




2019

REMAKING THE ICONIC LULU: TRANSFORMATIONS OF CHARACTER, CONTEXT, AND MUSIC

Jennifer Tullmann

University of Kentucky, jennifer.tullmann@uky.edu

Author ORCID Identifier:

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3381-0689>

Digital Object Identifier: <https://doi.org/10.13023/etd.2019.210>

[Right click to open a feedback form in a new tab to let us know how this document benefits you.](#)

Recommended Citation

Tullmann, Jennifer, "REMAKING THE ICONIC LULU: TRANSFORMATIONS OF CHARACTER, CONTEXT, AND MUSIC" (2019). *Theses and Dissertations--Music*. 140.

https://uknowledge.uky.edu/music_etds/140

This Doctoral Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Music at UKnowledge. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations--Music by an authorized administrator of UKnowledge. For more information, please contact UKnowledge@lsv.uky.edu.

STUDENT AGREEMENT:

I represent that my thesis or dissertation and abstract are my original work. Proper attribution has been given to all outside sources. I understand that I am solely responsible for obtaining any needed copyright permissions. I have obtained needed written permission statement(s) from the owner(s) of each third-party copyrighted matter to be included in my work, allowing electronic distribution (if such use is not permitted by the fair use doctrine) which will be submitted to UKnowledge as Additional File.

I hereby grant to The University of Kentucky and its agents the irrevocable, non-exclusive, and royalty-free license to archive and make accessible my work in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or hereafter known. I agree that the document mentioned above may be made available immediately for worldwide access unless an embargo applies.

I retain all other ownership rights to the copyright of my work. I also retain the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of my work. I understand that I am free to register the copyright to my work.

REVIEW, APPROVAL AND ACCEPTANCE

The document mentioned above has been reviewed and accepted by the student's advisor, on behalf of the advisory committee, and by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), on behalf of the program; we verify that this is the final, approved version of the student's thesis including all changes required by the advisory committee. The undersigned agree to abide by the statements above.

Jennifer Tullmann, Student

Dr. Diana R. Hallman, Major Professor

Dr. Michael Baker, Director of Graduate Studies

REMAKING THE ICONIC LULU:
TRANSFORMATIONS OF CHARACTER, CONTEXT, AND MUSIC

DISSERTATION

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Fine Arts
at the University of Kentucky

By
Jennifer Tullmann
Lexington, Kentucky
Director: Dr. Diana R. Hallman, Associate Professor of Musicology
Lexington, Kentucky
2019

Copyright © Jennifer Tullmann 2019
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3381-0689>

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

REMAKING THE ICONIC LULU: TRANSFORMATIONS OF CHARACTER, CONTEXT, AND MUSIC

Using Alban Berg's opera *Lulu* as a case study, this dissertation explores the fluid nature of cultural artifacts as they are reborn within new socio-cultural contexts. By examining several *Lulu* productions, this inquiry seeks to understand the changes of meaning that have occurred through the transformation of canonic works in the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries. Central to this project is the shifting nature of the character of Lulu, not only in Berg's opera, but also in various artistic genres that preceded and affected his own conceptions, as well as her appearances in selected productions.

This study contrasts modern *Lulu* productions with the composer's intentions for the opera, using Berg's operatic text as a basis for comparison. These assessments will be made through a semiotic analysis of various staging elements, musical and textual analysis of archival materials, and consideration of past *Lulu* scholarship. Relevant features of the political, cultural, and social climate of each production are also be investigated. Two Werktreue productions are examined: the Austrian première of *Lulu* at the Theatre an der Wien (1962) and the Metropolitan Opera staging by John Dexter (1977). Several Regietheater productions are also studied, including the three-act 1979 première at the Paris Opera—complete with Friedrich Cerha's third act—as well as stagings at the Glyndebourne Festival, Opernhaus Zürich, the Royal Opera House, the Theater Basel, and the Gran Teatre del Liceu.

Although much scholarship has been written on *Lulu*, directors have implemented some of the most radical changes to the opera. Building on Lydia Goehr's definition of the work-concept in *The Imaginary Museum of Historical Works*, this project examines the role of these radically altered stagings as challenges to the work-concept of *Lulu*. In order to assess the portrayal of Lulu in the above-listed productions, this dissertation investigates the origins of her character, tracing the genesis of Lulu and the numerous artists who molded her, including Félicien Champsaur, Frank Wedekind, Leopold Jessner, and G. W. Pabst.

Finally, this dissertation considers a work that goes beyond modifications of orchestration, setting, and staging in Regietheater productions. Olga Neuwirth's opera, *American Lulu*, represents the ultimate authorial challenge, functioning as both an adaptation of Berg's text and as a newly composed work. This inquiry explores the transformed *mise en scène* and re-imagined characters of *American Lulu*, investigating Neuwirth's politicized changes and the effect that these alterations have on the story of Lulu. In addition to analyzing her score and libretto, this study examines the performance and depiction of race and sexuality in two *American Lulu* productions, at the Komische Oper Berlin and the Young Vic in London.

Several *Lulu* performances discussed in this study explore an area which, even as recently as the publication of Roger Parker's *Remaking the Song*, was called "untouched": the alteration of the operatic text itself.¹ Whether these updated works and radical stagings are considered a passing trend or true innovations, the effect of staging on operagoers is undeniable. Like the shifting interpretations of the iconic character herself, the complex history of *Lulu* reflects the development of canonic works over time, as they are altered, transformed, and reborn in new environments.

KEYWORDS: Berg, Lulu, staging, Wedekind, Neuwirth, work-concept

Jennifer Tullmann

03/14/2019

Date

¹ Roger Parker, *Remaking the Song: Operatic Visions and Revisions from Handel to Berio* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006): 5.

REMAKING THE ICONIC LULU:
TRANSFORMATIONS OF CHARACTER, CONTEXT, AND MUSIC

By
Jennifer Tullmann

Dr. Diana R. Hallman

Director of Dissertation

Dr. Michael Baker

Director of Graduate Studies

03/14/2019

Date

DEDICATION

To my parents, Dennis and Karen, for their limitless support.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are many people that I wish to acknowledge for their contributions to this dissertation. I would like to start by thanking the director of the Metropolitan Opera Archives, John Pennino, for aiding my research, giving me opera tickets, and for reminding me to take an occasional break. I am grateful to the creative team behind the *American Lulu* première at the Komische Oper Berlin and would like to recognize the assistance of Olga Neuwirth, Johanna Wall, and Marisol Montalvo. Perusal materials provided by the Young Vic Theatre on their *American Lulu* production were greatly appreciated.

I am especially grateful to the members of my committee, Dr. Diana Hallman, Dr. Jonathan Glixon, Dr. Lance Brunner, Dr. Michael Baker, Dr. Susan Bordo, and Dr. Alice Christ. This dissertation would not have been possible without the continued support of my professor and mentor, Dr. Diana Hallman. Thank you for your high standards, and for your patience with my French pronunciation.

I want to thank Michael Ferguson for assisting me with formatting, editing, and all things technological, so that I could spend my time focusing on Lulu. Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to my entire family for their unending encouragement, and to my sister, Dr. Katherine Tullmann, for her excellent advice.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION: THE TRANSFORMATION OF A CANONIC OPERA AND AN ICONIC CHARACTER: BERG'S <i>LULU</i> AND LULU	1
1.1 Description and Goals of Project.....	1
1.2 The Research Question	9
1.3 Methodology and Primary Sources.....	11
1.4 Limitations of Study	13
1.5 Organization.....	15
1.5.1 Chapter 2: The Origins of an Icon.....	15
1.5.2 Chapter 3: Berg's <i>Lulu</i> and the Composer as Ultimate Authority ..	16
1.5.3 Chapter 4: Regietheater, Directorial Authority, and the New <i>Lulu</i> 17	
1.5.4 Chapter 5: The Transformation of <i>Lulu: American Lulu</i> as Reinterpretation and Original Work.....	18
1.5.5 Chapter 6: Sex and Race in <i>American Lulu's</i> Libretto and Staging. 19	
1.6 Review of Literature.....	20
1.6.1 Scholarship on Opera Staging.....	20
1.6.2 Scholarship on Early Lulu Works	22
1.6.3 Scholarship on <i>Lulu</i> and Berg.....	22
1.6.4 Regietheater and Regieoper Scholarship.....	25
1.6.5 Scholarship Providing Contextual Information	26
1.6.6 Scholarship in Semiotics	28
1.6.7 Scholarship in African American studies and Black Feminism.....	29
1.6.8 Scholarship in Feminism, Film Studies, etc.	31
1.7 Significance of Study	32
CHAPTER 2. THE ORIGINS OF AN ICON.....	35
2.1 Champsaur's Clownesse: The "Birth" of Lulu.....	36
2.2 Wedekind's Lulu Plays: Inspirations, Revisions, and Early Performances.....	46
2.3 Wedekind's Images of Lulu.....	51
2.4 The Myth of Pandora and the Femme Fatale in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna ..	58

2.5	The Frauenfrage: Inquiries on Female Sexuality during the Fin-de-Siècle	61
2.6	Expressionist Stagings of Wedekind's Lulu Plays	71
2.7	Film Depictions of Lulu in the Weimar Republic.....	75
2.8	Conclusions.....	83
CHAPTER 3. BERG'S LULU AND THE COMPOSER AS ULTIMATE AUTHORITY.....		84
3.1	Berg's <i>Lulu</i> Libretto and Synopsis.....	85
3.2	The Compositional and Early Performance History of <i>Lulu</i>	89
3.3	The Music of <i>Lulu</i>	95
3.4	Berg's <i>Lulu</i> as Expressionist Opera.....	104
3.5	<i>Lulu</i> and the Hounded Grace of Women: Karl Kraus's influence on Berg	109
3.6	Lulu as Femme Fatale.....	112
3.7	<i>Lulu</i> at the Theater an der Wien	120
3.8	John Dexter's <i>Lulu</i> Production.....	126
3.9	Conclusions.....	138
CHAPTER 4. REGIETHEATER, DIRECTORIAL AUTHORITY, AND THE NEW LULU		141
4.1	Regietheater	142
4.2	The Three-act première of <i>Lulu</i> at the Opéra National de Paris.....	145
4.3	Subtexts in the Zürich Opera's <i>Lulu</i>	149
4.4	A Minimalist Staging at the Royal Opera House	157
4.5	Bieito's <i>Lulu</i> : Euro-trash or Regietheater?	162
4.6	A Few More Post-1980 Productions.....	166
4.7	Conclusions.....	169
CHAPTER 5. THE TRANSFORMATION OF LULU: AMERICAN LULU AS REINTERPRETATION AND ORIGINAL WORK		171
5.1	The <i>American Lulu</i> Libretto	172
5.2	The Transformation of Lulu in <i>American Lulu</i>	175
5.3	The Transformation of the Countess into Eleanor	178
5.4	Eleanor and Lulu as African-American Women: Opposition and Correspondence	183
5.4.1	<i>Carmen Jones</i> as Inspiration	183

5.4.2	Dorothy Dandridge and the Tragic Mulatto	190
5.4.3	Eleanor and the Classic Blues.....	196
5.4.4	Billie Holiday	206
5.5	The Music of <i>American Lulu</i>	210
5.6	Conclusions.....	224
CHAPTER 6. SEX AND RACE IN <i>AMERICAN LULU'S</i> LIBRETTO AND STAGING		226
6.1	Racial Signifiers in <i>American Lulu</i>	229
6.2	The Sign of Blackness	231
6.3	The Performance of Blackness in <i>American Lulu</i> and its Stagings.....	234
6.4	Lulu as Dancer: The Paradox of Empowerment and Objectification..	241
6.5	Black Pride: The Staging of Intermediate Texts in <i>American Lulu</i>	253
6.6	The Black Body as Historical Signifier in the Staging of <i>American Lulu</i>	259
6.7	Conclusions.....	268
CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSION: THE REFITTING OF <i>LULU</i> AND THE LULU CHARACTER		272
BIBLIOGRAPHY		290
VITA.....		305

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: <i>Lulu</i> : the Formal Design.....	101
Table 3.2: Larger Formal Structures in Berg's <i>Lulu</i>	102
Table 3.3: The Characters of <i>Lulu</i>	102
Table 3.4: The Instrumentation of <i>Lulu</i>	103
Table 5.1: Neuwirth's <i>American Lulu</i>	211
Table 5.2: The Characters of <i>American Lulu</i>	211

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: <i>Éreintés de la vie: pantomime en un acte</i> (1888).....	38
Figure 2.2: <i>Lulu; pantomime en un acte</i> (1888).....	39
Figure 2.3: <i>L'Amant des Danseuses</i> . Poster Advertisement, 1896.....	40
Figure 2.4: <i>Lulu, roman clownesque</i> (1901).	42
Figure 2.5: <i>Lulu; pantomime en un acte</i> (1888).....	43
Figure 2.6: <i>Lulu; pantomime en un acte</i> (1888).....	44
Figure 2.7: Sarah Bernhardt as Pierrot in Jean Richepin's <i>Pierrot assassin</i> , 1883; photograph by Paul Nadar	55
Figure 3.1: Frank and Tilly Wedekind as Dr. Schön and Lulu, 1905	110
Figure 3.2: The Portrait at the Theatre an der Wien	122
Figure 3.3: Lulu's costume in the first scene, Theatre an der Wien	123
Figure 3.4: Lulu's Portrait at the Met	128
Figure 4.1: The Portrait at the Zürich Opera	154
Figure 4.2: Another View of Portrait at the Zürich Opera.....	155
Figure 4.3: The Portrait at the Royal Opera House.....	160
Figure 4.4: The Portrait at Basel.....	164
Figure 4.5: The Portrait at Glyndebourne.....	167
Figure 4.6: Lulu at Glyndebourne, opening scene.....	168
Figure 4.7: The Portrait at Liceu.....	169
Figure 5.1: <i>Lulu</i> by Alban Berg, Act II scene 1, mm. 3-5.....	218
Figure 5.2: The musical transformation of Eleanor's lines.....	218
Figure 5.3: The use of jazz drum set during Eleanor's vocal lines. <i>American Lulu</i> by Olga Neuwirth: Act II, Scene 1, mm. 3-6.	219
Figure 5.4: <i>American Lulu</i> by Olga Neuwirth, the opening of Act III.....	222
Figure 6.1: Marisol Montalvo and her Portrait in the KOB production of <i>American Lulu</i>	243

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION: THE TRANSFORMATION OF A CANONIC OPERA AND AN ICONIC CHARACTER: BERG'S *LULU* AND LULU

In recent research on opera, music scholars have begun to move beyond the realm of the composer's authority, past the theoretical analysis of scores and historical studies of première performances, and to focus greater attention on the recreation of works in new times, locales, and contexts. Whereas opera studies of the past often sought out definitive texts and the composer's intentions, present-day research seeks meaning within varied theatrical and cultural settings, exploring the malleability of texts in performance and the expansion of creative authority beyond the original composer. This scholarship mirrors the reality of musical performance today. Across genres, canonic pieces are being transformed in order to appeal to contemporary audiences. These updated works reflect not only the musical, but also the socio-cultural environments in which they are created. On stage, productions utilize entirely new concepts and radically changed *mise en scène*, altering both the setting of the story and its dramatic context. Even the most iconic characters are recreated in order to reflect current perspectives. Paralleling poststructuralist notions of authorship, this theatrical trend reveals the growing importance of new authorities, such as directors, over the intentions of the original author or authors.

1.1 Description and Goals of Project

In *The Imaginary Museum of Historical Works*, Lydia Goehr proposes that the "work-concept," along with the idea of the composer as ultimate authority, emerged

with the “romantic cult of personality” in the early nineteenth century.² Citing the influence of E.T.A. Hoffmann, Goehr writes:

Thus, a musical work is held to be a composer’s unique, objectified expression, a public and permanently existing artifact made up of musical elements (typically tones, dynamics, rhythms, harmonies, and timbres). A work is fixed with respect, at least, to the properties indicated in the score and it is repeatable in performances. Performances themselves are transitory sound events intended to present a work by complying as closely as possible with the given notational specifications.³

The exalted view of the composer as the one “true” musical authority has created, in part, an environment in which changes to the operatic text are, in general, limited.⁴ In *Remaking the Song*, Roger Parker comments on the restricted changes made to operas in performance, noting that these alterations primarily occur in the realms of staging and instrumentation.⁵ Exploring the realization of musical works, Goehr writes, “Room was to be left for multiple interpretations, but not so much room that interpretation would or could not be freed of its obligation to disclose the real meaning of the work.”⁶ Despite the rich tradition of social, political, and historical influences on the genre of opera, this notion of the work-concept has led to a cultural environment of “museum works”; pieces are performed in an historical

² Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 249.

³ Lydia Goehr, “Being True to the Work,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 47, no. 1 (Winter, 1989): 55.

⁴ Parker, *Remaking the Song*, 5.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁶ Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum*, 232.

void, ensuring that the “essence” of the work—defined by the text of the original author—remains intact. In spite of the enduring tradition of the work-concept, as theorized by Goehr, the operatic work has indeed undergone modifications, especially in performance practices following the Second World War. The central goal of this dissertation is to understand changes of meaning that have occurred through selected productions of canonic works in the twentieth- and twenty-first-centuries. Using *Lulu* as a case study, this project explores shifts in the work-concept of Berg’s opera, examining the ways in which the iconic piece is transformed and updated on stage and in performance.

Throughout the history of its theatrical production, Alban Berg’s *Lulu*, premiered at the Zürich Opera in 1937, has undergone many alterations. Changes to the opera are particularly meaningful considering that Berg was intimately involved in every aspect of its creation. Combined, Berg’s musical score and libretto constitute the operatic text of *Lulu*. While some theaters have chosen to uphold the authority of Berg’s intentions for the opera, more recently, stage directors and other operatic collaborators have seemingly moved further away from the composer’s original conception of the work. In doing so, they transform the piece and create new, sometimes radical, versions of *Lulu*.

Examining several contemporary *Lulu* stagings, this inquiry considers the adaptation of Berg’s opera at the hands of numerous artists, in a variety of locales—from America to Europe—and in a range of styles—from *Werktreue*,⁷ to

⁷ *Werktreue* productions seek to be “true” to the work, upholding the composer’s intentions and performing the work in its original style.

Regietheater,⁸ to minimalist.⁹ It will consider the staging, music, and drama of a number of *Lulu* productions, exploring the numerous adaptations of the Lulu story. Productions studied include the 1962 Austrian première at the Theater an der Wien, directed by Otto Schenk, the 1977 Metropolitan Opera production, directed by John Dexter, and the 1979 three-act première at the Paris Opera, directed by Patrice Chéreau. The majority of this dissertation will focus on *Lulu* performances that occurred after the 1979 three-act première at the Paris Opera, which debuted Friedrich Cerha's completed final act. Several post-1979 stagings will also be explored, including *Lulu* productions at the Opernhaus Zürich, directed by Sven-Eric Bechtolf in 2002, the Gran Teatre del Liceu, directed by Olivier Py in 2011, the Royal Opera House, directed by Christof Loy in 2009, and the Theater Basel, directed by Calixto Bieito in 2009.

Unique elements of each updated staging will be compared to Berg's libretto, examining how new visual and conceptual representations alter and challenge the story of Lulu. This study also considers relevant features of the political, cultural, and social climate of each *Lulu* production. The cultural and historical context of each *Lulu* performance is an essential part of understanding its unique meaning; it is important to consider both the new elements of that production, as well as the director's handling of Berg's opera. The staging of each updated *Lulu* is semiotically encoded with meaning by a number of authorities, including directors, designers,

⁸ "Regietheater" is German for "director's theater"; some scholars also use the term "Regieoper," or director's opera. In both cases, these theatrical works are reinterpreted according to the director's unique intentions, and are often prioritized over that of the original author or authors.

⁹ Minimalist opera stagings typically feature sparse mise en scène, bare sets, very few props, and plain, unadorned costumes.

and other members of the production team. According to the field of social semiotics, the spectator reads (or decodes) the theatrical in terms of the social—that is, from the perspective of his or her own environment. The spectator’s reception of theatrical signs is based off his or her decoding of social signs.¹⁰ This project analyzes the semiotic significance of sets, props, costumes, and other visual, musical, and textual signs in contemporary adaptations of Berg’s work. In particular, costumes can be used to signify a particular time, place, economic class, occupation, or inclusion in a social or political group. This study will examine costumes that symbolize the progression of time and the psychological development of the characters on stage, paying particular attention to Lulu’s depiction in her Portrait and her costume in the first scene of the opera.

Although several of these post-1979 *Lulu* productions include radical alterations, these changes are still rather limited, generally made only to the staging or instrumentation of the opera. In *Remaking the Song*, Parker comments on a possible “future” of operatic change, suggesting that one day, composers will further challenge the composer’s authority, and make alterations to the musical text itself.¹¹ Significantly, this dissertation investigates a work that goes beyond modifications of orchestration, setting, and staging. Olga Neuwirth’s innovative opera, *American Lulu*, represents the ultimate authorial challenge, functioning as both an adaptation of Berg’s text and as a newly composed work. In *American Lulu*, Neuwirth transforms

¹⁰ Aston and Savona, *Theatre as Sign System: A Semiotics of Text and Performance* (London: Routledge, 1991), 153.

¹¹ Parker, *Remaking the Song*, 5. Aston and Savona, *Theatre as Sign System*, 5.

Berg's opera, altering the title, setting, characters, libretto, and music—essentially, creating an entirely new piece.

American Lulu simultaneously perpetuates and challenges the work-concept of *Lulu*, both maintaining and subverting elements of the opera. In addition to analyzing Neuwirth's score and libretto, this dissertation explores two *American Lulu* productions: the 2012 première at the Komische Oper Berlin, directed by Kirill Serebrennikov, and a 2013 staging by the Young Vic in London, directed by John Fulljames. Through Neuwirth's opera, *Lulu* moves beyond her historical ties, severing the past for continued growth, adaptation, and expansion. Having been pushed to the extreme in increasingly radical stagings of canonic operas, the boundaries of updated, Regietheater productions have been broken, and the operatic text itself is now open to alteration.

Central to the canonic text of Berg's *Lulu* is the character of *Lulu* herself. In order to assess Berg's conception, as well as her the development in these post-1979 productions, this dissertation examines the origins of her character. By the time Berg first read Wedekind's plays, *Lulu* was already complex and multifaceted. This inquiry traces the genesis of *Lulu*, studying the artists and authors who molded her character. First created by French novelist Félicien Champsaur, *Lulu* was later reborn through the works of the German playwright Frank Wedekind. She continued to evolve, as seen in several notable productions of Wedekind's plays, as well as in her realization on the cinematic screen in the silent films of Leopold Jessner (*Erdgeist*) and G. W. Pabst (*Die Büchse der Pandora*). These early manifestations of *Lulu* influenced Berg's shaping of her character in his second

opera. In addition to studying Berg's libretto, this dissertation will explore aspects of his compositional process for *Lulu*, paying particular attention to the composer's use of tone rows as leitmotifs and his individual twelve-tone style.

Due to the unfinished nature of the score, *Lulu* underwent numerous changes after his passing. By the time of his death on December 24, 1935, Berg had completed the entire *Lulu* libretto, the music for Acts I and II, and the following portions of Act III: the first 268 bars; the instrumental interlude between scenes 1 and 2; and the finale of the opera (beginning with the monologue of Countess Geschwitz).¹² The remainder of the work consisted of a short score, including indications of instrumentation for a large part of it.¹³ Shortly after Berg's death, Austrian writer and musician Erwin Stein (1885-1958)—a close friend of Arnold Schoenberg—completed a vocal score of Act III using Berg's notes. However, after Stein's work, Helene Berg chose to deny all access to her late husband's materials, including the *Lulu* manuscript, compositional notes, and the short score—effectively preventing the opera's completion at the hands of any other composers.

For the next forty years, performances of *Lulu* were faced with the issue of how to address the unfinished third act. In place of Act III, many opera houses performed Berg's *Symphonische Stücke aus der Oper "Lulu" (Lulu Suite)* while the singers/actors silently mimed the last moments of the story. The passing of Helene Berg in 1976 released her control over Berg's estate; shortly thereafter, Viennese composer and conductor Friedrich Cerha (1926-) completed the opera using these

¹² For a more detailed description of Berg's music for *Lulu*, see chapter 3.

¹³ "Short scores" are condensed orchestral scores; in the case of Act III of *Lulu*, at the time of his death, Berg's short score included all vocal lines, as well indications for much of the instrumentation (discussed further in Chapter 3).

newly available resources. Cerha's third act was premiered in 1979 at the Opéra National de Paris (Paris Opera) under the direction of Patrice Chéreau. The Paris production expanded the work-concept of *Lulu*, establishing a new performance tradition, with opera houses presenting Berg's first two acts and Cerha's third act as the completed version of the work.

As in the case of Jacques Offenbach's *Les contes d'Hoffmann*, the fact that *Lulu* remained incomplete at the time of Berg's death has likely influenced directors to reinterpret it and offer new versions of the opera. These updated *Lulu* productions, however, are not performed without controversy. The act of altering Berg's operatic text is especially significant considering Berg's status as member of the Second Viennese School, whose musical works, unlike the changeable operatic texts of Rossini and the like, were written in a post-Wagnerian environment, with the composers acting as ultimate authorities over their musical creations. The bel-canto, virtuosity-based singing of Rossini's operas necessitated a musical text that was malleable and changeable for performance reasons. In his book, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, Carl Dahlhaus discusses the role of Rossini as composer of commercial opera, concerned with filling seats, and was even known for recycling his musical materials, from one aria to another, and even between operas.¹⁴ The changeable nature of operas differs greatly from the fixed texts of composers such as Beethoven and Wagner. Like the scores of these composers, Berg's musical text was deemed untouchable, and not to be tampered with. For *Lulu*, this untouchability proved to be particularly relevant, since Berg's widow restricted access to the score until her

¹⁴ Carl Dahlhaus, *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).

death. The rigid control of Berg's archival materials further promoted the view of Berg's work as an unchangeable text, as an ultimate expression of his self, making the alteration of *Lulu's* staging, and especially of its musical score, all the more provocative. Like the character herself, the complex history of the opera *Lulu* reflects the shifting interpretation of canonic works over time, as they are altered, transformed, and reborn in each new environment.

1.2 The Research Question

As stated above, this dissertation investigates a number of *Lulu* productions, from Dexter's meticulously accurate staging for the Met, to the Zürich Opera House's creative interpretation, to the Royal Opera House's musically-focused, minimalist production, to Olga Neuwirth's radically altered work, *American Lulu*. Despite the wide range of performances discussed here, every realization of *Lulu*, whether Werktreue or Regietheater, inevitably affects and alters the work itself. The productions discussed in this dissertation are significant because of their alterations to Berg's revered operatic text. These updated versions of *Lulu* transform the work not only through depictions of new locales and times on the stage, but also through shifts in meaning and perception relevant to the contexts in which they are performed.

Lulu has often been the focus of modernized and experimental stagings that have challenged the composer's original ideas—including those condemned as "Euro-trash." Building on poststructuralist scholarship and thought, this study examines the role of updated productions as challenges to traditional notions of

authorship. Rather than defining the “work” of *Lulu* by Berg’s text, this project considers the influence of multiple authors on the opera. Like other poststructuralist studies, this dissertation explores the impact of a work’s historical context on its creation, examining the ways in which cultural concepts are treated and transformed over time. Through an understanding of the contextual environment of each *Lulu* manifestation—in late nineteenth-century Paris, at the circus of bohemians; in fin-de-siècle Vienna, at the birth of psychoanalytic thought; in the decadence of Weimar Germany and the shadow of the Great War; in the growing censorship of the Nazi Party on the artistic climate of Germany and Austria; through the advent and development of Regietheater, poststructuralism, third wave feminism, and notions of intersectionality—this project examines the effects of cultural, social, and historical factors on the transformation of *Lulu*.

In his 1967 essay “La mort de l’auteur,” French literary critic and theorist Roland Barthes (1918-1980) announced the metaphorical “death” of the author as the ultimate source of meaning for a given work, and challenged the traditional practice of seeking understanding through the creator’s intentions.¹⁵ According to Barthes, to assign a text a single author, explanation or interpretation is to limit that work. He writes, “To give an Author to a text is to impose upon that text a stop clause, to furnish it with a final signification, to close the writing.”¹⁶ Rather than viewing the original author as the ultimate authority over his or her creation, every text has multiple meanings. Numerous aspects of Berg’s *Lulu* make it a prime

¹⁵ Roland Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” in *Image-Music-Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977): 147.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 147.

candidate for this kind of poststructuralist analysis, including the work's handling by multiple authors, the shifting identity of the title character, Lulu's role as a reflection of her surroundings, and the influence of its historical and cultural environment on the opera's dramatic meaning. Inspired by poststructuralist thinking, this dissertation explores the expansion of meaning that occurs when productions move beyond Berg's intentions for *Lulu*, and instead allow the work to evolve, to be transformed and recreated by new authors and artists.

1.3 Methodology and Primary Sources

Each chapter of this dissertation will utilize a number of different methodologies; the wide variety of approaches used reflects the diverse nature of the topic. A large part of this project is based on Ferdinand de Saussure's theory of semiotics, semiology, wherein the sign is comprised of the signifier (the sign) and the signified (its meaning). Additional areas of study include semiotics of the theater, Brechtian staging, the metaphysical significance of the body as sign, and semiotician Charles Sanders Peirce's notion of the icon sign. In addition to semiotics, this dissertation draws upon feminist thought including the scholarship of Jacques Lacan and the male gaze, the development of the femme fatale archetype, artistic depictions of women, second- and third-wave feminism, and historical stereotypes on female sexuality. Other scholarly areas that are utilized include art and theater history, film studies, psychology, and African American studies.

In order to investigate these modifications of the *Lulu* work-concept, each of the above-listed productions will be analyzed through an examination of selected

primary sources. In some cases, these materials are limited to private, for-perusal-only or commercially released DVDs. In this dissertation, the following productions are considered through the use of audio/visual recordings as primary source material: *Lulu* at the 1962 Theater an der Wien, the Metropolitan Opera in 1980, the Glyndebourne Festival in 1996, the Zurich Opera House in 2002, the Royal Opera House in 2009, the Salzburger Festspiele in 2010, and the Gran Teatre del Liceu in 2011. Private recordings will be used for productions at the Paris Opera in 1979 and for the Theater Basel staging in 2009, as well as for the *American Lulu* stagings at the Komische Oper Berlin and the Young Vic. Audio recordings of *Lulu* consulted for this dissertation include CDs by the Paris Opera in 1979, as well as a vinyl record of the production, and by the Metropolitan Opera in 2001.

Sources used in the study of each production will include items such as programs, season booklets, periodical and journal reviews, essays, interviews, lectures, and advertisements. Analysis of Dexter's Met staging will utilize archival materials from the Metropolitan Opera, including costume and set design sketches, program and season booklets, photographic stills, audio/visual recordings, and previously published interviews in newspapers and opera journals.¹⁷ Two *American Lulu* productions, directed by Kirill Serebrennikov and John Fulljames, will be studied through the use of archival program books, interviews,¹⁸ audio/visual recordings (perusal copy only), photographs, essays by the composer and director, and advertising materials from both opera houses.

¹⁷ The Young Vic and Komische Oper Berlin program books both contain essays by Olga Neuwirth; the Young Vic's program book includes an essay by director John Fulljames, and the KOB program book includes an essay by the house dramaturg, Johanna Wall.

¹⁸ Interviews by Kenan Malik, for the Mahogany Opera Group.

Primary sources on the study of Lulu's origins will also be used, including the illustrated novels of Félicien Champsaur, *Les Éreintés de la vie: pantomime en un acte* (1888), *Lulu: pantomime en un acte* (1888),¹⁹ *Lulu, roman clownesque* (1901), and the poster advertisement for *L'Amant des Danseuses* (1896). Other materials include Stephen Spender's English translation of Wedekind's two Lulu plays, *The Lulu Plays and Other Sex Tragedies*, and a DVD recording of G. W. Pabst's *Die Büchse der Pandora*. Several English translations of early twentieth-century writings will be consulted, such as P. J. Möbius's treatise, *Über den physiologischen Schwachsinn de Weibes*, Otto Weininger's *Geschlecht und Charakter*,²⁰ and Sigmund Freud's *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*.²¹

1.4 Limitations of Study

Although this dissertation evaluates *Lulu* productions following the work's 1937 première, especially concentrating on post-1979 stagings, it is not intended to serve as a complete overview of modern performances of the work. Rather, by using Berg's opera as a case study and analyzing select stagings following the *Lulu* three-act première, this inquiry considers the transformation of canonic works on the operatic stage. Berg's operatic text acts as a basis for comparison through which these updated *Lulu* productions will be explored. However, it should be noted that

¹⁹ Félicien Champsaur, *Lulu: Pantomime en un acte* Préf. Par Arsène Houssay (Paris: E. Dentu, 1888), <http://archive.org/details/lulupantomimeenu00chamuoft>.

²⁰ Otto Weininger, *Sex & Character: An Investigation of Fundamental Principles*, trans. Ladislaus Lob, Daniel Steuer and Laura Marcus, eds. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005).

²¹ Paul Julius Möbius, *Über den physiologischen Schwachsinn des Weibes* (Italle a. S.: Carl Marhold, 1900).

materials pertaining to the 1937 Zurich première are limited; only four photographs remain of the production, stills taken from the film interlude.

Despite the lack of archival materials from the first *Lulu* performance, Berg's operatic text includes numerous examples of detailed, extra-dialogic staging instructions prior to the opening of each of the opera's scenes, setting the *mise en scène* through set, props, costumes, and movement. Information on Berg's *Lulu* materials will be gained from secondary sources including Patricia Hall's *A View of Berg's Lulu Through the Autograph Sources* and Melissa Goldsmith's PhD dissertation, "Alban Berg's Filmic Music: Intentions and Extensions of the Film Music Interlude in the Opera *Lulu*." Although a detailed analysis of Berg's manuscript is outside the scope of this study, Hall's text will be used to provide insight into the composer's intentions for the opera. Given the fact that even its earliest performances took place after the composer's death, the conclusions in this dissertation regarding Berg's intentions function as hypotheses or educated guesses.

Materials used in the analysis of the post-1979 *Lulu* productions will vary; each will utilize DVD recordings, some aided by accompanying booklets or production information. In some cases, published reviews will be used in order to gain a more thorough understanding of the production being considered; however, this study does not constitute a reception history of the work. Regarding the use of DVD recordings, the restricted perspectives from which the videos are shot may consequently limit the visual perception of the author for certain staging elements.

Finally, this project is not intended to serve as a thorough theoretical analysis of the newly composed music of Neuwirth's *American Lulu*. Chapter 5 will include a limited amount of musical analysis, considering key sections of the work, rather than the entirety of her re-arranged and newly composed score. These sections include the jazz arrangement and instrumentation of Acts I and II, as well as her newly composed music of the third act—specifically, the transition music between the end of Act II and the beginning of Act III, and the duet between Lulu and Eleanor in the final scene of the opera.

1.5 Organization

Following the Introduction (chapter one), this study consists of six chapters.

1.5.1 Chapter 2: The Origins of an Icon

The second chapter of this dissertation explores the genesis of the Lulu character, the female clown, or clownesse, first created by French novelist Félicien Champsaur. Chapter two examines Champsaur's Lulu in pantomime and circus performances, as well as her appearance in several of his illustrated novels. After seeing the clownesse perform, German playwright Frank Wedekind began work on his *Die Büchse der Pandora: Eine Monstretragödie* (*Pandora's Box: A Monster Tragedy*)—which, after multiple editions and variations, would result in his two Lulu plays, *Erdgeist* and *Die Büchse der Pandora*. Chapter 2 explores the influence of Wedekind's environment on his controversial plays, the transformed trope of the fin-de-siècle femme fatale, the significance of the Pierrot figure, and early twentieth-century attitudes towards female sexuality. In addition to these early portrayals of

Lulu, this chapter investigates several historic productions of Wedekind's plays, including Erich Engel's 1926 staging at the Staatliches Theatre and Otto Falckenberg's 1928 staging at the Munich Kammerspiele. Finally, two film versions of Lulu are considered: Leopold Jessner's 1923 *Ergeist* and G. W. Pabst's iconic 1929 film, *Die Büchse der Pandora*. These cinematic depictions of Lulu will be studied within the historical context in which they were created, Germany in the interwar years, paying particular attention to their reflection of views of Weimarian women as criminal and destructive.

1.5.2 Chapter 3: Berg's *Lulu* and the Composer as Ultimate Authority

Chapter 3 explores the beginnings and history of Berg's second opera, *Lulu*. It considers Berg's conception of the work, including his literary transformation of Wedekind's two Lulu plays (*Das Erdgeist* and *Die Büchse der Pandora*) into his opera libretto. This chapter investigates the work's socio-historical context, considering the influence of Berg's environment, fin-de-siècle Vienna and Weimar Germany, on his creation of *Lulu*. Areas of study include the advent of Freudian psychoanalysis, the influence of politician and satirist Karl Kraus, the effects of censorship under the Nazi government, expressionist art, Berg's role as a member of the Second Viennese School and his personalized use of twelve-tone technique. In addition, this chapter investigates the unfinished nature of *Lulu*, the posthumous history of the work, and Friedrich Cerha's completion of the third act. It will also examine the staging of two Werktreue *Lulu* productions, demonstrating that even the truest stagings include

subtle changes to the operatic text, altering perceptions and paving the way for more radical transformations.

1.5.3 Chapter 4: Regietheater, Directorial Authority, and the New *Lulu*

The next chapter of this dissertation examines the increasingly creative role of the director and the growing trend of Regietheater, primarily in European opera houses. Chapter 4 will examine the advent of Regietheater, German for “director’s theater,” and the influence that these updated productions have on canonic works and the operatic genre as a whole. By altering staging elements of *Lulu*, these directors question the notion of the composer as ultimate authority, creating their own reinterpreted versions of the work; they assert themselves as creative forces equal to that of the original composer and librettist, and challenge previously established notions of the work-concept.

Chapter 4 will center on the analysis of several *Lulu* productions, including Patrice Chéreau’s three-act première at the Paris Opera, and productions at the Glyndebourne Festival in 1996, the Opernhaus Zürich in 2002, the Royal Opera House in 2009, the Theater Basel in 2009, and the Gran Teatre del Liceu in 2010. Through their transformations of Berg’s operatic text, these directors alter Lulu’s story to appeal to modern audiences. Significant features of each staging that will be considered include the design of Lulu’s Portrait, the costuming of the opening scene, the film interlude, and Lulu’s death at the end of the opera. By exploring the differences between Berg’s original conception of the opera and the sometimes radical alterations of *mise en scène* in post-1979 productions of the work, this

chapter examines the mediation of old and new, the interplay of operatic text and the transformation of that text in modern performances of the work.

1.5.4 Chapter 5: The Transformation of *Lulu: American Lulu* as Reinterpretation and Original Work

American Lulu, composed by the innovative Viennese composer Olga Neuwirth, functions as both a transformation of Berg's *Lulu* and as a new work. Together with Catherine Kerkhoff-Saxon, Neuwirth created a new libretto and modified story of *Lulu*. Her work modernizes Berg's original setting, shifting it to 1950s New Orleans and 1970s New York, in the years surrounding the Civil Rights movement and the beginning of the second wave of feminism in the United States. Chapter 5 examines Neuwirth's transformation of Berg's *Lulu*, considering her alterations as expansions to the work-concept of *Lulu*, reflective of a shifting historical and cultural context. It explores the transformed mise en scène and re-imagined characters of *American Lulu*, investigating the racialized changes made by Neuwirth, and the effect that these changes have on the story of Lulu. Other topics considered include the feminist implications of Eleanor's characterization as a performer of the blues, pre-feminist ideologies in the music of the early classic blues, actress Dorothy Dandridge and the 1954 film *Carmen Jones*, the actress Dorothy Dandridge, and the stereotype of the tragic mulatto.

Although a complete musical analysis of *American Lulu* is outside the scope of this study, as mentioned above, this chapter will examine key sections of Neuwirth's score, such as the transformation of the Countess's vocal lines into Eleanor's blues lines (present even in the re-arranged first two acts of *American Lulu*), and the

transition between the final bars of Act II, and the newly composed music of Act III. Finally, it will consider the contrasting vocal duet between Eleanor and Lulu in the final scene of the opera.

1.5.5 Chapter 6: Sex and Race in *American Lulu's* Libretto and Staging

The next chapter of this dissertation explores the performance and depiction of race and sexuality in Neuwirth's opera. By examining the *American Lulu* libretto, musical score, and stagings at the Young Vic and Komische Oper Berlin, this inquiry considers the role of race in the audience's understanding of, or semiotic decoding of, the characters and story on stage. In many ways, the transformation of Lulu into a black woman living in the United States circa the 1950s is idiomatic to her character, furthering her role as an objectified and oppressed individual. In its consideration of Neuwirth's racialized text, chapter 6 investigates the role of blackness as a signifier, studying the historical, stereotyped depiction of blacks as hypersexual, animalistic, and primitive. This chapter investigates the intersectional experience of African American women during the mid-twentieth century, which Neuwirth attempts to relate to her contemporary reinterpretation of Berg's story. In addition to examining the influence of black stereotypes in *American Lulu*, chapter 6 will consider the presence of historical signifiers and the depiction of African American icons Josephine Baker and Billie Holiday in both the *American Lulu* libretto and its stagings.

1.6 Review of Literature

1.6.1 Scholarship on Opera Staging

Recent critical studies of opera, particularly those that explore staging as an important part of the realization of operatic texts, raise questions and offer approaches relevant to this dissertation. In his 2007 book, *Unsettling Opera: Staging Mozart, Verdi, Wagner, and Zemlinsky*, David J. Levin calls for staging to become a greater part of the critical analysis of operatic works; he suggests that the “realization” and “fulfillment” of opera through performance serves as philosophical justification for the new authority of the stage director.²² Roberta Montemorra Marvin and Downing A. Thomas, editors of the 2006 book *Operatic Migrations*, highlight the interdisciplinary approach needed for critical studies of opera, calling for input from the fields of literary criticism, comparative literature, cultural history, philosophy, feminist criticism, film studies, political science, and medicine.²³ The synthesis of theatre, film, music, art, and technology in contemporary operatic performances necessitates a wide variety of research and disciplines.

Verdi in Performance, edited by Roger Parker and Alison Latham, also examines the role of the stage director in operatic productions, calling them a “relatively new force in the operatic field.”²⁴ The collection’s discussion of operatic transformation and the authority of stage directors will be helpful for this dissertation, which frequently centers on new creative authorities in modern opera

²² David J. Levin, *Unsettling Opera: Staging Mozart, Verdi, Wagner, and Zemlinsky* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 12.

²³ Roberta Montemorra Marvin and Downing A. Thomas, eds., *Operatic Migrations: Transforming Works and Crossing Boundaries* (New York: Ashgate Publishing, 2006).

²⁴ Alison Latham and Roger Parker, eds., *Verdi in Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

performances. Similarly, in *Remaking the Song: Operatic Visions and Revisions from Handel to Berio*, Parker discusses the necessity of newly evolved and adapted canonic works.²⁵ This scholarship will provide a background for which this dissertation can discuss the malleable concept of the “work” and the innovative changes made to the original text in radically altered and updated operatic productions.²⁶

Robert Donington’s book, *Opera and its Symbols*, also explores innovations in staging; however, the author warns that even transformative stagings need to uphold the onstage symbols and archetypes which were originally indicated by the composer of the work, and which are necessary for the audience’s understanding of the text at hand.²⁷ The “essential” symbols Donington discusses in his book will serve as examples for the many semiotic, musical, and textual symbols examined in this study. Gregory Camp’s 2012 dissertation, *Monteverdi on the Modern Stage*, has many similarities to this inquiry, investigating the changing nature of Monteverdi’s opera, *Poppea*, across various contexts, by examining several stagings of the work.²⁸ Finally, Mary Ann Smart’s 2002 article, “Primal Scenes: Verdi in Analysis,” and David J. Levin’s 1997 article, “Reading a Staging/Staging a Reading,” focus on the controversial act of staging “revisionist opera” productions.²⁹ The above sources

²⁵ Parker, *Remaking the Song*.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

²⁷ Robert Donington, *Opera and its Symbols: The Unity of Words, Music and Staging* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

²⁸ Gregory Camp, “Monteverdi on the Modern Stage” (PhD diss., Oxford University, 2012).

²⁹ Mary Ann Smart, “Primal scenes: Verdi in analysis,” *Cambridge Opera Journal* 14, no. 1-2 (2002): 1. David J. Levin, “Reading a Staging/Staging a Reading,” *Cambridge Opera Journal* 9, no. 1 (Mar., 1997): 47-7.

will prove beneficial in the analysis of visual and staging elements of the updated productions explored in this dissertation.

1.6.2 Scholarship on Early Lulu Works

Secondary sources will be used in the study of Champsaur's Lulu, including Naomi Ritter's text *Art as Spectacle: Images of the Entertainer since Romanticism*, Sandrine Bazille's article, "Lulu s'affiche--Affiches et intertextualité dans *Lulu Roman clownesque* (1901) de Félicien Champsaur," and Norman Manea's *On Clowns: The Dictator and The Artist*.³⁰ In its examination of Wedekind's two Lulu plays, secondary sources will include Gail Finney's *Women in the Modern Drama*, Edward Bond's essay, "Using *Lulu*," and Brian Simm's article, "Berg's *Lulu* and Theatre of the 1920s."

1.6.3 Scholarship on *Lulu* and Berg

Music scholars have investigated various aspects of Berg's *Lulu*, creating a wide range scholarship on the topic. Douglas Jarman's *Cambridge Opera Handbook* provides information on the types of secondary sources available on the opera, as well as including general and introductory information on *Lulu*.³¹ Patricia Hall's *A View of Berg's Lulu Through the Autograph Sources* and Melissa Goldsmith's "Alban Berg's Filmic Music" also aided in the analysis of archival materials, with Hall's text being particularly informative regarding Berg's compositional process and musical

³⁰ Sandrine Bazille, "Lulu s'affiche – Affiches et Intertextualité dans *Lulu Roman Clownesque* (1901) de Félicien Champsaur," *Image & Narrative* 20 (December 2007), <http://www.imageandnarrative.be/>.

³¹ Douglas Jarman, *Cambridge Opera Handbooks. Alban Berg: Lulu* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

score. For her research, Hall had access to newly available archival materials, including the composer's unfinished manuscript of *Lulu*. José Silvio Dos Santos deals with questions of identity in his Brandeis University dissertation, "Portraying Lulu: Desire and Identity in Alban Berg's *Lulu*"³² and in his 2008 *JAMS* article, "Marriage as Prostitution in Berg's *Lulu*."³³ In his 2004 *JAMS* article, "Ascription of Identity: The *Bild* Motif and the Character of Lulu," Dos Santos focuses on the music of Lulu's Portrait and draws conclusions regarding her identity and character.³⁴ Other published works which discuss the identity of Lulu include Leo Treitler's "The Lulu Character and the Character of *Lulu*,"³⁵ Karen Pegley's "Femme Fatale and Lesbian Representation in *Lulu*,"³⁶ and George Perle's "The Character of Lulu: A Sequel."³⁷ Unlike the above-listed sources, this dissertation examines the unique portrayal of Lulu implemented by directors in contemporary stagings of the work, especially those occurring after the 1979 three-act première. Rather than focusing solely on the identity of Lulu as Berg created her, this inquiry examines the realization of her character on stage, in transformed versions of opera.

Works centered on Berg's creation of the *Lulu* libretto as a transformation of Wedekind's two Lulu plays include Bryan R. Simms's "Berg's *Lulu* and Theatre of the

³² José Silvio Dos Santos, "Portraying Lulu: Desire and Identity in Alban Berg's *Lulu*" (PhD diss., Brandeis University, 2003).

³³ José Silvio Dos Santos, "Marriage as Prostitution in Berg's *Lulu*," *The Journal of Musicology* 25, no. 2 (Spring 2008): 143-182.

³⁴ Silvio José Dos Santos, "Ascription of Identity: The *Bild* Motif and the Character of Lulu," *The Journal of Musicology* 21, no. 2 (Spring 2004): 267-308. <https://doi.org/10.1525/jm.2004.21.2.267>.

³⁵ Leo Treitler, "The Lulu Character and the Character of *Lulu*," in *Alban Berg: Historical and Analytic Perspectives*, ed. David Gable and Robert P. Morgan (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

³⁶ Karen Pegley, "Femme Fatale and Lesbian Representation in *Lulu*," in *Encrypted Messages in Alban Berg's Music*, Siglind Bruhn, ed. (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1998).

³⁷ George Perle, "The Character of Lulu: A Sequel," *The Music Review* 25, no. 4 (1964): 317-18.

1920s,”³⁸ Donald Mitchell’s “The Character of Lulu: Wedekind’s and Berg’s Conceptions Compared,”³⁹ and Jack M. Stein’s “Alban Berg’s Adaptation of Wedekind.”⁴⁰

One of the leading scholars of *Lulu* from a theoretical standpoint is George Perle, author of *The Operas of Alban Berg, Volume Two: Lulu*.⁴¹ Perle provides valuable insight into the music of *Lulu* as well nuanced ideas on the characters of the opera. Perle’s musical analysis will be considered in the context of Patricia Hall’s book, *A View of Berg’s Lulu Through the Autograph Sources*, which uses new archival material in an attempt to understand Berg’s conception of tone-rows and use of twelve-tone for the work.⁴²

Biographies of Berg used in this study lend a personal and musical context for the composition of *Lulu*. Willi Reich’s book, entitled *Alban Berg*, provides information Berg’s life and works, as Reich was both a biographer and student of Berg’s in the last years of the composer’s life. Theodor Adorno, a student of Berg, also wrote a biography on the composer, paying particular attention to his evolving musical style. Other Berg biographies include Carner Mosco’s *Alban Berg: The Man and the Work*, Hans Ferdinand Redlich’s *Alban Berg: The Man and His Music*, and Karen Monson’s *Alban Berg*. Finally, collections of letters between Berg and

³⁸ Bryan R. Simms, “Berg’s Lulu and Theatre of the 1920s,” *Cambridge Opera Journal* 6, no. 2 (Jul., 1994): 2.

³⁹ Donald Mitchell, “The Character of Lulu: Wedekind’s and Berg’s Conceptions Compared,” *The Music Review* 15, no. 4 (1954): 268-74.

⁴⁰ Jack M. Stein, “Alban Berg’s Adaptation of Wedekind,” *Comparative Literature* 26, no. 3, (1974): 220-41.

⁴¹ George Perle, *The Operas of Alban Berg, Volume Two: Lulu* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).

⁴² Patricia Hall, *A View of Berg’s Lulu Through the Autograph Sources* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

Schoenberg,⁴³ and Berg and his wife⁴⁴ will provide additional insight into Berg's life and music at the time in which he composed *Lulu*.

1.6.4 Regietheater and Regieoper Scholarship

The concept of Regietheater, a German term which translates to “director’s theater” or “producer’s theater,” is used to describe productions in which the stage director is an authority capable of transforming, altering, or reinventing the original text or work. Roger Parker discusses this concept in *Remaking the Song*, referring to it as Regieoper, which he defines as a “habit of aggressively updating the visual embodiment of old works.”⁴⁵

Another English-language publication that will offer insights on the concept and practices of Regietheater is Marvin Carlson's *Theatre is More Beautiful than War: German Stage Directing in the Late Twentieth Century*.⁴⁶ Carlson's book includes a discussion of the *Intendant* (dominant director) tradition as well as stylistic characteristics of some of the main directors and time periods of German theatrical history; this information is useful in the comparative analysis of post-1979 *Lulu* productions. Evan Baker's text, *From the Score to the Stage: An Illustrated History of Continental Production and Staging*, aids in the exploration of Regietheater productions in this dissertation, especially the development of director's theater and

⁴³ Julianne Brand, Christopher Hailey, and Donald Harris, eds., *The Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence: Select Letters* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1987).

⁴⁴ Bernard Grun, ed., *Alban Berg: Letters to His Wife* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971).

⁴⁵ Parker, *Remaking the Song*, 3.

⁴⁶ Marvin Carlson, *Theatre is More Beautiful than War: German Stage Directing in the Late Twentieth Century* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2009).

the influence of Patrice Chéreau, the director of the three-act première of *Lulu* at the Paris Opera.

Other published studies on Regietheater and Regieoper include German-language sources, such as Jürgen Kühnel's article, "Regietheater': Konzeption und Praxis am Beispiel der Bühnenerke Mozarts," which discusses Regietheater by using Mozart's operas as practical examples. Alexandra Garaventa's 2006 book, *Regietheater in der Oper: Eine Musiksoziologische Untersuchung am Beispiel der Stuttgarter Inszenierung von Wagners Ring des Nibelungen*, also explores the role of Regietheater in opera, focusing on the role of the stage director in operatic production, and using Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* as an example. Garaventa's book includes interviews with various stage directors, explores the role of theater in society, a historical overview of Regieoper staging, and the contrasting style, Werktreue.

1.6.5 Scholarship Providing Contextual Information

In addition to archival documents, secondary sources will be utilized in order to provide insight into the historical and cultural context of the environment in which Berg composed. Sources discussing the historical context of fin-de-siècle Vienna include *Wittgenstein's Vienna*,⁴⁷ written by Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin, Carl E. Schorske's *Fin de Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture*,⁴⁸ and Erich Kandel's *The Age of Insight*.⁴⁹ In addition, this chapter includes an examination of the transformed

⁴⁷ Allan Janick and Stephen Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's Vienna* (New York: Touchstone, 1973).

⁴⁸ Carl E. Schorske, *Fin de Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980).

⁴⁹ Erich R. Kandel, *The Age of Insight: The Quest to Understand the Unconscious in Art, Mind and Brain From Vienna 1900 to Present* (New York: Random House, 2012).

femme fatale of the fin-de-siècle, citing Mary Ann Doane's important work, *Femmes Fatales*,⁵⁰ Jane Ellen Harrison's *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*,⁵¹ and Bram Dijkstra's *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-Siècle Culture*.⁵² Ritter's *Art as Spectacle*⁵³ will also be used in the analysis of Lulu as Pierrot. Sources on Weimar Germany include Peter Sloterdijk's "*Critique of Cynical Reason*,"⁵⁴ Helen Boak's *Women in Weimar Republic*,⁵⁵ Barbara Hales's article, "Dancer in the Dark,"⁵⁶ William Grange's *Cultural Chronicle of the Weimar Republic*,⁵⁷ and Ingrid Sharp's "Gender Relations in Weimar Berlin."⁵⁸ For Pabst's film, *Die Büchse der Pandora*, this inquiry again cites Doane's excellent text, *Femmes Fatales*, in addition to several articles from the Louise Brooks Society website.

Another important aspect of Viennese culture at the turn of the century, the conception of *Lulu* as an expressionist drama requires contextual information on the philosophy and practice of expressionist German theater. English-language works including David F. Kuhn's *German Expressionist Theatre: the Actor and the Stage*,⁵⁹

⁵⁰ Mary Ann Doane, *Femmes Fatales: Feminism, Film Theory, Psychoanalysis* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

⁵¹ Jane Ellen Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1903).

⁵² Bram Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-siècle Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).

⁵³ Naomi Ritter, *Art as Spectacle: Images of the Entertainer since Romanticism* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1989).

⁵⁴ Peter Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason, First Edition* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).

⁵⁵ Helen Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

⁵⁶ Barbara Hales, "Dancer in the Dark: Hypnosis, Trance-Dancing, and Weimar's Fear of the New Woman," *Monatshefte* 102, no. 4 (2010).

⁵⁷ William Grange, *Cultural Chronicle of the Weimar Republic* (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2008).

⁵⁸ Ingrid Sharp, "Gender Relations in Weimar Berlin," in *Practicing Modernity: Female Creativity in the Weimar Republic*, Christiane Schönfeld, ed. (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann GmbH, 2006), 218.

⁵⁹ David F. Kuhns, *German Expressionist Theatre: The Actor and The Stage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Walter Herbert Sokel's *Anthology of German Expressionist Drama: A Prelude to the Absurd*,⁶⁰ and Günter Berghaus's *Theatre, Performance, and the Historical Avant-Garde*.⁶¹ Additional works consulted on the subject include *Expressionism Reassessed*, edited by Shulamith Behr, David Fanning, and Douglas Jarman, as well as Oscar G. Brockett's and Franklin J. Hildy's *History of the Theatre*,⁶² and *The Cambridge Guide to Theatre*, edited by Martin Banham;⁶³ these texts will provide insight into the expressionist qualities of Wedekind's two Lulu plays, G. W. Pabst's silent film, *Die Büchse der Pandora*, and Berg's opera, *Lulu*. German-language works on expressionist theater include Horst Denkler's *Drama des Expressionismus: Programm, Spieltext, Theater*.⁶⁴ These sources also provide contextual information on the theatrical practices of post-war Europe.

1.6.6 Scholarship in Semiotics

In the field of semiotics, Daniel Chandler's text *Semiotics: The Basics* provides background on the semiotic methods of Charles Sanders Peirce and Ferdinand de Saussure, including the Peircean notion of the actor as icon. Elaine Aston and George Savona's text, *Theatre As Sign-System: A Semiotics of Text and Performance* is highly informative, providing a guide on how to decode semiotic meaning on stage and introducing readers to prevalent theories and practices of theatre semiotics. In

⁶⁰ Walter Herbert Sokel, *Anthology of German Expressionist Drama; A Prelude to the Absurd* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1963).

⁶¹ Günter Berghaus, *Theatre, Performance, and the Historical Avant-Garde. Palgrave Studies in Theatre and Performance History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).

⁶² Oscar G. Brockett and Franklin J. Hildy, *History of the Theatre*, ninth edition (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2005).

⁶³ Martin Banham, ed., *The Cambridge Guide to Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

⁶⁴ Horst Denkler, *Drama des Expressionismus : Programm, Spieltext, Theater* (München: Fink, 1979).

addition, this dissertation will consider the ideas of the Prague School, which applied semiotics to artistic activities, and the theories in Roland Barthes's *Literature and Signification*. In this text, Barthes calls theatre a "density of signs," commenting on the rich semiotic significance of the stage.⁶⁵

1.6.7 Scholarship in African American studies and Black Feminism

Scholarship in the field of African-American studies and black feminism will aid in the semiotic analysis of race in three Lulu productions: Marisol Montalvo's performance of Lulu in Calixto Bieito's staging—as discussed in chapter 3—and the two *American Lulu* productions explored in chapter 5, directed by Kirill Serebrennikov and John Fulljames. Chapters 5 and 6 will focus on the wide variety of historical stereotypes surrounding the supposed hypersexuality of black female sexuality. Carolyn M. West's "Mammy, Jezebel, Sapphire, and Their Homegirls: Developing an 'Oppositional Gaze' Towards the Images of Black Women" provides insight into several of these stereotypes. In addition, this dissertation cites texts by Juan Battle and Sandra L. Barnes, *Black Sexualities: Probing Powers, Passions, Practices, and Policies*, Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender and the New Racism*, Robert Staples, *Exploring Black Sexuality*, Shaka McGlotten and Dana-Ain Dais, *Black Genders and Sexualities*, and bell hooks, *Ain't I A Woman: Black Women and Feminism*. Chapters 4 and 5 will also utilize scholarship on Sarah Baartman in the field of black female sexuality, citing T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting's *Black Venus: Sexualized Savages, Primal Fears, and Primitive Narratives in*

⁶⁵ Barthes, "The Death of the Author," *Image-Music-Text*, trans. by Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977).

French and Deborah Willis's *Black Venus: Black Venus 2010: They Called Her "Hottentot."*⁶⁶

As discussed in chapter 5, in *American Lulu*, Neuwirth's statements about assimilation versus appropriation—and the idea that Lulu assimilates to white culture, whereas Eleanor adapts to it—will utilize literature on notions of black authenticity and colorism. Since Neuwirth cited Dorothy Dandridge and *Carmen Jones* as an inspiration for the mise en scène of *American Lulu*, this section explores the tragic mulatto stereotype, as well as the life and work of Dorothy Dandridge, and the influence of the Blaxploitation film genre on Neuwirth's opera. This section benefits from scholarship on the Civil Rights movement, setting the historical context of Neuwirth's opera. It also cites Emily Plec's article, "Signifyin(g) Civil Rights and Black power: Contemporary Implications of Historical Representations."⁶⁷

The connections between the Lulu character with the African American female artists Billie Holiday and Josephine Baker—as seen in the *American Lulu* libretto and its stagings—uses scholarship on both women, as well as on the jazz and blues idiom. Materials consulted include Angela Davis's book *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism: Gertrude "Ma" Rainey, Bessie Smith, and Billie Holiday*⁶⁸ and the film

⁶⁶ Denean Sharpley-Whiting, *Black Venus: Sexual Savages, Primal Fears, and Primitive Narratives in French* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999). Deborah Willis, ed., *Black Venus 2010: They Called Her "Hottentot"* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012), 16.

⁶⁷ Emily Plec, "Signifyin(g) Civil Rights and Black power: Contemporary implications of historical representations," in *Arguing communication & culture: Selected papers from the Twelfth NCA/AFA Conference on Argumentation*, T. Goodnight, ed. (Washington, DC: National Communication Association, 2001): 621-22.

