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Music as Excess

Die Reise and Neo-Baroque Aesthetics in Opera from the 1960s

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[1] Introduction

The music of the operas composed by the Swedish composer Lars Johan Werle has previously been considered primarily as a means to illustrate a text and narrate a story. However, statements made by the composer himself often challenge rather than manifest this view.

Just like many composers at the time, Werle engaged with tradition.[1] In the opera *Die Reise* (*The Journey*, Hamburg 1969) this engagement resulted in diverse forms of quotations, borrowings and allusions. These styles are combined in a collage together with contemporary popular music, post-serial textual composition and electronic sound effects. In previous research it has been concluded that *Die Reise* is an example of more radical postmodern music in accordance with criteria formulated by the musicologists Hermann Danuser and Robin Hartwell. The opera is characterized by a genuine and thorough pluralism of styles where no single style dominates and becomes supreme (Tillman 1999b p. 14).

Focusing on the device of musical pluralism of styles, I will go one step further and read this opera as neo-baroque. Of interest in this article is not the musical style or styles as such, but how the music is related to the other media in the opera and what effects the pluralism of styles is expected to have on the audience in the performance situation. My claim is that the pluralism of styles is manifested in a way that connects the opera to a neo-baroque aesthetics. I propose that this technique exceeds the limit of the narrative construction.[2] With an abundance of figurative representation, the music makes *Die Reise* an opera of 'excess'. Rather than absorbing audience members

[1] For how this trait is exploited by composers such as Bernd Alois Zimmermann, Luciano Berio, Alfred Schnittke, George Crumb and Mauricio Kagel, see Heile 2006 p. 106. See also Tillman 1999a and Tillman 1999b.

[2] For a description of this device from a baroque and from a neo-baroque perspective see Cubitt 2009 p. 50. Compare with Degli-Esposti 1996b.

into the fictive world of the drama, the pluralism of styles helps to enhance an experience of the performance as 'event of attractions' (cf. Gunning 1990). I am, however, aware of that the argumentation stands in opposition to the German reception of the opera, where a comprehension of such neo-baroque devices is missing.

Critical writings on neo-baroque aesthetics from philosophical, cultural, and aesthetic perspectives have played an important role in a variety of humanistic disciplines during the last thirty years. Many of the aesthetic transformations central to these rereadings of contemporary art forms and media are also relevant for thinking about music. Accordingly, in this article the focus is not on the musical style and aesthetics implied by the concept of 'neo-baroque' in music history, but on features that have been revealed in art forms other than music, and by scholars from disciplines other than musicology.

In relation to the ambivalent concept of postmodernism the concept of neo-baroque has been a way for scholars to emphasise the effect formal devices of certain art works has on the receiver. Point of departure for the concept is attitudes and formal qualities of the historical baroque that resulted in interplay between affect and effect. The recognition of certain aspects of baroque aesthetics in contemporary culture has been made with the ambition to shed new light of art works and means of expression from the 20th century.

Although a consensus of the concept of neo-baroque does not exist, some traits have attracted certain attention from scholars in various disciplines.[3] Taste for the extreme and for playfulness are two of the most important characteristics; that is to say it is an aesthetics that encourages the excessively showy and artificial. It is a manifestation of the artificial and the marvellous achieved by overwhelming or shocking the spectators/listeners through means such as unexpectedness, distortion and exaggeration.[4]

The Italian film scholar Cristina Degli-Esposti observes how the bewilderment created by the postmodern technique of the morphing of forms may have the role of shocking and surprising the spectator.

> The bewilderment created by the morphing of forms determines a reaction which both places us at a distance and draws our interest by surprising and shocking us. Like the historical baroque in the visual arts, the postmodern neo-baroque cinema tries to shock, to create a sense of marvel, to surprise, and, of course, to 'trompe l'œil' us by playing on what is and what seems to be in a labyrinth of interrelating self-conscious citations. (Degli-Esposti 1996b pp. 79–80)

In postmodern opera extreme musical devices, just like in opera from the 17th and 18th centuries, are used as means of evoking effects of shock and surprise.[5] Rather

[3] See Cubitt's brief description of the field (2009).

[4] See Ndalianis (2004 p. 7) who states that 'baroque' (during the 18th century) '…implied an art or music of extravagance, impetuousness, and virtuosity, all of which were concerned with stirring the affection and senses of the individual'.

[5] See Cubitt (2009 p. 50) who explains this concept in the following manner: 'Stylistically, the neo-baroque like its predecessor is characterized by excess, by spectacle, and by the elaboration of

than working as an interplay between other media, musical pluralism of styles, distortion, and stylistic excess function as means of creating disturbance that displaces the illusion (op. cit. p. 83). These extreme musical devices may also have the effect of provocation. Just like the effects of shock and surprise, the effect of provocation disturbs the illusion and generates an active participation from the spectator and the listener. In this way it is to be seen as a manifestation of the German theatre theoretician Erika Fischer-Lichte's aesthetics of performativity. She posits that this aesthetics is an important characteristic of not only experimental performances of the 1960s but also of the baroque era (2008 pp. 38–39 and p. 158).

The investigation is based on the score to the opera *Die Reise* composed for performance in Hamburg in 1969 and on a recording of the adaptation of the opera for Stockholm in 1970 made by Sveriges Radio. The score belonged to the composer and contains revisions made for the adaptation of the opera for the production in Stockholm. Some of the texts in the score are in both German and Swedish.

[2] Intertextuality and neo-baroque aesthetics

That the baroque era was characterized not only by an engagement in reality and in the fundamental, but that politics, science, art, literature and music also reveal a preoccupation with the surface, the appearance and the artificial has recently been of interest for many scholars. During recent decades scholars have also been interested in revealing affinities between the superficiality of the baroque age and the highly mediated world of our contemporary society (cf. Snickare 2008, Ndalianis 2004, Degli-Esposti 1996a and 1996b). In his exploration of formal manifestations of the baroque as a trans-historical and cultural category, the semiotic Omar Calabrese (1987) suggested the concept of 'neo-baroque' for the spirit of our contemporary epoch. He suggests that the concept is more adequate than the more ambivalent concept of postmodernism (Calabrese 1992 p. xii). Borrowed from the Cuban writer Severo Sarduy, the concept is defined as *a general attitude* and *a formal quality* and Calabrese states that 'baroque' can be seen as a category of spirit that almost stands in opposition to the 'classical' (op. cit. p. 14).

