

IS ROMANCE DEAD?
ERICH KORNGOLD AND THE ROMANTIC GERMAN LIED

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ABSTRACT

Far from being the operatic aria's less glamorous sister, the Romantic German Lied offers much dramatic scope for the classical performer. It has been described as the “quintessential Romantic genre”: the balanced and harmonious union of the music and text, in which the pianist and singer are equals. As accessible at private music gatherings as in concert halls, the Lied enjoyed popularity in German-speaking countries for over a hundred years, before facing its greatest adversary: Modernism. Romanticism, as an artistic movement, fought to survive in the uncertain musical and political landscape of the twentieth century.

In Erich Korngold, Romantic music found a staunch advocate, and Lieder gained one of its most gifted contributors. Following in the daunting footsteps of Richard Strauss and Gustav Mahler, Korngold's unashamedly luscious, rich orchestrations and soaring melodies earned him the nickname “the Viennese Puccini.” A child prodigy, Erich Korngold's rise was swift and glorious; his fall coincided with that of the German Lied and Romanticism itself. Romance may not have “died”, but it became outdated in the twentieth-century push for modernity and innovation across all art forms.

In encyclopedias little is written of Korngold and his compositional output beyond his most famous and enduring opera *Die tote Stadt*, and his pioneering film scoring in pre- and post-war Hollywood. In my research I will show that Korngold is deserving of a place in the music canon as not only one of the last great composers of Lieder, but one of the last great Romantics, whose life and works sit on the cusp between the old world and the new. Furthermore, I will address the question of whether Romanticism died with the arrival of Modernism and revolutionary experimentation in music, or whether it lives on today, albeit in different forms.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1909, Erich Korngold's father, the inimitable Dr Julius Korngold, allowed a selection of musicians, critics and composers to view the score of young Erich's ballet, *Der Schneemann*. The response was unanimous: there could be no doubt that the world had been gifted another Mozart or Mendelssohn. The compositions of the eleven-year-old Viennese prodigy were practically indistinguishable from the work of a grown adult with a lifetime of experience. Richard Strauss himself wrote to Dr Korngold: "I am looking forward to making the personal acquaintance of this arch-musician."¹ Forty years later, from his box at the Vienna State Opera where he had once been lauded as a musical *Wunderkind*, Erich Korngold looked with dismay at a half-empty theatre and said: "This is no Korngold house; I am forgotten."² He died believing himself "irrelevant" – the greatest tragedy for a composer.³

When I say the name Erich Korngold, I am often met with blank faces. It is true that he is best known in the classical world for a single work: the hauntingly romantic opera *Die tote Stadt* (1920), which Giacomo Puccini declared to be "among the most beautiful and the strongest hope of new German music."⁴ I have been puzzled by Korngold's omission from general discussion of German opera and song – it wasn't until the ninth edition of *A History of Western Music* (2014), for example, that his name is even mentioned. Most music encyclopedias focus on his second career as a Hollywood film composer and overlook his contribution to classical music, which seems to ignore the rich quality and quantity of his vast and varied classical output. Korngold was no dilettante: he wrote five operas, piano and string concertos, sonatas, orchestral pieces, chamber music, incidental music, three symphonies for orchestra, a ballet, numerous piano pieces, choral works; he arranged eleven of Johann Strauss, Leo Fall and Jacques Offenbach's operettas, and of particular significance to this exegesis, he wrote forty-two Lieder (nine of which are in English with Shakespearean texts, which would technically classify them as "Art Songs.")

I aim in this research to find out why this composer has been ignored, but, in addition, worse than ignored - disparaged, ridiculed, vilified, and then forgotten. In analysis and performances of his vocal works, I suggest that Erich Korngold is not only deserving of a place in our record collections, but that he also deserves the respect of music historians. He, in his time, was the greatest advocate for Romanticism as a musical ideology and an aural aesthetic, and he was a

¹ Brendan Carroll, *The Last Prodigy: A Biography of Erich Wolfgang Korngold* (Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1997), 43.

² Ibid., 345.

³ Michael Haas, "The False Myths and True Genius of Erich Wolfgang Korngold", *Forbidden Music*. Forbiddenmusic.org, (18 July 2015) <<https://forbiddenmusic.org/2015/07/18/the-false-myths-and-true-genius-of-erich-wolfgang-korngold/>> (8 February 2017).

⁴ Duncan Clark and Joe Staines, *Classical Music: The Rough Guide* (Rough Guides, 2001), 261.

champion of melody.

Perhaps the strongest example of Korngold's gift for melody is in the aforementioned forty-two Lieder, which as a professional classical singer, have been my performative focus for the better part of a year. From a singer's first year of formal vocal training, the German Lied has an important part in his or her concert repertoire. Singers are drawn to the Lied because of its small forces (a piano and a voice is all that is required), the seeming technical simplicity in comparison to an operatic aria, the challenge of the language, and the achievable objective: to tell a story. Furthermore, the vast repertoire of German Lieder available allows the individual singer to select the composer or song that best suits their voice for their level of ability: Schubert's songs range from the light, beginner-level to the heady *Winterreise* song cycle for the experienced baritone; a soubrette or coloratura soprano will relish Hugo Wolf's offerings, while a more lyric voice will tackle the demands of Richard Strauss.

Far from being the operatic aria's less glamorous little sister, the German Lied can offer just as much dramatic scope for the performer, and in many cases, much more. Compare the repetitive text of a Bellini aria, for example, with a short poem by Johann von Goethe - in Goethe the singer will find endless layers to explore and interpret. I was fortunate to learn to speak German through total immersion and to work solely in German for five years, which changed my approach to singing Lieder. I am now able to quickly translate texts, which allows me more time for delving further into the construction of the language and analysing the poetry beyond its face value. In recitals and in performances of German language works, I feel a much deeper connection to the character and story of the song, which in turn allows me to engage more with an audience.

Korngold's catalogue of songs was a revelation to me, and I swiftly joined the ranks of Korngold admirers and devotees. The songs are at times as lush and beautiful as a Puccini aria and equally, if not more difficult, in terms of breath control and a punishing *tessitura* that requires exceptionally steady technique. Footnote to explain At other times the songs are as melodic and singable as a Cole Porter song. Korngold composed Lieder throughout his lifetime, which spanned a most engrossing era, that of the pre-war, late-Romantic Vienna and Hollywood's Golden Age. In Korngold I see a fascinating figure in twentieth-century musical history, in that his life and works sat on the cusp between the old world and the new. He was immersed in the Romantic movement and was one of the last composers of Lieder, a genre that had dominated the German-speaking world for over a hundred years. His compositional *oeuvre* coincided with some of the most significant cultural shifts in music (not to mention a tumultuous and dangerous political climate): he bore witness to this radical cultural change and did not participate, for reasons that will be discussed.

In the first chapter of my exegesis, “Quintessentially Romantic: The German Lied” I will give historical background to German Romanticism and the characteristics of its poetry, from which the Romantic German Lied draws its inspiration. I will reference some of the great poets and their works, and the composers who then pioneered and developed the genre of German Lied.

In Chapter Two, “The Rise and Fall of Erich Korngold,” I will examine the composer's career in greater detail: the Viennese child prodigy from a Jewish family, who, at the expense of his reputation in Europe, became one of the most influential film score composers in history. In this chapter I hope to address the key question of why so few have heard of Korngold and his music. What are the factual and speculative reasons for Korngold's career decline?

In the third chapter, “The Last Romantic: Korngold's Songs,” I will offer some analysis from a predominantly performative perspective, drawing on my personal experience as an interpreter of German Lieder and opera. The selected songs for analysis span Korngold's compositional career from his earliest published works in 1916 to his last set of songs from 1948, thereby giving an overview of his output and illustrating his development.

Finally, in the fourth chapter, “Is Romance Dead?: Did the Metamorphosis of Lied Kill Romance?” I will identify and elaborate on the reasons for the decline – or “death”—of the Romantic German Lied in the twentieth century. This includes the Modernist movement of the early part of the century and the characters involved; new styles of song that reflected the political and cultural situation in Europe and America in the 1930s; and the effect of Nazi oppression and eventual exile on some of the key Lied composers.

In my conclusion “Romance Lives On: Korngold's Legacy” I will argue that Romance has not died, that Romanticism remains relevant as long as there is a public's desire for melody and harmony. I will argue that Korngold himself is a hero of the Romantic age, a revolutionary in his own way as the pioneer of romantic film music, but most importantly that his Lieder deserve a place in the canon.⁵

⁵ The use of the capitalised words *Romantic* and *Romanticism* refers specifically to a period of time, a set of values and a cultural movement; as opposed to the non-capitalised word *romance* which refers to the modern idea of what romance is, namely, the version most commonly offered by Hollywood films, romance novels, and popular love songs.

Chapter One

QUINTESENTIALLY ROMANTIC: THE GERMAN LIED

German Romanticism is an artistic and cultural movement exemplified in visual arts, music and literature in the main, as well as education, natural sciences and even politics. It is both a philosophy and an attitude. It is described in *Poetry into Song* by Deborah Spillman and Robert Stein as a period of intense emotionalism, introspection and self-absorption.⁶ The word “Romantic” was present in the German language by the end of the seventeenth century and was later linked with such notions as “wild” and “fanciful” by eighteenth-century essayist Dr Samuel Johnson.⁷ German Romanticism is undoubtedly a complex historical period and a conglomeration of ideas not easily described or categorised, but Spillman and Stein assert that one of the fundamental features is the “insatiable quest to go beyond what is known.”⁸ By this I suggest they are referring to the Romantic ideas of transgressing rules and of “reality being intensified by the imaginary.”⁹ Today we consider the era of Romanticism to have dominated the nineteenth century with some extension before and after.¹⁰

The German Romantic poets drew on the entire spectrum of human emotion, languishing in darkest despair and revelling in joy, often within a single poem. In addition, the human state could be described at this time to be susceptible to “Romanticism”: we know that psychological states are elaborate and sometimes inexplicable. Poets grapple with jealousy, melancholy, bliss, homesickness and heartache; the poet is at one with nature, yearns for romantic love, and his world is a hazy fusion of reality and imagination. Romanticism developed as a response to the dominant literary movement of the preceding period, Classicism, where order, harmony and proportion were exemplified and preferred. For the first time, readers in the Romantic period were invited to lead with the heart rather than the head, to explore emotions and imagination rather than be driven by a desire for scientific truth.¹¹ Contrasting with scientific clarity are confusion, ambiguity, and a “rich and meaningful chaos”, all desirable characteristics of the quintessentially “Romantic” poem.¹²

According to philosopher and literary critic Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829), the “Romantic” poem

⁶ Deborah Stein and Robert Spillman, *Poetry Into Song: Performance Analysis of Lieder* (Oxford University Press, 1996), 6.

⁷ Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), often referred to as Dr. Johnson, was an English writer who made lasting contributions to English literature as a poet, essayist, moralist, literary critic, biographer, editor and lexicographer. Robert Folkenflik, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Britannica.com <<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Samuel-Johnson>> (8 February, 2017).

⁸ Stein and Spillman, *Poetry into Song*, 5.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁰ Arnold Whittall, *Romantic Music: A Concise History from Schubert to Sibelius* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1987), 10.

¹¹ *The Cross Reference Project*. Crossref-it.info <<http://crossref-it.info/articles/361/romantic-poetry>> (8 February 2017).

¹² Stein and Spillman, *Poetry into Song*, 5.

differentiates from the “Classical” poem by being richer, expressing “insatiable longing”, and without limits in scope and theme.¹³

Similarly contrasted are the celebrated heroes of Classicism with their feats of bravery, morality and ingenuity, and the Romantic hero, or anti-hero, best personified by the recurring character of the “Wanderer.”¹⁴ In *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, for example, Johann von Goethe's eponymous semi-autobiographical character is an excellent example of the Romantic anti-hero that hugely influenced the Romantic movement in literature and later in opera.¹⁵ A brooding Wanderer, Werther's forbidden love for Charlotte, who is engaged to another man, causes him unimaginable psychological pain, and leads to his suicide. This act of absolute self-absorption was seemingly glamorised and a spate of copycat suicides – allegedly the earliest recorded in history - followed in the wake of the book's publication.¹⁶ Werther's story also encompasses the Romantic concepts of the unattainable quest (his doomed pursuit of Charlotte) and the agony of unfulfillment. As far as the English Romantics were concerned, “Wertherism”, as Thomas Carlyle terms it, was synonymous with morbid, melancholic Romanticism.¹⁷ Goethe himself had a negative view of the movement. He considered an overly strong reliance on imagination, for example, to be anti-rational, self-destructive and a threat to social order.¹⁸ He was also “dismayed by the misreadings of a text [Werther] he had intended as a warning against excessive emotionalism.”¹⁹

Considered the epitome of the Romantic poet, Goethe's work in fact spans a range of categories and sub-categories including Romanticism, Classicism, and *Sturm und Drang*.²⁰ Indeed, he is almost frustratingly undefinable. Debate still rages as to whether Goethe was a Romantic or not: Arnd Bohm, in an essay entitled *Goethe and the Romantics*, says that Goethe could not have “prevented

¹³ J Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music, 9th Edition* (New York/London, W. W. Norton & Company, 2014), 593.