⁶⁸ Angela Y. Davis, *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism: Gertrude "Ma" Rainey, Bessie Smith, and Billie Holiday* (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, Inc., 1999).

Josephine Baker: The First Black Superstar.⁶⁹ Davis's text is also used in the comparison of Eleanor with classic female blues singers.

Chapter 5 of this dissertation explores the use of the Afro hairstyle in the two *American Lulu* productions examined in this dissertation, investigating the politics of black female hair, and aided by Ingrid Banks's text, *Hair Matters: Beauty, Power, and Black Women's Consciousness*.⁷⁰ The role of the Afro in the Black Panther Movement, as exemplified by Angela Davis, will also be considered, and will cite the activist's previously-mentioned book on the subject. The semiotic significance of the raised fist salute—or black power salute—seen in the *Young Vic* production, is assisted by literature on the symbol and its use in the 1968 Olympic medal ceremony.

1.6.8 Scholarship in Feminism, Film Studies, etc.

The analysis of Lulu's sexuality is key to understanding every Lulu production; consequently, scholarship in the field of feminism will be used throughout this dissertation. Works cited and consulted include Doane's *Femme Fatales*, Catherine Clément's *Opera: The Undoing of Women*,⁷¹ Sue Ellen Case's *Feminism and Theatre* and *Performing Feminisms: Feminist Critical Theory and*

⁶⁹ *Legends*. "Josephine Baker: The First Black Superstar." Directed by Suzanne Phillips. Written by Sarah Broughton. BBC Four, July 9, 2009.

⁷⁰ Ingrid Banks, *Hair Matters: Beauty, Power, and Black Women's Consciousness* (New York: New York University Press, 2000).

⁷¹ Catherine Clément, *Opera, or the Undoing of Women*, trans. Betsey Wing (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).

Theatre,⁷² and Elaine Aston's *An Introduction to Feminism and Theatre and Feminist Theatre Practice: A Handbook*.⁷³

1.7 Significance of Study

Using Berg's *Lulu* as a case study, this inquiry follows the growing area of poststructuralist scholarship, examining the changes of meaning that occur when a canonic work is transformed beyond the intentions of the original author or confined to notions of definitive texts. Rather than studying *Lulu* exclusively from the perspective of Berg or Wedekind, this dissertation examines modern performances of the opera, tracing the shifting identity of the iconic Lulu as she evolves across various socio-cultural contexts and historical eras. By considering these post-1979 productions, this project explores the relationship of twentieth- and twenty-first-century audiences with canonic works. These updated stagings demonstrate how present-day adaptations, whether *Werktreue* or *Regietheater*, both perpetuate traditions and create new innovations, linking our past and present.

In addition to considering the reinterpretation of cultural icons over time, this dissertation investigates the mysterious beginnings of the Lulu character. Although often mentioned in scholarship on Wedekind, few sources on Berg's *Lulu* discuss Champsaur's clownesse, Lou Andreas-Salomé, or the internationally renowned acrobat "The Amazing Lulu." By investigating the complete history of the Lulu character, this project examines the fluctuating nature of cultural artifacts over

⁷² Sue Ellen Case, *Performing Feminisms: Feminist Critical Theory and Theatre* (Baltimore: the Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990).

⁷³ Elaine Aston, *An Introduction to Feminism and Theatre* (London: Routledge, 1995).
Elaine Aston, *Feminist Theatre Practice: A Handbook* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

time. By studying Lulu's genesis and various manifestations, we gain a more thorough understanding of her identity, both as Berg first understood her, and as she is reinterpreted in recent operatic stagings.

Following an investigation of 1890s Paris and the fin de siècle, this inquiry also examines Lulu's portrayal in the silent films of Leopold Jessner and G. W. Pabst, as well as the environment of Weimar Germany. Although Wedekind wrote his two Lulu plays during the fin de siècle and was widely influenced by his socio-cultural surroundings, Berg did not begin composing *Lulu* until 1927. Studies on Berg's *Lulu* typically explore the influence of the composer's surroundings in the early years of the twentieth-century, when Wedekind's plays were first published. Multiple aspects of the Viennese turn of the century contributed to Berg's second opera: he was undoubtedly inspired by the setting of late 1920s Europe and by his musical surroundings, especially the innovations of his teacher, Arnold Schoenberg, and finally, by the frequent Weimarian depiction of women as dangerous and inherently criminal.

This inquiry seeks a more thorough understanding of Lulu, investigating the origins and development of the character that would go on to influence Berg's creation of his second opera, *Lulu*. Although much of this study is built upon scholarship in the area of opera staging, this dissertation utilizes a modern, interdisciplinary approach as well as a more traditional archival research. By analyzing a number of post-1979 stagings, this study explores the realization of a canonic work within a poststructuralist environment, considering the updated productions of the opera as challenges to the *Lulu* work-concept.

Neuwirth's *American Lulu*, as realized through the productions discussed in this inquiry, modify the operatic text itself, which, even as recently as the publication of Parker's *Remaking the Song*, was called "untouched."⁷⁴ Her *American Lulu* goes beyond transformation of staging and instrumentation, making alterations to the libretto and score. It both follows and disregards Berg's *Lulu*, functioning simultaneously as a reinterpretation and as a new work. Whether these updated, radical adaptations are considered a passing trend or a true innovation, the effect of staging on operagoers is undeniable. By focusing on these recreations, this study shines new light on the identity of Lulu herself, as she is transformed and altered to reflect contemporary culture and audiences.

⁷⁴ Parker. *Remaking the Song*, 5.

CHAPTER 2. THE ORIGINS OF AN ICON

Significant to the meaning of Alban Berg's *Lulu*, as well as the varied productions of the opera, is an understanding of the title character herself. However, the origins of Lulu must be traced even earlier than the creation of Berg's libretto and score. This chapter will explore the history of Lulu prior to the composition of Berg's opera, following the conception, transformation, and diverse treatment of the iconic character as an invention of numerous artists and genres. Through her varied interpretation at the hands of multiple authors, Lulu reflects the diverse social, cultural, and historical contexts of her creation and reception, from late nineteenth-century Paris, to fin-de-siècle Vienna, to the Weimar Republic. This chapter will consider the development of Lulu before Berg's opera, examining her beginnings as a clown and pantomime in late nineteenth-century Parisian circuses, and her treatment in the illustrated novels and theatrical works of Félicien Champsaur. It seeks to understand the shifting cultural meaning of Lulu over time, examining the relationship of her characterization to literary, artistic, psychological, scientific, and economic trends within the differing environments in which she was created. Just as Lulu serves as a reflection of her surroundings in Berg's opera, so too does her handling by these creative authorities embody the fluid and ever-changing cultures in which her character evolved.

Like the past of Berg's title character, the origins of this cultural icon are mysterious and complex. Lulu as a literary character was first crafted by French novelist and journalist Félicien Champsaur (1858-1934) and performed in a mixture of circus act and pantomime as one of the earliest examples of a female clown on the

European stage.⁷⁵ She was likely based on the similarly named, internationally renowned, and cross-dressing acrobat, El Niño Farini, or, “the Amazing Lulu.” While performing at a Parisian circus in the early 1890s, the clownesse captured the attention of the young German playwright, Benjamin Franklin Wedekind (1864-1918), who happened to have a close relationship at the time with the infamous, likewise christened, real-life femme fatale, Lou Andreas-Salomé (1861-1937). Wedekind would spend the next several years of his life occupied with her character, creating numerous editions of his two Lulu plays and enduring repeated political censorship. Wedekind’s Lulu plays have undergone numerous adaptations on the European stage by directors such as Erich Engel and Otto Falckenberg before being realized on the cinematic screen through the silent films of Leopold Jessner (1878-1945) and G. W. Pabst (1885-1967). These various manifestations of Lulu—as pantomime, acrobat, femme fatale, and literary/stage type—all contributed to the formation of her identity before Berg first encountered her in the early years of the twentieth-century. For the next twenty years, her story would continue to dwell in the composer’s mind until he began composing his second opera, *Lulu*, in 1927.

2.1 Champsaur’s Clownesse: The “Birth” of Lulu

Félicien Champsaur created the clown Lulu, identified as “une clownesse danseuse” (“a dancing clownesse”), for the Parisian circus, particularly for the Cirque Nouveau, where she performed alongside other clowns in a combination of

⁷⁵ Norman Manea, *On Clowns: The Dictator and The Artist: Essays* (New York, NY: Grove Press, 1992), 80.

pantomime and circus act.⁷⁶ As Norman Manea writes in his book *On Clowns*, Lulu was “[t]he only female clown to achieve lasting fame” in Europe.⁷⁷ She made a brief appearance in the 1888 performance of Champsaur’s pantomime, *Les Éreintés de la vie*, which premiered at the Cirque Molier, a private circus for Parisian high society (see Figure 2.1); however, it is with his *Lulu; pantomime en un acte*, created at the Cirque Nouveau, also in 1888, that Lulu became a central character in his works (see Figure 2.2).⁷⁸ Champsaur would become the first author to publish a fictionalized version of Lulu; he went on to write two pantomimes and several prose texts on her character. In his illustrated novel, *L’Amant des Danseuses (The Lover of Ballerinas)*, also of 1888, identified in the subtitle as a *roman moderniste*, modernist novel (see Figure 2.3), Champsaur includes a chapter entitled “Lulu”; this chapter would, in turn, serve as the beginnings of his illustrated novel of 1901, *Lulu, roman clownesque (Lulu, clownish novel)* (see Figure 2.4).⁷⁹

⁷⁶ In this context, pantomime refers to the theatrical genre (rather than miming or ballet-pantomime), a comedic stage entertainment act that incorporated musical and dance elements, and frequently featured farcical or slapstick comedic elements. Champsaur’s pantomimes function as single-act plays, and his manuscripts contain both illustrations and dialogue. Ritter, *Art as Spectacle*, 109. Gail Finney, *Women in Modern Drama: Fred, Feminism and European Theater at the Turn of the Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 80.

⁷⁷ Manea, *On Clowns*, 44 and 80.

⁷⁸ Bazile, “Lulu s’affiche,” <http://www.imageandnarrative.be/>.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, <http://www.imageandnarrative.be/>.

Félicien Champsaur, *L’Amant des danseuses* (Paris: Imprimerie Chaix, 1896).

Félicien Champsaur, *Lulu. Pantomime en un acte* (Paris: Dentu, 1888).

Figure 2.1: *Éreintés de la vie: pantomime en un acte* (1888).⁸⁰



⁸⁰ Fèlicien Champsaur, *Éreintés de la vie: pantomime en un acte* (Paris: G. Dentu, 1888).

Figure 2.2: *Lulu; pantomime en un acte* (1888).⁸¹



In Champsaur’s novels, which included illustrations by a number of artists, including the “King of Posters,” Jules Chéret (1836-1932), French art nouveau painter Théophile Steinlen (1859-1923), French illustrator Henri Gerbault (1863-1930), and more, Lulu typically embodies the feminine ideal often seen in advertisements at the time—vivacious, cheerful, full of life and motion (see Figure 2.3, below).⁸² For the illustrations, some of which appeared in the margins, Champsaur remarked that the artists illustrated Lulu “according to their personal

⁸¹ Champsaur, *Lulu. Pantomime en un acte*.

⁸² Bazile, “Lulu s’affiche,” <http://www.imageandnarrative.be/>.

visions, as diverse silhouettes.”⁸³ Although many of these depictions contain female nudity and eroticism, rather than solely portraying women within the limited dichotomy of “prostitutes or puritans,” the images depict joyful, lively, and free-spirited women.⁸⁴

Figure 2.3: *L'Amant des Danseuses*. Poster Advertisement, 1896.⁸⁵



Champsaur’s works incorporate a variety of artistic expressions; for example, his “roman moderniste,” or “modernist novels” blend the genres of theater, circus

⁸³ Albert Bermel, “Lulu: Pantomime in one act by Félicien Champsaur,” in *Modern Drama* 43, Issue 2 (May 2000): 252-264.

⁸⁴ Frank Presbrey, *The History and Development of Advertising* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., 1929), 496.

⁸⁵ Champsaur, *L'Amant des danseuses*.

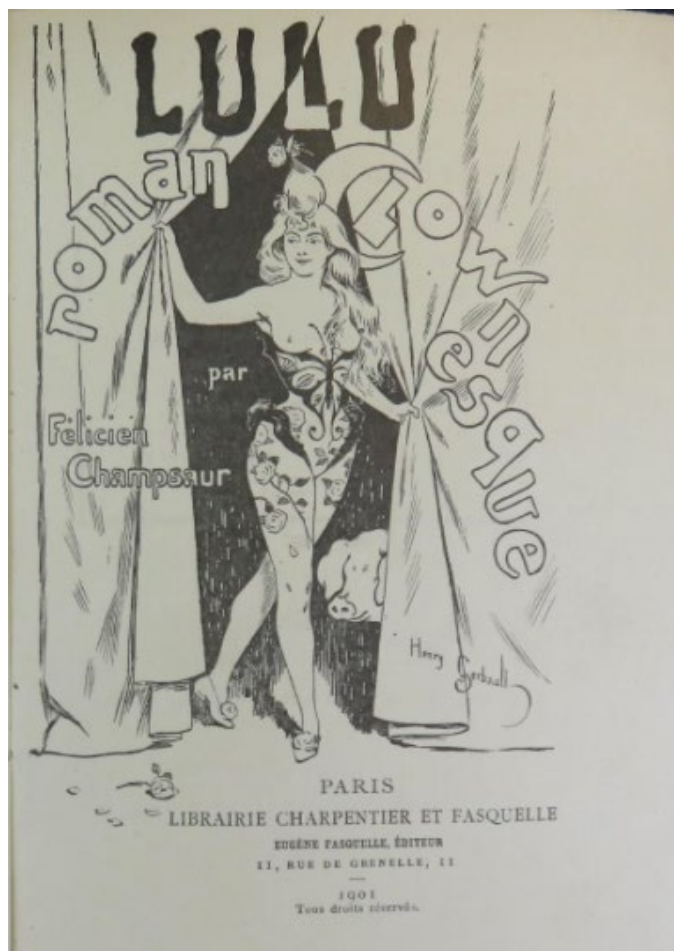
entertainment, pantomime, illustration, and literature in a single work.⁸⁶ In his novel, *Lulu, roman clownesque*, a young Lulu secretly dresses up in her mother's clothes and reads her books on the subjects of love and eroticism, transforming herself into the kind of attractive, seductive, and quintessentially feminine woman that she believed her mother personified (see Figure 2.4, below).⁸⁷ In *Lulu; pantomime en un acte*, Champsaur's portrayals of Lulu parallel that of Columbine; he describes Lulu as "La Femme qui a perdu son coeur" ("the woman who lost her heart") (see Figure 2.5 and 2.6). Appearing alongside the familiar *commedia dell'arte* figures of Harlequin and Pierrot, Lulu was a seductive dancer, paralleling the cruel, heartless Columbine.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Bazile, "Lulu s'affiche," <http://www.imageandnarrative.be/>.

⁸⁷ Félicien Champsaur, *Lulu: roman clownesque* (Paris : Charpentier et Fasquelle, 1901).

⁸⁸ Ritter, *Art as Spectacle*, 109.

Figure 2.4: *Lulu, roman clownesque* (1901).⁸⁹



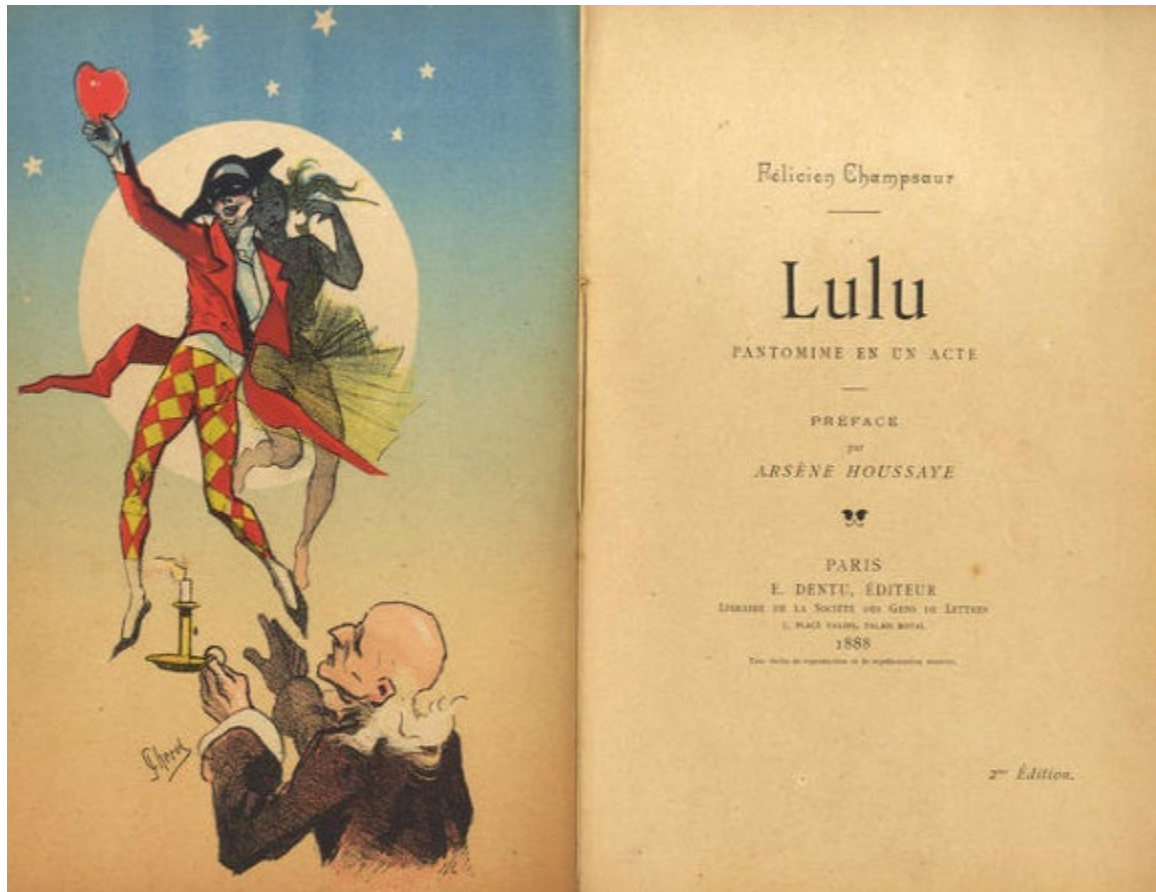
⁸⁹ Fèlicien Champsaur, *Lulu: roman clownesque* (Paris : Charpentier et Fasquelle, 1901).

Figure 2.5: *Lulu; pantomime en un acte* (1888).⁹⁰



⁹⁰ Champsaur, *Lulu. Pantomime en un acte* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1888).

Figure 2.6: *Lulu; pantomime en un acte* (1888).⁹¹



Champsaur's *Lulu* was inspired by the artistic climate in which he lived, surrounded by acrobats and trapeze artists, burlesque shows and grand circuses.⁹² Although Champsaur is credited with the origination of the character, his conception of *Lulu* in circus acts, pantomime and novels was possibly inspired by the real-life trapeze artist and aerialist, El Niño Farini, whose performance name was “the Amazing *Lulu*.” El Niño was the stage moniker of Samuel Wasgate (1855-1939);⁹³ as a boy, Samuel was adopted and trained by Canadian acrobat and tightrope walker William Leonard Hunt, performing with the stage name Guillermo Antonio Farini.

⁹¹ Félicien Champsaur, *Lulu. Pantomime en un acte* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1888).

⁹² Bazile, “*Lulu s’affiche*,” <http://www.imageandnarrative.be/>.

⁹³ Another common spelling is “Wasgatt.”

Influenced by an act featuring renowned French tightrope walker Charles Blondin and his young daughter, Hunt transformed his adopted son into “The Beautiful Lulu, the girl Aerialist and Circassian Catapultist”;⁹⁴ The pair went on to perform together throughout Europe.⁹⁵ Since Wasgate was already well known as El Niño Farini in London, he gave his première performance as Lulu in Paris in 1870. Shortly thereafter, the act became internationally famous throughout Europe and the United States, and Lulu was praised for her athletic ability and great beauty.⁹⁶

The climax of Wasgate’s performance was the “Lulu Leap,” in which he/she flew twenty five feet in the air, landed on a plank suspended by two trapeze bars, and then completed three somersaults before falling to a net below. The audience was amazed, unaware of the unique catapult built into the stage, an invention by Hunt.⁹⁷ Promotional materials for the Holborn Amphitheatre in London, in addition to multiple publications including *The New York Clipper*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Era* and *The Englishwoman’s Domestic Magazine* even proclaimed Lulu “the Eighth Wonder of the World.”⁹⁸ However, at a 1878 Dublin performance, the catapult malfunctioned, causing injury to Wasgate’s legs; after being treated at a local hospital, the famous Lulu was discovered to be a man.⁹⁹ Following the public

⁹⁴ Bill Lipsky, “Mademoiselle Lulu: The Wo/men on the Flying Trapeze,” *San Francisco Bay Times*, Apr 7, 2016, <http://sfbaytimes.com/mademoiselle-lulu-the-woman-on-the-flying-trapeze/>.

⁹⁵ A Canadian, born William Leonard Hunt [you might consider moving this to the main text, to parallel the stage and real names of Wasgate].

⁹⁶ “El Niño Farini,” Victoria and Albert Museum, London, <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/e/el-nino-farini/>.

⁹⁷ Lipsky, “Mademoiselle Lulu,” <http://sfbaytimes.com/mademoiselle-lulu-the-woman-on-the-flying-trapeze/>.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, <http://sfbaytimes.com/mademoiselle-lulu-the-woman-on-the-flying-trapeze/>.

⁹⁹ “El Niño Farini,” <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/e/el-nino-farini/>.

revelation of Lulu's true gender, Wasgate continued to perform as a male, El Niño Farini, until he retired several years later.¹⁰⁰

2.2 Wedekind's Lulu Plays: Inspirations, Revisions, and Early Performances

The bohemian, circus-filled, nonconformist environment in which Champsaur's Lulu performed also inspired the German playwright and literary figure, Benjamin Franklin, or Frank, Wedekind.¹⁰¹ Wedekind's works stood against bourgeois repression, especially focusing on sexuality. They reflected his life experiences, such as his time as a secretary to a traveling circus company during the years 1891-94, and his job at a Munich cabaret, where he also performed his songs while accompanying himself on guitar.¹⁰² As George R. Marek writes in his essay, "Earth Spirit," "Wedekind spent much time with the circus, and it was this mixture of a literary background and his plunging into a wayward and tumid world which formed his image of life."¹⁰³ Notably, Wedekind had a friendship with Willi Morgenstern, otherwise known as Rubinoff, another famous clown of Europe.¹⁰⁴ Despite the modern, innovative nature of his plays, Wedekind opposed the women's emancipation movement of his day.¹⁰⁵ Instead, he subscribed to the essentialist

¹⁰⁰ During this time, El Niño Farini continued to wear Lulu's performance costumes.

¹⁰¹ Finney, *Women in Modern Drama*, 79.

¹⁰² Doane, *Femmes Fatales*, 145.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 16-19.

¹⁰⁴ George R. Marek, "Earth Spirit: Playwright Frank Wedekind and Lulu," *Opera News* 41/21 (1977), 16-19.

¹⁰⁵ Doane, *Femmes Fatales*, 145. Audrone B. Willeke, "Frank Wedekind and the 'Frauenfrage,'" *Monatshefte* 72, no. 1 (Spring, 1980), 26-27.

notion of feminine difference, often highlighting the primitive, criminal, or animal nature of woman in his works.¹⁰⁶

Wedekind's first published play, *Spring Awakening*, was written in 1890 and published in 1891. Shortly after, he would begin his adaptations of Champsaur's Lulu, first writing a five-act play that was never realized (see below), and later completing the two Lulu plays for which he is most known: *Erdgeist (Earth Spirit)*, from 1895, and *Die Büchse der Pandora (Pandora's Box)*, from 1902. Wedekind was inspired by Champsaur's circus pantomime featuring Lulu, whom he saw perform in the early 1890s.¹⁰⁷ As Gail Finney writes in *Women in the Modern Drama*, "[n]one of Wedekind's dramas has been more influential than his so-called Lulu plays, which in their unusual mixture of satiric, grotesque, and tragic elements combine some of the most memorable features of naturalist and symbolist theater and also anticipate expressionism."¹⁰⁸ As predecessors to expressionist theater, both of the Lulu plays focus on a struggle to accept societal values and explore the nature of female sexuality. In his reinterpretation of Lulu, Wedekind creates a sexually amorphous creature, through which each character's subconscious desires are revealed.

Based on his transformation of Champsaur's character, Wedekind created his first Lulu play, *Die Büchse der Pandora: Eine Monstretragödie (Pandora's Box: A Monster Tragedy)* in 1894, and later, *Erdgeist* and *Die Büchse der Pandora*. Although Champsaur was the first to conceive of the seductive dancing clownesse named Lulu, after the publication of Wedekind's *Erdgeist*, Champsaur himself would, in

¹⁰⁶ Doane, *Femmes Fatales*, 145.

¹⁰⁷ Finney, *Women in Modern Drama*, 80.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 80.

turn, be influenced by the playwright's treatment of the character, using elements of Wedekind's plot—most notably, Lulu's changing personality—in his later illustrated Lulu novels.¹⁰⁹ In addition to Champsaur's clownesse, Wedekind's plays were inspired by journalistic accounts and stories of Jack the Ripper, the notorious serial killer who attacked female prostitutes in London, most notably in 1888.¹¹⁰ To Wedekind, Jack the Ripper represented the ultimate symbol of Victorian corruption, a fitting character in plays that explore the confluence of civilized society and unconscious amorality.¹¹¹

Another potential model for Wedekind's characterization of Lulu was his friend, the Russian-born intellectual and writer, Lou Andreas-Salomé (1861-1937), sometimes called "Lou Lou." By the time of her 1911 arrival in Vienna, she was reputed to be the most famous femme fatale in Central Europe.¹¹² Today, Salomé is most remembered for her close relationships with intellectuals of her day, including philosophers Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) and Paul Rée (1849-1901), psychologist Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), and poet Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926).¹¹³ However, Salomé was a prolific writer, essayist, critic, journalist, novelist, and Freudian analyst in her own right.¹¹⁴ She was one of the earliest female psychoanalysts, and is credited as being one of the first women to write on the

¹⁰⁹ Bazile, "Lulu s'affiche," <http://www.imageandnarrative.be/>.

¹¹⁰ Stewart P. Evans and Keith Skinner, *The Ultimate Jack the Ripper Sourcebook. An Illustrated Encyclopedia* (London: Robinson, 2000), 339-40.

¹¹¹ Douglas Jarman, *Alban Berg, Lulu* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 12.

¹¹² The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche famously labeled Salomé a femme fatale. Gary Winship, Introduction to Lou Andreas-Salomé *The Erotic*, trans. John Crip (New York: Routledge, 2017), 2.

¹¹³ "Lou Andreas-Salome, German writer," *Encyclopedia Britannica* (last modified May 20, 2015), <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Lou-Andreas-Salome>.

¹¹⁴ Gary Winship, Introduction to *The Erotic*, 2.

psychology of female sexuality.¹¹⁵ Known for her disdain of convention and sexual taboo, she served as a muse, and occasional lover, to some of the Western world's most distinguished thinkers of the time. As Gary Winship writes in his introduction to Salomé's psychoanalytic text, *Die Erotik*, Wedekind first met Salomé in Paris; although the two became close friends, "Lou Lou" rejected the German playwright's romantic advances.¹¹⁶ In her 1898 novel, *Fenitschka*, Salomé recounts her relationship with Wedekind. As Winship explains, "the suitor is portrayed as foolish and apologetic for his behavior having tried to seduce the heroine Fenitschka." Winship goes on to suggest that, as retribution, Wedekind then portrayed Lou as a teasing femme fatale called "Lulu" in his two plays.¹¹⁷

Wedekind spent the years 1892 to 1913 occupied with his Lulu plays. He originally conceived of the story in 1894 as a single five-act work entitled *Die Büchse der Pandora: Eine Monstretragödie*. However, the play proved to be unwieldy and difficult to stage, partially because of its six- to seven-hour length and use of multiple languages (German, French, and English).¹¹⁸ In 1895, Wedekind sent *Die Büchse der Pandora: Eine Monstretragödie* to Albert Langen at the publishing house *Simplicissimus* in 1895, but the play was not accepted for publication.¹¹⁹ As Edward Bond writes in his essay, "Using *Lulu*," which accompanies the English translation of the texts in *Wedekind Plays: One; Spring Awakening, Lulu: A Monster Tragedy*, "[n]o

¹¹⁵ Angela Livingston, *Lou Andreas-Salomé: Her Life and Work* (London: Gordon Fraser, 1984).
Maria Popva, "Lou Andreas-Salomé, the First Woman Psychoanalyst, on Human Nature in Letters to Freud," *Brainpickings*, accessed May 1, 2017, <https://www.brainpickings.org/2015/02/12/lou-andreas-salome-sigmund-freud-letters/>.

¹¹⁶ Gary Winship, Introduction to *The Erotic*, 2.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹¹⁸ Jarman, *Alban Berg, Lulu*, 15.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 15.

one would produce the original play. It was not even printed [...] Wedekind made various versions of it so that at least not all of it would be wasted. The versions are confused and pretentious.”¹²⁰

Following the unexpected success of the 1898 Leipzig première of *Erdgeist*, the play moved to other German cities and was widely performed for five months; however, it was banned shortly thereafter, and Wedekind was charged with disseminating obscene material.¹²¹ Before its censorship, *Erdgeist* met with mild success in several theaters under the direction of the German Regisseur Carl Heine.¹²² Max Reinhardt’s 1902 production of *Erdgeist* at the Kleines Theater Berlin was considered shocking by the public, and Wedekind was deemed to be a pornographer, who was immoral and unpatriotic.¹²³ In contrast, to the artistic avant-garde and anti-establishment factions, Wedekind was known as the epitome of a modern writer, a theatrical innovator.¹²⁴ The première of *Die Büchse der Pandora* took place in 1904 in Nuremberg. Shortly after, the play had its première Viennese performance in 1905; both performances, however, were restricted due to looming censorship. Following the performance, *Erdgeist* was banned, and neither play was publically performed in Germany again until after the 1918 abolition of censorship.¹²⁵

¹²⁰ Frank Wedekind, *Wedekind, Play: One. Spring Awakening. Lulu: A Monster Tragedy*, trans. Edward Bond and Elisabeth Bond-Pablé (London: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 1993), 64.

¹²¹ Gary Winship, Introduction to *The Erotic*, 2.

¹²² Marek, “Earth Spirit,” 16-19.

¹²³ Jarman, *Alban Berg, Lulu*, 14.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹²⁵ Finney, *Women in Modern Drama*, 80.

2.3 Wedekind's Images of Lulu

In the four-act *Erdgeist* and three-act *Die Büchse der Pandora*, the primary image of Lulu is that of a mysterious and alluring femme fatale. As summarized in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Wedekind's dramas narrate "the story of Lulu, an amoral woman who disregards bourgeois values; her amorality and her insistence on sexual freedom are dangerous to all who come in contact with her."¹²⁶ In *Erdgeist*, Lulu's first husband suffers a fatal heart attack after discovering his wife with another man, her second husband kills himself after learning the truth about Lulu's relationship with Dr. Schön, and Lulu shoots her third husband in self-defense. The play ends with Lulu's arrest for the murder of Dr. Schön. In the time between the setting of *Erdgeist* and *Pandora's Box*, as described in non-staged backstory, Lulu is tried, sentenced, and imprisoned for the murder of Dr. Schön.¹²⁷ The second play, *Die Büchse der Pandora*, begins with Lulu's escaped from jail, and ends with her murder at the hands of Jack the Ripper while working as a prostitute.

In his transformation of Champsaur's character, Wedekind maintained several characteristics of the French clownesse, most notably her sexualized dancing and the circus environment in which she originally performed. As a dancer, the primitive, animalistic, and feminine sides of Lulu are emphasized; however, rather than depicting her as the heartless Columbine, Wedekind associates Lulu with Pierrot, the tragic clown. As Naomi Ritter writes in her book, *Art as Spectacle*,

¹²⁶ Kathleen Kuiper and Marco Sampaolo et. al, "Pandora's Box: Play by Wedekind," *Encyclopedia Britannica* (2011), accessed April 17, 2016, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Pandoras-Box-play-by-Wedekind>.

¹²⁷ Wedekind, *Spring Awakening*, 16.

her depiction as Pierrot “gives Lulu her most complex identity.”¹²⁸ In the first scene of Wedekind’s *Erdgeist*, we see the Portrait, with Lulu dressed as Pierrot.

SCHWARZ. (puts the picture back on the easel. It shows a woman dressed as a pierrot, with a tall shepherd’s crook in her hand) A costume picture.¹²⁹

The Pierrot costume is rich with meaning, changing according to its historical and cultural context. Alongside Harlequin and Columbine, Pierrot is one of three popular characters originating from the Italian Renaissance tradition of the *commedia dell’arte*. In the late nineteenth-century Italian troupe of players, Pierrot was a stock character of pantomime, typically portrayed as a sad clown, pining for his unrequited love, Columbine. The earliest depictions of Pierrot typically show the clown as unmasked, with a whitened face.¹³⁰ He is dressed in a white billowing blouse with large buttons and wears wide white pantaloons. Other depictions of Pierrot show him wearing a wide-brimmed hat, a frilled collar, a pointed dunce’s cap, or a black skullcap. This version of Pierrot is defined by his naiveté; he is a fool, a buffoon, overly trusting, and the butt of pranks and jokes, struggling to adhere to societal expectations.

Pierrot has been a subject for numerous artists of the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries: to the decadents, he was a sad clown, mourning his lost love; to the symbolists, he was a tortured artist; for the modernists, he was an authorial

¹²⁸ Ritter, *Art as Spectacle*, 11.

¹²⁹ Wedekind, *Spring Awakening*, 14.

¹³⁰ Robert F. Storey, *Pierrot: A Critical History of a Mask* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 4.

alter-ego, an alienated artist-figure.¹³¹ In the late nineteenth century, Pierrot was a popular subject in French literature, such as in Charles Baudelaire's essay "The Essence of Laughter" (1855) and Victor Hugo's novel *Bug-Jargal* (1826). During this time, the nature of Pierrot began to change: rather than an innocent, sad clown, he became macabre, androgynous and hermaphroditic.¹³² Reflecting the pluralism of nineteenth-century culture, Pierrot's identity became complex and multi-faceted, shifting between heartbroken, mythical, and ethereal, and murderous, vicious, and treacherous.¹³³ He was a thief, a rapist, a murderer, and a criminal, hiding behind his oversized clothes and expressionless, white face.¹³⁴

In the fin de siècle, the androgynous nature of Pierrot came to represent a kind of cultural rebellion: whereas nineteenth-century studies on gender outlined rigidly defined differences of the sexes, Pierrot exemplified gender transgression and fluidity.¹³⁵ The ambiguity of Pierrot can be seen in the works of Albert Giraud, James Ensor, Ernest Dowson, and Aubrey Beardsley. In Dowson and Beardsley's *The Pierrot of the Minute*, the clown is portrayed as subjective and mysterious, blurring gender lines.¹³⁶ In his hermaphroditic form, Pierrot epitomized the grotesque and decadent; his non-binary, fluid gender representation threatened reasonable, logical thought, a symptom of his immoral nature.¹³⁷

¹³¹ Ritter, *Art as Spectacle*, 112.

¹³² Allison Dorothy Kreuter, "Morphing moonlight: Gender, masks and carnival mayhem: The Figure of Pierrot in Giraud, Ensor, Dowson and Beardsley," (PhD diss., University of the Free State, 2007), 15. Howard Sutton, *The Life and Work of Jean Richepin* (Paris: Librairie Minard, 1961), 162.

¹³³ Kreuter, "Morphing moonlight," 62.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 47.

¹³⁵ Kreuter, "Morphing moonlight," 15.

¹³⁶ Kreuter, "Morphing moonlight," 47.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

Paul Marguerite's 1882 play, *Pierrot assassin de sa femme* (*Pierrot, Murderer of his Wife*), exemplifies the treacherous side of the clown. Marguerite's Pierrot is violent, wicked, and sadistic; he kills the unfaithful Columbine by ticking her feet. In an 1883 performance of the play *Pierrot assassin*, written by Jean Richepin (1849-1926), the famous actress Sarah Bernhardt (1844-1923) played a sadistic, nervous, violent and androgynous version of Pierrot—this was the first time the part of Pierrot was performed by a woman (see Figure 2.7).¹³⁸ In the drama, Pierrot robs and kills a rich widow, stealing her fortune to win the heart of the greedy Columbine. Through his immoral actions and irrational violence, Pierrot came to represent the suffering brought about by the decadence of fin-de-siècle society.

¹³⁸ Edward Harris, "Liberation of Flesh from Stone: Pygmalion in *Erdegeist*," *Germanic Review* 52 (1977): 46.

Figure 2.7: Sarah Bernhardt as Pierrot in Jean Richepin's *Pierrot assassin*, 1883; photograph by Paul Nadar¹³⁹



In addition to the symbolism of Lulu's costume, Wedekind's choice to depict her as Pierrot holding a "tall shepherd's crook" is rich with semiotic meaning: it signifies her role as a shepherdess, connecting her with nature, as depicted in rococo paintings of the clown, such as Jean-Antoine Watteau's *Pierrot (or Gilles)*. In addition, As Edward Harris suggests in his article, "Liberation of Flesh from Stone: Pygmalion in *Erdegeist*," Wedekind's inclusion of a shepherd's crook suggests the figures of Pygmalion and Galatea.¹⁴⁰ In the fable, the sculptor Pygmalion—a legendary figure from the island of Cyprus, most familiar in Ovid's narrative poem *Metamorphoses* (8 A.D.)—falls in love with his own creation, a statue of a woman

¹³⁹ Robert Gottlieb, "The Divine Sarah," *The New York Review*, Oct. 14, 2010 (Yale University Press) <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2010/10/14/divine-sarah/>.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2010/10/14/divine-sarah/>.

carved out of ivory. In other stories, the shepherd Pygmalion creates a shepherdess, Galatea—a compliant, sexually idealized version of himself.¹⁴¹ The figure Galatea appears in Wedekind’s later poetry, such as in his idyll *Felix und Galatea*.¹⁴² Paired with the common nineteenth-century depiction of the clown as an authorial alter-ego, the connection of Lulu with the shepherdess Galatea supports her role as a creation of man. As Naomi Ritter writes, “the idea of Galatea, the female creation of the male artist as an externalized image of himself, stems from post-Ovidian versions of the fable.”¹⁴³ Like Galatea, Lulu was created by man, shaped to suit his individual desires. In the scope of Wedekind’s plays, the naturalness of Lulu—represented by her shepherd’s crook—becomes dangerous, a threat to masculine logic and societal order.

The role of Lulu as a scapegoat or sacrifice for a sick and corrupt society parallels the fin-de-siècle characterization of Pierrot. By aligning Lulu with Pierrot, Wedekind associates her with naturalness: both figures are helpless, driven by instinct. Writing of the conflict between natural instinct and civilized society in Wedekind’s Lulu plays, George Perle states, “[t]hrough the ‘false’ values of a particular society are exposed in this confrontation—the *fin de siècle* European bourgeois order of which the author himself was a part, and ironically characterized as such in the drama itself—the implied conflict is the Freudian one, the inevitable

¹⁴¹ Ritter, *Art as Spectacle*, 112.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 112. According to Ritter, Wedekind’s own “idealized female creation” can be seen in his character Franziska, a fantasized female version of himself.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 112.

and irresolvable conflict between the instincts and civilization.”¹⁴⁴ Like Freud’s description of women’s nature as a mysterious and “dark continent,” femininity is equated with otherness and with the natural, the opposition of maleness and civilized society.

The naturalness of Pierrot stands in contrast to the grotesque opulence of Viennese society at the turn of the century. His androgyny--the billowing, white costume--threatened rational thought in a time that was rife with theories on the difference of the sexes. Pierrot is a scapegoat, punished for the sins of others, just as Lulu is sacrificed for the innermost desires of man. Like the tragic clown, Lulu was formed and manipulated into an objectified creature; she becomes Galatea, the sexually compliant, female creation of her lovers, shifting and adapting to suit their differing needs. Similar to early accounts of Africans by slave-traders, in order to justifying her sacrificial death, the femme fatale is labeled as unsafe and immoral due to her primitive, animalistic and sexual nature.

Wedekind’s Lulu epitomizes the trope of the castrating female: a mysterious, ethereal, mythical Woman who threatens to seduce and bewitch rational man and to corrupt society. As Ritter writes, for Wedekind, Lulu “embodies [...] the most ambitious image of Nietzschean animal morality. Only she represents a true beast: ‘the *true* animal, the wild, beautiful animal [...] Lulu belongs to a special tradition in the literature of the fatal woman: the half animal.”¹⁴⁵ Her role as a wild beast is

¹⁴⁴ George Perle, “The Tireless Seductress,” *The Metropolitan Opera Program Booklet* (New York, 1976-77 Season).

¹⁴⁵ Ritter, *Art as Spectacle*, 106-107.

exemplified in the Prologue of *Erdgeist*, where Lulu is represented as a snake.¹⁴⁶ In the opening scene of the play, Lulu is depicted as childlike, honest, and lacking any moral code, furthering her characterization as a primitive being. Wedekind implies that Lulu has no parents; rather, she was discovered at age seven by Schigolch, and was later taken in by Dr. Schön, who orchestrates Lulu's marriage to Dr. Goll and the Painter. In doing so, Schön perverts the Pygmalion theme of Lulu as a feminine creation, resulting in disastrous consequences. Attempts to control the animalistic, mysterious Lulu lead to chaos and death, and in the end, her inability to conform to societal expectations of femininity leads to her own demise.

2.4 The Myth of Pandora and the Femme Fatale in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna

Wedekind's use of the Pandora myth as a basis for his first Lulu play reflects the environment in which he lived. The title of Wedekind's second Lulu play, *Die Büchse der Pandora*, is a reference to the popular Greek myth of Pandora. In the Greek myth, Pandora opens a box given to her by the gods, only to release all the evils of the world, leaving only hope behind. According to Hesiod's *Theogony*, Pandora was born under the direction of Zeus, and by the gods Hephaestus and Athena. She was the first woman created by the gods, molded out of earth to punish humanity for Prometheus's theft of fire. Although Pandora was beautiful and seductive, she was designed to torment the human race.¹⁴⁷

Originally referred to as an "all-giving" and life-bringing goddess, in the "patriarchal mythology" of Hesiod, Pandora was transformed into a bringer of death

¹⁴⁶ Ritter, *Art as Spectacle*, 106.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 107.

and chaos.¹⁴⁸ Largely because of this reinterpretation, Jane Ellen Harrison, author of *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, suggests that rather than a genuine myth, Pandora's story actually functions as an "anti-feminist fable."¹⁴⁹ Although the tale of Pandora first appears in Hesiod's poem *Theogony*, another version of her story occurs in his poem *Works and Days*. In this version, humanity suffers from Pandora's deceitful nature: the contents of her box release sickness, death, disease, and other pains into the world of man. Like Eve in the Book of Genesis, Pandora acts as a punishment for the wrongdoings of man. Further aligning Lulu with the women of the Bible, Linda and Michael Hutcheon write in their book, *Opera: Desire, Disease, Death* that "[c]ritics have associated Lulu with Lilith, who in Talmudic tradition was Adam's sensual and demonic first wife[.]"¹⁵⁰ The title of his second Lulu play, *Erdegeist*, or "Earth Spirit," refers to a gnome in Germanic folklore, and Spirit of the Earth in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust, Eine Tragödie*. In Goethe's story, the Earth Spirit is the personification of nature, symbolizing the constantly changing will of God and of the natural or physical world.

In the same way that Pandora was created to bring vengeance to man, Wedekind's Lulu functions as a sacrifice for the decadence and immorality of fin-de-siècle Viennese society. As Berg scholar and twelve-tone composer George Perle writes regarding the Lulu plays, "Here the tragic element in the relation between eros and society is inherent in the nature of eros itself. Sexual desire and everyone's

¹⁴⁸ The Greek translation of "Pandora" is "all-gifted" or "all-giving." Jane Ellen Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1903), 284.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 283-85.

¹⁵⁰ Linda Hutcheon and Mark Hutcheon, *Opera: Desire, Disease, Death* (London: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 99.

dream of its ideal fulfillment are symbolized in a single personality who approaches mythic dimensions.”¹⁵¹ As a creation of male desire, Lulu functions as a scapegoat for the men surrounding her. Their desires and actions are blamed on Lulu, whose instinctual and animalistic nature is contrasted with the corrupt society of fin-de-siècle Vienna.

Related to the myth of Pandora is the archetype of the femme fatale, who developed as a product of European art, literature, and culture at the fin de siècle.¹⁵² The femme fatale, translated from the French as “deadly woman,”¹⁵³ is commonly viewed as “a mysterious and seductive woman,” or “an irresistibly attractive woman [...] who leads men into difficult, dangerous, or disastrous situations.”¹⁵⁴ The original French wording clearly implicates the fatal results of interacting with these siren-like women, who use their feminine magnetism to gain power over men, often resulting in negative consequences. One of the most alluring qualities of the femme fatale is her unpredictability; however, this trait also makes her difficult to control and manage.¹⁵⁵

In many ways, the crisis-laden, apocalyptic environment of fin-de-siècle Vienna set the stage for the appearance of the castrating femme fatale. Although the archetype of the dangerous woman dates back centuries—as seen in the characters Pandora, Lilith, Eve, Judith, Salome, and more—fin-de-siècle Vienna played an important role in the development of the trope of the femme fatale. As Mary Ann

¹⁵¹ Perle, “The Tireless Seductress.”

¹⁵² Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-siècle Culture*, 4.

¹⁵³ “Femme fatale,” *Dictionary.com*, accessed Dec 7, 2010, <http://www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/femme+fatale>.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, <http://www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/femme+fatale>.

¹⁵⁵ Doane, *Femmes Fatales*, 1.

Doane writes in her seminal book, *Femmes Fatales*, the image of the femme fatale “marks the confluence of modernity, urbanization, Freudian psychoanalysis and new technologies of production and reproduction (photography, the cinema) born of the Industrial Revolution.”¹⁵⁶ The socio-cultural environment of the fin de siècle was marked by a literary and artistic climate of “sophistication, escapism, extreme aestheticism, world-weariness, and fashionable despair.”¹⁵⁷ In Vienna at this time, artists, writers, scholars, and composers were exploring previously uncharted territory, disconnected from tradition and the past.¹⁵⁸ The highly compacted political and social environment of the city was particularly influential in the revolt of thinkers against their “historical inheritance,” and compelled the reshaping of past traditions by innovators from multiple areas, including psychology, art, architecture, music, politics, and theater.¹⁵⁹

2.5 The Frauenfrage: Inquiries on Female Sexuality during the Fin-de-Siècle

In addition to artistic renderings exploring the femme fatale and the “true nature” of female sexuality, the fin-de-siècle preoccupation with sex can also be credited to Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution.¹⁶⁰ The role of sexual selection is introduced in Darwin’s text, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* (1859) and fully developed in *The Descent of Man, and Selections in Relation to Sex* (1871). In these texts, Darwin suggests that reproduction is a primary biological

¹⁵⁶ Doane, *Femmes Fatales*, 1.

¹⁵⁷ “Fin de Siècle,” *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Accessed December 07, 2010.

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/207099/fin-de-siecle-style>.

¹⁵⁸ Schorske, *Fin de Siècle Vienna*, xvii-iii.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, xxvi.

¹⁶⁰ Kandel, *The Age of Insight*, 73.

function of all organisms; therefore, sex came to be seen as central to human behavior.¹⁶¹ Expanding on these theories, the scientific community of fin-de-siècle Vienna frequently examined the biological, psychological, and physiological differences between of men and women.¹⁶² For instance, late nineteenth-century writings on gender outlined clearly defined and categorized concepts of the feminine and masculine.¹⁶³ The “woman question,” or *Frauenfrage*, attempted to solve the mystery of woman, what defined femininity and womanhood, and her role in society constituted. The *Frauenfrage* was central to fin-de-siècle writings on sex and gender, and reflected German anxiety regarding women’s suffrage.¹⁶⁴ Most Western gender theories at this time were written by men, and focused on the inherently sexual woman, who is less capable of being intellectual or controlling her sexual urges.¹⁶⁵ Woman’s biology—her experience of menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, and lactation—resulted in her identification as natural being. Women were considered to be more “biological,” “corporeal,” and “sensual.”¹⁶⁶

During the fin de siècle, many scientists, psychologists, writers, and artists, including Frank Wedekind and Gustav Klimt, explored the concept of the *Frauenfrage*.¹⁶⁷ In his 1907 treatise *Über den physiologischen Schwachsinn de Weibes* (*Concerning the Physiological Feeble-mindedness of the Female*), German neurologist Paul Julius Möbius (1853-1907) argues that women are “feeble-minded” and

¹⁶¹ Kandel, *The Age of Insight*, 74.

¹⁶² Barbara Hales, “Women as Sexual Criminal: Weimar Constructions of the Criminal Femme Fatale,” *Women in German Yearbook* 12 (1996): 102. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20688838>.

¹⁶³ Caitriona Ní Dhúill, *Sex in Imagined Spaces* (London: Routledge, 2010), 58.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 59.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 59.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁶⁷ Willeke, “Frank Wedekind and the ‘Frauenfrage,’” 26.

intellectual inferior to men.¹⁶⁸ For his study, Möbius compared the size of male and female brains, concluding that the female brains are “less developed” and less analytical than those of their male counterparts.¹⁶⁹ According to Möbius, women’s instinctual and biological tendencies make them animalistic and primal; they are inherently less capable of controlling themselves or thinking independently and rationally.¹⁷⁰ In his treatise, he writes, “Like animals have behaved from times immemorial, so too would mankind remain in its primal condition, if there were only women. All progress originates from man.”¹⁷¹ Similar to many scientific and psychological writers of the time, Möbius suggests that the very nature of women poses a threat to society; the idea of the castrating woman reflects the societal fear of feminism and the increasingly independent role of women at this time.¹⁷²

Austrian philosopher Otto Weininger (1880-1903) also believed that woman was incapable of logical thought.¹⁷³ According to Weininger’s *Geschlecht und Charakter: Eine prinzipielle Untersuchung* (*Sex and Character: A Fundamental Investigation*), published in 1903, all people contain a mixture of both male and female elements: whereas male characteristics are active, productive, logical, and moral, female characteristics are passive, unproductive and amoral.¹⁷⁴ *Sex and Character* seeks the “truth” of woman’s nature, scientifically categorizing the difference between man and woman. The value of woman lies in her relation to man

¹⁶⁸ Hales, “Women as Sexual Criminal,” 102. Möbius, *Über den physiologischen*, 11-35.

¹⁶⁹ Möbius, *Über den physiologischen*, 11-35.

¹⁷⁰ Möbius, *Über den physiologischen*. 18-19.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

¹⁷² Hales, “Women as Sexual Criminal,” 102

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 102.

¹⁷⁴ Weininger, *Sex & Character*, 131.

as a sexual object. *Sex and Character* explores the antithetical nature of the feminine essence, creating a dichotomy of the animal and virginal.¹⁷⁵ By dividing the essence of femininity into two types, *Mutter* und *Dirne* (mother and whore), Weininger cemented the characterization of women as naturally promiscuous.¹⁷⁶ The dichotomy of the virgin/whore outlined by Weininger is an extension of the ancient trope of the virgin and temptress as exemplified in the figures of Mary and Eve.¹⁷⁷ The animal-sexual-reproductive “sphere of womanhood” reduced woman to pure sexuality.¹⁷⁸ In essence, women exist solely for sex: they are either used for pleasure or for reproduction.

In the field of psychology, one of the most important contributions of the nineteenth century was Sigmund Freud’s theory of the unconscious. Freud proposed that humans are not in control of their actions, but are instead motivated by the unconscious, and, in particular, by the “id”—the pleasure-seeking part of the psyche that acts as the source of instinctual urges.¹⁷⁹ In Freud’s “Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie” (“Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality”), published in 1905, he further asserts that the primary instinct that motivates the unconscious is the libido, or sexual drive.¹⁸⁰ Humans do not consciously control their actions, but rather, are driven by unconscious motives.¹⁸¹ This idea was particularly frightening to the

¹⁷⁵ Dhúill, *Sex in Imagined Spaces*, 60-61.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 60-61.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 61.

¹⁷⁹ Kandel, *The Age of Insight*, 71.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 74.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

Viennese public, who feared the idea of unconscious motivators and the possible loss of control that resulted from them.¹⁸²

In his fifth introductory lecture from 1932, titled “Femininity,” Freud begins with a discussion of the biological differences between men and women, stating that these differences are more than just anatomical—they are also mental.¹⁸³ For instance, Freud associates masculinity with active traits, whereas femininity is associated with passive ones.¹⁸⁴ One of Freud’s earliest psychoanalytic theories, castration anxiety, also reflects the fin-de-siècle fear of female sexuality. According to Freud, during the mirror stage of childhood development, when a young boy first learns of the anatomical difference between the male and female sexes, he begins to fear the damage or loss of his own penis; conversely, girls become resentful over their lack of a penis, and develop penis envy.¹⁸⁵ Freud attributed the movement to emancipate women as an expression of their unconquerable penile envy.¹⁸⁶

Freud also discusses the psychology of sexuality in his “Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality” and “Female Sexuality.” In “Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality,” Freud describes female sexuality as “veiled in an impenetrable obscurity.”¹⁸⁷ Borrowing a term from Victorian colonialist texts on Africa, he uses the phrase “dark continent” to signify the mystery of female sexuality.¹⁸⁸ Through this classification, Freud suggests that female sexuality is an “unexplored territory,”

¹⁸² Doane, *Femmes Fatales*, 2.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 214.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 214.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 214.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 214.

¹⁸⁷ Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, trans. James Strackey (New York: Basic Books, 1962), 17.

¹⁸⁸ Doane, *Femmes Fatales*, 209.

an “enigmatic, unknowable place” that “confounds knowledge.”¹⁸⁹ By linking sexual and racial otherness, Freud aligns (white European) women with primitive races: both are enigmatic and dangerous. Like the “untouched” African, femininity is “pure” and “timeless.”¹⁹⁰ Building on contemporary evolutionary theory, Freud writes that the repression of sexuality is essential for civilization; unchecked sexuality, in contrast, is associated with primitive races.¹⁹¹

One manifestation of Freud’s views on femininity is demonstrated in the frequent depiction of the castrating femme fatale during the fin de siècle. Although the portrayal of woman as dangerous threats to men became an archetype of literature and art at this time, this trope has existed for centuries in the folklore and myths of numerous cultures.¹⁹² Paralleling the creation of the femme fatale is the notion of the man as victim. The implicit threat to masculinity by the amoral woman exemplified by the “fallen man” theme that commonly occurred in literary works from this period.¹⁹³ As Erich Kandel suggests in *The Age of Insight*, in the early twentieth-century, Viennese creators began to respond to Freudian ideas, that beneath a mask of civility, people unconsciously harbor erotic and aggressive impulses.¹⁹⁴ Freud’s theories contributed to the overtly sexual environment of fin-de-siècle Vienna, as well as encouraging the preoccupation with the expression of

¹⁸⁹ Doane, *Femmes Fatales*, 209.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 212.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 211.

¹⁹² Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 6.

¹⁹³ Janet Staiger, *Bad Women: Regulating Sexuality in Early American Cinema* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 154.

¹⁹⁴ Kandel, *The Age of Insight*, 14.

the inner, unconscious self by expressionist artists throughout Austria and Germany.¹⁹⁵

Whereas nineteenth-century art had previously portrayed “constrained and contemplative” women, modernist depictions of women focused on the vilified, dangerous and seductive femme fatale in various styles.¹⁹⁶ The modernist movement, which emerged circa 1900 in art, literature, and music,¹⁹⁷ radically broke from the past as it absorbed the new concepts of psychology and explored sexual themes and images.¹⁹⁸ The Viennese modernists were interested in self-examination, always looking inward, underneath the surface.¹⁹⁹ Modernist paintings depicted the unconscious motives of men and women, as seen in the works of Oskar Kokoschka, Egon Schiele, and Gustav Klimt.²⁰⁰

These three artists looked beyond Vienna’s constrained views of sexuality, seeking to reveal people’s “true” inner state.²⁰¹ Gustav Klimt (1862-1918), also labeled a symbolist, became particularly well known for his erotic paintings of the female body, including portraits and representations of the femme fatale. Many of Klimt’s paintings depicted sensuous, mythical women, and were often heavily gilded during his “Golden Phase” (circa 1899-1910).²⁰² The femme fatale also developed as a central figure in the paintings of the French symbolist Gustave Moreau (1826-

¹⁹⁵ Schorske, *Fin de Siècle Vienna*, xviii.

¹⁹⁶ Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity*, 4.

¹⁹⁷ Kandel, *The Age of Insight*, 6.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 14-16.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 90.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 90.

²⁰² Peter J. Buckley, “Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele, and Fin-de-siècle Vienna,” *American Journal of Psychiatry* 169, Issue 7 (July 2012): 692.

1898), the British illustrator Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), and in the earlier texts of Théophile Gautier (1811-1872) and Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867).²⁰³ The femme fatale came to be associated with numerous styles of the late nineteenth century, including symbolism, art nouveau, decadence, and orientalism.²⁰⁴ Images of highly sexual and dangerous women in fin-de-siècle art and literature were not unprecedented, however; the notion of women's threatening power is a common theme in history, mythology, and religion.²⁰⁵ Such images became increasingly prevalent during the fin de siècle, in part as a response to the burgeoning emancipation of women, and triggered by a fear of the destructive power of sexuality on society.²⁰⁶ In particular, fin-de-siècle artists increasingly portrayed the subject of the emasculating or castrating woman—a stark contrast to earlier, idealized depictions of feminine beauty. This stock type is illustrated by the recurring image of the decapitating woman, as seen in numerous fin-de-siècle depictions of Lilith, Salome, Delilah, sirens, and sphinxes.²⁰⁷ As a variant of the emasculating woman, the late nineteenth-century femme fatale is reinterpretation of the ancient and mythic trope, and a product of the fin de siècle's fear of "sexual difference" and perversion.²⁰⁸ As evidenced in art, literature, cinema, scientific inquiries, as well as in journalism and the mainstream media, fin-de-siècle Europe was obsessed with the idea of the femme fatale.

²⁰³ Doane, *Femmes Fatales*, 1.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.

²⁰⁵ Staiger, *Bad Women*, 149. Bordo, *Unbearable Weight*, 6.

²⁰⁶ Greg Buzwell, "Daughters of decadence: the New Woman in the Victorian fin de siècle," accessed May 1, 2017, <https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/daughters-of-decadence-the-new-woman-in-the-victorian-fin-de-siecle>.

²⁰⁷ Tania Albin, "Women at the Fin de Siècle – The Creation of the Femme Fatale," accessed May 1, 2017, <http://www.victorianweb.org/gender/albin/1.html>.

²⁰⁸ Doane, *Femmes Fatales*, 1-2.

In Audrone B. Willeke's article, "Frank Wedekind and the 'Frauenfrage,'" the author writes that "Wedekind's work as a whole can be viewed as an attempt to come to terms with the woman question."²⁰⁹ To Wedekind, the "liberated" woman embraces her inherent sexuality, using it to gain power in a patriarchal society.²¹⁰ Like Weininger's dichotomy of femininity (*Mutter und Dirne*), Wedekind also subscribed to the notion that the "natural fulfillment" of woman was found in her sexual and maternal experiences.²¹¹ As Weininger posits in *Sex and Character*, "the disposition for and inclination to prostitution is as organic in woman as is the capacity for motherhood."²¹² For Wedekind, femininity was defined by sexuality, and women struggled to conform to societal expectations of bourgeois marriage. As demonstrated in his 1890 play, *Kinder und Narren*, the playwright was not always an advocate of marriage, due to the tendency of wives to be treated as objects.²¹³

In his article, "Marriage as Prostitution in Berg's *Lulu*," Silvio José dos Santos explores fin-de-siècle views of female sexuality, writing that, like prostitution, marriage existed as a form of masculine control.²¹⁴ The nature of woman contrasts the ordered, rational world of man, of civilized society. As dos Santos writes, "But prostitutes are not to be blamed for their actions. Because sexuality is part of women's nature... it is not related to morality, which is a socio-cultural product created by man."²¹⁵ In Wedekind's second Lulu play, *Die Büchse der Pandora*, when

²⁰⁹ Willeke, "Frank Wedekind and the 'Frauenfrage,'" 26.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 28.

²¹¹ Willeke, "Frank Wedekind and the 'Frauenfrage,'" 28.

²¹² *Ibid.*, 28.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 28.

²¹⁴ Dos Santos, "Marriage as Prostitution in Berg's *Lulu*," 143.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 145.