Pluralism of styles is a device that has been connected to the concept of postmodernism and that has recently been seen as central in a neo-baroque context. The openness of this structure has been connected to an ambition to excite and overwhelm the spectator/listener.[6] According to the Australian scholar in cinema and cultural studies Angela Ndalianis, who takes the spatial formation of the neo-baroque into consideration, the open form and the serial structure (she uses the metaphors of the fold and the labyrinth as allegories for this form/structure), created by pluralism of styles, are characteristic for a neo-baroque aesthetics as they open themselves up to an active and reflexive engagement from the spectator (Ndalianis 2004 p. 72 and p. 75). The device of pluralism of styles may also be interpreted from a neo-baroque aesthetics through the effect of bewilderment that this 'dynamic fluidity of forms' may

decoration to the point where it takes over from the structural principle to become the characteristic formal property of cultural production'.

[6] The architectural historian Robert Harbison (2000 p. 221) suggests that pluralism of styles is a device that, through the confusion it creates, makes postmodern art a manifestation of baroque aesthetics.

have on the listener (Degli-Esposti 1996a p. 158 and 1996b p. 83). Degli-Esposti sees 'intertextuality' as one of many devices in postmodern film that recalls the rhetorical strategies of the baroque:

> In addition to a great amount of self-conscious artifice, the aesthetic *figurae* of the baroque manner include many scopic/observational devices such as the conceit, repetition, parody, the Menippean satire, carnivalization, metamorphoses, metalepses, intertextuality, the encyclopedia, cataloging, mirroring, trompe l'œil, the labyrinth, staging, distortion, contradiction, instability, disorder, chaos, detail, and fragment. (Degli-Esposti 1996b pp. 76–77)

The device has affinities with figurative devices that were frequently used in various art forms during the baroque as means to create wonder, such as *mise en abyme* (the picture within the picture, the text within the text). (op. cit p. 75)

Borrowing from literary theory, when it comes to music the engagement with tradition that pluralism of styles implies has been referred to as musical intertextuality (Heile 2006a p. 106). Musical intertextuality has been interpreted as a means for the composer to comment on the work that is to say as a kind of 'indirect speech'. In his analyses of Mauricio Kagel's *Ludwig van*, the musicologist Björn Heile claims that the intertext can be seen as a way for the composer to make his voice heard, through how pre-existing music is treated (op. cit. p. 109).

A definition of the concept of intertextuality also has to take the role of the interpreter/receiver into consideration. The text/cultural form is seen as a conscious or unconscious dialogue with other texts/cultural forms. Of decisive importance for the interpretation is the idea of the active participation from the reader/listener/spectator. According to the musicologist David Metzer musical intertextuality performs as a cultural agent, and he means that the cultural associations of the borrowings are of importance for the meaning in the new context. This is of cause on condition that the listener recognizes and is familiar with the references (Metzer 2003 p. 2 and p. 6). Of importance is also the fact that the intertext of the interpreter changes with time (Klein 2005 p. 5).

However, from a neo-baroque aesthetics it is rather a *contemporary* than a historical point of departure that is of interest for the interpretation of intertexts. This means that the interpreter considers the intentions of the author/composer and the historical context of the text's origin to be of comparatively little importance. Calabrese sees the variability and fragmentary construction of cultural expressions post-1960 as reflections of contemporary society, and considers the historical context of the references to be of relatively low interest:

> The spectator is by now accustomed to passing from one program to another, linking them instantaneously, inferring their contents from a few scenes, re-creating a kind of personal palimpsest, and, above all, eliminating 'historical' differences between various images perceived. Overcoming temporal perception thresholds almost certainly involves changes in our vision of the world. The first significant change, in my opinion, must be sought in a different sense of history from that found in earlier epochs. It is impossible to deny that

> we live in a period in which all cultural objects are rendered contemporary. (Calabrese 1992 p. 54)[7]

Intertextuality is seen in the context of creating excess (op. cit. p. 49). The kind of excess Calabrese describes is not so radical that it is to be connected with the avant-garde as a pure experimental tendency. It does not challenge limits in an experimental way, but instead it is connected to the limit and seeks to construct new forms through it (op. cit. p. 66).

When it comes to opera, besides a historical point of departure focusing on the questions of *what music is used* and *how it (the structure and the original meaning) is transformed in the new context*, of central importance for the meaning/message communicated to the audience/interpreter is the level of interplay with other art forms and media. Quotations and allusions are important musical techniques throughout the history of opera, but here I assert that the specific manner in which these techniques are handled in opera post-1960 confirms the relevance of a neo-baroque reading. Besides not being integrated into an overall musical style but instead treated as foreign elements, quotations and allusions are often combined in collages that do not seem to be connected to the narrative and expressive content of the text and the action. Pre-existing music and styles appear, just like in baroque opera, as rhetorical figures that have the role of seducing and overwhelming the listener through exaggeration and excess.

[3] *Die Reise* and its productions

The opera *Die Reise* (1965–69) was a commission from the German manager Rolf Liebermann for the Hamburger Staatsoper.[8] The opera was given its first performance in Hamburg on 2 March 1969, with Leopold Ludwig as conductor. Liebermann had become interested in the collaboration between the composer Werle and the director Runsten when he attended a performance of their first opera *Drömmen om Thérèse* ('Dreaming about Thérèse') in 1965 (Brattemo 1982 p. 5 and von Heijne 2007 p. 83). This opera was innovative for its scenic construction: theatre-in-the-round, which was a means of integrating the audience into the performance. As this construction not was possible at the Hamburger Staatsoper, Werle and Runsten created a new opera for this stage. The intimacy between performance and the audience was here created by other means, scenically as well as musically.

Written for one of the leading stages in Europe when it comes to modern opera of the 1960s, *Die Reise* was an important manifestation of experimental opera. Technically

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[7] Compare with the idea on which the musicologist Michael L. Klein (2005 p. 21) bases his intertextual investigation that is to say that our place in history questions the stylistic integrity of a text. Compare also with Nicholas Cook's performative approach in 'Between Process and Product' (2001 http://www.societymusictheory.org) and with Michael Chion's idea of a new sound reality in *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen* (1994 p. 103).

[8] The opera was commissioned in 1965 and in 1966 work on the opera was underway. Runsten sent a version of the first act to Werle. See the letter from Runsten to Werle, Gentofte, 13 October 1966 and the letter from Runsten to the committee of the Royal Theatre in Stockholm, Copenhagen, 1 December 1966.

and scenically it was very advanced and complex.[9] However, it never made the same impact as the earlier opera *Drömmen om Thérèse* and it did not have the same international circulation. The international reception of the production for Hamburg was mainly negative, not the least when it came to the music.[10] Swedish critics, on the contrary, received both the productions, for Hamburg and Stockholm, with enthusiasm. The production for Stockholm (*Resan*, 14 February 1970) was a revised and translated version of the opera made by the composer and the director.[11] The opera's first performance in Stockholm, conducted by Leif Segerstam, was sold out, and in total the production in Stockholm had nineteen performances (Sällström 1970 and von Heijne 2007 p. 94).[12] The opera was also produced for Helsinki, where it was given its first performance at the Finnish National Opera on 24 January 1974.[13]

