

## Summaries

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Jacques Amblard

### **Operetta in Marseille (France) During the 1930's, a Bridge to the New Cultural Industry: The Example of Tino Rossi**

During the 1930s, Marseille, perhaps the most emblematic city of southern France, had at least two major venues for operettas: the “Théâtre des Variétés” and the “Alcazar”. This is where the young Corsican singer Tino Rossi made his debut. However, the nascent cultural industry, soon stigmatised by Adorno (during this very period), put Rossi in these places of transition, of mutation. An impresario called him “king of the charming singers”. The operetta genre in the 1930s thus appears as a historic hub. Rossi, first a typical operetta *tenorino*, “logically” became a variety singer, one who is still top ranked with regard to records in France. The commonly accepted fact that operetta as a genre fell into disregard after the Second World War is perhaps mistaken. Operettas might not have really disappeared, but just mutated, into musicals (like *West Side Story*, which won 10 Oscars in 1962), or even into these millions of albums of variety and pop music which became the norm, today, of our postmodern music. The term “operetta singer” is thus wrongly associated with a bygone age, as it may in fact represent a pillar of present-day Western society, called “Société du spectacle” by Guy Debord (1967). In a way, today “all our society might be operetta”.

*Keywords:* Cultural industry, records, spectacle, operetta, Tino Rossi

Peter Andraschke

### **Arnold Schönbergs Verhältnis zur populären Musik: Operette, Vokal- und Instrumentalmusik**

Schönberg, einer der bedeutendsten Schöpfer der Neuen Musik im 20. Jahrhundert, hatte seit seiner Jugend ein selbstverständliches Verhältnis zur leichten Muse. Sie war für ihn als Autodidakt wichtig für seine musikalische Bildung. Die Art und Intensität der Beschäftigung ist bedingt durch die Lebensumstände. Mit der Wiener Unterhaltungsmusik ist Schönberg aufgewachsen, sie ist die Musik seiner Kindheit und Jugend, von der er gelernt und die er nachgeahmt hat. Er kannte sie aus öffentlichen Konzerten von Militärkapellen und Salonorchestern, die ihm kostenlos zugänglich waren. Zwischen 1900 und 1904 war ihm die Instrumentierung von Operetten – insgesamt rund 6000 Seiten – eine notwendige und lehrreiche Arbeit für den Lebensunterhalt. In diesen Jahren entstanden bereits seine opera 1–6, darunter die *Verklärte Nacht* für Streichsextett op. 4, *Pelleas und Melisande* op. 5 und die Anfänge der *Gurrelieder*. Die Operettenarbeiten betrafen Komponisten und Werke, die damals erfolgreich waren und noch in der Zwischenkriegszeit gespielt wurden, u. a. von Adalbert v. Goldschmidt (1848–1906), Bruno Granichstaedten (1879–1944), später in Berlin von Bogumil Zepler (1858–1918). Aus den persönlichen Kontakten entwickelten sich Freundschaften, die ihm sein Engagement als Dirigent an Ernst von Wolzogens Berliner Kabarett *Überbrettl* brachten, wo bereits Edmund Eysler und Oscar Straus tätig waren. Zuvor hatte er Anfang 1901 seine *Brettl-Lieder* komponiert, deren Nummern durchaus in Operetten stehen könnten. Sie überzeugten Wolzogen anlässlich eines Gastspiels am Wiener Carltheater, an dem Schönbergs Schwager Alexander Zemlinsky sechs Jahre musikalischer Leiter war und vor allem Operetten dirigierte. Am 27. Mai 1921 fand im „Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen“ in Wien ein Konzert mit Bearbeitungen von Johann-Strauß-Walzern für Kammermusik statt, das von Schönberg und seinen Schülern gestaltet wurde, Webern hatte den *Schatzwalzer* aus dem *Zigeunerbaron* arrangiert. In seiner Schrift *Der musikalische Gedanke*, die Schönberg 1934 im amerikanischen Exil niederschrieb, finden sich zahlreiche Hinweise, auch analytischer Art, auf Operetten (u. a. von Franz Léhar, Jacques Offenbach, Johann Strauß) sowie populäre Vokal- und Instrumentalmusik. Die entsprechenden Noten finden sich zum Teil noch heute in seiner Bibliothek. Schönberg hat in seinen Kompositionen populäre Musik zitiert bzw. auf deren Gattungen Bezug genommen. Entsprechendes finden wir in unter-

schiedlicher Weise auch bei seinen Schülern, z. B. Alban Berg, Hanns Eisler und Anton Webern.

*Schlüsselwörter:* Schönberg, Operette, Populäre Musik, Vokalmusik, Instrumentalmusik

Luisa Antoni

### **Trieste (and Gorizia) in the glittering light of trilingual operettas**

The author researches the pre-war and interwar musical scene in Trieste and Gorizia. Her research shows clearly for the first time that operettas were performed in all three languages of the territory (Italian, Slovene and German). Performers included both Italian and German travelling companies, while there was no shortage of local artists and performers, above all in Slovene clubs and societies. The German contribution, which dated back to the nineteenth century, was most vibrant and served as a model for Italian and Slovene efforts. Composers such as Franz Lehár and Franz Suppé cultivated strong ties with Trieste. Meanwhile, the question of local Slovene operettas versus foreign imports was, in Trieste, the subject of a polemic between Emil Adamič and Mirko Polič. This rich musical dramatic activity was brought to an end by Fascism, which imposed exclusively Italian operettas. Following the exodus of Slovene musicians, actors and intellectuals from Trieste, the number of Italian productions increased even further and operetta also served as a tie with the Italian-speaking communities in Istria and Dalmatia.

