

RICHARD STRAUSS IN CONTEXT

Richard Strauss in Context offers a distinctive approach to the study of a composer, placing the emphasis on contextualizing topics rather than on biography and artistic output. One might say that it inverts the relationship between composer and context. Rather than studies of Strauss's librettists that discuss the texts and his musical settings, for instance, this book offers essays on the writers themselves: their biographical circumstances, styles, landmark works, and broader positions in literary history. Likewise, Strauss's contributions to the concert hall are positioned within the broader development of the orchestra and trends in programmatic music. In short, readers will benefit from an elaboration of material that is either absent from or treated only briefly in existing publications. With its contextually rich approach, this book serves as a valuable and unique resource for students, scholars, and a general readership.

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RICHARD STRAUSS IN
CONTEXT

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Preface

Morten Kristiansen and Joseph E. Jones

Nearly a half century elapsed after Richard Strauss's death in 1949 before the composer became the object of sustained musicological inquiry, in spite of his prominence in the concert hall and opera house. Not until the early 1990s, with the publication of two English-language essay collections edited by Bryan Gilliam, did Strauss scholarship experience something of a turn-of-the-millennium resurgence that has not since abated.¹ In addition to numerous articles, contributions from this period include a string of biographies,² three comprehensive "companions,"³ several other essay collections published in 1999 in commemoration of the semi-centennial of Strauss's death,⁴ and a more recent volume in 2014 stemming from the 150th anniversary of his birth.⁵ The latest product is an English translation

¹ *Richard Strauss and His World*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) and *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1992).

² Franzpeter Messmer, *Richard Strauss: Biographie eines Klangzaubers* (Zürich/St. Gallen: M&T Verlag, 1994); Veronika Beci, *Der ewig Moderne: Richard Strauss 1864–1949* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1998); Tim Ashley, *Richard Strauss* (London: Phaidon Press, 1999); Matthew Boyden, *Richard Strauss* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1999); Bryan Gilliam, *The Life of Richard Strauss* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Michael Kennedy, *Richard Strauss: Man, Musician, Enigma* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Maria Publig, *Richard Strauss: Bürger-Künstler-Rebell, eine historische Annäherung* (Graz: Styria, 1999); Michael Walter, *Richard Strauss und seine Zeit* (Laaber: Verlag Laaber, 2000); Kurt Wilhelm, *Richard Strauss: An Intimate Portrait*, trans. Mary Whittall (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2000); and Raymond Holden, *Richard Strauss: A Musical Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

³ *The Richard Strauss Companion*, ed. Mark-Daniel Schmid (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003); *The Cambridge Companion to Richard Strauss*, ed. Charles Youmans (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); and *Richard Strauss Handbuch*, ed. Walter Werbeck (Stuttgart: Metzler, 2014).

⁴ *Richard Strauss und die Moderne*, ed. Bernd Edelmann, Birgit Lodes, and Reinhold Schlötterer (Berlin: Henschel, 2001); *Richard Strauss, Hugo von Hofmannsthal: Frauenbilder*, ed. Ilija Dürhammer and Pia Janke (Vienna: Praesens, 2001); *Richard Strauss: Essays zu Leben und Werk*, ed. Michael Heinemann, Matthias Herrmann, and Stefan Weiss (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 2002); and *Richard Strauss und das Musiktheater*, ed. Julia Liebscher (Berlin: Henschel, 2005).

⁵ Richard Strauss: *Der Komponist und sein Werk – Überlieferung, Interpretation, Rezeption*, ed. Sebastian Bolz, Adrian Kech, and Hartmut Schick (Munich: Allitera, 2017).

