of the Scala première given by Brunck although he fails to report the ‘Merry Widow!’ insult (other interjections cited by Brunck, but not Strauss, include ‘fairground racket!’ and ‘operetta trash!’).

were otherwise charmed by the appearance of a Strauss less brutal than the one hitherto known to them.⁷⁾

Of course, the waltz was by no means unprecedented in Strauss's music; on the contrary, as mentioned in the previous chapter, it was pressed into service as early as the *Burleske* and was used to memorable effect in both *Salome* (the Dance of the Seven Veils) and *Elektra* (Elektra's triumphant *Totentanz* at the conclusion of the opera). But whereas the *Salome* and *Elektra* waltzes are separate or very nearly separate numbers (indeed, the Dance of the Seven Veils was inserted into the score after Strauss had composed the rest of the opera) and are clothed in up-to-the-minute tonal (sometimes bitonal) language and orchestral sonorities, the *Rosenkavalier* waltzes pervade great sections of the opera, recall the sound world of popular Viennese music (including operetta) and, for the most part, are woven into the opera's ambient music (in other words, do not take the form of separate numbers). Waltzes *were* extracted from the score and stitched together to form suites but, tellingly, this was done with some difficulty (transitions posed the greatest challenge) and, according to Strauss, the results were largely unsuccessful. (He complained of the technical shortcomings of the *Rosenkavalier* waltz suites that were in circulation—with the exception of the *Zweite Walzerfolge*, which appeared at the time of the opera's première, they were not of his doing—and only in the final years of his life, at

⁷ Apparently, the second night at La Scala was without incident although the opera sustained extensive cuts in Acts II and III and the waltzes were played pianissimo; Schlötterer, *Der Rosenkavalier*, 248. *Elektra* had been performed in Milan two years previously. In a letter to Hofmannsthal (21 April 1909), Strauss writes the following: '*Elektra* in Milan was a surprisingly good performance: Krucziniska [*sic*] as Elektra first rate in every respect, the other parts vocally excellent—I've never heard the opera sung so beautifully. Orchestra very good, success colossal, the biggest takings of the season'; *A Working Friendship: The Correspondence between Richard Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannsthal*, trans. Hanns Hammelmann and Ewald Osers (New York: Vienna House, 1974), 29.

the age of eighty, did he make his own arrangement of waltzes from Acts I and II, the *Erste Walzerfolge*.⁸)

That the waltzes in *Der Rosenkavalier* are examples of pastiche writing should be immediately apparent. To take up Jameson's term, Strauss adopts a 'stylistic mask': the composer who won infamy for the cacophony of *Elektra*—a post-*Elektra* cartoon, 'the electric execution', shows a hapless victim shackled to an electric chair (of sorts) while Kapellmeister Strauss (with the score of his opera in hand) dispenses the aural death charge—presents himself as a composer of tuneful, polite waltzes in the popular Viennese style. But we ought not necessarily assume that they are wholly facile and exist purely for decorative purposes. For one thing, they suggest a lightness and grace that helps to propel the narrative forward in a manner not altogether unlike the dance rhythms of Viennese *opera buffa* of the late eighteenth century. The nimble, malleable waltz themes are an ingenious solution to the problem of finding a comic alternative to the serious and potentially leaden world of post-Wagnerian rhythm, phrasing, and 'endless melody'. Secondly, the waltzes can be seen as providing musical commentary on what is one of the principal concerns of the opera: the notion of time and its passing—a concern set out explicitly and poignantly in the Marschallin's musings in the closing stages of Act I. In the introductory pages to Hofmannsthal's libretto we are told that the opera is set 'in Vienna during the first

⁸ The waltzes in the *Zweite Walzerfolge* are taken from Act III (the original title of this work was *Walzerfolge Rosenkavalier 3. Akt*) where they mostly function as background music at the inn and are therefore quite easily removed from their dramatic context and presented in an independent suite. In a letter to conductor and director Heinz Tietjen (25 November 1944), Strauss points out that he has written his own arrangement of waltzes from *Rosenkavalier*—'es soll mein Abschiedsgruss von dieser schönen Welt sein'—and that he always found the 'terrible' arrangement by Otto Singer 'painful'; *Richard Strauss: Dokumente*, ed. Ernst Krause (Leipzig: Reclam, 1980), 310. But in light of Strauss's complaint about Singer's awkward transitions, it must be admitted that the transition in the *Erste Walzerfolge* from the *Einleitung* to the 'Frühstück waltz' (the Mozart pastiche discussed below) is forced and unconvincing.

years of the reign of Maria Theresa', i.e. in the 1740s. What has been pointed out repeatedly from the time of the opera's première is that the omnipresent waltzes are therefore stylistically incorrect and utterly at odds with the period in which the opera is set. Gluck, not Johann Strauss, was active in mid-eighteenth century Vienna (not that the charge of stylistic inappropriateness was levelled against the mysterious presence of the Viennese waltz in biblical Judea or ancient Mycenae, despite that fact that these waltzes, unlike the *Rosenkavalier* ones, were actually danced to on stage). But, on closer scrutiny, it becomes clear that not all of the waltzes in *Der Rosenkavalier* re-create the style and gestures of the Viennese waltz of the second half of the nineteenth century.

Indeed, the first waltz we encounter, the one that accompanies the breakfast of the Marschallin and Octavian (Example 2.1, Act I, rehearsal figures 48-51), is a Mozart pastiche. It carries the direction 'Walzertempo' but with its paired phrases, light scoring, and clarinet-focussed melody evokes the style and substance of a minuet from a divertimento or serenade by Mozart (significantly, it actually functions in the opera as a divertimento, as *Tafelmusik*). Conversely, the last waltz we encounter, the trio which forms the apotheosis of Act III, a fully-accompanied sung waltz rather than a purely instrumental one and rather on the slow side for a waltz, is an opulent example of *fin-de-siècle* harmonic writing, voice leading, and orchestration.⁹ My point, then, is that for an opera set in 1740 (or thereabouts) we have no examples of pastiche writing of musical forms or idioms from that time but, instead, have a century and a quarter of Viennese musical style presented in bits and pieces and

⁹ In the duet which immediately follows (not a waltz), Strauss once more invokes Mozart, albeit with piquant colouring courtesy of the reprise of the 'Presentation of the Rose' music from Act II.

Tempo di Valse.
(poco a poco più mosso)
Walzertempo
(etwas ruhig beginnen, dann allmählich fließender)

48

I. Hob. *espr.* *pp* *p*

I. A-Clar. *espr.* *pp* *p* *grazioso*

2 Fag. *p*

48

Marschallin. — Er her. Jetzt wird ge-frühstückt. Jedes Ding hat sei-ne Zeit. (Octavian setzt sich dicht neben

Walzertempo (etwas ruhig beginnen, dann allmählich fließender.)

Viol. I. *p* (geteilt) *pizz.*

Viol. II. *p* (geteilt) *pizz.*

Br. *p* *pizz. arco*

Celli. *p* *pizz.*

C. B. *p* *arco*

49

2 A-Clar. *p*

2 Fag. *p*

III. IV. Horn (E) *pp*

49

sie. Sie frühstücken sehr zärtlich.)

Viol. III. *p*

Br. *I. Pult* (alle) *I. Pult*

Celli. *I. Pult* (alle) *I. Pult*

50

2 A-Clar. *p*

2 Fag. *p*

III. IV. Horn (E) *pp*

50

(Octavian legt sein Gesicht auf ihr Knie. Sie streichelt sein Haar. Er blickt zu ihr auf)

Viol. II. *p*

Br. (alle) *I. Pult* *p*

Celli (alle) *I. Pult* *p*

Example 2.1: *Der Rosenkavalier*, Act I.

51 *pp* *mosso assai* *sehr fließend* 52 *molto espr.*

2 A-Clar. *pp* *molto espr.*

2 Fag. *pp* *molto espr.*

III. IV. Horn (K) *pp* *molto espr.*

Marschallin. 51 *pp* 52 *pp*

Octavian. (leise) *Ma - rio The - res! Bi - che - tie!*

Viol. I. *mosso assai* *sehr fließend* *espr.* *molto espr.*

Viol. II. *pp* *espr.* *molto espr.*

Br. (alle) *arco* *pp* *molto espr.*

Celli (alle) *pp* *pizz.* *molto espr.*

C. B. *pp* *arco* *molto espr.*

53 *espr.* 54

2 Gr. Fl. *espr.*

2 Hob. *espr.*

2 A-Clar. *pp* *molto espr.*

2 Fag. *pp* *molto espr.*

III. IV. Horn (K) *pp* *molto espr.*

Marschallin. 53 54

Octavian. *Mein Buh!* *(Sie frühstücken weiter)*

Viol. I. *Mein Schatz!...*

Viol. II. *Mein Schatz!...*

Br. *Solo* *(alle)*

Celli. *pizz.*

C. B. *pizz.*

Example 2.1 (cont.)

strewn across the three acts. *Der Rosenkavalier* asks questions about time and its effect upon us as social beings and we are offered in the diverse waltz or waltz-like pastiches stylistic timelessness. ‘Jedes Ding hat seiner Zeit’, declares the Marschallin as Strauss strikes up the Mozart pastiche (in 1740, this was the *future*). The opera seems to refer to the past but it is not entirely clear which past because a host of contradictory anachronisms get in the way (complicated by the fact that an orchestra of close to a hundred players suggests the post-Wagnerian present). From the above, we might accept that pastiche is not exactly a critical type of mimicry—the examples quoted here, taken separately, do not establish an ironic distance from the models they imitate and, to cite Jameson, are ‘without ulterior motive’—but this is not to say that pastiche is without purpose or that it is devoid of dramatic function.¹⁰ It may be ‘blank parody’ but it is not merely blank.

Ochs’s *Liedel*

There is, however, one waltz in the opera which transcends the condition of pastiche and enters the realm of parody: this is the one which I shall call Ochs’s *Liedel*. For better or worse, it happens to be the best known of all of the *Rosenkavalier* waltzes, an especially ironic state of affairs given that it is not meant to be taken seriously as a waltz, but, rather, is meant to appear ridiculous. Thanks to its intrusive, recurring presence in the opera and the popularity it has enjoyed since the time of the work’s première, it is sometimes referred to simply as ‘the *Rosenkavalier* waltz’. We hear the *Liedel* for the first time in Act II (Example 2.2, figure 90). Baron Ochs von

¹⁰ Linda Hutcheon states that ‘ironic “trans-contextualization” is what distinguishes parody from pastiche or imitation’; *A Theory of Parody* (New York: Methuen, 1985), 12.

ritard. *Tempo di Valse. ♩ = 48*
 Ruhiges Walzertempo. (*tranquillo*) 90

2 A-Clar. *p* *dim.* *pp*

II. Horn (D.) *p* *dim.* *pp*

Baron. 90
 Nacht, daß Sie ganz sanft — wird wis - sen, was ich bin zu ihr. Ganz wie im Liedel heißt. Kennt Sie das Lie - del? La la

Tempo di Valse. ♩ = 48
 Ruhiges Walzertempo. (*tranquillo*)

(Die Auftakte in den ersten und zweiten Violinen stets glissando.)
 (wiegend und sentimental gefühlvoll.)

Viol. I. *pp*

Viol. II. *pp*

Br. *p* *pizz.* *arco* *pp* *pizz.* *arco* *pp*

I. Hälfte. *arco* *p* *dim.* *pp* *pizz.* *arco* *pp*

Celli. *arco* *p* *dim.* *pp* *pizz.* *arco* *pp*

II. Hälfte. *arco* *p* *dim.* *pp* *pizz.* *arco* *pp*

C. B. *p* *dim.* *pp*

II. Fag. *pp*

Baron. (recht gefühlvoll) *pp*
 la la la — wie ich Dein Al - les — wer - de sein! Mit mir, mit mir kei - ne

Viol. I.

Viol. II.

Br.

I. Hälfte.

Celli.

II. Hälfte.

C. B. *pizz.* *pp*

91

2 gr. Fl.

I. Fag. *pp cesp.*

Baron. 91
 Kam - mer Dir zu klein, oh-ne mich, oh-ne mich je - der Tag Dir so bang,

Viol. I.

Viol. II.

Br.

I. Hälfte.

Celli.

II. Hälfte.

C. B.

Example 2.2: *Der Rosenkavalier*, Act II, Ochs's Liedel.

92 93

2 gr. Fl. d = 60

I. II. 3 Hob. III.

2 A-Clar. Bassoth.

I. II. 3 Fag. III.

I. II. 3 Hörner (D). III.

Pauken.

92 (ohne hinzusehen, und doch sieht er alles, was vorgeht) 93

Octavian. Ich stehe auf glühenden

Baron. (frech und plump)

mit mir, mit mir kei - ne Nacht dir zu lang, kei - ne Nacht dir zu lang - (Da er sie immer

Viol. I. (con spirito) d = 60

Viol. II. (frisch)

Br. (Doppelgriff.)

I. Hälfte. Celli. II. Hälfte. C. B.

2 gr. Fl. I. II.

4 Hob. III.

Es-Clar. 2 A-Clar. Bassoth.

I. II. 3 Fag. III. mute in Contrafag.

I. II. 3 Hörner (D). IV.

Marianne. (jetzt zu Sophie eilend) (in D)

Ist recht ein fa-mi-liä-rer Mann, der Herr Ba-ron! Man de-lec-

Octavian. Koh - - len! Ich fahr' aus mei-ner Haut! Ich hüß' in die-ser ei-nen Stund' all' mei-ne

fester an sich drückt, reißt sie sich los und stößt ihn heftig zurück.)

Viol. I. Viol. II. Br. Celli. C. B.

(geteilt) arco

9123

Example 2.2 (cont.)

Lerchenau has come blustering into the Faninal Stadtpalais and made an impression quite the contrary of his exquisitely mannered Rosenkavalier, Octavian. Sophie, Ochs's bride-to-be by prior arrangement, is repulsed both by her fiancé's appearance and his boorish behaviour. We, on the other hand, have already encountered Ochs in Act I and are surprised neither by his irritating pomposity nor his clumsy social skills. When Ochs finally addresses his intended (he is initially more interested in reminding the parvenu Herr von Faninal that he, Ochs, is better connected at court), he embarks upon conversation charged with sexual innuendo: 'Sag' Sie heraus, auf was Sie sich halt in der Eh' am meisten freut!' (What do you fancy will please you most as a bride?), he asks Sophie as he tries to force her onto his lap.¹¹ Sophie, fresh from the convent, pulls herself from his grasp but Ochs continues in the same vein:

Wird kommen über Nacht,
dass Sie ganz sanft
wird wissen, was ich bin zu Ihr.

[You'll find out overnight, with sweetest joy you'll learn just what I am to you.]

It is at this point that Ochs redoubles his seduction tactics and sings to Sophie a little song, his *Liedel*. He first asks her whether she knows it ('kennt Sie das Liedel?') and then delivers his performance of it, for which he himself seems to have forgotten the beginning:

Lalalalala—
wie ich dein Alles werde sein!
Mit mir, mit mir keine Kammer dir zu klein,
ohne mich, ohne mich jeder Tag dir so bang,
mit mir, mit mir keine Nacht dir zu lang!

[Lalalalala— / My love shall be your all in all! / With me you will find no room too small, / without me, without me, lonely days feel so wrong, / with me, with me nights cannot be too long!]

¹¹ English translation adapted from Alfred Kalisch's translation in *Der Rosenkavalier, Opera Guide 8* (London: Calder, 1981), 83. All subsequent translations are taken from this source, either verbatim or altered for the sake of greater accuracy.

Directions in the libretto indicate that the final line is to be delivered ‘impudently and coarsely’ (frech und plump) while the song otherwise is to be rendered ‘very sentimentally’ (recht gefühlvoll).¹² Although the work of Hofmannsthal, we are to imagine that it is a lyric plucked from Ochs’s memory, that it is in general circulation and, as suggested by Ochs’s enquiry, might even be known to Sophie. Strauss’s fastidious, delicate librettist here wears the mask of the poetaster. The *Liedel* is in the style of a cheap ditty: it scans poorly, is woefully amateurish, and is obtuse rather than clever or witty in its sexual inferences.¹³ But dramatically it is entirely convincing; Ochs is a coarse figure, after all, and is hardly going to serenade Sophie in the high style.

As set to music, Ochs’s *Liedel* at first traverses a fine line between waltz pastiche and waltz parody. So accurate is it stylistically that the first half of the opening phrase virtually replicates the beginning of Josef Strauss’s ‘Dynamiden’ waltz, a case either of borrowing (conscious or unconscious) or coincidence. It could well be the latter as the opening upward leap of the interval of a major 6th (the upbeat to figure 90) is a cliché of the Viennese waltz; it was much beloved by Johann Strauss and is frequently encountered in Austrian folk music.¹⁴ The *Liedel* utilises the distinct waltz accompaniment of a single bass note followed by triads on the second and third beats of the bar and, with its thirty-two bar length, follows a conventionally

¹² In a letter to Strauss (3 August 1909), Hofmannsthal describes the scene leading up to the *Leidel* as follows: ‘I have recast the wooing scene, too, to make it really funny with the Baron’s irrepressible and pretty brazen sallies which culminate in that impertinent little song [dem unverschämten Liedchen]’; *Working Friendship*, 45.

¹³ Its sexual innuendo was deemed unacceptable by Count Hülsen-Haeseler, Intendant of the Berlin Opera at the time of *Der Rosenkavalier*’s première there. He effectively rewrote the *Liedel* for the Berlin stage. His substitute verse is found in Alan Jefferson, *Der Rosenkavalier* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 134.

symmetrical phrase structure (additionally, the third phrase strongly recalls features of the first: it repeats the bass line along with most of the harmonic progressions and duplicates the melody at the upper third). Very precise performance directions are given at the outset: a leisurely waltz tempo is to be followed (*Ruhiges Walzertempo*, m.m. = 48, *tranquillo*); the violins are to execute all of their upbeats with glissandi; the dynamic marking is *pianissimo* and the whole is to be delivered ‘rocking and with sentimental feeling’ (*wiegend und sentimental gefühlvoll*). But the waltz pastiche suddenly comes undone midway through the fourth and final phrase with the appearance of an unexpected *forte*, a spirited change of tempo, the intrusion of three strongly accented (waltz-obliterating) beats in a bar, and an evaded final cadence. This is the punch line of the joke—‘keine Nacht dir zu lang’—and Strauss could hardly have made Ochs’s implicit pelvic thrusts more explicit.¹⁵ The sweetly sentimental waltz strains of the preceding phrases which set up a naïve picture of matrimonial respectability are mocked by the ribald peroration; the façade of *Gemütlichkeit* is torn asunder, unmasked by vigorous antics in the bedroom.

But not only does the concluding phrase make what has come before appear ridiculous: the entire number is intended to be ludicrous. Just as we are to imagine that Hofmannsthal is not the author of the words of Ochs’s *Liedel*, we are also to pretend that Strauss is not the composer. It is a stage song, a *Gassenhauer* which we are to suppose has a life of its own outside the opera into which it has crudely presented itself. It exemplifies Ochs’s taste (in the following act, when it is heard as

¹⁴ Camille Crittenden, *Johann Strauss and Vienna: Operetta and the Politics of Popular Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 113.

¹⁵ It is well to remember that Strauss, the master of descriptive touches both subtle and unsubtle, provides us with an ejaculatory horn motif within the first sixty seconds of the *Einleitung* to *Der Rosenkavalier*.

background music at the inn he describes it as his favourite song) and what deplorable taste it is too; by rights, we should be appalled by Ochs's *Liedel*. Towards the end of Act II, over a carafe of wine, he sings it once more, but this time to cheer himself up (he has been 'wounded' by Octavian and Sophie has refused point-blank to marry him). This is music to lift one's spirits, a popular little song to help pass the time and put oneself in an agreeable mood.

But shortly after Ochs's rendition, the *Liedel* is reprised for a third time (Example 2.3), now without Ochs's vocal contribution. Here, right at the end of Act II, it returns for the purpose of mocking him for his dim-wittedness. Ochs has been led to believe that his fortunes have taken a turn for the better (they haven't: he is being set up for the grand deception that takes place in Act III) and, as if to signify the magnitude of his pleasure, the previously lightly-orchestrated *Liedel* now commands the full weight of the orchestra. The formerly pianissimo strings now play mezzoforte in a register much higher than when the waltz was first heard and, with the exception of the double basses, are required to execute a crescendo through a very explicitly indicated upward glissando (Strauss states that 'at all times the string upbeats are to be played with the sugary Viennese glissando'¹⁶). The *Liedel* is cast before us in gloriously tasteless triumph as though, thanks to its sheer weight and magnitude, it has now won legitimacy as one of the *echt* waltzes in the opera. But, with its slightly slower tempo (m.m. = 46) and thick orchestral textures, the downbeats become truly leaden and the overall effect is of a simple little tune rendered irredeemably lumpy

253
a. tempo $\text{♩} = 44$

I. II.
3 gr. Fl.

III.
I.
3 Hob.

II. III.
Hs.-Clar.

2 O.-Clar.

I.
3 Fag.

II. III.

4 Hörner (E)

I.
3 Tromp. (C)

II. III.

3 Pos.

Baßuba.

Pauken.

Glockenspiel.

Triangel.

kl. Trommel.

3 Harfen
unisono

253
a. tempo $\text{♩} = 44$

Viol. I.

Viol. II.

Br.

Celli.

O. B.

(Annina geht ab,

*) Die Auftakte in den Streichern stets in dem süßlichen Wiener *glissando*

Example 2.3: *Der Rosenkavalier*, Act II.

¹⁶ 'Die Auftakte in den Streichern stets in dem süßlichen Wiener glissando', figure 253.

animato
255
lebhaft

I. II.
2 gr. Fl.

III.

I.
2 Hob.

II. III.

Es-Clar.

2 C-Clar.

Basseth.

I.
2 Fag.

II. III.

(III. Fag. muta in Contrafag.)

4 Hörner (E)

I.
2 Tromp. (C)

II. III.

2 Pos.

Baßuba.

Pauken.

Glockenspiel.

Triangel.

kl. Trommel.

Becken.
gr. Trommel.

2 Harfen
unisono.

Baron.

255

(Baron tut noch einen letzten Schluck)

animato
lebhaft
(frech)

Viol. I.

Viol. II.

Br.

Celli.

C. B.

Kei - ne Nacht Dir zu lang, kei - ne Nacht

Example 2.3 (cont.)

and misshapen.¹⁷ Ochs is the figure targeted here, the crass pomposity of his over-orchestrated *Liedel* is a sign that, while he might be enjoying his moment of triumph now, he will most certainly get his comeuppance before the final curtain of the evening.¹⁸

One further point to be made about the *Liedel* is that, thematically, it is more strongly defined by its orchestral accompaniment than by its vocal line. Indeed, for a supposedly popular number, it is surprisingly awkward vocally: Ochs sings a countermelody to the principal one played by the orchestra and it is only when he sings ‘Mit mir’ and ‘Ohne mich’ that he takes up the waltz’s most characteristic (and memorable) figure—the rising upbeat leap. This is not a number for the vocally untrained: it ranges widely, accommodates thorny intervals, and moves unexpectedly onto chromatic substitute chords. Indeed, Strauss very skilfully has provided Ochs with something that sounds like a popular song but, on closer inspection, could hardly have achieved popularity on account of its vocal difficulty; it is the accompaniment that embodies the popular idiom. (Strauss, it would appear, was only prepared to go so far in writing a commonplace sung ditty.) Additionally, for a supposedly popular song it is oddly un-self-contained: it has neither a beginning (lalalalala) nor an ending (the point where the waltz collapses) but is highly memorable nonetheless. We recall a fragment but are led to believe that it is a totality.

¹⁷ Erich Kleiber is particularly successful in capturing the awkward, lumbering gait of the waltz at this point in his 1954 recording with the Wiener Philharmoniker (Decca, 425 950-2). Not all conductors successfully convey the irony that is demanded here. Interestingly, in a letter of 22 June 1947 from Strauss (in Pontresina) to Kleiber (in Buenos Aires), Strauss mentions his fond recollection of Kleiber’s ‘famous’ pre-war *Rosenkavalier* at the Berlin Lindenoper; Krause, *Richard Strauss: Dokumente*, 314.

¹⁸ Not surprisingly, when the disgraced Ochs noisily quits the stage in Act III, the *Liedel* is among the many tunes quoted in the *mêlée* that accompanies his exit.

It might seem obvious to make the point that the *Liedel* is a trivial little song and that it provides a moment or two of low comedy in a work that generally pitches its humour a touch higher. But it is worth noting that of all of the waltzes in *Der Rosenkavalier*, indeed of all of the work's 'numbers', this is the one that has enjoyed the greatest popularity. In Otto Singer's hugely popular arrangement of the *Rosenkavalier* waltzes (the arrangement, as mentioned above, which so displeased Strauss), Ochs's *Liedel* makes two appearances and, in fact, forms the culminating point and conclusion of the composition.¹⁹ Evidently, this was considered a satisfactory approach, for in subsequent arrangements by Joh Doebber and Váša Přihoda, Ochs's waltz appears at least twice (three times in the former) and, as in the Singer arrangement, provides a rousing conclusion.²⁰ What was intended by Strauss as a parodic rendering of a waltz—the purpose of which was to help to delineate the opera's most boorish character—was taken as an example of the real thing, as an attempt by Strauss (and a very successful one at that) to emulate a popular nineteenth-century dance idiom, an idiom alive and well in contemporary operetta. In other words, the reception of the number has done away with the critical distance that clarified its parodic and ironic function in the opera.²¹ Ochs's *Liedel* has been able to achieve in the parlour, café, and band rotunda things denied it on stage: charm, legitimacy, and respectability.

¹⁹ Singer's potpourri was available in the following instrumental combinations: piano two hands; piano four hands (versions for one and two pianos); solo violin; violin and piano; flute and piano; solo mandolin; two mandolins; mandolin and piano; two mandolins and piano; large orchestra; salon orchestra; Paris ensemble; infantry band; hunting band; cavalry band.

²⁰ The three arrangements mentioned here were all published by Fürstner. In addition to appearing arranged for some of the combinations listed above, Doebber's adaptation was also published for treble zither, bass zither, and scratch quartet (Schrammelquartett).

²¹ We are reminded here of a point made in the previous chapter that, paradoxically, the parodic work reinforces that which it sets out to undermine; the hypotext is re-inscribed in the hypertext.

In several letters written to Hofmannsthal many years after *Der Rosenkavalier* and its resounding success, Strauss makes passing reference to the popularity of the opera's 'misunderstood waltz'.²² Misunderstood, no doubt, because its purpose was to perform critical work while it had been taken to be merely decorative.²³ Even Julius Korngold, Strauss's detractor at Vienna's *Neue Freie Presse* and a critic who otherwise writes disparagingly of the tawdriness of the abundant waltzes in *Der Rosenkavalier*, finds Ochs's waltz to be 'truly pretty'.²⁴ Perhaps Strauss's most insightful contemporary audience, oddly enough, was the one at the Scala première. In refusing to admit Ochs's waltz as 'bella musica', the scornful crowd in the theatre that night was at least closer to understanding the dramatic function of the *Liedel* than those for whom it was simply *schön*.

In Strauss's 1911 arrangement of waltzes from Act III, the *Zweite Walzerfolge*, Ochs's *Liedel* barely makes an appearance; not surprising, perhaps, given that its domain is predominantly Act II. Nevertheless, had Strauss anticipated the tremendous popularity that the number would enjoy, he might have enlarged its presence in the suite as, indeed, the arrangers listed above did. When, in the mid-1940s, he took it upon himself to compile an orchestral suite of waltzes from Acts I and II, the *Erste Walzerfolge*, he was finally given the chance to respond to the waltz's success in the thirty years since the première of the opera, to clarify the

²² Letters of 18 December 1927 and 3 May 1928; *Working Friendship*, 457 and 475.

²³ Derrick Puffett completely misreads Strauss's 'misunderstood waltz' reference when he points out that the issue here is to do with the charge of anachronism (*Der Rosenkavalier, Opera Guide*, 13). If this were the case, Strauss would have referred to the 'misunderstood waltzes' but, instead, it is clear that it is a *single* waltz that Strauss considers misunderstood: 'Vielleicht bedenken Sie, dass der Erfolg des *Rosenkavalier*—ausser dem missverstandenen Walzer—der Auftritt des Rosenkavalier, der Schluss des I. Aktes und das Terzett waren!' (letter to Hofmannsthal, 3 May 1928).

²⁴ Julius Korngold, 'Der Rosenkavalier: Comedy for Music by Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Music by Richard Strauss', *Neue Freie Presse*, Vienna, 9 April 1911; reprinted in 'Richard Strauss and the

misunderstanding. He did so by adding a brief double bass solo at the point where the *Liedel* appears (Example 2.4, figure 186) with the direction: ‘The bass solo to imitate the voice. Omit if the effect is not satisfactory!’ The effect, when satisfactory, is both ludicrous and grotesque. The bass plays fragments of Ochs’s melody but, robbed of the grain of the human voice, the notes sound all wrong and compete with the *tutti* basses—the true bass part—for the authority crucial to underpinning the waltz harmonies. What we get, then, is an effect which I contend Strauss wanted at the conclusion of Act II—an amusing, clumsy mistake of a waltz; a waltz parody. In the *Erste Walzerfolge* it is no longer a matter of interpretation, but is explicitly written into the part. Strauss is reclaiming Ochs’s *Liedel*, as it were, from its reception as a tuneful, sentimental, and comfortably reassuring number, and unmistakably pushing it in the direction of the absurd. What had been (incorrectly) understood by some as pastiche is distorted (beyond all reasonable doubt) into parody.

The Singer’s aria

Ochs’s *Liedel* is a stage song or, to use Carolyn Abbate’s term, ‘a phenomenal song’, a ‘vocal performance that declares itself openly, singing that is heard by its singer, the auditors on stage, and understood as “music that they (too) hear” by us, the theatre audience’.²⁵ Prior to our encounter with Ochs’s quasi-seduction song (more correctly, failed seduction song) we hear another such song in Act I, an Italian aria sung by a character who is simply identified as ‘a Singer’, an operatic tenor whose seemingly sole purpose is to appear on stage, sing his aria, and leave. As with Ochs’s song, the

Viennese Critics’, trans. Susan Gillespie, in *Richard Strauss and His World*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 356.

181 *p* *dim.* *calando*

1,2.C-Klar. *p* *dim.* *pp*

B'horn *p* *dim.* *pp*

1.Fag. *p* *pp* *dim.* *pp*

2.Fag. *p* *pp* *dim.* *pp*

1,2.Hrn. *pp*

4.Hrn. *pp*

1.Viol. *pp* *calando*

2.Viol. *pp*

Br. *arco* *pizz.* *arco* *pp*

Vcl. *p* *pp*

Solo Kb. *pp*

d.übr. *p* *pp*

186 *3/4* Walzertempo, sehr gemächlich beginnend

1,2.C-Klar. *pp* *ppp*

B'horn *pp* *ppp*

1.Fag. *pp* *ppp*

1,2.Hrn. (F) *pp* *ppp*

1.Viol. (mit Dämpfer) *pp* *ppp*

2.Viol. (mit Dämpfer) *pp* *ppp*

Br. (mit Dämpfer) *pp* *ppp*

get. (mit Dämpfer) *pp* *ppp*

Vcl. *pizz.* *pp* *pizz.* *pp*

Solo Kb. *pp* *arco* (hervortretend, aber nicht stark!)

d.übr. *1.u.2. Pult* *(pizz.)*

*) Anm.d. Komponisten: Das Kontrabass-Solo die Gesangsstimme nachahmend. Wenn nicht von guter Wirkung, dann weglassen!

Example 2.4: *Der Rosenkavalier* (Erste Walzerfolge) (1944)

²⁵ Carolyn Abbate, *Unsung Voices* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 5. In a footnote to this remark, Abbate cites Edward Cone's 'virtual song' as another term for the same phenomenon.

aria—‘Di rigori armato il seno’—is an isolated moment of parody, an instance of Strauss affecting a particular style, a mask, in order to offer some kind of critique.²⁶ This set piece is performed during the reception scene, or *levée*, a scene which is based on a Hogarth painting from the mid-1740s, ‘The Countess’s Morning Levée’, from the series *Marriage à la mode*.²⁷ Hogarth’s picture, which, in addition to the countess, includes a hairdresser, flautist, singer, servant, and assorted hangers-on, is recreated in *Der Rosenkavalier* as a kind of *tableau vivant* with music. The main thrust of the scene is threefold: to set up the Marschallin’s mirror gazing, to explore further Ochs’s material hopes from his impending marriage, and to introduce us to the intriguers Valzacchi and Annina. The tenor aria, therefore, might appear to be little more than an indulgence, a pleasant enough diversion but one which delays rather than advances the plot; it is a brief but prominent moment for a figure who, dramatically, is a non-entity. But to presume this ignores the parodic function of the aria, the fact that, as a moment of parody, it speaks with a double voice and offers insights beyond its seemingly decorative appearance and beyond the character who sings it.

The tenor aria is the only moment in *Der Rosenkavalier* where we encounter a text not of Hofmannsthal’s invention: this text has been borrowed from Molière, the *Ballet des Nations* that concludes *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* (1670).²⁸ Its original context, in other words, was a seventeenth-century *comédie-ballet* in which Molière—himself wearing the mask of a poet of Italian opera—sought to present in a brief

²⁶ Although both the tenor aria and Ochs’s *Liedel* are phenomenal songs which happen to be parodies, I do not wish to give the impression that phenomenal songs in opera need necessarily be parodic.

²⁷ The image is reproduced in Jefferson, *Der Rosenkavalier*, 18. Note that Hogarth’s painting is precisely contemporaneous with the period in which *Der Rosenkavalier* is set.

²⁸ The three countries represented in the *Ballet des Nations* are, in order, Spain, Italy, and France.

entrée the essence of contemporary Italian theatre. The first strophe of the aria makes clear the seriousness of the endeavour:

Di rigori armato il seno
Contro amor mi ribellai
Ma fui vinto in un baleno
In mirar due vaghi rai.
Ahi! che resiste puoco
Cor di gelo a stral di fuoco.

[With my breast armed with hardness / I rebelled against love / but I was defeated in a flash / when I looked at two beautiful eyes. / Ah! A heart of ice has little resistance against a shaft of fire.]

But the aria's gravitas is immediately undermined at its conclusion, since it is followed by a ballet in which the dancers wear the costumes of the *commedia dell'arte* figures Scaramouche, Trivelin, and Arlequin. Given Hofmannsthal's choice of an aria text from a French *comédie-ballet* rather than one from an eighteenth-century *opera seria* (and we should not forget that the eighteenth century's pre-eminent *opera seria* poet was Pietro Metastasio, resident at the court of Maria Theresa), it seems reasonable to assume that, at the very least, we should approach the Singer's serious pretensions with scepticism.²⁹

The parodic voices that the aria activates are varied. Most obviously, the tenor epitomises Italian opera (as the singer did in Molière's original), not of the period in which *Der Rosenkavalier* is set but, in yet another of the opera's temporal inconsistencies, a period much closer to that of the opera's composition. The aria's high tessitura, long-breathed legato phrases, chromatic embellishing notes, and upward swoops (in full chest voice) to high-register, impassioned climaxes (B flat on

²⁹ We should also bear in mind that another play by Molière, *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* (1669), had a strong bearing upon plot and characterisation in *Der Rosenkavalier* (see Jefferson, *Der Rosenkavalier*, 14-16). The close juxtaposition of *seria* and *commedia* characters obviously calls to mind the conceit that underpins *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Hofmannsthal's indebtedness to Molière in *Ariadne auf Naxos* is addressed in the following chapter.

three occasions, C flat on one) signifies a tenor of nineteenth-century pedigree, and one still present in the operas of Strauss's Italian contemporaries (Example 2.5). It should be noted that the part has been recorded by, amongst others, Giuseppe Di Stefano, Nicolai Gedda, Luciano Pavarotti, Plácido Domingo, and José Carreras.³⁰ Furthermore, when excerpts from *Der Rosenkavalier* were published at the time of the opera's première, the Singer's number was among them; it was passed off, in other words, as a genuine Italian operatic aria (albeit by a German composer).³¹

In an opera that denies us a lyric tenor (a mezzo in trousers has seen to that), the aria presents a moment of pure performance in the 'stand and deliver' tradition of operatic stagecraft. But there are two simultaneous performances going on here: one to those gathered in the Marschallin's bedroom (an audience which, by and large, ignores the Singer's efforts) and another to the audience beyond the stage, the eavesdroppers in the opera house.³² It is a 'straight' performance to the former audience and a parodic one to the latter. The parody, in other words, stems from the context of the aria and not from any distortion of the type it seeks to emulate: the tenor sounds magnificent but appears somewhat ridiculous having to fabricate so much emotion first thing in the morning before a room full of animals, strangers, and

³⁰ William Mann writes that, 'for the Hamburg première [of *Der Rosenkavalier*] Strauss was anxious that the part [of the Singer] should be sung by Caruso, who was touring Germany and the time. Alas, the great tenor demanded 3,000 marks, and was not engaged'; *Richard Strauss: A Critical Study of the Operas* (London: Cassell, 1964), 116.

³¹ As a published excerpt, the aria comprised the introduction and first strophe only.

³² Hofmannsthal indicates that the Singer is applauded by the hairdresser: this is his only reference to the reception of the song. In some productions of *Der Rosenkavalier* Ochs is generous in his applause, surely an inappropriate gesture. If Ochs truly were listening to the tenor and taking notice he might be better equipped to serenade Sophie in Act II; the Singer's elevated prose and impassioned phrases might succeed where the *Liedel* fails.

poco accelerando 232 poco calando.

3 gr Fl. II. III. 2 B-Clar. 2 Fag. III. Horn. Viol. I. (die Hälfte) Viol. II. Br. Solo Celli (die übrigen)

poco accelerando 232 poco calando - (Der Sänger hat sich in Po. (die Hälfte) (die Hälfte) pp

233 *l'istesso tempo, un poco sostenuto* dasselbe Zeitmaß, etwas getragen ♩ = 68 234

I. II. 3 Fag. III. I. II. (F) 3 Hörner IV. (Des) Der Tenor. 233 *l'istesso tempo, un poco sostenuto* dasselbe Zeitmaß, etwas getragen ♩ = 68 234

3 Soli Celli (die übrigen)

235

I. II. 3 Fag. III. I. II. (F) 3 Hörner IV. (Des) Der Tenor. in mi-rar du - e va-ghi rai. Ma fui vin-to in un ba - le-no ah! in mi-rar du - e va - ghi rai.

235 (G-Saite) esp. Viol. I. Viol. II. Br. 3 Soli Celli (die übrigen) G. B.

Example 2.5: *Der Rosenkavalier*, Act I, Singer's aria.

236 237 $\text{♩} = 84$
a 8. *espr.*

3 gr. Fl. *cresc.*

I. II. *cresc.* *dim.* *p* *cresc.*

3 Fag. *cresc.* *dim.* *p* *cresc.*

III. *cresc.* *dim.* *p* *cresc.*

I. II. (F) *p molto espr.* *cresc.* *p espr.* *cresc.*

4 Hörner III. *cresc.*

(Des) *cresc.*

IV. *cresc.*

Der Tenor. *236* *237*
Ahi! che re - si - ste puoco a - stral di fuoco Cor di ge - lo di fuo-co a - stral!

Viol. I. *pp* *cresc.* *p espr.* *cresc.*

Viol. II. *pp* *cresc.* *p* *cresc.*

Br. *pp* *cresc.* *p espr.* *cresc.*

3 Soli *p espr. molto* *cresc.* *dim.* *p* *cresc.*

Celli *p espr.* *cresc.* *dim.* *p* *cresc.*

(die übrigen) *p espr.* *cresc.* *dim.* *p* *cresc.*

C. B. *pp* *cresc.* *pp* *cresc.*

$\text{♩} = 84$

(Der Friseur übergibt dem Gehilfen das Eisen und applaudiert dem Sänger. Dann fährt er im Arrangement des Lockenbaues fort.)

a 8.

3 gr. Fl. *dim.*

2 Hob. *dim.*

I. II. *dim.*

3 Fag. *dim.*

III. *dim.*

I. II. (F) *dim.*

4 Hörner III. *dim.*

(Des) *dim.*

IV. *dim.*

Der Tenor.

Viol. I. *dim.*

Viol. II. *dim.*

Br. *dim.*

3 Soli *dim.*

Celli *dim.*

(die übrigen) *dim.*

C. B. *dim.*

Example 2.5 (cont.)

a woman having her hair set.³³ Strauss presumed that his public was operatically literate, that it was familiar with conventions of style and genre in opera, and therefore it is not surprising that he would have expected his audience to recognise in the *Rosenkavalier* tenor the playful (and incongruous) exhibition of a specimen from elsewhere in the literature, a specimen usually encountered ruminating on the agonies of love in rather more serious dramatic circumstances.

As in the Molière comedy from which the Singer's text has been taken, the two strophes of the aria are broken up by an interpolated passage—in the original it is a *ritournelle*, in *Der Rosenkavalier* it is the arrival of Ochs's ungainly retinue and Ochs's conversation with the Marschallin's Notary in which he tries to cajole the lawyer into drawing up a highly favourable—and legally dubious—pre-nuptial agreement. Their conversation continues through the second strophe of the aria,

Ma sì [*sic*] caro è'l mio tormento
Dolce è sì [*sic*] la piaga mia
Ch' il penare è mio contento
E'l sanarmi è tirannia
Ahi! Che resiste puoco—
Cor.....

[But so dear to me is my torment, / so sweet is my anguish / that the suffering is my delight / and healing is tyranny. / Ah! How could a / heart resist...]

³³ On the sheer beauty of the tenor aria, it is well to recall Donald Tovey's point that 'the first requirement of the highest order of parody is that it should take its opportunity of being obviously more beautiful than the things parodied'; 'Overture to *Così fan tutte*', *Essays in Musical Analysis*, 6 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), VI, 30. Dieter Zimmerschied, on the other hand, argues that the intended parody of the Singer's aria in *Der Rosenkavalier* is undone by the sheer beauty of the music; see 'Integration in Liebe oder brutale Vertreibung? Versuche zur Deutung der Sängerepisode im *Rosenkavalier*', *Die Musikforschung* 81 (1979), 297. Reinhold Schlötterer argues, fleetingly and unconvincingly in my view, that the tenor aria exaggerates and thereby renders ironic features typical of a nineteenth-century Italian opera aria, 'Ironic Allusions to Italian Opera in the Musical Comedies of Richard Strauss', in *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1992), 77-8. One of the conclusions drawn by Mary Hunter from her study of *seria* references in eighteenth-century *opera buffa* is that 'musical context rather than content almost always determines the tone of the moment', 'Some representations of *opera seria* in *opera buffa*', *Cambridge Opera Journal* 3 (1991), 107. In other words, as I argue in the case of the Singer's aria in *Der Rosenkavalier*, we cannot judge from content alone whether parodic meaning is inferred.

and becomes increasingly louder to the point where the Singer's performance is terminated by an ill-timed shriek from Ochs when it becomes clear that the Notary has more scruples than the bridegroom-to-be can tolerate.

If the vocal timbre and stylistic gestures of the aria are Strauss's take on Italian romantic opera, the dramatic structure of the scene—ode to love as a self-conscious performance before an on-stage assembly—places it in a parodic relationship with Tannhäuser's declaration before the Wartburg nobles in Act II of Wagner's opera. Tannhäuser's 'hymn to Venus' consists of a multi-stanza song that rises to ever higher keys with each successive verse before it is finally terminated in a shocked outburst from the assembly (diminished seventh chord on universal cries of 'Ha! der Verruchte!') when he confesses to having experienced the erotic pleasures of the Venusberg.³⁴ Strauss, too, subjects his love-struck tenor to scaling ever-higher keys (the opening D-flat major is cranked up to D major in the second stanza) and, in good romantic fashion, the *aria interrupta* explodes prematurely on an accented fortissimo diminished seventh chord (Example 2.6).³⁵ Humour resides not in what remains the same between Wagner's prototype and Strauss's imitation of it but, rather, in the 'perverse' differences that separate the latter from the former.

Tannhäuser's sincere declaration of love contrasts with the pseudo-sincere attitude of an unnamed professional opera singer, and whereas the content of the

³⁴ The first three stanzas of Tannhäuser's 'Dir töne Lob!' are heard in Act I and move steadily upwards in pitch: the key of D-flat major gives way to D major and then E-flat major. The last stanza, in E major, is sung in Act II before the assembled party at the Wartburg.

³⁵ Compare the premature termination of the love duet in Act II of *Tristan und Isolde*. Ochs's arrival in the Marschallin's bedroom, when he bursts through the door unexpectedly and interrupts the scene within, is also accompanied by a fortissimo diminished seventh chord (see rehearsal figure 101+5). The termination by Valzacchi and Annina of the Sophie-Octavian duet in Act II is very nearly of this

(Die Marschallin winkt den Sänger zu sich, reicht ihm die Hand
Lebhafter. Più animato.

249

I. II.
3 gr. Fl.
III.
2 Hob.
engl. Horn.
D-Clar.
2 B-Clar.
Basseth.
I. II.
3 Fag.
III.
I. II.
4 Hörner (D)
III. IV.
I. II.
3 Tromp. (B)
III.
I. II.
3 Pos.
III.
Baßuba.
gr. Trommel.
Der Tenor.
Notar.
Baron.
Viol. I.
Viol. II.
Br.
3 Soli
Celli.
die übrigen
C.B.

(Der Sänger bricht
jäh ab.)
249
che re - si - ste puo - - - co cor.....
Als eine Schenkung inter vi - vos o - der.. (schreiend)
Schädel? (Baron schlägt wü - Als Morgengabe! (Der Notar zieht sich erschrocken in die Ecke zurück.
tend auf den Tisch)

Lebhafter. Più animato.

Example 2.6: *Der Rosenkavalier*, Act I, Singer's aria (conclusion).

type, the difference here being that the duet has already cadenced the moment they take hold of the young couple.

Minnesinger's song proves to be his undoing (the revelation of forbidden pleasure), the tenor's aria is brought down not because of its poetic content (indeed, it is in a foreign language and no one really appears to be listening) but because of the supposedly peripheral but, in fact, ever-louder exchange between Ochs and the Notary, an exchange driven by the Baron trying to exact maximum financial advantage from his impending marriage. *Tannhäuser* is Wagner's critique of the artist and his complex and uneasy relationship with society. The Italian tenor scene in *Der Rosenkavalier* also presents the artist and his social milieu but, in this case, music is presented not so much as art but as mere commodity. It functions simply as one of the many diversions that grace a noblewoman's *toilette* and is so little noticed that it forms the background to, and is eventually shoved aside by, tawdry financial dealings.³⁶

It might also be argued that there is a further parodic layer at work in the Singer's aria, namely that it is a self-reflexive gesture, it is Strauss presenting *himself* (not, as in the case of Ochs's *Liedel*, some unnamed 'outside' author) as a lyrical composer of music for the tenor voice. After the strident excursions of *Salome* and *Elektra* he is declaring himself 'reinvented' as a *bel canto* composer (a declaration we hear, after all, in other areas of *Der Rosenkavalier*). The irony here is that Strauss made no secret of his disinclination to write heroic tenor parts (one need look no further than the *Hosenrolle* Octavian for confirmation of this attitude) and, in the period between writing the gruelling part for the *Heldentenor* Guntram (1894) to *Der Rosenkavalier*'s walk-on soloist, he reserved tenors for either minor roles (e.g.

³⁶ Ochs's fiancée is also implicitly objectified as a commodity in this scene, for it is through his bride-object that Ochs is hoping to improve his material status.

Aegisth) or cast them against type as unlyrical, unheroic specimens (e.g. Herod).³⁷

The superb lyricism of the tenor aria in *Der Rosenkavalier* might be seen, then, as a stylistically convincing but patently hollow gesture from a composer feigning interest in the most characteristic (and beloved) male voice type of romantic opera. The key of the aria—D-flat major—is not insignificant in this respect.³⁸ This is the key of ‘Wenn du einst die Gauen durchschreitest’, which marks Guntram’s farewell to dramatic soprano Freihild in the closing moments of Strauss’s first opera. D-flat major will also be the key of Bacchus’s closing paragraph to Ariadne, ‘Die Höhle deine Schmerzen’, in Strauss’s next opera. Since the *Guntram* passage is wholly serious but the one from *Ariadne* is tinged with at least the suggestion of the mock-heroic, the tenor episode in *Der Rosenkavalier* might mark some kind of transition point: its key signals Strauss delivering ‘the great tenor moment’ but the ethos that underscores that moment is most definitely open to question.

Intertextual Dialogues

Both of the phenomenal songs in *Der Rosenkavalier*—Ochs’s and the Singer’s—derive their meaning from and convey their meaning through operatic conventions.

They are not just stage songs, they are parodic stage songs and, as such, speak with a double voice. Being parodic, they engage in intertextual exchanges, mostly at the

³⁷ Paul Bekker writes eloquently of the change in the nature of the tenor in the early twentieth century: ‘The tenor as lover disappears changing into a character part, hysterical, pathological, almost possessed. [...] This conception of the tenor tone as an abnormal character color is not new. Mozart’s Basilio is perhaps the stem from which the entire line of such figures sprang; Halévy’s fanatic Eléazar belongs to it; Wagner’s Loge and Mime and Mussorgsky’s Idiot continue it. All these show the transformation of the tenor from the lover to the degenerate, the deformed, the outcast. The sound of the tenor voice arouses thoughts no longer of tenderness but of the singular and the grotesque’; *The Changing Opera*, trans. Arthur Mendel (London: Dent, 1936), 264.

³⁸ As mentioned above, only the D-flat major first strophe of the aria appears as a published excerpt. The incomplete second strophe is in D major.

level of general rather than specific parody. In their intertextuality they exhibit on the small-scale tendencies which are played out in the opera in larger and broader contexts. As we have seen, it is hardly original to offer the view that *Der Rosenkavalier* establishes an intertextual dialogue with *The Marriage of Figaro*, that in Octavian and the Marschallin we encounter the shadows of Cherubino and the Countess. Indeed, when the curtain goes up on the Marschallin's bedroom in Act I it is as though we are back in the bedchamber of *Figaro* Act II.³⁹

Hofmannsthal declares candidly that the opera makes use of 'types'—he lists them as 'the buffo, the old man, the young girl, the lady, the "Cherubino"'—⁴⁰—but whereas these types were staples of eighteenth-century comic opera, to early twentieth-century audiences they spelt *Figaro* (and, to a lesser extent, its precursor in the Beaumarchais trilogy, *The Barber of Seville*), a connection made explicit by Hofmannsthal's 'Cherubino' reference.⁴¹ Indeed, in a letter from Hofmannsthal to Strauss written shortly after the première of *Der Rosenkavalier*, he states that, although generally pleased with the music, he is not wholly satisfied and suggests that, in future, they address more specifically the matter of 'set numbers' (*Nummern*)

³⁹ Robin Holloway records an exchange overheard at Glyndebourne during an interval of *Der Rosenkavalier*: 'Who wrote the music?' 'It's Mozart, dear, you can tell by the costumes'; '*Salome*: art or kitsch?', in *Salome*, ed. Derrick Puffett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 194, n. 18.

⁴⁰ Hugo von Hofmannsthal, 'Der Rosenkavalier. Zum Geleit'. In *Hugo von Hofmannsthal. Gesammelte Werke. Dramen V: Operndichtungen*, ed. Bernd Schoeller and Rudolf Hirsch (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1979), 149. Even the Notary in *Der Rosenkavalier*, who is supposed to deliver his lines 'short of breath', conforms to the 'bumbling official' type familiar from *Figaro* (the speech impaired Judge, Don Curzio) and *Così fan tutte* (caricatured by a vocally distorted Despina when she appears in the guise of the marriage celebrant). That the opera's plot entails recourse to the tradition of characters appearing in disguise—Octavian as Mariandel is the most significant example—highlights another point of contact with the *buffa* tradition.

⁴¹ Herbert Lindenberger makes the point that with its eighteenth-century setting, '*Der Rosenkavalier* becomes an ideal lost world filtered through an early twentieth-century historical consciousness that has been coloured by notions of cultural decline— notions that are themselves embodied both in the imitation of earlier musical forms and in the bittersweet musical commentaries interrupting the comic action'; *Opera: The Extravagant Art* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984), 104.

and recitative, a more Mozartian type of opera in other words.⁴² (Even before Hofmannsthal settled upon the subject matter and content of *Der Rosenkavalier*, his correspondence with Strauss reveals that he specifically wished to write a work in which ‘the older style of opera’ was revived.⁴³ He even goes so far as to describe the proposed opera as ‘our *Figaro*’.⁴⁴) To this it should be added, however, that two passages in the opera (set numbers, or very nearly so) which more than any other recall Mozart’s *buffa* and *Singspiel* idioms are the Trio in Act I (Marschallin-Octavian/Mariandel-Ochs) and the closing duet (Sophie-Octavian), both of which were written at the suggestion of Strauss.⁴⁵ The former ‘number’—which commences at 190+10—takes up the style (if not the substance) of the *buffa* ‘action ensemble’ with its rollicking tempo and superimposition of disparate texts, melodic lines, and subject positions; while the latter—discussed in greater detail below—exhibits the influence of the *Singspiel* in its uncommonly simple melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic language. The composer, in other words, was a willing participant in Hofmannsthal’s Mozart revival project.

But *The Marriage of Figaro* is not the only opera drawn into the intertextual dialogue, for in its particular type of love triangle—young couple plus third party of more advanced years—*Der Rosenkavalier* calls to mind the Walther von Stolzing-Eva-Hans Sachs configuration of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. Beckmesser, the outsider who tries—hopelessly—to lay claim to one of the members of the triangle,

⁴² 20 March 1911; *Working Friendship*, 77. Emphasis in original.