Lulu's current husband, Dr. Schön discovers his wife's lovers hidden throughout his home, he attempts to force Lulu to commit suicide in order to save his reputation. Dr. Schön is a representation of the patriarchal order, the ultimate symbol of masculine control. As Willeke states, "In the 'femme fatale,' Lulu, Wedekind portrays such as 'Urgestalt des Weibes' who by her very being threatens with chaos the ordered male world."²¹⁶ In the Paris Casino scene of *Die Büchse der Pandora*, Casti-Piani is blackmailing Lulu for the murder of her husband, Dr. Schön. He threatens to sell her to a brothel in Cairo, the House of Oikonomopulos. Initially, Lulu argues with him, stating "I wouldn't do in that business" and "The life in such a house can never make a woman of my stamp happy."²¹⁷ As Casti-Piani's threats increase, Lulu grows increasingly desperate, stating, "I'll go with you to American or to China, but I can't let myself be sold of my own accord! That is worse than prison!"²¹⁸ Later, she urges her blackmailer to reconsider, stating, "I can not sell the only thing that ever was my own!"²¹⁹

In the final scene of play, Lulu's despair is apparent. Although she achieves control over her male-dominated surroundings with the death of Schön, her power is fleeting; in the end, Lulu must resort to prostitution in order to support herself, sacrificing her sexuality for her survival. In the end, Lulu's murder at the hands of Jack the Ripper functions as a way for the male world to re-establish control, and to restore the order of bourgeoisie society. Wedekind's works, especially the Lulu plays, explore the *Frauenfrage*, the differences of the sexes, and the tragedy that

²¹⁶ Willeke, "Frank Wedekind," 28.

²¹⁷ Wedekind, *Play: One*, 34.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 38.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 39.

befalls woman—a natural being who contrasts with the societal world in which she exists; her difference, her wildness and open sexuality are a threat, and must be suppressed.

2.6 Expressionist Stagings of Wedekind's Lulu Plays

In addition to decadence and symbolism, the culture of the Viennese fin de siècle can be seen in the expressionist movement. With its emphasis on introspective experience, expressionism is closely associated with Freud's theory of the repressed unconscious, and occurred in the fields of art, literature, music, dance, theater, and architecture during this time.²²⁰ Expressionist works rejected traditional Western aesthetic values by representing real objects or people in distorted ways, exposing the false moral values of bourgeois Viennese society.²²¹ These artists drew on contemporary themes involving the dark, negative side of urban living, in which people lived under extreme psychological pressure.²²² These works sought to expose our inner experience and to explore the hidden world of the psyche.²²³

In the theatrical realm, the expressionist movement occupied a brief period of time, mostly occurring in early 1900s. Examples of expressionist theatre include Oskar Kokoschka's 1909 play, *Mörderer, Hoffnung der Frauen* (*Murderer, the Hope of Woman*), considered the first fully expressionist work for the theater. Kokoschka's

²²⁰ Shulamith Behr, David Fanning, and Douglas Jarman, eds., *Expressionism Reassessed* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1993), 1-10.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, 1-10.

²²² Alan Lessem, "Schönberg and the Crisis of Expressionism," *Music and Letters* LV, issue 4 (October 1974): 429-432, accessed December 1, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ml/LV.4.429>.

²²³ *Ibid.*, 435.

play features the common trope of woman as scapegoat or sacrificial victim. Often focusing on the symbolic, expressionist theatre works frequently presented “mythic types” rather than developed characters, and centered on the grotesque, the degeneration of social values, and the struggle against bourgeois values or established authority.²²⁴ The staging of expressionist theatrical works typically included stark lighting, which accentuated shadows and illuminated key areas, in addition to a sparse or bare stage, with few props—which were always symbolic in nature. The scenery is abstract and distorted, full of angular or unusual shapes and lines.²²⁵

Similar to other expressionist theatrical works, early productions of Wedekind’s Lulu plays were often staged to emphasize their psychological and introspective nature. His plays *Frühlings Erwachen*, *Erdgeist*, and *Die Büchse der Pandora* are all identified as expressionist dramas. Performances of the Lulu plays frequently combined *Erdgeist* and *Die Büchse der Pandora*, such as in productions by Erich Engel, Friedrich Sebrecht, and Otto Falckenberg.²²⁶ By the mid-1920s Wedekind’s popularity began to decline; however, in 1926, the Lulu plays experienced a sudden revival under the direction of Erich Engel and the Staatliches Schauspielhaus’s Leopold Jessner. Jessner was the guiding force behind the Staatliches Theatre, often taking classic works and placing them under new direction, seeking to create a fresh, unique revival that was culturally relevant.²²⁷ Engel and Jessner were particularly drawn to the Lulu plays because of their focus

²²⁴ Behr, Fanning, and Jarman, eds., *Expressionism Reassessed*, 1-10.

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Jarman, *Alban Berg, Lulu*, 20.

²²⁷ Ibid., 4.

on social issues, and emphasized these in their productions.²²⁸ Their 1926 production for the Berlin Staatliches Schauspielhaus re-popularized the Lulu plays, and virtually all stagings after 1926 choose to use their conflated adaptation.

As Brian Simms asserts in his article, “Berg’s Lulu and Theatre of the 1920s,” “Engel’s approach to rewriting the plays was to select hints or suggestions in Wedekind’s original and to dwell on and reinforce them as a basis of a coherent and dramatically unified production.”²²⁹ Rather than simply combining the two plays, Engel completed his own, new arrangement, revising both textual and scene elements of the works.²³⁰ Critics praised his condensed version, which consists of seven acts and lasts slightly over two hours. Some of Engel’s staging choices can still be seen in present-day *Lulu* productions. For instance, he was the first to assign a specific animal to each character in the Prologue, whereas Wedekind only specifically identified Lulu with the snake.²³¹ Although Wedekind’s plays include no specific directions on casting, double roles were sometimes used for practical or financial reasons. In contrast, Engel’s production utilized doubled roles for dramatic purposes, in order to further support Lulu’s role as a victim of male society.²³² Following Engel’s production, the use of double roles for both practical and dramatic purposes became standard in stagings of the work.²³³

²²⁸ Bryan R. Simms, “Berg’s ‘Lulu’ and Theatre of the 1920s,” *Cambridge Opera Journal* 6, no. 2 (Jul., 1994), 149. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/823822>.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 150.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 149.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, 149-150.

²³² *Ibid.*, 150.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 151.

In 1928, Otto Falckenberg directed Wedekind's *Lulu* plays at the Munich Kammerspiele, using a new conflation of the two works that he wrote himself.²³⁴ Falckenberg had been the director of the Munich Kammerspiele since 1917, and had earned a reputation for his unique and modern stagings.²³⁵ Like Jessner, Falckenberg's production was expressionist in style, both incorporating a sense of realism and utilizing fantastic elements.²³⁶ Although the acting was realistic, the set design was the opposite—effectively highlighting the psychological aspect of *Lulu*'s story.²³⁷ Similar to Engel's production, Falckenberg's *Lulu* adaptation is seven acts long and calls for doubled roles. Simms writes of the Falckenberg production, describing it as “in the style of contemporary *Zeittheater*, with a slick, high-speed vision of a big-city life in the 1920s.”²³⁸ Adding to the modern feel, the production utilized several new technologies, such as the use of film and a gramophone.²³⁹ Foreshadowing the scandalous Regietheater stagings of Berg's opera, in the Paris casino scene of his Wedekind adaptation, Falckenberg even added a storyline about trafficking cocaine. The show also featured orchestral music by Ilia Jacobson, as well as jazz, tangos, and black bottoms. Falckenberg's staging centered on the circus-setting of the *Erdegeist* Prologue, and the production depicts the opposing worlds of demons and humans, where *Lulu*, Schigolch, and Jack the Ripper belong to the “spirit realm” and operate without souls, attempting to gain power over the human

²³⁴ Simms, “Berg's ‘*Lulu*,” 152.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 152.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, 152.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, 153.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 153.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, 153.

realm.²⁴⁰ Through these productions, directors emphasize the psychological and expressionist qualities of Wedekind's two Lulu plays. Multiple aspects of these early stagings, such as Jessner's conflated text, Engel's animal assignments in the Prologue, and his use of double roles in the final scene, would go on to influence later works on Lulu, including Berg's opera. Most significantly, these productions set the precedent for more radical interpretations of the Lulu character, as she is transformed and reimagined according to her ever-shifting socio-cultural surroundings.

2.7 Film Depictions of Lulu in the Weimar Republic

In early stagings of Wedekind's plays, Lulu is depicted as the eternally changeable Earth Spirit, a destroyer of men who is eventually murdered by one.²⁴¹ The archetype of the symbolically castrating femme fatale continued to evolve in the years following the turn of the century; in interwar Germany, the independent, sexual women came to be viewed as inherently criminal, threatening to the status-quo, and harmful to the country. The term "Weimar" is an unofficial historical designation for the German State between the years of 1919 and 1933—also called interwar Germany—following World War I, when the country's first democratic constitution was written. Weimar Germany was characterized by a struggle between tradition and modernity.²⁴² In his text *Critique of Cynical Reason*, Peter Sloterdijk links Weimar cynicism with the crisis of male identity, provoked in part

²⁴⁰ Simms, "Berg's 'Lulu,'" 153.

²⁴¹ Ibid., 152.

²⁴² Sharp, "Gender Relations in Weimar Berlin," 218.

by Germany's defeat in World War I.²⁴³ Adding to the anxiety was the changing role of women in society, due partially to the rise of the women's emancipation movement.²⁴⁴ In her article, "Gender Relations in Weimar Berlin," Ingrid Sharp writes, "Between 1921 and 1923, hyperinflation blurred social distinctions, challenging pre-war moral certainties as the traditional bourgeois values of order and thrift brought poverty and social sinking..."²⁴⁵

Building on the ahistoricism of the fin de siècle, Weimar Germany rejected romantic idealism and sexual repression; rather, it was noted for its inherent cynicism, constant questioning, and doubt of previously learned truths.²⁴⁶ Weimar was modernism embodied, with styles such as expressionism, Dadaism, Bauhaus, atonality and dodecaphony, as well as innovations in fields of literature, art, architecture, philosophy, music, theatre and cinema. In *Femmes Fatales*, Mary Ann Doane describes the Weimar social scene as decadent, degenerate, and "obsessed with the nonessential."²⁴⁷ Despite its "strategic immoralism" and "pervasive sexual cynicism," Weimar Germany was characterized by permissiveness, openness, and an almost exhibitionist attitude, with sexual expression operating outside the limits of law or societal convention.²⁴⁸ Unlike fin-de-siècle studies, which sought to discover the "truth" of sexuality, Weimar Germany believed that truth could only be found in

²⁴³Peter Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason, First Edition* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 144. Sharp, "Gender Relations in Weimar Berlin," 205-6.

²⁴⁴ Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason*, 144.

²⁴⁵ Sharp, "Gender Relations," 205.

²⁴⁶ Doane, *Femmes Fatales*, 143.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 146.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 143-4.

“the mask, the game, the deceptiveness of vision associated with the crossing of the boundaries of sexual identity.”²⁴⁹

Weimar was fascinated with sexual transgression, exploring taboo subjects such as pornography, prostitution, androgyny, and homosexuality.²⁵⁰ In interwar Germany, there was wild nightlife, cross-dressing, the cabaret, pansexuality, polysexuality, and fetishes; there were bars and clubs for all types of sexual preferences and non-binary gender expressions. There were orgies, prostitutes, public nudity, sexual experimentation, hedonism, and all imaginable types of sexual debauchery and excess— much of it fueled by recreational cocaine and alcohol use.²⁵¹ There was crime, prostitution, drug dealing, gangs, and an underground black market.²⁵² The excessive and deprave sexual liberty of Weimar became intertwined with psychological fears: as Doane writes, “In Weimar Germany, exposure of the flesh became tantamount to a confrontation with the facts, with the real.”²⁵³

Paralleling the liberal attitudes of Weimar society and culture, the creation of a democratic constitution in 1919 afforded women more freedoms, such as the right to vote and the opportunity to join the workforce. The New Woman that emerged in Weimar Germany refused to be limited to the traditional role of housewife and mother. As Elsa Herrmann wrote in her 1929 essay, “So ist die neue Frau” (“This is

²⁴⁹ Doane, *Femmes Fatales*, 143.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 142.

²⁵¹ Carl Ludwig Scheilch wrote a paper in 1921 entitled “Cocaineism”; Freud also wrote an essay on the advantages of cocaine.

²⁵² Mel Gordon, *Voluptuous Panic: The Erotic World of Weimar Berlin* (Los Angeles: Feral House, 2000), 1.

²⁵³ Doane, *Femmes Fatales*, 143.

the New Woman”), “the modern woman refuses to lead the life of a lady and a housewife, preferring to depart from the ordained path and go her own way.”²⁵⁴ Rather than focusing on starting families— deemed a priority due to the declining birthrate following the first World War—these New Women “selfishly” prioritized themselves, postponing or refusing marriage and motherhood, which was seen as the “cure” to heal a broken society. Pressured to conform to traditional societal expectations of womanhood, the New Woman of Weimar became a scapegoat for the multitude of issues faced by Germany at this time.

As women started to gain equality, society began to see her new status as a threat to normative gender roles.²⁵⁵ Simultaneously, media was becoming more prevalent in the daily lives of Germans: the availability of mass media in the 1920s meant that art, literature, radio and cinema reached a broader audience. Germans were introduced to the New Woman through movies such as *Pandora’s Box* and the paintings of Otto Dix. In her portrayal of Lulu in G. W. Pabst’s film, American actress Louise Brooks (1906-1985), embodied the New Woman of Weimar: free-spirited, independent, and androgynous. Appearing in films such as *Asphalt* (1929), *Tagebuch einer Verlorenen* (*Diary of a Lost Girl*, 1929), *Der blaue Engel* (*The Blue Angel*, 1930), *Metropolis* (1927), *Die freudlose Gasse* (*The Joyless Street*, 1925), and others, the New Woman was easily identifiable by her *Bubikopf* (bobbed hair) or Eton crop (the shortest bobbed hairstyle, in the style of English school boys). As seen in German cinema from this period, the New Woman of Weimar was typically depicted as

²⁵⁴ Elsa Herrmann, *So ist die neue Frau* (Hellerau: Avalun Verlag, 1929), 32-43.

²⁵⁵ Boak, *Women in the Weimar Republic*, 39.

hypersexual, and could be identified by her felt cloche hat, silk stockings, and short skirt.

In contrast, art from this time depicted the New Woman as unromantic, masculine and androgynous, as exemplified in Otto Dix's painting *Portrait of the Journalist Sylvia von Harden*. Here, von Harden, Dix's subject, is devoid of femininity; she smokes and drinks openly in public. Whereas Weimarian art portrayed the New Woman as overtly masculine, in contrast, the mainstream media portrayed the independent women as super feminine, overtly sensual, criminal and dangerous. In movies from the years between 1919 and 1933, the New Woman was characterized by her cold, selfish, and unpatriotic nature; in order to support her independence, she resorted to immoral methods to support herself—namely, crime and prostitution.

The popularity of short hairstyles on women during this period signifies the new social role of women. As women were required to join the workforce during the First World War, shell-shocked soldiers returned home to find altered gender roles and independent women. Her short hair was more convenient for work at factory jobs or other low-skilled industry positions. As Barbara Hales writes, "the independent woman who was assuming a new identity as a result of her participation in the work force."²⁵⁶ Instead of focusing on her role as mother, wife, and housekeeper, preferred to keep her wartime job, and to discover her own path in life. Despite the unique opportunities allowed to Weimar women, she still had to tolerate sexism and discrimination. The new German constitution continued to

²⁵⁶ Hales, "Dancer in the Dark," 534.

control women through its regulation of female bodies: abortion became illegal, access to birth control was difficult, and sexist divorce and work laws still treated women as unequal and subservient to men. At the time, it was believed that if women inherently more passive and reserved than her male counterpart; however if she were to succumb to her natural instincts, her criminality far exceeds that of man.²⁵⁷ As Sharp writes of interwar Germany's conception of the criminal woman, "Women of all classes... used their sexuality as a survival mechanism and anyone with access to dollars could live out their darkest fantasies."²⁵⁸

A product of Weimar cinema, the first film version of Wedekind's Lulu plays was the 1923 German silent film, *Erdgeist*. Directed by Leopold Jessner and starring Asta Nielsen as Lulu, *Erdgeist* was based directly on Wedekind's two plays, and was styled in a similarly avant-garde and expressionist manner. Asta Nielsen, the great Danish actress and one of the earliest international movie stars, known for her androgynous figure, her large, dark eyes, and her blank, mask-like, expressionless face. Nielsen often performed the role of strong, liberated and passionate women, of femmes fatales punished for their independence.²⁵⁹ However, due to the erotic nature of her performances, Nielsen's films were censored in the United States, where they are, consequently, mostly unknown.²⁶⁰

Despite the popularity of Jessner's film, Lulu would not achieve her iconic status until the 1929 film, *Die Büchse der Pandora* (*Pandora's Box*). Directed by

²⁵⁷ Hales, "Women as Sexual Criminal," 106.

²⁵⁸ Sharp, "Gender Relations," 205.

²⁵⁹ Thomas Gladysz, "Danger and Desire: 6 Great Lulus," *Huffington Post* (Nov. 5, 2015), https://www.huffingtonpost.com/thomas-gladysz/danger-and-desire-6-great_b_8474536.html.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., https://www.huffingtonpost.com/thomas-gladysz/danger-and-desire-6-great_b_8474536.html.

Austrian filmmaker Georg Wilhelm Pabst (also known as G. W. Pabst), the German silent film presents the plot of Wedekind's two Lulu plays in a single movie. *Die Büchse der Pandora* is often categorized as a silent melodrama, due to its sensational plot, emotional focus, and its portrayal of characters as types rather than realistic people.²⁶¹ In *Pandora's Box*, Louise Brooks stars as the seductive and naïve Lulu, whose raw sexuality inevitably results in destruction and death. With her boyish figure and short bob hairstyle, Brook's depiction of Lulu embodied the androgynous style so prevalent in Weimar Berlin. Pabst's Lulu is the epitome of Erich Wulffen's sexual criminal woman (*Triebmensch*), acting on instinct and eluding masculine control.²⁶² The expressionist qualities of Wedekind's Lulu plays are maintained in Pabst's film, as demonstrated in the stark sets and shadowy lighting. Although it received negative reviews upon its initial release, after being re-discovered in the 1950s, *Die Büchse der Pandora* has since become one of the most well known silent films.²⁶³

The story of Pandora's Box—both the Greek myth and Wedekind's play—was widely known in the early 1900s, allowing Pabst to take liberties with the plot in his film.²⁶⁴ Like the Wedekind plays, Pabst's movie revolves around themes of sexual excess and social disintegration.²⁶⁵ Critics of *Pandora's Box* denounced Pabst for his abandonment of realism, condemning his focus on “the lure of the image”: the film centers on the decorative, feminine, and erotic, presenting fragmented and

²⁶¹ *Pandora's Box* (Commentary), G. W. Pabst, dir. (New York: The Criterion Collection, 1929) 2006, DVD.

²⁶² Sharp, “Gender Relations,” 213.

²⁶³ *Pandora's Box* (Commentary), DVD.

²⁶⁴ *Pandora's Box* (Commentary), DVD.

²⁶⁵ Doane, *Femmes Fatales*, 145.

abstract images.²⁶⁶ Consistent with modernist art, the images in *Pandora's Box* are decontextualized and despacialized, serving no diegetic purpose.²⁶⁷ Pabst's film frequently emphasizes the male gaze, communicating emotion through close-up shots of his character's eyes.²⁶⁸ Lulu's derealization reflects her magnetic allure: Doane states, "Desire belongs to an irrational space.... In her most desirous (and disruptive) state, Lulu is *outside* of the *mise en scène*. There is a somewhat fantastic hallucinatory quality attached to her image."²⁶⁹ Like the Earth Spirit of Goethe's *Faust, Eine Tragödie*, Pabst's *Die Büchse der Pandora* represents Lulu as mythic and timeless, existing in the spaceless realm of the idea, rather than the factual. Her allure stems from her unrestrained nature; any attempt to control her sexuality—such as through marriage—results in fatal and disastrous consequences.

Unlike her depiction in Wedekind's plays, Pabst's Lulu is portrayed as "blank" and "devoid of thought"; despite her power, she has no conscious control over her actions—rather, her primitive, animal side motivates them.²⁷⁰ Lulu functions as a "narrative mechanism" and a provoker of events: everything in the film happens either through or around her.²⁷¹ However, the chaos surrounding Lulu is a projection of masculine guilt, expressed through the role of woman as scapegoat.²⁷² Her prison escape means that her punishment has yet to be delivered, leading to her inevitable murder by Jack the Ripper. Her death represents man's revenge,

²⁶⁶ Doane, *Femmes Fatales*, 146-47.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 147-8.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 147-8.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 150 and 156.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 152-3.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 152.

²⁷² *Ibid.*, 154.

eradicating her dangerous femininity. Ultimately, Pabst's film leaves the viewer with a sense of uncertainty: is Lulu guilty? Is she a victim? Is she a subject or an object?

2.8 Conclusions

After her creation by Champsaur, Lulu inspired Wedekind's two turn-of-the-century plays, *Erdgeist* and *Die Büchse der Pandora*, in addition to two German silent films. By examining the origins and many transformations of Lulu, this chapter investigates the evolution of an iconic character across multiple artistic genres and expressions. Lulu's origins stem from multiple socio-cultural environments, reinterpreted by the hands of numerous authors and artists. She is a product of the Parisian circus, surrounded by clowns and pantomime, steeped in a bohemian atmosphere. She is the castrating woman of the fin de siècle, a Nietzschean half-animal, a scapegoat for the id-like underbelly of civilized society. She is an extension of the ancient, archetypal femme fatale, like Pandora, Eve, Lilith and Delilah before her. She is the androgynous Pierrot, the tragic, naïve fool so often depicted in nineteenth-century art. She is the Weimarian New Woman, independent and sexual, challenging the patriarchy through her empowered femininity. All of these aspects of Lulu create the sign-system of her complete character as Berg was first exposed to her. Like her Portrait, Lulu is reflective of those who surround her and shape her. As the following chapters will demonstrate, these early elements of Lulu's character continue to influence contemporary stagings of Lulu, as she shifts, changes, and reappears in new and transformed ways.

CHAPTER 3. BERG'S LULU AND THE COMPOSER AS ULTIMATE AUTHORITY

On May 29, 1905, a twenty-year-old Alban Berg attended a private Viennese staging of Wedekind's *Die Büchse der Pandora*, which was accompanied by an introductory lecture by famed Austrian writer and satirist Karl Kraus. The impressions that this performance made on the young Berg, who was seated in the sixth row of the small Trianon theatre, would greatly impact the formative ideas for his second opera, *Lulu*, and would continue to occupy the composer's mind for the remainder of his life.²⁷³ Not only was Berg influenced by Wedekind's portrayal of Lulu, her earlier manifestations within varied genres and contexts likely touched his development of the character and her story. This chapter examines Berg's interpretation of Lulu and the genesis of his opera, with emphasis on his transformation of Wedekind's plays into his opera libretto, as well as the basic operatic structure and dodecaphonic techniques of *Lulu*. In addition, this chapter will explore the unfinished nature of Berg's score, the posthumous history of the work, the role that Berg's widow, Helene, had on the fate of the opera's third act, and Friedrich Cerha's eventual completion of the opera in 1979. It also examines the numerous socio-cultural factors that influenced Berg's creation of *Lulu*, enhancing the contextual discussions of the previous chapter. Finally, chapter 3 explores two *Lulu* stagings that seek to create true or authentic versions of the opera: the Austrian première of *Lulu* at the Theatre an der Wien in 1962, directed by Otto Schenk, and John Dexter's production for the Metropolitan Opera in 1977. By exploring both traditional and updated aspects of each of these productions, this

²⁷³ Jarman, *Alban Berg, Lulu*, 2.

chapter examines the transformation of a canonic work as it develops on the theatrical stage, as well as considerations of Cerha's completed third act as an "authentic" extension of Berg's work.

3.1 Berg's *Lulu* Libretto and Synopsis

According to accounts by Frida Semler, a friend of the Bergs who spent the summers of 1903 and 1904 with the family at their country residence, the Berghof on the Ossiachersee, Alban Berg first read *Erdgeist* in the early 1900s, when he was around nineteen-years-old, after the Reinhardt production made the play famous.²⁷⁴ Berg would revisit the Lulu character in 1927, when he began composition of his second opera.²⁷⁵ Although he originally intended to base the work on Gerhart Hauptmann's fairy tale drama *Und Pippa tanzt*, his negotiations to secure the rights for Hauptmann's play failed.²⁷⁶ Shortly thereafter, in the autumn of 1928, Berg began negotiating with Wedekind's widow, Tilly, for the rights to the Lulu plays. Anticipating a positive outcome, Berg began composition of the opera before negotiations were finalized. Negotiations were completed by July 1929, and Berg wrote to his publishers, Universal Edition, that he had successfully earned the rights to Wedekind's *Ergeist* and *Die Büchse der Pandora*.²⁷⁷ In Berg's opera libretto, he

²⁷⁴ Donald Harris, "Berg and Miss Frida," *Alban Berg Symposium*, Alban Berg Studien II, Rudolf Klein, ed. (Vienna, Universal Edition, 1981), 200.

Perle, *The Operas of Alban Berg, Volume Two: Lulu*, 39.

Frida Semler was the young American daughter of a business acquaintance of Berg's brother Charley in New York. Semler remembers copies of Wedekind's first play being read by Alban and his siblings while she stayed with the family at the Berghof as a paying guest in the summers of 1903 and 1904.

Jarman, *Alban Berg, Lulu*, 1.

²⁷⁵ Perle, *The Operas of Alban Berg, Volume Two: Lulu*, 39.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 40.

²⁷⁷ Jarman, *Alban Berg, Lulu*, 3.

converted the dramatist's two Lulu plays into five scenes, which he then developed into an opera in three acts.²⁷⁸ In a letter to composer Arnold Schoenberg in August of 1930, Berg wrote about the challenges of the adaptation for his libretto, stating that he cut 4/5ths of the two manuscripts—a difficult task in itself—while still preserving the playwright's writing style and story.²⁷⁹ Berg's personal library contained an annotated copy of the plays, revealing that the composer worked from a 1920 edition of Wedekind's *Gesammelte Werke*, published by Georg Müller in Munich.

In developing his libretto, it is probable that Berg was influenced by directorial decisions in the production of the Lulu plays (a conflated version of *Erdgeist* and *Die Büchse der Pandora*) by Otto Falckenberg at the Munich Kammerspiele in 1928, which was extensively covered by the press, and which Berg likely knew of.²⁸⁰ Although some critics at the time disparaged Engel's approach to double casting in his production of the plays for the Staatliches Schauspielhaus, Berg chose to further this relationship in his opera.²⁸¹ In his article, "Marriage as Prostitution in Berg's *Lulu*," Silvio José Dos Santos asserts that the multiple roles of Berg's characters, in addition to the use of leitmotifs, establish "symbolic connections that transcend practical matters."²⁸² Erich Engel used doubled-roles in his popular Lulu production for more than economic purposes: by casting her deceased husbands as her clients in the final scene, he emphasizes Lulu's role as a

²⁷⁸ Jarman, *Alban Berg, Lulu*, 40-1.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 20.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

²⁸¹ Dos Santos, "Marriage as Prostitution in Berg's *Lulu*," 146.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 143-182.

scapegoat for male society.²⁸³ This theme would become an integral element of Berg's opera, an essential element of the composer's own interpretation of the iconic Lulu.

Berg maintains many elements of Wedekind's plays in his newly adapted opera libretto. *Lulu* begins with a Prologue set in a circus-like environment, complete with an Animal-Tamer and clown. The Animal-Tamer, holding a trainer's whip, invites the audience to view his "menagerie" of dangerous beasts. Each animal represents a character in Berg's opera; the prize of the collection is the serpent, embodied by Lulu. In the opening scene of the opera (I.1), Lulu, who is married to the Medical Specialist (Dr. Goll), is having her Portrait painted by the Painter. She is dressed as Pierrot. Dr. Schön, a wealthy and powerful newspaper editor, and his son Alwa, a composer, are present. Upon their departure, the Painter pursues Lulu romantically; she resists, but eventually succumbs to his advances. When her husband, the Medical Specialist, unexpectedly comes home and discovers the pair in a compromising position, he dies from shock.

In the second scene of the opera (I.2), Lulu is married to the Painter. Schigolch, a decrepit old man from Lulu's past, visits their home, but departs after Lulu gives him some money. Dr. Schön arrives and informs Lulu that he is engaged to a respectable woman. He insists that she no longer visit him at his home, putting an end to their affair. Alone with the Painter, Dr. Schön tells him the truth about his wife's past. The Painter commits suicide.

²⁸³ Dos Santos, "Marriage as Prostitution in Berg's *Lulu*," 143-182.

The third scene of Act I (I.3) is set in Lulu's dressing room. Lulu, who is performing as a dancer, is called on stage. When she realizes that Dr. Schön and his fiancée are in the audience, Lulu faints and is taken back to her dressing room. She refuses to perform. When she is alone with Dr. Schön, Lulu manipulates him; the scene ends with Lulu dictating a letter written by Schön to his fiancée, breaking off their engagement.

In the opening scene of Act II (II.1), Lulu is married to Dr. Schön. He is jealous of his wife's many admirers, even of the attentions of the Countess Geschwitz. Leaving their home for a brief time, Dr. Schön returns to find Lulu's devotees—an Acrobat, the Countess, a Schoolboy, and even his own son, Alwa—hidden throughout the house. Enraged, Dr. Schön produces a gun and demands that Lulu shoot herself in order to save his reputation. Dr. Schön points the revolver, still in Lulu's hand, at Lulu herself. Suddenly, the Schoolboy cries for help. Schön turns to face the Schoolboy, and his back is exposed to Lulu. She fires five shots at her husband. Dr. Schön dies. Despite Lulu's desperate pleas, Alwa calls the police. As the scene ends, a Film Interlude (occurring between the first and second scenes of Act II, II.1 and II.2) depicts Lulu's arrest, trial, conviction and imprisonment.

The second scene of Act II (II.2) takes place in the same room as the previous one, in the now-abandoned home of Dr. Schön. Lulu's admirers are in the midst of implementing her escape from prison. The Countess smuggles herself into prison, disguises herself as Lulu, and takes her place. The Acrobat plans to make Lulu his partner in a circus performance; however, when she arrives, the Acrobat is shocked by her sickly appearance. The Acrobat leaves, threatening to expose Lulu as the

escaped murderess of Dr. Schön. Alwa confesses his love to Lulu, and the pair agrees to go away together.

In the first scene of Act III (III.1), Alwa and Lulu, disguised as a French Countess, are entertaining guests in their new, luxurious Parisian home. The company excitedly discusses the rising value of their railway shares. Both the Acrobat and Marquis are blackmailing Lulu for the murder of Dr. Schön. Lulu confides in Schigolch, and they devise a plot to murder the Acrobat. Suddenly, news breaks that the railway shares have crashed. In the chaos, Lulu changes clothes with a groom and escapes with Alwa just before the police arrive to arrest her.

In the last scene of Berg's opera (III.2), Lulu, Alwa and Schigolch are living in London. Impoverished and destitute, Lulu is reduced to walking the streets as a prostitute. The Countess arrives, bringing the remnants of Lulu's Portrait. Lulu's first client, the Professor, is a double of her deceased husband, the Medical Specialist. Her second client, the Negro—the double of the Painter—murders Alwa. Her third client, Jack the Ripper—the double of Dr. Schön—haggles with Lulu over money. Suddenly, we hear a scream offstage: Jack has murdered Lulu. As he leaves, Jack stabs the Countess, who expresses her unending love for Lulu and dies.

3.2 The Compositional and Early Performance History of *Lulu*

By selecting Wedekind's *Lulu* plays for his second opera, Berg deliberately made a controversial choice; he knew about the "shocking" nature of the plays and was aware of the continual censorship of Wedekind's works earlier in the

century.²⁸⁴ Like many of his peers, the young Berg considered Wedekind to be the epitome of modernity.²⁸⁵ In November 1907, Berg wrote a letter to Frida Semler, a family friend, stating, “Wedekind—the really new direction—the emphasis on the sensual in modern works!! . . . At last we have come to the realization that sensuality is not a weakness, does not mean a surrender to one’s own will. Rather is it an immense strength that lies in us—the pivot of all being and thinking.”²⁸⁶

By the time Berg began work on his second opera, the *Lulu* plays were no longer banned, as censorship had been abolished in Germany in 1918; by 1927, Wedekind’s works were frequently performed by some of the greatest actors of the time.²⁸⁷ However, they remained controversial, and were still widely regarded by the majority of the public as obscene, especially to those who were conservative or religious.²⁸⁸ Berg’s deliberate choice of such an “immoral” text for his second opera reflects a trend of many Viennese artists at this time: deliberately seeking to jolt audiences, perhaps as retaliation towards the complacency of bourgeois society.²⁸⁹ As Douglas Jarman writes, “By choosing *Lulu*, Berg was also revealing—as he had done earlier in his choice of Büchner’s *Woyzeck*—his awareness of and sensitivity to the literary and artistic thought of the period.”²⁹⁰

In Rosemary Hilmar’s *Katalog der Musikhandschriften, Schriften und Studien Alban Bergs*, the official catalogue of Berg manuscript holdings held in the Austrian

²⁸⁴ Jarman, *Alban Berg, Lulu*, 18.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

²⁸⁶ Perle, “The Tireless Seductress.”

²⁸⁷ Jarman, *Alban Berg, Lulu*, 18.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 18.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

National Library, the author cites a large chart by the composer, dated July 19, 1927, which shows several of the processes Berg used to derive subsidiary sets from the opera's Basic Set (discussed in more detail below).²⁹¹ As evidenced by the date of this chart, it is clear that Berg began composing his second opera in 1927; however, biographic accounts of the composer suggest *Lulu* was composed beginning in 1929, when negotiations with Tilly Wedekind had been concluded.

By the end of 1928, Berg had completed the opera's libretto, and he continued composing the music until his untimely death on December 24, 1935. Commissions for the concert aria "Der Wien" in 1929 and the Violin Concerto in January 1935 stalled Berg's work on *Lulu*; following these interruptions, Berg worked on completing the rest of the opera. By 1934, Berg had finished his *Lulu* short score, on which he based his composition of the five-movement concert suite, *Symphonische Stücke aus der Oper 'Lulu,'* (*Symphonic Pieces from the Opera 'Lulu'*), intended to attract attention to the opera elsewhere in Europe.²⁹² The *Lulu Suite*, as it is better known, premiered in Berlin in 1934, conducted by Erich Kleiber, and was attended by the composer a mere two weeks before his passing. He left behind an unfinished musical score for the opera: at the time of his death in 1935, Berg had completed the entire libretto, the music for Acts 1 and 2, and the first 360 bars of Act 3, the third act interlude, and the final Grave from the *Lulu Suite* adagio.²⁹³

²⁹¹ Jarman, *Alban Berg, Lulu*, 4.

²⁹² This orchestral suite consisted of the rondo, the Film music, the Lied der Lulu of Act 2, the interlude between the first two scenes of Act 3, and the final adagio.

²⁹³ Douglas Jarman, "Berg, Alban," *Grove Music Online* (July 9, 2018), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

In addition to his manuscript, Berg created a short score, or condensed score, of *Lulu*. At the time of his death, only four short passages of the short score remained incomplete: about 87 bars of 1326 total in Act III, with 940 measures left to be orchestrated. Since the main vocal lines of these passages were complete, they only needed to be paired with orchestral or secondary vocal lines. After her husband's death, Helene Berg contacted Arnold Schoenberg, Anton Webern and Alexander von Zemlinsky, in hopes that one of Alban's peers could complete his third act.²⁹⁴ After consideration, the three men agreed that the opera's completion would be possible without the composition of any new music. As Willi Reich, Berg's "authorized" biographer, wrote in a 1936 edition of *Musical Quarterly*, "Berg left a complete and very carefully worked out preliminary score of *Lulu*. Only the instrumentation of a few places in the middle of the last act was not finished and this could easily be carried out from the given material by some friend familiar with Berg's work."²⁹⁵ Although Helena hoped that Schoenberg would complete the opera before the world première, all three composers declined the undertaking.²⁹⁶

The incomplete opera premiered at the Zürich Opera on June 2, 1937, and was conducted by Robert Denzler, with Bosnian soprano Bahrija Nuri Hadžić performing the title role. After the première, Berg's widow became increasingly resistant to the completion of the third act. Universal Edition published the vocal score of Acts I and II arranged by Berg's colleague Erwin Stein, along with a note

²⁹⁴ George Perle, "The Complete 'Lulu'," *The Musical Times* 120, no. 1632 (Feb., 1979): 115-117 and 119-20.

²⁹⁵ Willi Reich, "Alban Berg's *Lulu*," *The Musical Quarterly* XXII, Issue 4, 1 October 1936): 383-401, <https://doi.org/10.1093/mq/XXII.4.383>.

²⁹⁶ Perle, "The Complete 'Lulu'," 115-20.

indicating, “the vocal score of Act III would be published at a later time.”²⁹⁷ In fact, Stein had completed the vocal score of Act III and submitted it for publication that same year; however, political pressure and government censorship meant that production of the arrangement was forced to be abruptly halted—after seventy pages of music had already been engraved. The imminent takeover of Austria by the National Socialist Party meant that no German or Austrian opera house was permitted to perform Berg’s *Lulu*.

After the end of the Second World War, the first revival of the incomplete opera was performed in a new production by Nino Sanzogno at La Fenice on September 4, 1949, during the Venice Biennale. It was then performed in concert version in Vienna in 1952, and on March 7, 1953, *Lulu* had its German première at the Grillo-Theater in Essen, with a new production by Hans Hartleb.²⁹⁸ This production was also performed on July 7, 1953 at the Stadsschouwburg in Amsterdam. The Netherlands première, which used Hartleb’s production, was performed as part of the Holland Festival and was broadcast by the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) to the United Kingdom on August 10, 1953.²⁹⁹ The televised performance was followed by a production by Günther Rennert at the Hamburg State Opera in 1957, which was then performed at the Paris Opera in 1960 and La Scala in 1963.³⁰⁰ Other notable performances include the American debut of

²⁹⁷ Douglas Jarman, “Berg, Alban,” *Grove Music Online* (July 9, 2018), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

²⁹⁸ Donald Mitchell, “The Holland Festival 1953: Berg’s *Lulu*,” *Tempo*, New Series, no. 29 (Autumn, 1953): 5, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/942704>.

²⁹⁹ Charles Stuart, “The Holland Festival: *Lulu*,” *The Spectator* (July 17, 1953): 5.

³⁰⁰ Jarman, “Berg, Alban,” <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

Lulu at the Santa Fe Opera in 1963, and Wieland Wagner's production at Stuttgart in 1966, with Anja Silja performing the title role.³⁰¹

For his study of the composer's life and works, published by Universal Edition in 1957, the Austrian composer, conductor, and musicologist Hans Redlich was allowed access to Berg's materials. In the years following the Hamburg performance of *Lulu*, Redlich, as well as composer George Perle, strongly encouraged the completion of the third act; however, by 1960, Helene Berg had taken efforts to prohibit any access to the materials of Act III. Frau Berg restricted access to unpublished materials for the third act, including Stein's vocal arrangement, and refused any completion or performance of the opera's final act. However, in 1962, Universal Edition allowed Friedrich Cerha to study Berg's sketches and short score in the hopes that he would finish the third act in the near future. In 1963, Dr. Alfred Kalmus, a director at Universal Edition, temporarily lifted the ban, allowing George Perle to examine Stein's vocal score and Berg's short score of Act III. After reviewing these materials, Perle came to the conclusion, like Redlich, that Berg "had indeed completed the opera, and that completion of the full score of Act III by another hand was entirely feasible."³⁰²

In her 1969 will, published after her death in 1976, Helene repeated her decision to prohibit access to Berg's Act III *Lulu* materials. Shortly thereafter, when the Paris Opera began work on a three-act production—the first to include Cerha's completed third act—the Alban Berg Foundation attempted to prevent this three-act première through legal action. Nonetheless, the Paris Opera performed *Lulu* in

³⁰¹ Mitchell, "The Holland Festival," 5.

³⁰² Perle, "The Tireless Seductress."

its entirety at the Palais Garnier in 1979. The three-act première was conducted by Pierre Boulez and directed by Patrice Chéreau, with soprano Teresa Stratas singing the role of Lulu. Following this production, numerous opera houses created new stagings of the three-act work, such as the American première in Santa Fe in 1979, which was sung in English (with a translation by Arthur Jacobs). Other notable performances include the Metropolitan Opera production in 1977 (unfinished, two-act version) and 1980 (three-act version), and the British première in 1981 at Covent Garden.³⁰³

3.3 The Music of *Lulu*

As performances of *Lulu* increased following Cerha's completion of the score, scholarship on Berg reached a climax with published studies by Leo Treitler, George Perle, Douglas Jarman, and, more recently, Patricia Hall. Hall's impressive text, *A View of Berg's Lulu through the Autograph Sources*, benefitted from full access to Berg's archives and estates, including materials that had never been examined due to Helene's restrictions. Through these studies, we learn the extent to which Berg unified the drama, music, and words of his operatic text.

The *Lulu* score is reflective of the musical and socio-cultural context from the time of its composition. Similar to fin-de-siècle creators in other fields, Berg and other composers of the early twentieth-century had grown tired of history repeating itself, and focused instead on the new direction of music.³⁰⁴ As Karen Monson

³⁰³ Douglas Jarman, "Berg, Alban," *Grove Music Online* (July 9, 2018), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

³⁰⁴ Douglas Jarman, *Alban Berg, Lulu* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), xxvi.

emphasizes in her biography of Berg: “[S]choenberg had a vision. In 1897, he realized that Brahms was dead, not only physically but spiritually. He recognized that the time had come for music to take a new direction, and found that direction in his own imagination.”³⁰⁵ Despite a long tradition of historically significant Viennese composers, the ahistorical environment of fin-de-siècle Vienna influenced artists and composers throughout the city to relinquish the past. For Schoenberg and his musical followers, the traditional methods of composing were losing their reliability, perhaps even their truth. As a student and great admirer of Schoenberg’s, Berg became preoccupied with the new musical direction of atonality—or, as Schoenberg preferred, “pantonality”—and many compositions prior to Berg’s first twelve-tone piece, the 1925 song *Schliesse mir die Augen Beide*, were composed in a free, atonal manner.

The radical musical and non-musical ideas of Berg and his teacher Schoenberg, as well as Anton Webern, a fellow member of the Second Viennese School, as it came to be known, emerged in the midst of a politically unstable time in Vienna, prior to the first World War. These composers and the artistic-intellectual circle that surrounded them, which included Viennese elites such as Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Sigmund Freud, Gustav Klimt, and Ernst Mach, were often criticized, and in some cases, their works were banned from Vienna.³⁰⁶ Like Schoenberg, Berg was influenced by a number of Viennese intellectuals from a variety of disciplines,

³⁰⁵ Karen Monson, *Alban Berg* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company Boston, 1979), 21.

³⁰⁶ Mosco Carner, *Alban Berg: The Man and The Work* (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1975), 11.
Schorske, *Fin de Siècle Vienna*, 345.

including architects Otto Wagner and Adolph Loos, artists Oskar Kokoschka and Gustav Klimt, and writers Peter Altenberg and Arthur Schnitzler.

Some of Berg's compositions, as well as the avant-garde works of his teacher, found a performance home in the Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen (Society for Private Musical Performances), founded by Schoenberg in 1918. The formation of the Society is evidence of the feeling of alienation that Schoenberg's inner circle felt from the Viennese public. The group sought to create an environment in which modern works could be properly rehearsed, performed, and received without being exposed to the harsh criticism of Viennese critics and public. In addition to works by the Second Viennese School, pieces by Scriabin, Reger, Debussy, Mahler, and other twentieth-century composers were performed at the Society concerts. Prohibitions against modern music increased with the rise of the National Socialists, who forbade performances of modernist works, atonal music and the music of Schoenberg.³⁰⁷

Although Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern are commonly linked due to their shared use of twelve-tone technique, Berg's dodecaphonic practice is markedly different from the serial approaches of his teacher. For instance, *Lulu* is based on many twelve-tone rows, as opposed to just one. Some of the opera's sets are traditional to serial technique, characterized by their interval sequence, or order of the notes. However, Berg also created rows which are defined by their segmental content, and manipulated the segments independently of the series as a whole; Perle

³⁰⁷ Michael Haas, *Forbidden Music: the Jewish Composers Banned by the Nazis* (London: Yale University Press, 2013), 80.

and Jarman refer to Berg's re-arranged, segmented rows as "tropes."³⁰⁸ In addition, *Lulu* also contains moments in which two or more independent sets are played simultaneously, creating harmony and to reflecting the changing plot and dramatic action. Rather than strictly adhering to the methods of his revered teacher, Berg develops his "compositional technique as a means to an end, rather than as an end in itself."³⁰⁹ The resulting music reflects Berg's personal approach to dodecaphony, and is simultaneously expressive, romantic, and lyrical, and sharp, dissonant and atonal. His tone rows are interactive and dynamic, constantly changing, transforming, and relating to each other or the story unfolding onstage. In this way, audiences can aurally absorb the subtle details of Berg's libretto through a detailed listening of the musical context in which Lulu's story occurs.

Berg's use of twelve-tone in *Lulu* differs from Schoenberg's methods, altering the technique for his own expressive and dramatic needs. Originally, Berg wanted to base the music for each character of his opera on a different twelve-tone row, but this proved difficult in the composition of a large-scale work such as an opera; instead, *Lulu* consists of multiple tone rows, each assigned to a specific character, similar to a Wagnerian leitmotif.³¹⁰ The result is a score full of interrelated rows used as both ordered pitches and harmonic tropes. These tone rows are interactive and dynamic; they are always changing and relating to each other. Through this interaction, listeners can pick up on the subtle details of the libretto or the complexity of the plot by listening to the musical context in which the tone rows

³⁰⁸ George Perle, *The Operas of Alban Berg, Volume Two: Lulu*, 10.

³⁰⁹ *The Metropolitan Opera Program Booklet* (New York, 1976-77 Season).

³¹⁰ Jarman, *Alban Berg, Lulu*, 4.

occur. As Douglas Jarman writes in his article for the *Oxford Music Dictionary*, “[T]he rows and the characteristic harmonies and themes to which they give rise (and also, in some cases, rhythms, meters and instrumental timbres) function as leitmotifs linked to particular characters and particular ideas in the text. This leitmotif system works within an intricate, multi-layered formal design.”³¹¹

The unification of music and story in the leitmotifs that signify the characters of his opera is similar to Wagner’s association of many of his leitmotifs with characters, or their thoughts and emotions. Berg utilized leitmotifs as signifiers of his operatic characters. As written in the Metropolitan Opera’s 1977 production booklet, “Thus it is unnecessary to recognize the various twelve-tone rows on which Berg based whole episodes of thematic development... These devices did insure for the composer that the structure of his work would have the necessary coherence and dramatic logic—qualities felt as much as heard.” Structurally, *Lulu* contains many traditional elements of a number opera—arias, ensembles, cavatinas, ballades, etc.—all indicated by Berg in his score (for a detailed view of the formal design of Berg’s *Lulu*, see Table 3.1). Similar to his previous opera, *Wozzeck*,³¹² in *Lulu*, each act encompasses a single, large-scale form: for example, sonata form can be found in Act 1 and rondo form in Act 2, and Act 3 is a set of variations (see Table 3.2, below).³¹³

³¹¹ Douglas Jarman, “Berg, Alban,” *Grove Music Online* (July 9, 2018), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

³¹² The three acts of *Wozzeck* utilize traditional musical forms, with Act I labeled as “Five Character Pieces,” Act II as a “Symphony in Five Movements,” and Act III as a series of “Six Inventions.” Anthony Pople, *The Cambridge Companion to Berg* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

³¹³ Douglas Jarman, “Berg, Alban,” *Grove Music Online* (July 9, 2018), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

Rather than maintaining his twelve-tone approach throughout the opera, Berg expands on Schoenberg's dodecaphonic method, incorporating tonal elements in the leitmotifs of Dr. Schön and his son, Alwa. At times, he divides his tone rows into tropes—smaller divisions of the row—that are then used as harmonies or rearranged, with the pitches heard in a new order. The opera even contains moments of free composition, shifting from tonality to atonality. Other innovative musical elements of *Lulu* include Berg's use of saxophone and vibraphone (see Table 3.4 for more information on the instrumentation of *Lulu*), the presence of ragtime (Act I, scene 3), music for jazz band (Act I, scene 3), a film interlude at the mid-point of the story (between Act II, scene 1 and Act II, scene 2), and a musical reference to Wedekind's lute song, *Konfession* (Act III).

Table 3.1: *Lulu*: the Formal Design³¹⁴

Part One: <i>Erdegeist</i>	Part Two: <i>Die Büchse der Pandora</i>
<u>Prologue</u> • Circus Music • Lulu's Entrance Music	<u>Act II, Interlude: Film Interlude</u> second half (retrograde of first half) • Curtain Music
<u>Act I, scene 1</u> • Recitative • Introduction, Canon, and Coda • Melodrama • Canzonetta • Recitative • Duet • Arioso	<u>Act II, scene 2</u> • Recitative • Largo • Chamber Music • Melodrama • Rondo: Middle Division • Rondo: Recapitulation • Musette • Hymn
<u>Interlude, scene 1/2</u>	<u>Act III, scene 1</u> • Introduction and Ensemble: Circus Music • Melodrama • Duet I, Concertante Chorale Variations • Ensemble • Duet II Pantomime • Cadenza for solo violin and piano • Scena • Ensemble III • Melodrama • Recitative
<u>Act I, scene 2</u> • Duettino • Chamber Music I • Sonata: Exposition • Monoritmica	<u>Act III, Interlude:</u> Four Variations on the tune of the Procurer's Song
<u>Interlude, scene 2/3</u>	<u>Act III, scene 2</u> • Theme of Variations (Barrel Organ Music) • Scena I, Melodrama • Scena II • Transition • Quartet • Scena III • Scena IV and Finale
<u>Act I, scene 3</u> • Ragtime • Andante • English Waltz • Recitative • Choral • Introduction and Sextet • Sonata • Development and Recapitulation • Musette ³¹⁵	
<u>Act II, scene 1</u> • Recitative • Arietta • Cavatina • Ensemble (canon) • Finale • Rondo: Exposition • Chorale Theme • Tumultuoso, Grave and Transition • Introduction and Aria • Lied der Lulu • Arietta	
<u>Act II, Interlude: Film Interlude</u> <u>first half</u> • Curtain Music • Film Music, silent film	

³¹⁴ Perle, *The Operas of Alban Berg, Volume Two: Lulu*, 68-84.

³¹⁵ The musette is a form of small bagpipe that was once popular in France; in this case, "Musette" refers to a dance or pastoral tune in the style of the instrument.

Table 3.2: Larger Formal Structures in Berg's *Lulu*

Act I	Sonata Form
Act II	Rondo Form
Act III	Set of Variations, based on Wedekind's cabaret song

Table 3.3: The Characters of *Lulu*

Lulu	<i>High Soprano</i>
Countess Geschwitz	<i>Dramatic Mezzosoprano</i>
A Dresser in a Theatre A High-School Boy (Female Role) A Groom (Female Role)	<i>Contralto</i>
The Professor of Medicine The Professor	<i>Speaking Part (Operatic Baritone)</i> <i>Mute Role</i>
The Painter A Negro	<i>Lyric Tenor</i>
Dr. Schön, an Editor-in-Chief Jack	<i>Heroic Baritone</i>
Alwa, Dr. Schön's Son, a Composer	<i>Youthful Heroic Tenor</i>
Schigolch, an Old Man	<i>High Character Bass</i>
An Animal-Tamer Rodrigo, an Acrobat	<i>Lyric Bass with Buffo touch</i>
The Prince, an African Explorer The Manservant The Marquis, a Pimp	<i>Buffo Tenor</i>
The Theatre Manager The Banker	<i>Buffo Bass (Deep)</i>
The Police Officer	<i>Speaking Role</i>
A Clown	<i>Mute Role</i>
A Stage-Hand	<i>Mute Role</i>
A Fifteen-Year-Old Girl	<i>Opera Soubrette</i>
Her Mother	<i>Contralto</i>
A Lady Artist	<i>Mezzosoprano</i>
A Journalist	<i>High Baritone</i>
A Manservant	<i>Deep Baritone</i>

Table 3.4: The Instrumentation of *Lulu*

Pit Orchestra		Special Groups	
Woodwinds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 flutes (all doubling on piccolo) • 3 oboes (3rd doubling English horn) • 3 clarinets in B-flat (1st and 2nd doubling E-flat clarinet) • 1 bass clarinet in B-flat • 1 alto saxophone in E-flat • 3 bassoons (3rd doubling contrabassoon) 	Onstage Jazz Band (Act I, scene 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 clarinets in B-flat • 1 bass clarinet in B-flat • 1 alto saxophone in E-flat • 1 tenor saxophone in B-flat • 1 contrabassoon • 2 jazz trumpets in C • 2 jazz trombones • 1 sousaphone • jazz drum set (3 players) • 1 banjo • 1 piano • 3 violins with jazz horns • 1 contrabass
Percussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • timpani • triangle • tambourine • snare drum • jazz drum • bass drum • cymbals • switch • 2 tam-tams (high and low) • xylophone • vibraphone 		
Brass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 horns in F • 3 trumpets in C • 3 trombones • tuba 	Small Onstage Ensemble (Act III, scene 1): Cerha's edition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 piccolo • 1 flute • 3 clarinets in B-flat • 1 bass clarinet in B-flat • 1 contrabassoon
Strings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • violins I • violins II • violas • cellos • double-basses • harp 		
Keyboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • piano 		

3.4 Berg's *Lulu* as Expressionist Opera

The twelve-tone compositional methods employed by Berg, as well as those of Schoenberg, enhanced the physiological and expressionist qualities of their musical works. Although the style of expressionism is most often associated with visual art (see Chapter 2 for more details), the Second Viennese School composers' prevalent use of distorted, angular melodic lines, dramatic textural and dynamic shifts, extreme dissonance, and rhythmic complexity, in addition to the use of psychological or sexual subjects, resulted in the categorization of multiple pieces of Schoenberg and Berg as expressionist music. Notably expressionist musical works include Schoenberg's single act monodrama, *Erwartung* (1909) and his *Fünf Orchesterstücke* (1909), Berg's Piano Sonata, Opus 1 (1910), and later, his opera *Wozzeck* (1914-1925). These pieces avoided traditional compositional methods and were often constructed in a formulaic manner. Although it is a very late example of expressionism, these qualities can also be heard in *Lulu*, in the angular melodies, sharp dissonance, extreme register shifts, and the challenging rhythms of *Lulu*'s vocal lines.

In addition to these musical qualities, the plot of Berg's second opera is quintessentially expressionist in that it focuses on the struggle to accept bourgeois values. The opera emphasizes the "tragic environment" of fin-de-siècle Vienna, exploring the consequences of morality in a society that is secretly preoccupied with its unscrupulous underbelly.³¹⁶ Like Galatea, the shepherdess suggested by Pierrot's crook, *Lulu* is a construction of man, a sexually ideal creature in which each

³¹⁶ Perle, *The Operas of Alban Berg, Volume Two: Lulu*, 33.

individual character's desire is represented, exposing his innermost secrets.³¹⁷ Whereas civilized Viennese society valued culture, sophistication, and restraint, Lulu's story explores the negative consequences of the repressed bourgeoisie and the disastrous consequences of suppressed sexuality.

Although Wedekind's plays contain elements of realism (the characters eat, drink and smoke on stage), they are in fact full of symbolism, with farcical, grotesque, and melodramatic plots typical of the expressionist style.³¹⁸ In his transformation of Wedekind's plays, Berg upholds many of the author's expressionist qualities.³¹⁹ The juxtaposition of the world of the stage and the world of reality—and the constant fluctuation between the two—are common features of expressionist theater and cinema.³²⁰ This structural shifting can also be found in Berg's opera, and is clearly displayed in the Prologue. Here, an Animal-Tamer introduces the opera's characters, with each individual represented by a different beast in his menagerie. Berg's Prologue has a circus-like feel, harkening back to the performances of Champsaur's Lulu: a clown stands in the background, wearing a bass drum and cymbal on his chest; the Animal-Tamer wears a vermillion frock-coat and holds a whip in his hands. The opera begins with his lines:

³¹⁷ George Perle, *The Operas of Alban Berg, Volume Two: Lulu*, 34.

³¹⁸ Jarman, *Alban Berg, Lulu*, 19.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 41.

³²⁰ Leo Treitler, "The Lulu Character and the Character of *Lulu*," in *Alban Berg: Historical and Analytic Perspectives*, David Gable and Robert P. Morgan, eds. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 168.

TIERBÄNDIGER

Hereinspaziert in die Menagerie,
Ihr stolzen Herren,
Ihr lebenslust'gen Frauen,
Mit heißer Wollust und mit kaltem
Grauen
Die unbeseelte Kreatur zu schauen,
Gebändigt durch das menschliche
Genie."

ANIMAL-TAMER

Walk up, walk up! and spend a pleasant
hour,
Fair ladies, noble gentlemen, with me;
Inside my tent you'll thrill—and chill—
to see
The beasts I have in my menagerie
Tamed by superior force of human
power.

In the Prologue, the Animal-Tamer "breaks the fourth wall," directly addressing the audience and inviting them to observe the story about to unfold on stage. The Animal-Tamer's introduction prepares spectators for the symbolic nature of the story about to unfold. Rather than projecting the stage as reality, the exaggerated nature of the Prologue emphasizes the unnaturalness of the opera, emphasizing the theatrical setting.

In Wedekind plays and in Berg's opera, Lulu's role as a sexual woman is contrasted with the men on stage, who represent the values and morals of Viennese society, as well as their hidden preoccupation with sex. Willi Reich, one of Berg's students and the author of an early biography on Berg, writes of Wedekind's plays, "Like many Expressionist dramas, the truth or morality of the Lulu plays is not be found on stage, but behind it."³²¹ Similarly, Leo Treitler states, "The characteristic paradox of this kind of drama is that we cannot take the characters on the stage seriously as real people. But we are meant to take very seriously the reality of what

³²¹ Willi Reich, *Alban Berg*, trans. Cornelius Cardew (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1965), 158.

they have been put on stage to show us.”³²² George Perle also comments on the expressionistic characters of Lulu, saying, “Though they appear to have all the extrinsic qualities of ‘real people,’ they are in effect types, as in the Expressionist drama of which Wedekind was the precursor.”³²³ In Berg’s opera, the composer highlights the role of Lulu’s story as a performance and morality play, rather than reality. *Lulu* functions as a morality play, with the characters functioning as symbolic tropes, rather than realistic people.³²⁴

In their book, *Theatre as Sign-System*, Aston and Savona examine the changing aesthetics of theatre throughout history, suggesting a shift from the dominant mode of theatrical performance, which valued realism and naturalism, to modern theatrical works. Whereas illusionistic theatre is defined by the “complicit passivity” of the audience due to the realistic depiction of the life and characters on stage, radical modern theatrical plays are anti-illusionist. These works, which include German dramas from the 1920s and 1930s, most notably epic theatre works by German dramatist Berthold Brecht (1898-1956), required a more active role for the audience because of the deliberate distancing of spectator and performance.³²⁵ Regarding illusionistic theatre, Aston and Savona state, “The development of the ‘fourth wall’ convention, together with artificial lighting, and a blurring of the role/real boundary which led the actor and consequently the

³²² Treitler, “The Lulu Character,” 273.

³²³ Perle, *The Operas of Alban Berg, Volume Two: Lulu*, 57.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, 57.

³²⁵ In Berthold Brecht’s epic theatre, distancing is the practice of distancing the audience from the drama or theatrical work, is also known as alienation effect, *Verfremdungseffekt*, or V-effekt, emphasizes the constructed nature of work in order to inspire active involvement on the part of the spectator. For more information, see the “distancing” subject entry in *A Dictionary of Film Studies*. Annette Kuhn and Guy Westwell, eds., *A Dictionary of Film Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

spectator to identify un-problematically with the character, worked to draw the spectator into the diegetic universe.”³²⁶ In contrast to the realistic, natural, life-like sets and characters of popular theater, in modern dramas, “[p]erformance is now foregrounded *as* performance, and the spectator is again accorded an active role in the processes of meaning-production.”³²⁷

Numerous elements of the libretto support Berg’s work as a contestation of illusionism. As discussed above, a clear example of this aesthetic is seen in the Prologue, with the Animal-Tamer introducing the audience to his menagerie. Other examples of the aesthetic of distancing within Berg’s opera is the presence of Lulu’s Portrait, which acts as a symbol of her creation by man, as well as Lulu’s illogical and unrealistic escape from prison, and the sudden shift of setting in the last scene, where Lulu, an escaped convict, successfully travels from Paris to London. Although the staging of the opera plays a major role in the aesthetics and decoding of the production, Berg’s opera nonetheless functions as a type of allegory. Like expressionist works, it encourages self-reflection and inward thought. The lesson to be learned is gained not only through its abstract and symbolic elements, but also through its psychological focus and its exploration of the unconscious desires and fears of man.