(rare for composer biographies) of Laurenz Lütteken's 2014 monograph, *Richard Strauss: Musik der Moderne*, hopefully a sign of an expanding global interest in the composer.⁶

The volumes in Cambridge's *Composers in Context* series differ in approach from previous edited collections, in that they place the emphasis on contextualizing topics rather than on the composer's biography and artistic output. One might say they invert the relationship between composer and context. For instance, while both *The Cambridge Companion to Richard Strauss* (2010) and the *Richard Strauss Handbuch* (2014) contain essays with titles echoed in this volume, (e.g. Strauss as Conductor, the Allgemeine Deutsche Musikverein, Strauss's Librettists, and the Genossenschaft Deutscher Tonsetzer), these earlier publications appropriately center on Strauss himself. The equivalent essays in *Richard Strauss in Context* instead focus attention on the composer's orbit. Rather than essays on Strauss's librettists that discuss the texts and his musical settings, Chapters 5 and 6 foreground the writers themselves: their biographical circumstances, styles, landmark works, and larger positions in literary history. Similarly, while previous essays on Strauss's development as an opera composer concentrate on the genesis, style, and reception of the works, the larger picture of German opera after Wagner might be addressed only in passing. The corresponding chapter in this volume expands that discussion into a survey of post-Wagnerian operas by composers such as Max von Schillings, Hans Pfitzner, Wilhelm Kienzl, and Eugen d'Albert – important figures in Strauss's operatic environment who typically receive only cursory mention in the existing literature. And yet, not all chapters in this volume focus exclusively on context. Those of the final section (Part VI: *Artifacts and Legacy*) are by nature more Strauss-centric as are a few others, such as Chapters 1, "Family and Upbringing," 14, "Strauss as Reader," and 29, "Lateness." What all chapters share, however, is the elaboration of material that is either absent from or treated only briefly in biographies and journal articles. Through this supplemental and broader contextual approach, we aim for this book to serve as a valuable and unique resource for students, scholars, and a general readership.

Richard Strauss in Context features 36 essays divided into six parts. Part I, *Family, Friends, and Collaborators*, explores a range of figures who played central roles in Strauss's life and career. Chris Walton examines the composer's family and upbringing with respect to the wider culture of

⁶ Laurenz Lütteken, *Strauss*, trans. Erik Butler (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019).

his native Bavaria, while David Larkin focuses on three figures who exerted significant influence over Strauss's development: his father Franz Strauss, Hans von Bülow, and Alexander Ritter. Katharina Hottmann presents a study of Strauss's wife, Pauline de Ahna, assessing their marriage relative to contemporary norms for domestic partnerships and compared to that for women with similar professional backgrounds. Walter Werbeck then discusses the lives of Ludwig Thuille and Friedrich Rösch, two of Strauss's closest friends. The next two chapters center on Strauss's librettists. Ingeborg Haase and Dirk Hoffmann survey the life and work of Hugo von Hofmannsthal, his longest and most significant collaborator, and Kenneth Birkin considers the careers of Ernst von Wolzogen (*Feuersnot*), Stefan Zweig (*Die schweigsame Frau*), Joseph Gregor (*Friedenstag*, *Daphne*, and *Die Liebe der Danae*), and Clemens Krauss (*Capriccio*). Ryan M. Prendergast investigates key stage collaborators, including Max Reinhardt and Alfred Roller, and touches upon the Salzburg Festival they cofounded with Strauss. Finally, Bryan Gilliam underscores the importance of several conductors, singers, and other composers who championed Strauss at various stages of his career.

Part II, *Career Stations*, includes studies of the seven cities most closely associated with Strauss, focusing both on the institutions where he pursued his professional activities as well as the cities' broader artistic milieus. Sebastian Bolz offers portraits of Munich, the city in which Strauss grew up and twice held conducting posts (1886–89 and 1894–98), and of Garmisch, where he built his mountainside villa in 1908. Strauss also spent time early in his career in Meiningen (1885–86) and Weimar (1889–94), and Michael Saffle's report on these two cities illuminates aspects of cultural life in pre-World War I Germany and its impact on the composer's professional development. Ulrich Konrad documents the city, institution, and phenomenon of Bayreuth that greatly influenced Strauss's career, including his relationship with Wagner's widow, Cosima. Dietmar Schenk writes on Berlin, the Prussian capital where Strauss spent the largest share of his conducting career, from 1898 until the abolishment of the German monarchy in 1918. Joseph E. Jones then contextualizes Strauss's difficult tenure as codirector of the Vienna State Opera (1919–24) through the lens of post-war politics and various social initiatives that impacted life in the city.

