An Incomplete Life: *Lulu* and the Performance of Unfinishedness

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What does unfinishedness mean to opera criticism in the wake of the performative turn? One familiar answer suggests that it means everything. Toward the end of the millennium, as live performance became a central focus of opera studies, the idea of a definitive version of an operatic text came to seem less and less appealing, as did the very notion of an operatic "work."[1] Instead, scholars valorized the elusive, mutable, or open-ended, and opera itself was imagined as an unfinished business, its ontology anchored in the moment of performance. But if the performative turn celebrated "unfinishedness," it also rendered the concept oddly void of meaning. Strictly speaking, the finishedness of an opera can only be measured against one version or another of the work concept. Once the composer's intention has lost its authority and the essence of an opera is situated less in its script than in its live instantiation, what does it mean to speak of an unfinished opera? If the locus of opera is the performance rather than the score, can *Turandot* be said to be any less complete than *Tosca* just because Alfano or Berio wrote the notes for the final scene? If the work is recast as a unique event that concludes every time the curtain falls, what space is left for the inconclusive?

Although these questions have a bearing on opera criticism in general, they derive from my engagement with one particular opera, and in this article I will reroute them back into it: Alban Berg's *Lulu*, which the composer struggled with from the late 1920s until his death in 1935.[2] In November of that year, Berg suffered an unfortunate insect bite that would lead to his death by blood poisoning on Christmas Eve. At that point, the two first acts and 268 of the 1326 measures in the third had been fully orchestrated, while the rest was notated only in short score, of which 87 measures were also left incomplete.[3] This state of affairs famously arose because Berg had been deflected from his opera by the commission of a violin concerto, which he dedicated to the memory of Manon Gropius (Alma Mahler's daughter, who had died at the age of eighteen the same year). Berg's homage to a life that ended too soon, only months before his own, condemned his operatic chef d'oeuvre to a life without an ending.

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In his book *Remaking the Song*, Roger Parker describes unfinished works in terms of two competing allegories of temporality, one artistic and the other biographical: "On the one hand is a work whose temporal span is unnaturally foreshortened, whose lack of an ending marks it as forever imperfect. On the other hand, though, this very lack necessarily engages a further, equally exigent allegory of temporality, that of the composer's life history, which completes itself in the act of leaving the work unfinished."[4] Parker's precise formulation seems to resonate particularly strongly in *Lulu*, and not only because Berg's operatic self-portrait, Alwa, presages the composer's fate by dying before the completion of the final act. For several reasons, the fact of this opera being marked as "forever imperfect" is extra frustrating. It is typically regarded as the crowning achievement of Berg's artistic life, and its status as one of the few modernist masterworks to enter the repertoire aligns the end of that life with the purported death of the genre itself in the twentieth century (thus adding a third, more expansive temporality to those noted by Parker). Beyond this, however, the modernist ethos has woven the fantasy of complete structural perfection into every fiber of its composition. Before turning my attention to a noteworthy recent performance of *Lulu* at the Staatsoper Hamburg, I will elaborate on this last point and its significance for the reception history of Berg's singularly engaging and uncomfortable opera.

Stages of Loss: Toward an Acceptance of the Unfinished

From the basic dodecaphonic impulse to systematically exhaust the chromatic scale, to the overarching chiasmus of the three acts, with the palindromic film-music poised in the middle as a pivot, the score of *Lulu* aims at a state of complete and perfect symmetry. In the context of such rigorous aesthetic principles, must not *Lulu*'s lack of a proper ending appear as the equivalent of the thousand-piece jigsaw that you have been struggling with for weeks only to discover that a mere handful of pieces were missing from the box? What is more, the score's totalizing ambitions extend beyond mere notes. An arch-example of the post-Wagnerian tendency to concentrate authorial intention into the figure of the composer, *Lulu* strives to codify not only the details of the music, but also stage direction, design, choreography, and dramaturgy. In Berg's own words: "The music must produce everything that the play needs for its transposition to the reality of the stage, and this requires from the composer that he carry out all the most important tasks of an ideal director."[5] Not only are all the exits and entrances of the opera tied to musical cues, but the score specifies the rhythm with which Lulu stomps her foot in impatience and takes a deep breath, just as it aligns the handling of the revolver—which is pointed at various characters, cocked and finally fired—with precise beats of the music.[6] Consequently, missing notes potentially correspond to missing stage directions, and the musical lacunae echo on into other registers of the opera. Yet another frustrating

factor is the promise of a possible completion. Unlike that other epitome of opera's modernist demise, *Moses und Aron* (the third act of which never grew into more than a few fragments even though the composer lived for another two decades and had ample opportunity to complete it), the missing pieces of *Lulu* were few and seemed tantalizingly possible to reconstruct. Even so, the promise was unfulfilled for forty years, chiefly because of Helene Berg's insistence that the work remain unfinished, and her consequent refusal to allow anyone near her late husband's manuscripts.[7] She even appears to have resorted to dubious means in order to keep the work from being completed. In Douglas Jarman's words: "There began a process of what can only be called 'disinformation,' the publication of deliberately misleading or doubtful information, the main purpose of which was to cast doubts on the possibility of finishing the work, to foster the belief that the score was little more than a fragment. . . ."[8]

In his frustration with Helene Berg's behavior, Jarman goes as far as a wholesale denial of any unfinishedness marring *Lulu*. In his view, any "'problematic' passages could be completed in accordance with Berg's own intentions either by following the indications provided in the score or by doubling the existing instrumental parts," and consequently, finishing the orchestration would take "only the kind of editorial attention that is required by any musical score being prepared for publication."[9] In other words, the very idea that *Lulu* is incomplete is a retrospective smokescreen: "At the time of Berg's death it was generally agreed by all those who were in a position to voice an informed opinion that *Lulu* was not an 'unfinished' work."[10] Perhaps Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's classic model of the grief process, in which denial is a primary strategy for coping with loss, applies not just to human life but to aesthetic objects.[11] If the idea that *Lulu* was unfinishable is strange indeed, the idea that it was already finished is no less so: scholars like Jarman refuse to acknowledge the possibility that further revisions to the material could have occurred to the composer while orchestrating the short score, and assign orchestration a secondary status within the creative process.

