

## ABSTRACT

Developments in Viennese Operetta in Johann Strauss, Franz Lehár, and Robert Stolz

Joanie Brittingham. M.M.

Thesis Chairperson: Laurel E. Zeiss, Ph.D.

The first immensely popular composer of Viennese operetta was Johann Strauss. Later composers, including Franz Lehár and Robert Stolz, became famous and wealthy for continuing the traditions of the genre as codified by Strauss. The most notable works of these composers either became part of the standard repertory or are considered historically important for the development of light opera and musical theatre in some way. Therefore, I studied the most important elements of the genre, namely the waltz, exoticism, and local color, and compared how each composer used these common building blocks in their most successful operettas.

Developments in Viennese Operetta in Johann Strauss, Franz Lehár, and Robert Stolz

by

Joanie Brittingham, B.M.

A Thesis

Approved by the Department of Music

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William V. May, Jr., Ph.D, Dean

---

David W. Music, D.M.A., Graduate Program Director

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Master of Music

Approved by the Thesis Committee

---

Laurel E. Zeiss, Ph.D., Chairperson

---

Jean Ann Boyd, Ph.D.

---

Deborah K. Williamson, D.M.A

---

Daniel E. Scott, D.M.A.

---

Wallace C. Christian, Ph.D.

Accepted by the Graduate School  
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J. Larry Lyon, Ph.D., Dean

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
DEDICATION	v
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
<i>COMPOSER BACKGROUNDS</i>	
<i>Johann Strauss</i>	
<i>Franz Lehár</i>	
<i>Robert Stolz</i>	
<i>CONVENTIONS: DEFINING THE GENRE</i>	
CHAPTER TWO: DIE FLEDERMAUS: ESTABLISHING THE CONVENTIONS	29
<i>DIE FLEDERMAUS</i>	
<i>Origins</i>	
<i>Plot: Social Extravagance and Gaiety</i>	
<i>CONVENTIONS: PRIMARY STYLISTIC TRAITS</i>	
<i>Waltz: The Prominent Feature</i>	
<i>Local Color</i>	
<i>Exoticism: Habsburg Dominance</i>	
<i>CONCLUSION</i>	
CHAPTER THREE: DIE LUSTIGE WITWE: CHANGING THE GENRE	51
<i>DIE LUSTIGE WITWE</i>	
<i>Origins</i>	
<i>Plot and Romance: Influx of Realism</i>	
<i>CONVENTIONS: RETAINING THE ESSENTIALS WHILE</i>	
<i>BREAKING THE MOLD</i>	
<i>Waltz: Dramatic Realism</i>	
<i>Exoticism and Local Color: The Cosmopolitan Composer</i>	
<i>CONCLUSION</i>	
CHAPTER FOUR: DER TANZ INS GLÜCK AND ZWEI HERZEN IN DREIVIERTELTAKT: END OF THE GENRE	76
<i>DER TANZ INS GLÜCK</i>	
<i>Origins</i>	
<i>Plot: Changing Views of Romantic Intrigue</i>	
<i>ARRIVAL OF FILM: ZWEI HERZEN IN DREIVIERTELTAKT</i>	
<i>Origins</i>	
<i>Plot: Simple and Straightforward—New Expectations</i>	
<i>CONVENTIONS: WHAT REMAINED IN A FADING GENRE</i>	
<i>Waltz: the Most “Nostalgic” Element</i>	

*Local Color: Connection to the Typical Viennese*  
*Exoticism: Influence of American Musical Theatre*  
*Film: A World Genre*  
**CONCLUSION**

CHAPTER FIVE: "SCHLUSSGESANG"	98
BIBLIOGRAPHY	102

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To my loving and supportive husband, Michael

## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

Scholarship concerning operetta primarily focuses on its influence upon the genres of comic opera and musical theatre. Unlike the serious dramatic works of the “high art” operatic stage, operetta was a popular form; in fact, works within this genre are even described as “short, or otherwise less ambitious, derivatives of opera.”<sup>1</sup> This lighter quality is typical in operetta. Plots are comedic, with romantic twists and improbable events. The genre combines spoken dialogue with tuneful, easily recognizable music that appeals to a broad assortment of musical tastes. Despite its seemingly wide audience, only a select few works of exceptional quality remain in the repertoire today. Most of these works are from the Viennese tradition. Through the operettas of Johann Strauss (1825-1899), Franz Lehár (1870-1948), and Robert Stolz (1880-1975), the genre reached its pinnacle. Operettas constituted the majority of each composer’s musical output, and each achieved international fame through the worldwide performances of his works, which were often translated into the vernacular. These three composers also adapted conventions of operetta to suit the tastes of the Viennese public, thereby contributing to the development of the genre.

Of their contributions, the most notable were Strauss’s *Die Fledermaus* (1874), Lehár’s *Die Lustige Witwe* (1905), and Stolz’s *Der Tanz ins Glück* (1920). These three operettas represented the first major success for each composer and were widely known:

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<sup>1</sup>Andrew Lamb, “Operetta,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy. <http://www.grovemusic.com.ezproxy.baylor.edu> (accessed April 24, 2008).

*Die Fledermaus* became “the golden standard by which other Viennese operettas are measured today,” *Die Lustige Witwe* ushered in the era of the “silver Viennese operetta,” and *Der Tanz ins Glück* “swept Europe.”<sup>2</sup> The plot of each work had sexual content considered mildly risqué at the time of their premieres. In addition, each included a prominent waltz, exoticism, and local color, elements that emerged as standard conventions of Viennese operetta. It was how each composer used these conventions that changed over time. Furthermore, the concept of nostalgia for an ideal past was particularly important for these works. The epicurean lifestyle suggested by these operettas was far from realistic, and served as an escape from the harsh realities of their time, including Habsburg censorship, the fall of an empire, and the impending threat of war in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nevertheless, nostalgia was not a musical characteristic but a social one; it described the feeling and attachment of contemporaneous audiences to this music for political or socioeconomic reasons. As a result, while not a focal point in this paper, it is relevant in regard to certain specific musical elements, particularly the waltz.

In *Die Fledermaus*, Strauss “voiced a nostalgia for an idealized Vienna and stamped the Viennese operetta with an individuality that was carried over in the work of his successors.”<sup>3</sup> Indeed, Strauss so codified the form and conventions of operetta that they lasted for a century after *Die Fledermaus*, and were seen in the works of Lehár and Stolz. Lehár’s *Die Lustige Witwe* achieved world fame. Due to his educational and ethnic background, he demonstrated a more diverse compositional palette than those within the

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<sup>2</sup>Richard Traubner, *Operetta: A Theatrical History* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1983), 103, 243, 300.

<sup>3</sup>Leslie Orrey, ed., *The Encyclopedia of Opera* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1976), 335.

traditional Viennese school. Stolz, who conducted over five hundred performances of *Die Lustige Witwe*, was intimately familiar with operetta conventions, and was widely known as the “last of the great operetta composers.”<sup>4</sup> Like Lehár’s *Die Lustige Witwe*, *Der Tanz ins Glück* was successful worldwide, though Stolz’s most notable works were those for recordings and films, such as *Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt* (1930). He therefore applied the established conventions of operetta in these easily accessible mediums.

*Die Fledermaus*, *Die Lustige Witwe*, and *Der Tanz ins Glück* were significant musically as well as culturally; they epitomized the most important developments within Viennese operetta from its inception to its decay in popularity. Alteration of the conventional elements of a genre can be expected even in an individual composer’s style and specific output; however, many of operetta’s essential features remained intact. Audiences expected certain traditional aspects, such as a grand waltz; however, because composers did not adapt the genre beyond these expectations, operetta was superseded in popularity by musical theatre in the mid-twentieth century. Because the time span of the popularity of the genre is limited, a study of the development of its conventions is possible. I will study the conventions of the aforementioned works of Strauss, Lehár, and Stolz in an effort to demonstrate what remained constant and how the genre changed.

### *Composer Backgrounds*

The three composers in question had similar educational backgrounds; all three came from musical families and received encouragement for a musical career from their mothers. Furthermore, their wives or love interests were tied to their careers, as these

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<sup>4</sup>Andrew Lamb, *150 Years of Popular Musical Theatre* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 222.

paramours were often singers or were involved with management of performers. The shape of their careers was comparable because the social and political state of Vienna at the time of their most successful compositions directly influenced their compositional choices. Additionally, because business demands of the genre remained alike in each of their lifetimes, they needed entrepreneurial skills. Each, however, had different ambitions both financially and artistically. Similar backgrounds yielded similar compositional results; yet each composer made particular choices because of his educational and musical experiences.

### *Johann Strauss*

Johann Strauss is considered by some to be the creator of the Viennese waltz-operetta, which combined the style of the French operettas of Offenbach with the Viennese social dance tradition of the waltz.<sup>5</sup> *Die Fledermaus*, his most commercially and artistically successful operetta, is deemed a masterpiece of the genre, and the example which Viennese operetta composers sought to emulate. Strauss's family, education, and personal life are important in understanding his development as a conductor and as a composer.

Strauss's father, known now as Johann Strauss the Elder, was a renowned composer of waltzes. The Elder Strauss did not wish for his children to become musicians; thus, the younger Strauss was educated at the Polytechnic Institute to become a banker. It was his mother who encouraged him to pursue music professionally, and

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<sup>5</sup>Sterling Mackinlay, *Origin and Development of Light Opera* (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1927), 158.

with her consent and guidance, he secretly took violin lessons.<sup>6</sup> She provided one of Johann the Elder's violins for her son, and used her savings to start his violin lessons. He later paid for his violin lessons by providing piano instruction to several neighbors; he studied with the principal violinist of his father's orchestra, who risked losing his position by helping the younger Strauss. As a child, he began to compose and studied theory (also in secret) with Josef Dreschsler, the Capellmeister at St. Stephen's Cathedral. Because of his preoccupation with music, his behavior in school was deemed unacceptable and he was expelled. After discovering these school troubles, Strauss's father warned his son about the fickle nature of the public and the financial difficulty musicians faced. Fortunately, the younger Strauss disregarded his father's advice, and pursued a musical life.<sup>7</sup>

Like his family background, his marital life was closely related to his career. His first wife, Henrietta Treffz, whom he married in 1862, was a singer and she encouraged Strauss to write his first operetta. It was her connection with Theater an der Wien that provided him with his first commission. Nearly ten years his elder, her relationship with Strauss waned near the end of her life.<sup>8</sup> Throughout their marriage, however, she encouraged him to compose more and accept fewer conducting positions, and therefore was responsible for his shift to a larger output of works. In addition, she managed his

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<sup>6</sup>"The King of Waltz Music: Johann Strauss, the Composer of Dances and Operettas: The Son of a Famous Waltz Writer and Brother of Two Others -- A Musician in Spite of Opposition -- How He Became an Operetta Writer -- The Manner in Which His Operettas Are Written -- He Composed One Grand Opera - - A Blaster of Instrumentation." *New York Times* (1857-Current file), March 25, 1894. <http://www.proquest.com/> (accessed November 21, 2008).

<sup>7</sup>"Johann Strauss: The Waltz King," *The Musical Times* 50, No. 798 (Aug. 1, 1909): 511-512.

<sup>8</sup>Egon Gartenberg, *Johann Strauss* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1974), 252.

business affairs.<sup>9</sup> He remarried shortly after her death in 1878, but his second marriage to a woman known as a “coquette and a strumpet” ended in divorce.<sup>10</sup> She left him for the director of the Theater an der Wien and friend of Strauss, Franz Steiner. The end of this torrid relationship had a drastic effect on his career, and led him to temporarily seek engagements outside of Vienna. For instance, Strauss arranged for the premiere of *Eine Nacht in Venedig* (1883) to occur in Berlin, rather than in Vienna.<sup>11</sup>

Shortly before the unsuccessful run of this operetta in Berlin, he married again in 1882, and he remained happily wed to his third wife, Adele, until his death. Both families opposed the marriage, as Strauss’s family was Catholic and hers was Jewish; in addition, she was at first disliked by the Viennese public, as he renounced both his Austrian citizenship and Catholicism to obtain a divorce from his second wife so that he could marry Adele. His relationship with her differed from those of his previous wives. She was important to his career because she managed his finances and supported his artistic endeavors. His religious conversion and change of citizenship did not, in the long run, diminish his career, and the operetta he wrote immediately after their marriage, *Der Zigeunerbaron* (1885), was an extraordinary success.<sup>12</sup>

Strauss’s career, like his personal life, had many obstacles. His entrance into performing and conducting publicly in Vienna was not an easy one; the Viennese magistrate required performers to obtain a license to perform publicly, which was only possible with the consent of the father. Instead of asking his father’s permission, Strauss

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<sup>9</sup>Jerome Pastene, *Three Quarter Time: the Life and Music of the Strauss Family of Vienna* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1951), 103.

<sup>10</sup>David Ewen, “The Vienna Strausses,” *The Musical Quarterly* 21, No. 4 (Oct. 1935): 469.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, 469.

<sup>12</sup>Gartenberg, *Johann Strauss*, 255-260.

presented letters from prominent musical and political figures, and had a friend on the licensing committee help him pass the application without his father's knowledge.<sup>13</sup> Johann Strauss the younger first conducted publicly on October 15, 1844 at Dommayer's Casino, performing many works by his father as well as a waltz of his own. Vienna celebrated his overnight rise to fame, and son replaced father as the primary waltz composer of the city.<sup>14</sup> The success of the younger Strauss over the Elder divided the Viennese public, who, "frustrated by an autocracy that kept every political interest and opinion but its own under rigid surveillance and check, found an outlet in taking up the sword over minor matters which, in a more politically balanced day, might never have been given a second thought."<sup>15</sup> This attention, however negative, garnered recognition for the younger Strauss's accomplishments.<sup>16</sup>

Many of Strauss's operettas never entered the standard repertory primarily because of bad libretti, though he wrote several musical gems. He was generally less adept with larger ensembles, passionate expression, and highly dramatic situations, but was rather at his best working with small forms, dance rhythms, and comedy. In particular, Strauss was gifted in creating memorable melodies and talented with orchestration.<sup>17</sup> In fact, he employed many harmonic and orchestral devices commonly

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<sup>13</sup>Pastene, *Three Quarter Time*, 62.

<sup>14</sup>Ewen, "The Vienna Strausses," 467-468.

<sup>15</sup>Pastene, *Three Quarter Time*, 63.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, 68.

<sup>17</sup> Eduard Hanslick, *Vienna's Golden Years of Music 1850-1900*, trans. and ed. by Henry Pleasants III (NY: Simon and Schuster, 1950), 327-329.

found in the music of Liszt and Wagner.<sup>18</sup> Though he used winds and percussion instruments more than his predecessors, the violin still dominated the thicker texture.<sup>19</sup> Strauss, an excellent violinist, played the violin to lead the orchestra in the concerts he conducted early in his career. It is not surprising then, that the violin remained an important instrument in operetta composition.<sup>20</sup> He composed 479 works, including 174 polkas, 70 quadrilles, 40 marches, 36 miscellaneous dances, and 159 waltzes.<sup>21</sup> With these dances, fifteen operettas, and one opera, his compositional output reached a volume similar to that of Mozart or Schubert.

Even though he maintained some of the clichés of sentimental light music associated with the waltz and operetta, Strauss enjoyed the respect of a wide array of composers and critics from Hans von Bülow and Richard Wagner to Johannes Brahms and Eduard Hanslick, all of whom praised Strauss as a melodist. He had a notable friendship with Johannes Brahms, with whom Strauss became friends near the end of their lives. The friendship was primarily based on Brahms's admiration for Strauss's music and the respect that Strauss had for Brahms's authority on musical ideas and understanding of music.<sup>22</sup> Strauss was one of the few contemporaries for whom Wagner had any praise.<sup>23</sup> Strauss was also admired by Eduard Hanslick, one of the most powerful critics of the time; known as Vienna's "musical pope," his opinion of a work

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<sup>18</sup>Mosco Carner, *The Waltz* (London: Max Parrish and Co. Limited, 1948), 49.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>20</sup>Camille Crittenden, *Operetta and the Politics of Popular Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 87-88.

<sup>21</sup>Bernard Grun, *Kulturgeschichte der Operette* (Munich: Albert, Langen, 1961), 140.

<sup>22</sup>Andrew Lamb, "Brahms and Johann Strauss," *The Musical Times* 116, No. 1592 (Oct. 1975): 869.

<sup>23</sup>Mosco Carner, *Major and Minor* (NY: Holmes and Meier Publishers, Inc., 1980), 56.

could make or break its success.<sup>24</sup> At Strauss's death, Hanslick wrote, "Vienna has lost its most original musical talent. The sources of his melodic invention were as fine as they were inexhaustible; his rhythm pulsed with animated variety; his harmonies and his forms were pure and upright."<sup>25</sup> Hanslick observed that all composers of the Viennese tradition of waltzes and operettas came from the Strauss tradition, whether intentionally or not. That critics such as Hanslick wrote about popular music is notable; prior to Strauss's cultural prominence, opera had been the vocal and theatrical genre given the closest analysis by critics. Inclusion of operetta brought the genre to a different level.<sup>26</sup> To most critics, *Die Fledermaus* was Strauss's "masterpiece."<sup>27</sup>

Yet, as a part of a popular genre, *Die Fledermaus* was "utility music," written for the masses, rather than for posterity.<sup>28</sup> In comparison to his contemporaries who composed art music, Strauss sought to appeal to more than an educated and socially elite audience.<sup>29</sup> Though theatre seating reflected social class, with the wealthiest individuals and aristocrats near the orchestra, business owners in balconies, and students and the working class in the highest balcony, a wide range of social and economic levels came to see "a happy end, and in that sense the genre did provide an escape from daily concerns."<sup>30</sup> Appeal to the lower classes allowed for a wider dissemination of Strauss's music, an appeal cemented by his memorable tunes. These melodies did not require the

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<sup>24</sup>Carner, *The Waltz*, 50.

<sup>25</sup>Hanslick, *Vienna's Golden Years of Music*, 325.