Contributing to the integration of the audience in the performance was the construction of the narrative, where different levels of events take place at one and the same time.[14] This construction already exists in the novel on which the libretto was based: *Till varmare länder* ('To Warmer Countries'), 1961, by the Swedish author Per Christian Jersild. The novel consists throughout of parallel levels of events. It can be said to depict two journeys into hell. The first is the mental hell experienced by the character of Barbro (Lili in the opera) in a suburb to Stockholm. The second is the mental hell experienced by the fantasist (and perhaps mentally disturbed) character of Bo-Erik (Christopher in the opera) in his search for meaning in life. The reader/audience follows the two characters in a mixture of past and present time. The characters never meet each other in the present. Bo-Erik communicates with Barbro through imaginative letters that have too intimate a tone for their relation to each other. The contents of the letters are read by and experienced by Barbro, and influence her final breakdown. It was the combination of the banality of everyday suburban life and the fantastic absurdity of the life described in the letters that fascinated Runsten about Jersild's novel (Edberg 1969). His ambition was to let these two levels of events, the realistic and the fantastic, draw ever closer to each other until the border was eventually eliminated (Brattemo 1982 p. 8).

The opera is traditionally structured in two acts and seven scenes, and each scene consists of allusions to musical numbers. Conventional opera numbers (Recitativo, Arioso, Aria, Cavatina etc.) are combined with unconventional numbers (Belacalypso Bossa Pop, Juke Pop, Ritornello Rock'n Roll etc.). However, this structure is not clearly audible as scenes and numbers overlap, both through textual, musical and visual

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[9] In reviews of the productions for Hamburg and Stockholm by Swedish critics the opera was seen as the most important Swedish opera since *Aniara* and even as comparable in importance with *Wozzeck*. See Brandel 1969, 1970 and Sällström 1970.

[10] According to Bergendal (1968/69 p. 34) the opera was received with enthusiasm during the performances in Hamburg, even if the newspaper critics were mainly negative. When it comes to the negative criticism in German journals he suggests that these may have been the result of the Germans not fully understanding the content of the drama, depicting the problems of suburban life in the Swedish welfare state.

[11] See the score that belonged to the composer at The Music and Theatre Library of Sweden. See also the correspondence between Runsten and Werle, Veddinge, 2 July 1969, Veddinge, 6 July 1969, Huvaborg, 12 August 1969.

[12] The first performance of the production was also recorded and broadcast by Sveriges Radio.

[13] Here Jarno Hilloskorpi and Paul Suominen replaced the director Runsten and scenographer Svoboda.

[14] See Ndalianis's description of how an open and process-oriented form enhances the active participation of the spectator (2004 p. 72).

means.[15] In the score every scene has a title that summarizes its main content. The scheme of the opera reads as follows:

> Act I
> Scene 1 Introduction (Lili, choir, pop group)
> Scene 2 The first letter (Lili, Peter)
> Scene 3 Retrospect (school choir, Lili, Peter, Christopher)
> Scene 4 The car purchase (Lili, Peter, the salesman, the mother, the father)
> Scene 5 Preparations (Lili, male choir, Christopher, Stefan)
> Scene 6 Attempt to make a confession (Lili)
> Scene 7 The border (Guardian I and II, Christopher, Stefan, the inspector, Lili)
>
> Act II
> Scene 8 Ballade (Lili, Peter)
> Scene 9 Minandra (Christopher, Stefan, Lili, the inspector, Carl, Anna)
> Scene 10 Weekend (Lili, Gitte, Vera, the fiancé, Peter, the office manager)
> Scene 11 Turning-point (Anna, Carl, Stefan, Christopher, Lili)
> Scene 12 Elegie (Lili, the mother, the father, Peter)
> Scene 13 Inferno (old men and women, guide, Christopher, choir, Lili, Vera, Peter, office manager, Gitte, the mother, the father, Stefan)
> Scene Quasi finale (Lili, Christopher, Stefan)

The opera has four main characters, of which three have different names in relation to in the novel: Lili (Barbro), Lili's husband Peter, Christopher (Bo-Erik) and Christopher's companion Stefan (Olle). The names were changed to suit an international context. In total the opera consists of twenty characters and different constellations of choirs and ensembles:

> Lili, soprano
> Peter, baritone
> Christopher, tenor
> the salesman, bass
> the mother, contraalto
> the father, bass
> four students, two tenors, two basses
>
> Stefan, bass
> two guardians, bass
> the inspector, tenor
> Carl, bass
> Anna, mezzo-soprano
> the office manager, bass
> Vera, mezzo-soprano
> Gitte, soprano
> the fiancé, tenor
> the guide, baritone (spoken part)
>
> waiter I and II, four guardians, silent parts
> mixed choir, male choir, school choir

As already has been concluded, the novel provided material to use parallel levels of events in a more advanced way than in the earlier opera *Drömmen om Thérèse* (cf.

[15] The German critic Klaus Wagner (1969) observed this in his review of the opera.

Heijne 2007 p. 83). This in turn provided the opportunity to experiment both with stage design and music. For the stage design Werle and Runsten collaborated with the Czech stage designer Josef Svoboda, who had developed a system (polyécran) that made it possible for different levels of events to take place on stage at the same time. Pictures and films were projected on fourteen huge cubes positioned on the stage. In this way one level of events could be represented on the cubes at the same time as another was acted out by the performers on stage. The openness of this multi-media representation was a means to enhance the intimacy between the stage and the auditorium.

The sounding structure of the productions was also based on openness, which enhanced the possibility for different levels of events to take place at one and the same time. The productions consisted of many different sound sources: symphony orchestra with three groups of percussion and with different keyboard instruments (organ/harmonium, cembalo, klavier), a pop-jazz band and sound tape (with two channels). Live sounds and music from the orchestra and from the pop-jazz band were combined with tape-recorded sounds (electronic and concrete) and music distributed by loudspeakers. The recorded and amplified sound and music surrounded the audience as the loudspeakers were positioned on the stage, behind the stage, and behind the stalls, and the two channels made it possible for different sounds to move around the room. Eighty-four loudspeakers distributed sounds from the sound tape and sixteen loudspeakers distributed sounds from the pop-jazz band (Edberg 1969). The instruments were positioned both in the orchestra pit and on the stage (timpani, three groups of percussion, cembalo, celesta and piano) and the pop-jazz band was positioned on one of the cubes.

This distribution of sounds and music was also a means of integrating the audience into the performance. However, according to the Swedish critic Folke Hähnel, the effect of this spatial distribution was not as strong as in the earlier opera *Drömmen om Thérèse* (Hähnel 1969). Also, in German reviews it was observed that Werle and Runsten did not wholly succeed in creating the intended audience integration through the spatial sound effects (see Wagner 1969).