*Keywords:* Operetta, Trieste, Gorizia, German travelling companies, Italian travelling companies

Kevin Clarke

### **Operetta As Safe Space**

Was the operetta world of Jacques Offenbach in 1860s Paris a protected world where authors, actresses and audiences could behave in ways unimaginable “outside” – with regard to moral conduct, sexual activity, gender norms and political explicitness? Is that why this morally “dangerous” form of musical theater became so popular worldwide and caused such outrage at the same time? These are the aspects Dr. Kevin Clarke wants to examine, discussing how a “sexually liberated” form of original operetta got replaced by a nostalgic version of the genre, and how different generations have subsequently found different types of “safe spaces” in operetta, espe-

cially after 1933 in Nazi Germany and ultimately after World War II all over the world, turning the provocative and modern art form into a nostalgic “pain killer” for a traumatized generation of war survivors. Is this how we, as researchers, want the genre’s history to end, or are there ways of getting back to what made operetta so revolutionary and glorious in the first place? *Keywords:* operetta, sexual liberation, National Socialism, safe space, Paris, Vienna, Berlin

Ryszard Daniel Golianek

**National Stereotypes and Political Issues  
in *Polnische Hochzeit* (1937) by Joseph Beer**

*Polnische Hochzeit*, composed in 1937 by Joseph Beer to the lyrics of Alfred Grünwald and Fritz Löhner-Beda, appears to be one of the most interesting operettas on Polish themes. The authors did not limit themselves to showing Polish people as an exotic ethnic group, but instead they made an attempt to present essential cultural issues in a more detailed manner. The very title, *Polish Wedding*, implies a tradition of lavish wedding celebrations on the territory of Poland, but the proposed analysis discloses a series of indications alluding to Polish tradition and culture, which proves an in-depth knowledge of the national background. It seems that it was Beer himself that contributed to this, as he grew up in Poland and among Polish people.

The most potent allusions to Polish realities can be noticed in the sphere of the language used by the characters, but what plays also an important role for the formation of national values in the structure of the operetta are various musical categories associated with Polish characteristics. Typically, elements of national culture, mainly national dances – mazur (mazurka), krakowiak and polonaise, are used to characterise the Polish protagonists and related events on stage.

The plot of *Polnische Hochzeit* takes place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in the times when there was no Polish state on the maps of Europe as it ceased to exist as a consequence of 18<sup>th</sup>-century partitions. The operetta events are situated in a Polish manor in the Russian partition, which generates an additional political conflict. The tension between Poles and Russians, as well as domination of the Russian occupier, are heightened by the constant introduction of political issues to the operetta’s plot.

*Keywords:* Joseph Beer, *Polnische Hochzeit*, Polish culture, national stereotypes

Igor Grdina

### **The operetta experience**

Operetta is a genre of paradoxes: although it belongs to history and is creatively no longer alive, it is still successful in terms of its reception. The tradition of operetta librettos also continues in the lyrics of musical comedies. At the same time, however, it faces criticism not only at the level of individual works, but also in general – as a self-referential theatrical genre – although this is above all a consequence of its connection to once-current events that over time have become part of a forgotten past. Historically, operetta was very closely tied to other genres, not only through allusions to various works, but also as a form of musical theatre capable of doing well at the box office and filling a theatre’s empty coffers. In a period in which French grand opera and the legacy of the New German School were stimulating the rapid staging of new operas, this was an extremely important consideration. In many places, particularly in smaller centres, it was operetta that enabled the performance of works that are artistically representative of various cultures.

Opera dramaturgy is complex because of the need to simultaneously take into account the logic of the story (the plot) and that of the music; the latter demands a succession of arias, ensembles, choruses and dance numbers and has particular requirements in the opening and closing scenes. In cultures which for a long time had lacked the infrastructure to establish a regularly functioning musical theatre, mastering the standards of the genre was always a problem; this is also evident in today’s productions of works that are chiefly performed for the sake of specific elements – in most cases the music. The author of the paper, himself the creator of new librettos for a series of Slovene operas/operettas for which the original texts have not survived or which were written in a foreign language, offers his own findings with regard to the operetta genre, with particular reference to two works: *Princesa Vrtoglavka* by Josip Ipavec (1873–1921), a “comic opera in the old numerical style” (i.e. consisting of a sequence of self-contained musical numbers linked by spoken dialogue), and *Majda* by Marjan Kozina (1907–1966), the first Slovene radiophonic operetta.

*Keywords:* operetta, libretto, dramaturgy, musical theatre, radio

Vita Gruodytė

**The (Non-)Seriousness of Culture:  
The Case of the Lithuanian Operetta**

Historically, the first composer to use the word ‘operetta’ and to make fun of the ‘minor works’ of his time was Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Although the operetta has since become a genre in itself, in Lithuania, which was in full construction of its cultural identity at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was perceived as quite problematic. Whereas the importance of the opera had been unquestionable since the creation of the first Lithuanian opera in 1906, and the majority of the cultural state funding had been allocated to it, the operetta, in contrast, was considered as a genre that inevitably pulled down the professional level of the musicians involved. This belittling of operetta spans the entire interwar period.

The paradigm of a necessarily ‘serious’ national culture, coupled with the criticism of musical critics, marginalised the ‘non-serious’ genres such as the operetta. Instead of disappearing, however, the genre found another way out: high-level variety music. The eternal debate on high vs low art not only influenced national cultural prejudices, but also formed the basis of a global vision of cultures, as Adorno (in *Paralipomena*) showed when comparing French ‘entertainment’ to ‘serious’ German art.

