

RECORDINGS EDITIONS BOOKS ARTICLES

NEW RECORDINGS

Violin Music of Stefan Wolpe. Movses Pogossian, Varty Manouelian, violins; Susan Grace, piano.

Bridge 9460 (2015)

Duo for Two Violins 1924; Two Studies for Two Violins and Piano 1933; Sonata for Violin and Piano 1949; Second Sonata for Violin and Piano 1959, fragment; Piece in Two Parts for Violin Alone 1964; Second Piece for Violin Alone 1966.

Close Connections. Garrick Ohlsson, piano.

Bridge 9380 (2013)

Wolpe: Passacaglia 1936. With: Louis Weingarden, Robert Helps, William Hibbard, Oldrich Korte.

Webern, Wolpe & Feldman. Aleck Karis, piano.

Bridge 9420 (2013)

Wolpe: Form 1959 and Form IV 1969. With: Webern, Variations op. 27 1936; Feldman, Piano 1977, Palais de Mari 1986.

NEW EDITIONS

Arrangements of Six Yiddish Folksongs 1923, 1925

Peermusic. Edited by David Bloch and A. Clarkson.

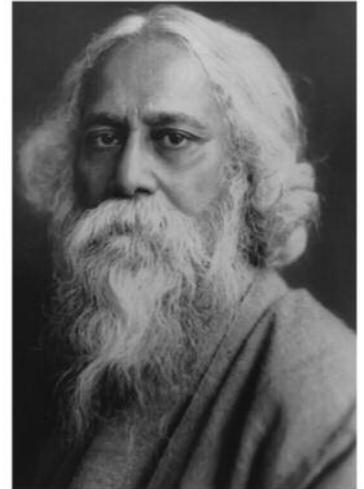
Wolpe composed these arrangements for the singer Rahel Ermolnikoff (b. Odessa, 1890), who specialized in music of Eastern and Yemenite Jews. The songs were first performed on a concert of Wolpe's music in 1925. Wolpe incorporated idioms from Klezmer music in what a Berlin reviewer described as "unusual, salty-lyrical settings": the glissandi and tremolos of the hammered dulcimer (No. 1), the ostinato pulse of the accordion (No. 2), the improvisation of fiddle, clarinet or flute (No. 3), offbeat tone clusters of the drum (No. 4), and ensemble chording (No. 5). The idiosyncratic piano part shows Wolpe's phenomenal keyboard virtuosity.

Nine Settings from Gitanjali of Rabindranath Tagore, for Alto and Piano 1926

Peermusic. Edited by Martin Brody and A. Clarkson.

Wolpe attended the dress rehearsal and premiere of Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* in Dec. of 1925. During the next three months Wolpe set to music thirteen poems from the "Gitanjali" of the Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore

(1861-1941). From these he selected a cycle of nine songs: it begins during the day when the poet watches and waits for the arrival of death, proceeds through the evening and stormy night, and ends with the dawn of the last day, when he bids farewell to his brothers and beneath a blue sky departs this life. The settings range from short lyrics in the Bergian manner (Nos. 1,



Rabindranath Tagore

2, 4, 5) to miniature cantatas that combine concertante, dramatic and lyric styles (Nos. 3, 6, 7, 8, 9). The Bergian influence is evident in the first song, which begins with a wedge-shaped vocal phrase that covers eleven pitch classes while the piano expands the space from two to nearly five octaves. The material of the opening phrase saturates the song. The profusion of articulation and dynamics signs, extremes of register and contrasts of texture, frequent changes of meter and tempo, and wide leaps and occasional Sprechstimme further signal the effect of *Wozzeck*. Wolpe addressed the spiritual heights and depths of Tagore's poetry not with shimmering textures, translucent harmonies and evanescent melodies, but with forceful drama powered by hard-edged, jazz-inflected rhythms. The variation idea from Hindemith's *Das Marienleben*, which Wolpe adapted for the third of his Kleist Songs 1925, brings the Tagore cycle to a close. The formal design of the cycle culminates in the last two songs, subtitled "Variation I" and "Variation II," respectively. Martin Brody is restoring passages in four of the songs that were damaged by fire.

Concerto for Nine Instruments 1933-1934

Peermusic.

Edited by Werner Herbers and A. Clarkson.

