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Inside Pierrot Lunaire: Performing The Sprechstimme In Schoenberg's Masterpiece



Synopsis

Inside Pierrot lunaire: Performing the Sprechstimme in Schoenberg's Masterpiece is a handbook on the performance and interpretation of the recitation in Arnold Schoenberg's Pierrot lunaire, op. 21. Presenting a guide for the listener and an aid to the interpreter of the 21 melodramas, the book provides an original English translation of each poem, annotated with references to other poems in the cycle, including some of the texts Schoenberg omitted. The volume also offers an analysis of the Sprechstimme in each melodrama in the context of the surrounding texture and directed by the principles of analysis Schoenberg established in his essays and lectures. Inside Pierrot lunaire makes a case for the importance of the notated pitches in a correct performance of the Sprechstimme. Acclaimed singer Phyllis Bryn-Julson and music theorist Paul Mathews provide a method for performing the Sprechstimme that considers Schoenberg's performing directions, his sometimes-contradictory statements, the recording Schoenberg conducted in 1939, and the burgeoning scholarship on speech-melody. Bryn-Julson and Mathews also examine the role played by Albertine Zehme, the singing actress who commissioned Pierrot, whose part in its creation has been minimized in previous studies. The discussion of Sprechstimme is informed by a genuine oral tradition running from Eduard Steuermann, the pianist who coached Zehme's premiere of the piece, to Ms. Bryn-Julson's own interpretation. The volume also provides a bibliography of sources and an index.

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Customer Reviews

This book is full of interesting information about Pierrot Lunaire. Musical analysis of each of the 21 "songs" is extensive. Information about the history of Sprechstimme is informative.

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