*Keywords:* Lithuanian music, Operetta, Opera, Cabaret

Matthieu Guillot

**Operetta as a Cultural and Historical Symptom:  
Offenbach through Karl Kraus**

Operetta is maybe more a striking symptom than a simple musical genre. Oscillating between frivolous and serious music, between entertainment and the spirit of the time, its real content can be analyzed based on the writings of Karl Kraus (1874–1936). The famous Viennese polemist made many adaptations of Offenbach operettas. Indeed, Operetta reveals its potential to hide the reality – the ‘*untruth*’ in the sense of Theodor Adorno. For Kraus, who rediscovered Offenbach by the prism of his time, the “laws of chaos” are the true foundation of the operetta: they combine the soothing effect of music with an innocent gaiety that suggests, in confusion, “the true absurdity of the world”. In his famous public readings (called “*theater of poetry*”), Kraus invents an original approach which highlights the satirical content of the booklets.

*Keywords:* Karl Kraus, J. Offenbach, historical symptom, sociological operetta

Fatima Hadžić

### **Operetta in Sarajevo Between the Two World Wars**

The National Theatre in Sarajevo, established in 1919 (and opened in 1921) was the first professional theatre ensemble in Bosnia and Herzegovina and a centre of Sarajevo's cultural life between the two world wars. The great influence of this institution on the development of musical life in the city was primarily reflected through staging so-called "pieces with singing" and operettas within the regular theatre repertoire. Performing operettas and other kinds of theatre pieces with music had a great impact on the development of music culture – it encouraged the establishment of music ensembles, theatre choirs, and the employment of professional musicians, conductors, and vocal soloists.

The musical part of the repertoire was the most demanded and visited one, and it was the Sarajevo audience's appetite for "musical performances" of an entertaining character that led to the introduction of operetta into the regular repertoire. This happened twice, from the season 1923/1924 to 1927, and again from the season 1935/1936 till the beginning of the war in 1941. Over two decades, around twenty operettas were performed on the stage of the National Theatre. On the other hand, there were no serious attempts to promote opera in the repertoire, nor was the staging of operettas aimed at the formation of an operetta ensemble as a separate unit of the National Theatre. Instead, operetta was used as a way to replenish the theatre's finances, without a clear vision of its development. Nevertheless, the "musical" activity of the National Theatre successfully prepared the ground for the establishment of the first permanent opera in Bosnia and Herzegovina after the Second World War.

*Keywords:* Sarajevo, National Theatre in Sarajevo, Operetta, Period between World Wars, Musical Culture of Bosnia and Herzegovina

Magdolna Jákfalvi

### **Identity-machines. The Nationalism of Hungarian Operetta between the Two World Wars**

Theatre as Memory-Machine (M. Carlson, 2003) does not allow us to forget that Emmerich Kálmán's masterpiece *Die Csárdásfürstin*, premiering in 1915, in the middle of the First World War, is an undeniable part of Hun-

garian national identity. But theatre is also an identity-machine, since it reminds us that the Hungarian theatre-going public considers both (Romanian) Sylva Varescu and (Austrian) Duke Lippert-Weilersheim Hungarian, simply because the author is Hungarian, the first act is set in a Budapest nightclub, and the adapted operetta is played with brilliant Hungarian lyrics. In the sphere of Vienna, Budapest and Cluj Napoca, the identity-mechanisms of Kálmán's work have been shaping the discourse on the whole of the Hungarian nation, so when after the war the Treaty of Versailles-Trianon reduced Hungary's area to a third of its former size, the reality-interpretation of operettas did not acknowledge this change. In this 'idiotic' medium, irredentism finds a nationalistic surface.

The focus of my study is the nationalistic interpretation of the grand creations born from a multinational Monarchy's operetta culture. As a case study, I am going to present a work little-known in the international musical theatre studies context, *The Hamburg Bride* by Ernő Kulinyi and Zsigmond Vincze. One of the songs in the (actually very successful) 1922 operetta, 'You are lovely, you are beautiful, Hungary' became an anthem in irredentist-nationalist circles, later became a much-quoted part of Bartók's *Concerto*, it was banned, it was silenced, and even if the operetta itself does not, the song preserves within communal memory the incomprehensible and unprocessable trauma framing the lives of the last three generations.

*Keywords:* operetta-identity, historical reality, national anthem, Vienna operetta

Luba Kijanovska

### **Die ukrainische Operette der 1920er und 1930er Jahre als Spiegel gesellschaftspolitischer Entwicklungen**

Wenn man die Voraussetzungen für die Entwicklung der ukrainischen Operette des 20. Jahrhunderts, insbesondere in der Zwischenkriegszeit darstellen will, muss man die unterschiedlichen sozialpolitischen Situationen in beiden Teilen des Landes berücksichtigen, die die ästhetischen und künstlerischen Grundlagen der Operette beeinflusst haben. Spezifischen Bedingungen unterlag die nationalkulturelle Entwicklung in dem Teil der Ukraine, der zum Russischen Reich und später zur Sowjetunion gehörte. Ganz andere Möglichkeiten der Kulturentwicklung gab es hingegen in dem Teil, der vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg zum Habsburger Reich gehört hatte und dann in den 20er bis 30er Jahren des 20. Jahrhunderts in der Zweiten Polnischen Republik existierte. Daher wurde das Genre der Operette in zwei