<sup>26</sup> Crittenden, *Operetta and the Politics*, 9.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, 326-327.

<sup>28</sup>Carner, *Major and Minor*, 56.

<sup>29</sup> Crittenden, *Operetta and the Politics*, 38, 91.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*, 35-37.

piano skills typical in the upper-middle and higher social strata and were therefore dearly loved by those outside the culturally elite.<sup>31</sup>

Because of the socially diverse audience, the development of the aforementioned conventions was closely related to the financial aspect of Strauss's compositional output. Other composers who followed him attempted to emulate his promotional skills, including Lehár and Stolz.<sup>32</sup> The Strauss family, at the height of their success, was powerful in the music business, employing over two hundred musicians and a staff of librarians, assistant conductors, copyists, publicists and booking agents.<sup>33</sup> Like the career of his father, Strauss's continued popularity depended upon self-advertisement, a skill at which he excelled. For example, Vienna had many newspapers and Strauss paid for advertisements in publications typically read by the bourgeois. Among these was *Die Bombe*, a satirical newspaper that addressed political issues through pop-culture metaphors, including those from operetta. Advertisements placed in this publication were directed toward an audience likely to see his performances.<sup>34</sup>

Operetta was given more significance socially and in the press than other theatrical genres at the time. It was "frequently weighted with political metaphor" and viewed as a political statement on Viennese life.<sup>35</sup> The theatre was the most acceptable

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 2.

<sup>32</sup>In fact, his self-promotion remains important in popular music: "All the tricks employed by today's commercialized pop music producers, including extensive publicity campaigns to promote a new record or pop group, are but variations on the themes developed by Strauss." Franz Endler, *Vienna: A Guide to its Music and Musicians*, trans. Leo Jecny, ed. Reinhard G. Pauly (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1989), 51.

<sup>33</sup>Pastene, *Three Quarter Time*, 78, 89.

<sup>34</sup>"Die Fledermaus," *Die Bombe*, 12 April 1874, Austrian Newspapers Online, <<http://anno.onb.ac.at/>> (accessed July 2008).

<sup>35</sup>Crittenden, *Operetta and the Politics*, 27-30.

form of public entertainment despite the fact that the Habsburgs maintained a system of censorship in “an attempt to exclude from the Habsburg lands any literature that might tend to subvert the status quo.”<sup>36</sup> Viennese fascination with the arts, especially in a time of economic and political crises, was escapist in nature. Vienna was plagued by a serious housing shortage in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries; working class housing, especially, was subpar. Heating apartments was prohibitively expensive, thus, the habit of sitting in a café to sip one drink for several hours, thought by tourists to be part of the easygoing and responsibility-free nature of the Viennese, was in fact a means to stay warm. In these conditions, the waltz and operetta thrived. Residents of Vienna “spoke of the Viennese passion for the dance as pathological and as reflecting their need to escape the harsh realities of daily life in the City of Dreams.”<sup>37</sup> Especially in *Die Fledermaus*, the ballroom scene had several political implications that will be discussed later in the paper.

Strauss’s personal background and early compositional career led to the immense success of *Die Fledermaus*. With positive reception from art composers, critics, and the populace alike, it was no surprise that later composers followed his example in their own works. They did so primarily through the conventional traits that Strauss established. Interestingly, the life experiences of Strauss are quite similar to those of Franz Lehár and the development of his career and works, including *Die Lustige Witwe*.

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<sup>36</sup>Paul Banks, “Vienna: Absolutism and Nostalgia,” *The Late Romantic Era*, ed. Jim Samson (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1991), 74-76.

<sup>37</sup>Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin, *Wittgenstein’s Vienna* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973), 34-35.

## *Franz Lehár*

Franz Lehár is known as one of the most successful operetta composers of the early twentieth century. His famed *Die Lustige Witwe* or, as it was presented to British and American audiences, *The Merry Widow*, made the composer a multi-millionaire. Like Strauss, he came from a musical family and had a good musical education. Lehár wanted to create high art; his reception by both critics and musicians differed from that of Strauss. Many of his compositional techniques mimicked the successful ones of Strauss, though his extension of the genre beyond its typical conventions, especially in dramatic content, made his work memorable.

Lehár spent most of his childhood moving, since his father was a Regimental Bandmaster. As a result, his social and cultural education occurred all over the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He became fluent in many languages, and acquired an understanding of different regional cultures resulting in respect from persons in those cultures: “to the Viennese he always seemed a Viennese, to the Hungarians a Hungarian, to the Czechs a Czech, to the Poles and Slovaks a Pole and Slovak.”<sup>38</sup> Like Strauss’s mother, Lehár’s was a source of constant encouragement for her son’s musical propensity. Though Lehár’s father believed his son to have musical aptitude, he thought that improvement occurred through criticism, and was systematic and demanding with his son’s early musical training. His mother insisted that in order to further Lehár’s musical education, they must live in a city; as a result his father transferred to another regiment in Budapest. Not long after, because his parents decided that his German needed improvement, he was sent to Sternberg to live with an uncle, who required him to practice both piano and

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<sup>38</sup>Bernard Grun, *Gold and Silver: The Life and Times of Franz Lehár* (New York: David McKay and Company, Inc., 1970), 24-25.

violin rigorously. Meanwhile, his parents sought entrance for their son to a music academy, and at 12 years of age, he went to the Böhmisches Landes-Konservatorium in Prague. There he studied violin and composition and had the opportunity to meet Anton Dvořák, who encouraged Lehár to compose. He also played violin for Johannes Brahms, at the behest of Dvořák. Lehár's father was against his son's creative ambitions, for a violinist could always find work, but a composer would have a much more difficult financial life.<sup>39</sup>

The romantic relationships in Lehár's life had less influence on his career than those of Strauss. Lehár was often considered attractive, which may be why the aging Princess Metternich-Sándor, a famous socialite in Vienna, decided to arrange for a "Gold-and-Silver" waltz in 1902, and commissioned Lehár to write it. Though not a great success, the press following the "Gold und Silber" waltz introduced Franz Lehár to the world.<sup>40</sup> Unlike Strauss, Lehár remained a bachelor for many years. Lehár met his wife Sophie after he had become a great financial success; she was married at the time, and it took years before she obtained a divorce and Lehár agreed to give up his single life. Though she was not particularly influential in his compositional life, she did not hold him back, and provided a quiet and comfortable home for him. Nevertheless, Lehár enjoyed the company of a certain type of woman outside of his marriage, and Sophie, "the ideal wife who knew of her 'bachelor husband's' escapades," chose to ignore them and remain in an acquiescent relationship.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid., 25-35.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 64-65.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 147-150.

Lehár worked both as a theatre violinist and as a military band leader, eventually taking his father's place. In this, his path was similar to that of Strauss, though with marches instead of waltzes, and a military band as opposed to an orchestra. He composed various marches and waltzes, the first notable waltz being the previously mentioned "Gold und Silber." One of his earliest stage works was *Kukuschka*, a Russian opera, which received some positive reviews but was not widely performed. Other mildly successful early works included *Der Rastelbinder* (1902), *Wiener Frauen* (1902), and *Die Juxheirat* (1904).<sup>42</sup>

The early part of Lehár's career was marked by the view that the age of operetta had already passed; "the early 1890s represented a watershed for European operetta. Many of its founders seemed content to rest on their reputations, while newcomers evinced an interest in bringing the genre up to date."<sup>43</sup> Lehár's attitude toward operetta was different from that of Strauss; rather than a lesser version of opera, written for a popular audience, "it was a distinctive art form to be taken seriously and not to be debased by the incorporation of parody or burlesque."<sup>44</sup> The influence of his operatic composer friends was evident, as well as his sensitivity to the developments in other music in Vienna at the time. His later works were structured differently than the tonal compositions of his early years, as they feature persistent use of chromaticism over a tonic or dominant pedal tone.<sup>45</sup> Though he had several failures after the widely acclaimed *Die Lustige Witwe* (1905), his 1909 *Der Graf vom Luxemborg* was a success,

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 45-90.

<sup>43</sup>Lamb, *150 Years*, 58.

<sup>44</sup>Gervase Hughes, *Composers of Operetta* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1974), 139.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 141.

as was *Zigeunerliebe* of 1910. In 1911, he wrote an unconventional piece, *Eva*, whose main character was a factory worker.<sup>46</sup> This was an attempt to appeal to the mass populace, and fit into the post-Habsburg trend to notice the working classes. These newer compositions, which delved into an “*innere, private Welt* [inner private world],” were not what Lehár fans expected, and most often failed.<sup>47</sup> One of the primary criticisms of these later works was that they became too tragic, which worked against the stabilizing function of operetta in society, namely, to reinforce the status quo through a happy ending. Such resolution in the finale ensured that all of the emotional turbulence throughout the performance ceased, an illusion strikingly familiar to the nostalgia-seeking Viennese.<sup>48</sup>

Like Strauss, Lehár employed orchestral devices typical of contemporary art composers; his techniques were more like those of Richard Strauss than of Johann Strauss, and he included similar colorings to those of Mahler and Debussy. For example, the woodwinds were given primary consideration, as opposed to the dominant violin of the Strauss era, harp was included, and the brass used for soft textures instead of just for climaxes, thus creating a new timbre for the operetta stage.<sup>49</sup>

Additionally, Lehár enjoyed the friendship and admiration of “high art” composer Giacomo Puccini, who kept a signed photograph of Lehár in his home. He referred to his

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<sup>46</sup>Lamb, *150 Years*, 78-79.

<sup>47</sup>Christian Marten, *Die Operette als Singspiel der Gesellschaft: Frans Lehár's 'Die Lustige Witwe'—Versuch einer Socialen Theorie*. Europäische Hochschulschriften, no. 36:34. (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1989): 61.

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*, 66.

<sup>49</sup>Edward Michael Gold, “Franz Lehár: The Complete Cosmopolitan,” *Journal of the Conductor's Guild* 18, No. 1 (Winter-Spring 1997): 21-23.

opera *La Rondine* as “bad Lehár.”<sup>50</sup> Lehár wished to write opera, and “when he told him [Puccini] of his intention to write a full-scale tragic opera, Puccini’s advice—prompted, possibly, by his own experiences with *La Rondine*—was to stick to his last—operetta.”<sup>51</sup> Despite Puccini’s warnings, Lehár delved into *bel canto* style opera, and his *Giuditta* (1934) premiered at the Vienna Staatsoper. The press decried it, although it had forty-two well attended performances.<sup>52</sup> Many operetta scholars noted that “had he [Lehár] striven to imitate Johann rather than Richard Strauss, the operetta picture in this century might have been radically different.”<sup>53</sup>

*Die Lustige Witwe* received critical acclaim in Vienna, though not all of its residents cheered the operetta’s success. Karl Kraus, a noted Austrian satirist, called Lehár “one of the most degenerate artists of his day.”<sup>54</sup> Kraus believed that the growing sensationalism surrounding the operetta and crowd-pleasing lightness were detrimental to art in general, and to the public. He did not object to risqué content, but rather noted that Lehár’s works were not intellectually stimulating. Though Lehár delved into more serious music, Kraus associated him with the lighter genres. To him, Lehár’s success was a measure of the erosion of cultural life in Vienna; catering to the lowest classes artistically lowered popular taste and expectations.<sup>55</sup> This was certainly the opinion of Richard Strauss, who may have been so vehement in his railing against Lehár because of

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<sup>50</sup> Mosco Carner, *Puccini: A Critical Biography* (London: Gerald Duckworth and Co. Ltd., 1958), 67.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.

<sup>52</sup> Grun, *Gold and Silver*, 246-251.

<sup>53</sup> Traubner, *Operetta: A Theatrical History*, 244.

<sup>54</sup> Janik, *Wittgenstein’s Vienna*, 81.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 81-84.

jealousy over royalties and/or the place Lehár had in the hearts of the Viennese public. Strauss wrote, “the danger that threatens our entire cultural standard from films and from Lehár and his cronies, and to which it has to a large extent already succumbed, can no longer be shrugged off merely by ignoring it! To declare war on it would be a pleasurable duty!”<sup>56</sup> On the other hand, although Alma and Gustav Mahler felt that operetta was low-brow, they enjoyed seeing a production of *Die Lustige Witwe* “so much that we danced at home afterward, reconstructing Lehár’s waltz from memory.”<sup>57</sup> They then went to a music store to find a passage in the score that neither could recall (though they remained “too proud” to purchase the music).<sup>58</sup>

The success of *Die Lustige Witwe* “has the characteristics of a fairy tale.”<sup>59</sup> The operetta had unprecedented success in box offices around the world, and the immense profit was supplemented by the sale of products branded “Merry Widow.”<sup>60</sup> The opening production and subsequent ones abroad made stars of the performers involved.<sup>61</sup> The phenomenon of *Die Lustige Witwe* was its nearly universal allure to both art composers and a general public. This was due in part to Lehár’s retention of the important conventions. Though his use of the waltz served a different dramaturgical function than Strauss’s waltz for *Die Fledermaus*, and his use of local color and exoticism reflected a different political climate, these aspects were present in the work.

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<sup>56</sup>Robin Holloway, “A question of kitsch,” *Opera* 56, No. 12 (Dec. 2005): 1430-1433.

<sup>57</sup>Alma Mahler Werfel and E.B. Ashton, *And the Bridge is Love* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1958), 32.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>59</sup>*Ibid.*, 249.

<sup>60</sup>W. Macqueen-Pope and D.L. Murray, *Fortune’s Favorite: the Life and Times of Franz Lehár* (London: Hutchinson, 1953), 114.

<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*, 70.

Lehár, like other nineteenth-century composers, believed music to be of great social and spiritual importance. In this regard, he was more ambitious than Strauss and composed music he hoped would be canonized rather than “utility music.” However, he was often dismissed as a purely commercial composer whose works do not even pretend to be “high art,” even though his works are continually performed by singers with exceptional talent for operatic singing. In addition, *Die Lustige Witwe* was scored for a larger orchestra, much like the works of Puccini and Richard Strauss. In fact, for the London premiere, Lehár insisted on a larger orchestra than could fit comfortably in the pit. He only agreed to a smaller ensemble for performances at Daly’s Theatre because use of the full orchestra would have required removing several rows of seats, thus lowering ticket sales.<sup>62</sup> Such a conflict between practicality and artistry permeated his career. Though he wanted the career renown of an art composer, he also maintained the “old Austrian lifestyle” of a commercially successful operetta composer: he lived in a large house, spent his summers in Ischl where the Emperor vacationed, and his parties were covered in gossip columns.<sup>63</sup>

Unlike Strauss’s *Die Fledermaus*, *Die Lustige Witwe* obtained negative political associations years after it premiered, as it was very popular with Nazi supporters. Adolf Hitler saw Lehár’s operetta the year that it premiered in Vienna, and it became his favorite operetta. His supporters produced this work and others by Lehár throughout the Nazi regime. Though Lehár did not actively support the Nazis, he was thought to be a Nazi sympathizer; therefore, his work was largely ignored after the fall of the Third Reich. Lehár and his wife were unable to leave their home during World War II because

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<sup>62</sup>Macqueen-Pope, *Fortune’s Favorite*, 97.

<sup>63</sup>Traubner, *Operetta: A Theatrical History*, 244-247.

of his poor health, and the Nazi awards and honors he received served only to cause him much stress and offend many Jewish friends and colleagues, particularly the Jewish librettists who wrote the text to his most successful operetta.<sup>64</sup> Lehár's music came to have a negative connotation because it was associated with a Nazi approved repertory that displaced even the works of Richard Strauss (much to that composer's consternation). In fact, the association was so strong that other composers used sections of *Die Lustige Witwe* to represent the height of Hitler's regime. For instance, a quote from Danilo's aria "Da geh' ich zu Maxim" appears in Shostakovich's Symphony, No. 7 (*Leningrad*) of 1942 over a repeating snare drum rhythm, to suggest the marching of the Germans into Russia.<sup>65</sup> Avant-garde British composer Maxwell Davies satirized the operettas of Lehár in his *Revelation and Fall* (1965).<sup>66</sup> Nevertheless, a London revival of the operetta in 1943 was successful. A 1948 British obituary for the composer stated, "It was a remarkable achievement to bridge the gulf in taste created by the 1914-1918 war...Lehár will be remembered as a provider of light music of a high order embodying the gaiety of a world that has succumbed to two world wars, a worthy successor of the great Strauss dynasty."<sup>67</sup>

Lehár's involvement in operetta composition came at a time when it was considered to be past its prime, and yet he created a work "that is responsible for a

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<sup>64</sup>Harold Roan Mortimer, "The Silver Operetta and the Golden Musical: The Influence of the Viennese Operetta (1905-1935) on the Broadway Musical of the Golden Age (1943-1964)," (DMA Diss., University of Washington, 1999), 38-39.

<sup>65</sup>Alex Ross, *The Rest is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2007), 247.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., 463.

<sup>67</sup>"Obituary: Herr Franz Lehar, Composer of 'The Merry Widow,'" *The Times*, October 25, 1948.

vibrant reawakening in the world of Viennese light musical theatre.”<sup>68</sup> Perhaps this work addressed the needs of the public for singable tunes evoking the ideal past, which, combined with a modern sense of psychological insight and realistic relationships, contributed to a renewal of the genre, a renewal that eventually led to the works of Robert Stolz.

### *Robert Stolz*

Robert Stolz (1880-1975) lived through some of the most dramatic upheavals in European history and, like Strauss and Lehár, had to adjust his compositional output to suit changing tastes and musical tendencies. Though he had a similar educational background, and sought to make his fortune in operetta, the technological advancements in recording and film vastly altered his opportunities and goals. Furthermore, the advent of two world wars at the height of his compositional life changed the perspective on the qualities that led to a “worldwide” success. His 1920 operetta *Der Tanz ins Glück* was not as successful as *Die Fledermaus* or *Die Lustige Witwe*. It was Stolz’s film operetta *Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt* (1930), rather than a stage work, that remained his most enduring success.