This unwillingness to accept incompleteness can be understood as symptomatic of the organicist aesthetics that were such a strong current in modernist thought, particularly in that of the Second Viennese School.[12] As Schoenberg wrote in his 1912 essay "Relationship to the Text": "When one cuts into any part of the human body, the same thing comes out—blood. When one hears a verse of a poem, a measure of a composition, one is in a position to comprehend the whole. Even so, a word, a glance, a gesture, the gait, even the color of the hair, are sufficient to reveal the personality of a human being."[13] The implied idea is that a masterpiece can only be finished in one way, because the DNA of the perfect dodecaphonic work, as it were, has already programmed its growth from the first cell to the last, from the genotypes of basic sets and rows to the phenotype of the orchestral writing. As Willi Reich put it, paraphrasing Berg himself: "the strictest musical cohesion is achieved

in *Lulu* by *deriving the entire musical action of the opera from a single twelve-tone row*" (emphasis in the original).[14] From this perspective, it makes sense to consider the corpus of *Lulu* essentially complete, and if anything does not seem to fit in, it can be ascribed to oversight or error. As George Perle (whose phrasings are more tempered than Reich's) puts it when he comes across a rare flaw in the work's symmetry: "These and other inconsistencies would undoubtedly have been corrected by the composer had he survived to complete the scoring of the third act and to prepare his manuscript for publication."[15] In other words, any imperfection of the actually existing score can always be overcome by the projected idea of organic completeness. As I suggested at the outset, from a performance-centered perspective the concept of unfinishedness risks losing its meaning because all performance is open-ended and ongoing. For those committed to aesthetic organicism, it risks losing its meaning for the opposite reason, that is, because the idea of completeness is always projected onto the musical corpus, filling out any remaining blanks and correcting all imperfections. Hence, loss can be bargained away via the assumption that the work, had the creator been allowed to live, could only have been finished in one specific way.

Lulu's onstage life has a curiously contrary relation to aesthetic currents of the twentieth century. Its score was left incomplete at a moment when a whole new level of completeness was expected of a musical score. The decision to play the work using the Variations and Adagio movements from the *Lulu Suite* as placeholders for the third act, a solution that became the norm after the 1937 world premiere in Zurich, did little to mitigate the frustration.[16] Instead, during the four decades that followed, this truncated version fueled a desire for a more definitive option, one only satisfied when Friedrich Cerha's completed version of the third act was performed in 1979 in Paris. Ironically, at this point the dream of the complete work had already taken its first blows from the ideas of the open artwork in the 1960s and 1970s, and in Germany, *Regietheater* had started to wrestle part of the authority over the work from the hands of the composer. In other words, *Lulu* was finished at the moment when finishedness had started to fall out of fashion. This tension is illustrated by the fact that the Paris premiere was directed by Patrice Chéreau, whose centennial *Ring* in Bayreuth rapidly grew into a symbol of directorial intervention. Just when *Lulu*'s score was to receive its longed-for closure, the operatic work had burst open in the other end, leaking authority and initiative into the hands of dramaturgs and directors. Unsurprisingly, this enraged those envisioning a performance of *Lulu* according to Berg's intentions. Jarman found the Paris production "disastrous," and two years later he claimed that Götz Friedrich's Covent Garden production displayed a "shocking ignorance of the most elementary principles of Berg's musico-dramatic organization."[17] Similarly, Perle noted that "our work sometimes seems to have as little relevance in the real world of operatic production today as that of the specialist deciphering the clay tablets of ancient Sumer." His solution

was to turn away from actual performances and indulge in an imagined ideal staging of his own.[18]

The tendency that so aggravated Jarman and Perle has only become more pronounced since. Although Cerha's score has been used for the vast majority of performances since 1979, in the last two decades the fad for open-endedness has inspired new approaches to the opera's music, ones that question the sacrosanctity of the score as well as the very ideal of completion. It stands to reason that *Lulu* has become an object of particular interest, since there is no palpable authority to prevent the exploration of different solutions than Cerha's. Moreover, Berg's work became free from copyright restrictions in 2006, giving legal leeway to a new level of experimentation. As a result, recent years have seen a proliferation of new ways of dealing with its unfinishedness.

In 2002, the Zurich Opera chose to return to the same two-act version they had used for the world premiere in 1937. What had, before Cerha's version, been a makeshift solution now became an artistic choice: director Sven-Eric Bechtolf thematized the musical incompleteness on stage by letting the dismembered body of a mannequin—representing Lulu's portrait—mirror the fragmented corpus of the third act.[19] In 2003, a Hamburg production directed by Peter Konwitschny also used the two-act version, but turned the old solution around by opening the piece with the Variations and the Adagio, before the Animal Tamer's prologue.[20] After the copyright expired, Eberhard Kloke completed a brand new three-act version in 2008, which premiered at the Copenhagen Opera in 2010, in a production conducted by Michael Boder and directed by Stefan Herheim. This version has since been performed in numerous houses internationally, including the Semperoper in Dresden, the Teatro Comunale in Bolzano, the Welsh National Opera in Cardiff, and the West Edge Opera in Berkeley. Kloke's arrangement illustrates perfectly the desire to escape conclusiveness: it is a flexible, module-based version of the third act, in which the parts orchestrated by Berg are kept intact, but a significant amount of freedom is left to the conductor and performers. Through the use of ossia variants and suggested solutions for cuts in the (undeniably lengthy) act, a mutable and malleable version is produced. In addition, Kloke has created a chamber-orchestra version of the opera, scored for twenty-eight players, which was first performed in Stadttheater Gießen in 2012. Yet another performance version was premiered at the Deutsche Oper in 2012, conducted by Daniel Barenboim and directed by Andrea Breth. This version, available on DVD, disposes with both the Prologue and the Paris scene, opening instead with Lulu's chilling full-orchestra death cry from the final scene, before launching into the first act proper. Robert David Coleman, who orchestrated the third act for this production, added a number of new timbres, such as marimba, steel drums, accordion, and even a banjo. Only months later, Olga Neuwirth's *American Lulu*, which translates the story to the civil-rights era in New Orleans and New York, saw the light of day at the Komische Oper.[21] Neuwirth's

imaginative score sweeps Berg's first two acts off their dodecaphonic feet with a jazzy, wind-dominated adaptation and adds a newly composed third act.

These productions suggest that the process of grieving for the *Lulu* that never came to be has progressed from denial, anger, and bargaining to acceptance. The continuous production of alternatives undermines both the idea and the ideal of a final, authoritative work—especially in Kloke's version, which is several versions in itself. As Parker puts it with reference to Berio's ending for *Turandot*, "Far from thinking its textual issues now 'solved,' we can instead look forward with pleasure to future solutions."[22] Even so, from the perspective of the unique event of a live performance, these various three-act versions present finished operas, and not just because they end at a given point. They are planned and carried out in order to make *Lulu*, however briefly, appear onstage as a finished opera. While this may seem like a self-evident objective, I will now turn in more detail to a production that does something very different: instead of trying to reconstruct completeness, it goes further than any of the above versions in its pursuit of unfinishedness.