Regionen der Ukraine in unterschiedlichen gesellschaftspolitischen Realitäten auf unterschiedliche Weise geformt und entwickelt – allerdings unter Berücksichtigung der inhärenten mentalen Merkmale der Ukrainer und der Folkloretradition mit ihrer Theaterkomponente. In der Zwischenkriegsperiode entwickelte sich die ukrainische Operette in den beiden Teilen der Ukraine, die verschiedenen Staaten angehörten, unter unterschiedlichen Bedingungen. Die Geschichte mit der Operette von Rjabows *Hochzeit in Malinowka* zeugt eindeutig von der harten kommunistischen Kontrolle über eine so heitere Gattung wie die Operette. Die ukrainische Bevölkerung Galiziens, nach wie vor staatenlos, bedurfte der Operette, um das nationale Bewusstsein zu bewahren sowie die Befreiungskämpfe des Ersten Weltkriegs zu heroisieren und zu romantisieren. Dem wurden vor allem die Operetten von Jaroslaw Barnytsch gerecht.

*Schlüsselwörter:* ukrainische Operette, kommunistische ideologische Kontrolle, modernes Theater, galizische Musiktradition, national-patriotische Thematik

Ana Kocjančič

### **Operetta set design in Slovenia in the light of the historical avant-garde**

The avant-garde movement took over Slovene professional theatres in the 1930s. This was a time in which younger directors and set designers introduced new artistic and theatrical tendencies to the country's professional theatres and opera companies. Among the more important directors of this generation were Bratko Kreft, Ferdo Delak and Bojan Stupica, all of whom had gained their early experiences with distinguished theatrical names in other countries (Erwin Piscator, Herwarth Walden and Rudolf Blümmer) and through working with amateur and popular theatres around Slovenia. Kreft and Delak were invited to collaborate with the opera house by the conductor, director and opera manager Mirko Polič, who was himself eager to modernise productions. It was also in 1930 that the Ukrainian set designer Vasily Ulyanishchev arrived at the Ljubljana Opera, bringing with him new, modern approaches to scenic design. Ulyanishchev's bold, avant-garde ideas complemented numerous opera and ballet productions in this period. The third of the trio, Bojan Stupica, was a remarkable director and set designer who, with the help of realistic elements from the everyday world, took set design in the direction of the realism of the so-called New Objectivity.

The paper aims to shed light on operetta set design in Slovenia between the wars and, in particular, the important contribution of the directors Bratko Kreft, Ferdo Delak and Bojan Stupica and the set designers associated with them to the development of Slovene set design. In opera, too, the representatives of the avant-garde generation replaced the dusty, outdated stage sets with scenic concepts designed using new, avant-garde performative elements and practices.

*Keywords:* operetta, theatre, set design, avant-garde, stage design sketch, rotating stage

Darja Koter

**Operetta performances at the SNG Maribor  
between the two world wars focusing on directing  
techniques**

The repertoire of Maribor operetta stage performances between the two world wars shows that the vast majority of the works performed consisted of Viennese operettas from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and that they also performed current works by Slovenian composers. The stylistic orientation of the works was subordinated to the taste and expectations of the audience and the financial capabilities of the theatre and did not succumb to the occasional critical remark made by reporters from Maribor and Ljubljana newspapers. The performances were directed by members of the ensemble: actors, directors of drama performances, and singers. Most had, at least for a short time, been formally or informally educated in acting and directing, or was able to attend performances by major European theatres. Rado Železnik attended Otto's School of Drama in Vienna, Pavel Rasberger was moulded by Slovenian directors Anton Verovšek and Ignacij Borštnik, Anton Harastović gained experience from the Varaždin and Maribor theatres, Vladimir Skrbinšek matured with avant-garde director Rado Pregarc and role models within the Moscow Art Theatre. Jože Kovič attended the Max Reinhardt Theatre School, and Milan Košič attended the avant-garde Erwin Piscator School of dramatic art in Berlin. Guest directors included Josip Povhe from Ljubljana, Kurt Bachmann from Vienna, and the Croatian baritone, Đuro Truhović, as well as Ferdo Delak, who was the only one amongst the heretofore listed with an academic degree in directing obtained at *University Mozarteum*. Compared to the Ljubljana theatre, directors from both houses had similar educations, worked in several fields, and had similar role models. The operetta directors of the Maribor Theatre

mostly did not experiment with technique and did not imitate avant-garde schools, since ordinary directing, based upon the Viennese and Prague models, was the sort best received. Critical responses barely mention the directing, so it is not possible to decipher the comments that would underline the general findings of the abilities and qualifications of individual directors.

*Keywords:* Slovene National Theatre Maribor, operetta performances, directing, drama schools, directors

Hartmut Krones

**Der Kampf der Komponisten der „heiteren Musik“  
um Anerkennung sowie um eine gerechte Abgeltung  
ihrer Kunst**

Die Zwischenkriegszeit, als in vielen Ländern das Urheberrecht zunächst nur für die Zeitspanne von 30 Jahren nach dem Tod des Komponisten galt, war auch eine Epoche der Kämpfe der Musiker um eine gerechte Entlohnung sowie vor allem um eine Absicherung ihrer Erben. Insbesondere waren es die Komponisten der „unterhaltenden Musik“ (zu der auch die Gattung der Operette zählte), die hier aktiv wurden, die sich dabei aber bisweilen mit einer offen zutage tretenden Herabwürdigung ihrer Kunst konfrontiert sahen. Der Kampf um eine Verlängerung der Schutzfrist war schließlich in Österreich (1934) und Deutschland (1935), welche Länder hier in erster Linie betrachtet werden, durch die Anhebung auf 50 Jahre erfolgreich, doch parallel hatte sich eine weitere Stoßrichtung ergeben – durch das Aufkommen des Tonfilms: Wurden für die „neue“ Kunstform der Filmmusik doch viele Jahre gar keine oder nur sehr wenige Tantiemen bezahlt. Auch hier war eine Ursache die häufige Mißachtung der Filmmusik als „minderwertige“ Form der Kunst, die zudem nicht von dem „Gesamtwerk“ Film herauszulösen wäre. Doch erneut war man, in diesem Fall bereits 1933, erfolgreich: Für die Filmmusik galten schließlich ebenso die Schutzfrist sowie die Tantiemen-Regelungen. Das Referat gibt einen Überblick über diese Kämpfe der Jahre von 1920 bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg.

