

## **Young Researchers Workshop** **Analysing Music-Dramatic Movement**

“C’est rapide, – c’est ardent, – c’est écumant” - Biel/Bienne, Switzerland

Thursday 23 April 2015, 14.00–18.30

in connection with the international conference “Musiktheater im Brennpunkt von Bild und Bewegung / Opera through the Prism of Visuality and Kinesis”  
Schweizer Opernstudio, Jakob-Rosius-Strasse 16, 2502 Biel, Room 3.03

Organisation: Laura Möckli (Bern), contact & info: [laura\\_moeckli@hotmail.com](mailto:laura_moeckli@hotmail.com)

Participants: Anselm Gerhard (Bern), Sarah Hibberd (Nottingham), Laura Protano-Biggs (London), Anette Schaffer (Bern), Stephanie Schroedter (Bern/Berlin), as well as further guests and participants.

Pre-circulated input papers: Livio Marcaletti (Bern), Theresa Steinacker (Basel), Rachana Vajjhala (Berkeley), Delphine Vincent (Fribourg)

The workshop is supported by the “Fund for the Promotion of Young Researchers” granted by the “Intermediate Staff Association of the University of Bern” (MVUB)

### PROGRAM

**14.00 Theresa Steinacker** (Universität Basel)

*Störung – Versöhnung – Ruhe. Janáčeks Theorie der Wirksamkeit von Akkordverbindungen und die kompositorische Praxis am Beispiel der Jenůfa*

**15.00 Livio Marcaletti** (Universität Bern)

*‘Visible’ Vocality: Ornamentation, Interpretation and Expressivity in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century German and French Singing Manuals*

**16.00 Rachana Vajjhala** (University of California, Berkeley)

*Beauty’s Body: Trouhanova’s Ballet Evening*

**16.30 Delphine Vincent** (Université de Fribourg)

*“Comme de longs échos qui de loin se confondent” : Some Thoughts on Intermedial Exchanges Between Film Studies Methods and Opera Analysis*

**18.00 Concluding Discussion**



## ABSTRACTS

**Theresa Steinacker** (Universität Basel)

*Disturbance – Reconciliation – Stillness. Janáček’s Theory of Effective Chord Connections and its Compositional Concretisation in Jenůfa*

Janáček’s operas are often considered comprehensible to the audience upon first hearing; this immediacy is attributed to the composer’s exceptional ability to convey his stage protagonists’ psychology through music. At the same time however the analysis of his works is considered difficult. For a long time Janáček’s image was that of an exotic outsider, the exact contrary of an academic composer, whose music had a direct effect on the public, but was hardly worth analysing in detail. Particularly in the case of his operas, analysis rarely went beyond the observation that Janáček tended to work with extremely small and variably combined motifs and motif-fragments.

A very similar attitude prevailed in the reception of his music-theoretical works, long considered barely understandable eccentric declarations of a (recurrent) college dropout. Recent research has shown that Janáček was not only very familiar with contemporary scientific discourse, but that his writings were directly influenced by authors such as Wilhelm Wundt, Hermann von Helmholtz and others. However, Janáček refused an “academic” approach to music theory: his central category was always musical effectiveness, with which he radically departed from the prevalent doctrine.

This paper will explore to what extent these areas of research can be productively brought together – so whether Janáček’s theoretical considerations, particularly those influenced by psychologically oriented texts, can help develop a method for analysing his music. Janáček’s theory of “Rückbeziehungen”, as he calls his effective chord connection system, will be critically tested as an analysis method on the basis of a scene from the opera *Jenůfa*, focusing particularly on the musical representation of the characters’ psychological processes.

**Theresa Steinacker** studied musicology, Slavic studies and Jewish studies at the universities of Freiburg im Breisgau and Basel. During her studies she worked as a research assistant for the international graduate academy of the University of Freiburg. She also worked as an intern in opera productions at the Theater Freiburg (2008) and the Deutsche Oper Berlin (2009, 2011, 2012). Since 2013 she is assistant at the University of Basel where she is writing a dissertation about Leoš Janáček’s operas.

**Livio Marcaletti** (Universität Bern)

*‘Visible’ Vocality: Ornamentation, Interpretation and Expressivity in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century German and French Singing Manuals*

After the creation of the Parisian *Conservatoire* in 1795, the amount of music manuals published in France rose remarkably, reflecting the new demand for didactic teaching materials. Although the French *Conservatoire* model only gradually spread to neighbouring Germany, French singing methods were translated and published throughout Europe. These new manuals often focused on technical exercises such as *sofeggi* and *vocalizzi*, through which the pupil could acquire vocal agility and correctness of intonation, but many singing manuals also include a few chapters on expression or performance, in which the means of depicting vivid sentiments are explained. One aspect is the art of vocal ‘graces’, articulations or dynamics. For instance Ferdinand Sieber (*Gesangskunst*, 1856) describes several

