

Arnold Schoenberg, *String Quartet No. 3 (op. 30) (1927)*

Abstract

In this first movement (*Moderato*) of the 1927 String Quartet, No. 3 (op. 30), composer Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951) showcased his use of the twelve-tone technique, a way of structuring atonal music. Earlier atonal music followed a free form that produced short, intense bursts of music that composers found difficult to sustain without some formal harmonic process. Starting around 1920, Schoenberg sought to lay down such a syntax with his twelve-tone “row” that played all one dozen chromatic pitches without repeating any given one. In other words, it encompassed all black and white keys in an octave on the piano, and the musician played the entire row before repeating any tone within it. Schoenberg’s approach influenced a generation of mid-century composers. As a leading figure in the so-called “Second Viennese School” [*Zweite Wiener Schule*], a circle of modernist composers in the 1920s dedicated to the advancement of what they consciously referred to as “New Music.” Schoenberg joined the composers Anton Webern, Hanns Eisler, and Alban Berg in moving decisively away from traditional major-minor tonality. Schoenberg won appointment as a Professor at the Prussian Academy of Arts in Berlin, where he taught a master course in composition from 1926 until 1933, when the Nazis seized power and stripped him of his title on account of his Jewish heritage. He and his family emigrated to the United States soon thereafter, where he taught composition at USC and UCLA in Los Angeles, California.

Source

Source: Arnold Schoenberg, String quartet op. 30: Moderato, 1927. From *Neue Wiener Schule. The String Quartets*. Schoenberg, Berg, Webern. Performed by the Lasalle-Quartet, Deutsche Grammophon (2720 029), 1971. Accessed via Internet Archive

[https://archive.org/details/lp_neue-viener-schule-die-streichquartette_lasalle-quartet-arnold-schoenberg-alban-be/disc2/04.01.+III.+Streichquartett+Op.+30+\(1927\):+Moderato.mp3](https://archive.org/details/lp_neue-viener-schule-die-streichquartette_lasalle-quartet-arnold-schoenberg-alban-be/disc2/04.01.+III.+Streichquartett+Op.+30+(1927):+Moderato.mp3)

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