*Schlüsselwörter:* Operette, Filmmusik, Urheberrecht, Schutzfrist, Tantiemen

Primož Kuret

**Gustav Mahler and operetta**

As the principal conductor of the Provincial Theatre (Landestheater) in Ljubljana, Mahler was required to conduct not only operas but also oper-

ettas. The latter in fact accounted for the greater part of the theatre's repertoire. In the brief period he spent in Ljubljana, Mahler conducted 14 different operettas, among them three works each by Johann Strauss II and Offenbach and four by Suppé. Ljubljana critics faithfully followed events at the theatre and a brief report was published after almost every performance. Just as they were satisfied with the theatre's opera performances, so they were satisfied with its operettas. Interestingly, however, none of the reviews (with one exception) mention the conductor. Confirmation that this was indeed Mahler is provided by a review of the opera *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, which notes that "*the same conductor conducts both opera and operetta.*" The aforementioned exception was a performance of Strauss's operetta *Der lustige Krieg* ("The Merry War"), where the critic noted that the orchestra was "good" and that under Mahler's direction it "*acquitted itself boldly.*" This particular performance was also notable for another reason: it was transmitted by telephone from the auditorium to the offices of the theatre's management. The operetta received 11 repeat performances!

*Keywords:* Mahler, operetta, Ljubljana, Provincial Theatre, operetta composers

Helmut Loos

### **Erich Wolfgang Korngold – hin- und hergerissen zwischen U- und E-Musik**

Als kompositorisches Wunderkind und Schüler von Alexander von Zemlinsky (1871–1942) verstand sich Erich Wolfgang Korngold (1897–1957) zunächst als Vertreter der Moderne, seine G-Dur-Violinsonate op. 6 wurde 1919 in Schönbergs Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen gespielt. Seine musikalische Biographie verlief dann allerdings ganz überraschend hin zum Oskar-prämierten Filmkomponisten Hollywoods. Niemals gab Korngold die Tonalität auf und entwickelte sich unterm dem Einfluss seines Vater, dem einflussreichen Musikkritiker Julius Korngold (1860–1945), zu einem entschiedenen Gegner der Moderne. Die Operette bildete gewissermaßen den Übergang vom Vertreter der Moderne zum Filmkomponisten, von der E- zur U-Musik. In den 1920er Jahren hat Korngold sich intensiv der Operette zugewandt, eine wenig beachtete, aber folgenreiche Schaffensphase, die ihm u. a. durch die Zusammenarbeit mit Max Reinhardt den Weg nach Amerika bahnte. Wie sich der Komponist selbst mit dieser Situation arrangierte, versucht der Beitrag zu beleuchten.

*Schlüsselwörter:* Operette, Julius Korngold, Johann Strauss, Moralität, Afterkunst

Tatjana Marković

**Contested entertainment: Discussions on operetta in Belgrade, the Kingdom of SCS/Yugoslavia**

The most popular stage music forms of spoken theatre with music numbers, performed prior to and at the same time as opera, were known under the various names, such as theatre plays with music, operetta, vaudeville, and *varieté*. Such works contributed to the foundation of the Serbian national (music) theatre repertoire by translations and adaptations/nationalisation (*posrbe*) of French, German, and Hungarian models, transferred from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The communicativeness of these music stage works was provided by language, topic, and folk(-like) or urban popular music, as well as recognisable iconography (national costumes).

The tradition was enriched until 1914 and continued in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes/the Kingdom of Yugoslavia 1918–1941. Contrary to the former Habsburg provinces (Slovenia, Croatia, Vojvodina), where the operetta was deeply rooted, it entered the repertoire of the National Theatre in Belgrade in 1882 with Davorin Jenko's *Vračara* (*The Sorceress*), regarded as the first Serbian operetta.

Operetta, including both original works (Offenbach, Suppé, Strauss) and nationalised adaptations, had a minor role on the stage of the Belgrade National Theatre, namely the Belgrade Opera (1920), during the period between the two World Wars. Although operetta was not only the most popular part of the repertoire but also of key importance for the economic aspect of the institution's work before World War I, it was strongly criticised by intellectuals, numerous literary and theatre critics, composers, music writers and the first professional musicologists in their reviews of the performances in daily newspapers and periodicals, as well as in other publications. This paper will discuss the main discourses about operetta and cultural policy of the National Theatre (*Narodno pozorište*) in Belgrade, the capital of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, in the context of the continuity with the pre-World War I period.

*Keywords:* operetta, Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Serbia, music writers, cultural transfer

Daniel Molnár

**288 metres of velvet, 16 pairs of shoes, 12 yellow top hats,  
5 bathtubs ... – The staging and Cultural Impact of the 1925  
Production of *Hallo, Amerika!* in the Budapest Operetta  
Theatre**

The American theatre entrepreneur Ben Blumenthal reopened the former orpheum of Budapest as Operetta Theatre in 1922. After three years of producing operettas rooted in the Central European tradition (pieces by Kálmán, Lehár, Fall etc.) the management decided on a revue show, reflecting the latest Broadway style musical entertainment.