³²⁶ Aston and Savona, *Theatre as Sign System: A Semiotics of Text and Performance* (London: Routledge, 1991), 160.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 161.

3.5 *Lulu* and the Hounded Grace of Women: Karl Kraus's influence on Berg

One of the loudest voices in fin-de-siècle Vienna was Karl Kraus (1874-1936), a critic of politics, art and literature, known for his biting social commentary.³²⁸ Kraus's constant criticism of Viennese society reflected the ahistorical environment of Vienna at this time.³²⁹ In 1905, the critic delivered a pre-performance lecture at a private Viennese staging of Wedekind's second Lulu play, *Die Büchse der Pandora*. At the time of the 1905 production, *Die Büchse der Pandora* was still under consideration for an obscenity charge; shortly after the performance, the Royal Court in Berlin banned the play.³³⁰ For the 1905 staging, Wedekind played the role of Dr. Schön, and his wife Tilly acted as Lulu (see Photograph 7, below). In attendance was the young Alban Berg, only twenty-years-old, a new composition student of Arnold Schoenberg. Berg was an enthusiastic follower of Kraus and an avid reader of his magazine, *Die Fackel*. As Willi Reich writes in his biography on Berg, "He was passionately involved in everything pertaining to Kraus, though in later years they never met personally." Kraus's lecture made a "profound and lasting impression" on Berg, who would return to the subject of Lulu in 1927, when he began work on his second opera.³³¹ Kraus's interpretation was so influential to Berg that he even sent a page of his *Lulu* score to Kraus for his sixtieth birthday.

³²⁸ David P. Schroeder, "Opera, Apocalypse and the Dance of Death: Berg's Indebtedness to Kraus," *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* 25, no. 1 (Winter, 1992): 92.

³²⁹ Reich, *Alban Berg*, 32.

³³⁰ Douglas Jarman, "Berg, Alban," *Grove Music Online* (July 9, 2018), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

³³¹ Reich, *Alban Berg*, 32.

Figure 3.1: Frank and Tilly Wedekind as Dr. Schön and Lulu, 1905³³²



One of the major topics of Kraus's 1905 lecture, the concept of woman as scapegoat, would later become a central theme of Berg's second opera. As Jarman writes, "Berg's doublings not only symbolized this revenge strikingly but also, by equating the characters who inhabit the respectable bourgeois world of the first half with the shady inhabitants of the demi-monde depicted in the final act, draw attention to the sexual hypocrisy which is the subject of the work, and which gives it a wider moral and social significance."³³³ Lulu's male admirers blame the femme fatale for their own sexual desires; her magnetic allure renders them incapable of controlling themselves. It is Lulu who is punished for their sins: similar to fin-de-siècle depictions of the castrating woman, her character leaves men incapable of

³³² Doris Melerhenrich, "Tilly und Frank Wedekind: Der berührende Briefwechsel einer dramatischen Küstlerehe," *Berliner Zeitung* (March 9, 2018), <https://www.berliner-zeitung.de/kultur/theater/tilly-und-frank-wedekind-der-beruehrende-briefwechsel-einer-dramatischen-kuenstlerehe-29839336>.

³³³ Douglas Jarman, "Berg, Alban," *Grove Music Online* (July 9, 2018), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

functioning within the superego part of their psyches, which governs societal values and morality. Like the snake of the Animal-Tamers menagerie, Lulu's feminine nature ensnares her admirers, capturing the dark desires of their primitive, animalistic id.

Kraus's defense of prostitution and views on female sexuality paralleled those of Otto Weininger, who, in his *Sex and Character*, wrote: "the disposition for and inclination to prostitution is as organic in woman as is the capacity for motherhood."³³⁴ Kraus's views on prostitution mirrored that of the expressionists: rather than depicting the prostitute as fallen and submissive, he interpreted her as a woman who "delights in active play of her sexuality" and is capable of "spell-binding" men of the world.³³⁵ Because of his perception of female sexuality, in Kraus's eyes, prostitution was morally acceptable, and even defensible.³³⁶ Since sexuality was part of woman's nature, it was "not related to morality, which is a socio-cultural product created by men."³³⁷ Like many of his peers, Kraus saw woman as *allgeschlechtliche Frau*,³³⁸ a "totally sexual being"—all her actions stemmed from that essence which is her sexuality.³³⁹ She should not necessarily be held accountable for her actions, since her conduct is "in fact determined by the unconscious sensuality which is her very nature."³⁴⁰ In his 1905 lecture prior to the performance of Wedekind's second play, Kraus referred to woman as a "total sexual

³³⁴ Dos Santos, "Portraying Lulu," 58.

³³⁵ Treitler, "The Lulu Character," 264.

³³⁶ Dos Santos, "Portraying Lulu," 58.

³³⁷ Dos Santos, "Marriage as Prostitution," 145.

³³⁸ Karl Kraus, "Die Büchse der Pandora," in *Literature and Lüge*, ed. Christian Wegenknecht (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1987): 13.

³³⁹ Dos Santos, "Portraying Lulu," 58.

³⁴⁰ Janik and Toulmin, *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, 71.

being” and “sexuality itself.”³⁴¹ Woman was seen as emotional and irrational; though she may seem to be of the same race as man, she has no control over her actions.³⁴²

To Kraus, the Lulu plays functioned as tragedies that reflect the “hounded grace of women,” who is “eternally misunderstood.”³⁴³ Regarding the second play, *Die Büchse der Pandora*, Kraus commented, “her portrait, the image of her best days, now plays a larger part than she herself... it is the discrepancy between her former magnificence and her present woe that arouses our feelings. The great retribution has begun, the revenge of a world of men, which makes bold to avenge itself for its own guilt.”³⁴⁴ Kraus interprets the final scene of *Die Büchse der Pandora*, where Jack the Ripper murders Lulu, as an act of revenge on behalf of her husbands.³⁴⁵ The use of double roles—in which Lulu’s husbands reappear as her clients in the final scene—further supports Kraus’s views, and parallels Weininger’s classification of women as wife or whore in his *Sex and Character*; additionally, it emphasizes the expressionist theory of woman’s dual nature and the notion of the bourgeois household as a brothel.³⁴⁶

3.6 Lulu as Femme Fatale

The ambiguity of Lulu’s identity and characterization in Berg’s text allows for a certain amount of freedom or flexibility in her interpretation. As demonstrated in numerous *Lulu* productions, various interpretations of Lulu are possible. To many,

³⁴¹ Dos Santos, “Portraying Lulu,” 58.

³⁴² Janik and Toulmin, *Wittgenstein’s Vienna*, 71.

³⁴³ Reich, *Alban Berg*, 157.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 157-8.

³⁴⁵ Treitler, “The Lulu Character and the Character of *Lulu*,” 270.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 265-70.

she is a murderous, seductive femme fatale. To others, she is an objectified victim of society, identifiable only through the men in her life. Perhaps Lulu is a puppet-like creation of man, a scapegoat for the id-like desires of otherwise “civilized” men. She is an amoral figure, unaware of any personal spiritual or ethical code and incapable of love. Lulu is the eternal and mythical Woman, a mysterious antithesis of Man.

In both Wedekind’s plays and Berg’s opera, Lulu functions as the ultimate representation of the ambiguous, mythological, timeless Woman. Writing in a 1954 issue of *Music Review*, Donald Mitchell calls her “the Universal Mistress we all desire to possess or emulate.”³⁴⁷ As George Perle writes, “In the two Lulu plays a mythical earth-goddess, beyond time and place, is suggested by means of vague hints, statements which on the surface seem to be prosaic and trivial”³⁴⁸ For example, in the second scene of the opera, Schigolch comes to visit Lulu. Although Dr. Schön mistakes the old man as Lulu’s father, he is actually one of her past lovers. In this scene, Lulu is married to the Painter, who calls her Eve. After Schigolch addresses her as Lulu, the pair has the following dialogue:

³⁴⁷ Donald Mitchell, “The Character of Lulu: Wedekind’s and Berg’s Conceptions Compared,” *The Music Review* 15, no. 4 (1954): 272.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 57.

LULU	LULU
Ich heiÙe seit Menschengedenken nicht mehr Lulu [...]	For centuries, no one has ever called me Lulu [...]
SCHIGOLCH	SCHIGOLCH
Was bist du?	What are you?
LULU (<i>Geste des Schauderns</i>)	LULU (<i>with a gesture of shuddering</i>)
... Ein Tier...	... A beast... ³⁴⁹

Lulu's line that "for centuries" no one has referred to her by the name Lulu, demonstrates the type of "vague hints" that Perle spoke of; although these lines could easily be glossed over as "trivial," they reveal the true nature of her character. She is a representation of fin-de-siècle conceptions of womanhood, emotional and sexual. Like Freud's labeling of female sexuality as "the dark continent," fin-de-siècle Vienna viewed feminine nature as obscure, unknown, mysterious and timeless. As Doane writes in her text, the unpredictability of Lulu makes her a threat to the rational order of civilized, patriarchal society.

Another reference to Lulu's mysterious past can be heard in her response to Schigolch, in which she calls herself "a beast." This description supports Ritter's statement regarding literature on the fatal woman, with Lulu functioning as the Nietzschean half-animal, wild, beautiful and dangerous. Later in the second scene, Dr. Schön, in a conversation with the Painter, refers to Lulu as Mignon:

³⁴⁹ Alban Berg, *Lulu: Libretto in German and English*, trans. Arthur Jacobs (Vienna: Universal Editions, 1936), 19.

DR. SCHÖN

Bei einer Herkunft, wie sie Mignon hat,
kannst du unmöglich mit den Begriffen
der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft rechnen

DER MALER

Von wem sprichst du denn?

DR. SCHÖN

Von deiner Frau!

DR. SCHÖN

With a background such as Mignon has,
it's impossible to seek the standards of
conduct usual in good society.

PAINTER

Who is this you mean?

DR. SCHÖN

I mean your wife!³⁵⁰

This dialogue not only illustrates the transformational nature of Lulu through her changing names and personalities, but also hints at her mysterious origins. Like the Pygmalion fable of Galatea, signified by her shepherd's crook in the Portrait, Lulu's identity alters to suit her current lover; transforming into her partner's ideal sexual mate.

Lulu's malleable nature is exemplified in Dr. Schön's name for Lulu—Mignon—a reference to the young girl of Goethe's 1796 novel, *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (*Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*). In Goethe's book, Wilhelm purchases the girl Mignon from a circus, rescuing her from a cruel master. As the story progresses, Mignon, only thirteen or fourteen years of age, falls in love with her savior, who she also identifies as a type of father figure. The two characters share many qualities: during her time at the circus, Mignon performed as an acrobat, dressed as a boy; throughout Goethe's book, she is often mistaken for a young man. Here, we see the connection between Goethe's character and Champsaur's Lulu, who was possibly influenced by the cross-dressing acrobat El Niño Farini. Both Mignon and Champsaur's female clownesse, Lulu, performed in a circus setting; the two girls

³⁵⁰ Berg, *Lulu: Libretto*, 25.

have mysterious backgrounds, they are elusive, androgynous, and ambiguous, capturing male attention through their perceived latent sexuality. Like Mignon, Lulu's portrayal as Pierrot in the Portrait makes her androgynous. Both Mignon and Lulu were rescued as children by their respective father figures. Dr. Schön took Lulu in from the streets after meeting her as a child of seven, begging and pick pocketing outside the Alhambra café. The two girls develop complex relationships with their saviors, a mix of romantic, sexual feelings and paternal love.

Lulu's character reflects fin-de-siècle views of female sexuality, paralleling depictions of the Freudian symbol of the castrating woman. Numerous elements of Berg's *Lulu* perpetuate her role as a femme fatale. One of the clearest of these appears in the Prologue, where the Animal Trainer introduces Lulu as a snake—a representation of the “true nature” of woman.

TIERBÄNDIGER

Sie ward geschaffen, Unheil anzustiften,
 Zu locken, zu verführen, zu vergiften.
 Und zu morden, ohne daß es einer spurt.
(Lulu am Kinn kraulend)
 Mein süßes Tier, sei ja nur nicht geziert!
 Du hast kein Recht, uns durch Miaun und
 Pfauchen
 Die Urgestalt des Weibes zu verstuachen.

ANIMAL TAMER

She as the root of all evil was created;
 To snare us, to mislead us she was fated,
 And to murder, with no clue left on the
 spot.
(Tickling Lulu under the chin)
 My sweetest beast, please don't be what
 you're not! You have no right to seem a
 gentler creature,
 Distorting what is true in woman's
 nature.”³⁵¹

In works such as *Nuda Veritas* and *Watersnakes*, Gustav Klimt furthered the view of women as ambiguous creatures.³⁵² As Karen Pegley writes, “Klimt also furthered

³⁵¹ Berg, *Lulu: Libretto*, 3.

women's ambiguity and sensuality by allying them with reptilian imagery. The snake in particular was attractive to Klimt: it is amphibious, a phallic symbol, and is able to dissolve boundaries between land and water, male and female."³⁵³ In Klimt's 1899 painting *Nuda Veritas*, women are juxtaposed with snakes, accentuating the close relationship of women to nature; in his 1904-07 *Watersnakes*, the female subjects appear as snakes.

In the Prologue, Lulu is depicted as the archetypal femme fatale, an inherently seductive and evil creature. Like the women so often depicted in fin-de-siècle art, Lulu's ambiguous nature is a danger to civilized society, threatening to awaken hidden, unconscious feelings. The role of woman as a creation of man, as emphasized by Kraus in his 1905 lecture and adopted by Berg in his creation of *Lulu*, is most clearly signified in her Portrait. Berg considered the Portrait so significant that he extended its role from the Wedekind plays, including it in nearly every scene of the opera. He treats the Portrait as a character in itself, creating a leitmotif and tone row specifically for it, similar to the way in which the other characters of *Lulu* each have their own tone row. The static nature of the Portrait serves as a stark contrast to Lulu's own situation, as portrayed on stage. Compared to Lulu herself, whose personality and name changes for each of her husbands, her Portrait remains the same. Directly following the Prologue, in the opening scene, Lulu is having her portrait made by the Painter. In his libretto, Berg includes specific instructions for the staging of the opening scene.

³⁵² Pegley, "Femme Fatale," 254.

³⁵³ Ibid., 253.

Vorne, auf der einen Seite eine Staffelei mit dem noch nicht ganz ausgeführten Bild Lulus.

Front stage, on one side an easel on which is a portrait of Lulu, not quite finished [...]

Lulu, im Pierrotkostüm, einen hohen Schäferstab in der Hand, auf dem Podium stehend.

Lulu (In Pierrot costume, standing on the podium and holding in her hand a tall shepherd's crook).³⁵⁴

According to Leo Treitler, "the most palpable sign for the Lulu character as a creation of male desires is the Pierrot portrait." Through her identification with Pierrot, we see Lulu as more than a femme fatale: rather than appearing nude, sexualized, or as a castrating female, Lulu is dressed as the complex, shifting figure of Pierrot. Like Pierrot, Lulu struggles to adapt to bourgeois society, and inadvertently causes strife and disorder wherever she goes. Treitler writes, "By dressing as Pierrot, in fact a male costume, Lulu represents ideals of androgyny, whose threat to male identity is more subtle than the threats posed by figures such as Salome and Carmen."³⁵⁵ Similar to the snake, the fluidity of Pierrot confuses traditional gender roles, existing and navigating within both the feminine and masculine.

Like Pierrot, Lulu's identity is ever shifting, adapting to reflect those around her. In his article "Ascription of Identity in the Bild Motif," José Silvio Dos Santos writes, "Yet, because Pierrot represents a character that constantly recreates and innovates his own roles, its symbolism resonates with Lulu's personality."³⁵⁶ Like her changing name, the Pierrot costume is one of many parts Lulu plays in the

³⁵⁴ Berg, *Lulu: Libretto*, 4-5.

³⁵⁵ Treitler, "The Lulu Character," 270.

³⁵⁶ Dos Santos, "Ascription of Identity," 272.

opera: she is an innocent, pre-sexual childlike figure to the Medical Specialist (Dr. Goll), who named her Nelly; to Schigolch, she is the ethereal half-animal, who believes she has no parents and alludes to her mythical nature; she is a femme fatale to the Painter, who names her Eve; to Dr. Schön, who names her Mignon, she is a murderess and a scapegoat.

As noted above, the world première of *Lulu* took place at the Stadttheater in Zürich on June 2, 1937. It presented the unfinished opera as a two-act torso; in place of the third act, Lulu's death at the hands of Jack the Ripper was acted on silently on stage, while the orchestra played Berg's music from the last two movements of the *Symphonische Stücke*. In addition, the performance included a silent film by director Heinz Ruckert at the mid-point of the opera. Unfortunately, most of the materials from the production are lost, except for four photographic stills at the Zürich Stadtarchiv.³⁵⁷

The first staged version of *Lulu* occurred on September 1949 at the Venice Biennial Festival, directed by Giorgio Strehler.³⁵⁸ The second staged revival was the German première of the work, and occurred in Essen in 1953; it was followed by a production at the Hamburg Opera. Although little is known about these early productions, as Douglas Jarman writes in his text *Alban Berg, Lulu*, these first stagings, other than inspiring music critics and scholars to urge the completion of the opera, were mostly unremarkable, and staged the work according to Berg's libretto instructions.

³⁵⁷ Melissa Ursula Dawn Goldsmith, "Alban Berg's Filmic Music: Intentions and Extensions of the Film Music Interlude in the Opera *Lulu*," PhD diss. (Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, May 2002), 2.

³⁵⁸ The opera was staged in its concert version in February and April of 1949.

The remainder of this chapter will explore two *Lulu* productions that aim to honor the composer's intentions for the opera: the 1962 production at the Theater an der Wien, and the 1977 Metropolitan Opera production. These stagings follow in the tradition of *Werktreue*, which Lydia Goehr defines as the idea that a work's "real meaning" is conveyed by the creator through the musical score, text, libretto, or program notes; altering these elements compromises the work's integrity, going against the composer's intentions and challenging the work-concept.³⁵⁹ Despite the conservative, traditional nature of these productions, a closer examination of certain staging elements—in particular, the Portrait and Lulu's costuming in the opening scene—reveals that regardless of a director's interpretation, the function of opera as a theatrical work means that no performance can ever completely recreate a piece in its truly original form. Even these stagings, carefully based on Berg's extra-dialogic libretto instructions, contain new and unique elements, subtly altering the "work" of *Lulu*.

3.7 *Lulu* at the Theater an der Wien

Following the 1953 production of *Lulu* in Essen, opera houses performing the incomplete work played the Variations from the *Lulu Suite*, complete with mimed action on stage, immediately following Act II. This orchestral music included Geschwitz's monologue with the *Adagio*, Lulu's death at the hands of Jack, and the death of the Countess. *Lulu* productions continued to be staged with the *Lulu Suite* until the completion of the third act by Friedrich Cerha in 1979. The 1962 Austrian

³⁵⁹ Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum*, 232.

première of *Lulu* follows in this tradition. Held at the Theater an der Wien, the unfinished opera was directed by Otto Schenk, with Evelyn Lear in the title role, and was conducted by Karl Böhm for the *Wiener Festwochen*. The Austrian première of *Lulu* was especially significant considering Berg's inclusion in the Second Viennese School, and the censorship of his works throughout Austria during his later life by the Nazi party. Partially due to its incomplete nature, performances of *Lulu* prior to 1979 were scarce, as the work was just beginning to make its way into the operatic canon. Similar to earlier stagings of the work, Schenk's *Lulu* seeks to present Berg's opera in its true form, as the composer intended.

In many ways, Otto Schenk's *Lulu* at the Theater an der Wien can be described as a *Werktreue* staging, its goal being to present an authentic version of Berg's operatic text. In the Prologue and opening scene, Lulu's costume contains subtle references to Pierrot; however, it is a far cry from the billowing white blouse and pantaloons indicated in the libretto. In the opening scene of Schenk's staging, Evelyn Lear's costume consists of a white dunce's cap adorned with a large, black button, as well as a fanned out, white collar and matching white sleeves (see Figure 3.2 and 3.3, below). In addition, she wears a sparkling, sequined leotard, similar to a showgirl outfit, as well as silk stockings and black high heels. Although some elements of Lulu's costume are reminiscent of Pierrot, the androgyny of the clown is replaced by a coquettish, playful sexuality. Lear holds a staff, rather than a shepherd's crook; she wears a coy smile on her face and poses her legs flirtatiously. Her short black hair is curled in the style of an Italian cut, a popular style at the time; although it is a similar length to Louise Brook's bob, Lear's hair is softer, more

feminine, lacking the sharp edges and androgynous style of the *Bubikopf*. Although Pierrot is hinted at through elements of Lulu's costume such as her fanned collar and dunce's cap, her clothing is updated in order to emphasize Lulu's sexuality, rather than the innocence and naivety of Pierrot. With the exception of his updated costuming, Schenk's staging of the Prologue and the first scene of *Lulu* are true to the instructions included in Berg's libretto. For instance, in the first scene of the Theater an der Wien production, the stage is set with the same props Berg indicated in his libretto: the unfinished Portrait, a folding screen, a ladder, an artist's easel, and a sofa with a tiger skin draped across it.³⁶⁰

Figure 3.2: The Portrait at the Theatre an der Wien³⁶¹



³⁶⁰ Berg, *Lulu: Libretto*, 5.

³⁶¹ Alban Berg, *Lulu*, Wiener Symphoniker. Otto Schenk, dir. 1962. Arthaus Musik, DVD.

Figure 3.3: Lulu's costume in the first scene, Theatre an der Wien³⁶²



In the second scene of Schenk's production, Lear's outfit is again altered, with Lulu appearing more sexualized than the "morning gown" indicated in the libretto by Berg. Here, Lear wears a white romper adorned with ruffles, as well as a black corset, silk knee-highs, a garter-belt, black high heels, and a matching white, ruffled robe. Her hair is worn down, falling to her mid-back, accentuating her femininity. Similar to her outfit from the previous scene, Lulu's second costume is also black and white. Later in the scene, after the death of her second husband, the Painter, she changes into a black, off-the-shoulder, low-cut dress with a white lace trim. In the third scene, Schenk follows Berg's instructions regarding the Portrait, which appears as a poster for Lulu's dance act; however, Lulu's costume is updated: the advertisement shows her in a sleeveless, busty showgirl leotard, a feathered bustle,

³⁶² Alban Berg, *Lulu*, Wiener Symphoniker. Otto Schenk, dir. 1962. Arthaus Musik, DVD.

fishnet stockings and black high heels, rather than her clothing from the first scene and the unfinished Portrait. Schenk's alteration of Lulu's Portrait in her poster advertisement highlights her role as a sexualized dancer, a connection to Champsaur's clownesse.

In the opening scene of Act II, the stage is set according to the instructions of Berg's libretto: the *mise en scène* here shows Lulu at the height of her power, the wife of the wealthy and powerful Dr. Schön. In the middle of the stage, there is a large, grand staircase, in the German Renaissance style, rich with dark wood. The Portrait has returned to its original, completed form, with Lulu once again appearing in her sexualized Pierrot costume, and holding a tall staff. The picture itself is quite large, housed in an ornately decorated gold frame, effectively capturing the decadence of fin-de-siècle Vienna. In the scene, Lulu wears a tight, low cut black lace evening gown with thin straps. The dress highlights Lulu's depiction as a *femme fatale*: it is revealing and sexual, and the black lace is suggestive of darkness, danger, and decadence. Unlike her previous costumes, this dress has no white ruffles or trim; significantly, Lulu's wears this all black gown when she shoots and kills her third husband, Dr. Schön.

Overall, Schenk's production at the Theater an der Wien is true to the composer's intentions for the work's staging, indicated in Berg's libretto instructions and extra-dialogic texts. As demonstrated in the above examination of the Act I sets of Schenk's production, the director maintains numerous elements of the original *mise en scène*. The Theater an der Wien production consistently follows Berg's instructions regarding the props and set of each scene, effectively showcasing

the rise and fall of Lulu's power as she adapts to each of her husbands. Elements of Schenk's treatment of the Portrait is also true to Berg, showing it as an incomplete painting in the first scene, as a poster in the third scene, and as a completed work in the remainder of the opera.

Schenk's *Lulu* production, like many contemporary opera stagings, focuses on and develops one particular aspect of the title character's personality. As mentioned previously, Berg's libretto hints at numerous identities for Lulu—naïve fool, victimized scapegoat, castrating femme fatale, mythical and eternal Woman. In David J. Levin's *Unsettling Opera: Staging Mozart, Verdi, Wagner, and Zemlinsky*, the author states that a successful operatic staging should attempt to "solve problems" and address questions that are presented by the operatic text.³⁶³ In the case of Schenk's production at the Theater an der Wien, the staging focuses on the naïve, child-like aspects of Lulu's personality. One instance of this can be seen in the opening scene of Schenk's production: after the death of her husband the Medical Specialist, Lulu dances around his lifeless body, as if expecting him to wake up at any moment. Another example is in the first scene of Act II, when Dr. Schön attempts to force Lulu to commit suicide. She shoots the revolver into the air, surprised by the force of the loaded gun and the seriousness of her husband's request. Echoing this sentiment, Lear's body movements are playful, accentuating the silly, childlike side of Lulu. Her mannerisms mirror that of a little girl playing dress up; her innocence is corrupted by male desire and control. When she approaches her dead husband the Medical Specialist, Lulu seems not to grasp the seriousness or permanence of his

³⁶³ Levin, *Unsettling Opera*, 12.

death. Even her singing has a playful, sing-song tone.

Despite the altered costumes of Schenk's production, the director suggests Lulu's connection with Pierrot through subtle references: in the opening scene, through her white collar and sleeves, and the black buttons on her dunces cap; in the second scene, through the white ruffles on her robe; in the third scene, through the white lace trim lining her black dress. Although operagoers in 1962 may not have fully understood the semiotic significance of Lulu's association with Pierrot, the juxtaposition of Lulu's black and white clothing represents her paradoxical nature, as both victim and victimizer. By incorporating white ruffles or lace in each of Lulu's costumes, Schenk links Lulu with the foolish naivety of Pierrot. The whiteness of her costumes represents Lulu's innocence, corrupted by the hands of man over the course of the opera. At the time of Dr. Schön's death, Lulu's innocence has been lost; she has been passed from man to man, used up, a former image of her vivacious, feminine self. The all-black, lace dress signifies Lulu's role as a *femme fatale*, a sexually objectified scapegoat; her innocence lost, she is transformed into the castrating woman she was created to embody.

3.8 John Dexter's *Lulu* Production

In his text, *Narratives of Identity in Alban Berg's Music*, José Silvio Dos Santos writes, "To my knowledge, the version of the portrait presented by the Metropolitan Opera, produced by John Dexter, is the closest to Berg's intentions" (see Figure 3.4). The accuracy of Lulu's Portrait in the Metropolitan Opera House production is reflective of the authorial respect with which Dexter created his staging.

Anticipating the completion of the third act by Friedrich Cerha, the Met hoped that *Lulu* would be finished in time for the opera house's première of the work, to take place during their 1976-77 season; however, Cerha's Act III was not finalized until the following year. Consequently, Dexter's production first presented Berg's opera in its unfinished, two-act form, with Teresa Stratas and Carole Farley³⁶⁴ as Lulu. The production was repeated in 1980-81, with Cerha's completed third act, with Stratas and Julia Migenes³⁶⁵ in the title role. In 1985, Migenes again performed the role of Lulu, and was followed by a 1988 performance with Catherine Malfitano, a 2001-2 performance with Christine Schäfer, and a 2010 performance with Marlis Petersen.³⁶⁶ In 1980, the Metropolitan Opera released a commercial DVD recording of Dexter's *Lulu*, with Julia Migenes in the title role.

³⁶⁴ Carole Farley replaced Stratas after the latter chose to quit the Met *Lulu* production. "Teresa Stratas Quits Met's 'Lulu,'" *The New Yorker* (Feb 1, 1977), 328, <http://www.nytimes.com/1977/02/01/archives/teresa-stratas-quits-mets-lulu.html>.

³⁶⁵ Migenes replaced Stratas in the role of Lulu, as she was suffering from influenza and unable to perform.

³⁶⁶ Marlis Petersen sang the role of Lulu in William Kensington's new *Lulu* production for the Met in 2015.

Figure 3.4: Lulu's Portrait at the Met



Dexter's *Lulu* production is notable for its rigid adherence to historical accuracy and the composer's intentions. In her influential article, "The Abduction of Opera," Heather Mac Donald writes that the Met's role as "the guardian of opera integrity" began in the 1980s and 1990s, as Regietheater—which Mac Donald refers to as "the abuse of composers' intentions"—became more popular and controversial, first in Germany and then throughout Europe. She quotes Joe Clark, a technical manager at the Met, who stated that under general manager Joseph Volpe, there was a "conscious effort to avoid" director's opera. Funding also plays a significant role on the types of staging an opera house performs, as is evident in the contrasting styles of American and European operatic productions.³⁶⁷ Unlike operas produced in German-speaking countries, which were funded by the government, opera houses in

³⁶⁷ In Erin Helyard's opera column, "In Defense of Regietheater," on the Australian magazine website, *Limelight*, the author comments on the influential role of funding on the type of staging in opera houses.

the United States, including the Met, had to please their sponsors, who had notoriously conservative and traditional taste.³⁶⁸ However, to its critics, the Met's productions were seen as decadent, outdated, and overblown; in particular, stagings by masters of realism such as Franco Zeffirelli and Otto Schenk (the director of the Austrian première of *Lulu*) were considered mismatched with more modern operatic works.

In an article written by William R. Braun in *Opera News*, the author calls Dexter's staging "remarkable in its unusual fidelity to the score." The production, which marked the Met's first performance of *Lulu*, follows Berg's detailed libretto instructions with impressive accuracy, treating the composer's text with considerable reverence by meticulously following his every direction.³⁶⁹ In an article written for *New York* magazine on the 1985 Met performance, Peter G. Davis writes, "The Met's respectful *Lulu* production deserves close attention, since, as far as I can determine, it faithfully follows the composer's every wish... I imagine that fanatical *Lulu* devotees could find instances that depart from the text, but such lapses, if any, must surely be minor ones."³⁷⁰ Davis continues by suggesting that Dexter's goal for his production was to be as faithful to Berg's score as possible, allowing the world to become familiar with the composer's conception of the opera before altering the work too drastically.

Perhaps reflecting the conservative tastes of its audience, critical reception of

³⁶⁸ Evan A. Baker, *From the Score to the Stage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 588.

³⁶⁹ William R. Braun, "Lulu: New York City, the Metropolitan Opera," *Opera News* 80, no. 7 (January 2018), https://www.operanews.com/Opera_News_Magazine/2016/1/Reviews/NEW_YORK_CITY_Lulu.html.

³⁷⁰ Peter G. Davis, "Sacred and Profane," in *New York Magazine* (April 22, 1985), 95.

the Met's *Lulu* celebrated the production, calling it "natural," "toned-down," and praising Dexter's "considerable restraint."³⁷¹ In a 1977 review of the production for "The Village Voice," Leighton Kerner called Dexter's staging "scrupulously faithful to Berg," especially in "Lulu's Prologue appearance in the Pierrot costume of the Portrait that dominates every scene."³⁷² Andrew Porter, in a 1981 article for the *New Yorker Magazine*, called Dexter's production "free of gratuitous sensationalism," while still maintaining the shocking elements of Wedekind's *Lulu* plays as adapted in Berg's opera;³⁷³ years later, Alex Ross, in an article for the same publication, would echo these sentiments, celebrating the production's "decrepit," "off-kilter splendor."³⁷⁴

Dexter's *Lulu* reflects the decadent hypocrisy of fin-de-siècle Vienna, maintaining its 1890s setting. His approach was straightforward and fastidious, rather than imbuing his staging with symbolism or his own personal interpretation of the work. The sets and costumes of the Met's *Lulu* were designed by Jocelyn Herbert, and brilliantly evoke the socio-cultural and historical context of Berg's opera. In the opening scene of Dexter's production, the stage is full of sharp lines, sudden angles, and dark corners; as Ross writes in his review, although the stage is realistic, things appear to be somewhat askew. Gil Wechsler's harsh lighting is full of stark shadows and contrast, contributing to a distinctly expressionist, film-noir feel.

³⁷¹ Tim Ashley, "Berg: Lulu- review," *The Guardian* (Dec 8, 2011), <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2011/dec/08/berg-lulu-met-opera-review>.

³⁷² Leighton Kerner, "Debut: Jocelyn Herbert, Review," *The Village Voice* (March 28, 1977), <http://www.nytimes.com/1977/03/20/archives/opera-met-offers-bergs-symbolic-intense-lulu.html/>.

³⁷³ Andrew Porter, "Musical Events: A True Reflection," *New Yorker Magazine* (January 5, 1981), 66.

³⁷⁴ Alex Ross, "Desperadoes: 'Lulu' at the Met, 'Spring Awakening' on Broadway," *The New Yorker Magazine* (November 23, 2015), <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/11/23/desperadoes>.

Herbert's realistic and colorful designs, set and costumes were inspired by a number of styles, including Bauhaus, art moderne, art nouveau, and a "heavy German bourgeois style."³⁷⁵ Since the film interlude from the opera's première in Zürich was lost, Dexter's film interlude projects an animated film showing Lulu's escape from jail.³⁷⁶ For the unfinished third act, Dexter's production utilized slides, pantomime, and text from Wedekind's *Die Büchse der Pandora*.

Dexter stages the opera almost exactly as the libretto indicates, making very few changes. As Peter Davis suggested in his article, the few changes that were made in the production are inconsequential and irrelevant to the story, and were likely made for practical reasons. For example, in scene three of Dexter's production, the dance costumes are absent from the table in Lulu's dressing room; in the second scene of Act II, rather than hanging on an easel, the Portrait is mounted above the fireplace. The few alterations that Dexter makes to Berg's staging are insignificant, and likely done for practical reasons.

One interesting choice that Dexter makes in his *Lulu* production can be seen in the physical appearance of the two female characters, Lulu and the Countess Geschwitz. As discussed previously in this chapter, costuming, hair and makeup all affect the audience's understanding, or semiotic decoding of, the characters on stage. In particular, the style of a character's hair can play a significant role in our interpretation of his or her identity. According to Ingrid Banks, hair acts as a

³⁷⁵ Kerner, "Debut: Jocelyn Herbert, Review," <http://www.nytimes.com/1977/03/20/archives/opera-met-offers-bergs-symbolic-intense-lulu.html>.

³⁷⁶ Ibid., <http://www.nytimes.com/1977/03/20/archives/opera-met-offers-bergs-symbolic-intense-lulu.html>.

physical and existential representation of self—“a physical manifestation of our being”—that is full of social and cultural meanings.³⁷⁷ In the Met’s *Lulu*, the Countess wears her hair in a black Louise-Brooks bob. As discussed previously, Lulu is commonly depicted with a *Bubikopf* hairstyle, as she appeared in Pabst’s 1929 film, *Die Büchse der Pandora*. The gender-bending haircut also evokes the changing social atmosphere of interwar Europe, as well as the androgyny of Pierrot. By giving the Countess a *Bubikopf*, she is depicted as severe, dark, and dangerous; her style is similar to Berg’s description of the Countess as “masculine” in his libretto.

In Dexter’s production, Lulu’s hair is also styled in a short bob. The Portrait depicts a redheaded Lulu dressed as Pierrot, her hair in a somewhat softened *Bubikopf*. In addition to its length, the color of Lulu’s hair is rich in symbolic meaning. Rather than appearing with a dark, black, or brunette bob—as seen on Asta Nielsen and Louise Brooks— in Dexter’s production, Lulu’s hair is red. The reason for Dexter’s choice to portray Lulu as a redhead is unclear—it does not appear to be based on Berg’s intentions. The choice of red hair is perhaps based on the original depiction of Champsaur’s clownesse, as seen in the poster advertisement for *L’Amant des Danseuses*. Jarmila Novotná, the Czech soprano Berg had hoped would sing the title role for his opera, was a brunette. Nowhere in Berg’s libretto—nor Wedekind’s plays, for that matter—does the composer indicate Lulu’s hair color. Bosnian soprano, Bahrija Nuri-Hadžić, who sang the role at the opera’s Zürich première in 1937, was also a brunette. Although only a limited number of

³⁷⁷ Banks, *Hair Matters*, 26.

photographic stills remain from this première production, Hadžić does not appear to be a redhead in any of them.³⁷⁸

Teresa Stratas, who performed the title role at the Paris Opera's 1970 three-act première, was perhaps the first operatic Lulu to be styled as a redhead. Stratas was also selected to perform in the 1977 Metropolitan Opera production; however, she quit the production shortly prior to its première, due to what she felt was an insufficient rehearsal schedule.³⁷⁹ Why then did Dexter choose to portray Lulu as a redhead? Perhaps the choice was influenced by Stratas's natural hair color, and the designs and art—including the film interlude—that was created in her image. Since she quit only a month before the première performance, it is likely that the Met's creative team did not have time to remake these materials, making it necessary for replacement to have red hair, as well. Carole Farley, who replaced Stratas, also performed the role of Lulu as a redhead, and the choice of red hair was repeated in all the following *Lulu* productions at the Met. Significantly, Lulu also appears as a redhead in other productions: notable redheaded Lulus include Patricia Petibon, Christine Schäfer, Laura Aiken, Marlis Petersen, and Agneta Eichenholtz.

Considering the common depiction of Lulu as a redhead, it is important to explore the significance of this sign. The symbolism of red hair has changed throughout history. In the medieval era, red hair was seen as evidence of a

³⁷⁸ Due of the aged nature of these photographs, the color of each actor's hair is difficult to ascertain with absolute certainty.

³⁷⁹ "Teresa Stratas Quits Met's 'Lulu,'" *The New Yorker* (Feb 1, 1977), 328, <http://www.nytimes.com/1977/02/01/archives/teresa-stratas-quits-mets-lulu.html>.

lascivious, over-sexed nature, and of moral degeneration.³⁸⁰ The medieval prejudice against red hair can be seen in depictions of the Biblical Mary Magdalene, who was commonly portrayed as a redhead, along with Judas. The color red was considered to be the color of the devil, and redheads were believed to have a connection with Satan.³⁸¹ During the Middle Ages, redheads were portrayed as witches, vampires, and ghosts, and red hair was associated with witchcraft, mind-reading, and magic.³⁸² During the Spanish Inquisition, red hair meant that the individual had “stolen the fires of hell,” and had a connection to the devil.³⁸³ Redheads were frequently depicted as witches in Germanic culture. In Elizabethan England, red hair became fashionable because of the famous hue of the Queen’s hair, and came to signify independence. Redheads are typically depicted as having “fiery” or quick tempers, they were spirited, wild, hypersexual, and untamable. Red hair was linked to sin, temptation, and danger.³⁸⁴ The redhead’s reputation for a fiery disposition is credited to the Scots, who were descendants of the fierce Celtic warriors, who had a high percentage of redheads.³⁸⁵

Inspired by aesthetics of Italian painters from the fifteenth century, nineteenth-century artists portrayed red hair as distinctive and beautiful.³⁸⁶ The late Romantic, Pre-Raphaelite red haired women are most famously seen in the paintings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Everett Millais, and William Holman Hunt;

³⁸⁰ Stephanie Graham Pina, “What is the ‘Pre-Raphaelite Woman’?,” accessed May 1, 2017, <http://preraphaelitesisterhood.com/what-is-the-pre-raphaelite-woman/>.

³⁸¹ Jacky Colliss Harvey, *Red: A History of the Redhead* (New York: Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers, 2015), 8.

³⁸² *Ibid.*, 71.

³⁸³ *Ibid.*, 65.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 92.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 32.

³⁸⁶ Lucinda Hawksley, *Essential Pre-Raphaelites* (Bath: Dempsey Parr., 1999).

their works portrayed red hair as romantic, strange, and rare.³⁸⁷ Typical of art from the 1860s through 1890s, Rossetti's redheaded woman came to epitomize femininity; these rare women were unconventional and independent, and challenged social norms.³⁸⁸ Other artists that famously painted red-haired women include Jules Joseph Lefebure, Frederick Sandys, and Gustav Klimt. In his *Beethoven Frieze*, Klimt associates red hair with lust.³⁸⁹ In his 1899 work, *Nuda Veritas*, the redheaded woman represents ahistoricism, a break from tradition.³⁹⁰ A quotation by Friedrich Schiller, engraved above the painting, reads, "If you cannot please everyone with your deeds and your art, please only a few. To please many is bad." The painting is one of the clearest examples of Klimt's anti-establishment attitude.³⁹¹

By giving her red hair in his 1977 production of the opera, Dexter identifies Lulu as an unconventional, wild woman. The shade suits her: in the second act, even when she is married to the wealthy and powerful Dr. Schön, Lulu refuses to conform to the role of monogamous housewife. She maintains relationships with her admirers: Schigolch, Alwa, the Athlete, the Countess, and the Schoolboy. Dr. Schön, upon discovering his wife's lovers hiding around the house, becomes so enraged that he attempts to force Lulu to commit suicide. In her "Lulu lied," Lulu tells Schön that he knew her nature when he married her, singing, "I have not asked in my life to

³⁸⁷ Pina, "What is the 'Pre-Raphaelite Woman?', " <http://preraphaelitesisterhood.com/what-is-the-pre-raphaelite-woman/>.

³⁸⁸ Hawksley, *Essential Pre-Raphaelites*.

³⁸⁹ Pina, "What is the 'Pre-Raphaelite Woman?', " <http://preraphaelitesisterhood.com/what-is-the-pre-raphaelite-woman/>.

³⁹⁰ Harvey, *Red: A History*, 189.

³⁹¹ Pina, "What is the Pre-Raphaelite Woman?", " <http://preraphaelitesisterhood.com/what-is-the-pre-raphaelite-woman/>.

appear in another color than the one which I am known to have.”³⁹² Berg’s extra dialogic text prior to the Lulu lied indicates that she sing “in a decisive, self-confident tone.”³⁹³ Lulu’s confidence, however, will not save her from her inevitable fate: she is a scapegoat, a creation of man. Her hair color signifies man’s understanding of female sexuality, his fear of her fluid, androgynous, animalistic nature. The stigmatization of red hair parallels Lulu’s victimized status. Lulu is the Other, her difference can be seen in her rare, grotesquely beautiful red hair. Like Rossetti’s redheads, Lulu is the quintessential feminine form; she is rare, strange, and unconventional. Just as red hair is equated with licentiousness and lust, her dangerous nature adds to her magnetism and temptation. Like Rossetti’s redheaded women, Lulu challenges societal norms through her independence and open sexuality.

Lulu’s wild nature is also signified by her short *Bubikopf*, reminiscent of the short hairstyles of die neue Frau (the New Woman) of interwar Germany. Just the sexual and independent Weimar woman was seen as the cause of the destruction of Germany’s pre-war attitudes, Lulu is blamed for the downfall of the men around her. Her sexuality leads to chaos, destruction, and crime; by giving her red hair, Dexter emphasizes her dangerous, or criminal nature.

Through her Louise Brooks bob, Dexter’s Lulu is independent, androgynous, and sexual. Although long hair is traditionally associated with femininity, Lulu’s short, bobbed hairstyle represents a distinctly Weimarian sensibility, epitomizing the transgression of gender boundaries that occurred in interwar Germany. These

³⁹² Berg, *Lulu: Libretto*, 61.

³⁹³ *Ibid.*, 61.

two elements of Lulu's hair—its style and color—signify her role as an unconventional woman. Throughout the opera, in all her marriages, Lulu refuses to conform to the traditional role of monogamous housewife. In the second scene of the opera, Dr. Schön tells the Painter the truth about his wife's nature.

DER MALER

Was tut sie den?

DR. SCHÖN (*eindringlich*)

Du hast eine halbe Million geheiratet.

DER MALER (*erherbt sich, außer sich*)

Sie... Sie... Was tut sie?

PAINTER

What has she done?

DR. SCHÖN (*Forcefully.*)

By taking a wife you took half a million marks.

PAINTER (Rising: no longer self-controlled)

She – she – what is it?³⁹⁴

Despite Lulu's previous marriage to the Medical Specialist, the Painter thinks of his new wife as an innocent girl. When he discovers the truth about his wife, the Painter is so disturbed that he commits suicide. Similarly, in the first scene of Act II (II.1), when Dr. Schön, who is married to Lulu, discovers her admirers hiding in their home, he becomes enraged, and attempts to force Lulu to commit suicide in order to save his reputation. Rather than fulfilling her traditional role as obedient housewife, Lulu shows no interest in monogamy or childrearing, and instead maintains romantic relationships with other men and women.

The use of a Louise Brooks bob for Lulu is also seen in numerous other stagings of the work, such as those by Zürich Opera (2002), the Bastille Opera (1998), the Vienna Opera (2015), and William Kensington's new production at the Metropolitan Opera (2015). The style aligns Lulu with Louise Brooks in the G. W.

³⁹⁴ Berg, *Lulu: Libretto*, 23.

Pabst silent film. Rather than appearing as ultra-feminine, with long hair and tight-fitting clothes, she is portrayed as androgynous, independent, and unafraid of challenging the status quo. Lulu's androgyny supports her nature as a complex and multi-dimensional character, rather than the definitive femme fatale. In Dexter's staging, Lulu is more than the fatal woman or the castrating femme fatale; rather, she is a natural being, in contrast with her civilized surroundings, captured and molded into a scapegoat for the sins of her male admirers.

3.9 Conclusions

Similar to the early manifestations of Lulu discussed in the previous chapter, the history of Berg's opera is long and complex, reflecting the influence of multiple creators, genres, and expressions. Multiple aspects of Berg's opera inspired the varied treatment of the work after the composer's death, including the character's diverse origins, the unfinished score, and the enigmatic nature of the title character. At the same time, the complex, individual style of dodecaphonic composition of the *Lulu* musical score, as well as Berg's inclusion in the esteemed Second Viennese School, perpetuated the fixed nature of the opera text, making alterations to the canonic opera controversial. Despite its canonic status, Berg's *Lulu* is an expansion of a character that had been in development since the late nineteenth-century. His libretto was not only inspired by Wedekind's two Lulu plays, it was also inevitably influenced by the formation of Lulu's character by past authors, including Champsaur, Engel, Jessner, and Pabst.

Like Pierrot, the sign of Lulu changes over time. Her origins are mysterious and complex; she is a cultural signifier of the environments that created her. Over decades, various artists shaped her character. Similarly, the identity of Lulu is fluid and always changing, continuously evolving and adapting, a mirror of her surroundings. Not only is tracing Lulu's identity ambiguous, her identity itself is ambiguity. As a mythical representation of Woman, she belongs to everyone, and yet to no one. Just as Lulu's portrait serves as a mirror for the characters within the opera, the character of Lulu herself serves as a mirror for its viewers, with Lulu's identity changing for each of us.

Although the productions examined in this chapter aim to honor the composer's intentions by closely following Berg's extra-dialogic libretto instructions, even these "historically accurate" or *Werktreue* stagings include subtle changes to the operatic text of *Lulu*. As discussed previously, all signs on the theatrical stage have semiotic significance. For instance, although Dexter went to great lengths to replicate the *mise en scène* of Berg's opera, his decision to cast Lulu as a redhead inevitably contributes to the audience's perception of her character. Although Dexter's staging includes the most accurate representation of the Portrait as it is indicated in Berg's libretto, he nevertheless makes the decision to cast her as a redhead with a short, boyish bob. Her red hair gives Lulu an edge—she is perceived as abnormal, wild, and untamable. It is perhaps due to the association of Lulu with the antiquated symbol of Pierrot—recognizable to mid twentieth century audiences, but most likely not understood by contemporary ones—that Dexter chose to align her with the more popular, better-understood sign of "fiery red hair."

Wearing her Pierrot costume and a short, red bob, Dexter's Lulu is wild, independent, and androgynous, yet undeniably feminine. By giving Lulu red hair, Dexter makes her more easily accessible to the audience.

The Austrian première of *Lulu*, performed at the Theater an der Wien in 1962, also sought to honor Berg's intentions through its "accurate" staging of the opera. Similar to early European productions of the work, the Theater an der Wien staging is traditional in its realization of Berg's opera, closely following the instructions included in his libretto. One small change made by director Otto Schenk can be seen in the opening scene of the work. Rather than wearing a Pierrot costume for her Portrait, Lulu—performed masterfully by Evelyn Lear—wears a tight leotard, sheer stockings, and black high heels. Unlike the loose-fitting clothes of Pierrot, Lear's costume suggests a more sexual and playful character. However, Lulu's clothing here nonetheless references the clown Pierrot, as seen in her wide, white collar and her hat, a dunce's cap with large black buttons. Schenk slightly alters Lulu's costuming for her Portrait, imbuing even this "conservative" staging with new elements, altering the audience's understanding of Lulu's nature and her story. Over time, leading up to the advent of Regietheater in the late 1970s and 80s, these types of small changes to the operatic text would become increasingly significant, and the authority of the director would grow to match that of the original composer/librettist. Even the most "accurate," "historical," or "true" stagings can never completely replicate Berg's operatic text. It is this idea—this new understanding of what constitutes the "work" of *Lulu*—that would lead the way to more radical interpretations of the opera.

CHAPTER 4. REGIETHEATER, DIRECTORIAL AUTHORITY, AND THE NEW *LULU*

Expanding on the previous discussion of *Werktreue* stagings, this chapter examines the continuing trend of productions that challenge the work-concept of Berg's canonic opera. Through an analysis of several *Lulu* productions with updated stagings, chapter 4 will investigate the development of Regietheater and the director's role in the realization of works on stage. The productions analyzed in this chapter include the three-act première of *Lulu* at the Opéra National de Paris (1979), as well as productions at the Glyndebourne Festival (1996), the Zürich Opera House (2002), the Royal Opera House (2009), the Theater Basel (2009), the Gran Teatre del Liceu (2010), and the Salzburg Festival (2010). Despite their varied nature, the productions analyzed in this chapter all qualify as Regietheater due to their reinterpreted stagings and *mise en scène*. They demonstrate the new authority of the director in the opera house, whose decisions came to be considered equally important as those of the original composer/librettist. By altering the staging of Berg's *Lulu*, these directors propose new elements to her story; each has its own unique interpretation of the canonic work, focusing and developing a particular aspect of the opera. Through their unique stagings, these productions address questions and explore ambiguities present in the original operatic text, creating their own version of the work and challenging the tradition of composer as ultimate authority.

4.1 Regietheater

Regietheater, German for “director’s theater,” describes opera or theater productions in which the director significantly alters the original author’s text. The word “Regie” implies that the theatrical element of an opera—the staging— is just as important as the text and the music. In the early twentieth-century, some *Regisseur* in German-speaking companies began to challenge the traditions of bourgeois theater, and the years following World War II saw the advent of director’s theater.³⁹⁵ In her article, “The Abduction of Opera,” Heather MacDonald writes that Regietheater opera productions consider the director’s interpretation of the work to be equally as important as the composer’s intentions, if not more so.³⁹⁶ These directors felt open to changing the staging of an opera, altering elements of the *mise en scène* such as the location, time period, costuming, and plot.³⁹⁷ Directors began to increasingly focus on the visual aspect of opera; sets became increasingly abstract, and realism fell out of favor. As Ulrich Müller writes in the *Oxford Handbook of Opera*, the overall concept of modern Regietheater is to explore and visualize hidden subtexts, exposing what lies beyond the surface.³⁹⁸ In addition, regietheater productions frequently emphasize sexual and psychological aspects of the story.

According to Parker, Regietheater productions, although sometimes considered controversial, began as an attempt to breathe new life into “old” operatic works, incorporating innovative updates such as the use of technology and

³⁹⁵ Baker, *From the Score to the Stage*, 582.

³⁹⁶ Heather Mac Donald, “The Abduction of Opera,” *The Social Order; Arts and Culture* (Summer 2007), <https://www.city-journal.org/html/abduction-opera-13034.html>.

³⁹⁷ Baker, *From the Score to the Stage*, 327.

³⁹⁸ Ulrich Müller, “Regietheater/ Director’s Theater,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Opera*, Helen M. Greenwald, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014): 591.

abstraction.³⁹⁹ In their *Opera Quarterly* article, Gundula Kreuzer and Clemens Risi discuss the origination of the term Regietheater, and the difficulty in defining it. Kreuzer and Risi write that stage directors of the Regietheater tradition often question the original text of the opera (the libretto and musical score), creating new contexts for a given performance and challenging the composer's intentions.⁴⁰⁰ While these productions usually do not alter the musical text of the opera, Regietheater directors often transport the work's setting to a new historical context, and may "update" the story through a psychological or socio-political reading.⁴⁰¹ Kreuzer and Risi contrast Regietheater with the concept of the *Werktreue*, which upholds the composer's intentions by creating "authentic" performances.⁴⁰²

Wieland Wagner (1917-1966), the grandson of Richard Wagner, paved the way for the updated treatment of canonic works on stage through his minimal and symbolist stagings of his grandfather's works. As Evan Baker writes in his text, *From the Score to the Stage*, "The achievements of Wieland Wagner and Walter Felsenstein cannot be underestimated. Not only did they exert enormous influence on the visual aesthetics of opera production, they also established the preeminence of the stage director in the artistic hierarchy, sometimes eclipsing even superstar conductors and singers."⁴⁰³ By the 1960s, the stage director had become a more prominent member of the operatic team, and audiences began attending

³⁹⁹ Parker, *Remaking the Song*, 3.

⁴⁰⁰ Gundula Kreuzer and Clemens Risi, "Regietheater in transition: An introduction to Barbara Beyer's interviews with contemporary opera directors," *Opera Quarterly* 27, no. 2-3 (March 2011): 304.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 304.

⁴⁰² The concept of the *Werktreue* is also discussed by Rachel Cowgill in *Operatic Migrations*.

⁴⁰³ Baker, *From the Score to the Stage*, 351.

performances based on their interest in directors.⁴⁰⁴ Although some consider Regietheater groundbreaking and inventive, others condemn it, even referring to updated stagings as “Euro-trash.” Regardless of its polarizing effect, Regietheater has become widespread in European opera houses; in particular, German theaters have led the way with these productions. Through regietheater, the stage director’s interpretation of the opera became an essential element of the production, sometimes even at the expense of the music.

The year 1976 was an important one in the opera world, as it was the centennial of *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, as well as of the foundation of the Richard Wagner Festival (also called the Bayreuth Festival). Under the recommendation of conductor Pierre Boulez, French director Patrice Chéreau and designer Richard Peduzzi were selected for the Festival. Chéreau’s *Ring* productions were considered extremely controversial, updating Wagner’s operas to a nineteenth-century setting and promoting a social message by contrasting working class and wealthy characters on the stage.⁴⁰⁵ As Baker writes, “Patrice Chéreau’s completely original social, political, and economic ideas broke with previous Bayreuth *Ring* styles, particularly those of Wieland Wagner.”⁴⁰⁶ Wolfgang Wagner continued to publicly support the production despite its provocative staging, and, after four seasons, Chéreau’s staging finally won over Bayreuth audiences.⁴⁰⁷ The productions received an enormous amount of attention through press reports; additionally, they had a large number of viewers, as there were both televised and live performances.

⁴⁰⁴ Baker, *From the Score to the Stage*, 351.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 362.

⁴⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 365.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 366.

Chéreau's experimental treatment of such a canonic set of operas—staged in Bayreuth, a literal symbol of the composer as ultimate authority— was hugely influential, and transformed the world of opera staging.⁴⁰⁸ Chéreau's *Ring* productions cleared the path for future experimental opera productions.⁴⁰⁹ Beginning in the 1980s and continuing to this day, many directors earned reputations for their unique stagings, often of “classic” or canonic repertoire, altering or ignoring the intentions of composer and librettist, and instead filling their new role as a leading authority of the production team.

4.2 The Three-act première of *Lulu* at the Opéra National de Paris

Despite its controversial nature, the popularity of Regietheater in European opera houses was further demonstrated when conductor Pierre Boulez again recommended Patrice Chéreau as director and Richard Peduzzi as set designer for the première of the three-act *Lulu* at the Opéra National de Paris, held in the Palais Garnier (Opera Garnier). With Cerha's third act, the much-anticipated complete opera took place on February 24, 1979 at the Paris Opera under direction by Patrice Chéreau, with Teresa Stratas in the title role. After the three-act première, *Lulu* began to be performed internationally, and with increasing frequency. Chéreau's *Lulu* boldly transformed the opera—updating Berg's work and ignoring the explicit directions outlined in his libretto. His staging transported the opera to the 1930s, approximately forty years later after the setting of Wedekind's plays.⁴¹⁰ According

⁴⁰⁸ Baker, *From the Score to the Stage*, 366.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 368.

⁴¹⁰ Jarman, *Alban Berg, Lulu*, 53.

to Chéreau, he changed the setting of Berg's opera because he felt the heightened "historical anxiety" of the 1930s paralleled the psychological, dark story of *Lulu*. He states, the staging "better express[es] the sense of danger and anxiety that haunts the play."⁴¹¹

Some heralded the Paris staging as innovative and fresh; others condemned it for its rejection of Berg's operatic text. In particular, critics disparaged Chéreau's altered setting, as his removal of Berg's carefully calculated double-roles. For his production, Chéreau chose not to have the singers/actors of Lulu's deceased husbands return as her clients in the final scene of the opera. In doing so, the director ignores one of the most symbolically significant elements of Berg's adapted libretto. Critics disparaged the altered setting of the production, as well as the rejection of Berg's carefully calculated double roles in the final scene of the work.⁴¹² Instead of Lulu's first client being the double of the Medical Specialist, her first husband, in Chéreau's production, Lulu's first client is a dwarf. He also doubled the role of the Medical Specialist and Schigolch, despite the lack of any indication in Berg's libretto; this choice of double role was perhaps made for practical reasons, since the two characters are both men who are similar in age; however, this change is inconsistent with both Berg's and Wedekind's stories.

In a review of the production published in *New York Magazine*, Peter G. Davis wrote, "Apparently, the first performance of the complete three-act *Lulu*, a

⁴¹¹"Lulu d'Alban Berg (1979) – Lucia Silla de Mozart (1984-1985)," *Opéra National de Paris Website*, <https://www.operadeparis.fr/en/visits/exhibitions/patrice-chereau-staging-the-opera/iv-lulu-dalban-berg-1979-lucia-silla-de-mozart-1984-1985>.

⁴¹² Alban Berg, *Lulu*, Théâtre National de l' Opéra de Paris, Patrice Chéreau, dir., 2000, Deutsche Grammophon, CD and booklet.

production devised by Patrice Chéreau at the Paris Opera in 1979, blithely altered one detail after another, completely subverting and falsifying Berg's original design." According to Davis, Chéreau's "willfulness" hobbled the drama of the production by ignoring Berg's staging directions.⁴¹³ However, the opera's conductor, Pierre Boulez, defended Chéreau's staging, questioning the public's obsession with "authenticity," and challenging the belief that only a "true" representation of the opera—in the style of the composer's intentions—could garner an "accurate" understanding of the work.

One historically accurate element of the Paris staging is its psychological focus, an important feature of Wedekind's expressionist plays, and later, a common theme of Regietheater. Richard Peduzzi's sets emphasize film noir and expressionist styles with their dark and gloomy atmospheres. The architecture is in a modern, Art Deco style, the stage is set with towering black marble pillars, a grand staircase, and glass windows. The scene is rich and grand, but also cold and foreboding, like the lobby of a bank or office building, or perhaps a mausoleum. As Davis writes, "Richard Peduzzi embodied society's impersonal omnipotence in sets of frigid architectural grandeur that, though very beautiful, dwarfed the characters."⁴¹⁴ Chéreau disregards Berg's casting instructions and fills the stage with supernumeraries: maids, butlers, servers, and theater staff.

The 1979 Paris Opera production of *Lulu* is a quintessential example of Regietheater because of the director's unique treatment of Berg's operatic text. Chéreau altered and ignored many of Berg's instructions outlined in his operatic

⁴¹³ Peter G. Davis, "Sacred and Profane," in *New York Magazine* (April 22, 1985): 95.

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 95.

text, including the use of double-roles, the film interlude, and the sets of each scene. For instance, in the opening scene of Chéreau's *Lulu*, which takes place in the Painter's studio, numerous paintings hang on the walls next to Lulu's Portrait. Although this is similar to the scene of Wedekind's *Erdgeist*, in Berg's libretto, he heightens the importance of the Portrait, making it the only painting hanging during the first scene of the opera. In another instance, in the third scene of the opera, Berg indicates that Lulu should dance off-stage, which is set as her private dressing room. However, in the third scene of Chéreau's production, rather than dancing off-stage, Lulu performs in full sight; later, Dr. Schön and Lulu argue in front of her audience, rather than in the privacy of Lulu's dressing room.

Another example of Chéreau's radically altered staging can be seen in his treatment of the film interlude. In the Paris Opera staging, there is no silent film played at the midpoint of the opera (between the second and third scenes of Act II). The film interlude represents a significant moment of the story: it is the peak of Lulu's story-arc, after which she begins her descent into prostitution. Berg sets the film interlude with palindromic orchestral music, mirroring the symmetry of the story's plot, while a projection shows a short film depicting Lulu's arrest, trial, imprisonment, and escape. In addition to omitting the film, Chéreau's production cuts the opening scene of Act III, the Paris Casino scene. Numerous directors of *Lulu* went on to follow this example, calling the scene to be superfluous to Lulu's story and the music too complex. Although critics disparaged the extreme alterations and changes made by Chéreau to Berg's iconic opera, the dramatic Regietheater staging of the three-act *Lulu* by the Paris Opera, although controversial, represents the

shifting ideologies of the operatic genre at this time.