⁴³ Letter of 18 October 1908; *ibid.*, 25-6.

⁴⁴ Letter of 19 May 1908; *ibid.*, 20. The *Figaro* project mentioned here became *Cristinas Heimreise*, a comedy in embryonic form in early 1908 which, according to Hofmannsthal’s plans, Strauss would subsequently set as an opera. Strauss, however, was not in sympathy with this approach—what if the comedy failed as a stage play? wouldn’t this damage the subsequent opera?—and the project was superseded in early 1909 by work on *Der Rosenkavalier*.

finds his counterpart in Ochs.⁴⁶ The Marschallin recalls Sachs not merely because she occupies the equivalent position in the three-way relationship and, finally, has to renounce that position but, also, and more importantly, because she too casts her presence over the entire opera and is given to philosophical monologues, to intellectual ruminations on humankind and the ways of the world.⁴⁷ *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* itself includes a significant intertextual reference when, in Act III, Sachs cites the tragic story of ‘Tristan and Isolde’ (underscored by Wagner with a highly evocative quotation from his recently completed opera) when he informs the young lovers that he has no wish to take the part of King Mark in competing for the attentions of a younger woman in love with a man her own age.

Just as *Die Meistersinger* refers to *Tristan*, and *Der Rosenkavalier* refers to *Die Meistersinger*, Willi Schuh has argued that the opening scene of Act I of *Der Rosenkavalier* establishes a parodic relationship with *Tristan*, Act II. Thus Octavian’s passionate yet somewhat unexpected reflection upon the word ‘you’ while reclining in a post-coital embrace

Du, du—was heisst das ‘Du’? Was ‘du und ich’?
 Hat denn das einen Sinn?
 Das sind Wörter, blosser Worte, nicht? Du sag’!⁴⁸

[You, you—Why talk of ‘you’? This ‘You and I’? Do we know what they mean? They are words, merely words—Yes—You know!]

⁴⁵ See letters of 16 May and 26 June 1909; *ibid.*, 32 and 35.

⁴⁶ However, as Paul Robinson points out, ‘Beckmesser pursues the middle figure in the triad—Eva—while Ochs pursues the ingénue’, *Opera and Ideas* (Ithaca, N. Y.: Cornell University Press, 1985), 213. Robinson’s study includes an excellent and detailed comparative analysis of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and *Der Rosenkavalier*.

⁴⁷ In a letter written to Strauss on 7 January 1927, Hofmannsthal cites *Die Meistersinger* as a ‘distant model’ for *Der Rosenkavalier*; *Working Friendship*, 434. Additionally, Willi Schuh cites amongst Hofmannsthal’s papers a note written while at work on *Der Rosenkavalier* in which he draws a parallel between the Marschallin and Sachs, ‘Die Entstehung des *Rosenkavalier*’, *Trivium* 9 (1951), 78. Schuh also points out that Roland Tenschert presents a detailed examination of connections between *Der Rosenkavalier* and *Die Meistersinger* in *Dreimal sieben Variationen über das Thema Richard Strauss* (Wien: Frick, 1944).

⁴⁸ Strauss offers a thrice repeated ‘du’ in his setting of the opening of this passage.

is a parodic reworking of Isolde's similarly passionate, surprising meditation on the word 'and' while in the throes of ecstatic love

Doch unsre Liebe
heisst sie nicht Tristan
und—Isolde?
Dies süsse Wörtlein 'und':
was es bindet,
der Liebe Bund...

[But our love, / is it not Tristan / and—Isolde? / The word that joins us 'and' / how it binds us / in loving bonds...]

As Schuh asserts, that Octavian shortly thereafter vents his anger at the advancing daylight

Warum ist Tag? Ich will nicht den Tag!
Für was ist der Tag?
Da haben dich alle! Finster soll sein!

[Why is it day? It shall not be day! What use is the day? Then everyone sees you. Dark it shall be!]

further points up the parodic relationship with *Tristan*.⁴⁹ Strauss, he maintains, establishes the parodic tone of Hofmannsthal's opening scene when, shortly after the *Einleitung* gets underway he provides (at rehearsal figure 2+5) the following marking: 'die ganze Steigerung von hier ab durchaus parodistisch!' (the entire raising up from this point onwards parodistic!), an intensification which reaches its climax in the infamous orgasmic spurt from the horns (4+5). Additionally, Strauss sets Octavian's quasi-*Tristan* phrase 'du und ich' to a rising chromatic figure, an allusion to the 'longing' motif in Wagner's opera (Example 2.7, figure 19).⁵⁰ It could hardly be called a quotation, but as it is accompanied by an *espressivo Tristan*-like motif passed

⁴⁹ Schuh, 'Die Entstehung des *Rosenkavalier*', 78-9. This point is also taken up by Jefferson, *Der Rosenkavalier*, 107.

⁵⁰ Schuh, 'Die Entstehung des *Rosenkavalier*', 79. See also Norman Del Mar, *Richard Strauss. A Critical Commentary on his Life and Works*, 3 vols. (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1962-72), I, 354.

19

I. II.
3 gr. Fl.
III.
2 Hob.
engl. Horn.
2 A-Clar.
Basseth.
I. II. Fag.
III. IV. Horn.
(E)
Octavian.
Was heißt das, „Du?“ Was „Du und ich?“ Hat denn das einen Sinn? Das sind Worte, bloße Wor - te, nicht? Du sag!

Viol. I.
Viol. II.
Br.
Celli.
C. B.

20 $\text{♩} = 120.$

I. II.
3 gr. Fl.
III.
2 Hob.
engl. Horn.
2 A-Clar.
Basseth.
I. II. Fag.
III. IV. Horn.
(E)
Octavian.
— Aber dennoch: Es ist etwas in ihnen, ein Schwin - deln, ein Zie - hen, ein Seh - nen und Drängen, ein

Viol. I.
Viol. II.
Br.
Celli.
C. B.

Example 2.7: *Der Rosenkavalier*, Act I.

around the orchestra (rising interval of a 6th followed by falling tone or semitone), the reference may be said to be present yet in highly discreet form.

One further point to be made with regard to *Tristan* is the Marschallin's laughter which follows Octavian's discourse on night and day and his subsequent attempt to draw the bedroom curtains. 'Lachst du mich aus?' (Are you laughing at me?) cries Octavian in his attempt to exchange light for dark, a question the Marschallin skilfully evades. A sentimental reading of the scene might conclude that she laughs because she is charmed by her lover's youthful antics, but if we accept that Hofmannsthal is parodying the pretentious language and tone of *Tristan und Isolde*, Octavian becomes the agent through which the Wagnerian music drama is made the object of laughter.

While fond of *Die Meistersinger*, Hofmannsthal made no secret of his loathing for the 'erotic screaming' that passes for passionate ecstasy in Wagner's more serious operas. In a letter written to Strauss during the time of their collaboration on *Der Rosenkavalier*, he likened Wagner's love duets to the repulsive bestial shrieking of two creatures in heat.⁵¹ Happily, no such shrieking occurs in the Sophie-Octavian duet at the close of *Der Rosenkavalier* (Example 2.8). 'Kannst du lachen!' (You are laughing!) exclaims Sophie, momentarily interrupting the strains of a Mozart parody. Laughing with Mozart at the end of the opera has replaced laughing at Wagner at the start as one lover is exchanged for another and young passion is affirmed by old opera. Joseph Kerman, however, is ruthlessly dismissive of the 'sort of feeble folk song' that comprises the closing duet:

By any criterion, I think, it is the poorest thing in the opera. Was it for this minimal level of consciousness that we have had to suffer the Marschallin's self-pity and to

⁵¹ See letters of 2 September 1909 and 6 June 1910, especially the latter; *Working Friendship*, 49 and 58.

298 $\text{♩} = 76$

I. Hob. *p* (*zart*)

2 B-Clar. *pp*

I. Fag. *p espr.*

I. II. (G.)

4 Hörner. *pp* (in E.) III.

III. IV. (E)

Celesta. *p*

I. Harfe. *p*

II. Harfe. *p*

Sophie. *p* 298

ander sein, — bei ein — and für al — le Zeit und E — — — wig — keit.

Octavian. *p* (stärker)

ander sein! Geht all's sonst wie ein Traum dahin vor mei — — — nem Sinn. Ware ein Haus wo, da warst du drein, und die

A Saite. $\text{♩} = 76$

Viol. I. *p espr.* *pp*

Viol. II. *p espr.* *pp*

Br. *p espr.* *pp*

Celli. *p espr.* *arco* *p*

C. R. *arco* (pizz.) *p*

Example 2.8 (cont.)

poco accelerando poco Cal. a tempo ♩ = 76 299

I. II. 3gr. Fl. III. I. Hob. A-Clar. 2 B-Clar. I. 3 Fag. II. III. I. II. (G) 4 Hörner III. IV. (E) Celesta. I. Harfe. II. Harfe. Sophie. Octavian. Leu - teschicken mich hinein, mich gradaus in die Se - ligkeit! Die wa - ren g'scheidt!

poco accelerando poco cal. a tempo ♩ = 76 299

Viol. I. Viol. II. Br. Celli. C. B.

Example 2.8 (cont.)

sacrifice Ochs? for this, the silver rose and the white suit, the Three Noble Orphans and four finicky hours of leitmotives, modulations, and program-musical wit? The folk song is evidently a bow to a passage in *The Magic Flute*; Octavian and the Marschallin recall *The Marriage of Figaro*. These were deadly comparisons to have courted, and bespeak an arrogance hard to credit in any true Mozartian.⁵²

But the duet reveals the ‘minimal level’ of whose consciousness? Sophie’s and Octavian’s, Hofmannsthal’s and Strauss’s? Is it not possible that the affected simplicity of the closing duet (regular metre, clear-cut phrases, diatonic harmony, parallel thirds) speaks with a double voice, that we should be slightly wary of this as a storybook happy ending? It offers a certain charm but is heard as an appendage to the trio and has no hope of trumping the musical and theatrical clout of that particular ensemble. (Indeed, for adjacent numbers, the trio’s D-flat-major sublime and the duet’s G-major naïveté could hardly be farther apart.) On the strength of the musical evidence alone, the breakdown of the Octavian-Marschallin relationship is infinitely more compelling than the birth of the Sophie-Octavian union. ‘I sense that she [the Marschallin] gives him to me and at the same time takes something of him away from me’,⁵³ utters Sophie in the Act III trio. Just how much the Marschallin takes away becomes apparent once she exits the stage. As we shall see, Strauss uses intertextuality as a means of throwing into doubt aspects of plot and character which otherwise appear to be beyond question.

We are apt to mistake bland for sweet in our understanding of Sophie. Hofmannsthal made the point on a number of occasions that she is every inch the bourgeois daughter of her *nouveau riche* arms-dealing father (who, after all, is modelled on a *buffo* prototype): she says what she has heard others say and feels what

⁵² Joseph Kerman, *Opera as Drama* (New York: Random House, 1956), 260-1. Unlike Hofmannsthal, Kerman greatly admires *Tristan und Isolde*.

⁵³ ‘denn ich spür’, sie gibt mir ihn and nimmt mir was von ihm zugleich’.

she has been told to feel.⁵⁴ (The moment mentioned above when, in the closing duet, she expresses surprise at Octavian finding their situation cheerfully amusing typifies her one-dimensionality: the sacred bond of love—so she has been told—is not to be entered into lightly.) As a character of depth and sophistication she is clearly no match for the Marschallin. Hofmannsthal states this very explicitly when, in a letter to Strauss, he points out that ‘Sophie is a very pretty girl, but she is also a very ordinary girl like dozens of others—this is the whole point of the story; true charm of speech, indeed the stronger charm of personality is all with the Marschallin’.⁵⁵ In other words, the dénouement is far more concerned with loss than it is with gain. And notice how sour the tone becomes the further we get into Act III: Ochs makes a ‘low, angry bow’ to the Marschallin, the Marschallin laughs ‘angrily’ at Octavian and addresses Sophie ‘deprecatingly’. Additionally, Hofmannsthal indicates that there is a degree of uncertainty that the close of the opera signifies ‘happily every after’ for our young lovers: ‘Octavian draws Sophie to himself but does he really expect to be with her forever? This perhaps remains in doubt’.⁵⁶ Sophie, after all, is the only one who at this point is both dreaming (‘ist ein Traum’) and invoking eternity (‘für alle Zeit und Ewigkeit!’).

But our understanding of the closing duet must also take into account the unusual circumstances in which it was written together with the fact that, although the final number in the opera, its music was devised very early in the compositional

⁵⁴ ‘Ungeschriebenes Nachwort zum *Rosenkavalier*’ and ‘*Der Rosenkavalier*. Zum Geleit’ (both in Hofmannsthal, *Gesammelte Werke, Dramen V*); letter to Strauss of 12 July, 1910, *Working Friendship*, 59-61. In Act III Sophie makes a habit of repeating verbatim sentences uttered by others: ‘Das Ganz war halt eine Farce und weiter nichts’, ‘Is eine wienerische Maskarad’ und weiter nichts’, ‘Was drum und dran hängt, ist mit dieser Stund’ vorbei’.

⁵⁵ 12 July 1910; *Working Friendship*, 60.

process. We know for certain that the music of the duet was written before the words, for Strauss wrote to Hofmannsthal in the period before he had even begun setting Act II (or, indeed, before he had even received the libretto for Act II) with a request that the proposed duet at the close of Act III follow a given metrical scheme as, ‘I [already] have a very pretty tune’.⁵⁷ Strauss provided his librettist with a sample text of four lines (the word ‘Ewigkeit’ appears at this very early stage) in order that any confusion as to metre and, presumably, sentiment be avoided. Strauss, in other words, had already determined the *topos* of the duet before he had received even a line of Hofmannsthal’s text, for the ‘pretty tune’ very clearly exhibits folk-like qualities.

It is plain that, musically at least, the projected sound world at the close of the opera was to be characterised by naïve simplicity.⁵⁸ For Strauss, this simplicity is also explicitly bound up with the popular for, in addition to providing Hofmannsthal with metre and preliminary verse, he asked that the completed quatrains be in the style of a popular vaudeville poem (‘So ein recht populäres Vaudeville-Gedicht’).⁵⁹ This, then, places the closing duet in a curious relationship with Ochs’s *Liedel*, for Hofmannsthal, having there had to assume the mantle of bawdy street poet and produce a popular verse (which, playing along with the conceit, we are to understand is not of his making) is frankly requested here, with due seriousness, to produce a candidly popular (and candidly sentimental) number. But Hofmannsthal, as pointed out above,

⁵⁶ ‘Oktavian zieht Sophie zu sich herüber—aber zieht er sie wirklich zu sich und auf immer? Das bleibt vielleicht im Zweifel’; Hofmannsthal, ‘Ungeschriebenes Nachwort’, 146.

⁵⁷ Letter of 26 June 1909; *Working Friendship*, 35. Strauss received from Hofmannsthal the acts of *Der Rosenkavalier* one by one. Indeed, Strauss had finished Act I and sent it to his publisher before he had even received Act II from Hofmannsthal.

⁵⁸ As mentioned in the previous chapter, Donald Francis Tovey considered the Sophie-Octavian duet to be ‘a kind of parody of the past too gentle to be called caricature’, *The Classics of Music. Talks, Essays, and Other Writings Previously Uncollected*, ed. Michael Tilmouth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 142.

⁵⁹ Letter of 26 June 1909; *Working Friendship*, 35-6.

did not in fact see his young lovers as two peas in a pastoral pod (at least not by the time he actually came to write the words of the duet). The conception that both he and Strauss had of the opera at the time that Strauss devised the duet tune (mid-1909) turned out to be quite different from the work that emerged as they made their way through Acts II and III (on which they were still engaged in mid-1910). The Marschallin, most importantly, was removed from her slightly marginal position and came to command a far greater presence in the opera than it was at first thought she would. In other words, the dramatic function of the sweet and simple duet—the ‘triumph’ of young love—changed over time even if the tune did not.

The matter of the duet is complicated still further when we look beyond the folk-like *topos* and pinpoint the specific, very near quotation that is at work, the *Magic Flute* reference cited above by Kerman. The passage in question belongs to a duet in the Act I finale, ‘Könnte jeder brave Mann solcher Glöckchen finden’.⁶⁰ Stefan Kunze has argued that Strauss’s reference to the Mozart duet is no mere happenstance for he has borrowed not only melody, but also key and accompaniment figuration.⁶¹ Significantly, however, the hypotext is sung by a couple who, for obvious social reasons, have absolutely no chance of enjoying conjugal union, Pamina and Papageno. This is the wrong couple to be citing, the wrong duet to be invoking if we are to read the *Rosenkavalier* duet as signalling an unambiguously happy ending. By courting the comparison with Mozart, by parodically adapting one work in the other, the naïveté of the Sophie-Octavian duet is tempered by intertextual disjunction;

⁶⁰ The *Magic Flute* and *Rosenkavalier* duets are quoted and placed side by side in Lewis Lockwood, ‘The Element of Time in *Der Rosenkavalier*’, in Gilliam, *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives*, 252-5.

⁶¹ Stefan Kunze, ‘Idealität der Melodie: Über Richard Strauss und Mozart’, in *Mozart in der Musik des 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Wolfgang Gratzer and Siegfried Mauser (Laaber: Laaber Verlag, 1992), 22.

the passage from *The Magic Flute* critically informs the one from *Der Rosenkavalier* and, far from being deadly (*pace* Kerman), invites discord where we hear concord.⁶²

In borrowing gestures from one or another opera (be it *Tristan*, *Meistersinger*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, or *The Magic Flute*) and thereby forging a link between established works and a new opera yet to prove itself, Strauss and Hofmannsthal are positioning *Der Rosenkavalier* within elevated operatic company. *Der Rosenkavalier*'s musical and dramatic puns and 'in jokes' bind the work to canonic texts. *Rosenkavalier* might flirt with the coarse, vulgar, and popular, but it simultaneously wishes to declare an affinity with the erudite and esteemed. The web of intertextual references are a means to that end.

Strauss and *Così fan tutte*

Irony is a consequence of the process whereby the Sophie-Octavian duet recalls the duet for Pamina and Papageno. It emerges from the incongruity of situation and reference: young lovers in happy embrace (Sophie and Octavian) are linked musically to the wrong couple. Irony is a notoriously difficult phenomenon to ascertain in music but, in discussion of opera, is a term that emerges frequently in commentary on Mozart's final collaboration with Lorenzo Da Ponte, *Così fan tutte*. Indeed, parody and intertextuality, phenomena which have concerned us in the foregoing discussion, are also of particular relevance to Mozart's and Da Ponte's last opera. Collectively, these practices complicate to a very significant degree what, at first glance, appears to

⁶² Indeed, Strauss literally colours the scene with discords when in the final section of the duet (from figure 303), he reprises the spiky 'rose' music from the 'presentation scene' in Act II. Although he does not refer to any specific examples, Richard Taruskin states that Strauss left us 'in his compositions and arrangements, ample testimony to an utterly sentimentalized, fairyland vision of the eighteenth

be a straightforward plot enacted by stock—or very nearly stock—characters. The double-voiced properties of parody and intertextuality and the irony (also double voiced) which can lead from their application offer meaning (or meanings) far in excess of the musico-poetic surface. Thus, when Fiordiligi in her Act I aria ‘Come scoglio’ declares that, like a rock standing firm through gale and storm, she shall remain steadfast to her absent lover, we are invited to locate in her language and metaphor references to antique *seria* vocabulary and idioms and therefore to interpret what she says with the knowledge that she appears to be acting a role (the high style heroine of outdated high style opera) rather than expressing sentiments which we might take to be genuine.⁶³ She appears to be protesting too much or, more correctly, protesting with an intensity disproportionate to the situation placed before her and, as a result, arouses our suspicions as to the sincerity of her histrionic display.

Mozart matches the excesses of Da Ponte’s text with a vocal line marked by extreme leaps, as though the sheer force of her convictions cannot adequately be contained or expressed by a normal vocal range (that she declares her steadiness while at the same time ranging all about the place further hints at the double-coded strategies at work).⁶⁴ ‘In a final stretta section’, writes one commentator, ‘Mozart suggests Fiordiligi’s state of near-hysteria with initial five-bar phrases, long melismas in triplets, and a sudden outburst on high Bb’.⁶⁵ Her aria follows upon ‘Smanie

century’, a point of view I would contest in this instance; *Text and Act* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 114.

⁶³ Andrew Steptoe points out that [‘Come scoglio’] is written in the Arcadian verse typical of the [*opera seria*] genre, expressing a single emotion by means of metaphor. It has the common eight-line form, syllabically organized into Metastasian 8-8-8-7 metre; *The Mozart-Da Ponte Operas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 223.

⁶⁴ Steptoe, however, believes that rather than being wholly parodic Mozart’s setting contains moments of parody; *ibid.*

⁶⁵ Bruce Alan Brown, *W. A. Mozart: Così fan tutte* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 35.

implacabili', a similarly exaggerated performance from her sister Dorabella, a number which in tone, imagery, language, vocal delivery, harmony, and accompanying instrumental forces recalls Elettra's 'D'Oreste, d'Aiace' from *Idomeneo*.⁶⁶ Elettra's aria, however, is sung by a character on the verge of madness, and its particular qualities are attuned to the idioms and conventions of *opera seria*. Transferred to *Così fan tutte*—which is an *opera buffa* after all—they strike a false note and point up a disjunction between the dramatic situation and the individual's response to it.

While the falseness here fulfils, on the one hand, a comic function (the character in question is made to appear somewhat ridiculous), it highlights the issue of insincerity which, on many levels, pervades the workings of character and plot in *Così fan tutte*. Falseness, of course, underscores every aspect of the deception practised upon the women by the men: Ferrando and Guglielmo lie about being sent into battle, feign grief at having to leave their lovers behind, assume false identities as two Albanians and, with bogus declarations of love, set about seducing each other's fiancée. The insincerity of their actions is marked by the fact that, for them, success brings defeat: should they prove the faithlessness of their lovers, they lose both the wager placed with Don Alfonso at the start of the opera concerning the fidelity of their fiancées and, more significantly, the trust that each has for the other (fiancé for fiancée, friend for friend). In other words, by acting in accordance with the terms of the wager, the men speak and behave in ways contrary to their stated beliefs and hoped-for outcome. Thus, both music and text continually engage with planes of truth and untruth, sincerity and insincerity. Telling them apart is not always a straightforward matter.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 127.

In the Act I quintet ‘Di scrivermi ogni giorno’—one of a number of ‘farewell’ ensembles in the opera—the grief of the sisters is indicated by the direction ‘piangendo’ and the broken delivery of their lines. Da Ponte sets out the text thus: ‘Di... scri...ver...mi... ogni... giorno’. One asks that her fiancé despatch a letter a day from the front, the other demands two. A sobbing motif in the violins reflects (or perhaps mocks) the scene being played out. The departing soldiers, meanwhile, utter contrived assurances of their letter-writing ambitions and Don Alfonso, as an aside, remarks ‘I’ll burst if I don’t laugh!’ Musico-dramatic conventions are pressed into service—this is a ‘grief’ ensemble—but the sentiments are either insincere or, in the case of Fiordiligi and Dorabella, quite possibly sincere (at least up to a point) but presented by poet and composer in such a way that it is not altogether clear whether the sisters’ behaviour is meant to be read as reasonable or absurd.⁶⁷

In a score that resonates with internal cross-references together with allusions to and quotations from other operas by Mozart, we are offered the possibility of interpreting character and plot development on the basis of the meaning implicit in inter- and intratextual cues. These references are hardly accidental and, tantalisingly, occur on occasion at momentous junctures in the plot. Thus, when a phrase sung by one character in the early stages of Act I reappears in the later stages of Act II sung by someone else—and at a highly significant moment—we have to ask what is it that we are invited to conclude from this explicit, albeit long-range, conjunction.⁶⁸ I do not

⁶⁷ At issue here is also whether Mozart and Da Ponte were of one mind in matters of parody. Were the intentions of the librettist fully realised by the composer? Steptoe, for instance, claims that Mozart made a point of *not* yielding to Da Ponte’s parodic intent in many instances. From a study of the opera’s key structure, he presents the theory that sincere feelings are presented in sharp keys and insincere ones in flat keys.

⁶⁸ The reference here is to a phrase sung by Fiordiligi in ‘Fra gli amplessi in pochi istanti’, no. 29. It was first heard sung by Ferrando—in reference to Dorabella—in ‘Una bella serenata’, no. 3. For

wish to offer a proposed reading—although, interestingly, in light of the discussion above concerning *Der Rosenkavalier*'s closing duet, at issue could be the matter of 'right' and 'wrong' couples in *Così fan tutte*. My point is that, like in the quintet, there may be no unequivocal interpretation but, rather, informed supposition on the basis of a range of evidence. Indeed, *Così fan tutte* is richer for the fact that it teases and plays with plot and character (and audience for that matter) and leaves at its resolution a sense of the unresolved. It offers deception wrapped up in beautiful music and the unsettling notion that lies can reveal truths.⁶⁹

As mentioned at the start of this chapter, Strauss made no secret of his great affection for *Così fan tutte*. To declare a fondness for this opera might not appear to be particularly startling until we remember that until well into the twentieth century—in fact, until it was championed by Strauss—it was a work that, by and large, was held in low esteem. Of particular interest is that Strauss's great love for Mozart's opera was not, as one might expect, simply on the basis of its musical beauties but, significantly, on its sophisticated musico-dramatic workings as outlined above. Strauss, whom we are often given to assume had little or no gift for subtlety and refinement, was principally drawn to *Così fan tutte* for its delicate play with double voices, its use of parody and irony, its skilful conveyance of simultaneous messages at cross purposes. Never, he argued, has Mozart's capacity for character delineation been better served than when faced with the comically exaggerated pathos of the

discussion and proposed interpretation see Brown, *Mozart: Così fan tutte*, 50-1, 123-4, and Frits Noske, *The Signifier and the Signified: Studies in the Operas of Mozart and Verdi* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990), 112-14. Steptoe discusses the duet in some detail but does not make reference to the quotation from the earlier number, *The Mozart-Da Ponte Operas*, 237-42.

⁶⁹ On this point, see Scott Burnham, 'Mozart's *felix culpa*: *Così fan tutte* and the Irony of Beauty', *Musical Quarterly* 78 (Spring 1994), 77-98.

sisters and the hollow, sweet-sounding yet, in truth, furious compliments thrown at them by their pretended suitors.

This is a view expressed by Strauss in his 1910 essay, 'Mozarts *Così fan tutte*', written on the occasion of a new production of the opera in Munich.⁷⁰—precisely the time, it should be noted, that Strauss was at work on *Der Rosenkavalier*. The essay's insights are all the more remarkable given the patchy performance history of *Così fan tutte* up until that time.⁷¹ Strauss, one may presume, draws his points and observations from his very personal engagement with the opera—as mentioned previously, he had been conducting it from the time of his first opera house appointment, in 1886—rather than from received opinion of the work to date. Thus, he criticises the fact that the hitherto best known German translation of *Così fan tutte*—an influential version from 1860 by Eduard Devrient—largely obliterates the opera's finely calculated treatment of real as opposed to affected emotions and thereby disregards crucial matters of parody and irony. (The version performed in Munich from 1897, a new German translation by the celebrated Wagner conductor Hermann Levi, was unprecedented for the degree to which it followed Da Ponte's original text.) Devrient, as Strauss points out, also upset the well-marked character

⁷⁰ Reprinted in *Betrachtungen und Erinnerungen*, 98-105. It appears in highly abridged translation as 'On Mozart's *Così fan tutte*', in *Recollections and Reflections*, ed. Willi Schuh (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1953). Strauss's essay predates by a few years Edward J. Dent's spirited defence of *Così fan tutte* in *Mozart's Operas: A Critical Study* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1913). In the preface to the second edition of *Mozart's Operas* (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), Dent cites the significance of the Mozart productions that were staged in late-nineteenth century Munich (attended, as he points out, by many English visitors as part of a Bayreuth tour package) in fostering a 'new outlook' on the composer and his works.

⁷¹ See Brown, *Mozart: Così fan tutte*, 157-81, for a survey of the opera's performance history. Interestingly, one of the great Mozart ensembles of the last century was the highly accomplished group of singers at the Vienna State Opera in the period after the Second World War, comprising Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, Ljuba Welitsch, Irmgard Seefried, Hilde Gueden, Sena Jurinac, Erich Kunz, Hans Hotter, and Ludwig Weber. It will be noted that, by and large, these are the same singers who performed *Der Rosenkavalier* to great acclaim.

distinctions between the two sisters and thought nothing of transferring an aria from one to the other.⁷² For Strauss, these distortions were unconscionable for, as he makes plain, it is the psychological insight brought to bear in both music and text, the inner drama that is worked out with care, sophistication, and more than a dash of parody and irony, that makes *Così fan tutte* the extraordinary work that it is. He suggests that, in the past, ‘the peculiar parodic style of Mozart’s comedy’ no doubt worked against full appreciation of the opera for

the very pieces which expressed this style most clearly, namely the E-flat major aria of Dorabella in the first Act, Ferrando’s B-flat major aria and Guglielmo’s aria in G major in the second Act with their connecting and extremely charming recitatives, were invariably cut because they were obviously considered as musically inferior, although in reality they are all the most interesting and important from the dramatic point of view.⁷³

Indeed, he claims that it is precisely those aspects of the opera which were so little understood by previous generations—the curious psychology, the mix of emotions true and false and their calculated expression in the drama—that render it highly compatible to the tastes and sensibilities of progressive, contemporary opera audiences:

Today a community—still small, to be sure—takes pleasure from the charms of a more intimate, psychological, consistently developed and carefully shaded plot, without great to-do [ohne grosse Haupt- und Staatsaktionen], from the artistic treatment of a quite specific terrain of expression, such as that humoristic-pathetic, parodistic-sentimental style which is treated with such delicate irony in *Così fan tutte*.⁷⁴

⁷² Astoundingly, he assigned ‘Come scoglio’ to Dorabella.

⁷³ Strauss, ‘On Mozart’s *Così fan tutte*’, *Recollections and Reflections*, 73-4. The arias are, respectively, no. 11 ‘Smanie implacabili che m’agitano’, no. 24 ‘Ah lo veggio, quell’anima bella’, and no. 26 ‘Donne mie, la fate a tanti’. It is instructive to compare Strauss’s comments with those of Dent: ‘All through the opera we shall meet these parodies of the grand tragic manner, both in aria and in accompanied recitative; it was the perfection of ingenuity on the part of Da Ponte and Mozart together (for they cannot have planned such a thing independently or against each other’s wishes) to invent these opportunities for enhancing the absurdity of the dramatic situation and at the same time giving the singers the most glorious opportunities for showing off their voices’; *Mozart’s Operas*, 2nd ed., 196.

⁷⁴ Strauss, ‘Mozart’s *Così fan tutte*’, quoted in Brown, *Mozart: Così fan tutte*, 173. Again, compare Dent: ‘*Così fan tutte* is the apotheosis of insincerity—the only moment when anybody speaks the truth is when Don Alfonso utters the statement which forms the title of the opera. For this reason the opera is to some auditors bewildering and almost embarrassing. German chivalry in the last century was

Without for a moment wishing to doubt the sincerity of the point of view expressed here, it is not too fantastic to imagine that Strauss is also hinting at the ideal audience for his new opera, for the *Così fan tutte* essay was published exactly one month before the première of *Der Rosenkavalier*, an event marked by a welter of pre-publicity.⁷⁵ Following the middling success of Strauss's last comic opera, *Feuersnot*—a far less tactful venture into the realm of parody and comedy than his latest offering—he was situating, by implication, his soon-to-be unveiled opera within a rarefied comic tradition. But rarefied does not signify remote, for Strauss very skilfully places Mozart's as-yet under-appreciated opera beside the proven, popular, yet far-from-lightweight *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (he describes *Così fan tutte* as 'one of the gems of the whole of operatic comedy prior to Richard Wagner's *Meistersinger*'⁷⁶). Strauss appears to be making it easy for critics to join the dots, to locate the shared concerns and attitudes and intertextual links between established comic operas and ones pending. As we shall see in the following chapter, Strauss was ever mindful of the need to lay the groundwork in the musical press for conditions favourable to the reception of works about to be premiered. *Der Rosenkavalier* may reveal little stylistic affinity with *Così fan tutte*, but the parodic and ironic tone that informs Mozart's opera—the features of the work that attracted Strauss above all and

shocked at seeing women made ridiculous; the present age, at any rate in England, is merely amused. If the realists maintain that the story is an insult to human nature, let them read the reports of the Divorce Court during the period of a war. Such embarrassment as modern listeners sometimes do feel is due to the sheer beauty of the music itself; they cannot bear to think that it is the deliberate expression of sham feeling and sometimes of comically exaggerated passion'; *Mozart's Operas*, 2nd ed., 192-3.

⁷⁵ The essay was published in Vienna's *Neue freie Presse* on 25 December 1910. *Der Rosenkavalier* premiered in Dresden on 26 January 1911.

⁷⁶ Strauss, 'On Mozart's *Così fan tutte*', *Recollections and Reflections*, 73.

for which he reserved his highest praise—are features that are powerfully echoed in Strauss's 'Mozart' opera.

The Marschallin

By utilising certain conventional musical forms and idioms—features that in their conventionality exemplify well-established signs and meanings—Strauss in *Der Rosenkavalier*, like Mozart before him in *Così fan tutte*, was able to speak with a double voice: to state one thing but to signify something else, to render the conventional parodic. But whereas Mozart does not shy away from utilising parody in moments where his characters express seriousness of purpose—the Act I arias of Dorabella and Fiordiligi, for instance—Strauss, as we have seen, tends to reserve parody for either comic or, at the very least, cheerful moments.⁷⁷ Mozart is quite happy to scoff at his high-born ladies, but Strauss seems to keep the Marschallin well away from his parodic sights.

But, then again, perhaps he doesn't. From the moment in Act I when the Marschallin, in an undertone, rebukes her hairdresser, Hippolyte, for giving her the appearance of 'an old woman', the tone of the opera momentarily becomes more serious and from here until the close of the Act the Marschallin offers three separate monologues on the cruelty of ageing, the passing of time, and the inevitable collapse of her relationship with the young Octavian. This 'comedy for music' is never more solemn (and, indeed, affecting) than in the final twenty minutes or so of Act I. The futility of searching for 'the snows of yesteryear', the proof of time's passing that

⁷⁷ As pointed out above, parodic cues in *Così fan tutte* are in large part present in Da Ponte's text; it is not for Mozart to decide, in other words, which numbers or passages will be coloured by parody.

stares back at one's reflection in the looking-glass, the vain attempt to halt the passage of time by stopping clocks 'in the dead of night'; these are the concerns that occupy the Marschallin either in soliloquy or in contemplation before Octavian. When she explains to him that

Die Zeit, die ist ein sonderbar Ding.
Wenn man so hinlebt, ist sie rein gar nichts.
Aber dann auf einmal, da spürt man nichts als sie.

[For time, how strangely goes its own way. We do not heed it, time has no meaning,
But there comes a moment when time is all we feel.]

she is making plain the age difference that separates them for she has reached the point where time's passage is cause for anxiety whereas for him 'time has no meaning'. He will soon leave her, she predicts, for someone who is younger and more beautiful. When she tells Octavian that 'Er soll jetzt geh'n, er soll mich lassen' (You must go now, you must leave me), her words have both immediate import and prophetic connotations (Example 2.9).

At the start of this lengthy scene the Marschallin conjures up an image of herself as an old woman—'die alte Fürstin Resi'—and at the end she informs Octavian that, among her duties for that day, she will dine with her elderly, crippled uncle for it will please the dear old man ('das freut den alten Mann'). Strauss's tone painting in the first instance is frankly descriptive—the old Marschallin walks with an awkward gait—and in the second it is unequivocally introspective—dinner with the aged relative is accompanied predominantly by string sonorities comprising wave upon wave of sweet, softly articulated, indeed, almost inaudible, glissandi.⁷⁸ All of the strings are directed to play soulfully ('seelenvoll') and with vibrato, their parallel thirds and sixths are marked 'sehr süß' ('very sweet' or, conceivably, 'very sugary').

329 *sempre più tranquillo*
immer ruhiger

2 gr. Fl. *p* *sart ausdrucksvoll* *pp* *p* *dim.*

2 A Clar. *pp* *p* *dim.*

Baßcl. (A) *pp* *p* *dim.*

2 Fag. I. II. *pp* *p* *dim.*

4 Hörner (E) *pp* *p* *dim.*

Marschallin. *329*
Mann. Und Nachmittag werd ich ihm einen Laufferschenken, Quin - quin, und sa - gen lassen,
sempre più tranquillo
immer ruhiger

Viol. I. *(geteilt)* *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *(sehr süß)* *gliss.* *dim.*

1. Pult *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *(sehr süß)* *gliss.* *dim.*

Viol. II. *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *(sehr süß)* *gliss.* *dim.*

(die übrigen) *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *(sehr süß)* *gliss.* *dim.*

Br. Solo *(alle)* *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *Solo* *gliss.* *dim.*

1. Pult *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *(alle)* *gliss.* *dim.*

Celli 2. Pult *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *(alle)* *gliss.* *dim.*

(die übrigen) *p* *pp* *p* *pp* *(alle)* *gliss.* *dim.*

330 *♩ = 76*

1. Hob. *p* *pp*

2 A-Clar. *p* *pp*

Baßcl. (A) *ppp* *p*

I. II. *pp* *dim.* *ppp* *p*

3 Fag. *pp* *dim.* *ppp* *p*

III. *pp* *dim.* *ppp* *p*

Hörner III IV (E) *pp* *dim.* *ppp* *p*

Marschallin. *330*
(zögernd) ob - ich in den Prater fahr! Und wenn ich fahr, und Er hat Lust, so wird

Viol. I. *gliss.* *ppp* *gliss.* *espr.* *p* *pp*

1. Pult *gliss.* *ppp* *gliss.* *espr.* *p* *pp*

Viol. II. *gliss.* *ppp* *gliss.* *espr.* *p* *pp*

(die übrigen) *gliss.* *ppp* *gliss.* *espr.* *p* *pp*

Br. Solo *gliss.* *ppp* *gliss.* *espr.* *(alle)* *espr.* *p* *pp*

1 2 Pult *gliss.* *ppp* *gliss.* *espr.* *p* *pp*

Celli *gliss.* *ppp* *gliss.* *espr.* *p* *pp*

(die übrigen) *gliss.* *ppp* *gliss.* *espr.* *p* *pp*

C.B. *ppp* *gliss.* *espr.* *p* *pp*

Example 2.9 (cont.)

The principal orchestral motif, the *espressivo* string theme heard from 327+2, was first announced in the *Einleitung* (figure 8) where, as if to prepare us for the Marschallin's regretful mood at the end of the Act, Strauss surrounds it with a three-note affective motif marked 'sighing' (*seufzend*). The melancholy of the scene is amplified by the fact that it follows upon repeated announcements from the Marschallin that 'heut oder morgen' her relationship with Octavian will come to an end.

But we know from our study of Ochs's waltz that the 'sugary' Viennese glissando is the mark of shallow sentimentality, the stock-in-trade of the popular musician. Indeed, a 1911 review of *Der Rosenkavalier* in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* makes it clear that this was the characteristic performance style of Viennese *Kaffeehaus* musicians.⁷⁹ It should be noted that the only places in the entire score where Strauss stipulates this effect are the recurring appearances of Ochs's *Liedel* and the Marschallin's closing monologue (and a further illuminating example discussed below). Upon completing Act I, Strauss, in a letter to Hofmannsthal, informs him that 'that certain Viennese sentimentality of the parting scene has come off very well'.⁸⁰ But is this admixture of 'high' sentiment and 'low' idiom akin to the 'parodistic-sentimental' style that Strauss praises so effusively in his *Così fan tutte* essay? Do we have here a re-run of the strategies at work in Dorabella's and Fiordiligi's arias where

⁷⁹ Georg Kaiser, 'Der Rosenkavalier', *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 78 (1911), 64-6; quoted in Schlötterer, *Der Rosenkavalier*, 225.

⁸⁰ 'Die gewisse Wiener Sentimentalität der Abschiedsszene gut getroffen'. Letter of 22 May 1909; *Working Friendship*, 34.

the characters sing what they believe to be genuine sentiments but the composer signals otherwise? Is Strauss, like Mozart, casting his audience a knowing look?⁸¹

Curiously enough, we may get an answer (or at least an answer of sorts) to these questions in the early stages of Act III. Ochs and Mariandel (Octavian disguised as the Marschallin's chambermaid) have been admitted to their private room at the inn and when they sit down to supper the strains of an off-stage band drift into the room. In a happy coincidence, the pub musicians are playing Ochs's *Liedel*, in the authentic style it should be noted, 'stets hinaufschleifen' (constantly sliding up). As sketched earlier in this chapter, upon hearing the waltz Mariandel exclaims 'Die schöne Musi!' (the 'Che bella musica!' moment in Milan), an obviously ironic statement given that, in her normal guise as Octavian, she heard Ochs's inappropriate rendition of the song for Sophie only the day before and was appalled by it. Ochs, not unexpectedly, announces that it is his favourite song ('Is mei Lieblied'). Continuing to play the part of the lowly chambermaid (a type clearly not blessed with superior taste), Octavian as Mariandel pretends to be moved by the sentimental strains of the *Liedel* and declares it so beautiful that it makes 'her' weepy.

⁸¹ I deliberately refrain here from including Hofmannsthal in this discussion for whereas Mozart was prompted by Da Ponte's libretto when tackling the issue of parody, there is nothing to lead me to believe that in this instance Hofmannsthal was inferring (at least intentionally) the parodic in his text for the Marschallin. The possibility of a parodic reading rests with what Strauss has done with Hofmannsthal's material. That the two men had somewhat incompatible tastes and passions (Hofmannsthal, incidentally, believed that his taste was infinitely superior to Strauss's) is revealed by Hofmannsthal's lack of admiration for *Così fan tutte*. Several years into their collaboration he expressed the following in a letter to Strauss: 'From time to time I look through the libretti of *Figaro*, *Così fan tutte* etc., I hope with real profit. I can quite understand why the latter never had any success: there is hardly a single sentence in the whole piece that can be taken seriously; all is irony, deception, lies, the kind of thing the music cannot (except rarely) express and the public cannot stand'; 13 August 1916, *Working Friendship*, 261. It has been suggested that Hofmannsthal had a poor grasp of music. Indeed, this letter indicates a surprisingly limited understanding of the dramatic range of music and text.

It is at this point that something extraordinary happens. Perhaps encouraged by a surfeit of string portamenti, Octavian embarks upon a brief, curiously maudlin (but obviously falsely felt) monologue on the passing of time and the futility of our existence (Example 2.10). He offers what appears to be an inelegant, not entirely coherent version of the Marschallin's heartfelt musings from Act I. A parodic version, in other words. Octavian heard the eloquent musings in their original form a day or two before and, as Mariandel, volunteers a corrupted copy. The Marschallin's poetic ticking clocks become the prosaic 'hours flying by', and 'the snows of yesteryear' metaphor is ill-remembered as 'the blowing of the wind'. Appropriate to her deeply flawed verbal communication skills, Mariandel can only manage clumsy scansion and the occasional end rhyme. The monologue falls into two parts separated by a brief riposte from Ochs. Its second section is:

Wie die Stund' hingeht, wie der Wind verweht,
so sind wir bald alle zwei dahin.
Menschen sin' ma halt,
Richt'ns nicht mit G'walt,
Weint uns niemand nach, net dir net und net mir.

[As the hours fly by, as the wind blows by, so too we must shortly pass away. It's the lot of man, / that we nothing can. Not an eye shall weep, nor for your loss, nor for mine.]

So extraordinary is Mariandel's lament that a thoroughly bewildered Ochs believes her to be drunk, but of course she isn't, for she has already made it clear that she does not imbibe ('Nein, nein, nein, nein! I trink' kein Wein').⁸² That Octavian/Mariandel is here delivering a performance—and an entirely insincere one at that—is made abundantly clear by Hofmannsthal's stage directions. He calls for

⁸² In some performances Mariandel does indeed give the appearance of being drunk, a thoroughly incorrect way to play the scene. William Mann describes the scene thus: 'Mariandel appears to have fallen upon boozier's gloom (*Es ist ja eh als eins*), moaning that time blows everyone away. This is not at all to Ochs's liking, and he is sure that the cause of her melancholy is a tight corset; after all, the

106

poco calando

ziemlich langsam
(moderato assai)

2 gr. Fl.

2 C-Clar.

2 Fag.

2 Hörner (E).

Harmonium.

Bühne

Klavier.

Viol. I.

Viol. II.

Br.

Cello.

C. B.

106

poco calando

ziemlich langsam
(moderato assai)

2 gr. Fl.

I. Hob.

2 A-Clar.

Bassoth.

2 Fag.

I. Horn (E).

Orchester

Octavian.

(Der Lakai öffnet nochmals die Tür, schaut mit frischer Neugierde herein und verschwindet erst auf einen neuen heftigen Wink des Barons gänzlich.)

Es ist ja eh als eins,

106

ziemlich langsam
(moderato assai)

Viol. I.

Viol. II.

Br.

I. Pult

Celli.

(die übrigen)

C. B.

Example 2.10: *Der Rosenkavalier*, Act III, Mariandel's lament.

music has become excessively woeful and chromatic (almost like one of Salvador Dali's limp watches)'; *Richard Strauss*, 135.

2 gr. Fl. *espr.* *p*

2 Hob. *espr.* *pp*

2 A-Clar. *espr.* *pp*

Basseth. *pp*

2 Fag. *pp*

I. II. (E)
4 Hörner. (in F) *p*

III. IV. (F) *pp*

Octavian. *es is ja eh als eins, - was ein*

Viol. I. *arco* *espr.* *pp*

Viol. II. *arco* *espr.* *pp*

I. Pult Br. *espr.* *p*

(die übrigen) *pp*

I. Pult Celli. *espr.* *p*

(die übrigen) *arco* *ppizz.* *pp*

C.B. *mf* *pp*

107 (*più mosso*)
etwas fließend. *d. = 48.*

108 *1. pp* *espr.* *p*

2 gr. Fl. *pp*

2 Hob. *pp*

2 A-Clar. *II. espr.* *pp*

Basseth. *pp*

2 Fag. *pp*

2 Hörner. I. (E) *pp*

II. *pp*

I. Harfe. *pp*

Octavian. **107** (*più mosso*)
etwas fließend. *d. = 48.* *(indes der Baron ihre Hand faßt)* **108** *pp* *espr.* *p*

Viol. I. *espr.* *pp*

Viol. II. *espr.* *pp*

I. Pult Br. *pp*

(die übrigen) *pp* *gliss.*

I. Pult Celli. *pp*

(die übrigen) *pp*

C.B. *pp*

Example 2.10 (cont.)

lebhafter $\text{♩} = 66$
(più mosso)

109

calando

2 Kr. Fl.
2 Hob.
2 A-Clar.
Basseth.
2 Fag.
2 Hörner III (F) IV.
I. II.
3 Pos.
III.
Baßuba.
I. Harfe.

Octavian.
Baron.

Viol. I.
Viol. II.
I. Pult Br.
(die übrigen)
I. Pult Celli.
(die übrigen)
C. B.

net drum wert.
(läßt ihre Hand fahren)
Ei wie denn?
Is sehr wohl der Mühl wert.

(Octavian wirft dem Baron schmachtende Blicke zu.)

lebhafter $\text{♩} = 66$
(più mosso)

calando

(ancora più moderato)
noch langsamer $\text{♩} = 40$
espr.

110

(klagen!)

engl. Horn.
2 A-Clar.
Basseth.
2 Fag.

Octavian.

Immer gleich melancholisch)

Wie die Stund' hin - geht, wie der Wind ver - weht so sind

(ancora più moderato)
noch langsamer $\text{♩} = 40$
espr.

Br. I. Pult.
Cello Solo.

Example 2.10 (cont.)

111 *(ancora più moderato)*
noch etwas gemächlicher

2 gr. Fl. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

2 Hob. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

engl. Horn. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

2 C-Clar. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* (In C)

Basseth. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

2 Fag. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

111 *(schmachtender Blick nach dem Baron)* *(chesso)*

Octavian. wir bald al-le zwei da-hin. Menschen sich mahalt, richtns nicht mit Gewalt.

(ancora più moderato)
noch etwas gemächlicher
(mit Dämpfern)

Viol. I. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *(mit Dämpfern)*

Viol. II. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *(mit Dämpfern)*

I. Pult Br. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *(mit Dämpfern)*

(die übrigen) *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *(mit Dämpfern)*

I. Pult Celli. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *(mit Dämpfern)*

(die übrigen) *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *(mit Dämpfern)*

112 *rit. a tempo*

2 gr. Fl. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

2 Hob. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

engl. Horn. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

2 C-Clar. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

Basseth. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

2 Fag. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp*

112 *pp*

Octavian. Weint uns nie-mand nach, net Dir net und net mir.

rit. a tempo *(Dämpfer weg)*

Viol. I. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *(Dämpfer weg)*

Viol. II. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *(Dämpfer weg)*

I. Pult Br. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *(Dämpfer weg)*

(die übrigen) *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *(Dämpfer weg)*

I. Pult Celli. *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *(Dämpfer weg)*

(die übrigen) *pp* *ppp* *pp* *ppp* *(Dämpfer weg)*

Example 2.10 (cont.)

‘exaggerated melancholy’ (mit unmässiger Traurigkeit) at the outset (the passage prior to the one given above) and asks that it be maintained throughout (immer gleich melancholisch). Like the Marschallin’s introspective musings in Act I, he indicates that the speech is to be delivered ‘as if to himself’ (wie zu sich selbst sprechend). But what purpose does her performance serve? Of course, initially she is mocking Ochs and his lowly taste in music when she praises the *Liedel* for its alleged beauty (by extension, the mockery also implicates all those listening to the opera who, won over by the strains of the waltz on this, its fourth appearance, might also be tempted to consider it their ‘Lieblich’). But the subsequent maudlin performance has nothing to do with Ochs and his musical taste but, rather, serves to pour cold water on her suitor’s amorous designs. It is intended as a libido suppressant. From Octavian’s experience with the melancholy Marschallin a day or two before he knows that solemn pronouncements on life, death, and the way of the world never lead to sex.

As set by Strauss, Mariandel’s weepy monologue utilises, predictably, string glissandi (albeit discreetly, figures 107-8) and a profusion of ‘espressivo’ markings, but it is otherwise far removed from the sweetly sonorous sound world that accompanied the Marschallin’s ruminations (her parallel thirds and sixths have been discarded and replaced by ungainly parallel root position chords and sevenths). The prevailing texture is spare and hollow. In fact, the floating tonality, abundant chromaticism, and sparse orchestration of the monologue’s second section in particular (from figure 110) almost marks it as an attempt at expressionistic writing, though taken to the point of absurdity in the discontinuous vocal line. Strauss, having offered blatant sentimentality in the Marschallin’s scene, here offers a caricature of expressionist *Angst*. The principal melodic motif is a mournful three-note

chromatically descending figure (first heard at 106) and the vocal acciaccaturas—another obviously affective gesture—increase in both frequency and range as the monologue proceeds such that by its end it becomes unclear whether the primary melodic line is following an ascending or descending shape because it seems to be heading in both directions at once. A plaintive falling semitone motif enunciated by the oboe (a shorter version of the vocal motif) provides further affective colouring (109+7; it is a transformation of Ochs's 'tête-à-tête' motif, heard in the bars immediately preceding but first announced in Act I at the point when he propositions Mariandel). So that there can be no doubt as to its expressive purpose it is marked 'klagend', effectively placing the following 'lament' in quotation marks. Indeed, the 'klagend' oboe and descending semitones are crucial in implicating further the Marschallin in the musico-dramatic meaning that radiates from this scene.

The whole purpose of the deception performed at the inn—of Octavian once more appearing *en travesti*—is so that Ochs will be exposed and humiliated, his engagement called off, and Sophie's hand will be available to Octavian. That Octavian will leave the Marschallin, despite his protestations to the contrary in Act I, goes without saying. In offering this crude parody of the Marschallin's expression of her fears and anxieties Octavian is, indeed, taking leave of her. It is an insensitive, mocking gesture. It is an act of betrayal but, despite its falseness (its feigned misery), it is also a moment of truth. When events at the inn get out of hand a little later in the Act and the Marschallin makes her surprise entrance, Octavian as much as anyone is taken aback to see her: 'Marie Theres', wie kommt Sie her?' The Marschallin pointedly refuses to dignify the question with an answer and, in another pointed gesture, ignores Octavian until events are such that she is compelled to speak to him,

whereupon she coldly addresses him by his surname, Rofrano, a snub lost neither on him nor on us. The Marschallin very quickly takes stock of the situation, understands who Sophie is and what she means to Octavian and explains to Ochs that this ‘wienerische Maskerad’ has scuttled his marriage plans.

With the subsequent rowdy departure of Ochs, the opera, in its final section, addresses the emotional entanglements of Sophie, Octavian, and the Marschallin. Octavian, having cruelly mocked the Marschallin earlier in the Act, is now indebted to her for bringing Ochs’s demise to a hasty and, for him, advantageous conclusion. But, awkwardly, he has both to thank her and disentangle himself from her so that he can take up with Sophie:

Octavian:	Theres’, ich weiss gar nicht—
Marschallin:	Geh’ Er and mach’ Seinen Hof.
Octavian:	Ich schwör’ Ihr—
Marschallin:	Lass’ Er’s gut sein.
Octavian:	Ich begreif’ nicht, was Sie hat.
Marschallin:	Er ist ein rechtes Mannsbild, geh’ Er hin.
(lacht zornig)	
Octavian:	Wie sie befiehlt.