*Halló, Amerika!* was a spectacle of a previously unexperienced size and quality in Hungary. It was radical in the sense that instead of operetta stars and a concise plotline it relied mostly on visual effects and showgirls. The stage space was used in radically new ways: creating mass scenes and abstract stage compositions, using the human body as a decorative element. In a society shocked by the trauma of WWI, it was also a subject of a cultural debate and the conservative press claimed that the show was against Hungarian values. Still, due to the successful mix of Hungarian and international cultural elements, it ran for more than 100 performances. It eventually ended in financial disaster, but had a major influence on Budapest musical entertainment for the next 25 years. Even during the run of the original production, provincial theatres attempted to create their own *Halló...!* shows; each having its own take on the genre.

The paper analyses the role of the spectacular and the showgirls in the success of the show, as well as its legacy, based on the surviving original documentation and the management's correspondence, kept in the National Széchényi Library's Department of Theatre History, along contrasted with photos and press coverage.

*Keywords:* revue, operetta, scenography, showgirls, musical

Henrik Neubauer

**Operetta at the Ljubljana Opera between the wars**

The paper covers operetta at the Ljubljana Opera between the end of the First World War and the beginning of the Second World War and is divided into three chapters corresponding to the periods under each of the Opera's three interwar managers: Rukavina, Polič and Ukmar. Over the course of this 23-year period, there were a total of 374 musical productions at the Ljubljana Opera. In addition to operas and ballets, these included 76

operetta premieres, of which nine were original works by Slovene composers. To these we can add a further two operettas written by foreign composers living in Slovenia (Josip Raha and Josip Jiranek) to librettos by Slovene authors (Gorinšek, Simončič).

The ratio of operettas to operas remained at around one to three or four throughout the period in question, although these figures may have deviated up or down slightly in individual seasons. Some operettas enjoyed around 40 repeat performances, while the absolute record belongs to Benatzky's *Pri belem konjičku (Im weißen Rössl)*, which had 70 performances in 1932.

The programme included operettas by foreign and Slovene composers, some of them of extremely high quality and others somewhat less well known and of occasionally questionable quality. In most cases our only accounts of what these foreign and Slovene operettas were like in terms of staging, what the music was like and how contemporary audiences reacted to them come from newspaper reports. These are all the more valuable if the opinions of those writing them were either unanimous or totally contrasting. It is from these sources that anyone interested in the subject will be able to extract all essential information. The reader will undoubtedly observe some extremely negative views on the part of critics regarding the staging of operettas in general. After subsequent premieres, however, their opinions suddenly changed and they began to welcome such choices of repertoire by the management.

*Keywords:* operetta, Ljubljana Opera, Friderik Rukavina, Mirko Polič, Vilko Ukmar

Niall O'Loughlin

**Slovene Operetta at the Crossroads: Radovan Gobec's  
*Planinska roža***

Reaction against serious opera was well established in the classical period, especially in works that embraced a lighter character, with dance routines and spoken dialogue rather than formal recitative. In France by the mid-19th century this became a distinct art-form, developed by Offenbach and others, often with satirical intention and grouped under the umbrella heading 'operetta'. This spread across Europe from Paris to England and to Austria and neighbouring lands. For many years the performances dominated the repertoires of theatres, interrupted by the onset of World War I. By 1920 the re-establishment of operatic activities encouraged a flood of new

operettas. One example of this was in Slovenia, from the late 1920s, with a group of four operettas by Radovan Gobec which involved country settings, national folk tales, folk dancing, spoken dialogue and a sense of innocent living, together with music that was melodically memorable and rhythmically simple and repetitive. *Planinska roža* of 1937, the penultimate operetta by Gobec, including all the characteristics of the Slovene and European inter-wars genre, represented a watershed in the type. The form was abandoned by Gobec for his dedicated war effort with the Partisans and his post-war work in opera proper. At the same time operetta was now giving way to *Musical Theatre* or simply *The Musical*, especially in its emergence in English-speaking contexts in Europe and the United States.

*Keywords:* operetta, Slovenia, Ljubljana, Maribor, Radovan Gobec, *Planinska roža*

Karmen Salmič Kovačič

**The background to the “Maribor operetta war”  
after the Second World War and the subsequent  
development of operetta at the Slovene National Theatre  
in Maribor**

Even after the first premiere by the Maribor Operetta Ensemble in 1952, there were signs of a complex background to the views of the opponents of operetta, in other words those forces and factors that led to a “war” against operetta breaking out at the nationwide level in 1963 and successfully suppressed it for a quarter of a century. Given the ideological background of the period, operetta as a genre was condemned to expulsion from Slovenia’s professional theatres merely by virtue of its origin – it had originated and spread in “capitalist” lands – regardless of any other attributes. The second aspect that is evident from the polemical debates is aesthetic – namely an attitude that automatically attributes “quality” to high (serious) culture in comparison to lighter, more popular genres. The third aspect is the criterion of modernity, but in a socialist realist sense. This occupies the same ideological starting points as the first two. The ideas of progress and avant-garde art in fact originated in the context of revolutionary left-wing ideology and philosophy. Despite the fact that the controversy raises other issues, such as centre versus province, the relationship between opera and drama, humour in music, and so on, the ideological-political aspect is the central one from which all the others followed. Given that the extremely long-lasting rejection of operetta as a genre was a pan-Slovenian phenom-

enon, we are led in this paper to the assumption that the two key figures of this “background” in Slovenia, which had a more orthodox and intransigent ideological reference system than the other Yugoslav republics, were the Marxist philosopher and sociologist Boris Zihlerl and the literary historian and charismatic professor of comparative literature Dušan Pirjevec. The latter’s non-acceptance of transcendence, which is revealed in art as pure essence, was also decisive for Slovene culture.

