Schoenberg and Hollywood Modernism

Schoenberg is often viewed as an isolated composer who was ill at ease in exile. In this book Kenneth Marcus shows that in fact Schoenberg’s connections to Hollywood ran deep, and most of the composer’s exile compositions had some connection to the cultural and intellectual environment in which he found himself. He was friends with numerous successful film industry figures, including George Gershwin, Oscar Levant, David Raksin, and Alfred Newman, and each contributed to the composer’s life and work in different ways: helping him to obtain students, making recordings of his music, and arranging commissions. While teaching at both USC and UCLA, Schoenberg was able to bridge two utterly different worlds: the film industry and the academy. Marcus shows that alongside Schoenberg’s vital impact upon Southern California Modernism through his pedagogy, compositions, and texts, he also taught students who became central to American musical modernism, including John Cage and Lou Harrison.

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University of La Verne
For Christine and David
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* * *

Acknowledgments

Abbreviations

ASC  Arnold Schönberg Center, Vienna, Austria
HL   Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, California
LC   Library of Congress, Washington, DC
PSF  Paul Sacher Foundation, Basel, Switzerland
SC/UCLA Special Collections, Performing Arts, University of California, Los Angeles
SC/USC Special Collections, USC Libraries, University of Southern California
TMA  Thomas Mann Archive, Zurich, Switzerland
UA/UCLA University Archives, Charles E. Young Research Library, University of California, Los Angeles
Map 0.1 Map of the City of Los Angeles. Courtesy Sean Carlson, University of La Verne Graphics.