The Opera that Would Not End

On February 12, 2017, Staatsoper Hamburg premiered a new version of *Lulu* conducted by Kent Nagano and directed by Christoph Marthaler. The production was enthusiastically received in the German press, and went on to win the prize of the Deutscher Bühnenverein ("Der Faust") for best music-theater direction, as well as being named performance of the year by *Opernwelt*.[23] Far from bearing out Berg's own ideal of concentrating all authorial agency into the composer, the Hamburg version was an unusually collaborative effort, illustrative of Parker's observation that opera is characterized by a "surplus of signature."[24] In addition to Nagano and Marthaler, the team charged with creating a new version of the third act consisted of the dramaturg Malte Ubenauf and the two German composers Johannes Harneit and Jochen Neurath. Neurath first produced a transcription of Berg's short score, which then served as the basis for the new orchestration.

To give an idea of the result, I will take the cue of performance-focused opera studies and offer a candidly subjective account of my immediate impressions as an audience member. I first attended the Hamburg production a couple of weeks after the premiere, on February 24, 2017. I could have informed myself of what I was in for by reading the reviews, but being rather spoiler-sensitive I refrained from doing so—and, indeed, from looking at the program book. I knew the opera itself well enough and, having previously watched Marthaler's production of *Le nozze di Figaro* on DVD, I had at least a basic idea of his directorial style. My high hopes for the evening were above all invested in Barbara Hannigan's performance of the lead role. I had heard her in a recording of Warlikowski's Brussels production as well as in a stunning live performance of the *Lulu Suite* in Zurich (in one of her trademark

singing-conductor concerts). While she does not have the most massive voice, Hannigan's combination of agility, clarity, and musical intelligence makes her ideal for the part. My hopes in this department were amply realized. Whether drowning her audience in broad surges of post-romantic affect or firing off crystalline coloratura, Hannigan appeared to pull it off with incomprehensible ease. Incomprehensible not least because the production had her match the vocal acrobatics with physical ones: throughout the performance, she delivered the fiercely difficult vocal line while doing somersaults, hanging upside down, tripping en pointe, being thrown about by her co-actors, or jumping off two feet for a quarter of an hour. This focus on physical performance, in turn, resonated with Anna Viebrock's set (fig. 1), which consisted of a rather haphazard assemblage of elements drawn from various performance arenas, such as circus (a seesaw and stereotypical zigzag-painted circus podiums), underground cabaret (a cheap, makeshift-looking stage-on-the-stage), and recording studio (overhead microphones and instrument cases). In addition, Lulu was surrounded by four younger girls, who mimicked and interacted with her, perhaps as her alter egos or acolytes.

The most radically surprising aspect of the evening, though, was the music for the third act. To begin with, the second act did not end. After the ominous fate chords, when the curtain might have been expected to drop, the stage remained visible. The sets were then rearranged, in silence, to look like a café or restaurant. After a while, the third act began, and I was puzzled. Would there actually be no second

Figure 1. Lulu in Hamburg, 2017: The Animal Tamer's Prologue. (Staatsoper Hamburg/Monika Rittershaus 2017).

intermission (and if so, what would happen to my pre-ordered champagne and chocolate truffles)? The scaffold of the expected act-structure having been dislodged, a kind of vertigo ensued, like a countdown continuing past zero. In short, this was a staging of the unfinished work as a work that refused to end. Even more remarkably, however, the full orchestra had been replaced by two pianos, one placed in the orchestra pit and one on stage (or, actually, on the stage-on-the-stage). The only other instrument was a violin played by German virtuoso Veronika Eberle, in the role of a café musician. Musically, the result was a chamber-music-like intimacy, diametrically opposed to Cerha's densely orchestrated version. In addition, the near-impenetrable ensembles of the Paris scene were missing entirely, and Berg's vocal writing resounded with precise and effortless clarity through the transparent accompaniment. Finally, the intermission came after the first scene of the third act, in which Lulu is forced to travel to London to sell her body. The last musical gesture before the curtain fall caught my ear: the onstage violinist played a small arpeggio motif involving open strings, which sounded a lot like an allusion to Berg's Violin Concerto. I had never noticed it before, and as I headed for my refreshments I wondered whether it had always been there or if it was an addition to the score.

I also wondered whether the orchestra would return after the intermission, and how the relatively short London scene could be expected to stand on its own. As it turned out, the refusal to finish grew even more pronounced. The scaled-down instrumentation continued, but rather than the violin, the pianos were now supplemented by offstage winds instruments, which intermittently shadowed their notes. When the Jack-the-Ripper scene began, it had become clear that the piano duo would actually persist throughout the entire the third act. In spite of its appealing clarity, I found this rather disappointing. Instead of the beautiful, post-Mahlerian string setting of the music associated with Schön's love for Lulu, I was served a frugal keyboard arrangement. What was worse, I began to feel bothered by the formally unsatisfying idea of concluding two richly orchestrated acts with such weak forces. It simply seemed too much of a sonic whimper to carry the drama's bang. The ending, however, did turn out to be massive enough, and this was in fact the real scandal of the Hamburg production: immediately after the final scene—with Lulu already dead on the boards, and in the wake of three hours of dodecaphonic drama—the café violinist stepped onto the stage and launched into an unabridged performance of Berg's Violin Concerto (fig. 2). Under Nagano's restrained direction, Eberle delivered a spectacularly passionate version of Berg's final work, the dark lyricism of which now seemed to incorporate all the sensuality and suffering of the opera that had preceded it. Meanwhile, Hannigan's Lulu rose from the dead and joined the four dancing girls in a pantomime of silent speech, as if communicating an urgent message that could only be expressed by Berg's concerto. I left the opera house as mystified as I was moved, wrangling over the evening with my opera-

Figure 2. Lulu in Hamburg, 2017: Berg's Violin Concerto, played by Veronika Eberle after the third act (Staatsoper Hamburg/Monika Rittershaus 2017).

loving partner (who, by the way, abhorred the production) and feeling a distinct need to further probe what I had seen and heard.

The Sound of Drafts

Turning to the more concrete facts of the Hamburg version, we may observe that the third act is scored for one offstage and one onstage piano, supplemented by a solo violin in the first scene, and by an offstage ensemble of flute, oboe, clarinet, trumpet, trombone, and percussion in the second.[25] It also reduces the act by approximately 490 measures (cutting about 315 measures from the first scene, the remainder from the second).[26] Many of these omissions are ensembles and exchanges concerning the *Jungfrauaktien* and the stock-market crash. Other missing sections include the four first variations of the interlude and the most blatantly racist parts of the Negro's role (about his six wives always nagging him to take a bath). The remaining music has not only had its instrumental forces reduced, but also some of its vocal parts: sung and spoken lines have been removed from roughly 100 measures. These include the small talk between Schigolch and Alwa in the London scene and, again, almost everything concerning the stock market. While the first ensemble has been cut in its entirety, for instance, the music for the second ensemble remains, but without its massive vocal counterpoint: the voices of the fifteen-year-old, her Mother, the Art dealer, the Journalist, the Groom, the Servant, the Banker,

the Athlete, Alwa, and the Marquis have all been ousted (compare mm. 242–63 of Cerha's score). In performance, this meant that the conversation between Lulu and Geschwitz became audible for the first time in the opera's history.

