

## VERBAL AND NOTATIONAL DISCREPANCIES:

The first edition of the full score was published in Vienna by UE in 1914 and parts were issued in 1920, with Erwin Stein's piano score following in 1923. More recently a new edition has come from Belmont, USA edited by Jacques-Louis Monod.

There are some slight but interesting verbal discrepancies between the printed texts and Schoenberg's settings. I have checked these against the original Hartleben translations:-

It is highly possible that Schoenberg, writing with typical fire and fluency, and totally at home in the language, may even have made such small 'errors' in the heat of his inspiration, or he may genuinely have preferred the modifications. I now incline towards the former view. I think it unlikely that he would have wanted deliberately to dispense with the slightly more colourful terms. If so, it gives an intriguing insight into his state of mind. Other composers of my personal acquaintance have occasionally missed fine details of texts in the full flow of compositional fervour.

In No. 7 (*Der Kranke Mond*) Schoenberg surprisingly substitutes the more prosaic 'geht' for the poetic 'schleicht', in describing the heedless lover's journey to his sweetheart. In the final paragraph of no. 16 (*Gemeinheit*) the poem has 'behäbig' but Schoenberg gives 'behaglich' for the torturer's demeanour when he puffs 'comfortably' from his victim's bald pate. For *Der Mondfleck* (no. 18) Pierrot inspects himself- Schoenberg has 'besieht' instead of Hartleben's 'beschaut' for the reflexive verb. The most radical deviation from the Hartleben verses occurs in no. 19 (*Serenade*) where Schoenberg re-arranges the order of the words to fit the rhythmic emphasis of the musical line:- 'Fasst den Kahlkopf er am Kragen' becomes 'Fasst er den Kahlkopf am Kragen'. In the final movement (*O Alter Duft*) the poem uses the past tense 'gab' in the last stanza, instead of Schoenberg's present tense 'geb' (now checked and found also in his manuscript). Several exponents have reverted to Hartleben's version.. Most puzzling of all is Schoenberg's substitution of 'Mondstrahl' for the more sibilant 'Lichtstrahl' at the whispered coda to No. 3.

Perhaps he wished to change the emphasis in favour of the Moon itself. It does seem extremely odd that he would have preferred this sound-wise, since it is quite difficult to make the hissed whisper effective when robbed of that explosive 'cht' I wonder if this was a rare slip of the pen or quite deliberate?.

A few even smaller additional divergences may well have happened 'on the wing' in the interests of preserving a natural speaking rhythm. There is the missing 'dem' in no. 3- Pierrot mit (dem) wächsernem Antlitz – (it is wächserneN in the text). and Schoenberg re-instates the middle syllable of 'näch't'gen' in *Serenade* (19) to 'nächtigen'. Also: 'mag'ren; in *Madonna* (no. 6) is 'magern' in Schoenberg's setting, 'Sünderhals' (no. 13 *Enthauptung*) becomes 'SündeNhals'. These are certainly so slight as to be considered possible slips of the pen (or tongue).

Other minor discrepancies are to be found in the composer's manuscript, but these were all adjusted for the published (UE) version. The most significant are in no. 21: The final 'n' of 'Schelmerein' is missing, and, instead of 'beschau ich frei' we have 'beschau ich MIR', which I think can be assumed to be a hasty slip on Schoenberg's part as he eagerly identified with the journey's happy resolution. At the end of no. 10 'Raub' he first wrote 'blutige' instead of 'fürstliche' for the last repeat. Had he not

crossed it out and corrected it in the manuscript, we might possibly have had a similar situation to the mystifying end of no. 3 as cited above. Also, in No.14 'Die Kreuze', another (illegible) word was first put in place of 'schwelg'ten' and the 'correct' version is put over the top.

I have recently checked the above details in the 1990 corrected edition of the score, published by Belmont Edition, and find them all unaltered.

This new edition does, however, change the verbal notation back to the more conventional method of 'note per syllable' that Schoenberg employed in his manuscript. Because of the high number of notes of short value, this results in a particularly large amount of single notes with multiple tails. In my opinion this is somewhat offputting visually, making rhythmic shapes and patterns less easy to read quickly than in the earlier and more familiar printed edition. However, it's highly possible that the more fragmented appearance of the line may have the psychological effect of causing a more clipped delivery, one a little nearer to speaking, and considerably less legato.

One very small change in the vocal part in the new edition is significant. The staccato mark which appears over the first syllable of 'Mut-ter' in bar 11 on Movement 6 has been removed (and, with it, the staccatos over the pizzicato cello line in the same passage). One has the suspicion that this isolated vocal staccato may always have been a misprint, or even an ambiguous blemish or smudge, which has now been perpetuated through many performances. (I have always found it natural to shorten the first syllable of 'Mut-ter' in view of the double consonant)..