

Lulu's Canzonetta: a Twentieth-Century Leitmotiv

Master's Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
Brandeis University
Department of Music
Allan Keiler, Advisor

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for

Master of Fine Arts Degree

by
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May, 2011

ABSTRACT

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Of all the composers who famously used Schoenberg's twelve-tone method of composition, Alban Berg stands out for his manipulation of the system for his own, often very expressive ends. Berg's opera *Lulu* proves to be an effective example of this compositional technique as Berg clearly uses the dodecaphonic system as a basis for the work, though his use of multiple rows often depicting different characters and his lack of consistency in always using these rows point towards one of Berg's great achievements in *Lulu*: his detailed and comprehensive depiction of characters' emotions, psychological states, dramatic actions, past and future events, and inner thoughts through a careful combination of libretto and music.

Lulu's Canzonetta is one of the many sections of music that convey these subtle but effective meanings. Though deceptively simple-sounding, lyrical music, Berg uses

the music of the Canzonetta in complex ways to not only reveal Lulu's inner psychological world in the context of her reaction to death, but also to link different parts of the opera together structurally. A close examination of the structural qualities of the music in combination with interpretive reflection on meaning and consequence for the work as a whole yields intriguing insight into Berg's care and skill in the composition of this work.

This paper attempts such an interpretation, beginning with a detailed account of musical structure, followed by a reading of meaning based on these musical characteristics. Various authors concerned with discerning meaning in music, especially opera, are consulted, but though their methods prove to be insightful, the interpretation is also intuitive and does not ascribe to any theory in particular. All together, this examination of music and meaning in Lulu's Canzonetta provides a layer of depth in understanding Lulu and her actions and relationships with others in the opera, and also gives insight into Berg's wonderful care in composition.

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Introduction

In writing about Alban Berg's second opera, *Lulu*, Theodor W. Adorno states, “Those who know anything about his style would expect in his second opera to find music that is thoroughly structured, autonomous, and, to use a traditional word: “absolute.” – And that expectation will be even more richly rewarded than in *Wozzeck*. But this construction, though far more than a mere illustration of the text-drama, is nonetheless organized around the words as around a dark kernel from which it draws its sustenance at every movement.”¹ It is well known that Adorno held Berg in higher esteem than almost any other composer for the primary reason that he was able to merge Schoenberg's modern twelve-tone method of composition with nineteenth-century expressive fluidity, a practice which sets him apart from other dodecaphonic composers.² In *Lulu*, Berg integrates words and music in such a way that not only do the actions on stage come alive, but the viewer of the opera reaches a level of understanding that goes far beyond what Berg could have communicated through words or music alone. Berg relies on musical figures that are culturally recognized to create musical moods that transcend the dramatic situation, and, in some cases, he uses this musical material as a Wagnerian leitmotiv, thereby connecting disparate parts of the opera with one another

¹Theodor W. Adorno, *Alban Berg: Master of the smallest link*, trans. Juliane Brand and Christopher Hailey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 121.

² See Brand's and Hailey's Introduction to Adorno, *Alban Berg*, viii-xiv.

while strengthening the emotive character of the music. One of these leitmotivic sections is the Canzonetta, a relatively brief, innocuous bit of music whose depth, complexity, and contribution to the opera is only fully revealed through close examination. Though seemingly simple, when the music is considered comprehensively, including its relationship to text, dramatic action, psychological state of characters, and how it is used as a leitmotiv, it becomes clear that there is far more to the Canzonetta than meets the ear on its first hearing.

The Canzonetta occurs in the first scene of Act I directly after the Medical Specialist's death (I. m. 258), consisting of an entire section of music, complete and independent in its form.³ *Lulu* can so easily be broken into individual numbers (even as indicated by the composer) that George Perle goes so far to consider it as a Classical-style number opera, and the Canzonetta's style along with its deliberate and antiquated title clearly hearkens back to that sort of form and gives the piece an independent quality.⁴ It is made up of two distinct themes (called Theme A and Theme B in this paper), each of which develops its own meaning as a leitmotivic phrase within the Canzonetta, though they are also used together as a leitsektion. Theme A, the most distinctive and prominent tune from the Canzonetta, represents Lulu's attitude and reaction to the deaths of her lovers, while Berg uses Theme B in a less transparent way to express Lulu's flirtatious, seductive, and even powerful relationship with men. Both themes bring a significant depth of meaning to actions occurring onstage, and they

³ When score locations are given in this text, the act number will be given first as a Roman numeral and will then be followed by the measure number.

⁴ George Perle, *The Operas of Alban Berg, Volume Two: Lulu* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 69.

become important in the perception and understanding of the feelings and inner thoughts of characters, Lulu in particular, which may not be apparent from words and dramatic actions alone. Furthermore, the Canzonetta's independent role as a leitsektion serves to help the listener connect disparate but related sections of the opera to one other as its lyrical and memorable qualities stand out to the listener in this complex, atonal opera.

This paper will explore both the structural, purely musical design of the themes' construction, as well as the way Berg uses them to represent and relate Lulu's psychological state and actions to the listener throughout the opera. The first part delves into the formal aspects of the initial and proto-typical Canzonetta, in which the structural characteristics and emotional content of the themes is established. Part 2 then gives some background on the methods of analyzing meaning in music, and more specifically opera, that are used in this interpretation. Finally the third part outlines an interpretation of the Canzonetta music, first using the proto-typical Canzonetta to introduce the basic meanings of the themes, and then showing more specific meanings that occur later in the opera, both when the Canzonetta is heard as a leitsektion and when its component themes are heard as leitmotifs. It will become clear that Berg constructed this music very carefully to give a depth of expression that cannot be achieved by words, music, or drama alone.

Part 1: Presentation of Structure

The nature of the Canzonetta and the role of its component themes in the opera is complex and a note on terminology must be made before continuing. Perle's brief comments on the Canzonetta in *The Operas of Alban Berg, Volume Two: Lulu* highlight this complexity as he refers to the Canzonetta as a leitsektion, while elsewhere speaking of Theme A as a leitmotiv.⁵ Perle does not discuss the differences between these two representations explicitly, but we can use his discussion of the way the "Possession Music" represents a leitmotiv that has its origins in a leitsektion (Closing theme of the Sonata) as an example.⁶ Although the themes of the Canzonetta do not have specific names in the literature, because this paper discusses the music of the Canzonetta both in terms of its role as a leitsektion and its components roles as leitmotivs, for the sake of clarity I call the leitmotiv associated with Theme A "Death Music" and the one associated with Theme B "Flirtation Music." It is important to keep in mind that Themes A and B are not simply representations of the leitmotiv in the original Canzonetta section. Together they make up the greater whole that is the Canzonetta, which functions independently of (though not always exclusively from) the Themes' leitmotivic

⁵ Perle, *The Operas of Alban Berg, Volume Two: Lulu*, 82-83, 130.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 131.

meanings, and because of this aspect of their being I will use “Theme A/B” when speaking of their role as part of the Canzonetta leitsektion.

The Canzonetta is first presented in its complete form when it is heard after the death of the Medical Specialist (I, m. 258). Themes A and B are established here, both structurally and with their leitmotivic meanings, and as subsequent representations of the themes are based on this section it can be viewed as a sort of “proto-typical” representation of the Canzonetta theme. The theme does not always come back in the same way, and these differences will be explored by using the Canzonetta section as a point of reference. Because meaning is inextricably tied to structure, some meanings will be given in the following discussion; however, the complete, nuanced meaning of the Canzonetta as a leitsektion and its components as leitmotivs will be further developed throughout the paper.