In the Hamburg program book, composer Johannes Harneit gives an interesting rationale for the decision to perform the third act as what he calls "the living fragment" ("das . . . lebendige Fragment").[27] His basic argument is that we cannot know what Berg would have done with the opera if he had lived longer. Harneit cites a letter to Webern from May 6, 1934 (just after the short score was finished), in which Berg wrote that the "whole score of *Lulu* needed to be overhauled again": if this statement is "taken seriously," Harneit suggests, "Berg speaks of a revision of the complete opera."[28] Moreover, Harneit brushes off as "pure speculation" ("reine Spekulation") the idea that the orchestrated Variations from the suite were to be inserted as the interlude between the Paris and London scenes.[29] He finds it likelier that "in the third act, where an increasing depression spreads, the composer would have orchestrated the corresponding musical passages in a more subdued manner."[30]

If Jarman's suggestion that *Lulu* is not unfinished at all seemed like wishful thinking, Harneit's opposing claims are even stranger. In that letter to Webern, for one thing, Berg disarmed the notion of "overhauling" the whole score, clarifying that he was only talking about "minor retouching" that would take "two or three weeks of work."[31] These formulations hardly point to anything like "revision of the complete opera" that Harneit suggests. As for the interlude between the first and second scenes, Jarman's discovery that Berg literally pasted parts of the autograph score for the suite (the Adagio and Rondo) into the full score of the first and second act, while the autograph for the Variations was put in its place in the middle of the unfinished score for the third act, remains a rather persuasive indicator that Berg intended the sections he orchestrated for the suite to enter the opera itself.[32]

My point here, however, is not to argue for the authenticity of either solution, but rather to draw attention to the oddity of authenticity being chosen as the mode of justification by Harneit, who presumably represents the team behind the new version of the third act. With a production that so barefacedly departs from anything remotely resembling Berg's intentions, such references to the composer's statements must come across as a red herring. As part of the opera house's official presentation of the production, they simply underline that the appeal to authorial intention is still the only form in which tampering with the music can be sold to an audience.[33] What carried the production, however, was not its faithfulness, but the strength of its ideas: it was a performance not just of Berg's musical drafts, but of the very idea of a musical draft. In this version, the third act sounded less like a finished work for pianos, violin, and voices than a placeholder foregrounding its own provisional quality. After the two fully orchestrated acts, the third turned out to be a black-and-white drawing on the piano, graced by the well-defined lines of a violin and, later, by the

tinge of distant wind instruments. It was music that presented itself as a monochrome sketch, awaiting the palette of orchestral color. The ubiquitous piano also betokened the unfinished in its replication of the rehearsal situation. At the opera, after all, the sound of the piano is synonymous with the preparatory sing-through, not the resulting orchestral performance.

In other words, Berg's manuscript drafts were used neither to reconstruct a supposedly authentic performance version (as in Cerha's *Arbeitsbericht*), nor to lend philological support to a particular finished version (as in Jarman's article on the manuscript pages of the suite), nor indeed to contribute to our understanding of the decisions that led to the last available version (as in Patricia Hall's book on the autograph sources).[34] Instead, the drafts were made to sound *like drafts*. The strategy amounted to a performative rendition of the unfinished as unfinished, thus sidestepping the seemingly given need to endow the opera with closure, however temporarily. If the Hamburg score for the third act can only seem scandalously gratuitous from the perspective of the composer's intention (one hardly dares imagine what Perle would have thought), it became all the more motivated and meaningful from the perspective of the production's overall concept. This fact is particularly clear from the overdetermined role of the violin in the production—the violin's role in the new score, the violinist as a character in the staging, and the inclusion of the Violin Concerto as the ending—which will be my focus in the remainder of this article.

The Angel that Would Not Stay Dead

In the Hamburg *Lulu*, the significance of the solo violin was second only to that of the protagonist herself. Why was it there and what role did it play in Lulu's story? Harneit's text in the program book places emphasis on the fact that the only instruments specified in Berg's short score are a violin and a piano. The creative team, or so the argument goes, have thus made sure that the sought-for "actual experience of a fragmentary state" is not reached "in an arbitrary way," but "by making audible the only certain solo instruments, specified in the short score, in the first scene of the third act."[35] True, those instruments do occur regularly and prominently in Berg's manuscript of the Paris scene, where the markings "Solo Geige," "Solo Gge," "Solo gg," or "Klavier" stick out in a short score otherwise mostly lacking in clues about the intended orchestration.[36] However, they are there for a specific reason: they are tightly linked with the characters of the Marquis and the Athlete. Almost all passages marked "Klavier" in the short score are various versions of the Athlete's characteristic leitmotiv, two dense chords of all black-key notes and all white-key notes (what Perle refers to as the "Acrobat's Chords").[37] The solo violin, meanwhile, belongs to the Marquis. The previous roles sung by the same buffo tenor as the Marquis—the Prince in the first act and the Manservant in the second—are

consistently accompanied by solo strings and involve his specific series (ex. 1), as does the introduction of "his" animal, the monkey, in the Prologue.[38] Beyond doubt, the specification of the solo violin in the short score, which is predominantly attached to instances of the Marquis's series and the Wedekind tune, is there because the instrument is closely associated with this specific character. A neat illustration, for instance, is the *Cadenz* for violin and piano, which is an exchange between these two characters: in its first measures (fig. 3), the stage directions say "Castipiani [later renamed the Marquis] is pushed into the salon by Rodrigo [later renamed the Athlete]," while the piano plays the Athlete's leitmotiv and the solo violin the Marquis's series.[39]

In the Hamburg staging, however, the violin was thoroughly and deliberately disconnected from the Marquis. In the *Cadenz*, for instance, its ties to the Marquis were lost, as were the piano's to the Athlete, since these instruments already dominated the entire Paris scene. In other words, the role of the solo violin in the production can hardly be justified with reference to Berg's manuscript. Instead, I would argue, it became dramatically meaningful by being refunctioned and connected to Lulu herself. This move was most conspicuously made in the sixth of the *Concertante Chorale Variations* in the Paris scene, which deserves some special attention, both in terms of music and of staging. These variations, which accompany the tightening net that pulls Lulu into the world of prostitution, are built around the Marquis's series (ex. 1) and, more specifically, the chordal sequence of which that series forms the top voice (ex. 2).[40] What made this passage so important in the Hamburg staging, however, was not the genotype of the twelve-note series, but the phenotype of the violin gesture: the sixth variation has the form of a legato waveform arpeggio reaching up across the four strings and then down again (ex. 3).[41]