In addition, the musical structure manifested an open form with the combination of newly composed music, allusions to and quotations from pre-existing styles and music, modern pop and jazz music and electronic/concrete sounds.[16] The performance was in large part grounded on freedom of choice for the performers (indeterminacy). An example is the Coro suburbano, a vocal number that initiates the first act. The text consists of words and short phrases that characterized the daily life of the Swedish suburban society of the 1960s. Each singer has the freedom to choose in which order the short phrases and the words are to be spoken or sung. Pitches are not notated but the singers are guided by written instructions and the text does not have to be recognized, but functions principally as phonetic material (Score p. 4). The live performance by the chorus is combined with recorded sounds from the tape, where channel one consists of realistic sounds from a suburban environment (cars, children,

[16] See also how Tillman (1999b p. 14) characterizes the opera. From the correspondence between Runsten and Werle predating the première in Hamburg it can be concluded that the idea of musical pastiche and parody was important in the construction of the opera. See the letter from Runsten to Werle Gentofte, 14 October 1967.

noise, television program etc.), whereas channel two consists of a recorded version of the Coro suburbano (Score p. 5).

[4] *Die Reise* and the role of sound and music

Many commentators on *Die Reise* have concluded that the pluralism of musical styles functions as an interplay with the drama (Bergendal 1968/69 pp. 34–36, Per-Anders Hellqvist 1977/78 p. 46 and Brattemo 1982).[17] Werle himself claimed that the music in the opera was often independent of the text, but that it served a narrative function in relation to the novel. The music added a level to text that existed in the novel but was difficult to mediate through action and words (Petersén 1980 p. 19).[18] Werle on various occasions also made clear that he considered the musical style/styles as such to be of little importance. He said that the main purpose was that the music functioned within the context of the drama (Connor 1971 p. 148 and Petersén 1980 p. 19). However, he also said that a pluralism of styles had the advantage that it made more listeners and spectators receptive to the message of the opera (Hedwall 1987 p. 299). It was a means to create a more direct communication with the audience (Tillman 1999b p. 14 and Hedwall 1987 p. 299).[19] This view is revealed by Werle's comment on the operas *Die Reise* and *Drömmen om Thérèse* that reads as follows:

> […] *quotations or similar allusions may be a way to make contact with the listener, and it certainly is an immediate contact with the listeners one needs to establish in a theatre event, where everything happens at once and all new impulses follow quite quickly one upon another*. I have always been partial to this kind of means – the ballad in *Dreaming about Thérèse* is the first example and *The Journey* consists of many style affiliations and quotations, and there was a pop group positioned on stage just to show that these 'style features' wholly belonged to the piece! Furthermore *a modern listener brings with him and knows a repertory that stretches from the baroque – and sometimes even earlier – to new popular music – thus, why not make use of this extensive frame of references*? Thus, naturally, how one makes use of references is of the utmost importance! (Hedwall 1987 p. 299. My italics and trans. J.E.P.)

Accordingly, the method of taking the stylistic variability of the contemporary listener's musical consciousness into consideration was a means of creating a more active participation in the performance. Audience integration as a point of departure for the opera/performance is precisely in line with a neo-baroque aesthetics, as is the view of musical quotations and allusions as means of reflecting the multiplicity of contemporary society.[20] Musical integrity and origin of style are factors that are of less importance than the function the music serves in relation to the listener.[21]

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[17] Tillman (1999b p. 14), on the other hand, reaches the conclusion that the fluctuation between styles is not clearly connected to the text-illustrating or narrative functions in the drama.

[18] The composer in relation to the later opera *Tintomara* presents a similar view of the role of the music. See Johnson and Werle p. 50. See also Ethnersson Pontara and Tillman 2010.

[19] Compare with P.C. Jersild's intention concerning the novel revealed by the interview that was distributed in relation to the broadcasted Swedish version of the opera (1970). The author stated that his intention with the novel had been to create social engagement. Compare also with Werle's tendency to compose unpretentious music as a way to create contact with and engage the audience. This tendency was stronger in the operas composed after *Die Reise*. See Bergendal 1971 p. 79.

[20] See Calabrese 1992 p. 54 and Degli-Esposti 1996b.

[21] Werle not only quoted and alluded to other composers, but also borrowed material from his own earlier productions. See Hedwall 1987 p. 299.

Commenting on the opera *Die Reise*, the composer formulated himself in the following manner:

> The musical style in *The Journey* consists of continuous fluctuations between different time styles. I here *make use of the whole musical consciousness of the modern human being*. And this gives me the possibility to *act upon the 'association reactions' of the audience*. (Connor 1971 p. 149. My italics and trans. J.E.P.)[22]

Thus, how did contemporary audience members experience the opera? Taking the reception of contemporary critics into consideration it is apparent that the music/sound was largely evaluated in a traditional way through its interplay with other media. The reviewers expected the different elements of the opera (the visual, the textual, and the musical and sounding) to be integrated into a continuous whole with the function of narrating a story. The negative evaluations of *Die Reise*, especially of the music, indicate that the opera was based on an aesthetics that differed from these expectations.

In the review of the first performance in Hamburg for *Hamburger Abendblatt* Sabine Tomzig writes that the music was unable to add any new dimension to the performance/opera. Referring to the music as 'film music' the reviewer indicates that it was a means of narration or expression that lacked an independent role in the development of the drama. Furthermore, quotations and allusions were experienced as parody and as distortions of the illusion of the drama (Tomzig 1969). The first act (where quotations and allusions are most frequent) was also referred to as a revue, which emphasizes an experience of the different musical styles as separate entities. It is also said to have had a certain effect on the audience, which, however, was not followed through in the second act (Wagner 1969). The way in which quotations was handled was seen as both shocking and manipulative (ibid.), and the effect of the contrast between different musical styles was observed (Jacobs 1969).

Some of the Swedish critics more explicitly emphasized that the overwhelming experience of the spectator and listener was a main issue of the performance.[23] Focusing on the audience experience, the critic Ulla-Britt Edberg stated that the pluralism of styles added a new dimension to the general impression (Edberg 1969). She also observed how a stylistic multiplicity could play an important role for the reception of opera in the society of the time.

In the reviews of the production in Stockholm in 1970 – which were generally more positive – the interplay between media was also seen as a central factor. However, many descriptions reveal that certain media could have expressions of their own, and that the effect was overwhelming and spectacular (Mangs 1970, Linder 1970, Sällström 1970 and Törnblom 1970).

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[22] Werle's intention to base the musical content and structure on the musical consciousness of the contemporary spectator/listener reflects also the idea on which, for example, Klein (2005 p. 21) bases his intertextual investigation, that is to say that our place in history questions the stylistic integrity of a text. The idea of using the musical consciousness of the contemporary audience is also observed by the Swedish critic Ulla-Britt Edberg in her review of the production of the opera in Hamburg. See Edberg 1969.

[23] See Edberg 1969. The Swedish critic Åke Brandel (1969) observes the expressive and dramatic effects of the projections on the cubes. See also Tamsen 1969.

