

# Two Sketches for Alban Berg's *Lulu*

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Both sketches for *Lulu* preserved in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek contain material from Act I, scene 3, and originate from the same collection of autographs in the Austrian National Library.<sup>1</sup> Mus. ms. 17489 is a single leaf containing a draft of the ragtime music of Act I, scene 3, measures 10074021, and a rhythmic sketch of the opening of the ragtime music, measures 991993. Berg cut the leaf by hand from the middle third of a bifolium of fourteen-stave paper (J. E. and Co., *Protokoll Schutzmarke* No. 3), leaving dull, somewhat jagged edges along its top, bottom, and right sides (recto). The cut along the fold side, in contrast, is very precise and apparently made at a different time. The dimensions of the sketch are 25 cm. (length), 10.5 cm. (left edge, recto), 10.1 cm. (right edge, recto). The sketch is completed almost entirely in pencil and has a very smudged appearance. There are four small strokes of black ink on the recto side, and four overlaid notes on the verso side. The ink is the same type Berg used in his autograph *Particell*, and the strokes on the recto side in particular suggest that Berg was simply priming his pen as he copied the finished sketch.<sup>2</sup>

The oblong format of the sketch, the precise cut along the fold side, and the fragmentary nature of the draft itself suggest that this leaf was removed from a sketchbook. It proves to be, in fact, the sketchbook F 21 Berg 80/V folios 117 in the Austrian National Library which Berg constructed from the upper, middle, and lower third of four overlaid bifolia of fourteen-stave paper. An additional leaf has been removed from the middle set of bifolia; the six remaining leaves have the same profile and stave placement as Mus. ms. 17489.<sup>3</sup> The sketchbook contains initial thematic material for the Sonata of Act I, as well as preliminary sketches of the sextet of Act I, scene 3. Because Berg was composing the development and reprise of the Sonata--the music immediately following the sextet--during the summer of 1931, this sketchbook, together with Mus. ms. 17489, almost certainly date from the summer of 1930.<sup>4</sup> It has a total of six stubs in its binding, implying that it was, unfortunately, a favorite source of souvenir material for the donor of the Munich sketch, Helene Berg.

There are many types of evidence to match Mus. ms. 17489 with its corresponding stub, the

most convincing of which are the internal content and continuation marks. Folio 7 verso of the Vienna sketchbook contains a draft of measures 992-993 of the ragtime music, using the same two-stave format as the opening of Mus. ms. 17489. The draft is followed by two stubs and folio 8 recto, which begins with the final note of Mus. ms. 17489. In addition, the second stub has two continuation marks which match with those on the left recto edge of Mus. ms. 17489. Thus, the Munich sketch was not only attached to this second stub, but the earlier stub originally contained the remaining section of the draft, measures 994-1006. Berg numbered the two measures on folio 7 verso, 1-2. Mus. ms. 17489, correspondingly, is numbered 16-30, and the missing leaf undoubtedly bears the measure numbers 3-15.

Even in isolation, Mus. ms. 17489 is a beautiful sample of Berg's compositional process.<sup>5</sup> In contrast to a typical Beethoven sketch, this draft shows very little revision. We can attribute this to Berg's "additive" approach to composition--that is, he usually adds progressively defined pitch material, rather than rejecting and revising earlier versions. For instance, on the verso side, stave two, appear stems without noteheads--a type of rhythmic notation or shorthand first noted by Ernst Hilmar in Berg's sketches for *Wozzeck*.<sup>6</sup> At a later time, Berg superimposed pitches on these stems, completing the passage. Berg was thus able to progress essentially from a rhythmic skeleton to a compositional draft which differed very little from the published score. Yet composing ragtime music did not come entirely second nature to Berg; his autographs show that he resorted to using a "self-help" booklet entitled, *Das Jazzbuch*. Moreover, its annotations include careful underlinings in sections such as "How to orchestrate a jazz band."<sup>7</sup>

The sketch also offers significant insights about the role of orchestration in Berg's compositional process. Although, according to one of Berg's letters to Webern, he orchestrated the opera after he had completed it, he made various initial decisions about orchestration during his earliest stages of composing.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, it appears that choices in instrumentation even generated some of the passages. For instance, folio 1r shows Berg's annotation, "Gg" (*Geige*) in measures 1007 and 1010, and "Sax" (*Saxophon*) in measures 1008 and 1012. In the final version, Berg retains the saxophones, but substitutes the more jazzlike trumpet for the violins.