ways of articulating notes through breathing effects, such as trembling, sighing, sobbing, weeping and laughing; or, the German singers Heinrich Ferdinand Mannstein and Franz Hauser explain various applications of the ‘sentimental’ *glissando* which may depict the feelings of ‘warm lovers’, but may also sound too ‘mawkish’ in association with stern characters. Some of the most striking musical examples are found in French manuals, such as García’s renowned *Traité de l’art du chant* (1847), where all sorts of vocal changes and nuances are carefully indicated in the selected recitatives and arias. Enrico Delle Sedie’s *L’art lyrique* (1874) provides even more detail with regard to the movement and staging of operas. The author – an important interpreter of Verdi’s baritone roles – elaborates several *vocalises* to teach how feelings such as pain, irony, fury, contempt, melancholy can be expressed through changes of tempo, articulation, dynamics, accents, etc. These techniques are then applied to specific scenes from *Barbiere*, *Rigoletto*, *La Favorita* and *Macbeth*, and associated with appropriate expressive movements and gestures for the stage. The aim of the present paper will be to consider the conjunction between vocal ‘graces’ and nuances, nowadays often neglected by performers, and dramatic stage gestures, exploring to what extent movement becomes ‘hearable’ and vocality ‘visible’.

**Livio Marcaletti** studied musicology and Italian philology in Cremona (University of Pavia). He is a PhD student in musicology at the University of Bern, with a thesis about *Gesangsmanieren* and written vocal didactics (1600–1900) which considers the development and continuity of vocal ornamentation and performance practice in the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Besides his research activity, he has prepared CD booklets, programme notes and critical editions for Italian and Swiss music ensembles (*La Risonanza*, *Stile Galante*, *Les Passions de l’âme*) and has given a workshop for singers at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis.

**Rachana Vajjhala** (University of California, Berkeley)  
*Beauty’s Body: Trouhanova’s Ballet Evening*

This paper will consider an evening of ballets by the émigré dancer Natasha Trouhanova and engage with questions of beauty and femininity. Trouhanova herself was an eclectic who graced stages ranging from risqué music-halls to high theater. In the spring of 1912, she directed and starred in an ambitious concert that featured ballets by four eminent composers of the French music scene: Schmitt, Dukas, Ravel, and d’Indy. The last two offered preexisting scores adapted for the stage. Both were notable failures that evening: d’Indy’s *Istar* on account of Trouhanova’s simulation of nudity and Ravel’s diminutive *Adélaïde, ou le langage des fleurs* on account of its too-conventional choreography. I will suggest that these two moments reveal the complications of staging feminine beauty during the *belle époque*. In its musical salubrity, *Istar* presented health and wholesomeness—physical, aesthetic, national; Trouhanova’s seemingly nude body, however, corrupted d’Indy’s pure score. *Adélaïde* was the greater problem. Narrating the romantic foibles of a courtesan and her two suitors, the ballet offered a perspective on feminine beauty that provoked anxieties about its propriety. Instead of *Istar*’s salubrious and generative aesthetic, *Adélaïde* seemed to promote a self-indulgent beauty that valued pleasure over fecundity. Because the nation was then witnessing a declining birthrate, such a suggestion was particularly charged in Third Republic France. In its eclectic presentation of these divergent construals of beauty, Trouhanova’s risky concert not only contributed to the revitalization of French ballet, but also intersected with larger projects of national rehabilitation.

**Rachana Vajjhala** recently earned her PhD in Music History & Literature from UC Berkeley. Her dissertation, *The Politics of Belle Epoque Ballet*, engages with both historical and historiographical questions surrounding danced works in the immediate prewar years. Though her dissertation focuses on balletic productions, she is interested more generally in the complex and multifarious interactions of music and gesture.

**Delphine Vincent** (Université de Fribourg)

*“Comme de longs échos qui de loin se confondent”*: Some Thoughts on Intermedial Exchanges Between Film Studies Methods and Opera Analysis

It is a recent trend to draw upon film studies methods in musicology and other “old” domains of the Humanities. Beyond the idea that moving image is the new ‘sexy’ in terms of academic work, what aspects of film studies are really relevant to the field of opera analysis? My paper wishes to point out a few concepts used by film studies scholars which could be of general interest for operatic analysis. I will discuss some terms specifically relevant to film music studies such as diegetic/non-diegetic/meta-diegetic music and questions regarding tonal perspective. I will also take a look at a few terms borrowed from ‘general’ film studies and try to apply framing and editing concepts such as freeze frame, close-up, travelling shot and so on to the domain of opera analysis. On the other hand, I will examine a few of the musical concepts for analysis which film studies use erroneously such as “Leitmotiv”, and discuss the notions of “cinematic” and “operatic” which have appeared in film music studies for qualifying the intersection of opera and film.

**Delphine Vincent** studied musicology, film and history at the universities of Lausanne, Geneva and Fribourg. Her dissertation, *“L’œil écoute”*. *Musique classique filmée: perception, réception, idéologie*, explores the relations between music performance and moving image. Further research interests include music for the flute and French music between 1850 and 1950. She was awarded a grant of the SNF for her project, *La musique de film du Groupe des Six* at the University of Paris 8, and is currently senior research assistant in musicology at the Université de Fribourg.