[Theres’, I do not know— Go now, and pay her your court. I swear it— ‘Tis no matter. But I do not understand. (*laughing angrily*) How like a man to say that. Go to her! As you command.]

At the point where the Marschallin makes clear her anguish and, with an angry laugh, casts Octavian away from her we hear very frankly, unmistakably, over and over again, the three-note descending semitone figure that characterised Mariandel’s parodic lament (Example 2.11, figure 261-3). The Marschallin, in fact, sings the figure when she utters the dismissive command ‘geh’ Er hin’ (at exactly the same pitch and register that Octavian/Mariandel uttered ‘Wie die Stund’). Not surprisingly, it is the oboe (marked *espressivo*) that announces the motif most tellingly: its five repeats of the three-note figure cut through the orchestral texture.

260 *(poco a allmählich ein)*

2 Gr. Fl.
2 Hob.
engl. Horn.
2 C Clar.
Basseth.
2 Fag.
Contrafag.
I. II.
4 Hörner (F)
III. IV.
Pauken.
Sopran.
Marschallin.
Octavian.
Viol. I.
Viol. II.
Kc.
Celli.
C. B.

lee - re Luft. O mein Gott! Mein Gott!
sagt. Geh Er und mach Sei - nen Hof. 260 Laß Er's gut sein.
The-res, ich weiß gar nicht. Ich schwör' Ihr.

(poco a allmählich ein)

(poco meno mosso.)
klein wenig ruhiger werden 261 *mf espr.* 262 *mf*

4 Hob.
engl. Horn.
2 C Clar.
Basseth.
2 Fag.
I. II.
4 Hörner (F)
III. IV.
II. III. Pos.
Pauken.
Marschallin.
Octavian.
Viol. I.
Viol. II.
Kc.
Celli.
C. B.

(acht zornig)
261 Er ist ein rech - tes Manns - bild, geh' Er hin! 262
Ich be-greif' nicht, was Sie hat.
(poco meno mosso.)
klein wenig ruhiger werden *(heftig)* *sfz* *(geteilt)*
heftig *dim.* *dim.*

9123

Example 2.11: Der Rosenkavalier, Act III.

263 (*con moto assai moderato*)
ziemlich mäßig bewegt $\text{♩} = 54$

2 Hob.
engl. Horn.
2 C Clar.
Jassth.
2 Fag.
III, IV. Horn (F)
2 Harfen unisono

Octavian.
Wie Sie befiehlt. (geht hinüber) (Sophie wortlos) (bei ihr)
Eh bien, — hat Sie kein freund-lich Wort für mich?

Viol. I.
Viol. II.
Br.
Celli.
C. B.

263
(*con moto assai moderato*)
ziemlich mäßig bewegt $\text{♩} = 54$

2 Harfen unisono

Sophie.
(stockend)
War mir von Eu-er Gna-den Freundschaft und Be-hilf-lichkeit wahrhaftig einer andern Freud-gewär.

Octavian.
Nicht einen Blick, nicht ei-nen lie-ben Gruß?

Viol. I.
Viol. II.
Br.
Celli.
C. B.

I. Pult.
pp

Example 2.11 (cont.)

Other instruments too engage in the motivic repartee: the cor anglais, first horn, second violins, and violas. The reference, in other words, is not fleeting and it is not coincidental. The Marschallin in a moment of anger throws back at Octavian the motif he used when he mocked her fears and anxieties at the very thing that has come to pass: the demise of their relationship. She takes leave of him with the material with which he so cravenly took leave of her.

But the Marschallin does not remain angry. In the opera's most ravishing and extraordinary thematic transformation she takes up another of Mariandel's melodies—the commonplace tune sung to the commonplace rhyme, 'Nein, nein, nein, nein! I trink' kein Wein'—and shapes it into a theme of transcendent beauty; it forms the principal theme of the Act III trio ('Hab' mir's gelobt'). This too can be seen as a parodic practice. Indeed, 'singing in imitation' is precisely what the ancients understood by the term *παρωδός*, or 'parodos'.⁸³ Other commentators have used the term 'high burlesque' to describe the process at work here: the presentation of lowly subject matter in an incongruously high style.⁸⁴ In an opera that, as pointed out above, contains a number of extraordinary intratextual references, the explicit use of Mariandel's trivial tune at the work's musical, dramatic, and emotional climax is perplexing to say the least. It is heard not only at the outset of the trio (where, notably, it is sung by the Marschallin alone) but, taken up by each singer in turn, it weaves its way through the richly contrapuntal vocal and orchestral texture and permeates the entire number. Yet somewhere in this process its initial incongruity is lost, the theme's humble origins become overwhelmed by the musical and dramatic

⁸³ Margaret A. Rose, *Parody: Ancient, Modern, Post-Modern* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 7-8.

intensity of its transposed context. While the trio is a moment of loss for the Marschallin, hers is truly a dignified loss. Having suffered the indignity of being treated in ‘low burlesque’ fashion at the hands of Octavian/Mariandel (‘low burlesque’ here meaning the commonplace treatment of elevated subject matter), she has the generosity of spirit to perform a contrary transaction: she elevates Mariandel’s music, redeems the trivial, and quietly, unobserved, leaves the stage.

Titles and Subtitles

The word ‘burlesque’ and its application to *Der Rosenkavalier* was a point of some disagreement between Strauss and Hofmannsthal in the final stages of their work on the opera. Finding a title for the as-yet unnamed work proved difficult enough—Strauss was in favour of *Ochs von Lerchenau* and needed some persuading to come around to *Der Rosenkavalier*—but finding a subtitle proved to be just as thorny.⁸⁵ Hofmannsthal considered ‘Comedy for Music’ unfeasible on the grounds that, the libretto having already been set to music, it was redundant. ‘This impossible title would invite the standing joke that your music is no music’, he informs Strauss, ‘and that the opera is still waiting to be set to music’.⁸⁶ He therefore offered three possibilities: Opera in three Acts; Comic Opera; and Burlesque Opera. Of the three, he was decidedly in favour of the last, arguing that ‘Comic Opera’ would raise expectations that *Der Rosenkavalier*, with its ‘unusually forthright passages of broad comedy’, simply would not meet, whereas by advertising the work as a ‘Burlesque

⁸⁴ Ibid., 54-8.

⁸⁵ Strauss closes his letter to Hofmannsthal of 2 May 1910 with the comment: ‘Title? I’m still in favour of *Ochs!*’; *Working Friendship*, 55. Note that the opera has no title in Alfred Roller’s designs for the first production, each of his sketches simply carries the heading ‘Hofmannsthal-Strauss: Opera Buffa’.

Opera', quite apart from the aptness of the description, 'we get double the credit for the tender, lyrical passages, for the psychological subtlety and the abundance of more profound features'.⁸⁷ Accordingly, Hofmannsthal proposed as a definitive title '*Der Rosenkavalier*, Burlesque Opera in 3 Acts'. Strauss was horrified. "Burlesque Opera" is impossible: after all, there's nothing burlesque about it. Just think what the public would expect: Offenbach, *Mikado*, etc.'. ⁸⁸

Of course, in one sense, Strauss is expressing anxiety over the fact that, with its profusion of waltzes, its pantomime, *risqué* touches, and frequent recourse to masquerade and disguise, there is a case to be made for *Der Rosenkavalier* being mistaken for an operetta. Strauss knew full well that it flirted with the conventions of operetta, that 'Burlesque Opera'—burlesque here denoting a popular theatrical form rather than the specific practice cited above—has a grain of truth; indeed, this is all the more reason to ensure that the opera's subtitle does not in any way invoke Offenbach and Sullivan (no doubt Strauss could not even bring himself to write Lehár).

But in another sense, one can quite reasonably understand Strauss's position. At the time of the exchange of letters cited above, September 1910, Hofmannsthal had absolutely no acquaintance with the music of Act III—in fact, Strauss was still writing it. Hofmannsthal had recently given a reading of his libretto before a small, invited

⁸⁶ Letter to Strauss of 10 September 1910; *ibid.*, 66.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 67. While at work on Act III earlier that year, Hofmannsthal made repeated references in letters to Strauss to the Act's burlesque features. See the letters of 23 May and 10 June; *ibid.*, 57-8.

⁸⁸ Letter to Hofmannsthal of 12 (?) September 1910; *ibid.*, 68. The German edition of the Strauss-Hofmannsthal correspondence dates this letter as 7 September but considering the content of Hofmannsthal's letter of 10 September (above), it seems more likely that Strauss's letter was written after this date. It is indeed telling that Hofmannsthal, the delicate urban aesthete, is quite happy to have his name attached to a theatrical burlesque while Strauss, the coarse country squire, finds it utterly intolerable.

audience and, from the response it garnered, was concerned that, as he put it, ‘a *definite falling off* in interest became apparent in the third act after the Baron’s exit, a *longueur* which is wearing’.⁸⁹ In the same letter in which he scuttles the proposed subtitle ‘Burlesque Opera’, Strauss informs Hofmannsthal that, since he, Hofmannsthal, has not heard the music, he is not in a position ‘at this stage [to] judge the musical effect which the conclusion, in particular, will have. [...] I am nearly finished and I believe that the last third [of Act III] has come off brilliantly’.⁹⁰ In fact, Strauss says he can ‘*guarantee*’ the success of the final third of the final Act. He also says that ‘Comedy for Music’, Hofmannsthal’s least-favourite subtitle, is his preferred choice, and there the matter rested.

When the Marschallin sums up to the Commissar of Police the events that have unfolded at the inn, she remarks, ‘das Ganze war halt eine Farce und weiter nichts’ (this has all just been a farce, and nothing more). Farce, ‘Burlesque Opera’, ‘Comedy for Music’: the prospect of labelling, let alone writing, a comic opera (and even that term is evidently problematic) in the early twentieth century highlights preoccupations and insecurities explicitly bound up with issues of high art/low art, opera/opera, Kunst/Kitsch. *Der Rosenkavalier*, indeed, thematises these concerns. The veneer of *The Marriage of Figaro* declares an affinity with high-art canonic opera, the presence of the *Liedel*—undoubtedly the opera’s ‘hit tune’—is a very explicit nod in the direction of popular Viennese theatre. The large orchestra, sophisticated orchestration, and web of leitmotifs bespeak a work in the post-Wagner tradition, while the abundant waltzes and sugary, ‘café style’, string glissandi suggest popular

⁸⁹ Letter to Strauss of 30 August 1910 (emphasis in original); *ibid.*, 65.

⁹⁰ 12 (?) September 1910; *ibid.*, 67-8.

traditions and performance styles untouched by Wagner. Strauss seems to want to have it both ways. He evidently took great pride in being a popular composer—witness his infamous, proudly delivered comment that his Garmisch villa was built on the proceeds of *Salome*—but he could not countenance being seen to be a populist composer.⁹¹ His parodic strategies in *Der Rosenkavalier* (and I use ‘parodic’ here as an all-encompassing term for double-voiced strategies) sometimes clarify and sometimes obfuscate these issues, since parody, as discussed in the previous chapter, entails both nearness to and distance from that which is being parodied, and separating one from the other is no easy task nor does it necessarily yield unequivocal results.

We can, nevertheless, distinguish between the blunt parody which is utilised as a means to comedic ends—the Singer’s aria, Ochs’s *Liedel*—and the intricate and subtle parody which illuminates the human drama that is played out before us: Octavian’s relationship with Sophie and, more especially, his relationship with the Marschallin. It is in these latter instances that it becomes clear that the opera’s connection with the Mozart-Da Ponte legacy is no mere gloss and that Strauss brought to *Der Rosenkavalier* an awareness of the capacity of parody to explore the finer points of psychology as revealed to him from his intimate understanding of the musico-dramatic workings of *Così fan tutte*. Parody in *Der Rosenkavalier*, then, cuts across the high/low binarism: it panders to the popular and undercuts the popular, it panders to high art and undercuts high art.

⁹¹ The context of the *Salome* comment is as follows: ‘[Kaiser] William the Second once said to his Intendant: “I am sorry Strauss composed this *Salome*. I really like the fellow, but this will do him a lot of damage”. The damage enabled me to build the villa in Garmisch’; Strauss, ‘Reminiscences of the First Performance of My Operas’, *Recollections and Reflections*, 152.

To say that the opera utilises parodic strategies is not, by any means, a startling revelation; Paul Bekker, in a review written within a matter of days of the opera's première states that:

The round, periodic phrases, the snippets of Italian style, the languishing Mendelssohn imitations, the waltz copies with their unmistakeable Viennese stamp, are all intended as parody. Strauss, with admirable subtlety, succeeds in avoiding the distortions of coarse caricature, indeed, his imitations display such a clever, discreet unconstraint that at first they very nearly give the impression of the originals themselves.⁹²

But this merely states that parody is present in the work; it does not address what it is doing there or how it functions. My point is that parody in *Der Rosenkavalier* demonstrates more than mere imitative skill or technical proficiency; it is not simply a matter of clever decoration or incidental colour, of invoking this composer or that composer. Rather, by considering more closely the varying degrees to which it permeates the work—when, where, and to whom it applies, its long-range meaning and consequences—we are able to acquire insight into the characters, the archetypes, brought to life on the stage. Indeed, parody is a way of tweaking those archetypes, of rendering them slightly off-centre and throwing the conventional relationships that sustain them out of balance. It brings dissonance to a work that, in its musical language at least, is overwhelmingly consonant (significantly, almost without exception double-voiced dissonance is embedded in passages of tonal and harmonic consonance). In this 'wienerische Maskerad'—as in any masquerade—appearance and reality are uncertain, unstable, and by no means absolute.

⁹² Paul Bekker, 'Der Rosenkavalier', *Basler Nachrichten*, 29 January 1911; quoted in Schlötterer, *Der Rosenkavalier*, 230-1.

CHAPTER III

PARODIA ABBANDONATA: THE TWO ARIADNES

‘The closer opera gets to a parody of itself, the closer it is to its own most particular element’.¹

When Strauss and Hofmannsthal in the early months of 1911 were hatching plans for their next operatic venture, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, they did so bolstered by the extraordinary popular success of *Der Rosenkavalier*.² In fact, it was the triumphant première of *Der Rosenkavalier*—at the Dresden Hofoper on 26 January 1911—that to a significant degree prompted *Ariadne*: celebrated theatre director Max Reinhardt assisted (in an unofficial capacity) Dresden’s *Oberregisseur* Georg Toller in staging the work and, according to composer and librettist, was largely responsible for drawing from the cast performances of an exceptionally high quality. *Ariadne* was intended to be a small-scale work suitable for Reinhardt’s Deutsches Theater in Berlin, a gesture of thanks for the part he played in contributing to the success of the Hofmannsthal-Strauss ‘Comedy for Music’.³ The project that materialised from Hofmannsthal’s early thoughts was an adaptation of Molière’s comedy-ballet *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* (in German, *Der Bürger als Edelmann*) followed by a one-act opera *Ariadne auf Naxos*, the two forming a coherent whole through the conceit that

¹ Theodor W. Adorno, ‘Bourgeois Opera’, in *Opera Through Other Eyes*, ed. David J. Levin (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 26.

² In its first six months, *Der Rosenkavalier* was staged in Dresden, Nuremberg, Munich, Basel, Hamburg, Milan (in Italian), Zurich, Prague (in Czech), Vienna, Budapest (in Hungarian), and Cologne. As is often pointed out, special trains carried *Rosenkavalier*-deprived Berliners to Dresden (the Königliches Opernhaus in Berlin did not stage the opera until 14 November 1911).

³ *Ariadne auf Naxos* is dedicated to Reinhardt.

the opera is performed in the house of Herr Jourdain, the Bürger of the play's title and, indeed, performed before an on-stage Jourdain and his two guests. Thus, spoken play and sung entertainment were brought together in the one work (and, with modest musical forces required, within the means of Reinhardt's company).⁴

Generally speaking, this is the form that *Ariadne auf Naxos* took when it was first performed in 1912 although, as we shall see, its musical demands were rather more substantial than Hofmannsthal originally envisaged. Its full title was *Ariadne auf Naxos, Oper in einem Aufzuge, von Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Musik von Richard Strauss, zu spielen nach dem 'Bürger als Edelmann' des Molière*. This 'theatrical experiment'⁵ was not a success, however, and the work was significantly revised within a few years: the spoken play was jettisoned, the opera was abridged, and a sung *Vorspiel*—an expanded version of the spoken *Zwischenspiel*—was added. When the revised version of *Ariadne auf Naxos* was unveiled in 1916 its title page carried the description, *Oper in einem Aufzuge nebst Vorspiel*. Thus, the second fully-fledged collaboration between Strauss and Hofmannsthal was presented (and published) in two forms, the second of which superseded the first.

Present right from the start of Hofmannsthal's work on the project was his intention to juxtapose two antique theatrical traditions in his telling of the Ariadne story: *opera seria* of the eighteenth century on the one hand, and *commedia dell'arte* on the other. Indeed, even before settling upon the Molière play within which he was to situate his projected 'thirty minute' Ariadne opera, Hofmannsthal informed Strauss in a letter of 20 March 1911 that the work, 'as good as complete in my head', 'is made

⁴ Additionally, the two dramatic halves were joined by a *Zwischenspiel*, a spoken, behind-the-scenes glimpse of preparations for the musical entertainment.

up of a combination of heroic mythological figures in 18th-century costume with hooped skirts and ostrich feathers and, interwoven with it, characters drawn from the *commedia dell'arte*; harlequins and scaramouches representing the buffo element which is throughout interwoven with the heroic'.⁶ *Ariadne auf Naxos*, he continues, will be 'a new genre which to all appearance reaches back to a much earlier one'.⁷ From these comments it should be clear that right from this early stage Hofmannsthal was revisiting themes and issues already explored to some degree in *Der Rosenkavalier*: the eighteenth century as constructed from the distance of the early twentieth century; the forging of something new from the attempt to recreate something old; and the juxtaposition of serious high art ('heroic mythological figures') and down-to-earth comic entertainment ('the buffo element'). One further point of common ground between the two works is Molière: the French playwright's *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac* and *Les Fourberies de Scapin* played a significant part in determining various aspects of plot and characterisation in *Der Rosenkavalier* (Pourceaugnac, for instance, provided the template for Ochs) and, as mentioned in the previous chapter, the text for the Singer's aria in Act I of *Der Rosenkavalier* was borrowed from the 'Ballet des Nations', the spectacle that concludes *Le bourgeois gentilhomme*.⁸

⁵ The term is Norman Del Mar's, *Richard Strauss: A Critical Commentary on his Life and Works*, 3 vols. (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1962-72), II, 1.

⁶ *A Working Friendship: The Correspondence between Richard Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannsthal*, trans. Hanns Hammelmann and Ewald Osers (New York: Vienna House, 1974), 76.

⁷ *Ibid.*

‘A spirited paraphrase’

Although Hofmannsthal refrains from using the word pastiche when setting out his conceptual framework, his correspondence with Strauss from the earliest stages of their collaboration on *Ariadne* reveals that pastiche is present in all but name.

Together with ‘hooped skirts’ and ‘ostrich feathers’, Hofmannsthal’s letter of 20 March spells out an idiom which he hopes will bring a return to ‘*set numbers*’⁹ and, if at all possible, ‘*secco recitative*’.¹⁰ Mozart, in other words, is once again quite clearly on the librettist’s agenda.¹¹ By May of that year Hofmannsthal had produced a *Szenarium* for *Ariadne*—a detailed prose sketch in which character, plot, motivation, movement, stage set, design, and even the occasional line of speech are all laid out—and, in an accompanying letter to Strauss, he stressed that the work he envisaged was ‘not a slavish imitation but a spirited paraphrase of the old heroic style’.¹² *Ariadne*’s initial utterance in the *Szenarium*, for instance, is marked as a ‘great lament of the forsaken’ (*Grosse Klage der Verlassenen*), its *Affekt* and grand gesture clearly grounded in *opera seria* conventions. But, for Hofmannsthal, this is not to be a merely academic, stylised gesture for he adds that, while pathetic, *Ariadne*’s cry is to

⁸ For further discussion of the influence of Molière in the working out of the plot of *Der Rosenkavalier*, see Victor A. Oswald, Jr., ‘Hofmannsthal’s Collaboration with Molière’, *The Germanic Review* 29 (1954), 18-30 (esp. 19-22).

⁹ *Working Friendship*, 77; emphasis in original.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Hofmannsthal’s predilection for drawing parallels between his work and Mozart’s is revealed elsewhere in the letter of 20 March where, in reference to *Die Frau ohne Schatten* (which was also in its early stages at this time), he states that it would ‘stand in the same relationship to *Die Zauberflöte* as *Rosenkavalier* does to *Figaro*’; *ibid.*, 76.

¹² Letter of 19 May 1911; *ibid.*, 80. The *Szenarium* is reproduced in *Hugo von Hofmannsthal: Gesammelte Werke. Dramen V: Operndichtungen*, ed. Bernd Schoeller and Rudolf Hirsch (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1979), 286-93.

be simple and heartfelt ('pathetisch aber ganz einfach und zum Herzen gehend'¹³). A few days later, in response to Strauss's criticism that the *Szenarium* appears rather 'thin' as a dramatic framework, Hofmannsthal cites Gluck, *La clemenza di Tito*, and *Idomeneo* as his historical models, examples of the type of 'heroic opera' 'whose spirit we mean to invoke'.¹⁴

It is just as well that Hofmannsthal uses a word such as 'paraphrase' and that he speaks of invoking the 'spirit' of heroic opera, for his is hardly a fully coherent vision of past theatrical practice. Thus, in combining spoken play (including incidental music) with musical finale he calls upon a form from seventeenth-century France (a form utilised by Molière and Lully), pairs it with eighteenth-century (Italian) *opera seria* and, if matters of authenticity were not already complicated enough, enlists the intermezzo, the small comic opera played between the acts of a serious opera—a form not found in French opera at the time of Lully and Molière and obsolete in the period of Gluck and Mozart.¹⁵ That the intermezzo is to be populated by figures drawn from the *commedia dell'arte* (a comedic form well known to Molière) is a further example of Hofmannsthal's dramatic licence, since the eighteenth-century intermezzo was influenced by the *commedia dell'arte* but was certainly not synonymous with it. Indeed, it would appear that the poet considers Italian comic opera, *opera buffa*, and *commedia dell'arte* to be all of a piece, judging from the way in which he uses the terms interchangeably. From the wide-ranging mix of theatrical styles and traditions

¹³ Hofmannsthal, *Szenarium*, *Gesammelte Werke* V, 287. Indeed, in the letter to Strauss accompanying the *Szenarium* (19 May 1911), Hofmannsthal states that the character of Ariadne is to be 'altogether real, as real as the Marschallin'; *Working Friendship*, 80.

¹⁴ Letter of 25 May 1911; *Working Friendship*, 84.

¹⁵ I therefore disagree with Karen Forsyth's comment that 'the 1912 combination of play plus opera is then a carefully reconstructed imitation of the *comédie-ballet* in which historical authenticity figures

utilised by Hofmannsthal the Italian word *pasticcio* (from which pastiche derives) comes to mind: a pie comprising all manner of different ingredients.

If *Der Rosenkavalier* presented us with the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries wrapped up in *fin-de-siècle* decadence, *Ariadne auf Naxos*, while masquerading as a simulacrum of baroque theatre, is equally wide-ranging in its vision of the past.

While Hofmannsthal's musical cues are more eighteenth-century Vienna (or Naples) than seventeenth-century Paris, his visual ones can at least claim to be in a style that Molière would have recognised. Just as Hogarth's 'The Countess's Morning levée' from *Marriage à la mode* informed the Marschallin's levée in Act I of *Der Rosenkavalier*, it was to the visual arts that Hofmannsthal turned when describing his stage images in the *Szenarium*: thus Ariadne's island is to be represented 'in the style of Poussin' and the *commedia* players are to appear 'in the manner of Callot', presumably a reference to a set of engravings, *Balli di Sfessania* (Neapolitan Dances), by the seventeenth-century French graphic artist Jacques Callot.¹⁶ The attempt to recreate an antique performance space (no doubt garnered from engravings of French productions at the time of Louis XIV) is also spelt out in Hofmannsthal's directions when he calls for a row of topiary trees ('Orangenbäumchen in Kübeln') to enclose the performance area along with lighted candles in candelabra.¹⁷ A pasteboard grotto, Ariadne's cave, forms the mid-point of the space. Stating an obvious but not insignificant fact, Hofmannsthal describes it as an 'artificial' (künstliche) grotto.

largely'; 'Ariadne auf Naxos' by Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Richard Strauss: *Its Genesis and Meaning* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 46.

¹⁶ Forsyth, *Ariadne*, 27.

¹⁷ Hofmannsthal, *Szenarium, Gesammelte Werke V*, 286. This resembles settings for outdoor performances at Versailles as depicted in etchings by R. Félibien (Forsyth, *Ariadne*, 28).

Indeed, 'everything artificial' (alles künstlich) is one of Hofmannsthal's earliest *Ariadne* annotations.¹⁸

Given that in *Elektra* Strauss had assembled one of the largest orchestras in the history of opera and that the forces required for *Der Rosenkavalier*, while smaller, were not greatly so, the fact that Hofmannsthal made it clear from the start that *Ariadne* was to be written not just for chamber orchestra but for 'kleines Kammerorchester',¹⁹ further indicates the period aura that he envisaged for the work. Ostensibly, the severely reduced orchestra was for practical reasons—in order that the players be accommodated in Reinhardt's Deutsches Theater—but no doubt Hofmannsthal's ulterior motive was to rein in Strauss's Wagnerian tendencies. In other words, Strauss was to turn his back on the opera orchestra of his day (and the vast array of colours of which it was capable and for which Strauss's music was justly famous) in order to recreate the opera ensemble of a former period. This, Hofmannsthal seems to imply, was to be a *Gesamtkunstpastiche* in which the sound world was to accord with the visual and dramatic ones. Indeed, in another artificial gesture—specifically, a bid to recreate the performance traditions at Versailles—Hofmannsthal initially proposed that the small body of orchestral players appear on stage with the 'Capellmeister am Spinett',²⁰ but this scheme was very swiftly vetoed by Strauss: 'Orchestra *on* the stage impossible: for this kind of chamber-music piece I need first-class people (only from the Royal Court Orchestra in Berlin) and they wouldn't play act'.²¹ A sentence or two later in the same letter Strauss points out that

¹⁸ Previously unpublished note written in early May 1911; reprinted in Forsyth, *Ariadne*, 270 (see also Forsyth, 61-3).

¹⁹ Letter of 20 March 1911; *Working Friendship*, 75-6.

²⁰ Hofmannsthal, *Szenarium*, *Gesammelte Werke* V, 286

²¹ Letter to Hofmannsthal of 22 May 1911; *Working Friendship*, 82

he envisages for the work an orchestra of fifteen to twenty players, not exactly a kleines Kammerorchester and one that will double in size by the time we arrive at the finished opera.

Verwandlungen

In the first few months of 1911 Hofmannsthal at one and the same time was laying the groundwork not only for *Ariadne auf Naxos* but also for the opera that would follow it, *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. Work on both operas would occupy composer and librettist for the next six and a half years. In Hofmannsthal's letter to Strauss of 20 March (referred to several times above), he makes it clear that he considers *Ariadne* to be by far the less important of the two projects in the pipeline—a way station *en route* to the larger, more imposing (more significant) *Frau ohne Schatten*.²² But, as he points out, it is a necessary way station for it will acquaint him further with Strauss's music and with musico-dramatic forms and conventions generally: 'This slight interim work [die kleine Zwischenarbeit] will perhaps make it still clearer to me how to construct a dramatic piece as a whole'.²³ The basic premise concerning the interweaving of *seria* and *commedia* elements is evident at this early stage as is the intention to adapt a yet-to-be-determined comedy by Molière.²⁴

On 15 May Strauss received an update from his librettist on the state of progress: Hofmannsthal had by now decided that *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* would form the first two acts (the idea came to him while on a recent visit to Paris); that the

²² Ibid., 75-7; on two occasions Hofmannsthal describes *Ariadne* as an 'interim work'.

²³ Ibid., 77. It is at this point that Hofmannsthal raises the issue of 'set numbers' and 'secco recitative', referred to above.

²⁴ Although Hofmannsthal makes no mention in the letter of 20 March of the Molière component of the proposed work, he must have revealed this to Strauss at an earlier point (perhaps when they were in Dresden for the *Rosenkavalier* première in late January), for Strauss in his letter to Hofmannsthal of 17 March states that he is 'most anxious' to hear news of 'the little Molière piece'; *ibid.*, 75.

play would contain opportunities for dances and other incidental music; and that the *dramatis personae* for *Ariadne* would comprise Ariadne, Bacchus, Echo, first Nymph, second Nymph (all of the preceding listed as one group), and Harlequin, the first Scaramouche, the second Scaramouche, Tartaglia, Brighella, ‘and so on’ (listed as another group).²⁵ (It will be noted that, as yet, there is no mention of Zerbinetta.²⁶) Thus, as spelt out in the initial proposal, the two disparate groups—*seria* and *commedia*—are set in opposition. An especially noteworthy feature of Hofmannsthal’s letter is that on three occasions he describes *Ariadne* as a ‘divertissement’ (he makes it explicit, for instance, in the title he offers for the proposed playbill: ‘Divertissement: *Ariadne auf Naxos*’). In keeping with his letter to Strauss of 20 March with its repeated references to ‘this slight interim work’, Hofmannsthal appears to be indicating clearly and unambiguously that he still considers *Ariadne* to be an attractive but slender work, a diversion, an entertainment.²⁷

A few days later, on 19 May, Hofmannsthal sent Strauss the *Szenarium*. The two equally divided groups are now labelled, on the one hand, ‘the heroic figures’ (Ariadne, the Stranger [Bacchus], Naiad, Dryad, Echo) and, on the other, ‘the figures of the Intermezzo’ (Zerbinetta, Harlequin, Scaramuccio, Brighella, Truffaldino). The heroic characters, additionally, are described as being ‘noble’, ‘in the style of Louis

²⁵ Letter of 15 May 1911; *ibid.*, 79.

²⁶ We find the name Smeraldina, however, in one of Hofmannsthal’s notes written at this time. It is clear from the action Hofmannsthal attributes to her in this note that she is an early manifestation of Zerbinetta. See Hofmannsthal, *Gesammelte Werke V*, 292; also Forsyth, *Ariadne*, 26-7 and 63-5.

²⁷ Hofmannsthal, for instance, makes it clear in the letter of 15 May that he is not going to be rushed into completing the libretto for *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. He states that, given a choice, he would prefer that it not be set to music rather than written under pressure for the sake of a quickly produced libretto. As before, it is evident that he considers this to be the major project and *Ariadne* to be the minor one.

XIV', 'antique'; while the intermezzo players are 'colourful' and 'grotesque'.²⁸ The following is an abridged translation of Hofmannsthal's *Szenarium*:

Ariadne before her cave. Naiad, Dryad, and Echo exclaim: 'Sie schläft!', 'Sie weint!', 'Ariadne!' Ariadne delivers her lament. From the side of the stage, the 'Italian figures' express regret over her state of mind and Harlequin delivers a little song. Ariadne, however, remains unmoved. The audience [i.e. Jourdain and his guests] offer a few remarks: hopefully the 'forsaken one' will be comforted. *Intermezzo*. Zerbinetta and her four companions present themselves before Ariadne and try to cheer her up with a dance ('groteske-charakteristisch'). Ariadne does not acknowledge them. Zerbinetta comes closer to Ariadne, tries to flatter her and to offer comfort by declaring that she too knows the sorrow that comes from being deserted by a lover. She proceeds to read aloud to Ariadne a letter from her first lover but Ariadne retreats into her grotto and utters no response. Harlequin, Scaramuccio, Brighella, and Truffaldino call out to Zerbinetta and she joins them. She flirts with each of them in turn but finally slips away with Harlequin. Upon realising the deception played upon them, the three remaining figures, momentarily annoyed, dance off hoping for better luck next time. End of Intermezzo. The opportunity for a few remarks from Jourdain and his guests as the men dance off—gossip about Bacchus's origins and first adventure. Naiad reports that a strange ship has dropped anchor in the bay and that strange music ('*fremdartige Musik*') is heard coming from on board; surely the arrival of a god! Ariadne advances from the cave, hears the voice of Bacchus (off-stage) and asks whether this is the god Hermes come to take her to the realm of the dead. Zerbinetta arrives and speaks excitedly of the beautiful, god-like stranger who surely has come to seek out Ariadne. Like a lady's maid she fusses about Ariadne and dresses her in her finery but Ariadne thinks that she is being prepared for death. To the sound of triumphant music Bacchus enters. Zerbinetta, Naiad, and Dryad bow deeply while Ariadne and Bacchus, facing each other, engage in tender expressions of love. They retire to her cave from where they sing a love duet. Zerbinetta ('ad spectatores') remarks that, as expected, Ariadne has taken a new lover. Naiad, Dryad, and Echo join in. General jubilation: Zerbinetta dances with Harlequin, Brighella with Naiad, Truffaldino with Dryad, and Scaramuccio with Echo. Bacchus and Ariadne emerge from the cave and he leads her away by the hand. General exit including Jourdain and his guests.²⁹

In addition to setting out clearly the sequence of events, Hofmannsthal's intention in forwarding the *Szenarium* to Strauss was to have the composer indicate the specific places where he intended to compose 'definite *numbers*' and the places where he intended 'merely to suggest them'.³⁰ Strauss, accordingly, specifies (in

²⁸ Hofmannsthal, *Szenarium*, *Gesammelte Werke V*, 286.

²⁹ Ibid., 287-91. The translation is my own.

³⁰ Letter of 19 May 1911; *Working Friendship*, 80. The full sentence reads: 'It would be good if you could indicate to me the points where you mean to place definite *numbers*, and where you intend merely to suggest them as you did repeatedly in *Rosenkavalier*'. From Hofmannsthal's tone, it is clear that 'merely' suggesting numbers is not his preferred course of action. Cf. Hofmannsthal's letter to Strauss of 20 March (see n. 9).

order): a 'Recitative and Aria' for Ariadne at the opening; a 'Lied' for Harlequin; an 'Aria: Variations with Coloratura' for Zerbinetta; a 'Men's Quartet'; an 'Ensemble' for Zerbinetta and her four admirers; a 'Trio' for Scaramuccio, Brighella, and Truffaldino; a 'Duet' for Ariadne and the off-stage Bacchus (the music for the latter is described as 'hymn-like'); and, finally, a 'Love Duet'.³¹ Additionally, Strauss specifies that the *Einleitung* will commence 'melancholy, in G minor' to be followed by a 'passionate section in B flat', with 'pizzicati tears' and 'waves' (*Meereswogen*) on the violas. Voice types are also indicated at this early stage with Ariadne as an alto, Bacchus as a lyric tenor, Zerbinetta as a coloratura (soprano is presumably understood), and Harlequin as a baritone. Interestingly, even before Strauss marked in his voice types, Hofmannsthal suggested that Bacchus might either be a lyric tenor or an alto ('lyrischer Tenor oder Alt??'), but the latter proposition was subsequently crossed out, perhaps with thoughts that the mythical lovers might provoke unwanted comparisons with the Marschallin and Octavian.³²

As mentioned above, Strauss received Hofmannsthal's *Szenarium* rather coolly. He had only recently finished reading Molière's play and, although pleased with its opportunities for effective incidental music, thought it dramatically meagre.³³ He likewise felt that the *Szenarium* was feeble ('the plot as such holds no interest'³⁴).

³¹ These proposed numbers were written by Strauss in the margin of Hofmannsthal's copy of the *Szenarium*. In Strauss's letter to Hofmannsthal of 22 May he sets out the numbers in the following order: (a) Recitative and aria for Ariadne, (b) Harlequin's song, (c) Great coloratura aria and *andante*, (d) Male quartet, later quintet with Zerbinetta, (e) Male trio, (f) Finale, love duet, final ensemble; *ibid.*, 82.

³² Crossed out by whom—Hofmannsthal or Strauss—is not entirely clear. Most probably Strauss, for in the postscript of Hofmannsthal's letter to Strauss of 28 May he writes that 'it is quite correct to compose the part [of Bacchus] for a man, not once again for a soprano'; *ibid.*, 87. See n. 13 on the connection Hofmannsthal draws between the sincerity of Ariadne's grief and the sincerity of the Marschallin's emotions (letter to Strauss of 19 May 1911).

³³ Letter to Hofmannsthal, 20 May 1911; *ibid.*, 80-1.

³⁴ Letter to Hofmannsthal, 27 May 1911; *ibid.*, 85.

Notwithstanding the fact that Hofmannsthal in an earlier letter had asked that Strauss be 'objective and severe',³⁵ in his critique of the *Ariadne* project, he was clearly stung by the composer's possibly too severe criticisms. (Strauss can hardly have endeared himself to Hofmannsthal when, in his letter of 27 May, he bluntly declared that, 'personally, I am not particularly interested by the whole thing myself'.³⁶) Hofmannsthal's pained reply of 28 May indicates that Strauss's unsupportive comments would have discouraged him had he not, in the meantime, come to grips with 'the hardest and most attractive part of the work', the working out of 'the psychological motives of the action',³⁷ action which Strauss seemed to suggest was virtually non-existent. What Hofmannsthal indicates here for the first time is that the 'spirited paraphrase', the divertissement, is to be granted psychological depth (and, as we shall see, more than its fair share of metaphysical gravity).

This marks a crucial turning point in the genesis of *Ariadne*. Elsewhere in the letter of 28 May Hofmannsthal writes that the 'essence of the relationship between Ariadne and Bacchus' now stands before him 'finely graded', 'delicately animated', and 'psychologically convincing'.³⁸ (From the account given in the *Szenarium*, one could point out that there is scant indication of there *being* a relationship between Ariadne and Bacchus; that Bacchus, who is off-stage for most of the time, is merely a cipher, a *deus ex machina*.) Hofmannsthal concludes his letter with the revealing comment that 'it was actually quite wrong of me to expect you to read more into the

³⁵ Letter of 25 May 1911; *ibid.*, 84.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 85.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 86.

³⁸ 'Dieses *Eigentliche* zwischen Ariadne und Bacchus nun schwebt mir so nuanciert, so zart bewegt, so psychologisch und so lyrisch zugleich vor der Seele...'; *Richard Strauss – Hugo von Hofmannsthal: Briefwechsel*, ed. Willi Schuh (Zürich: Atlantis, 1964), 125.

scenario than there is at present in it—to any except my own eyes’.³⁹ ‘Reading more into the scenario’ is precisely what occupied the librettist over the next six to seven weeks. In the letter to Strauss of 25 May, Hofmannsthal was still referring to the ‘interim work’ *Ariadne* as ‘this dramatic trifle’ (so kleinen spielerischen Sache), yet by early June he was complaining of the difficulties caused by ‘this slight but by no means easy piece of work’,⁴⁰ and by the middle of that month the former ‘trifle’ was now referred to as ‘a very serious trifle’.⁴¹ Indeed, Hofmannsthal seems to have regarded the ‘deepening’ of the *Szenarium* as an artistic imperative: ‘Altogether, when two men like us set out to produce a “trifle” like this, it has to become a very serious trifle’.⁴² Whether or not Strauss was of the same opinion seems not to have occurred to Hofmannsthal, a critical miscalculation on the librettist’s part symptomatic of the poor communication between librettist and composer from the very earliest stages of the *Ariadne* project.

Accordingly, when the *Szenarium* was fleshed out to become the libretto, characters and events became weighed down by a *gravitas* that was hardly implicit (let alone explicit) in the preliminary stages of the project. Indeed, Hofmannsthal maps a conventional (some might say tedious) ‘goddess vs. whore’ narrative onto his characterisation of the two leading ladies: ‘Ariadne and Zerbinetta’, he writes, ‘represent diametrical contrasts in female character’.⁴³ Thus, the princess Ariadne

³⁹ *Working Friendship*, 87.

⁴⁰ ‘Diese eine kleine aber nicht leichte Sache’. Letter to Strauss, 5 June 1911; *ibid.*, 88.

⁴¹ Letter to Strauss, 15 June 1911; *ibid.*, 89.

⁴² ‘Überhaupt, wenn zwei Menschen wie wir eine solche “Spielerei” machen, so muss es eben eine sehr ernsthafte Spielerei werden’; *Briefwechsel*, 129. That Hofmannsthal now places trifle (Spielerei) in inverted commas is a point that should not go unnoticed.

⁴³ Undated letter to Strauss, mid-July 1911; *Working Friendship*, 93. Interestingly, there is a slight discrepancy with this phrase between the first German edition of the Strauss-Hofmannsthal correspondence and the later edition. Thus in the first edition (1926, Paul Zsolnay Verlag), Hofmannsthal writes, ‘in der polaren Entgegensetzung des Frauencharakters in Ariadne-Zerbinetta

becomes a symbol of fidelity—fidelity unto death—an exemplification of noble, pure love; while the base Zerbinetta becomes a symbol of lowly, shallow, ephemeral, *eros*.⁴⁴ Prompted by Strauss's less-than-enthusiastic appraisal of the libretto (he received it in full on or before 14 July 1911), Hofmannsthal was stirred to write the following:

What it [*Ariadne*] is about is one of the straightforward and stupendous problems of life: fidelity; whether to hold fast to that which is lost, to cling to it even unto death—or to live, to live on, to get over it, to transform oneself, to sacrifice the integrity of the soul and yet in this transmutation to preserve one's essence, to remain a human being and not to sink to the level of the beast, which is without recollection... In the present case we have the group of heroes, demi-gods, gods—Ariadne, Bacchus, (Theseus)—facing the human, the merely human group consisting of the frivolous Zerbinetta and her companions, all of them base figures in life's masquerade. Zerbinetta is in her element drifting out of the arms of one man into the arms of another; Ariadne could be the wife or mistress of *one* man only, just as she can only be *one* man's widow, can be forsaken only by *one* man. One thing, however, is still left even for her: the miracle, the God. To him she gives herself, for she believes him to be Death: he is both Death and Life at once; he it is who reveals to her the immeasurable depths in her own nature, who makes of her an enchantress, the sorceress who herself transforms the poor little Ariadne; he it is who conjures up for her in this world another world beyond, who preserves her for us and at the same time transforms her.⁴⁵

Leaving aside the fact that Hofmannsthal seems unsure as to whether he commends or derides the human condition, it is clear that the 'spirited paraphrase' has become invested with weighty (if confused) issues (does one transform oneself or is one transformed by another?; if Ariadne is a '*one* man' woman how do we account for Theseus *and* Bacchus?). Miracles and metamorphoses, gods and humans, death as life, these are issues that are not to be entered into lightly. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the word 'divertissement' was dropped from the title page of the finished work.

zwanglos gegeben ist'; while in the edition of 1952 (reprinted 1964, Atlantis Verlag) he writes, 'in der diametralen Kontrastierung des Frauencharakters—in Ariadne-Zerbinetta zwanglos gegeben ist'. Additionally, the letter receives an exact date in the first edition: 18 July 1911.

⁴⁴ Forsyth puts it rather nicely when she says that Hofmannsthal seems finally to have thought of Zerbinetta as 'not much more than a witless prostitute'; *Ariadne*, 146.

In the closing moments of the *Oper*, Bacchus exclaims, 'Ich bin ein anderer, als ich war!', a comment that could well apply to the libretto *vis-à-vis* the *Szenarium*. Hofmannsthal was evidently well pleased with the transformation of the work for he states that it was with 'growing pleasure' that, while writing the conclusion of the opera (the Ariadne-Bacchus scene), it 'rose more and more to a higher spiritual plane from something which was merely meant to amuse'.⁴⁶ His theme of transformation literally spilled beyond the page and devoured the work-in-progress. But, unlike the fate of Ariadne and Bacchus in the opera, this does not necessarily mean that the transformation from *divertissement* to *Oper gravitas* was an entirely happy process for the project as a whole. Indeed, Strauss was operating under one set of assumptions about the tone and scope of the work-in-progress while Hofmannsthal was operating under another, altogether grander, set of objectives. The often terse exchanges between composer and librettist during work on *Ariadne* can be attributed in large measure to conflicts arising from these different perspectives. Additionally, these fundamental misunderstandings feed into, complicate, tease, and obscure some of the opera's more significant issues. Karen Forsyth, for example, points out that by privileging elevated spiritual love over base erotic love 'Hofmannsthal does an injustice to the *commedia dell'arte* world by judging it according to a morality which is alien to it'.⁴⁷ She rightly comments that, in the *Szenarium* 'we find that the division into two groups [*seria* and *commedia*] was essentially a cultural-historical one', whereas in the libretto the division 'is essentially a moral one, and at the same time

⁴⁵ Undated letter of mid-July 1911; *Working Friendship*, 94.

⁴⁶ Letter to Strauss, 5 July 1911; *ibid.* 91.

⁴⁷ Forsyth, *Ariadne*, 101.

also a moralizing one'.⁴⁸ Having constructed the *commedia* players as 'the morally inferior group', Hofmannsthal, she argues, 'keeps his distance from them'.⁴⁹

Parody and Irony

In fact, 'keeping his distance from them' is not entirely correct, for Hofmannsthal knew that it was not in his interests as a dramatist to push the *commedia* figures wholly onto the fringe of the newly intensified work (even though, as promiscuous sensualists, he had little sympathy for them and was keen that they do not crowd the central space given to Ariadne and Bacchus), as they had an important role to fulfil in casting their own particular perspective on the various themes that it was his objective to explore. Indeed, it is precisely as promiscuous sensualists that they perform their critical work. If the *Szenarium* sets out a sequence of events informed by theatrical pastiche, the moral, psychological, and spiritual dimensions that complicate these events in the libretto are informed, above all, by parody and irony.

The intermezzo—'The Unfaithful Zerbinetta and her Four Lovers'⁵⁰—is presented as an anti-*Ariadne auf Naxos*. Zerbinetta, indeed, is Ariadne's parodic shadow. (Having stated above that Hofmannsthal's claims for historical authenticity in *Bürger-Ariadne* are somewhat shaky, he is on far more secure ground with the intermezzo-*Ariadne* pairing as there are eighteenth-century precedents for intermezzi which trace in comic parallel the plot of the principal *seria* opera, a point made in Chapter I of this thesis.) In her opening monologue, 'Ein Schönes war', the grief stricken Ariadne recalls this 'thing of beauty' that was Theseus-Ariadne; and in 'Es

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 100.

gibt ein Reich', the aria that follows (her principal 'number' in the opera), she sadly but stoically narrates the imagined sequence of events when the messenger god Hermes will arrive and convey her to the realm of the dead ('Du schöner, stiller Gott! sieh! Ariadne wartet!'), for in her heartbroken condition it is death, above all, for which she longs. But at the conclusion of Ariadne's great scene, this narrative is temporarily put to one side while we are offered an alternative, less elevated, perspective on the workings of love and loss. This is the moment when Zerbinetta steps forth. In Zerbinetta's recitative, aria, and rondo, 'Grossmächtige Prinzessin', she points out that, although socially inferior to 'Prinzessin' Ariadne, she too knows the sorrows that come from being deserted by a lover (as, indeed, she continues, do countless other women on countless other desert islands).⁵¹ Ariadne, however, shows little interest in Zerbinetta's counsel and retires to her cave. Zerbinetta carries on regardless. While it is true that men are faithless, is it not also true that women are likewise fickle?; from her own experience, she explains, no sooner has she fallen for one man when another comes along and grabs her affection. Love and deception, she suggests, follow one upon the other. Zerbinetta then proceeds to rattle off a list of her former lovers—Pagliaccio, Mezzetin, Cavicchio, Burattino, Pasquariello—lovers taken by compulsion, she states, never mere caprice. 'That the heart should understand itself so little!', she exclaims. Each came like a god, took her captive, transformed her. To each, she surrendered without a word ('Hingegeben war ich stumm!').

⁵⁰ The title as given by the Dancing Master in Act I of *Der Bürger als Edelmann*.

⁵¹ In a departure from the outline of this scene as given in the *Szenarium*, Zerbinetta does not read aloud a letter from her first lover.

What is noteworthy here is not that Zerbinetta simply acts as a foil to Ariadne, but that she actively takes up themes and issues that preoccupy the principal narrative, the *opera seria*. Most obvious, of course, is the theme of ‘fidelity’; for Zerbinetta, fidelity is, at best, a temporary condition. Her casually reeled-off list of ex-lovers—taking an operatic precedent, we might call it a catalogue—stands in intentionally grotesque counterpoint to Ariadne’s catalogue of one, Theseus. The theme of ‘transformation’ (which, as Hofmannsthal makes clear in his mid-July letter to Strauss, is crucial to the Ariadne-Bacchus encounter) is also tackled by Zerbinetta. Far from the singular, metaphysical transformation which Hofmannsthal reserves for his *seria* couple in the closing stages of the opera—in which Ariadne, expecting death, is transformed by life-giving Bacchus, and Bacchus is transformed from innocent (albeit divine) youth to god—Zerbinetta claims to be transformed each time she takes a new lover:

Als ein Gott kam jeder gegangen,
 Und sein Schritt schon machte mich stumm,
 Küsste er mir Stirn und Wangen,
 War ich von dem Gott gefangen
 Und gewandelt um und um!

[Each one came like a god / and his very step bereft me of speech, / he only had to kiss my brow and cheek, / and I was his captive / and was utterly transformed.⁵²]

The ‘gods’ of whom Zerbinetta speaks are, naturally, not divine beings but mere creatures of the *commedia dell’arte*. But it is significant and consequential that she describes her commonplace lovers as gods for, in doing so, she is both utilising imagery presented by Ariadne in ‘Es gibt ein Reich’—the arrival of the god Hermes (‘An dich werd ich mich ganz verlieren, / Bei dir wird Ariadne sein’ [I will lose

⁵² All translations of the libretto are by Peggie Cochrane, libretto accompanying *Der Bürger als Edelmann – Ariadne auf Naxos*, Virgin Classics, 545 111-2.

myself entirely in you, / with you Ariadne will abide])—and preparing the scene not only for the arrival of an *echt* god, Bacchus, but also for the crucial transformational encounter that will form the crowning moment of the opera. By the terms of the parallel plot that is at work, Zerbinetta's 'god' is not *the* god and Zerbinetta's 'transformation' is not *the* transformation: rather, hers is a parodic account of the rather more serious content that Hofmannsthal places at the heart of the opera.

Indeed, as we shortly discover, Zerbinetta's latest 'god' arrives in the form of Harlequin. As spelt out in the *Szenarium*, she toys with all four of the men of the *commedia* ensemble—'Männer! Lieber Gott, wenn du wirklich wolltest, dass wir ihnen widerstehen sollten, warum hast du sie so verschieden geschaffen?' (Men! Dear God, if you really wanted us to resist them, why did you create them all so different?)—all the while reprising certain lines from her aria about how in matters of love she is never driven by caprice but, rather, by compulsion. This is a sentiment that is difficult to take seriously when she so brazenly cavorts with all four admirers, inflames rivalries and jealousies among Brighella, Scaramuccio, and Truffaldino, and finally throws herself into the arms of Harlequin.

Harlequin is the parodic shadow of Bacchus, the anti-Bacchus to Zerbinetta's anti-Ariadne. Hofmannsthal sets out this opposition in the 'Ariadne Brief' (*Ariadne* Letter), a document published in 1912 as advance publicity for the first performance (a kind of press release of its day⁵³) and based to a substantial degree upon his letter to Strauss of mid-July 1911 (quoted, in part, above):

⁵³ The 'Ariadne Brief', in truth a mock letter, was published in the 1912 edition of the *Almanach für die musikalische Welt*. Hofmannsthal wrote it at the behest of Strauss who insisted that critics had to be fully prepared for the experimental nature of their new work especially given its potentially confusing symbolism: 'It's always better to tell people in advance what to look out for and what to write', letter of 23 June 1912; *Working Friendship*, 135. The 'Ariadne Brief' is quoted in full in the *Führer* that was

Bacchus is the opposite of the vulgar character Harlequin, just as Ariadne is the opposite of Zerbinetta. Harlequin is mere nature; although a man, he is soulless and without destiny. Bacchus is a boy and full of destiny. Harlequin is anyone, whereas Bacchus is one of a kind, a god, on his way to becoming a god.⁵⁴

Hofmannsthal's play with parallel narratives reaches its apotheosis in the final moments of *Ariadne*. In the closing stages of the Ariadne-Bacchus duet the hero and heroine, having retired to the mouth of the grotto, are concealed by a canopy of foliage and are heard as no more than a pair of disembodied voices. But these are not the voices that have the last word, for Zerbinetta, the *commedia* men, and Ariadne's three nymphs steal back on stage and Zerbinetta—'with mocking triumph'—delivers the 'moral'. In fact, her summing up is a partial reprise of her aria and rondo. Everything, she points out, has followed precisely as she said it would (for it always does); the new god appears and we surrender without a word:

Zerbinetta: *vor und wiederholt mit spöttischem Triumph ihr Rondo*⁵⁵
Kommt der neue Gott gegangen,
Hingegeben sind wir stumm!
Und er küsst uns Hand und Wangen,
Und wir geben uns gefangen,
Sind verwandelt um und um!
Sind verwandelt um und um!
Sie reicht die Hand dem Harlekin, desgleichen die übrigen
paarweise. Zerbinetta singt und tanzt mit ihrem Partner
So war es mit Pagliazzo
Ein Knicks
Und mit Mezzetin!
Ein Knicks
Dann mit Cavicchio
Dann Burattin!
Ein Knicks
Doch niemals Launen,
Immer ein Müssen,
Immer ein neues
Beklommenes Staunen:
Dass ein Herz so gar sich selber,

published at the time of the opera's première: Leopold Schmidt, *Richard Strauss: Ariadne auf Naxos. Zu spielen nach dem Bürger als Edelmann. Ein Führer durch das Werk* (Berlin: Furstner, 1912), vi-x.

