Arnold Schönberg, *Transfigured Night* (1899)

Abstract

Austrian-born composer Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951) is considered one of the most influential composers of the twentieth century. A central figure of the Viennese School [Wiener Schule], a circle of modernist composers dedicated to the advancement of New Music that also included Anton Webern and Alban Berg, Schoenberg was a driving force behind the move away from traditional major-minor tonality and, around 1920, the development of the twelve-tone technique. This excerpt, however, is taken from an early, tonal work, the tone poem *Verklärte Nacht* [Transfigured Night], considered one of Schoenberg's most popular and accessible compositions. Based on a poem of the same title by Richard Dehmel, Schoenberg originally composed it in 1899 as a string sextet and later also scored it for orchestra. The piece was premiered at the Vienna Music Society in 1902 and, while recognized as innovative, it was not a success. In part, this was probably due to the controversial subject matter of Dehmel's poem, in which a woman confesses to her new lover that she is expecting a child from her premarital affair with another man.

After the National Socialists came to power, Schoenberg was stripped of his professorship at the Prussian Academy of Arts because he was of Jewish descent. His avant-garde works were defamed as "degenerate" and banned. Schoenberg and his family emigrated to the United States in 1933, where he taught composition at USC and UCLA and became part of the growing circle of European exiles in Los Angeles.

Source

Source: Arnold Schönberg, *Verklärte Nacht* [*Transfigured Night*], 1899. Perfomed by the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, 2010.
https://imslp.org/wiki/Verkl%C3%A4rte_Nacht,_Op.4_(Schoenberg,_Arnold)#IMSLP74224

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Recommended Citation: Arnold Schönberg, Transfigured Night (1899), published in: German History in Documents and Images, <https://germanhistorydocs.org/en/wilhelmine-germany-and-the-first-world-war-1890-1918/ghdi:audio-5115> [September 05, 2026].