¹⁴ The anti-hero was a foil to the traditional hero archetype, lacking in conventional heroic traits. The anti-hero is often a troubled loner or “lone wolf”; he can be indecisive and morally questionable, and will usually have a history of private torment or trauma that makes him distrustful, introverted and psychologically more complicated than a traditional hero. The troubled anti-hero, in all his flaws is also inexplicably attractive to women.

¹⁵ Teresa Fairbanks, *A century of musical responses to Goethe's Die Leiden des Jungen Werthers* (Department of Music, Stanford University, 2003), 7.

¹⁶ Derek Jones, *Censorship: A World Encyclopedia Vol 1-4* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 963.

¹⁷ Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), Scottish philosopher, satirical writer, essayist, historian: “Wertherism” was Carlyle's epithet for the spirit of passionate discontent that had seized modern Europe. Mark Cumming, *The Carlyle Encyclopedia* (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2004), 488.

¹⁸ Dennis F. Mahoney, (editor), *The Camden House History of German Literature Vol. 8: The Literature of German Romanticism* (New York: Camden House, 2004), 41.

¹⁹ Ibid., 41. Goethe's “warning against excessive emotionalism” has resonances in the Cartesian dualism thinking of the time, whereby the body and mind are fundamentally distinct and often viewed as male/female; associating inferior bodies and emotions with “stereotypical female-identified traits” while associating superior mind and reason with the male. Karen J. Warren (editor), *An Unconventional History of Western Philosophy: Conversations Between Men and Women Philosophers* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008), 160.

²⁰ *Sturm und Drang* (“storm and stress”), a proto-Romantic movement in German Literature in the late 1700s and intimately associated with the young Goethe. “Sturm und Drang”, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Britannica.com <<https://www.britannica.com/event/Sturm-und-Drang>> (8 February 2017).

future generations from appropriating him to their own views according to their own perspectives.”²¹ What is irrefutable is Goethe's influence over several generations of philosophers, readers, writers, playwrights, artists, scientists and composers into the twentieth century.

Many scholars attribute Carl Maria von Weber's opera *Der Freischütz* (1821) as being the first important example of Romanticism in German music, citing its themes of nationalism, the presence of the supernatural, and the descriptive frustrations of youthful love. Weber himself demonstrated many characteristics of the Romantic with his strong sense of identity and an attraction to nature and German folk stories. While believing in the visual component of opera, he placed great importance on storytelling, widely considered an essential element of singing Lied.²²

While Weber might have shown the way, it is the Romantic German Lied that has been described as the “quintessential Romantic genre”: the fusion of Romantic poetry predominantly from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century with the Romantic composers of the mid-nineteenth to early-twentieth century.²³ Arnold Whittall considers the art of the German Lied to be “direct communication by means of allusion and symbolism without mimetic gesture or scenery”, meaning that, unlike the opera singer aided by visual delights, the Lied singer must “embody its subject matter with the greatest naturalness.”²⁴ Therefore the poetry of the words and music – the storytelling, just as Weber saw it - comes to the forefront.

Goethe was a favourite choice of poet for both the pioneers of Romantic Lied (Franz Schubert's *Erlkönig* from 1815) and the later subscribers (Alban Berg's setting of *Mignon* between 1904 and 1908). The world's most comprehensive Lieder website, “lieder.net”, which has become an indispensable resource for singers seeking, in particular, translations of their art songs, lists 630 Goethe texts (in various languages) set to music over 2,700 times.²⁵ Other eighteenth and nineteenth-century Romantic poets such as the prolific poet Heinrich Heine, Friedrich von Schiller, Friedrich Rückert and perhaps the most distinguished and popular exponent of Romantic poetry in general terms, Joseph von Eichendorff, also feature heavily in the works of the great German Lieder composers.

Though Eichendorff (born 1788) had an idyllic and privileged childhood, when the family fell into financial straits, his family home was sold and Eichendorff was obliged to stand on his own two feet, setting up the conditions for a “Romantic” life with all its deprivations, memories, hopes and

²¹ Arnd Bohm quoted in Mahoney, *The Camden House History of German Literature Vol. 8*, 49.

²² Fred Plotkin, “Overlooked Operas: Weber's *Der Freischütz*”, *Operavore*. Wqxr.org, (9 July 2013) <<http://www.wqxr.org/#!/story/305476-overlooked-operas-der-freischutz/>> (8 February 2017).

²³ Burkholder, Grout and Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 9th Edition, 596.

²⁴ Whittall, *Romantic Music: A Concise History from Schubert to Sibelius*, 25.

²⁵ “Authors Starting with the Letter G”, *The Lieder Net Archive*. Lieder.net <http://www.lieder.net/lieder/get_name_list.html?Type=Authors&Letter=G> (8 February 2017).

longings. He served as a Prussian civil servant and volunteered in the anti-Napoleonic Wars of Liberation.²⁶ In *Romantic German Literature*, Glyn Tegai Hughes describes the “formulas of Romanticism” that include: ruins, moonlight, rocky landscapes, medieval knights and wandering minstrels, simple peasants, nature spirits, mill streams, posthorns, *Waldeinsamkeit*, childhood dreams, gypsies “and the rest”, all of which feature in Eichendorff’s works.²⁷ Through his poetry he celebrates nostalgia, revisiting the past, with powerful evocations of childhood and experiences connected to those places. Particular to Eichendorff is not only the intense longing for his childhood home that the family was obliged to sell, but also an “almost childlike trust in God...the God of the woods by his home, not the God of speculation and philosophy.”²⁸ Although not a pantheist as Goethe was, Eichendorff’s religious faith – he was raised a Catholic – was at the emotional centre of his writing.²⁹

There were few Romantic poets producing works beyond 1820, and Eichendorff (who died in 1857) was considered one of the last. His poetry attracted many composers, including Felix Mendelssohn, Johannes Brahms, Hugo Wolf, Max Reger and especially Robert Schumann, all of whom were instrumental in bringing Eichendorff’s work onto the European stage. Two generations of Lieder composers later, in early twentieth-century Vienna, Eichendorff became a favoured poet of the fledgling Romantic, Erich Korngold. Perhaps the theme of youthful nostalgia particularly resonated with Korngold, whose own childhood was cut short by his musical career, an issue to be readdressed in Chapter Two.

Very rarely did the composers of the German Lied turn to foreign language texts: though not even they could escape the worldwide influence of William Shakespeare. While not technically a Romantic poet (the English Romantics are generally considered to be Blake, Shelley, Byron, Keats, et al, two centuries after Shakespeare), Shakespeare was exalted by German Romantics for his disregard for Classical rules, such as the merging of comedy with tragedy within the same play, and the fact that he was a popular writer – for the people – and not university educated.³⁰ Shakespeare was translated into German by August Schlegel (brother of Friedrich) and others, and these became the texts of musical settings by the likes of Schumann, Schubert and Wolf. In 1873, Brahms set the August Schlegel translation of the three Ophelia songs.³¹ Erich Korngold set himself apart by using

²⁶ *Merriam-Webster's Encyclopedia of Literature* (Massachusetts, Merriam-Webster Inc, 1995), 368.

²⁷ *Waldeinsamkeit*: forest or woodland solitude, the feeling of being alone in the woods, the feeling of being connected to nature (my own translation); Glyn Tegai Hughes, *Romantic German Literature* (London: Edward Arnold Ltd, 1979), 110.

²⁸ Rudiger Safranski, *Romanticism: A German Affair* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2014), 140.

²⁹ Christopher John Murray (editor). *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era 1760-1850* (Routledge, 2013), 313.

³⁰ Paul Brians, *Romanticism* (Washington State University, 1998) <https://public.wsu.edu/~brians/hum_303/romanticism.html> (8 February 2017).

³¹ Richard Strauss, strangely, chose the less distinguished Karl Simrock translation in 1918 and the three songs became part of his Opus 67, written to appease his publishers. Norman del Mar, *Richard Strauss: A Critical Commentary on His Life and Works, Volume 3* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1972), 366.

the original English texts for his Opus 29 *Songs of the Clown* (1937), Opus 31, *Four Shakespeare Songs* (1937 – 1941) and the fifth of the *Fünf Lieder* in Opus 38 (1948). The reason for his seeming comfort in using the original text is surely due to his heavy exposure to the English language in comparison to his predecessors, having worked regularly in Hollywood since 1934, and from 1938 he lived permanently in the United States.³² These songs however were not his first foray into Shakespeare's texts, having written incidental music for *Much Ado About Nothing* in 1918 that was widely praised, and later a re-orchestration of Mendelssohn's well known *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for the 1935 Hollywood film of the same name.

Over the course of more than a hundred and fifty years of German Lied composition, we have come to recognise the elements that define the genre: first and foremost, the Lied is the balanced and harmonious union of the music and text. As performers, the pianist and singer have an intimate onstage relationship, interacting with, and responding to each other as if in conversation. This is the most important point of difference between a Lied and, for example, a folk song, where the singers' melody and text take centre stage, and the piano, or other instruments, act as accompaniment.

One of the characteristics that made the Lied so popular was the quiet intimacy that could be achieved in performance. Despite conveying texts and stories worthy of the operatic stage, the absence of costume, props and scenery in a recital of Lieder made the genre ideal not only for the concert stage, but also for Sunday afternoons around the piano, salon and house concerts, and small gatherings, which is exactly where Erich Korngold first tested the water with his early Lieder. Furthermore, the Lied offers the singer greater scope for individualism, in that it is perfectly acceptable to perform a Lied in whichever key best suits the voice. This concept is utterly foreign to instrumentalists and most opera singers who would never dream of performing a work in any other key than the original. If the *tessitura* of a particular aria, for example, was out of the reach for the opera singer, he or she is most likely to concede defeat and turn to other repertoire that sits more comfortably.³³

³² Troy Dixon, "Biography", *Korngold Society*. Korngold-society.org, (February 2006, revised 2011) <<http://www.korngold-society.org/bio.html>> (8 September 2017).

³³ There are certain arias, such as "Una voce poco fa" from Rossini's *Barber of Seville* where it is considered acceptable to transpose to a higher key if the role is being sung by a soprano rather than a mezzo. However it would be extremely unusual to transpose, for example, "Der Hölle Rache" from *The Magic Flute*: the aria was written to showcase the vocal range of the soprano earmarked to sing the role of the Queen of the Night, Mozart's sister-in-law, Josepha Hofer (née Weber). Mozart also specifically selected the key of D minor for the aria, as this key is often associated with tragedy. Gavin Plumley, "Accessible Arias: The Queen of the Night's Act II Aria from The Magic Flute", *Royal Opera House*. Roh.org.uk, (4 February 2013) <<http://www.roh.org.uk/news/accessible-arias-the-queen-of-the-nights-act-ii-aria-from-the-magic-flute>> (8 September 2017).

Franz Schubert, with a catalogue of more than 600 songs, can be considered the grandfather of German Lied and gifted the piano with descriptive and colourful accompaniments. In his songs the piano contributed as fully as possible to the atmosphere and expressiveness of the text as the voice did.³⁴ The mantle was then taken up by Robert Schumann, who elevated the accompaniment to full partnership with the voice. In 1840, the year he was finally permitted (by a court of law) to marry his fiancé and muse, Clara Wieck, Schumann wrote no less than 138 Lieder, among these the *Dichterliebe* poems by Heinrich Heine in a song cycle that represents, according to Whittall, perhaps the finest essence of Romanticism: wavering emotions expressed on a small scale and yet “embracing all the necessary variety and intensity.”³⁵

Johannes Brahms and Hugo Wolf continued to shape the Romantic Lied through the nineteenth century. Brahms wrote dramatic, pictorial accompaniments to predominantly strophic Lieder, while Wolf delved into chromaticism and rich harmonies, with accompaniments of greater technical difficulty than previously seen in the genre.³⁶ Wolf's deep yet subtle sensitivity to the literature helped him to marry melody and text to create the closest connection between the two.³⁷ Whittall concurs, suggesting that in his tendency for a self-contained piano setting that serves to express and maximise attention to the texts, Wolf “could be the ultimate Romantic”.³⁸

However, the most dominant figure in the development of Lied in the twentieth century was Richard Strauss (1864-1949), who composed more than 200 songs, many for his wife, Pauline de Ahna, to perform. In Strauss's Lieder we see sweeping phrases, large interval leaps, greater indulgence, richer harmonies than seen previously, rapid key modulations and songs that were almost operatic in scope.³⁹ Many of these Straussian characteristics are seen in the Lieder of Erich Korngold a generation later.