4.3 Subtexts in the Zürich Opera's *Lulu*

In 2002, the Zürich Opera House created a new production of *Lulu* directed by Sven-Eric Bechtolf, with soprano Laura Aiken in the title role. Like other Regietheater stagings, Bechtolf's production focuses on a particular subtext of Berg's opera: it presents Dr. Schön as Lulu's childhood abuser. As Laura Aiken commented regarding the production, "I knew from the moment Sven started speaking at the first meeting of the cast and production, that he had taken the understanding of the role to a deeper level than I had experienced before, in the plays that I had seen or productions that I had seen. He really was not afraid of the child abuse that Lulu had suffered."⁴¹⁵ Throughout the production, a young supernumerary, depicting the child version of Lulu, appears on stage. Bechtolf's film interlude shows Lulu's childhood abuse at the hands of Dr. Schön, rather than her arrest, imprisonment and escape. The Zürich Opera's video for the film interlude depicts Lulu's abuse by a dark figure—presumably, Dr. Schön/Jack the Ripper—abusing Lulu, chasing her as the young girl runs through the forest, terrified. The audience sees Lulu from Jack's perspective, feels his gaze on her; he holds a pair of red high-heels, as he watches Lulu below him, unconscious in the fallen leaves.

In an interview for the Zürich Opera's commercial recording of the production, Bechtolf discussed the relationship between Lulu and Dr. Schön, noting textual references in Berg's libretto that suggest an abusive relationship between

⁴¹⁵ Reiner E. Moritz, "Lulu, the Lethal Victim," accompanimental film for *Lulu*, Opernhaus Zürich, Sven-Eric Bechtolf, dir., 2002, Fleischer Moving Images, DVD.

the two characters. Dr. Schön met Lulu when she was twelve—he caught her attempting to steal his watch outside of the Alhambra Café. Dr. Schön then took the young Lulu to his acquaintance, a woman who taught girls social “lessons”—the subject matter, presumably, centered on feminine seduction and manipulation. According to Schön, Lulu became her star pupil. He arranged Lulu’s marriage to the Medical Specialist, and later to the Painter, in an attempt to present her as a “proper lady”—all the while keeping her as his secret lover. Bechtolf states:

Berg went further than Wedekind, and created a character [Dr. Schön] whose motives suddenly become clear... So one suddenly gains some biographical insight into Lulu... she becomes a character that men commit sin against. One could read the death, the ruin that she brings upon men, as a kind of Lulu’s revenge. To be quite blunt, one cannot escape the sense that, before the piece even begins, abuse has been inflicted upon a little girl by Dr. Schön, by this man of violence.⁴¹⁶

Throughout Bechtolf’s staging, the innocent, child Lulu appears on stage. She follows Laura Aiken around the stage, imitating her movements and mannerisms; she clings to Dr. Schön’s legs, desperate and pathetic. In one scene, Dr. Schön sings to Lulu (Aiken) as the child sits on his lap, a blank expression on her face. When he turns to leave, she latches onto his ankle—he walks away, dragging her on the floor behind him.

⁴¹⁶ Moritz, “Lulu, the Lethal Victim,” DVD.

In the last scene of the Zürich Opera's *Lulu*, Jack the Ripper murders the child Lulu. He destroys Lulu's innocence, just as Dr. Schön damaged her soul at age twelve. On stage, Jack presents the child Lulu with a large bouquet of floating black balloons, invariably to gain her trust and to distract her. The adult Lulu watches, helpless, begging Jack to leave the girl alone; however, as soon as the girl Lulu accepts the balloons from Jack, and he raises his razor and slits her throat. Rather than the instructions of Berg's libretto, where Lulu yells out as she is murdered offstage, in Bechtolf's staging, Lulu yells "no... no... no" in grief over the death of her childhood self. Jack then leads the adult Lulu, distraught over the girl's death, into a dumpster, stabs her, covers her in newspaper, and leaves her to die. As Bechtolf asserts, "It is clear to see that there is a certain bias for Lulu, and a certain interest in pulling her out of the realm of the eternally feminine, and allowing her to become human."⁴¹⁷ Rather than an eternal, mythical creature, Bechtolf's Lulu is an abused woman, a victim we can all empathize with and relate to.

The staging of the Zürich Opera House's *Lulu* is stark and minimalist, containing few props or furniture with the exception of two black leather sofas. The walls are constructed of a dark, cold marble; symmetrical staircases and a balcony lined with a black metal railing frame the stage. The marble walls are reminiscent of the 1979 Paris Opera production, suggesting a cold, menacing environment. The characters wear black silk outfits, stark white makeup, and painted black eyebrows, evocative of expressionism or early cinema aesthetics. In Bechtolf's production, the Portrait takes on an unusual form, consisting of a nude mannequin enclosed in four

⁴¹⁷ Moritz, "Lulu, the Lethal Victim," DVD.

clear plexiglass boxes, each containing a different segment of the statue's body. The mannequin's eyes are closed; she wears white face makeup, a vibrant shade of red lipstick, and red high-heels. Her hair is covered with a close-fitting, sequined head covering in the style of a 1920s short bob.

In the Prologue and first scene of the Zürich production, Laura Aiken wears the silver head covering and red lipstick, like her Portrait, although she wraps pages of newspaper around her body. She is barefoot, suggesting her sensuality, her wildness, and her unconventionality. Underneath the newspaper, Aiken wears a pale pink silk romper with black fur trim around the low-cut neckline. Throughout the opera, the male characters move the Portrait around the stage, stacking and arranging the plexiglass cubes in different ways, literally depicting their manipulation and control of Lulu. The Portrait is manufactured, commercial, and idealized, representing Lulu's role as a consumed object.

The Portrait of the Zürich Opera emphasizes Lulu's role as an objectified, sexual creature; it is similar to the Portrait in Willy Decker's 1998 production at the Opéra Bastille (Opéra National de Paris). In Decker's staging, the Portrait consists of five painted canvases, of inconsistent sizes, with Lulu's nude body divided between them (see Figures 4.1 and 4.2, below). It is in the style of René Magritte's painting, *L'Évidence éternelle*, and supports the idea of Lulu as a fragmented, unstable, incomplete person (see Photograph 10, below). The top canvas contains a close up of Lulu's face; her short, wavy red hair is worn in a 1920s style. The next painting shows Lulu's chest and torso, followed by her pelvis and hips—complete with red pubic hair (perhaps influenced by Klimt's *Nuda Veritas*)—the next, her thighs and

knees, and finally, the lowest canvas shows her feet. The Portrait appears in different forms throughout the scenes of the opera. For instance, in Dr. Schön's house, only the top painting, showing Lulu's face, hangs on the walls. In the stagings by Decker and Bechtolf, the physical manipulation of the Portrait by the male characters of the opera supports the identity of Lulu as a puppet-like scapegoat, a victim and a creation of man. Just as every admirer changes Lulu's name and shapes her identity, each character arranges her Portrait in a distinct way, constructing their ideal woman.

Figure 4.1: The Portrait at the Zürich Opera⁴¹⁸



⁴¹⁸ Alban Berg, *Lulu*, Opernhaus Zürich. Sven-Eric Bechtolf, dir. 2002. Bernhard Fleischer Moving Images, DVD.

Figure 4.2: Another View of Portrait at the Zürich Opera⁴¹⁹



Unlike most *Lulu* productions following the three-act première, Bechtolf chooses to present Berg's opera in its unfinished, two-act form. In the accompanying film, entitled *Lulu, The Lethal Victim* (included with the commercially recorded DVD), conductor Franz Welser-Möst suggests that one reason Bechtolf chose to present the work in its incomplete form is because at one time, Berg considered redesigning the entire third act. He states, "And I think that this statement of his actually gives us the right, as good as Cerha's work was in finishing the third act, that Berg's statement allows us to play it as a torso."⁴²⁰ Bechtolf compares *Lulu* to other unfinished works, such as Bruckner's Ninth Symphony and Schubert's Unfinished Symphony, asserting that "[a] torso is a form of expression in itself."⁴²¹ In this way, despite its radically altered story line, especially evident in the film

⁴¹⁹ Alban Berg, *Lulu*, Opernhaus Zürich. Sven-Eric Bechtolf, dir. 2002. Bernhard Fleischer Moving Images, DVD.

⁴²⁰ Moritz, "Lulu, the Lethal Victim," DVD.

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*, DVD.

interlude, the Zürich production honors the opera as Berg left it at the time of this death: incomplete, but still remarkable.

In some ways, Bechtolf's Zürich Opera production aims to honor Berg's work. Bechtolf disregards Cerha's completion of the third act, instead presenting Berg's opera in its incomplete form. He insists that even the incomplete opera is an important work. In addition, the staging and design of the Zürich Opera's production connects Lulu with her earlier film depictions, such as by giving Lulu a Louise Brooks bob and using gender-bending costumes. The Zürich Opera production is perverse and decadent, paralleling the Weimar era's freedom of sexual expression: male characters wear women's lingerie, garter belts, knee-highs, and red high heels. In other ways, it defies Berg's operatic text, such as shifting the setting to a more modern context and changing her Portrait.

As discussed above, one of the characteristics of Regietheater productions is the exploration of sub-texts present in the original work. In his production, Bechtolf addresses the ambiguity surrounding Lulu's past. He depicts Dr. Schön as Lulu's child abuser, cementing Lulu's status as a victim and scapegoat. Rather than present Berg's interpretation of Lulu's story, Bechtolf alters it, removing the ambiguity of the libretto and clarifying the story. Bechtolf's production focuses on one aspect of Lulu's multifarious identity—her abuse. In the final scene, we see Jack the Ripper murder both the girl and the adult Lulu. Through his extreme reinterpretation of Berg's libretto and story, the production at the Zürich Opera reveals a unique interpretation of Lulu's story, offering a deeper understanding of her character in a new, updated context.

4.4 A Minimalist Staging at the Royal Opera House

Similar to Bechtolf's production at the Zürich Opera, the 2009 staging of *Lulu* at the Royal Opera House (Covent Garden, London), directed by Christof Loy and with designs by Herbert Murauer, is minimalist and sparse, focusing little attention on props or other visual elements. For instance, in the Prologue of Loy's production, the stage is empty, containing only a semi-transparent black screen, mounted on the back wall, and a simple wooden chair. Lulu wears her hair pulled back, and has on a plain black dress, simple black high heels, and a delicate pearl necklace. The stage is bare, with no props or furniture except for a single a wooden chair. Throughout the production, the men on stage wear modern black tuxedos, designed by Murauer and Eva-Mareike Uhlig. During the Prologue, in addition to the Animal-Tamer, Lulu and Dr. Schön appear on stage; it is Dr. Schön who carries Lulu off stage, rather than Harry, the Animal-Tamer's assistant.

The opening scene of Loy's production contains none of the props Berg indicates in his libretto. Here, the Medical Specialist is seated in the wooden chair with his back facing the audience. The stage is bare with the exception of the screen and the chair. Lulu and the Painter appear on stage. When the Medical Specialist enters the Painter's studio, rather than approaching from off-stage and bursting through the locked door, he simply rises from the wooden chair and enters the scene. When they are not singing, the cast remains motionless, standing like Brechtian archetypes of epic theater, tropes rather than realistic people. The singers/actors do not attempt to be realistic, emphasizing the theatrical setting: they simply walk off stage when they die. Unlike most contemporary productions,

Lulu is not portrayed as hypersexual, and there is no overt violence on stage. In Loy's production, only props that are necessary to the action of the story appear on stage, and the limited action occurs only when necessary for the progression of the story. Like the radical modern stagings discussed by Aston and Savona (noted above), the director makes no attempt to present the stage as natural or realistic. The audience is confronted with the theatrical, symbolic nature of the work, perhaps heightening self-reflection or deeper listening.

Loy's staging is mostly black and white, with various shades of gray. In the monochromatic production, the use of colors outside of the black, white, or gray spectrum is infrequent—in particular, the color red is used in a highly symbolic manner, occurring only at key moments of the story. Throughout the production, a large screen hangs at the back of the stage. In the opening scene, Lulu's black dress nearly blends into the black background of the screen. One of the first uses of color on stage occurs in the second scene, when Lulu's second husband slits his throat. Dr. Schön rushes to comfort the Painter, kneeling down and holding him. His blood marks Schön's face and hands, the bright red stark against the monochromatic background of Loy's set. Lulu licks the blood from his hands in a primal fashion, and then kisses him.

During the film interlude prior to the third scene, the Animal-Tamer returns to the stage, situates the chair, and places some makeup and a black tulle skirt on the seat. By including the Animal-Tamer here, the Zürich production again emphasizes the theatrical, Brechtian element of the production; there are several instances in which the characters on stage break the fourth-wall, reminding

audiences of the symbolic nature of the drama on stage. Lulu kneels next to the chair and applies the white makeup to her face; the effect is eerie, accentuating her blank expression, reminiscent of the white face of Pierrot.

Another significant use of the color red in the Royal Opera House production of *Lulu* occurs in the third scene: as Dr. Schön writes the letter to his fiancée, Lulu manipulates him, paints his face white, and draws a red mouth on him with lipstick, similar in shape to the mouth of a painted clown. She overpowers him and pushes him to the ground. Schön mouths the words of his letter silently as Lulu stands over him, dictating. This moment captures a pivotal point of the couple's relationship, in which Lulu seizes control over Dr. Schön, finally getting what she has always wanted: to be his wife. Lulu also applies the same makeup to Dr. Schön's face prior to his death in final scene of Act II. In the beginning of the scene, Lulu wears the grotesque white makeup; however, by the end, she has wiped her face clean, and applies the makeup to Dr. Schön's face, a symbolic and metaphysical representation of the transference of power between the two characters. An additional use of the color red occurs in the next scene, the first of Act II, when Lulu shoots Dr. Schön and a large bloodstain blooms on his pure white shirt. There is no film interlude in Loy's production, instead, Lulu stays on stage, and wipes the makeup from the deceased Dr. Schön's face, sitting next to him, crying and in shock.

In his staging for the Royal Opera House, rather than using a painting for the Portrait, Loy uses a spotlight (see Photograph 9, below). Whenever the Portrait is referenced in the libretto or dramatic action, the large, bright spotlight shines down on stage, illuminating Lulu in blinding white light. The first appearance of the

spotlight/Portrait is in the opening scene: when Dr. Schön discusses the Painter's work on the Portrait, the spotlight suddenly shines down on Lulu. When Berg's libretto indicates that Lulu's admirers should gaze at the Portrait, the spotlight illuminates that particular character; the result feels psychological, as if the spotlight is revealing their unconscious, innermost desires. In the second scene, when Schigolch sings to Lulu about her Portrait, the spotlight shines down on them. While they are illuminated, Schigolch holds Lulu from behind, groping her and undressing her until she is stripped down to her undergarments, a black silk slip dress. Schigolch's shocking behavior reveals his relationship with Lulu: he views her as a means to an end; throughout the opera, he repeatedly begs Lulu for money and attempts to capitalize on her role as a sexualized object.

Figure 4.3: The Portrait at the Royal Opera House⁴²²



⁴²² Alban Berg, *Lulu*, The Royal Opera House. Christof Loy, dir. June 13 and 17, 2009. Opus Arte, DVD.

The use of a spotlight for the Portrait emphasizes Lulu's role as a creation of man, changing with each admirer who gazes upon it. It gives the staging a psychological feel, as if revealing the hidden, innermost thoughts of the characters on stage. Loy's staging, without the use of props, scenery, or film, heightened the psychological development of the characters on stage, enhancing the drama of Berg's musical score; the exploration of the unconscious mind and the motivators hidden within the id of our psyche, parallels expressionist aesthetics, connecting the opera to the works of Wedekind and the context of fin-de-siècle Vienna.

Like other Regietheater directors, Loy alters the *mise en scène* of Berg's *Lulu*, changing the settings, props, and costumes. Through his transformation, Loy strips the opera down to its bare bones, leaving only the essentials. Rather than answering questions or expanding on hidden subtexts, Loy's staging emphasizes the ambiguous, mysterious qualities of Berg's opera. Falling in the category of radical modern productions described by Aston and Savona, Loy's staging also parallels ideologies of Brecht's Epic theater: the audience is forced to play an active role in the interpretation of the story being presented on stage. By removing all visual distractions, the Royal Opera House's production emphasizes the theatrical element of the opera, and highlights the role of the characters on stage as tropes or types. Although the Royal Opera House's *Lulu* production qualifies as Regietheater because of its radically altered staging, rather than rejecting the notion of composer as ultimate authority, Loy's staging reflects his deep respect for Berg's operatic text. By removing visual distractions and forcing the audience to focus on the musical score,

the Royal Opera House production aims to honor the composer and his masterfully complex work.

4.5 Bieito's *Lulu*: Euro-trash or Regietheater?

In 2009, the Theater Basel in Switzerland created a new *Lulu* production, directed by the notorious Catalan director Calixto Bieito, and with Marisol Montalvo in the title role. In the world of opera, Bieito has earned his reputation as the quintessential Regietheater director. During the period of the 1980s-2000s, Bieito's stagings attracted much attention throughout Europe and internationally; the director is known for his highly updated productions, with brash, shocking ideas, with instances of overt sexuality and violence. As George Loomis writes in his review of the production in *The New York Times*, "Calixto Bieito, one of the more provocative of cutting-edge European directors, likes to shock audiences and does so here with breathtaking displays of nudity in two crucial scenes."⁴²³ Bieito's reputation was sealed after his notorious staging of Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* at the Komische Oper Berlin in 2004. In that production, Mozart's characters are transformed into pimps and prostitutes, and the stage was full of sex, nudity, and extreme violence. It is exactly these qualities, highly prevalent in Bieito's stagings, which led to critics' designation of updated productions as "Euro-trash."

In Bieito's *Lulu* production, soprano Marisol Montalvo performs the role of Lulu as a hypersexual femme fatale. Although Lulu has frequently appeared in revealing clothing, Bieito's production is significant because of its use of full nudity.

⁴²³ George Loomis, "Heroines as ruthless as they are alluring," *The New York Times* (Feb. 24. 2009), <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/24/arts/24iht-loomis.1.20393689.html>.

Marisol appears fully nude in several scenes; in addition, the Portrait, which will be discussed in more detail below, is constructed of five enlarged nude photographs of Lulu. In the opening scene of the Theater Basel production, the Painter is photographing Lulu for her Portrait. Montalvo depicts Lulu as bubbly, energetic, and flirtatious. Her hair is long and straight; she wears a white lace bra and thong. She is riding a large horse statue, painted a bright pink hue, and holds a white riding crop. The Painter's studio appears as a photography studio, and his photographs are projected on a screen behind Lulu.

In the next scene, we see the completion of the Painter's work: the Portrait consists of five giant banners of Lulu, extending from the ceiling and hanging the full length of the stage. In the far right banner, Lulu stands nude, partially covered by shadow; she is tied and bound, her underwear around her ankles. She gazes down, ashamed and afraid, and holds her arms covering her breasts. Here we see one side of Lulu: the victimized, abused, mistreated woman. The next banner shows Lulu from behind, wearing black lingerie, her knees slightly bent to the side, emphasizing the curve of her nude figure. This portrayal of Lulu is much different from the first banner; here, Lulu is sexual, alluring, and seductive. The middle poster shows Lulu in all her strength: her feet spread wide, hands on her hips, shoulders back, chin up. She is completely nude, wearing a pair of platform heels. Her strong stance illustrates Lulu's pride and empowerment. In the next banner, Lulu is dressed in a "sexy-schoolgirl" outfit, wearing high-waist black briefs, knee socks and heels. She wears a choker necklace, and her long hair leaves her chest exposed. This banner reflects the male gaze and Lulu's role as a sexualized object. In the last banner, Lulu

has an ecstatic look on her face: her mouth is wide open, her eyes are closed, and her hands grab the sides of her sheer black cover-up. Lulu's orgasmic expression here suggests the pleasure she takes in her sexuality (see Figure 4.4). On stage, Marisol Montalvo is tiny, dwarfed amongst the larger-than-life banners. Like Lulu's ever-changing names, Bieito's Portrait represents the multifaceted identity of her character and her fluid nature, transforming according to her lover's desires.

Figure 4.4: The Portrait at Basel⁴²⁴



Bieito's production grows increasingly daring and grotesque as the arc of Lulu's story descends. During the film interlude, clips from an episode of *The Little Lulu Show* are projected on a large screen. Little Lulu was a comic strip character

⁴²⁴ Alban Berg, *Lulu*. Basel Theater. Calixto Bieito, dir. June 16, 2009. Live recording, for perusal only, DVD.

first created by Marjorie Henderson Bell in 1935, a mischievous young girl with dark hair. The comic appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post* until 1944, and in 1995, select stories from the comic were adapted for *The Little Lulu Show*, an animated series by HBO.

During the film interlude of Bieito's production, clips from the cartoon are projected, and we watch as Little Lulu plays with and teases the boys in her neighborhood. The boys walk Lulu back to her house; she closes the door and peers through the keyhole. The screen switches to a pornographic scene, a close-up shot of sexual intercourse. The film changes to an animated film, showing an umbrella being swept away in the current of a flowing river, surrounded by an urban environment and dark storm clouds. The camera speeds through a tunnel, driving fast on a dark road, lit by florescent bulbs, with lights and advertisements streaking past. Again we see little Lulu peering through the keyhole, watching the pornographic scene with a shocked look on her face.

Bieito's reinterpreted film interlude prepares the audience for Lulu's gruesome fate. In the final scene of the production, the Countess and Alwa mend the battered Portrait with yellow tape and present it as a sign; standing next to them, Schigolch advertises Lulu's services, holding a cardboard sign that reads "sex = cheap and safe." Later in the scene, Lulu enters the shabby room with her final client, Jack the Ripper. She removes her fur coat, completely nude underneath, and slowly makes her way to the dumpster, Jack following close behind her. She slowly steps into the dumpster, walking over heaping black bags of trash. Behind her, Jack extends his arm, holding a razor; Lulu pleads with him, shrieking "no... no... no...."

He violently attacks her, slicing her throat with his blade. Lulu lies dead amongst the refuse, mutilated and covered in blood.

Similar to the Zürich Opera production, in Bieito's staging, Lulu dies alone, surrounded by trash. Afterwards, Jack walks to the front of the stage, holding a clear bag containing one of Lulu's organs; he ties it closed and then slips it into his trench coat pocket. The opera ends as he slits the throat of the Countess; suddenly, the theater lights go out, and we see Jack standing illuminated over her dead body. Perhaps the graphic violence of Bieito's reinterpreted final scene is meant to clarify the victimized role of Lulu—she is used up, abused, mutilated, and discarded. The production is outrageous and offensive, with overt sexual acts, pornographic scenes, and bloody violence. Like many Regietheater works, *Lulu* at the Theatre Basel disregards the composer's intentions in favor of creating a novel, shocking production that prioritizes visual and staging elements over the operatic text. It is an extreme example of the updated productions so commonly performed in contemporary opera houses across Europe, and especially in German-speaking countries.

4.6 A Few More Post-1980 Productions

One of the most common ways in which post-1979 productions of *Lulu* transform Berg's opera is through the alteration of the Portrait. In several stagings, Lulu is depicted as Eve in the Portrait, rather than as Pierrot. By portraying her as Eve, the original temptress, these productions emphasize Lulu's identity as a femme fatale. Aligned with Eve, Lulu is powerful yet dangerous, she is a temptation to man,

a symbol of weakness, sexuality, and sin. In the 1996 Glyndebourne Festival production of *Lulu*, directed by Graham Vick and with Christine Schäfer in the title role, the updated Portrait is highly symbolic. It shows Lulu posing seductively, with one side of her blouse falling down to expose her shoulder. In one hand she holds an apple, as she situates her other hand flirtatiously on her waist (see Figure 4.5 and 4.6). The apple she holds connects her with Eve in the Biblical Garden of Eden. Her snakeskin pants recall the guise of Satan in the Genesis story, as well as Lulu's role as a serpent in the Animal-Tamer's menagerie, with the reptilian depictions of the femme fatale in the fin-de-siècle works of Gustav Klimt.

Figure 4.5: The Portrait at Glyndebourne⁴²⁵



⁴²⁵ Alban Berg, *Lulu*, Glyndebourne Festival Opera. Graham Vick, dir. (West Long Branch, NJ: Kultur, 1996) DVD.

Figure 4.6: Lulu at Glyndebourne, opening scene⁴²⁶



In the opening scene of the 2010 *Lulu* production at the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona, directed by Olivier Py and with Patricia Petibon in the role of Lulu, the Portrait also depicts Lulu as Eve: she stands in front of an apple tree, fully nude, with her hands strategically placed to cover her breasts and pelvis, her flowing red hair falling to her shoulders. A text at the bottom reads: “Sex Line: 22 418,” foreshadowing her fate as a prostitute in the last scene of the opera (see Figure 4.7, below). Similar to the previously discussed Metropolitan Opera staging by John Dexter, Lulu’s red hair evokes her fiery sexuality, her magnetic and rare femininity. In both Vick’s and Py’s Portraits, Lulu holds an apple, suggesting her inclusion in the ancient and historical trope of the destructive woman. Although Berg’s original

⁴²⁶ Alban Berg, *Lulu*, Glyndebourne Festival Opera. Graham Vick, dir. (West Long Branch, NJ: Kultur, 1996) DVD.

conception is lacking in these Portraits, by depicting Lulu as Eve, these directors highlight her role as a scapegoat creation of man, similar to Pandora, the mythological woman who inspired Wedekind's plays, highlighting the timeless, ancient history of the femme fatale.

Figure 4.7: The Portrait at Liceu⁴²⁷



4.7 Conclusions

Whether these updated productions of *Lulu* are considered inconsequential or inventive, the effects of staging on the audience's understanding of Lulu's character and story are undeniable. Most scholarly research on Lulu's identity does not consider her representation in performance, instead examining her as she is portrayed in the operatic text. As Levin proposed, a successful operatic staging

⁴²⁷ Alban Berg, *Lulu*, Gran Teatre del Liceu. Olivier Py, dir. November 2010. Deutsche Grammophon, DVD.

should attempt to “solve problems” which are presented by the operatic text.⁴²⁸ In this sense, directors of *Lulu* have a difficult task at hand: despite Lulu’s multifaceted personality, the staging must present a coherent storyline and a character that is alluring and mysterious, yet still understandable to audiences. Often, directors choose a specific identity for Lulu, using staging elements to project symbols that support and emphasize that identity. In doing so, these updated productions alter Berg’s character to display in their directors’ interpretations.

In examining these *Lulu* productions, it is evident that each of these directors had his own unique ideas about the identity of Berg’s Lulu character. These updated productions not only transform the staging of Berg’s opera, but by doing so, transform the character of Lulu herself. Just as Lulu’s Portrait serves as a mirror for the characters within the opera, the character of Lulu herself serves as a mirror for the unique contexts in which the work is delivered, reflecting the re-interpretation of Lulu under new authorities and visions. As Levin writes in *Unsettling Opera*, only in performance does opera become the fulfillment of the art. Through their altered and updated stagings, these productions consider Lulu in the fluid and ever-shifting context in which she exists today.

⁴²⁸ Levin, *Unsettling Opera*, 12.

CHAPTER 5. THE TRANSFORMATION OF *LULU*: AMERICAN *LULU* AS REINTERPRETATION AND ORIGINAL WORK

Although many opera houses have created new *Lulu* productions, ranging from conservative to experimental, the treatment of Berg's opera by Viennese composer Olga Neuwirth, entitled *American Lulu*, is significant in the boldness of its adaptation of a twentieth-century canonic work. Chapter 5 builds on the previous exploration of new authorities in contemporary opera houses. *American Lulu* is unique in that, through its role as both a reinterpretation of a canonic work and a newly composed work, Neuwirth challenges not only the role of the composer as ultimate authority, but also the genre of opera itself. *American Lulu* is a politicized transformation of Berg's opera, and contains an updated setting and characters, told from the feminist perspective of a contemporary woman composer. She also modernized Berg's original setting, shifting it to 1950s New Orleans and 1970s New York, in the years surrounding the Civil Rights movement. This setting, partly motivated by Neuwirth's interest in American counterculture and jazz, allowed her to transform Berg's psychologically centered opera into a highly politicized one.

Neuwirth alters Berg's opera in several ways: aided by Catherine Kerkhoff-Saxon, Neuwirth wrote a new English libretto and modified story for *American Lulu*, while simultaneously maintaining enough elements of Wedekind's plays and Berg's opera in order to preserve a sense of Lulu's story.⁴²⁹ Although the work's title and

⁴²⁹ Since Neuwirth is a Viennese composer, she grew up with the names of the Second Viennese School in her musical education; as operagoers, it would be unusual for a German or Austrian not to

setting, and the race and names of several key characters are changed in *American Lulu*, Neuwirth's *Lulu* maintains a clear connection to the earlier manifestation of her story. In this way, Neuwirth continues in the tradition of Berg, who adapted Wedekind's two *Lulu* plays into a single opera libretto, major literary feat.

In this assessment, *American Lulu* serves as a case study to explore the widening of interpretative boundaries as well as the roles of creative authorities in the performance of opera today—authorities distinct from that of the original composer and librettist. It will also allow us to raise questions about the ways that this authorial expansion might figure into scholarly reassessments of the “work” or “text” of an opera. This chapter will explore *American Lulu* as a challenge to the *Lulu* work-concept, through Neuwirth's revised operatic text. In addition, chapter 5 will consider Neuwirth's creation of *American Lulu*, including her jazz arrangement of Berg's text, as well as influential factors that contributed to the composer's creation of her opera, and her encoding of signs and meaning.

5.1 The *American Lulu* Libretto

In *American Lulu*, Neuwirth transforms Berg's opera in numerous ways. Together with Catherine Kerkhoff-Saxon, she created an entirely new, English language libretto, changed the historical context of the story, and altered the race and names of several characters. For her opera, Neuwirth re-wrote Berg's entire libretto, although many of Berg's original lines remain, translated to English by Catherine Kerkhoff-Saxon. Neuwirth made most of her changes in the third act of

be familiar with Berg. Based on this information, I believe we can safely assume that Neuwirth considered Berg a canonic composer, and that her audience-goers would be familiar with *Lulu*.

American Lulu, where her reinterpreted characters truly shine. In *American Lulu*, the Countess Geschwitz, Schigolch, and Lulu are all African Americans in the midst of the Civil Rights movement. Schigolch is renamed Clarence, Dr. Schön is now Dr. Bloom, and Alwa is Jimmy. The Countess, also cast as an African American, is transformed into Eleanor, a tragic blues-singer. Rather than an Animal-Tamer introducing his menagerie, the Prologue of *American Lulu* is set in New York in the 1970s. Here, the character of Lulu, who is now a high-class prostitute, recalls her past: New Orleans in the 1950s. The opening scene transports the audience to that past, and the first two acts serve as a flashback to Lulu's life in New Orleans. The third act, complete with Neuwirth's newly composed music, brings the audience back to Lulu's present, 1970s New York. In an interview at the Bregenz Festival, the composer commented on the third act, stating: "...[T]he first and second act, I feel it was like a recollection, and in the third act, we are in the now-a-days of the 1970s."⁴³⁰

To enrich the historical context of *American Lulu*, Neuwirth includes "intermediate texts" between certain scenes of the opera, with recorded fragments of speeches by Civil Rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. ("MLK") and poetry by Caribbean-American poet June Jordan and American writer Djuna Barnes. *American Lulu* includes eight intermediate texts. These intermediate texts, which are referred to as "Black 1-8" in the libretto, are completely external to the story: as Neuwirth

⁴³⁰ Olga Neuwirth, "Interview with Olga Neuwirth, Bregenz Festival." Interview by Kenan Malik. Impact Video Production for Mahogany Opera Group, September 6, 2013. <https://kenanmalik.com/2013/09/08/behind-the-scenes-of-american-lulu/>.
Olga Neuwirth and John Fulljames, "Behind the Scenes of American Lulu: Part 2." Interview by Kenan Malik. Mahogany Opera Group, April 29, 2014. <https://kenanmalik.com/2013/09/08/behind-the-scenes-of-american-lulu/>.

states, the audience can either choose to connect the speeches with what is going on onstage, or not.⁴³¹ The MLK texts help to reveal the historical context of the opera—particularly referring to the decade between the time of the first two acts and Act 3, the 1960s, at the height of the Civil Rights movement—but they also highlight the politicized function of Neuwirth’s work.

The opera encourages audience members to consider their own role in their social and political environment, building on the tradition of German theatre as educational and enlightening, as propagated in works by Schiller and Brecht. Through the use of intermediate texts, Neuwirth intentionally separates Lulu’s story from the historical context of the opera. The characters are detached from their political surroundings, never overtly discussing the events or ideals of the Civil Rights movement. Although the inclusion of intermediate texts contributes to a fuller understanding of the opera’s context and characters, their disembodied presentation poses a significant challenge to the spectator. The foreign and disconnected nature of the “Black” texts are reminiscent of Formalist and Brechtian techniques of defamiliarization, or *Verfremdungseffekt*, in which the theatrical work “defamiliarizes” the spectator’s habit of viewing the theatre as a representation of reality, therefore inspiring personal reflection and growth.⁴³²

Neuwirth’s reinterpreted setting is significant to more than just the story of *American Lulu*—it is a key element in both the theatrical and socio-cultural function of the work. Commenting on the politicized nature of the opera, Neuwirth stated,

⁴³¹ Neuwirth and Fulljames, “Behind the Scenes of American Lulu: Part 2.”
<https://kenanmalik.com/2013/09/08/behind-the-scenes-of-american-lulu/>.

⁴³² Aston and Savona, *Theatre as Sign System*, 7.

“It’s important to bring these social issues into music, especially with opera or music theatre... it’s a topic which should also show us something about our lives.”⁴³³ Ideally, *American Lulu* is meant to inspire the spectator to actively engage with their surroundings, encouraging audience members to consider their own roles in society, rather than living a life devoid of social and political understanding.

5.2 The Transformation of Lulu in *American Lulu*

In her personal essay, “Fatale Frauen oder: der dritte Akt,” Komische Oper Berlin dramaturg Joanna Wall comments on the role of the “myth of the femme fatale” in Neuwirth’s opera. Wall writes, “Only in Olga Neuwirth’s handling of the story does the character of Lulu undergo a radical reinterpretation.”⁴³⁴ In her opera, Neuwirth seeks to challenge the concept of the femme fatale, examining the endurance of the myth even in contemporary culture.⁴³⁵ She questions the ever-present notion of the “dangerous woman” in modern productions of *Lulu*, and indeed, in current Western culture. The long-standing concept of Lulu as femme fatale, first explored by Wedekind and Berg, has remained the primary focus on most *Lulu* productions—even in those with updated stagings. Although the topic of women’s “true nature” was a popular subject in fin-de-siècle Vienna, the perception of female sexuality as dangerous and pathological is still prevalent in today’s culture, despite shifts in thinking about women and developments in feminist thought. In an interview at the Bregenz Festival in 2013, Neuwirth commented on

⁴³³ Neuwirth and Fulljames, “Behind the Scenes of American Lulu: Part 2.” <https://kenanmalik.com/2013/09/08/behind-the-scenes-of-american-lulu/>.

⁴³⁴ Johanna Wall, “Fatale Frauen Oder: Der Dritte Akt,” Komische Oper Berlin program book (Berlin, September 9, 2012): 16-18.

⁴³⁵ Ibid., 16-18.

her personal interpretation of the Lulu character, noting how her own attitude differs from that of Wedekind and Berg, both of whom she feels treat Lulu too “exaltedly” and “romantically.”⁴³⁶ Neuwirth, on the other hand, has a more distant view of her. She believes that concept of the femme fatale is an ancient creation of man, and declares that it is time the “myth” should finally be put to rest.

American Lulu moves beyond traditional depictions of the title character as a femme fatale, by giving it female characters, Lulu and the Countess, a feminist edge.⁴³⁷ As opposed to the final scene of Berg’s opera, which depicts a degraded, desperate Lulu working as a prostitute in order to support herself and her remaining male admirers, in the final scene of *American Lulu*, Neuwirth’s character is more powerful than ever, with wealthy, influential customers and plenty of money. Although she admits to no longer enjoying her profession, Neuwirth’s Lulu has complete control over her clients, and she continues to work despite having gained financial stability. In *American Lulu*, rather than be portrayed as a naïve girl, Lulu is aware of her sexuality and the power it encompasses. In her essay in the Young Vic’s *American Lulu* program book, Neuwirth explains that Lulu “turns herself into a market commodity whose value fluctuates wildly.”⁴³⁸ Lulu conforms to the idea that she is a commodity, transforming herself into what men want her to be. She chooses her profession, and chooses to be the center of male attention. Although

⁴³⁶ Olga Neuwirth, “Interview with Olga Neuwirth, Bregenz Festival.” Interview by Kenan Malik. Impact Video Production for Mahogany Opera Group, September 6, 2013. <https://kenanmalik.com/2013/09/08/behind-the-scenes-of-american-lulu/>.

⁴³⁷ Johanna Wall, Interview by Jennifer Tullmann, Komische Oper Berlin, Germany, June 28, 2013, Interview 2.

⁴³⁸ Olga Neuwirth, “Notes on American Lulu (2006-2011),” *American Lulu Program Book, Young Vic* (Sept. 2013), 13.

she is still a victim of man due to her inevitable murder at the end of the work, Neuwirth's Lulu is a more empowered, less victimized character throughout the work.

Instead of focusing primarily on Lulu's characterization as a femme fatale, Neuwirth transforms her, as well as the Countess, in order to tell a new story. Hence, the death of the figure of Lulu—the "myth" of Lulu—is made clear in the end of the work. Although Neuwirth wanted it to be clear that Lulu died at the end of the opera, she did not want the murderer to be identifiable as a specific character.⁴³⁹ Rather than having a recognizable murderer—Jack the Ripper, the double of Dr. Schön—Neuwirth's libretto specifically leaves Lulu's death a mystery.

Behind a curtain or in very dim light, a shadowy figure can be seen strangling Lulu.

(By no means should the killer be identifiable!)

For a moment, the lights go back on. Lulu's lifeless body lies there, sprawled out on the floor.⁴⁴⁰

Anyone could be Lulu's murderer, and all the characters on stage play a part in her death. In the end, it is Neuwirth's story, and the lessons to be learned from that story, that is important—not Lulu. Lulu is an affirmation of the male world, as a reflection of male desire. Despite Neuwirth's assertion that this femme fatale stereotype be put to rest, in her libretto, she emphasizes the seemingly evil, or

⁴³⁹ Johanna Wall, Interview by Jennifer Tullmann, Komische Oper Berlin, Germany, June 27, 2013, Interview 1.

⁴⁴⁰ Olga Neuwirth and Catherine Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu: Libretto* (Milan: Ricordi, 2006-2011), 30.

dangerous, traits of the Lulu character. By portraying her as a woman who manipulates men through her sexuality, Neuwirth retains the core of the femme fatale myth in connection with the Lulu character. However, the story of *American Lulu* focuses on more than the objectification of women; rather, it is transformed into a politicized work that explores a number of socio-cultural issues. Although many aspects of Neuwirth's Lulu retain her dangerous nature, it is through Neuwirth's updated setting and transformation of characters that *American Lulu* transcends the topic of the femme fatale.

5.3 The Transformation of the Countess into Eleanor

One of the most significant alterations Neuwirth makes to Berg's *Lulu* is seen in her treatment of the Countess Geschwitz. In *American Lulu*, the Countess is not only given a new name—Eleanor—she is given a central purpose. Eleanor becomes the second protagonist of the work, who is dramatically equal to Lulu. In Neuwirth's opera, Eleanor acts as an antithesis to Lulu. Eleanor is dramatically opposite to the femme fatale: she is the anti-male fantasy. In *Lulu*, the Countess dies, almost casually, in the final scene of the work. In contrast, in Neuwirth's opera, Eleanor not only survives, she is the only character who manages to break away from Lulu and pursue an independent path.⁴⁴¹ The death of Berg's Countess freezes her, traps her, never to be separated from Lulu, never to fulfill her dreams of independence. On the other hand, in *American Lulu*, Eleanor escapes Lulu, with her dreams, independence,

⁴⁴¹ Johanna Wall, pre-performance lecture on *American Lulu*. *Komische Oper Berlin*, June 30, 2013.

and integrity intact—“she runs out the door without looking back...”⁴⁴²

Although they are not very physically distinct, the two women are clearly contrasted dramatically and musically (as discussed below). The extra-dialogic text before the last scene describes Lulu as follows: *Lulu is black, in her early 50s, slim and delicate. She wears very little make-up. Her pretty pale face is spoiled by a smug, condescending expression.*⁴⁴³ Prior to Eleanor’s entrance on stage, Neuwirth writes: *Eleanor—who is now in her early 40s, and slim and delicate—wears a lovely dress and a gardenia in her hair.*⁴⁴⁴ The libretto’s physical description of the two women is remarkably similar, describing them both as “slim and delicate”; however, throughout the work, Lulu’s cruel and manipulative nature is contrasted with Eleanor’s personality. Whereas Lulu is “spoiled” by her smugness, Eleanor wears a “lovely” dress and a flower in her hair, suggesting a more innocent, likeable character.

Although the two women come from similar backgrounds, as victims of racism, childhood abuse, and objectification they react to their pasts in entirely different ways.⁴⁴⁵ The characters have opposite strategies for surviving as African Americans in the South during the 1950s. On one hand, Lulu uses her magnetism—of which she is well aware—to attract white, wealthy men, to gain financial stability and to learn powerful secrets. She becomes what the men surrounding her want her to be, and is more powerful and successful for it. Eleanor, on the other hand, refuses

⁴⁴² Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 29.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁴⁴⁵ Olga Neuwirth, personal notes: word document, “O.Neuwirth.Notes.Lulu engl,” e-mailed to the author, July 1, 2013.

to assimilate or act subserviently. She stays true to herself, defying the circumstances around her that have made her part of the American underclass. Instead of molding herself into an idealized object of white male desire, Eleanor adapts, making only small changes to herself in order to survive her surroundings. Even her acceptance of her homosexuality is an act of defiance towards cultural and societal norms of the time.

While Eleanor is a transformation of Berg's Countess character, his Countess is a transformation of Wedekind's original Geschwitz. In her article, "Femme Fatale and Lesbian Representation in *Lulu*," Karen Pegley explores Berg's alteration of Wedekind's Countess Geschwitz into the character of his opera. Pegley labels Berg's Countess as weak and confusing, a result of the heavy cuts Berg was forced to make when writing the *Lulu* libretto. In Wedekind's plays, and especially in *Die Büchse der Pandora*—where the Countess's character plays an even larger role than in *Das Erdgeist*—her character is a stock type, based on numerous pre-existing images of lesbians in German and European literature at the time.⁴⁴⁶ Pegley writes, "In contrast to Wedekind's characterization of Geschwitz, Berg's representation was not of a true lesbian type, but a negative social stereotype—that is, a restrictive, standardized image of a weak and imbalanced woman [...] and thus the textual adaptation from play to libretto resulted in a confused and unstable operatic character."⁴⁴⁷ Since Wedekind's stock lesbian character was present in other cultural works at the time, she was understandable to audiences.⁴⁴⁸ Wedekind's

⁴⁴⁶ Pegley, "Femme Fatale," 267.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid., 267.

⁴⁴⁸ Ibid., 268.

Countess acts as a knowledgeable social commentator in *Die Büchse der Pandora*—separated from her peers by her sexuality; her lesbianism makes her an outsider, capable of commenting on her amoral surroundings.⁴⁴⁹

Neuwirth's opera transforms the Countess, changing her from a weak character that exists solely as one of Lulu's many admirers, into Eleanor, an artist and a wise cultural critic. In her labeling of Eleanor as a blues singer, Neuwirth suggests that the character's music functions as social commentary, a reflection of the African-American experience. It is unclear whether or not Neuwirth's reinterpreted Eleanor is a result of a personal knowledge of Wedekind's original Countess, although she has stated in past interviews that she is very familiar with Berg's opera, having an uncle who was a *Lulu* scholar.⁴⁵⁰

In many ways, Neuwirth's libretto highlights the oppositional nature of her two female characters. Whereas Lulu conforms to societal expectations, making herself the center of white male attention, Eleanor focuses on her ideals and her music. Lulu assimilates to white culture, perhaps even using her light skin for her own social advantage; in contrast, Eleanor is identified as the "authentic" black woman, who refuses to assimilate. By classifying Eleanor as a blues singer, Neuwirth further suggests that she stays true to her African American roots. As dramaturg Johanna Wall stated, "Eleanor... doesn't try to assimilate. She doesn't try to be the better man or the better white. That is what she's [Neuwirth's] actually saying that Lulu does. Lulu does try... to adapt to a white culture, a white Anglo-Saxon culture,

⁴⁴⁹ Pegley, "Femme Fatale," 267-8.

⁴⁵⁰ Tom Service, "A guide to Olga Neuwirth's Music," *The Guardian* (Aug. 7, 2010), <https://www.theguardian.com/music/tomserviceblog/2012/aug/07/contemporary-music-guide-olga-neuwirth>.

as a woman... she tries to just be better in the same system.”⁴⁵¹ Eleanor is the only character in *American Lulu* who is remotely political, and who is not entirely caught up in Lulu’s world; consequently, she is also the only character who resists Lulu’s lure and survives.

Similar to Wedekind’s Countess, who was both self- and socially aware, Eleanor is a proud, critically thinking, and independent woman. Pegley writes, “Wedekind’s *Geschwitz* did not drown in self-pity but instead valued her lesbian perspective and objectively criticized society.”⁴⁵² In the last scene of *American Lulu*, Eleanor’s conversation with Lulu support her own role as a social commentator, when she states “You think you’re free ‘cause you’ve money and power over others, but you exist only through them!”⁴⁵³ Eleanor’s strength is fully demonstrated here: she confronts Lulu, stands up for herself, says goodbye, and leaves. She tells Lulu “You will not kill my free spirit! I’ve had it since I was young,” and “I’ve finally found myself again.”⁴⁵⁴ Through her reinterpretation of the Countess into Eleanor, Neuwirth creates a character that parallels the social function of Wedekind’s original plays. Neuwirth’s reinterpretation of Berg’s Countess is revealing of the transformative and innovative nature of her work. Rather than existing merely as an admirer of Lulu, Eleanor’s antithetical role as a critically thinking blues singer distinguishes her from Berg’s Countess, creating both a new protagonist and a new storyline for Neuwirth’s opera.

⁴⁵¹ Service, “A guide to Olga Neuwirth’s Music,” <https://www.theguardian.com/music/tomserviceblog/2012/aug/07/contemporary-music-guide-olga-neuwirth>.

⁴⁵² Pegley, “Femme Fatale,” 269.

⁴⁵³ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 29.

⁴⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

5.4 Eleanor and Lulu as African-American Women: Opposition and Correspondence

5.4.1 *Carmen Jones* as Inspiration

In numerous interviews prior to the première of *American Lulu* at the Komische Oper Berlin (“KOB”), Neuwirth noted the influence of Otto Preminger’s 1954 film, *Carmen Jones*, on her choice to transform both the setting and characters of Berg’s opera.⁴⁵⁵ In an essay by the composer in the Young Vic’s program book, entitled “Notes on *American Lulu* (2006-2011),” Neuwirth writes, “As a child I saw Otto Preminger’s film *Carmen Jones* (1954), in which the director took the opera *Carmen* and set it in the South of the USA and cast all the roles with African-Americans; stirred by that I decided to transplant Berg’s *Lulu* to New Orleans and New York.”⁴⁵⁶ As this section will explore, a comparison of *American Lulu* and *Carmen Jones* reveals multiple parallels between the works, such as their representation of the South through setting and mise en scène, as well as the use of stereotypical tropes in the depiction of African American characters.

The film *Carmen Jones*, directed by Otto Preminger and released in 1954, was based on the 1943 Broadway musical by Oscar Hammerstein II; the musical, also entitled *Carmen Jones*, transformed Bizet’s opera *Carmen* through an updated, post-World War II setting and an all-black cast. For his musical, Hammerstein translated the opera libretto into English, in addition to making changes for its updated setting: Carmen becomes Carmen Jones, Don José becomes Joe, Micaëla becomes Cindy Lou,

⁴⁵⁵ George Loomis, “One ‘Lulu’ Has Little New to Say, While Another Can Do No Wrong,” *The New York Times*, Oct. 23, 2012, “http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/24/arts/24iht-loomis24.html?_r=0.”

⁴⁵⁶ Olga Neuwirth, “Notes on *American Lulu* (2006-2011),” *American Lulu Program Book, Young Vic* (Sept. 2013), 13.

and bullfighter Escamillo becomes boxer Husky Miller. Musically, Hammerstein's *Carmen Jones* alters little of Bizet's score; Hammerstein cuts two of Bizet's arias, and eliminates the use of Spanish-sounding castanets. For his film version of *Carmen Jones*, director Otto Preminger hired Yale professor Harry Kleiner to write the screenplay. As Donald Bogle writes in his seminal 1974 book *Toms, Coons, Mulattos, Mammies & Bucks*, the film *Carmen Jones* "cleverly transforms the opera's colorful Spanish cigarette girl into Carmen Jones, a sexy black factory worker in the South"; he later names the film as the "most successful all-black spectacle" of the 1950s.⁴⁵⁷

Numerous parallels can be drawn between Preminger's *Carmen Jones* and Neuwirth's *American Lulu*. Most notably, the transformed mise en scène of both works transports the setting to the Southern United States in the 1950s. Although the setting of *Carmen Jones* shifts from North Carolina, Louisiana, and Chicago, the film unfolds in a generalized, stereotypical depiction of "the South" and American culture at the time. Similarly, as Young Vic director John Fulljames commented in an interview with Kenan Malik, *American Lulu* functions as a reflection of Neuwirth's ideas about American culture: its story presents an image of "Americana" rather than a realistic depiction of America itself.⁴⁵⁸ Further parallels can be seen in the language of Preminger's and Neuwirth's works: both are sung in English, rather than

⁴⁵⁷ Donald Bogle, *Toms, Coons, Mulattos, Mammies & Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Films* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 1973), 169.

Preminger's film is based on the 1943 Broadway musical, which contains music by Bizet and lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II. Like the film, the musical updates Bizet's opera to a World War II-era setting, and casts the characters as African-Americans. The screenplay for Preminger's film was written by Harry Kleiner, and was based off the musical's libretto.

⁴⁵⁸ John Fulljames and Angel Blue, "Behind the Scenes of American Lulu: Part 1." Interview by Kenan Malik. Mahogany Opera Group, April 29, 2014. <https://kenanmalik.com/2013/09/08/behind-the-scenes-of-american-lulu/>.

their original language.⁴⁵⁹ In a personal interview with the KOB dramaturg, Wall, she notes the significance of Neuwirth's choice to set *American Lulu* in English. Although the work was co-commissioned by The Opera Group and the KOB, by choosing to write her libretto in English Neuwirth intentionally broke the opera house's tradition of presenting works in the (German) vernacular—a tradition upheld since 1947.⁴⁶⁰ By choosing to set their "Americanized" works in English, both Neuwirth and Preminger sought to create a more "authentic" American expression through use of vernacular language.⁴⁶¹

Additionally, the stories of *Lulu* and *Carmen* both outline the rise and fall of a femme fatale, ending with her inevitable death. Feminist studies, including those by Catherine Clément and Susan McClary, have suggested the inevitable downfall of these leading women in opera. Clément's famous text, *Opera, or the Undoing of Women*, examines opera librettos to support her thesis that these operatic stories are repetitive, typically ending with the murder or suicide of the opera's female character, such as Cio-Cio-San, Carmen, Isolde, Tosca, and more.⁴⁶² Clément hypothesizes that this common treatment of women in opera librettos is reflective of a larger cultural pattern of male domination and female oppression.⁴⁶³ As femmes

⁴⁵⁹ The libretto of Bizet's *Carmen*, written by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, is in French, and Berg's *Lulu* is in German.

⁴⁶⁰ In this interview, Wall also suggests that Neuwirth's use of English for her libretto also functioned as a way to distance her opera from Berg's work.

⁴⁶¹ Melinda Boyd's *Blackness in Opera* chapter, entitled "The Politics of Color in Oscar Hammerstein's *Carmen Jones*," explores Hammerstein's manipulation of the language of Bizet's libretto, and in particular, his use of the African-American vernacular. Melinda Boyd, "The Politics of Color in Oscar Hammerstein's *Carmen Jones*," *Blackness in Opera*, Naomi André, Karen M. Bryan, and Eric Saylor, eds., (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2012): 212-235.

⁴⁶² Catherine Clément, *Opera, or the Undoing of Women*, trans. Betsey Wing (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).

⁴⁶³ Ibid.

fatales, both Neuwirth's Lulu and Preminger's Carmen Jones represent the quintessential sexualized object; in the end, they both receive the ultimate punishment for their sexuality—death.

Like Lulu, Carmen Jones does not direct her sexuality to one man alone. Both women Lulu and Carmen reject the attempts by Joe and Dr. Schön/Dr. Bloom to contain them to the traditional feminine role of the monogamous housewife. Their sexuality is inescapably captivating, but also amoral and unsafe. Indeed, the sexuality of both female characters takes on an almost mythic dimension; the women are universally alluring and therefore all the more dangerous. Although they function as sexualized objects, Carmen and Lulu nevertheless gain a certain amount of power from that role: the two women share the dangerous, irresistible magnetism of the femme fatale, and are capable of overpowering man's objective morality and reason. For instance, after she is arrested for fighting with a co-worker, Carmen Jones seduces Joe while she and the soldier are en route to the authorities, despite his previously upstanding character. Similarly, Berg and Neuwirth portray Lulu as an inescapable force, the clearest instance occurring in Act II, scene 1, in which Lulu dictates Dr. Schön's/Dr. Bloom's letter to his fiancée, ending their engagement. Both Neuwirth's Lulu and Preminger's Carmen Jones inevitably attract men, only to hurt them soon after.

In *American Lulu* and *Carmen Jones*, the title characters are labeled as amoral due to their overt sexuality. In his biography of Dorothy Dandridge, Bogle further explores the controversy surrounding the explicit displays of sexuality in Preminger's film. Shortly before the film's photography was scheduled to occur,

Preminger was contacted by Joseph Breen of the Motion Picture Production Code, who challenged the film's "over-emphasis on lustfulness" and apparent lack of morality, claiming that the film failed to "properly [condemn]" Carmen Jones's lack of morals.⁴⁶⁴ Despite the fact that Carmen explicitly warns her admirers about her attitude towards love in her "Habañera" aria, Breen's conclusion that she should be "punished" for her actions supports arguments by Clément and McClary that the dangerous nature of the sexually open woman results in her death.

Although an in-depth examination of the Carmen character is outside the scope of this study, like Lulu, Carmen defies dominant norms of cultural behavior; this is most clearly expressed in her famous "Habañera" aria, called "Dat's Love" in both the film and movie versions of *Carmen Jones*. In "The Politics of Color in Oscar Hammerstein's *Carmen Jones*,"⁴⁶⁵ Melinda Boyd explores Hammerstein's transformation of Bizet's original French lyrics to those in *Carmen Jones*. She writes, "Whereas the original French text reiterates the verb *love* [...] Hammerstein's new words revise the concept of love, [...] portraying Carmen Jones as even more independent, if not predatory."⁴⁶⁶ The supposedly aggressive nature of Carmen Jones is paralleled in Neuwirth's Lulu, and is particularly evident in her interaction with her clients in the final scene of the opera. Here, Lulu handles her clients dismissively, almost cruelly, treating them as paying transactions rather than as men, just as she is treated as a sexualized commodity.

⁴⁶⁴ Donald Bogle, *Dorothy Dandridge: A Biography* (New York: Amistad Press, 1997), 266.

⁴⁶⁵ This article is about the Broadway musical version of *Carmen Jones*. The lyrics to "Dat's Love" are unchanged in the film version.

⁴⁶⁶ Boyd, "The Politics of Color in Oscar Hammerstein's *Carmen Jones*," 212-235.

Similar to Preminger's film, Neuwirth's opera portrays the female lead as hyper-sexual, emphasizing the male gaze. Lulu's morals are questioned in the opening scene of both operas, when the Painter interrogates Lulu after the death of her first husband, the Medical Specialist. He asks her about her personal beliefs, such as "Can you tell truth from falsehood?" and "Then what do you believe?" Just as in Berg's opera, she can only answer "I've no idea."⁴⁶⁷ In her essay for the Young Vic's program booklet, Neuwirth commented on her transformation of Lulu's character, writing that in her opera, Lulu is "cold" and "narcissistic."⁴⁶⁸ Additionally, in an interview with Tom Service, Neuwirth divulges her feelings on Lulu, stating, "To me, she's rather a cold woman, a narcissist who gets what she wants at every moment in the opera. She lives off and through men, and she humiliates and pampers people. She brainwashes them. I'm not very sympathetic to this kind of personality."

Neuwirth's reinterpreted Lulu exaggerates her cruel nature, rather than the naïve portrayal in Berg's opera. For instance, Lulu mocks Eleanor and dismisses her pain after she finds out that Eleanor was raped during her attempt to rescue Lulu from prison. By accentuating these aspects of her personality, Neuwirth alters Lulu, portraying her more clearly as a femme fatale. Despite her desire to move past the "myth of the femme fatale," as discussed by Joanna Wall in her pre-performance lecture, Neuwirth's harsh personification of Lulu strips her of all childlike innocence, reducing her to a manipulative vixen. Just as the language of the "Habañera" aria is modified in Preminger's film in order to portray Carmen Jones as a sexual predator,

⁴⁶⁷ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 4.

⁴⁶⁸ Neuwirth, "Notes on American Lulu," 17.

Neuwirth removes the ambiguities of Berg's Lulu to create a character that is clearly dangerous. Both Preminger, in *Carmen Jones*, and Neuwirth, in *American Lulu*, transform their respective opera characters into archetypal femmes fatales, expanding on and recreating the ancient trope of the dangerous woman in an updated setting and context.

The sexualities of Neuwirth's Lulu and Preminger's Carmen Jones contrast with societal attitudes regarding femininity. In her aria, "Dat's Love," Carmen Jones sings of her allegiance to love, rather than monogamy. She reveals her free and non-committal attitude towards romantic relationships, warning potential lovers of the danger in expecting consistency from her. She sings, "I go for you, and if I do, then you are through, boy. My baby, dat's the end of you!"⁴⁶⁹ Similarly, when she is married to Dr. Schön/Dr. Bloom, Lulu continues to maintain numerous romantic relationships; although her husband is enraged upon discovering her many affairs, the seriousness of the situation appears to be lost on Lulu. She appears confused by her husband's anger, and reminds her husband that he has always known her true nature and married her regardless, singing, "I have not once in my life ever tried to be something other than what I have been taken for; nor have I once in my life ever been taken for something other than what I am."⁴⁷⁰ Although Carmen and Lulu warn their suitors about their disinterest in long-term monogamy, the men are incapable of matching the sexual independence of their lovers. Rather, Lulu and Carmen Jones are depicted as amoral and sexually excessive. Regardless of their magnetic allure,

⁴⁶⁹ *Carmen Jones*, directed by Otto Preminger (Twentieth Century Fox, 1954), DVD.

⁴⁷⁰ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*, 21.

the dangerous sexuality and defiance of masculine control by these two women ends in their inevitable death at the hands of man.

5.4.2 Dorothy Dandridge and the Tragic Mulatto

In addition to the black cast and American setting of *Carmen Jones*, the African American actress Dorothy Dandridge also influenced Neuwirth's opera. In *American Lulu* and *Carmen Jones*, as black women, the sexual allure of both femme fatales is linked to their race and skin tone. As discussed by scholars on the semiotics of theater, it is impossible the audience, in their process of decoding the stage, to separate an actor's attributes—whether physical, social, or physiological—from the character they are portraying. In this case, the qualities of Dorothy Dandridge became part of the identity she encoded onto her character, Carmen Jones. As this chapter will explore in more detail, both the race of the actor and the race of character they are portraying influence the audience's understanding, or semiotic decoding, of that character. In this way, Neuwirth, as a viewer of Preminger's film, 'read,' or decoded, the sign of Carmen Jones as a light-skinned black woman, associating her complexion with her role as a femme fatale. In her creation of *American Lulu*, Neuwirth made a deliberate choice to depict Lulu as light-skinned, revealing the probable influence of Dandridge's race on the composer's racial transformation of Lulu. Although Neuwirth seeks to make a statement against racism in her politicized opera, by aligning Lulu with Carmen Jones and Dorothy Dandridge, she connects her character with the stereotype of the tragic mulatto.