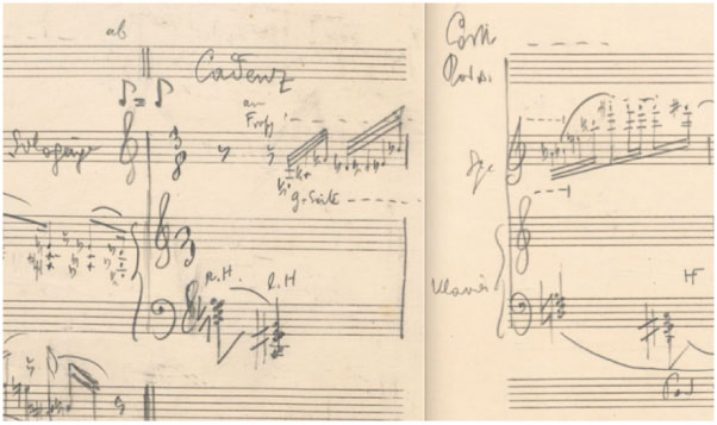
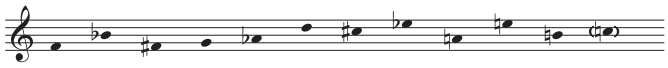
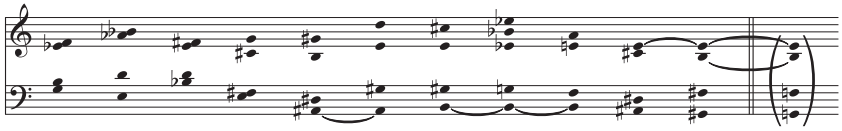


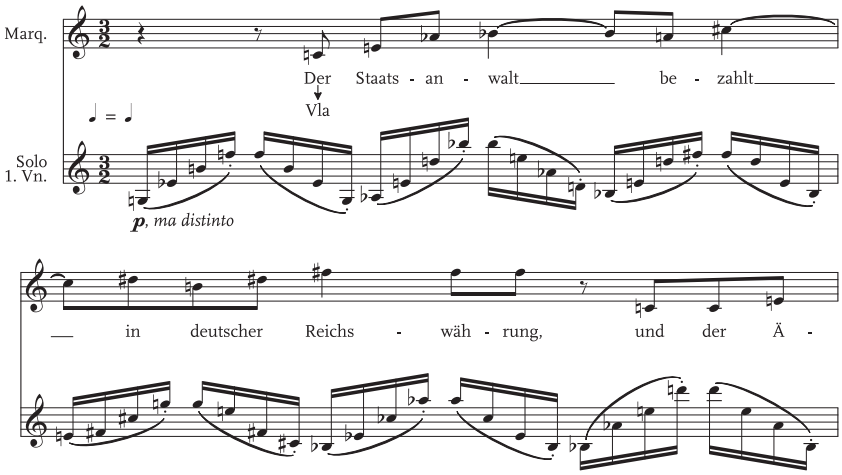
Figure 3. Berg's short score draft for the opening of the *Cadenz* in act 3, scene 1.



Example 1. The Marquis' Series from *Lulu*. See George Perle, *The Operas of Alban Berg, Volume Two: Lulu* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 115.



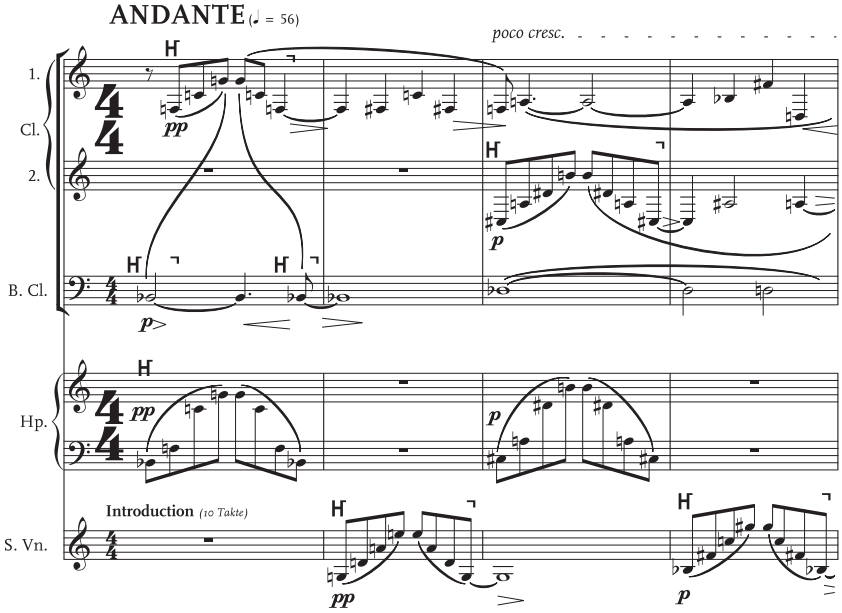
Example 2. Chordal sequence of the *Concertante Choral Variations* in act 3, scene 1. See Perle, *The Operas*, vol.2, 148.



Example 3. The violin part of the opening of the *Concertante Choral Variations*, No. 6, in act 3, scene 1.

Although their gestures are derived from different series in quite different manners, the similarity of this passage with the opening of the Violin Concerto is striking (ex. 4). In the Hamburg version, this music thus served as a link between the Paris scene and the end of the performance, preparing the concerto both musically and theatrically.

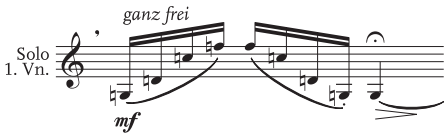
To emphasize this, the violin part was placed in focus aurally and detached from the Marquis. In Berg's short score, the passage accompanies his spoken lines in response to Lulu's claim that she has enough money: "In stock shares! I have never had anything to do with stock shares. The state prosecutor pays in German Reich currency and the Egyptian pays in English gold. So please make a decision soon.



Example 4. The opening measures of Berg's Violin Concerto.