It is also interesting to note that Strauss approached the great Romantic poets with caution, opting to set their lesser-known or smaller-scale poetry to music. In his book, Norman del Mar says that Strauss “felt himself inhibited when confronted with great poetry such as Goethe's.”⁴⁰ Schubert, for example, tackled the finest and largest scale Goethe texts such as *Erlkönig* (not without difficulty), while Strauss seemingly shied away from such epic poetry.⁴¹ Strauss had intended to write a cycle of Goethe songs but eventually only wrote a handful, perhaps the best known being *Gefunden*, part of Opus 56 in 1903, which he dedicated to his wife. In a pleasing parallel, Goethe had written the

³⁴ Whittall, *Romantic Music: A Concise History from Schubert to Sibelius*, 28.

³⁵ Ibid., 40.

³⁶ Murray, *Encyclopedia of the Romantic Era 1760-1850 Volume 2*, 682.

³⁷ Carol Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Style and Literature* (Redmond, Washington: Psst...Inc, 1996), 51.

³⁸ Whittall, *Romantic Music: A Concise History from Schubert to Sibelius*, 171.

³⁹ Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Style and Literature*, 36-38.

⁴⁰ del Mar, *Richard Strauss: A Critical Commentary on His Life and Works, Volume 3*, 350.

⁴¹ Schubert wrote three other versions before resting on the final setting of *Erlkönig* (D328) in 1815.

verse for his own wife, Christiane, whom he married after an eighteen-year relationship.⁴²

Of the several composers working in the German Lied genre in the twentieth century, it is Strauss's Lieder that feature the most heavily in singers' repertoire. The vast repertoire of songs to choose from may be a reason for this, as well as his profound understanding of the soprano voice (the voice type of his wife). Additionally, although Strauss's Lieder are not without their challenges, when compared to the vocal lines of Alban Berg and Arnold Schoenberg for example, they are potentially more approachable for the singer.

Rudiger Safranski states in *Romanticism: A German Affair*: "Romanticism is an epoch; the Romantic is a disposition of mind that is not limited to an epoch."⁴³ Richard Strauss was certainly not limited to an epoch, but neither would any biographer call him a Romantic in terms of his personality. A shrewd businessman in his negotiations with publishers, opera houses and professional associates, Strauss took the practical aspects of his career very seriously, writing up to ten business letters a day.⁴⁴ Fastidious and methodical, his sketches and manuscripts were carefully labelled and filed, and he prided himself on his handwriting and clear musical calligraphy.⁴⁵ In physical appearance he was also "not in the least like the traditional musician", scrupulously neat and tidy, which is certainly not what one associates with a Romantic character.⁴⁶

Much of Strauss' character is tied up in the ongoing debate as to whether he did or did not support the Nazi party. It is presumptuous to assume that by his not openly staging any protest he must therefore have been a supporter: Gustav Mahler went as far as accusing Strauss of being "the great opportunist", echoed later by Ernst Krause who noted Strauss's tendency to conform to whatever political system was in power.⁴⁷ What is more likely is that the "brash and opinionated" composer, for the safety of his family, attempted to appear apolitical.⁴⁸ It has been confirmed that Strauss was asked, and not forced, to take the position of president of the Reich Music Chamber, but one can only speculate as to the consequences of turning Adolf Hitler down.

As seemingly un-Romantic as Strauss the man was, he was one of just a handful of composers in the early half of the twentieth century committed to the preservation of the technical principles and expressive qualities of musical Romanticism, as well as a champion of the Romantic poetry of the previous century.⁴⁹

⁴² del Mar, *Richard Strauss: A Critical Commentary on His Life and Works, Volume 3*, 351.

⁴³ Safranski, *Romanticism: A German Affair*, 140.

⁴⁴ Bryan Gilliam (editor) *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work* (Duke University Press, 1997), 115.

⁴⁵ Bryan Gilliam (editor), *Richard Strauss and His World* (Princeton University Press, 1992), 275.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 278.

⁴⁷ Gilliam, *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*, 97.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁴⁹ Whittall, *Romantic Music: A Concise History from Schubert to Sibelius*, 176.

Leaning more towards a “Romantic disposition of mind” was young Erich Korngold, the self-proclaimed “Straussian”, who as a child had aroused “awe and fear” in Strauss himself.⁵⁰ On Korngold's adolescent shoulders Giacomo Puccini would place the burden for the continued future of Romanticism in Germany.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 151. Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music Vol. 4: The Early Twentieth Century* (Oxford University Press, 2005), 549.

⁵¹ Clark and Staines, *Classical Music: The Rough Guide*, 261.

Chapter Two

THE RISE AND FALL OF ERICH KORNGOLD

Erich Wolfgang Korngold was born in 1897 to a Jewish family in Brünn, Austria-Hungary.⁵² He was named for his father's favourite composer, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, the greatest musical child prodigy in history. Young Erich had more than a name in common with Mozart: when he was ten years old, he played one of his own compositions for Gustav Mahler, who declared him a genius. On the advice of Mahler, Erich was sent to learn from the respected composer and conductor Alexander Zemlinsky, also Arnold Schoenberg's teacher, and it was under Zemlinsky's guidance that Erich composed his first important work, *Der Schneeman* (1908-1910) although his earliest dated compositions are from 1905.⁵³

Forty copies of *Der Schneeman* were privately published and sent to musicians and experts outside of Vienna, to protect then eleven-year-old Korngold from what could be a highly critical reception.⁵⁴ The response was unanimous – the child was a musical genius. Critics, composers, academics, did not realise at first, when reviewing his composition, that they were viewing the work of a child. It seems that his was indistinguishable from the work of a grown adult with a lifetime of experience, and in that respect it is not surprising that Korngold's father, Dr Julius Korngold, received a letter from Richard Strauss dated 3 January 1910: “Take this young genius away from his desk and his music; send him to the countryside for tobogganing, skiing...lest his young brain becomes prematurely tired and worn out before it reaches its full productivity. I am looking forward to making the personal acquaintance of this arch-musician.”⁵⁵

Strauss and Erich Korngold met for the first time in Munich, September 1910, where Mahler's 8th Symphony was having its world premiere. At the time, Korngold was thirteen and Strauss forty-six, and yet this was the beginning of a decades-long friendship based on mutual respect between two composers. Korngold looked to Strauss as something of a mentor, while Strauss admired in Korngold's compositions the “firmness of style, sovereignty of form, individuality of expression and harmonic structure”, deeming them to be the equal of those of any living composer's.⁵⁶

Musicologist Egon Wellesz cannot have been the only person who, in his 1916 review of Korngold's double-bill *Violanta* and *Der Rings des Polykrates*, wondered how an “adolescent purely by intuition could have reproduced so uncannily the emotions and passion he cannot have

⁵² Now Brno, Czech Republic.

⁵³ Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 31.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 43.

⁵⁵ Richard Strauss quoted in Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 43.

⁵⁶ Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music Vol. 4: The Early Twentieth Century*, 549.

yet experienced.”⁵⁷ While his music was mature, Korngold himself was not. His wife, Luzi von Sonnenthal, penned a biography of her husband in 1967, in which she remarked that Erich was “more childish than his contemporaries, untouched by the problems of puberty.”⁵⁸ It is difficult to imagine that a child so heavily guarded from the outside world, living in the bubble of Viennese upper middle-class salons, could have written the music he did at such a young age. Biographer Jessica Duchen suggests that Korngold was as precocious as a child could be, and indifferent to everyday life, and was therefore able to completely absorb himself in his music without distraction.⁵⁹ His father, Dr Julius Korngold, described him as possessing “truthfulness and modesty peculiar to the child, but also a certain childlike nature” even as an adult.⁶⁰ Erich Korngold himself admitted he never learned to drive a car for fear of mistaking the accelerator for the sustain pedal on a piano.⁶¹

He lead a sheltered life under constant parental supervision. Dr Korngold oversaw his son's every move, musically, professionally and socially, and disapproved of Erich's courting of Luzi von Sonnenthal, an actress from a theatrical family. When they eventually married without his parents' blessing, it was perhaps Erich's first ever act of defiance. As will soon be shown Dr Korngold was a key player in the rise and fall of his son's career.

The whirlwind success of his career-defining opera *Die tote Stadt* (1920) meant that by the mid-1920s, Korngold was in the prestigious position of being the most performed Germanic composer in Austria and Germany, second only to Richard Strauss. It was in *Die tote Stadt* as Marietta that the famous soprano Maria Jeritza took New York by storm in her 1921 Metropolitan Opera debut.⁶² She described the opera as “theatrically vivid in the highest degree and fairly inspires the singer in the outstanding dramatic moments.”⁶³ Jeritza respected Korngold personally as well as professionally and considered performing his music a great pleasure. She felt that Erich himself was an “engaging,

⁵⁷ Egon Wellesz quoted in Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 133.

⁵⁸ Luzi Korngold, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold: Ein Lebensbild von Luzi Korngold* (Vienna: Elisabeth Lafite und Österreichischer Bundesverlag 1967), 22.

⁵⁹ Jessica Duchen, *Erich Wolfgang Korngold* (Phaidon Press, 1996), 27.

⁶⁰ Dr Julius Korngold quoted in Ivan Hewett, “Erich Korngold: genius or mere talent?” *The Telegraph*. Telegraph.co.uk, (14 Jan 2009) <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/journalists/ivan-hewett/4238665/Erich-Korngold-genius-or-mere-talent.html>> (8 February 2017).

⁶¹ Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 176.

⁶² Maria Jeritza (1887-1982), Czech-born prima donna of the golden age of opera, known for her association with the Vienna State Opera. She performed the role of Juliette in the 1920 Hamburg premiere of Korngold's *Die tote Stadt*. She created numerous iconic (and titular) roles including Strauss's *Ariadne*, Korngold's *Violanta*, and Janáček's *Jenůfa*. John Rockwell, “Maria Jeritza, Star of Opera's 'Golden Age' Dies at 94”, *The New York Times*. Nytimes.com, (11 July 1982) <<http://www.nytimes.com/1982/07/11/obituaries/maria-jeritza-star-of-opera-s-golden-age-dies-at-94.html?pagewanted=all>> (8 February 2017). According to Jeritza, Giacomo Puccini “wrote [Turandot] for me” but she had another engagement at the time of *Turandot*'s 1924 Vienna premiere. Paul Thomason, “Maria Jeritza and Turandot”, *Paul Thomason Writer*. Paulthomasonwriter.com, (2004) <<http://paulthomasonwriter.com/maria-jeritza-and-turandot/>> (8 February 2017).

⁶³ Maria Jeritza quoted in Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 149.

modest boy, not at all puffed up with the fame which he has earned at so early an age.”⁶⁴ His father, however, was becoming a liability, not just in his micro-managing of his son, but with his “partiality and arbitrariness” as a critic, which would come to a head just a few years later.⁶⁵

In 1927, Korngold's most ambitious work, the shamelessly romantic opera *Das Wunder der Heliane* was to be premiered in Vienna.⁶⁶ Another work, the revolutionary “jazz” opera, *Jonny spielt auf* by Ernst Krenek was in direct competition. Naturally Dr Korngold did everything in his power to promote Korngold's opera and destroy *Jonny*, which he considered a component in the steady corruption of opera and classical music. Vienna became a virtual war zone, a battle of musical ideologies, old world versus new world. The public gleefully took sides. Cigarettes called *Jonny* and *Heliane* were launched, *Helianes* being perfumed and gold-tipped and *Jonny's* filterless, rough and ready.⁶⁷ Ultimately the public preferred the plebeian flavour of the *Jonny* cigarettes and of the opera. *Heliane* was hardly a flop, running for eighteen performances in Hamburg alone - a respectable number for a new work and comparable to a new Strauss opera – but the press deemed Korngold out of touch, and the work to be pointless and emotionally immature.⁶⁸ This was particularly painful for Korngold as he considered *Heliane* his greatest work to date.⁶⁹ His confidence shaken, and with bills still needing to be paid, he undertook other work: arrangements of operetta and conducting for several houses including the Theater an der Wien. He did this work with both pleasure and great success, particularly his production of *Der Fledermaus*, with renowned director Max Reinhardt, that toured Europe in 1929, and his reworking of Offenbach's *La Belle Helene* in 1931.

When Korngold should have been in the prime of his career, Hitler's rise to power in 1933 ensured that no Jewish composer could have a future in Austria. Conservative nationalists deplored swing, jazz, African American and Jewish music, believing it to contribute to the collapse of German society and appropriate German values; composers like Arnold Schoenberg and Kurt Weill fuelled this fire with their avant garde and populist styles.⁷⁰ The music of both living and deceased Jewish

⁶⁴ Maria Jeritza, *Sunlight and Song: A Singer's Life* (Arno Press, 1977), 85.

⁶⁵ Mark Mitchell and Allan Evans (editors), *Moriz Rosenthal in Word and Music: A Legacy of the Nineteenth Century* (Indiana University Press, 2005), 71.

⁶⁶ Tim Mahon, “Das Wunder der Heliane”, *All Music*. Allmusic.com <<http://www.allmusic.com/composition/das-wunder-der-heliane-opera-op-20-mc0002658692>> (8 February 2017).

⁶⁷ Michael Haas, “The False Myths and True Genius of Erich Wolfgang Korngold.”

