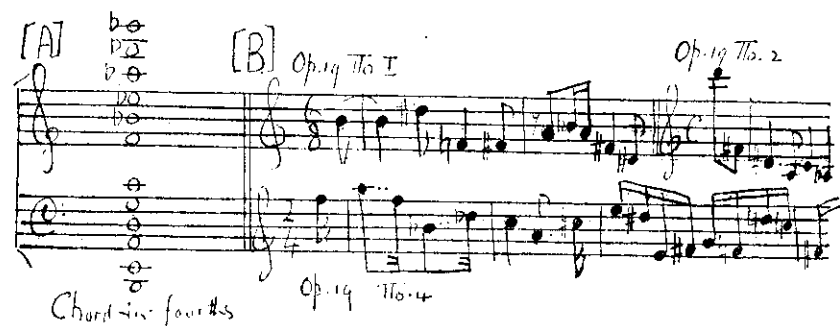


Tribute to Schoenberg

ON Friday, August 31, at 8.30 p.m., Station 2YC will present a memorial programme to Arnold Schoenberg, the Vienna-born composer who died at Los Angeles on July 14 last. The programme includes excerpts from an early work, "Transfigured Night," and from the studio, Frederick Page plays the Six Piano Pieces, Op. 19. Here BESSIE POLLARD briefly discusses Schoenberg's contribution to contemporary music.

ARNOLD SCHOENBERG (born at Vienna on September 13, 1874) for many years eked out a precarious living by orchestrating many thousands of pages of other composers' theatre music, and by directing theatre orchestras. At the same time he was composing continually. His first notable



peating the row backwards, (3) by inverting the crab.

In October, 1933, because of his modernistic artistic trends and his Jewish descent, he left Nazi Germany and emigrated to the U.S.A. where he continued teaching and composing.

His most astounding work, *Pierrot Lunaire*, a setting for voice and a small instrumental ensemble of 21 symbolist poems by Albert Giraud, appeared in 1912. In his book, *Contemporary Music*, Cecil Gray says of this composition: "Out of the unpromising material afforded by these highly artificial, precious and decadent little poems, Schoenberg has created a whole world of strange fascination and enchantment, of nameless horrors and terrible imaginings, of perverse and poisonous beauty and bitter-sweet fragrance, of a searing and withering mockery and malicious, elfish

work, the string sextet, "Transfigured Night," inspired by a poem of Richard Dehmel's, appeared in 1899. The stupendous "Songs of Gurra" (*Gurre-Lieder*)—which occupied him from 1900 to 1913—while still incomplete, earned for him on the recommendations of Richard Strauss and Gustav Mahler the Liszt Fellowship and a post as teacher of composition in the Stern Conservatory in Berlin.

The F Sharp Minor String Quartet, Op. 10 (1907), was perhaps the last work to be supplied with a key-signature indicating a specific tonality. Today Schoenberg's name is permanently linked with what is called the twelve-tone system (or "twelve-tone technique" as some of his pupils prefer to describe it), based on a chromatic scale of equidistant semitones—the duodecuple scale. His essays in twelve-tone technique evolved from Atonality (much as he disliked that term), a type of music where there is no relationship in tones and chords to any central keynote. As a composer, a theorist and a kind of musical scientist, Schoenberg made far-reaching and important contributions to 20th Century musical resource with his "chords-in-fourths" and his "twelve-tone system. In the illustration ("A") I quote the chord-in-fourths, which includes the twelve tones of the chromatic scale. "B" quotes three themes from the Six Piano Pieces, Op. 19, to be played from the 2YC studio by Frederick Page.

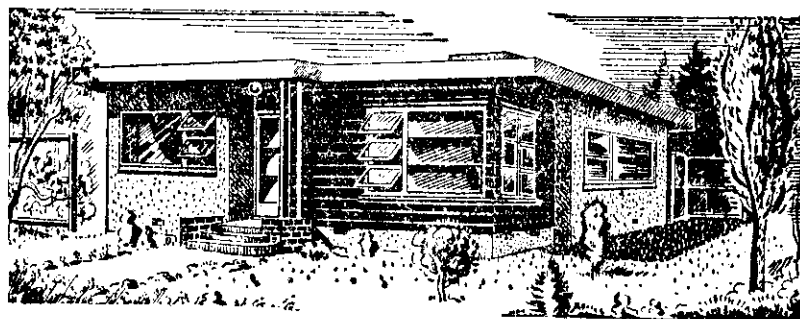
From about his Opus 23 onwards (*Five Pieces for Piano*) Schoenberg evolved what is known as his "series of rows"—a system of melodic line building where all the twelve tones can appear in a row, grouped in well-defined arrangements. The series can be transformed in at least three ways: (1) by inversion ("mirror-reflection"), (2) "matus cancrizans" (crab-motion), or re-

humour, which the poet most assuredly never even contemplated. . . If Schoenberg had written nothing else, this work alone would be sufficient to assure him a place in musical history."

To most listeners Schoenberg's compositions seem to be a mass of discords, as difficult to comprehend as they are to perform. His place in musical history may not be clarified perhaps for many years. Undaunted by the unflattering reception sometimes accorded his works, Schoenberg never forced their claims—he was always sure that in the end their worth would be recognised and accepted.

The Great Fire

ONE Sunday morning in September, just 285 years ago, Samuel Pepys, the famous diarist, was called to the window by one of his wife's maids to see the great fire in the city. "I thought it far enough away," he relates, "and so to bed, and to sleep." But by breakfast-time 300 houses had been burned down, in the first stages of the greatest catastrophe in London's history. This "lamentable fire" broke out at Master Farryner's, the King's baker, in Pudding Lane. Pepys tells of the panic-stricken towns-people staying in their houses till the very flames touched them, flinging their goods into the river to save them from the fire which raged every way. "And nobody," he remarks, "to my sight, endeavouring to quench it." For nearly four days London burned. When finally stepped at Pie Corner, the fire had destroyed St. Paul's Cathedral and 87 other churches, and more than 13,000 houses, leaving 200,000 people—all but 50,000 of London's population—homeless. On Sunday, September 2, in *32B Presents*, at 8.45 p.m., listeners will hear *Ordeal By Fire* to mark the anniversary of the conflagration that devastated 17th Century London.



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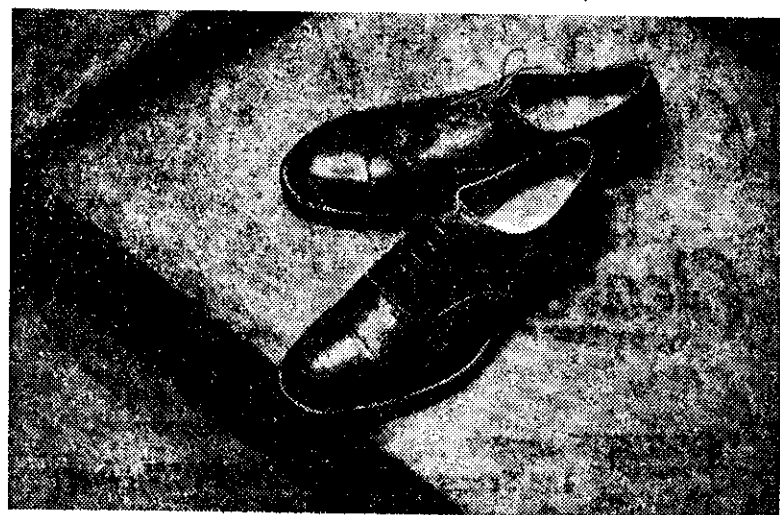
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