Like Strauss and Lehár, Stolz was born to a family immersed in music; his father was a conductor, and his mother a concert pianist. His parents had a connection to Verdi through Stolz’s aunt, a famed Verdi soprano. His parents maintained close relationships with both Brahms (whom Stolz referred to as “Grandpa” Brahms) and Bruckner (whom

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<sup>68</sup>Gold, “Franz Lehár: The Complete Cosmopolitan,” 20.

parents referred to as “Poor Anton” in the privacy of their home).<sup>69</sup> Also like his predecessors, Stolz was close to and encouraged by his mother. Stolz was a child prodigy and toured Europe at an early age to play recitals as a concert pianist. He studied theory and composition with Robert Fuchs at the Vienna Conservatoire and later studied composition with Engelbert Humperdink.<sup>70</sup> Like Lehár, Stolz served as a military musician and conducted a regimental band during World War I. At this time, he began to write popular Viennese songs with a nostalgic tone that praised the city and functioned as consolation for the city’s residents. His early popularity as a composer then grew.<sup>71</sup>

The most thorough (and colorful) account of Stolz’s life and the influence of his five marriages on his career is in his autobiography. Like Strauss, his first wife Grete was a singer. Because of their desire to remain together, he turned down a conducting job in Cologne to be with her in Vienna; he then obtained the job of conductor at the Theater an der Wien, where he was to conduct 547 performances of *Die Lustige Witwe*. As his relationship with his wife began to break down, primarily over musical disagreements they had concerning performances she sang and he conducted, he became involved with a chorus girl named Franzl. His wife discovered the affair and ended their marriage. Stolz married Franzl, who later left him for one of his closest friends, a story very similar to that of Strauss’s second wife. The marriage he claimed as his “most disastrous” was his third, to Josephine. Also a singer, her “ambition outweighed her

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<sup>69</sup>Robert Stolz, Einzi Stolz, and Aram Bakshian, Jr., *The Barbed Wire Waltz: The Memoirs of the Last Waltz King: based on tapes, documents, and stories told by Robert and Einzi Stolz* (Melbourne: Robert Stolz Publishing Company, 1983), 7-19.

<sup>70</sup>“Robert Stolz,” *The Times* 28 June 1975, Issue 59434, col. F, p. 14. Database on-line. Available from *The Times* Digital Archive 1785-1985 (accessed 22 Nov. 2008).

<sup>71</sup>*Robert Stolz, the Man and his Times: 25<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1980: 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of his Birth* (Vienna: Bundespressdienst, 1979), 2.

talent” and she called on Stolz to use his contacts to help develop her career.<sup>72</sup> Failing at this, she, like his second wife, had several affairs before this marriage too ended in divorce. His fourth wife, Lilli, left her husband for Stolz. Their marriage (the dissolution of which Stolz attributed to emigration and war) lasted fourteen years. He met his fifth wife, Yvonne, nicknamed “Einzi” or “the only one” while in exile in Paris. She was called by this nickname because she provided legal assistance to artists who otherwise had no hope of escaping from the Nazis.<sup>73</sup> Stolz, despite being of Aryan descent, chose to leave Hitler-controlled Germany and Austria. Nazis attempted to bring him back to Vienna, and it was Einzi who helped him to escape to the United States in 1940.<sup>74</sup> She devoted herself to him and to keeping his music alive throughout the world, arranging for many of his concerts during the last twenty-eight years of his career, including his conducting debut at the Vienna Staatsoper when he was eighty-five.<sup>75</sup>

Stolz was directly influenced by Strauss and Lehár, having seen or met both of the famous composers in his youth. He had the opportunity to see Johann Strauss conduct a performance of *Die Fledermaus* at the Vienna Staatsoper a few weeks before Strauss’s death in 1899.<sup>76</sup> After this performance, Stolz decided to pursue popular music, rather than a career in art music for which his educational background had prepared him. In his autobiography, Stolz remarked that following Strauss’s death, “I was sure that the imprint of so great a genius would not vanish with the death of the man himself. And from that

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<sup>72</sup>Stolz, *The Barbed Wire Waltz*, 91, 106-110.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., 123, 148, 152-154, 213-215.

<sup>74</sup>Robert Stolz, *the Man and his Times*, 9.

<sup>75</sup> Nigel Douglas, “Mr. Robert Stolz,” *The Times* 02 July 1975, Issue 59437, col. F, p. 18. Database on-line. Available from *The Times* Digital Archive 1785-1985 (accessed 22 Nov. 2008).

<sup>76</sup>Stolz, *The Barbed Wire Waltz*, 56-57.

day, I was one of his sworn disciples.”<sup>77</sup> This was a surprising choice, because the distinction between composers of art music and those of popular music had become even more rigidly defined in Stolz’s lifetime than it had been with Lehár and Strauss. The composer even claimed that “it was after this encounter that I realised [sic] the truth of the saying: there is no such thing as light and serious music, only good and bad music.”<sup>78</sup>

In 1907, Stolz took over as conductor for *Die Lustige Witwe* and conducted the first performance of Lehár’s *Der Graf von Luxemborg* at the Theater an der Wien; his close work with Lehár further influenced his compositional style and business approach for operetta productions.<sup>79</sup> As noted earlier, the interest of English-speaking audiences in foreign operettas blossomed with the English version of *Die Lustige Witwe*, *The Merry Widow*.<sup>80</sup> Stolz, like many of his contemporaries, was encouraged by the widely publicized financial success of Lehár’s work to compose operetta. He offered promise to a genre largely considered to be dying, particularly in the years following World War I.<sup>81</sup>

Stolz could easily see the effects of World War I, and was part of a generation for whom the very essence of their lifestyle was disassembled. With the face of Vienna changing yet again, Stolz had a different opportunity artistically than his predecessors, namely, more autonomy. Less censorship and greater and more varied advertising were among some of the ways artists promoted their works. However, most artistic

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid., 57.

<sup>78</sup>Robert Stolz, *the Man and his Times*, 7.

<sup>79</sup>Lamb, *150 Years*, 222.

<sup>80</sup>Ewen, *The Book of European Light Opera*, 163.

<sup>81</sup>Grun, *Kulturgeschichte der Operette*, 391.

developments arose because of innovations in technology, such as films and recordings.<sup>82</sup> Stolz capitalized on these opportunities by combining the ever-popular nostalgic melodies of the pre-World War I era with the self-advertisement necessary for success in twentieth-century popular art.<sup>83</sup> What made Stolz exceptional was his ability to include conventional waltzes, exoticism, and local color in ways that appealed to changing audience expectations. His music had more simple construction and orchestration than that of Strauss or Lehár. This simplicity of style attracted a less educated audience.<sup>84</sup>

Also, there was a shift in power away from Vienna at this time; success of a work was often perceived by how it was received in Berlin and in American theatres.<sup>85</sup> A composer could face economic hardship if a work was deemed a failure, especially if, as Stolz did many times, he had invested his own money into the production—a flop often meant bankruptcy.<sup>86</sup> He left Vienna for Berlin after one such poor investment in a theatrical venue in 1924 that closed after only a few months.<sup>87</sup> It was in these few years that the tendency to revive well-known works began; the most popular performances were seen over and over again, and theatre producers were less apt to take risks on new works.<sup>88</sup> *Die Fledermaus* and *Die Lustige Witwe* were among the revived works, but Stolz's were not. Stolz's attempt to create "new possibilities with the old methods (*neue*

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<sup>82</sup>Janik, *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, 241-247.

<sup>83</sup> Marten, *Die Operette als Spiegel der Gesellschaft*, 62.

<sup>84</sup>*Ibid.*, 62.

<sup>85</sup>Lief Ludwig Abertson, "Zur Ästhetik der Operette und ihrer Krise in der Zwischenkriegszeit," *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, T. 32, Fasc. 1/4 (1990): 433.

<sup>86</sup> Endler, *Vienna: A Guide to its Music and Musicians*, 85.

<sup>87</sup>Robert Stolz, *the Man and his Times*, 3.

<sup>88</sup>*Ibid.*, 469.

*Möglichkeiten mit den alten Methoden*)” did not revive the genre adequately for it to maintain the same social function it once had under Strauss and Lehár.<sup>89</sup>

Yet he helped to transfer the Viennese operetta style to other mediums such as revues and film. Stolz and the composers with whom he worked in Berlin wrote music despite depression and war surrounding them, because they saw hope of continuing the genre in film and radio.<sup>90</sup> In Stolz’s Berlin years, he collaborated with Ralph Benatzky on the successful revue *Im weissen Rössl*, produced in English as *White Horse Inn* (1930). With most of the score by Benatzky, Stolz’s music was included along with numbers by Granichstädten, Hans Frankowski, Anton Paulik, and others.<sup>91</sup> Because works by multiple composers were included, the revue style show lacked artistic unity and depended more upon slapstick humor. Much of the success of *Im weissen Rössl* was due to its lavish technical display, with bouts of rain, a functional train, live animals, and other spectacular lighting and set elements that attracted a less-than-sophisticated audience. It had a story line with multiple romances, included extensive dance numbers with dancers who “invaded the stage at the slightest excuse” to perform traditional Austrian dances such as the Ländler and the Schuhplattler.<sup>92</sup> Thus, “the ‘spectacular’ musical had arrived; genuine Viennese operetta was now a thing of the past.”<sup>93</sup> As Karl

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<sup>89</sup>Klaus Eidam, *Robert Stolz: Biographie eines Phänomens* (Berlin: Lied der Zeit, 1989), 192-197.

<sup>90</sup>Ed. Otto Brusatti and Wilhelm Deutschmann, *FleZiWiCsá und Co.: die Wiener Operette* (Wien: Eigenverlage der Museen der Stadt Wien, 1984), 9.

<sup>91</sup> Kurt Gänzl, *The Musical: A Concise History* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 222.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., 222-223.

<sup>93</sup> Hughes, *Composers of Operetta*, 152.

Kraus had predicted with Lehár, the appeal to a broad public eradicated any edification of the audience by providing a spectacle in lieu of intellectual content.

Many of these changes were due in part to the new aesthetic set by films. A larger budget became necessary for more magnificent productions that could equal the visual stimuli possible in the movies. Films like *Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt* helped spread operetta works to a mass audience. Because the action moved more quickly in films, stage works then needed similar timing, and overall length became shorter. Streamlined plots drove the operetta further away from the Strauss model.<sup>94</sup> Additionally, the waltz, still a standard feature in operetta, became important in film to express sentimental nostalgia for an idyllic Austrian lifestyle.<sup>95</sup> Therefore, operetta retained “a very important function in the culture of the people (*eine sehr wichtige Funktion in der Volkskultur*).”<sup>96</sup> In comparison to the Brechtian theatre that became increasingly influential in Weimar and Berlin, Stolz never composed libretti that were “superficial” or “alienating.”<sup>97</sup> His older style of operetta proved more adaptable to film, which may have been why he experienced one of the earliest successes in film musicals. The essential elements of Viennese operetta for the stage, such as the waltz, romantic entanglements, and farcical, slapstick humor were included in his film works.<sup>98</sup>

Like Lehár, Nazi control affected Stolz’s career. Because he was a well-respected musical figure, the Nazi party hoped to use his image and music for propaganda. Stolz

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<sup>94</sup> Marten, *Die Operette als Spiegel der Gesellschaft*, 57.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 97-98.

<sup>96</sup> Brusatti, *FleZiWiCsá*, 12.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., 77-78.

was fiercely opposed to the Nazi party and fled Austria.<sup>99</sup> He gained international prominence at this time, in part because of his resistance. Stolz's success continued when he lived in the United States; he received two Oscar nominations for Best Music, one in 1940 for *Spring Parade*, and again in 1944 for *It Happened Tomorrow*, both of which contained waltzes. Stolz spent much of his career after World War II conducting concerts that lauded the Viennese waltz and operetta traditions, and "although he composed music for every possible medium, from the operetta stage to films to television to records to ice spectacles, he will more likely be remembered in operetta chronicles as a champion of composers who preceded him, from Strauss to Straus."<sup>100</sup> Stolz was politically astute, and sought to make his music a bridge for the social gaps caused by World War II. In a 1963 concert in Israel, where it was assumed that all German music would be sung in either English or French translation, he refused to have the Viennese compositions performed in anything but German. Instead of protests, audience members, many of whom had settled in Israel because of the war, answered with tears and an audience sing-along. Press covering the event the following day praised Stolz as "the aptest diplomat" who provided the context for reconciliation.<sup>101</sup>

Throughout his career, Stolz wrote over sixty operettas and the scores to over a hundred films. At the time of his death at age ninety-four, he was extolled for his compositional and conducting careers.<sup>102</sup> Though his operettas seldom receive

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<sup>99</sup>Stolz, *The Barbed Wire Waltz*, 204-205.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 300.

<sup>101</sup>Robert Stolz, *the Man and his Times*, 5. Songs included on these performances included "Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt" from the film discussed in this thesis, as well as "Frühling im Wien" and "Du, du, du sollst der Kaiser meiner Seele sein."

<sup>102</sup>"Robert Stolz," *The Times*.

performances now, many of his songs are excerpted for concert performance, and are considered to be classics of light Viennese repertoire. The recordings he made,

especially those of Johann Strauss's music, "provide a lasting proof of his mastery of the elusive Viennese style."<sup>205</sup> Even with these recordings, it is in *Der Tanz ins Glück* and *Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt* that one can see the continuation of the conventions set by Strauss, as well as Lehár's influence on the genre.

### *Conventions: Defining the Genre*

These three composers and their most prominent works provide the stylistic foundation of operetta. The musical conventions of the waltz, local color, and exoticism become the definitive stylistic traits that make Viennese operetta "Viennese." Each of the works to be discussed, *Die Fledermaus*, *Die Lustige Witwe*, and both *Der Tanz ins Glück* and *Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt*, are examples of this musical and theatrical tradition.

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<sup>205</sup>Douglas, "Mr. Robert Stolz," *The Times*.

## CHAPTER TWO

### *Die Fledermaus: Establishing the Conventions*

#### *Die Fledermaus*

##### *Origins*

Although Johann Strauss's most famous work is now considered typical for Viennese operetta style, "for the time it was strikingly innovative."<sup>1</sup> *Die Fledermaus* is based upon a play by Meilhac and Halévy, taking place during a *reveillon*, a Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve supper. The play was presented to several different librettists, first to Franz Jauner, director of the Carltheater, who enlisted his house writer Karl Haffner to translate it because it was not completely adapted to Viennese tastes; then it was sent to Carl Haffner, who, along with Richard Genée, prepared a new version of the French original. A good deal of the text and all of the song lyrics are Genée's, with small changes involving the character's names and locations.<sup>2</sup> The biggest change was replacing a Christmas dinner for six guests with the Act II ball scene.<sup>3</sup> *Die Fledermaus* premiered at the Theater an der Wien in 1874. It is known as Strauss's best work, and it "deserves its widespread recognition and admiration, for not only did it fulfill contemporary desires under the pressure of contemporary economic circumstances but it

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<sup>1</sup>Camille Crittenden, *Operetta and the Politics of Popular Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 138.

<sup>2</sup>Richard Traubner, *Operetta: A Theatrical History* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1983), 115-116.

<sup>3</sup>Bernard Grun, *Kulturgeschichte der Operette* (Munich: Albert, Langen, 1961), 192-193.

is also the most tightly constructed work of Strauss's long career, filled with elegant melodies and bright instrumentation."<sup>4</sup>

There have been many authors who claimed that Strauss wrote the operetta in six weeks. This judgment is incorrect; it took that long to sketch the work but the actual writing took an additional six months. Also, it has been incorrectly stated that the work was originally a failure, closing after only a few performances, whereas in reality, the run was interrupted by a previously scheduled guest artist in the season.<sup>5</sup> The arrival of a famed Italian soprano, Adelina Patti, to sing *Ernani*, closed the production temporarily after eleven performances. After Patti's run, theatre management, composer, and librettist worked together to resume the run of *Die Fledermaus*.<sup>6</sup>

#### *Plot: Social Extravagance and Gaiety*

The operetta truly begins with the overture, which is sprinkled with references to later scenes, especially the waltz. Rosalinde, the lady of the house, is confronted with the arrival of a former lover, Alfred, a tenor, who serenades her outside of her home. Her husband, Eisenstein, must spend the night in prison for a misdemeanor from which his lawyer, Blind, could not get him released. A friend of Eisenstein's, Dr. Falke, arrives and invites him to a masked ball that evening, assuring him that he can get to the prison after a bit of fun. Dr. Falke informs Rosalinde of her husband's intentions, and encourages her to attend the party in disguise so as to catch her husband; Rosalinde then permits her maid, Adele, to leave for the evening. Alfred returns, and prepares to enjoy

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<sup>4</sup>Crittenden, *Operetta and the Politics*, 5.

<sup>5</sup>Andrew Lamb, *150 Years of Popular Musical Theatre* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 46.

<sup>6</sup>Grun, *Kulturgeschichte der Operette*, 196.

an intimate supper with Rosalinde, attired in Eisenstein's dressing gown. When the prison warden, Frank, arrives, he takes Alfred to jail, mistaking him for Rosalinde's husband.

The action in act one moves quickly, and it is not until the second act that Dr. Falke reveals the impetus behind his several invitations to the party: revenge. Several years previously, after a night at a costume party, with Eisenstein dressed as a butterfly and Falke as a bat, Eisenstein left his inebriated friend in a bat costume in the center of town. Falke, with much consternation, walked home to much laughter and faced the mockery of his peers for years afterwards. Acts II and III center upon his revenge scheme, which Falke created to entertain Orlofsky. Eisenstein poses as a Marquis, producing comic results when he recognizes his wife's chambermaid, Adele, who has "borrowed" one of his wife's gowns and come to the party unbeknownst to her employers; he is likewise introduced to Frank, the prison warden, who is pretending to be a chevalier. The arrival of Rosalinde, dressed as a Hungarian countess, also draws Eisenstein's attention. Various toasts and songs to champagne present the musical opportunity for the traditional waltz and the party does not end until early in the morning.