In the chapter, “The Myth of the Whore,” included in her book, *Mammies No More*, Lisa M. Anderson explores the hyper-sexualized depiction of black women, writing that “[t]he construction of the black female as a sexual creature also denied her the quality of femininity, at least in the eyes of an American society that viewed the mythic virginal, sexless white woman as the paragon of the feminine.”⁴⁷¹ The black woman was not feminine in the socio-cultural sense, but rather functioned as a sexualized object, particularly if she was light-skinned.⁴⁷² This association of the light-skinned black women with hypersexuality is especially evident in Dandridge’s 1954 portrayal of Carmen Jones. As Bogle outlines in his book, Preminger’s choice to cast Dorothy Dandridge as Carmen Jones is “at heart... based on an old and classic type, the tragic mulatto.”⁴⁷³

The creation of the tragic mulatto, like other “stock” characters in American culture, such as toms, mammies, and bucks, was based on cultural stereotypes regarding African-Americans.⁴⁷⁴ The story of the tragic mulatto is one of miscegenation, a warning of racial “mixing,” in which a mixed-race character is completely accepted by neither white nor black society. As Bogle writes, the tragic mulatto was often the “darling” of classic American all-black films: her light skin made her a more “likeable” and “sympathetic” character, most likely due to her “white blood.”⁴⁷⁵ In “Mulattas, Tragedy, and Myth,” Anderson describes two types of tragic mulattos—the “sweet” and the “bad”— noting that both types have a tragic

⁴⁷¹ Lisa M. Anderson, *Mammies No More: The Changing Image of Black Women on Stage and Screen* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997), 117.

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*, 117

⁴⁷³ Bogle, *Toms, Coons, Mulattos, Mammies & Bucks*, 166.

⁴⁷⁴ As seen in literary works and film.

⁴⁷⁵ Bogle, *Toms, Coons, Mulattos, Mammies & Bucks*, 9.

and unavoidable fate.⁴⁷⁶ Anderson also explores the sexualized depiction of the mulatto, who was considered attractive due to her white features, while simultaneously embodying the primitive, hypersexual nature of the black woman. Later, she describes one of several common depictions of tragic mulatto characters in fiction from 1920 to 1955, describing her as an “exotic, restless, and mysterious mulatto, who is inherently a sexual character.”⁴⁷⁷

Dorothy Dandridge was the definitive tragic mulatto, a role established by her character in *Carmen Jones*.⁴⁷⁸ A prominent celebrity of the 1950s, Dandridge’s celebrity status and sex appeal are often compared to Marilyn Monroe. Like Lulu and Carmen Jones, Dandridge was valued as a “fetishized sex symbol,”⁴⁷⁹ and as a “sex-goddess[s] men lusted for from one corner of the earth to the other.”⁴⁸⁰ Critical reviews of Dandridge’s numerous films reveal that one of the key components of her beauty was her skin tone. Dandridge’s race was both alluring and exotic to audiences; her light-skin, a result of racial mixing, was perceived as more “palatable and assimilable” due to her supposedly partially white blood, which, on some level, was perceived by audiences as a result of white control.⁴⁸¹ Dandridge’s *Carmen Jones* is a quintessential embodiment of the tragic mulatto type: she was considered attractive and desirable due to her “white” and “European” features, while simultaneously embodying the exotic, primitive and hypersexual nature of the black

⁴⁷⁶ Anderson, *Mammies No More*, 45.

⁴⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁴⁷⁸ Bogle, *Toms, Coons, Mulattos, Mammies & Bucks*, 166.

⁴⁷⁹ Mia Mask, *Divas on Screen: Black Women in American Film* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 20.

⁴⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁴⁸¹ Nancy Nenno, “Femininity, the Primitive, and Modern Urban Space: Josephine Baker in Berlin,” in *Women in the Metropolis: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture*, Katharina von Ankum, ed. (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1997), 154.

woman. Similarly, perhaps Neuwirth's Lulu is more able to "fit in" and assimilate to white culture—and be more financially successful—because of her light skin, capitalizing on the stereotypes surrounding both her status as a mulatto and as a black woman.

The perception of light-skinned black women as exotic, mysterious, and sexual, as seen in American literature and film from the 1950s, parallels Neuwirth's characterization of Lulu. In her work, Neuwirth emphasizes the restless and unfulfilled nature of Lulu in the Prologue and last scene of the opera. In *American Lulu*, Lulu is more successful than in Berg's opera: rather than her downfall culminating in degrading poverty and prostitution, Neuwirth's Lulu is a high-class prostitute, wealthy and powerful, both irresistible and intimidating to her larger-than-life clients. However, in Clarence's speech in the Prologue of the opera, he asks her why she's "so damn insatiable" despite her wealth. Regardless of her material success, Lulu remains unhappy: she is a tragic, restless, and unfulfilled character.

Like Dandridge, Lulu is aware of her role as a sexualized object, and uses it to gain power in a racist, patriarchal society. As various biographies on Dandridge explore, as an African American actress in the 1950s and 1960s, Dandridge was able to achieve a certain level of success through her manipulation of her own sexual desirability; however, she was also aware of the limitations she faced due to her race.⁴⁸² Like Dandridge, Lulu is cognizant of the restrictions she faced as an African American woman living in the South during the 1950s. In the last scene of the opera, Lulu discusses her narrow role in society with one of her clients:

⁴⁸² Mask, *Divas on Screen*, 20.

YOUNG MAN

I can't shift from love to friendship that fast! We are perfect for each other!

LULU

(Starring numbly out into space, she utters in a flat tone)

Yeah, perfect for sex.⁴⁸³

Here, Neuwirth's dialogue reveal Lulu's dissatisfaction: the Young Man's opinion that the pair is "perfect for each other" is based solely on his sexual relationship with Lulu. Lulu's "numb" and "flat" response, that they are indeed "perfect for sex," reveals her own awareness that to her clients, her value lies solely in her sexuality. Lulu's heartrending restlessness, like that of Dandridge and the stereotypical tragic mulatto, lies in her awareness of that limitation—that she functions solely as an exoticized, sexualized object.

Paired with Neuwirth's statements regarding the influential role of *Carmen Jones* on her creation of *American Lulu*, there is ample evidence to assume that Neuwirth's transformation of Lulu into a fair-skinned African American was influenced by Dandridge's portrayal of Carmen Jones. Whether or not Neuwirth was consciously aware of it, her decision to align her transformed Lulu with Preminger's Carmen Jones was influenced by the tragic-mulatto stereotype Dandridge so often personified. Despite Neuwirth's desire to move beyond the "myth of the femme fatale," the influence of *Carmen Jones* played a significant role in the perpetuation of the exotic and sexual tragic mulatto figure in *American Lulu*. By labeling her as "pretty" and "pale," paired with the 1950s setting of the work, Neuwirth's Lulu

⁴⁸³ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 29.

embodies the tragic mulatto that was so commonly depicted in American culture at this time.

In addition to the influence of *Carmen Jones* on Neuwirth's opera, in an interview with Tom Service, the composer stated, "I was very much intrigued by Blaxploitation movies when working on *American Lulu*.... Blaxploitation movies are all about the fluid boundaries between trash and counterculture. And that's all there in Berg's original."⁴⁸⁴ The Blaxploitation genre began in America in the early 1970s; these films were originally marketed to an African American audience, but soon gained a larger following.⁴⁸⁵ Although Blaxploitation movies include stereotypical representations of blacks, William Lyne's article "No Accident: From Black power to Black Box Office," Blaxploitation created the earliest examples of film in which black actors are the protagonists and heroes, rather than exclusively playing roles as criminals, sidekicks, or victims.⁴⁸⁶ Notable Blaxploitation films include *Foxy Brown*, *Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song*, *Shaft*, *Mandingo*, and *Superfly*. When Blaxploitation films were set in the South, they often focused on issues such as miscegenation; this could serve as another inspiration to the themes of colorism hinted at in Neuwirth's libretto. Additionally, Blaxploitation films often featured black power ideology (such as in *Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song*)—another aspect of Neuwirth's *American Lulu* libretto. Blaxploitation films such as *Foxy Brown* focus on the objectification of black women, transforming them from victims into

⁴⁸⁴ Tom Service, "Alban Berg's Lulu Turns Freedom Fighter," *The Guardian* (Aug 18, 2013), <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2013/aug/18/american-lulu-alban-berg-neuwirth>.

⁴⁸⁵ William Lyne, "No Accident: From Black power to Black Box Office," *African American Review* 34, No. 1 (Indiana State University: Spring, 2000), 39.

⁴⁸⁶ Lyne, "No Accident," 39.

fearless women, similar to Neuwirth's depiction of Lulu and Eleanor in *American Lulu*. Like many of her compositions, Neuwirth's opera reflects influences from a variety of genres and artistic works.

5.4.3 Eleanor and the Classic Blues

In *American Lulu*, Neuwirth transforms Berg's Countess character, reinterpreting her as an African American blues singer names Eleanor. In her initial extra-dialogic character description of Eleanor, Neuwirth describes her as a "Blues singer, in her late teens in Act I and II (in her 30's in Act III)."⁴⁸⁷ Neuwirth's labeling of Eleanor as a *blues* singer, rather than as a jazz singer, is significant for several reasons. First, it aligns her character with the inherently "tragic" nature of the blues. As Paul Oliver writes in *Grove Music Online*, "[t]he most important extra-musical meaning of 'blues' refers to a state of mind. Since the sixteenth-century 'the blue devils' has meant a condition of melancholy or depression."⁴⁸⁸ The two meanings of the blues—as a mental state and an African American musical genre—are often related to each other: many musicians assert that the "blues feeling" is an essential part of musical performances of the genre.⁴⁸⁹

Like the topic of countless blues songs, one reason for Eleanor's "blues" comes from her unrequited love for Lulu. In *American Lulu*, as in Berg's opera, Lulu

⁴⁸⁷ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 1.

⁴⁸⁸ The labeling of a particular type of music as "the blues" first occurred in America shortly after the Civil War; this folk music was defined through the expression of an emotional state of "the blues" in African Americans. Paul Oliver, "Blues," *Oxford Music Online* (Oxford University Press, January 20, 2001). <https://doi-org.ezproxy.uky.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.03311>.

⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

manipulates Eleanor/the Countess for her own personal gain. Lulu's rejection of Eleanor is made evident in the last scene of Neuwirth's opera. Here, Eleanor sings to Lulu, "You've destroyed my dignity," and "All your talk never meant a thing. Remember the promises you made while seducing me?"⁴⁹⁰ Regardless of Lulu's cruel behavior towards her, prior to her exit, Eleanor sings "But I'll always be near you, my angel."⁴⁹¹ In Berg's opera, the Countess dies as she declares her eternal love for Lulu. However, through Eleanor's survival, Neuwirth creates a character that, despite the allure of Lulu and the pain of her rejection, is empowered through her own actions: in the end, Eleanor leaves Lulu in order to focus on her musical career.

Neuwirth's "tragic" interpretation of Eleanor is not unique to *American Lulu*; rather, it is an extension of Wedekind's original character, the Countess Geschwitz. In the Preface of his 1906 edition of *Die Büchse der Pandora*, Wedekind called the Countess the "tragic central figure of the play," who, despite her "terrible destiny" (being a lesbian) makes a "superhuman self-sacrifice."⁴⁹² In Neuwirth's *American Lulu*, although she manages to free herself from the destructive magnetism of Lulu and survives the opera, Eleanor, in many ways, remains a victim. Despite her resistance, Eleanor cannot fully escape her oppressed status as a dominated, sexual object—a status that is inherently tied to the color of her skin. The tragic nature of Eleanor is exemplified in her role as an African American woman living in the South, who is mistreated and discriminated against due to her race. For example, between the first and second scenes of Act II, a film interlude, similarly depicting Lulu's

⁴⁹⁰ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 27-28.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁴⁹² David Midgley, "Wedekind's Lulu: From 'Schauertragödie' to Social Comedy," *German Life and Letters* 38, no. 3 (April 3, 1985): 205, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0483.1985.tb01272.x>.

arrest, trial, conviction, and imprisonment as in Berg's opera, shows Eleanor (uncharacteristically) exploiting her sexuality and being attacked as she tries to help Lulu. As discussed in chapter 2, Berg's film interlude, which occurs at the mid-point of the opera, shows Lulu on the cusp of her descent. In *American Lulu*, the film interlude depicts Eleanor temporarily adopting Lulu's sexually manipulative behaviors and seduces the Commissioner in order to help Lulu. In her libretto, Neuwirth writes:

Eleanor is seen trying to negotiate and charm the Commissioner into helping Lulu. Before long he starts accosting her sexually. They make a deal. He now takes advantage of Eleanor's situation. As a black woman, she is powerless, especially because she has overstepped the law. He rapes her.

*Lulu is released.*⁴⁹³

As in Berg's original ideas, in *American Lulu*, Eleanor is responsible for planning Lulu's escape; however, the rape of Eleanor by the Commissioner is unique to Neuwirth's opera. Neuwirth's film interlude is representative of the mistreatment that many black women were forced to endure during this time. Rather than solely depicting Lulu's arrest, trial and escape, Neuwirth's film interlude illuminates the historical realities faced by black women during the mid twentieth-century, and the social injustices they were forced to accept. Eleanor's sacrifice is made all the more tragic considering Lulu's response:

⁴⁹³ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 22.

LULU

That foolish girl thought she could settle things simply by using a little charm. Boy was she wrong! The Commissioner tore her apart. He did her in! They all tore her apart. Afterwards she was more dead than alive!

(Merrily)

Incredibly stupid! And to top it off, they all took advantage of her! And for whom did she do this for? For me! Ha!⁴⁹⁴

Eleanor is attacked and raped; by attempting to “charm” the Commissioner, she sacrifices her sexuality for Lulu. Lulu’s statement that Eleanor was “foolish” and “incredibly stupid” reveals the harsh truth of her surroundings. As a black woman, Eleanor knew the risk she took in seducing the Commissioner. Even in her role as a femme fatale, Lulu is aware that as an African American woman, she is powerless. Regardless of the antithetical nature of the two, both Lulu and Eleanor function as empowered victims: despite their strength, their race and gender ensures their inescapable status as victims.

In addition to highlighting her “tragic” nature, the role of Eleanor as a blues singer aligns her with a group of politically active, early feminists: women blues singers of the 1920s. However, Neuwirth’s choice of labeling Eleanor a blues singer is somewhat inconsistent with the opera’s setting, for the blues were not at the height of popularity in the 1950s (although performers of various styles of jazz that were developed at this time would incorporate blues elements into their works). By labeling Eleanor as a blues singer despite the anachronism, Neuwirth makes a

⁴⁹⁴ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 24-25.

deliberate choice; it is important to consider the composer's motivation behind this decision. Neuwirth's specific categorization of Eleanor as a blues singer, since it is a specifically African American folk music genre, furthers her depiction as the "authentic" black woman of the opera.

By naming Eleanor a "blues singer," rather than a "jazz singer," Neuwirth connects her character with the genre of the classic blues that was especially associated with women vocalists: it is also known as "classic female blues" or "vaudeville blues." In this early style of Blues, a pianist or a small jazz ensemble typically accompanied a female vocalist. Significantly, this style of blues was the first of the genre to be recorded, and is remembered through singers such as Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith, and Ethel Waters. The songs of the "women's blues" are a reflection of the realities of African American life in the post-slavery era. By casting Eleanor as a blues singer, Neuwirth associates her character with a musical genre that is inherently tragic, political, and reflective of "true" African American culture, and one that is especially representative of black women.

According to Michele Russell's "Slave Codes and Liner Notes," the blues were a "familiar idiom" for the expression of social truths by poor black women in post-slavery America.⁴⁹⁵ African-American sexuality became an important marker of freedom during this period—for the first time, African-Americans could freely choose their own sexual partners.⁴⁹⁶ In her book, *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism*, Angela Davis explores the significance of sexuality on the blues genre; she describes the blues as the "musical expression" of "new social and sexual realities of post-

⁴⁹⁵ Michele Russell, "Slave Codes and Liner Notes," *The Radical Teacher* No. 4 (March, 1977): 1

⁴⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 1 – 6.

slavery African-American life.”⁴⁹⁷ The classic blues explore a specifically African American ideology, reflecting the relative independence of the black woman. The ideological expectations of womanhood—of subordination, passivity and domesticity, functioning within a patriarchal society—were “incongruous” with the reality black women were faced with.⁴⁹⁸ These women were independent, often holding jobs and supporting their families without the help of a partner, contrasting with the conservative, house-wife role that was traditionally designated to white American women at this time.⁴⁹⁹

The early blues commonly included themes of “brazen challenges” to dominant notions of womanhood.⁵⁰⁰ The Classic Female Blues reflected the African American tradition of womanhood—a tradition that directly challenges prevailing norms of femininity.⁵⁰¹ Through their songs, classic blues women sang of independent, assertive women, who defied traditional gender roles.⁵⁰² According to Angela Davis, Bessie Smith’s blues songs “foreshadowed” feminist ideologies of the late 1960s and early 1970s.⁵⁰³ As Davis writes, “Smith created a musical caricature of domesticity that marked the beginnings of an oppositional attitude toward patriarchal ideology.”⁵⁰⁴ Women’s Blues, as the Classic Female Blues are sometimes

⁴⁹⁷ Angela Y. Davis, *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism: Gertrude “Ma” Rainey, Bessie Smith, and Billie Holiday* (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, Inc., 1999), 3.

Daphne Duval Harrison, *Black Pearls: Blues Queens of the 1920s* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1988).

⁴⁹⁸ Davis, *Blues Legacies*, 22.

⁴⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 22-3.

⁵⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 22-23.

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, 37.

⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*, 143

⁵⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, photo caption.

called, captured the reality of black women's lives during this time—a reality that existed outside of bourgeois, post-Victorian notions of sexuality and femininity.⁵⁰⁵

In the final scene of *American Lulu*, Eleanor directly associates her confidence—essential to resisting Lulu and gaining her independence—with her musical expression. It is in this last scene that Eleanor's role as a protagonist is clearly evident; Neuwirth transforms her from being one of Lulu's admirers into an independent character, a freethinking woman with her own story. Similarly, the classic blues functioned as a type of empowerment for black women. Bessie Smith, the Empress of the Blues, challenged mainstream ideologies regarding female sexuality with songs that directly address the importance of sex.⁵⁰⁶ Through these blues songs, the black woman became more than just a sexual object—by singing about her sexuality, she became a “sexual subject.”⁵⁰⁷ These blues singers sang about sexual acceptance and enjoyment; in doing so, these women metaphysically reclaimed the black woman's body.⁵⁰⁸

The sexuality of Berg's Countess was another possible influence on Neuwirth's creation of Eleanor. In both Berg's opera and Wedekind's *Lulu* plays, the homosexuality of Geschwitz connects her with the genre of the classic blues, the women of which occasionally sang about engaging in same-sex relationships. Eleanor's homosexuality is another possible influence on Neuwirth's transformation of Berg's Countess. Like her blues-singing counterparts, a major identifying feature

⁵⁰⁵ Robert Philipson. *T'Ain't Nobody's Bizness: Queer Blues Divas of the 1920s*. Film/documentary. Directed by Robert Philipson. Shoga Films, 2011.

⁵⁰⁶ Russell, “Slave Codes and Liner Notes,” 1 – 6.

⁵⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 1-6.

⁵⁰⁸ Davis, *Blues Legacies*, 12.

of Eleanor is her independence and refusal to conform to societal norms. The difference between Neuwirth's two protagonists is inherent in their sexuality: whereas Lulu is an object of male desire, Eleanor is averse to male sexual attention (though she attempts to attract it for Lulu's sake in the film interlude, as noted above). Neuwirth's Eleanor, like Berg's Countess, defies traditional notions of femininity and sexuality. Whereas Lulu is defined by her sexuality—she conforms to white standards of beauty in order to be sexually attractive to powerful, white men—Eleanor is defined by her music. While Lulu conforms to dominant notions of femininity, Eleanor subverts them, challenging these notions of womanhood both through her blues music and through her acceptance of her own sexuality. Like these blues women, by accepting herself as a lesbian, Eleanor challenges dominant notions of sexual behavior. In both Berg's and Neuwirth's operas, this opening scene of Act II shows the Countess/Eleanor at the height of her infatuation for Lulu. Whereas Berg's Countess is more subtle about her affection for Lulu, Eleanor is less discreet, referring to Lulu as "my love," and telling Lulu that her "lovely eyes have robbed me of all sleep."⁵⁰⁹

In Chris Albertson's biography of Bessie Smith, entitled *Bessie*, the author notes the infamously flexible nature of female blues singers' sexuality.⁵¹⁰ The relatively obscure status of the genre within mainstream culture meant that taboo subjects—such as domestic violence, sexual relationships, feminist ideologies, and

⁵⁰⁹ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 17.

⁵¹⁰ Chris Albertson, *Bessie: Revised and Expanded Edition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003).

even homosexuality—could be explored in the classic blues songs.⁵¹¹ In his 2011 documentary, *T’Aint Nobody’s Bizness: Queer Blues Divas of the 1920s*, director Robert Philipson examines the lives of lesbian blues singers Ma Rainey, Bessie Smith, and Ethel Waters, as well as Harlem cabaret artist Gladys Bentley.⁵¹² Ma Rainey’s song “Prove it on Me,” written in 1928, is perhaps the most cited—and most explicit—example of homosexual imagery in the classic blues. Ma sings: “Went out last night with a crowd of my friends/They must’ve been women ‘cause I don’t like men [...] It’s true I wear a collar and a tie... Talk to the gals just like any old man.” The presence of homosexual references in classic blues songs is part of a larger pattern of the socially progressive nature of the genre. By creating songs that focused on these taboo subjects, these women created a public sphere through which social change could occur.⁵¹³

Paired with her race, gender, and categorization as a blues singer, Eleanor’s blatant disregard for social norms—as seen in her acceptance and expression of her own sexuality—further aligns her with the classic blues singers of the 1920s. In *American Lulu*, only Eleanor enacts the newfound socio-political power conveyed by the female blues singer, while Lulu remains the epitome of the sexualized object. Prior to the first scene of Act II, Neuwirth’s libretto even specifies that Eleanor be dressed “rather masculinely.” This is an extension of Berg’s extra-dialogic text, which indicates that the Countess be dressed in a “curiously mannish costume” with

⁵¹¹ Lisa Hix, “Singing the Lesbian Blues in 1920s Harlem,” *Collectors Weekly* (July 9, 2013), <http://www.collectorsweekly.com/articles/singing-the-lesbian-blues-in-1920s-harlem/>. Philipson. *T’Ain’t Nobody’s Bizness*.

⁵¹² Philipson. *T’Ain’t Nobody’s Bizness*.

⁵¹³ Davis, *Blues Legacies*, 33.

a “high stand-up collar, etc.”⁵¹⁴ Although Neuwirth re-writes Berg’s libretto, she retains the masculine style of the Countess’s costume, most likely to further identify Eleanor as a lesbian. Eleanor’s “masculine dress” is reminiscent of the cross-dressing attire of blues singers such as Ma Rainey. In the advertisement for “Prove it on Me,” Ma is dressed in a full men’s suit and collar, with two women hanging on her arm. The song’s lyrics dare police to “prove” Ma’s lesbian activities, which, in the year 1928, were still illegal.⁵¹⁵

In Neuwirth’s newly composed music of the third act, Eleanor’s vocal lines are clearly blues-inspired. The final scene of Neuwirth’s opera, which features an argument between Lulu and Eleanor, strongly identifies them as equal protagonists. Eleanor’s last lines in *American Lulu* recall the Countess’s in Berg’s opera, “I’ll always be near you, my angel.” Eleanor associates her strength with her own musical expression, stating, “You will not kill my free spirit! I’ve had it since I was young. Even wrote my own songs back then [...] I have to distance myself from you and refocus my talents. I’ve finally found myself again.”⁵¹⁶ Through her independence, Eleanor stands in opposition to Lulu, who, as Neuwirth writes, has defined her life through others.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁴ Berg, *Lulu: Libretto*, 45.

⁵¹⁵ In 1925, Ma Rainey was arrested at her home in Harlem for having a lesbian party; Bessie Smith bailed her out of jail the next morning.

GLSEN, Inc., “LGBTQ History Timeline Reference,” (New York: 2003-2019). Accessed 15 May 2018, <https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/LGBTQ-History-Timeline-References.pdf>.

Lillian Faderman. *American Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in 20th Century America* (New York: Penguin, 1990).

⁵¹⁶ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, 29.

⁵¹⁷ Olga Neuwirth, “Notes on American Lulu (2006-2011),” *American Lulu Program Book, Young Vic* (Sept. 2013), 17.

5.4.4 Billie Holiday

In her book, *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism*, Angela Davis writes in that although she was not a blues singer, the music of jazz singer Billie Holiday is “deeply rooted” in blues traditions.⁵¹⁸ Billie Holiday is known for providing innovative, emotionally powerful, and occasionally satirical interpretations of popular love songs of her era.⁵¹⁹ One of the primary connections Holiday’s songs have with the classic blues genre lies in their subject matter: Billie frequently sings about “love, sexuality, individuality, and freedom.”⁵²⁰ With the exception of “Strange Fruit,” Holiday’s work “consisted almost exclusively of original and often subversive renderings of the conventional and formulaic popular love songs offered by her record producers.”⁵²¹ In her chapter, “Slave Codes and Liner Notes,” Michele Russell comments on the role of Holiday as both an extension of African American musical heritage and a bridge to mainstream culture. Whereas the music of classic blues singers was marketed specifically to blacks, the career of Billie Holiday existed within mainstream culture. Russell writes of Holiday: “With her, we began to consciously appropriate the best in white popular culture as a means of elaborating our style. She then went on to mainline the blend.”⁵²²

Throughout her life and career, Holiday was openly bisexual, and was rumored to have dated a number of women, including stage actress Tallulah

⁵¹⁸ Davis, *Blues Legacies*, 161.

⁵¹⁹ Ibid., 163.

⁵²⁰ Ibid., 162.

⁵²¹ Ibid., 182.

⁵²² Russell, “Slave Codes and Liner Notes,” 1 – 6.

Bankhead.⁵²³ In an interview for *The Billie Holiday Story*, William Dufty, co-writer of her autobiography *Lady Sings the Blues* and a close friend of Holiday, comments on the book, noting that numerous controversial aspects and details of Billie's life had to be left out of the text due to the time of its publication (1956).⁵²⁴ In her biography of Holiday, *If You Can't Be Free, Be a Mystery: In Search of Billie Holiday*, Farah Jasmine Griffin states that although Holiday's autobiography does not "explicitly" state her bisexuality, it is often implied.⁵²⁵ Numerous other biographies of Holiday also explore her bisexuality, such as Donald Clarke's *Wishing on the Moon: The Life and Times of Billie Holiday*, which includes first-hand accounts by musician Carl Drinkard,⁵²⁶ as well as Stuart Nicholson's *Billie Holiday*.⁵²⁷ Holiday's sexual fluidity functions as another link between her and the classic blues singers of the 1920s. Unlike the songs of Bessie Smith, Ma Rainey, and others, the subject of Holiday's sexuality remains decidedly outside of her songs.⁵²⁸ As Holman Jones writes, "Holiday's sexual experiences and preferences remain firmly outside of her material and performances on stage, reserved instead for subtle allusions or outright outings in biographies and autobiographies."⁵²⁹

⁵²³ Farah Jasmine Griffin, *If You Can't Be Free, Be a Mystery: In Search of Billie Holiday* (New York: Free Press, 2001), 53.

⁵²⁴ *Reputations*. "The Billie Holiday Story: Sensational Lady." Season 8, episode 4. Directed by David F. Turnbull. British Broadcasting Corporation, July 31, 2001.

⁵²⁵ Griffin, *If You Can't Be Free*, 53.

⁵²⁶ *Reputations*. "The Billie Holiday Story: Sensational Lady." Season 8, episode 4. Directed by David F. Turnbull. British Broadcasting Corporation, July 31, 2001.

In *The Billie Holiday Story*, John Levy states that "'Billie had lady friends and she had men friends. I don't think she had any preference, really."

In his accounts of Holiday's sexuality, Drinkard makes some effort to assert that although she had relationships with both men and women, Holiday "preferred men."

⁵²⁷ Stuart Nicholson, *Billie Holiday* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1995), 174.

⁵²⁸ Stacy Holman Jones, *Torch Singing: Performing Resistance and Desire from Billie Holiday to Edith Piaf* (New York: Altamira Press, 2007), 29.

⁵²⁹ *Ibid.*, 28.

Similar to research on early feminist discourse in the classic blues, scholars differ in their opinion regarding the role of feminism in Billie Holiday's career. Several critics have contested Holiday's role as a feminist. In the documentary "The Long Night of Lady Day," Michele Wallace, whose research focuses on black feminism, referred to Holiday's life as a "negative lesson to women," due to her seeming tolerance of abuse in her own romantic relationships.⁵³⁰ Studies that focus on Holiday's victimized status often discuss her song, "My Man"—the lyrics of which seem to indicate evidence of "female masochism."⁵³¹⁵³² In "My Man," Holiday sings of her undying devotion to her man, despite the fact that he has "two or three girls" and "beats me." Although these lines appear to place Holiday in a passive, victimized role, in *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism*, Davis emphasizes the importance of musical tone in the analysis of Billie's songs. "My Man" tells of a victimized woman who is beaten and cheated on by her man; however, multiple scholars comment on the enduring fame of the song, attributing its popularity to Holiday's performance: her ironic tone implies anything but a literal interpretation of the lyrics.⁵³³ In her book, *Torch Singing: Performing Resistance and Desire from Billie Holiday to Edith Piaf*, Stacy Linn Holman Jones also comments on the role of irony in Holiday's performance of "My Man," paying particular attention to the musical elements that inform listeners of Holiday's true intention. She writes, "In rhythm, in phrasing, in

⁵³⁰ Stephen Holden, "Billie Holiday Documentary on 13," *The New York Times* (Aug. 4, 1986): C00016, <http://www.nytimes.com/1986/08/04/movies/billie-holiday-documentary-on-13.html>.

⁵³¹ Davis, *Blues Legacies*, 177.

⁵³² In *Billie Holiday Story*, jazz historian Dan Morgenstern states that "[Holiday] had a strong masochistic streak, and she wanted guys that would hurt her, both physically and emotionally." *Reputations*. "The Billie Holiday Story: Sensational Lady." Season 8, episode 4. Directed by David F. Turnbull. British Broadcasting Corporation, July 31, 2001 (29:37).

⁵³³ Davis, *Blues Legacies*, 178.

the spaces between speech and song and indictment and confession, Holiday's voice speaks an ironic subversion."⁵³⁴ David Brackett, in his *Interpreting Popular Music*, writes that although Holiday appears to "perform the victim," her musical interpretation and vocal improvisations cast doubt on her role as a mistreated woman.⁵³⁵

Similar conclusions can be made regarding Holiday's performance of numerous other songs.⁵³⁶ For example, in "When a Woman Loves a Man," Holiday's "quiet" and seemingly "introspective" tone suggest doubt about the type of one-sided relationships that discussed in the song's lines.⁵³⁷ Throughout her career, Holiday used musical elements such as altered tempo, articulation (including "slurred pronunciation"), vibrato, phrasing, and "melodic dissonance" to inform her listeners of her personal critique of the lyrics she was singing.⁵³⁸ Although Holiday functions within mainstream white culture due to the "pop" nature of her songs, the implicit social critique present in many of her recordings and performances situates her as a socially aware artist, a bridge between classic blues singers of the 1930s and later artists of the civil-rights era, such as Nina Simone.⁵³⁹ Furthermore, references towards domestic abuse—both in her life and in her songs—further connect Holiday with her blues predecessors, whose songs often discussed the reality of domestic violence. In addition, these musical readings of Holiday's songs

⁵³⁴ Jones, *Torch Singing*, 86.

⁵³⁵ David Brackett, *Interpreting Popular Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 65.

⁵³⁶ See also, "Fine and Mellow."

⁵³⁷ Davis, *Blues Legacies*, 178.

⁵³⁸ Brackett, *Interpreting Popular Music*, 62-71.

Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* (London: Verso, 1997), 345-6.

⁵³⁹ Davis, *Blues Legacies*, 197

clarify her role as a performer concerned with social progress, and in particular, with women's lives, a crucial element of the blues genre.

The iconic image of Billie Holiday shows her wearing a large white gardenia in her hair. Significantly, in the last scene of *American Lulu*, the extra-dialogic text of Neuwirth's libretto indicates that Eleanor wears a gardenia in her hair.⁵⁴⁰ Paired with Eleanor's designation as a Blues singer, the gardenia is a clear reference to Billie Holiday. The association of Eleanor with Billie is appropriate: both are black women living in 1950s America, both are singers, both are influenced by the blues genre, both challenge societal views on sexuality, both are independent and free-spirited, and, perhaps most significantly, both function as empowered victims.

5.5 The Music of *American Lulu*

In addition to the alterations of race and setting Neuwirth makes in her opera, perhaps the most controversial aspect of her transformation occurs in her musical score. In an interview with Service, Neuwirth stated, "In other art forms – visual art or film – it's accepted that it's possible to do rethinkings. But in classical music or new music, it's still a scandal." As introduced in chapter 1, the first two acts of *American Lulu* are a jazz arrangement of Berg's score (for a layout of Neuwirth's adapted and newly-composed opera, see Table 5.1).

⁵⁴⁰ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 27.

Table 5.1: Neuwirth's *American Lulu*⁵⁴¹

Act I	<p>Libretto: "Text of Act I [...] adapted [from Berg's <i>Lulu</i>] by Olga Neuwirth, Helga Utz and Catherine Kerkhoff-Saxon using translations into English by Richard Stokes.</p> <p>"Music of Act I adapted and reorchestrated by Olga Neuwirth."⁵⁴²</p>
Act II	<p>Libretto: "Text of Act II [...] adapted [from Berg's <i>Lulu</i>] by Olga Neuwirth, Helga Utz and Catherine Kerkhoff-Saxon using translations into English by Richard Stokes.</p> <p>Music of Act II adapted and reorchestrated by Olga Neuwirth."⁵⁴³</p>
Act III	<p>Music and text [libretto] for Act III by Olga Neuwirth and translated into English by Catherine Kerkhoff-Saxon.⁵⁴⁴</p>

Table 5.2: The Characters of *American Lulu*⁵⁴⁵

Lulu	High soprano, in her late 20s in Act I and II (in her early 50s in Act III)
Eleanor	Blues singer, in her late teens in Act I and II (in her late 30s in Act III)
Dr. Bloom	Heroic baritone
Jimmy / Young Man	Young heroic tenor
Painter	Lyric tenor, same age as Lulu in Act I and II
Clarence	Bass, in his late 30s in Act I and II (in his early 60s in Act III)
Athlete	Heroic buffo bass
Professor / Banker	Speaking part in Act I; high bass in Act III
Commissioner	Speaking part

⁵⁴¹ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 1.

⁵⁴² *Ibid.*, 1.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁵⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 1. Much of the *American Lulu* libretto of Act III is adapted from Berg's *Lulu*.

⁵⁴⁵ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 27.

These two acts are re-orchestrated for a an ensemble of brass and woodwinds, with electric guitar, electric piano, percussion, and strings. Acts I and II of Neuwirth's *American Lulu* alter little else of Berg's musical score—she preserves Berg's music of his first two acts, merely altering the instrumentation. Instead of continuing with the jazz arrangement for Cerha's completed third act, however, Neuwirth composed an entirely new third act. Her third act is not based on Berg's original music, as was Cerha's Act III. Act III is written for an ensemble of piccolo, clarinet, bass clarinet, saxophones, trumpet, trombone, tuba, electric guitar, electric piano, percussion, jazz percussion, and strings. Neuwirth's newly composed third act serves as a challenge to the idea of the work-concept, and the role of Berg as the ultimate *Lulu* authority—not only does she re-orchestrate his music, in Act III, she disregards Berg's and Cerha's music entirely. Significantly, Neuwirth's opera, despite its unique elements, maintains a sense of continuity between Berg's *Lulu* and her own work, preserving Lulu's story and character while simultaneously varying it.

In his *Guardian* article, Service identifies *Lulu* as a sacred emblem of Austrian musical culture, making its alteration somewhat controversial. In an interview for the article, Neuwirth comments on the challenge of making changes to Berg's classic opera, stating, "One has to be very careful," she says, "because this is the golden calf of twentieth-century music. Who was I to dare to do this, especially as a woman and an Austrian? I knew also that I would be slaughtered by the critics and the music historians – just like Jack the Ripper slaughters Lulu at the end of Berg's opera." Like many of her works, *American Lulu* is representative of Neuwirth's personal

compositional philosophy, which centers around the transformation of canonic works and the combination of previously recorded or existing materials with new sounds. Neuwirth's compositions reflect her wide range of interests in numerous historical eras, styles, and genres. Frequently, her pieces blend sources, fusing music with works of literature, cinema, architecture, and painting.

Stylistically, Neuwirth's multi-faceted pieces are noted for their extreme contrasts, often utilizing unorthodox instruments and electronics; many include elements of film, or other types of theatrical performance.⁵⁴⁶ In *The Guardian's* "A Guide to Olga Neuwirth's Music," Tom Service describes Neuwirth's compositions as kaleidoscopic hybrids, noting the composer's passion for collaboration with "writers, directors, film-makers, and electronic artists."⁵⁴⁷ The piece *No More* reveals her interest in various art forms and genres: the collage-like, quasi-improvisational work uses both a live ensemble and a laptop computer in its performance, sampling composers Richard Wagner, Arnold Schoenberg, Edgard Varèse, and even Frank Zappa.⁵⁴⁸ Similarly, Neuwirth's trumpet concerto, *Miramondo Multiplo*, references a wide range of composers, quoting George Friedrich Handel, Gustav Mahler, and Igor Stravinsky, as well as others such as Miles Davis. Perhaps one of Neuwirth's most well-known works, her opera *Lost Highway* is a music and theatre work based on David Lynch's film, using both live ensembles

⁵⁴⁶ Bernhard Günther, "Neuwirth, Olga," *Oxford Music Online* (May 26, 2010), <https://doi-org.ezproxy.uky.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.S46782>.

⁵⁴⁷ Service, "A guide to Olga Neuwirth's Music," <https://www.theguardian.com/music/tomserviceblog/2012/aug/07/contemporary-music-guide-olga-neuwirth>.

⁵⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, [://www.theguardian.com/music/tomserviceblog/2012/aug/07/contemporary-music-guide-olga-neuwirth](https://www.theguardian.com/music/tomserviceblog/2012/aug/07/contemporary-music-guide-olga-neuwirth).

and electronics. Like *American Lulu*, *Lost Highway* challenges operatic conventions, revealing the composer's post-modern disregard for the traditions of musical genres.

An understanding of Neuwirth's past compositions, as well as her own approach to composing, reveals that—despite its radical function as a challenge to a canonic work—*American Lulu* is not an unusual piece in the composer's repertoire. Neuwirth's works routinely challenge the role of the composer as ultimate authority through her musical borrowing and transformation of canonic pieces. Like so many of her works, *American Lulu* reflects Neuwirth's own opinion that all composers—even greats like Berg—are equal, and that no musical material is off-limits.

Neuwirth's "completion" of *American Lulu* is not written as an extension of Berg's work, as is the case of Cerha's third act. His masterful score was based on thorough archival research and the knowledge of a highly reputed scholar of the Second Viennese School. Because of his "reverent," stylistically informed approach, Cerha's completed third act has come to be treated as another part of the authentic *Lulu*—the music of which should not be altered. To Neuwirth, instead of viewing Cerha as an extension of Berg's compositional authority, he was just another composer who created his own completed version of *Lulu*.⁵⁴⁹ In a personal interview, KOB dramaturg Johanna Wall reflected on Neuwirth's disregard of Cerha's third act, explaining that since Berg died before completing *Lulu*, Neuwirth saw the unfinished third act as an opportunity to re-write his story—even the

⁵⁴⁹ Johanna Wall, Interview by Jennifer Tullmann, Komische Oper Berlin, Germany, June 28, 2013, Interview 2.

opportunity to tell an entirely new story.⁵⁵⁰ Despite the common use of Cerha's third act by opera houses around the world, Neuwirth's reinterpretation of Berg's music—and lack of influence by Cerha's music—reveals her fluid conception of “canonic” works and her willingness to challenge established composition and performance traditions. Instead of romanticizing the “work” of *Lulu* and attempting to complete the third act in the style of Berg himself, Neuwirth sees the unfinished nature of the work as an invitation for creativity. Offering a more contemporary solution for the completion of Berg's unfinished opera was a natural creative process for the composer who grew up fascinated with *Lulu*.

In her personal notes on *American Lulu*, Neuwirth mentions several reasons for her choice to re-write the opera, particularly the incomplete nature of Berg's score, the tendency of the Second Viennese School to adapt works by other composers, and the ambiguous nature of the characters of *Lulu* themselves.⁵⁵¹ Her musical adaptations of Berg's score are directly tied to the story of *American Lulu*. Neuwirth aims to honor the composer's work and the period in which it was written by ensuring that there is clear connection between Berg's score and the musical and contextual changes present in *American Lulu*.⁵⁵² In a 2013 Bregenz Festival interview, the composer discussed her reinterpretation of Berg's work, noting that: “[I]t became important for me to find a meaningful analogy for the transformation of

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵⁵¹ Olga Neuwirth, personal notes: word document, “O.Neuwirth.Notes.Lulu engl,” e-mailed to the author, July 1, 2013.

⁵⁵² Neuwirth, “Interview with Olga Neuwirth, Bregenz Festival,” <https://kenanmalik.com/2013/09/08/behind-the-scenes-of-american-lulu/>.

sound in my re-orchestration of Act One and Act Two of Alban Berg's music."⁵⁵³ Neuwirth's re-contextualization was influenced not only by her own fascination with American culture and its socially progressive periods, but also by jazz elements in Berg's musical score. For instance, in Act I of *Lulu*, Berg's score includes a "jazz band" section, with music for clarinets, saxophones, trumpets, trombones, percussion, banjo, piano, double bass, and sousaphone. As Neuwirth stated, "There is this jazz music, already, used in his score... So I thought, if I'm re-orchestrating it, why not use his orchestration which is there in the jazz band [section] of the first act, and use this [orchestration] in general for my re-writing, or re-thinking of it [the opera]."⁵⁵⁴ Her choice to re-interpret *Lulu* in a jazz-context is historically informed by Berg's personal interest in the musical style and the era in which his opera was composed.

With the exception of Neuwirth's reduction and re-orchestration of *Lulu*, the first two acts of *American Lulu* alter very little of Berg's original score, as noted above. The cuts have two functions: primarily, Neuwirth wanted to shorten the opera; secondly, she wanted to "tighten" the story to suit her own dramatic interests.⁵⁵⁵ In place of Berg's "film music" and music for "jazz band," Neuwirth composed music for a sampled Wonder Morton Organ, a theater pipe organ popular in America during the 1920s. In her choice of an old cinema organ, she consciously tried to connect her music to Berg's time. As she states, "...I chose to have the passages in Berg's score that were marked 'film music' and music for a 'jazz band'

⁵⁵³ Ibid., <https://kenanmalik.com/2013/09/08/behind-the-scenes-of-american-lulu/>.

⁵⁵⁴ Neuwirth, "Interview with Olga Neuwirth, Bregenz Festival,"

<https://kenanmalik.com/2013/09/08/behind-the-scenes-of-american-lulu/>.

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid., <https://kenanmalik.com/2013/09/08/behind-the-scenes-of-american-lulu/>.

performed on a Wonder Morton Organ. For Berg's use of film and composition of *Lulu* began in 1929, and this coincides with the heyday of this special theater organ."⁵⁵⁶ She goes further by using another instrument from the jazz age of Berg's time: several sections consist of sampled recordings of a calliope, standard equipment on river steamboats, in reference to the Mississippi Delta, the origin of jazz and blues.

Other than her new third act, one of the most noticeable differences Neuwirth makes to Berg's opera is her exclusion of Berg's Prologue, in which Lulu's character is portrayed as the Animal-Tamer's most prized possession, the snake. Because the Prologue also introduces each character's tone row, or leitmotif, it is the basis of the listener's understanding of Berg's music. By excluding Berg's Prologue, Neuwirth makes a major musical cut—and launches her challenge to the notion of composer as ultimate authority. *American Lulu* begins with a newly composed Prologue, which is repeated at the beginning of Act III. By structuring her opera in this way, Neuwirth is able to begin and end her opera in her own unique musical language.

The most drastic changes to Neuwirth's libretto are seen in Eleanor's lines, both in the score and libretto. The alteration of Eleanor's vocal lines occurs even in the first two acts. In Neuwirth's opera, Eleanor's musical lines are adaptations of the Countess's original vocal lines, altered to match Eleanor's updated dialogue and blues style. Neuwirth's blues transformation can be seen in a comparison of the

⁵⁵⁶ Neuwirth and Fulljames, "Behind the Scenes of American Lulu: Part 2," <https://kenanmalik.com/2013/09/08/behind-the-scenes-of-american-lulu/>.

Countess's and Eleanor's vocal lines. Figure 5.1 shows the Countess's lines in Berg's opera, and Figure 5.2 displays Neuwirth's transformation of Berg's lines for Eleanor.

Figure 5.1: *Lulu* by Alban Berg, Act II scene 1, mm. 3-5.⁵⁵⁷

Gräfin Geschwitz zu Lulu

auf der Ottomane, in einem sehr männlich anmutenden Kostüm - hoher Stehkragen etc. - Schleier vor dem Gesicht, die Hände krampfhaft in Muff

Sie glau - ben nicht, wie ich mich dar - auf freu - e,

Geschw.

Sie auf unserm Künst - le - rin - nen - ball zu sehn.

In the Countess Geschwitz's lines to Lulu in Berg's opera, she sings: "Sie glauben nicht, wie ich mich darauf freue, Sie auf unserm Künstlerinnenball zu seh'n." ("Delighted to you will be at the ball which we lady artists are to hold tonight.")⁵⁵⁸

Figure 5.2: The musical transformation of Eleanor's lines.

American Lulu by Olga Neuwirth, Act II, Scene 1, mm. 3-6 .⁵⁵⁹

(To Lulu)

Great that you will be joi-ning us this e - ve-ning for our ___ par - ty, my love...

Recit

⁵⁵⁷ Alban Berg *Lulu: Opera in 3 Acts*, Musical Score, trans. Arthur Jacobs (Vienna: Universal Editions, 1936), 330-331.

⁵⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 330-331.

⁵⁵⁹ Olga Neuwirth, *American Lulu: Musical Score* (Milan: Ricordi, 2006-2011), 137.

Here, Eleanor sings to Lulu: “Great that you will be joining us this evening for our party, my love.”⁵⁶⁰

Neuwirth’s lines for Eleanor are centered around minor third intervals, creating a blues feel through the use of “blue notes,” flatted thirds, fifths, and sevenths. Although the two lines do share the same declamatory nature, Eleanor’s lines are smaller in range to that of Berg’s Countess, and have a different rhythm. Eleanor’s lines are further given a blues feel through Neuwirth’s instrumentation, which indicates electric guitar and drum set, in addition to trumpet, clarinet, and saxophones. The jazz drum set mirrors the rhythm of Eleanor’s vocal lines, creating a timbrally unique sound whenever she sings (see Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3: The use of jazz drum set during Eleanor’s vocal lines. *American Lulu* by Olga Neuwirth: Act II, Scene 1, mm. 3-6.⁵⁶¹

The image shows a musical score for three parts: Jazz Schlag., Schlag. I and II, and Eleanor. The Jazz Schlag. part features a complex drum pattern with various notations including S-D, Cymb., B-D, H-H, and S-D. The Schlag. I and II parts are simpler, with some notation like 'gr. Tr.' and 'p'. The Eleanor part is a vocal line with lyrics: 'Great that you will be joining us this e-ve-ning for our... par-ty, my love...'. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamics like 'p' and 'mp'.

Neuwirth maintains Eleanor’s blues style in the newly composed third act, using melodies derived from the blues scale and pairing Eleanor’s lines with the jazz drum set of the previous acts. In Act II, Neuwirth distinguishes Eleanor’s vocal style from Lulu’s, which preserves Berg’s virtuosic, operatic style in a high tessitura. The difference between the two protagonists’ musical styles is most clearly heard in the last scene, which features a duet between Eleanor and Lulu. Here, there is a stark

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid., 137.

⁵⁶¹ Neuwirth, *American Lulu: Musical Score*, 137.

musical contrast between the two characters, with Eleanor singing in the blues style and Lulu singing in an operatic style; their musical differences mirror their contrasting personalities.

A sharp stylistic differentiation occurs between the re-arranged first two acts and the newly composed music of the third act. Prior to the third act, Neuwirth includes a transition, consisting of the same dissonant chords and swelling dynamics with which she begins her opera. This transitional material is identical to the first seven measures of the Prologue. It is followed by the last intermediate text—"Black 8"—adapted from MLK's 1968 speech, "I See the Promised Land." This musical "break" prior to the opening of Act III makes it all the more dramatic and sudden. Neuwirth's score even has an indication that reads "attacca ACT III."⁵⁶² Here, Lulu's story is transported back to the present-day of the opera, as in the Prologue. The third act then suddenly increases in tempo, with forte dynamics and a driving, repetitive, interlocking, minimalist-sounding rhythm. Again, this music is identical to mm. 8-29 of the Prologue. Both sections end with Clarence's speech to Lulu:

⁵⁶² Neuwirth, *American Lulu: Musical Score*, 137.

Goddamn it! What's wrong with you? You got all this (*gestures around the room*), a second place down South, and loads of cash. Everything you ever wanted. Why can't you just be happy? It can't be about money. Why are you so damn insatiable?

Neuwirth's third act sounds drastically different from Berg's *Lulu* and the rearranged Act I and II of *American Lulu*—a difference Neuwirth sought to emphasize (see Figure 5.4). In an interview with Kenan Malik, Neuwirth says of Act III, "Then, my music doesn't have anything to do with Berg. It's really separated, because I didn't want to fall into the language of Alban Berg. That wouldn't have made sense for me. So, that's why there's a kind of big gap musically, a language gap."⁵⁶³

⁵⁶³ Neuwirth and Fulljames, "Behind the Scenes of American Lulu: Part 2," <https://kenanmalik.com/2013/09/08/behind-the-scenes-of-american-lulu/>.

Figure 5.4: *American Lulu* by Olga Neuwirth, the opening of Act III⁵⁶⁴

ACT THREE

LICHT AN
New York. A spacious, very elegant designer apartment in the mid 1970s. A tall mirror leans against the wall in the left corner. Lulu is now in her early 50s, slim and delicate. She wears very little make-up. Her pretty pale face is spoiled by a smug, condescending expression. Clarence is in his late 50s.

- 10 - (für ausdrücken mit dem Pedal) Sp. 4128

In addition to Neuwirth’s newly composed music, Act III includes musical references to the historical era of her re-written libretto. In the last scene of the opera, Neuwirth’s libretto indicates:

⁵⁶⁴ Neuwirth, *American Lulu*: Musical Score, 263.

(While Eleanor is singing, voices are heard reciting the following lines: “Brother, where are you?”; “We shall overcome”; “Where have all the flowers gone?”; “Do your thing”; “Let it shine!”; “Come on, run!”)⁵⁶⁵

Through her use of “We Shall Overcome” and other popular songs from this socially activist period, Neuwirth makes clear the connection of the characters on stage and the events of the work’s setting, 1950s and 1970s America. The folk song “We Shall Overcome,” whose title was taken from a 1958 speech by Martin Luther King, Jr., became the unofficial anthem of the Civil Rights movement. “We Shall Overcome” was frequently sung by Pete Seeger and other folk musicians at rallies, festivals, and more, making it widely known across the United States. In August 1963, Joan Baez famously led crowds at the March on Washington at Lincoln Memorial in a historic performance of the song. Among the folk songs referenced in Neuwirth’s opera are “Where have all the flowers gone,” which was an anthem for peace, particularly during the Vietnam War. She also references “Brother, where are you?,” sung by the American singer, songwriter, and Civil Rights activist Oscar Brown, which focuses on the image of a small boy walking alone down a city street, “looking for a soul brother all around him.” “Do Your Thing,” recorded by Charles Wright and the Watts 103rd Street Rhythm Band, an early soul and funk band, was popular in the 1960s. Through these musical borrowings, Neuwirth seeks to “set the scene” of her opera, both politically and culturally.

⁵⁶⁵ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 29.

5.6 Conclusions

American Lulu is both a reinterpretation of Berg's opera and a newly composed work created by a contemporary, politically active, socially conscious, feminist composer. Through the many changes she made to Berg's libretto and music, Neuwirth seeks to make Lulu's story more relevant to contemporary audiences. Not only is gender inequality an aspect of Lulu's story, in *American Lulu* so is racial and economic inequality. In an interview with Service, Neuwirth commented on the expanded focus of her opera, stating "We are again in times when we need to deal with sexism, racism and class. For me, it was a very modern topic."⁵⁶⁶ In its exploration of homosexuality, racism, and economic hardship, *American Lulu* is an important expression of intersectional experiences of discrimination. Placed within the setting of 1950s and 1970s and referencing African American stereotypes, such as the tragic mulatto, the primitive African, and the hypersexual black woman, Neuwirth's opera includes "extra-textual" links to the external world of the Civil Rights movement through her use of MLK speeches and poetry by Djuana Barnes and June Jordan in her *Intermediate Texts*, thus connecting her opera to contemporary historical and cultural events. In addition, she references musical works from the time: quoting various folk and popular songs from the 1970s and setting the cultural context for the audience.

In her reinterpreted work, Neuwirth creates a new protagonist, the blues-singing Eleanor. By portraying Eleanor as an iconic blues singer, Neuwirth mediates between Wedekind's and Berg's *Lulu* and her own contemporary ideas. She further

⁵⁶⁶ Service, "Alban Berg's Lulu Turns Freedom Fighter," <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2013/aug/18/american-lulu-alban-berg-neuwirth>.

connects her story to American culture through her blues inspired music. As the antithesis to the Lulu character, Eleanor chooses to adapt within a socially restrictive culture, rather than assimilate, as Lulu does. Despite its mixed critical reviews, *American Lulu* undeniably links its story and music to relevant cultural issues of the day, including the recent Civil Rights Movement and the advent of feminist thought.

Neuwirth's work maintains many elements of Berg's opera, successfully connecting it to the canonic work while simultaneously altering enough elements to mark it as a different piece entirely. Through the numerous transformations she makes to Berg's opera, Neuwirth challenges the idea that *Lulu*—or any canonic work—is “untouchable” except at the hands of the original composer or author. Like many of Neuwirth's pieces, *American Lulu* challenges classical music conventions—in this case, the genre of opera—by re-writing a canonic work in an updated aesthetic. By referencing relevant socio-cultural issues, her opera becomes more relevant to contemporary audiences. Through these changes, Neuwirth creates an opera that mediates between past works and newly composed music. Although many productions of *Lulu* alter the setting, costumes, or orchestration of Berg's opera, *American Lulu* goes beyond these changes by modifying the operatic text itself. Although *American Lulu* is not an unusual piece in Neuwirth's repertoire, the way in which the composer balances the unique parts of her opera with elements of Berg's canonic work is a unique expression within the genre of opera.

CHAPTER 6. SEX AND RACE IN *AMERICAN LULU'S* LIBRETTO AND STAGING

Similar to those discussed in the previous chapter, the two *American Lulu* productions explored here challenge the concept of the composer as ultimate authority through their unique, updated stagings. These productions include Kirill Serebrennikov's 2012 *American Lulu* première at the Komische Oper Berlin (KOB) and John Fulljames's 2012 production at the Young Vic in London. Under the direction of both Serebrennikov and Fulljames, *American Lulu* encountered a new set of authorities, outside of the composer/librettist. Considering the fact that the composer is still living, the alterations that both directors make to Neuwirth's operatic text are especially significant. This chapter will consider how these new authorities realize Neuwirth's text on stage, including how they uphold, alter, or disregard her staging directions. Particular focus will be paid to the portrayal of Lulu as a black woman and dancer. The productions by Serebrennikov and Fulljames modify the already reinterpreted story of *American Lulu*; they create new signs on the operatic stage, further transforming Lulu and her story.

American Lulu functions as more than a piece of entertainment. Neuwirth's work is thought provoking; it has social meaning, a "lesson to be learned." Although the music and storyline are the primary focus of the spectator, a major way that Neuwirth's higher meaning (the "lesson" of the opera) is presented to the audience is through symbols on stage. This chapter explores the 'reading' or 'decoding' of these theatrical signs, adopting the premises of the Prague School of semioticians who believed that, in theatre, everything that is presented to the spectator is a sign. Founded in 1926, The Prague Linguistic Circle considered a wide variety of topics,

including literature, semiotics, aesthetics, psychology, and more.⁵⁶⁷ The thriving modern theatre scene of Prague at this time resulted in the School's Theory of Theater, presented in works published between the years of 1930 and 1945, by semioticians such as Otakar Zich, Petr Bogatyrev, Jindřich Honzl, Jan Mukařovský, Roman Jakobson, Karel Brušák, and Jiří Veltruský.⁵⁶⁸

According to the theories of the Prague School, the semiotic decoding of opera includes more than the analysis of libretto and score.⁵⁶⁹ Other signs include the mise en scène, costumes, lighting, stage design, and the interaction of characters with other characters or with objects. Together, these elements create the sign-system of the opera. In their book, *Theatre as Sign System*, Aston and Savona compare theatrical signs to those encountered in daily life:

For example, we 'read' people we see in the street according to how they dress... Although we instinctively engage in such 'readings' because of our knowledge of dress codes... and act upon them accordingly, we have no way of knowing whether they are truly meant. This contrasts with theatre where everyone and everything placed within the theatrical frame has an artificial or pre-determined meaning. Even if something has arbitrarily entered into the frame it is read as significant.⁵⁷⁰

⁵⁶⁷ Jiří Veltruský, "Prague's experimental stage: Laboratory of theatre and semiotics," *Poetics Today: Drama, Theater, Performance: A Semiotic Perspective* 2, no. 3 (Spring, 1981), 225-227.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid., 225-227.

⁵⁶⁹ Ibid., 225-227.

⁵⁷⁰ Aston and Savona, *Theatre as Sign System*, 99.

Even the smallest object, when appearing on stage, has semiotic meaning; all the signs on stage are meant to be decoded by the audience. This chapter will consider the importance of seemingly simple signs that occur when directors realize Neuwirth's work on stage.

The detailed analysis presented here may be outside of the scope of "conscious" symbolism — that is, the audience, and even the directors themselves, may not be acutely aware of the signs discussed here. One of the limitations of this particular study — and of any study using semiotic methodologies — is the subjectivity of the process of decoding itself. The signs discussed here are solely reflective of one spectator (the author of this dissertation), not of the audience as a whole. However, in its analysis of productions by Serebrennikov and Fulljames, this chapter aims to reflect the socio-cultural environment of Neuwirth's opera, investigating signs that are relevant to contemporary audiences.

This chapter will also examine the uniquely intersectional nature of Neuwirth's opera, considering how Lulu's story is affected by her economic status, her race, and her gender. Intersectionality, defined as "the complex, cumulative manner in which the effects of different forms of discrimination combine, overlap, or intersect."⁵⁷¹ Legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw invented the term in 1989, urging policy- and law-makers to consider the multi-dimensional experience of black women. Although the term was originally created to describe the entangled nature of racism and sexism faced by black women, intersectionality has since expanded to include class, sexuality, physical ability, and more. Through an analysis of

⁵⁷¹ "Words We're Watching: Intersectionality," *Merriam-Webster*, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/intersectionality-meaning>.

Neuwirth's racial transformation of her characters, this chapter considers the intersectional experiences of Eleanor and Lulu. Neuwirth herself acknowledged the influence of the 1954 film *Carmen Jones*, as well as the Blaxploitation film genre, as discussed in the previous chapter. Despite the feminist perspective of *American Lulu*, Neuwirth's opera includes common African American stereotypes, exploring the hypersexual depiction of black women, the notion of primitive blackness, the Jezebel, the tragic mulatto, and the bad bitch.

6.1 Racial Signifiers in *American Lulu*

One of the most important signs to be decoded in *American Lulu* is the race of Neuwirth's characters. In *American Lulu*, not only are there black singers on stage, the characters themselves have been transformed into African Americans. Significantly, Neuwirth's opera changes only the characters of Lulu, Eleanor, and Clarence into African Americans; Dr. Bloom, Jimmy, the Athlete, the Professor/Banker, and the Commissioner are all white. The alteration of Lulu, Eleanor, and Clarence into African American characters corresponds with Berg's and Wedekind's original story: since Clarence is mistaken as Lulu's father, his blackness is seemingly tied to Lulu's; Eleanor's characterization as a blues singer also seems to necessitate her race. However, Lulu's male admirers could easily have also been transformed into African Americans. Although Neuwirth has yet to comment on her racial transformation of certain characters, her decision to "blacken" Lulu can perhaps be attributed to power dynamics between the white man and the black woman. In her pre-performance lecture, Johanna Wall

commented on Neuwirth's reinterpretation of Berg's opera, stating that *American Lulu* explores the theme of hegemonic supremacy of white Anglo-Saxon men over other cultures— specifically African American cultures.⁵⁷² By changing Lulu into a Southern black woman from the 1950s, Neuwirth further cements her role as an oppressed individual, and reflects her intersectional experience of discrimination.