⁵⁴ Hofmannsthal, 'Ariadne 1912: Aus einem Brief an Richard Strauss', *Gesammelte Werke V*, 299.

⁵⁵ In the score, the direction reads: 'leise beginnend, aber mit spöttischem Triumph im Ton' (starting softly but with a note of mocking triumph).

Gar sich selber nicht versteht!
*Alle fallen ein, singend und tanzend*⁵⁶. *Tanzend und singend gehen sie ab.*

[*In front and repeats her Rondo with mocking triumph* The new god approaches / and we surrender without a word! / And he kisses our hand and cheeks, / and we surrender / and are utterly transformed! / And are utterly transformed! *She reaches for Harlequin's hand, likewise the others form pairs. Zerbinetta sings and dances with her partner.* Thus it was with Pagliaccio (*she curtseys*) / and Mezzetin! (*she curtseys*) / Then it was Cavicchio, / then Burattino! (*she curtseys*) / But never by caprice, / always by compulsion, / always a new tremulous wonder / that the heart should understand itself so little! *All join in singing and dancing. They exit singing and dancing.*]

Gods, lovers, transformations. What is delivered with all the confidence of a 'moral' is, in fact, an anti-moral, for Zerbinetta, as a *commedia* player—a member of the parody group and not the authentic one—is in no position to sum up the metaphysical complexities that have engulfed the heroic couple. Indeed, as her closing remarks imply, she has neither knowledge nor understanding of the mystical nature of the Ariadne-Bacchus encounter. The parody narrative is trying to explain in its own terms the *seria* narrative and, as a result, does it scant justice. Which is not to suggest, however, that the closing scene is without dramatic purpose: its function is to draw into sharp relief the gulf that separates Zerbinetta's world from Ariadne's—a gulf that is seemingly unbridgeable, for the end of the opera brings from Zerbinetta no new insights, merely the reprise of her number from the intermezzo. But this, in fact, *is* the insight: Ariadne has taken an emotional and spiritual journey during the course of the opera (she longed for death and has received life) whereas Zerbinetta has not budged one step. To her, all is as it ever was.

In Hofmannsthal's letter to Strauss of mid-July 1911, we find the following comments regarding the dramatic and symbolic function of the opera's final scene:

⁵⁶ As set to music by Strauss, all members of the *commedia* troupe take up Zerbinetta's concluding line: 'Dass ein Herz sogar sich selber nicht versteht!'

But what to divine souls is a real miracle, is to the earth-bound nature of Zerbinetta just an everyday love-affair. She sees in Ariadne's experience the only thing she *can* see: the exchange of an old lover for a new one. And so these two spiritual worlds are in the end ironically brought together in the only way in which they can be brought together: in non-comprehension.⁵⁷

These comments are repeated almost verbatim in the '*Ariadne* Brief'.⁵⁸ But if the close of the opera highlights the ironic distance between the work's two competing narratives—the *Ariadne* story and its parodic intermezzo—and underscores this irony by presenting an anti-moral as a moral, it also, in a further ironic twist, suggests that appearance and reality in *Ariadne auf Naxos* are both, in any case, highly questionable and contestable, for the opera itself is a theatrical fabrication, a point made abundantly clear when we return, at the very close of the work, to *Der Bürger als Edelmann*. The lights come up and the papier mâché set that is Ariadne's grotto ('Lass mich, die Höhle deiner Schmerzen, / Zieh ich zur tiefsten Lust um dich und mich!' [Let me change the cave of your sorrows / to a bower of deepest delight for you and me!]) is shown to be, well, a papier mâché set. The reality we return to is a bourgeois household and a dim-witted Bürger who cares nothing for art and its higher mission.

The Molière frame

In a letter written to Strauss shortly after the completion of the libretto (a letter clearly meant to convince Strauss of the value of the work), Hofmannsthal offers a defence of his theatrical hybrid on the basis of seventeenth-century French theatrical practice: 'The whole affair is after all actually distilled from the two theatrical elements of

⁵⁷ *Working Friendship*, 94.

⁵⁸ 'She [Ariadne] has died and is risen, her soul is transformed in truth—of course, it is the truth of a higher level: how could it be the truth for Zerbinetta and her like! These lowly characters see in the experience of Ariadne only what they are capable of grasping: the exchange of an old lover for a new

Molière's age: from the mythological opera and from the *maschere*, the dancing and singing comedians. Lully might have set it to music'.⁵⁹ But *Ariadne auf Naxos*, with its mix in the one work of mythological figures and characters drawn from the *commedia dell'arte*, actually bears little resemblance to anything set by Lully. Hofmannsthal pointedly neglects to mention in his letter the comedy-ballets of Lully and Molière—of which *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* is one—possibly because he is fully aware of the extent to which his offering departs from the conventions of that particular genre.

The comedy-ballet in the hands of Molière and Lully brought together a spoken play, including dancing and incidental music, with an elaborate concluding piece comprising a prolonged musical entertainment—a *divertissement*—involving airs and ballets; a form that *Bürger-Ariadne* superficially resembles. But, unlike *Bürger-Ariadne*, the spectacular *divertissement* was not endowed with weighty moral or philosophical issues but, rather, was an elaborate spectacle that existed purely (and gloriously) for its own sake. Furthermore, it had little or no connection with the spoken comedy that preceded it and was certainly not, as in the case of *Bürger-Ariadne*, followed by an epilogue (however brief) heralding a return to the spoken comedy.⁶⁰ Hofmannsthal has performed a very curious (some might say imprudent) transaction in *Bürger-Ariadne* by bringing satire, myth, and *commedia* into such close

one. And so at the end both spiritual worlds are bound together ironically, in the only way possible: through a lack of understanding'.

⁵⁹ Letter of 26 July 1911; *Working Friendship*, 101. Hofmannsthal's tone is indeed defensive for it is in reply to Strauss's letter of 24 July in which he states that friend Willy Levin, having read the libretto, was none the wiser as to what it was about or what connection it had with Molière's play.

⁶⁰ Note that there is no clear indication in the *Szenarium* that the work will conclude with remarks from Jourdain.

proximity;⁶¹ to the point where the *opera seria* and the intermezzo are actually framed by the satire. Indeed, by situating *Ariadne* within *Bürger*, Hofmannsthal complicates still further the opera's parodic and ironic dialogues and undermines the integrity that he otherwise demands of his telling of the Ariadne myth.

Molière's *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* (1670) is an exquisite satire on the foolish and pretentious aspirations of the bourgeoisie. Adapting the play, Hofmannsthal, who, in order to bring an antique quality to the entire *Ariadne* project worked from F. S. Bierling's translation of 1750,⁶² discarded complete acts, subplots, and characters. Molière's comedy was reduced to a single sequence of events: the ludicrous antics of Herr Jourdain, the *Bürger* of the play's title, in his quest for social respectability.⁶³ Jourdain is under the influence of the sharp but debt-ridden Count Dorantes, an aristocrat who flatters him in order to receive an apparently endless line of credit. Additionally, Dorantes leads Jourdain to believe that he has a chance of winning the love and affection of the widowed marquise Dorimene, and supposedly acts as a go-between in setting up a liaison (an arrangement kept secret from the level-headed and sensible Frau Jourdain). But Dorantes is as fraudulent in his role as intermediary as he is in his financial operations, for while pretending to act on behalf of Jourdain he, in fact, is ingratiating himself with the lady aristocrat.

Dorantes, however, is not the only person taking advantage of the foolish and gullible Jourdain. In his attempt to recast himself as a gentleman, Jourdain has assembled a vast array of flatterers and hangers-on who coach him in the skills and

⁶¹ Offenbach, of course, pursued precisely this course of action but used myth as a vehicle for satire, an approach utterly alien to Hofmannsthal's.

⁶² That is, Hofmannsthal's adaptation is an arrangement of a pre-existing translation.

⁶³ Oswald has described the result of Hofmannsthal's severe pruning of Molière's original as 'a *Caractère* rather than a play'; *Germanic Review*, 22.

manners of the high-born. Indeed, the early acts of Molière's play (the ones drawn on above all by Hofmannsthal in his adaptation) consist of a procession, one after the other, of those who offer instruction and assistance to Jourdain on his upwardly-mobile quest: his music master, dancing master, master-at-arms, philosophy tutor, and tailor. The would-be gentleman has to be schooled in fashion, taste, and manners even if, as on at least one occasion, he is duped into believing that faulty craftsmanship is stylish. Thus, when his tailor informs him that the flower print on his new suit is *meant* to be upside down—that it is customary for persons of rank to wear their embroidered flowers in this fashion—Jourdain is satisfied and will not hear of having the error 'corrected'.

The role of the music master's pupil, a minor part in the original play, is amplified in Hofmannsthal's version such that he becomes 'A Young Composer', the figure responsible for the opera *Ariadne auf Naxos* performed as after-dinner entertainment before an audience comprising Jourdain, Dorantes, and Dorimene.⁶⁴ Both dinner (it is a lavish affair) and opera are part of Jourdain's strategy to impress Dorimene and, hopefully, to secure her love (and, thereby, cement further his connections with the aristocracy). In other words, in the context of *Der Bürger als Edelmann*, *Ariadne auf Naxos* is simply one further means by which Jourdain hopes to win social respectability; it is quite literally a divertissement and, like the dancing lessons, fencing lessons, and philosophy tuition, functions as an accoutrement amassed by Jourdain as part of his vain and pretentious self-improvement initiative.

⁶⁴ Of course, no such post-dinner opera exists in Molière's original. It was only after Hofmannsthal finished writing the libretto that he set to work adapting the Molière play and it was during the course of the adaptation that he thought to make the music master's pupil (a character he originally considered doing away with) the composer of *Ariadne*. See letter to Strauss, 22 October 1911; *Working Friendship*, 103.

Thus, Jourdain insists that ‘this thing’ that is to be performed in his house must be entirely suitable for a widow. Even better would be the possibility that it be specifically pitched *at* a widow.⁶⁵ Indeed, the Music Master assures him this is quite the case for the princess Ariadne is herself a grieving widow who, happily, finds comfort at the end of the opera in the figure of Bacchus (whereupon Jourdain wonders what a Bacchus is). Under the impression that he, Jourdain, might therefore fulfil the role of an allegorical Bacchus to his allegorical Ariadne, Dorimene, he asks that no expense be spared in having the ‘desert island’ appear as splendid and inviting as possible. As for the *Nachspiel*, ‘The Unfaithful Zerbinetta and her Four Lovers’, Jourdain asks whether it might be a work that somehow suggests to a widow that the state of widowhood should best be renounced. The Dancing Master assures Jourdain that this could well be the case for it is concerned with the inconstancy of women in general. Indeed, he adds, in a sly comment lost on Jourdain, the work has already received the approval of the Count (Dorantes).

The *Nachspiel*, of course, is not performed after the *opera seria* but, rather, *with* the *opera seria*. This is announced in the *Zwischenspiel*, the rather short spoken episode between Molière’s *Bürger* and Hofmannsthal’s *Ariadne*. Jourdain’s footman informs the assembled players—together with other figures associated with the performance, the Young Composer, Dancing Master and so on—that his master has commanded the simultaneous delivery of the ‘Trauerstück *Ariadne*’ and the ‘Tanzmaskerade’. Fireworks have been commanded for nine o’clock, he adds, and

⁶⁵ Along with making ruthless excisions from Molière’s play, Hofmannsthal had to add material of his own—such as the passage referred to here—in order to establish the context for the performance of *Ariadne*.

Jourdain insists that the two theatrical entertainments be condensed into one in order to make way for the pyrotechnic display.

Like Ochs before him in *Der Rosenkavalier*, Jourdain is shown to be a man whose untutored taste in music tends towards the simple and the commonplace. Early in Act I, an arietta by the Young Composer is sung for him—‘Du, Venus’ Sohn’—but Jourdain, who called for his dressing-gown [*Schlafrock*] immediately prior to the performance (it supposedly makes him hear better), declares the arietta rather too sad (‘it makes one nod off’) and sings for those assembled a ‘really pretty’ *Liedchen* he has recently learnt—a trivial ditty about the discovery that one’s sweetheart [*Schätzchen*] is not a kitten [*Kätzchen*] after all, but a thousand times wilder than a tiger.⁶⁶ The Music and Dancing Masters, flatterers both, compliment Jourdain on his (truly awful) performance. Shortly thereafter, Jourdain expresses the hope that the forthcoming opera will include a hunting horn ‘because it sounds so beautiful’ (evidently his taste inclines not only towards the prosaic but also the rustic).

But the conflict between Jourdain’s unsophisticated musical disposition and his pretentious aspirations provokes an inappropriate outburst from him during the performance of *Ariadne*, for the heroine’s all-consuming grief truly bores him:

Ariadne:	Wo war ich? tot? und lebe, lebe wieder
<i>an der Erde</i>	Und lebe noch?
	Und ist ja doch kein Leben, das ich lebe!
	Zerstückelt Herz, willst ewig weiter schlagen?
<i>Richtet sich halb auf</i>	Was hab ich denn geträumt? Weh! schon vergessen!
	Mein Kopf behält nichts mehr...
Jourdain:	Es ist ein wenig eintönig, was sie singt, finden Sie nicht?

⁶⁶ ‘Ich glaubete, mein Schätzchen / Ist doch so mild als schön. / Ich glaubete, mein Schätzchen / Ist zahmer als ein Kätzchen; / Doch ist sie wilder hundertmal, / Ja, wilder ist sie tausendmal / Als Tiger, die im Walde gehn’. As set to music by Strauss, the *Liedchen* (which is only eleven bars long) commences in C major, drifts into D-flat major—‘the modulation must give the impression that Jourdain has unintentionally sung off-key’—and comes to a close back in C.

Dorantes: Pst, das ist die Einfachheit des grossen Stils, das ist es, was die Kenner über alles setzen!

Jourdain: Ich finde es ja auch recht hübsch. Nur schade, dass er das Waldhorn nicht verwendet.

[*On the ground* Where was I? Dead? And alive, alive again and still living? And yet it is no life that I live! Broken heart, will you keep on beating forever? *Half rising herself* What then was I dreaming? Alas! Forgotten already. My head retains nothing any more... What she sings of is a little monotonous don't you think? Pst, that is the simplicity of the great style, it is what the connoisseurs value! Actually I find it rather pretty. Just a shame that there's no part for a hunting horn.]

But while momentarily convinced that 'the great style' is to his liking, boredom soon sets in once more and during Ariadne's moving set-piece 'Ein Schönes war', Jourdain once again talks over her.⁶⁷

Jourdain: Sie tut nichts als sich beklagen. Man wird traurig davon. Ich wollte, man hätte mehr Kerzen aufgesteckt. Es sind wahrlich genug davon im Hause.

Dorantes: Sie träumt von Theseus, der sie verlassen hat.

Jourdain: Kommt er wieder?

Dorimene: Still, hören wir doch zu.

Jourdain: Ich wollte, es käme bald was Kurzweiligeres. Ich habe doch anbefohlen—

Hebt sich vom Sessel, um nach Tanzmeister zu sehen.

Dorimene, Dorantes: Sst!⁶⁸

[She does nothing but complain about herself. It makes one sad. I would have liked more candles to have been put out, we have enough of them in the house. She dreams of Theseus, the one who has forsaken her. Is he coming back? Quiet! We want to listen. I want something amusing soon to come along, indeed, I have commanded it— *Rises out of the chair and looks around for the Dancing Master.* Ssh!]

Jourdain feels nothing for the tragic heroine and hankers for 'something amusing' not realising (for he is blind to the dramatic irony of the situation) that, *commedia* players notwithstanding, it is he who is the 'something amusing'. We are given no indication that he engages with the dramatic work played out before him; he

⁶⁷ Strauss's letter to Hofmannsthal of 11 April 1912 makes it clear that it was Strauss who decided that the two outbursts from Jourdain should take place at these specific points. Also in this letter, Strauss suggests the nature of the comments that Jourdain should make (that he is bored by Ariadne, that he longs for something amusing), comments polished by Hofmannsthal in the finished work. This letter does not appear in the English translation of the Strauss-Hofmannsthal correspondence.

certainly has nothing to say about it at its conclusion. In the moment of darkness at the close of the Ariadne-Bacchus duet, Dorantes and Dorimene quietly slip away—in parodic counterpoint to the departure of the operatic lovers—and as the lights come up Jourdain realises, to his utter astonishment, that his guests have disappeared. Following the concluding scene with Zerbinetta et al, a servant appears before the still puzzled Jourdain and, through his gestures, indicates that the aristocratic company has most definitely taken its leave:

Zweiter Lakai:	Soll das Feuerwerk trotzdem abgebrannt werden?
Jourdain:	<i>achtet nicht auf ihn, sagt vor sich hin, wie entrückt</i> Alle Leute rücken mir beständig nichts als meinen Verkehr mit grossen Herren vor, und ich, ich weiss mir einmal nichts Schöneres als das; es ist doch bei grossen Herren ein Anstand, eine leichte gelassene Höflichkeit ohnegleichen, und ich wollte, das es mir ein paar Finger aus der Hand gekostet hätte und dass ich dafür ein Graf oder Marquis von Geburt wäre und dieses gewisse Etwas mit bekommen hätte, mit dem sie allem, was sie tun, ein solches grosses Ansehen zu geben wissen!

Vorhang.

[Should the fireworks nevertheless be lit? *Takes no notice of him, speaks to himself, as if in a trance* Everyone keeps on at me about my association with people of quality—but I can't imagine anything nicer. They have such finesse, such an incomparable air of easy, relaxed courtesy; I would gladly have given, if not my right arm, then a few fingers at least to have been born a count or marquis and to have had that certain something which confers such grandeur on all that they do. *Curtain.*]

The ever-obsequious Jourdain is thus as deluded and unenlightened at the end of the work as he was at the start (and thus occupies a position analogous to Zerbinetta).⁶⁹ Having been treated appallingly by his aristocratic company he, nevertheless, explains away their impolite behaviour as an example of the 'easy,

⁶⁸ Note the difference between Jourdain's comments as proposed in the *Szenarium*—where Hofmannsthal suggests that he offers the view that hopefully Ariadne will be comforted—and as they appear in the finished libretto.

⁶⁹ Indeed, one might argue that no-one is particularly enlightened at the work's dénouement: Ariadne thinks that Bacchus is Hermes, Bacchus does not understand her confusion, Zerbinetta believes that her prediction has come to pass, and Jourdain still longs to be a nobleman.

relaxed courtesy' of people of quality. As for Ariadne and Bacchus, they receive no mention at all in Jourdain's closing remarks. They might as well have not existed. So much for their mystical transformation. The evening's entertainment was for a specific purpose—to fulfil Jourdain's drive to emulate the nobility and to impress Dorimene—and, if only partially successful in these respects, Jourdain remains utterly oblivious to the allegedly transcendental qualities of the *opera seria*.⁷⁰

This sits very oddly with Hofmannsthal's objectives in *Ariadne auf Naxos* and points up the hugely problematic issue of claiming profundity for the *opera seria* while encasing it in a satirical comedy (the incidental music for which, moreover, includes playful quotations from works by Meyerbeer, Wagner, Verdi, and, indeed, Strauss⁷¹). It is a problem that is symptomatic of Hofmannsthal's unfocussed hold on the work from the very beginning and the swiftness with which he developed (and altered) it from *Szenarium* to libretto (the tremendously consequential transformation from 'trifle' to 'very serious trifle'). Having settled upon the Molière frame prior to writing the *Szenarium* and, more crucially, before deciding to expand and intensify the opera, Hofmannsthal appears to have ignored the possibility that the two components might be at odds with each other.⁷² One way out of this impasse would be to retract the profundity claimed for the *opera seria* and to reclaim it as a *divertissement*. Hofmannsthal did not take this option (although it would certainly be possible in performance). Rather, in the 'Ariadne Brief' he asks that we become

⁷⁰ Which makes it all the more peculiar that Hofmannsthal, in a letter to Strauss, makes the point that, 'Jourdain stands for the public'. Letter of 18 December 1911; *Working Friendship*, 107.

⁷¹ These quotations are discussed in Del Mar, *Richard Strauss*, II, 22.

⁷² As stated above, Hofmannsthal did not commence adapting Molière's comedy until *after* he had written the libretto. In Hofmannsthal's letter to Strauss, 26 December 1911, he writes: 'This "little bit of Molière" fills three-fifths of the whole evening, and on it I am risking my skin—since this

utterly absorbed in Ariadne and Bacchus and simply imagine away the inconvenient frame of the bourgeois Jourdain:

If we are ever to stage this, we must use all the powers of the scene painter and director, not in order to disclose a true mystery, but in order to glorify it [nicht zu offenbaren, aber zu verherrlichen]. The small stage must seem limitless, and with Bacchus's entry the doll-like backcloths must disappear, the ceiling of Jourdain's room flies up, a starry night envelops Bacchus and Ariadne, *there can be no sign of the 'play within the play'*, Herr Jourdain, his guests, his lackeys, his house, everything must vanish and be forgotten, and the audience must have as little memory of these things as the deeply dreaming person has of his bed.⁷³

It is indeed ironic that Hofmannsthal seems not to have considered that by presenting two pairs of lovers with parallel trajectories—albeit one serious and 'eternal', the other frivolous and 'ephemeral'—and situating them within a satirical spoken play, context alone might suggest that the puffed up and grandiloquent pair look faintly ridiculous.⁷⁴ They are the ones who belong to the genre—*opera seria*—alien to the prevailing one. Hofmannsthal seems not to have realised that by presenting Zerbinetta and Harlequin as the lowly parody couple to Ariadne and Bacchus the parody might, in fact, turn back on itself (the hypotext might be mistaken for the hypertext) particularly since Zerbinetta and, later, Jourdain have the final word. Then again, perhaps he did realise it, which is why these mere prosaic beings 'must disappear and be forgotten'.

But there is also a case to be made that the unforeseen contradictions of *Bürger-Ariadne* enrich the work by offering dynamism in place of inertia, ambivalence in place of the unequivocal. This becomes a volatile text, a text that has escaped the

dovetailing of the two works which I have devised will prove an amusing conceit only if the overall intention comes out; otherwise it is rubbish'; *Working Friendship*, 112.

⁷³ Hofmannsthal, 'Aus einem Brief', *Gesammelte Werke V*, 300 (emphasis added).

⁷⁴ A recent review of a concert in London's Queen Elizabeth Hall featuring excerpts from *Ariadne* commends the singer who played Ariadne not only for beauty of tone but for engaging upon 'a witty send-up of her character'; George Hall, 'National Opera Studio Showcase 2002', *Opera* 53 (August 2002), 1003.

control of the author to the point where it challenges the author's known objectives. The profundity claimed for *Ariadne* is undone (or, at the very least, critiqued) by *Bürger*; the moral values invested in the work by one dramatist (Hofmannsthal) are irrelevant to the dramatic objectives of the other (Molière); and the dialectic by which the work operates presents no resolution other than an ironic one (or, as argued above, a doubly ironic one). *Bürger-Ariadne* offers competing narratives, competing objectives, and competing outcomes while maintaining the pretence of a single, unified dramatic entity. In fact, further complications arise when *Ariadne* becomes a musical text, for the presence of yet another author gives rise to ever more competing perspectives.

Zerbinetta's Paradenummer

The early days of the collaboration on *Der Rosenkavalier* were marked by spirited enthusiasm on the part of Strauss for both the project as a whole and the quality of Hofmannsthal's writing. Strauss's oft-quoted compliment to his librettist upon reading the opera's opening scene—'it'll set itself to music like oil and melted butter'⁷⁵—points to a genuinely felt optimism. (Nevertheless, Strauss was equally frank with Hofmannsthal when presented with work which he considered to be of inferior quality—he sent back Act II of *Der Rosenkavalier*, for example, with instructions for an extensive rewrite.) As traced above, the early stages of the collaboration on *Ariadne* were rather fraught between composer and librettist. It is clear that Strauss found little to warm to in the project and that he doubted its

⁷⁵ 'Die Szene ist reizend, wird sich komponieren wie Öl und Butterschmalz'; *Briefwechsel*, 56. Letter of 21 April 1909; *Working Friendship*, 28-9.

dramatic strength.⁷⁶ But it is telling that, upon receipt of the *Szenarium*, Strauss's greatest enthusiasm was for the one character Hofmannsthal would have preferred him to have embraced not quite so enthusiastically—Zerbinetta.

Upon reading the *Szenarium*, Strauss immediately envisaged Zerbinetta's part as the 'star role' (Paraderolle) and proposed for her a 'great coloratura aria and *andante*'.⁷⁷ Indeed, his annotations continue, 'rondo, theme with variations, with all coloratura tricks [Koloraturspässen] (if possible with flute *obbligato*) [...] when she speaks of her unfaithful lover (*andante*) and then when she tries to console Ariadne: rondo with variations (two or three). A *pièce de resistance*'.⁷⁸ (What is translated here as 'A *pièce de resistance*' is, in fact, 'Paradenummer'; 'star number' or 'show-stopper' might be equally valid translations.) Strauss had even at this early stage suggested potential singers for the role: '[Selma] Kurz, [Frieda] Hempel, [Luisa] Tetrazzini'.⁷⁹ Hofmannsthal was aghast at the possibility of casting any of the above-named *prima donnas* in the role, on the grounds of both their shortcomings as actresses and their impact upon the limited budget of the Deutsches Theater ('the fee for *one* such star would swallow up half of Reinhardt's gross takings each night'⁸⁰). But he was equally taken aback (indeed, if not more so) by Strauss's intention to

⁷⁶ When Strauss, in a letter to Hofmannsthal (20 May) writes, 'I shall enjoy the thing very much' (*Working Friendship*, 81), he is referring to the prospect of composing incidental music for the Molière adaptation; he did not receive the *Szenarium* until slightly later (Hofmannsthal posted it on 19 May). It should be noted, however, that Strauss is highly complimentary in his letter of 10 June (not found in the English translation of the Strauss-Hofmannsthal correspondence): 'Many thanks for the first scene [not a 'scene' as such but the opening up to Ariadne: 'Du schöner, stiller Gott!'], it is splendid and will set itself to music wonderfully'. But, by and large, this enthusiasm was not followed up in the composer's subsequent letters. Hofmannsthal, in fact, points out the contrast between Strauss's warm reception of the *Rosenkavalier* libretto and his cool response to *Ariadne* in his letter of 23 July; *Working Friendship*, 97.

⁷⁷ Letter to Hofmannsthal, 22 May; *ibid.*, 82. As stated above (see n. 31), Strauss's marking in the *Szenarium* was 'Aria: Variations with Coloratura'.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

make Zerbinetta the focus of (musical) attention: 'That you intend to place Zerbinetta so distinctly in the musical limelight surprised me at first, but finally quite convinced me'.⁸¹ In fact, Hofmannsthal was never entirely convinced by Strauss's 'star role' for Zerbinetta and years after the completion of the work her 'show-stopper' remained a sore point.

With the lowly Zerbinetta being relegated to the second rank of characters in Hofmannsthal's working out of character and plot in the transformation from *Szenarium* to libretto, it became necessary for the librettist to impress upon the composer the opera's shifting conceptual framework (i.e. its 'deeper' meaning). Thus, in the letter from Hofmannsthal to Strauss of 28 May (discussed above) in which he emphasises the 'psychological motives' of the action and pushes the Ariadne-Bacchus relationship to the forefront of the drama, he makes a point of describing Zerbinetta as a mere 'trimming'.⁸² In his somewhat brief reply of 1 June, Strauss, aware that he had earlier offended Hofmannsthal with his lukewarm response to the *Szenarium*, assures his librettist that 'the main thing, of course, is Ariadne and Bacchus'.⁸³ But surely this is an attempt to assuage Hofmannsthal: how can Strauss know that the 'main thing' is Ariadne and Bacchus when he has not yet set eyes on the libretto? As pointed out above, upon completing the libretto in mid-July, Hofmannsthal explicitly indicated to Strauss the 'goddess vs. whore' typology of Ariadne and Zerbinetta. To hammer the point home, in a letter written a short time

⁷⁹ Ibid. As it turned out, none of the women created the role of Zerbinetta in the 1912 *Ariadne* although Selma Kurz was the first to perform Zerbinetta in the 1916 version.

⁸⁰ Letter to Strauss, 25 May; *ibid.*, 83.

⁸¹ 'Dass Sie Zerbinetta so ganz ins stärkste musikalische Licht stellen wollen, war mir zuerst überraschend, dann sehr einleuchtend'; *Briefwechsel*, 121. Letter of 25 May; *Working Friendship*, 83.

⁸² '...about the trimmings [Zutaten], Zerbinetta, and so forth...'; letter of 28 May, *Working Friendship*, 86.

after the undated mid-July letter cited at length above, Hofmannsthal states that the work revolves around ‘the juxtaposition of the woman who loves only once and the woman who gives herself to many’.⁸⁴

Zerbinetta, in other words, is a ‘trimming’ in the sense that she is ‘other’ to the principal Ariadne-Bacchus narrative, but she nevertheless has a crucial role to play as a foil to Ariadne. But aware (and perhaps slightly anxious) that, now that he had submitted the libretto and *Ariadne* was entirely in the composer’s hands, its higher meaning might perhaps be misunderstood, Hofmannsthal goes on to emphasise that:

this [the juxtaposition of the women] is placed so very much in the centre of the action, and is treated as so simple and so clear-cut an antithesis, *which may be heightened still further by an equally clear-cut musical contrast*, that we may hope at least to avoid utter incomprehension by the audience (and it is on them, and not on the critics, that our success depends).⁸⁵

But despite the significant shift in Hofmannsthal’s conception of Zerbinetta from *Szenarium* to libretto—from cheerful *commedia* player to morally dubious underling—Strauss never wavered from his initial musical characterisation; the coloratura ‘Paraderolle’ that he envisaged for her right from the start was maintained throughout all stages of the project. Thus, while delineated by a ‘clear-cut musical contrast’ from Ariadne, Zerbinetta’s coloratura sound world potentially marks her as the *prima donna* and raises the possibility of an anti-Ariadne who displaces Ariadne as the musical focus of the work.

⁸³ Letter of 1 June; *ibid.*, 87-8.

⁸⁴ Letter of 23 July; *ibid.*, 99.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, (emphasis added).

The coloratura sisterhood

In writing for coloratura soprano Strauss was adopting a stylistic mask. As with the Singer's aria in *Der Rosenkavalier*, he was once again presenting himself as a composer of music outside his (hitherto) normal style and idiom. He was presenting himself as someone else. Zerbinetta's flights of coloratura (the 'Koloraturspässen' to which Strauss refers) were unprecedented in the Strauss operatic literature and never again repeated to such a degree.⁸⁶ In the letter to Hofmannsthal in which Strauss stipulates that Zerbinetta is to sing a 'great coloratura aria' (22 May) he advises his librettist to familiarise himself with the form of 'well-known coloratura arias'.⁸⁷ Indeed, he makes a point of citing specific examples from the repertory: 'Perhaps you could get [Selma] Kurz to sing you *Sonnambula*, *Lucia*, the aria from Hérold's *Zweikampf* [*Le Pré aux clercs*], Gilda, or some Mozart rondos'.⁸⁸ This request proved to be more difficult than Strauss could have imagined—for one thing Hofmannsthal made it clear that he wished to keep his distance from 'Mme Kurz'. When it became clear that Hofmannsthal could not locate these numbers in the libretti for himself, Strauss subsequently wrote that 'it was foolish of me to refer you to those idiotic coloratura arias from whose texts you can't learn a thing. I merely wanted to refer you to the musical scheme as it emerges, for instance, from Donna Anna's letter aria [*sic*], or in Gilda's aria (*Rigoletto*)'.⁸⁹ Idiotic or not, Strauss still wished to pursue his initial instincts for a coloratura Zerbinetta for he goes on to write that:

⁸⁶ The Fiakermilli in *Arabella* is a coloratura role but a far smaller one than Zerbinetta's.

⁸⁷ *Working Friendship*, 82.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ Letter of 1 June; *ibid.*, 87. Strauss's conciliatory tone here is no doubt partly conditioned by the need to pacify Hofmannsthal who, in his previous letter (28 May), made it clear that Strauss's negative attitude towards the *Ariadne* project was unhelpful.

The form of coloratura variations came to my mind unwittingly as I read your draft [the *Szenarium*] of Zerbinetta's first aria [...] I pictured Zerbinetta's first speech—when she tries to ingratiate herself with Ariadne—as recitative with slow accompaniment, added to it then the speech of the four men, and finally an allegro with variations as she finds something irresistible in each of the four.⁹⁰

He then goes on to suggest that Hofmannsthal can dispense with following an existing model and that 'a few melodious verses (in the manner of Ochs's account of his wenches)' will be sufficient.⁹¹

By and large, coloratura arias are not sung by subsidiary characters. As Strauss indicates, he envisages this as a 'Paradenummer' for a 'Paraderolle'. Additionally, the examples he cites—*Sonnambula*, *Lucia*, Gilda, Donna Anna (and he might also be thinking of Fiordiligi's celebrated rondò 'Per pietà' when he mentions 'some Mozart rondos')—are all examples of either serious operas or *seria* characters in *buffa* operas.⁹² Not, one would think, obvious models for a character envisaged from the start as a representative of the *commedia dell'arte* and one who, as the *Szenarium* indicates, sings an aria in which she offers counsel based on the experience of her own active sex life. Indeed, one has to ask why Strauss would have thought to pair vocally demanding coloratura writing with the *commedia dell'arte* in the first place, given that the *commedia* was marked by physical, knockabout stage antics rather than technically demanding, sophisticated vocal delivery. The answer might lie in a desire to represent 'Italian theatre'—as mentioned above, Hofmannsthal refers in the

⁹⁰ Ibid. In the libretto, there is no 'speech of the four men' inserted into Zerbinetta's number. In fact, Strauss seems to be conflating here what he sets out as three separate numbers in the *Szenarium*: Aria: Variations with Coloratura, Men's Quartet, and Ensemble: Zerbinetta with Men's Quartet.

⁹¹ Ibid. In his reply, however, Hofmannsthal persists and asks that Strauss send him 'the exact text of a coloratura aria with rondo and variations' (5 June). The postscript to the letter reads, 'Gilda, or whatever aria you like; best of all Mozart or Gluck'. Hofmannsthal reveals his limited knowledge of the repertory by imagining that one would search out the operas of Gluck for a coloratura aria. From Strauss's reply (7 June) it appears that no text was forthcoming.

⁹² Both *La Sonnambula* and *Rigoletto* carry the generic subtitle 'Melodramma', while *Lucia di Lammermoor* is described as a 'Dramma tragico'.

Szenarium to the *commedia* players as ‘the Italian figures’. From as early as the seventeenth century, German music theorists had used the word ‘coloratura’ to refer to Italian vocal practice although it is a word that never appears in Italian treatises of the same period.⁹³ But Strauss’s choice of a coloratura idiom for Zerbinetta effectively obliterates the style opposition—*seria* vs. *commedia*—that so crucially underscores Hofmannsthal’s conception of the work. ‘Coloratura tricks’ are not the domain of earthy, popular theatre but, rather, belong to the elevated world of ‘high art’ opera.⁹⁴ This, of course, is Ariadne’s world. If Hofmannsthal, invoking the eighteenth-century intermezzo, offers a parody of Ariadne and Bacchus in Zerbinetta and Harlequin, Strauss, in granting Zerbinetta the status of coloratura soprano, challenges the primacy of the *seria* narrative as well as the moral and philosophical superiority with which it presents itself.

The rondò as it appears in the Mozart-Da Ponte operas (and, indeed, in late eighteenth-century opera generally) is reserved for moments of considerable tension, places in the action where a protagonist is torn by conflicting emotional states such that an aria in a long, complex form is required in order that these turbulent emotions can be fully worked out. (It *never* marks the arrival of a character on stage, as is the case in *Ariadne*.) As for coloratura writing in the nineteenth-century operas cited—*Sonnambula*, *Lucia*, *Rigoletto*, and *Le Pré aux clercs*—we find that the *Paradenummern* are placed at highly significant moments in the plot. Thus, Gilda

⁹³ *New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, s.v. ‘Coloratura’, by J. B. Steane and Owen Jander.

⁹⁴ Which is not, necessarily, that coloratura display is excluded from popular theatre—Mozart’s Queen of the Night, for instance, is a voice type from *opera seria* who happens to find herself in a *Singspiel*—but to make the point that it is not idiomatic to it. I find it difficult to accept the assertion of Donald G. Daviau and George J. Buelow that Zerbinetta’s number recalls ‘the café music of early twentieth-century Vienna’; *The ‘Ariadne auf Naxos’ of Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Richard Strauss* (Chapel Hill, N. C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 182.

sings 'Caro nome' (it is her only aria) at the point immediately prior to her abduction (indeed, its closing phrases are overlaid by the mutterings of her abductors).

Similarly, the *tour de force* that is Lucia's 'mad scene' marks not only a high point of the opera (the wedding festivities and the heroine's mental collapse) but of nineteenth-century coloratura writing in general. Strauss, by contrast, treats Zerbinetta's number purely as an opportunity for pastiche writing, as the chance to write a show-stopper divorced from the vestiges of plot and character that normally hold such arias in place. Indeed, its inappropriate context is such that—as seen in the previous chapter—it can be said to transcend pastiche and enter the realm of parody for it carries out a critical, one could even say, subversive, function.

As mentioned above, in Strauss's letter to Hofmannsthal of 22 May, he states that he is keen to include in Zerbinetta's *Paradenummer* a 'flute *obbligato*', if possible. Sopranos and flutes go back a long way—Almirena's 'Augelletti' from Handel's *Rinaldo* is a celebrated example from the early eighteenth century. While duets for two sopranos were virtually non-existent in baroque opera, soprano and flute *in concert* allowed the *prima donna* both unchallenged vocal glory and the opportunity to indulge in thrilling repartee with a wordless accomplice of comparable tessitura and agility. Additionally, baroque composers often utilised flutes in soprano arias for illustrative effects—most often as quasi-birdsong (the intended effect in the example from *Rinaldo*). For nineteenth-century opera composers, however, the flute frequently acted as a signifier of the internal state of the singing subject rather than the external world in which she sang and moved. Significantly, *obbligato* flutes hold

a prominent place both in Gilda's 'Caro nome' and Lucia's 'mad scene'.⁹⁵ Indeed, in the latter example, the flute's distorted rendering of themes heard earlier in the opera signifies the heroine's unhinged mental state. (Surely Strauss was thinking of the *Lucia* 'mad scene' above all—with its *obbligato* flute, theme and variations form, and extensive cadenza—when he marked Zerbinetta's aria as a theme and variations coloratura showpiece *con* flute.) But one has to ask what on earth these virginal sopranos (Lucia, Gilda, Amina in *Sonnambula*; to a lesser extent Fiordiligi and Donna Anna), with or without their flutes, have to do with the sexually uninhibited Zerbinetta. Why would Strauss invoke the musical signifiers of operatic heroines pure of heart (although, in Lucia's case, driven to commit first-degree murder) for a character who sings what is essentially a 'catalogue aria'? Zerbinetta is a free spirit *untroubled* by her sexuality, she adopts the style but not the (emotional) substance of her *bel canto* sisters (one might point out that, indeed, there *is* no emotional substance in Zerbinetta's aria to give rise to flights of coloratura in the first place). Her coloratura is not coloured by hysteria but by a confident self-assuredness.⁹⁶

Parodic coloratura

The index of *The Oxford History of Opera* contains a single entry for 'coloratura, parodic'. Upon looking up the citation we find that it is a reference to Zerbinetta: 'the

⁹⁵ As is well known, Donizetti originally included an *obbligato* glass harmonica in Lucia's 'mad scene' but subsequently withdrew the instrument and wrote for flute instead.

⁹⁶ In this respect, she might be compared with Konstanze in *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, a curious omission from Strauss's list to Hofmannsthal (perhaps on account of Mozart's *Singspiel* being a German rather than an Italian work). For a discussion of the implications of Konstanze's coloratura in her aria 'Martern aller Arten', see Wye Jamison Allanbrook, Mary Hunter, and Gretchen A. Wheelock, 'Staging Mozart's Women', in *Siren Songs: Representations of Gender and Sexuality in Opera*, ed. Mary Ann Smart (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 47-66 (esp. 47-62).

parodic coloratura of Zerbinetta in *Ariadne auf Naxos*'.⁹⁷ While some preliminary reasons have already been offered in support of the thesis that Zerbinetta's *Paradenummer* is a parodic rendering of a coloratura aria, closer examination of the number is warranted.

Strauss received the text for Zerbinetta's monologue in a consignment from Hofmannsthal in early July 1911.⁹⁸ In Strauss's letter to Hofmannsthal of 14 July (the letter in which, as discussed above, he offers a lukewarm response to the finished work), he states that 'Zerbinetta's rondo is partly sketched out'.⁹⁹ By far the longest solo number in the opera, Zerbinetta's monologue falls into several discrete sections. The clear-cut divisions that it has as a sung number (divisions made explicit by changes in key, time, tempo, and thematic material) are strongly implicit in Hofmannsthal's setting out of the text: quite apart from changes in the style and content of Zerbinetta's argument (empathy towards Ariadne, the recounting of personal experiences, the delivery of a personal philosophy), some passages are in prose while others are in verse; additionally, verse in one metre and rhyming scheme contrasts with verse in another. As indicated above, the scene as proposed in the *Szenarium* involved Zerbinetta reading to Ariadne a letter from her first lover, but this failed to materialise in the finished libretto.

⁹⁷ William Ashbrook, 'Opera Singers', in *The Oxford History of Opera*, ed. Roger Parker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 299. Ashbrook writes in reference to sopranos Adele Kern (1901-1980) and Erna Berger (1900-1990), accomplished interpreters of Zerbinetta.

⁹⁸ The libretto for *Ariadne auf Naxos* was sent to Strauss in a number of instalments in June-July 1911. As mentioned in n. 76, Strauss acknowledged on 10 June receipt of what he called the 'first scene'. From the correspondence between composer and librettist it is clear that most of the remainder of the libretto was sent to Strauss in the first week of July. Hofmannsthal posted the text of the closing stages—the Ariadne-Bacchus 'love duet'—on 12 July.

⁹⁹ *Working Friendship*, 92.

Although Zerbinetta's number, 'Grossmächtige Prinzessin', carries in the score the title Recitative and Aria (and, later, Rondo)—thereby suggesting that it falls into three differentiated sections—the aria itself comprises two distinct, thematically unrelated parts (Norman Del Mar usefully describes them as two ariettas¹⁰⁰). The recitative, which begins *secco* but soon becomes *accompagnato* (Example 3.1), is a sixty-five bar passage of juxtaposed tempi, textures, and keys—the abrupt contrasts mark Zerbinetta's varied attempts to hold Ariadne's attention (none of which, however, is successful). The first arietta, 'Noch glaub ich dem einen ganz mich gehörend' (in which Zerbinetta reflects upon her cycle of fidelity and infidelity), is generally earnest in tone, its steady 3/4 rhythm and rich D-flat major tonality (the strings at the start are marked 'singend', Example 3.2) give little indication of Zerbinetta as coquette (save for the odd roulade).¹⁰¹ The second arietta, however, marks the point when Zerbinetta presents her catalogue of lovers ('So war es mit Pagliazzo') and here she unleashes her coloratura potential (Example 3.3). The tempo marking given at the outset, 'allegro scherzando', sets a playful tone that reaches its climax in the cadenza at the end of the section.¹⁰² It is at this point that the rondo commences ('Als ein Gott kam jeder gegangen').

While it is not an especially long text (the first five of its thirteen lines have already been cited), the rondo generates a substantial amount of musical material. In its original setting in *Ariadne* I¹⁰³ it amounted to an episode of one hundred and forty-

¹⁰⁰ Del Mar, *Richard Strauss*, II, 36.

¹⁰¹ In its original form, the arietta is eighty-seven bars in length but in the 1916 *Ariadne* it is slightly shorter at seventy bars long.

¹⁰² The second arietta is identical in both versions of *Ariadne* (thirty bars in length).

Recitativ und Arie.

Moderato, stets streng im Zeitmaß. (*Senza alcuna licenza*) M. 84
(mit einer tiefen Verneigung vor Ariadne)

Zerbinetta
Groß - mäch-ti-ge Prin-zes-sin, wer ver-stün-de nicht, daß so er-lauch-ter und er-ha - be-ner Per-so - nen

Klavier
pizz. arco

C. B.

Zerbinetta
Traurigkeit mit einem an-deren Maß ge-messen werden muß, als der ge-mei-nen Sterbli-chen. Jedoch, sind wir nicht Frauen unter
(einen Schritt näher tretend, doch Ari-

Klavier

101
adne achtet in keiner Weise auf sie)

I. Fl.

Zerbinetta
uns, und schlägt denn nicht in je-der Brust ein un-begreiflich, ein un-begreiflich Herz? Von unsrer Schwachheit
(abermals näher, mit einem Knix) (Ariadne, ihrer nicht

Klavier
dim. p

101
(G Saite)

I. Viol.

I. Br.

I. Cello
espr. mf f glissando

102
(zart)

I. Hoboe

Zerbinetta
zu achten, verhüllt ihr Gesicht) spre - chen, sie uns sel-ber ein-ge-stehn, ist es nicht schmerzlich süß? Und zuckt uns nicht der
(lebhaft)

Klavier
dim. pp

102
espr. p sf p pp

I. Viol.

I. Br.

I. Cello

Example 3.1: *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Zerbinetta's *Paradennummer* (opening).

¹⁰³ Where appropriate, and for reasons of clarity and concision, the 1912 version of the opera shall be referred to as *Ariadne I* and the 1916 version as *Ariadne II*.

103

I. Fl.

I. Horn (E)

Zerbinetta

Sinn da-nach? Sie wollen mich nicht hö-ren... schön und stolz und

Klavier

103

I. Br.

I. Cello

re-gungslos, als wären Sie die Statu-e auf Ih-rer eig-nen Gruft. Sie wollen kei-ne an-dere Ver-trau-to

Klavier

I. Cello

C. B.

lehhafter M. J. 100
(piu mosso)

104

I. Fl.

I. B-Clar.

I. Fag.

Zerbinetta

(Ariadne tritt an den Eingang ihrer Höhle zurück)

als diesen Fels und diese Wel-len haben? Prinzessin, hören Sie mich an, nicht Sie al-lein, wir al-le ach, wir al-le, was ihr

Klavier

104

I. Br.

I. Cello

C. B.

Example 3.1 (cont.)

109

I. Hob.

I. A-Clar.

I. Fag.

Zerbinetta

si-cher zu sein, da mischt sich im Her-zen lei-se be-tö-rend schon einer nie ge-

109

2 Viol.

I. Br.

2 Celli

110

I. A-Clar.

I. Fag.

I. Horn (E)

Zerbinetta

ko-steten Frei-heit, schon ei-ner neu-en ver-stoh-len-en Lie-be schwei-fen-des, freches Ge-

Klavier

110

2 Viol.

2 Br.

2 Celli

The musical score is presented in a standard orchestral layout. Measures 109 and 110 are clearly marked at the beginning of their respective systems. The vocal part, Zerbinetta, has lyrics written below the notes. The instrumental parts include woodwinds (Hoboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn), strings (Violins, Viola, Horns, Trumpets, Cellos), and keyboard (Piano). Dynamic markings such as *pp*, *dim.*, *cresc.*, *f*, and *mf* are used throughout the score to indicate volume changes. The key signature is B-flat major, and the time signature is 4/4.

Example 3.2 (cont.)

Allegro scherzando M. 63

1. Hob.

1. A-Clar.

1. Fag.

1. Horn (E)

Zerbinetta

So war es mit Pa - glia - - zzo und Meze - tin! Dann war es Ca - vi - - chio dann Bu-ra -

Klavier

Allegro scherzando M. 63

2 Viol.

2 Br.

2 Celli

118

1. Fl.

1. Hob.

2 A-Clar.

2 Fag.

1. Horn (E)

Zerbinetta

ttin, dann Pasqua - riel - - lo! Ach, und zu - wei - - len, will es mir schei - - nen, waren es zwei! —

Klavier

118

Example 3.3: *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Zerbinetta's *Paradenummer* (second arietta).

119

2 Fl.

1. Hob.

2 A-Clar.

2 Fag.

1. Horn (E)

Zerbinetta

Klavier

Doch nie - mals Lau - - - - - nen, immer ein Mös - - - - - sen, immer ein

120

1. Hob.

2 A-Clar.

2 Fag.

1. Horn (E)

Zerbinetta

Klavier

neu-es be-kommenes Stau - - - - - nen: daß ein Herz - - - - - so

121

2 Viol.

1. Br.

1. Cello

Example 3.3 (cont.)

122

2 Fl.

1. Hob.

2 A-Clar.

2 Fag.

1. Horn (E)

Zerbinetta

gursichsel - ber nicht versteht, gur sich sel - ber

Klavier.

2 Viol.

2 Br.

1. Cello

122

2 Fl.

2 A-Clar.

2 Fag.

1. Horn (E)

Zerbinetta

nicht versteht.

(Cadenza)

Klavier.

2 Viol.

2 Br.

1. Cello

Example 3.3 (cont.)

five bars (nearly half the length of the entire number—the preceding recitative and ariettas total one hundred and eighty-two bars). In *Ariadne* II, however, the rondo was drastically abridged, amounting to a mere eighty-one bars (the preceding sections, by comparison, total one hundred and sixty-five bars).¹⁰⁴ Indeed, it could be argued that it is incorrectly labelled a rondo in its second version since it takes the form A B A¹ coda, whereas in its original, longer form it was A B A¹ C A² cadenza coda. The cadenza of the first version—an especially elaborate piece of vocal writing—was dropped from the later setting (although, as if to compensate for its excision, Strauss provided a newly written—albeit briefer—bravura passage appended to the A¹ section).¹⁰⁵ One further challenging feature of the original that was modified in the revised number concerns its tonality: the rondo's E major of *Ariadne* I was lowered to D major in *Ariadne* II (thus, the highest note was lowered a tone from f#''' to e'''). Despite these modifications, however, Zerbinetta's *Paradenummer* remains in *Ariadne* II a coloratura *tour de force*, even if (as will be discussed subsequently) it is deprived of certain features that mark it unequivocally as a parodic *tour de force*.

One way of addressing the issue of parody in Zerbinetta's number might be to consider its place as a stage song. Indeed, one of the curious features of 'Grossmächtige Prinzessin' is that it is simultaneously a stage song and a number in and of the opera. As discussed above, its poetic content utilises themes and imagery common to the *opera seria* (notions of fidelity, gods, transformations) and there are

¹⁰⁴ This did not, however, involve abridging Hofmannsthal's text, but merely the number of times certain words or lines were repeated. In total, Zerbinetta's number takes about 13-14 minutes to perform in *Ariadne* I and about 11-12 minutes in *Ariadne* II.

moments in its early stages where it makes use of motifs already heard in the opera, thereby calling into question, at least to a degree, its posture as a song from without. Nevertheless, that it is a phenomenal song is made clear from its broader dramatic context. At an earlier point, the *commedia* players resolve to sing to the doleful Ariadne in the hope of lifting her spirits; indeed, it is Zerbinetta herself who first makes the suggestion:

In der Kulisse

Harlekin:	Ich fürchte, grosser Schmerz hat ihren Sinn verwirrt.
Zerbinetta:	Versucht es mit Musik!
Brighella, ¹⁰⁶ Truffaldin:	Ganz sicher, sie ist toll!
[...]	
Zerbinetta:	Ach, so versucht doch ein kleines Lied!

[*From the wings.* I'm afraid that great sorrow has unhinged her mind. Let us try some music! No doubt, she has gone mad! [...] Oh then, try a little song!]

Taking Zerbinetta's advice, Harlequin sings a song from the wings ('Lieben, Hassen, Hoffen, Zagen') but to no avail. Following Ariadne's aria 'Es gibt ein Reich' (where, as mentioned above, she reflects upon what she believes to be her impending death), the four *commedia* men sing and dance for her ('Es gilt, ob Tanzen') but their performance fails to move her. Significantly, it is Zerbinetta who notices that their efforts are ineffectual: 'Doch die Prinzessin / Verschliesst ihre Augen, / Sie mag nicht die Weise, / Sie liebt nicht den Ton' (But the princess shuts her eyes, she does not like the dancing, she does not like the tune). Zerbinetta sends the men off into the wings—'Drum lasset das Tanzen, / Lasset das Singen, / Zieht euch zurück!' (Cease then your dancing, stop your singing, and leave us alone)—and, with only Ariadne and herself on stage, delivers her own song: the Recitative and Aria (and Rondo).

¹⁰⁵ For a bar-by-bar summary of the modifications to Zerbinetta's number in *Ariadne* II, see E. H. Mueller von Asow, *Richard Strauss: Thematisches Verzeichnis*, 3 vols. (Wien: Doblinger, 1955-74), II, 574.

Zerbinetta's number, then, is the third attempt to cheer the abandoned Ariadne with a stage song.