Act III begins with another serenade by Alfred, but this time, from within the prison. The jailor, Frosch, attempts to quiet him as Frank stumbles in, and Adele arrives soon after seeking the chevalier to help her to start her acting career. Eisenstein arrives to begin his sentence, and, when face to face with the "chevalier," has to divulge his true identity; the remaining characters enter, the accidental imprisonment of Alfred is

revealed, as well as all the details of the trickery. Forgiveness abounds, and all the characters rejoice in the follies that transpire when “King Champagne” takes over.<sup>7</sup>

The praise of champagne and an extravagant lifestyle was an important statement about Viennese life at the time. As with most operettas, the 1874 premiere of *Die Fledermaus* was a diversion from the failures of society, especially the stock market crash of May 9, 1873, referred to as “Black Friday” for the decade afterward.<sup>8</sup> Viennese audiences had “lost the means of leading such lives themselves” and therefore the social extravagances depicted in the operetta contributed even more to a sense of nostalgia for what had been.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, because operetta was not limited to the highest strata of the social order, the censors were more lenient; standards for plots were lower.<sup>10</sup> Unlike the Parisian operettas of Offenbach, where the romantic plot was secondary to the social commentary and satire of the piece, Viennese librettists highlighted the romantic situations; this trend was especially apparent in *Die Fledermaus*, and became one of the tenets that carried into the works of Strauss’s descendants. The ethnically and economically diverse audiences of Vienna would not have understood the more sophisticated dialogue typical of the genre’s French counterparts, and therefore love stories speckled with physical humor were more

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<sup>7</sup>The synopsis of the plot was compiled from the following sources: Joseph Wechsberg, *The Waltz Emperors: The Life and Times of the Strauss Family* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1973), 196-197; Kurt Gänzl, *The Musical: A Concise History* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 67-69; Andrew Lamb, “Fledermaus, Die,” *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. Stanley Sadie. *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*. <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/O005972> (accessed January 17, 2009).

<sup>8</sup>Janik, *Wittgenstein’s Vienna*, 33.

<sup>9</sup> H.E. Jacob, *Johann Strauss: Father and Son, A Century of Light Music*, trans. Marguerite Wolff (Garden City, NY: Halcyon House, 1939), 259.

<sup>10</sup>Crittenden, *Operetta and the Politics*, 10.

appropriate and accessible.<sup>11</sup> Audiences anticipated some sexual content, so long as it was resolved appropriately within social expectations: “There are pleasant cross-currents of eroticism—will she? won’t she? – which put the bubbles into the *Fledermaus* champagne, but it is all sophisticated and a little bourgeois.”<sup>12</sup>

### *Conventions: Primary Stylistic Traits*

#### *Waltz: The Prominent Feature*

Strauss’s largest contribution to operetta was the waltz. Having spent most of his life working with dance bands and specializing in the waltz, it was not surprising that he made the dance form the central element of Austrian operetta.<sup>13</sup> This was especially true in Viennese operetta, which, in contrast to the operettas in the French and English traditions, is centered on it. The waltz was essential to the genre because “of all the nineteenth-century dances it is the Viennese waltz alone that has the merit of satisfying the lowbrow and the highbrow, the layman and the musician, and the dancer and the listener; and that is the highest possible criterion by which we can judge the quality of light music.”<sup>14</sup> The Viennese fervor for theatre and dancing was such that the waltz, which served both genres so well, became canonized. Though the function of the waltz in society changed, it still remains in the dancing repertory in Vienna: “Conditions,

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<sup>11</sup>Crittenden, *Operetta and the Politics*, 13.

<sup>12</sup>Wechsberg, *The Waltz Emperors*, 197.

<sup>13</sup>Mark Lubbock, “The Music of ‘Musicals,’” *The Musical Times* 98, No. 1375 (Sept. 1957): 483.

<sup>14</sup>Mosco Carner, *The Waltz* (London: Max Parrish and Co. Limited, 1948), 71.

ideas, and habits changed, but the Viennese Waltz remained. Even today, with all the changes of modern dances, it is still the highlight of the Viennese Ball.”<sup>15</sup>

The waltz had an essential dramaturgical function and was the means through which the audience could escape from the worries and limits of daily existence, characteristics that Lehár and Stolz emulated. In *Die Fledermaus*, it fell at the middle point of the work and served as the central place where all the characters come together to enjoy an unencumbered *joie de vivre*.<sup>16</sup> Because it was the first dance to enter high society where partners faced one another, it was associated with sensuality, romance, and high spirits. The “whirling motion made one light-headed and tipsy—all in all, waltzing was a genuine Dionysian experience in the Good Old Days.”<sup>17</sup> Culturally and socially, it replaced “thinking” with “feeling.”<sup>18</sup>

For example, in the “Bruderlein-Schwesterlein” waltz, drink and dance encouraged the principals and chorus to refer to one another in the “du” form, the informal address normally used only in close family situations. Here, champagne and the waltz have “done away with all social decorum, and all can enjoy each other’s company without thinking of propriety or even class distinctions.”<sup>19</sup> Strauss used very regular phrases of eight bars and he developed this straightforward theme in multiple

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<sup>15</sup>“Viennese Waltz Celebrates One-Hundred-Fiftieth Anniversary,” *Music Educators Journal* 48, No. 5 (Apr-May 1962): 126. Though printed in 1962, the “Opera Ball” in Vienna remains an important social and cultural event for the city.

<sup>16</sup>Monika Fink, “Ballszenen in Operetta,” *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 29, No. 1 (June 1998): 3-5.

<sup>17</sup>Allan Janik, *Wittgenstein’s Vienna Revisited* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2001), 25.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>19</sup>Traubner, *Operetta: The German and Austrian Musical Film*, (Ph.D diss., New York University, 1996), 28.

ways, including staggered entrances by the central characters, followed by a choral statement of the primary idea, “*Erst ein Kuß, dann ein Du, Du, Du, Du, eimmerzu!*” (First a kiss, then a you, you, you, you, always!). By including multiple sections, Strauss elaborated on the simplicity of the waltz form. Dr. Falke began the main theme of this waltz at measure 144 (Example 1).

Example 1. *Die Fledermaus* Akt II, No. 11a Finale, mm. 144-151. Note the informal address of “Du.”<sup>20</sup>

The image displays a page from a musical score for Johann Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*, specifically Act II, No. 11a Finale, measures 144-151. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with multiple staves. The instruments listed on the left include 1. Fl., 2. Fl. Picc., 1. & 2. Ob., 1. & 2. Klar. (in B), 1. & 2. Fag., 1. & 2. Hr. in F, 1. & 2. Trp. in F, Falke (vocal), 1. & 2. Vl., 2. Vl., Va., Vc., and Kb. The vocal part for Falke is prominent, with lyrics in German: "Du, Du, Du, im - mer - zu! Erst ein Kuß, - dann ein Du, im - mer - zu, im - mer - zu, im - mer, im - mer -". The score includes various musical markings such as "poco ritenuto", "decresc.", "pizz.", and "p". The measures are numbered 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, and 151.

<sup>20</sup>Johann Strauss, *Die Fledermaus: Operette in 3 Akten*, Series 2, Vol. 3, *Neue Johann Strauss Gesamtausgabe*, RV 503, ed. Michael Rot (Vienna, Strauss Edition, 1999), 295.

Crittenden noted that both the text and music of this waltz also evoked nostalgic feelings. Strauss sustained a sense of longing by frequently using a leap to the sixth scale degree over tonic, as seen in the gesture at measure 217. The text encouraged this sense of longing: “Forever, just like today, when we think back on it tomorrow.”<sup>21</sup>

Example 2. *Die Fledermaus* Akt II, No. 11a Finale, mm. 217-223. The prominent use of sixths suggests a sense of longing, according to Crittenden.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup>Crittenden, *Operetta and the Politics*, 154-157.

<sup>22</sup>Strauss, *Die Fledermaus*, 304.

This feeling of yearning is exaggerated by a typical Viennese performance practice, the *Atempause* (breathing-time). With a slight anticipation of the second beat in each bar, this feature produces a hovering or lilting feeling to the music often associated with nostalgic qualities.<sup>23</sup> Though this trait is not evident in the music itself, it is one that later composers, such as Lehár and Stolz, copied due in part to their familiarity with Strauss's conducting style.

Strauss's large-scale success with the waltz, particularly in *Die Fledermaus*, was in part because it fits the era's standard of beauty. Hanslick reflected on this in his writings about the aesthetics of music: "The primordial stuff in music is regular and pleasing sound. Its animating principle is rhythm: rhythm in the larger scale as the co-proportionality of a symmetrical structure; rhythm in the smaller scale as regular alternating motion of individual units within the metric period."<sup>24</sup> The regular phrasing and the refrain structure seen in Example 1 contributed to this sense of beauty.

Nonetheless, Hanslick criticized the placement of the waltz in this operetta, noting that it halted the action. Other critics seconded his opinion, complaining that Strauss included too much waltz music.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, the "Bruderlein-Schwesterlein" waltz was not the only waltz in the Act II finale. After a series of internationally inspired dances, Orlofsky announced, "*Genug damit, genug! Diese Tänzer mögen ruh'n!*"

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<sup>23</sup>Peter Gammond and Andrew Lamb, "Waltz," *The Oxford Companion to Music*, ed. Alison Latham. *Oxford Music Online*. <<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t114/e7260>> (accessed March 15, 2009).

<sup>24</sup>Eduard Hanslick, *On the Musically Beautiful: A Contribution towards the Revision of the Aesthetics of Music*, trans. and ed. Geoffrey Payzant (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1986), 28.

<sup>25</sup>Traubner, *Operetta: A Theatrical History*, 118.

(Enough with it, enough! These dancers would like rest!). However, in the midst of his protestations, the orchestra began another waltz, led by the string section (Example 3).

Example 3. *Die Fledermaus*, Act II, No 11c. Schluß des Finale II, mm. 1-7. String dominated beginning of waltz, contradicting Orlofsky's statement.<sup>26</sup>

Nº 11c. Schluß des Finale II 349

Tempo di Valse

1. Flöte  
2. Flöte, Piccolo  
1., 2. Oboe  
1., 2. Klarinette in C  
1., 2. Fagott  
1., 2. Horn in F  
3., 4. Horn in F  
1., 2. Trompete in F  
1., 2. Posaune  
3. Posaune  
Pauken, Glocke  
kleine Trommel  
große Trommel mit Becken  
Rosalinde, Adele, Ida  
Orlofsky  
Eisenstein  
Frank, Falke  
Sopran  
Tenor  
Baß  
1. Violine  
2. Violine  
Viola  
Violoncello  
Kontrabaß

Pauken in D, G

Orlofsky

Ge - nug da - mit, ge - nug! Die - se Tän - zer mö - gen

Eisenstein

Mel, Faust, Fel, Minni, Sidi mit 1. Sopran  
Herm., Nat., Sab., Sil. mit 2. Sopran

Ali - Bey, Ramusin mit 1. Tenor

Murray, Cariconi mit Baß

Tempo di Valse

1 18 A 503 O

<sup>26</sup> Strauss, *Die Fledermaus*, 349.

Like the “Brulerlein-Schwesterlein” waltz, the principal characters led the theme and the chorus responded. They commented on the nature of the party they attended in the manner of a Greek chorus, “*Ha, Welch ein Fest, welche Nacht voll Freud! Liebe und Wein gibt uns Seligkeit.*” (Ah, what a party, what a night full of fun! Love and wine gives us bliss); this observation and delivery style shown in measures 245 through 252 may have been the feature that Hanslick described as ceasing the action (Example 4).

Example 4. *Die Fledermaus* Act II Finale, mm. 245-252. Choral description of the party.<sup>27</sup>

\*) Ros. laut (A), (TZ) und (TK) bereits abgegangen; siehe Revisionsbericht Takt 216 und 245 - 254.

118 A 503 O

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 379-380.

Admittedly, connecting the waltz to the storyline and including it with dramatic purpose was a challenge for Strauss. *Die Fledermaus* was his most successful instance of doing so, because the plot is centered on the ball. As stated earlier, the waltz thus became the unity around which all of the shenanigans can occur.<sup>28</sup> Despite some criticism of his waltz usage, clearly his contemporaries saw value in the dance as an art form as both Brahms and Dvorák frequently included waltz rhythms in symphonic literature.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, other operetta composers, namely Lehár and Stolz, used the waltz as an important feature in their operettas.

### *Local Color*

Another aspect of Strauss's style that later composers imitated, though to a much lesser extent, was inclusion of local color. This was a pragmatic choice because folk styles of the surrounding region heavily influenced many Viennese musical genres. Folksongs used local dialects, tended to be strophic, and contained specific references to places or events. Because folk music, unlike the canonized art music, was based on an oral tradition, it was not censored, and thus could contain more social commentary and political references. It is possible that audiences would have been mindful of these associations when they heard similar music on stage in operetta. In the Act II chorus of *Die Fledermaus*, Strauss alluded to folk style with the "duidu, la la la," shown here in measures 202 through 209 (Example 5).<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Lamb, *150 Years*, 45.

<sup>29</sup>"Strauss and His Influence," *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular* 35, No. 621 (Nov. 1, 1894): 730.

<sup>30</sup>Crittenden, *Operetta and the Politics*, 18-19.

Example 5. *Die Fledermaus* Akt II, No. 11a, mm. 202-209. Folk references with nonsense syllables.<sup>31</sup>

302

1. Fl.  
2. Fl.,  
Picc.

1., 2. Ob.

1., 2. Klar.  
(in B)

1., 2. Fag.

1., 2. Hr.  
in F

1., 2. Trp.  
in F

Ros.,  
Ad.

Orl.,  
Ida

Solo-  
Damen

Eis.

Frank,  
Falke

Ali - B.,  
Ram.

Mur.,  
Caric.

S.

T.

B.

1. Vl.

2. Vl.

Va.

Vc.

Kb.

18 A 503 O

<sup>31</sup>Strauss, *Die Fledermaus*, 302.

Strauss used modified strophic form in this section, and the nonsense syllables resembled similar types of refrains in folk songs. The simple harmony consisting of primarily tonic and dominant chords was also a folk trait. Furthermore, the inclusion of an obviously non-theatrical type of music drew more attention to it as a performance within a performance. The music did not reflect action on the stage, but provided a frame allowing the characters to celebrate and entertain one another. It also provided a theatrical bridge to the ballet that follows this chorus.

In addition, due to the setting in a spa town outside of Vienna and contemporaneous middle class costumes, *Die Fledermaus* was an essentially local operetta. The intimate familial setting in which the operetta opens reflected the economic downturn that the first audience faced. Strauss was one of the first operetta composers to achieve success after the 1873 stock market crash. In fact, “by rejecting exotic foreign settings in favor of interior scenes, it reflects a social trend often observed after a national crisis: to retreat to home and family.”<sup>32</sup> Indeed, *Die Fledermaus* concerned everyday people, with adventurous characters akin to well-known archetypes. Blind and Adele, for example, resembled characters from the *commedia dell’arte* tradition; Rosalinde and Eisenstein represented the bourgeois. The living room setting and middle class characters were quite innovative for the time, and contributed to the success of the work in part because of the period’s economic climate.<sup>33</sup> These traits were not as readily copied by Lehár in *Die Lustige Witwe*, though similar economic conditions encouraged Stolz to include bourgeois characters.

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<sup>32</sup>Crittenden, *Operetta and the Politics*, 135.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*, 139.

### *Exoticism: Habsburg Dominance*

Through recognizably local characteristics, Strauss made Viennese audiences feel comfortable, though they were also “enchanted” by exotic elements.<sup>34</sup> Immigrants arrived from provinces of the Habsburg Empire to find jobs daily; this created ethnic diversity in the city, which had exploding population and economic growth in industry, banking, and railroads, despite the 1873 stock market crash.<sup>35</sup> Strauss drew on international idioms in the party scene, which demonstrated an Austrian pride in the perceived dominance over other nationalities at a time when the empire was beginning to weaken.<sup>36</sup> In the ballet scene of Act II, Strauss used Scottish, Russian, Spanish, Bohemian, and Hungarian dances; each country “at various times posed threats to the integrity of the Habsburg monarchy. By presenting them within the frame of a Viennese ballroom, Strauss domesticate[d] their power and demonstrate[d] Viennese resilience by having the scene culminate in a waltz.”<sup>37</sup> Strauss’s tremendous success as a composer showed that Austria was in the lead culturally, whether or not their military endeavors were successful.<sup>38</sup> Rhythm was one of the primary distinctions between these national dances. For example, in the “Scottish” and “Russian” sections (Examples 6B and 6C, respectively) Strauss brought out off-beat accents and dotted rhythms. Though rhythmic differences from the waltz were present in each national dance, differences in melodic contour were also somewhat notable. For instance, in the “Spanish” dance, the melodic

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<sup>34</sup>Barry Emslie, “The Domestication of Opera,” *Cambridge Opera Journal* 5, No. 2 (July 1993): 168.

<sup>35</sup>Crittenden, *Operetta and the Politics*, 7-8.

<sup>36</sup> Henry Schnitzer, “‘Gay Vienna’—Myth and Reality.” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 15 No. 1 (Jan 1954): 100.

<sup>37</sup>Crittenden, *Operetta and the Politics*, 152.

<sup>38</sup>Traubner, *Operetta: A Theatrical History*, 116.

line descended (Example 6A mm. 13-14), while the waltz featured an ascending line (see Example 2). This section also contained more grace notes. In the “Bohemish” segment, two Bohemian maidens sang the melody, which drew even more attention to its melodic line, and made it noticeably different from the other national dances (Example 6D). Strauss used slightly more percussion these sections, though for the most part, the orchestration was relatively similar to the waltz. Therefore, the “national” dances have a decidedly Viennese color.