Part III, *Cultural Engagement and Musical Life*, explores Strauss's interests in literature, philosophy, and religion, as well as musical organizations in which he played a leading role. Matthew Werley examines the composer's lifelong consumption of literature with fascinating commentary on

the contents of his Garmisch library. Jason Geary traces the rich history of German engagement with antiquity and the ways in which it informs our understanding of Strauss's operas that are based on Greek myth. Charles Youmans introduces Strauss's views on metaphysics and faith, specifically his active engagement with Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, as well as the composer's agnosticism, in their contemporary artistic contexts. James Deaville's essay on the Allgemeine Deutsche Musikverein details not only the legacy of Strauss's tenure as president (1901–09), but also the society's four decades prior to Strauss's leadership and its eventual dissolution during the Nazi era. Lastly, Manuela Schmidt discusses the complex history of the Genossenschaft Deutscher Tonsetzer, the first successful collective management organization in Germany, which Strauss helped found in 1903.

The first two essays of Part IV, *Professional and Musical Contexts*, compare his path as composer (Jeremy R. Zima) and conductor (Raymond Holden) with those of the broader profession, drawing contrasts between Strauss and his contemporaries with respect to education, career options, income, repertoire, and more. Scott Warfield then focuses on the development and significance of the orchestra in the long nineteenth century as a crucial backdrop for assessing Strauss's music. In an effort to better situate Strauss's aesthetic orientations, Jonathan Kregor presents a broad history of programmatic composition, outlining the absolute versus program music debate and its impact on concert life. Morten Kristiansen explores new directions and challenges in German opera after Wagner, highlighting many now-forgotten examples that formed the context of Strauss's fin-de-siècle stage works. The section concludes with Jürgen May's assessment of the historical and cultural backdrop of Strauss's Lieder, a topic that has received limited scholarly attention despite the composer's prolific output.

Part V, *In History*, covers a series of historical contexts that profoundly affected the careers and reception of Strauss and his contemporaries. Pulling back the lens, Peter Franklin investigates the wider modernist narrative that declared Strauss an irrelevant conservative after 1910, while Leon Botstein offers a sweeping assessment of traditionalism in twentieth-century music vis-à-vis Strauss, arguing that his "alternate formulation of the modern" made him the century's most representative composer. Next is another pair of essays, by Philip Graydon and Erik Levi, respectively, that analyze the cataclysmic impacts of the World War I on German musical life, and then the conditions of music creation and consumption in Nazi Germany, including the role of the Reichsmusikkammer.

Giangiorgio Satriani's examination of Strauss's celebrated "Indian Summer" in the larger contexts of classicizing and aging is followed by Franzpeter Messmer's survey of contemporary Strauss reception within the context of contemporary developments in music, the visual arts, literature, philosophy, and science.

Lastly, Part VI, *Artifacts and Legacy*, considers the critical and scholarly reception of Strauss, the artifacts of his long and productive career, and his influence and legacy. Andreas Pernpeintner and Stefan Schenk discuss the composer's relationships with his publishers as well as the various editions of his works spanning from the late nineteenth century to the present, including the new critical edition begun in Munich in 2011. Claudia Heine and Adrian Kech document the enormous quantity of Strauss's correspondence and the process that continues to lead to the publication of letters, diaries, and other artifacts, with a list of these sources appearing as an Appendix. Raymond Holden studies Strauss's posthumous legacy of musical performances through programming, recordings (including Strauss's own), and conductors and performers closely associated with his oeuvre. Ben Winters adopts a more analytical approach in tracing Strauss's influence from contemporaries such as Erich Korngold to the film scores of John Williams. Charles Youmans then assesses the impact of the inclusion of *Also sprach Zarathustra* in Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), emphasizing the affinities between the tone poem and film. In the final chapter, Matthew Werley takes stock of trends in Strauss research, particularly from dissertations written over the past three decades, while pointing to potentially fruitful paths for future research.

Note on Translation

The names of major orchestras (e.g. Berlin Philharmonic) and performance venues (e.g. Vienna State Opera) that are well known in English appear as such, while the others (e.g. Danzig Stadttheater) remain in German. They all, along with the names of organizations (e.g. Allgemeine Deutsche Musikverein), are printed in standard roman type, with italics reserved for German terms (e.g. *Zeitoper*). Position titles such as Kapellmeister and Generalmusikdirektor, that are widely used in English or are almost identical in translation, are left in German. The titles of works (musical, literary, etc.) are translated parenthetically when relevant to the author's argument.