The train leaves at one."[42] In the Hamburg score, these lines have simply been cut, laying bare the violin arpeggios. The staging, meanwhile, underlined the process of revision. At the outset of the scene ("Ich denke nicht"), Lulu was sitting at a café mid-stage (fig. 4). Meanwhile, the Marquis and the Violinist had tables on opposite sides of Lulu (he stage left and she stage right). On one side, the Marquis tried to persuade her to sell her body, on the other, the Violinist was playing. Gradually, Lulu listened more closely to the Violinist, walking slowly, as if mesmerized, toward her side of the stage. During the sixth variation—the one resembling the Violin Concerto—Hannigan was standing right next to Eberle, as if transfixed by her playing, while the Marquis sat silent and ignored on the other end of the stage. Rather than unwittingly overlooking Berg's association between the violin part and the Marquis, the production thus seemed to stage the passage as a gradual but deliberate dissolution of this connection, in order to tie the instrument and its arpeggio gesture to the onstage Violinist, the representative of a force altogether different from that of the procurer. At the very end of the scene—right before the second intermission in the Hamburg production—this dynamic reached its end with the return of the violin gesture (ex. 5). While this reprise sounded about the same as in Cerha's orchestration, it took on an entirely different function. At this point in the story, Lulu has been forced to play along in the Marquis's scheme. Hannigan now stood at the far end of "his" side of the stage, looking across to the table where the

Figure 4. Lulu in Hamburg, 2017: act 3, scene 1 (Staatsoper Hamburg/Monika Rittershaus 2017).



Example 5. Reprise of the violin gesture from the *Variations*, No. 6, in act 3, scene 1.

Violinist sat, playing the reprise of the arpeggio, with the two open strings making it sound almost like a quotation straight out of the concerto. In this way, the last moment before the intermission curtain came to foreshadow that before the final curtain, creating a fresh musical symmetry to replace the one so meticulously planned by Berg himself.

The result forged a clear and intimate connection between Lulu and the Violinist, a bond at the core of the Hamburg *Lulu* more generally. To shed further light on this relationship, a brief intertextual excursion into the strange world of Frank Wedekind is necessary. Wedekind was an ardent admirer of the circus, in which he found not only a sensual antithesis to bourgeois literature but also aesthetic allegories for modernity itself.[43] His fascination is obvious enough in the Lulu plays, but even more consistently explored in the strange novella entitled *Mine-Haha: Or, On the Bodily Education of Young Girls* (1903) (*Mine-Haha, oder Über die*

körperliche Erziehung der jungen Mädchen). Berg might have read this work while grappling with *Lulu*: in November 1933, Adorno recommended it to him as "one of the most puzzling things" and the composer replied that he would read it soon.[44] Whether he kept his word or not, Marthaler's visual narrative draws one of its chief elements from this novella: the group of dancing girls that surround Lulu throughout the production. Wedekind's story, purportedly based on a manuscript given to the narrator by an old teacher right before she commits suicide, tells of an isolated boarding school where girls between seven and fourteen are trained in dance, music, and gymnastics. They live together in groups, the older girls tutoring the younger ones. It is an elaborate, vaguely sadistic fantasy of the perfectly trained body, as exemplified by the following passage, quoted in the Hamburg program book:

> Simba gave us dancing lessons. Every fortnight we had to congregate in the White House, always just the youngest girls from the whole park, one girl from each of the thirty houses. Our mentors only came with us on the first occasion. The instruction began with dramatic dances, in which we were never able to move our limbs slowly enough. Not until the second year did we move on to the quicker dances, for which we wore clogs with lead inlay in the soles. That loosened the joints so quickly that soon each of us could swing her legs with ease over the other girl's head. Underneath the soles were covered with felt to dampen the noise on the brightly coloured stone tiles. . . . There was a dryness in my throat. No feelings. Every time I went to the White House to dance, I hoped it would be for the last time. And when the last time finally came, I had already all but given up hope that it would ever arrive.[45]

The girls' only contact with the external world comes via the display of the skills they have mastered: the "White House" is a theater where they perform pantomimes for an unseen audience. The Hamburg Lulu, too, trained her acolytes in dances and pantomimes, first practiced in quotidian clothes and then performed in costume, as a sort of cabaret. Without venturing into the explicitly erotic, *Mine-Haha* places its reader in an unsettlingly voyeuristic position vis-à-vis the disciplining of the (young female) body. Something similar can be said of Marthaler's *Lulu*: the controlled agility of the body was consistently in focus through Hannigan's dazzling display of gestures—skipping, somersaulting, dancing en pointe—that in turn became a unique visual manifestation of the breakneck vocal acrobatics demanded by the coloratura role. The issue of sensuality that was so central to both Wedekind and Berg was thus placed at the forefront of the staging, with all its fraught corollary questions about objectification and scopophilia, yet without any concession to the pornographic imagery that marks so many contemporary productions of this opera.[46]

Not only the dancers belonged to Lulu's group of girls, however: Veronika Eberle's onstage violinist was also one of them, and one with a particularly close

relationship to the opera's protagonist. This relationship culminated in Eberle's final performance of the Violin Concerto. The famous subtitle of the concerto, "To the Memory of an Angel" ("Dem Angedenken eines Engels"), was transformed into a direct response to the final words of the dying Geschwitz: "Lulu—my Angel!—Show yourself once more! Show yourself once more! I am near you! I will remain near you—eternally!" ("Lulu! Mein Engel! Lass dich noch einmal sehen! Ich bin dir nah! Bleibe dir nah—in Ewigkeit!"). It was with these words, Geschwitz's call for the reappearance of the angel, that the Violinist came back onto the stage in order to play the concerto. In *Mine-Haha*, notably, the girls all have to learn to play musical instruments, and the narrator turns out to be especially gifted at hers: the violin. She also turns out to be a dead angel: after she has jumped to her death from a window, as an old woman, we learn that her name was Helene Engel.[47] Wedekind's novella, then, supplies one possible layer of meaning to the Violinist in Marthaler's staging. Whether one understands her as a peer, acolyte, or alter ego of Lulu, both women share the predicament of being a body onstage, trained to perfection in the art of being the object of the gaze, but also in voicing their own subject with the same skills. Her rendering of the concerto became the music for an alternate ending, where Lulu the angel does indeed return, rising from a death that was perhaps no less of a performance. As Hannigan joined the other girls in the final pantomime, silently echoing that of the girls in *Mine-Haha*, their inaudible speech appeared to tell of hope and consolation rather than tragedy, as if the music carried a message not of eternal rest but of resurrection, or perhaps salvation from the demands of performance as described by the narrator in Wedekind's novella.