Another example of folk-like exotic elements was in Rosalinde’s famous “Csárdás” aria from Act II. Strauss drew attention to Rosalinde’s Hungarian disguise musically. The aria opened with a clarinet solo and pizzicato string accompaniment reminiscent of Hungarian gypsies. Hungarian elements were familiar to Viennese audiences because Hungary was a part of the Habsburg empire; other composers such as Liszt and Brahms included well-known Hungarian elements in some of their compositions.<sup>39</sup> Additionally, the structure of the csárdás was somewhat fixed; Strauss adhered to the expected rhythmic organization of the csárdás in Rosalinde’s aria. He split it into two sections: the first a slow 4/4 meter where she expressed grief in longing for her homeland; the second a fast 2/4 dance-like meter marked “Friska” where she praised her “homeland.”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Crittenden, *Operetta and the Politics*, 148-149.

<sup>40</sup>Jonathan Bellman, “Csárdás,” *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy, *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/06918> (accessed April 8, 2009).

Example 6A. *Die Fledermaus* Act II, No. 11b. Ballet, mm. 9-16. Spanish dance.<sup>41</sup>

The musical score is for a ballet piece titled "Spanisch" from *Die Fledermaus*, Act II, No. 11b. The score is written for a full orchestra and includes parts for the following instruments:

- Fl. (Flute)
- Picc. (Piccolo)
- 1., 2. Ob. (Oboe)
- 1. Klar. in A (Clarinet in A)
- 2. Klar. in A (Clarinet in A)
- 1., 2. Fag. (Bassoon)
- 1., 2. Hr. in F (Horn in F)
- 3., 4. Hr. in F (Horn in F)
- 1., 2. Trp. in F (Trumpet in F)
- 1., 2. Pos. (Posaune)
- 3. Pos. (Posaune)
- Pk., Glsp. (Percussion, Glockenspiel)
- Trgl. (Trommel)
- kl. Tr. (kleine Trommel)
- gr. Tr. (große Trommel)
- m. Bck. (military drum)
- 1. Vl. (Violin I)
- 2. Vl. (Violin II)
- Va. (Viola)
- Vc. (Violoncello)
- Kb. (Kontrabaß)

The score is marked with dynamics such as *f* (forte) and *p* (piano). The tempo is marked "Spanisch". The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes parts for Flute, Piccolo, Oboe, Clarinets, Bassoon, Horns, Trumpets, Percussion, and Strings. The second system includes parts for Violins, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass.

<sup>41</sup>Strauss, *Die Fledermaus*, 307.

Example 6B. *Die Fledermaus* Act II, No. 11b. Ballet, mm. 81-85. Scottish dance.<sup>42</sup>

The musical score is for a full orchestra and includes parts for Flute, Piccolo, Oboes, Clarinets, Bassoons, Horns, Trumpets, Trombones, Percussion, and Strings. The tempo is marked 'Allegro' and 'Allegro moderato'. The score is for a full orchestra and includes parts for Flute, Piccolo, Oboes, Clarinets, Bassoons, Horns, Trumpets, Trombones, Percussion, and Strings. The tempo is marked 'Allegro' and 'Allegro moderato'.

**Instrument List:**

- Fl.
- Picc.
- 1., 2. Ob.
- 1. Klar. in A
- 2. Klar. in A
- 1., 2. Fag.
- 1., 2. Hr. in F
- 3., 4. Hr. in F
- 1., 2. Trp. in F
- 1., 2. Pos.
- 3. Pos.
- Pk., Glsp.
- Trgl.
- kl. Tr.
- gr. Tr.
- m. Bck.
- 1. Vl.
- 2. Vl.
- Va.
- Vc.
- Kb.

**Tempo and Dynamics:**

- Allegro** (mm. 81-85)
- Allegro moderato** (mm. 81-85)
- „Schottisch“** (mm. 81-85)
- Allegro moderato** (mm. 81-85)

<sup>42</sup> keine Tempoangabe in (A); "Allegro" steht in (PS) und (K).

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 316.

Example 6C. *Die Fledermaus* Act II, No. 11b. Ballet, mm. 112-118. Russian dance.<sup>43</sup>

112 Allegretto molto moderato „Russisch“

Fl. *f* *mf*

Picc. *f* *mf*

1., 2. Ob. *f* *mf*

1. Klar. in A *f* *mf*

2. Klar. in A *f* *mf*

1., 2. Fag. *f* *mf*

1., 2. Hr. in F *f* *mf*

3., 4. Hr. in F *f* *mf*

1., 2. Trp. in F *f* *mf*

1., 2. Pos. *f* *mf*

3. Pos. *f* *mf*

Pk., Glsp. *f*

Trgl. *f*

kl. Tr. *f*

gr. Tr. *f*

m. Bck. *f*

1. Vl. *f* *mf*

2. Vl. *f* *mf*

Va. *f* *mf*

Vc. *f* *mf* pizz.

Kb. *f* *mf*

Allegretto molto moderato „Russisch“

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 322.

Example 6D. *Die Fledermaus* Act II, No. 11b. Ballet, mm. 168-175. Bohemian dance.<sup>44</sup>

168 Tempo di Polka „Böhmisch“

Fl. *p* *pp*

Picc. *pp*

1. 2. Ob. *p* *pp*

1. Klar. in A *f* *p* *pp*

2. Klar. in A *f* *pp*

1. 2. Fag. *f* *pp*

1. 2. Hr. in F *f* *p* *pp*

3. 4. Hr. in F *p*

1. 2. Trp. in F *pp*

1. 2. Pos. *pp*

3. Pos. *pp*

Pk., Gksp. *pp*

Trgl. *pp*

Kl. Tr. *pp*

Gr. Tr. m. Bck. *pp*

Gesang von zwei böhmischen Mädchen

1. S. Ma - rian - ka, komm und tanz' me hier! Heut' ist's schon schetz - ko

2. S. Ma - rian - ka, komm und tanz' me hier! Heut' ist's schon schetz - ko

Tempo di Polka „Böhmisch“

1. Vl. *f* *p* *pp*

2. Vl. *f* *pp*

Va. *f* *pp*

Vc. *f* *pp*

Kb. *f* *pp*

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 330.

Other characters that exhibit exotic traits were Orlofsky and Blind. One important issue was the decision to write Orlofsky as a pants role. Because such roles were typically reserved for adolescents, in Orlofsky's case it perhaps implied an unusual sexuality: "Orlofsky is a fully adult male, so the bisexual implication adds a perverse, slightly sinister feel."<sup>45</sup> Such juxtaposition suggested a mockery of foreign royalty; Orlofsky's Act II aria where he announced that he will remove any guests who are bored pointed to a more satirical and thus French view than the farcical Viennese characters.<sup>46</sup> He was a Russian noble, rather than Austrian, which also painted him as Other. Crittenden also comments on the fact that pants roles provided the opportunity for a woman's legs to be seen on stage. Whether Strauss's motivation for writing Orlofsky as a pants role was to highlight the sense of Other or as a risqué element is unclear.

In a similar fashion, Blind represented a stereotypical picture of the Viennese Jew. Jews in Vienna were denied government positions, and there were many who maintained private law practices. The musical style Strauss gave to Blind not only would have appeared comical to the era's audiences, but also would have reinforced the anti-Semitic idea that Jews were unable to express themselves clearly; "Eisenstein and Rosalinde are accompanied by violins and flutes, a neutral tone color in Strauss's palette, but Blind's monotone, syllabic recitation is reinforced in the orchestra by horns and trumpets, contributing to the blaring, nasal tone Wagner ascribed to Jews" (Example 7).<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>Eric A. Plaut, *Grand Opera: Mirror of the Western Mind* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1993), 145-146.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 145.

<sup>47</sup>Crittenden, *Operetta and the Politics*, 143.

Example 7. *Die Fledermaus* No. 2 Terzett, mm. 129-134. Note the short, syllabic setting on a single pitch of Blind's text.<sup>48</sup>

### Conclusion

*Die Fledermaus* created storyline and musical expectations for subsequent contributions to the genre, with the result that later composers viewed Strauss as a model both compositionally and financially. Strauss's *Die Fledermaus* is the reason that later composers, especially Lehár and Stolz, included both the exotic and the erotic to titillate the middle-class audiences. Though local color remained important as a means through which to make audiences feel comfortable, Lehár and Stolz used this characteristic differently than Strauss. Most importantly, Strauss established the waltz as one of operetta's most important features, causing it to remain in the dance repertory long past the average lifespan of typical popular social dances. As we will see, the waltz played a pivotal role in Lehár's *Die Lustige Witwe*.

<sup>48</sup>Strauss, *Die Fledermaus*, 83.

## CHAPTER THREE

### *Die Lustige Witwe: Changing the Genre*

#### *Die Lustige Witwe*

##### *Origins*

Henry Meilhac, the playwright on whose work *Die Fledermaus* is based, inspired Lehár's work as well, as Victor Leon and Leo Stein loosely based their libretto for *Die Lustige Witwe* on Meilhac's play *L'attaché*. At first, Leon and Stein attempted to collaborate with another composer, Richard Heuberger, whose first few numbers disappointed them. The secretary at the Theater an der Wien suggested they send their libretto to Lehár.<sup>1</sup> He composed a song in one day and played it for the librettists over the telephone; they then hired him to write the operetta.<sup>2</sup>

*Die Lustige Witwe* opened at Theater an der Wien on December 28, 1905, thirty-one years after the premiere of *Die Fledermaus*. The theatre's management expected the operetta to fail, and spent little money on costumes and sets. In addition, the premiere production had a short rehearsal period, as theatre management thought it would only be performed for a short period of time.<sup>3</sup> Despite some favorable reviews, box office

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<sup>1</sup>W. Macqueen-Pope and D.L. Murray, *Fortune's Favorite: the Life and Times of Franz Lehár* (London: Hutchinson, 1953), 42-43.

<sup>2</sup>Richard Traubner, *Operetta: A Theatrical History* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1983), 247.

Though the telephone had been invented in the mid-1800s, it was not until the early twentieth century that it revolutionized communication both socially and in the business world. Such technology influenced the creation of this work, just as technology influenced the works of Stolz.

<sup>3</sup>Franz Endler, *Vienna: A Guide to its Music and Musicians*, trans. Leo Jecny, ed. Reinhard G. Pauly (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1989), 82-83.

turnout remained slim, but through word of mouth, and free tickets, the operetta reached its fiftieth performance. Management transferred the production to the Raimuntheater for the summer because of other performances already booked in the theatre, much like the *Fledermaus* predicament. Though slow to catch on, the operetta became increasingly successful, garnering larger crowds with each performance. As a result, for the 300<sup>th</sup> performance, the operetta was presented with new sets and new costumes.<sup>4</sup> The production at first appeared unpromising, but gradually became a worldwide success. *Die Lustige Witwe* is at present a summer staple at the Theater an der Wien. Interestingly, other performances are now moved to alternate theatres to make way for the production, as it had been moved in its first year.<sup>5</sup>

#### *Plot and Romance: Influx of Realism*

*Die Lustige Witwe* focuses on the most conventional type of story line, a formula familiar to the Viennese, British, and American audiences who propelled it to lasting fame: Boy meets Girl, Boy loses Girl, Boy gets Girl. As such, it has a much less convoluted plot than *Die Fledermaus*. The innovation in this recognizable trope is open eroticism that is musically interpreted.<sup>6</sup> Without an overture (though one was written later), the curtain rises to reveal a party in Paris. It is at this party that the audience is introduced to the Baron Mirko Zeta, whose young wife, Valencienne, is showered with affection from Camille, a French aristocrat. Right away, sexual tensions between characters arise. Shortly thereafter, Hanna Glawari, the fabulously well-to-do widow of a

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<sup>4</sup>Traubner, *Operetta: A Theatrical History*, 247.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 249.

<sup>6</sup>Bernard Grun, *Kulturgeschichte der Operette* (Munich: Albert Langen, 1961), 349.

Pontevedrian banker, arrives. Hoping to keep her money in the bankrupt tiny country, the Baron plots for the young, eligible Danilo, another Pontevedrian, to woo and wed Hanna, a difficult task as Danilo greatly prefers the company of the ladies at Maxim's, an establishment of ill repute. It is then revealed that Hanna and Danilo had once been lovers, and matters are further complicated by a ladies' choice dance, providing an opportunity for Hanna and Danilo to waltz together at the close of Act I. The second act opens with another party, this one thrown by Hanna for all the Pontevedrians, and featuring traditional Pontevedrian songs and dances. Rumors that Hanna is romantically involved with Camille worry the Baron. Valencienne and Camille sneak off to the summerhouse, only to be caught, but Hanna saves her friend's reputation by claiming it was she. Danilo then storms to Maxim's, his anger proving to Hanna that he loves her. Act III opens with a can-can featuring Valencienne and the ladies from Maxim's. Danilo arrives to stop Hanna from marrying Camille. She tells him the truth, and they profess their love for one another. Baron Zeta also discovers that his wife's fan was in the summerhouse, but is soothed when she shows him that "I am a respectable wife" is written on the fan. A finale with the entire cast acknowledges the trouble of comprehending women's motives.<sup>7</sup>

In Lehár's lifetime, the course of Viennese operetta began to change, with the tomfoolery and satire of the Strauss operetta transformed into romantic sentimentality, wherein beautiful love songs dominated.<sup>8</sup> It was in the "new" operetta that:

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<sup>7</sup>The synopsis of the plot was compiled from the following sources: Kurt Gänzl, *The Musical: A Concise History* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 143; Andrew Lamb, "Lustige Witwe, Die," In *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, edited by Stanley Sadie, *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/O003026> (accessed January 26, 2009).

<sup>8</sup>Traubner, *Operetta: A Theatrical History*, 244.

the nonsense made sense again, though it was a special kind of sense: no longer the mere interplay of wit, grace, and good humour. As in the new naturalistic drama and veristic opera, fancy made way for reality. The woman Hana Glawari lived in a different world from Lady Rosalinda in *Fledermaus*, the man Danilo in a different world from Eisentein the bon-vivant. There was psychological depth instead of simplicity, sexual passion instead of innocent amorousness. Discussions whether all this had an effect on the genre for good or ill, whether Lehár went too far, are attractive—and unprofitable.<sup>9</sup>

Many in Vienna believed that the realism introduced into operetta occurred as a means to place sexually explicit scenes before an audience. Themes such as infidelity, as in the relationship between Valencienne and Camille, as well as the expression of love by Hanna and Danilo, especially in the waltz, were deemed inappropriate by many. Karl Kraus, a noted Austrian satirist, criticized the work of Lehár as decadent, a destruction of art that should serve to edify the public; the difference in opinion can be explained as such: “For Lehár, sex was common, though passionate and therefore theatrical; in Kraus’s opinion, this ‘realistic’ or plausible treatment of sexual matters divested the relations between man and woman of their mysterious poetic element and completely distorted their creative power.”<sup>10</sup>

Like *Die Fledermaus* before it, *Die Lustige Witwe* premiered at a pivotal time in Vienna’s history. Audiences in 1905 were very aware of the trouble brewing with the Balkans, and references to Balkan culture and economic state through the fictional Pontevedro would not have been missed. Laughter about a nationalist threat to the empire served as a satirical outlet that allowed audiences to forget the eminent danger to

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<sup>9</sup>Bernard Grun, *Gold and Silver: The Life and Times of Franz Lehár* (New York: David McKay and Company, Inc., 1970), 131.

<sup>10</sup>Allan Janik and Stephen Toulmin, *Wittgenstein’s Vienna* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973), 84-85.

their way of life.<sup>11</sup> The emperor was then seventy-five years old, and the unity of the empire culturally and economically was beginning to crumble; a general dissatisfaction with the aging ruler had begun throughout his regime, and as was typical for the Viennese, the people retreated to the arts.<sup>12</sup> The carefree abandon perceived in *Die Lustige Witwe*, like that of *Die Fledermaus*, was once again a point of nostalgia for the Viennese.

### *Conventions: Retaining the Essentials While Breaking the Mold*

#### *Waltz: Dramatic Realism*

Lehár's romantic use of the waltz defined the Silver Age of operetta: "though not immediately recognized as such, it was the beginning of a new wave of modern operettas in which the waltz was employed for romantic, psychological plot purposes, and danced as much as sung."<sup>13</sup> Psychological purpose in drama was a popular concept for the time; Sigmund Freud's theories were widely accepted, and theatrical or musical works delving into the human psyche were byproducts of his era.<sup>14</sup> Dance heightened the dramatic action in *Die Lustige Witwe*, especially at the end of the Act I finale, measures 384-400, where Danilo and Hanna danced together without the chaperoning figures of the chorus or other dancers; the romantic implications were clear, and the waltz thus became a plot

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<sup>11</sup>Richard Traubner, *Operetta: The German and Austrian Musical Film* (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1996), 43.

<sup>12</sup>Grun, *Gold and Silver*, 101-104.

<sup>13</sup>Traubner, *Operetta: A Theatrical History*, 243.

<sup>14</sup>Lamb, *150 Years*, 77.

device.<sup>15</sup> Danilo sang first, at the very start of the “Valse” marking in the finale. Hanna refused him, at which point the marking of *zurückhalten* (literally, to suspend) appeared (measure 407). Rhythm created a sense of longing, which Crittenden claimed is the essential quality of Strauss’s waltzes, as mentioned in the previous chapter. The depth of the characters’ love took precedence over simplicity in the dance, allowing a profound sexual passion to replace a waltz based upon a large group of champagne-influenced caricatures as seen in *Die Fledermaus*. Lehár’s music drew attention to the couple and the relationship between them primarily through changes in tempo (Example 1).

Furthermore, the orchestration was more chamber-like than that in Strauss’s waltz, which highlighted the intimate quality of Lehár’s version. The sparser orchestration mirrored both the lack of a full chorus and the appearance of only two major characters in the scene. Rather than appearing to be just a dance, Lehár utilized this section to convey emotions of the characters.<sup>16</sup> Unlike *Die Fledermaus*, Lehár’s waltz was much shorter, more fluid, had fewer sections, and more through-composed. Hanna and Danilo’s lines did not have the regular eight-bar phrasing of the Strauss waltz, but instead appeared more conversational; it is not until the full orchestra entered and Danilo danced that the phrasing becomes more regular. In addition, the orchestration became fuller when Danilo attempted to entice Hanna to dance with him (Example 2); her strong refusal of “Nein, ich will nicht!” propelled him to dance alone, *streng in Walzertempo* (severely in waltz tempo) beginning with measure 431.