Theme A: Death Music

Theme A (Death Music) represents Lulu’s personal, emotional reaction to death, and it occurs after the deaths of the Medical Specialist, the painter, Dr. Schön, and Alwa. Because it represents a distinct feeling of Lulu’s, it is naturally not heard at the deaths of Lulu and Countess Geschwitz. The Death Music is private and reflective, yet naïve and fantasy-like, representing Lulu’s thoughts alone. Though other living characters may be present when the music sounds, the focus of action on stage is most intimately between Lulu and the recently deceased; the others are secondary or background in those moments, however brief.

Berg's use of tone rows representing the different characters has been well documented and the reader should refer to Perle's book for a detailed discussion of these rows, their construction, and what they denote.⁷ The Canzonetta and its recurrences contain the Basic row in inversion and Lulu's row in prime and inverted forms, shown below in Example 1.

Example 1 consists of four musical staves, each showing a different transposition or inversion of a tone row. The first staff is labeled 'Basic Prime (P4)' and shows a sequence of notes: C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C. The second staff is labeled 'Basic Inversion (I4)' and shows the notes: C, B, A, G, F, E, D, C, B, A, G, F, E, D, C. The third staff is labeled 'Lulu Prime (P2)' and shows the notes: C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C. The fourth staff is labeled 'Lulu Inversion (I2)' and shows the notes: C, B, A, G, F, E, D, C, B, A, G, F, E, D, C.

Example 1

Theme A is comprised of two presentations of the basic row in inversion that are connected through a common tone; the first presentation begins on E (I4) (m. 258), while the second begins on D-flat (I1)(m. 259).⁸ The two rows always have this intervallic relationship in later appearances of the theme, but the theme is not pitch-specific and

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ In this paper the numbering of transpositions and inversions is based on C=T0/I0

transposition appears to be used to integrate the theme with surrounding music rather than for supplying any extra-musical meaning. Theme A can be seen in Example 2, in which the numbers over the notes show the succession of each inverted row. Example 2 shows the pitch level when Lulu enters at the pick-up to m. 262, in which the first row is I7 and the second is I4. Note that Berg connects the rows through the use of the common tone E (pitch no. 11 in I7 and pitch no. 1 in I4) in the second complete measure.

Example 2

Though all the notes of the rows occur in order, Berg does not assign the pitches to the same textural role in the theme, and furthermore, this particular presentation of the row differs from that found in the saxophone entrance at m. 258. When considering the theme from a melodic standpoint, only the highest-sounding pitches are included: [1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 11][1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12]. When the Death Music returns throughout the opera the melody of Theme A is the only attribute retained and the harmonic accompaniment is frequently unrelated to that which we find in Example 2. In most reoccurrences of the Death Music, a twelve-tone aggregate is heard in the combination of the melodic and harmonic aspects of the Death Music and the surrounding music, but

they do not repeat in the arrangement heard here in the first, and primary, representation of the theme, and they also do not spell out the inversion of the basic row. When the Canzonetta returns as a leitsektion, the harmony is more often held intact, but Berg often changes the exact presentations of rows and it is clear that the melodic parameter of the themes, both as leitmotivs and in the leitsektion, are of primary importance.

This way in which Berg raises the melodic parameter of the Canzonetta above harmonic violates conservative twelve-tone composition rules, and is one way that Berg manipulated the serial system to achieve his own expressionistic ends. This sort of motivic development in creating a leitmotiv also clearly hearkens to Wagner's conception of leitmotiv, and though a minor observation, Berg's combination of leitmotiv development and the twelve-tone system shows a glimpse of the range of musical influence from which Berg, and other composers of his era, drew. Berg clearly considers the melodic aspect of the music to be of primary importance, which is not surprising given that the melodic aspects of this theme are by far more memorable than its harmonic structure, and the listener remembers the melody in a far more meaningful way than the harmonic accompaniment. Berg uses the melodic character of the theme to enhance the listener's understanding while changing the harmonic and textural underpinnings of the melody to suit the later musical and dramatic contexts.

A final characteristic of Theme A that is not terribly important in the theme's role in the Canzonetta, but turns out to be vital to the understanding of the Death Music is the small grace-note motive seen in the third measure of Example 2. These grace notes add to the immediate mood of the theme in the Canzonetta, but, more importantly, they also provide a link to Lulu's row which becomes important in the Death Music. Lulu's row

often begins with a motivic sixteenth-note neighbor figure before going through the whole row, shown in Example 3.

Lulu's Melody in Prime Form (P2)

The image shows two musical staves in treble clef. The first staff is titled "Lulu's Melody in Prime Form (P2)" and contains a sequence of eight notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), D5 (quarter), E5 (quarter), F5 (quarter), and G5 (half). The notes are numbered 2 through 8 below the staff. The second staff is titled "Lulu's Melody in Inverted Form (I2)" and contains a sequence of eight notes: G4 (quarter), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter), B3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), and G3 (half). The notes are numbered 1 through 8 below the staff, with a sharp sign (#) above the 7th note (A3).

Example 3

In the case of the Canzonetta that neighbor figure is represented in the grace-notes. This relationship is often exact in terms of pitch for both Theme A and Lulu's row; however, when Lulu's row is presented in its prime form it begins on the second note of that row. Nevertheless the rhythmic association of the grace-note (or sixteenth-note) figure to Lulu's row is undeniably heard in every instance in which it occurs.

Example 4 shows the Death Motive followed by Lulu's row in both prime and inverted forms.

Prime Form (Dr. Schön)

The image shows a single musical staff in treble clef. The first part is labeled "Theme A" and consists of a sequence of notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), D5 (quarter), E5 (quarter), F5 (quarter), and G5 (half). The second part is labeled "Lulu Prime" and consists of a sequence of notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), D5 (quarter), E5 (quarter), F5 (quarter), and G5 (half). The notes are numbered 2 through 8 below the staff.

Example 4

music when used as a leitmotiv. In its original presentation (see Example 2) the Canzonetta is in six-eight time, while in Example 4 it is shown in six-four and five-four times. The melodic contour is so distinctive that rhythms (and, as mentioned before, harmony) need not be exact in order for the connection between sections to be made.

Theme B: Flirtation Music

Theme B of the Canzonetta seamlessly takes over from Theme A at m. 267 as the G and F that sound together as Theme A ends are transformed into a contrasting motive consisting of sixteenth-note major seconds displaced by octaves. This motive pervades the orchestra throughout Theme B and is quite important as an identifying structure. After an introductory measure of this motive Lulu enters with a wending line that resembles Theme A in style, but is lighter and, until the end, covers a narrow register, highlighting Lulu's chromatic music.

Unlike Theme A, Theme B is not clearly based on any particular row, though certain pitch relationships are clearly emphasized. While individual rows cannot be easily or reliably identified, one does find several series of aggregates, and given the multiplicity of rows Berg worked with and all their possible inversions and retrogrades it is possible to make rows fit in several places through the theme; however, when one takes a step back it is clear that there are too many inconsistencies, skipped pitches, and pitches out of order to really define a viable row structure. The closest one can come to assigning a row comes from Lulu's row (P11) and is dependent on her vocal line (this is illustrated by the row numbers in Example 5, which also shows the first few measures of

Theme B), but even here in this clearest of row presentations the pitches are not undeniably based on that row.