The opera and not least the pluralism of styles also had a provocative effect, at least on German musicians and listeners/spectators. Musicians showed dissatisfaction with the borrowed music during rehearsals,[24] and the audience broke into spontaneous/provocative applause during the performance (Tomzig 1969, Wagner 1969, Bergendal 1968/69 p. 34 and Brandel 1969). Accordingly, the effect of provocation brought about active participation from both executors and audience (cf. Fischer-Lichte 2008 pp. 38–39). In later compositions Werle intended the music to be provocative (Tillman 1999b pp. 15-16), but in this work the effect appears to have been unintended.

[5] Music and sound as narration and drama

[5.1] Realism, hyperrealism and expressionism

In many ways, *Die Reise* is a representation of the fictive world of the drama, both in terms of the visual presentation and the role of sound and music. Contemporary popular music (belacalypso pop, pop, jazz and blues) represents time and place and often this music is diegetic (cf. Bergendal 1968/69 p. 36). The pop-jazz band performed this music (in Hamburg German Bonds and in Stockholm Mecki Mark Men and the Swedish jazz saxophonist Tommy Koverhult). The location of the band on one of the cubes on the stage not only made the performance come into focus as performance (see below, 'Representation and neo-baroque aesthetics'), but also made the musical representation appear as hyper realistic rather than realistic.

This 'higher' level of realism was also emphasised through the use of pre-existing, tape-recorded music, and through the use of exact copies of reality both for sounds (concrete sounds) and the visual (films and pictures projected on the cubes).[25] Films and pictures projected on the cube-screens and recorded and amplified environmental sounds distributed through loudspeakers represented the suburb (act I, scene 1 and act II, scene 14) (Score p. 5). The sounds wandered back and forth from the stage to a place behind the auditorium (behind the stalls). This spatial sound distribution further emphasised the level of hyperrealism as it integrated the audience into the fictive environment of the represented situation.

Just as in Werle's earlier opera *Drömmen om Thérèse*, sound and music also represent another level of the narrative, the psychological, through interior monologues. Often this level of events is represented by a combination of live performance and recorded music. For example, both live performance and tape-recorded song and speech (the singers had recorded some of their vocal parts on tape) (Bergendal 1968/69 pp. 35–36) contributed to the representation of the main characters Christopher and Lili.

The opera is also characterized by exaggerations and distortions of expressions and representations. Often the level of hyperrealism is transformed through non-realistic and stylized effects. The tape-recorded passage initiating the opera's first scene (act I, scene 1), mentioned above, consists of alternation between 'realistic' sounds from the underground and 'non-realistic' underground sounds (Score p. 5). The suburban choir contributes to the effect of stylization, which is initiated by a signal performed by

[24] See Werle's statement in Hedwall 1987 p. 299. See also Edberg 1969.
[25] Tamsen (1969) observed in her review that the sounds and films/pictures were correlated.

percussion.[26] Besides functioning as a way of organizing this 'improvised' section, the signal makes the choir appear as something that exists beyond the fictive world of the drama.

That the effect of visual projections and concrete sounds was stylistic rather than realistic is indicated by the description of the scene made by the Swedish critic Ulla-Britt Edberg in her review of the first performance in Hamburg (Edberg 1969). In addition, the critic Hähnel wrote, in his review of the same performance, that the representation of reality through photos, films and concrete sounds had a distancing effect ('verfremdung') rather than an effect of 'naturalistic illusion' (Hähnel 1969).

Distortions of sounds and music also function as means of exaggerating atmospheres, feelings and situations in an expressionistic manner. The vocal lines' fluctuation between speech, recitative, and song create an oscillation between realism and expressionism. Often exaggerations and distortions function as ways of representing the reality from a specific character's perspective, principally Lili's. Distortions contribute to making the reality appear as a projection of her mental condition.[27]

Musical quotations and allusions take part in this expressionistic representation. In act I, scene 5 Lili reads a letter from Christopher, where he describes how he tries to persuade students to engage in an expedition, but the students are only interested in eating and drinking. Suddenly they in unison sing a drinking song 'Det var i vår ungdoms gladaste vår' (Score p. 92). Somewhat later they continue their song with a jingle in dance rhythm (*jänka*), the rhythm marked by strings and percussion, combined with legato figures in the winds (Score p. 97). However, the diegetic role of the music is successively distorted through a continuous repetition where the accompaniment becomes more and more modernistic and chaotic with sound effects in strings and winds. The distorted and exaggerated expression can be interpreted as a representation of how Lili experiences Christopher's story. The critic Hähnel saw the distorted dance – just like the school choir (see below) – as a comic moment in the opera (Hähnel 1969).

Act II, scene 10 (Weekend) offers a further example of how quotations and allusions that function as diegetic music are distorted to the level of expressionism. Lili and Peter are guests of the bank manager and his wife Vera on their summer estate. Lili's experience of the summer night in the archipelago has the character of a nightmare through a 'distorted' waltz, performed by winds (clarinets and trumpets) and percussion, that displays jazz characteristics when it comes to harmony and melodic gesture (Score p. 174).[28] Eventually the scene transforms into the context of Minandra (a representation of hell). A cha-cha (Cha-cha infernale, act II, scene 11) represents what Lili experiences reading a letter from Christopher (Score p. 177). The scientists Carl and Anna dance to the music as an erotic experiment. The dance becomes more and more violent through dynamic accents and cluster effects and through Lili's operatic vocalises that turn into hysteric screams (Score p. 184). Lili experiences the situation that Christopher writes about in the same nightmarish light that she

[26] This is true for the Coro suburbano I, II and III in act II, scene 13. Coro suburbano II also concludes with a signal. See also the dental choir (act I, scene 5) that is initiated by a signal performed by percussion, piano and harp.
[27] Compare with Berg's *Wozzeck*. In many ways *Die Reise* is reminiscent of Berg's opera not least through its use of allusions and quotations. See for example Juke Jazz in act I, scene 3.
[28] Compare with *Wozzeck* act II, scene 4, where Marie dances with the drum major.

experienced the summer night, and her own mental hell is reinforced through what she reads.

A similar technique is used in act II, scene 13 (Inferno), where Christopher describes his experience of the bath of purgatory. The gloomy environment is represented through a waltz (an allusion to Romantic piano music, labelled 'Valse perdue'), played on a piano that is out of tune (Score p. 195). The waltz is successively distorted through various layers of sounds and music, which create a nightmarish character. Initially the melody is accompanied by 'humming' from wheelchair patients and later it is combined with entirely unrelated sounds and music. This transformation appears as a representation of the mental condition of Christopher and of how Lili experiences what he writes in the letter.