⁶⁸ In a 2007 review of the work, and in line with the feelings of music critics at the time of its premiere, journalist Rupert Christiansen calls *Heliane* “drivel”, and “profoundly bogus and cheap.” Rupert Christiansen, “Das Wunder der Heliane: Opera's Biggest Load of Codswallop Rises from the Grave”, *The Telegraph*. Telegraph.co.uk, (23 November 2007) <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/opera/3669482/Das-Wunder-der-Heliane-Operas-biggest-load-of-codswallop-rises-from-the-grave.html>> (8 February 2017).

⁶⁹ Jessica Duchan, *Composer of the Month: Erich Korngold, Post Romantic Film Music Pioneer* (BBC Music Magazine, 2007), 47.

⁷⁰ Shirli Gilbert, “Music in the Third Reich”, *Music and the Holocaust*. Holocaustmusic.ort.org, (World ORT, November 2006. Web. 6 January 2007) <<http://holocaustmusic.ort.org/politics-and-propaganda/third-reich>> (8 February 2017).

composers, including Mendelssohn and Mahler, was condemned by the Nazis. Along with Schoenberg, Weill, Ernst Krenek and many others, Korngold's music was labelled *Entartete Musik* - "degenerate music."

However, thanks to Korngold's earlier "defection" to the world of operetta, his working partner Max Reinhardt engineered Korngold's employment in Los Angeles as the composer for his 1935 film *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. After this initial introduction, Hollywood fatefully came calling for Korngold a second time in 1938, effectively saving his life and his career. Korngold was able to escape persecution in Europe and had ongoing, well-paid employment in America while many other Jewish composers, Arnold Schoenberg included, fled to America and struggled to find their feet. With his contacts already in place from previous film contracts, Korngold's integration into American life was significantly smoother.

Korngold enjoyed much satisfaction from his work in film, and took particular pleasure in the knowledge that his music was reaching a new audience. Furthermore, Warner Brothers, for whom he was employed on a year-by-year contract, allowed his compositions to remain his own property, and he averaged a comfortable one or two films annually.⁷¹ He won two Academy Awards for *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938) and *Anthony Adverse* (1936), and received three further nominations. Korngold undoubtedly paved the way for the future of film composition as a prestigious and lucrative career, although not in everyone's eyes. In a statement indicative of the attitude of the classical world towards Korngold and his "descent" into film music, Eric Myers wrote in 1985: "[His music was] effective in a cheaply theatrical sort of way, and it is not surprising that [he] eventually went to Hollywood to ply his trade for The Bastard Art."⁷² Such a statement is at odds with more recent commentary on his contribution to film, Michael Haas for example asserting that he was the composer who made film music serious music and that his genius "quite specifically elevated film music to the degree that it could never be forgotten."⁷³ Korngold's enduring influence on film music to the present day is indisputable.⁷⁴

Post-war, however, Korngold became disenchanted with films. He may have felt that after being twice awarded Hollywood's greatest honour, the Academy Award, there was nowhere for him to take his career. Several of the films are memorable only for Korngold's music, as Hollywood

⁷¹ Reinhold Brinkmann, *Driven Into Paradise: The Musical Migration from Nazi Germany to the United States* (University of California Press, 1999), 228.

⁷² Eric Myers quoted in William Cheng, *Opera en abyme: The Prodigious Ritual of Korngold's Die tote Stadt* (Cambridge Opera Journal, Vol. 22 Issue 2, 2010), 123.

⁷³ Haas, *The False Myths and True Genius of Erich Wolfgang Korngold*.

⁷⁴ John Williams, five-time Oscar-winning film composer of *Jaws*, *Star Wars*, and *ET*, was hugely drawn to the work of Erich Korngold and took inspiration from him while creating the music for several of his best film scores, for example in the sword-fighting scene in Steven Spielberg's *Hook*, in which Williams constantly "referenced Korngold's idiom." Emilio Audissino, *John Williams's Film Music* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2014), 214.

produced films of varying quality en masse year after year: a less than satisfying outlet for one's creativity.⁷⁵ Korngold clandestinely began writing classical music again, in the hope of returning to Austria and reviving his concert and opera career with new works, including his 1946 concerto for cello and orchestra. Peter Franklin describes these compositions as “raising the specter of a conservative return to the form resolutely associated with Classical Music in its most culturally regressive manifestation” - in other words, old fashioned and now irrelevant.⁷⁶ His 1945 Violin Concerto, for example, was ridiculed for its melodic indulgence, resulting in the notorious *New York Sun* critique “more corn than gold”, which then became the brush that tarnished his entire compositional output.⁷⁷ His fifth and final opera, *Die Kathrin* (1938), with its implausible plot, suffering from a poor libretto and performed to a world-weary, cynical, post-war Viennese audience in 1950, was a resounding flop. “In short,” says Reinhold Brinkmann, in *Driven Into Paradise*: “he left Austria a degenerate and returned an anachronism.”⁷⁸ No university would employ him, no orchestra invited him to conduct. This had an adverse effect on his state of mind, as he was already prone to depression and overeating. Unhealthily overweight for decades, Korngold had suffered a serious heart attack in 1947 and a second debilitating stroke in 1956 left him partially paralysed on the right side of his body; harrowingly, he was unable to play the piano again.⁷⁹ Jessica Duchén speculates that he died of sadness at the early age of sixty; soprano Lotte Lenya believed what killed him was the deep sense of loss of his German identity.⁸⁰

Erich Korngold's rise was swift and glorious; his fall was tragic, for which there were several contributing factors.

Journalist Ivan Hewett believes Korngold chose not to notice the burgeoning modernism in a changing Vienna: Korngold's Romantic music seems completely at odds with, for example, Freud's psycho-analytic theories, including the “Oedipus complex”, the controversial (and Freudian) plays of Artur Schnitzler, and Karl Kraus' brutal satire of Austro-Hungarian culture and politics.⁸¹ Cloistered at home, Korngold's music was equally “safe” - he was devoted to following the

⁷⁵ “...he ceased to view film music as being of equal significance, and resented its draining of creative resources.” Haas, “The False Myths and True Genius of Erich Wolfgang Korngold.”

⁷⁶ Peter Franklin, *Reclaiming Late-Romantic Music: Singing Devils and Distant Sounds* (University of California Press, 2014), 122.

⁷⁷ Clark and Staines, *Classical Music: The Rough Guide*, 261.

⁷⁸ Brinkmann, *Driven Into Paradise: The Musical Migration from Nazi Germany to the United States*, 228.

⁷⁹ Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 364.

⁸⁰ Jessica Duchén, “Composer of the Month: Erich Korngold, Post Romantic Film Music Pioneer”, *BBC Music Magazine* (2007), 50. Lotte Lenya quoted in Haas, “The False Myths and True Genius of Erich Korngold.”

⁸¹ Artur Schnitzler (1862-1931) was a Jewish Viennese author and dramatist who specialised in novellas and short plays. His works included depictions of sexuality, human psychology and the position of Jews in Austria. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Britannica.com <<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Arthur-Schnitzler>> (8 February 2017). Karl Kraus (1874-1936) was a Jewish Viennese writer and journalist who in 1899 founded his own newspaper, *Die Fackel* (the Torch), in which he attacked the Austrian middle classes and the Viennese liberal press. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. <<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Karl-Kraus#ref49705>> (8 February 2017).

Romantic tonal composition of his heroes, Mahler and Strauss, his tutor Zemlinsky, and he adored Johann Strauss (“The Waltz King”). He was not a part of the changes taking place in the world of classical music, the inventions and forward-thinking, of which Vienna was at the nexus, to be discussed in detail in Chapter Four. Hewett alleges that rather than move with the times, “he preferred to dream the nostalgic dream of Old Vienna” and that “along with the nostalgia went a peculiar self-absorption.”⁸² He is not alone in accusing Korngold of self-indulgence, but Duchon says that Korngold was “guilty only of being true to himself.”⁸³

Robbert van der Lek asserts that at the age of twenty-five, Korngold had “effectively already said everything he had to say through his music.”⁸⁴ This oft-heard allegation that Korngold's work did not develop beyond his twenties is not entirely without foundation. By age twelve he had established his own Romantic language, within it traces of Strauss, Mahler and Puccini, that saw him sail through the next fifteen years as the darling of Vienna. After the debacle of *Das Wunder der Heliane* in 1927 he turned out of financial necessity to the arranging and revival of other composers' operettas. The structure of *Die Kathrin* is the least successful of his operas, and musically Korngold shows no real progress.⁸⁵ Once forced out of Austria and landing on his feet in Hollywood, according to his family he swore he would not write “real music” until Hitler was overthrown.⁸⁶ Whether this is true or not, in any case, he wrote practically no other music than that for film during World War II.

Korngold's reluctance to adapt to the changing musical world is certainly the most glaring reason for his career decline, but the fact remains that even if *Heliane* had been a critical success, if Korngold had composed more stunning operas and held his position as the *Wunderkind* of Vienna, as a Jew, he could have no future under the Third Reich.

Furthermore, the ongoing meddling of Dr Julius Korngold was hugely detrimental to Korngold's career and reputation. Maria Jeritza put it quite diplomatically when she explained that Dr Korngold, from the very beginning of Erich's career, had “made himself unpopular by obtrusively taking charge of everything on his boy's behalf.”⁸⁷

A Romantic loyalist, Dr Korngold was the self-appointed defender of that tradition. In his powerful

⁸² Hewett, “Erich Korngold: genius or mere talent?”

⁸³ Duchon, “Composer of the Month: Erich Korngold, Post Romantic Film Music Pioneer,” 50.

⁸⁴ Robbert Van der Lek, *Diegetic Music in Opera and Film: A Similarity Between Two Genres of Drama Analysed in Works by Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897-1957)* (Rodopi, 1991), 4.

⁸⁵ Ian Lace wrote “Working against the emergent tide of serialism, *Die Kathrin* is resolutely tonal...The libretto is weak and the concept follows a well worn path.” Ian Lace, “Erich Wolfgang Korngold: Die Kathrin”, *Film Music on the Web: Film Music Recordings Review*. musicweb-international.com <<http://www.musicweb-international.com/film/1998/dec98/kathrin.html>> (8 February 2017).

⁸⁶ Brinkmann, *Driven Into Paradise: The Musical Migration from Nazi Germany to the United States*, 228.

⁸⁷ Jeritza, *Sunlight and Song: A Singer's Life*, 85.

position as chief critic of the prestigious *Neue Freie Presse*, he was known for his aggressive rants against modern musical inventions, and particularly atonality, pioneered by Schoenberg and his proteges, Alban Berg and Anton Webern. Dr Korngold considered them a subversive crowd, and the assaults launched at the Second Viennese School, or indeed anything that was not to his taste, resulted in the *Neue Freie Presse* regularly being slapped with defamation suits. Dr Korngold even made enemies of former friends: he was highly critical of Richard Strauss' running of the Vienna State Opera (1919-1924), a dispute into which Erich was thrown in the middle. Eventually, Erich himself found himself excluded from festivals, including the International Society for Contemporary Music because of his belligerent father.⁸⁸

Lastly, the prejudice and scorn Korngold faced for “lowering” himself to writing film music, and worse, utilizing themes from films in his last classical works brought particular derision from critics.⁸⁹ Examples of this include his Violin Concerto in 1947 which drew on the music from the films *Another Dawn*, *Anthony Adverse* and *The Prince and the Pauper*, and his Symphony in F Sharp inspired by *The Private Lives of Elizabeth and Essex*.⁹⁰ It seems absurd now that bringing Hollywood to a concert hall was considered so low-brow, when today's orchestras (including the internationally renowned New Zealand Symphony Orchestra) regularly programme “light” music: Bernstein's symphonic dances from *West Side Story* and *Harry Potter* being two prime examples of film music that attracts audiences and leads to earnings at the box office.⁹¹

Like so many child prodigies, Korngold's was a career with a dizzying upward trajectory that then stalled - but not for lack of ability, which is what makes him such an intriguing figure. He straddled two musical worlds, Romanticism and Modernism, but too late to be counted among the great Late Romantics. Regardless, his music cannot be dismissed as unimportant to the Romantic era and of particular significance are his vocal works. For Korngold, opera was the most meaningful of all musical forms – he once referred to his film scores as “operas without singing”- but it was Lieder that first attracted seven-year-old Erich Korngold.⁹² Thus he was poised to make an important and substantial addition to the heritage of European song.

⁸⁸ Cheng, *Opera en abyme: The Prodigious Ritual of Korngold's Die tote Stadt*, 122.

⁸⁹ Much of the criticism came from his own father who never stopped berating him for abandoning high art. Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 367.

⁹⁰ Mark Pullinger, “Korngold: Defining the Hollywood Film Score”, *Bachtrack*. Bachtrack.com, (2014) <<https://bachtrack.com/article-korngold-hollywood-film-month>> (8 February 2017).