Finally, the inclusion of Berg's Violin Concerto transformed the production into a musical representation of the final year of the composer's life: it was, after all, because he turned to the concerto that the opera remained unfinished. As a result, the Hamburg *Lulu* brought forth onstage—both audibly and visibly—the two competing allegories of temporality that Parker ascribes to unfinished opera in general: onto "a work whose temporal span is unnaturally foreshortened, whose lack of an ending marks it as forever imperfect" it superimposed "the composer's life history, which completes itself in the act of leaving the work unfinished."[48] Importantly, these two temporalities were not muddled: for all the careful linking of the opera and the concerto, the latter kept its integrity as a work of its own, prosthetically stitched onto the fragmentary corpus of *Lulu*. While *Lulu* itself remained in its unfinished state throughout the performance, the performance as a whole borrowed the closure of Berg's biographical temporality. It marked the conclusion of the evening at the opera, but not of the opera as such. The production was just as precise in its performance of the work as unfinished as in its performance of life as finite. The paradox, in fact, is only apparent: both the unfinished and the finite stand in opposition to the self-enclosed timeless masterpiece, existing eternally and independently of any instantiation in performance. From this perspective, opera becomes a cycle of

life and death, repeated through resurrection: Lulu the character rises again as a mortal being, and *Lulu* the opera returns as performance, both defiantly undoing the death of opera. The process takes place in and through time, forming the very opposite of an ideal, closed, and unchangeable structure. The immortal work knows neither death nor resurrection, but the living performance of opera must know both.

NOTES

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1. Lydia Goehr dated the idea of the musical work to around 1800 in her influential book *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

2. *Lulu*'s more recent onstage life has not attracted much scholarly attention. The overwhelming part of research has concentrated on the score, its musical symbolism and Berg's idiosyncratic handling of the twelve-tone method, from the seminal article by Willi Reich, "Alban Berg's *Lulu*," *Musical Quarterly* 22 (1936): 383–401, to later milestones such as Douglas Jarman, *The Music of Alban Berg* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), and George Perle, *The Operas of Alban Berg, Volume Two: Lulu* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985). For a brief overview of stagings between 1937 and the 1990s, see Douglas Jarman, *Alban Berg: Lulu* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 41–42, 44–46, 48–55, and Pierre Flinois, "Visages de Lulu," in *L'Avant-Scène Opéra* 181–182 (1998): 184–93. Further discussions of specific productions can be found in Douglas Jarman, "Friedrich's *Lulu*," *Contact* 22 (1981): 40–41, and Peter Petersen, "Lulu geht: Anmerkungen zu Peter Konwitschnys zweitem Berg-Projekt," *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 72 (2015): 213–37. Otherwise, the only staging that has been the object of extensive discussion is the premiere of the three-act version in Paris 1979, directed by Patrice Chéreau. See Rudolf Klein, "Pariser Premiere löste nicht alle Probleme," *Österreichische Musikzeitschrift* 34 (1979): 144–48; Andreas Briner, "Ist Bergs Oper eine Tautologie?," in *Werk und Widergabe: Musiktheater exemplarisch interpretiert*, ed. Sigrid Wiesmann (Bayreuth: Mühl'scher Universitätsverlag, 1980), 283–94; Sieghart Döhring, "Illusionismus und Verfremdung: Anmerkungen zu Chéreaus Inszenierungskonzept," in *Werk und Widergabe*, 295–306; Pierre Boulez, "*Lulu*: A Short Postscript on Fidelity," in Pierre Boulez, *Orientations*, trans. Martin Cooper, ed. Jean-Jacques Nattiez (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986), 398–403; Patrice Chéreau, *Si tant est que l'opéra est du théâtre: notes sur une mise en scène du Lulu* (Tolouse: Petite Bibliothèque Ombres, 1992); Ivan A. Alexandre, "Berg: Lulu," in *Opéra et mise en scène: Patrice Chéreau* (Paris: Éditions Premières Loges, 2014), 54–55.

3. Jarman, *Alban Berg: Lulu*, 39–40.

4. Roger Parker, *Remaking the Song: Operatic Visions and Revisions from Handel to Berio* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 93.

5. Berg's words are from an essay on *Wozzeck*, quoted in George Perle, "Some Thoughts on an Ideal Production of *Lulu*," *Journal of Musicology* 7/2 (1989): 244–53 [244].

6. These examples are from act 1, mm. 145–46, act 2, mm. 340ff. Alban Berg, *Lulu: Oper nach Frank Wedekinds Tragödien Erdgeist und Büchse der Pandora, Partitur (I. und II. Akt)*, ed. H. E. Apostel, rev. Friedrich Cerha (Vienna: Universal Edition, 1985).

7. Perle, *The Operas*, vol. 2, 262–72.

8. Jarman, *Alban Berg: Lulu*, 46.

9. Ibid., 40.

10. Ibid., 40.

11. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, *On Death and Dying* (New York: Macmillan, 1969).

12. John Neubauer, "Organicism and Modernism/Music and Literature," in *Essays on the Song Cycle and on Defining the Field*, ed. Walter Bernhart, Werner Wolf, David L. Mosely (Amsterdam/Atlanta: Rodopi, 2001), 3–24.

13. Arnold Schönberg, "The Relationship to the Text," in *Modernism and Music: An Anthology of Sources*, ed. Daniel Albright (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 41.

14. Reich, "Alban Berg's *Lulu*," 391.

15. Perle, *The Operas*, vol. 2, 69.

16. Jarman, *Alban Berg: Lulu*, 41.

17. Jarman, "Friedrich's *Lulu*," 40.

18. George Perle, "Some Thoughts on an Ideal Production of *Lulu*," 244–53 [253].

19. Alban Berg, *Lulu*, dir. Sven Eric-Bechtolf (DVD TDK DVWW-OPLULU, 2006).

20. Peter Petersen, "Lulu geht."

21. Heidi Hart, "Visual Recycling in Olga Neuwirth's *American Lulu*," *Ekphrasis* 2 (2013): 125–39; Clara Hunter Latham, "How Many Voices Can She Have? Destabilizing Desire and Identification in *American Lulu*," *Opera Quarterly* 33/3–4 (2017): 303–18.

22. Parker, *Remaking the Song*, 118.

23. See Werner Theurisch, "Intim bis zum Exzess," *Der Spiegel* (February 13, 2017); Sören Ingwersen, "'Lulu' and der Staatsoper: Spektakel der Extraklasse," *Hamburger Morgenpost* (February 14, 2018); Monika Nellissen, "Wie man eine unvollendete Oper vollenden kann," *Die Welt* (February 14, 2017); Christine Lemke-Matwey, "Alles ist Komposition," *Die Zeit* 8 (February 16, 2017); Reinhard J. Brembeck, "Ein Engel unter Hampelmännern," *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (February 23, 2017).

24. Parker, *Remaking the Song*, 8.

25. My thanks to the Hamburger Staatsoper and Erle Bessert for kindly allowing me to study the score and a video documentation of the premiere on site.