*Keywords:* operetta, Slovene National Theatre Maribor, “Maribor operetta war”, Maribor Operetta Ensemble, socialist realism, Boris Zihlerl, Dušan Pirjevec

Stefan Schmidl, Timur Sijaric

### **Subversive Obedience: The Film Music of Willi Forst’s Viennese Trilogy**

Operetta is a quintessential example of the manifold agencies can operate in music. Among these agencies, the persuasive role of operetta’s ideological workings in particular have to be considered in their historical manifestation. In our paper, we will examine a peculiar case of this practice, namely the appropriation of the genre in film – a medium that by its own devices further fostered and reinforced the functionality of operetta. Our examination comes even more to the fore against the background of our research object’s historical context: the era of National Socialism in Austria. Analysing director Willi Forst’s so-called “Viennese Trilogy” – consisting out of the feature films *Operette* (1940), *Wiener Blut* (1942) and *Wiener Mädeln* (1944/49) – operetta’s endowment with images, pacing and, as a result of this interpretation, with meaning will be demonstrated. The reading of the latter will be the crucial point of our argumentation, as it raises a striking ambivalence. Specifically, is the “Viennese Trilogy” a vehicle of escapism and therefore compliant with a key doctrine prevailing in Third Reich cinema? Or, is it, as Willi Forst later claimed, the expression of an ‘Austrian essence’, and therein a dissident statement against the Reich? To answer this question, we will draw to the recently discovered autograph scores of the films, which allow a keen insight in the process of adapting and construing operetta for the silver screen.

*Keywords:* Film music, National Socialist Cinema, Wien-Film, Willi Forst, Willy Schmidt-Gentner

Borut Smrekar

### **Marjan Kozina: *Majda***

In the period of the flowering of original Slovene operetta between the two world wars, Marjan Kozina's operetta *Majda* is a work that particularly stands out in terms of quality. Kozina originally only intended to compose a few musical numbers for Josip Fran Knaflič's comedy *Kmečki teater* ("Rustic Theatre"), but over time this grew into an operetta. A radio operetta was created in parallel and broadcast three times by a Ljubljana radio station in 1935. The first theatrical performance of *Majda* took place in Maribor the same year. Despite its success, however, it failed to make the transition to other theatres, largely because of its weak libretto.

*Majda* was revived in 2001 for a concert performance. This successful performance, for which Igor Grdina wrote a new libretto, proved that Kozina's music was still fresh and attractive. Kozina drew without prejudice on the popular music of his day and grafted it onto the melody of central European operetta, although there was no breakthrough hit among the musical numbers to particularly characterise the work.

*Majda* was Kozina's first major work and also represented the end of his silence as a composer following his completion of composition studies in 1932. Although Kozina later established himself as one of the leading Slovene composers, he once said of *Majda*: "*Between you and me, I am still pleased with it today, even though I have since taken a completely different direction.*"

**Keywords:** Marjan Kozina, Ferdo Delak, operetta, jazz, Maribor

Michal Ščepán

### **Operettas Staged by the Slovak National Theatre During the Years 1920–1938**

The first mention of an operetta in Bratislava dates back to the 1860s. Numerous stagings performed in the municipal theatre building by foreign theatre companies then became a popular form of entertainment for the local German-Hungarian population. The turning point came after the First World War, when Czechoslovakia was established after the disintegration of Austria-Hungary. Bratislava became the administrative and cultural centre of Slovakia, where in 1920 the Slovak National Theatre began to operate. However, it was not a state institution but was managed by private persons on the basis of a concession. Since the founding of the theatre, and under the first director Bedřich Jeřábek, operetta had had its own

ensemble, but its productions did not achieve the quality of foreign performances. Established natives of the city boycotted them and there were very few Slovaks in the town. In addition, the operettas were the target of populist criticism, which opposed the genre appearing on the stage of national theatre. The solution, which was to attract mainly foreign audiences, was the cancellation of the operetta ensemble and its replacement with ballet, while only a few operettas remained in the repertoire. However, the quality of their staging was progressive, which gradually attracted more and more audiences. The Slovaks, whose number in the city also increased, found their way into the theatre too. At the end of the Oskar Nedbal era, a second stage, the so-called People's Theatre, was opened for the purpose of staging operettas. However, it did not generate the promised financial rewards. After Nedbal's death, when Antonín Drašar took over the theatre, the second stage was cancelled, and the operetta ensemble returned to the Slovak National Theatre. Its presence was often criticised for mainly qualitative and political reasons. On the other hand, it was a source of funds and brought the possibility for the performance of the first Slovak operettas by Ján Móry and Gejza Dusík, as well as opportunities for young Slovak singers.

This paper deals with the relationship between the operetta genre and the Slovak National Theatre in 1920–1938, with a focus on its socio-political and performance issues as well as comparing operetta works by domestic authors.