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<sup>15</sup>Traubner, *Operetta: The German and Austrian Musical Film*, 41.

<sup>16</sup>Edward Michael Gold, “Franz Lehár: The Complete Cosmopolitan,” *Journal of the Conductor’s Guild* 18, No. 1 (Winter-Spring 1997): 24.

Example 1. *Die Lustige Witwe*, Act I, No. 6 Finale I, mm. 384-414. Waltz-duet between Hanna and Danilo. Notice the tempo markings.<sup>17</sup>

**Valse**

The musical score is for a waltz-duet. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system has five staves: two for vocal parts (Hanna and Danilo) and three for piano accompaniment. The tempo marking 'Valse' is at the top. The key signature is D major (two sharps). The time signature is 3/4. The score includes dynamic markings like 'pp' (pianissimo) and 'pizz.' (pizzicato). The second system also has five staves, with the vocal parts continuing their duet. The piano accompaniment includes a harp part marked 'Harfe durchwegs pp'.

Harfe durchwegs *pp*

Der letz-te ging, Sie sind be-

**Valse**

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

*pizz.*

*pp*

*pp*

<sup>17</sup>Franz Lehár, *Die Lustige Witwe: Operette in drei Akten= The Merry Widow: Operetta in three acts*, ed. Norbert Rubey (Vienna: Doblinger, 2005), 133-135.

387

1. Klar. in A

2. Klar. in A

Hf.

Dan.

1. Vl.

2. Vl.

Va.

Vc.

Kb.

freit und jetzt, gnä - di - ge Frau, bin ich zum Tanz be - reit!

*pp*

*arco*

*pizz.*

394

1. Fl.

1. Klar. in A

2. Klar. in A

Hf.

Han.

Dan.

1. Vl.

2. Vl.

Va.

Vc.

Kb.

Jetzt dan - ke ich sehr!

Und mein Man - dat? Sie wähl - ten mich doch?

*p*

*pp*

*pp*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*pizz.*

*p*

401

O Sie Haupt - di - plo - mat! Ich tan - ze nicht!

arco

**zurückhalten**

407

Gei - gen er - klin - - - gen lo - cken so süß, wer - den Sie zwin - gen ge - wiss!

**zurückhalten**

Flag.

pizz.

Example 2 *Die Lustige Witwe*, Act I, No. 6 Finale, mm. 431-437, “Nein ich will nicht” and “severe” tempo marking.<sup>18</sup>

430 **streng im Walzertempo**

Ob. *p* *mf*

Kb. *p* *mf*

Tr. *p* *mf*

Pos. *p* *mf*

(kämpft) (kämpft noch eine Weile, fliegt unwillkürlich in seine Arme und tanzt mit

Nein, ich will nicht!

(Er tanzt allein um sie herum)

**streng im Walzertempo**

*p* *mf con tenerezza* *mf*

<sup>18</sup>Franz Lehár, *Die Lustige Witwe*, 137.

After she agreed to dance with him, and the two have finished singing, the orchestration became even thicker. Furthermore, the tempo, which has grown faster throughout the waltz, ended with a *Presto* at measure 462, the fastest marking yet, which suggested that their increasing passion in the dance will culminate in sexual relations, or at least an overwhelming desire to do so. In addition, the orchestra played regular, eight-bar phrases at the end of the waltz, indicating Danilo's successful seduction (Example 3).

This is not the only instance of the waltz; Lehár used it throughout the operetta to remind the listener of the passions of Danilo and Hanna. In Act II, the waltz appeared as an orchestral underscoring in a melodrama between the two lovers beginning in measure 114 at the *Walzer Moderato* marking. The phrasing was more regular, and the theme could be considered a development of Danilo's sung phrase enticing Hanna to dance with him (Example 1, mm. 407), because of its similar contour, intervallic qualities, and opening gesture (Example 4).

Similar to Strauss, the upward leaps seen in the previous example could evoke a similar feeling of longing as the raised sixth Crittenden addressed. Towards the end of Act III when Hanna and Danilo fully express their love for one another, the developed theme of the waltz (shown in Example 4) appeared again. The regular eight-bar phrasing and simple harmonies could represent the resolution of their previous conflict, and provide a resolution musically for the irregular phrasing of their earlier courtship. This could be considered another nostalgic characteristic, as the main characters finally reach musical simplicity and harmony. They sing the theme with simplistic string accompaniment, with their lines doubled by the violin in measures 18-48.

Example 3. *Die Lustige Witwe*, Act I, No. 6 Finale I, mm. 455-462. Full orchestration and presto marking.<sup>19</sup>

The musical score is presented in a multi-staff format. The top system includes vocal staves and piano accompaniment. The tempo marking "Presto" is placed above the first staff of the section. The score contains various musical notations, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as "ff". The bottom system continues the orchestration with additional piano parts. The score is written in G major and 2/4 time.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 140.

Example 4. *Die Lustige Witwe*, Act II, No. 10 Spielszene und Tanzduett, mm. 114-120. Melodrama with waltz theme development.<sup>20</sup>

(Stichwort) Hanna: Tanzen tut er mit mir, aber erklärt hat er sich noch immer nicht.

Danilo: Wo man im  $\frac{3}{4}$ -Takt drei Viertel seiner Tugend vergißt.

⊕ bei Wiederholungen hier anfangen

**Moderato** **Walzer moderato**

1. Vl.

2. Vl.

Va.

Vc.

Kb.

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

*pizz. con. sord.*

*pp*

The violin-dominated texture resembled the technique often employed by Strauss (Example 5).

Like the Strauss example, the waltz also continued to represent that which was hedonistic; however, in contrast to the champagne-induced chorus of *Die Fledermaus*, Lehár's version was far more intimate. The highly erotic nature of Danilo and Hanna's relationship served to hide the depressing features about Viennese life at the time, such as the high suicide rate: "a coating of waltzes and whipped cream was the surface covering to a despair-ridden society."<sup>21</sup> Perhaps the largest social parallel was Viennese citizens ignoring the crumbling of the Austrian-Hungarian monarchy; the use of the waltz allowed them to avoid the loss of political power and to transform "the realistic frame to that of a

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 222.

<sup>21</sup> Janik, *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, 64.

‘dream action.’”<sup>22</sup> In the end, however, the positive ending implied by the dance was superficial. The nation of the characters onstage was still on the verge of bankruptcy, and yet they still danced the waltz.<sup>23</sup>

Example 5. *Die Lustige Witwe*, Act III, No. 15 Duett “Lippen Schweigen” mm. 17-48. Note the regular phrasing and simple string accompaniment.<sup>24</sup>

17

Han.

Dan.

Lip - pen schwei - gen, 's flü - stern Gei - gen: Hab' mich lieb!

1. Vl.

2. Vl.

Va.

Vc.

Kb.

25

Han.

Dan.

All' die Schrit - te sa - gen bit - te, hab' mich lieb!

1. Vl.

2. Vl.

Va.

Vc.

Kb.

D. 19 500

<sup>22</sup>“Somit aus dem realistischen Rahmen in denjenigen einer ‘Traumhandlung’ hinführte,” Monica Fink, “Ballsszenen in Operetten,” *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 29, No. 1 (June 1998): 8.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 352-353.

Handwritten musical score for a scene. The score includes parts for Hand (Han.), Dance (Dan.), Violin I (1. Vl.), Violin II (2. Vl.), Viola (Va.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Kontrabaß (Kb.). The lyrics are in German: "Je - der Druck der Hän - - - de deut - lich mir's be - schrieb." The music is in G major and 3/4 time.



Handwritten musical score for a scene, starting at measure 42. The score includes parts for Hand (Han.), Dance (Dan.), Violin I (1. Vl.), Violin II (2. Vl.), Viola (Va.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Kontrabaß (Kb.). The lyrics are in German: "Er sagt klar 's ist wahr, 's ist wahr, du hast mich lieb! Bei je - dem Wal - zer -". The music is in G major and 3/4 time. The tempo is marked "Valse lento" and "rit." (ritardando). The dynamic is marked "p dolce" (piano dolce).

### *Exoticism and Local Color: The Cosmopolitan Composer*

Lehár was known as a cosmopolitan composer, primarily because of his international upbringing. *Die Lustige Witwe* contained a more international style with a

variety of dances and Hungarian and other folk styles.<sup>25</sup> American dances had become very popular in Europe, especially cakewalks and two-steps. Such American tunes, while catchy and popular, were not thought to be at the same level as time-tested European dances, and thus were only incorporated for exotic effect.<sup>26</sup> However, with cakewalk contests frequently held in Paris, it is not surprising that Lehár included the dance in *Die Lustige Witwe* (Example 6). The title designation of “Cake-walk,” which was listed after the tempo, indicated more about the dancing than the music; the cakewalk did not have specific step patterns, but was a “grand march in a parade-like fashion by couples prancing and strutting arm in arm.”<sup>27</sup>

Lehár was not the only Viennese composer after Strauss to employ exotic elements, but he was one of the few to infuse a large range of national idioms into his music: Polish, Spanish, Italian, Russian, and even, in the case of *Das Land des Lächeln* (1929), Chinese characteristics.<sup>28</sup> Similarly to Strauss’s national dances, Lehár included the polka, Rhinelander, gallop, mazurka, march, and the polonaise in *Die Lustige Witwe*.<sup>29</sup> Other examples were the aforementioned American cakewalk, as well as the French can-can. The Parisian setting of *Die Lustige Witwe* contrasted with the Viennese sitting room of *Die Fledermaus*, where breaking moral and sexual codes in the manner of the Widow characters would be unthinkable. The exotic locale allowed bourgeoisie

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<sup>25</sup>Endler, *Vienna: A Guide to its Music and Musicians*, 83.

<sup>26</sup>Andrew Lamb, “From Pinafore to Porter: United States-United Kingdom Interactions in Musical Theatre, 1879-1929,” *American Music* 4, No. 1 (Spring 1986): 39-40.

<sup>27</sup>H. Wiley Hitchcock and Pauline Norton, “Cakewalk,” in *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy, *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/04568> (accessed April 19, 2009).

<sup>28</sup>Mark Lubbock, “The Music of ‘Musicals,’” *The Musical Times* 98, No. 1375 (Sept. 1957): 484.

<sup>29</sup>Fink, “Ballszenen in Operetten,” 7.

Example 6. *Die Lustige Witwe*, Act II, No. 13 Tanz-Szene. Cakewalk mm 1-6.<sup>30</sup>

**Tempo di marcia** (Cake-Walk)  
(Die Bühnenmusik spielt mit)

**Tempo di marcia** (Cake-Walk)  
div.

<sup>30</sup>Lehár, *Die Lustige Witwe*, 321.

principles to be broken; therefore, “the exotic is not so threatening because it can be utterly enjoyed *elsewhere*.”<sup>31</sup> Because of the setting, the use of popular Parisian dance music can be considered either exoticism or local color; the inclusion of the can-can in Act III, for instance, was both exotic to the Viennese audience and indicative of the Parisian setting of the story line. It was also an opportunity for risqué display on the stage. It featured a simple duple rhythm in a quadrille pattern, which was typical of the can-can.<sup>32</sup> Like Strauss’s use of nonsense syllables for effect, Valencienne and the Grisettes sang “Ritantouri tantirette,” untranslatable syllables that sound “French” as shown in mm. 69-85 (Example 7). This section is the refrain, and is repeated several times throughout the number.

Another instance of nonsense syllables occurred in the Act II dance scene preceding the famous “Vilja” song. In this festive scene, the chorus sang and danced traditional “Pontevedrian” music. The chorus expressed a longing for their homeland by singing “ah” and nonsense syllables in a simple meter and strophic form (Example 8).

This led into the Hanna’s “Vilja ” song where she articulated an intense longing for the stories and culture of her homeland in the opening verse of the aria, mm. 130-145 (Example 9). The aria’s rhythm is based on a Balkan folk dance, and is strophic with a refrain. Later in the aria, the orchestra featured the *tamburizza*, a local string instrument.<sup>33</sup> Such elements of Balkan style would have been recognizable to the diverse

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<sup>31</sup>Barry Emslie, “The Domestication of Opera,” *Cambridge Opera Journal* 5, No. 2 (July 1993): 169.

<sup>32</sup>“Can-Can,” *The Oxford Dictionary of Music*, 2nd ed. rev., edited by Michael Kennedy. *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/opr/t237/e1761> (accessed April 21, 2009).

<sup>33</sup>Lamb, *150 Years*, 76.

Example 7. *Die Lustige Witwe*, No. 14 Chanson “Grisetten-Lied” mm. 69-85. Valencienne and the Grisettes sing and dance the Can-Can.<sup>34</sup>

The musical score is for a piece from *Die Lustige Witwe*, specifically the "Grisetten-Lied" (measures 69-85). It is a duet for Valencienne and the Grisettes, featuring a Can-Can dance. The score is written for voice and piano. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 2/4. The score is divided into three systems. The first system (measures 69-75) is marked with a forte (f) dynamic. The second system (measures 76-82) is marked with a forte (f) dynamic and includes the instruction "a due". The third system (measures 83-85) is marked with a forte (f) dynamic and includes the instruction "uniti". The lyrics are in French: "ri! Ri-tan-tou-ri tan-ti-rette, eh voi-là les belles Gri-settes!".

<sup>34</sup>Franz Lehár, *Die Lustige Witwe*, 336-337.

77

The musical score for page 77 consists of several systems of staves. The first system includes five staves with musical notation. The second system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The third system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The fourth system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The fifth system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The sixth system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The seventh system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The eighth system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The ninth system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The tenth system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The eleventh system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The twelfth system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The thirteenth system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The fourteenth system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The fifteenth system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The sixteenth system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The seventeenth system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The eighteenth system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The nineteenth system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due". The twentieth system includes five staves, with the first three marked "a due".

Les Gri - set - tes de Pa - ris! Ri - tan - tou - ri tan - ti - ril

Les Gri - set - tes de Pa - ris! Ri - tan - tou - ri tan - ti - ril

Les Gri - set - tes de Pa - ris! Ri - tan - tou - ri tan - ti - ril

Gr. Tr. Solo

Example 8. *Die Lustige Witwe*, Act II, No. 7 Tanz, mm. 82-97. Use of nonsense syllables.<sup>35</sup>

The musical score is arranged in a system of staves. The top system includes five staves for the orchestra (flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and strings) and two staves for vocal soloists. The bottom system includes five staves for the orchestra (trumpets, trombones, tubas, and strings) and two staves for vocal soloists. The score is written in 3/4 time and features a variety of musical notations, including triplets, sixteenth notes, and dynamic markings. The vocal parts include lyrics such as 'Ah' and 'div'.

<sup>35</sup>Lehár, *Die Lustige Witwe*, 154-155.

[illegible]

Example 9. *Die Lustige Witwe*, Act II, No. 7 Vilja-Lied, mm. 130-145, Balkan folk elements. In measure 134, Lehár notes that it should be sung “*Im Volkston* (in folk-tone).”<sup>36</sup>

**Vilja-Lied**  
**Allegretto**

130

wechselt 2. Flöte

*Im Volkston vorgetragen*

nannt! Es lebt' ei - ne Vil - ja, ein Wald - mäg - de - lein, ein  
Wald - mäg - d - lein streck - te die Hand nach ihm aus, und

**Vilja-Lied**  
**Allegretto**

pizz. arco p pizz. arco p pizz. arco p pizz. arco p

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 160-161.

138

mf

mf

pp

pp

pp

[mf]

[mf]

f:pp

Jä - ger er - schaut' sie im Fel - sen - ge - stein! Dem Bur - schen, dem wur - de so ei - gen zu Sinn, er  
zog ihn hin - ein in ihr fel - si - ges Haus! Dem Bur - schen die Sin - ne ver - gan - gen fast sind, so

mf

mf

mf

mf

mf

pp

audience in Viennese theatres, though the inclusion of this style in the operetta was not looked upon favorably: “the intital reception of the work was mixed, and there were

political demonstrations from the Montenegrin students who took offence at their homeland (only thinly disguised as Pontevedro) being the subject of operetta satire.”<sup>37</sup> An operetta situation that commented on real world politics was not new; one need only to recall the use of national dances in *Die Fledermaus* mentioned in the previous chapter. The existence of a fantasy world of political resolution allowed for the audience to envision a different reality via the stage.<sup>38</sup>

### *Conclusion*

Lehár, like Strauss, successfully combined conventional material, such as exoticism, with unprecedented techniques, such as realism in the waltz. Relationships between the characters influenced the dramatic and musical structure of *Die Lustige Witwe*. For Strauss, exotic and folk-like sections were innovative, but these became standard in later operettas, including *Die Lustige Witwe*. For Lehár, innovation meant an inclination for increasingly predominant theatrical realism in the early twentieth century. This new trend in theatre was important in the works of Stolz. As the Strauss model was the standard Lehár both adhered to and deviated from, so Lehár’s great work became the newest approach which other composers sought to emulate. The influence of both of the “great” operetta composers was significant in the development of later stage works, such as *Der Tanz ins Glück* and subsequent operetta-influenced films, such as *Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt*.

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 76.

<sup>38</sup>Christian Marten, *Die Operette als Singspiel der Gesellschaft: Frans Lehár’s ‘Die Lustige Witwe’—Versuch einer Socialen Theorie*. Europäische Hochschulschriften, 36, no. 34. (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1989): 115.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### *Der Tanz ins Glück* And *Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt*: End of the Genre

Stolz's 1921 operetta *Der Tanz ins Glück* in many ways is comparable to *Die Fledermaus* and *Die Lustige Witwe*. It did not, however, enter the canon of standard repertoire even though its initial reception was successful. Stolz's film operetta *Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt* (1930) remains his most enduring success yet it contains little music other than the waltz; it too fails to follow the Lehár and Strauss models. Nevertheless, these works represent the culmination of the Viennese operetta tradition musically and culturally.