Example 5

Lulu's row is perhaps the easiest and most convincing to find in these aggregates because of its emphasis on the interval of a major second. Both the vocal line and especially the accompanying sixteenth-note figure are heavily characterized by major seconds, and this pitch content forms one of the two primary harmonic and melodic forces in this theme, the other being the use of a minor second chromatic line and decoration. These major seconds can clearly be seen in the contour of the vocal line (though minor seconds are also prominent) and in the accompaniment, as noted above. As the sixteenth-note figure is repeated through the section its interval content does change in m. 269 where D and F form a minor third, but because the motive is heard twice from the beginning and once again at m. 271 with the major seconds, this motive is primarily heard as being associated with the major second interval alone. Of all the rows Berg used in *Lulu*, Lulu's own row is the most focused on major seconds, and Lulu's sonic area is present even if an exact presentation of her row is not.

The major second forms the primary pitch structure of the section in a mainly harmonic way, while the minor second plays a different but also important linear role. This motion by semitone can be seen in the sixteenth-note accompaniment when viewed by measure: F/G descends by the next figure to E/F-sharp, which then descends again to D/F (the semitone is only retained in the highest voice). In its final iteration in m. 271 the line has risen to F-sharp and G-sharp, a half-step higher than where it started. Lulu's vocal line (which is doubled in the orchestra) also contains many examples of minor seconds that are used chromatically in a primarily decorative or passing manner. After acting as a passing note between B and D in m. 268 the C-sharp functions to decorate D through a turn figure, while the next chromatic pitch, B-flat on the final beat of that measure, functions in a similar manner. When the C-sharp functions again as a passing note between C and D in the following measure, one can see the special emphasis on the major second on the final note of the measure, as instead of moving directly from E to F, Berg instead inserts a grace-note figure making the contour E – F-sharp – G – F. Though there is still the semi-tone between F-sharp and G, one hears the E up a whole step and the G moving down a whole step most prominently and the possible leading-tone associations between the E and F are reduced.

Berg does treat many of the semi-tone relationships in this vocal melody as local leading-tones, however, as can be seen most prominently in the turn figures mentioned above. There can hardly be said to be a tonal focus anywhere in this music, but these tonal-type associations and the emphasis on whole steps and smooth, lyrical writing as is seen through the entire Canzonetta do give the music more tonal associations in comparison to much of twelve-tone music that surrounds it. Theme A is characterized by

leaps rather than stepwise motion, but here too the leaps are primarily consonant and there are moments of tonal-type tension, such as in the last two notes of the vocal line in m. 266 where the A-flat clearly pulls toward the following G. Perhaps Berg chose to write in this style to make the music particularly easy to remember since it is in the sort of musical system with which his audience would be most intimately familiar; at any rate the music does stand out clearly in the listener's mind because of these characteristics and their difference from the surrounding music.

Theme B's transition into Flirtation Music takes a similar process to that which made the Death Music as Berg keeps and discards various features of the music. In this case, the Flirtation Music consists only of the sixteenth-note, major-second motive seen in the accompaniment, and as is the case in the Death Motive, the rhythms need not be identical; in fact, the motive is found more frequently in eighth notes to fit into a faster overall tempo. The vocal line (found doubled in the orchestra as well) is not found in the moments in which Lulu's coquettish nature is revealed, which in some way preserves the integrity of meaning in this section, as will be discussed more thoroughly below. From a musical standpoint the Flirtation Music differs dramatically in tone from the rest of the Canzonetta, including the melodies of both Themes A and B. Its light, choppy texture is incongruous with the smooth, melodic lines of Themes A and B, and it is almost as if this motive actually appeared and functioned as a separate, layered leitmotiv rather than as a legitimate part of the texture of Theme B. That Berg uses this motive as the bearer of the playful, flirtatious meaning it first contains here in the Canzonetta shows that the motive has a special force that will distinguish it from the rest of the Canzonetta music both in music and meaning. Finally, it must be stated that though Themes A and B are heard in

succession in the Canzonetta and thereby influence the meaning of one another, the Death Music and the Flirtation Music are completely independent of one another as leitmotifs. In the one instance both leitmotifs are heard in succession (at the scene of Dr. Schön's death), they are separate musical ideas and should not be thought of as connected as they are in the Canzonetta.

Overall Formal Structure of the Canzonetta

Though certainly idiosyncratic, the Canzonetta displays an overall ternary form. The Canzonetta is set apart from the preceding music both musically and dramatically by a neighbor-tone passage in which durations become shorter and shorter until the figure morphs into a trill. This passage has the effect of distancing and, indeed, when Theme A emerges on the pick-up to m. 258 there is the sense that one has emerged into an entirely new musical world.

The basic melody of Theme A is repeated twice in full in a straightforward manner in the A section (mm. 258-266), the first presentation heard with the melody in the saxophone, outlining the basic rows I4 and I1. Before the second row is able to be finished entirely, which we can see on the page but cannot hear, Lulu comes in singing on I7 and I4. The intersection of this first and second presentation of the theme occurs over an E-flat major chord, which is supported by the G – E-flat in the voice as it begins the new row. Because of this consonant harmony, the two presentations of the theme blend seamlessly, an effect that Berg reproduces throughout the Canzonetta. As discussed above, Theme B maintains this sense of continuity and ease by primarily moving in

stepwise motion with a very fluid vocal line. Though the sixteenth-note motive that permeates the B section contains bouncy octave leaps, the extremely smooth line in the voice and lower accompanimental voices serves to counter that disjoint texture, relegating it to decorative rather than structural importance.

The smooth continuity that defines the musical tone of the Canzonetta can most clearly be seen in the transitions between sections, which are both quite brief, but elegant and remarkably effective transitions. The transition from A to B is enacted from the latter half of m. 265 leading into the following measure, as seen in Example 6.

The image displays a musical score for two staves, Treble and Bass clef, in 6/8 time. The score is divided into two sections: Theme A and Theme B. Theme A spans the first two measures, and Theme B spans the next two measures. The notation includes various note values, rests, and accidentals, illustrating the transition between the two themes.

Example 6

Berg's repetition of the A-flat – F leap (previously Lulu's "Pussi!") brings an F into the sonic design, and in combination with the G in the melody at the end of the measure Berg has the major second with which he will begin the defining sixteenth-note motive of Theme B. The ease with which this transition, and the differently executed but equally smooth transition from B to A' at the second beat of m. 272, takes place causes it to be nearly imperceptible, as if the listener were borne from one place to another without even

noticing the journey. It keeps the listener focused on what is happening in the moment, which corresponds to Lulu's state of mind as well.

The A' section is the most problematic in terms of defining a simple ternary form. The return at m. 272 is clear enough, though, significantly, Berg begins the return in the middle of Theme A's melody with the second presentation of the inverted basic row. What is probably the proper ending occurs at m. 281 where that handy grace-note figure found in Theme A morphs into the same accelerating trill motive that introduced the scene, and the listener is transported out of the world in which the Canzonetta took place. Lulu, however, has not yet left that world as she continues to sing material from the Canzonetta in the following section, marked Recitative. Though numbered differently and serving dramatically to lead up to the Duet, this Recitative underscores the difference between Lulu's and the Painter's reaction to the Medical Specialist's death in that their musical language differs entirely. The Painter never sings anything related to the Canzonetta, and is clearly surprised by her words and the tone with which she sings them – the Canzonetta is firmly Lulu's alone. Though not part of the Canzonetta officially, this will aid in the understanding of the Canzonetta as explored more fully in a coming section.