⁹¹ The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra programmed John Williams's *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* Suite for Orchestra in their Christmas 2006 concert and performed Bernstein's *West Side Story* Suite as recently as 2016.

⁹² The earliest surviving example of Korngold's Lieder was composed in early 1905, entitled “Knabe”. Brendan G. Carroll in the foreward of *Korngold: Lieder aus dem Nachlass/Posthumous Songs* (Schott, 2005).

Chapter Three

THE LAST ROMANTIC: THE SONGS OF KORNGOLD

Korngold's biographer Brendan Carroll suggests that, in bypassing any youthful compositional phase, Erich Korngold was fully created, a grown composer, at eleven years old, and thus one of the most remarkable child prodigies in history.⁹³ Carroll cites some of his pre-*Schneeman* compositions (from 1905) as already exhibiting the creeping musical dissonances from outside the otherwise diatonic harmony which would become a feature of his later music.⁹⁴ In this regard, his work was indistinguishable from the work of a fully-grown adult. The great Hungarian conductor Arthur Nikisch, after viewing the score of *Der Schneeman*, remarked: "I am really excited about these pieces – that is, the pieces themselves, without the restrictive consideration that an eleven-year-old boy has written them."⁹⁵ There were some sceptics who suspected the music was actually written by his father, Dr Julius Korngold, but Erich Korngold was quick to dispel such rumours by proving that he was no one-trick pony who had stumbled across such harmonic richness by accident. As will be discussed in this chapter, an adolescent Korngold displayed in his complex harmonies and clusters of chords a maturity that is extraordinary for one of his age and background.

Evidence does not suggest that Korngold's upbringing was different from any other boy in upper middle class Vienna at that time. He learnt to read, write, and he had music lessons. There is nothing unusual about that. Even a child starting to experiment with composition is hardly out of the ordinary. Many children like to play around on their instrument and see what sounds they can make. Some children, once they are able, start to jot their compositions down on paper. Brendan Carroll, however, says that Korngold was unlike any other child: we listen to Mozart the child composer, for example, with knowledge of the genius that was to come, but the works are fundamentally *childish*.⁹⁶ Korngold, in comparison, as mentioned in Chapter Two, was capable of reproducing "uncannily the emotions and passion he cannot have yet experienced."⁹⁷ Furthermore, Korngold was not simply emulating the sounds he had heard others making; his compositions weren't obviously reminiscent of Mozart, or Beethoven, or Schubert's works that he most certainly would have played in his piano lessons: while these composers helped shape his musical development, his work was truly original. No wonder at twenty-five, when the first biography was published, the author suggested that the future of music lay in Erich Korngold.⁹⁸

⁹³ Carroll, *The Last Prodigy: A Biography of Erich Wolfgang Korngold*, 28.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 31.

⁹⁵ Richard Strauss quoted in Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 42.

⁹⁶ In the sense that they possess a simplicity and youthful charm; lacking the maturity of his adult works. This is not to infer that they are unimportant, or puerile in the negative sense of the word.

⁹⁷ Egon Wellesz quoted in Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 133.

⁹⁸ The first biography was *Erich Wolfgang Korngold* by Dr Rudolf Stefan Hoffman, published by Carl Stephenson Verlag in Vienna, 1922.

In an interview in 2004, Brendan Carroll expressed delight in the recent CD release of Korngold's unpublished *Zwölf Lieder* (Twelve Songs) from 1911. "Korngold is not often regarded as a song composer and I have always thought he was one of the finest exponents of that great German Lied tradition that stretches from Schubert onwards. 'Liebesbriefchen' or 'Sommer' deserve to be on every recital programme, alongside the songs of Strauss, Mahler and Marx."⁹⁹ Korngold had been exposed to vocal music from early childhood as his father reputedly possessed a fine tenor voice and accompanied himself on the piano. Concerts and the singing of Lieder were also a staple in the middle-class Viennese home.¹⁰⁰

All twelve songs draw on texts by Joseph von Eichendorff, whose themes, as mentioned in Chapter One, of childhood memory, nostalgia, and vivid descriptions of nature with a religious-like reverence, particularly attracted the young composer. Three of these twelve, "Schneeglöckchen", "Nachtwanderer" and "Das Ständchen" were taken from the set and were published alongside three additional Lieder in 1916 as *Sechs Einfache Lieder* (Six Easy Songs), Opus 9. Each are masterpieces in miniature, and not all of them "easy" as their collective title suggests. The songs present several challenges for both the pianist and singer, in terms of tempo and range, the demand for perfect synchronicity, and awareness of the other performer.

The first in the set, "Schneeglöckchen" (Snowdrops), written in 1911, describes snowdrops in the garden anxiously awaiting Spring so that they might bloom. They are so impatient that on a mild evening, they believe the winds are calling them to waken; they open their petals only to realise the world is still white with snow, and they wither with sorrow. Eichendorff compares the flowers to poets, weary with songs, who fall by the wayside, and Spring rustles over their graves.

"Schneeglöckchen" is marked with the unusual time signature "3|4 4|4" but the tempo does not alternate between waltz and common time with any regularity, nor does Korngold indicate the changing meter on the music. In performing the song, however, the changing time signature poses no real problem, for the change is so organic that one hardly notices it has occurred. He appears to do this to accommodate the text without disrupting the accompaniment, which continues to roll quietly and uninterrupted beneath the vocal line, demonstrating a thoughtfulness for the word scan. He allows, for example, a 4|4 bar for longer lines of text or to emphasise a word within the phrase. He is also sympathetic to the singer, awarding her moments of repose or an extra beat in the bar to breathe. Such moments are usually carefully crafted into the transition between stanzas of the poem, or to signal a change in mood, for example when transitioning from fate of the wilting flowers "sie

⁹⁹ Troy Dixon interview with Brendan Carroll, *Korngold Society*. Korngold-society.org, (2004) <http://www.korngold-society.org/Interviews_page/intvw_carroll.html> (8 February 2017).

¹⁰⁰ Bonnie Lynn Finn, *Erich Korngold's Discursive Practices: Musical Values in the Salon Community from Vienna to Hollywood* (Master's Thesis, University of Tennessee, 2016), 4 <http://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_gradthes/4036> (8 February 2017).

sanken um vor Weh” (they sank under in sorrow) to the poets “so schon manche Dichter...” (so have some poets.) It is incredible that a young boy, fourteen years old, could have achieved this balance of two different meters and made something quite unusual – the changing meter - seem beautifully natural.

In “Schneeglöckchen” we hear examples of Korngold's tendency for unexpected harmonic shifts and mysterious dissonances that would later become so recognisable to his devotees.¹⁰¹ The Lied establishes itself in the key of F in the first bar, introduces a foreign A flat in the third bar, creating momentary uneasiness, that then gently fades back to the calming F major. This is followed by the “stark and drastic” combination of a G flat and C tritone, only to be once again quickly resolved.¹⁰² Peter Franklin, in *Reclaiming Late-Romantic Music: Singing Devils and Distant Sounds* identifies Korngold's mobilisation and orchestration of dissonant vertical harmonies that would then resolve tonally as one of his particular contributions to the early twentieth-century “style wars.”¹⁰³

“Das Ständchen”, the third in the set, has an altogether different mood: a carnival-like introduction followed by a playful song of youthful confidence, as a student stands in the moonlit alley singing lustily up to his beloved. With typical Eichendorff nostalgia, the narrator is reflective as he surveys the scene, remembering that he too was once young and full of songs. Again, Korngold uses different phrase lengths, but a relatively simple melody based around a rising and falling C major scale. In this song the keen listener will hear moments of what is to come from Korngold over the next decade: different harmonic structures at the peak of the melodic phrase, such as the change to an E major chord with a *ritardando*; and after the sonority of F minor the progression to a harmonically rich B flat middle section where the narrator's “youthful days” are wistfully remembered.¹⁰⁴

Korngold has the ability to make the listener feel that they are on a theme park ride full of surprises around each corner, but reassures with a return to the main melodic theme and key at the song's conclusion. Singers performing these pieces can also be made to feel secure in Korngold's songs, believing they know where the melody is heading, only to be surprised with an unexpected accidental or interval. This delights and intrigues the singer and audience. Part of the genius of Korngold was incorporating melodic or harmonic twists, as he does in the middle section of “Das Ständchen” with a shift in mood lasting several bars, but these twists could also be fleeting: an unexpected chord or dissonance, or tritone that quickly resolves as mentioned in

¹⁰¹ Brendan Carroll says that “having lived with and studied this music for a quarter of a century, I can recognise the voice of Korngold in a single chord, so extraordinarily personal is his style.” Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 371.

¹⁰² Randel Wagner, *Wunderkinder Lieder: A study of the songs of Erich Wolfgang Korngold* (Michigan: UMI, 1993), 26.

¹⁰³ Franklin, *Reclaiming Late-Romantic Music: Singing Devils and Distant Sounds*, 120.

¹⁰⁴ German: *Jungen Tagen* – youthful days (my translation).

“Schneeglockchen.” Such moments add colour and interest in a non-confrontational way that pleases rather than shocks. It was never Korngold's ambition to shock; he left that task to others.¹⁰⁵ His work was experimental, but not outrageous. What he did was in keeping with the Romantic aural aesthetic yet edged with newness, fascination, curiosity and experimentation.

With Korngold's first published collection of songs, *Sechs Einfache Lieder* he proved himself a “master composer of Lieder” and a worthy heir to the throne of Richard Strauss.¹⁰⁶

While Korngold never sought to emulate his mentor, Strauss, the similarities in their Lieder are very clear: expansive vocal lines, broad melodic phrases, rich harmonies with rapid modulations. Both composers demanded much from the piano, and an excellent pianist is required to successfully navigate the difficulties of the richly textured accompaniments. Carol Kimball cites Strauss's major contribution to the Lied genre as being the development of songs with orchestral accompaniment, the most famous being the *Four Last Songs*.¹⁰⁷ Korngold also wrote orchestral accompaniments for several of his Lieder, including the *Sechs Einfache Lieder*, and these were performed in their orchestral form by Lotte Lehmann in January 1918 with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra.¹⁰⁸ Strauss used large interval leaps up or down to underscore words in the text; it is not uncommon to see an interval of a thirteenth in Korngold's Lieder.

A main difference in their Lieder-writing is in terms of *tessitura*: Strauss wrote extensively for high soprano with frequent coloratura. Korngold's Lieder sit lower in the voice as if writing to accommodate a range of voices including soprano, mezzo and baritone. Unlike Strauss, who wrote frequently for his wife, Pauline de Ahna, Korngold did not appear to write for specific singers, presumably with the exception of Opus 38 which was dedicated to Maria Jeritza. One can assume he was thinking of her voice when writing these songs, but they are rather reflective, intimate Lieder, and not at all operatic in scope – a far cry from the unrelentingly high *tessitura* of *Violanta*, for which Jeritza was famous. Many of Korngold's songs were gifted to non-singers, including his father, his son, and the occasional girlfriend.¹⁰⁹

Four years after the publication of *Sechs Einfache Lieder*, and still only twenty-three years old, Korngold had become almost obsessive about tempo, dynamics and expressive markings, which is particularly evident in the songs of Opus 14, *Lieder des Abschieds* (Songs of Farewell). When approaching the fourth song, “Gefasster Abschied”, singers may find themselves reaching for the

¹⁰⁵ In Chapter Four I will be discussing the revolutionary works of the Second Viennese School who both delighted and shocked the musical world.

¹⁰⁶ Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 108.

¹⁰⁷ Kimball, *Song: A Guide to Style and Literature*, 136.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 108.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 81. The manuscript of “Liebesbriefchen” was gifted to one of his crushes, Mitzi Kolisch, who would become Arnold Schoenberg's sister-in-law.

German dictionary, for the instructions vary between the standard Italian (“*sempre rit.*” - “always slowing”), the reasonably common German (“*langsamer*” - “slower”) to the almost poetic (“*mit liebenswürdigem, heiter-gemütvollem Ausdruck*” - “with agreeable, blithely serene expression” is one possible interpretation). In this piece Korngold also instructs the singer exactly when to *glissando*, when to stress a word, when to breathe, when to crescendo; in fact there are only two bars in the entire Lied that do *not* include some instruction for the singer. Compare to “Schneeglöckchen”, which has significantly fewer instructions (90% of them Italian, with only three in German, all fairly concise i.e. “*Ruhig fliessend*”, “*zart*”, “*langsamer*”¹¹⁰).

From the performer's point of view, too few indications on a piece of music could be seen as a blessing or a curse: an experienced singer who understands the composer and his works will feel little apprehension in creating her own interpretation; for a less experienced singer it can be difficult to know how the piece was intended to be performed. It must be said that some performers have no *interest* in performing a piece the way it was intended. In the case of Korngold's meticulousness, I take comfort in the knowledge that I am adhering as closely as possible to Korngold's intention for his songs. However, despite the seeming rigidity of the markings, there still remains the possibility for an injection of individuality and sense of freedom within the confines, and therein lies the great challenge for the performer. It begs the question, why was Korngold so obsessive about instructions?