### *Der Tanz ins Glück*

#### *Origins*

Robert Bodanzky and Bruno Hardt-Warden wrote the libretto for *Der Tanz ins Glück*. Bodanzky wrote several libretti for Lehár, and Stolz's connection to this librettist came about when he conducted at the Theater an der Wien. Hardt-Warden also wrote several libretti for Stolz before beginning to write more for film. *Der Tanz ins Glück* opened in 1921 at the Wiener Komödienhaus. The financial success of this production indicated that people did indeed, despite the draw of film, attend the theatre.<sup>1</sup> In 1928, Stolz's operetta appeared at the Theater an der Wien, first home of *Die Fledermaus* and *Die Lustige Witwe*. Another production took place at the

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<sup>1</sup>Atilla Láng, *Melodie aus Wien: Robert Stolz und sein Werk* (Wiener Themen. Vienna: Jugend a Volk, 1980), 66.

Raimundtheater in 1949.<sup>2</sup> The story was the basis for a 1951 Austrian film. Stolz also reworked it for a new stage version in 1958 under the title *Hallo, das ist die Liebe*.<sup>3</sup> Despite several revivals and revisions, the work did not attain the lasting success of either *Die Fledermaus* or *Die Lustige Witwe*.

*Plot: Changing Views of Romantic Intrigue*

Much like *Die Lustige Witwe*, the plot of *Der Tanz ins Glück* (1921) is a romantic one. Bodanzky and Hardt-Warden “concocted a piece of comical nonsense” that involves a hairdresser’s assistant, Fritz, who pretends to be a count to impress Lizzi, the daughter of a hat-maker.<sup>4</sup> The story begins with Count Biebersbach, who seeks a rendezvous with Lizzi at the Variété Ronacher. He does so through a newspaper advertisement. She is to distinguish him from other guests because he wears a monocle on a blue band. Fritz stops at the Ronacher, and seeing the monocle on the floor, picks it up. The Count does not notice the missing monocle while he quarrels with his lover, Desirée Viverande, the diva of the variety show. Lizzi then believes Fritz to be the Count. The two instantly fall in love. Upon meeting her parents, Fritz is invited to a family party celebrating Lizzi’s father, Herr Mutzenbecher, who has recently been appointed as imperial court supplier of hats. Fritz and Lizzi are soon engaged, and when a jealous Desirée tries to break up the couple, she discovers that the “Count” is not actually Biebersbach. Desirée reveals his true profession to all, and it seems that Fritz

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<sup>2</sup>Anton Bauer, *Opern und Operetten in Wien* (Graz: Hermann Böhlaus Nach F., 1955), 97.

<sup>3</sup>Stephen Pflicht, *Robert Stolz: werkverzeichnis=Catalogue of Works* (Munich: Musikverlag E. Katzibchler, 1981), 273.

<sup>4</sup>Kurt Gänzl, *The Musical: A Concise History* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1997), 209.

has lost everything. Desirée reconciles with the real Count and then intervenes on behalf of Fritz. Lizzi's parents agree to the marriage, even though it is only to a simple hairdresser. The cast celebrates the triumph of love over all.<sup>5</sup>

*Der Tanz ins Glück* was underscored throughout most of the dialogue, giving the work a conversational tone. These melodrama sections were also more through-composed than sung sections. Stolz frequently employed melodrama to advance the action musically. Lehár also used several brief sections of melodrama in *Die Lustige Witwe*. In the previous chapter, it was noted that the waltz developed as the lovers spoke. Similarly, Stolz utilized the device to provide a musical underpinning to propel the characters into the waltz (Example 1).

Example .1 *Der Tanz ins Glück*, Act I. Note the use of spoken text over music.<sup>6</sup>

24

LIZZI (kommt von links, ein wenig zaghaft, bleibt einen Augenblick stehen).  
FRITZ (verneigt sich schüchtern, kleine Pause, beide schauen sich wortlos an, lächeln verlegen).

Melodram. LIZZI: Herr Graf, bitte, denken Sie nichts Schlechtes von mir... aber ich... ich war so neugierig, Sie kennen zu lernen, ich hab' kommen müssen – FRITZ: Bitte, es bedarf keiner Entschuldigung – Bitte, ich freue mich sehr –  
Sehr langsam.

6

<sup>5</sup>Robert Bodanzky, Bruno Hardt-Warden, and Robert Stolz, *Der Tanz ins Glück: Operette in drei Akten* (Leipzig: W. Karczag, 1920), 2-30.

<sup>6</sup>A full score version of *Der Tanz ins Glück* is unavailable in the United States. All examples are from the vocal score released shortly after the production premiered: Robert Stolz, Robert Bodanzky and Bruno Hardt-Warden, *Der Tanz ins Glück: Operette in drei Akten* (Vienna: Josef Weinberger, 1921), 24.

Character relationships in Stolz's operetta deviated from those in Lehár and Strauss. There was only one instance of Stolz mimicking previous character relationships. In both *Die Fledermaus* and *Der Tanz ins Glück*, a character masqueraded as someone of a higher social status. Fritz, like Eisenstein, disguised himself as a noble.<sup>7</sup> Strauss and Lehár included certain socially acceptable and recognizable characters that were part of a long theatrical tradition. Such character patterns had, by the time Stolz composed this operetta, become formulaic: there was the "singing-pair," the buffo pair, comical older character, and the noble.<sup>8</sup> *Der Tanz ins Glück* deviated from the formula because it lacked the traditional buffo pair. Fritz was neither a buffo nor an operetta tenor, but a "young, singing lover (*jugendlicher singender Liebhaber*)."<sup>9</sup> Stolz gave him syllabic, conversational music when he was not in disguise. In his masquerade scenes, he sang higher and more sustained lines. This was akin to Rosalinde; she too sang simpler music as a bourgeois housewife and more exotic music when in disguise as a Hungarian countess.

Furthermore, the lyric soprano fach of *Die Fledermaus*'s Rosalinde or *Die Lustige Witwe*'s Hanna did not match the youthfulness and playful nature needed for Lizzi as well as that of a soubrette. In addition, a lighter voice indicated a lower social standing than the previous two leading ladies.<sup>10</sup> Lizzi's age and voice type were more comparable to Adele, the chamber maid in *Die Fledermaus*, though Lizzi did not

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<sup>7</sup>Andrew Lamb, *150 Years of Popular Musical Theatre* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 222.

<sup>8</sup>Lief Ludwig Abertson, "Zur Ästhetik der Operette und ihrer Krise in der Zwischenkriegszeit," *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, T. 32, Fasc. 1/4 (1990): 428.

<sup>9</sup>Klaus Eidam, *Robert Stolz: Biographie eines Phänomens* (Berlin: Lied der Zeit, 1980), 76.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, 76.

demonstrate any of the archetypal behavior of a cunning maid. Stolz composed the role of Desiree for a lyric voice, which contrasted with Lizzi's characterization, thus making her sound even younger. In this manner, Stolz's music more realistically reflected the age of the characters. Additionally, visual appearance became more important; according to Richard Traubner, one of America's leading operetta scholars, casting a performer who appeared to be the same age as the character became much more common in the 1920s.<sup>11</sup> Fritz and Lizzi were much younger than Rosalinde and Eisenstein or Hanna and Danilo, and therefore the actors needed to look younger. A focus on their youthful love took precedence over the farcical situations common in *Die Fledermaus*. Aside from the aforementioned link of characters in disguise, connections to the comedic style of Strauss were then remote.<sup>12</sup>

### *Arrival of Film: Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt*

#### *Origins*

Stolz's first and most lasting success in film, *Zwei Herzen im Dreivierteltakt* (1930), was the first film to be released in America with subtitles, and its title song was an international hit. Stolz himself boasted that "until the outbreak of the war, *Two Hearts in Three-Quarter Time* and some of my other films were the only real competition for Hollywood."<sup>13</sup> Stolz turned to film because in the early 1930s Viennese music had practically disappeared from the foreign stage, "going from full-strength

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<sup>11</sup>Traubner, *Operetta: A Theatrical History*, 243

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup>Robert Stolz, Einzi Stolz, and Aram Bakshian, Jr., *The Barbed Wire Waltz: The Memoirs of the Last Waltz King: based on tapes, documents, and stories told by Robert and Einzi Stolz* (Melbourne: Robert Stolz Publishing Company, 1983), 2.

prosperity to virtual extinction in just a handful of years.”<sup>14</sup> Berlin became the European cultural center of musical life, in part because of its numerous and profitable film studios. Accordingly, film soundtrack music became more popular than songs from the theatre, mostly because they were likely to be heard by a larger audience. Stolz excelled at popular song composition: “This field of music has never known a greater genius of the one-minute form than Stolz. His songs on first hearing so deceptively simple, are in fact infinitely complex structures capable of surprising the listener time and again.”<sup>15</sup> *Colliers* magazine ranked the waltz from the film as one of the most popular Viennese waltzes, second only to Strauss’s “Blue Danube.”<sup>16</sup> The primary reason Stolz made the conscious decision to write film music, especially after the success of *Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt*, was its appeal to a general audience:

For me, at least, things had never been better and my music and film work were bringing joy to countless people inside and outside of Germany—especially to those whose only affordable pleasure in hard times was an occasional ticket to the movies. There, in the insulated world of the theatre, to the lilting strains of melodies like *Two Hearts*, they could at least set aside their sorrows for a few fleeting hours.<sup>17</sup>

*Plot: Simple and Straightforward—New Film Expectations*

The romantic story delves into the backstage world of operetta composition. The Mahler brothers, Nicki and Vicki, are librettists collaborating with a composer, Toni Hofer, who is well-known as a ladies’ man. Due to his reputation, the brothers choose

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<sup>14</sup>Gänzl, *The Musical*, 224.

<sup>15</sup> Robert Stolz, *the Man and his Times*, 3.

<sup>16</sup>Stolz, *The Barbed Wire Waltz*, 182.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, 183.

to keep the existence of their good-looking sister, Hedi, hidden from Toni. In an attempt to overcome a case of writer's block, Toni decides to throw a party. However, his friends do not attend, arguing that he is wasting time he should spend working. Only one guest arrives: Hedi, who happens to be the inspiration he seeks for his new waltz. Because of his new-found love for her, he completes the waltz and the story ends happily.<sup>18</sup>

The cast and script, though somewhat memorable, were not as important as the waltz for the success of the film: "if this *gemütlich* [cozy] depiction of Viennese backstage shenanigans had to compete with far brassier American films, the music had to carry it."<sup>19</sup> However, aside from the central waltz, the film had little music beyond incidental underscoring. The lack of other music separated it from stage works but also served to highlight the waltz as the primary carrier of operetta traits.

The plot of the film had almost no similarities to *Die Lustige Witwe* and *Die Fledermaus*. It had fewer central characters and no ensembles, focused solely on the romantic story and it lacked the typical character types often seen in operetta stage works. The primary reason for this was time: with a shorter time span, film action needed to be much faster than on the stage. However, with bourgeois central characters, the film maintained the elevation of the middle class seen in the Straussian model.

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<sup>18</sup>The plot synopsis was taken from the following sources: Stolz, *The Barbed Wire Waltz*, 180-183; Richard Traubner, *Operetta: The German and Austrian Musical Film* (Ph.D diss., New York University, 1996), 95-96.

<sup>19</sup>Traubner, *Operetta: The German and Austrian Musical Film*, 95-96.

## *Conventions: What Remained in a Fading Genre*

### *Waltz: the Most “Nostalgic” Element*

The waltz remained the central element of both stage and film operetta. Especially in *Der Tanz ins Glück* and *Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt*, it represented the highest level of nostalgia for the idealized past. Audiences still expected “gay, light and tuneful [music] bristling with waltzes.”<sup>20</sup> The main waltz for *Der Tanz ins Glück* was no exception; it appeared several times throughout the production, first as a duet between the central characters. The opening phrase of the verse at measure 21 featured a gesture with a leap of a sixth, which can be compared to the prominent use of sixths seen in the Strauss example. However, this gesture began on the dominant and moved to the third scale degree. Therefore, it still functioned in the tonic harmony, unlike Strauss’s emphasis on the sixth scale degree. The refrain of the waltz, however, began on the sixth scale degree over a tonic chord, much like Strauss’s waltz, as seen in measure 21. Intervallic quality in the opening gestures of the verse and refrain for the waltz could be interpreted as having a nostalgic character, and may suggest that Stolz was emulating Strauss, though it is uncertain whether he did so intentionally or not (Example 2).

This excerpt also can easily be compared to the intimate duet of Lehár’s *Die Lustige Witwe*; as with Lehár’s waltz, Stolz’s was central in bringing the two lovers together. Fritz later sang it in a slower tempo marked “Reminiszenz” when it seemed he had lost any chances with Lizzi. While the harmonies remained constant, the

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<sup>20</sup>Mark Lubbock, “Götterdämmerung in Wien: The Passing of Viennese Operetta,” *The Musical Times* 95, No. 1333 (March 1954): 127.

similar to the sparse orchestration seen in the Lehár example (Example 3). This and the

1

Fr.: Schenk' der Mi - nu - te Dich, schenk' Dei - nem Blu - te Dich und der Him - mel hängt voll  
Li.: Heut, vielleicht küßt Du mich, mor - gen ver - gißt Du mich und mir winkt kein Trost hie -

1. Ob.

rit.

Gei - gen! Li.: A - ber das kann nicht sein! Fr.: Mä - del, schau, sag' nicht nein! Sei nicht streng! Be - denk!  
nie - den! Fr.: Wer wird voll Schwermut sein! Schlürf' oh - ne Wehrmut ein heut' der Lie - be Wein!

1. Fl.

1. Fl.

1. Ob. Solo.

2. Hörn.

1. Fg.

1. Fg.

rit.

1. Fg. Solo.

3. Pos.

Gl.

1. Trp.

3. Pos.

Gl.

1. Trp.

Hfe.

2 Langsames Walzertempo.

*Fritz 1-2.* Ein - mal im Mai, ein - mal im Mai führt uns die Stra - ße am  
 Vl. Solo ohne Sord.  
 1.2. Vl. trem.  
 p  
 Hr. Solo  
 1. Hr. Hfe.  
 Holz.  
 Trgt1.  
 Trgt1.

Glück vor - bei, darfst nicht den Weg ver - feh - len.  
 Vl. Solo  
 1. Hr.  
 Hr.  
 Trgt1.  
 Gl.

<sup>21</sup>Stolz, *Der Tanz ins Glück*, 27-28.

3

sonst wird's Dich e - wig' quä - len! *Lizzi:* Ein - mal im Mai,

ein - mal im Mai, ein - mal kommt auch wohl an mich die Reih'!

*Fritz.* Doch dann ver - säum' nicht den Au - gen - blick zum Tanz in's

*Beide: Langsam.*

Glück! Glück!

4 Wiegendes Walzertempo.

TANZ.

*mf v.o.*

1. rit. 2. rit.

1. Fl. 1. Ob. 2. Kl. 2. Fl. 1. Hr. 2. Hörn. Hfe. Gl.

VI. Solo. p

Example 3. *Der Tanz ins Glück* Act III. No. 14a “Reminiszenz” mm. 1-31. Note the return of the waltz.<sup>22</sup>

FRITZ (schaut ihm nach, vor sich hin: Posten verloren...Mädel verloren...Alles verloren...(geht zum Spiegel, seufzt, ergreift einen Perückenstock, auf dem eine blonde Perücke aufgespannt ist, blickt ihn wehmütig an) So ähnlich war ihr Haar...  
Langsames Walzertempo.

(streichelt liebevoll die Perücke): So weich... so zart... so goldig... blond... er setzt sich wieder und beginnt an der Perücke zu arbeiten; leise, fast hauchend: Lizzi... nicht einmal angeschaut hat sie mich mehr... (reminiszierend): Meine Hand gehört einem Andern,

hat sie gesagt, einem Andern... hat sie gesagt... FRITZ.  
Ein - mal im Mai, ein - mal im  
Mai, ein - mal kommt auch wohl an mich die Reih'! Doch dann ver -  
säum' nicht den Au - gen - blick zum Tanz ins Glück!

Viol. Solo.  
Str. pp  
Hfe pp  
Viol. Solo.  
1. Kl. p  
1. Hr.  
1. Fg.  
Trgl.  
1. Ob.  
2. Kl.  
1. Hr.  
2. Fl.  
2. Hörn.  
Hfe. Gl.  
Hr. Gl.  
Gl.  
pizz.

slower tempo conveyed his sadness and a sense of nostalgia for the happy version heard earlier in the production. Lastly, all members of the cast sang the waltz at the finale, similar to the finales of both *Die Fledermaus* and *Die Lustige Witwe* (Example 4).

<sup>22</sup>Stolz, *Der Tanz ins Glück*, 117.

Example 4. *Der Tanz ins Glück* Act III. No. 16 “Schlußgesang.” mm. 1-26.  
Choral rendition of main waltz theme as finale.<sup>23</sup>

Walzertempo.  
rit. ALLEGRO, a tempo

Ein - mal im Mai, ein - mal im Mai, ein - mal kommt

auch wohl an mich die Reih'! Doch dann ver - säum' nicht den Au - gen - blick zum

Tanz ins Glück!

VORHANG.

Presto.

Ende der Operette.

Similar to the full chorus waltz heard in Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*, the cast addressed this rendition to the audience; however, “Einmal im Mai” had a much simpler construction than either of the other examples. It was shorter, strophic with a refrain,

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 124.

and had regular eight-bar phrases, and was therefore more similar to popular songs of the time.

The waltz was no less important in operetta-based film; it was the focus of *Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt* (Example 5).

Example 5. *Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt*, Waltz.<sup>24</sup>

**Zwei Herzen im Dreivierteltakt**  
Walzerlied aus dem gleichnamigen Film

Text: Walter Reisch / Armin L. Robinson      Musik: Robert Stolz

The musical score is for a waltz in 3/4 time, G major. It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are in German. The score is divided into four systems. The first system includes the title and credits. The second system includes the first line of the vocal melody and the piano accompaniment. The third system includes the second line of the vocal melody and the piano accompaniment. The fourth system includes the third line of the vocal melody and the piano accompaniment. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

<sup>24</sup>Robert Stolz, *Robert-Stolz-Melodien für Gesang und Klavier*, Vol. 1 (Munich, Dreiklang-Dreimasken, 1970), 14-15.