To return to the musical features of A' proper, we see clearly that though this section is structurally based on material from Theme A, Berg only uses that theme as a starting point from which additional musical material may be developed. As noted above, Berg begins A' in the middle of Theme A as the second row of the set begins. Though it seems that in this case the reason for the omission of the first part may be for greater continuity between sections (which seems hardly arguable as the stepwise

character of the second half of Theme A meshes far better with Theme B's material than the leaps that occur in the beginning of the theme), Berg continues to truncate Theme A in its next entrance at m. 274 as well. Here Lulu begins to sing the theme two notes into the melody on I10, followed by the second row on I7. Unlike the transition instance, there is no clear reason why Berg chose to omit the first two notes of the theme here, except that it does enhance the fragmentary nature this return has had as yet. Something is clearly different in A', and this uncomfortable suspicion is further confirmed by Lulu's singing of completely foreign material in mm. 277-280, as well as the fact that the final presentation of Theme A begins all right, but is not allowed to finish as it changes into the transitory trill. The material Lulu sings in mm.277-278 seems to be derived from the inverted basic row on I7, a pitch level that has become rather prominent through the Canzonetta, but because the pitches are not distributed through the orchestra and the voice in the same manner as Theme A, the melodic contour resembles nothing that has come before. Lulu's next phrase in mm. 279-280, consisting of a descending fifth which then moves up a semitone only to fall a perfect fourth, is an imperfect inversion of the ascending sixth-descending fourth figure seen in the fourth measure of Theme A and shown in Example 7 as it occurs at m. 265. Though this relation is fairly clear, it is out of place in the context of the third presentation of Theme A, which begins in the pick-up to m. 279. Lulu's line is completely fragmentary at this point, and although it may be related to Theme A it is in no way part of it.



Example 7

The fragments of Theme A that Lulu has begun singing as the A' section comes to an end are repeated and elaborated upon in the Recitative. In m. 285 Lulu sings “Was fang ich an?” to the falling fifth motive as in m. 279, which is a completely inappropriate response to the Painter’s inquiry about whether the Medical Specialist has come to. Her next response features Theme A on II starting with the grace note figure, and while this response does directly respond to the Painter, the use of the Canzonetta indicates that Lulu is not in his world. Lulu’s third comment at m. 289 begins as Theme A normally does, but then moves on to invert and elaborate the falling fifth motive after the first three notes. Interestingly, Lulu’s fourth and fifth passages represent a mirror of her first two remarks, as she sings a fragment of Theme A (beginning from one note into the second half), and the falling fifth motive once more, again with the same words. This symmetrical construction adds a level of coherence, particularly with the framing device of the falling fifth motive, and the repetition of similar segments emphasizes their relationship to the Canzonetta.

Part 2: Notes on the Interpretation

The meaning of the two themes has already been alluded to and will be further elucidated in the coming discussion; however, something must first be said about the unique nature of the Canzonetta and its themes in comparison to other themes and motives Berg develops through the opera. Although sometimes difficult once one has become acquainted with the work, its score, and in particular the characteristic rows Berg uses to denote certain characters, it is helpful to think about what a first-time listener would hear and hold on to in terms of Berg's communicating meaning to the audience. Perhaps by the end of the opera the listener would be able to associate the sounds of Dr. Schön's row with his character, and he probably would have little doubt about the role of the Hauptritmus and a host of other leitmotifs and leitsektions, but in general these associations would build slowly and gradually as Berg used the material in their appropriate situations throughout the work. This sort of subtle and gradual understanding takes place at a much faster rate in the instance of the Canzonetta, particularly the Death Music, as the two themes are quite clearly audible, musical, and distinctive, particularly when heard in the context of the complex dodecaphonic language from which it arises. Much of the reason the Canzonetta is easier to recognize and remember than many other similarly functioning passages is because of its primarily melodic nature and the fact that the melody contains tonal-type pulls of tension and release and primarily diatonic or

consonant motion. The listener will grasp onto this melody in a more immediate way than he can recognize and comprehend a tone row, or harmonic area. It is immediately recognizable, and can be easily remembered without having been sounded over long periods of time, which gives it a fairly unique position in the opera.

The establishment of the leitmotifs out of the Canzonetta occurs over time for the listener as Berg uses the material in various related scenes. The Death Music is established very quickly as a leitmotiv, as it is heard in the context of the Medical Specialist's death and then fairly soon after at the scene of the Painter's death. The meaning of the Death Music is well-established in the Medical Specialist's scene, and in combination with the distinctive, easily remembered melody, when heard in its second occurrence the listener has little trouble relating the music to its original form. The Flirtation Music is not such a pervasive leitmotiv, and it is not as clearly or easily established as the Death Music. The listener makes the same sorts of associations, but it is not inevitable that he will be able to consciously link occurrences in the way he can with the Death Motive. The Flirtation Music is used distinctly from the Death Music, but in terms of its ability to be recognized it is subservient to the Death Music that surrounds it in the Canzonetta. The Flirtation Music adds a level of meaning to the music in which it is found, but it is not as clear or as extensively used as the Death Music, a fundamental difference between the two leitmotifs that must be kept in mind in considering these two musical passages generally.

The topic of meaning in music is complicated and rather contentious, and, rather than adhere to a particular mode of thought in this area, I have found it to be useful to base my interpretation of the Canzonetta primarily on intuition and then enhance, justify,

and explain this interpretation by using a variety of authors' theories. This method has worked well in this study because it has allowed me to approach the piece naturally and from a variety of angles. The primary theories that have come into play in describing the meaning of the Canzonetta are briefly summarized below, though their specific applicability will be further explored within the interpretation itself.

In terms of determining the meaning of the Canzonetta themes, one must keep in mind the distinctions between what meanings are supplied and built upon by the composer and what meanings have some sort of broad cultural relevance that the composer shares with the audience and which the audience will understand immediately themselves. Raymond Monelle, in *The Sense of Music*, calls attention to the difference between iconic signs and symbolic signs, highlighting that one of the differences in this complex theory focuses on whether a sign has a predetermined cultural value or not, and he asserts that these two genres of sign rarely occur completely autonomously in music.⁹ Though definitions of icons and symbols can be helpful in theorizing these differences, this paper is more concerned with describing music and these definitions will not be explored beyond this minor and rather straightforward division. What is notable about Monelle's description is his statement that the two types of signification often (even always) occur together. There is an element of mixing between culturally accepted norms regarding meaning in music and the specific meanings Berg attaches to the leitmotifs of the Canzonetta, and considered together we can have some idea of how a listener or analyst comes to understand meaning in these themes.

⁹ Raymond Monelle, *The Sense of Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 14-19.

In the most obvious layer of understanding of meaning, the meanings that we come to associate with the Canzonetta themes and their leitmotifs are derived from Berg's specific handling of the material as he places the themes at corresponding moments in the drama, and the audience is able to link the sections and derive meaning from this coupling. Though these constructed associations on the part of the listener may bring the most immediately recognizable meaning to the music, cultural norms regarding meaning operate in ways that are both more subtle and that hold deeper meaning. The ideal example of a culturally-recognized symbol in music is the *topoi* of the Classical era as first introduced by Daniel Ratner and subsequently discussed by many, many other authors when speaking of meaning in Classic music.¹⁰ By Berg's time the idea of a strict dance *topos* had faded, but certain elements about the music make it sound in ways that do have meaning for the listener. The Death Music, for example, is heard at a time that Lulu should exhibit certain characteristics such as fear and sadness, but the Death Music can hardly be heard as mournful. Though the words Lulu sings supply some of the meaning of the Death Music, even without the words no listener would interpret the theme as representing her sadness. Because the theme does not match the listener's expectations for how it "should" sound, he must then pick up clues to why this is the case, both in the music and onstage.