While studying with Anton Webern in the fall of 1933, Wolpe began the Concerto for Nine Instruments with almost the same instrumentation as *Konzert* op. 24, on which Webern was working at the time. The kinship between Webern's lapidary *Konzert* and Wolpe's epic Concerto would seem to end there. Webern's three

movements last seven minutes, while Wolpe's four go on for twenty-five. Yet Webern's hand is evident: after three tonal, *musikantish* movements, the fourth is a set of twelve variations on a twelve-note theme. The row forms and canons in Variations 1 and 11 appear to be modeled on the row topography of Webern's *Quartet op. 22*. With the Concerto Wolpe staked out a middle ground between the Socialist Realism of the Leningrad School (Shostakovich) and the high style dodecaphony of Webern. The full score and violin part were lost. Cues in the remaining parts provided 80 bars for the violin. For this edition, the violin part has been completely reconstructed.

Passacaglia and Presto furioso for Two Pianos 1936

Theodore Presser. Edited by A. Clarkson.

Wolpe arranged two movements from *Four Studies on Basic Rows* for two pianos so that Irma Wolpe and he could play them for colleagues and students at the Palestine Conservatoire, Jerusalem. They performed the "Passacaglia" much to the chagrin of colleagues who told Wolpe that twelve-tone music was not needed in Palestine. Wolpe revised "Presto furioso" in 1955 for the Theodore Presser edition of *Four Studies*. The two-piano version is the only source for the original version of Presto furioso.

The Man from Midian for Orchestra 1950-1951, 2014

Peermusic, by arrangement with McGinnis and Marx. Edited by Antony Beaumont.

The Wolpe Society commissioned the distinguished conductor, author and editor Antony Beaumont, to orchestrate the Second Suite of *The Man from Midian*. Wolpe composed the Suite in 1942 for two pianos and orchestrated the First Suite for Dimitri Mitropoulos, who conducted it with the New York Philharmonic in 1951.

Wolpe composed the ballet suite to a libretto by the poet, novelist and dance critic Winthrop Palmer (1899-1988). Palmer depicted Moses not as the religious prophet, but rather as the political leader who led the Israelites out of bondage in Egypt, but was forbidden to accompany them across the Jordan River. The scenario, which ends with Moses left to die alone in the wilderness while the People depart for the Promised Land, suggests that Moses' punishment was not for lack of faith in the Lord (as in the Bible), but for his despotic acts towards the People. Eugene Loring (1911-1982), who also danced the role of Moses, and Palmer were keen to address current social issues through dance. While portraying the quest of the Jewish people for nationhood, the ballet was an implicit critique of American leaders of industry and labor who stood in the way of democracy.

John Martin of the *New York Times* described Loring's choreography for *The Man from Midian* as "prodigiously complex" and Wolpe's score as "rich and impassioned." Wolpe's score stands apart from the neo-classical and Americana styles of the day with an idiom that integrates diatonic with dodecaphonic material: a tune of the Jewish pioneers in Palestine depicts the Israelites, while Moses the law-giver has a twelve-note theme. The material of the opening scenes is varied and developed through the ballet in symphonic fashion.

The Man from Midian for Two Pianos 1942

Peermusic, by arrangement with McGinnis and Marx. Edited by Antony Beaumont.

While preparing to orchestrate the First Suite in 1950, Wolpe marked up a copy of the two piano score with notes on instrumentation. He also added several bars of music for Piano I in No. 4. The new edition has been extensively corrected.



*Costume designs by Doris Rosenthal.
Langson Library, University of California, Irvine.*



*The Israelites marching through the Red Sea, by Doris Rosenthal.
Langson Library, University of California, Irvine.*