But this too goes awry for, as mentioned above, Ariadne ignores Zerbinetta and withdraws to her cave. The sole person to whom the number is (ostensibly) addressed leaves the stage before Zerbinetta even gets as far as the end of her recitative (Ariadne retreats between rehearsal figures 106 and 107¹⁰⁷). Although Hofmannsthal's directions state that Zerbinetta continues to address the absent Ariadne ('Zerbinetta richtet ihre weiteren Tröstungen an die unsichtbar Gewordene'), Strauss makes a nonsense of this (as indeed he should—it hardly makes sense to have the *Paradenummer* delivered upstage to the grotto, to a mere stage prop). Indeed, we find that it is once Ariadne is *off stage* that Zerbinetta offers her first suggestion of bravura singing—the melisma at the end of the recitative on the (not insignificant) word 'Verwandlungen'.¹⁰⁸ In other words, the stage song takes flight when, ironically, the stage itself is bereft of listeners.

But Zerbinetta does indeed have listeners beyond the make-believe world of the *wüste Insel*, and with her *seria* shadow having literally retired to the shadows she plays the part of *prima donna assoluta*. This is nowhere more apparent than in the final part of her number, the rondo section, when she engages in all manner of repartee with conductor and orchestra. For instance, at one point (*Ariadne* I, 129+3) Zerbinetta notices that the clarinet is doubling her part so she simply stops singing—'generously giving over the performance' to her rival—and, 'following the old custom', cheerfully chimes in at the cadence (Example 3.4). (The *obbligato* flute that

¹⁰⁶ Strauss sets the line for Scaramuccio and Truffaldin, not Brighella and Truffaldin as indicated in the libretto.

Strauss envisaged for the number was not fully realised in practice; the clarinet passage cited here is as close as the number gets to concertante writing for voice and solo woodwind.) Somewhat later (136+3), she again breaks off ('war ich...') because, as she indicates through her body language, it is impossible to continue singing with an ever-louder orchestra drowning her out (Example 3.5). Very soon thereafter (136+5) Zerbinetta makes another gesture to the orchestra: this time she thanks them for coming to a stop—they have reached the six-four fermata immediately prior to her cadenza—and, following the hushed entry of a solo cello, she takes control of proceedings and embarks upon her closing flourish. The genius of the quasi-improvised features of Zerbinetta's rondo is that they go some way towards capturing the improvisatory spirit of the *commedia dell'arte* while also invoking—and parodying—performance traditions of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century opera.

From the above, it is clear that Zerbinetta's phenomenal song is unique in that it steps outside the *two* frames in which it nominally sits—as a song performed before Ariadne and a song performed before the on-stage audience of Jourdain and guests¹⁰⁹—and, in its points of contact with conductor, orchestra, and the audience beyond the proscenium, addresses the very nature of performance and performing traditions (or clichés perhaps) in a manner that points up Zerbinetta's knowingness.¹¹⁰ It is hardly surprising, then, that the single point in *Ariadne auf Naxos* where performances are inevitably broken off is the vigorous applause that greets the

¹⁰⁹ Obviously the second frame does not apply in *Ariadne II*.

¹¹⁰ Del Mar summarises as follows: 'The whole escapade indulges in much self-conscious play with the "business" of entertainment. Zerbinetta steps right out of her role, making it plain that she is neither a character on Ariadne's desert island, nor a member of the *Commedia dell'Arte* in the course of the

136

2 Fl.

2 Hob.

2 A Clar.

2 Fag.

2 Hörner (E)

Zerbinetta

Klavier

2 Viol.

2 Br.

2 Celli

C.B.

(sie macht eine Gebärde, daß es ihr in Folge des immer
- gen hin - ge - go - ben war ich....)

molto accel.

Cadenz. tempo primo, wieder etwas ruhig beginnend
(un poco tranquillo da prima)

(ohne Text)

(Zerbinetta, die während der Feriate erwartungsvoll aufgehört hatte, macht, als sie das Violoncell
allein und *p* beginnen hört, eine dankende Geste und füllt sofort ein.)

molto accel.

tempo primo, wieder etwas ruhig beginnend
(un poco tranquillo da prima)

(mit Dämpfer)

pp (mit Dämpfer)

espr.

p (mit Dämpfer)

gliss.

A. 6300 F.

Example 3.5: *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Zerbinetta's *Paradenummer* (rondo).

conventional drama of her troupe. She is now purely a coloratura soprano performing on a stage in unequal competition with the orchestral resources of the composer'; *Richard Strauss*, II, 39.

conclusion of Zerbinetta's *Paradenummer*.¹¹¹ It is, quite literally, the show-stopper that Strauss intended it to be.

By parodying coloratura conventions and, in such spectacular fashion, marking Zerbinetta as an operatic diva playing the diva, Strauss is entering into the *divertissement* spirit that was originally intended for the work but, at the same time, renegotiating in brutal terms the carefully worked out symmetries of plot and character that Hofmannsthal subsequently prioritised.¹¹² Not content to act as a mere 'trimming' to the principal narrative, Zerbinetta takes up Hofmannsthal's ironically intended text (that she, of all people, should know something of 'transformation'; that she, an empty-headed coquette, should have a 'philosophy of life') and repeats words and phrases, atomising the text to the point where it functions merely as syllables upon which to hang notes, it dissolves into vocalise. Delivery trumps content. In a further example of the volatile nature of this opera, Zerbinetta takes hold of her number and makes it her own. Zerbinetta's parody shows awareness of her subjectivity, an awareness of her performance as a performance; rather than playing along with her dramatic function as the spokeswoman of the 'unenlightened', she plays up the artificiality of the whole enterprise. She triumphs with her voice in a way that, as a figure from the 'lesser' narrative, she ought not to do.

Zerbinetta's assertive performance also does away with the notion of coloratura display as a mark of mental collapse or frustrated sexuality or irrationality. Indeed, even in the recitative (before the coloratura passages get underway) Zerbinetta plays with operatic conventions: notice the excessively absurd treatment of 'Verlassen! In

¹¹¹ This is also the case in performances of *Ariadne II* despite its less challenging bravura writing.

Verzweiflung! ausgesetzt!’ (Forsaken! In despair! Marooned!, Example 3.6); is it any wonder that Ariadne, having just delivered her anguished ‘Es gibt ein Reich’, retires to her cave when her feelings of misery are echoed in such an excessive fashion? (We should bear in mind the lines quoted above in the exchange between Zerbinetta and the *commedia* men in the early stages of the *opera seria*—‘I’m afraid that great sorrow has unhinged her mind [...] No doubt, she has gone mad!’—for it is Ariadne, not Zerbinetta, who has been marked as the mentally disturbed soprano.)

Hofmannsthal may have intended Zerbinetta to act as Ariadne’s parodic double but he most surely did not intend that she mock the grief-stricken heroine and, through the sheer power and presence of her voice, lay claim to the *Paraderolle*.

Forsyth makes the point that it is ‘curious’ that Hofmannsthal ‘failed to notice’ that ‘the opera acquired two female leads, Ariadne and Zerbinetta, and so two centres of gravity—one of the opera’s least satisfactory features’.¹¹³ But if this is indeed an unsatisfactory feature of the work, it is one that is confronted head-on in Zerbinetta’s *Paradenummer*. Zerbinetta’s show-stopper both plays on and plays up this very problem, challenging the notion of there being a single centre of gravity.

The première and its aftermath

Strauss completed the composition of *Ariadne* on 22 July 1912, a little more than one year after receiving the libretto from Hofmannsthal. The première of *Bürger-Ariadne*—on 25 October 1912—did not take place at Reinhardt’s Deutsches Theater

¹¹² All of the performance directions in Zerbinetta’s number were inserted by Strauss, they do not appear in the published libretto.

(Allegro assai)
ziemlich rasch

poco ritard. 105

I. Hob.

Zerbinetta

Hers erstarrt wer ist die Frau, die es nicht durch - ge - lit - - ten hätte? Verlassen! in Verzweiflung! aus -

Klavier

dim. p

I. Viol.

I. Br.

I. Cello

C. B.

(Allegro assai)
ziemlich rasch

poco ritard. 105

I. Hob.

I. B. Clar.

I. Fag.

I. Horn (E)

Zerbinetta

- gesetzt! Ach, solcher wü - sten Inseln sind un - zäh - li - ge auch mitten unter Menschen, ich, ich selber ich habe ihrer meh -

Klavier

I. Viol.

I. Br.

I. Cello

C. B.

106

Example 3.6: *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Zerbinetta's *Paradenummer* (opening)

¹¹³ Forsyth, *Ariadne*, 130.

after all (indeed, it had been apparent for some time that the musical demands of the work—the orchestra of thirty-seven players for one thing—were beyond the means of the Berlin theatre) but, rather, the kleines Haus of the Hoftheater, Stuttgart.¹¹⁴ Max Reinhardt directed, Strauss conducted, actors from Reinhardt's Berlin ensemble made up the cast of *Bürger*, and the cast of the opera included two front rank sopranos, Maria Jeritza as Ariadne and Margarete Siems as Zerbinetta.¹¹⁵ Despite the luxury casting, the work failed to win either critical or popular approval.¹¹⁶ Having enjoyed remarkable success with two of his previous three operas (the success of *Elektra*, while solid, was probably less than remarkable), the mediocre reception afforded *Ariadne* must have come as a blow to Strauss. In his oft-repeated account of the première (written many years after the event), Strauss cites reasons for the work's failure: the divided interests of the audience—theatre-goers on the one hand and opera-goers on the other; scheduling difficulties in Stuttgart during the rehearsal period such that the work was under-rehearsed; last minute cuts to the spoken *Zwischenspiel* which left the audience ill-prepared for the opera; the fact that an interval reception hosted by the King of Württemberg dragged out the night to an interminable degree.¹¹⁷ More succinctly, he adds that 'the proper soil for this cultural

¹¹⁴ In fact, it marked the opening of the new opera house in Stuttgart.

¹¹⁵ Incredibly, Margarete Siems also created the roles of Chrysothemis (Dresden, 1909) and the Marschallin (Dresden, 1911).

¹¹⁶ For an account—albeit very brief—of the reception of *Ariadne* in Stuttgart, see Forsyth, *Ariadne*, 206-7.

¹¹⁷ Richard Strauss, 'Reminiscences of the First Performance of my Operas', in *Recollections and Reflections*, ed. Willi Schuh, trans. L. J. Lawrence (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1953), 161-4. In its original German, the essay is found in Richard Strauss, *Betrachtungen und Erinnerungen*, ed. Willi Schuh (Zürich: Atlantis, 1949). Strauss wrote the essay in 1942. In a letter to Hofmannsthal (15 December 1913), Strauss states that 'the Royal party was to blame' for two fifty-minute intervals; *Working Friendship*, 180.

hybrid was lacking',¹¹⁸ a reason which might account for the subsequent failure of the work to hold the stage.

For his part, Hofmannsthal was not at all pleased with Strauss's treatment of *Zerbinetta*. When *Bürger-Ariadne* was being prepared for its first performance in Munich early the following year, Hofmannsthal contacted the Intendant of the Munich house, his good friend Clemens von Franckenstein, and asked that Bruno Walter—the conductor of the forthcoming performances—do something to correct the 'barbaric distortion' done to *Zerbinetta*.¹¹⁹ It seems highly likely that Hofmannsthal made his overtures without the knowledge of Strauss.¹²⁰ Hofmannsthal sets out his primary complaint as follows:

The principal passage is this: 'hingegen sind wir stumm—stumm—stumm!' This, particularly the repeats of 'stumm', is not, for goodness sake, to be delivered *impudently, cynically, parodically*; rather, *against* this brainless and heartless music, the entire passage is to convey with ingenuité the sincere heart of a frivolous but kind woman, 'with happy recollection', as spelt out so correctly in Reinhardt's production book (the 'stumm' gently fading away). Otherwise, the character becomes an impudent whore rattling everything off the top of her head—even thinking about it is painful to my ears. So, my dear, please rescue me from this.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Strauss, *Recollections*, 163.

¹¹⁹ Specifically, he begs Franckenstein to have Walter judiciously 'tone down, through [a few] nuances, the barbaric distortion of *Zerbinetta*': 'es handle sich bei seinen an Bruno Walter gerichteten Korrekturvorschlägen um ein paar "nuancen, durch welche die barbarische Verzeichnung der *Zerbinetta* durch den Komponisten wenigstens gemildert" werden könnte'; quoted in Willi Schuh, 'Die "Verzeichnete" *Zerbinetta*', *Hofmannsthal-Blätter* 31/32 (1985), 54. Schuh does not provide a date for the letter other than January 1913.

¹²⁰ There is certainly nothing in the Strauss-Hofmannsthal correspondence to suggest that composer and librettist were discussing the matter in early 1913.

¹²¹ 'Die Hauptstelle ist diese: hingegen sind wir stumm—stumm—stumm! Dies, besonders die nachfolgenden "stumm" sind um alles in der Welt *nicht frech, cynisch, parodistisch* zu bringen, sondern *gegen* die hier hirnlose und herzlose Musik ist die ganze Stelle mit ingenuité, aus ehrlichem Herzen einer leichtfertigen, aber liebenswürdigen Frau zu bringen, "in seliger Erinnerung", wie es in R[einhardt's] Regiebuch so richtig heisst (die "stumm"—verhauchend). Andernfalls wird die Figur eine freche Dirne, alles steht auf den Kopf—mir ist es wie Ohrfeigen, das nur zu denken. Also bitte mir das, mein Lieber'; letter of January 1913 quoted in Schuh, "'Verzeichnete" *Zerbinetta*', 54-5. Hofmannsthal recalls *Zerbinetta*'s line incorrectly; in the rondo she repeats 'Hingegen war ich stumm!' At first glance it appears that he might be referring to the closing stages of the opera where *Zerbinetta*, at the conclusion of the *Ariadne-Bacchus* duet, does indeed sing 'hingegen sind wir stumm', but given that she does not repeat the word 'stumm' (at least not in *Ariadne I*) it is impossible that this is the passage in question. The reference to Reinhardt's production book concerns the performance of the opera in Stuttgart.

Hofmannsthal wishes to reclaim his text, to retrieve it from Zerbinetta's powerful, disrespectful grasp.

He seized the opportunity to do so when Strauss had made up his mind to commit to fashioning a second version of *Ariadne*, a version divorced from the Molière frame and with a sung prologue in place of the spoken *Zwischenspiel*. The chronology of *Ariadne* II is one marked by stops, starts, and indecision on both sides: the resolution to separate *Ariadne* from *Bürger* was taken within a matter of weeks of the Stuttgart première (Hofmannsthal, in an uncharacteristically frank admission of failure, was later to describe the coupling of play and opera as a 'misalliance' [letter to Strauss, 12 June 1913]); it would seem that it was Strauss who first proposed the idea of replacing the spoken *Zwischenspiel* with a prologue sung in *secco* recitative (letter from Hofmannsthal to Strauss, 9 December 1912), but when Hofmannsthal submitted the completed *Vorspiel*, Strauss rejected it out of hand (letter to Hofmannsthal, 15 June 1913); Hofmannsthal later agreed that *Ariadne* I should remain unchanged (letter to Strauss, 3 January 1914); but in early 1916 Strauss and Hofmannsthal once more discussed the possibility of setting the *Vorspiel* to music, a task Strauss attended to in May-June of that year.¹²² *Ariadne* II received its première only a few months later.

More than two years after *Ariadne* was unveiled in Stuttgart, Hofmannsthal declared candidly to Strauss that there were aspects of the work's music that ran contrary to his intentions:

For we would run grave risks if we were to be at cross purposes anywhere in this work [*Die Frau ohne Schatten*], as happened for instance, as you know, more than once over

¹²² The following chapter considers in detail aspects of the chronology and composition of the *Vorspiel*.

Ariadne, where what I had meant to be subordinate and even unimportant was often emphasized and drawn out by the music, so that the final product as a whole has about it something of a convex mirror.¹²³

In all probability this is a reference to Zerbinetta and, especially, to her

Paradenummer (the image of the convex mirror is telling—that Strauss has *distorted*

Hofmannsthal's text). Once the decision had been taken to revise *Ariadne*,

Hofmannsthal bluntly informed Strauss that they differed 'profoundly'¹²⁴ in their

conceptions of Zerbinetta, to which Strauss responded that 'after all, two opinions are possible about the character'.¹²⁵ A few months later—when Strauss was engaged in

the composition of the *Vorspiel*—Hofmannsthal again addressed their differences

over Zerbinetta and once more wrote of them being at 'cross purposes'¹²⁶ in their

handling of the character.

Rewriting Zerbinetta

In *Ariadne* I, Zerbinetta returned to the stage well after the conclusion of the

intermezzo and, in another long solo number (but not, by any means, as long as

'Grossmächtige Prinzessin'), addressed Ariadne and informed her of the arrival on the

island of 'ein Mann, ein Gott!' (the intention to write this scene is found as early as

the *Szenarium*). This, Zerbinetta's second 'number', was not retained in *Ariadne* II.¹²⁷

More significantly, however, the *Paradenummer* as it appears in *Ariadne* II is excised

of all of the passages of repartee between Zerbinetta, conductor, and orchestral

¹²³ Letter to Strauss, 6 February 1915; *Working Friendship*, 214.

¹²⁴ Letter to Strauss, 13 April 1916; *ibid.*, 242.

¹²⁵ Letter to Hofmannsthal, 16 April 1916; *ibid.*, 243.

¹²⁶ Letter to Strauss, 11 June 1916; *ibid.*, 251. This letter—which was not actually sent—is a very strong attack on what Hofmannsthal claims are Strauss's shortcomings in understanding and realising the intentions of his librettist.

¹²⁷ Strauss asks Hofmannsthal to approve this cut in his letter of 1 May 1916. Hofmannsthal provides precise details for the cut in his reply of 8 May; *ibid.*, 244-5.

players. The rondo no longer includes the ‘struggle’ between Zerbinetta and the solo clarinet, the ‘surrender’ of her part in the face of the orchestra’s louder presence, and the gesture of ‘thanks’ at the arrival of the six-four chord marking the start of the cadenza; her chance, that is, to retrieve the spotlight from her rivals in the pit (indeed, as mentioned above, the cadenza was done away with entirely). In other words, the moments that unquestionably mark this as a parodic performance—all of the quasi-improvised passages—were deleted. It is still, undeniably, a bravura performance but it does not explicitly involve Zerbinetta stepping out of character and ‘playing the diva’.¹²⁸

Nevertheless, despite Strauss’s revisions, Hofmannsthal continued to press him for further changes to the *Paradenummer*. Indeed, as late as 1918, he goes so far to ask that it be scrapped entirely and replaced by a non-coloratura aria on the grounds that its sheer difficulty places it out of reach of the ‘more attractive singers of the soubrette type’, that it hinders the opera from gaining a foothold in smaller theatres, and that, in any case, the coloratura writing, ‘half ironical as it is meant to be, fails to make any vital contribution to the over-all effect’.¹²⁹ He continues:

If [...] you were to take the words of this aria which builds up a whole feminine type, perhaps the archetype of the feminine, and write new music of the smooth melodiousness of *Le Bourgeois* for its various phrases with their distinct variation in rhythm, the whole aria would, I imagine, all at once gain a firmer hold on people’s understanding and make this understanding a delight.¹³⁰

Indeed, Hofmannsthal may well have a point that the ‘half-ironic’ quality of the coloratura writing contributes little now that the overtly parodic passages have been

¹²⁸ Reinhold Schlötterer, in answering the question—‘Why is it that in Zerbinetta’s extended coloratura aria one senses no irony at all?’—ignores entirely the original version of the aria; ‘Ironic Allusions to Italian Opera in the Musical Comedies of Richard Strauss’, in *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Works*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1992), 78.

expunged (not that he approved of them in the first place), but here is further evidence that he wishes to tame Zerbinetta; to replace her assertiveness with passive, smooth, feminine, melodiousness. Strauss, nevertheless, remained unmoved by Hofmannsthal's pleas and declined to apply 'the surgeon's knife',¹³¹ to the aria.

But far more serious than the amendments to the *Paradenummer* was the damage inflicted upon Zerbinetta in the closing stages of the opera. With the Molière frame no longer in place there was now no ironic counterweight to the high-brow mysticism of the Ariadne-Bacchus encounter. Strauss suggested to Hofmannsthal that perhaps the Composer could return to the stage at the end and receive payment for the opera, a suggestion that, naturally, received a withering reply from the librettist.¹³² Nevertheless, Strauss maintained (at least for the moment) that the close of the opera should include the *commedia* players followed by a few remarks from the Composer.¹³³ 'A curse on all revision!',¹³⁴ came Hofmannsthal's reply, as it seemed very nearly impossible to provide a dramatically convincing reason for the Composer—a figure in the *Vorspiel* but not the *Oper*—to make a reappearance at the conclusion of the work. Strauss must have conceded Hofmannsthal's point, for in their subsequent written exchanges all discussion of the Composer's return is off the agenda.

It would seem that they toyed with the idea of simply concluding the work with the triumphant strains of Ariadne and Bacchus, for the *opera seria* to be unchallenged by any contrary point of view. Hofmannsthal, however, insisted that Zerbinetta (but

¹²⁹ Letter of 8 July 1918; *Working Friendship*, 303.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 303-4.

¹³¹ Letter of 12 July 1918; *ibid.*, 307.

¹³² Letter of 13 April 1916; *ibid.*, 241-2.

¹³³ Letter to Hofmannsthal, 1 May 1916; *ibid.*, 244.

not the *commedia* men) make a very brief return to the stage, if only ‘for a second’

(*einen Moment*):

Zerbinetta appears in front, right, in the wings, but visible, waves her fan mockingly over her shoulder towards the back [i.e. at Ariadne and Bacchus] and proceeds to sing her couplet:

Kommt der neue Gott gegangen, hingegeben sind wir stumm, Und er küsst uns
Stirn und Wangen, etc.... gefangen... Hingegeben sind wir stumm!

If need be let her only begin to sing, sing the first line—then let the orchestra drown her, so that the rest is to be found only in the libretto; I am satisfied with her symbolic mocking presence and exit.¹³⁵

As in *Ariadne* I, her presence is to provide an ironic voice; to offer a fragment of her ‘anti-moral’ as moral and thereby highlight the distance that separates what she perceives of Ariadne’s experience and the ‘truth’ of that experience. This is consistent with what Hofmannsthal set out in the ‘*Ariadne* Brief’. Indeed, his reasons for insisting upon the return of Zerbinetta at the conclusion of *Ariadne* II are forced to a significant degree by his public statements in defence of the symbolic meaning of the work that greeted its unveiling in 1912 (he is fully aware, in other words, that he has painted himself into a corner). Thus, the revised opera should not, rightly, end without the presence of a counter-voice (what he terms ‘die irdische Gegenstimme’):

For we might possibly get away with it on this occasion, but I doubt it, for the critics have the first version of the libretto at hand. They have had the symbolic meaning of the whole work dinned into them so often in the past that they will not be such fools as to miss the opportunity of attacking us with glee for sacrificing so capriciously the point of the whole piece on which the spectacle was avowedly based from the outset (the contrast between the heroic ideal and its denial, or whatever you may wish to call it), for sacrificing it just for the sake of the ‘curtain’.¹³⁶

‘Your wish is my command’, replied Strauss, ‘at Number 236 Zerbinetta shall softly step from the wings and sing mockingly: “Kommt der neue Gott gegangen, hingegeben sind wir stumm—stumm—” ; the bassoon hints at the rondo theme from

¹³⁴ Letter of 8 May 1916; *ibid.*, 245.

¹³⁵ Letter to Strauss, 15 May 1916; *ibid.*, 246-7.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 246.

her aria, and at Number 237 she vanishes'.¹³⁷ But when he came to set this passage to music, Strauss departed from Hofmannsthal's 'wish' in several crucial (and damaging) respects.

Parodia abbandonata

All reference to Zerbinetta's comments being delivered mockingly failed to materialise in the score (Example 3.7). Whereas the libretto states, 'Zerbinetta appears from the wings, with her fan points back over her shoulder to Bacchus and Ariadne, and repeats her rondo with a note of mocking triumph';¹³⁸ the score reads, 'Zerbinetta appears from the wings and with her fan points over her shoulder to Bacchus and Ariadne'.¹³⁹ Strauss has wilfully removed the explicit reference to mockery. Moreover, her part is marked 'gentle and discreet' (*leise und diskret*), and the entire passage is marked 'peaceful' (*ruhig*), hardly indications of either mockery or triumph. True, her opening three notes ('Kommt der neu-') echo the rhythm of the head motif of her rondo—a motif taken up and extended in the bassoon part, where it is marked 'softly emphasised' (*zart hervortretend*)—but the prevailing sonority here is the glittering celesta: the spirited Zerbinetta, robbed of her voice, is cast before us as a feeble near relation of the Sugar Plum Fairy. Indeed, Strauss, in a most perfunctory way, has merely superimposed Zerbinetta's line onto 'Ariadne' music: there is no break at 326 from the music of 325 (also marked '*ruhig*'), Ariadne's comment, 'Lass meine Schmerzen nicht verloren sein!' (Let not my suffering be in vain!).

¹³⁷ Letter of 18 May 1916; *ibid.*, 247.

¹³⁸ 'Zerbinetta tritt aus der Kulisse, weist mit dem Fächer, über die Schulter auf Bacchus und Ariadne zurück und wiederholt mit spöttischem Triumph ihr Rondo'; cf. n. 55, the equivalent moment in *Ariadne I*.

¹³⁹ 'Zerbinetta tritt aus der Kulisse, weist mit dem Fächer über die Schulter auf Bacchus und Ariadne'.

326

a 2 *ruhig*

2 Fl.

2 Hob.

2 B-Clar.

I. Fag.

(zart hervortretend)

2 Hörner (F)

Trompete (B)

Glockenspiel

Celesta

Harmonium

Zerbinetta

Ariadne

nicht ver - lo - ren sein!

(leise und diskret)
Kommt der neu - e Gott ge - gan - gen

2 Harfen
(unisono)

Klavier

dim. *pp* (nicht hervortretend)

326

ruhig

I. Pult

II. Pult

III. Pult

2 Celli

I. Pult

II. Pult

4 C.B.

dim. *pp*

Example 3.7: *Ariadne auf Naxos* (1916).

2 Fl.

2 Hob.

2 B-Clar.

I. Fag.

2 Hörner (F)

Trompete (B)

Glockenspiel

Celesta

Harmonium

Zerbinetta

2 Harfen (unisono)

Klavier

Solo v. I. Pult

3 Celli

II. Pult

2 C.B.

hin - ge - ge - ben sind wir stumm — stumm —

(verschwindet wieder)

flageol.

flageol.

etwas weniger breit C

327

pespr.

pizz. (voll)

p

pizz. (voll)

p

Example 3.7 (cont.)

328
4/4

2 Fl. *ppp cresc. - - - p*

2 B-Clar. *ppp*

2 Fag. *p espr. mf*

2 Hörner(F) (mit Dämpfer) *p* (Dämpfer weg)

Trompete(B) (Dämpfer weg)

Glockenspiel

Celosta

Harmonium

Ariadne

Bacchus

2 Harfen (unisono) (flageol.) (gewöhnlich)

328
4/4

I. Viol. *pp espr. cresc. - - - mf*

I. Pult

4 Br. *p*

II. Pult

I. Pult *espr. p*

4 Celli *espr. p*

II. Pult *arco I p*

2 C.B.

Laß mei-ne

Dei-ner hab-ich um

Example 3.7 (cont.)

Furthermore, the orchestral accompaniment at 326 appeared, in any case, in *Ariadne I* (minus the newly written bassoon part) where it functioned as a brief orchestral interlude. Zerbinetta, in other words, has been *accommodated* into the ending of *Ariadne II* but with minimal effort, minimal regard for her musical material (and character), and minimal interruption to the business of Ariadne and Bacchus. Theseus may well have abandoned Ariadne on the island of Naxos, but it is *parodia abbandonata* that we encounter in Strauss's rendering of Zerbinetta at the conclusion of *Ariadne II*.

The impression that Zerbinetta's reappearance is an inconvenient interruption that Ariadne and Bacchus have to tolerate is compounded by the fact that once she leaves the stage (at 327) we return to the Ariadne-Bacchus duet (at 328). Her line, in other words, receives a sung response—the reprise of material delivered by the heroic couple (which builds to a colossal fortissimo cadence)—and is not allowed to stand alone in its own ironic space. Despite the earlier resolve of composer and librettist *not* to end the opera with the Ariadne-Bacchus duet, this is precisely the course of action that was finally taken.

When *Ariadne II* was being prepared for its première (towards the end of 1916), Hofmannsthal felt compelled to write to Strauss and make known his displeasure concerning the obliteration of the *commedia* element at the close of the work:

My own feeling grows from rehearsal to rehearsal, and is wholly confirmed by the judgement of people of taste, that scant justice is being done, either by the music or on the stage to the gay figures at the end—they are being dropped—so that one has, unfortunately, a sense of being left in mid-air. The music cannot be changed, but the production on the stage can, and you must settle it by a word with W(ymetal) [the opera's director], as your (and my) express wish, that *Zerbinetta* (coming up the staircase) *must be accompanied by her companions* and they must all stand there for a

moment, receiving the spot light. Please oblige me over this; it looks unimportant, but it is not.¹⁴⁰

Of course, it was Hofmannsthal himself who stipulated in his letter to Strauss of 15 May that Zerbinetta but *not* the other *commedia* players appear at the conclusion of the work but, evidently, having seen the token nature of her appearance—as a brief moment *within* the closing strains of the Ariadne-Bacchus duet—he was struck by the inadequate attention given the human dimension and the decidedly non-ironic rendering of her supposedly mocking remark.¹⁴¹

Ariadne II received its première at the Vienna Hoftheater on 4 October 1916, nearly four years after the première of the original version. Maria Jeritza, who created Ariadne in 1912, again took the title role, Zerbinetta was played by Selma Kurz (one of the coloratura sopranos singled out by Strauss as a potential Zerbinetta in the early stages of work on the opera¹⁴²), and Lotte Lehmann created the role of the Composer. It was conducted by Franz Schalk. In a diary entry from 1924 (11 May), Romain Rolland, who at that time was on a visit to Vienna, records his attendance at a performance of the revised work—he describes it as a gathering in honour of Strauss, who presumably conducted:

In the evening, *Ariadne auf Naxos*. The comic parts are good and well acted; the polka sung by the comic singers does not fall flat.—But the general impression is a disappointment. I had heard tell about this work (from Zweig, from Bahr, from Annette Kolb, from all the Viennese élite), as if it was Strauss's masterpiece! It seems to me hybrid and cold. No over-all conception as regards either the general idea, the drama, the musical style or the production. Serious, or ironical? The two authors have thought

¹⁴⁰ Undated letter to Strauss, October 1916; *Working Friendship*, 263-4.

¹⁴¹ A 1997 review of a new recording of *Ariadne* I (Virgin Classics, 545 111-2) draws attention to its ironic ending and compares it with the inflated conclusion of *Ariadne* II: 'The last word in this version goes to the *commedia dell'arte* characters, who creep back on stage to reprise Zerbinetta's sparkling aria, and then Molière's host, Monsieur Jourdain, who wakes up [*sic*] to find that the rest of the guests have slipped away—a delightfully ironic ending, so much better than the overblown conclusion we usually hear'; Richard T. Fairman, 'Ariadne—in a former life', *Gramophone* 75 (September 1997), 116.

¹⁴² See n. 79.

so much about this that in the end they don't know themselves. *Ariadne*, twice re-written: it should be a third time. All those pastiches: that would be nothing; but Hofmannsthal, a slave to his virtuosity, ends up taking them seriously. And Strauss can't. Instead of ending, as they should have done, with an ironic septet of the five comic and two tragic characters, the comic characters are eliminated and we are offered nothing but a pompous and frigid tragedy involving two bombastic persons. Lack of taste. Lack of life.—I feel that both Strauss's art and German music in general are stagnating.¹⁴³

Hofmannsthal, as we have seen, did indeed take his pastiches seriously (in his published account of the stage decoration for the new version of *Ariadne*, he stipulates that the opera's set and costumes are 'not to be treated parodistically but seriously in the heroic opera style of a former age'¹⁴⁴) but, as pointed out above, it was Strauss who took matters in hand with the conclusion of *Ariadne* II and, in a somewhat liberal interpretation of Hofmannsthal's instructions, pushed the *commedia* presence as far as possible into the background. Implicit in Rolland's critique is that while Strauss cannot take Hofmannsthal's pastiches seriously, he at least *pretends* to—hence the delivery of cold, empty, bombast.

Adorno, writing in reference to Strauss's works generally, makes the point that 'the endings slip away from him'.¹⁴⁵ But 'slipping away' implies that Strauss has no control over them, whereas the conclusion of *Ariadne* II is both contrived and calculated. Perhaps Strauss—a composer hitherto unused to dealing with failure—was stung by the failure of *Ariadne* I to the point where he was willing, in the revised

¹⁴³ Romain Rolland, 'From the Diary of Romain Rolland', in *Richard Strauss and Romain Rolland: Correspondence. Together with Fragments from the Diary of Romain Rolland and other essays and an Introduction by Gustave Samazeuilh*, ed. Rollo Myers (London: Calder and Boyars, 1968), 163. Rolland's misgivings about *Ariadne* II were repeated in a letter he wrote to Strauss a little over a month later (10 June 1924), 100. The diary entry concludes with a remark about the performance of Zerbinetta's aria: 'The Zerbinetta, an excellent artist who takes this break-neck part with admirable virtuosity, is booed for a single wrong note in the last *aria*'.

¹⁴⁴ 'Die Oper *Ariadne* ist, was Dekoration (und Kostüme) betrifft, nicht etwa parodistisch zu halten, sondern ernsthaft im heroischen Opernstil der älteren Zeit (Louis XIV oder Louis XV)'; Hofmannsthal, 'Angaben für die Gestaltung des Dekorativen in *Ariadne* (neue Bearbeitung)', *Gesammelte Werke* V, 294. Compare these directions with Hofmannsthal's early note, 'alles künstlich' (see n. 18).

opera, to forego the subtle non-resolution of its *seria* and *commedia* parts (its unresolved dialectic) and force a triumphant, heroic conclusion. It is surely no accident that the key of the closing love duet is D-flat major (from 321 in both *Ariadne* I and *Ariadne* II); as we know from the previous chapter, this is Strauss's 'lyrical' key, the key of the Singer's aria in *Der Rosenkavalier* and the Act III trio. But in *Ariadne* I, Zerbinetta's closing commentary brings a shift to D major (three bars before 335), whereas in *Ariadne* II, D flat is maintained throughout—Zerbinetta is written into the key of Ariadne's and Bacchus's inflated, lyrical effusions—and the work pushes through to its fortissimo conclusion (in the process, the reduced orchestra is made to sound like a band twice its size¹⁴⁶).

In a 1918 letter from Hofmannsthal to Strauss, written in the wake of attending a performance of the revised *Ariadne*, he makes the following remarks:

Of all our joint works this is the one I never cease to love best, every time I hear it. Here alone you have gone wholly with me and—what is more mysterious—wholly even with yourself. Here for once you freed yourself entirely from all thought of effect; even what is most tender and most personal did not appear too simple, too humble for you here.¹⁴⁷

These are comments either of outstanding arrogance, breathtaking naïvety, or delusional disregard for the work as it stands (as quoted above, barely two months later Hofmannsthal asks Strauss to rewrite Zerbinetta's aria from scratch). But the 'third revision' called for by Rolland is not an impossibility. In the era of

¹⁴⁵ Theodor W. Adorno, 'Richard Strauss, Born June 11, 1864', tr. Samuel and Shierry Weber, *Perspectives of New Music* 1 (1965) and *Perspectives* 2 (1966), II, 115.

¹⁴⁶ Of the *Ariadne* orchestra, Adorno has written: 'If the traditional ideal of composition sought to produce a maximum of forms out of a minimum of "givens", it thereby sanctioned the pretense of making the few seem like the many. This concealment, a dishonesty of honest composition, was visibly underlined by Strauss. The few out of which he makes many step forward with aplomb, as though they were already much. Presentation is thus put in a disproportionate relation to its own material; it must exaggerate the latter as well as itself. The principle flourishes in the score of *Ariadne*, where a chamber orchestra is made to sound like its large and opulent predecessors'; *ibid.*, I, 18.

¹⁴⁷ Letter of 16 May; *Working Friendship*, 299.

Regietheater it is entirely feasible not to ‘go along wholly’ with Hofmannsthal nor to ‘go along wholly’ with Strauss, but to step back from both music and text and to point up their confused (and confusing) imperatives by refusing to resolve them: to highlight the work’s disjunctions; to question authorial authority (especially in a jointly-written work); to address the myth of the Strauss-Hofmannsthal ‘working friendship’. Something like this approach seems to have informed Jossi Wieler’s and Sergio Morabito’s production of *Ariadne* for the 2001 Salzburg Festival. At the conclusion of their production, Ariadne is alone on stage nursing the whisky highball that has been her comfort for the duration of the opera and Bacchus—delivering his valiant lines with tremendous gusto—slips out the backdoor with Zerbinetta (yes, the new god has most certainly arrived). Possibly not a model reading of the work, but one that at least draws attention to the dislocation of its conclusion; one that locates an irony in the heroic music and the un-heroic deeds.

CHAPTER IV

HOLY ART AND ITS DECEPTIONS

‘Wer sagt, dass mein Herz dabei im Spiele ist?’¹

As we near the halfway stage of the tone poem *Don Quixote* we temporarily take leave of the onomatopoeic play that has been such a strong feature of the work up to this point—involving all manner of special effects from Strauss’s bag of tricks including (notoriously) wind and brass flutter tonguing mimicking the bleating of sheep—and enter the realm of what we might term ‘the Straussian sublime’. We are in variation three and the tonality takes an unexpected shift into the key of F-sharp major (from F major), the tempo is pulled back (*viel langsamer*), and a gorgeously lyrical theme (a variation of a theme heard in the introduction) pours forth from the cellos, violas, horns, and cor anglais (Example 4.1). It is marked ‘tender’ (*zart*), ‘expressive’ (*ausdrucksvoll*) and, in the case of the violas (and later violins), ‘very expressive’ (*sehr ausdrucksvoll*). A characteristically Straussian six-four chord introduces the passage, forming a shimmering pianissimo background against which the theme is enunciated. The theme is rendered ever more beautiful as the passage unfolds. Enriched with occasional chromatic inflections, it unwinds seamlessly through a range of nearly three octaves with the climax note of one phrase topped by the climax note of the next until, finally, when it no longer seems possible to maintain its upward sweep, it dissolves into a statement of the so-called ‘Dulcinea’ theme (or

¹ Zerbinetta, *Vorspiel* to *Ariadne auf Naxos*.

theme of 'ideal love', the upbeat to 38), which then forms the principal thematic material for much of the remainder of the episode. Just prior to the close of the variation, however, another reworking of the lyrical theme appears (at 41, again 'expressive') played by a solo cello before being passed to a solo violin (Example 4.2). The passage comes to a rest on a hushed F-sharp-major chord (41+9). The sublime is quickly undone, however, when the spiky, angry violins ('wütend', at 42) respond to an inappropriate interjection from the bass clarinet (in the standard programmatic readings of the work, an improper interruption from Don Quixote's squire, Sancho Panza) and we scurry into the key of D minor and are launched into the fourth variation, returning once more to tone painting of a most literal kind, tone painting that the foregoing episode refused to entertain.

The F-sharp passage is a moment of interruption. It is a point of disjunction and, significantly, an especially beautiful point of disjunction. It also happens to be the greater part of the only one of *Don Quixote's* ten variations for which there is no specific link with a corresponding episode in Cervantes's novel. Which is not to say, however, that the passage is exterior to the tone poem's programme, for the third variation correlates in a general, if not precise, sense to the novel that it takes as its subject. It is one of the few passages in *Don Quixote* where we actually hear the voice of the protagonist rather than trace events which befall him.

In the listening guide prepared by Arthur Hahn on the occasion of the première of *Don Quixote* (1898)—a guide published with the full consent of the composer—variation three is explained as a dialogue between Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. Hahn prefaces his discussion by quoting remarks made by Strauss concerning the programme at this point: 'Conversation, questions, Sancho's demands and proverbs;

40 41 (immer ruhiger werden)

2 gr. Fl. *(ausdrucksroll)* *p*

2 Oboen

engl. Horn *p*

Basscl. (B) *p*

3 Fag. *pp* *pp*

Contrafag. *pp*

6 Hörner (E) *pp* *pp*

Tenortuba (B) *p*

Basstuba. *pp*

Pauken. *pp*

Harfe. *pp* *p* *pp*

40 41 (immer ruhiger werden)

Bratschen *p* *(ausdrucksroll)*

Solo Violonc. *pizz.* *pp*

(die übrigen.) *pp*

Contrab. *pp*

Example 4.2: *Don Quixote*.

42 **lebhafter**

kl. Fl.

2 gr. Fl.

2 Oboen

engl. Horn

2 Clar. (B)

Basscl. (B)

3 Fag.

Contrafag.

6 Hörner (E)

I. Tromp. (D)

II. III.

I. 3 Posannen

II. III.

Tenortuba (B)

Basstuba

Pauken

Glöckchen

Becken

Harfe

42 **lebhafter**

I. Viol. *p* (nicht geteilt)

II. Viol. *p* (nicht geteilt)

Bratschen *p* (nicht geteilt)

Solo Violanc. *p*

(die übrigen) *arco*

Contrab. *p*

(wütend)

(wütend)

1. 2.

3. 4. 5. Pult.

arco

Example 4.2 (cont.)

lectures, pacifications, and promises by Don Quixote'.² But Hahn goes some way towards fleshing out the bare bones of this outline and provides the following account of the F-sharp major episode:

And now in magnificent words Don Quixote explains to Sancho what lies ahead. He will arrive at the court of a monarch and will be admitted with great honour as the 'Flower of Knighthood' (ideal form of the knight's motif [i.e. *sehr ausdrucksvoll* theme]). Then the king will lead him to his princess daughter who, naturally, will be inflamed with ardent love for Quixote ('Dulcinea' theme [labelled as such by Hahn in his discussion of the first variation] together with the *sehr ausdrucksvoll* theme). The squire shall also be rewarded and will be offered the hand of the princess's lady-in-waiting. But as Sancho starts again with more questions, Don Quixote expresses displeasure at having his peaceful vision interrupted.³

Before pointing an accusatory finger at Hahn for his apparent poetic licence, it is well to take into account annotations made by Strauss in another score (described by Walter Werbeck as the 'Krauss score') in which the composer summarises the F-sharp episode thus: 'He [Quixote] points out to Sancho the paradise that is in store for him at Dulcinea's side'.⁴

But Don Quixote, the would-be knight, is mentally unhinged. His 'magnificent words', the 'paradise' of which he speaks, are nothing but the ravings of a madman. His vision is a purely fantastic one (not for nothing is Strauss's tone poem subtitled 'Fantastische Variationen über ein Thema ritterlichen Characters'). His beloved 'Dulcinea' does not exist outside his own overheated imagination, an imagination stoked by an unhealthy attachment to a particular literary genre—knightly romances—to the point where he can no longer differentiate between events which

² Arthur Hahn, 'Don Quixote', in *Meisterführer Nr. 6, Richard Strauss, Symphonien und Tondichtungen*, ed. Herwarth Walden (Berlin: Schlesinger'sche Buch- und Musikhandlung, n.d.), 138. While Hahn makes it clear that these are the words of Strauss, he provides no citation details. Walter Werbeck cites the 'Garmischer Autograph' as the source of the quote and points out that these same remarks are found in the four-hand arrangement of the tone poem; *Die Tondichtungen von Richard Strauss* (Tutzing: Schneider, 1996), 543 (see also 231-2).

³ Hahn, 'Don Quixote', 140-1.

take place in the pages of literature and events in the world he inhabits. As described by Cervantes:

Having quite lost his wits, he fell into one of the strangest conceits that ever entered the head of any madman; which was, that he thought it expedient and necessary, as well as for the advancement of his own reputation, as for the public good, that he should commence knight-errant, and wander through the world, with his horse and arms, in quest of adventures, and to put in practice whatever he had read to have been practised by knights-errant; redressing all kind of grievances, and exposing himself to danger on all occasions; that by accomplishing such enterprises he might acquire eternal fame and renown.⁵

That Don Quixote is an utterly foolish character is a fact made plain in Strauss's *Tondichtung* by the absurd misunderstandings played out in the variations that both precede and follow variation three (in the former he mistakes two flocks of sheep for opposing armies and, in the latter, a procession of disciplinants with their hooded statue of the Virgin for a band of abductors making off with a captive maiden). We, too, are taken for fools should we be seduced by the vision that he presents in this most beautiful of episodes. The voice of Sancho Panza, the irritating interjection that so rudely terminates the F-sharp sublime, is the voice of *reason*, yet it has none of the appeal, none of the beauty, of the madman's oration.

Having suggested above that Strauss momentarily puts aside his bag of tricks when embarking upon the sublime of the third variation, I would now like to suggest that the sublime itself is another of the composer's tricks. Here we find music of outrageous beauty called upon to *act* as outrageously beautiful music. It speaks with a double voice: it presents itself as truth but, in truth, it is nothing but a sham. Of the Don Quixote of literature, Milan Kundera has written that 'the fundamental fact of the

⁴ Werbeck, *Tondichtungen*, 543 (see also 232). The 'Krauss score' is so called on account of it once having belonged to the conductor Clemens Krauss (now with the Krauss papers in the Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Vienna).

⁵ Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quixote de la Mancha*, trans. Charles Jarvis, intro. Milan Kundera (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 27-8.

protagonist's whole existence is his will to be what he is not; [this] has radical aesthetic consequences for this novel; nothing in it is sure; everything in it is mystification or illusion; everything in it has an uncertain, shifting significance'.⁶ In this chapter, I propose to examine the 'uncertain, shifting significance' of specific passages in two of Strauss's works—the *Vorspiel* to *Ariadne* II and *Intermezzo*—with a view to considering how these passages address and complicate issues of sincerity and insincerity, the authentic and the inauthentic, the true and the bogus. As with the F-sharp episode from *Don Quixote*, the passages in question are not only moments of great musical beauty, but also moments which are heard as points of interruption—as breaks in the prevailing topos or texture or form—and, by virtue of their disjunctive nature, invite critical examination. The issue of beautiful music and the work of deception was considered in Chapter II in the discussion of *Così fan tutte* and *Der Rosenkavalier*, but it is complicated still further in the works under discussion in this chapter by the fact that these deceptions are bound up with works which themselves address music and its production, works which go so far as to present us with 'composers' as protagonists. How are we to read these passages of 'beautiful music' and how are we to read these 'composers'?

Lyrical interruptions

In his *Vorwort* to *Intermezzo*, Strauss states that, 'it was in the first act [*sic*] of *Ariadne*, with its interplay of pure prose, *secco* recitative and emotionally charged recitative, that I successfully essayed the vocal style that has now been taken to its

⁶ Ibid., v.

logical conclusion in *Intermezzo*'.⁷ What is missing from Strauss's description of the multiplicity of vocal idioms in the *Ariadne Vorspiel*, however, is mention of the rare moments when he altogether abandons recitative of one kind or another and asks that his singers pour forth in strains of utmost lyricism. One such moment occurs in the early stages of the *Vorspiel* when the Composer is shown in the act of composing; working out an extended melody from initial idea ('Du allmächtiger Gott!', rehearsal figure 21) to completed strophe (37+2). The arietta in question, 'Du, Venus' Sohn' is, in fact, the sole number in *Ariadne* II salvaged from *Bürger-Ariadne*, where it was performed before Jourdain (not by the Composer but by 'a singer') as an example of a work by the Young Composer whose opera is to be performed later in the evening (this was the number that, as pointed out in the previous chapter, occasioned Jourdain to call for his dressing gown in order that he hear the music to its best advantage). More frequently, lyrical passages in the *Vorspiel* occur at moments when aspects of the Ariadne story are briefly summarised—the various bits of plot summary are accompanied by quotations from the relevant passages in the opera to come. For instance, when the Composer explains that Ariadne mistakes Bacchus for the god of death (at rehearsal figure 79), both the vocal line and the orchestral accompaniment call up thematic material taken from the moment in the opera when Ariadne believes she has crossed over to the other realm. But these lyrical fragments are largely unremarkable in that they owe their existence to the fact that they are drawn from the opera that follows and are heard less as interruptions to the *Vorspiel*'s plot development than as foretastes of the main event.

⁷ Richard Strauss, *Vorwort* to *Intermezzo*, trans. Stewart Spencer (Wien: Dr. Richard Strauss Verlag, 1996), no pagination.

Far more significant, however, are the few moments of lyrical interruption that function as character exposition, that owe their existence to events as they unfold in the *Vorspiel* rather than as mere citations from the *opera seria*. There are two such episodes, both of which are longer than the brief lyrical passages cited above and both of which occur in the closing stages of the *Vorspiel*: the first is the encounter between Zerbinetta and the Composer ('Ein Augenblick ist wenig', 90+9), the second the Composer's moment of new-found clarity, beginning at 'Sein wir wieder gut' (108+2) and leading to what is arguably the *Vorspiel*'s most celebrated episode, 'Musik ist eine heilige Kunst'.

It is commonly thought that the *Vorspiel* to *Ariadne II* was written from scratch in the attempt to rework *Ariadne I* as a viable opera in its own right, one that was independent of the Molière frame. While it is indeed true that the impetus for *Ariadne II* was to create a more conventionally 'operatic' work, one that did not demand both a company of actors and singers, much of the material in the *Vorspiel* was lifted verbatim (or very nearly so) from the spoken *Zwischenspiel* of *Bürger-Ariadne*. Moreover, this material carried out the same dramatic function in the *Zwischenspiel* as in the later work: to present us with the various performers, both *commedia* and *seria*, 'out of costume', their foibles and vanities in full view; to point up rivalries between the two groups, rivalries grounded in issues of status and class; to make the shock announcement that the *Trauerspiel* and the *Tanzmaskerade* are to be performed 'gleichzeitig'; and to explicate the 'meaning' of *Ariadne auf Naxos* in order that the opera's symbolism be fully grasped (this, of course, was a point insisted

upon by Strauss).⁸ Some of these features are developed considerably in the *Vorspiel*—the discussion concerning the meaning of *Ariadne*, for instance, is used as a means of enlarging and intensifying the characters of both the Composer and Zerbinetta—but the later work nevertheless owes its broad outline and content to the former and for this reason the spoken *Zwischenspiel* warrants closer examination.⁹

Zwischenspiel to Vorspiel

The chronology of the *Zwischenspiel* can be pieced together from close study of the Strauss-Hofmannsthal correspondence. Even before he had received a word of the libretto, Strauss asked his librettist exactly how the transition from *Bürger als Edelmann* to *Ariadne* was to be effected.¹⁰ Hofmannsthal replied that,

The transition to the actual opera takes place on the open stage; I shall lead up to it by a short scene in prose in which the Dancing Master and Composer—who are responsible for arranging this opera performance in Jourdain's house—talk about the public, critics, etc. During this conversation the stage is being set for the opera in the big hall; Harlekin and Ariadne are making up, others are bustling to and fro half dressed for the performance. The lights are being lit, the musicians are tuning their instruments, Zerbinetta tries a few roulades, Jourdain and his guests appear and take their seats in the fauteuils [...]¹¹

Hofmannsthal's reference to 'talk about the public, critics, etc.' suggests that the scene might possibly be informed by some kind of sardonic impulse, a point raised by Strauss some weeks earlier when, having read the Molière play, he offered the

⁸ The full text of the *Zwischenspiel* is in Hugo von Hofmannsthal, *Gesammelte Werke, Dramen V, Operndichtungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1979), 271-80.

⁹ One additional difference is that it is understood from the start of the *Zwischenspiel* that the two contrasting theatrical works—a *Vorspiel* and a *Nachspiel*—will be performed in Herr Jourdain's house, whereas in *Ariadne II* the mere fact of there being a 'lustiges *Nachspiel*' is the first (but not the only) crisis for the Composer, Music Master, and Prima Donna.

¹⁰ Letter to Hofmannsthal, 10 June 1911; *A Working Friendship: The Correspondence between Richard Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannsthal*, trans. Hanns Hammelmann and Ewald Osers (New York: Vienna House, 1974), 89.

¹¹ Letter to Strauss, 15 June 1911; *ibid.*, 90.

suggestion that Hofmannsthal might ‘accentuate’ the interaction of the Composer and Dancing Master (in *Bürger*) with ‘topical points’.¹²

By mid-July 1911, with Strauss and Hofmannsthal having reached a moment of crisis in their collaboration on *Ariadne* (as summarised in the previous chapter)—Strauss’s lukewarm response to the symbolically overloaded libretto and Hofmannsthal’s defence of its higher meanings—the function of the *Zwischenspiel* was seen by both to be crucially important. Rather than merely singing ‘a few roulades’, Zerbinetta is now brought into focus as a means by which both the opera’s narrative and its themes can be elucidated. Hofmannsthal writes that,

The Composer is furious [upon being informed that both works are to be performed simultaneously], the Dancing Master tries to soothe him. Finally they summon the clever soubrette (Zerbinetta); they tell her the plot of the heroic opera, explain to her the character of Ariadne, and set her the task of working herself and her companions as best she may into this opera as an intermezzo, without causing undue disturbance. Zerbinetta at once grasps the salient point: to her way of thinking a character like Ariadne must either be a hypocrite or a fool, and she promises to intervene in the action to the best of her ability, but with discretion. This offers us the opportunity of stating quite plainly, under cover of a joke, the symbolic meaning of the antithesis between the two women. Does this appeal to you?¹³

Hofmannsthal’s proposal did indeed appeal to Strauss who even went so far as to point out that ‘the scene preceding the opera must become the core of the piece’.¹⁴ He again repeated his call for an injection of topicality into the portrayal of the Composer and the Dancing Master and asked that the former, in particular, be treated in parodic fashion: ‘Drop in a few malicious remarks about the ‘composer’—that sort of thing

¹² Letter to Hofmannsthal, 20 May 1911; *ibid.*, 80. Strauss is referring here to the opening scene of Molière’s play in which the Music Master and the Dancing Master discuss the importance of works being both well received and well paid. Molière’s play includes a Music Master and his pupil, a Young Composer, but is clear that references to Molière’s ‘Composer’ by Strauss and Hofmannsthal in the early stages of work on *Ariadne* are, in fact, references to the Music Master and not to his pupil. It is not until Hofmannsthal’s letter to Strauss of 22 October 1911 that he raises the possibility of making the Composer’s pupil (*sic*) the Composer of the *opera seria* and not the Composer (i.e. the Music Master) as he previously intended; *ibid.*, 103.