¹⁰ Leonard G. Ratner, *Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1980); see also: Wye Allanbrook, *Rhythmic Gesture in Mozart: Le Nozze di Figaro and Don Giovanni* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983). Kofi Agawu, *Playing with Signs: A Semiotic Interpretation of Classic Music* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

In his book, *The Corded Shell*, Peter Kivy leads the reader through a theory in which he outlines some of the ways that he finds music to have meaning.¹¹ A theory of topics does not come into his discussion; rather, he bases his argument on the idea that some music gestures sound similar to human vocalizations or physical gestures and thus allow the listener to recognize meaning.¹² This idea is quite helpful when regarding music from an intuitive standpoint because it allows one to think about why a particular phrase is heard as sounding a particular way. For example, one might intuitively know that a slow, funereal march is sad without knowing a title or having any programmatic information about the work, and the recognition that this music bears resemblance to a somber, trudging gait brings justification and enhanced understanding to the intuitive knowledge. The Canzonetta's themes can largely be described in these terms, and much of their nuanced meaning comes from this type of argument as the audience intuitively senses how the music sounds and compares this sound with the dramatic action in the scene as well as the words Lulu sings.

Finally, something must be said about an approach that treats a musical utterance as a sign and then uses aspects of semiotic theory to make assertions about the meaning of that utterance. Frits Noske has explored this approach in the essays in his book, *Signifier and Signified: The Operas of Mozart and Verdi*.¹³ Noske takes a rather intuitive approach, stating that working on operas led him to the study of semiotics rather than the other way around, and in his work he uses aspects of the theory to emphasize certain

¹¹ Peter Kivy, *The Corded Shell: Reflections on Musical Expression* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1980).

¹² Ibid., see chapters three and seven.

¹³ Frits Noske, *The Signifier and the Signified: Studies in the Operas of Mozart and Verdi*, Trans. by Harold Lindberg (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1977).

intuitive aspects of the operas in question.¹⁴ In his appendix to the book Noske outlines his views of semiotic theory and his conception of the “musico-dramatic sign,” which is specific to opera as the libretto and the music are intimately and inevitably tied together when discerning meaning.¹⁵ Much of this theory is difficult and really too abstract for direct application in interpreting the Canzonetta, but towards the end of the chapter Noske outlines a list of characteristics of the musico-dramatic sign that provide a more tangible, useful tools to use in the interpretation.¹⁶ The list is summarized below:

Special Sign Categories

1. A corroborative sign works closely with an element contained in the libretto and is very commonplace in opera.
2. An ironic sign may contradict an element contained in the libretto
3. A parodical sign refers to something outside of the work itself, usually something in the audience’s common knowledge.
4. A physiognomic sign represents and characterizes individual characters
5. A sign that designates a concept is described as a certain motif that is repeated throughout the opera in structurally significant ways.
6. Finally a topos is defined as a traditional formula transmitted through generations.

Though many other scholars have formed intriguing ideas regarding meaning in music, the authors mentioned above have presented ideas that are most readily applicable to interpreting this specific piece. In the following section I present my interpretation of the Canzonetta, and bring back a reality that Noske points out aptly in his own interpretation of *Don Giovanni* and that few scholars studying meaning in music can deny: the interpretation presented is only one of several that can be made.¹⁷ Different

¹⁴ Ibid., 315.

¹⁵ Ibid., 316.

¹⁶ Ibid., 316-321.

¹⁷ Ibid., 91.

people may disagree on the details of any interpretation, but I hope that the presentation below satisfies one's need for both logical analysis and intuition, a combination of which is needed in any hermeneutic study.

Part 3: The Meaning of the Canzonetta

Speaking of meaning in the Canzonetta can get a little more complicated than it really should due to the Canzonetta's role as a leitsektion and its component themes' roles as leitmotivs. The leitsektion and the leitmotivs are linked in meaning, but the specific meanings are not the same, and, more importantly, the way Berg uses the musical devices to signify large-scale connections differs almost entirely. Because in some ways the leitsektion and the leitmotivs are similar in meaning, they can be spoken of together, but because they function differently they must also be presented and thought of as independent. To address this issue with maximum clarity, I will speak of Theme A/B when referring to the meaning that the leitsektion and the leitmotivs share. Death Music/Flirtation Music will be reserved for discussion of leitmotivs, and when there is a meaning that is specific to the leitsektion I have labeled it as such.

There are two types of meaning that must be spoken of when referring to the Canzonetta, or really any music in which there is a return. The first is the meaning that the musical utterance has on its own: its characteristics as a theme which can be discerned by musical features, links to the libretto and stage action, or extra-musical features such as topics. The second type of meaning relates to the situations in which the music is repeated at various places in the work. This type of meaning shows how the different sections of a work are connected to one another, which adds meaning to both

scenes in question. This type relies on the meaning determined in the first type, though depending on the situation, that meaning can be intensified, diminished, or otherwise altered. In a similar manner to the way in which the structural attributes of the Canzonetta were discussed in part one, first the meanings found in the proto-typical Canozetta section will be discussed, followed by a presentation of the more specific meanings the music contains as a leitsektion and as leitmotivs.

The General Meaning as found in the Canzonetta

The original Canzonetta is the only logical starting point when considering meaning, as the primary meaning is established here. It can be determined by a combination of the examination of the words that Lulu sings and the characteristics of the music. Here we observe the ideology behind Noske's music-dramatic sign: the words and music are intimately connected and must be considered as so in order to reach an understanding of meaning.

Theme A/Death Music

The Canzonetta is separated from the preceding music by the trill motive mentioned in Part 1. The static harmony, particularly as it is realized in the high register in the flute and violin, makes it seem as if time is standing still, and it indicates a change from the reality of the Medical Specialist's death to Lulu's private, inner world. Though the listener does not yet know the fantastical nature of Lulu's thoughts, he is immediately

cognizant that this shift has taken place. Theme A is first heard in the saxophone before Lulu picks up the same melody at the pick-up to m. 262. It is a smooth, lyrical melody that, while not particularly joyful, certainly does not present a typical mournful or even respectful attitude toward death. The melody has a meandering quality as it leaps back and forth up to Lulu's high note in m. 263. The series of leaps that cross each other gives the melody an unsettled quality (one could easily imagine dance-like human motion that one might associate with it), but because the leaps are primarily consonant this unsettledness ends up sounding whimsical and even playful rather than sad or angry. The music has a dreamy quality, and a fantasy-like and thoughtful, but somehow emotionally distant, mood is created before Lulu confirms these feelings with her words.