The second sketch, Mus. ms. 17488, is written entirely in pencil, again on a bifolium of fourteen-stave paper, J. E. and Co., *Protokoll Schutzmarke* No. 3. According to Berg's correspondence, he probably wrote this sketch during the summer of 1931.<sup>9</sup> Folio 1r consists of compositional drafts for Act I, scene 3, measures 1278-1283, folio 1v measures 1289-1299, and folio 2r measures 1300-1309; folio 2v is blank. The bottom of folio 1r bears a typical, enigmatic Bergian dedication written in red pencil: "Lieber Schloss, Auch eine 'Briefarie' aber leider nur von Alban Berg. Oktober [19]31." ("Dear Schloss, Also a 'letter aria,' but unfortunately only by Alban Berg. October [19]31.")

Julius Schloss was Berg's composition student from 1925 to 1935.<sup>10</sup> Berg entrusted him with collating the scores of *Wozzeck*, *Der Wein*, and the *Lulu Suite*, and to this end he was employed by Universal Edition. Although Adorno claims that Schloss was often the butt of Berg's jokes, Berg's and Schloss's mutual correspondence reveals Schloss to be a loyal and assiduously dedicated student and friend.<sup>11</sup> Berg frequently relied on Schloss to attend to personal and musical errands in Vienna while he composed at his summer home in Carinthia. The personal errands ranged from picking up a mended blue sock (for which Schloss expended an enormous amount of effort due to a missing claim slip) to facilitating an affair while Helene Berg was briefly away from Vienna.<sup>12</sup> In contrast, one of Schloss's musical errands was to complete a row chart for *Lulu*, listing the twelve prime and inverted forms of Countess Geschwitz's row.<sup>13</sup> Schloss quickly completed the chart in September of 1931, and Mus. ms. 17488, presented to Schloss the following month, could conceivably have been Berg's expression of thanks. Whether Berg presented it in person (he was in Vienna for approximately a week during October 1931), or whether it arrived by mail, is unclear.<sup>14</sup> If the latter, then this "letter aria" as Berg refers to it, would have been an interesting double entendre: an aria in which the featured character, Dr. Schoen, is writing a letter, sent to Schloss via mail.



Figure 1. Moldenhauer Archives Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Mus. ms. 17489, recto

Each act of *Lulu* is structured around a central musical form, and the sonata is the predominant form of Act I. Dramatically, it is the epic of Dr. Schoen's struggle finally to break his ties with Lulu by marrying the woman to whom he has been engaged for three years. Like a typical sonata, it has a main theme, bridge theme, second theme, and coda. Berg indicates three of these themes with letters in the margins of folio 1r, staves 1-5: "S" (*Seitenthema*), "C" (*Coda*) and "H" (*Hauptthema*). The section of the sonata featured in this sketch, the music surrounding the recapitulation, is where Schoen realizes that he is

powerless to end his relationship with Lulu and writes a letter to his fiancée, breaking off their engagement. In addition to being an emotional climax, it is also a highly complex, notey moment of the opera. We are in the eye of the hurricane, so to speak.

The format of the sketch is in itself striking; instead of the two- to three-stave format of Mus. ms. 17489, Berg uses a four- to five-stave format similar to that in his *Particell*. The sketch also has a more unfinished appearance: there are many notes missing from the manuscript on folio 2r, and Berg frequently erases, revises, or uses shorthand and letters to indicate pitches. And further, the content of the sketch itself is sporadic; folio 1r ends with measure 1283, but then skips to measure 1289 for folio 1v. Unlike the case of the previous sketch, however, this is obviously not the result of a missing leaf. Rather, folio 1r replaced an earlier version of the passage which Berg simply abandoned. This earlier sketch is again in the Austrian National Library.

Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Musiksammlung F 21 Berg XXX folio 12v-13r shows measures 1277-1279 tentatively sketched, using shorthand to indicate the rhythms and general contours, and letters to identify the accompanying sonata theme (U, S, etc.).

For the remainder of the sketch (measures 1280-1283), Berg writes a less dramatic version of the Munich sketch Mus. ms. 17488, with the vocal line ("Aber wohin...zu meiner Braut...naut Hause...") beginning one beat earlier and a semitone lower. This results in an unconvincing setting of the vocal line, with the naturally stressed "hin" of the first gesture occurring on a metrically weak beat. Moreover, the ascending sixth that signals the beginning of each of the three gestures in the finished score appear as an ascending diminished fourth, a descending minor third, and an ascending major sixth. Perhaps Berg was simply experimenting with this initial version, and considered it to be as preliminary as the sketched--in measures at the beginning of the passage.