Before 1916 his vocal works had mainly been performed by the star pupils in the salon of Luise von Fraenkel-Ehrenstein, a former star of the Vienna Court Opera, but after the premiere of his double-bill *Violanta* and *Der Ring des Polykrates*, Korngold was more experienced in working with professional singers, some more loose in their interpretations than others¹¹¹. “Gefasster Abschied” was written in 1920: perhaps by then Korngold had realised that thorough musical directions on the score itself was the best way of keeping as much creative control over his work as possible. His meticulous and over-the-top instructions became even more important as he got older. As someone whose work had been scrutinised since the age of eleven, he was no stranger to the criticism that went hand-in-hand with international fame: it seems only logical that as Austro-Germany's most performed operatic composer (second to Richard Strauss), he wanted his music presented exactly as he desired, especially if it was to be heard in other cities where he may not be present to supervise rehearsals or conduct it himself.

Brendan Carroll observes that out of the 200 bars in Opus 14, only two do not contain some instruction of marking.¹¹² Interestingly, when one examines his later Lieder, Opus 38 (1948),

¹¹⁰ “Gently flowing”, “tender” and “slower.”

¹¹¹ Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 107.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 153.

written during the Hollywood years, Korngold has eased his grip and allows a little more freedom of interpretation: in “Glückwunsch” (the first of the five songs) he gives no instruction beyond the initial marking of *semplice*, the occasional crescendo and diminuendo, *poco rit.* and *a tempo*.

Similarly scarce with instructions, “Der Kranke” is marked *tranquillo, triste*, with a *stringendo e cresc* in the approach to the climax, and little else. By then Korngold may have been immersed in American culture long enough to have adopted a more relaxed approach. He cannot have failed to notice Americans' optimistic “no problem!”, “can-do!” attitude (especially in the Golden State of Los Angeles) in comparison with the Austro-German stereotype who adheres religiously to rules. In any case, it seems Korngold was more willing to put his faith in the singers' own sense of artistry. The German language is totally eradicated and he uses only Italian instructions. If he was writing for a more international scene, this seems a logical thing to do as Italian is the international musical language. Furthermore, German instructions just three years after the end of World War II may not have been “politically correct.”

When he wrote Opus 38 - his last set of Lieder - he had not written any vocal works in German for over a decade (he had in the interim written two song cycles of Shakespeare's texts). It is unclear why he decided at this stage to revisit the Romantic German poetry that had inspired him in his younger days. One possible reason is that he had suffered a serious heart attack in 1947 and had been instructed to forego any activities that might cause him stress: adhering to his doctor's warning, he virtually retired from film work and when he started composing again it was quietly at home. A return to the German language, and Joseph von Eichendorff (whose poem “Der Kranke” - “The Invalid” - is the second song in the Opus) seemed appropriate at this time.

He dedicated Opus 38 to Maria Jeritza, “my unforgettable Violanta and Marietta in Friendship and Admiration.”¹¹³ The fifth in the Opus, “My Mistress' Eyes”, with text by Shakespeare, was gifted as a wedding present to Korngold's son Ernst, who shared with his father a love of the Bard. Certainly “retirement” was a time for reflection for Korngold. The five songs are “the product of maturity” according to Randel Wagner, and show Korngold at his Lieder-writing best.¹¹⁴

“Glückwunsch” is at first reminiscent of the beautiful, romantic Hollywood songs being churned out around the same time by Cole Porter and Jerome Kern, and for good reason: the melody is based on the main title used for the 1946 Bette Davis film *Devotion*, for which Korngold wrote the score. The text by Richard Dehmel translates to: “I wish you happiness; I wish you the sun in my glance; I feel your heart within my breast, it wishes you more than just mere pleasure.”¹¹⁵ Wagner

¹¹³ Ibid., 334.

¹¹⁴ Wagner, *Wunderkinder Lieder: A study of the songs of Erich Wolfgang Korngold*, 148.

¹¹⁵ German: *Ich wünsche dir Glück. Ich bringe dir die Sonne in meinem Blick. Ich fühle dein Herz in meiner Brust, es wünscht dir mehr als eitel Lust.* (My translation).

describes it as a song of “voluptuous melody” with frequent use of large intervals which “typify the lush, rich, late-romantic Viennese style.”¹¹⁶ I suggest that this song is actually much *less* lush and Puccini-esque than, for example, the three songs of Opus 22 (in 1930) and if anything, harks back to the quiet, gentle simplicity of “Liebesbriefchen” from the *Sechs Einfache Lieder* (1911-1916) but with even more sense of calm and reverence; an older and wiser composer. The song begins almost hymn-like with a sparse, chord-based accompaniment. While the piece is not strophic, there are repetitions of melody (beginning with a sixth interval) signifying each new section of text. This sixth interval is then used to launch into the climax of the piece. Once again Korngold adds his harmonic twists to the established E flat key, for example the A7 chord leading to a D major chord on the text “mehr als eitel Lust” (more than just mere pleasure).

The melody of “Glückwunsch” is exploratory; for example in the second phrase, “Ich bring dir die Sonne in meinem Blick” he chooses a B flat octave leap to return the singer to the tonic F on “Blick” instead of a more obvious (and easier) journey, such as a simple downward scale from B flat to F. The numerous octaves, sixth and seventh intervals requires the technical skill of the performer to avoid letting the melody seem angular and keeping her harmonic structure consistent: in my case as a soprano, in the opening bars I shift from low-range (B flat below middle C, necessitating more chest resonance) to mid-range (G above middle C), aiming to maintain a seamless transition throughout the transition. The piece is not showy, with a short-lived climax to a top G that gently eases back down into the singer's middle range via an octave scale. A particularly effective suspension from the seventh to the octave on the key word “Sehnsucht” (longing) is an example of Korngold's adept word-painting.

Korngold's contribution to the genre of Lieder came late, Lieder having enjoyed its heyday in nineteenth-century salons and concert halls. By the time Korngold was born in 1897, the genre was still being developed by the likes of Richard Strauss, but by the time of his death in 1957 the Romantic German Lied was essentially a lost art from a bygone era. Perhaps it had been developed as far as it could. As World War II loomed, songs became an outlet for political and social commentary and new musical influences came fast and furiously from all corners, which would ultimately see the end of the Lied as it had once been.

¹¹⁶ Wagner, *Wunderkinder Lieder*, 149.

Chapter Four

IS ROMANCE DEAD?: DID THE METAMORPHOSIS OF THE LIED KILL ROMANCE?

Over the course of a student's classical vocal studies she will study and perform numerous German Lieder, usually beginning with Schubert and Schumann, tackling the challenges of Wolf, and as her voice matures she may add Brahms, Mahler and Strauss to her repertoire. This was certainly the road I travelled, but for the Romantic Lieder enthusiast, myself included, the road abruptly ends in the early twentieth century with Strauss. Those with a keen interest in Lieder will seek out songs that sit outside the standard set, or search for lesser-known composers – which is what lead me to Erich Korngold, as he appeared to bridge the gap between Strauss and Schoenberg, who for the most part could not be classified as a Romantic composer in the traditional sense. But as wonderful as Korngold's Lieder revealed themselves to be, who, if anyone, was writing Romantic Lieder beyond Strauss? Could an entire genre of music have just died out and what might be the reasons for this?

I suggest there are three main causes: changing musical trends and the move from Romanticism to Modernism; the new styles of song that were decidedly un-Romantic including *Kabarett*; and the turbulent political climate in Germany in the 1930s and 1940s which saw many composers going into exile.

Just as Romanticism grew as a response to the previous era – Classicism – and is characterised by everything that Classicism is *not*, out of Romanticism grew Modernism. This was the most significant threat to the survival of the Romantic Lied, and those living at the time (not least Dr Korngold) would identify three key characters on whose feet to lay the blame: the triumvirate of Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg and Anton Webern.

Considering their fame (or notoriety) for avant-garde styles and revolutionary experimentation in composition, it is easy to forget that intense Romanticism is found in the early compositions of all three. Yet Don Randel says in *The Harvard Dictionary of Music*, “.... most twentieth-century Lieder lie outside the aesthetic ideals of the popular and singable *Kunstlied*.”¹¹⁷ This is certainly true when comparing at face value the work of Schubert and Schumann with that of the Modernist composers, but at the foundation of the musical training of Schoenberg, Berg and Webern was tonality, harmony and counterpoint. It is only with a deep understanding of the fundamentals of his field that the revolutionary can convincingly introduce his new ideas to the world.

The Second Viennese School is the special focus for these differences. The *Eight Early Songs* by Anton Webern (1901-1903), for instance, are Romantic in style and written before his becoming a

¹¹⁷ Don Michael Randel, *The Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003), 465.

principal member. Alban Berg's *Seven Early Songs* (1905-1908) also exhibit the Romantic style of lush harmonies and soaring melodies and yet start to show a weakening of the sense of tonal direction.¹¹⁸ With his *Brettli-Lieder* (Cabaret Songs) in 1901, Schoenberg chose texts that were the antithesis of Romantic poetry: “Gigerlette” for example, with its shocking subject matter (the female gigolo inviting the narrator into her “red room”) could not have been further from Goethe, Eichendorff and Heine. Korngold rarely drew from texts outside the Romantic genre, Shakespeare being one of the few exceptions.

Though Romanticism would remain the dominant musical force until World War I, the free use of chromatic harmony was already present in the late-Romantic style of Richard Wagner, for example, and Schoenberg's “dismantling of the tonal framework” was a logical extension of this.¹¹⁹ The traditional Romantic German Lied started to take several different shapes and forms. One of the greatest departures from Romantic German Lied imaginable was Schoenberg's surrealist *Pierrot Lunaire* (1912), and the use of the *Sprechstimme* technique, a twentieth-century experimentation with *recitative* whereby rhythm is kept precise, but pitch is deliberately indefinite.¹²⁰

Schoenberg began composing his *Gurre-Lieder* in 1900 at a time when Richard Wagner was a great influence, but by the time it premiered in 1913 Schoenberg had already been writing atonal works and was dismissive of the cycle, saying “I had, during these thirteen years, developed my style in such a manner that to the ordinary concertgoer, it would seem to bear no relation to all preceding music.”¹²¹ It seems he had also become tired of Wagner, or perhaps Wagner's hold over him. Hans Gál, in an interview in 1985, alleges that Schoenberg broke with Romanticism because he “could not achieve an original voice...he was so heavily influenced by Wagner and couldn't shake it off.”¹²²

Korngold, in comparison, never struggled to find an “original voice” within the realm of Romanticism – for him, atonality was a defunct term when he saw no limits to the possibilities found in the existing language of music.¹²³ Regardless of how extravagant and virtuosic his work became, “a hothouse of emotionalism” even, his music remained firmly tonal.¹²⁴

Sprechstimme and other musical inventions associated with the Second Viennese School, as mentioned earlier, were viewed with disdain by Dr Julius Korngold, who described *Pierrot Lunaire*

¹¹⁸ Douglas Jarman, *The Music of Alban Berg* (USA: University of California Press, 1985), 20.

¹¹⁹ John Paxman, *Classical Music 1600-2000: A Chronology* (Omnibus Press, 2014), 504.

¹²⁰ Randel, *The Harvard Dictionary of Music*, 707.

¹²¹ Arnold Schoenberg, *Style and Ideas: Selected Writings* (University of California Press, 1984), 41.

¹²² Hans Gál (1890-1987), prolific Jewish-Viennese composer, fled Austria in 1938. One of the founders of the Edinburgh International Festival. Became Officer of the Order of the British Empire in 1964. *Boosey & Hawkes*. Boosey.com <<http://www.boosey.com/composer/Hans+Gal>> (8 September 2017). Quoted in Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 157.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 157.

¹²⁴ Clark and Staines, *Classical Music: The Rough Guide*, 261.

as “the atonal roar.”¹²⁵ Considering the often vitriolic critiques Dr Korngold wrote in his long career, this could be considered one of his milder attacks; it leaves us in no doubt however as to his feelings about the new musical movement rippling through Vienna. Dr Korngold was not alone in his disparaging of Schoenberg. Forgetting that Schoenberg was once an archetypal Romanticist, as evidenced in his earlier works, musicologist Edward Dent named Schoenberg the “most dangerous adversary” of the Romantic movement.¹²⁶

But Schoenberg could not be slowed. In 1923 he introduced his polarising twelve-tone method to the world, a systematic technique of composition he had been developing for two years.