*Keywords:* Slovak National Theatre, Operetta, Bedřich Jeřábek, Oskar Nedbal, Antonín Drašar, Ján Móry, Gejza Dusík

Manica Špendal

### **Different views of operetta and its reception over time at the Maribor theatre**

Regarding the evaluation of operetta and its reception at the theatre in Maribor, we can talk about three different periods: the Austrian Empire period, the interwar period and the period after the Second World War, when ideological views of this musical-dramatic genre also played an important role.

Operetta was widely popular in the former provinces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, particularly in provincial theatres like that of nineteenth-century Maribor. Among the reasons for this were a population that was mainly interested in lighter forms of entertainment and a lack of suitable premises and performers (singers, orchestra) that might otherwise have

permitted the regular staging of operas, as in larger cities. Programmes largely consisted of operettas by Austrian composers, although some works by French and English composers were also staged. The examples of two composers illustrate how popular some operettas were: Carl Millöcker's operetta *Der Bettelstudent* (*The Beggar Student*) was performed forty-eight times between the 1884/85 season and the 1912/13 season, while *Die Fledermaus* (*The Bat*) by Johann Strauss II received as many as seventy performances between the 1874/75 season and the 1912/13 season.

Hinko Nučič, the first manager of the Slovene National Theatre in Maribor, even included an operetta in the programme of the theatre's first season (1919/20). On 16 May 1920 *Mam'zelle Nitouche* by the French composer Hervé thus became the first work of musical theatre to be performed at the new Slovene National Theatre.

Operettas continued to be regularly staged at the Slovene National Theatre in Maribor right up until the Second World War and helped put the theatre on a sounder financial footing. After the war, ideological prejudices and a view of operetta as an obsolete and decadent musical-dramatic genre put an end to its inclusion in the theatre's programme. *Die Fledermaus* returned to the Maribor stage in the 1986/87 season, after which operettas and musicals began to be staged more frequently.

*Keywords:* Maribor theatre, operetta performances, reception

Jernej Weiss

### **Operetta between the Two World Wars at the Opera of the National Theatre in Maribor**

After the end of the First World War, the opportunity arose to establish a second Slovene professional theatre, in Maribor. The National Theatre in Maribor was founded in 1919 at the initiative of the city's Dramatic Society. The following year, on 1 May 1920, the Opera of the National Theatre in Maribor made its debut with a performance of Hervé's popular operetta *Mam'zelle Nitouche*. This was followed in subsequent seasons by numerous operettas by Oscar Straus, Franz Lehár, Leo Fall, Oskar Nedbal, Emmerich Kálmán and Ralph Benatzky, among others. Slovene composers also began to devote themselves more intensively to operetta after the First World War. Along with three operettas by Viktor Parma, the National Theatre in Maribor performed operettas by Josip Jiranek, Pavel Rasberger, Danilo Bučar, Marjan Kozina and Radovan Gobec in the period between the two world wars. A review of the interwar activity of the Maribor Opera shows that op-

eretta productions accounted more than two thirds of the entire repertoire at the time. Operetta predominated in Maribor right up until the start of the Second World War, when the Opera of the National Theatre in Maribor was forced to close its doors. The paper draws attention to some of the most important achievements of the Opera in Maribor in the field of operetta between the wars and highlights reactions to them in the local press. In this way, it determines the importance of operetta and the mark it made on the broader sociocultural characteristics of the capital of Lower Styria.

*Keywords:* operetta, Maribor, Viktor Parma, Andro Mitrović, Ljubljana

Ingeborg Zechner

**Operette trifft Tonfilm: Mediale Perspektiven  
auf die transnationale Tonfilmoperette Anfang der 1930er  
Jahre**

Für den Anfang der 1930er Jahre in Deutschland aufkommenden Tonfilmstandard stellte die Bühnenoperette eine wichtige Referenz dar. Die Tonfilmoperette griff Konventionen des Bühnengenres auf und fand gleichzeitig durch den Film und Rundfunk zugrunde liegenden Aufnahmetechnologien die Möglichkeit einer unmittelbaren internationalen Verbreitung. Zusätzlich erfuhr die Musik von Tonfilmoperetten in der Form von Tonfilmschlagern einerseits einen medialen Transfer und lenkte andererseits den Fokus des zeitgenössischen Publikums mittels Plattenaufnahmen, gedrucktem Notenmaterial und der Aufführung als Tanzmusik auf die „Filmmusik“. Als Internationalisierungsstrategie der deutschen Filmindustrie wurden Anfang der 1930er Jahre von deutschen Filmfirmen so genannte Sprachversionen mit unterschiedlicher Besetzung der Darsteller, u.a. für den französischen und italienischen Markt produziert. Die internationale Verbreitung der Tonfilmoperette über Sprachversionen lässt allerdings eklatante Parallelen zu Aufführungen und Adaptionen von Bühnenoperetten bzw. anderen Musiktheater-Genres erkennen. Dieser Aufsatz beleuchtet die komplexen medialen Dimensionen der Tonfilmoperette Anfang der 1930er Jahre anhand der Beispiele *Ich und die Kaiserin*, *Gruß und Kuß – Veronika*, und *Paprika* vor dem Hintergrund der theoretischen Diskurse der Intermedialität und der Adaptation Studies. Dabei wird deutlich, dass die Tonfilmoperette in dramaturgischer, medialer und adaptionstechnischer Hinsicht als Fortführung der Musiktheaterpraxis Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts gesehen werden kann, wodurch die Musik in einigen Fällen als intertextueller Referenzrahmen wirkt.

*Schlüsselwörter:* Tonfilmoperette, deutscher Tonfilm 1930–1934, Intermedialität, Adaption, Tonfilmschlager, Sprachversionsfilm