[5.2] Representation and neo-baroque aesthetics

The realism in the opera is often transformed into an experimental level comparable to the 'baroque' technique of *trompe l'œil* in painting. The multimedia distribution of visual and sounding elements offers the possibility to represent two different realities at one and the same time. These realities are just as true as each other, that is to say that no single perspective dominates over another. Different levels of events take place on one and the same time without regard for time, place, or inner or outer action. At the same time as Lili reads Christopher's first letter in live performance, Christopher reading the same letter is projected on one cube, his speech is tape-recorded (act I, scene 2) (Score p. 13).[29] The loudspeaker distributing the speech is positioned behind the audience, which integrates them into the event.[30] Continuous glissandi by the strings in the orchestra create a dreamlike character.

Music and sound also contribute to representations of multiplicity and superficiality (rather than originality and uniqueness). These traits have been seen as characteristics of a contemporary (commercial) society and as important devices that make this society a confirmation of neo-baroque aesthetics (Ndalianis 2004 and Calabrese 1992). The opera can be seen as a manifestation of multiplicity and superficiality through the collage technique.

Another technique that is important when it comes to the avoidance of the unique is to let speech, sounds and music alternately be performed by different media, for example a song performed on tape can be immediately repeated by singers on stage. At the end of act I, scene 2 and at the beginning of act I, scene 3 (Retrospect), a quotation is handled in this way. At first glance the quotation appears to have the role of creating continuity between scenes and to represent the action. Lili has read Christopher's first letter and remembers their school years together. The time and the environment of these years are represented through the song 'Muntra musikanter' (by August Ferdinand Riccius), performed by a choir in four parts (Score p. 19).

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[29] Another clear example of a multimedia distribution of different levels of events occurs in act 1, scene 6. Lili prepares dinner for Peter with the intention of making a confession about the letters from Christopher. At the same time as this is acted out on stage, the cubes show what response she hopes to receive from the confession. See also act II, scene 1, where Peter is represented both through a film projected on a cube and on stage communicating with Lili.

[30] Compare with the opera *Dreaming about Thérèse*. This technique can be interpreted from a 'baroque aesthetics'. See Fischer-Lichte 2008. See also the examples from *Die Reise*, act I, scenes 1, 2 and 3.

However, the song is distributed/performed by two different media. Initiated as a recorded adaptation distributed by loudspeakers, it is fulfilled as live performance by a 'school choir'. The choir successively makes its entrance and takes over the song. The fulfilment is achieved in combination with speech interjections from Lili to a string accompaniment that is a harmonic, rhythmic and melodic deviation (Score pp. 19–20). The replication creates a new experience of the song as it no longer surrounds the audience, but is performed from the stage. The short duplication between two media emphasises the technique of replication, and makes the music appear as something unoriginal and superficial. It can be compared to a commercial product (kitsch).[31] In this way the musical representation can also be interpreted as a manifestation of neo-baroque aesthetics.

The music also adds the marvellous and the fantastic – two further characteristics of a neo-baroque aesthetics (Maravall 1986 p. 213 and Degli-Esposti 1996b pp. 79–80). This is a dimension that is missing in the society surrounding Lili and Christopher, which is characterized by isolation and coldness. Often the original music in modernistic style represents and narrates the action on stage,[32] whereas allusions, quotations and popular music also add this other level, as will be discussed later.

Even if allusions, quotations and popular music are introduced as integrated into the drama, often an exaggeration of expression eventually leads to a deviation from the illusion that enhances the experience of the moment as musical performance. This appears to have been the case with the distorted jingle mentioned above (act I, scene 5) that attracted particular attention from critics (Bergendal 1968/69 p. 34). In act I, scene 6, Lili watches television, on which a vocalist performs a blues. The vocalist is projected on a cube screen whereas song and accompaniment (by piano and double bass) is tape-recorded (No, no, no Blues) (Score p. 106). The music is diegetic, and Lili repeats phrases of frustration to the music. The music functions as a representation of not only time and place, but also of Lili's mental condition, feeling sad and lonely.

However, instead of being distorted, the musical section is long and becomes more and more expressive. The tape-recorded accompaniment is gradually expanded with live instruments first by alto saxophone and drums then by the rest of the pop-jazz band (electric organ, bass guitar) and later by brass (trumpets, horns, trombones) and cellos. In this way the diegetic situation is gradually transformed into musical performance. This experience is confirmed by Hähnel's review. The blues appears to have attracted his attention above all as music and as performance (Hähnel 1969). The music is first part of the narrative, but the musical expression progressively appears to exceed the limit of the diegetic world. The film projection of the vocalist (in a glamorous dress) on the cube screen and the tape-recorded song that is amplified and distributed by loudspeakers contribute to this effect. This is theatre as theatre (performance as performance), an important device in baroque (and neo-baroque) aesthetics.

A similar technique occurs in act II, scene 12 (Elegie), where Lili is alone and feels isolated in the suburban environment. After a dialogue with the saxophone she breaks into an excessive aria (Score p. 188). Initially low-voiced with a declamatory vocal

[31] Compare with the interpretation of how opera is represented in the film *Citizen Kane* by the scholar Michelle Lekas 2000. See also the review by the Swedish critic Folke Hähnel (1969, cited above), who insinuated that the 'number' had a comic effect.

[32] See Edberg's description of the music in her review of the production for Hamburg (1969).

melody and a reserved string accompaniment, it gradually becomes more intense and expressive through vocal outbreaks with chromatics and high tones and an expanded orchestral accompaniment including nearly the whole orchestra. The aria culminates with expressive allusions to film music, through which the orchestra bridges the cadences of the vocal line. Initially representing Lili's mental condition, as it progresses, the aria creates the effect of musical performance.

[6] Music as excess

An important characteristic when it comes to the music's role in *Die Reise* is the excessive. It is an exaggeration of expression that can lead to an experience of both wonder and superficiality. This technique is important in neo-baroque aesthetics (cf. Maravall 1986 p. 213 and Degli-Esposti 1996b pp. 79–80). When it comes to *Die Reise*, excess also appears to have had a provocative effect.

[6.1] Figurative representation

Besides the excessive means observed in the examples mentioned above, excess could be created through figurative representation. The music illustrates single words. However, the illustration is not limited to the context provided by text and diegetic situation, but is exaggerated in a manner that intensifies the communication with the audience.[33]

An example occurs in act I, scene 1, where the suburban choir (Coro suburbano) utters words in line with the suburban society of the 1960s ('zwei Zimmer mit Küche', 'FNL', 'LBS', 'LSD', 'Elizabeth Taylor', 'Kiesinger', 'Urlaub', 'Vietnam' etc.). At the utterance of the word 'Mallorca' the pop-jazz band performs a section of Latin-American popular music (Belacalypso Bossa Pop) together with instruments from the percussion sections (Score pp. 6–7). The melody is both duplicated by the song performed by the suburban choir and combined with recorded sounds and words from the tape. The music appears to have a role that stretches beyond illustrating the word and emphasising the level of superficiality that characterizes this society. The length of the section contributes to transforming the illustrative and narrative role of the music into musical performance. The objectification of the word is exaggerated in a way that makes the idea of the word fade into the background whereas the musical expression dominates. Besides, at the very end of the opera (where the music is repeated at a low volume) there is no continuity of this music or of this concept in the opera; instead it is to be seen as an isolated moment that has a rhetorical effect on the audience. The transformation of the narrative into musical performance is also enhanced through how the pop-jazz band and percussion sections are located in the room, on the stage.