Romanticism was faced with its greatest threat to date: Serialism.¹²⁷ The method was embraced by his pupils and supporters who then rallied to form an international association for the promotion of modern music, to be called the International Society for New Music. Attempts to recruit Erich Korngold into the fold were in vain. Dr Korngold was particularly horrified by the thought of Erich becoming friendly with Alban Berg, fearing Berg might “infect” Erich with his new-fangled ideas.¹²⁸ Erich, however, ever the faithful Romantic, did not subscribe to the concept of musical “progress” and deeply objected to Serialism's invalidation of melody (in the tonal sense): he simply could not embrace the idea of music being created almost mathematically, as Schoenberg did.¹²⁹ It is interesting to note that Schoenberg and Korngold studied with the same teacher at the same time, Alexander Zemlinsky, and yet were polar opposites in terms of their musical values.¹³⁰

In the 1920s, a new kind of Lied entered the music language: political and social satire. Weimar-era *Kabarett* blossomed at the end of World War I when the censorship on theatres, banning all forms of public criticism, was lifted. This form of entertainment juxtaposed with the growing seriousness in the concert hall and widened the gulf between classical and popular music, bringing new compositional talent, namely Kurt Weill and Friedrich Hollaender.¹³¹ In the face of *Kabarett*, jazz and other American influences including tango and foxtrot, how could the traditional Romantic German Lied ever survive, let alone thrive as it once had? Two of the driving forces of Romantic German Lieder were conspicuously absent: by the 1920s Strauss had already written the majority of his Lieder (around 220 in total), while Korngold's main compositional focus at this time was his

¹²⁵ Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 156.

¹²⁶ Edward Dent quoted in Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 157.

¹²⁷ In an unusual crossover, Alban Berg's 1925 Lied, “Schliesse mir die Augen beide” combined Romantic poetry (of Theodor Storm) with the twelve-tone compositional technique. An earlier version of the song is dated 1900 and is wholly Romantic in style.

¹²⁸ Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 45.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 156.

¹³⁰ That is not to say that Korngold actively disliked the music of Schoenberg et al, as his father did. In an interview in 1926 Korngold explained his position: “By no means do I isolate myself against the harmonic enrichments which we owe to say, Schoenberg. But I will not give up claim to the eminent possibilities offered by 'old music.’” Ibid., 193.

¹³¹ Burkholder, Grout and Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 9th Edition, 719.

instrumental music and the opera *Heliane*.

The newfound freedom of speech and intellectual criticism of *Kabarett* however was to be short-lived. When Hitler seized power in January 1933, the effect was almost immediate: concerts by Jewish artists were disrupted, pro-Nazi newspapers slandered Jewish composers, and in March, Goebbels had taken control of all radio stations and the press. Kurt Weill, who had long been targeted by Nazi activists said “what is going on here is so sickening, that I cannot imagine it going on for more than a few months.”¹³² To Weill, it was inconceivable that a cosmopolitan city like Berlin, which in the Roaring Twenties had been one of the world leaders in artistic expression in music, film, arts and industry, was now under such repression. Korngold, who was not active politically, and was living in a very different world from Berlin – Vienna – seems to not have been greatly affected personally or professionally by the Nazis coming into power, probably due to the fact that he was traveling regularly to Los Angeles for work while Jewish musicians in Germany found their employment drying up.

The goal of the Nazi Party was to rid Germany of its “degenerate” music – anything linked to Jews, blacks, foreigners, experimental music, Modernism - culminating in the notorious *Entartete Musik* exhibition of 1938.¹³³ As we know, the “degenerates” included Weill, Korngold and Schoenberg, Ernst Krenek, Paul Hindemith and Alban Berg. In the case of Berg, his crime was merely having studied with Schoenberg – although his atonal opera, *Wozzeck*, that took Berlin by storm in 1925 was probably reason enough for the Nazi party to denounce him. In the case of Korngold, his being of Jewish heritage trumped the fact that his music actually typified the Nazi aesthetic ideal of Romantic and Germanic; Paul Hindemith was not Jewish but his music (and likely Hindemith himself!) was classified as “degenerate”, largely because of his hugely controversial opera *Sancta Susanna* which depicts a sexual frenzy in a Catholic nunnery.¹³⁴

As Jews were forbidden from joining the newly formed *Reichsmusikkammer* (the State Music Bureau), many, mainly for financial reasons, began to consider exile. At the time of the annexation of Austria in early 1938, Korngold and his family were fortunately already in Los Angeles as he was working on the film *The Adventures of Robin Hood*. Schoenberg had already been there since

¹³² Kurt Weill quoted in Ben Winters, “Composers in Exile”, *Music and the Holocaust*. Holocaustmusic.ort.org <<http://holocaustmusic.ort.org/resistance-and-exile/composers-in-exile/>> (8 February 2017).

¹³³ Shirli Gilbert, “Music in the Third Reich”.

¹³⁴ Hindemith had problems finding a willing conductor for the piece; critic Karl Grunsky said the opera “desecrates our cultural institutions” and audience members had to state in writing that they would not cause a disturbance during the performance. “Riccardo Muti Leads the New York Philharmonic in a Performance of Hindemith's *Sancta Susanna*” *Schott*. Eamdc.com, (5 June 2007) <<https://www.eamdc.com/news/riccardo-muti-leads-the-new-york-philharmonic-in-a-performance-of-hindemiths-quos-emsancta-susannaem/>> (8 September 2017).

1933.¹³⁵ Hindemith and Krenek fled in 1938; Weill had been in New York since 1935.¹³⁶

As for Richard Strauss, his acceptance of the position of president of the *Reichsmusikkammer* was a controversial one, as mentioned briefly in Chapter One. Whether his acceptance of the position implies his Nazi sympathies or whether he suspected he might be able to better protect his Jewish daughter-in-law if he carried a position of weight in Hitler's regime remains a topic of contention. His presidency certainly made him unpopular with those who had previously respected him - conductor Arturo Toscanini famously saying "To Strauss the composer I take off my hat; to Strauss the man I put it back on again."¹³⁷

One composer who was particularly active writing German Lieder in the war years was Hanns Eisler (1898-1962) another of Schoenberg's pupils, who to Schoenberg's dismay, turned to writing jazz and cabaret rather than pursuing Serialism at which he was particularly adept.¹³⁸ Eisler's protest songs with Bertolt Brecht and his socialist leanings in the politically-charged days of the early thirties drew the attention of the Nazi Party, who in 1933 banned Eisler's songs and Brecht's poetry and forced them both into exile. Between Eisler, Korngold and Schoenberg, a whole corner of Los Angeles was Viennese!

In 1942 and 1943, Eisler wrote the forty-seven Lieder that comprise the *Hollywooder Liederbuch*. The collection is fascinating for its wide range of musical styles including Romantic, Impressionist, Expressionist, twelve-tone, and some with traces of *Schlager* and blues, with texts for the most part by Brecht, alongside poets Eichendorff, Eduard Mörike and Goethe. Considering that by 1942 World War II had been raging for four years, America entering in 1941, and that Eisler had been driven out of his own country, it seems curious that Eisler had no concerns about writing forty-seven songs in German. His *Kabarett* contemporaries Weill and Hollaender were now composing solely in English, as they were catering to Broadway and Hollywood audiences; this was now also the position that Korngold found himself in, but as he was writing primarily orchestral music for film, a change of language was unnecessary. If anything, he brought his language with him from Vienna – Romanticism – and infused Hollywood with it.

Korngold, however, did occasionally write a song in English: "Love for Love", for example, written for the film *Escape Me Never* (1946) with lyrics by Ted Koehler. It was a hit, the seamless merging of Korngold's brand of Romanticism with Hollywood's idea of romance, the one based in sheer,

¹³⁵ Sabine Feisst, *Schoenberg's New World: The American Years* (Oxford University Press, 2011), 1.

¹³⁶ Winters, "Composers in Exile" <<http://holocaustmusic.ort.org/resistance-and-exile/composers-in-exile/>> (8 September 2017).

¹³⁷ Michael Kennedy, *Richard Strauss: Man, Musician, Enigma* (Cambridge University Press, 2006), 287.

¹³⁸ Eisler's *Fourteen Ways To Describe Rain* is a masterful example of the twelve-tone genre written for Schoenberg's seventieth birthday and highly praised by Schoenberg himself. Sabine Feisst, *Schoenberg's New World: The American Years*, 59.

technicolour fantasy. The twentieth-century love song was yet another of the Romantic Lied's modern guises.

In 1931, George and Ira Gershwin had written what might be the definitive satirical love song, “Blah Blah Blah” which eschewed coherent text for the babbling “blah-blah-blah” with a token rhyming word at the end of each line:

Blah-blah-blah moon

Blah-blah-blah above

Blah-blah-blah croon

Blah-blah-blah love.¹³⁹

The fact that in 1931 the Gershwins were mocking the formulaic and often cringe-worthy lyrics of the Hollywood/Broadway love song says a lot about how popular this type of song was. The “rich and meaningful chaos” of Romantic poetry discussed in Chapter One, let alone the wandering anti-hero must have seemed bitterly depressing to a country in the Depression! But in the same way America turned out in droves to see sunny Shirley Temple movies full of hope and joy, they responded with enthusiasm to 1920s and 1930s Hollywood love songs, written by the masters of the genre including Irving Berlin, Rodgers and Hart, Cole Porter, Jerome Kern and the Gershwins. During World War II, the love song continued its steady reign, but the lyrics were now regularly tinged with melancholy; Vera Lynn's *We'll Meet Again* (1939) was a defining love song of the period as it perfectly captured the feelings of young people separated from their sweethearts.

In Germany during World War II, Strauss's production of German Lied stalled – he wrote only four in six years. He was also seventy-four when war broke out in 1938, and the bulk of his Lieder had been written much earlier in the century. The operas *Die Liebe der Danae* (completed in 1940, not performed publicly until 1952) and *Capriccio* (1942) were the focus of his composing for voice. Having not written any Lieder in several years, Strauss made a last, triumphant return to the genre in 1948 with his *Vier Letzte Lieder* (Four Last Songs), first performed by Kirsten Flagstad in 1950 after Strauss's death. They are a glorious culmination of the composer's lifetime of Lieder writing and rapturous orchestration.

Korngold's “Glückwunsch” and “Der Kranke” from Opus 38 (also written 1948) are comparatively understated and sentimental. These pieces can be classified as wholly Romantic, with texts by

¹³⁹ Lyricist Stephen Sondheim says the most difficult English words for a lyricist to rhyme are *love* and *life*, consequently *above* and *dove* are overused and cliché. Interview with James Lipton, *The Paris Review Issue 142*. theparisreview.org, (1997) <<https://www.theparisreview.org/interviews/1283/stephen-sondheim-the-art-of-the-musical-stephen-sondheim>> (8 February 2017).

Richard Dehmel and Joseph von Eichendorff respectively. Korngold's final Lied was "Sonnett für Wien" (1953), the theme of which, in typical Korngold style, he borrowed from a film score (the aforementioned *Escape Me Never* from 1946). The Lied is a tribute to the Vienna of the past with text that deeply resonates with anyone with an intimate knowledge of Vienna and its history. Korngold considered himself, rightfully, the last of a "dying breed of composers" but remained optimistic that Romanticism would live on through the music of the great Romantic composers, and that they would not be forgotten.¹⁴⁰

It is extremely difficult to ascertain exactly what happened to German Lieder, for while vast amounts of literature can be found about the history and analysis of the genre, there is a dearth of information regarding the Lied beyond Richard Strauss. If the encyclopedias are to be believed, after Strauss, the composition of German Lieder simply ceased altogether. Through laborious digging around on internet forums and engaging with other Lieder-lovers via the web I have discovered this to be far from the truth.

Interestingly, names I had never heard before started to emerge from my investigations about the demise of the Lied: Aribert Reimann, for example, born in 1936 in Berlin, 2006 winner of the Arnold Schoenberg prize, wrote several Lieder, including a cycle for countertenor as recently as 1994 (revised in 2001) with the German poetry of Romanian-born Paul Celan (1920–1970).¹⁴¹ However, these compositions, rightfully classified as German Lied are not Romantic in style, and certainly not in content, as the bulk of Celan's poetry focussed on the Holocaust, of which both his parents were victims. Berthold Goldschmidt (1903–1996), who studied alongside Ernst Krenek (composer of *Jonny spielt auf*), also wrote many songs up until his death. However he used English, German and French texts, and once again, the works are not Romantic. The conclusion must therefore be that while German Lieder never died, and will not die, Romanticism is no longer the dominant artistic movement it once was. But the Romantic composers are no less relevant than they once were, especially the composers of German Lied.

Year after year in music colleges and universities around the world, first-year vocal students open their books of German Lieder to study the masters. Lieder has been a staple of the classical singer's training and repertoire for generations.

The audience response to Lieder, however, is mixed. Even those who love opera do not necessarily love Lieder. In English-speaking countries in particular, an evening of Lieder presents a major problem: translations are necessary, which means audiences will often spend the entire performance

¹⁴⁰ Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 371.

¹⁴¹ At the suggestion of Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, Reimann wrote the literary opera *Lear* (1978) with Fischer-Dieskau in the title role, for which he is best known. His opera *Medea* premiered at the Vienna State Opera in 2010 with Marlis Petersen. *Wikipedia*. [Wikipedia.org <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aribert_Reimann>](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aribert_Reimann) (8 February 2017).

with their faces downward in their programmes, instead of engaging with the singer. When the connection between audience and singer is broken in this way, the goal of the piece – communicating a story – becomes more difficult to achieve. Thus, Lieder is relegated to a section of a singer's recital programme and will not be the main focus.