¹³ Letter to Strauss, 23 July 1911; *ibid.*, 99.

¹⁴ Letter to Hofmannsthal, 24 July 1911; *ibid.*, 101.

always amuses the audience and every piece of self-persiflage takes the wind out of the critics' sails'.¹⁵ Furthermore, he asks that in his adaptation of the Molière play,

Hofmannsthal

develop the two parts of the Composer and the Dancing Master in such a way that everything is said that can be said today about the relationship of public, critics and artist. It could become a companion piece to *Meistersinger*: fifty years after. Pack into it everything that's on your chest, you'll never get a better opportunity! Is there enough malice in you? If not, take a collaborator; such things are usually best done by two people.¹⁶

Of course, Strauss is asking the impossible of his librettist (as he probably well knew, hence the tactless suggestion that Hofmannsthal consider working with a collaborator), for he had no taste whatsoever for humour of a satirical kind (some might suggest that Hofmannsthal had little talent for humour *per se*), least of all satire at his own expense.¹⁷ Indeed, somewhat closer to the première of *Bürger-Ariadne*, Strauss suggested that Hofmannsthal insert into *Bürger* a comment regarding the King's disapproval of modern operas on account of their unmelodiousness (one cannot help but think that Strauss is here recalling Kaiser Wilhelm II's celebrated comment to Hofkapellmeister Strauss that 'the whole of modern music is worth nothing, there's no melody'¹⁸), but Hofmannsthal flatly rejected the suggestion on the grounds that it was anachronistic; that Louis XIV, far from being resistant to new works, was a devoted patron of modern opera.¹⁹ Given the mass of anachronisms

¹⁵ Ibid., 100.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ For discussion of Hofmannsthal's attitude towards comedy and humour generally, see Victor A. Oswald, Jr., 'Hofmannsthal's Collaboration with Molière', *Germanic Review* 29 (1954), 18-30 (esp. 24-6).

¹⁸ The Kaiser continued, 'I like *Freischütz* better', to which Strauss responded, 'Your Majesty, I too like *Freischütz* better'; diary entry by Romain Rolland (1 March 1900), *Richard Strauss and Romain Rolland: Correspondence. Together with Fragments from the Diary of Romain Rolland and other essays and an Introduction by Gustave Samazeuilh*, ed. Rollo Meyers (London: Calder and Boyers, 1968), 123.

¹⁹ Letter from Hofmannsthal to Strauss, 14 June 1912; *Working Friendship*, 130-1.

elsewhere in *Ariadne* I, pedantry of this kind speaks volumes for Hofmannsthal's precious comedic sensibility.

The issue of persiflage—self or otherwise—is crucial to any insightful understanding of the Composer in the *Vorspiel* and is an issue to which I will return a little later. For the moment, however, I wish to remain with the *Zwischenspiel* and Strauss's letter to Hofmannsthal of 24 July 1911 (quoted above). He closes the letter with the suggestion that 'Zerbinetta might have an affair with the Composer, so long as he is not too close a portrait of me'.²⁰ Unfortunately, Hofmannsthal offers no reply to this suggestion in his next letter and, in fact, makes no further reference to the *Zwischenspiel* in his correspondence with Strauss until early the following year when he points out that he will sit down and write it once all other aspects of the work ('including the *mise en scène*') have been settled.²¹ (Hofmannsthal further adds that the transition scene will be written 'working hand in hand with Reinhardt'.²²) Some months later, Hofmannsthal reports that he has 'worked like a cart-horse' on both fine tuning the Molière adaptation and, above all, the *Zwischenspiel*, 'which ought to be concise and colourful, discreet and at the same time gay, which must not jar with the Molière and yet must contain the whole key to *Ariadne*: a hellish chess-problem'.²³ Finally, in a letter to Strauss written a few days later, he merely provides the following comment as a postscript: 'On reading it through I find the transition scene quite good. If you, Reinhardt or I can think of anything to add, this can easily be done during rehearsal'.²⁴

²⁰ Ibid., 101.

²¹ Letter to Strauss, 18 January 1912; *ibid.*, 114.

²² Ibid.

²³ Letter to Strauss, 19 April 1912; *ibid.*, 125.

²⁴ Letter of 24 April 1912; *ibid.*, 128.

I am interested above all in considering the *Zwischenspiel*'s treatment of Zerbinetta and the Composer. It is noteworthy, for instance, that among the theatrical players, the *seria* characters are given generic names in the *Zwischenspiel* (a practice retained in the *Vorspiel*)—Ariadne is the Prima Donna and Bacchus is the Tenor—while the *commedia* players remain the same on and off the stage. (One would think that it therefore hardly makes sense to have Zerbinetta making-up backstage when we are given to believe that there is no 'behind the scenes' for the likes of her.) From the correspondence cited above, however, this would appear to be something that was not taken as given in Hofmannsthal's earliest thoughts: in the letter of 15 June, for instance, he refers to two of the backstage players as Harlekin and Ariadne (thus, the performer and the persona are one and the same whether *seria* or *commedia*) and, in the letter of 23 July, describes Zerbinetta as 'the clever soubrette', thereby making a distinction between the performer and the persona. But Hofmannsthal's subsequent comments in the letter of 23 July imply that by making light of Ariadne's situation and not grasping the profundity of Ariadne's transformation, backstage Zerbinetta is, indeed, one and the same as on-stage Zerbinetta. Significantly, he goes so far as to point out that the comments she makes in the *Zwischenspiel* set her up as Ariadne's antithesis *before the opera even gets underway*. That Zerbinetta is never anyone other than Zerbinetta is made plain by the Dancing Master when, in the *Zwischenspiel*, he makes the comment that 'Zerbinetta is a mistress of improvisation for she is always playing herself'.²⁵ Hofmannsthal's decision to make no distinction between Zerbinetta on and off the stage is a significant one and, in fact, is crucially important when considering the expanded role afforded her in the *Vorspiel*.

²⁵ 'Sie ist eine Meisterin im Improvisieren; da sie immer nur sich selber spielt'. This comment is

The Young Composer as he appears in the *Zwischenspiel* is an extremely idealistic and sensitive individual. He takes the news very badly that Jourdain has commanded the simultaneous performance of the *seria Vorspiel* (i.e. *Ariadne*) and the *lustiges Nachspiel* ('Hölle – Hölle auf Erden! Wozu lebe ich? Warum werde ich nicht zu Stein?' [Hell – Hell on earth! Why do I live? Why am I not turned to stone?]). When the Dancing Master makes a flippant remark about the *commedia* players bringing welcome relief to the opera's boring passages he is hushed by the Music Master (the Composer's teacher) with the warning that such a remark could drive his pupil to suicide ('Still, wenn er uns hört, begeht er Selbstmord'). Faced with the possibility of having to make on-the-spot cuts to his treasured score, the Composer clutches the manuscript to his chest and exclaims that he would rather burn it ('Lieber ins Feuer') than have it disfigured by emendations (emendations which he nevertheless proceeds to carry out almost immediately).²⁶

If he has no choice but to accept the intrusion of the *commedia* troupe as a *fait accompli*, the Composer at least makes it his business to ensure that the full profundity of the *Ariadne* story is given the *gravitas* it deserves. Thus, when the Music Master summarises the plot of the *opera seria* for Zerbinetta's benefit, the Composer sees fit to interject where necessary and redeem the work from impertinent paraphrase (the following passage appears almost word for word in the *Vorspiel*):

Musiklehrer:	Sie verzehrt sich in Sehnsucht und wünscht den Tod herbei.
Zerbinetta:	Den Tod. Das sagt man so. Natürlich einen anderen Liebhaber.
Tanzmeister:	Natürlich, so kommts ja auch!
Komponist:	<i>hat aufgehört, kommt auf den Knien näher</i> Nein, so kommts nicht, Herr! Denn sie ist eine von den Frauen, die nur einem im Leben angehören und danach keinem mehr—
Zerbinetta:	He!

retained in the *Vorspiel*.

²⁶ This comment, along with the other examples cited above, all appear in the *Vorspiel* either exactly or modified slightly.

Komponist: *verwirrt, starrt sie an* —keinem mehr als dem Tod.
 Zerbinetta: Der Tod kommt aber nicht. Wetten wir. Sondern ganz das Gegenteil. Vielleicht auch ein blasser, dunkleäugiger Bursche, wie du einer bist.

[She languishes in passionate longing and prays for death. Death! That's what they say. Of course she means another lover. Of course, that's how it turns out. *Having overheard, comes closer on his knees* No, it doesn't sir! Because she is one of those women who belong to one man only in their life and after that to no one else— Ha! *Confused, staring at her* —to no one else, save death. But death doesn't come. I'll wager quite the contrary. Perhaps even a pale, dark-eyed lad, someone like you.]

(This is almost the full extent in the *Zwischenspiel* of any inkling of an 'affair' between Zerbinetta and the Composer. Towards the end of the scene he briefly takes her by the hand and she looks into his eyes but it is not until the *Vorspiel* that Hofmannsthal fully takes up Strauss's suggestion of some kind of love interest between the two and expands their backstage banter into a small, extended scene.)

Having been granted the plot summary, Zerbinetta proceeds to provide her own précis for the benefit of her *commedia* colleagues but, again, the Composer feels compelled to interrupt and speak for the seriousness of the work (again, this appears virtually unaltered in the *Vorspiel*):

Zerbinetta: Merkt auf, wir spielen mit dem Stück "Ariadne auf Naxos". Das Stück geht so: eine Prinzessin ist von ihrem Bräutigam sitzengelassen, und ihr nächster Liebhaber ist fürs erste noch nicht angekommen. Die Bühne stellt eine wüste Insel dar. Wir sind eine muntere Gesellschaft, die sich zufällig auf dieser Insel befindet. Die Kulissen sind Felsen und wir plazieren uns dazwischen. Ihr richtet euch nach mir und sobald sich eine Gelegenheit bietet—
 Komponist: *während sie spricht, auf den Knien vor sich* Sie gibt sich dem Tod hin—ist nicht mehr da—weggewischt—stürzt sich hinein ins Geheimnis der Verwandlung—wird neu geboren—entsteht wieder in seinen Armen—daran wird er zum Gott. Worüber in der Welt könnte eins zum Gott werden, als über diesem Erlebnis?

[Listen to me. We are to take part in the play *Ariadne on Naxos*. The plot is about a princess who has been deserted by her fiancé, and her next lover has not as yet turned up. The scene is a desert island. We are a merry company which finds itself by chance on this desert island. The scenery consists of rocks between which we place ourselves. You are to take your cues from me, and whenever the opportunity presents itself— *While she speaks, on his knees before her* She surrenders herself to death—is no longer there—disappears—throws herself into the mystery of transfiguration—is reborn—renews life once more in his arms! Thus he

wins his godhead. How else in the world could one become a god, except through such an experience?]

While it is possible to read the Composer's torrent of short, incisive comments as a sign of his youthful enthusiasm and the passion that he has for his opera, I am more inclined to see these remarks as Hofmannsthal making absolutely certain that the meaning of *Ariadne* is presented in as concise a form as possible; that he is insuring against any possibility that the symbolic implications of the work might be misunderstood or overlooked.

In mid-June 1912, with the première of *Ariadne* only a matter of months away, Strauss expressed anxiety that Hofmannsthal had still not made the meaning of the work absolutely clear in his comments to the press.²⁷ He reminded Hofmannsthal of the letter of the previous year (mid-July 1911, discussed in Chapter III) in which the poet pinpointed and clarified the lofty issues addressed in the libretto.²⁸ Significantly, Hofmannsthal tried to alleviate the composer's anxiety by explaining that 'everything that I was obliged to tell you in that letter of mine is now, in the transition scene, being driven into the heads of the audience with a sledge-hammer, point for point'.²⁹ Hofmannsthal, of course, is absolutely right, as the Composer's comments above make abundantly clear. But, indeed, it is precisely the extent to which the Composer parrots the content of letters from Hofmannsthal to Strauss that it is difficult to see the Composer as anyone but Hofmannsthal himself.

'Ariadne could be the wife and mistress of *one* man only, just as she can be only be *one* man's widow, can be forsaken only by *one* man'. Is this the Composer of the *Zwischenspiel* or correspondent Hofmannsthal? Likewise,

²⁷ Letter to Hofmannsthal, 23 June 1912; *Working Friendship*, 135.

²⁸ This is the letter that was later polished as the 'Ariadne Brief'.

to him [Bacchus] she gives himself, for she believes him to be Death: he is both Death and Life at once; he it is who reveals to her the immeasurable depths in her own nature, who makes of her an enchantress, the sorceress who herself transforms the poor little Ariadne; he it is who conjures up for her in this world another world beyond, who preserves her for us and at the same time transforms her.

Both of these passages could well be passed off as Hofmannsthal speaking through the Composer but, in fact, they are examples of Hofmannsthal speaking to *his* composer.³⁰ Indeed, the Composer's exasperation with the unenlightened rabble as presented in the *Zwischenspiel* plays out Hofmannsthal's exasperation with Strauss—a composer who, as traced in the previous chapter, failed to comprehend the profundity of *Ariadne auf Naxos* and, as we have seen, was far more charmed by *commedia* Zerbinetta than *seria* Ariadne. Of course, the Composer's characterisation is given to excess—Hofmannsthal exaggerates his youthful impetuosity, sensitivity, and earnestness—but when it comes to the Composer's elucidation of the Ariadne story, Hofmannsthal follows not only the basic substance of his letters to Strauss but also the detail.

Could it be, then, that Hofmannsthal presents in the Composer of the *Zwischenspiel* a caricature of himself? Is there perhaps an element of self-persiflage after all?³¹ This is indeed possible but, if so, it is persiflage of a most generous kind

²⁹ Letter to Strauss, 28 June 1912; *Working Friendship*, 135.

³⁰ Both excerpts are from Hofmannsthal's letter to Strauss, mid-July 1911; *ibid.*, 94.

³¹ Karen Forsyth, echoing the view of Willi Schuh, states that 'Hofmannsthal's Composer has too much genuine charm to be a caricature [of anyone]'; '*Ariadne auf Naxos*' by *Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Richard Strauss: its genesis and meaning* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 224-5. Nevertheless, Forsyth states that the Composer is 'partly a self-portrait of the young "Loris" [i.e. the young Hofmannsthal] but more specifically a portrait of Mozart [...] W. Schuh rightly rejects M. Stern's suggestion, endorsed by H. Mayer, that the Composer is a secret caricature of Wagner'; '*Ariadne auf Naxos*', 224. For a brief account of 'the young "Loris"' and the strong impression he made on the Viennese literati, see Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday* (New York: Viking, 1943), 46-7.

for, as a portrait, this is far from critical of its subject.³² The Composer is presented as an idealist, an aesthete, an artist; if anything, the criticism flows in the opposite direction, to the uncultivated mob who compromise the artist and the lofty ideals which he does his best to uphold. If anyone is subject to criticism here it is (by implication) Strauss and his ilk, those who are engaged in the business of art but who have little feeling for its higher mission. But if the Composer *speaks* with Hofmannsthal's voice in the *Zwischenspiel*, does he *sing* with Hofmannsthal's voice when the *Zwischenspiel*, reworked as the *Vorspiel*, becomes a musical text? Delivered into the hands of the composer, Hofmannsthal's Composer finds himself at the mercy of Hofmannsthal's composer.

Heilige Kunst

As summarised in Chapter III, the decision to rewrite *Ariadne* divorced from the Molière frame was taken in the aftermath of the inauspicious première of *Bürger-Ariadne* in Stuttgart. Hofmannsthal set himself the task of rewriting and expanding the *Zwischenspiel* in the middle of 1913 having spent some months mulling over how the task was to be accomplished. He duly submitted the completed *Vorspiel* to Strauss around the middle of June (presumably they both contemplated unveiling the revised work later that year, i.e. twelve months after the première of *Ariadne* I). But Strauss rejected the *Vorspiel* out of hand and made a point of citing dissatisfaction with the Composer as a strong factor in his rejection of the entire work:

[...] to be quite frank, I have so far not found it [the *Vorspiel*] to my liking at all. Indeed, it contains certain things that are downright distasteful to me—the Composer,

³² In a letter to Strauss (14 June 1912), Hofmannsthal describes *Bürger-Ariadne* as 'a humorous pastiche of ourselves', a comment that is difficult to take seriously given the weighty issues Hofmannsthal invested in the work, as discussed in the previous chapter; *Working Friendship*, 131.

for instance: to set him actually to music will be rather tedious. I ought to tell you that I have an innate antipathy to all artists treated in plays and novels, and especially composers, poets and painters. Besides, I now cling so obstinately to our original work, and still regard it as so successful in structure and conception, that this new version will always look to me like a torso.³³

Unfortunately, the Strauss-Hofmannsthal correspondence contains no letter of response from the librettist and there is no further mention of the Composer or the *Vorspiel* in their exchange of letters for some years. But we can guess that Strauss's sharp rejection of the revised text came as a blow to Hofmannsthal, especially since he lavished great care upon the Composer and, ten days or so before dispatching the *Vorspiel* to Strauss and, as if to prepare him for receipt of the libretto, announced that 'the Composer now occupies the very centre of the scene'.³⁴ Furthermore, upon sending the revised text to Strauss he made a point of saying that not only was he satisfied with the refashioned work but that he was especially pleased with the Composer, a figure 'tragic and comic at the same time, like the musician's lot in the world'.³⁵ Nevertheless, despite no further immediate correspondence on the subject, Strauss's comments above are highly revealing and warrant closer scrutiny.

Of course, we must be highly sceptical of Strauss's alleged antipathy towards representations of composers in plays given that this is precisely what we find in Molière's *Le bourgeois gentilhomme* and Hofmannsthal's *Zwischenspiel*. Why did he leave it until now to state his aversion when he could have saved Hofmannsthal the

³³ Letter from Strauss to Hofmannsthal, 15 June 1913; *ibid.*, 171. In its original form: '[...] der ich, offen gesagt, bis jetzt noch gar keinen Geschmack abgewinnen kann. Sie enthält an und für sich manches mir direkt Unsympathische, u.a. den Komponisten, den nun auch noch in Musik zu setzen, mir ziemlich sauer werden wird. Sie müssen nämlich wissen, dass ich gegen alle in Dramen und Romanen behandelten Künstler, besonders Komponisten, Dichter und Maler, eine angeborene Antipathie habe. Ausserdem habe ich mich unsere erste Arbeit derart hineinverbissen, und halte sie im Aufbau und in der Idee für so glücklich, dass mir die neue Fassung immer wie ein Torso vorkommen wird...'; *Richard Strauss-Hugo von Hofmannsthal: Briefwechsel*, ed. Willi Schuh (Zürich: Atlantis, 1964), 237.

³⁴ Letter to Strauss, 3 June 1913; *Working Friendship*, 169.

³⁵ Letter to Strauss, 12 June 1913; *ibid.*, 170.

bother of making a revision which was therefore being set up for inevitable rejection? Furthermore, by reaffirming his commitment to *Ariadne I*, Strauss is explicitly endorsing the Composer as a *spoken* character in these works. But it is as a *sung* character—a figure with a *musical* voice—that Strauss raises his objections (‘to set him actually to music will be rather tedious’). This is surprising to say the least for, as pointed out in the previous chapter, it would appear that it was Strauss who in the first place raised the possibility of setting a revised *Zwischenspiel* to music, albeit in a plain, recitative style.³⁶ We may assume, therefore, that Strauss was favourably disposed towards the prospect of the Composer appearing as a sung character up until he actually received the *Vorspiel* from Hofmannsthal. In other words, it is specifically the Composer of the *Vorspiel*, and not representations of composers *per se*, that greatly displeased Strauss.

As discussed above, much of the *Zwischenspiel* was simply lifted with little or no alteration and placed in the *Vorspiel*, but the one significant difference between the two texts and the reason, I wish to offer, for Strauss’s antipathy towards the revised version, is the newly written episode for the Composer that forms the *Vorspiel*’s climax. Following his encounter with Zerbinetta, ‘Ein Augenblick ist wenig’, a passage not found in the *Zwischenspiel*, the Composer explains to his teacher, the Music Master, that he now sees the world differently; he has cast off his anxious demeanour and found a heroic bearing (again, a passage not found in the *Zwischenspiel*):

³⁶ In one of Hofmannsthal’s first letters to Strauss written after the première of *Ariadne I*, he writes: ‘I was very glad of our talk the other day, and about your happy idea concerning the *secco* recitatives (in view of this I shall recast that brief scene and cut out all allusions which refer back to the Molière)’; letter of 9 December 1912, *ibid.*, 148. This is the first mention in their correspondence of the possibility of presenting *Ariadne* in revised form.

Komponist: Seien³⁷ wir wieder gut! Ich sehe jetzt alles mit anderen Augen! Die Tiefen des Daseins sind unermesslich!—Mein lieber Freund, es gibt manches auf der Welt, das lässt sich nicht sagen. Die Dichter unterlegen ja recht gute Worte, recht gute—*Jubel in der Stimme* jedoch, jedoch, jedoch, jedoch, jedoch!—Mut ist in mir, Freund³⁸—Die Welt ist lieblich und nicht fürchterlich dem Mutigen—und was ist denn Musik?³⁹

[Let's make up. I see everything differently now! The depths of existence are immeasurable! My dear friend, there is much in the world that cannot be put into words. Poets set down excellent words, yes, really excellent—*rejoicing in his voice* and yet, and yet, and yet, and yet, and yet—I am filled with courage, my friend! The world is lovely and not fearful to the bold man—and what, then, is music?]

He provides an answer to his question with a solemn declaration in praise of music:

Komponist: *Mit fast trunkener Feierlichkeit* Musik ist heilige Kunst,⁴⁰ zu versammeln alle Arten von Mut wie Cherubim um einen strahlenden Thron! Das ist Musik,⁴¹ und darum ist sie die heilige unter den Künsten!⁴²

[*With almost drunken solemnity* Music is a sacred art, which brings together all men of courage, like cherubim around a shining throne. This is music, and for this reason it is the most holy of the arts!]

Upon dispatching to Strauss the newly-written *Vorspiel*, Hofmannsthal singled out this passage and described it thus:

Here the words ought to inspire you to find a new, beautiful melody, solemn and ebullient; let's hope they accomplish their object:

[...]

‘Musik ist heilige Kunst [...]

Und darum ist sie die Heilige unter den Künsten!’

(This struck me as the kind of text Beethoven might have liked to use.)⁴³

Hofmannsthal's reference to Beethoven is surely telling—if the Composer is, indeed, a half-comic, half-serious figure let there be no mistaking his serious intent at this juncture. Not only is solemnity called for, but the very spirit of Beethoven.

³⁷ As set by Strauss, ‘Sein’.

³⁸ As set by Strauss, ‘Mut ist in mir, Mut, Freund!’

³⁹ As set by Strauss, ‘Die Welt ist lieblich und nicht fürchterlich dem Mutigen! Was ist denn Musik?’

⁴⁰ As set by Strauss, ‘Musik ist eine heilige Kunst’.

⁴¹ This phrase deleted by Strauss.

⁴² At which point Strauss adds: ‘Die Heilige Musik!’

⁴³ Letter of 12 June 1913; *Working Friendship*, 170.

There is no passage in the *Zwischenspiel* even vaguely analogous to this, no hymn in praise of music, no suggestion whatsoever of music as a redemptive, holy art. Hofmannsthal, indeed, made it clear to Strauss that at this point in the *Vorspiel* he expected the recitative style to disappear and for the Composer to pour forth in a lyrical voice. He described ‘Musik ist heilige Kunst’ as the *Vorspiel*’s ‘lyrical climax’ and added that what was called for here was ‘a kind of little Prize Song’ (he then goes on to make the point that ‘the whole *Ariadne* with the *Vorspiel* possesses a remote, purely conceptual affinity with *Meistersinger*’⁴⁴). But Strauss the anti-metaphysician surely found the on-stage paean to music embarrassing at best, offensive at worst. Strauss’s composers hitherto went into battle, made love, quarrelled, bathed their offspring but didn’t sing cloying phrases in praise of music. Indeed, as early as his first opera, *Guntram* (1893), Strauss made it clear that he subscribed to an anti-metaphysical philosophy of music. In Charles Youmans’s summary of that opera’s dénouement, the minstrel priest Guntram ‘flings his lyre to the ground, announcing that music can play no meaningful role in spiritual *Erlösung* (redemption)’.⁴⁵ ‘Strauss’, he continues, ‘had turned his first opera, the work meant to show the world that the Wagnerian music drama could survive the Master’s death, into a vehicle for the message that music was an unspiritual art’.⁴⁶ And here was Hofmannsthal in the *Vorspiel* to *Ariadne* presenting a young Composer of such idealism, such conviction, that he declares in its closing moments that he would sooner freeze, starve, and die (‘Lass mich erfrieren, verhungern, versteinen in der meinigen!’) than have his hallowed opera debased and corrupted. Which, of course, is not to say that

⁴⁴ Letter to Strauss, 13 June 1913; *ibid.*

⁴⁵ Charles D. Youmans, ‘The Development of Richard Strauss’s Worldview’, in *The Richard Strauss Companion*, ed. Mark-Daniel Schmid (Westport and London: Praeger, 2003), 79.

Hofmannsthal intended us to take this outburst entirely seriously (indeed, we are struck by its utter banality) but he doubtless hoped that we would be charmed by the youth's passion and idealism, his reverence for his 'holy art'. Strauss, as we have seen, was most definitely not charmed.

But in April 1916, nearly three years after emphatically rejecting the *Vorspiel*, Strauss, for reasons never made explicit, decided to set Hofmannsthal's libretto to music after all as part of a revised *Ariadne*. Norman Del Mar has postulated that Strauss felt he had little choice but to embark upon the project owing to the conditions of war; that he saw the unlikelihood of offering as large a work as *Die Frau ohne Schatten* in the near future (a work he was still composing in 1916⁴⁷) and that a small-scale opera such as *Ariadne II* might prove far more feasible in the short-term.⁴⁸ But this does not account for the fact that Strauss still had to overcome his antipathy towards the Composer, to find a way of negotiating Hofmannsthal's libretto, especially since, upon receiving it three years before, he seemingly left so little room for negotiation.

Travesty

A crucial decision in this respect was Strauss's resolution to cast the part of the Composer as a trouser role. The Composer, together with his overblown ideals, now becomes a wholly operatic figure; indeed, he is one of opera's most engaging types: the hormone-fuelled youth, volatile by nature and given to fanciful outbursts. Here is

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Act III of *Die Frau ohne Schatten* was not completed in short score until 15 September 1916. It was completed in full score on 24 June 1917.

⁴⁸ Norman Del Mar, *Richard Strauss: A Critical Commentary on his Life and Works*, 3 vols. (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1962-72), II, 60. According to Del Mar, it was in January 1916 that discussions

a figure who can unleash hysteria—‘Die heilige Musik!’—without endangering verisimilitude; indeed, as a fantastic, androgynous creature (someone not quite of this world but thoroughly at home in the world of opera) he is not even *bound* by verisimilitude. He can wax and wane, fall in and out of love with Zerbinetta, extol the virtues of the mythical Ariadne, ring out in joyful strains one moment and cry out in utter despair the next simply because this is how his type is expected to behave. He is a character in an opera larger than the one we are to believe he has created. Furthermore, the Composer’s brief scene with Zerbinetta now carries the promise of a distinctively operatic frisson—the spectacle of two sopranos in quasi-carnal embrace—one which serves to draw attention to the extraordinariness of their bond (and, by extension, the extraordinariness of the genre).

But just as Strauss was originally repelled by Hofmannsthal’s *Vorspiel*, now it was Hofmannsthal’s turn to express outrage at the proposed violation of his (holy?) text. The librettist was affronted by Strauss’s decision to opt for a travesty Composer (it was a decision obviously taken without consultation) for he thought that by this gesture Strauss was literally making a travesty of his libretto. What is especially fascinating about Hofmannsthal’s irate letter to Strauss in defence his libretto and its higher meaning, is that it reveals just how much of himself is in the Composer. Indeed, Hofmannsthal’s comments to Strauss could well be passed off as the Composer’s grievances to the assembled philistines. They uncannily read like passages from both the *Zwischenspiel* and the *Vorspiel*:

[...] the idea of giving the part of the young Composer to a female performer goes altogether against the grain. To prettify this particular character, which is to have an aura of ‘spirituality’ and ‘greatness’ about it, and so turn him into a travesty of himself

were held between Strauss, Hofmannsthal, and Reinhardt concerning, once more, the thorny question of whether or not to revise *Ariadne*.

which inevitably smacks of operetta, this strikes me as, forgive my plain speaking, odious. I can unfortunately only imagine that our conception of this character differs once again profoundly, as it did over Zerbinetta! Oh Lord, if only I were able to bring home to you completely the essence, the spiritual meaning of these characters.⁴⁹

Substitute the Composer's 'spirituality' and 'greatness' for Ariadne's 'spirituality' and 'greatness', and we have a carbon-copy defence of the Composer's tenacious claims for his work. Having invested so much of himself in the Composer, Hofmannsthal was no doubt horrified at the prospect of having himself presented in drag, the librettist *en travesti*. But quite apart from any personal embarrassment over Strauss's decision to present the Composer as a soprano, Hofmannsthal was highly perceptive in guessing Strauss's motives: that in writing for a trouser role Strauss was removing the Composer from any kind of realistic portrayal and, in employing an operatic type, was allowing for the possibility of a characterisation bordering on caricature. It was Strauss's way of distancing Strauss, the composer, from the Composer of the *Vorspiel*.

A 'little duet'

As stated above, the *Vorspiel*, like the *Zwischenspiel*, offers a glimpse of the behind-the-scenes goings-on that provide the context for the curious mix of *commedia* and *seria* in the entertainment which follows (with Jourdain removed from *Ariadne II*, we are told that the setting for the composite work is the house of Vienna's richest man). In keeping with ideas suggested from the earliest discussions of a proposed revision (December 1912-January 1913), the great majority of the *Vorspiel*'s text is set in a quasi-recitative style. There are also substantial passages of spoken dialogue (the role of the Major Domo, for instance, is wholly a speaking part). There is generally quick

⁴⁹ Letter of 13 April 1916; *Working Friendship*, 241-2.

repartee between characters with hastily sung (and spoken) lines as individuals are brought in and out of focus. However, as discussed above, the somewhat blank, musically plain idiom is occasionally interrupted at points where material of greater lyricism is called for. In the final part of the *Vorspiel*, from the scene between the Composer and Zerbinetta onwards, it is the lyrical style which predominates.

The brief scene between the Composer and Zerbinetta, beginning with Zerbinetta's utterance 'Ein Augenblick ist wenig', heralds a crucial moment both in Hofmannsthal's libretto and in Strauss's setting of it, for it marks the point when these fleeting wisps of characters are fleshed out beyond the merely two-dimensional. Indeed, it is as a result of his encounter with Zerbinetta that the Composer, clearly besotted by her, launches forth and exalts in the 'depths of existence' and 'music as holy art'. It is a seemingly straightforward example of cause and effect: his new-found heroic self is a consequence of his being thoroughly captivated by Zerbinetta.

Immediately prior to sending the *Vorspiel* to Strauss, Hofmannsthal, in drawing attention to the differences between his reworked text and the earlier *Zwischenspiel*, mentioned that the revised work even includes 'a hint of a little duet (Zerbinetta-Composer)'.⁵⁰ The 'little duet' follows upon a passage (largely taken from the *Zwischenspiel*) in which the downcast Composer exclaims that he shall never survive the fate that has befallen him ('Ich überlebe diese Stunde nicht!'). Zerbinetta replies that he shall certainly survive far worse than this ('Du wirst noch ganz andere überleben') to which the Composer responds, 'Was wollen Sie damit—in diesem Augenblick—sagen?' (What do you mean at this moment by a thing like that?), whereupon Zerbinetta embarks upon 'Ein Augenblick ist wenig', a point that marks

⁵⁰ Letter to Strauss, 3 June, 1913; *ibid.*, 169.

an epiphany in the Composer's attitude towards the *commedia*'s leading lady. The full text of the ensuing 'duet' is as follows:

Zerbinetta: *mit äusserster Koketterie, scheinbar ganz schlicht* Ein Augenblick ist wenig—ein Blick ist viel. Viele meinen, dass sie mich kennen, aber ihr Auge ist stumpf. Auf dem Theater spiele ich die Kokette, wer sagt, dass mein Herz dabei im Spiele ist? Ich scheine munter und bin doch traurig, gelte für gesellig und bin doch so einsam.

Komponist: *naiv*⁵¹ *entzückt* Süsses, unbegreifliches Mädchen!⁵²

Zerbinetta: Törichtes Mädchen, musst du sagen, das sich manchmal zu sehnen verstünde nach dem einen, dem sie treu sein könnte, treu bis ans Ende.—

Komponist: Wer es sein dürfte, den du ersehnest! Du bist wie ich—das Irdische unvorhanden deiner Seele.⁵³

Zerbinetta: *schnell, zart* Du sprichst, was ich fühle.—Ich muss fort. Vergisst⁵⁴ du gleich wieder diesen einen Augenblick?

Komponist: Vergisst sich in Äonen ein einziger Augenblick?

Zerbinetta macht sich los, läuft schnell in ihr Zimmer nach rechts.

[*With extreme coquetry, apparently quite sincere* A moment is nothing—a glance is much. Many think they know me, but their eyes lack perception. On the stage I play the coquette, who can say that my heart is in the part I play? I appear merry and yet am sad, I pass for being fond of company, and am so lonely. *Naively enraptured* Sweet, incomprehensible girl! Foolish girl, you should say, who sometimes allows herself to long for someone to whom she could be faithful—faithful unto death. Whoever it may be for whom you long—you—you are like me—things earthly have no place in your soul. *Quickly, tenderly* You put what I feel into words.—I must go. Are you going to forget about this one moment straight away? Can such a moment be forgotten in all eternity? *Zerbinetta breaks away and runs off quickly to her room on the right.*]

This is without doubt the most engaging passage in the entire *Vorspiel*: here we find Zerbinetta playing the coquette while at the same time professing sincerity (*mit äusserster Koketterie, scheinbar ganz schlicht*). Indeed, she even draws attention to her stage persona (as though it somehow differs from her authentic self) while simultaneously pretending to distance herself from it: 'Auf dem Theater spiele ich die Kokette, wer sagt, dass mein Herz dabei im Spiele ist?' The Composer—Hofmannsthal's half-tragic, half-comic figure—is thoroughly seduced by Zerbinetta's

⁵¹ 'Weich' in the score.

⁵² As set by Strauss, the line reads, 'Sie unbegreifliches Mädchen!'

⁵³ As set by Strauss, 'in deiner Seele'.

⁵⁴ As set by Strauss, 'Vergissest'.

performance and, imagining her to be truthful, believes that he has found in her a kindred spirit (he drops the formal ‘Sie’ maintained up to this point and, in a moment of rapture, addresses her as ‘Du’⁵⁵). Of course, one indication of her insincerity (apart from the stage direction) is provided by her alleged longing for someone to whom she could remain faithful ‘unto death’. Barely a minute or two before, she, along with the assembled players and backstage personnel, was told by the Composer that this very feature was among Ariadne’s finest virtues, that Ariadne was ‘one in a million’.⁵⁶ What Zerbinetta mocked then (‘He!’) she mocks now, but this time in the guise of sincerity.

But it is easy to imagine that Zerbinetta is sincere, given that Hofmannsthal (ever the poet) has her speak with such eloquence. Hers is a performance polished in both content and delivery. Zerbinetta’s gift for language seemingly places her at some remove from a player of the knockabout *commedia dell’arte* (but not, it should be pointed out, at some remove from Zerbinetta as she appears in the main body of the opera where, as discussed in the previous chapter, she skilfully draws upon themes from the *opera seria* when offering her analysis of gods, lovers, and transformations). Thus, taking up the Composer’s word ‘Augenblick’ (‘Was wollen Sie damit—in diesem Augenblick—sagen?’) she adroitly moves from ‘Augenblick’ (moment) to ‘Blick’ (glance) and, indeed, returns to ‘Augenblick’ just before darting off-stage, closing the episode with the idea with which she began. From ‘Blick’ she explores additional imagery of sight (‘aber ihr Auge ist stumpf’) and then skilfully toys with ‘spielen’ (to play) as both verb (‘spiele ich’) and noun when she posits her rhetorical question (‘wer sagt, dass mein Herz dabei im Spiele ist?’). It is hardly surprising that

⁵⁵ Strauss, in fact, has the Composer repeat the pronoun: ‘Du, Du bist wie ich’.

the naïve, hypersensitive Composer is at once ‘enraptured’ by her given the sheer poetry with which she speaks. Hofmannsthal, thus, marks the passage as a moment of interruption: it is not only a ‘little duet’, but a point where we take leave of the everyday world of the behind-the-scenes players—conversational banter and so forth—and enter a poetic realm.

As set to music, the episode is prepared by a climactic rush to a greatly embellished dominant seventh chord (*forte*, at 89), a point that heralds a tonal rupture as the passage begins its course towards E major. The chromatic voice-leading of the subsequent bars (over a steady dominant pedal) finally subsides and from the mass of sound the new key comes into focus and Zerbinetta’s lyrical voice softly emerges as if in an undertone. The crucial direction from Hofmannsthal’s libretto, ‘mit äusserster Koketterie, scheinbar ganz schlicht,’ appears at the head of her entry (albeit with slightly different spelling and the two phrases in reverse order, Example 4.3). Strauss reinforces Zerbinetta’s pretended sincerity with a battery of expressive gestures: a superabundance of appoggiaturas and other accented dissonances (especially at phrase ends), a solo violin countermelody that weaves in and around her part (given over to *espressivo* solo oboe and solo clarinet from time to time), a gently syncopated, dampened string accompaniment (the string syncopations call to mind the opening of *Tod und Verklärung* and the F-sharp episode from *Don Quixote*), and the stipulation for freely applied *rubato*. In other words, we are given strong signals of another journey into the Straussian sublime. To Hofmannsthal’s directions, Strauss adds a few of his own—notably ‘sehr innig’ (very heartfelt, at 96)—a curious addition given

⁵⁶ ‘Ariadne ist die eine unter Millionen’.

ruhig bewegt 91

I. A-Clar. *pp* *pp*

Baßclar. (A) *pp*

I. Fag. *pp*

Zerbinetta (scheinbar ganz schlicht, mit äußerster Coquetterie)
Ein Au - - - gen - blick - ist we - - - nig, ein Blick -

ruhig bewegt 91 stark rubato, die in Klammern eingeschriebenen Zeitmaßänderungen nur als unmerkliche Modifikationen.

1 Solo Viol. *Solo* *pp* *p*

II. Pult *pp*

4 Viol. *pp*

III. Pult *pp*

I. Pult *pp* *s* *pp*

4 Br. (mit Dämpfer) (sehr weich) *pp*

II. Pult *pp*

I. Pult *pp* *Solo*

4 Celli (mit Dämpfer) (sehr weich) *pp*

II. Pult *p*

I. C. B. (mit Dämpfer) *pp*

92

I. Fl. *p*

I. Hob. *espr.* *dim.* *pp*

I. A-Clar. *pp* *espr.* *p*

Baßclar. (A) *pp*

Zerbinetta ist viel. Vie-le mei-nen, daß sie mich ken-nen, a-ber ihr Au-ge ist

2 Viol. I. Pult *pp* *espr.* 92

I. Pult *Solo* *pp* *p*

4 Br. *pp*

II. Pult (m. D.) *pp*

I. Pult *pp*

4 Celli *pp*

II. Pult (m. D.) *pp*

Example 4.3: *Ariadne auf Naxos*, Vorspiel, Zerbinetta-Composer duet.

that Zerbinetta, in fact, is offering counterfeit emotions. Still, it is all the more to her credit that she is able to deliver insincerity sincerely.

Zerbinetta's supple, ravishingly beautiful phrases elicit responses of almost equal beauty from the Composer—from *her* voice he discovers *his* voice, for up until now his brief moments of lyricism consisted almost exclusively of paraphrases from the *opera seria*, music from without, not from within. How extraordinary it is that Zerbinetta should not only entrance the Composer with *what* she says (this much is clear from Hofmannsthal's text) but, more significantly, with *how* she says (read, sings) it. More extraordinary still is that she entrances him with a voice that is charged with false sentiment. It is highly likely that Hofmannsthal expected her 'apparent sincerity' to be met with music that gave some indication of the truth behind what she said. Upon sending the *Vorspiel* to Strauss, he suggested that the scene between Zerbinetta and the Composer might rise 'emotionally to something more than mere *parlando*; perhaps the thing might lead up to a tiny duet or something of the kind, but not a proper *number*, on the last few sentences of the text which are lyrical in tone'.⁵⁷ The inference being that Zerbinetta's music ought *not* to be lyrical at the outset so as to make it clear that her sincerity rings false.⁵⁸ What is remarkable about the episode as set by Strauss is that by providing Zerbinetta with music of such

⁵⁷ Letter to Strauss, 12 June 1913; *Working Friendship*, 170.

⁵⁸ In 1916, as Strauss was about to set the *Vorspiel* to music, Hofmannsthal suggested that if he wished to enlarge the Composer's part slightly he might consider making a duet of the closing line of the Zerbinetta-Composer scene: "'Vergisst sich in Äonen ein einziger Augenblick!'" Duet on this line, capable of endless repetition in various moods'; Letter of 8 May 1916, *Working Friendship*, 245. This is Hofmannsthal's response to Strauss's suggestion (as traced in the previous chapter) to have the Composer reappear at the end of *Ariadne* and utter lines previously ascribed to Jourdain. Hofmannsthal thought the idea dramatically impossible (and also nonsensical) but he knew that Strauss was eager to enlarge the part of the Composer (in order for the role to be attractive to first-rank singers), hence the suggestion of a duet on 'Vergisst sich in Äonen ein einziger Augenblick!'

exquisite beauty she takes the essence of the Composer's craft—music itself—and uses it as the means by which she deceives him.

Zerbinetta's renowned vocal agility is brought into play for the decisive comment 'Du sprichst was ich fühle' (100), her teasing melisma on 'fühle' a moment of pure, sensuous sound allegedly in the service of genuine 'feeling'. This is literally music to the ears of the Composer for here, evidently, is the sympathetic soul for whom he longs, Ariadne made flesh. Such is the persuasive force of Zerbinetta's performance that when the Composer replies (at 102), his part is marked 'hingerissen, schwärmerisch' (carried away, ecstatically; directions *not* found in Hofmannsthal's libretto) (Example 4.4). The episode closes on a sustained *pianissimo* tonic chord (103+5). But the mood is immediately lost as the *commedia* piano makes an abrupt intrusion, Zerbinetta makes a hasty exit, and we are wrenched out of the key of E major (the brutal gear shift at this point strongly echoes the contrast between the sublime and the commonplace at the conclusion of the F-sharp episode in *Don Quixote*). The arrival of the Music Master brings a return to the prosaic backstage events and, musically, a return to the recitative-like idiom that typifies the greater part of the *Vorspiel*.⁵⁹

But for the Composer there is no return. Emboldened by his encounter with Zerbinetta (and none the wiser as to her feigned vulnerability, to the charade that has been passed off as authentic *Innigkeit*), his despair has evaporated (for the moment at least), he sees the world afresh, and he withdraws his objections to the *seria-*

⁵⁹ That Strauss was pleased with his setting of the Zerbinetta-Composer scene is clear from his correspondence with Hofmannsthal (letter of 25 May 1916): 'The scene between Zerbinetta and the Composer has really come out very delightful: it is one of my very best ideas. The whole thing is, in my opinion, rather well organized and climaxed, and should be successful in its own right, without oppressing the opera proper'; *Working Friendship*, 248.

103

Schnell ♩ etwas schneller
als vorher ♩

2 Fl. *dim.* *pp* *ppp* *ff*

2 Hob. *espr.* *dim.* *p* *pp* *ff*

I. A-Clar. *dim.* *pp* *ppp* *ff* *mufa in II. A-Clarinetto*

Baß-Clar. A *pp* *ppp* *ppp* *ff*

2 Fag. *pp* *ppp* *ppp* *ff*

2 Hörner (E) *dim.* *pp* *ppp* *mf* *in F*

Trompete (C) *mf* *mf*

Posaune *mf*

Pauken *dim.* *pp* *dim.* *ppp*

Klavier *dim.* *pp* *ff*

Componist *(Zerbinetta macht sich los, läuft ab.)*
nen ein ein zi-ger Au - gen - blick?!

103

Schnell ♩ etwas schneller
als vorher ♩

I. Pult *espr.* *p* *dim.* *pp*

II. Pult (m. D.) *p* *dim.* *pp* *(Dämpfer weg.)*

III. Pult *flag. p* *dim.* *pp* *ff*

I. Pult *dim.* *p* *pp* *dim.* *ppp*

4 Br. *dim.* *pp* *dim.* *ppp* *(Dämpfer weg.)*

II. Pult (m. D.) *mf* *dim.* *pp* *ppp*

I. Pult *arco* *espr.* *p* *dim.* *pp* *ff* *(Dämpfer weg.)*

4 Celli *pp* *dim.* *ppp* *(Dämpfer weg.)*

II. Pult (m. D.) *pp* *dim.* *ppp* *(Dämpfer weg.)*

2 C. B. (f. m. D.) *pp* *dim.* *ppp*

Example 4.4 (cont.)

commedia hybrid. Not for him the recitative style, he continues in his new-found lyrical voice ('Seien wir wieder gut!'). The 'mystery of transformation'—a mystery which, as the Composer took great pains to point out, lies at the very heart of the Ariadne-Bacchus encounter—has literally been played out in his own life with the unlikely Zerbinetta filling the role of Ariadne. Just as Bacchus wins his godhead through his encounter with Ariadne, the Composer has found his heroic voice in his encounter with Zerbinetta. It is to music, then, that he addresses his great, lyrical paragraph ('Musik ist heilige Kunst').

Although the hymn to holy music is marked 'solemn' in both the libretto and score, it is not exactly the word that comes to mind when considering this passage as set to music. Youthful charm and enthusiasm give way to bombast as Strauss unleashes the full might of the (chamber) orchestra at the massive *fortissimo* cadence in the 'heroic' key of E-flat on the interpolated phrase 'Die heilige Musik!' (as pointed out above, it is a phrase not found in Hofmannsthal's libretto, Example 4.5). This, Strauss is saying unequivocally, marks the *Vorspiel*'s climax (as Hofmannsthal, indeed, said it should). But despite this being a textbook example of the oft-repeated Straussian vulgarity, the Composer's inflated gestures are not at all inappropriate, for the real interest of this passage lies in its function in the broader dramatic framework. Indeed, it makes little sense as an isolated paragraph—why the sudden hymn to music?—but its dramatic meaning becomes clear when it is understood within the context of what has come before—the Composer's crucially significant encounter with Zerbinetta—and, equally important, what comes next. The (soon-to-be-revealed) irony of 'Die heilige Musik!' is thus amplified when the passage itself is literally amplified, belted out in full voice with as loud an orchestral sound as Strauss (under

2 Fl.

2 Hob.

2 A-Clar.

2 Fag.

2 Hörner(F)

Trompete(C)

Posaune

Pauken

Glockenspiel

Celesta

Harmonium

2 Harfen

Klavier

Componist

hei - li - ge Mu -

I. Pult

II. Pult

III. Pult

I. Pult

II. Pult

I. Pult

II. Pult

I. Pult

II. Pult

2 C.B.

Example 4.5 (cont.)

Zerbinetta erscheint rückwärts, mit einem frechen Pfiff ihre Partner auf die Bühne zu rufen.
 Harlekin kommt eilfertig aus dem Zimmer rechts, läuft, seinen Gurt schnallend, auf die Bühne.
 Scaramuccio kommt wie Harlekin, gleichfalls im Laufen seine Toilette beendend.

117 etwas schneller

2 Fl.
 2 Hob.
 2 A-Clar.
 2 Fag.
 2 Hörner (F)
 Trompete (C)
 Posaune
 Pauken
 Glockenspiel
 kl. Trommel
 Celesta
 Harmonium
 2 Harfen
 Klavier
 Composit.
 sikl. Was ist das? Wo-hin? Diebe, Krea-tu-ren!

117 etwas schneller

I. Pult
 II. Pult
 III. Pult
 I. Pult
 4 Br.
 II. Pult
 I. Pult
 4 Celli
 II. Pult
 2 C.B.

Example 4.5 (cont.)

the circumstances) can muster.

The Composer's idealistic vision thus comes crashing down immediately thereafter when, on the final note of his puffed up cadence, Zerbinetta and the *commedia* players come rushing back on stage (musically, another gear shift not unlike the close of the Zerbinetta-Composer duet), their coarseness in plain view:

Zerbinetta erscheint rückwärts, mit einem frechen Pfiff ihre Partner auf die Bühne zu rufen. Harlekin kommt eilfertig aus dem Zimmer rechts, läuft, seinen Gurt schnallend, auf die Bühne.

Komponist: Was ist das? Wohin?

Scaramuccio, wie Harlekin, gleichfalls seine Toilette im Laufen beendend.

Komponist: Diese⁶⁰ Kreaturen!—

Truffaldin, Brighella, den gleichen Weg wie die vorigen.

Komponist: —in mein Heiligtum hinein ihre Bocksprünge!⁶¹ Ah!

[*Zerbinetta appears at the back and, with an impudent whistle, calls her troupe onto the stage. Harlequin comes hastily out of her room on the right, buckling his belt as he runs on stage. What is that? Where do they come from? Scaramuccio arrives, like Harlequin, finishing his dressing as he comes. These creatures! Truffaldino and Brighella now enter. In my holy sanctuary cutting their capers. Ah!*]

The Composer finally realises the deception played upon him: the 'Süsses, unbegreifliches Mädchen!' is nothing but a lowly 'Kreatur' who, together with her cohorts, now runs amok and defiles the holy sanctuary of his holy art. Indeed, it is entirely due to *the holy art of music* that he was deceived in the first place.

Zerbinetta's earlier affectation is now made plain—the beautiful music of 'Ein Augenblick' was nothing but empty pretence—and the belated revelation of it (belated to the Composer at least) provokes the final crisis of the *Vorspiel*, one that remains unresolved at the end. Thus, the *Vorspiel* concludes tragically—the Composer's idealism in ruins. But it is difficult to be moved by the tragedy when Strauss has the orchestra make a frenzied dash up a cliché-ridden diminished seventh

⁶⁰ As set by Strauss, 'Diebe' [thieves] (the 'creatures' who rob the Composer of his idealistic fantasy).

⁶¹ As set by Strauss, 'Bocksprünge'.

chord and thump down a perfect cadence (of sorts) in C minor. Here is ‘tragedy’ masquerading as tragedy.

Having reached the conclusion in Chapter III that Strauss wilfully fudged the close of *Ariadne* II by rendering Zerbinetta’s ‘mocking’ retort to the pompous heroic couple—‘Kommt der neue Gott gegangen’—in sweet and sentimental terms, we can at least acknowledge that what she loses at the end of the revised opera she gains (in part) at the conclusion of the *Vorspiel*; a case of parody lost, parody regained. Nevertheless, I would not wish to suggest that this is any more than a partial rehabilitation of her character, for clearly the close of the *opera seria* is a more authoritative point from which to offer a parodic counter-voice than the end of the *Vorspiel*.⁶²

Among Adorno’s many criticisms of Strauss is the claim that he adheres to and reinforces conventional notions attached to consonance and dissonance:

His affirmative formula for the world, wholly unmistakeable for the first time in *Elektra*, is the result of turbulence and sensual-spiritual, often cheap appeasement. It is founded in the uncommonly primitive idea, extrapolated from textbook harmony, that in music dissonance, if not polyphony as such, corresponds to tension and negativity, whereas simplicity, euphony, consonance signify the good and desirable. This divides the musical spirit into sheep and goats, and the unrest of the dissatisfied, the drive to become is included among the at times unavoidable goats.⁶³

What I am proposing here in my reading of the *Vorspiel*, specifically of the Zerbinetta-Composer duet, is that Strauss uses ‘simplicity, euphony, consonance’ to radically different ends: as make-believe ‘good and desirable’, as the means by which the cunning Zerbinetta presents herself to the Composer as someone other than who

⁶² By all accounts, Strauss’s revisions to *Ariadne* I—specifically the excisions to Zerbinetta’s part—were carried out at exactly the same time that he set to work on the *Vorspiel* (May-June 1916). Thus, what was credited to her in the one was simultaneously debited in the other.