BOOKS AND ARTICLES

- Born, Nora, (Ed.). In press. *Briefwechsel Stefan und Irma Wolpe, 1933-1972*. Pfau Verlag, Saarbrücken. 279 letters document the relationship of two extraordinary personalities from when they left Berlin in 1933 to their life together and apart in Jerusalem and New York to Stefan's death in 1972. Stefan's letters to Irma reveal biographical information recorded nowhere else and enhance greatly our understanding of his ideas and musical thought. The volume brings together correspondence archived at the Paul Sacher Foundation in Basel, the New York Public Library (the collection of Wolpe correspondence deposited by Carol Baron in 2008) and from Nora's personal collection.
- Clarkson, Austin. 2013. "Harmonies for 'The New Palestine'." In: Jenny Svenson (Ed.), *Die Dynamik kulturellen Wandels: Essays und Analysen. Festschrift Reinhard Flender zum 60. Geburtstag* (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2013), pp. 143-166.
- Cohen, Brigid. 2014. "Musical Modernism beyond the Nation: The Case of Stefan Wolpe." In: Felix Meyer, Carol Oja, Wolfgang Rathert, Anne Shreffler (Eds.), *Crosscurrents: European and American Music in Interaction*. Boyer and Brewer Press.
- Cohen, Brigid. 2014. "Limits of National History: Yoko Ono, Stefan Wolpe and Dilemmas of Cosmopolitanism," *The Musical Quarterly*. Summer/Fall Issue.
- Henning, Ina 2013. *Displaced Spaces, Shocks, Negations: A theoretical and movement analysis of Stefan Wolpe's Studies for Piano, Part I (1946-1948) and its implications for performance*. DMA Dissertation, University of Toronto. The core project of the dissertation is a musical and gestural analysis of Stefan Wolpe's Studies, "Part I: Displaced Spaces" (1946). The method consists of Fortean set class analysis, Effort-Shape analysis of gesture of Rudolf Laban, and the Time and Tone analysis of accordion performance of Joseph Macerollo. Chapter 1 provides the historical and stylistic context for "Displaced Spaces." Chapter 2 is concerned with the pitch class and contour analysis. Chapter 3 is concerned with Laban analysis of the gestures implicit in Wolpe's score. Wolpe titled the series of studies, "Music for Any Instruments" (1944-49), leaving the instrumentation to the performer, in this case a classical accordionist. The Laban analysis of the music is compared to Macerollo's Time and Tone analysis, which addresses gesture in accordion performance. Chapter 4 considers the degree of coherence between "Displaced Spaces" as a set of studies that form a transition between the first four movements of "Battlepiece for Piano" (composed in 1943), and the last three movements (composed in 1947). The new techniques developed in "Displaced Spaces" are identified in the last three movements of "Battlepiece." In conclusion, Chapter 5 brings together results from set theory and gestural analysis in order to develop a methodology that links the disciplines of music theory and music performance.
- Henning, Ina. 2014. „Stefan Wolpe. Leben und Werk.“ In: W.W. Sparrer & H.W. Heister (Eds.), *Lexikon Komponisten der Gegenwart (KdG)*. Munich: edition text+musik, 2014. An extensive essay is based on latest findings on Wolpe's life and work. The *KdG* would be the German equivalent of the New Grove Dictionary of Contemporary Composers. The entry includes a detailed works list, bibliography and discography. The main article presents Wolpe's early years in Berlin, his period in Palestine and the last half of his career in the U.S. Seven representative works with short musical examples illustrate Wolpe's compositional development. The works list was matched with the inventory list of the Paul Sacher Stiftung; Dr. Heidi Zimmermann, curator of the Stefan Wolpe collection at the PSS, helped to update the inventory with English equivalents of Hebrew titles.
- Wiener, Barry. (2014) *Ralph Shapey and the Search for a New Concept of Musical Continuity, 1939-66*. CUNY Dissertation. The dissertation creates a narrative for the stylistic development of the American composer, Ralph Shapey, during the first half of his career. Shapey's music represents a fusion of Schoenbergian metamorphic process and Varèsian stasis, methods for the creation of musical continuity that are usually considered incompatible. Wiener shows how Shapey formulated his compositional techniques, influenced by his teacher, Stefan Wolpe, and his friend, Edgard Varèse. Shapey's interest in the music of Schoenberg was mediated through the prism of Wolpe's musical ideas. Wolpe used unordered pitch-class sets to present the aggregate in his music, and avoided Schoenberg's neo-classic and neo-baroque forms in favor of more fluid continuity procedures. Shapey developed an interest in the use of block forms through his study of the music of Béla Bartók, Olivier Messiaen and Edgard Varèse. He began to employ techniques derived from Varèse's music during the mid-1950s, including the use of static constructions and the exploitation of a wide musical space. At the same time, he continued to use the procedures of pitch organization that he had learned from Wolpe. During the early 1960s, Shapey synthesized the opposing musical tendencies represented by Wolpe's dynamic narrative processes and Varèse's use of stasis.

BOOKS IN PROGRESS

- Brody, Marin. *American Music and the Cold War: Babbitt, Carter, Wolpe*.
- Clarkson, Austin. *Dionysos in the Subway: The Life and Music of Stefan Wolpe*.
- Cohen, Brigid. *Musical Migration and the Global City: New York, 1947-1964*. This project is supported by an NEH grant and a Newhouse Fellowship (Wellesley College).