Another possible reason for the Lied being lost in the middle of a programme is the poetry itself, which can be intimidating. David Denby in *The New Yorker* describes German Lieder as “almost too sensitive, delicate, and plaintive to bear, and some part of me revolts against all the plangent aestheticism.”¹⁴² One fears that this aversion to Romantic poetry is not uncommon in our modern-day English-speaking culture in which one of the most used words in music is *yeah!* However, Denby acknowledges that in the hands of a gifted Lieder performer, even the most sceptical can learn to appreciate the genre, citing Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau as the master of soulful storytelling. The modern audience also responds to the way a Lied is presented: if it has a personal meaning or a particular association for the performer which prompted her to include it in the recital, this can be explained to the audience, which leads to a greater feeling of intimacy in the performance space, as if audience and performer are connected through the Lied.

It is one of the most accessible of genres: it can be performed almost anywhere, from a private home to a church; putting together a concert of Lieder requires just two musicians and a single instrument; and the cost is relatively small, especially considering the most famous and well-known Lieder – Schubert, Schumann, Wolf and all the cycles that draw in the audiences - have long fallen out of copyright.

Furthermore, the German Lieder sets itself apart from opera, oratorio or songs with orchestra, in which the conductor binds all musical forces together under his baton: it is one of the few instances of the singer predominantly driving the shape and style.

I believe that there is much to be gained from German Lieder, and that if the language hurdle in particular can be cleverly overcome (visual aid in the performance space, speakers or readers to present the texts before they are sung, linking texts with themes or stories), it can be appreciated more by English speakers. I do not believe that the genre is “dead”, and though the Lied may take a backseat to other vocal works it remains integral to a young singer's development.

It also must be said that fashions work in endless cycles, and as Romanticism may fall in and out of favour, it plays as vital a role in our musical history as any other artistic movement; the same may be said of the Romantic German Lied. Its importance cannot be diminished or downplayed as long

¹⁴² David Denby, “You Wanted This Man To Sing To You”, *The New Yorker*. Newyorker.com, (21 May 2012) <<http://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/you-wanted-this-man-to-sing-to-you>> (8 February 2017).

as there are willing musicians to play it and willing ears to hear it. Furthermore there is scope for it to be presented in new ways while simultaneously honouring its traditions, and song composers to be discovered who are upholding the Romantic values of “rich and meaningful chaos”, exploring emotions and imagination, and leading, as Erich Korngold did, with the heart rather than the head.

Conclusion

ROMANCE LIVES ON: KORNGOLD'S LEGACY

Today we hear the word “romantic” and do not immediately think of the Romantic era: for some, the word is linked to all things kitschy, commercial (Valentine's Day for example), maybe embarrassing (the romance novel) and above all, unrealistic (the clichéd American romantic comedy); for others, romance is something soulful and honest, and plays a meaningful role in their lives and relationships.

As for Romanticism and the Romantics, they undoubtedly retain their appeal and relevance in the twenty first century: opera companies know their chances of covering their yearly costs are much higher if they programme Puccini and Verdi. Audiences' attraction to soaring, beautiful melody is as strong as ever, just as Korngold predicted in 1955: “I have faith and I have confidence that the classic and romantic masterworks of Bach, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann and Mendelssohn, the symphonies of Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Bruckner and Mahler, as well as the charming French and Italian operas, and last, but not least, the operas of the German masters, Mozart, Wagner and Richard Strauss will continue their unbroken vigor and impact, and will bring to mankind today and in the future, pleasure and exaltation, dedication and happiness.”¹⁴³

Korngold, too, brings pleasure and exaltation, as he describes it, which is what makes the decline of his reputation all the more scandalous to those fortunate enough to have been exposed to his works. The simple answer to my initial question, of why so few people have heard of him in the first place, is that he was a victim of circumstance. He had the misfortune to be a Romantic composer just as Romanticism was falling out of fashion and was overshadowed; he was of Jewish origins in Austro-Germany on the brink of World War II; and he seemingly squandered his talent in the film industry.¹⁴⁴

The very title of Rupert Christiansen's 2007 article *Das Wunder der Heliane: Opera's Biggest Load of Codswallop Rises from the Grave*, let alone the content (“drivel!”) gives us an indication of the detraction Korngold's work continues to face.¹⁴⁵ Ivan Hewett, as mentioned in Chapter Two, suggested he was a “slight figure”; “an endearing but somewhat self-indulgent man,” perhaps in his failure to recognise that the career disappointment of *Heliane* may have been the first indication of

¹⁴³ Korngold quoted in Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 359.

¹⁴⁴ Certainly this was his father's view. Additionally, Michael Haas alleges in his article: “His community of fellow exiles...[convinced] him that work as a film composer was unworthy of his talent.” Haas, “The False Myths and True Genius of Erich Wolfgang Korngold.”

¹⁴⁵ The review of the Royal Festival Hall production is scathing not of the performance itself but of the music: “I felt slightly sick when it was all over and had to lie down in a darkened room.” Christiansen, “Das Wunder der Heliane: Opera's biggest load of codswallop rises from the grave.”

how the world *desired* change and innovation in the arts.¹⁴⁶ Michael Haas in his article “The False Myths and True Genius of Erich Korngold” suggests that in post-war Germany, in order to escape Hitler's cultural legacy “one needed to be icily forward-looking and dispassionately avant-garde” which Korngold was not incapable of doing, but extremely averse.¹⁴⁷

However, this is not to say that he was averse to experimentation within his self-described job description of a Romantic composer. Maria Jeritza felt that Korngold was able to write modern music “without being an ultra modernist.”¹⁴⁸ She must have recognised the tinges of newness in Korngold's music that celebrated, rather than contorted, the traditional Romantic aesthetic. In a letter to a friend in 1952, Korngold wrote: “... 'Modernism' at the cost of abandoning invention, form, expression, beauty, melody – in short, all things connected with the despised 'romanticism' - which, after all, has produced some not so negligible masterpieces! - will ultimately result in disaster for the art of music.”¹⁴⁹

A bone of contention for purists was Korngold's tendency to recycle melodies; some did not desire to hear traces of *Anthony Adverse* in an orchestral concert.¹⁵⁰ Once again, this seems an obstinately old-fashioned attitude, as today, one hardly bats an eyelid at this practice. Korngold frequently reworked his compositions, bettering them, demonstrating he was not so precious about his music that it could not evolve or be improved over the years: a Lied called “Angedenken” that he wrote in 1911 but never published was reworked in 1947 with an alternative Eichendorff poem to become “Der Kranke” from Opus 38.

The snobbery around Korngold's shift into film music seems ridiculous in the twenty-first century; it is an antiquated notion that one should remain in the same position, job, or industry for their entire working life. Many detractors forget that his career shift into film music ensured the physical and financial safety of his family. Furthermore he can be credited with turning film composition into an art form and paving the way for generations of film composers. For the *Star Wars* score, director George Lucas specifically demanded a “Korngold kind of feel.”¹⁵¹ The man put to the task, John Williams, cites Korngold as his main influence, the man who had “brought the Vienna Opera House to the American West.”¹⁵² Eric Myers may have described film scoring as “The Bastard Art” in 1985, but today when discussing Korngold's compositions the words “pioneer”, “brilliant”, and “greatest” frequently arise.

¹⁴⁶ Hewett, “Erich Korngold: genius or mere talent?”

¹⁴⁷ Haas, “The False Myths and True Genius of Erich Wolfgang Korngold.”

¹⁴⁸ Jeritza, *Sunlight and Song: A Singer's Life*, 84.

¹⁴⁹ Korngold quoted in Franklin, *Reclaiming Late-Romantic Music: Singing Devils and Distant Sounds*, 126.

¹⁵⁰ As mentioned earlier, Korngold's Violin Concerto drew on his scores of *Another Dawn*, *Anthony Adverse* and *The Prince and the Pauper*.

¹⁵¹ Emilio Audissino, *John Williams's Film Music*, 71.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 72.

There has been something of a Korngold renaissance in the last few decades, primarily as a result of the 1991 exhibition *Banned By The Nazis: Entartete Musik*, a critical reconstruction of the 1938 *Degenerate Music* exhibition. Since then there has been a surge of new recordings of both Korngold's vocal and orchestral works – in 2016 nine CDs featuring Korngold's compositions were released, four of which feature his Lieder.

This new appreciation for Korngold – the music and the man - is extremely gratifying for those who judge him on his body of work, and not individual hits and flops. Robbert van der Lek was hopeful, in 1991, that Korngold the “forgotten master” would be rediscovered and attain a lasting place in the classical repertoire.¹⁵³ I share this hope, with particular fondness for his forty-odd Lieder. They are a contribution to the genre for which singers and audiences should be grateful; a pleasure to perform and a pleasure to listen to, they demonstrate that Korngold indeed possessed “an unquenchable source of original melody.”¹⁵⁴ What is certain is that regardless of genre – film, opera, orchestral or Lieder - “the last Romantic composer” deserves to be seen and heard on the world's stages.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ Van der Lek, *Diegetic Music in Opera and Film*, 5.

¹⁵⁴ Carroll, *The Last Prodigy*, 371.

¹⁵⁵ Peter G. Davis, *Pangs of Guilt* (New York Magazine, October 7, 1991), 90.

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APPENDIX

List of repertoire performed at the Master's Recitals to accompany this exegesis:

Robert Schumann (1810-1856)

“Widmung” from *Myrthen*. Text: Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866)

“Du Ring am meinen Finger” from *Frauenliebe und Leben*. Text: Adelbert von Chamisso (1781-1838)

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

“Nachtlied.” Text: Joseph von Eichendorff (1788-1857)

Hugo Wolf (1860-1903)

“Nimmersatte Liebe.” Text: Eduard Mörike (1804-1875)

“In dem Schatten meiner Locken” from *Spanisches Liederbuch*. Text: Paul Heyse (1830-1914)

Richard Strauss (1864-1949)

“Du meines Herzens Krönelein.” Text: Felix Dahn (1834-1912)

“Schlagende Herzen.” Text: Otto Julius Bierbaum (1865-1910)

“Ich trage meine Minne.” Text: Karl Henckell (1864-1929)

“Gefunden.” Text: Johann von Goethe (1749-1832)

“Sie trugen ihn auf der Bahre bloss” from *Drei Ophelia-Lieder*. Text: Karl Joseph Simrock (1802-1876)

Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951)

“Mondestrunken” from *Pierrot Lunaire*. Text: Otto Erich Hartleben (1864-1905)

Anton Webern (1883-1945)

“Tief von fern” from *8 Early Songs*. Text: Richard Dehmel (1863-1920)

“Aufblick” from *8 Early Songs*. Text: Richard Dehmel

“Blumengruss” from *8 Early Songs*. Text: Johann von Goethe

“Bild der Liebe” from *8 Early Songs*. Text: Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)

Alban Berg (1885-1935)

“Schliesse mir die Augen beide” (1900 “Romantic” version). Text: Theodor Storm (1817-1888)

“Schliesse mir die Augen beide” (1925 12-tone version). Text: Theodor Storm

“Schilflied” from *Seven Early Songs*. Text: Nikolaus Lenau (1802-1850)

“Die Nachtigall” from *Seven Early Songs*. Text: Theodor Storm (1817-1888)

“Im Zimmer” from *Seven Early Songs*. Text: Johannes Schlaf (1862-1941)

Friedrich Hollaender (1896-1976)

“Ich weiss nicht zu wem ich gehöre.” Text: Holländer/Robert Liebmann (1890-1942)

“Wenn ich mir was wünschen dürfte.” Text: Holländer/Marlene Dietrich (1901-1992)

Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897-1957)

“Schneeglöckchen” from *Sechs Einfache Lieder*. Text: Joseph von Eichendorff (1788-1857)

“Das Ständchen” from *Sechs Einfache Lieder*. Text: Eichendorff

“Liebesbriefchen” from *Sechs Einfache Lieder*. Text: Elisabeth Honold (dates unknown)

“Sommer” from *Sechs Einfache Lieder*. Text: Siegfried Trebitsch (1868-1956)

“Gefasster Abschied” from *Lieder des Abschieds*. Text: Ernst Lothar (1890-1974)

“Was Du mir bist” from *Three Songs, Opus 22*. Text: Eleanore Van der Straaten (1845-?)

“Love for Love” from the film *Escape Me Never*. Text: Ted Koehler (1894-1973)

“Der Kranke” from *Five Songs*. Text: Joseph von Eichendorff

“Glückwunsch” from *Five Songs*. Text: Richard Dehmel (1863-1920)

Kurt Weill (1900 - 1950)

“Berlin im Licht.” Text: Kurt Weill (1900-1950)

“That's Him” from *One Touch of Venus*. Text: Ogden Nash (1902-1971)

Georg Tintner (1917-1999)

“Dämmerstunde.” Text: Theodor Storm (1817-1888)

“Frühling.” Text: Hermann Hesse (1877-1962)