Of all the times that Theme A is repeated, both in this Canzonetta section and throughout the opera, this instance is the only one in which Lulu sings words to this melody to any extent. Though she sings fragments later in this section, after this point the theme is primarily presented in the orchestra, and the words she sings now can then be thought to give the theme its initial and primary meaning. She sings, "All of a sudden he will get up, he is only pretending," which may lead one to think that she does not actually believe that he is dead; however, this idea contradicts her statement that the Medical Specialist cannot hear what the Painter says (m. 242-243). Though her exact thoughts as to whether the man is dead or not are ultimately unknown, what is clear is that Lulu does not know how to deal with the situation. Set to different music this phrase could mean something quite different, but because of this pairing with such a meandering, even frivolous theme, the listener knows that Lulu is either so deeply

horrified that she imagines a situation that is not very grave, or that she actually does not feel much in the way of fear or sadness at the death of her husband.

When Theme A is reprised in the A' section, Lulu admits to herself (and thereby to the audience) that she knows that the Medical Specialist is not pretending. After briefly considering that he is gone and their life together is over (the life she tellingly refers to as a dance), Lulu's tone changes dramatically as she sings, "He's left me sitting," followed by, "What shall I do?" The first phrase is sung to a very different-sounding motive that has not been heard or suggested previously. It consists of the basic row inverted on G (I7), which of course is the basis of Theme A; however, this motive is connected only through this content and it is not heard as being part of Theme A. For the first time Lulu's words are set to (sixteenth) notes in a non-passing context and the breathless way she enters on an upbeat makes it seem as though she has suddenly had the realization that this man's demise affects her directly. Here again we have the idea that Berg imitates some aspect of human communication to show how Lulu's mental comprehension of the scene. Though the next motive she sings to, "Was fang ich an?" is related through inversion to Theme A (as shown above), it is recognizably different than the distinct melody of Theme A, a difference that is highlighted by the orchestra's rendition of Theme A beneath the vocal line. Lulu's reaction to this supposedly tragic event has now shifted from curious bewilderment to suspicious selfishness. One could at first imagine that Lulu is simply too shocked to express the normal concern at someone's death, but when her focus changes to her own problems without yet expressing sadness one begins to question her human reaction. Her terms of endearment for the Medical Specialist in the A section ("pussi!") would lead one to believe that their relationship was

not wholly unhappy, and any discomfort with Lulu's reaction that the listener may have felt before is now becoming difficult to explain away.

By this point Theme A has become quite strongly characterized as it has shown Lulu's reaction to the Medical Specialist's death in both musical and textual aspects. Here we see how the music of Theme A works together with the libretto, as in Noske's corroborative sign, to bring further meaning to Lulu's words. The meaning emitted by the music does not contradict what is in the libretto; rather, it enhances Lulu's words and adds a stronger level of understanding in regard to Lulu's thoughts and character. Lulu's reaction is naïve and childish. She does not react to the death of someone close to her in socially expected ways, and her reaction can even be characterized as frivolous. When the Death Music comes back at subsequent deaths this meaning is largely held intact, though its nuances change in each scene depending on the specific context.

Theme A seems to have a disconnected, otherworldly feel that belongs specifically to Lulu. It is certainly private music, and even when there are other characters present, living or dead, in nearly every case it seems as though Lulu has a private moment with the character that has just died. This quality is initiated and made very clear in the Canzonetta as it is framed by the trill motive generated through the Medical Specialist's dyads (m. 247-257, and m. 281-283). The trill first coincides with the Painter exiting, and then returns upon his reentering the room, and it is clear that it acts as a transition from the real world to Lulu's inner fantasy, and then back again. Though the trill motive is not actually heard at other appearances of the Death Music, the fact that it has been so strongly characterized as private in the Canzonetta causes the viewer to interpret the Death Music as representing Lulu's private world. It is also

notable that even when the Canzonetta is used as a leitsektion, Berg places the trill motive at a time at which Lulu and the Professor retreat to the privacy of the inner room while Alwa and Schigolch wait outside. Though Lulu is not alone in this instance and the physical isolation implied here is quite different from the psychological isolation in the Canzonetta, the concept of privacy and being removed is clearly very strongly associated with the Canzonetta and its introductory trill.

Finally, Berg gives much prominence to the role of the saxophone in Theme A of the Canzonetta. The melody is first heard in the saxophone and when the theme returns later in the opera it is played by this instrument more often than any other. Moreover, the saxophone actually takes over the role of Lulu's voice in m. 263, which aligns the instrument quite closely with Lulu herself. When Berg wrote this opera the saxophone was associated with jazz and was certainly not a common addition to an opera orchestra. Its choice in this context is interesting because although the saxophone is quite expressive and can convey the lyrical melody beautifully, its primary association with entertainment would have added a level of cheap crassness to the already notably frivolous-sounding music.

Theme B/Flirtation Music

Theme B has a very strong character, but its function in the opera is not immediately clear in the Canzonetta. Part of the reason for the apparent lack of clarity in this section comes from the fact that the Flirtation Music plays a minor role in the opera as a whole, and in some ways is less important as a leitmotiv than the Death Music is.

The Death Music links disparate parts of the opera together (though, of course, the nature of the scene does as well), but the Flirtation Music is only ever used to provide deeper meaning in a local way. It is not heard enough to really make clear associations, and, more importantly, the times that it is heard are not memorable enough to create a strong leitmotiv. The fact that Lulu's vocal line is not used as part of the Flirtation Music also causes it to have more of a local, enhancing role than any use in making long-range associations.

The meaning of Theme B is established through both its musical character and its textual and dramatic associations in the Canzonetta. In the Canzonetta, Lulu dances over the Medical Specialist and playfully says that he is watching her feet and her every move (m. 267), but before she even begins to sing, the orchestra has set the lighthearted tone through its bright, staccato sixteenth-note motives. The idea that musical meaning can be inferred by considering its relationship to human gesture exhibits itself strongly in this scene, particularly as the stage directions and words actually have Lulu dancing over the Medical Specialist. As she dances, the sixteenth-note motive provides a direct musical correlation to the onstage action and there can be no mistaking the character of the combined efforts. Lulu is playing with the Medical Specialist, pretending he is still alive, and in this context the lightness of the theme takes on a frivolous tone. In the Canzonetta, the meaning of Theme B is directly influenced by Theme A because of its relative strength and because of the narrative inherent in the overall ABA form. If Theme A represents Lulu's immediate reaction to the Medical Specialist's death, Theme B represents an extreme subset of that emotion. Lulu goes beyond making a statement in this section; she actually interacts with the body as if it were alive, trying one last time to

somehow make him come alive. Theme B is flirtatious and playful, and one gets the sense that the relationship between Lulu and the Medical Specialist (which of course we know very little about) incorporated this juvenile sort of playing frequently, allowing the audience to make an initial observation of Lulu's interaction with men. The audience has only seen Lulu with the Painter to this point, and because Lulu is in her own private world right now, even without the Medical Specialist, the viewer gets a valuable insight into not only her reaction to death, but also into her relationship with men in general.

Theme B is characterized by cheerful, coquettish music and playful words, but in the Canzonetta this playfulness seems to be somewhat insincere, particularly as it seems as though Lulu knows that the Medical Specialist is dead deep down. She is pretending and in this context Theme B also has a sense of fantasy, which proves to be an important feature in the theme's role as a leitmotiv. When the Flirtation Music is repeated later in the opera, this unreal component to the theme's first appearance is not kept in the same capacity because the dramatic contexts differ quite extensively, but in each case there is something false or unreal about the nature of the flirtation that is taking place. Though short, seemingly subservient to Theme A, and not terribly recognizable through the opera, the Flirtation Music actually does impart a significant layer of meaning in regards to Lulu's flirtatious relationship with men, going beyond mere innocent teasing into a realm of complexity and unreality.