Given the rough appearance of Mus. ms. 17488, did Berg complete a more finished draft which he then copied into his *Particell*? Surprisingly, no. The autograph *Particell* for this section is replete with erasures, revisions, and many additions in colored pencil.<sup>15</sup> This revises the common view that the *Particell* is a "finished product." On the contrary, it too is an evolving composition, worthy of individual study.

Handwritten musical score on ten staves. The notation is dense and includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and clefs. The manuscript is annotated with several handwritten notes and markings:

- At the top right, the text "Kloster at Staffhad e" is written.
- On the left side, the letters "C" and "H" are written vertically next to the first two staves.
- Below the fifth staff, the name "Johann Siles" is written.
- Below the sixth staff, the name "Anton Bruckner" is written.
- Below the seventh staff, the text "Kloster hinter ..." is written.
- At the bottom right, the name "Altenberg" is written in a large, cursive hand.

At the bottom left, there is a small logo of a bear and the text "GWS in". In the center bottom, there is a circular stamp that reads "B.S.B. BAYERN".

Mus. ms. 17488 | recto

Figure 2. Moldenhauer Archives Bayerische Staatsbibliothek  
Mus. ms. 17488 fol. 1r.

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I would like to thank Dr. Hartmut Schaefer of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek and Dr. Joseph Gmeiner of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek for their extremely helpful assistance during my research at their respective music divisions.

<sup>1</sup> See Rosemary Hilmar, *Katalog der Musikhandschriften, Schriften und Studien Alban Bergs im Fond Alban Berg und der weiteren handschriftlichen Quellen im Besitz der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Alban Berg Studien, Band 1* (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1980).

<sup>2</sup> The call number of the *Particell* is ÖNB Musiksammlung F 21 Berg 29.

<sup>3</sup> This leaf presumably is lost.

<sup>4</sup> See the excerpt of Berg's letter to Webern of July 23, 1931, in Ernst Hilmar, "Alban Bergs Selbstzeugnisse zu Entstehung und Aufführbarkeit der Oper *Lulu*," in *Alban Berg "Lied der Lulu": Faksimile-Ausgabe der Anton v. Webern gewidmeten autographen Partitur* (Vienna: Wiener Stadt- und Landesbibliothek, 1985), p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> For a more detailed discussion of Berg's compositional process on *Lulu*, see Patricia Hall, "The Sketches for *Lulu*," in *The Berg Companion*, ed. Douglas Jarman (Great Britain: Macmillan, 1989), pp. 235-59.

<sup>6</sup> Ernst Hilmar, "Die verschiedenen Entwicklungsstadien in den Kompositionsskizzen," in *50 Jahre "Wozzeck" von Alban Berg*, ed. Otto Kolleritsch (Graz: Universal Edition, 1978), p. 24.

<sup>7</sup> ÖNB Musiksammlung F 21 Berg 80/II fols. 12r-35v.

<sup>8</sup> See the excerpt of Berg's letter to Webern of May 6, 1934, op. cit., in Ernst Hilmar, p. 17.

<sup>9</sup> See note 4. In this excerpt, Berg reports to Webern that he is working on the development and reprise of the Sonata. On August 6th he reports that he has essentially finished the first act.

<sup>10</sup> Schloss's letters to Berg are in the Musiksammlung of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek under the call number F 21 Berg 1309. Berg's letters to Schloss are in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek under the call number Ana 500, B, Schloß, Julius, I.

<sup>11</sup> *Theodor Adorno Gesammelte Schriften Band 18, Musikalische Schriften V* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1984), p. 489.

<sup>12</sup> See Schloss's letter to Berg of January 26, 1932 (ÖNB Musiksammlung F 21 Berg 1309/90) and

Berg's letter to Schloss of November 9, 1932 (Ana 500, B, Schloß, Julius, I/116). The woman Berg refers to, cryptically notated with the musical notes E-D-A, is probably the actress Edyth Edwards, the recipient of several effusive love letters. I thank Janet Naudé for suggesting the name and supplying me with copies of Berg's letter to her.

<sup>13</sup> See Berg's letter to Schloss of August 27, 1931 (Ana 500, B, Schloß, Julius, I/86) and Schloss's responses to Berg's letter (ÖNB Musiksammlung F 21 Berg 1309/82-83).

<sup>14</sup> See Berg's letter to Schloss (Ana 500, B, Schloß, Julius, I/87).

<sup>15</sup> ÖNB Musiksammlung F 21 Berg 29/I fol. 127.