Throughout both Berg's and Neuwirth's operas, Lulu's male admirers seek to control her; their attempts to regulate the femme fatale serve as a metaphor for the male subjugation of women. This theme is clearly demonstrated in the second scene of Berg's work, in which Dr. Schön urges the Painter, Lulu's current husband, to control his wife.

DR. SCHÖN

Laß sie Autorität fühlen; sie verlangt nicht mehr, also unbedingt Gehorsam leisten zu dürfen. Mach mit dir selber den Anfang! Raff dich zusammen!

DR. SCHÖN

She requires no more than to be made to show unflagging obedience. First you must master your passions. Try to be stronger!⁵⁷³

Similarly, in *American Lulu*, Dr. Bloom stresses to the Painter the importance of controlling Lulu.

⁵⁷² Johanna Wall, pre-performance lecture on *American Lulu*. *Komische Oper Berlin*, June 30, 2013.

⁵⁷³ Berg, *Lulu: Libretto*, 26-7.

DR. BLOOM

(Encouragingly)

Let her know who's the real master. She deserves no less than to be made to show the strictest obedience.⁵⁷⁴

In both works, the words of Dr. Schön/Dr. Bloom depict a sense of ownership over Lulu. Lulu must be controlled and made to be obedient to her husband. In *American Lulu*, Lulu's wild nature is attributed not only to her gender, but also to her race. This attribution of unruliness reflects the historical context of Neuwirth's opera, in which blacks were viewed as primitive and amoral. In the second scene, the idiomatic nature of Lulu's blackness is revealed: her admirers simultaneously desire and fear her. In their attempts to control her, Lulu's male admirers assert their supposed dominance as white men. In this way, Neuwirth transforms Berg's opera, expanding the story of Lulu to include lessons on racism as well as gender oppression.

6.2 The Sign of Blackness

An exploration of race is an essential part of understanding Neuwirth's opera. Whether or not *American Lulu* audiences consciously engage in the decoding of characters on the stage, the race of Neuwirth's characters plays an important role in their identity. In addition to the sign of the actor, blackness itself—the race of the actor—serves as a sign. Blackness signifies a multitude of meanings and perspectives, including the centuries-long association of dark skin with racial

⁵⁷⁴ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 10.

inferiority. Anecdotal accounts by colonialists and slave traders depicted Africans as "savages, with animal-like sexual behavior, massive sex organs, and even intercourse between African females and gorillas."⁵⁷⁵ These descriptions of African sexual excess were used to justify the Europeans' brutal treatment of African men and women.⁵⁷⁶ These accounts were later related to biological and determinist theories of human sexuality, which resulted in various scientific studies regarding the "difference" between Africans and Europeans— with that difference representing inferiority.⁵⁷⁷ In his much-cited article, "The Hottentot and the Prostitute: Toward an Iconography of Female Sexuality," Sander Gilman writes that the association of blackness with concupiscence dates back to the Middle Ages;⁵⁷⁸ the author also cites works dating back to the mid sixteenth-century which depict black servants engaging in illicit sexual activity.⁵⁷⁹ Similarly, in their chapter, "Black Female Sexual Identity: The Self-Defined," authors Annecka Marshall and Donna-Maria Maynard write that "[t]he notion of black women as immoral, lascivious, and diseased has been used to legitimize their subordination since the sixteenth-century."⁵⁸⁰ Nineteenth-century scientist Georges Cuvier suggested that the "large genitalia" of Africans was representative of their primitiveness and subsequent racial inferiority, linking the Africans' sexuality with their morality. African women

⁵⁷⁵ Robert Staples, *Exploring Black Sexuality* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006), 1-2.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, xvii.

⁵⁷⁸ Willis, *Black Venus 2010*, 16.

⁵⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁵⁸⁰ Shaka McGlotten and Dana-Ain Dais, eds., *Black Genders and Sexualities* (New York: Palgrave, 2012), 195.

were labeled as more primitive, and therefore more sexual.⁵⁸¹ Through these stereotypes, the individual black woman came to serve as a symbol for the entirety of black female sexuality.⁵⁸²

During slavery, African women were commonly depicted as animalistic, hypersexual and licentious in order to justify oppression.⁵⁸³ One manifestation of this can be seen in the Jezebel stereotype. Although, biblically, Jezebel is associated with false prophets, by the early twentieth century, the name “Jezebel” had come to mean a fallen or abandoned woman; in particular, “Jezebel” was associated with female promiscuity.⁵⁸⁴ The Jezebel image, unlike the asexual Mammy figure, is the “bad black girl,” a hypersexual, seductive harlot.⁵⁸⁵ As Carolyn West states in her lecture, “Mammy, Jezebel, Sapphire, and their Homegirls: Developing an ‘Oppositional Gaze’ Towards the Images of Black Women,” portraying African American women as either unappealing Mammies or promiscuous Jezebels made it easier to abuse and rape them.⁵⁸⁶ Similarly, in his book *Mammy and Uncle Moses: Black Collectibles and American Stereotyping*, K. W. Goings writes that the Jezebel image was created to “absolve white men” of the sexual abuse and rape of African American women; black women who were subjected to sexual abuse were said to be

⁵⁸¹ Willis, *Black Venus 2010*, 17.

⁵⁸² *Ibid.*, 16.

⁵⁸³ McGlotten and Dais, *Black Genders and Sexualities*, 195.

⁵⁸⁴ Stanley Arthur Cook, “Jezebel,” in *Encyclopædia Britannica* 15 (11th ed.), Hugh Chisholm, ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911), 411.

⁵⁸⁵ S.K. Jewell, *From Mammy to Miss America and Beyond: Cultural Images and the Shaping of US Policy* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

⁵⁸⁶ Carolyn M. West. “Mammy, Jezebel, Sapphire, and their Homegirls: Developing an ‘Oppositional Gaze’ Toward the Images of Black Women,” in *Lectures on the psychology of women*, 4th ed., J. C. Chrisler, C. Golden, & P. D. Rozee, eds., (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 2008), 291.

“asking for it.”⁵⁸⁷ As West further explains, from the point of view of some white men, black women could not be raped, since they always desired sex.⁵⁸⁸ The Jezebel stereotype, therefore, both resulted from and further perpetuated the idea of the black woman as hypersexual. In *Black Feminist Thought*, Patricia Hill Collins writes that the Jezebel stereotype is a “controlling image,” an “elite white male interpretation” that simultaneously represents race, class, and gender oppression.⁵⁸⁹ The intersectional aspect of the Jezebel stereotype is particularly suited to Neuwirth’s opera, and is paralleled in her characters Lulu and Eleanor.

6.3 The Performance of Blackness in *American Lulu* and its Stagings

According to the theories of semiotics by the Prague School, Lulu’s race is impossible to divorce from the audience’s understanding of the opera. In the case of *American Lulu*, Lulu’s blackness is reflective of the race of the actor/singer and of the transformed character herself. The audience decodes this dual-coded sign.⁵⁹⁰ The actor and character cannot easily be separated in the analytic process. In Peircean semiotics, the actor himself functions as a special type of sign: the icon, a sign that is linked by similarity to its object, such as a photograph.⁵⁹¹ In the case of the actor, the “sign” is the character he or she is portraying. Consequently, elements such as the appearance, race, and age of the actor all factor into the spectator’s

⁵⁸⁷ Laura Green. “Stereotypes: Negative Racial Stereotypes and Their Effect on Attitudes Toward African Americans,” *Perspectives on Multiculturalism and Cultural Diversity* XI, no. 1 (Winter 1998-99). <http://www.ferris.edu/jimcrow/links/VCU.htm>. K. W. Goings, *Mammy and Uncle Moses: Black Collectibles and American Stereotyping* (Indiana University Press, 1994), 67.

⁵⁸⁸ West. “Mammy, Jezebel, Sapphire, and their Homegirls,” 291-294.

⁵⁸⁹ Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 78.

⁵⁹⁰ Aston and Savona, *Theatre as Sign System*, 99.

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 6.

semiotic reading of the character.⁵⁹²

In many ways, Neuwirth's transformation of Berg's Lulu into a sexualized African American character is representative of the nature of Lulu herself. Similar to early, exoticized perceptions of black women, as projected through the Jezebel stereotype, the femme fatale simultaneously provokes fear and desire in her admirers. As suggested above, in *American Lulu* this fear can be partially attributed to Lulu's race. Lulu's role as an Other and an object of male desire parallels attitudes towards black female sexuality. Lulu's treatment by her husbands mirrors the colonial need for control over the sexualized Other, including the black woman. In her introduction to the text *Black Venus 2010*, entitled "The Notion of Venus," Deborah Willis explores colonial views of the exoticized Other. Willis explains that the supposed anatomical differences of Africans and Europeans, which were frequently discussed in scientific studies in the 18th and 19th centuries, revealed widespread views of the pathological nature of the Other's sexuality.⁵⁹³ The simultaneous danger and allure of the Other is a result of her difference. As Robert Staples writes in *Exploring Black Sexuality*, "there still exists a veiled expression of fear of Black sexuality."⁵⁹⁴ Staples calls black sexuality a "double-edged sword," in which blackness is both exciting and frightening.⁵⁹⁵ Likewise, in both Berg's and Neuwirth's operas, Lulu's admirers, although undeniably drawn to her, simultaneously fear her immoral influence.

In Berg's opera, Lulu's gender makes her both exotic and dangerous; in

⁵⁹² Aston and Savona, *Theatre as Sign System*, 42.

⁵⁹³ Willis, *Black Venus 2010*, 27.

⁵⁹⁴ Staples, *Exploring Black Sexuality*, xii.

⁵⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 290.

Neuwirth's work, this perception of Lulu is expanded to include her race. By transforming her into a black woman, Neuwirth highlights the intersectional nature of Lulu's experience as a victim of discrimination. In resonance with the Jezebel stereotype as an "elite white male interpretation"⁵⁹⁶ of African American female sexuality, Berg's Lulu is frequently analyzed as a scapegoat-like creation of man.⁵⁹⁷ Like Dr. Schön, Dr. Bloom also uses Lulu as a scapegoat: her pathologized femininity becomes a symbol for the subversive nature of Woman over "civilized" (male) society. Just before his death, Dr. Bloom comments on Lulu's supposedly treacherous influence, singing "You creature you, it's your fate to drag me through the gutter to the grave. O Death's Angel! My unavoidable tormentor! You joy of my dotage! You hangman's noose!"⁵⁹⁸ Dr. Bloom labels Lulu the source of his downfall; her irresistible allure and amoral nature has seemingly led him down a path of degradation to his inevitable death. He calls Lulu his "unavoidable tormentor," suggesting that she holds the power in their relationship, that she is his oppressor, controlling him with her sexuality. Lulu becomes dangerous, threatening, a criminal. As Deborah Willis writes in *Black Venus 2010*, regarding colonial attitudes towards the Other, "The 'white man's burden,' thus becomes his sexuality and its control, is displaced into the need to control the sexuality of the Other, the Other as sexualized female."⁵⁹⁹ In both Berg's and Neuwirth's works, Lulu's male admirers attribute their own sexual fantasies — a threat to their notion of cultured, refined society — to Lulu, blaming her influence for their own desires; Lulu thus becomes the

⁵⁹⁶ Collins. *Black Feminist Thought*, 78.

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 78.

⁵⁹⁸ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu: Libretto*, 20.

⁵⁹⁹ Willis, *Black Venus 2010*, 27.

scapegoat which the men in her life seek to control.

Like the stereotyped black woman, Lulu is portrayed as both unscrupulous and hypersexual in Wedekind's plays and Berg's opera. Berg's libretto contains several instances in which the audience is warned of Lulu's dangerous sexual allure; for instance, in the Prologue, an Animal Tamer warns spectators of the evil nature of the serpent, which represents Lulu (see previous discussion, chapter 3).⁶⁰⁰Lulu's morality— or lack thereof— is established early in the opera. Her first husband, the Painter, names Lulu "Eve," supporting her personification as a mythical, eternal femme fatale. In the opening scene of Berg's opera, the Painter questions Lulu after the death of her then-husband the Professor of Medicine, asking her "Eine Frage: Kannst du die Wahrheit sagen?" ("Just one question! Can you tell truth from falsehood"?), "Glaubst du an einen Schöpfer?" ("Do you believe in God, then?"), and "Hast du schon einmal geliebt?" ("Have you no soul for saving?").⁶⁰¹ "I don't know" is Lulu's response to all the Painter's questions. In this scene, Lulu is represented as a naïve, unprincipled, almost child-like figure. Significantly, during their dialogue, the Painter comments to himself regarding the seemingly unprincipled and untamed character of Lulu, stating:

⁶⁰⁰ Berg, *Lulu: Libretto*, 3.

⁶⁰¹ Alban Berg *Lulu: Opera in 3 Acts*, Musical Score, trans. Arthur Jacobs (Vienna: Universal Editions, 1936), 12-13.

DER MALER (für sich)

Vollkommen verwildert!⁶⁰² (geht auf Lulu zu, ergreift ihre Hand) Sieh mir ins Auge!

PAINTER (To himself.)

She's simply a savage! (He goes up to Lulu and seizes her hand.) Look at me closely!⁶⁰³

In *American Lulu*, Neuwirth and Saxon alter the Painter's line:

PAINTER

(To himself again)

Depraved and perverted!

(Goes over to Lulu and takes her hand)

*Look in my eyes!*⁶⁰⁴

Despite this alteration, by labeling Lulu as “perverted” and “depraved,” the connection between Lulu’s wicked nature and her sexuality is maintained. An examination of Neuwirth’s language in this scene clarifies the Painter’s understanding of Lulu. The *Merriam Webster Dictionary* defines “perverted” as “corrupt” or “marked by perversion,” and “perversion” as “an aberrant sexual practice or interest especially when habitual.”⁶⁰⁵ By calling Lulu depraved and perverted, the Painter labels her as corrupt, debased and decadent; she is warped, aberrant, and immoral. Lulu perverts those around her, causing them “to turn aside or away from what is good or true or morally right... from what is generally done or

⁶⁰² “Verwildert” is German for “savage” or “feral.”

⁶⁰³ Alban Berg *Lulu: Opera in 3 Acts*, Musical Score, trans. Arthur Jacobs (Vienna: Universal Editions, 1936), 12-13.

⁶⁰⁴ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 4.

⁶⁰⁵ “Perversion,” in *Merriam-Webster*, accessed May 1, 2017, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/perversion>.

accepted.”⁶⁰⁶ Through their choice of words, Neuwirth and Saxon create a “fallen man” theme – a common trope, wherein the man is a victim of the seducing and immoral woman. Lulu’s unrestrained nature corrupts those around her; her raw sexuality lures in admirers, only to lead them to their downfall.

In the opening scene of the Young Vic’s production of *American Lulu*, director John Fulljames emphasizes the dishonorable aspects of Lulu’s personality in several ways. During the Painter’s ethical questioning of Lulu’s ethics, the soprano Angel Blue lies on her back, sprawled out on the ottoman next to her deceased husband, the Professor. When the Painter, who was photographing her earlier in the scene, calls Lulu “depraved” and “perverted,” he resumes photographing her. Lulu poses seductively, laughing and smiling. Significantly, the Painter continues photographing Lulu during these exact lines, furthering the association of Lulu’s sexual allure with her “depraved” nature. Similar to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century views of the black woman, Neuwirth’s Lulu is depicted as abnormal, her Jezebel-like character dangerous in its allure. In addition, Fulljames highlights the oppressed nature of Lulu in this scene through his use of props: when Lulu is having her portrait taken by the Painter, she wears a thick rope wrapped around her neck and body. The prop is representative of Lulu’s role as an oppressed individual, a tool of control and manipulation. It is reminiscent of those used in the lynching of African-Americans after the abolition of slavery. The allure of Lulu’s dangerous, primitive nature threatens to overcome the rational, “civilized” society of man, therefore she must be closely controlled.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid., <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/perversion>.

Serebrennikov and Fulljames highlight Lulu's perceived hypersexuality in their stagings of the first scene of *American Lulu*. Although Neuwirth's libretto indicates that Lulu initially attempts to "ward off" the Painter's advances, eventually succumbing to him, both productions instead depict Lulu as flirtatious and receptive to the Painter's advances.⁶⁰⁷ In Fulljames's production, Lulu's sensuality is signified in several ways: she appears in her nightgown, barefoot except for her lace-trimmed stockings. She lies on an ottoman in the center of the stage, posing seductively for the Painter as he takes her portrait. The Painter wears a button-down shirt, socks and shoes—but no pants. Only when the Professor suddenly enters does he rush to dress himself. Here, the Painter's costume suggests his attraction to Lulu, and is a sign that some kind of sexual interaction had occurred—or was about to occur—between the two. As in Berg's work, by having her portrait taken, Lulu appears as an object, rather than a subject. Lulu, whose value is aligned with her sexuality, does nothing to object to the Painter's state of undress or his sexual advances; she has come to accept her own limited worth as a sexualized object of male desire. Similarly, in the first scene of the Komische Oper Berlin's production, Lulu is dressed in lingerie and reclines on a bed; her costume is a stark contrast from the androgynous, loose-fitting clothing of Pierrot, as indicated in Berg's libretto.

According to Komische Oper Berlin dramaturg Joanna Wall, Serebrennikov received his copy of Neuwirth's operatic text late, as the composer continued to edit and change the work past the expected KOB deadline.⁶⁰⁸ Serebrennikov, a Russian film director, had never directed an opera before and was not well acquainted with

⁶⁰⁷ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 2.

⁶⁰⁸ Johanna Wall, personal interview with the author, June 28, 2013.

Berg's *Lulu*; upon researching the opera, Serebrennikov learned of her traditional depiction as femme fatale. This image influenced his staging of *American Lulu*. Serebrennikov's production for the Komische Oper Berlin portrays Lulu as a reflection of male desire, who has abandoned her African American cultural heritage in order to better please her white male admirers. Marisol Montalvo, who performed the role of Lulu in the KOB première, is depicted as promiscuous throughout Serebrennikov's production, building on the historical stereotype that blacks are hypersexual. As Montalvo commented in an interview following the *American Lulu* première, "I find that a lot of directors— not Kirill, but a lot of directors—don't allow for the sympathy [towards the Lulu character]. You know, 'she's a bad woman, she likes sex, she must die (*laughing*).'"⁶⁰⁹ Although Lulu's acceptance of her own sexuality can be interpreted as empowerment, the limitation of her character — who exists solely as a sexual object — solidifies her inescapable role as a victim.

6.4 Lulu as Dancer: The Paradox of Empowerment and Objectification

In *American Lulu*, the paradox of Lulu's empowerment and objectification is revealed through her role as a dancer. Although she is admired as a performer, ultimately, the male gaze consumes her, reducing her to an object of desire. In Neuwirth's libretto, she aligns the dancer Lulu with common physical traits of African American female entertainers, and alludes to typical entertainment venues in segregated America. For instance, in the third scene of the opera, she stipulates

⁶⁰⁹ "Opera Lulu gets a Blues and Jazz Makeover," *Euronews* (2012), http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xu357f_opera-lulu-gets-a-blues-and-jazz-makeover_news.

that Lulu dances for an “all-white crowd.”⁶¹⁰ The scene is set in a club dressing room, where Dr. Bloom speaks with the Commissioner:

COMMISSIONER

No? So what is it then?

(With a leer)

The bewitching Lulu sings for an all white crowd...⁶¹¹

This scene, along with Neuwirth’s description of Lulu’s skin, recalls performances at the Harlem Cotton Club of the 1920s and 30s, where chorus girls were required to wear barely-there outfits and were held to strict physical standards, including a requirement to be at least 5 feet 6 inches tall, light-skinned and under the age of 21.⁶¹² These venues housed performances by some of the greatest African American performers, despite catering to all white audiences. The jazz age of the 1920s and 30s was characterized by a fascination with not only jazz music and dance, but also with the concept of exoticism, attributing a seemingly primitive and primal nature to African Americans.⁶¹³ Cotton Club performers were often costumed to suggest their savage or animalistic nature.⁶¹⁴

Another performer who undoubtedly influenced Lulu’s portrayal as an African American female dancer—and her role as an empowered victim—is Josephine Baker (1906-1975), an entertainer who became an emblem of Parisian

⁶¹⁰ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 14.

⁶¹¹ *Ibid.*, 14

⁶¹² Elizabeth Winter, “Cotton Club of Harlem,” *BlackPast.org: The Online Reference Guide to African American History*, accessed May 11, 2017, <http://www.blackpast.org/aah/cotton-club-harlem-1923>.

⁶¹³ Winter, “Cotton Club of Harlem,” <http://www.blackpast.org/aah/cotton-club-harlem-1923>.

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*, <http://www.blackpast.org/aah/cotton-club-harlem-1923>.

jazz culture. Both productions emphasize Lulu's role as a dancer. In Serebrennikov's production, the director uses a dancer to enact the Portrait (see Photograph 11, below). She appears as an idealized version of Lulu, and the men on stage watch her every movement. Similarly, in the third scene of the Young Vic's production, Lulu is also represented as a dancer. Here, she is literally portrays Lulu as Josephine Baker, recognizable through her iconic banana skirt.

Figure 6.1: Marisol Montalvo and her Portrait in the KOB production of *American Lulu*⁶¹⁵



Building on scholarship on the sexual stereotyping of Africans, Josephine Baker has been a frequently discussed subject in African American studies. Baker, an American-born French dancer, singer, and actress, has been called the first black

⁶¹⁵ Olga Neuwirth, Performance: *American Lulu*. Komische Oper Berlin, Germany. June 30, 2013.

superstar, and was “one of the most famous symbols of the jazz age.”⁶¹⁶ Baker spent most of her career in Paris, where she moved at the age of 19 in order “to find freedom.”⁶¹⁷ Unlike America, where Jim Crow laws were still practiced, in Paris, there was no legal enforcement of segregation. Paris at this time was one of the prime environments for negrophilia— the love of all things African, or the love of black culture. In visual art, “black culture” referred to African folk art, introduced to the French through colonialism.⁶¹⁸ The French fascination with the “primitive” can be seen in various artistic genres, such as in the paintings of Polynesian women by post-Impressionist Paul Gauguin (1848-1903). The influence of African culture is perhaps best exemplified in the later works of Spanish expatriate Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), whose years in Paris coincided with Baker’s. As Alicja Sowinska writes in her article, “Dialectics of the Banana Skirt: The Ambiguities of Josephine Baker’s Self-Representation,” “The ultramodern, interwar France [that] Baker ‘breezed’ into, was fashionably influenced by negrophilia—literally understood as a ‘love for black culture’—which involved white craze for black entertainment and greatly impacted French art, from sculpture and painting to music.”⁶¹⁹ In Paris, blacks were considered “exotic flowers”— Baker herself was called “Black Pearl,” “Bronze

⁶¹⁶ Quote by Darryl Pickney (0:45). *Legends*. “Josephine Baker: The First Black Superstar.” Directed by Suzanne Phillips. Written by Sarah Broughton. BBC Four, July 9, 2009.

⁶¹⁷ Quote by Baker (7:50). *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁸ Alicja Sowinska, “Dialectics of the Banana Skirt: The Ambiguities of Josephine Baker’s Self-Representation,” *Michigan Feminist Studies* 19 (Fall 2005-Spring 2006), <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?cc=mfsfront;c=mfs;c=mfsfront;idno=ark5583.0019.003;rgn=main;view=text;xc=1;g=mfsg>.

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Venus” and “Creole Goddess.”⁶²⁰ Petrine Archer-Straw, author of *Negrophilia*, even goes so far as to call Baker an= personification of the modernist movement,⁶²¹ stating: “her dancing black body served as an embodiment of the art, music, and philosophy of the modern times.”⁶²²

Multiple scholars have explored Baker’s reception as a black entertainer, examining whether her performances served to perpetuate or subvert African American stereotypes. In her infamous act, the *Danse sauvage*, Baker wore her now-infamous banana skirt, capitalizing on the stereotype of blacks as “savage,” and using movement and choreography to depict herself as wild and primitive. Although the use of these stereotypes appears to perpetuate racist views of African Americans, multiple scholars, including Ian Wood, Brenda Dixon Gottschild, Petrine Archer-Straw, and more, question the role of Baker as a “victim” of racism.⁶²³ Considering the *Danse sauvage*, arguably Baker’s most overt expression of black stereotypes, Gottschild explores the empowerment of Baker, writing that her banana skirt represents the female in possession of the male; the phallus-like bananas are “stimulated” through female agency (her dancing black body).⁶²⁴ This idea resonates with views of Baker during her lifetime: she stood for a certain kind of liberation for black people.⁶²⁵ Baker became a symbol of sexual freedom not only due to her overtly sexual dancing, which was often performed in the nude, but also

⁶²⁰ “The Official Site of Josephine Baker,” *CMG Worldwide* (Indianapolis, IN), accessed May 1, 2017, <http://www.cmgww.com/stars/baker/about/biography.html>.

⁶²¹ Archer-Straw defines the modernist movement as occurring in Western society in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-centuries, particularly in the years following World War I.

⁶²² *Legends*. “Josephine Baker: The First Black Superstar.” Directed by Suzanne Phillips. Written by Sarah Broughton. BBC Four, July 9, 2009. Interview with Petrine Archer-Straw.

⁶²³ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*

for her personal life: she was married four times, and was said to have had male and female lovers, both white and black.⁶²⁶

Baker was also a popular performer in Berlin, where, as in Paris, she was seen as “the incarnation of the primitive,” and known for her uncontrollable, natural, and wild character.⁶²⁷ As Nancy Nenno writes in her chapter, “Femininity, the Primitive, and Modern Urban Space: Josephine Baker in Berlin,” Baker’s performances “spoke much more about European modernity than they did about the bodies they claimed to exhibit.”⁶²⁸ While the color of Baker’s skin resulted in her status as a primitive Other, her light complexion labeled her as assimilated and controllable. Similar to discussions of the tragic mulatto figure, Baker was simultaneously celebrated for her African and animalistic wildness, and her non-threatening light skin, a result of miscegenation. By presenting herself in stereotypical ways, Baker consciously controlled her image, portraying herself in accordance with the European idea of a “primitive African” in an environment that was steeped in negrophilia. In her article, Sowinska discusses Baker’s awareness, writing: “Thus, the fantasy about Baker reduced her to her black body, and she was fully aware of that.”⁶²⁹ Through her performance of blackness, Baker transformed herself into the type of black woman her public was so fascinated with at the time. Similarly, the treatment of Lulu by her admirers parallels the colonial fantasy of the

⁶²⁶ *Legends*. “Josephine Baker: The First Black Superstar.” Directed by Suzanne Phillips. Written by Sarah Broughton. BBC Four, July 9, 2009.

⁶²⁷ Nancy Nenno, “Femininity, the Primitive, and Modern Urban Space: Josephine Baker in Berlin,” in *Women in the Metropolis: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture*, Katharina von Ankum, ed. (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1997), 145.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*, 146.

⁶²⁹ Sowinska, “Dialectics of the Banana Skirt,” <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?cc=mfsfront;c=mfs;c=mfsfront;idno=ark5583.0019.003;rgn=main;view=text;xc=1;g=mfsg>

primitive, as demonstrated by Europe's fascination with Baker. Like Baker, Lulu's success comes from her stage career as a dancer and singer, and from the appreciation and objectification of her body.

The male gaze that so often objectified black women such as Josephine Baker is featured prominently in *American Lulu*. As mentioned above, in the KOB's production of Neuwirth's work, Lulu's Portrait takes on a physical role: a dancer, adorned in a bejeweled showgirl outfit, and complete with a diamond g-string and nipple tassels, as well as a bustle, fans, and headpiece, all ornamented with billowing white feathers. The costume is evocative of Josephine Baker's stage outfits: the dancer wears a shining silver skullcap, in the style of Baker's marcelled hair; the racy bra and g-string are also suggestive of a Las Vegas showgirl outfit.⁶³⁰ The dancer performs atop a diner counter, in the middle of a set taken straight from Edward Hopper's iconic painting, *Nighthawks* (1942). Men sit on stools, surrounding the Portrait, pressing against the glass to get a clearer view of the dancing Lulu. Lulu's Portrait appears throughout the production, dancing behind glass windows, always the objectified and consumed subject of male fantasy.

In the third scene of the Young Vic's production of *American Lulu*, Lulu is explicitly portrayed as Josephine Baker. Soprano Angel Blue appears barefoot on stage, wearing a banana skirt, bikini top, and a large hanging necklace—her outfit is a replica of Baker's banana skirt worn in her *Danse sauvage* act. A screen on the back of the stage projects Lulu's smiling face, a floating head surrounded by rows of

⁶³⁰ Baker's marcelled hairstyle featured short hair that was flattened to the woman's head, and fascinated Parisian women, who wanted to recreate Baker's look. Victoria Sherrow, *Encyclopedia of Hair: a Cultural History* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006), 257.

bright yellow bananas. Angel Blue dances on stage, and with a flick of her wrist, the banana images begin to rotate, encircling Lulu's floating head. The staging of this scene supports Gottschild's assertion regarding Baker's empowerment: the phallic-like bananas are manipulated and controlled by Lulu's movements.⁶³¹ By representing Lulu as Josephine Baker, Fulljames suggests that she is liberated and empowered; like Baker, Lulu is aware of the stereotypes surrounding her, and instead "performs" blackness in order to capitalize on the European fascination—and fear—of the primitive African Other.

Through her connection with Baker, Fulljames associates Lulu with the jazz age, causing some confusion in regards to the historical accuracy of Neuwirth's opera. *American Lulu* is set in the 1950s-70s, decades after the jazz age. Baker performed in Paris in the 1920s and 30s; In *American Lulu*, Lulu dances in 1951 New Orleans. Despite the historical inconsistencies, Neuwirth's libretto depicts Lulu as a dancer in an all-white venue, accentuating the hegemonic power dynamics between Lulu and her male admirers. As Johanna Wall stated in her pre-performance lecture, the story of *American Lulu* explores the "hegemonic supremacy" of white men over other cultures, and especially over African Americans.⁶³²

In Berg's opera, Act II, scene 1 culminates with Lulu dictating Dr. Schön's letter to his fiancée, ending his engagement. Neuwirth slightly alters this scene, but maintains Lulu's power over Dr. Bloom. In her libretto, when the seemingly indifferent Lulu agrees to end her affair with Dr. Bloom, he begins to panic. The

⁶³¹ *Legends*. "Josephine Baker: The First Black Superstar." Directed by Suzanne Phillips. Written by Sarah Broughton. BBC Four, July 9, 2009.

⁶³² Johanna Wall, pre-performance lecture on *American Lulu*. *Komische Oper Berlin*, June 30, 2013.

scene ends with Dr. Bloom breaking his engagement and declaring his obedience to Lulu.

DR. BLOOM

(Lulu exits. Bloom dashes after her, reconsiders, turns around)

Wherever to? To my betrothed? Back home?!

Could I just leave this world!

(He grabs a pen and paper, and begins writing)

“These short lines will explain... for three years I have struggled to be free, to love you; I do not have the strength of will.”

I shall now remain at the side of the one whom I obey. Forget me for good.⁶³³

Neuwirth’s reinterpretation of this scene underscores the role of Dr. Bloom as a “fallen man,” suffering at the hands of a woman who controls him. Dr. Bloom’s words suggest that distancing himself from Lulu is a constant struggle, one that he has failed numerous times; he is powerless in his desire for her. In the third scene of *American Lulu*, Lulu expresses her displeasure to Jimmy over Dr. Bloom’s role in her dance-act commission. She says: “He bought the club and bribed the Commissioner so he can humiliate me. – He only wanted me to sing so he could see me half nude, so EVERYONE could see me half nude.”⁶³⁴ Dr. Bloom attempts to control Lulu by making her dance for his fiancée, presenting her publically as an object to be

⁶³³ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 15.

⁶³⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

consumed, even bribing the Commissioner to “allow black girls to dance naked for white men.”⁶³⁵

Fulljames’s staging accentuates the influence Lulu has over her male admirers. In the Young Vic production, instead of appearing humiliated by Dr. Bloom, Lulu laughs at him; like Baker, she gains strength through her awareness of her objectified treatment, and she uses her sexuality as a tool. For instance, in the third scene of Neuwirth’s opera, Lulu quickly regains her power over Dr. Bloom: after fainting on stage, she refuses to continue her performance. Lulu flaunts the Commissioner’s⁶³⁶ romantic interest in her, telling Dr. Bloom “Your bribe’s made him wonder if a darkie’s worth it.”⁶³⁷ Lulu emotionally manipulates Dr. Bloom, suggesting she might start a relationship with the Commissioner.

The depiction of Lulu as Dr. Bloom’s master is suggestive of a particular type of empowered woman, the black bitch. In Patricia Hill Collins’s *Black Sexual Politics*, the author comments on the topic of control that surrounds black female sexuality, writing: “The issue of control becomes highly important within the universe of Black popular culture that is marketed by mass media. Some women are bitches who control their own sexuality—they ‘get a freak on,’ which remains within their control and on their own terms.”⁶³⁸ Expanding on the Jezebel stereotype,⁶³⁹ a bitch’s power comes from her ability to control and manipulate men; she uses her body and

⁶³⁵ American Lulu at The Young Vic Program Book (Sept., 2013), 7.

⁶³⁶ In Berg’s *Lulu*, the Prince doubles the role of the Commissioner.

⁶³⁷ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu: Libretto*, 15.

⁶³⁸ Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 1.

⁶³⁹ *Ibid.*, 127.

her sexuality for her own gain.⁶⁴⁰ Although the black bitch is an extension of the femme fatale, by portraying Lulu in this way—despite the likelihood that European audiences are unaware of this particular trope— *American Lulu* is reflective of the intersectional nature of Neuwirth’s updated story.

According to Hill Collins’s definition, Lulu’s sexuality and materialism make her a “black bitch.” Like the black bitch, in *American Lulu*, Lulu’s power stems from her sexuality and irresistible allure, which she uses to gain influence over men. Neuwirth’s transformation of Lulu strips her of the Pierrot-like innocence and naivety of Berg’s opera, replacing her with a sexual, powerful, and cruel femme fatale. The final scene of *American Lulu* shows the level of control that Lulu has over her own circumstances. Unlike Berg’s opera, in which Lulu desperately haggles with clients, in the final scene of *American Lulu*, she is a rich woman. She screens her Johns, has a line of men waiting outside, and she even blackmails the wealthy Banker. Even as a prostitute, Neuwirth’s Lulu is in control of her own sexuality—she dictates the terms under which she meets her clients. Prior to her monologue in the final scene, Lulu reflects on her past, even referring to herself as a bitch. She states, “I’m not cut out for this profession anymore. I used to enjoy it. I was the queen bitch, supreme bitch...”⁶⁴¹

In contrast to Berg’s character, Neuwirth’s Lulu is independent, strong, and merciless. She is cold, manipulative, and selfish in order to gain power and wealth in a society that de-values and discriminates against black women. In the last scene of

⁶⁴⁰ Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 126.

⁶⁴¹ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 26.

American Lulu, she tells Eleanor, “I don’t give a damn about anyone!”⁶⁴² Neuwirth’s Lulu looks out for herself, and only herself. Similar to Serebrennikov’s interpretation of the work, Fulljames’s production also highlights the cruel aspects of Lulu’s character: she laughingly tells Jimmy that she poisoned his mother, she mocks Eleanor with her body movements, and she physically attacks her clients.

Lulu’s self-awareness represents both her authority and her degradation: although she used to “enjoy” her profession, and the attention of the male gaze, she goes on to explain her growing dissatisfaction:

At fifteen I got lucky. Spent three months in a hospital, not a man in sight. Really got to know myself and see things clearly. I wanted to make it in life. In my dreams I saw the man who was made for me. When I got out, I was no longer a naïve girl. From then on I could tell a hundred feet off if somebody was meant for me, and: nobody’s gonna love me like me. Wanted it all, but now I’ve got it, there’s just loneliness, sorrow and pain.⁶⁴³

Although she has achieved material wealth, Neuwirth’s Lulu remains lonely and unfulfilled. As Collins notes, “The difficulty lies in telling the difference between representations of Black women who are sexually liberated and those who are sexual objects, their bodies on sale for male enjoyment.”⁶⁴⁴ Serebrennikov’s staging suggests the inevitability of Lulu’s loneliness, just as Hopper’s painting depicts the loneliness of its diners. Despite her wealth and apparent power over her clients,

⁶⁴² Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 29.

⁶⁴³ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁶⁴⁴ Collins, *Black Sexual Politics*, 126.

Lulu still feels “loneliness, sorrow and pain.”⁶⁴⁵ In an interview for the Young Vic’s *American Lulu* program book, director John Fulljames comments on the tragic story behind Neuwirth’s opera:

As she recalls her story, she tells it to us. She is an exotic creature trapped on a stage before a paying public, forced to re-enact her life story. We listen and watch but do nothing and so become complicit in her nightly repeated murder. There is no exit other than her final exit. The only way she will stop singing is to stop breathing and we will not leave until she has died.⁶⁴⁶

Fulljames’s statement that, for Lulu, “there is no exit other than her final exit,” reveals the inevitable tragedy of her life. As a scapegoat and creation of man, there’s no alternative “happy-ending” for Lulu. Her function in society— a sexualized object of male desire—means that Lulu remains an oppressed individual. As in Wedekind’s plays and Berg’s opera, Lulu’s death in *American Lulu* is representative of her status as an oppressed person: through her death, Lulu becomes a victim of society.

6.5 Black Pride: The Staging of Intermediate Texts in *American Lulu*

As Joanna Wall explained the nature of the intermediate texts in *American Lulu* present a particular challenge for productions of the work: Neuwirth’s libretto refers to them as “Black-outs,” since they occur in the absence of any dramatic

⁶⁴⁵ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 26.

⁶⁴⁶ John Fulljames, “Layers of Lulu,” *American Lulu* at the Young Vic Program Book (London: Sep., 2013): 11. Johanna Wall, pre-performance lecture on *American Lulu*. *Komische Oper Berlin*, June 30, 2013.

action or musical accompaniment.⁶⁴⁷ One way that these two directors differ in their stagings of *American Lulu* is their realization of Neuwirth's intermediate texts. Both directors disregard the libretto's instructions for Black 1, 2, 5 and 8, instead creating their own interpretation of the Intermediate texts. Her libretto includes specific instructions for video projections during Black 1, 2, and 5; however, neither Serebrennikov nor Fulljames follow Neuwirth's directions, instead altering her operatic text to suit their own dramatic intentions.

During the intermediate texts in the KOB production, the stage is dark, with no props or characters present; instead, abstract videos by Alexander Jitomirsky are projected on a screen. The absence of any dramatic elements serves as a reminder that the Black texts are separate from the story unfolding on stage. As discussed earlier, several elements of Serebrennikov's production highlight the theatrical setting of the opera—a common characteristic in modern theatre, and influenced by the Brechtian technique of “making strange.” In the KOB production, these elements are used in a Brechtian manner, in order to stress the political and moral aspects of the story, and to inspire contemplation in the audience.

In the Young Vic's production of *American Lulu*, Lulu's empowerment can be partially attributed to her involvement in the Civil Rights and black power movements. In the Young Vic program book, Fulljames states:

⁶⁴⁷ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu*: Libretto, 30.

As she looks back on her life, we see the events through her mind's eye. She recalls not just her own life but also the revolutions through which she has lived. Olga's Lulu lives not only through a gender revolution but also through a racial revolution; as a black woman her right to be fully human is doubly contested. She remembers the speeches and poems which inspired the freedom fighters of the civil rights movement and they inspire her too as she fights for freedom in her own life.⁶⁴⁸

According to Fulljames, the intermediate texts act as reflections by Lulu, like memories or recollections from her lifetime. During Black 1 and Black 4 of Fulljames's *American Lulu*, the actors/singers stand frozen on stage, immobile. During Black 7, Lulu cries over Dr. Bloom's dead body, sobbing and beating the floor with her fists. Prior to the last scene, in Black 8, Lulu walks stage right and plays a vinyl record of the Martin Luther King speech that is currently being recited. Lulu nods along in agreement with King's words. Here, the intermediate text switches from non-diegetic to diegetic: rather than King's speeches being divorced from the action on stage, Lulu's actions—her decision to put on a record of King's speech— influence the story. Unlike Serebrennikov's production, in Fulljames's staging, the historical context of Neuwirth's setting is incorporated into the staging of the opera, and various signs of black pride appear on stage. Lulu becomes involved in the Civil Rights movement, and the story and historical context of the opera become one. In contrast, in the KOB's production, the tragedy of Lulu—in addition to her being the

⁶⁴⁸ John Fulljames, "Layers of Lulu," *American Lulu* at the Young Vic Program Book (London: Sep., 2013): 11.

emblematic target of racist and sexist attitudes prevalent in America at that time—is that she does not transcend her racist surroundings; Serebrennikov’s Lulu does not engage in the Civil Rights or the black power movements. Rather, she assimilates into white culture and transforms herself into what her clients desire.

In addition to incorporating MLK references into his staging, Fulljames highlights the historical context of Neuwirth’s setting through references to the black power movement. In the Young Vic’s production, during Black 8, Lulu stands on top of an ottoman, her fist raised in the air. The raised and clenched fist has a long history as a symbol of defiance, solidarity, unity, resistance, and strength through oppression.⁶⁴⁹ Most significantly, Lulu’s position—her arm raised and holding a clenched fist—is a common salute of black power, a movement that developed in America during the 1960s and 70s. Although its ideologies vary according to individual practitioners and sub-sects, in general, black power emphasized racial pride and self-determination, in addition to creating political and cultural institutions that nurtured and promoted black interests.⁶⁵⁰ During the 1960s and 70s, the black power movement was frequently represented, by both politicians and the mainstream media, as a group of extreme, militant, and anti-white revolutionaries.⁶⁵¹ The salute itself would have been widely known during the “present-day” of Neuwirth’s opera (New York, 1970), due to publicity surrounding

⁶⁴⁹ Kelly, Breivik, “What’s Behind Clenched Fist Salutes?,” *BBC News Magazine*, April 17 2012, <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-17739105>.

The clenched, raised fist has been used as a salute for the Popular or anti-fascist front during the Spanish Civil War of the 1930s, by women’s rallies for social justice in the 1970s, by Nelson Mandela upon his release from prison in 1994, by workers in Russia and the United States, and is found in the logo of the American Indian Movement.

⁶⁵⁰ J. O. G. Ogbar, *Black power: radical politics and African American identity. Reconfiguring American political history* (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 2

⁶⁵¹Plec, “Signifyin(g) Civil Rights and Black power, 621-22.

the 1968 Mexico City Olympic Medal ceremony, when gold and bronze medalists Tommie Smith and John Carlos (respectively), raised their clenched fists, a gesture that is widely regarded as the most powerful and recognizable use of the black power salute.⁶⁵² By positioning Lulu in the black power stance, Fulljames aligns Lulu with a radical and extreme group. Through her raised fist, the historical context of the intermediate texts become part of Lulu's story, rather than appearing divorced from the Black texts.

Despite Fulljames's unique staging, the use of black power ideologies originates from Neuwirth's libretto: Neuwirth's extra-dialogic instructions for Black 8 specify that "(During *BLACK 8*, we see a video with superimposed images of Black Panther posters by Emory Douglas)."⁶⁵³ Neither Fulljames nor Serebrennikov followed Neuwirth's instructions regarding the video for Black 8—there are no images of Black Panther posters present in either production.⁶⁵⁴ The Black Panther Party, which grew out of the black power movement, was formed in 1966, and originally developed in order to challenge police brutality and discrimination towards African Americans. The group quickly gained a reputation as a more "radical" organization, and became known as a revolutionary black nationalist and socialist party.⁶⁵⁵ In *Hair Story: Untangling the Roots of Black Hair in America*, authors Ayana D. Byrd and Lori L. Tharps suggest that in the late 1960s and 1970s,

⁶⁵² Gary Younge, "Interview: The man who raised a black power salute at the 1968 Olympic Games," *The Guardian*, March 30, 2012, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/mar/30/black-power-salute-1968-olympics>.

⁶⁵³ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu: Libretto*, 26.

⁶⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁶⁵⁵ William L. Van Deburg, *New Day in Babylon: The Black power Movement and American Culture, 1965-1975* (University of Chicago Press 1993), 155.

the black power movement became inseparable from the Black Panther Party. They write, “For lack of any other cohesive nationalist movement, all things that fell under the general heading of black pride came to be attributed—by the media, White America, and other Blacks—to the work of the organization called the Black Panthers.”⁶⁵⁶

In his book *Seize the Time: The Story of the Black Panther Party and Huey P. Newton*, Black Panther Party co-founder Bobby Seale emphasizes that the Party, although often portrayed as being anti-white, was actually at war with the “white supremacist power structure.” Seale feels strongly that black oppression was “a result of economic exploitation.” The ideology of the Black Panther Party (BPP) was framed around a class struggle, rather than a race struggle; this creed is further revealed through the BPP’s utilization of socialist and communist philosophies.⁶⁵⁷ In his interview with Neuwirth, Kenan Malik made a similar comment regarding the theme of oppression in Neuwirth’s opera, stating that the story isn’t about race, “it’s about status.”⁶⁵⁸ Malik’s statement reflects the intersectional nature of discrimination present in Neuwirth’s opera. For instance, the relationship between power and economic class is clearly highlighted in both Berg’s *Lulu* and Neuwirth’s *American Lulu*—one only needs recall that Lulu is at the height of her power when she is married to her wealthiest husband, Dr. Schön/Dr. Bloom. As a woman, Lulu’s

⁶⁵⁶ Ayana Byrd and Lori Tharps, *Hair Story: Untangling the Roots of Black Hair in America* (New York: St. Martin’s Griffin, 2001), 54.

⁶⁵⁷ Seale, Bobby, *Seize the Time: The Story of the Black Panther Party and Huey P. Newton* (New York: Black Classic Press, 1996), 72.

⁶⁵⁸ Olga Neuwirth and John Fulljames, “Behind the Scenes of American Lulu: Part 2.” Interview by Kenan Malik. Mahogany Opera Group, April 29, 2014. Audio/visual, 5:59. <https://kenanmalik.com/2013/09/08/behind-the-scenes-of-american-lulu/>.

welfare—or, financial success—is tied to the men in her life. At the age of twelve, she was rescued from homelessness by Dr. Schön, who later carefully arranged her marriages to wealthy, respectable partners.

6.6 The Black Body as Historical Signifier in the Staging of *American Lulu*

In the Young Vic's production of *American Lulu*, costuming takes on an important role in the story of Neuwirth's opera. Lulu's shifting clothes and hair function as changing signs, indicating what era the scene is in. In his production, Fulljames utilizes period fashion and hairstyles. For example, in the opening scene of the production, Angel Blue's hair is presented in a style that was popular in 1950s America: the Italian cut. Popularized by Italian actresses Gina Lollobrigida and Sophia Loren, and later worn by Elizabeth Taylor, Lulu's hairstyle in this scene is particularly reminiscent of Dorothy Dandridge in the 1954 film *Carmen Jones*. The short, curled hairstyle supports the setting of this scene (1951 New Orleans). Prior to the opening of this scene, the text "1951 New Orleans" is projected across the stage. In contrast, there is no indication for the audience regarding the specific time and location of the second scene. Here, Lulu's fashion serves as a clue as to the setting. Her costume is clearly influenced by 1960s fashion: she wears a short, A-line, mini-length dress, with tights and matching heels; her hair is done in a bouffant, a popular style of the 1960s and drastically different from the one she wore in the prior scene. Although there is no projection or text indicating that this scene is set in the 1960s, Lulu's costuming—her clothes and her hair—serve as a signifier of the era from which these particular styles were taken.

Multiple scholars have discussed the metaphysical significance of the body as a sign in itself. In particular, analysis of the body as sign-symbol is an important part of social semiotics, which explores the encoding of meaning that is achieved through fashion and style. Ingrid Banks's *Hair Matters: Beauty, Power, and Black Women's Consciousness* begins with a discussion of the scholarship of the body-as-sign. According to Banks, the idea that "the body is a text in which a host of meanings are extracted" is a subject that has been explored in various fields, by scholars such as Michel de Certeau, Susan Bordo, Judith Butler, Gloria Wade Gayles, and more.⁶⁵⁹

In *Hair Matters*, Banks discusses the significance of hair as a physical and existential representation of self, writing that it is "a physical manifestation of our being" that is full of social and cultural meanings.⁶⁶⁰ The text also explores the politicized nature of black hair and hairstyling practices.⁶⁶¹ Discussions and scholarship regarding black hairstyling practices were at a peak during the black power movement, the setting of *American Lulu*.⁶⁶² According to William L. Van Deburg, author of *A New Day in Babylon: The Black Power Movement and American Culture*, the public's fixation on the political aspects of black power has hindered our appreciation of the cultural and social impacts of the movement: namely, the role of black power in "promoting psychological well being" of African Americans.⁶⁶³ Van Deburg writes that the significant impact of the movement was not political; rather, it was its leaders ability to convince people to challenge notions of American culture

⁶⁵⁹ Banks, *Hair Matters*, 26.

⁶⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 26-7.

⁶⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁶⁶² *Ibid.*, 43.

⁶⁶³ Van DeBurg, *New Day in Babylon*, 304.

that imprisoned African Americans in a cycle of “self-deprecation” and internalized notions of inferiority.⁶⁶⁴

Ingrid Banks’s book, *Hair Matters*, explores the oppressive nature that mainstream images of beauty in the US have on African Americans. She writes, “[B]lack women still have to deal with the mental chains of slavery and Jim Crow that are exacerbated by mainstream standards of beauty that black women, in general, cannot meet.”⁶⁶⁵ The black power movement encouraged blacks to reject mainstream, privileged definitions of beauty—namely, white skin and straight, long—preferably blonde—hair.⁶⁶⁶ A result of black power, the Black is Beautiful Movement began in the late 1960s, and was the first time that cultural notions of beauty were contested on a significant scale.⁶⁶⁷ The black woman’s appearance contrasted with mainstream cultural ideals of beauty, which privileged white skin and long hair.⁶⁶⁸ Through black pride, African Americans were encouraged to take pride in their natural beauty, learning to embrace to color of their skin and the texture of their hair.⁶⁶⁹

In the late 1960s, the Afro, also known as the natural, became a symbol of black pride.⁶⁷⁰ According to Banks, “It was the Afro that led the ‘Black is Beautiful’ cry during that moment in history.”⁶⁷¹ In his article, “Nap Time: Historicizing the Afro,” author Robin D. G. Kelley writes that the Afro was about more than black

⁶⁶⁴ Van DeBurg, *New Day in Babylon*, 306

⁶⁶⁵ Banks, *Hair Matters*, 46.

⁶⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 50.

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁶⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁶⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁶⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁶⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 86

pride—it was a rejection of mainstream ideals of female beauty.⁶⁷² For countless decades, hair has functioned as a symbol of both womanhood and sexuality; in particular, the association of long hair with femininity has been perpetuated throughout media and other cultural forces.⁶⁷³ By embracing the naturally “kinky” or “nappy”⁶⁷⁴ texture of black hair, as well as its shorter length, the Afro stands against cultural norms of gender and beauty at the time. In “The Decline of the Conk; or, How to Read a Process,” Maxine Craig writes that “[W]hen women first started wearing natural hairstyles, they felt pulled between feminine ideals and racial pride. Unlike men who moved towards more conventional gender identities by ceasing to straighten their hair, women who wore their hair in naturals broke with dominant norms of femininity.”⁶⁷⁵ As Kelley writes, the natural was “a direct rejection of a conception of female beauty [...]”⁶⁷⁶ Adding to the de-feminization of the Afro was its unisex nature—black men and women both wore naturals. In *Hair Matters*, Banks even mentions cases of mistaken gender identity that occurred when women who wore Afros were mistaken for men.⁶⁷⁷

Afro hairstyles appear in both *American Lulu* productions discussed in this dissertation. In the final scene of the Young Vic’s staging, Lulu and Eleanor both wear Afros. The most obvious explanation for the choice of hairstyling here is the setting of Neuwirth’s opera: the last scene is set in New York in the year 1970, when

⁶⁷² Robin D. G. Kelley, “Nap Time: Historicizing the Afro,” *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body, and Culture* 1, (1997): 348.

⁶⁷³ Banks, *Hair Matters*, 8.

⁶⁷⁴ The terms “kinky” and “nappy” are employed as mere descriptors of black hair, and are not being used in a negative way.

⁶⁷⁵ Banks, *Hair Matters*, 414.

⁶⁷⁶ Kelley, “Nap Time,” 348.

⁶⁷⁷ Banks, *Hair Matters*, 9.

black power was at its peak. In addition, natural hair acts as a signifier of the opera's story and historical context. However, the sign of the Afro, as discussed earlier, signifies more than just a time in American history. By wearing Afros in the context of 1970s New York, Lulu and Eleanor are aligned with the black pride and the black power movements. Lulu's Afro is a distinct change from her hairstyle in the opening (the 'Italian') and second (the bouffant) scenes.

Regardless of their mutual interest or involvement in black power, Lulu and Eleanor behave very differently in the last scene of the Young Vic's *American Lulu*. At several points, Lulu is aggressive, and even violent, towards her clients: she pushes the Banker down and kicks the Young Man in the stomach. Lulu's violent behavior is erratic and somewhat confusing. Immediately prior to the final scene is Black 8, with adapted and abridged text from Martin Luther King's last speech, "I See the Promised Land," (1968). Lulu puts on a record of King's speech, nodding along. The combination of Lulu's violent behavior in this scene and the pacifist connotation of King's words creates some semiotic confusion. Although European audiences likely know King's pacifist stance, it is less likely that these spectators perceived the complexity of the Afro—for example, its alignment with the black power movement. In the audience's decoding of Lulu's Afro, the hairstyle is likely interpreted as a stylistic statement, rather than a political one.

In the last scene of Neuwirth's opera, Lulu has become a high-class prostitute (or call-girl). Lulu's success is made abundantly clear through Fulljames's staging. Lulu's irresistible nature is revealed in her conversations with the Banker, who says that even the most powerful and wealthy men—"bosses, politicians, bankers"—are

“hooked on” Lulu.⁶⁷⁸ However, in this scene, Lulu wears an Afro—a hairstyle that multiple scholars, including Banks, Craig, and Kelley, have called an affront to mainstream representations of beauty and femininity. The Afro hairstyle, although considered exotic by some, was also seen as a type of threat, since it represented an African American style that was linked to radical black politics.⁶⁷⁹ Lulu’s alignment with the ideology of the black power movement—or, possibly, the even more militant and socialist Black Panther Party—would hardly have been alluring to her wealthy, white clientele. Lulu’s hair in this scene, therefore, is perplexing, and perhaps reveals a lack of understanding by the creative authorities behind the Young Vic production, which chose to present Lulu in an Afro even though she is a successful call-girl. In addition, a high-class prostitute would likely wear clothing that was revealing and expensive; however, in this scene Lulu is wearing the same costume she wore when she was released from prison: a mid-length, red pleather trench coat, a white nightgown, and a pair of plain white sneakers. It is arguably the least sexual and expensive-looking costume Lulu wears in the entire opera, hardly the kind of dress that one would expect any type of prostitute to wear.

Eleanor also wears an Afro in the final scene of the KOB’s production of *American Lulu*. Neuwirth’s libretto refers to Eleanor’s costuming as “masculine” in the opening scene of Act II, making her Afro hairstyle less confusing.⁶⁸⁰ Despite the fact that both Serebrennikov and Fulljames use Afros, the meaning of the hairstyle changes according to the thematic environment of their stagings. In the KOB

⁶⁷⁸ Banks, *Hair Matters*, 27.

⁶⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁶⁸⁰ Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon, *American Lulu: Libretto*, 16.

production, Eleanor's Afro is not explicitly associated with the black power movement. Rather, Serebrennikov uses the Afro as a sign to explore the politics of natural versus unnatural black hair. By divorcing the story from its historical context, the contrasting hairstyles of Eleanor and Lulu highlight the themes of adaptation versus assimilation that Wall discussed in her pre-performance lecture.

In Serebrennikov's production, the Afro is symbolic of Eleanor's refusal to assimilate to "white" culture. In their 1968 book, *Black Rage*, psychiatrists William H. Grier and Price M. Cobbs proposed their "self hatred theory of hair alteration."⁶⁸¹ According to Grier and Cobbs, the alteration of hair as practiced by black women, such as the use of a pressing comb or chemical relaxers, is indicative of a learned belief that "tightly coiled" black hair is undesirable and unattractive.⁶⁸² The authors propose that the act of hair alteration is reflective of an internalized, learned hatred of blackness and an emulation of white physical features.⁶⁸³ Through the act of straightening their hair, black women reject their blackness, and instead embrace mainstream images of white beauty. In contrast, the Afro allowed African Americans to voice their rejection of these beauty ideals.⁶⁸⁴ In the 1960s and 70s, straightened hair became a sign of the internalized hatred that African Americans felt about themselves; consequently, whereas the Afro (or natural hair) became a sign of power, straightened hair signified disempowerment and shame.⁶⁸⁵ Those associated with black power shared the belief that any alteration of black hair was

⁶⁸¹ Banks, *Hair Matters*, 43.

⁶⁸² *Ibid.*, 43.

⁶⁸³ *Ibid.*, 43-44

⁶⁸⁴ Byrd and Tharps. *Hair Story*, 55.

⁶⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 43.

representative of a “desire to be white,” and consequently, natural hair became a pseudo-requirement for black women who were associated with black power or black pride.⁶⁸⁶ Today, the self-hatred theory of hair alteration proposed by Grier and Cobbs, although widely studied, is considered controversial. Banks expresses doubt that self-hatred is a part of the contemporary black woman’s act of hair alteration, writing that “self-hatred may have been an issue” during the early twentieth century, when Madame C.J. Walker first introduced the pressing comb.⁶⁸⁷ In contrast, various scholars today discuss the empowerment that contemporary African American women feel, noting that their choice of hairstyle practices acts as a type of self-definition, and that choice gives them power.⁶⁸⁸

Eleanor wears a large Afro throughout the KOB production of *American Lulu*, reminiscent of Afro styling that appeared in the 1970s. The third scene of Serebrennikov’s *American Lulu* is set in 1951 New Orleans, the “beginning” of Lulu’s flashback. Notably, the setting of this scene precedes the connection of the Afro hairstyle with the black power movement; the fact that Eleanor wears a large Afro throughout the entire production is perhaps representative of the de-politicization of the Afro as it has become increasingly worn in post-1971 America, representing a stylistic rather than a political choice. Eleanor is portrayed as a hip young black woman, not a political artist. Unlike Fulljames, Serebrennikov did not include any visual signs of black power or black pride in his staging of the work.

⁶⁸⁶ Byrd and Tharps. *Hair Story*, 57.

⁶⁸⁷ Banks, *Hair Matters*, 53.

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 69.

The connection of the Afro with the black power movement parallels the decline of the movement itself: by 1971, the Afro had become a mere fashion statement, “a hairstyle, plain and simple.”⁶⁸⁹ The focus of the Afro shifted from politics to fashion, with everyone trying to achieve a “high”—or large—Afro as a mere fashion statement.⁶⁹⁰ In the 1970s, young people of all races were growing their hair long, and Afros emulated celebrities like Jimi Hendrix and the Jackson 5, rather than Angela Davis. As Byrd and Tharps write, “Blacks [were] now used to the style and increasingly forgetful of its ideological meanings, [...] reinterpreting it simply as a hairstyle that could be worn today and gone tomorrow.”⁶⁹¹

In Serebrennikov’s production of *American Lulu*, Lulu is an African American woman who chooses to assimilate to white culture: she displays herself in a hypersexual way, wearing revealing clothing, her hair worn long and straight. Eleanor adapts to the culture around her, embraces her music heritage, and refuses to alter herself in order to fit in with white culture and mainstream projections of feminine beauty. She is a new protagonist, the antithesis of Lulu. In Serebrennikov’s production, Eleanor assumes the role of the “authentic” black woman: she wears natural hair,⁶⁹² she is a blues singer, and she is the only one of Lulu’s admirers who is able to achieve independence from Lulu. Similar to Wall’s interpretation of Neuwirth’s opera, by contrasting these elements of Eleanor’s “authentic blackness” with the “normative” (white) aspects of Lulu’s race, Serebrennikov highlights the theme of assimilation versus adaptation. Whereas Lulu assimilates to white culture,

⁶⁸⁹ Byrd and Tharps, *Hair Story*, 62.

⁶⁹⁰ Banks, *Hair Matters*, 62.

⁶⁹¹ Banks, *Hair Matters*, 62.

⁶⁹² Byrd and Tharps, *Hair Story*, 203.

transforming herself into what white men want her to be, Eleanor represents the black power movement, rejecting popular notions of beauty, and instead embracing her identity as an African American woman.

6.7 Conclusions

Through their unique stagings, the two *American Lulu* productions examined in this chapter serve as challenges to the concept of the composer as ultimate authority through their innovative treatment of Neuwirth's operatic text. They act as mediations between cultures, transforming the various reinterpretations of Lulu's story as told by Frank Wedekind, Alban Berg, and Olga Neuwirth. By comparing these two productions, the importance of staging becomes even more apparent, revealing the fluid concept behind the treatment of canonic works by the creative authorities involved in contemporary opera production.