**Breiter**  $F^{#m6}$   $C$   $D^7$   $G^7$   $C$

schwei-gen beim Klang der Gei-gen und kei-ne(r) tanzt so gut wie du! Zwei  
 schwei-gen beim Klang der Gei-gen und kei-ne(r) tanzt so gut wie du!

**Refrain**  
 C  $E^{#}$  etwas langsamer als vorher **Breiter**  $G^7$  im Tempo

Her-zen im Drei-vier-tel-takt, die hat der Mai zu-sam-men-ge-bracht, zwei Her-zen  
 im Drei-vier-tel-takt in ei-ner Wal-zer-nacht! Ein Vier-tel Früh-ling und  
 ein Vier-tel Wein, ein Vier-tel Lie-be ver-liebt muß man sein. Zwei Her-zen im Drei-vier-tel-  
 takt, wer braucht mehr, um glück-lich zu sein? 2. Die Lo-ge

*rit.* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *rit.* *Walzertempo* *rit.* *p* *rit.*

As in *Der Tanz ins Glück*, the example had eight-bar phrases and was strophic with a refrain. A prominent gesture in this waltz was a leap of a fifth to the second scale degree, a trait similar the sense of longing produced by the leap of a sixth used by Strauss. In addition, until the final cadence at the end of the refrain, none of the sung phrases ended on the tonic; rather, most phrases ended on an E, the third scale degree.

This also produced a desire for resolution, and therefore a sense of longing, as it was part of the tonic triad, but not the tonic note.

The text of the waltz, as well as the music, indicated the sense of nostalgia for a better time: “a quarter spring, a quarter wine, a quarter love, falling in love must one be. Two hearts in three quarter time. Who needs any more to be happy?”<sup>25</sup> This waltz became so popular that it was practically a national anthem to the Viennese public. This type of recognition occurred not only with this particular song, but with several of Stolz’s most successful songs and others by his contemporaries. Such cultural success was similar to that which Lehár achieved with *Die Lustige Witwe*.<sup>26</sup>

#### *Local Color: Connection to the Typical Viennese*

Like *Die Fledermaus*, *Der Tanz ins Glück* took place in Vienna. The setting alone acted as a part of local color because it was not a realistic depiction of the city, but rather that which could appear on stage. Audiences expected operetta to be light and cheerful, even when addressing grim social realities.<sup>27</sup> For example, Fritz’s aria “Ich hab’ kein Geld! (I have no money!)” made light of the dire economic state experienced by most people living in Vienna after World War I; it connected him to the audience, who could easily identify with his sentiment. He sang an optimistic “tra-la-la” after each statement that he had no money, shown in measures 60 through 61 (Example 6).

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<sup>25</sup>Translation by the author: “Ein Viertel Frühling und ein Viertel Wein, ein Viertel Liebe verliebt muß man sein. Zwei Herzen im Dreivierteltakt, verbraucht mehr, um glücklich zu sein?” Stolz, *Robert-Stolz-Melodien*, 15.

<sup>26</sup>Abertson, “Zur Ästhetik der Operette,” 427-429.

<sup>27</sup>Othmar Herbrich, *Robert Stolz: König der Melodie* (Munich: Heyne, 1977), 181.

Example 6. *Der Tanz ins Glück*, No. 4 Entrée. “Ich hab’ kein Geld” mm. 49-72. Note the “tra-la-la” and the military tempo marking.<sup>28</sup>

The musical score is for the Entrée "Der Tanz ins Glück", No. 4, measures 49-72. It is written in B-flat major and 2/4 time. The tempo marking is "Quasi langsames Marschtempo." (Quasi slow march tempo). The score includes a vocal line with lyrics in German and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "bin ich nicht zu-frie-den trotz der äu-ßern E-le-ganz! Ich hab' kein Geld! Tra-la-la! Und das ist g'fehlt! Denn oh-ne Geld bist Du Nie-mand auf die-ser Welt!". The score features various musical notations, including "rit." (ritardando), "cresc." (crescendo), "p" (piano), "f" (forte), and "ff" (fortissimo). The piano accompaniment includes parts for 2 Fl. (Flutes), 2 Kl. (Clarinets), 2 Trp. (Trumpets), 3 Pos. (Posaunes), 2 Hörn. (Horns), 1 Hr. (Horn), and 1 Ob. (Oboe). The vocal line is marked with "rit." and "cresc.".

Military tempos and rhythms became increasingly important in the period between the two World Wars. Austria was no longer the Hapsburg Empire; its status as a former world power was one that citizens of the nation had trouble accepting. Therefore, use of marches symbolized the greatness of the past and created another

<sup>28</sup>Stolz, *Der Tanz ins Glück*, 14.

nostalgic characteristic.<sup>29</sup> In *Der Tanz ins Glück*, Stolz utilized march-like tempos frequently, most often in sections sung by ensembles, but also in Fritz's aforementioned aria "Ich hab' kein Geld!" as seen in measure 57.

### *Exoticism: Influence of American Musical Theatre*

In the 1920s, European composers and audiences looked toward America as a source of musical inspiration; as a financially successful nation, it took the place of the once-powerful Habsburg Empire as the center, not just of political power, but artistic influence as well. Stolz, like many of his contemporaries, included increasingly popular American dances in *Der Tanz ins Glück*, such as the fox-trot. This dance was similar to ragtime dances that relied heavily on syncopation and first became popular in America shortly after 1910. The dance reached Europe shortly after World War I, which may have been due to the American presence on the Continent during the war.<sup>30</sup> Much like Lehár's use of the Cakewalk, Stolz's inclusion of the foxtrot highlighted the sense of "Other" typical of operetta exoticism. Syncopation occurred in every other measure, with phrases that began on off beats, as seen in measures 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15 (Example 7).

In this number, Fritz and Lizzi became familiar with one another very quickly; they addressed each other as "Du" (measure 13) relatively early in the music. This was akin to the "Du" designation that Falke requested at the party in *Die Fledermaus*.

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<sup>29</sup>Abertson, "Zur Ästhetik der Operette," 428-429.

<sup>30</sup>Pauline Norton, "Foxtrot," *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/10075> (accessed March 13, 2009).

Example 7. *Der Tanz ins Glück* Nr. 11a Foxtrott-Duett, mm. 1-15. Use of American popular dance.

Ruhiges Foxtrotttempo.

Lizzi: 1. Kling! Klang!  
Lizzi: 2. Kling! Klang!

*mf* VO. Trp. ohne  
sord.

Holz Sub.  
1. Trp.

Holzschl.

Hr. Trgl.

Hörst du das Glück nicht läu-ten? Kling! Klang! Es tönt von al-len Sei-ten  
Die Glocken wer-den läu-ten? Kling! Klang! Wenn wir zu-sammenschreiten

Küßt euch nur, ruft's aus den Zwei-gen! Lizzi: Küßt euch nur!  
Lizzi: Glück-ent-sandt, den Kranz im Haa-re! Fritz: Hand in Hand

Holz

1. Hr.

1

Die Stern-lein schwei-gen! Du! Du! Du!  
zum Trau-al-ta-re! Du! Du! Du!

Hörst du die Blu-men sin-gen?  
Das wird ein fro-hes Pärchen!

1. Ob.  
1. Fg.

1. Hr.

Stolz also included American words in the text. Such usage was often considered by critics to be trite and lacking in substance, coming from the *Amerika-Wahn* (American Illusion), a concept that expressed the spirit of the time. The idiom referred to the idea that success of any kind was possible in America, but, in the aftermath of World War I, it seemed to be unrealistic.<sup>31</sup> Stolz employed Americanized text when Lizzi and her friends sing “Halloh! Was das für Mädeln sind!” They sing to

<sup>31</sup>Láng, “Melodie aus Wien,” 67.

Lizzi's parents, extolling the fact that they are, indeed, adults, and should be treated as such, especially in the line:

Wir sind ganz modern Mädis und doch keine Baby's mehr!  
*We are all modern girls and after all not babies anymore!*

Nein, wir Mädis sind schon große Lady's!  
*No, we girls are already big ladies!*

American slang represented the increased dominance of youth culture in Vienna; Stolz's usage of this text may have been to draw a younger audience.

Lastly, much like the "French" sounding text found in the Grisettes' can-can in the Lehár, Stolz utilized nonsense-syllables to provide an exotic sound in the confrontation scene between Lizzi and Desirée over their claims to the man each thinks is the count. In this scene, Desirée insulted Lizzi by calling her by various bird names; Lizzi responded to these invectives by singing bird-like calls and parrot-like repetition of words such as "Kiwi" and "Honolulu."<sup>32</sup> The two women end the section by addressing the other's childish behavior, which, in the jungle, would be no crime (Example 8). This contrasted with the folk-like use of nonsense syllables found in sections of the Lehár and Strauss; here, the two female characters exploited the syllables for their comical fight.

Stolz adapted to increasing competition from American musical theatre by including the foxtrot typical of American productions. The balance of power had shifted, and without Habsburg dominance or the cultural clout it once had, the Viennese imported rather than exported musical style.<sup>33</sup> The nature of exoticism in the genre

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<sup>32</sup>This text could be considered another foreign influence; "Kiwi" was a nickname for New Zealand, and it, like Hawaii, had become a popular vacation destination in the 1920s.

<sup>33</sup>Abertson, "Zur Ästhetik der Operette," 433.

Example 8. *Der Tanz ins Glück*, No. 12. Quintett. “Kakadu,” mm. 46-77. Notice use of nonsense syllables.<sup>34</sup>

changed from the era of Strauss and Lehár: “the operatic and theatrical styles of nineteenth-century social structures were replaced by a musical style more aptly suited to the twentieth-century society and its vernacular idiom. It was from America that the more direct style emerged, and in America that it was able to flourish in a developing society less hidebound by nineteenth-century tradition.”<sup>35</sup> Because the foxtrot became

<sup>34</sup>Stolz, *Der Tanz ins Glück*, 84.

<sup>35</sup>Andrew Lamb, “From Pinafore to Porter: United States-United Kingdom Interactions in Musical Theatre, 1879-1929,” *American Music* 4, No. 1 (Spring 1986): 47.

popular, Stolz's use of it in the operetta attracted an audience enraptured by the newest social dance craze. It was therefore a commercial as well as an artistic choice.

### *Film: A World Genre*

*Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt*, unlike the stage production of *Der Tanz ins Glück*, did not include the characteristics of local color and exoticism expected in operetta. In this manner, the film strayed even further from the Strauss and Lehár models. It was the title waltz, including the last line, "who needs anything else to be happy?" that resonated with audiences around the world who faced economic recession in the time between world wars.<sup>36</sup> Like *Die Fledermaus*, ridiculous situations masked a darker view of life at the time. Additionally, exoticism was impractical in the truncated time frame of the film; only the waltz was necessary to the plot, and inclusion of other styles of music would have been superfluous.

### *Conclusion*

The largest change in Stolz's career in comparison to those of Strauss and Lehár was how audiences experienced operetta, namely film and radio. Rather than the accumulation of scores to be played repeatedly on the piano after seeing a performance, the public became accustomed to seeing films and listening to the radio, with fewer people playing the music at home on the piano for their own enjoyment. This new type of "half-listening" removed a crucial experience of the music, but also permitted a wider

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<sup>36</sup>Eidam, *Robert Stolz*, 97.

audience to experience these works.<sup>37</sup> Stolz's longest enduring success was as a cultural symbol: he was the last representative of true Viennese operetta, and the only remaining link to the great days of Strauss and Lehár, and in some ways he "achieved some recognition by virtue of his extreme old age and by the fact that as a composer and conductor he was a relic of those glorious times."<sup>38</sup> He never really attained the same cultural significance as a composer that his predecessors did. Changing political and financial situations may be partly responsible for this, but it might also be that he did not make sufficient changes in the genre as a stage work for it to survive. He maintained some operetta traditions, namely the waltz, but did away with the inclusion of local color and exoticism in his films. This may be why the genre, though not necessarily the works of Stolz, is still a vital part of international theatrical repertory.

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<sup>37</sup>Abertson, "Zur Ästhetik der Operette," 436.

<sup>38</sup>Endler, *Vienna: A Guide*, 85.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### “Schlussgesang”

The three composers discussed made careers in a genre that addressed the needs of Austrians, most especially the Viennese, to escape from the realities of daily life into a world populated by farce and romance, strewn with waltzes and champagne. After Strauss set the conventions in *Die Fledermaus*, the genre became codified. As a popular genre, it was dominated by socio-political context, causing the expected forms and idioms to represent idealized ways of life, as evidenced by the works of Lehár and Stolz. Despite much conventional content, it is the works of these two composers that stand out from other operetta composers at the height of the genre. Each composer broke the rules of the composers and works before them. What sets their works apart as stellar compositions is that they each wrote a work that was unconventional in some way. All three composers included conventional material, though used in different ways. The most important conventions were the waltz, local color, and exoticism. In the waltz, each one incorporated sexual content. For Strauss, gaiety and champagne led to characters' foibles. Lehár chose a more realistic type of sexual display, namely the passionate love affair of Hanna and Danilo. Stolz expressed the development of young love in his waltz. Furthermore, they all provided local color to make the audience feel comfortable. Strauss and Lehár achieved this through recognizable folk styles and melodies; Stolz used march rhythms that a post-World War I audience would have found recognizable. Additionally, the location of both Strauss's and Stolz's works was Vienna; the local setting served as

another type of local color. All three composers employed exoticism for excitement. Strauss's use of national dances highlighted the Habsburg stronghold over the region. Lehár and Stolz included American idioms, which reflected the lure of an increasingly successful culture outside of Austria. Exotic elements functioned not only to thrill the audience with unusual musical traits, but also commented upon existing political and social situations. Because the political climate changed so much over the years between *Die Fledermaus*'s 1874 premiere and the 1921 premiere of *Der Tanz ins Glück*, it is no wonder that the genre was unable to continue on the same musical path.

Stolz's works did not fit the mode of presentation in which those by Strauss and Lehár ultimately remained, namely, the stage. This was primarily because popular operetta was no longer possible. The rise of film and musical theatre as forms of popular entertainment drew audiences away from the traditional operetta stage, and younger audiences especially followed the newest musical and technological trends in art. Additionally, many political issues prevented Stolz from achieving the international notoriety that Strauss and Lehár did prior to the First World War. It was impossible for an Austrian composer to attain the same level of financial and artistic success when Germanic culture was deemed unsavory. Though his stage works did not attain the same level of renown, his film works did, primarily due to his early involvement with the technology. However, film cannot be reproduced by theatres and updated as can *Die Fledermaus* and *Die Lustige Witwe*, with new libretti that are relevant to a modern audience though with the same well-known nostalgic music. Film is set, and therefore cannot enter any kind of standard repertory.

Revivals of *Die Fledermaus* and *Die Lustige Witwe*, however, are common. *Die Fledermaus* is currently ranked as the nineteenth in Opera America's "20 Most Frequently Performed Operas in North America." Since 1990, it has had 145 productions in North America's major houses. *Die Lustige Witwe* has been produced 97 times. *Der Tanz ins Glück*, on the other hand, has not been performed in the United States in the same time frame.<sup>1</sup> Translations and updated libretti are quite common; Wendy Wasserstein's recent version of *The Merry Widow* (*Die Lustige Witwe*), for instance, has a "contemporary gleam."<sup>2</sup> The libretto features "occasional updated talk of mutual funds, tourist trade, and a wife who shops to exhaustion."<sup>3</sup> Another example of an updated translation and production was the Austin Lyric Opera's *Die Fledermaus*, which took place in June 2008 under the title *The Bat*; in this version, the story took place in Austin, and the libretto was revised to include even more local color in the form of topical references to politicians, socialites, and area musicians.<sup>4</sup> These revisions help to keep the music and stories relevant to non-German speaking audiences by addressing contemporary political concerns.

Similarly, there have been many worldwide productions of both *Die Fledermaus* and *Die Lustige Witwe*. Between January 2008 and the present, *Die Fledermaus* has had 372 performances in 64 productions in 51 cities worldwide. *Die Lustige Witwe* has had

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<sup>1</sup>"OPERA America presents Cornerstones: the 20 Most Performed Operas in North America," <http://www.operaamerica.org/content/audiences/Programs/Cornerstones/index.shtml> (4 April 2009).

<sup>2</sup>Alan Rich, "In Review: From Around the World: North America: San Francisco," *Opera News* 66, No. 9 (March 2002): 78.

<sup>3</sup>John Harrison, "Viewpoints: Great Performances: San Francisco Opera: 'The Merry Widow,'" *Opera Journal* 36, No. 2 (June 2003): 25.

<sup>4</sup>*The Bat*, by Johann Strauss, directed by Rod Caspers, conducted by Richard Buckley, Long Center for the Performing Arts, Austin Lyric Opera, Austin, June 5, 2008. An important example of added local color in this production was mention of the bats that nest under the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge, a famed sight in Austin.

367 performances in 38 productions in 28 cities worldwide. In contrast, there have been no performances of *Der Tanz ins Glück*, but a stage version of *Zwei Herzen in Dreivierteltakt* took place in Coburg, Germany, in their 2008-2009 season.<sup>5</sup>

The numbers alone demonstrate the staying power of *Die Fledermaus* and *Die Lustige Witwe*. Though each composer had parallel compositional careers and included much of the same conventional material, the long term result, canonization, was different. Stolz remains an important historical figure for Austria because he represents the culmination of the nation's favorite genre. Its place as popular music came to a halt, with no means through which to revive itself. Because the music of *Die Fledermaus* and *Die Lustige Witwe* has entered the standard repertory, text revisions and updated versions help to keep these works alive. Though Stolz worked to keep the genre thriving in a new medium through two world wars, works not already canonized would never achieve the same status as those of famed composers Strauss and Lehár.

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<sup>5</sup>“Operabase: Performances,” <http://www.operabase.com/index.cgi?lang=en> (Accessed 4 April 2009).

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