The Canzonetta as a Leitsektion

Now that the general meaning of the Canzonetta as it is first presented has been established, its role as a leitsektion and its components' roles as leitmotifs can be examined more carefully. As mentioned above, the leitsektion typically contains both Themes A and B together, though of primary importance in determining difference between leitsektion and leitmotiv is the way that Berg uses the music as a signifier. As a leitsektion, the Canzonetta returns twice: first in the Interlude between the first and second scenes of Act I (m. 257) and finally in Act III as the Professor (who is the counterpart to the Medical Specialist) patronizes Lulu (m. 791 and m. 850).¹⁸ Though obviously the primary Canzonetta also has the leitmotivic meanings as discussed above, Berg does not retain these meanings through the leitsektion segments, nor is the purpose of these recurrences to bring a nuanced meaning to the scene. The Canzonetta comes back as a leitsektion in order to link the relationship between Lulu and the character of the Medical Specialist/Professor in disparate scenes throughout the opera. When looking at the basic meaning above, the Medical Specialist is referred to when speaking of how Lulu's reaction to him shapes the meaning of the music in relation to the viewer's understanding of her character, but this scene is also simply indicative of the relationship between the two characters. Though it is difficult to characterize the Medical Specialist when he is alive for such a short time and in such strange circumstances, from the way that Lulu sings the Canzonetta it appears that theirs was a kind, albeit unusual,

¹⁸ Perle, *The Operas of Alban Berg, Volume Two, Lulu*, 82-83, has a complete listing of leitsektion returns.

relationship. There seems to be some childish fondness in the way she calls him, “Pussi,” and imagines him playing a game with her in Theme B, and one gets the impression that while she may not have loved him he was at least harmless to her.

When the leitsektion first returns in the Interlude it acts as a sort of summary of the previous scene. Though the Interlude begins and ends with the Canzonetta music, it also contains summaries of other parts of the scene, all of which bring images of these actions back in distinctive ways. The fact that the Canzonetta begins and ends the section is appropriate in that the death of the Medical Specialist and all the events leading up to and following it are central to the scene and have the greatest impact on the action to come. Berg’s use of the Canzonetta to frame the representation of other events leads to a reinterpretation of those events in the context of all that the Canzonetta stands for in summarizing this part of the opera. The Canzonetta also fits in well dramatically at these points because of the use of the Flirtation Music leitmotiv that highlights the relationship between Lulu and the Painter, both at the end of the first scene and the beginning of the second. Though the Flirtation Music can be heard as strictly being part of the leitmotiv at this point, when Theme A enters, focus shifts back to the Canzonetta as it stands as a whole; and even if one discounts the use of Theme B in this presentation of the leitsektion (which is overly prescriptive and limiting), what really causes this Interlude to fall into the realm of leitsektion is the way Berg has used it to bring understanding in terms of structural coherence rather than to denote a specific meaning through the leitmotiv.

The second instance of the Canzonetta as a leitmotiv occurs in Act III when Lulu brings the Professor up to her room as her first customer as a prostitute. The character of

the Professor is meant to be played by the same actor as the Medical Specialist, and the connection between their characters is made most clear through the music of the Canzonetta, which, of course, is also very clearly associated with the Medical Specialist. Beyond being related by music, there are other signs that the characters of the Medical Specialist and the Professor are meant to be interpreted as one and the same through their relationship with Lulu. Again there is a playful sort of interaction between the Professor and Lulu as he refuses to speak to her, and of all of the patrons Lulu will have that night the Professor is the only one who does not kill someone else. In an opera where nearly everyone uses Lulu, here again this character is harmless and kind. The Canzonetta music occurs almost exclusively in the orchestra and is not represented in the vocal part at all until Lulu asks if the Professor will come back. Whether she has recognized the Medical Specialist in the Professor may be looking into the music too far, but nonetheless it is clear that Lulu is comfortable enough with him and the situation to actually sing this music.

Here again, the Canzonetta themes are private between Lulu and the Professor. As the scene progresses and they go into the inner room, the trill motive signals the moving from one sphere of reality into another, and Schigolch and Alwa come out of their hiding spots. Consequently the music turns away from the Canzonetta, and the music does not resume again until the Professor and Lulu emerge from their privacy. This use of the Canzonetta makes it seem as though the Canzonetta were so intimately connected with Lulu and the Professor that it in fact went with them into the inner room, and one can imagine the music continuing in there privately. The viewers are only able to hear the Canzonetta in the presence of the two characters, and though Schigolch and

Alwa are physically present in the room, the relationship between the two characters goes above their ability to understand, and one can imagine that they are excluded from the music even when present. In this instance, the Canzonetta leitsektion links the Professor with the Medical Specialist both as being related characters and in terms of the nature of their relationships with Lulu.

The Canzonetta as a Leitmotiv

After the Canzonetta section introduces the two themes and sets the basis for their leitmotivic meanings, both themes recur through the opera. Theme A is especially recognizable and expected at the deaths of all the characters, and it is used in similar ways every time. Berg's use of Theme B is somewhat more subtle, but still enhances the richness of the action onstage. For the most part I will discuss the reappearances of the Canzonetta in the order in which they appear in the opera, but because of the similarities in their representations I have grouped the death scenes together so that one can more easily compare the three.

The Canzonetta in the Painter's Recitative

Though the meaning of the Canzonetta has been discussed in great detail, what happens after the Canzonetta section proper in the following Recitative has not. Though still representing Lulu's thoughts in regards to the Medical Specialist's death, here Lulu's relationship to the Painter also begins to come into question. The Recitative begins after

the trill motive signals a transition back to reality that is brought on by the Painter's return in m. 284. He enters rapidly and immediately asks Lulu if the Medical Specialist has shown any signs of recovery, singing the basic row inverted on C-sharp (I1), while the orchestra plays the Hauptritmus to notes that occur in both the Medical Specialist's and the Painter's dyads. The fate motive represents a critical moment for both characters as the Medical Specialist has officially lost Lulu, and thereby the Painter has then gained her. Lulu seals both of their fates, so it is fitting that the Hauptritmus is played to those particular pitches, and in a way the Painter's own death is foreshadowed by this fateful connection with the Medical Specialist. Lulu answers his question by repeating "Was fang' ich an?" in the descending fifth to descending fourth motive described above. As she enters, the music shifts back to the sound of the Canzonetta, showing that Lulu is not quite returned from that world.

As the dialogue between Lulu and the Painter continues in the Recitative, the Painter persists in singing earnest, rapid passages on the inverted basic row, while Lulu continues to answer with Canzonetta-inspired phrases based on either the fifth/fourth motive or Theme A. The Painter reveals both his concern for the Medical Specialist and his surprise and distaste for Lulu's unfeeling comments while Lulu dreamily ponders what will happen to her, offers light remarks about the Medical Specialist in reaction to the Painter's concern, and then realizes that she now has an inheritance. Tellingly, right before she sings "Jetzt bin ich reich" (to Theme A) the picture chords are heard in the orchestra. Those chords are used throughout the opera as a representation of Lulu's image of herself, and it is as if at that moment she understands what this event means for her life. Though the painter exclaims his shock at that remark, Lulu does not respond to

him, and again closes her part of the section with another statement of “Was fang’ ich an?” in its characteristic setting.