A similar way of exaggerating the music as a figurative device appears in act I, scene 5. Lili has received the second letter from Christopher, where he describes his life during the period when they had lost contact with each other. When he describes his dental training, a choir of dental students enters on stage and performs a Latin text to an allusion of Gregorian chant, the voices alternating between unison song and parallel movements (Score p. 70). The tape-recorded voice of Christopher reading the letter

[33] Compare with how Monteverdi lets music illustrate single words in *L'incoronazione di Poppea*. See Rosand 1989.

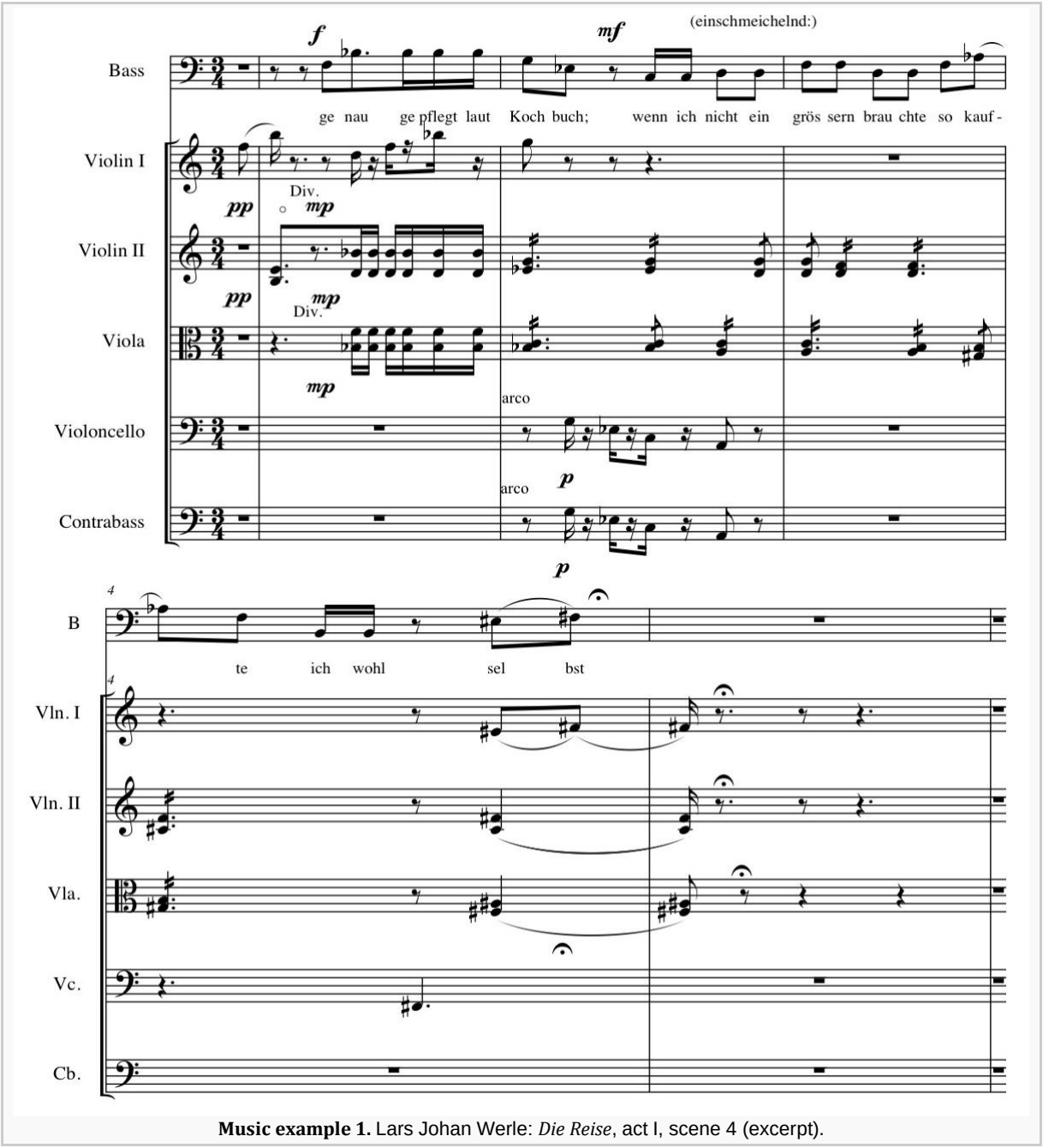
returns during the song in short interjections together with laugh sequences from Lili. The song can be seen as a representation of the academic environment, where Christopher did not fit in. However, the musical number extends over an unprecedented length of time (it is the longest number in the opera). That this made an impact on the audience is marked by the many reviews where critics observe the discrepancy between the extension of this musical number and the dramatic situation (see Hähnel 1969, Tamsen 1969 and Brandel 1970).[34]

Just like the suburban choir in act I, scene 1, the musical number is initiated with a signal (from percussion sections, piano and harp), which makes it deviate from the fictive world, and emphasizes an experience of stylization (occasionally the instruments also have short, marked interjections during the song). The privileged position of the music over the drama is also emphasized through the culmination in two climaxes where the vocal melody is reinforced by an extension of the orchestral forces, eventually including winds, strings and percussion (Score p. 74 and p. 76), and through the transformation of Lili's laughter (as she reads the letter) into operatic vocalises. These devices create an exaggerated expression that makes the musical allusion extend beyond the fictive world.

[6.2] Operatic extravagance

Besides allusions to 'operatic' expressions,[35] quotations of and allusions to certain operas are means of creating operatic extravagance. The quotations are mainly taken from the classical canon (*Die Zauberflöte*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* and *La Bohème*) that is to say from operas that were probably well known to the contemporary spectator/listener. The quotations are positioned in a way as to give the spectator/listener who recognizes them a clearer picture of the diegetic situations in question. An example is when the words 'and cared for in accordance with the cookery-book; if it not had been that I needed a larger I would probably self …' uttered by the insincere car salesman in act I, scene 4, is briefly accompanied by a quotation of the string accompaniment that initiates Leporello's aria 'Little lady, this is the list' in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (act I, scene 5) (Score p. 52).

[34] The section is also interpreted as a comic moment. See Mangs 1970 and Edberg 1969.
[35] As well as in act I, scene 5 examples of this occur in act I, scene 1, act II, scene 9, 11 and 12.