Similar to those discussed in previous chapters, the two productions examined here exemplify the significance that updated stagings can have on an audience's perception of a given work. The two have markedly different themes: whereas Serebrennikov highlights the issue of adaptation versus assimilation, Fulljames's production emphasizes Neuwirth's setting by incorporating historical details into his staging. One of the most important aspects of a staging decoded by the audience is the actors themselves; as semiotic icons, both the actors and the characters they are portraying can affect the audience's perception of the story. This is especially important in *American Lulu*, where the race of several characters has been altered. This chapter examines the differing ways these two directors handled

the treatment of race in their productions, revealing the importance of creative authorities such as directors on the realization of operatic texts since the advent of Regietheater in the late 1970s.

As discussed in the previous chapter, *American Lulu* transforms Berg's opera through music, language (German to English), setting (fin-de-siècle Vienna and London, to 1950s-70s New York and New Orleans), references to historical and political events (the Civil Rights and black power movements), and the re-naming of key characters (Alwa to Jimmy, Countess Geschwitz to Eleanor, Dr. Schön to Dr. Bloom, Schigolch to Clarence). In addition, Neuwirth uses new musical elements to reflect Americanized version of *Lulu*, including Eleanor's blues-inspired lines, a jazz arrangement of Berg's first two acts, the use of the Wonder Morton Organ and calliope, references in the libretto to songs from the era, and a newly composed Act III. In his production for the Young Vic in London, Fulljames expands upon the new American setting of Neuwirth's work, making the socio-cultural and political climate of the opera's setting a central focus of his production. His staging includes numerous historical references, such as the depiction of *Lulu* as Josephine Baker, *Lulu*'s black power salute, and the use of period hairstyling and costumes, such as the bouffant and Afro, to depict the changing historical context of Neuwirth's story.

By creating a character that is hypersexual, aggressive, and even violent, Fulljames supports Neuwirth's cruel, narcissistic interpretation of *Lulu*. However, other aspects of Fulljames's stagings challenge Neuwirth's operatic text. His treatment of the intermediate texts⁶⁹³ does not consistently follow Neuwirth's

⁶⁹³ For more information on the intermediate texts, see Chapter 5, section 5.1.

instructions as outlined in her libretto. The video for Black 1 is somewhat similar to the description in the libretto, including a projection of a steamboat with rainbow-colored steam; however, none of the other Black-outs in the Young Vic production follow Neuwirth's instructions. Although Neuwirth stated in interviews with Kenan Malik that the intermediate texts are separate from the story being told on stage, in Fulljames's staging, Lulu interacts with her surroundings during some of the Black-outs. She plays records of the MLK speeches, changing their presence from non-diegetic to diegetic. In his production, Fulljames's Lulu takes action: through his staging, he creates a character that is political and empowered.

In Kirill Serebrennikov's production of *American Lulu* for the KOB, the director challenges the authority of the composer in several ways. As dramaturg Joanna Wall stated, Serebrennikov was given Neuwirth's operatic text late, and the director was required to make some decisions regarding staging without access to the full *American Lulu* operatic text. Consequently, his interpretation is influenced by more traditional readings of Lulu as a femme fatale, as seen in numerous past *Lulu* productions. This contrasts with Neuwirth's wish that the "myth" of the femme fatale be put to rest.

Like Fulljames, Serebrennikov does not follow Neuwirth's libretto instructions for the intermediate texts; rather, he sets them to abstract videos by Alexander Jitomirsky. However, in other ways, Serebrennikov conforms to the composer's ideas: for instance, the politicized aspect of the opera are downplayed in this production, which includes no references to the Civil Rights movement outside of the Black-outs. In the last scene of the work, Serebrennikov's production supports

Neuwirth's creation of Eleanor as a second protagonist, using elements such as costuming, movement, and interaction between characters to emphasize her antithetical role to Lulu.

Both productions discussed in this chapter function as mediations between Neuwirth's work and the director's creative ideas for the realization of that work on stage. Like Neuwirth herself, Fulljames and Serebrennikov approach the operatic text as a starting point, using or dismissing elements to suite their own interpretation of the story. In their productions of *American Lulu*, we see the transformation of a centuries-old character, and her treatment in the hands of various authorities, from Wedekind, Berg, and Neuwirth, and finally in the directors that brought the operatic text to life on stage. Just as Neuwirth's compositional philosophy centers around the transformation of past creations, through these productions, the story of *Lulu* continues to evolve and change, ever-shifting in its role as a reflection of the culture surrounding us.

CHAPTER 7. CONCLUSION: THE REFITTING OF *LULU* AND THE LULU CHARACTER

Late in his creative life, an eighty-year old Igor Stravinsky famously asserted, “refitting old ships is the real task of the artist. He can say again in his way only what has already been said.”⁶⁹⁴ Although Stravinsky was certainly referring to the role of the composer, we might also apply his idea to the artistic aims of directors of staged works, as well as composers who consciously adapt an existing work, as Neuwirth has done. Directors such as Bechtolf and Chéreau, as well as Neuwirth, have clearly “refitted” the “old ship” that is Berg’s *Lulu*.

The history of the character of Lulu actualizes the central meaning of Stravinsky’s statement: first created in the mid-1880s by French novelist Félicien Champsaur, her character has been shaped, altered, and transformed over decades, by numerous authors and across a multitude of genres and expressions. As this dissertation has examined, Lulu took many forms before Berg shaped her character: from the seductive clown of Champsaur’s pantomimes and novels to the femme fatale of Wedekind’s popular plays and the androgynous New Woman of Pabst’s film. Her enigmatic, multifaceted portrayal in Berg’s libretto and opera were not distant from these earlier renderings, but, in fact, encompassed aspects of Wedekind’s and other author’s depictions. This, in the realization of Berg’s work in the theater, present-day directors have had to confront not only the canonic operatic text, but the multiple images of Lulu that are contained within Berg’s work, as well those that lie outside of it. By considering Lulu beyond the scope of Berg’s interpretation of her character, this inquiry has demonstrated the ways in which the

⁶⁹⁴ David Dubal, *The Essential Canon of Classical Music* (New York: North Point Press, 2001), 366.

canonic opera *Lulu* and the iconic figure of Lulu have changed through diverse theatrical realizations.

In contrast to the stagnant view of work-concept that developed during the nineteenth century, the continued existence of the canonic work, or cultural artifact, is rooted in inevitable change, as new generations update texts and traditions to reflect and relate to their current socio-cultural environments. As discussed in chapter 2, by the time Berg began composition of his second opera in 1927, the character of Lulu was already complex and multilayered. Indeed, in Berg's *Lulu*, all facets of Lulu's past are embedded in his interpretation of her character. Whether or not Berg was familiar with these early versions of Lulu—the illustrated novels of Champsaur, the silent films of Jessner and Pabst, and the recent productions of Wedekind's two Lulu plays—the past manifestations of Lulu's story inevitably influenced his adaptation of her character. By creating new versions of her story, these authors encoded Lulu with novel, untraditional elements; these changes, in turn, became part of the cultural understanding of her character and were absorbed into her identity.

As discussed in chapter 6, the complete sign of Lulu includes both the title character of Berg's opera (the signifier) and our individual, personal perception of the character (the signified). Because theatrical and operatic works are only truly realized through performance, the unique elements of each Lulu we are exposed to—whether in the theatre, the opera, or in literature—becomes part of our understanding of her character. With each variation of Lulu's story, her identity changes and expands, absorbing new elements of her reinterpreted character.

By examining the transformation of her story over time, we gain a more thorough understanding of both Lulu's identity and the contexts in which she has evolved. Since her earliest appearances were neither recorded nor transcribed, Lulu's past remains vague and ambiguous. As one of the first female clowns to appear in Europe, the origins of Champsaur's Lulu lie in performance—namely, in the bohemian circus and pantomime of late nineteenth-century Paris. Following her popularity as a circus performer, Champsaur went on to write numerous novels and pantomimes on the clownesse Lulu. In his novel, *Lulu, roman clownesque*, Champsaur depicts the young Lulu's fascination with feminine power; the girl Lulu emulates her mother, secretly dressing up in her clothes and reading her erotic books. She transforms herself into a magnetic woman and a seductive, dancing clownesse. In *Lulu, roman clownesque*, Lulu is portrayed as both a sexual and amoral being: a “heartless” woman, she uses her femininity—through her sexualized dancing—to manipulate those around her.

Inspired by Champsaur's character, German playwright Frank Wedekind produced the next iteration of Lulu: his two plays, *Erdgeist* and *Die Büchse der Pandora*. Although Champsaur was the first to create Lulu, he would later be inspired by Wedekind's transformation of her character in *Erdgeist*; in Champsaur's later illustrated novels featuring the clownesse, he expanded on Wedekind's depiction of the dangerous woman. Additionally, it is possible that the infamous, real-life femme fatale Lou Andreas-Salomé inspired the Lulu characters of both Champsaur and Wedekind. Even in these early versions of her story, it is difficult to

assign Lulu a single, original creator: she is the product of multiple authors and of differing artistic expressions.

For his newly reinterpreted Lulu character, Wedekind was influenced by Champsaur's portrayal of the seductive, dancing clownesse in her earliest circus performances. In *Erdegeist* and *Die Büchse der Pandora*, Wedekind maintained several aspects of Champsaur's original character, such as the use of Pierrot in the Portrait, Lulu's role as a dancer, and her ambiguous, fluid nature. Wedekind expanded on these aspects of Champsaur's Lulu, transforming her to reflect the current cultural fascination with the femme fatale. Like Champsaur, Wedekind, who moved to Paris in the 1890s, was inspired by the environment in which he lived. The title of his second Lulu play, a reference to the myth of Pandora's box, mirrors the European fascination with the fatal woman at this time. This dangerous woman of the fin de siècle is itself an extension of the ancient trope of the castrating woman, as seen in the myths of Pandora, Lilith, Judith, and Eve.

For his reinterpretation of Champsaur's character, Wedekind reimagined Lulu in the world of high Viennese society. In *Erdegeist* and *Die Büchse der Pandora*, Lulu is reborn as a femme fatale of the fin-de-siècle: she is mysterious, vague and malleable, shaped by her male admirers. As the title of Wedekind's play suggests, the story of Lulu explores the archetype of the dangerous woman and the timeless fear of the feminine Other. The introspective, psychological focus of the Lulu plays mirror the socio-cultural environment of fin-de-siècle Europe at this time. Often called predecessors to expressionism, the Lulu plays explore the negative consequences of a sexually repressed society, Lulu acts as a reflection of those

around her, a creation of man and a scapegoat of man, transforming and shifting according to her lover's hidden, unconscious desires.

The next manifestation of Lulu's story occurred in the 1920s, this time on the cinematic screen. The German silent films *Erdgeist*, directed by Leopold Jessner and released in 1923, and *Die Büchse der Pandora*, directed by G. W. Pabst and released in 1929, are both products of the environment in which they were created: Weimar, Germany. Although the films were created over twenty years after the publication of Wedekind's plays, they are highly influenced by the works. In the silent films of Jessner and Pabst, the hidden decadence and amoral underbelly of Viennese society is replaced with the excessive, catastrophic setting of Weimar, Germany. In his film, Pabst's despatialized, abstract images promote the timeless, mythic feel of Lulu, aligning her with the castrating woman of Wedekind's time. The multifaceted depiction of Lulu—as victim and victimizer, as a scapegoat for a sick, corrupt society, as bringer of chaos and death—parallels representations of the sexual, criminal woman in numerous studies from interwar Germany.

Both films expand on Wedekind's femme fatale, transporting Lulu from fin-de-siècle Vienna to Weimar Berlin. In their reinterpretation of Lulu for the cinematic screen, she became a symbol of the modern woman—an extension of the fin-de-siècle femme fatale, but with the added cultural concerns of interwar Germany. One of the clearest links to interwar Germany in these films is the representation of Lulu as a New Woman of Weimar. Both actresses who performed the role of Lulu—Asta Nielsen and Louis Brooks—epitomized the androgynous style of the time, with their short hairstyles, boyish figures, and contemporary fashions. Like the New Woman of

Weimar, the 1920s cinematic Lulu was portrayed as independent and sexual; she challenged the status quo and questioned the traditional roles of femininity.

Despite her changing environment, the various manifestations of Lulu all explore the same central issue: the archetype of the dangerous woman. The Lulu character that Berg first encountered was a product of all of her past environments and creators; like Pandora, her story is ancient, yet she has been reinterpreted and reborn across numerous cultures and eras. Berg began work on his second opera in 1927, further transforming the story of Lulu through his adaptation of Wedekind's two plays into a single opera libretto. His libretto, possibly influenced by the conflated versions of the play by Engel and Falckenberg, expanded on Lulu's role as a scapegoat of man, continuing Engel's use of animal assignments in the Prologue, as well as the double roles of Lulu's husbands in the last scene of the work. Berg was also highly influenced by the lecture of Viennese satirist Karl Kraus prior to the 1905 private performance of *Die Büchse der Pandora*. In Kraus's discussion, he suggested that the final scene of the play depicted an act of revenge on behalf of man, with Lulu as a scapegoat and victim. This idea would be especially influential on Berg's understanding of the Lulu character, herself a reflection of pre-established, fin-de-siècle attitudes and ideologies regarding the true nature of femininity and female sexuality.

Following the untimely death of Alban Berg on December 24, 1935, the incomplete *Lulu* was premiered on June 2, 1937 at the Zürich Opera. It was not until 1979, at the Paris Opera, that *Lulu* would be performed in its entirety, with a third act completed by Friedrich Cerha. An examination of post-1979 productions reveals

the shifting contemporary relevance of *Lulu*: modern stagings of Berg's seminal opera combine traditional and unique elements, telling the story of the iconic femme fatale while mediating between her past and current environments. By modifying and transforming the operatic text in contemporary productions of the work, directors of Berg's *Lulu* confront all aspects of her character. Every new production of *Lulu*—whether *Werktreue* or *Regietheater*—alters the canonic work in their realization of the opera on stage. The many retellings of Lulu's story shed light on our own relationship with cultural artifacts, as we “refit” our traditions to reflect our own lives and experiences.

Lulu was created in a post-Wagnerian environment, and came to be considered an extension of Berg's compositional genius not only due to his incredibly complex music, but also because of his newly written libretto and detailed staging instructions. Initial treatments of Berg's work were limited in their realization of the unfinished text; these *Werktreue* productions were defined by their historically accurate stagings. For instance, in Otto Schenk's 1962 *Lulu* at the Theater an der Wien, the director sought to fulfill the composer's intentions, presenting much of the opera according to the instructions included in Berg's libretto. However, multiple aspects of Schenk's *mise en scène* deviate from the details of the operatic text, such as Lulu's updated, sexualized, black-and-white costuming. In the Portrait, Evelyn Lear's costume contained a mixture of unique and established elements. Her form-fitting leotard and silk stockings are feminine and flirtatious, lacking the androgynous qualities of the original billowing blouse and

pantaloons of Pierrot. However, her costume also includes a fanned white collar and sleeves, evocative of the tragic clown.

John Dexter's 1977 *Lulu* production for the Metropolitan Opera, originally presented in the two-act version, reflects the conservative nature of American opera houses, and is perhaps the most accurate and "true" staging of the work to date. Dexter went to great lengths to follow Berg's detailed staging instructions, and the production includes very few, minor alterations to the operatic text. However, Berg's libretto for *Lulu* does not include instructions for every element of the opera's mise en scène. One area in which the unique elements of Dexter's production can be seen is in the portrayal of the two female characters on stage, Lulu and the Countess Geschwitz. In Dexter's production, the Countess's hair is styled in a short black bob—a cut usually associated with Lulu due to Louise Brooks's iconic performance as the character in Pabst's silent film, *Die Büchse der Pandora*. By styling her hair in a *Bubikopf*, Dexter imbues the Countess character with the historical and cultural implications of the style, aligning her with the New Woman of Weimar and emphasizing her nonconformist, androgynous nature.

As the Prague School of semioticians stated, everything on the theatrical stage functions as a sign, meant to be decoded by the audience. Although the Portrait of Dexter's production shows Lulu's hair styled in a short bob, the color of her hair—red—adds a new layer of semiotic significance to her character. Unlike reality, staged signs all constitute specific choices on behalf of the production team. By making her a redhead, Dexter portrayed Lulu as fiery, abnormal, lustful, and unconventional. Through this unique choice, Dexter clarifies the symbolism of Lulu's

Portrait and identity, encoding her with the more commonly understood symbol of red hair, rather than solely representing her as Pierrot. Despite his great reverence towards Berg's *Lulu*, Dexter reveals through his staging the significant role that even the subtlest changes to the operatic text can have on the audience's perception of the work being presented on stage.

Although the Metropolitan Opera hoped to perform Berg's work in its completed form, Cerha's third act was not ready in time for the performance, and the three-act première of *Lulu* would not occur until 1979. For that production, the Paris Opera, based on a recommendation by conductor Pierre Boulez, selected the controversial director Patrice Chéreau, known for his updated stagings of Wagner's *Ring Cycle* in 1976 at Bayreuth. Chéreau's staging reflects changing ideas about the realization of opera at this time, defined by the development of Regietheater, or Regieoper, and the increasing authority of the director. Regietheater advocates consider the visual or staging elements of an opera to be equally as important as the music and text; these updated productions challenge the concept of the composer as ultimate authority through their unique stagings, promoting the role of the director as of equal importance as the original composer and librettist.

Chéreau's *Lulu* can be categorized as a quintessential example of Regietheater due to its significant alteration of Berg's operatic text. In the Paris Opera production, Lulu's story is transported to a 1930s setting, and each scene contains an updated *mise en scène*, different from the instructions indicated in Berg's libretto. Chéreau ignores some of the most symbolic and important features of Berg's work, such as excluding a film projection during the middle interlude,

ignoring the doubling of Lulu's husbands and clients in the final scene, and omitting the first scene of Act III entirely. Without the film interlude, the production fails to explain how Lulu escaped from her imprisonment; the palindromic music of Berg's score is no longer reflected in the rise and fall of Lulu's arc-like story line. By ignoring Berg's casting instructions in the libretto, Chéreau drastically alters the story of Lulu, removing the symbolism of the final scene as an act of revenge on behalf of man. Through his alteration of Berg's operatic text, Chéreau's production directly challenges the role of the composer as ultimate authority, and reflects the shifting treatment of canonic works in contemporary environments.

As David Levin states in his seminal text, *Verdi in Performance*, a successful operatic staging answers questions or addresses ambiguities in the original text.⁶⁹⁵ This concept is especially true in Regietheater productions, which often propose new interpretations of canonic works, developing and expanding on sub-texts. In Eric Bechtolf's 2002 *Lulu* production for the Zürich Opera, the director addresses the mysterious background of Lulu, building off vague hints and suggestions in the text, and presents Lulu as a victim of childhood abuse. His staging includes the use of a supernumerary, a young girl who acts as the child Lulu. The film interlude is altered to depict her past abuse at the hands of Dr. Schön, rather than her arrest and escape from imprisonment. Other unique elements of Bechtolf's staging include his Portrait, which consists of a nude mannequin encased and divided between five plexiglass boxes; throughout the production, the male characters on stage rearrange and move the boxes, serving as a physical representation of their manipulation of

⁶⁹⁵ Levin, *Unsettling Opera*, 12.

Lulu. Despite the radical changes present in the production, the Zürich Opera's *Lulu* expands on and clarifies her common interpretation as a victim.

The 2009 *Lulu* production for the Royal Opera House, directed by Christof Loy, celebrates Berg's rich musical score while simultaneously disregarding the staging instructions of his libretto. The minimalist production includes the use of almost no props, with the exception of those necessary to the dramatic action on stage, and is primarily monochromatic, with splashes of red used symbolically, appearing only at significant moments in the performance. The actors/singers wear simple black dresses or tuxedos, and the set consists solely of a single wooden chair and a screen at the back of the stage. Even the Portrait is treated in a minimalist fashion: Loy replaces the painting with a spotlight that shines down on stage, illuminating Lulu or other characters. Despite the extreme style of his staging and its numerous alterations to the operatic text, Loy's production differs from other Regietheater works in that it highlights the significance of Berg's score by redirecting the audience's attention on his music. The audience is confronted with the anti-illusionist ideologies of radical, modern theatrical works, forced to play an active role in the analysis of the story unfolding on stage.

Perhaps the most controversial production of *Lulu* occurred in 2009 at the Theater Basel, under the direction of Calixto Bieito. Bieito's staging includes many typical Regietheater—or "Euro-trash"—qualities: it is exploitative and graphic, containing sexuality, nudity, and violence. Although Bieito's production at times depicts Lulu as an empowered, sexually liberated woman, by presenting the Portrait as a series of giant, larger-than-life banners, it emphasizes Lulu's role as a sexualized

object. The film interlude consists of scenes from an episode of the “Little Lulu” cartoon, as well as pornographic images, further supporting the notion of Lulu as a victimized, objectified creation of man. Despite its scandalous nature, Bieito’s production exemplifies the newly important role of the visual or staging element of an opera.

As Roger Parker states in *Remaking the Song*, updated opera productions have typically been limited to alterations of orchestration or staging; very few include modifications to the original musical score. Viennese composer Olga Neuwirth commented on her polarizing decision to remake Berg’s canonic *Lulu* in an interview with Tom Service on her new production of *American Lulu* at the Young Vic in London: “One has to be very careful because this [*Lulu*] is the golden calf of twentieth-century music. Who was I to dare to do this, especially as a woman and an Austrian? I knew also that I would be slaughtered by the critics and the music historians—just like Jack the Ripper slaughters Lulu at the end of Berg’s opera.”⁶⁹⁶ Despite the canonic nature of the opera and the honored treatment of its author, to Neuwirth, the incomplete nature of *Lulu* acted as an invitation for its completion. *American Lulu* exemplifies Neuwirth’s compositional philosophy, which revolves around the fusion of past traditions and unique, newly composed music. Unlike the treatment of *Lulu* by Friedrich Cerha, Neuwirth’s attitude towards Berg is less romantic; she considered him “just another composer.” In *American Lulu*, Neuwirth goes beyond the updated elements of previously discussed productions, altering not

⁶⁹⁶ Service, “Alban Berg’s Lulu Turns Freedom Fighter,” <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2013/aug/18/american-lulu-alban-berg-neuwirth>.

only the staging and orchestration of *Lulu*, but going so far as to change Berg's musical score.

Similar to the previously discussed updated productions of *Lulu*, Neuwirth's opera is a fusion of old and new elements, of tradition and innovation. *American Lulu* is both a jazz rearrangement of Berg's *Lulu* and a newly composed work. For *American Lulu*, Neuwirth and Kerkhoff-Saxon created an entirely new libretto in English, and transported the work to the time of Civil Rights Era America, reinterpreting Lulu, the Countess, and Schigolch as African Americans. The first two acts of Neuwirth's opera are a jazz rearrangement of Acts I and II of Berg's *Lulu*, and were inspired by his jazz band music of the opening act. For the third act, rather than arranging Cerha's completed version for jazz band, Neuwirth composed new music, in a style quite distinct from that of the previous two acts.

The first two acts of *American Lulu* alter very little of Berg's musical score. Neuwirth replaces Berg's Prologue with a newly composed Prologue, which is later repeated in the opening of her Act III. Like many updated *Lulu* productions, including the Paris three-act première, Neuwirth chose to cut the Paris casino scene (III.1) from the reinterpreted work. In her transformation of the Countess into Eleanor, Neuwirth changed her musical lines to reflect her blues background. Even in the first two acts of the work, Eleanor's music is filled with blue notes, flatted thirds, and sevenths, and her bluesy lines are sung over the steady beat of a jazz drum set; her bluesy singing style continues in the newly composed music of Act III.

In her lecture prior to the *American Lulu* première at the KOB, dramaturg Joanna Wall discussed Neuwirth's transformation of *Lulu*, noting the composer's

wish to expand the focus of her opera outside of traditional depictions of the femme fatale. In her opera, Lulu is reinterpreted as a cold, narcissistic, cruel character; Neuwirth's Lulu is devoid of the mysterious ambiguity of her earlier portrayals. Her version of Lulu reflects Neuwirth's attitude towards the icon: she views Lulu as a selfish manipulator who uses those around her to her own advantage.

Rather than focusing exclusively on Lulu, *American Lulu* includes a second protagonist, the blues-singing Eleanor. Unlike Berg's opera, in which the Countess functions as just another one of Lulu's admirers, in Neuwirth's opera Eleanor becomes the antithesis of Lulu, changed into an independent, politically active feminist. It is in the treatment of Eleanor that we see Neuwirth's most significant alteration of Berg's operatic text: her race is changed, she is given a new name, and she has a new profession as a blues singer. Perhaps most significantly, Eleanor is given a new fate, and is no longer killed by Jack the Ripper: in the final scene of the opera, Eleanor confronts Lulu, choosing to leave in order to focus on her music career. Despite these radical modifications, Neuwirth's reinterpretation of Berg's Countess parallels the character's depiction in Wedekind's Lulu plays. Both women are portrayed as abnormal due to their homosexuality, and their difference and unrequited love marks them as inherently tragic characters. Like Wedekind's Countess, Eleanor's role as an outsider is revealed in her personal reflections on her socio-cultural surroundings; in the end, her independence and strength are what motivates her to leave Lulu. Neuwirth contrasts Eleanor with Lulu, both musically and dramatically, highlighting the opposing ways in which the two women relate to their surroundings. By exploring the different responses of the two protagonists to

racism and discrimination, the focus of *American Lulu* becomes starkly political. Whereas Lulu capitalizes on stereotypes of African American women, displaying herself as an exotic, hypersexual creature, Eleanor challenges social norms, both through her acceptance of her homosexuality and through her blues music.

Continuing in the tradition of the radical theatre works of Germany during the 1920s and 1930s, *American Lulu* encourages active participation of its audience. By updating the setting of Berg's opera and altering her characters to reflect contemporary culture, Neuwirth's *American Lulu* reveals the continued relevance of Lulu's story. Like many Regietheater productions, the setting of Neuwirth's opera is modernized, transporting the story from fin-de-siècle Vienna to 1950s and 1970s New Orleans and New York. *American Lulu* simultaneously maintains the central theme of Berg's opera, which centers on sexism and the oppression of individuals, but updates Lulu's story to reflect the contemporary issue of intersectional racism, gender discrimination, and economic oppression, encouraging the audience to self-reflect on their own lives and experiences.

By reinterpreting Lulu, Eleanor, and Clarence as African Americans, while Dr. Bloom, Jimmy and the Painter remain white, *American Lulu* explores the hegemonic displays of power so prevalent during this time. Rather than solely focusing on issues of gender discrimination, *American Lulu* takes an intersectional approach, studying the ways in which Lulu and Eleanor experience sexism, racism, and economic hardships. Like the category of radical theatrical works discussed by Aston and Savona, *American Lulu* encourages active participation of its audience, probing the audience to consider the role of intersectional discrimination in their

own lives, their own times. For instance, by aligning Lulu and Eleanor with iconic African American female performers such as Josephine Baker and Billie Holiday, the stagings of Neuwirth's opera investigate the fine line between the objectification and the empowerment of black women—a topic of continued relevance in contemporary culture. As Neuwirth's *American Lulu* demonstrates, no work, no matter how iconic, is “off-limits” in our current poststructuralist atmosphere. Rather than rejecting the author, these pieces simultaneously present traditional and new elements, reinterpreting important cultural works to reflect our current surroundings.

Despite their varied nature, ranging from traditional and conservative to shocking and radically altered, the *Lulu* productions discussed in this dissertation contribute to the shifting, expanding work-concept of the opera. As Levin states in his *Unsettling Opera*, “only in performance does opera become the fulfillment of the art.”⁶⁹⁷ Even the most “authentic” stagings can never fully recreate the work as Berg intended. The differing treatment of Berg's *Lulu* since the composer's death in 1935 reflects the shifting treatment of cultural artifacts as they exist over time, across historical eras and socio-cultural movements. The productions discussed in this study serve as mediations of past and present, combining aspects of Berg's opera with unique ideas and reinterpretations. Even directors with the most respectful, romanticized view of Berg, who seek to create an “authentic” version of the opera—such as the Met's John Dexter—can never fully understand or recreate the work as Berg intended it to be. Although Berg's libretto included sections of detailed

⁶⁹⁷ Levin, *Unsettling Opera*, 12.

instructions, many aspects of the work's staging require independent choices on behalf of the director and designers. As this dissertation demonstrates, even the most seemingly simple staging decisions—for instance, the color of Lulu's hair or the style of her costume—can result in rich, complex signs to be decoded by the audience. On stage, the visual—props, set design, lighting, costuming—becomes semiotically significant; the most seemingly inconsequential decisions are transformed into symbolic representations of character and story. These many variations of Lulu maintain a connection, or common thread, linking them to the iconic femme fatale of Wedekind; despite their differences, they all represent the “essence” of Lulu's character. She is mysterious, malleable, and ambiguous, shifting between guilt and innocence, an empowered and objectified woman.

Just as Berg himself reinterpreted Wedekind's Lulu plays, so too did Wedekind transform Champsaur's clownesse. Cultural icons rarely exist in a vacuum or endure in their original, “true” form, and instead shift, adapt, and change to reflect their current environments. It is perhaps this element of opera that makes the genre so significant—each work, each performance is a product of the socio-cultural surroundings from which it was created. Due to its long past of transformation, *Lulu* exemplifies the continuously evolving role of historical artifacts: over time, the iconic character has served as a reflection of late nineteenth-century Parisian culture, of the Viennese fin-de-siècle, and of interwar Germany; it has mirrored the shifting genre of opera, of Regietheater and the new authority of the director; it has considered the interplay of objectification and empowerment, building on ideas of third-wave feminism; it has explored modern historical events

such as the Civil Rights movement, and come to reflect new ideas on intersectional discrimination. In this sense, rather than condemning these updated or Regietheater productions as being untrue to the work of *Lulu*, they have turned a static canonic work into a vibrant, relevant piece of contemporary society. Contemporary transformations of canonic works, although polarizing, exist as products of our constantly shifting socio-cultural surroundings. They are an expression of our relationship with the past, and with the traditions that formed us. The history of Berg's second opera is a quintessential example of the complex and evolving relationship we have with classic, seminal and traditional cultural artifacts. Like *Lulu's* Portrait, these retellings act as mirrors, reflecting the realities of those who help to create them.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

- Berg, Alban. *Lulu*. Gran Teatre del Liceu. Olivier Py, dir. November 2010. Deutsche Grammophon, DVD.
- _____. *Lulu: Libretto in German and English*. Translated by Arthur Jacobs. Vienna: Universal Edition, 1977.
- _____. *Lulu: Opera in 3 Acts*. Musical Score. Translated by Arthur Jacobs. Vienna: Universal Editions, 1936.
- _____. *Lulu*. Opernhaus Zürich. Sven-Eric Bechtolf, dir. 2002. Bernhard Fleischer Moving Images, DVD.
- _____. *Lulu*. Basel Theater. Calixto Bieito, dir. June 16, 2009. Live recording, for perusal only, DVD.
- _____. *Lulu*. The Metropolitan Opera. John Dexter, dir. 1980. The Metropolitan Opera, DVD.
- _____. *Lulu*. The Royal Opera House. Christof Loy, dir. June 13 and 17, 2009. Opus Arte, DVD.
- _____. *Lulu*. Salzburg Festival, The Haus für Mozart. Vera Nemirova, dir. 2010. Unitel Classica, DVD.
- _____. *Lulu*. Théâtre National de l' Opéra de Paris. Patrice Chéreau, dir. 2000. Deutsche Grammophon, CD and booklet.
- _____. *Lulu*. Théâtre National de l' Opéra de Paris. Patrice Chéreau, dir. 2000. Deutsche Grammophon, vinyl record.
- _____. *Lulu*. Wiener Symphoniker. Otto Schenk, dir. 1962. Arthaus Musik, DVD.
- _____. Champsaur, Fèlicien. *L'Amant des danseuses*. Paris: Imprimerie Chaix, 1896.
- _____. *Lulu. Pantomime en un act*. Paris: E. Dentu, 1888.
- _____. *Lulu: roman clownesque*. Paris: Charpentier et Fasquelle, 1901.
- _____. *Éreintés de la vie: pantomime en un acte*. Paris: G. Dentu, 1888.
- Freud, Sigmund. *Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie (Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality)*. Translated by James Strackey. New York: Basic Books, 1962.

- Möbius, Paul Julius. *Über den physiologischen Schwachsinn des Weibes*. Italle a. S.: Carl Marhold, 1900.
- Neuwirth, Olga, and Catherine Kerkhoff-Saxon. *American Lulu*. Libretto. Milan: Ricordi, 2006-2011.
- Neuwirth, Olga, and John Fulljames. "Behind the Scenes of American Lulu: Part 2." Interview by Kenan Malik. Mahogany Opera Group, April 29, 2014. <https://kenanmalik.com/2013/09/08/behind-the-scenes-of-american-lulu/>.
- Neuwirth, Olga. *American Lulu*. John Fulljames, dir. The Young Vic, London. September 2013. Live video recording, for perusal only.
- _____. *American Lulu*. Kirill Serebrennikov, dir. Komische Oper Berlin, Berlin. September 30, 2012. Live video recording, for perusal only, DVD.
- _____. *American Lulu*. Musical score. Milan: Ricordi, 2006-2011.
- _____. Dress Rehearsal: *American Lulu*. Komische Oper Berlin, Germany. June 27, 2013.
- _____. "Interview with Olga Neuwirth, Bregenz Festival." Interview by Kenan Malik. Impact Video Production for Mahogany Opera Group, September 6, 2013. <https://kenanmalik.com/2013/09/08/behind-the-scenes-of-american-lulu/>.
- _____. "Notes on American Lulu (2006-2011)." *American Lulu* at the Young Vic Program Book. London: Sep. 2013: 13.
- _____. Performance: *American Lulu*. Komische Oper Berlin, Germany. June 30, 2013.
- _____. Personal notes: word document, "O.Neuwirth.Notes.Lulu engl," email message to the author, July 1, 2013.
- Pabst, G. W. *Die Büchse der Pandora*. 1929; Berlin, Germany: Nero Film.
- _____. *Pandora's Box*. Commentary by Thomas Elsaesser and Mary Ann Doane. 1929; New York: The Criterion Collection, 2006. DVD.
- Wall, Johanna. "Fatale Frauen Oder: Der Dritte Akt." Komische Oper Berlin program book, Berlin, September 9, 2012):16-18.
- _____. Interview by Jennifer Tullmann. Komische Oper Berlin, Germany. June 27, 2013. Interview 1.
- _____. Interview by Jennifer Tullmann. Komische Oper Berlin, Germany. June 28, 2013. Interview 2.

_____. "Orpheus, dem Seelentod entronnen oder Musiksprachen als gesellschaftliche Auswege." Pre-performance lecture at the Komische Oper Berlin, Berlin, June 30, 2013.

Wedekind, Frank. *Wedekind, Play: One. Spring Awakening. Lulu: A Monster Tragedy*. Translated by Edward Bond and Elisabeth Bond-Pablé. London: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 1993.

Weininger, Otto. *Sex & Character: An Investigation of Fundamental Principles*. Translated by Ladislaus Lob, Daniel Steuer, and Laura Marcus. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005.

Secondary Sources

Albertson, Chris. *Bessie: Revised and Expanded Edition*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003.

Albin, Tania. "Women at the Fin de Siècle – The Creation of the Femme Fatale," *The Victorian Web: Literature, History, and Culture in the Age of Victoria*. Accessed May 1, 2017. <http://www.victorianweb.org/gender/albin/1.html>.

"*American Lulu* by Olga Neuwirth: Gesamtkonzept und Neuinterpretation von Alban Bergs Oper *Lulu* von Olga Neuwirth" (Komische Oper Berlin program book, Berlin, September 9, 2012), 1-33.

"*American Lulu* by Olga Neuwirth: A new interpretation of Alban Berg's opera *Lulu*" (Young Vic program book, London, Sep. 13-24, 2013), 1-36.

Anderson, Lisa M. *Mammies No More: The Changing Image of Black Women on Stage and Screen*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997.

Ashley, Tim. "Berg: Lulu- review." *The Guardian*, Dec. 8, 2011. <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2011/dec/08/berg-lulu-met-opera-review>.

Aston, Elaine. *An Introduction to Feminism and Theatre*. London: Routledge, 1995.

_____. *Feminist Theatre Practice: A Handbook*. New York: Routledge, 1999.

Aston, Elaine, and George Savona. *Theatre as Sign System: A Semiotics of Text and Performance*. London: Routledge, 1991.

Baker, Evan A. *From the Score to the Stage*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

- Banham, Martin, ed. *The Cambridge Guide to Theatre*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Banks, Ingrid. *Hair Matters: Beauty, Power, and Black Women's Consciousness*. New York: New York University Press, 2000.
- Barringer, Tim. *Reading the Pre-Raphaelites*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998.
- Barthes, Roland. "The Death of the Author." In *Image-Music-Text*. Translated by Stephen Heath. New York: Hill and Wang, 1977.
- Bazile, Sandrine. "Lulu s'affiche – Affiches et Intertextualité dans Lulu Roman Clownesque (1901) de Félicien Champsaur." *Image & Narrative* 20 (December 2007). <http://www.imageandnarrative.be/>.
- Berghaus, Günter. *Theatre, Performance, and the Historical Avant-Garde. Palgrave Studies in Theatre and Performance History*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Bermel, Albert. "Lulu: Pantomime in one act by Félicien Champsaur." *Modern Drama* 43, Issue 2 (May 2000): 252-264.
- Boak, Helen. *Women in the Weimar Republic*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013.
- Bogle, Donald. *Dorothy Dandridge: A Biography*. New York: Amistad Press, 1997.
- _____. *Toms, Coons, Mulattos, Mammies & Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Films*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 1973.
- Bordo, Susan. *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and the Body*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press, 1993.
- Boyd, Melinda. "The Politics of Color in Oscar Hammerstein's Carmen Jones." In *Blackness in Opera*, edited by Naomi André, Karen M. Bryan, and Eric Saylor, 212-235. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2012.
- Brackett, David. *Interpreting Popular Music*. Berkley: University of California Press, 1995.
- Brand, Julianne, Christopher Hailey and Donald Harris, eds. *The Berg-Schoenberg Correspondence: Select Letters*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1987.
- Braun, William R. "Lulu: New York City, the Metropolitan Opera." *Opera News* 80, no. 7 (January 2018). https://www.operanews.com/Opera_News_Magazine/2016/1/Reviews/NW_YORK_CITY_Lulu.html.

- Breivik, Kelly. "What's Behind Clenched Fist Salutes?" *BBC News Magazine*, Apr. 17, 2012. <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-17739105>.
- Brockett, Oscar G., and Franklin J. Hildy. *History of the Theatre*, ninth edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2005.
- Buckley, Peter J. "Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele, and Fin-de-siècle Vienna." *American Journal of Psychiatry* 169, Issue 7 (July 2012).
- Buzwell, Greg. "Daughters of decadence: the New Woman in the Victorian fin de siècle," The British Library Website. Accessed May 1, 2017. <https://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/daughters-of-decadence-the-new-woman-in-the-victorian-fin-de-siecle>.
- Byrd, Ayana, and Lori Tharps. *Hair Story: Untangling the Roots of Black Hair in America*. New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2001.
- Camp, Gregory. "Monteverdi on the Modern Stage." PhD diss., Oxford University, 2012.
- Carlson, Marvin. *Theatre is More Beautiful than War: German Stage Directing in the Late Twentieth Century*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2009.
- Carner, Mosco. *Alban Berg: The Man and The Work*. London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1975.
- Case, Sue Ellen. *Performing Feminisms: Feminist Critical Theory and Theatre*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990.
- Clément, Catherine. *Opera, or the Undoing of Women*. Translated by Betsey Wing. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988.
- Collins, Patricia Hill. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. New York: Routledge, 2000.
- _____. *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism*. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Cowgill, Rachel. "Mozart Productions and the Emergence of *Werktreue* at London's Italian Opera House, 1780-1830." In *Operatic Migrations: Transforming Works and Crossing Boundaries*, edited by Roberta Marvin Montemara and Downing A. Thomas, 145-86. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2006.
- Dahlhaus, Carl. *Nineteenth-Century Music*. Translated by J. Bradford Robinson. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989.

- Davis, Angela Y. *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism: Gertrude "Ma" Rainey, Bessie Smith, and Billie Holiday*. New York: Vintage Books, Random House, Inc., 1999.
- Davis, Peter Graffam. "Sacred and Profane." *New York Magazine*, Apr. 22, 1985. Denkler, Horst. *Drama des Expressionismus : Programm, Spieltext, Theater*. München: Fink, 1979.
- Denning, Michael. *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century*. London: Verso, 1997.
- Dhúill, Caitriona Ní. *Sex in Imagined Spaces*. London: Routledge, 2010.
- Dijkstra, Bram. *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-Siècle Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- Doane, Mary Ann. *Femmes Fatales: Feminism, Film Theory, Psychoanalysis*. New York: Routledge, 1991.
- Donington, Robert. *Opera and its Symbols: The Unity of Words, Music and Staging*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990.
- Dos Santos, Silvio José. "The 'Bild' Motif and the Character of Lulu." *The Journal of Musicology* 21, no. 2 (Spring, 2004): 267-308.
- _____. "Marriage as Prostitution in Berg's *Lulu*." *The Journal of Musicology* 25, no. 2 (Spring 2008): 143-182.
- _____. "Portraying Lulu: Desire and Identity in Alban Berg's *Lulu*." PhD diss., Brandeis University, 2003.
- Dubal, David. *The Essential Canon of Classical Music*. New York: North Point Press, 2001.
- "El Niño Farini." *Victoria and Albert Museum* website. Accessed August 1, 2017. <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/e/el-nino-farini/>.
- Evans, Stewart P., and Keith Skinner. *The Ultimate Jack the Ripper Sourcebook. An Illustrated Encyclopedia*. London: Robinson, 2000.
- Faderman, Lillian. *American Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in 20th Century America*. New York: Penguin, 1990.
- Finney, Gail. *Women in Modern Drama: Fred, Feminism and European Theater at the Turn of the Century*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980.

- Fulljames, John, and Angel Blue. "Behind the Scenes of American Lulu: Part 1." Interview by Kenan Malik. Mahogany Opera Group, April 29, 2014. <https://kenanmalik.com/2013/09/08/behind-the-scenes-of-american-lulu/>.
- Fulljames, John. "Layers of Lulu," *American Lulu* at the Young Vic Program Book. London: Sep., 2013: 11.
- Gable, David, and Robert P. Morgan. *Alban Berg: Historical and Analytic Perspectives*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.
- Gilman, Sander. "The Hottentot and the Prostitute: Toward an Iconography of Female Sexuality." In *Black Venus 2010: They Called Her "Hottentot,"* edited by Deborah Willis, 15-31. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012.
- Gladysz, Thomas. "Danger and Desire: 6 Great Lulus." *Huffington Post*, Nov. 5, 2015. https://www.huffingtonpost.com/thomas-gladysz/danger-and-desire-6-great_b_8474536.html.
- Goehr, Lydia. "Being True to the Work." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 47, no. 1 (Winter, 1989): 55-67. Accessed December 13, 2016. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/431993>.
- _____. *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.
- Goings, K. W. *Mammy and Uncle Moses: Black Collectibles and American Stereotyping*. Indiana University Press, 1994.
- Goldsmith, Melissa Ursula Dawn. "Alban Berg's Filmic Music: Intentions and Extensions of the Film Music Interlude in the Opera Lulu," PhD diss., Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, May 2002.
- Gordon, Mel. *Voluptuous Panic: The Erotic World of Weimar Berlin*. Los Angeles: Feral House, 2000.
- Gottlieb, Robert. "The Divine Sarah." *New York Review*, Oct. 14, 2010. Yale University Press. <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/2010/10/14/divine-sarah/>
- Grange, William. *Cultural Chronicle of the Weimar Republic*. Lanham, MD: the Scarecrow Press, 2008.
- Griffin, Farah Jasmine. *If You Can't Be Free, Be a Mystery: In Search of Billie Holiday*. New York: Free Press, 2001.
- Grun, Bernard, ed. *Alban Berg: Letters to His Wife*. London: Faber and Faber, 1971.

- Günther, Bernhard. "Neuwirth, Olga." *Oxford Music Online* (May 26, 2010).
<https://doi-org.ezproxy.uky.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.S46782>.
- Haas, Michael. *Forbidden Music: the Jewish Composers Banned by the Nazis*. London: Yale University Press, 2013.
- Hailey, Christopher, ed. *Alban Berg and His World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010.
- Hales, Barbara. "Dancer in the Dark: Hypnosis, Trance-Dancing, and Weimar's Fear of the New Woman." *Monatshefte* 102, no. 4 (2010): 534-549.
- _____. "Women as Sexual Criminal: Weimar Constructions of the Criminal Femme Fatale." *Women in German Yearbook* 12 (1996): 101-121.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20688838>.
- Hall, Patricia. *A View of Berg's Lulu Through the Autograph Sources*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.
- Harris, Donald. "Berg and Miss Frida." In *Alban Berg Symposium, Alban Berg Studien II*, edited by Rudolf Klein. Vienna: Universal Edition, 1981.
- Harris, Edward. "Liberation of Flesh from Stone: Pygmalion in *Erdegeist*." *Germanic Review* 52 (1977): 44-56.
- Harrison, Daphne Duval. *Black Pearls: Blues Queens of the 1920s*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1988.
- Harrison, Jane Ellen. *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1903.
- Harvey, Jacky Collins. *Red: A History of the Redhead*. New York: Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers, 2015.
- Hawskley, Lucinda. *Essential Pre-Raphaelites*. Bath: Dempsey Parr., 1999.
- Herrmann, Elsa. *So ist die neue Frau*. Hellerau: Avalun Verlag, 1929.
- Hix, Lisa. "Singing the Lesbian Blues in 1920s Harlem." *Collectors Weekly*, July 9, 2013. <http://www.collectorsweekly.com/articles/singing-the-lesbian-blues-in-1920s-harlem/>.
- Holden, Stephen. "Billie Holiday Documentary on 13." *New York Times*, Aug. 4, 1986: C00016. <http://www.nytimes.com/1986/08/04/movies/billie-holiday-documentary-on-13.html>.

- Hutcheon, Linda, and Mark Hutcheon. *Opera: Desire, Disease, Death*. London: University of Nebraska Press, 1996.
- Janick, Allan, and Stephen Toulmin. *Wittgenstein's Vienna*. New York: Touchstone, 1973.
- Jarman, Douglas. *Alban Berg, Lulu*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- _____. "Berg, Alban." *Oxford Music Online* (January 20, 2001). <https://doi-org.ezproxy.uky.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.02767>.
- _____. *Cambridge Opera Handbooks. Alban Berg: Lulu*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- Jewell, S. K. *From Mammy to Miss America and Beyond: Cultural Images and the Shaping of US Policy*. New York: Routledge, 1993.
- Jones, Stacy Holman. *Torch Singing: Performing Resistance and Desire from Billie Holiday to Edith Piaf*. New York: Altamira Press, 2007.
- Kandel, Erich R. *The Age of Insight: The Quest to Understand the Unconscious in Art, Mind and Brain From Vienna 1900 to Present*. New York: Random House, 2012.
- Kelley, Robin D. G. "Nap Time: Historicizing the Afro." *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body, and Culture* 1, (1997): 339-351.
- Kerner, Leighton. "Debut: Jocelyn Herbert, Review." *Village Voice*, March 28, 1977. <http://www.nytimes.com/1977/03/20/archives/opera-met-offers-bergs-symbolic-intense-lulu.html>.
- Kraus, Karl. "Die Büchse der Pandora." *Literature and Lüge*, edited by Christian Wegenknecht. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1987.
- Kreuter, Allison Dorothy. "Morphing moonlight: Gender, masks and carnival mayhem: The Figure of Pierrot in Giraud, Ensor, Dowson and Beardsley." PhD diss., University of the Free State, 2007.
- Kreuzer, Gundula and Clemens Risi. "Regietheater in transition: An introduction to Barbara Beyer's interviews with contemporary opera directors." *Opera Quarterly* 27, no. 2-3 (March 2011): 303-306.
- Kuhn, Annette, and Guy Westwell, eds. *A Dictionary of Film Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
- Kuhns, David F. *German Expressionist Theatre: The Actor and The Stage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

- Latham, Alison and Roger Parker, eds. *Verdi in Performance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Legends*, "Josephine Baker: The First Black Superstar," directed by Suzanne Phillips, written by Sarah Broughton, aired on July 9, 2009, on BBC Four.
- Levin, David J. "Reading a Staging/Staging a Reading." *Cambridge Opera Journal* 9, no. 1 (Mar., 1997): 47-71.
- _____. *Unsettling Opera: Staging Mozart, Verdi, Wagner, and Zemlinsky*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- Lewis, Ward B. *The Ironic Dissident: Frank Wedekind in the View of his Critics*. Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1997.
- Livingston, Angela. *Lou Andreas-Salomé: Her Life and Work*. London: Gordon Fraser, 1984.
- Lipsky, Bill. "Mademoiselle Lulu: The Wo/men on the Flying Trapeze." *San Francisco Bay Times*, Apr. 7, 2016. <http://sfbaytimes.com/mademoiselle-lulu-the-woman-on-the-flying-trapeze/>.
- Loomis, George. "Heroines as ruthless as they are alluring." *New York Times*, Feb. 24, 2009. <https://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/24/arts/24iht-loomis.1.20393689.html>.
- _____. "One 'Lulu' Has Little New to Say, While Another Can Do No Wrong." *New York Times*, Oct. 23, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/24/arts/24iht-loomis24.html?_r=0.
- Lou Andreas-Salome, German writer." In *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Last modified May 20, 2015. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Lou-Andreas-Salome>."
- Lulu d'Alban Berg (1979) – Lucia Silla de Mozart (1984-1985)," Opera National de Paris Website. Accessed October 2, 2016. <https://www.operadeparis.fr/en/visits/exhibitions/patrice-chereau-staging-the-opera/iv-lulu-dalban-berg-1979-lucia-silla-de-mozart-19841985>.
- Lyne, William. "No Accident: From Black power to Black Box Office." *African American Review* 34, no. 1 (Indiana State University: Spring, 2000): 39-59. Accessed December 11, 2015, www.jstor.org/stable/2901183.
- Magubane, Zine. "Which Bodies Matter? Feminism, Post-Structuralism, Race, and the Curious Theoretical Odyssey of the 'Hottentot Venus.'" In *Black Venus 2010: They Called Her "Hottentot,"* edited by Deborah Willis, 32-46. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012.

- Manea, Norman. *On Clowns: The Dictator and The Artist: Essays*. New York, NY: Grove Press, 1992.
- Marek, George R. "Earth Spirit: Playwright Frank Wedekind and Lulu." *Opera News* 41/21 (1977): 16-19.
- Mask, Mia. *Divas on Screen: Black Women in American Film*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009.
- McGlotten, Shaka, and Dana-Ain Dais, eds. *Black Genders and Sexualities*. New York: Palgrave, 2012.
- The Metropolitan Opera Program Booklet*. New York, 1976-77 Season.
- Melerhenrich, Doris. "Tilly und Frank Wedekind: Der berührende Briefwechsel einer dramatischen Küstlerehe." *Berliner Zeitung* (March 9, 2018), <https://www.berliner-zeitung.de/kultur/theater/tilly-und-frank-wedekind-der-beruehrende-briefwechsel-einer-dramatischen-kuenstlerehe-29839336>.
- Midgley, David. "Wedekind's Lulu: From 'Schauertragödie' to Social Comedy." In *German Life and Letters* 38, no. 3 (April 3, 1985): 205-232. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0483.1985.tb01272.x>.
- Mitchell, Donald. "The Character of Lulu: Wedekind's and Berg's Conceptions Compared." *The Music Review* 15, no. 4 (1954): 268-74.
- _____. "The Holland Festival 1953: Berg's *Lulu*." *Tempo*, New Series, no. 29 (Autumn, 1953): 5-7, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/942704>.
- Monson, Karen. *Alban Berg*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company Boston, 1979.
- Montemarra, Roberta Marvin, and Downing A. Thomas, eds. *Operatic Migrations: Transforming Works and Crossing Boundaries*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2006.
- Moritz, Reiner E. *Lulu, the Lethal Victim*. Film included with *Lulu* recording. Opernhaus Zürich. Sven-Eric Bechtolf, dir. 2002. Bernhard Fleischer Moving Images, DVD.
- Müller, Ulrich. "Regietheater/ Director's Theater." *The Oxford Handbook of Opera*, edited by Helen M. Greenwald (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014): 591.
- Nenno, Nancy. "Femininity, the Primitive, and Modern Urban Space: Josephine Baker in Berlin." In *Women in the Metropolis: Gender and Modernity in Weimar Culture*, edited by Katharina von Ankum, 145-161. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.
- Nicholson, Stuart. *Billie Holiday*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1995.

- Oliver, Paul. "Blues." *Oxford Music Online*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, January 20, 2001.
<https://doiorg.ezproxy.uky.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.03311>.
- "The Official Site of Josephine Baker." *CMG Worldwide*. Accessed May 1, 2017.
<http://www.cmgww.com/stars/baker/about/biography.html>.
- Ogbar, J. O. G. *Black power: radical politics and African American identity. Reconfiguring American political history*. Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.
- "Opera Lulu gets a Blues and Jazz Makeover." *Euronews*, 2012.
http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xu357f_opera-lulu-gets-a-blues-and-jazz-makeover_news.
- Parker, Roger. *Remaking the Song: Operatic Visions and Revisions from Handel to Berio*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.
- Pegley, Karen. "Femme Fatale and Lesbian Representation in *Lulu*." In *Encrypted Messages in Alban Berg's Music*, edited by Siglind Bruhn, 249-277. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1998.
- Perle, George. "The Character of *Lulu*: A Sequel." *The Music Review* 25, no. 4 (1964): 317-18.
- _____. "The Complete 'Lulu'." *The Musical Times* 120, no. 1632 (Feb., 1979): 115-117 and 119-20.
- _____. *The Operas of Alban Berg, Volume Two: Lulu*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.
- _____. "The Tireless Seductress." *The Metropolitan Opera Program Booklet*. New York, 1976-77 Season.
- Philipson, Robert, dir. *T'Ain't Nobody's Bizness: Queer Blues Divas of the 1920s*. Film/documentary. Shoga Films, 2011.
- Pina, Stephanie Graham. "What is the 'Pre-Raphaelite Woman'?" *Pre-Raphaelite Sisterhood*. Accessed May 1, 2017. <http://preraphaelitesisterhood.com/what-is-the-pre-raphaelite-woman/>.
- Plec, Emily. "Signifyin(g) Civil Rights and Black power: Contemporary implications of historical representations." In *Arguing communication & culture: Selected papers from the Twelfth NCA/AFA Conference on Argumentation*, edited by T. Goodnight, 621-22. Washington, DC: National Communication Association, 2001.

- Pople, Anthony. *The Cambridge Companion to Berg*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
- Popva, Maria. "Lou Andreas-Salomé, the First Woman Psychoanalyst, on Human Nature in Letters to Freud." *Brainpickings*. Accessed May 1, 2017. <https://www.brainpickings.org/2015/02/12/lou-andreas-salome-sigmund-freud-letters/>.
- Porter, Andrew. "Musical Events: A True Reflection." *New Yorker Magazine*, Jan. 5, 1981: 66.
- Presbrey, Frank. *The History and Development of Advertising*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., 1929.
- Redlich, Hans. *Alban Berg*. Los Angeles, CA: the University of California, 1957.
- Reich, Willi. *Alban Berg*. Translated by Cornelius Cardew. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1965.
- _____. "Alban Berg's Lulu." *The Musical Quarterly* XXII, Issue 4 (Oct. 1, 1936): 383-401. <https://doi.org/10.1093/mq/XXII.4.383>.
- Reputations*, season 8, episode 4, "The Billie Holiday Story: Sensational Lady," directed by David F. Turnbull, aired, July 31, 2001, on British Broadcasting Corporation.
- Ritter, Naomi. *Art as Spectacle: Images of the Entertainer since Romanticism*. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1989.
- Ross, Alex. "Desperadoes: 'Lulu' at the Met, 'Spring Awakening' on Broadway." *New Yorker Magazine*. November 23, 2015. <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/11/23/desperadoes>.
- Russell, Michele. "Slave Codes and Liner Notes." *The Radical Teacher* No. 4 (March, 1977): 1-6.
- Schorske, Carl E. *Fin de Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980.
- Schroeder, David P. "Opera, Apocalypse and the Dance of Death: Berg's Indebtedness to Kraus." *Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal* 25, no. 1 (Winter, 1992): 91-105.
- Seale, Bobby. *Seize the Time: The Story of the Black Panther Party and Huey P. Newton*. New York: Black Classic Press, 1996.

- Service, Tom. "Alban Berg's Lulu Turns Freedom Fighter." *The Guardian*, Aug. 18, 2013. <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2013/aug/18/american-lulu-alban-berg-neuwirth>.
- _____. "A guide to Olga Neuwirth's Music." *The Guardian*, Aug. 7, 2010. <https://www.theguardian.com/music/tomserviceblog/2012/aug/07/contemporary-music-guide-olga-neuwirth>.
- Sharp, Ingrid. "Gender Relations in Weimar Berlin." In *Practicing Modernity: Female Creativity in the Weimar Republic*, edited by Christiane Schönfeld, 1-14. Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann GmbH, 2006.
- Sharpley-Whiting, Denean. *Black Venus: Sexual Savages, Primal Fears, and Primitive Narratives in French*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999.
- Sherrow, Victoria. *Encyclopedia of Hair: a Cultural History*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2006.
- Simms, Bryan R. "Berg's 'Lulu' and Theatre of the 1920s." *Cambridge Opera Journal* 6, no. 2 (Jul., 1994): 147-158. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/823822>.
- Skrine, Peter. *Hauptmann, Wedekind and Schnitzler*. London: Macmillan, 1989.
- Sloterdijk, Peter. *Critique of Cynical Reason*, first edition. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1988.
- Smart, Mary Ann. "Primal scenes: Verdi in analysis." *Cambridge Opera Journal* 14, no. 1-2 (2002): 1-9.
- Sokel, Walter Herbert. *Anthology of German Expressionist Drama; A Prelude to the Absurd*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1963.
- Sowinska, Alicja. "Dialectics of the Banana Skirt: The Ambiguities of Josephine Baker's Self-Representation." *Michigan Feminist Studies* 19 (Fall 2005-Spring 2006), <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?cc=mfsfront;c=mfs;c=mfsfront;idno=ark5583.0019.003;rgn=main;view=ext;xc=1;g=mfsg>.
- Staiger, Janet. *Bad Women: Regulating Sexuality in Early American Cinema*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1995.
- Staples, Robert. *Exploring Black Sexuality*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006.
- Stein, Jack M. "Alban Berg's Adaptation of Wedekind." *Comparative Literature* 26, no. 3, (1974): 220-241.

- Stuart, Charles. "The Holland Festival: *Lulu*." *The Spectator* (July 17, 1953).
- Sutton, Howard. *The Life and Work of Jean Richepin*. Paris: Librairie Minard, 1961.
- "Teresa Stratas Quits Met's 'Lulu.'" *New Yorker*, Feb. 1, 1977: 328.
<http://www.nytimes.com/1977/02/01/archives/teresa-stratas-quits-mets-lulu.html>.
- Treitler, Leo. "The Lulu Character and the Character of *Lulu*." In *Music and the Historical Imagination*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989. 264-306.
- Van Deburg, William L. *New Day in Babylon: The Black Power Movement and American Culture, 1965-1975*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.
- Veltruský, Jiří. "Prague's experimental stage: Laboratory of theatre and semiotics." *Poetics Today: Drama, Theater, Performance: A Semiotic Perspective 2*, no. 3 (Spring, 1981): 225-227.
- West, Carolyn M. "Mammy, Jezebel, Sapphire, and their Homegirls: Developing an 'Oppositional Gaze' Toward the Images of Black Women." In *Lectures on the Psychology of Women*, 4th ed., edited by J. C. Chrisler, C. Golden, & P. D. Rozee, 286-99. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 2008.
- Willeke, Audrone B. "Frank Wedekind and the 'Frauenfrage.'" *Monatshefte 72*, no. 1 (Spring, 1980): 26-38.
- Willis, Deborah, ed. *Black Venus 2010: They Called Her "Hottentot."* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2012.
- Winship, Gary. Introduction to *Lou Andreas-Salomé's The Erotic*, 1-48. Translated by John Crip. New York: Routledge, 2017.
- Winter, Elizabeth. "Cotton Club of Harlem." *BlackPast.org: The Online Reference Guide to African American History*. Last accessed May 11, 2017.
<http://www.blackpast.org/aah/cotton-club-harlem-1923>
- "Words We're Watching: Intersectionality." *Merriam-Webster* online. Last modified April 2017. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/intersectionality-meaning>.
- Younge, Gary. "Interview: The man who raised a black power salute at the 1968 Olympic Games." *The Guardian*. Last modified March 30, 2012.
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/mar/30/black-power-salute-1968-olympics>.

VITA

Jennifer Tullmann

EDUCATION

Masters of Arts in Music, August 2012

University of Kentucky

100 W. D. Funkhouser Bldg.

Lexington, KY 40506-0054

Liberal Arts in Music, July 2008

Truman State University

100 East Normal Street

Kirksville, MO 63501