Until the Painter tells her to look into his eyes and answer a question in the transition to the Duet (m. 302), Lulu continues to be separated from the Painter in her mind; she is not focused on what he says in the least, and other than being a source of money, the Medical Specialist does not concern her in the least either. Though Lulu’s singing music from the Canzonetta can be seen as a sort of coda to the section which preceded it, the role of this music is to highlight the self-focused fantasy she has created for herself. The selfish parts of the meaning of Theme A have been brought to new heights in this section, and will influence the way the viewer comprehends Lulu’s character.

The Death Scenes

Though not occurring in succession in the opera, the death scenes are grouped together here because of the similarity of their settings. Each scene must be discussed individually as they all have slightly different characteristics, but in general Berg uses the Canzonetta in a very systematic and consistent way when representing Lulu’s reaction to the deaths of the Painter, Dr. Schön and Alwa. The general formula has Lulu looking at the body as Theme A is heard in the orchestra, followed by a transition to a version of her row (see Example 4 above). The stage directions Berg has included in the score are very important for these representations of the Death Music as they indicate clearly what Lulu does, and thereby thinks, when the symbolic music occurs.

The Painter is the first of these men to die. The Death Music emerges from chords sounding the Hauptritmus in Act One, m. 868, and is heard up to its grace-note figure, which in this case acts as the motivic beginning to the inversion of Lulu's row (see Example 4). Though the fact that the theme transforms into Lulu's row shows that her feelings about the Painter's death are shallow and fleeting, Lulu's actions on stage do not mirror this shift in tone as they do at Dr. Schön's and Alwa's death. Lulu sees the Painter for an instant long before the Canzonetta sounds. After seeing him she screams and says she cannot stay there any longer, and it is only after she leaves that the Death Music is introduced. It is interesting to compare this reaction to that of the deaths of Alwa and Dr. Schön, in which she remains with the body to briefly mourn before leaving. Lulu did not have as deep a relationship with the Painter as she had with the other two men, and perhaps she did not feel any sentimental need to linger thoughtfully with him. It is perhaps more likely, however, that Lulu was unprepared for the shock of the Painter's death. Lulu acts as one who panics, who does not know how to handle a situation and does not act rationally. Lulu deals with the Painter's death by leaving immediately, and by asking Alwa to accompany her to her room whereupon she changes clothes. She is clearly unable to comprehend this death rationally, which contrasts interestingly to her reactions at the deaths of Dr. Schön and Alwa in which she does in fact have some sort of remarkably brief reflective period before self-centeredly taking care of herself. Perhaps at this point in the opera Lulu has not yet been through enough to harden her to the reality of death to the point that she can actually comprehend it.

The next appearance of the Death Music in the opera occurs at the scene of Dr. Schön's death (Act II, m. 611). The theme is introduced after Lulu sings, "Er hat es

überstanden,” to the Possession Music while kneeling by Dr. Schön. The characteristic saxophone plays the Canzonetta melody and the theme transforms to Lulu’s row, this time in prime form, at the point of the grace-notes. This presentation of the Death Music coincides clearly with the stage direction. When the theme is first heard, Lulu stands up and looks again at Dr. Schön, but then she turns and hurries toward the stairs as she realizes that she killed a man and could potentially have trouble for it. At that very moment the music transforms to her row, and it is clear, both musically and dramatically, that her focus has moved from Dr. Schön back to immediate concern for herself. Lulu does not make it out of the room, however, as Alwa stops her before she can leave. Directly under the words, “...und an Alwa vorbei,” the Flirtation Music is presented in the orchestra, which foreshadows her desperate pleading for Alwa to spare her in the coming moments using a seductive promise, which is her only means of negotiation. Stylistically this light theme has no place in the grave situation, and because of the stage direction it can be directly linked to Alwa and Lulu’s anxious promise to do whatever he wishes. She is immediately unsuccessful in these attempts and does go to prison; however, Alwa also takes a large role in helping her to escape in the next two years, which does show that her influence is too strong to be broken by the murder of his father. Perhaps this appearance of the Flirtation Music ultimately foreshadows his final devotion to her, though it may be a stretch to look that far ahead in the act. Because these two themes have specific and independent meaning, they should be viewed in their leitmotivic characters rather than as part of a leitsektion. Here, as elsewhere, the Death Music acts as transitional material from Dr. Schön’s death to its aftermath, and it

individual relationships to the men in question change. Berg uses this music consistently, but the differences that occur in each scene do highlight some of these differences, and together they show Berg's aptitude for representing detailed emotions and actions.

Appearances of the Flirtation Music

As was stated above, the meaning and even the composition of the Flirtation Music is not strongly expressed in the Canzonetta itself, and looking at Berg's use of the leitmotiv in the following moments serves to solidify what the theme represents in terms of Lulu's character. The interlude between the first and second scenes of Act I is introduced by the Flirtation Music (which also acts as part of the leitsektion to some degree, as discussed above) as Lulu asks the Painter to hook up her dress. Her request shows her power over him and foreshadows the increased seriousness of their relationship, which lends a sense of power to what was a more innocent flirtation represented by Theme B. After the Interlude summarizes the first scene, the Canzonetta Leitsektion returns, and similarly to how the Flirtation Music was used to transition from a scene with the Painter into the summarizing Interlude, at this point the opposite occurs. The Canzonetta leitsektion transforms into the Flirtation Music precisely when the scene changes, which indicates Berg's intention of using this theme to represent the relationship between the Painter and Lulu. This subtle, but telling, feature prepares the viewer for Lulu's new marriage and her influence over the Painter. A full transition has taken place from the death of the old scene to the seemingly bright, domestic scene that follows, all of which is represented in the presentation of these two themes at this precise moment.

The final significant appearance of the Flirtation Music (aside from the instance at Dr. Schön's death discussed above) occurs in Act 2 as Dr. Schön threatens Lulu (m. 459). Lulu asks Dr. Schön for a divorce, to which he replies, "The final insult! So tomorrow another would pursue his path of pleasure where I have shuddered from horror to horror, with suicide to haunt me and you unscathed." As he sings about watching Lulu's next lover, the Flirtation Music is heard in the orchestral accompaniment. Meanwhile, Dr. Schön indicates that he thinks specifically of Alwa at this time as he sings Alwa's row. With the exception of Dr. Schön and Countess Geschwitz, each of Lulu's lovers who is killed by the end have some association with the Flirtation Music, and it is never used with the very few characters who happen to survive. This may be coincidental as so few important characters survive; however, it is notable that the Flirtation Music is not used with the Marquis or the Schoolboy or other characters that Lulu merely flirts with. There is a deeper, more serious association with the characters that relates to Lulu's destructive power over those she seduces. The theme is almost excruciatingly light and playful, and it contrasts ironically with the grim fates of the characters.

The Canzonetta is just one part of an opera densely filled with intricate meanings, but a close examination of the construction and use of the Canzonetta and its themes shows that even in this relatively small section of music Berg retains a sense of detail and nuance in meaning that greatly affects the way a viewer of the opera interprets specific events. Berg's construction of the Canzonetta reveals his attention to creating a culturally-recognized mood that, in combination with her words, tells more about Lulu's psychological state than any dramatic action could; while his systematic but varied use of

the Canzonetta as a leitsektion and its division into Death and Flirtation Music show Berg's adept ability to transform material to meet differing dramatic and musical contexts. This sensitivity to human emotion and ability to so effectively integrate this emotion into the libretto and local musical contexts in combination with the inventive use of the twelve-tone system makes *Lulu* stand out as an opera that is at once musically and psychologically strikingly significant.

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