26. As indicated above, the third act has been subjected to cuts in several of the new performance versions of *Lulu*, mostly involving the Paris scene. In fact, even Perle concedes that parts of it are less than musically satisfying, see Perle, *The Operas*, vol. 2, 148–49. My use of adjectives signaling approximation are necessitated by the fact the Hamburg score often makes cuts mid-measure.

27. Johannes Harneit, "Das *Lulu*-Particell und 'Töne an sich'," *Lulu: Programmheft zur Premiere am 12. Februar 2017* (Hamburg: Hamburgerische Staatsoper, 2017), 25.

28. ". . . gesamte Partitur der *Lulu* müsse noch einmal überholt werden," "ernst genommen, spricht Berg von einer Revision der vollständigen Oper." Harneit, "Das *Lulu*-Particell," 25. Berg's metaphor should be understood in the context of his enthusiasm for automobiles. What Berg actually wrote was: "I must also 'overtake' the whole composition once more (as you say about cars)!" ("Auch muß ich die ganze Komposition nocheinmal von vorn 'überholen' [wie man von Autos sagt]!"), quoted in Friedrich Cerha, *Arbeitsbericht zur Herstellung des 3. Akts der Oper 'Lulu' von Alban Berg* (Wien: Universal, 1979), 4.

29. Harneit, "Das *Lulu*-Particell," 26.

30. ". . . der Komponist im dritten Akt, in welchem auf Handlungsebene eine zunehmende Depression Raum greift, eher abgeschwächte Varianten der musikalischen Parallelereignisse orchestriert hätte." Harneit, "Das *Lulu*-Particell," 26.

31. ("kleinere Retouchen," "2, 3 Wochen Arbeit"). Quoted in Cerha, *Arbeitsbericht*, 4. See also Perle, *The Operas*, vol. 2, 269.

32. Douglas Jarman, "The 'Lost' Score of the 'Symphonic Pieces from *Lulu*,'" *International Alban Berg Society Newsletter* 12 (1982): 14–16. Reprinted in *Alban Berg: Lulu*, 125–32.

33. See also Parker's comments on Berio's new ending for *Turandot*, which is also a curious combination of careful study of the sketches and disregard for any authorial intention. Both scores put material from the original manuscript in the service of an idiosyncratic interpretation that in no way reflects the composer's intention. Parker, *Remaking the Song*, 100, 119.

34. Patricia Hall, *A View of Berg's* Lulu *through the Manuscript Sources* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 12 and passim.

35. ". . . tatsächliche Erleben eines fragmentarischen Zustands," "nicht auf beliebige Weise," "indem wir in der erste Szene des dritten Aktes die einzig gesicherten, im Particell verzeichneten Soloinstrumente zu Gehör bringen." Harneit, "Das *Lulu*-Particell," 26.

36. Alban Berg, *Lulu: Oper in drei Akten nach den Tragödien "Erdgeist" und "Büchse der Pandora" von Frank Wedekind; Particell zum I., II. und III. Akt* (in the collection of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek: F21.Berg.29/I-III/GF MUS MAG), digitally available at http://data.onb.ac.at/rec/AC14003345 (accessed September 25, 2018). For such markings, see for instance mm. 76, 87–88, 99–100, 105–19, 149–59, 168–74, 178–84, 186–208 of the short score for the third act.

37. Perle, *The Operas*, vol. 2, 101.

38. All these passages (mm. 27–31, 1115–1118 and 1134–1138 of the first act, mm. 250–59 and 289–94 of the second) make use of the same series. Compare Perle, *The Operas*, vol. 2, 114–15.

39. The opening note of the violin phrase here (G) is the "missing" twelfth note, not included in the Marquis's series proper, but often added either before or after it. Compare Perle, *The Operas*, vol. 2, 115. In Cerha's published score for the third act, the *Cadenz* is found in mm. 470–98.

40. Perle, *The Operas*, vol. 2, 115, 148.

41. The excerpt in ex. 3 is quoted from Cerha's orchestration. In the Hamburg version, the violin part differs slightly: instead of rearranging the pitches on the descent of the second and fourth

arpeggio, the violin just repeats the notes of the ascent in reverse order. This difference is presumably just a misreading of Berg's manuscript, which corresponds to Cerha's version.

42. "In Aktien! Ich habe mich nie mit Aktien abgegeben. Der Staatsanwalt bezahlt in deutscher Reichswährung, und der Ägypter zahlt in englischem Gold. Wirst du dich also bitte gleich entscheiden. Um ein Uhr geht der Zug."

43. Frank Wedekind, "Zirkusgedanken" and "Im Zirkus," in *Werke*, ed. Erhard Weindl (Berlin: Artemis & Winkler, 1994), 352–77. See also Robert A. Jones, "Frank Wedekind: Circus Fan," *Monatshefte* 61/2 (1969): 139–56.

44. Theodor W. Adorno and Alban Berg, *Correspondence 1925–1935*, ed. Henri Lonitz, trans. Wieland Hoban (Cambridge: Polity, 2005), 202, 204.

45. Compare Frank Wedekind, *Mine-Haha: Or, On the Bodily Education of Young Girls*, trans. Philip Ward (London: Hesperus, 2010), 21–22, 55–56. The program book quotes it in the original German: "Simba erteilte Tanzunterricht. Alle vierzehn Tage mussten wir uns im Weißen Hause dazu zusammenfinden, immer nur die jüngsten aus dem ganzen Park, ein Mädchen aus jedem der dreißig Häuser. Unsere Begleiterinnen kamen nur das erste Mal mit. Der Unterricht begann mit den pathetischen Tänzen, bei denen wir die Glieder nicht langsam genug bewegen konnten. Erst im zweiten Jahre kamen die rascheren Tänze dran, für die wir schwere Holzschuhe trugen, in deren Sohlen noch Blei eingelegt war. Das löste die Gelenke so rasch, daß bald jede von uns die Füße mit Leichtigkeit der andern über den Kopf schwingen konnte. Unten waren die Sohlen mit Filz belegt, um den Lärm auf den bunten Steinfliesen zu dämpfen. . . . Mir war trocken in der Kehle. Keine Gefühle. Jedes Mal wenn ich, um zu tanzen, ins Weiße Haus ging, hoffte ich, dass es das letzte Mal sein würde. Und als das letzte Mal endlich kam, hatte ich die Hoffnung schon beinahe aufgegeben, dass es jemals kommen würde." *Lulu: Programmheft*, 33.

46. For salient examples, see the stagings directed by Olivier Py (DVD Deutsche Grammophon 00440 073 4637, 2011), Krzysztof Warlikowski (DVD BelAir Classiques BAC109, 2014).

47. Wedekind, *Mine-Haha*, 3.

48. Parker, *Remaking the Song*, 93.