

21M.260: STRAVINSKY TO THE PRESENT

ASSIGNMENT due at Class 6, February 23

- Reading: Auner, p. 82-92.  
Weill, "Shifts in Musical Production" (handout)
- Anthology work: Kurt Weill, *Der Lindberghflug*, "Introduction of the Pilot"
- Supplemental: Weill's *Threepenny Opera*  
Paul Hindemith, *Symphony: Mathis der Maler*

We're going to do things in a slightly different order for this assignment. First, skim the Grove Music Online article about Weill. Then, read the Auner excerpt and Weill's short essay, "Shifts in Musical Production" and answer the following questions.

Why did World War I necessitate a reevaluation of the place of art in society?

What are some of the main cultural trends against which Weill's music can be seen to react?

What are some of the discursive oppositions Weill deploys in justifying his approach? That is, which descriptive words are "good" and which are "bad" in his aesthetic?

What revolution did radio bring to music, and how did contemporaries critique this technology?

From both the essay and the Auner reading, refine your idea of "Gebrauchsmusik." To what extent do you agree with Weill that composers have an obligation to engage the public, or make music useful?

Now, listen to the anthology excerpt at least twice. Given Weill's essay, detail at least five specific musical features of *Der Lindberghflug* that make it a worthy exemplar of the cause he promotes.

What are some features of *Der Lindberghflug* that are not strictly musical that make it a worthy exemplar of Weill's aesthetic? Consider the story, the historical context, the technology, etc.

Do you like this music or find it "accessible"? Why or why not?

How might ideas of "accessibility" be contingent on the traits of a specific imagined audience? What traits might Weill have imagined in his audience?

Supplemental listening

Watch the two excerpts from the *Threepenny Opera* and listen to the first movement ("Engelkonzert") of the *Symphony: Mathis der Maler* carefully with *no distractions* except a notetaking apparatus (pencil/pen/keyboards); take notes on what you hear and observe. Then, write a 5-6 sentence paragraph, citing specific features of the musical style, performance practice, and adjacent traditions, to justify why Hindemith's work is more likely to be thought of as "classical music" than is Weill's work today.

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