⁶³ Theodor W. Adorno, ‘Richard Strauss, Born June 11, 1864’, tr. Samuel and Shierry Weber, *Perspectives of New Music* (Part I, 1965, Part II, 1966), I, 29.

she really is.⁶⁴ The ‘good’ that is offered cynically is taken at face value by the idealistic Composer and trumpeted in his subsequent monologues. It is not surprising that the point at which we hear ‘rejoicing in his voice’ (Example 4.6), the orchestra reminds us of Zerbinetta, the motivation for that rejoicing, when it takes as its thematic material a motif from the duet—the ‘flowing’ theme that accompanies her allegedly ‘very heartfelt’ declaration, ‘das ich manchmal zu sehnen verstünde nach dem einen, dem sie treu sein könnte’ (who sometimes allows herself to long for someone to whom she could be faithful)—and builds it to an impassioned climax on ‘Mut ist in mir’. Strauss here sets the Composer up for a colossal fall from grace. That the Composer rings out in praise of music in such lyrical (and, needless to say, consonant) fashion further compounds the shock revelation of Zerbinetta’s feigned sincerity. Thinking himself a sheep, the Composer is shown to be a goat.

Parody and Sentimentality

It was precisely while in the process of setting the *Vorspiel* to music, that Strauss made the oft-quoted comment to Hofmannsthal concerning his aptitude for parody and sentimentality. It is appropriate to quote the letter at length:

When you’ve heard the new *Vorspiel* [... you] will realize that I have a definite talent for operetta. And since my tragic vein is more or less exhausted, and since tragedy in the theatre, after this war, strikes me at present as something rather idiotic and childish, I should like to apply this irrepressible talent of mine—after all, I’m the only composer nowadays with some real humour and a sense of fun and a marked gift for parody.

⁶⁴ I should point out that this reading is at odds with the great majority of commentary on the Zerbinetta-Composer duet. Donald G. Daviau and George J. Buelow (*The ‘Ariadne auf Naxos’ of Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Richard Strauss*), Karen Forsyth (*‘Ariadne auf Naxos’*), Joanna Bottenberg (*Shared Creation: Words and Music in the Hofmannsthal-Strauss Operas*), and Tim Ashley (*Richard Strauss*) all contend that Strauss neglects to follow Hofmannsthal’s direction that Zerbinetta’s lines are to be delivered with apparent sincerity and that by bestowing on her music of such beauty, Strauss presents her as a figure who is, indeed, sincere. This strikes me as highly unsatisfactory since it (a) assumes that beautiful music must be sincere music, and (b) fails to consider the outcome of the duet in the closing stages of the *Vorspiel* when the Composer’s disillusionment is laid bare.

110
(poco calando) a tempo (nicht eilen)

2 A-Clar. *pespr.* *cresc.*

2 Fag.

1. Horn (F)

Componist
Welt, das läßt sich nicht sa - gen. Die Dich - ter un - ter - le - gen ja recht gu - te Wor - te -

110
(poco calando) a tempo (nicht eilen)

1. II. Pult *dim.* *pp*

6 Viol. *dim.* *pp*

III. Pult *dim.* *pp*

I. Pult *dim.* *pp*

4 Br. *dim.* *pp*

II. Pult *dim.* *pp*

I. Pult *dim.* *pp*

4 Celli *dim.* *pp*

II. Pult *dim.* *pp*

2 C. B. *dim.* *pp*

111
poco acceler. Sehr schwungvoll.

2 Fl. *cresc.*

2 Hob. *mf cresc.*

2 A-Clar. *mf cresc.*

2 Fag. *cresc.*

2 Hörner (F) *mf cresc.*

Klavier *cresc.*

Componist
recht gu - te (Jubel in der Stimme) je - doch - je - doch - je - doch -

111
poco acceler. Sehr schwungvoll.

I. Pult *pp*

II. Pult *pp*

III. Pult *pp*

I. Pult *pp*

4 Br. *pp* (Doppelgriffe)

II. Pult *pp*

I. Pult *pp* (hervortretend)

4 Celli *pp* (hervortretend)

II. Pult *pp*

2 C. B. *pp*

Example 4.6: Ariadne auf Naxos, Vorspiel.

112

2 Fl.
2 Hob.
2 A-Clar.
2 Fag.
2 Hörner(F)
Trompete (C)
Posaune
Becken
Klavier
Componist

je-doch - je-doch! Mut ist in mir, Mut, Freund! Die

112

I. II. Pult
6 Viol.
III. Pult
1. Pult
4 Br.
II. Pult
I. Pult
4 Celli
II. Pult
2 C. B.

mf cresc. f mf

2 Fl.
2 Hob.
2 A-Clar.
2 Fag.
2 Hörner (F)
Posaune
Triangel
Klavier
Componist

Welt ist lieblich und nicht fürchterlich dem

I. II. Pult
6 Viol.
III. Pult
1. Pult
4 Br.
II. Pult
I. Pult
4 Celli
II. Pult
2 C. B.

Example 4.6 (cont.)

Indeed, I feel downright called upon to become the Offenbach of the 20th century, and you will and must be my poet. Offenbach's *Helena* and *Orpheus* have reduced the ridiculousness of 'grand opera' *ad absurdum*. What I have in mind with my impromptu suggestions, which you resent so much, is a political-satirical parody of the most trenchant kind.⁶⁵ Why shouldn't you be able to write that? Altogether you write far too little: put your Pegasus in tight harness for once. You'll see how the beast can run. Our road starts from *Rosenkavalier*: its success is evidence enough, and it is also this genre (sentimentality and parody are the sensations to which my talent responds most forcefully and productively) that I happen to be keenest on. [...] Long live the political-satirical-parodistic operetta!⁶⁶

It is reasonable to assume that Strauss's case for 'satirical-parodistic operetta' is conditioned not only by his work-in-progress on the *Vorspiel*—it was composed in a remarkably short period of time, from early May to mid-June 1916—but also his difficulty in coming fully to terms with *Die Frau ohne Schatten*.⁶⁷ The latter was also a work-in-progress in June 1916 but, unlike the *Vorspiel*, was proving resistant to completion. In a subsequent letter, Strauss claims that the *Ariadne Vorspiel* 'marks the peculiar new road which we must follow' and, in regard to any further projects, indicates his preference for a 'realistic comedy with really interesting people—either like *Rosenkavalier* with its splendid Marschallin or with a burlesque, parodistic content, something in the manner of Offenbach's parodies'.⁶⁸ In other words, works antithetical to the fantastic, fairytale, symbol-laden world of *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. Indeed, in the same letter he asks that Hofmannsthal agree that *Die Frau ohne*

⁶⁵ In a letter to Hofmannsthal (25 May 1916), Strauss suggested that their next opera be a 'diplomatic love intrigue' set at the time of the Vienna Congress. Guessing Hofmannsthal's reaction, Strauss added, 'you'll probably say: kitsch!' Hofmannsthal duly dismissed the suggestion as 'truly horrid' (letter of 30 May 1916).

⁶⁶ Letter of 5 June, 1916; *Working Friendship*, 250-1. It should be noted that neither this letter nor Strauss's letter of 28 July 1916 (in which he again raises the issue of parodic opera) were included in the first edition of the Strauss-Hofmannsthal correspondence—published in 1926, when both composer and librettist were still living (and, indeed, working).

⁶⁷ The short score of the *Vorspiel* was finished by 27 May, the full score on 19 June.

⁶⁸ Letter to Hofmannsthal, 28 July, 1916; *Working Friendship*, 258. 'Parodistic content' is rendered as 'satirical content' in the English translation of the Strauss-Hofmannsthal correspondence despite the fact that, in its original German, the phrase reads: 'sei es burlesken, parodistischen Inhaltes nach der Seite der Offenbachschen Parodie zu'.

Schatten will be their ‘last romantic opera’.⁶⁹ Slightly later still, Strauss made the (again) oft-quoted remark that, with the *Vorspiel* to *Ariadne auf Naxos*, he had ‘definitely stripped off the Wagnerian musical armour’.⁷⁰ But it is decidedly odd that Strauss should commend Offenbach for his parodistic treatment of grand opera while at the same time, in *Ariadne* II, demonstrate an unwillingness to pursue precisely the same agenda himself (or, at least, to pursue it convincingly from the start of the work through to its close). Hofmannsthal, for his part, was not only sceptical of Strauss’s professed enthusiasm for operetta but also his capacity to write convincingly in an operetta idiom. In a rather savage reply to Strauss’s letter of 5 June—a reply, incidentally, not sent—Hofmannsthal points to operetta-like episodes in the *Rosenkavalier* libretto which Strauss failed utterly to comprehend.⁷¹

Leaving aside issues of operetta and Strauss’s allegedly ‘irrepressible talent’ for it, what is especially noteworthy about the letter of 5 June is not only that Strauss cites sentimentality and parody as the sensations to which his talent ‘responds most forcefully and productively’, but that he places the two in such close proximity. Indeed, in my reading of the Zerbinetta-Composer encounter in the *Ariadne Vorspiel* (and also the F-sharp episode in *Don Quixote*), it is not merely a question of Strauss presenting the parodic and the sentimental but, more interestingly, the parodic *through* the sentimental. A legitimate criticism levelled at *Ariadne auf Naxos* (either version) is that Hofmannsthal sets up a conceit that is not followed through

⁶⁹ Ibid., 259.

⁷⁰ Letter to Hofmannsthal, early September 1916 (no specific date); *ibid.*, 262.

⁷¹ ‘Take for instance *Rosenkavalier*, Act II, the burlesque chorus of Faninal servants [...it] was written only to be rattled off in a burlesque fashion, i.e. in the transparent Offenbach style; what you did was smother it with *heavy* music and so to destroy utterly the purpose of the words, the deliberate pastiche of an operetta. The fun of this passage has simply ceased to exist, the very thing a man like Offenbach would have brought out as a point charged with humour as a joke’. Letter of 11 June 1916; *ibid.*, 251-2.

convincingly: he has it announced that the richest man in Vienna has commanded the *simultaneous* performance of the *Tanzmaskerade* and the *opera seria* but, in practice, the two disparate theatrical forms are presented in juxtaposition—first *seria*, then *commedia*, then back to *seria* (followed by *commedia* in the case of *Ariadne I*).⁷² What is particularly illuminating about the ‘Ein Augenblick ist wenig’ episode in the *Ariadne Vorspiel* is that it is the sole point in the entire work where Strauss comes closest to realising the otherwise unrealised conceit: the Composer (*seria*) and Zerbinetta (*commedia*) are simultaneously at cross purposes and, more interesting still, it is precisely through Zerbinetta’s sentimental idiom that she performs the work of parody. She delivers a performance of such subtlety that the Composer hears only one voice—the inauthentic one—and not the other.

Opera domestica

In his quest for a ‘realistic comedy’ Strauss found an unwilling partner in Hofmannsthal and, looking elsewhere, entered into discussions with Viennese dramatist and critic Hermann Bahr. Between September 1916 and July 1917 they collaborated on an opera scenario based on events from Strauss’s own life, the beginnings of what was to become *Intermezzo*. The work takes as its autobiographical basis a stormy chapter in Strauss’s marriage, one that occurred in the spring of 1902 when his wife, Pauline, believing that he was engaged in an extra-marital affair, instigated preliminary divorce proceedings. The catalyst for the divorce was that Pauline had opened one of Strauss’s private letters—it was from a

⁷² The only slight exception to this is when the *commedia* players first appear on stage and offer their response to *Ariadne*’s grief. She, pointedly, refuses to acknowledge them and, as we have seen in the previous chapter, retires to her grotto in the early stages of Zerbinetta’s ‘Grossmächtige Prinzessin’.

woman and made mention of a missed rendezvous in a bar—and presumed that her husband was guilty of infidelity. As it transpired, the letter was from a complete stranger and, meant for someone else, was addressed to Strauss by mistake. Still, it caused a rift in the marriage that took some time to sort out.⁷³ To this autobiographical tale Strauss added a further incident from life: an occasion when a young man attempted to charm Pauline and arouse her sympathy in order to profit financially.⁷⁴ It was from these two events, plot and subplot, that Strauss asked Bahr to fashion an opera libretto.⁷⁵

But while Bahr wished to downplay the autobiographical aspects—he made the husband a learned professor of archaeology and the wife a rather sympathetic character with a strong maternal attachment to the younger man (the husband and wife are childless in Bahr’s account)—Strauss, on the contrary, was eager to draw attention to the fact that the couple were Richard and Pauline Strauss (which, apart from making the husband a composer, meant presenting the wife as a woman of unrefined manners and blustery temperament⁷⁶). When Bahr, in October 1916, sent Strauss an outline of the first act, the composer was quick both to praise the potential

⁷³ A full account of the incident is in Kurt Wilhelm, *Richard Strauss: An Intimate Portrait* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1989), 175-7.

⁷⁴ Michael Kennedy, *Richard Strauss: Man, Musician, Enigma* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 196.

⁷⁵ For a summary of the genesis of the *Intermezzo* libretto, see Bryan Gilliam, ‘Strauss’s *Intermezzo*: Tradition and Innovation’, in *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1992), 264-6.

⁷⁶ For a first-hand account of Pauline Strauss’s abrasive personality and uncouth manners (albeit an account written with some degree of malice), see Alma Mahler, *Gustav Mahler: Memories and Letters*, trans. Basil Creighton, ed. Donald Mitchell and Knud Martner, 4th ed. (London: Cardinal, 1990). See also Count Harry Kessler, *The Diaries of a Cosmopolitan 1918-1937*, tr. and ed. Charles Kessler (London: Phoenix, 2000), 275-6. According to Lotte Lehmann—the creator of the part of *Intermezzo*’s Christine—Strauss devoted particular attention to having Pauline ‘recreated’ on stage: ‘It was truly touching to witness the care that Strauss lavished at rehearsals upon making sure that his Pauline-Christine corresponded in every detail to the personality of his wife. He frequently interrupted with a peremptory: “No, my wife wouldn’t do that.” And when he said to me “Lotte, you’re really so much

he saw in it but also to point out its faults: for example, he maintained that the characters came across as mere comic stereotypes (especially the learned husband) and that the whole thing presented itself as rather too solid and sturdy in construction.⁷⁷ Strauss embellished the latter point some months later when, responding to a draft of the entire work, he suggested that Bahr allow more room for the music and, by way of example, sent the playwright his own attempt at writing a few scenes in which the music says everything ('die Musik Alles sagt') to the extent that all the librettist needs to do is provide a few key catch phrases.⁷⁸ Strauss describes the effect he wants as 'fast nur Kinobilder' (just almost cinematic pictures). But given their different conceptions of character and dramatic structure, Bahr finally withdrew from the project and suggested that since Strauss seemed to have such a clear idea of what he wanted, he should write the libretto himself. (Bahr also confessed that, given his cordial relations with Pauline Strauss, he found the proposition of presenting her as a character on stage impossible to fulfil.⁷⁹) In July 1917, a little over a year after expressing his desire for 'an entirely modern, absolutely realistic domestic and character comedy',⁸⁰ Strauss dashed off the libretto to *Intermezzo* while on an eight-day stay in a Munich clinic.⁸¹

Intermezzo carries the subtitle 'Eine bürgerliche Komödie mit sinfonischen Zwischenspielen in zwei Aufzügen' (A bourgeois Comedy with Symphonic Interludes in Two Acts). The reference to the orchestral interludes provides an

like my wife in your whole being," I accepted it as the greatest compliment ever paid me'; Lotte Lehmann, *Five Operas and Richard Strauss* (New York: Macmillan, 1964), 75.

⁷⁷ Letter from Strauss to Bahr, 21 October 1916; in *Meister und Meisterbriefe um Hermann Bahr*, ed. Joseph Gregor (Wien: Bauer Verlag, 1947), 97.

⁷⁸ Letter from Strauss to Bahr, 1 January 1917; *ibid.*, 100.

⁷⁹ Letter from Bahr to Strauss, 5 July 1917; *ibid.*, 102.

⁸⁰ Letter to Hofmannsthal, 25 May 1916; *Working Friendship*, 248.

indication of the substantial role they play in the opera's musical topography. At the head of the *dramatis personae* we find Christine (read, Pauline) followed by, in order, her eight-year-old son Franzl (the actual name of the Strauss' only child, to whom, incidentally, the opera is dedicated⁸²), Hofkapellmeister Robert Storch⁸³ (read, Richard Strauss), Christine's maid Anna (the actual name of the Strauss' maid), Baron Lummer, and so on through to the seven or so minor characters (where, in a further concession to opera *vérité*, we find in the list of Storch's skat partners thinly disguised references to Strauss's card-playing associates⁸⁴). It is telling that Christine leads the *dramatis personae* and that subsequent characters are described as objects to her subject (her child, her husband, her maid), for not only does she literally have both the first word in the opera and the last, she is on-stage for seven of the eight scenes in the first act and four of the six scenes in the second.⁸⁵ This is unquestionably 'her' opera. Hofkapellmeister Storch, by comparison, appears in the first scene only of the first act (in which he and his wife do little else but quarrel) and in four scenes in the second (two of which are with his wife). We are told that the action takes place partly on the Grudlsee (read, Garmisch) and partly in Vienna. Indeed, for the first production of *Intermezzo*, special care was taken to replicate the interior of the Strauss villa in

⁸¹ Richard Strauss, 'Erinnerungen an die ersten Aufführungen meiner Opern', in *Betrachtungen und Erinnerungen*, ed. Willi Schuh (Zürich: Atlantis, 1949), 246.

⁸² The son in the opera is always referred to by his pet name, Bubi, precisely the name by which Franz Strauss was called by family and close friends.

⁸³ The Professor in Bahr's draft is Albert Storch. It was thus Strauss's decision to endow the Hofkapellmeister with precisely the same initials as Richard Strauss. The name Christine was given to the wife in the early stages of Bahr's work on the project.

⁸⁴ Norman Del Mar reveals the identities of 'A Conductor, A Commercial Counsellor, A Legal Counsellor, A Singer', *Richard Strauss*, II, 254. The Commercial Counsellor, for instance, is Strauss's long-time friend Willy Levin. Many years before, Strauss wrote a 'Skatcanon' dedicated to Levin: 'S-c-a-t spielen wir fröhlich bei Willy Levin'.

⁸⁵ While the libretto indicates eight scenes in the first act, the score lists only seven. Scene seven (in both libretto and score) is set in the dining room of the Storchs' house and the following scene (scene eight in the libretto) is set in the child's bedroom. There is an orchestral interlude between the two but the score, erroneously, does not preface the scene between Christine and Franzl as scene eight.

Garmisch for the scenes set in the Storchs' house.⁸⁶ Furthermore, the singer who took the part of the Hofkapellmeister, Josef Correck, not only bore a slight physical resemblance to Strauss, but was made-up in such a way to accentuate the resemblance still further.⁸⁷

Dramatic ironies

Strauss clearly took delight in a libretto which inverts or even parodies operatic conventions and expectations—a pair of lovers who fling insults at each other, a Notary who is called upon to transact divorce rather than marriage proceedings (cf. *Der Rosenkavalier*), a card scene without a gypsy in sight—and, furthermore, relished the occasional moments of irony made possible by the fact that he is the *primo uomo* and his wife is the *prima donna*. Early in Act I, for example, when Christine and Robert are engaged in almost constant bickering (the idyll to which the hero/composer retired at the end of *Heldenleben* is shown to be far from idyllic), she searches for the most spiteful insult to throw at him and finally comes up with 'musician!' ('Du... du... du bist... ein Musikant'⁸⁸). She then launches into a complaint of the public life she is forced to lead thanks to her husband's profession:

Die Frau: ⁸⁹	Mir passt das ganze Milieu nicht, die Öffentlichkeit und was sich so alles an den Künstler herandrängt: diese schamlosen Dichter, die all

⁸⁶ The work received its première on 4 November 1924 at the Schauspielhaus of the Dresden Staatstheater. On the Strauss-Storch interior see Rudolf Hartmann, *Richard Strauss: The Staging of His Operas and Ballets* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1982), 154. Hartmann points out that the practice of replicating the interior of the Strauss house in Garmisch was followed in subsequent productions in other cities.

⁸⁷ Lehmann, *Five Operas and Richard Strauss*, 75. Lehmann adds that, unlike Correck and his 'faint resemblance to Strauss', she 'in no way resembled the slender, petite Pauline'.

⁸⁸ It should be noted that Christine opts for 'Musikant' rather than the potentially less disparaging 'Musiker'. In a letter to Bahr (10 July 1917), Strauss claimed that he was able to sketch the opening 'farewell and quarrel scene' quickly because he was writing it from memory; Gregor, *Meister und Meisterbriefe*, 102.

⁸⁹ Christine is always referred to in the libretto as 'Die Frau'. Storch is 'Der Mann' in Act I but 'Robert' in Act II.

ihre Erlebnisse auf die Strasse tragen, so ein Kapellmeister, der den Vollgefress'nen unten im Parkett den Hampelmann macht und seine brünstigen Gefühle im Viervierteltakt preisgibt! Pfui Teufel!⁹⁰

[Only I hate this living in public, the artistic milieu and all that goes with the life of an artist: your shameless librettists, revealing their adventures so that all the world can hear them; and then the conductor—a clown!—who, to amuse the well-fed public in the stalls, lays bare his burning passions and beats them in 4/4 time! Ugh! Disgusting!]

We find further dramatic irony later in the act when Strauss exploits the possibility of having Christine boast at length to Baron Lummer (the young man who plays on her affections in the hope of making financial gains) not only of her husband's kindness and great achievements but of his modesty, of the fact that he is not in the least bit puffed up about his success:

Die Frau: Ein so weiches Gemüt, mein Mann—man sieht es ihm nicht an—oft scheint er abweisend—o, er wird sehr verkannt, nicht als Künstler: da kann er sich nicht beklagen, seine glänzende Laufbahn, diese Masse Orden und üb'rall Erfolg, dabei ist er nicht mal eitel, nein, eigentlich bescheiden, ja wirklich bescheiden.⁹¹

[Oh, my husband is tender and kind—it often doesn't show—at times he seems unfriendly—and so he's misunderstood; not as an artist, oh no he has no complaints on that score—his career is so glorious, honours heaped upon him, success on success; and yet he is not conceited, no, honestly, he's modest, yes truly, he's modest.]

Lummer, who is clearly bored by this tedious account of Storch's greatness and humility, complains in the following scene (Act I, vi) that, should he take the bold step of making a declaration of love to Christine, she would probably answer with a 'hymn of praise to that old cripple to whom she's married' (antwortet mit einem Lobeshymnus auf ihren alten Ehekrüppel).

⁹⁰ Not only is Strauss in the current work implicated as one of the 'shameless librettists' who take their subjects from life, but also, presumably, Hofmannsthal who, as he himself declared privately to Strauss, drew upon Pauline Strauss when formulating the character of the Dyer's Wife in *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. This, and all subsequent quotations from *Intermezzo*, are taken from the published libretto, not from the score. Occasionally, there are slight differences of spelling and punctuation between the two.

⁹¹ Act I, v.

But while the examples of dramatic irony cited above—noteworthy though they are—stem from the libretto as a literary text, Strauss’s play with irony and parody sometimes appears in far more subtle forms, emerging, for instance, in the musical text and in the disjunction between the musical and the written, between what is said and what is heard. As an example we may cite a theme first heard in Act I, i, when Christine complains to her maid Anna that she finds her husband’s ‘eternal kindness and thoughtfulness’ difficult to bear:

Die Jungfer:	Aber er [Storch] ist doch so gut und nachgiebig!
Die Frau:	Diese ew’ge Güte und Nachgiebigkeit—das ist es ja, was mich so rasend macht. Wenn er nur mal richtig grob und brutal wäre, wie ein richtige Mann—aber dieser ewig ‘waiche Günstler’ und dabei deise ruh’ge süffisante Überlegenheit, die er mir gegenüber stets markiert.

[But he [Storch] is really so kind and thoughtful! His eternal kindness and thoughtfulness—they’re just the things that drive me really mad. If only he’d rage and be brutal like a real man—but this eternal ‘kindness and thoughtfulness’ and, besides, his self-contained, sarcastic superiority, and the calm lofty way he treats me.]

One might expect that, as set to music, the passage will further illustrate the spiky, angry, recitative-like phrases for which Christine has already been shown to be remarkably adept. After all, this is one further grievance to add to the many we have heard from the moment the curtain went up. But, on the contrary, what we hear at this point is material that is surprisingly robust and lyrical (the instrumental parts are marked *cantabile*), material that appears to be at odds with the main thrust of Christine’s complaint (Example 4.7). But more noteworthy still is that the theme is robust and lyrical not in a mere generic sense but, more particularly, in the tradition of a Straussian *Heldenthema*: major key, broad range, vigorous rhythm, great swooping phrases. We are presented here with something that sounds like a Strauss quotation—it is as though the composer is compelled to offer in the music a positive counter-

Lebhafter Metr. $d = 72$

87

2 Fl.

2 Ob.

2 B Klar.

2 Fag.

I. III Horn (F)

Die Frau

Die Jungfer

I. Viol.

II. Viol.

Br. (alle)

Celli Solo

(heftig)

Er reizt mich fort - während.

sind gar nicht so bö-se auf den Herrn. Lebhafter Metr. $d = 72$

A-ber er ist doch so

poco rit. 88 a tempo Metr. $d = 69$

I. B Klar.

2 Fag.

I. III Hörner (E)

II

Die Frau

Die Jungfer

I. Viol.

II. Viol.

2 Soli Br.

die 3 übrigen

2 Soli Celli

die 3 übrigen

Ktrb. Solo

Die - se ew - ge Gü - te und Nach - gie - big - keit -

gut und nach-giebig!

(geteilt) weich

cantabile

(geteilt) weich

Solo

Example 4.7: Intermezzo, Act I, i.

2 B Klar.

2 Fag.

I. III
3 Hörner(E)
II

Die Frau
das ist es ja, was mich so ra - send macht. Wenn er nur mal rich - - tig grob und bru -

I. Viol.
II. Viol.
m. Dpf.

2 Soli
Br.
die 3 übrigen
m. Dpf.

2 Soli
Celli
die 3 übrigen
m. Dpf.

Ktrb. Solo

89

2 B Klar.

2 Fag.

I. III
3 Hörner(E)
II

Die Frau
tal wä - re, wie ein rich - tiger Mann, a - ber die-ser e - wig „wai - - che

I. Viol.
II. Viol.
m. Dpf.

2 Soli
Br.
die 3 übrigen
m. Dpf.

2 Soli
Celli
die 3 übrigen
m. Dpf.

Ktrb. Solo

2 Soli

Example 4.7 (cont.)

voice to Christine's negative onslaught.⁹² Christine, of course, is trying to sing *against* the theme—after all, it is Hofkapellmeister Storch who rings out in heroic voice—but she can only do so by singing *with* it. The theme (indeed the whole thematic complex) is reprised in Act I, v (figure 236), when Christine, in conversation with the Baron, extols the virtues of her husband: 'Ich sage Ihnen: mein Mann ist der beste Mensch von der Welt...' (I assure you, my husband is the most wonderful man in the world...). But while her words in this later instance no longer run counter to the theme's positive and heroic qualities, the ironic context here is that her husband, supposedly a modest man, is emblazoned musically in such immodest fashion. The obsequious Lummer merely tolerates her gushing song of praise in the hope of making a favourable impression.

Hofkapellmeister Storch

Although Strauss displayed obvious enthusiasm for *Intermezzo*'s autobiographical content and contemporary setting, some degree of circumspection is called for in examining these features of the work. On closer investigation, for instance, the 'entirely modern comedy' betrays strong traces of nostalgia (not for nothing did Strauss remark to Hofmannsthal in respect of his talent for the sentimental and the parodistic, that 'our road starts from *Rosenkavalier*'). In 1924, the year of *Intermezzo*'s première, the title Hofkapellmeister no longer existed. With the collapse of the monarchy in both Germany and Austria in the aftermath of World War One, the court theatres became state theatres and Strauss's title upon assuming the pre-eminent

⁹² It should be noted that *Intermezzo* does, indeed, contain the odd genuine Strauss quotation; perhaps the most obvious one is the brief quote from the 'adversaries' section of *Ein Heldenleben* when Christine, in Act I, v, refers to a comment made about her by 'der berühmte Kritiker'.

position in opera in Vienna in 1918 was Direktor der Wiener Staatsoper.⁹³ By comparison, when Strauss took up the pre-eminent opera position in Berlin in 1898 he was given the title Erster Königlich Preussischer Hofkapellmeister. In *Intermezzo* Act I, ii, when Christine first meets the opportunistic Lummer (they collide in the snowfields, she on a toboggan, he on skies), she introduces herself as ‘Frau Hofkapellmeister Storch’. ‘Mein Mann’, she adds, is ‘der berühmte Tondichter’. In the previous scene, she refers to herself as the ‘Tondichtersgattin’. Given that the autobiographical events on which the opera is based actually took place in 1902—a time when Strauss-as-composer was, first and foremost, a Tondichter—it is not unreasonable to assume that what we might at first take to be a work set in the 1920s is, more correctly, set nearly a quarter of a century earlier.⁹⁴ Strauss, in a number of the opera’s interludes, indulges in the *Tonmalerei* for which he was (in)famous as a Tondichter (the toboggan run, the storm in the Prater) and, as stated above, manages to include a few brief quotations from his self-portrait of 1898, *Ein Heldenleben* (a work written at a time when he was, indeed, Hofkapellmeister).

Of course, a turn-of-the-century setting squares with the fact that the Storchs have a young son, just as Franz ‘Bubi’ Strauss was a mere child in 1902 (a fact well known from his bathtub antics in the *Symphonia domestica* of 1903⁹⁵). This displacement of a generation—1924 for 1902—is a highly charged modification,

⁹³ Strauss held the position jointly with Franz Schalk. Indeed, Strauss resigned the post (or, indeed, was effectively forced to resign the post) in November 1924, the same month that *Intermezzo* received its première.

⁹⁴ While the libretto clearly indicates place—the Grudlsee and Vienna—there is no mention of time. Rudolf Hartmann claims that in a later production (under Clemens Krauss), Strauss showed interest in the idea of setting the opera in the period between 1907 and 1910; *Richard Strauss: Dokumente Seines Lebens und Schaffens*, ed. Franz Trenner (München: C. H. Beck Verlag, 1954), 195.

⁹⁵ One wonders whether Christine’s comment regarding Bubi and his bath in Act I, v—‘Er soll dann gleich ins Bad’ (Then he must have his bath at once)—is a playful reference to one of Tondichter Strauss’s most notorious episodes.

given that conservative Germans and Austrians in the 1920s (amongst whom we must count Strauss) had all manner of difficulties coming to terms with the democratic, republican (for them, chaotic) present, and the old days of the Emperor were remembered as a golden age.⁹⁶ That Storch is ‘the Emperor’s composer’ is a detail that unquestionably colours the opera’s time frame as the glorious past rather than the inglorious present (and, more particularly, a recent past that was itself in love with the past). Storch, like the *Ariadne Vorspiel*’s Composer, is, surprisingly, in period dress. The nostalgic, period ‘feel’ is amplified further by the waltz that emerges in the interlude between Act I, scenes ii and iii (which then proceeds to underscore scene iii and lead without break into the interlude between scenes iii and iv). It is hardly surprising to discover that Strauss developed this waltz from sketches made around the time of *Der Rosenkavalier* (and possibly as early as *Salome*). Indeed, we can trace part of the waltz to a discarded section of a sketch that was finally to become Ochs’s *Liedel*.⁹⁷

As we have seen in the *Vorspiel* to *Ariadne* (and, to a lesser extent, the *Zwischenspiel* of *Ariadne* I), Hofmannsthal’s Composer is presented in his eighteenth-century milieu as a transient in a grand house, a service provider in the temporary employ of the fabulously wealthy Bürger. He is forced to endure a range of humiliations at the hand of the Bürger (the command to accommodate the *commedia intermezzo* in the *opera seria*), the Major Domo (who treats him with condescension), and the other, lesser household staff. In *Intermezzo*—‘eine bürgerliche Komödie’—it

⁹⁶ Harry Kessler records in his diary an embarrassing scene that took place in June 1928 when, while dining with Strauss, Hofmannsthal and others, ‘Strauss aired his quaint political views, about the need for a dictatorship, and so on, which nobody takes very seriously’. A subsequent entry indicates that Hofmannsthal later wrote to him to apologise for Strauss’s behaviour; *Diaries of a Cosmopolitan*, 346 and 365.

is the *composer* who has become the Bürger and it is the household staff who are humiliated, if not by the Hofkapellmeister himself, than by Frau Hofkapellmeister Storch. The first words we hear when the curtain goes up on Act I are Christine's angry summons to her maid: 'Anna, Anna! Wo bleibt denn nur die dumme Gans?' (Anna, Anna! Where can the silly goose be?). This typifies the level of mistress-servant interaction that runs throughout the opera; subsequent exchanges between the lady of the house and her household staff are overwhelmingly marked by an impolite, quick-tempered, and frequently aggressive tone. Indeed, it is a tone that Storch himself has to endure. (Christine even declares at one point that it is she who is the 'master in the house!'⁹⁸) One of the most compelling images of Strauss and his wife as a bourgeois couple *par excellence* is a photograph taken in front of their Garmisch Landhaus with members of the household staff gathered in the background (see Fig. 1). Strauss is simultaneously paterfamilias and country squire. One could hardly guess that he is a 'berühmter Komponist' even though the house before which he so proudly sits is the house that *Salome* built.

Indeed, one could hardly guess from his portrayal in *Intermezzo* that Hofkapellmeister Storch is a composer. Unlike Hofmannsthal's Composer in the *Ariadne Vorspiel*, Strauss has taken great pains to push into the background any explicit evidence of Storch as a creative being. We are told that he is famous composer, we are reminded that he is a *Künstler*, and we know that he is a Hofkapellmeister, but we certainly never encounter him in the act of composing nor

⁹⁷ Gilliam, 'Strauss's *Intermezzo*', 269-72.

⁹⁸ When thinking out aloud of her new companion, Baron Lummer, Christine declares: 'Ich will mit meinesgleichen fröhlich plaudern, rüstig wandern! Wenn es ihm [Storch] nicht recht ist, werde ich ihm schon zeigen, wer der Herr im Hause ist!' (I need a friend of my sort, fond of talking, fond of walking! If he [Storch] doesn't like it, I'll simply have to show him who is master in the house!), Act I, v.



Fig. 1: Strauss and Pauline before their house in Garmisch (domestic staff in background).

are we subjected to impassioned odes to music à la Hofmannsthal. His profession, in other words, appears incidental to his character. Of his disposition and personality we are told quite a bit: Christine, as quoted above, tells the Baron how kind her husband is, and Storch's card-playing associates speak generously of him ('Er ist ein reizender Mensch' [He is a capital fellow], Act II, i) and, it should be added, ungenerously of Christine ('Aber die Frau: einfach ferchterlich! [But his wife—simply terrible!]). But we are given very little indication of Storch's attitude to his art. He is someone who is spoken of but he himself almost never articulates who he is or what it is that he holds dear. It is perplexing to say the least that for all Strauss's attention in *Intermezzo* to recreating events and details from life (from *his* life), we are nevertheless struck by the extent to which he has tried to erase himself *as a composer*.

It is a cliché to think of Strauss as a businessman who happened to compose rather than a composer who was driven by idealistic, creative imperatives (and who, in the process, just happened to profit greatly from his creative endeavours).⁹⁹ But, on the surface, it is the businessman and not the composer who is cast before us in *Intermezzo*. Storch, bourgeois that he is, is shown in the company of others of his class. The skat party at the start of Act II, for instance, is set at the house of a Kommerzienrat (Commercial Counsellor) in a room described as a 'Komfortables Wohnzimmer mit guten modernen Bildern und Bronzen' (Comfortable living room with good modern paintings and bronzes). The modern art in the room is presumably *fin-de-siècle* modern rather than 1920s 'modernist' modern. (Given that the location is Vienna we might imagine the room displays works of the Vienna Secession.) In

⁹⁹ Alma Mahler, for instance, has written that 'Strauss was the businessman first and foremost and an artist only in the second place: when the two came into collision it was the businessman who won';

addition to Storch and the Kommerzienrat, the party includes Kapellmeister Stroh, a Kammersänger, and a Justizrat (Legal Counsellor). In other words, a group of senior rank musicians and the kind of professional men who make their way onto opera boards.

Storch's financial success is made clear right from the start of the opera where it is obvious that he is the head of a prosperous household (in addition to Anna, the opera includes parts for two other domestic servants and we hear mention of a gardener). In the opening scene, and elsewhere in the libretto, it is work (Arbeit) rather than music, that is held up for admiration. When Christine complains of all the work she has to do managing the household, Robert dismisses these duties as not even worthy of the word work:

Der Mann: Nur produzierendes Denken beim Künstler, beim Gelehrten, bei einem Erfinder, das ist Kopfarbeit: und die sollte eigentlich ein Vergnügen sein; für mich ist sie es wirklich.

[The only thinking that's fruitful is the artist's, the scholar's, the true inventor's—that is real brain-work; and work like that should be enjoyable too; for me, work is a pleasure.]

(Note that he does not declare himself a *Künstler* but refers to artistic endeavour in general.) Storch's declaration in praise of (true) work is as close as we ever get in *Intermezzo* to a spirited defence of his beliefs. (It should be noted that, as set to music, musical interest is brought to the foreground at this point, figure 13; Storch's comments are not allowed to pass by in plain recitative but are enlivened by musically significant material.) That Storch is first and foremost a worker (rather than, presumably, a composer) is pointed out repeatedly by his wife: 'Sie wissen doch, wo er doch so angestrengt arbeitet...' (And you know, when he's working so hard...);

Gustav Mahler, 93. Adorno famously described Strauss as a composer who adopted 'the gesture of the idealized big industrialist'; 'Richard Strauss. Born June 11, 1864', I, 14.

‘Ich bin immer allein, entweder ist er auf Reisen oder, wenn zu Hause—in Gedanken und bei seiner Arbeit’ (I am always alone, not only when he is travelling, also when he’s with me, lost in thinking and in his work); ‘Wissen Sie, mein Mann, der immer an der Arbeit sitzt—er ist so furchtbar fleissig...’ (As you know, my husband, who is always hard at work, who’s always so industrious...); ‘zu Hause spricht er nie von sich, von seiner Arbeit—und was ist der Mann fleissig! So fleissig!’ (at home he never speaks of himself or of his work—and he’s always so busy, too busy!). At no point does she mention that he is preoccupied with music or with composing or with conducting, just work. Industrialist composer indeed.

The interpretation of dreams

In fact, the word ‘Musik’ appears in one instance only in the entire libretto. It is in the early stages of Act II when Storch, arriving late to the skat party (the rehearsal was not able to be cut short, he declares), apologises to his card-playing associates and utters the line: ‘Ach, so ein Skätchen ist ein Genuss, die einzige Erholung nach Musik!’ (Ah, a little skat is a treat, the only recreation after music!). The very notion of there being an ‘after music’ (and, presumably, a ‘before music’) is revealing. Not ‘after a rehearsal’ or ‘after a performance’, but ‘after music’. Indeed, this is one place in the libretto where the word ‘Arbeit’ would seem to be more appropriate than ‘Musik’, for at least ‘after work’ makes it clear that work is a self-contained, clearly defined activity. But that music is a self-contained, clearly defined activity merely confirms one’s impression of Storch-Strauss as the businessman musician. One is reminded of a comment made by Fritz Busch, the conductor of the first performance of *Intermezzo*, concerning what he termed the ‘puzzle of Strauss’: ‘In spite of his

marvellous talents [Strauss] is not really penetrated and possessed by them like other great artists but, in fact, simply wears them like a suit of clothes which can be taken off at will'.¹⁰⁰ (Of Strauss's appearance, Busch remarked that, 'at the first glance he appeared a *grand seigneur*: he might have been taken for the president of a bank. No one would have imagined he was an artist'.¹⁰¹) Nevertheless, as set to music, 'nach Musik' is not only accompanied by the 'Tristan' chord and its dominant-seventh resolution; the vocal part actually traces the upper chromatic line of that progression (Act II, 12+5). Strauss, in other words, effectively hammers his listeners over the head with this most famous and recognisable of musical citations: 'music' as music (or should that be music as 'music'?). But surely this is an evasive gesture: by resorting to quotation Storch-Strauss exculpates himself from engaging with the word on a personal level and music becomes a thing—a quotation—something that occupies the Hofkapellmeister but from which he nevertheless keeps his distance.

Storch, however, can only keep his distance from music for so long. In an opera that is predominantly given over to conversational-style vocal writing, we encounter very few vocally beautiful—that is to say, operatic—moments (the orchestral writing, on the other hand, contains a number of examples of melodically beautiful passages).

This is a feature of *Intermezzo* that Strauss draws attention to in his *Vorwort*:

In none of my other works [...] is the dialogue of greater importance than it is in this bourgeois comedy, which offers so few opportunities for a proper cantilena to develop. [...] It is generally only in the longer orchestral interludes that the lyrical element and the account of the characters' psychological lives are more fully developed. Only in the closing scenes of the first and second acts is the singer given a chance to indulge in an extended cantilena.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Fritz Busch, *Pages from a Musician's Life*, trans. Marjorie Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1953), 173.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 172.

¹⁰² Strauss, *Vorwort* to *Intermezzo*, no pagination.

Indeed, it is the final scene of the second act above all—the closing scene of the entire opera, a duet between husband and wife—where Strauss finally lets go of the wisps of lyrical melody heard up until now and indulges (his word) in truly operatic writing. However much Storch might have wished to resist his musical self, he is rendered unquestionably musical in the opera's final scene.

Here, as we have seen in *Don Quixote* and the *Ariadne Vorspiel*, we encounter a moment of interruption (Example 4.8). The by-now familiar signals of the Straussian sublime are called upon to perform their 'transcendent' work: a slow and tranquil tempo, the modulation to a new key at the head of the episode (as in the previously cited examples, a major key), the appearance of a lyrical theme over a gently syncopated accompaniment (additionally, with the direction for the strings to play 'singend' so as to extract every drop of lyricism). Dramatically, this is the moment of rapprochement between Christine and Robert, she has finally accepted that he is entirely innocent of her charge of infidelity and, at the point where the duet begins ('Er ist sicher kein Gauner', 207+8), she explains that Baron Lummer, far from being her lover, was merely a 'thoughtless and naïve' (leichtsinnig und naiv) acquaintance. The couple, formerly given to anti-operatic bickering, are now wholly conventional operatic lovers (indeed, at 228, in the closing stages of the scene, Christine declares, 'You are my handsome, faithful marvellous man! I love you alone for ever and ever' [Du bist mein schöner, reiner, prachtvoller Mann! Ich liebe dich allein und immer und ewig]) and thus, finally, sing operatically.

But this is a scene that has provoked squeamishness in a number of commentators. Busch, for example, complained that 'when at the end of the opera the married pair—the Strausses [*sic*]—sing a sentimental cantilena in F-sharp major after

Sehr ruhig Metr. $\text{♩} = 56$ 208

I. B. Klar. *pp*

I. Fag. *pp*

II. Horn (F) *pp*

Großes Harmonium *pp*

Die Frau (sehr schüchtern)
Er ist si - cher kein Gau-ner, nur vielleicht ein bißchen leichtsinnig und na - iv ich hab's

Sehr ruhig Metr. $\text{♩} = 56$ 208

I. Viol. *pp* (singend) G. Saite

Solo *pp* (singend) G. Saite

II. Viol. (m. Dpf.) *pp*

die übrigen *pp*

Solo *pp* (singend) G. Saite

Br. *pp* (singend)

die übrigen *pp* (singend)

Solo *pp*

Celli (m. Dpf.) *pp*

die übrigen *pp*

Ktrb. *pp* (m. Dpf.) *pp*

209 allmählich fließender

2 Fag. *pp*

I. Horn (F) *pp*

Harmonium *pp*

Die Frau - ihm auch gleich ab-ge-schla - gen.

Robert Nun dann ist ja al - - les

209 allmählich fließender

I. Viol. *pp*

Solo *pp*

II. Viol. *pp*

die übr.(m.D.) *pp*

Solo *pp* (m. Dpf.)

Br. *pp*

die übrigen *pp*

Solo *pp*

Celli *pp*

die übr.(m.D.) *pp*

Ktrb.(m.D.) *pp*

Example 4.8: *Intermezzo*, Act II, vi.

2 B Klar. poco cal. 210 a tempo Metr. d. 56

2 Fag.

I. Horn (P)

Harmonium

Die Frau (mutiger) Sehr nett und

Robert gut! Da er nett zu Dir war— er ward doch nett?

I. Viol. poco cal. 210 a tempo Metr. d. 56

Solo

II. Viol. (ohne Dpf.)

die übrigen (m.D.)

Solo Br. (ohne Dpf.)

die übrigen (m.D.)

Solo Celli

die übrigen (m.D.)

Ktrb.(m.D.)

2 Fl. etwas breit

I. Ob.

2 B Klar.

2 Fag.

Harmonium

Die Frau liebenswürdig, bis...

Robert Nun ja, bis... Also hö-re: weil er zu meiner lie-ben Frau nett war, (betont)

Solo II. Viol. etwas breit

die übrigen

Solo Br.

die übrigen

Solo Celli

die übrigen (m.D.)

Ktrb.(m.D.)

Example 4.8 (cont.)

211 Metr. $\text{♩} = 68$

I. Horn (P) *pp espr.* *cresc.*

Harmonium *pp* *cresc.*

Robert
wer - de ich für ihn sor - gen, in je - der Form, die Du wü - schest,

211 Metr. $\text{♩} = 68$

I. Viol. *pp espr.* *cresc.*

Solo II. Viol. *pp* *cresc.*

die übrigen *pp espr.* *cresc.*

Solo Br. *pp espr.* *cresc.*

die übrigen *pp* *cresc.*

Solo Celli *pp* *cresc.*

die übrigen (m. D.) *pp* *cresc.*

Ktrb. (m. D.) *pp* *cresc.*

212

2 Fl. *pp espr.*

I. Ob. *pp espr.*

2 Fag. *pp*

2 Hörner (P) *pp*

Harmonium

Harfe

Die Frau (etwas weinerlich)
Ich wünsche ja nichts!

Robert
ihn un - ter - stü - tzen... Nun, wir wer - den sehn re - den

212

I. Viol. *pp espr.*

Solo II. Viol. *pp espr.* (nicht gut)

die übrigen *pp*

Solo Br. *pp espr.*

die übrigen *pp*

Solo Celli *pp espr.*

die übrigen *pp*

Ktrb. *pp*

Example 4.8 (cont.)

repeated domestic quarrels, “All the same it’s a happy marriage”, I felt embarrassed’.¹⁰³ I would argue that it is precisely the fact that the closing scene appears to embrace the romantic operatic duet so uncritically that, contrary to appearances, it does so in order to perform its critical work. As stated above, the sentimental cantilena of the duet intrudes—almost jarringly so—into the prevailing topos of the work; it is immediately heard as other. Furthermore, the thematic material in the orchestral underscoring at ‘Er ist sicher kein Gauner’ is familiar to us; it is a reprise of the opera’s most glorious theme, introduced towards the end of Act I, v, subsequently taken up as the principal theme of the orchestral interlude between scenes five and six, and finally restated here in the closing duet. Indeed, at the close of the opera it functions not merely as accompaniment but is maintained and amplified in the vocal writing (notably in Storch’s part at 211). Strauss provides a crucial marking at the point that marks the theme’s first appearance, Act I, 255: ‘In Träumerei versunken’ (Example 4.9). This disarmingly beautiful theme *emerges from Christine’s subconscious*, it is the stuff of dreams, a magnificent fantasy. Appearing, then, at the outset of the closing duet, it signals the fantastic, the idyllic, the unreal. It marks the opera’s irrationally operatic moment, an episode at some remove from *Intermezzo*’s prevailing *Alltäglichkeit*. We are reminded of the theme of ‘ideal love’ in *Don Quixote*—another beautiful theme that masks a fantasy—and the naïve, sentimental duet at the conclusion of *Der Rosenkavalier* (Example 2.8), another conventionally operatic moment but one that is also marked by unreality (‘Ist ein

¹⁰³ Busch, *Pages from a Musician’s Life*, 171 (‘Am Ende der Oper das Ehepaar Strauss nach ewigem häuslichem Gezänk in sentimentaler Fis-dur-Kantilene singen zu hören: “Es ist halt doch eine glückliche Ehe”—schuf mir Missbehagen’). Busch, however, tosses a bouquet along with the brickbat when he subsequently writes that ‘still, it was amusing to study the flowering, airy music, put together with such a sure hand’.

254

I. Fl.

I. Ob.

2 B Klar.

I. Fag.

II. Fag.

I. III. Hörner (F)

II. Hörner (F)

Pauke

Die Frau

ab? A-ber mor-gen sind Sie hoffentlich et-was fröh-li-cher! Lassen Sie Ihre Sorgen zu Hause! Ich kann nur

254

I. Viol.

II. Viol.

Br.

Celli

ruhiger werdend

ruhig schwebend Metr. $\text{♩} = 54$

2 B Klar.

II. Fag.

II. Horn (F)

Die Frau

(Der Baron verabschiedet sich)

hei-te-re Men-schen um mich schn! Auf Wie-der-sehn!

ruhiger werdend

ruhig schwebend Metr. $\text{♩} = 54$

I. Viol.

3 Soli

II. Viol.

die übrigen

3 Soli

Br.

S. Pult

Celli

ausdrucksvoll mart

pp

Example 4.9: *Intermezzo*, Act I, v.

255

2 Fl.

Engl. Horn

Die Frau

(in Träumerei versunken)

Ein hübscher Mensch!

255

I. Viol.

3 Soli

II. Viol.

die übrigen

(fünffach)

(m. Dpf.)

3 Soli

Br.

3 Pult

Celli

256

2 Fl.

I. Ob.

I. Horn (F)

Die Frau

Und jung — — — isterhalt — — —

256

I. Viol.

3 Soli

II. Viol.

die übrigen

(dreifach)

3 Soli

Br.

3 Pult

Celli

(ohne Dpf.)

The image displays a page of a musical score, specifically measures 255 and 256. The score is written for a large orchestra and includes vocal parts. The instruments listed on the left are 2 Flutes, English Horn, Violins I and II, 3 Soli (Soprano, Alto, Tenor), 3 Pults (Piano, Violoncello, Double Bass), and Celli. The vocal part is for 'Die Frau'. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. Measure 255 features a vocal line for 'Die Frau' with the lyrics 'Ein hübscher Mensch!' and a piano line with a fivefold repeat. Measure 256 features a vocal line for 'Die Frau' with the lyrics 'Und jung — — — isterhalt — — —' and a piano line with a triple repeat. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, dynamics (pp, p), and articulation marks.

Example 4.9 (cont.)

traum') and, as I argued in Chapter II, a wealth of double-coded signals.

One further point to be made is that Busch's quote above, 'All the same it's a happy marriage', is a paraphrase—and an inaccurate one at that—of Christine's closing line (the line that brings down the curtain). While the duet commences with the ambiguous, symbolically-laden *träumerei* theme, it concludes with the uncertainty of a question:

Die Frau: Gelt, mein lieber Robert, das nennt man doch wahrhaftig eine
 glückliche Ehe?

[Isn't it, my dear Robert, that one may nevertheless call ours a truly happy marriage?]

Thus, the duet is framed by equivocal gestures. Its 'embarrassing' assuredness is, in fact, tempered by discreet signs of insecurity. Indeed, arguing from the perspective of Strauss's adherence to key symbolism, Bryan Gilliam has suggested that *Intermezzo*'s happy ending is best understood as ironic:

Strauss consistently uses F-sharp major to represent dreamlike or magical worlds. [...] Some writers have criticized the final duet as being too sentimental, but I would gainsay that assessment. Strauss's use of F-sharp major suggests irony: that only the wave of a magic wand—in six sharps, no less—could create peaceful marital bliss between Strauss and his wife.¹⁰⁴

Gilliam subsequently asks whether we should therefore 'interpret the ending as parody?'¹⁰⁵ but, without answering the question himself, adds that 'Strauss leaves us with a question'.¹⁰⁶ I would argue that it is not so much that Strauss leaves us with a question, but that he leaves us with a dialectic: a closing duet that, while overtly sentimental, plays with parodic gestures—the most obvious one being that it is an operatic episode in a stubbornly unoperatic work. The effectiveness of the duet as a musical and dramatic complex stems from these sentimental and parodic voices co-

¹⁰⁴ Gilliam, 'Strauss's *Intermezzo*', 274-6. The F-sharp passage to which Gilliam refers (and also Busch in the previous note) commences at 225+6.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 279.

existing in a shifting, uneasy alliance. This, as I have argued throughout, is a strategy that Strauss habitually performs at crucially important junctures—junctures marked by disjunction.

We return, then, to the issue that confronted us at the conclusion of the discussion of the Zerbinetta-Composer duet: beautiful music *acting* as beautiful music; beautiful music performing a dramatic function over and above (and even contrary to) the function that it is seen (and heard) to perform at its most fundamental dramatic level (an idyllic love duet, for instance); beautiful music that uses its beauty in order to tell another story. As if to underline the point, we are provided with a foretaste of music in the service of deception somewhat earlier in *Intermezzo*.

There are a number of instances in the opera where character and plot development are advanced through various forms of on-stage written communication: thus, Christine, at the start of Act I, v, reads the contents of a letter she has written to her husband; later in the act she reads out and is duly shocked by the letter from Storch's alleged paramour; in Act II, iv, Anna, the maid, reads aloud to Christine Robert's telegram in which he clarifies the misunderstanding that has led to the accusation of unfaithfulness. In all of these instances the contents of the written documents are literally read aloud, they are spoken, not sung, passages (when, for instance in Act I, v, Christine pauses and reflects upon what she has written, she sings, but when she returns to citing passages from the letter, she speaks). There is one further letter that is crucial to the development of the plot: Baron Lummer's letter to Christine in which he begs her for financial assistance (Act I, vi):

(*Setzt sich an den Schreibtisch*)

Der Baron: Also—erster und letzter Versuch:

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

(*Beginnt zu schreiben*)

‘Verehrte, gnädige Frau! So freundlich Sie heute zu mir waren, so brachte ich es doch nicht über die Lippen, Ihnen mein ganzes Herz auszuschütten... Verzeihen Sie, wenn ich es nun schriftlich wage...

(*Während er weiterschreibt, fällt der Vorhang.*)

[(*Sits himself at the writing table*) So—my first and last attempt. (*Begins to write*) ‘Most honoured, gracious lady! Today you were so kind and understanding I did not care, did not dare, tell you in words all that my beating heart yearned to tell you... Forgive me, if I try to put into writing... (*He continues to write, the curtain falls*)]

Lummer, of course, is a shameless opportunist. These are not the words of a sincere man but of a con man. How telling it is, then, that this is the one letter in the opera that is *sung*. When insincerity is called for—lies and deception—Strauss turns to music for a helping hand (it goes without saying that Lummer’s music is sweet and charming).

It is well to remember that Strauss, like his persona Storch, was an avid and successful card player, a *Skatmeister*. He confronted his card-playing opponents with an inscrutable visage. He was a master at bluff and he played for money. Naturally, he played to win. Pretending to hold one hand—and proffering expertly coded signals—he would reveal another and walk off with the takings. In the opening scene of *Intermezzo* we are presented with the following exchange between Christine and Anna:

Die Jungfer:	Der Herr ist doch auch ganz praktisch!
Die Frau:	Nur schlau! Diese Bauernpfiffigkeit, das fehlt mir eben. Ich platze immer heraus mit allem; er heimtückisch, kann sich beherrschen, verstellen!

[The master is also extremely practical! But sly! He has a peasant cunning that I can lay no claim to. I come right out with what I’m feeling; he’s so crafty, he can control himself, conceal things!]

These are indeed revealing words. Storch-Strauss as a sly master of concealment.

Christine-Pauline would doubtless prefer if her husband were straightforward and upfront, the sort of man who lays his cards on the table and calls a spade a spade.

This is normally how we prefer our composers. But Strauss the composer, like Strauss the card player, revelled in the subtle and skilful play of truth and untruth, of the apparent and the real and, more interesting still, of transparency masking deception.

LETZTE AUFZEICHNUNG

“‘Why does almost everything seem to me like its own parody? Why must I think that almost all, no, all the methods and conventions of art today *are good for parody only?*’”¹

‘You must distinguish the man from the works’.²

The year of *Intermezzo*’s première, 1924, was the year in which Strauss celebrated his sixtieth birthday. No one could have known at the time that the career of sexagenarian Strauss was going to continue well into the future; astoundingly, it still had a quarter century to run. However, while Strauss in 1924 could doubtless lay claim to being Germany’s most famous living composer, whether or not he was Germany’s most important living composer was a point that was rather more open to question. To the younger generation of composers he was surely a figure who, more and more, was coming to be seen as anachronistic.

Indeed, Strauss in 1924 was nearly a decade older than the age Brahms had reached when Strauss composed the *Burleske*; and just as the young Strauss had presented in that work a parodic critique of musical hierarchies of the mid-1880s, so too young composers of the 1920s offered parodic renderings of composers, forms, and genres which, for them, represented a tradition that in the post-World War I period was not only moribund but stylistically and ideologically unsustainable. In 1925 Paul Hindemith composed an ‘Aria with Grand Orchestral Accompaniment in

¹ Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*, trans. H. T. Lowe-Porter (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1985), 131-2.

² The Count, *Capriccio*, sc. ii (‘Du musst den Menschen vom Werke trennen’).

the Style of Richard Strauss'. The fact that the 'grand orchestral accompaniment' consisted of nothing more than the four players of a string quartet (who no doubt had to overreach themselves at every opportunity) and that the aria's text was taken from a journal for bee keepers, makes it abundantly clear that Hindemith's intentions, far from being complimentary, were irreverent.³ Strauss was again in Hindemith's sights a few years later when, in the opera *Neues vom Tage* (1929), he had the lovers sing an effusive, gushing number that went by the title 'Duett-Kitsch'.⁴ As the 'grand old man' of German music, Strauss, in those heady days of the Weimar republic, was the obvious target for young composers eager to settle oedipal scores.⁵

But within a few short years the aesthetics of kitsch, Strauss's status as the 'grand old man', and his relevance both to German music and German culture would be revived to explicit political ends when, following the collapse of the Weimar republic in 1933 and the rise to power of the National Socialists, at the age of sixty-nine Strauss was appointed President of the Reich Chamber of Music (*Reichsmusikkammer*). The Reich Chamber of Culture (*Reichskulturkammer*), the larger organisation of which the *Reichsmusikkammer* was but a part, was under the authority of Joseph Goebbels. Although Strauss was forced to resign the position less

³ This work was presumably never published and is now lost. Its full title as listed in the 'Hindemith' entry in *MGG* is: 'Lied mit grosser Orchesterbegleitung im Stil Rich. Strauss. Text aus einer Imkerzeitung'. It is listed (along with a handful of other works) under the general heading 'Parodien'.

⁴ Susan C. Cook claims that the duet 'parodies nineteenth-century operatic literature', *Opera for a New Republic: The Zeitopern of Krenek, Weill, and Hindemith* (Ann Arbor and London: UMI Research Press, 1988), 163. The 'Neues vom Tage' entry in the *New Grove Opera* (by Geoffrey Skelton) claims that it parodies Puccini. However, given the preponderance of six-four chords (Strauss's 'signature' chord above all others), it would appear that the duet is a Strauss parody. I am grateful to Richard Toop for pointing this out.

⁵ As a conductor, Strauss was certainly no champion of new German opera. A study of Strauss's conducting schedule in Vienna, for instance, reveals that apart from his own operas, Strauss conducted no other twentieth-century works with the single exception of a solitary performance of Max von Schillings's *Mona Lisa* (1915) in March 1923; Götz Klaus Kende, 'Was Richard Strauss in Wien dirigierte', *RS-Blätter* (Neue folge) 19 (June 1988), 29-40.

than two years later—a resignation which marked a partial fall from grace with the Nazi hierarchy—he resided in Germany for the duration of the Nazi era (Austria too during some of the war years) and remained active as a composer (and to a lesser extent as a conductor), thereby presenting himself publicly as a figure who at the very least was willing to tolerate the regime.⁶

The period 1933-45 was a highly productive one for Strauss. It saw the completion of no less than five operas: *Die schweigsame Frau* (1935), *Friedenstag* (1936), *Daphne* (1937), *Die Liebe der Danae* (1940), *Capriccio* (1941). Significant instrumental works of the period include the Second Horn Concerto (1942) and *Metamorphosen* (1945). Less significant compositions (although works not wholly without interest) include the *Olympische Hymn* for choir and orchestra (conducted by the composer at the 1936 Berlin Olympic Games) and the *Japanische Festmusik* (1940), commissioned by the Japanese government as part of the festivities marking the 2600th anniversary of the Imperial dynasty.⁷ Also of interest is ‘Das Bächlein’, a song written in December 1933 in response to Strauss’s installation as head of the *Reichsmusikkammer* and dedicated to Goebbels.⁸ The closing line of the song is ‘Der, denk’ ich, wird mein Führer sein!’ (He, I think, will be my leader!); ‘mein Führer’ is repeated three times in Strauss’s setting (the only words in the entire song to be

⁶ Strauss, for instance, appeared as a conductor at the 1938 *Reichsmusiktag* in Düsseldorf, a music festival in which ‘authorised’ composers (i.e. ‘Aryan’ composers) were celebrated. ‘Unauthorised’ composers were held up for ridicule at the ‘Entartete Musik’ exhibition held around the same time.

⁷ These are the only works by Strauss to have been written on commission.

⁸ The song’s inscription reads: ‘Dedicated with reverence to Reichsminister Dr. Joseph Goebbels in commemoration of 15 November 1933’.

emphasised in this way), surely a pointed and unsubtle endorsement of Germany's emerging Führer cult.⁹

The question of Strauss's politics and the political implications of his Nazi era compositions are matters which have received increased attention in recent years.¹⁰ Michael P. Steinberg, for instance, has addressed the especially complex matter of the politics of Strauss's 'musical imagination' and offered a sophisticated and cogent critique of a range of works of the period.¹¹ One work which Steinberg fails to discuss, however, is *Capriccio*, Strauss's last opera and a work of some relevance to an investigation of the composer and his parodic voices.

One of the points that Steinberg makes is that Strauss's music of this period engages to an ever greater degree in complex processes of self-quotation.¹² *Capriccio* may be cited as a further example of this phenomenon. Like the *Vorspiel* to *Ariadne* and *Intermezzo*, *Capriccio* includes a composer (Flamand) among the dramatis personae, and, like in *Der Rosenkavalier*, the action is played out in an aristocratic eighteenth-century milieu (the libretto was co-written by Strauss and conductor Clemens Krauss). Indeed, the opera's principal character, the Countess Madeleine, bears more than a passing resemblance to the Feldmarschallin (it is hardly surprising that notable interpreters of one role are very frequently notable interpreters of the

⁹ Efforts have been made to pass the poem off as the work of Goethe, no doubt in an attempt to elevate the verses above the commonplace and to remove them from the context of Germany in the early years of Nazi rule. Matthew Boyden states that 'Strauss almost certainly wrote the three verses', *Richard Strauss* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999), 316. Boyden, however, provides no supporting evidence and his statement must be tempered by the fact that his Strauss biography is driven by a desire to present the composer in the most negative light possible.

¹⁰ Most recently in Michael Kater, *Composers of the Nazi Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

¹¹ Michael P. Steinberg, 'Richard Strauss and the Question', in *Richard Strauss and His World*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 164-89. Steinberg focuses especially on *Friedenstag* and *Metamorphosen* and, to a lesser degree, *Daphne* and 'Das Bächlein'.

other, Elisabeth Schwarzkopf for instance). Also like *Rosenkavalier*, *Capriccio* includes an 'Italian' episode, a duet for soprano and tenor ('Addio, mia vita, addio'¹³) in which the emotional intensity of Italian opera is subjected to exaggerated treatment. But, unlike *Der Rosenkavalier*, the function of the Italian episode in *Capriccio* is not decorative, for in this opera about opera the soprano and tenor duet is presented before an on-stage audience as a somewhat overwrought example of the Italian style. The duet is assessed by the assembled party, a group which in addition to Madeleine and Flamand includes La Roche (a theatre director), Clairon (an actress), and Olivier (a poet). Madeleine remarks that the words and music do not seem to fit, to which Flamand responds that the cheerful expression of sorrow is itself an art.

But the opera's play with idioms ranges beyond the Italianate. The action is set in a chateau near Paris around 1775—'the time when Gluck was beginning his operatic reforms', as the libretto reminds us—a setting which allows for pastiches of eighteenth-century French music (a passepied, gigue, and gavotte played by an on-stage trio, including harpsichord) and historically legitimate discussion of the relative merits and shortcomings of the French and Italian styles. Strauss, however, ranges beyond the eighteenth century in his musical citations: references to Italian opera afford an excuse for oompah accompaniments recalling Donizetti or early Verdi, and when it is suggested that the legends of Ariadne and Daphne might provide suitable material for an opera, Strauss cannot resist indulging in a little self-quotation.

Strauss also cannot resist indulging in a little self-mockery (of a kind that he requested—unsuccessfully—from Hofmannsthal during work on *Ariadne*). Thus,

¹² Steinberg points out that one of his objectives is to consider the 'politics of musical self-quotation' in late Strauss; *ibid.*, 165.

when La Roche complains that Gluck's heavy orchestration drowns out the fine text of *Iphigénie*, we are reminded of Strauss's infamously brutal accompaniment to another Greek classic, *Elektra*. 'Musik ist eine erhabene (exalted) Kunst!' exclaims Flamand at one point, but lest we hear this as an echo of the lofty idealism of *Ariadne's* Composer, Madeleine's brother, the Count, shortly brings us back to earth with the blunt declaration that 'Eine Oper ist ein absurdes Ding'.

Is *Capriccio* an absurd thing, a trivial product of an appalling time, an indulgent 'conversation piece' that excludes from discussion any topic worth discussing?¹⁴ Tim Ashley points out that Strauss has been accused of burying his head 'in the metaphorical sand by writing a drawing-room comedy in the shadow of Dachau (the camp is in a Munich suburb) while the world was at war'.¹⁵ But we might add that *Capriccio* is not wholly devoid of an awareness of the social and political conditions of the time in which it was written. Its period setting—during the waning years of the *ancien régime*—ought to be noted. This is a society not only in decline but one which will swiftly and brutally be brought to an end. Presented before us on stage are the fading emblems of an entire (privileged) culture. Not surprisingly, the opera includes repeated references to an idealised past (against which the present is said to mark a period of decline). Also of note is *Capriccio's* claustrophobic location—it is played out in a single room, which could well be a bunker—a setting which further heightens the sense of a social group shut away from a world that is soon to encroach upon it and annihilate it. *Capriccio* is not just an opera about opera but an opera about the

¹³ The text is by Metastasio.

¹⁴ *Capriccio* carries the descriptive subtitle: 'Eine Konversationsstück für Musik in einem Aufzug'.

¹⁵ Tim Ashley, *Richard Strauss* (London: Phaidon, 1999), 186-7. *Capriccio* had its première in Munich on 28 October 1942.

end of opera. When Madeleine in the closing scene takes up the harp and sings the sonnet written for her by Olivier and Flamand, it is as though she has become an Orpheus for the end of time.

We might also defend the work against the charge of political cowardice by pointing out that it offers one brief, coded reference to the moral culpability of those who fail to speak out against what they know to be wrongdoing. We find in *Capriccio* an exceptionally rare instance of Strauss implicating himself in the business of collaboration. It occurs in the lengthy address given by La Roche in scene ix. La Roche, a bass, is a conservative figure who admonishes his younger companions for their lack of respect for the theatrical traditions of their elders. In his defence of art and tradition, La Roche takes on the appearance of *Meistersinger*'s Hans Sachs. Like Nuremberg's philosopher-poet, he is an authority figure who is duly applauded at the conclusion of his oration for the wise words he offers. But just as Sachs's paean to 'holy German art' is a contemporary plea dressed up in historical clothing, so too La Roche's complaint against the 'oafish and gruff' antics of the day speaks of the inhumanity of Nazism:

Seht hin auf die niederen Possen,
an denen unsere Hauptstadt¹⁶ sich ergotzt.
Die Grimasse ist ihr Wahrzeichen—
die Parodie ihr Element—
ihr Inhalt sittenlose Frechheit!
Tölpisch und rüde sind ihre Spässe!
Die Masken zwar sind gefallen,
doch Fratzen seht ihr statt Menschenantlitze!
Ihr verachtet dies Treiben,
und doch, ihr duldet es!
Ihr macht euch schuldig durch euer Schweigen.

¹⁶ *Capriccio* includes numerous references to Paris—generally in the context of characters either coming from it or going to it—but it is noteworthy that the less specific 'Hauptstadt' is used in this instance allowing for the possibility of Berlin as the location of La Roche's disapproval.

[Just look at the base antics that our capital city takes delight in. Its emblem is a grimace, parody is its element, its contents are immoral impudence! Its amusements are oafish and gruff. Although the masks are discarded, grimaces greet you in place of human faces! You despise these activities and yet you suffer them! You make yourselves guilty through your silence.]

It is well to bear in mind that the distinguished theatre director Max Reinhardt—director and dedicatee of *Ariadne*—provided the model for La Roche. Reinhardt, a Jew, left Austria to pursue a career in the United States in the mid-1930s. Reinhardt, unlike Strauss, chose to emigrate; but it is Strauss who gives La Roche/Reinhardt the words which he knows to be true but can hardly utter himself: ‘You make yourselves guilty through your silence’.

The metaphor of the looking-glass is one that pervades *Capriccio*. When Madeleine addresses her innermost being in the closing stages of the concluding monologue, she peers into the mirror and asks her reflection to help resolve the issue of her two rival suitors: Olivier or Flamand, words or music? Perhaps Strauss for one brief moment in the figure of La Roche also shot a glance in the mirror but, turning hurriedly away, could not face the image that stared back at him.¹⁷

It is to one of Strauss’s personal utterances—specifically, a diary entry—that I now wish to turn as a way of drawing this study to a close, for it is an utterance that is both summational and (strangely) prophetic. The so-called ‘Letzte Aufzeichnung’ was written on 19 June 1949, a little more than a week after Strauss’s eighty-fifth birthday and less than three months before his death.¹⁸ In it, Strauss reflects upon the context in which his works have been discussed in the musical literature and argues

¹⁷ Reinhardt, who enjoyed only modest success in America, died in New York on 31 October 1943. Sefan Zweig, librettist of *Die schweigsame Frau* and another Austrian Jew who was compelled to leave his homeland, died by his own hand in Brazil on 22 February 1942.

the case for what we might term their revisionist reappraisal. Aware of himself as an historical personage and his compositions as historical objects, Strauss invokes the authority of the author/composer and sets out to secure for himself and his works what he considers to be their rightful place in music history. His comments are closely related to the project I have set out to address.

Strauss firstly considers the merits of the early opera *Feuersnot* (1901):

In the biographical literature, which I read in profusion, I miss in nearly all cases precisely the right attitude with regard to the libretto of *Feuersnot*. While not a perfect work (particularly with respect to the uneven treatment of the orchestra), one forgets that right at the start of the century it introduces a new subjective style into the nature of old opera. It is an upbeat!¹⁹

He then presses the case for the close study of his works:

[...] Why does one not see the new in my works, that they contain (as only in Beethoven) a visible role played by man—this begins already in *Guntram* Act III (the renunciation of collectivism), *Heldenleben*, *Don Quixote*, *Domestica*—and in *Feuersnot* a deliberate tone of mockery, of irony, of protest against the customary opera text, an individual freshness. Hence the cheerful persiflage of Wagnerian diction [in *Feuersnot*]; for it is precisely because of Kunrad's address, which must not be omitted, that the whole little non-opera [Nichtoperchen] came into existence! This is indeed the creed of *Intermezzo* and *Capriccio*, which is why my dramatic works differ from the customary operas, masses, and variations of the direct followers of Beethoven, Berlioz, and Liszt. Music of the twentieth century.²⁰

'Music of the twentieth century'. Strauss's comments roughly coincide with the appearance of works such as Messiaen's *Mode de valeurs et d'intensités*, Boulez's Second Piano Sonata, and Babbitt's *Composition for Twelve Instruments*, and while he can hardly have known the very latest in post-war 'new music', Strauss seems only too aware of his ever shakier position as a figure of importance in music of the twentieth century. The 'Letzte Aufzeichnung' is marked by the anxiety of irrelevance.

¹⁸ Strauss died on 8 September 1949. The 'Letzte Aufzeichnung' is in Willi Schuh, ed., *Richard Strauss: Betrachtungen und Erinnerungen* (Zürich: Atlantis, 1949), 182.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

Yet, despite the anxiety and presumption of the comments above, Strauss is right to ask that we look for the new in his works. It is a request that this thesis has endeavoured to take up. The ‘deliberate tone of mockery, of irony’ that Strauss claims for *Feuersnot* is a claim that could equally be made for the *Burleske*. The non-opera and the non-concerto share common ground in their irreverent treatment of valued musical traditions. Indeed, if *Feuersnot* is an ‘upbeat’ to twentieth-century opera, the *Burleske* is an ‘upbeat’ to Strauss’s career as a parodist. As we have seen, the degree of parodic sophistication shown by the twenty-one-year-old composer is remarkable: Strauss did not simply draw upon gestures from Brahms and Wagner in order to mock them; rather, the *Burleske*’s hypotexts assist in the much larger project of critiquing positions of authority, power, and control. While the *Burleske* is frequently cited as the first large-scale work of Strauss’s early maturity on account of its technical proficiency (the skill with which themes are manipulated, orchestral forces are combined, and so on), I would argue that the more significant pointer to an emerging mature style is the extent to which it trumpets the appearance of the composer’s parodic voice. More than anything, the *Burleske* heralds the arrival of an attitude.

Having arrived, this attitude is then subjected to all manners of realisation. In *Der Rosenkavalier* parodic strategies run far deeper than the utilisation of historically grounded idioms—waltzes above all—as the means by which an idealised past is recreated. The opera’s four principal characters (and some minor ones too) are all at some point implicated in parodic exchanges; exchanges which variously ridicule a particular character or situation, reveal a previously undisclosed aspect of a character’s personality, offer a contrary perspective on a development in the plot, or

present an intertextual reference rich in associative implications. The dynamic quality of parody—the multi-directional dialogue it establishes between referents—is such that it brings a volatility and uncertainty to character and situation, forcing us to question one set of assumptions by offering another, competing set.

Der Rosenkavalier is frequently dismissed in the scholarly literature as a work that is lightweight and intellectually shallow. Its operetta-like waltzes are often discussed scornfully—they are said to represent Strauss's 'retreat' into a comfortably tuneful, anodyne realm. But an examination of the opera's often complex parodic procedures reveals a work that is highly sophisticated. *Der Rosenkavalier*'s double-voiced exchanges exhibit a level of complexity (and, indeed, ambiguity) unacknowledged in most critical accounts of the opera. Perhaps scholarly reappraisal will follow upon ever more fresh and insightful stagings. A recent review of a new production of *Der Rosenkavalier* by the Netherlands Opera, for instance, states that 'rarely have the threads of the piece seemed so unified yet so violently contradictory'.²¹ It is the opening remark of an overwhelmingly favourable report. *Der Rosenkavalier* would long ago have ceased to attract leading producers, performers, and conductors were it not for the intellectual sophistication of the work and the challenges it presents. One assumes that there will always be an audience for Ochs's waltz and the Act III trio, but the skill invested in these and other set pieces points to but by no means summarises the skill that can be claimed for the work as a whole.

²¹ Michael Davidson, 'Netherlands - Amsterdam', *Opera* 55 (May 2004), 577.

The dramatic tension which arises from the parodic exchange—the ambiguity of the double-coded signal—is complicated still further in an opera such as *Ariadne auf Naxos* where we find disagreement between composer and librettist concerning both the tone of the work—ironic or heroic? sardonic or sentimental?—and the relative importance of the principal characters. Thus, the Ariadne-Zerbinetta axis signifies one thing for Hofmannsthal (Zerbinetta's vulgarity as the means by which Ariadne's virtues are able to shine all the brighter) and another for Strauss (Zerbinetta's vulgarity as the means by which he can guarantee at least one show-stopping number). Indeed, if ever there was a work that could be said to have escaped the dominant control of its author(s), this is it. The first version of *Ariadne* was truly remarkable for the degree to which it appeared to take on a life of its own; a life characterised, in large measure, by layer upon layer of parody and irony. The principal objective in revising the work was to offer a more 'traditional' entertainment but this, unfortunately, meant reining in many of its subversive, mercurial, double-voiced features. Thus, the conclusion of the 1916 version of *Ariadne auf Naxos* offers no ironic counter-voice to the 'mystical truth' of the Ariadne-Bacchus encounter. We miss the intrusive, contrary presence of Zerbinetta and her *commedia* cohorts.

But while Zerbinetta's parodic function is obfuscated to a considerable degree in the second version of *Ariadne*, her flirtatious tease with the Composer in the *Vorspiel* of the revised opera is a double-coded exchange of such subtlety that the Composer fails utterly to read her mock sincerity for what it truly is. Indeed, the cross purposes of the Zerbinetta-Composer episode thematises the cross purposes of the Strauss-Hofmannsthal *Ariadne* project, except that it is Hofmannsthal, not Strauss, who

assumes the (trouser) role of the Composer—the sentimental idealist who is deaf to the joke at his expense. It is the librettist who subscribes to the view that ‘music is a holy art’. When Strauss lays bare the deceptive work that ‘beautiful’ music can carry out, he does so by unmasking the ‘transcendence’ offered by Zerbinetta in her scene with the Composer. Musical transcendence is thus shown to be as false as Zerbinetta’s declaration of fidelity. *Intermezzo* provides further examples of the double-voiced possibilities of the musically beautiful.

In making the case in the ‘Letzte Aufzeichnung’ for *Intermezzo*’s modernity, Strauss points to its departure from operatic norms and conventions. But, paradoxically, in order to define what it is, *Intermezzo* is highly contingent upon what it supposedly isn’t—an opera. Its libretto may indeed invert a number of standard character types and situations, but they are inversions shaped nonetheless by the archetypes (in the same way that the photographic negative is shaped by the positive). Likewise, the music strives for the most part to be unoperatically conversational and non-lyrical but it inevitably collapses into the conventionally operatic at crucial moments: character’s inner lives are explored in orchestral interludes and the reconciliation of the couple formerly at loggerheads is sealed by a ‘love duet’. Thus, in classic parodic tradition—offering within the work of parody the very thing that is being parodied—*Intermezzo* simultaneously plays with and against genre.

In declaring himself a composer of ‘music of the twentieth century’, Strauss’s diary entry neglects to cite the two works which for much of the modern era were thought to present most convincingly the case for ‘Strauss the progressive’: *Salome* and *Elektra*. Rather, Strauss’s argument for the freshness and on-going relevance of

his works rests not on the basis of music that is tonally and harmonically audacious (a conventional argument in support of the innovative and the relevant in modernist music criticism and the principal reason why, in Strauss's case, the works after *Elektra* were said to represent a volte-face), but works of a particular sensibility; works which taunt, tease, and play with the ironic.

We can never really know whether Strauss wrote the 'Letzte Aufzeichnung' presuming that the day would come when modernist music criticism would lose its hegemonic status or whether he was simply holding out that hope (in other words, whether the presumption of his comments is predicated on faith or conviction). In any case, a little more than fifty years after the composer's death and in a scholarly climate that is increasingly sceptical of ideologically driven grand narratives, we find Strauss's argument for the new in his works curiously prescient. With the 'volte-face' paradigm now in retreat, Strauss's compositions from *Rosenkavalier* onwards can be approached less in terms of their alleged deficiencies—deficiencies as understood by a teleologically-driven, tonally-based view of the composer and his works—and more by the terms in which they address and resolve (with varying degrees of success) specific issues and problems.

'Strauss as parodist' provides one theoretical model with which we might approach a deeper understanding of the provocative coldness that his contemporaries often recognised as the complement of the post-romantic sensationalism. The cold shadow cast by music of apparent warmth (or even rapture) points up Strauss's play with gesture and meaning, text and subtext. In early 1893, Strauss received a fifteen-page missive from his erstwhile friend and mentor Alexander Ritter complaining

that—on the basis of the revised conclusion of the libretto of *Guntram*—the composer had largely turned his back on Wagnerian ideals and that nothing more remained of Wagner in Strauss except merely ‘the mechanics of his art’.²² Cold, mechanical Strauss; the anti-metaphysician who cunningly borrows the gestures, if not the principles, of musical metaphysics. Writing of *Salome* in 1934, Thomas Mann, the supreme parodist, commented dismissively on ‘the ridiculous coldness of this showpiece. It is distinctly prewar in its middle-class aesthetics. Has not Richard Strauss, this naive product of the imperial era, become far more old-fashioned than I?’²³ The tone of rivalry suggests that Mann too had wondered, just a little.

²² Quoted in Charles Youmans, ‘The Private Intellectual Context of Richard Strauss’s *Also sprach Zarathustra*’, *Nineteenth-Century Music* 22 (Fall 1998), 107.

²³ Diary entry, 2 May 1934. *Thomas Mann: Diaries 1918-1939*, ed. Hermann Kesten, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (London: Robin Clark, 1984), 209.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Scores

- Strauss, Richard. *Ariadne auf Naxos. Oper in einem Aufzuge nebst Vorspiel*. Wien: Dr. Richard Strauss Verlag, 1999.
- _____. *Ariadne auf Naxos. Oper in einem Aufzuge zu spielen nach dem 'Burger als Edelmann' des Molière*. Berlin: Adolph Fürstner, 1912.
- _____. *Burleske*. London: Eulenburg, 1995.
- _____. *Intermezzo*. Wien: Dr. Richard Strauss Verlag, 1999.
- _____. *Der Rosenkavalier*. London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1943.
- _____. *Suiten und Stücke aus Bühnenwerken*, Vol. 2. Wien: Dr. Richard Strauss Verlag, 1999.
- _____. *Tondichtungen*, Vol. 2. Wien: Dr. Richard Strauss Verlag, 1999.

Correspondence

- Richard Strauss: Briefwechsel mit Hugo von Hofmannsthal*. With a Foreword by Dr. Franz Strauss. Berlin: Paul Zsolnay Verlag, 1926; *Richard Strauss - Hugo von Hofmannsthal: Briefwechsel*. Edited by Willi Schuh. Zürich: Atlantis, 1964; *A Working Friendship: The Correspondence between Richard Strauss and Hugo von Hofmannsthal*. Translated by Hanns Hammelmann and Ewald Osers. New York: Vienna House, 1974.
- Meister und Meisterbriefe um Hermann Bahr*. Edited by Joseph Gregor. Wien: Bauer Verlag, 1947.
- Richard Strauss: Briefe an die Eltern*. Edited by Willi Schuh. Zürich: Atlantis, 1954.
- Hans von Bülow and Richard Strauss: Correspondence*. Edited by Willi Schuh and Franz Trenner. Translated by Anthony Gishford. London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1955.
- Richard Strauss and Romain Rolland: Correspondence. Together with Fragments from the Diary of Romain Rolland and other essays and an Introduction by Gustave Samazeuilh*. Edited by Rollo Meyers. London: Calder and Boyers, 1968.
- A Confidential Matter: The Letters of Richard Strauss and Stefan Zweig, 1931-1935*. Translated by Max Knight. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977.
- Gustav Mahler - Richard Strauss. Correspondence*. Edited by Herta Blaukopf. Translated by Edmund Jephcott. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- Richard Strauss - Max von Schillings. Ein Briefwechsel*. Edited by Roswitha Schlötterer. Pfaffenhofen: W. Ludwig Verlag, 1987.
- Hans von Bülow: Die Briefe an Johannes Brahms*. Edited by Hans-Joachim Hinrichsen. Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1994.

Literature

- Abbate, Carolyn. 'Elektra's Voice'. In *Richard Strauss: Elektra*, ed. Derrick Puffett, 107-27. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- _____. 'Opera, or the Envoicing of Women'. In *Musicology and Difference*, ed. Ruth A. Solie, 225-58. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993.
- _____. *Unsung Voices*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
- Adorno, Theodor W. 'Bourgeois Opera'. In *Opera Through Other Eyes*, ed. David J. Levin, 25-43. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993.
- _____. 'Richard Strauss. Born June 11, 1864'. Translated by Samuel and Shierry Weber, *Perspectives of New Music*, 1 and 2, Part I (Fall-Winter 1965), 14-32, Part II (Spring-Summer 1966), 113-29.
- _____. 'Richard Strauss at Sixty'. Translated by Susan Gillespie. In *Richard Strauss and His World*, ed. Bryan Gilliam, 406-15. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- Allanbrook, Wye Jamison, Mary Hunter, and Gretchen A. Wheelock. 'Staging Mozart's Women'. In *Siren Songs: Representations of Gender and Sexuality in Opera*, ed. Mary Ann Smart, 47-66. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- Altmann, Wilhelm. Preface to *Academic Festival Overture*. Leipzig and Wien: Eulenburg, 1926.
- '*Ariadne auf Naxos*', *Programmheft, Salzburger Festspiele*, 2001.
- Ashbrook, William. 'Opera Singers'. In *The Oxford History of Opera*, ed. Roger Parker, 286-303. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Ashley, Tim. *Richard Strauss*. London: Phaidon, 1999.
- Asow, E. H. Mueller von. *Richard Strauss: Thematisches Verzeichnis*. 3 vols. Wien: Doblinger, 1955-74.
- Bekker, Paul. *The Changing Opera*. Translated by Arthur Mendel. London: Dent, 1936.
- Blackmer, Corinne E., and Patricia Juliana Smith, eds. *En Travesti: Women, Gender Subversion, Opera*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995.
- Bloch, Ernst. *Essays on the philosophy of music*. Translated by Peter Palmer. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Botstein, Leon. 'The Enigmas of Richard Strauss: A Revisionist View'. In *Richard Strauss and His World*, ed. Bryan Gilliam, 3-32. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- _____. *Music and its Public: Habits of Listening and the Crisis of Musical Modernism in Vienna, 1870-1914*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI, 1985.
- Bottenberg, Joanna. *Shared Creation: Words and Music in the Hofmannsthal-Strauss Operas*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996.
- Boyden, Matthew. *Richard Strauss*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1999.
- Broch, Hermann. *Hugo von Hofmannsthal and his Time: The European Imagination, 1860-1920*. Translated and edited by Michael P. Steinberg. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- Brodbeck, David. *Brahms: Symphony No. 1*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

- Brown, Bruce Alan. *W. A. Mozart: Così fan tutte*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Brown, Howard Mayer. 'Emulation, Competition, and Homage: Imitation and Theories of Imitation in the Renaissance'. *JAMS* 35 (1982), 1-48.
- Burnham, Scott. 'Mozart's *felix culpa*: *Così fan tutte* and the Irony of Beauty'. *Musical Quarterly* 78 (Spring 1994), 77-98.
- Busch, Fritz. *Aus dem Leben eines Musikers*. Zürich: Rascher Verlag, 1949; *Pages from a Musician's Life*. Translated by Marjorie Strachey. London: Hogarth Press, 1953.
- Cervantes Saavedra, Miguel de. *Don Quixote de la Mancha*. Translated by Charles Jarvis. Introduction by Milan Kundera. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Cochrane, Peggie, trans. *Der Bürger als Edelmann – Ariadne auf Naxos*. CD booklet accompanying Virgin Classics recording, 545 111-2.
- Cone, Edward T. *The Composer's Voice*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974.
- _____. 'The World of Opera and Its Inhabitants'. In *Music: A View from Delft*, ed. Robert P. Morgan, 125-38. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1989.
- Cook, Susan C. *Opera for a New Republic: The Zeitopern of Krenek, Weill, and Hindemith*. Ann Arbor and London: UMI Research Press, 1988.
- Cooper, John Michael. 'The Hero Transformed: The Relationship between *Don Quixote* and *Ein Heldenleben* Reconsidered'. *RS-Blätter* (Neue Folge) 30 (December 1993), 3-18.
- Corse, Sandra. *Operatic Subjects: The Evolution of Self in Modern Opera*. London: Associated University Press, 2000.
- Crittenden, Camille. *Johann Strauss and Vienna: Operetta and the Politics of Popular Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Dahlhaus, Carl. *Nineteenth-Century Music*. Translated by J. Bradford Robinson. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989.
- Daviau, Donald G., and George J. Buelow. *The 'Ariadne auf Naxos' of Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Richard Strauss*. Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1975.
- Davidson, Michael. 'Netherlands – Amsterdam'. *Opera* 55 (May 2004), 577.
- De La Grange, Henry-Louis. 'L'envers et l'endroit: ironie, double-sens, ambiguïté dans la musique de Mahler'. In *Gustav Mahler et l'ironie dans la culture viennoise au tournant du siècle: actes du colloque de Montpellier 16-18 juillet 1996*, ed. André Castagné, Michel Chalon, and Patrick Florençon, 77-98. Calsenau-le-Lez: Climats, 2001.
- _____. 'Music about Music in Mahler: reminiscences, allusions, or quotations?' In *Mahler Studies*, ed. Stephen E. Hefling, 122-68. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Dellamora, Richard, and Daniel Fischlin, eds. *The Work of Opera: Genre, Nationhood, and Sexual Difference*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.
- Del Mar, Norman. *Richard Strauss: A Critical Commentary on his Life and Works*. 3 vols. London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1962-72.
- Dent, Edward J. *Mozart's Operas: A Critical Study*. 2nd ed. London: Oxford University Press, 1947.

- Dentith, Simon. *Parody*. London: Routledge, 2000.
- Deppisch, Walter. *Richard Strauss*. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1968.
- Dunn, Leslie C., and Nancy A. Jones, eds. *Embodied voices: Representing female vocality in western culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Erwin, Charlotte E. 'Richard Strauss's Presketch Planning for *Ariadne auf Naxos*'. *Musical Quarterly* 67 (1981), 348-65.
- Fairman, Richard T. 'Ariadne—in a former life'. *Gramophone* 75 (September 1997), 116.
- Farnsworth, Rodney. 'Così fan tutte as Parody and Burlesque'. *Opera Quarterly* 6 (1988-9), 50-68.
- Forsyth, Karen. 'Ariadne auf Naxos' by Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Richard Strauss: *Its Genesis and Meaning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.
- Franklin, Peter. 'Strauss and His Contemporaries: Critical Perspectives'. In *The Richard Strauss Companion*, ed. Mark-Daniel Schmid, 31-61. Westport and London: Praeger, 2003.
- Gellermann, Bernd. *Richard Strauss und die Moderne*. München: Münchener Philharmoniker, (1999).
- Genette, Gérard. *Palimpsestes: La Littérature au second degré*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1982.
- Gillespie, Susan, trans. 'Richard Strauss and the Viennese Critics'. In *Richard Strauss and His World*, ed. Bryan Gilliam, 311-71. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- Gilliam, Bryan. *The Life of Richard Strauss*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- _____. 'Richard Strauss'. In *The Nineteenth-Century Symphony*. Edited by D. Kern Holoman, 345-68. New York: Schirmer, 1997.
- _____. 'Strauss's *Intermezzo*: Tradition and Innovation'. In *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*, ed. Bryan Gilliam, 259-83. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1992.
- _____. 'Strauss's Preliminary Opera Sketches: Thematic Fragments and Symphonic Continuity'. *Nineteenth-Century Music* 9 (Spring 1986), 176-88.
- _____, ed. *Richard Strauss and His World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- _____, ed. *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1992.
- Gilman, Sander. 'Strauss and the Pervert'. In *Reading Opera*, ed. Arthur Groos and Roger Parker, 306-27. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988.
- Gould, Glenn. *The Glenn Gould Reader*. Edited by Tim Page. London: Faber, 1988.
- Greenberg, Clement. 'The Avant-Garde and Kitsch'. In *Kitsch: An Anthology of Bad Taste*, ed. Gillo Dorfles, 116-26. London: Studio Vista, 1969.
- Greene, David B. *Listening to Strauss Operas: The Audience's Multiple Standpoints*. New York: Gordon and Breach, 1991.
- Griffiths, Paul. 'The Twentieth Century: To 1945'. In *The Oxford History of Opera*. Edited by Roger Parker, 186-211. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

- Hahn, Arthur. 'Don Quixote'. In *Meisterführer Nr. 6, Richard Strauss, Symphonien und Tondichtungen*, ed. Herwarth Walden, 128-49. Berlin: Schlesinger'sche Buch- und Musikhandlung, n.d..
- Hall, George. 'National Opera Studio Showcase 2002'. *Opera* 53 (August 2002), 1003.
- Hanslick, Eduard. *Eduard Hanslick: Music Criticisms 1846-99*. Translated by Henry Pleasants. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1963.
- Hartmann, Rudolf. *Richard Strauss: The Staging of His Operas and Ballets*. Oxford: Phaidon, 1982.
- Hefling, Stephen E. 'Techniques for Irony in Mahler's *Oeuvre*'. In 'L'envers et l'endroit: ironie, double-sens, ambiguïté dans la musique de Mahler'. In *Gustav Mahler et l'ironie dans la culture viennoise au tournant du siècle: actes du colloque de Montpellier 16-18 juillet 1996*, ed. André Castagné, Michel Chalon, and Patrick Florençon, 99-142. Calselnu-le-Lez: Climats, 2001.
- Hepokoski, James. 'Fiery-Pulsed Libertine or Domestic Hero? Strauss's *Don Juan* Reinvestigated'. In *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*, ed. Bryan Gilliam, 135-75. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1992.
- _____. *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- _____. 'Structure and Program in *Macbeth*: A Proposed Reading of Strauss's First Symphonic Poem'. In *Richard Strauss and His World*, ed. Bryan Gilliam, 67-89. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- Hinson, Maurice. *Music for Piano and Orchestra*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993.
- Hofmannsthal, Hugo von. *Hugo von Hofmannsthal: Gesammelte Werke. Dramen V, Operndichtungen*. Edited by Bernd Schoeller and Rudolf Hirsch. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1979.
- Holden, Raymond. 'Richard Strauss in London'. *RS-Blätter* (Neue folge) 37 (June 1997), 18-51.
- Holloway, Robin. 'Salome: art or kitsch?'. In *Salome*, ed. Derrick Puffett, 145-60. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Hudson, Elizabeth. 'Gilda seduced: A tale untold'. *Cambridge Opera Journal* 4 (1992), 229-51.
- Hunter, Mary. *Opera buffa in Mozart's Vienna*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- _____. 'Some Representations of *opera seria* in *opera buffa*'. *Cambridge Opera Journal* 3 (1991), 3-25.
- Hutcheon, Linda. *A Theory of Parody*. New York: Methuen, 1985.
- Hutcheon, Linda, and Michael Hutcheon. 'Staging the Female Body: Richard Strauss's *Salome*'. In *Siren Songs*, ed. Mary Ann Smart, 204-21. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- Jackson, Timothy L. 'The Metamorphosis of *Metamorphosen*: New Analytical and Source-Critical Discoveries'. In *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*, ed. Bryan Gilliam, 193-241. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1992.

- Jameson, Fredric. 'Postmodernism and Consumer Society'. In *Postmodern Culture*, ed. Hal Foster, 111-25. London: Pluto: 1985.
- _____. 'Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism'. In *Postmodernism: A Reader*, ed. Thomas Docherty, 62-92. Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993.
- Jefferson, Alan. *The Life of Richard Strauss*. Newton Abott, Devon: David and Charles, 1973.
- _____. *Der Rosenkavalier*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.
- Jump, John Davies. *Burlesque*. London: Methuen, 1972.
- Karrer, Wolfgang. 'Cross-dressing between Travesty and Parody'. In *Parody: Dimensions and Perspectives*, ed. Beate Müller, 91-112. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997.
- Kater, Michael. *Composers of the Nazi Era*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- _____. *The Twisted Muse: Musicians and their Music in the Third Reich*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Keahy, Delores Jerde. 'Così fan tutte: Parody or Irony?' In *Paul A. Pisk: Essays in his Honor*, ed. John Glowacki, 116-30. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966.
- Kende, Götz Klaus. 'Was Richard Strauss in Wien dirigierte'. *RS-Blätter* (Neue Folge) 19 (June 1988), 29-40.
- Kennedy, Michael. Preface to *Burleske*. London: Eulenburg, 1995.
- _____. *Richard Strauss*. Master Musicians Series. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- _____. *Richard Strauss: Man, Musician, Enigma*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Kerman, Joseph. *Opera as Drama*. New York: Random House, 1956.
- Kessler, Count Harry. *The Diaries of a Cosmopolitan 1918-1937*. Translated and edited by Charles Kessler. London: Phoenix, 2000.
- Knaus, Gabriella Hanke. *Aspekte der Schlussgestaltung in den Sinfonischen Dichtungen und Bühnenwerken von Richard Strauss*. Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1995.
- Kramer, Lawrence. *Classical Music and Postmodern Knowledge*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995.
- _____. 'Culture and Musical Hermeneutics: The Salome Complex'. *Cambridge Opera Journal* 2 (1990), 269-94.
- _____. 'Fin-de-siècle fantasies: Elektra, degeneration and sexual science'. *Cambridge Opera Journal* 5 (1993), 141-65.
- Krause, Ernst, ed. *Richard Strauss: Dokumente*. Leipzig: Reclam, 1980.
- Krellmann, Hanspeter, ed. *Wer war Richard Strauss?* Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1999.
- Kunze, Stefan. 'Idealität der Melodie: Über Richard Strauss und Mozart'. In *Mozart in der Musik des 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Wolfgang Gratzer and Siegfried Mauser, 11-30. Laaber: Laaber Verlag, 1992.
- Lebrecht, Norman. *The Companion to 20th-Century Music*. London: Simon and Schuster, 1992.
- Lehmann, Lotte. *Five Operas and Richard Strauss*. New York: Macmillan, 1964.
- Lindenberger, Herbert. *Opera in History: From Monteverdi to Cage*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998.

- _____. *Opera: The Extravagant Art*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1984.
- Lockwood, Lewis. 'The Element of Time in *Der Rosenkavalier*'. In *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*, ed. Bryan Gilliam, 252-5. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1992.
- _____. 'On "Parody" as Term and Concept in 16th-Century Music'. In *Aspects of Medieval and Renaissance Music: A Birthday Offering to Gustave Reese*, ed. Jan LaRue et al., 560-75. New York: Pendragon Press, 1978.
- McClary, Susan. 'A Musical Dialectic from the Enlightenment: Mozart's *Piano Concerto in G Major, K. 453, Movement 2*'. *Cultural Critique* 4 (Fall, 1986), 129-69.
- Mahler, Alma. *Gustav Mahler: Memories and Letters*. Translated by Basil Creighton. Edited by Donald Mitchell and Knud Martner, 4th ed. London: Cardinal, 1990.
- Mann, Thomas. *Doctor Faustus*. Translated by H. T. Lowe-Porter. Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1985.
- _____. *Thomas Mann: Diaries 1918-1939*. Edited by Hermann Kesten. Translated by Richard and Clara Winston. London: Robin Clark, 1984.
- _____. 'Voyage with *Don Quixote*'. In *Cervantes: A Collection of Critical Essays*, 49-72. Edited by Lowrey Nelson Jr. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1969.
- Mann, William. *Richard Strauss: A Critical Study of the Operas*. London: Cassell, 1964.
- Marek, George R. *Richard Strauss: The Life of a Non-Hero*. London: Victor Gollancz, 1967.
- Meyer, Leonard B. *Style and Music: Theory, History, and Ideology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989.
- Morris, Christopher. *Reading Opera Between the Lines*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Musgrave, Michael. *The Music of Brahms*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985.
- Nattiez, Jean-Jacques. *Wagner Androgyne*. Translated by Stewart Spencer. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- Newman, Ernest. *Richard Strauss*. London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1908.
- Noske, Frits. *The Signifier and the Signified: Studies in the Operas of Mozart and Verdi*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1990.
- Observer* (London), Sunday 17 March, 2002.
- Osborne, Charles. *The Complete Operas of Strauss*. London: Grange, 1995.
- Oswald, Victor A., Jr. 'Hofmannsthal's Collaboration with Molière'. *The Germanic Review* 29 (1954), 18-30.
- Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed. Prepared by J. A. Simpson and E. S. C. Weiner. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.
- Painter, Karen, ed. *Mahler and His World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.
- Puffett, Kathryn Bailey, ed. *Derrick Puffett on Music*. Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate, 2001.
- Quintilian. *Institutio Oratoria*. Translated by H. E. Butler. 4 vols. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960.
- RED classical catalogue*, 2003. London: Red Publishing, 2003.

- Robinson, Michael F. *Naples and Neapolitan Opera*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972.
- Robinson, Paul. *Opera and Ideas*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1985.
- _____. *Opera, sex, and other vital matters*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.
- Rose, Margaret A. *Parody//Meta-Fiction*. London: Croom Helm, 1979.
- _____. *Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Rosen, Charles. *The Romantic Generation*. London: HarperCollins, 1996.
- _____. *Sonata Forms*. Revised ed. New York and London: Norton, 1988.
- Der Rosenkavalier*, *Opera Guide* 8. London: Calder, 1981.
- Schlötterer, Reinhold. 'Ironical Allusions to Italian Opera in the Musical Comedies of Richard Strauss'. In *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*, ed. Bryan Gilliam, 77-91. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1992.
- _____. 'Komödie als musikalische Struktur'. In *Musik und Theater im 'Rosenkavalier' von Richard Strauss*, ed. Reinhold Schlötterer, 9-60. Wien: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1985.
- Schlötterer, Roswitha. 'Die musikalische und szenische Bedeutung der Rosenkavalier-Walzer', and 'Der Rosenkavalier in der Zeitgenössischen Kritik'. In *Musik und Theater im 'Rosenkavalier' von Richard Strauss*, ed. Reinhold Schlötterer, 135-68 and 211-48. Wien: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1985.
- Schmid, Mark-Daniel, ed. *The Richard Strauss Companion*. Westport and London: Praeger, 2003.
- _____. *The Tone Poems of Richard Strauss and their Reception History from 1887-1908*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI, 1997.
- Schmidt, Leopold. *Richard Strauss: Ariadne auf Naxos. Zu spielen nach dem Bürger als Edelmann. Ein Führer durch das Werk*. Berlin: Furstner, 1912.
- Schuh, Willi. 'Die Entstehung des Rosenkavalier'. *Trivium* 9 (1951), 65-91.
- _____. *Hugo von Hofmannsthal und Richard Strauss: Legende und Wirklichkeit*. München: Hanser, 1964.
- _____. *Richard Strauss: A Chronicle of the Early Years 1864-1898*. Translated by Mary Whittall. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- _____. *'Der Rosenkavalier': Fassung, Film-Szenarium, Briefe*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1972.
- _____. *Straussiana aus vier Jahrzehnten*. Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1981.
- _____. *Über Opern von Richard Strauss*. Zürich: Atlantis, 1947.
- _____. *Umgang mit Musik*. Zürich: Atlantis, 1970.
- _____. 'Die "Verzeichnete" Zerbinetta'. *Hofmannsthal-Blätter* 31/32 (1985), 52-7.
- Smart, Mary Ann. 'The silencing of Lucia'. *Cambridge Opera Journal* 4 (1992), 119-41.
- Spotts, Frederic. *Hitler and the Power of Aesthetics*. London: Hutchinson, 2002.
- Steinberg, Michael P. 'Richard Strauss and the Question'. In *Richard Strauss and His World*, ed. Bryan Gilliam, 164-89. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- Stephens, Andrew. *The Mozart-Da Ponte Operas*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988.

- Stone, Anne. 'A Singer at the Fountain: Homage and Irony in Ciconia's "Sus une fontayne"''. *Music and Letters* 82 (August 2001), 361-90.
- Strauss: 'Le Chevalier à la Rose'. *L'Avant-Scène Opera*, 69-70.
- Strauss, Richard. *Betrachtungen und Erinnerungen*. Edited by Willi Schuh. Zürich: Atlantis, 1949; *Recollections and Reflections*. Edited by Willi Schuh. Translated by L. J. Lawrence. London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1953.
- Stravinsky, Igor, and Robert Craft. *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1959.
- _____. *Dialogues and a Diary*. London: Faber, 1961.
- _____. *Expositions and Developments*. London: Faber, 1959.
- Taruskin, Richard. *Text and Act*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Tenschert, Roland. *Dreimal sieben Variationen über das Thema Richard Strauss*. Wien: Frick, 1944.
- Todd, R. Larry. 'Strauss before Liszt and Wagner: Some Observations'. In *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*, ed. Bryan Gilliam, 3-40. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1992.
- Tourneau, Gary Le. 'Kitsch, Camp, and Opera: *Der Rosenkavalier*'. *Canadian University Music Review* 14 (1994), 77-97.
- Tovey, Donald Francis. *The Classics of Music. Talks, Essays, and Other Writings Previously Uncollected*. Edited by Michael Tilmouth. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- _____. 'Overture to *Così fan tutte*', *Essays in Musical Analysis*, 6 vols. London: Oxford University Press, 1939.
- Trenner, Franz, ed. *Richard Strauss: Dokumente Seines Lebens und Schaffens*. München: C. H. Beck Verlag, 1954.
- Troy, Charles E. *The Comic Intermezzo: A Study of the History of the Eighteenth-Century Italian Opera*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: UMI, 1979.
- Walter, Michael. *Richard Strauss und seine Zeit*. Laaber: Laaber Verlag, 2000.
- Warfield, Scott. 'From "Too Many Works" to "Wrist Exercises": The Abstract Instrumental Compositions of Richard Strauss'. In *The Richard Strauss Companion*, ed. Mark-Daniel Schmid, 191-231. Westport and London: Praeger, 2003.
- Weiner, Marc A. *Undertones of Insurrection: Music, Politics, and the Social Sphere in the Modern German Narrative*. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1993.
- Weisstein, Ulrich. 'Parody, Travesty, and Burlesque: Imitations with a Vengeance'. In *Proceedings of the 4th Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association, 1964*, ed. François Jost. 2 vols., II, 802-11. The Hague: Mouton, 1966.
- Werbeck, Walter. *Die Tondichtungen von Richard Strauss*. Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1996.
- Wheelock, Gretchen. *Haydn's Ingenious Jestings with Art: Contexts of Musical Wit and Humor*. New York: Schirmer, 1992.
- Wilhelm, Kurt. *Fürs Wort brauche ich Hilfe: Die Geburt der Oper 'Capriccio'*. München: Nymphenburger, 1988.
- _____. *Richard Strauss: An Intimate Portrait*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1989.

- Wulf, Joseph. *Musik im Dritten Reich: Eine Dokumentation*. Frankfurt am Main: Ullstein, 1966.
- Youmans, Charles D. 'The Development of Richard Strauss's Worldview'. In *The Richard Strauss Companion*, ed. Mark-Daniel Schmid, 63-99. Westport and London: Praeger, 2003.
- _____. 'The Private Intellectual Context of Richard Strauss's *Also sprach Zarathustra*'. *Nineteenth-Century Music* 22 (Fall 1998), 101-26.
- _____. 'The Twentieth-Century Symphonies of Richard Strauss'. *Musical Quarterly* 84 (Summer 2000), 238-58.
- Zimmerschied, Dieter. 'Integration in Liebe oder brutale Vertreibung? Versuche zur Deutung der Sängerepisode im *Rosenkavalier*'. *Die Musikforschung* 81 (1979), 291-7.
- Zweig, Stefan. *The World of Yesterday*. New York: Viking, 1943.