Music example 1. Lars Johan Werle: *Die Reise*, act I, scene 4 (excerpt).

However, just as in this example, the quotations are often short and intertwined with deviating styles, and are therefore not always easy to recognize. This is confirmed by reviews of the opera (where quotations and allusions often are interpreted in relation to the drama), where critics state that the recognition of the borrowings is of importance for an understanding of the context and complain that Werle does not manage to accomplish this.[36] Werle himself claimed, on the other hand, that quotations and allusions not were meant to be recognized by people in the audience, but saw any possible recognition as a 'humoristic effect' (Petersén 1980 p. 19). It appears that these musical passages were meant to be *experienced* rather

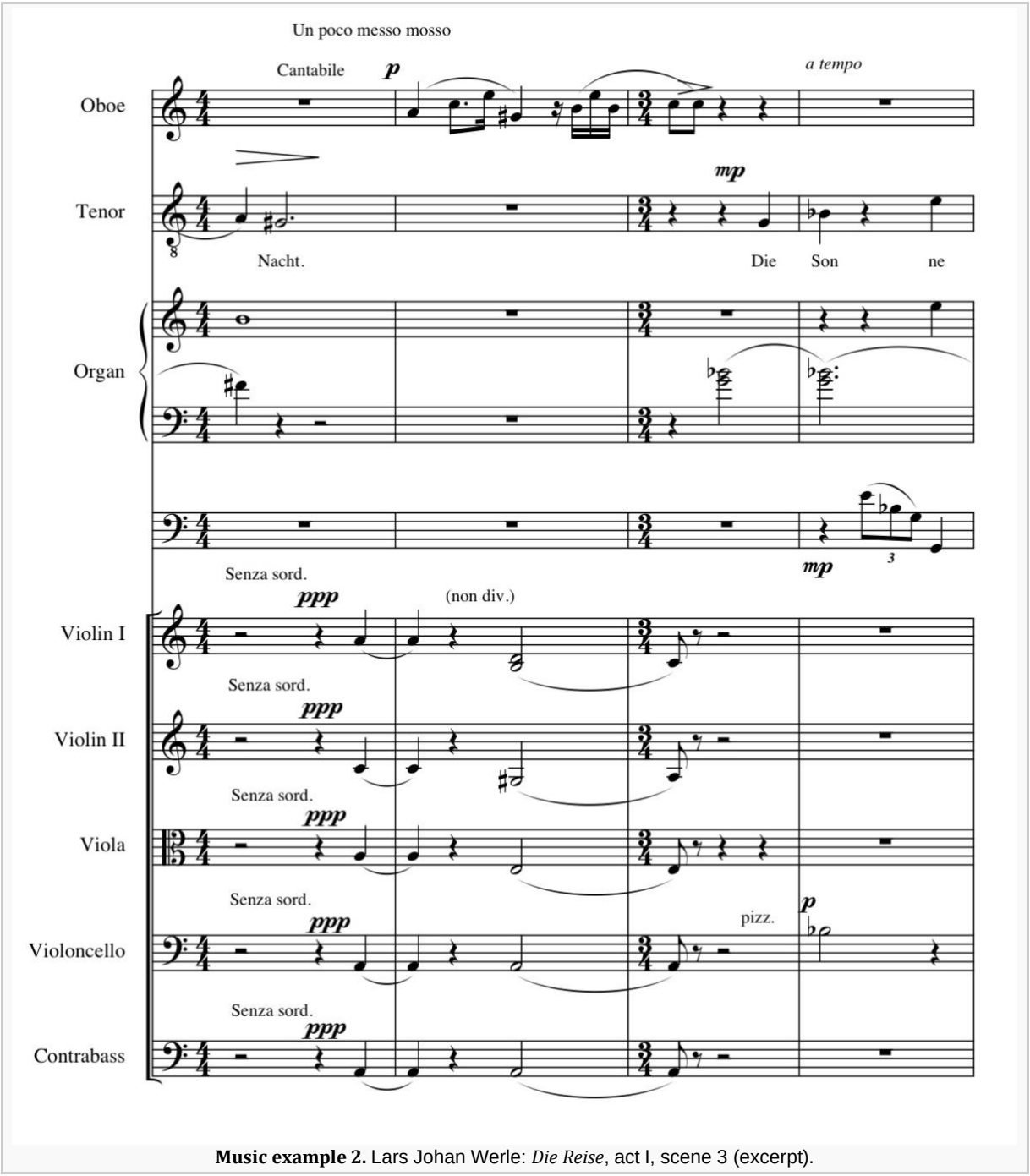
[36] According to Rolf Liebermann the opera was a 'Bildungsoper' and he meant that it was important to recognize the quotations to achieve the right experience (Brandel 1969). See also Brandel 1970. Also, the Swedish critic Folke H. Törnblom (1970) sees the quotations in relation to the drama and states that they do not fulfil the dramatic function.

that *interpreted* and that this also was the effect of them during the performance. This idea is in line with Fischer-Lichte's performative aesthetics, which in turn can be compared to a baroque aesthetics (Fischer-Lichte 2008 pp. 38–39 and p. 158).[37] As already has been concluded, the experience not only had the effect of wonder, but also of provocation. The above-mentioned quotation from *Don Giovanni* was one of the musical borrowings that the German musicians opposed (Edberg 1969).

Of special interest when it comes to pluralism of styles is the opera's first act, as here the technique of quotations and allusions, as well as the use of popular music, is more extensive than in the second. Especially important is scene three, where Lili has received the first letter from Christopher and remembers things they did together in the past.[38] She recalls when Christopher – dreaming of becoming an opera singer – performed a solo song at school. The character of Christopher enters the stage and performs a quasi-strophic song (labelled Cavatina) in modernistic shape (lacking a clear tonality and with a chromatic melody) that is initially accompanied by the organ (Score p. 22). However, unexpectedly and for a short instant, there is a harmonic turn to A minor and an oboe introduces a motif that is profiled rhythmically and melodically (bars 8–9). It is a quotation of a melody and accompaniment from the finale of the first act of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* (act I, scene 8). Oboe performs the number's vocal melody and, just as in the original, strings perform the accompaniment.

[37] Fischer-Lichte contends that the theatre performance of the 'performative turn' of the 1960s bears affinities to the theatre performance of the 17th and early 18th centuries. Both enhanced a kind of communication between actor and audience that was based on materiality and inter-activity. The audiences of the 17th and early 18th centuries were, just like audiences of the experimental performances after 1960, supposed to *experience* and *act*, whereas audiences from the late 18th century until around 1960 were supposed to have an *interpretive* relation to what was happening on stage.

[38] The fleeting combination of memory, fantasy and invention that is revealed by the mentality of Lili, as well as the morphing of musical forms that characterizes the scene, are devices that also can be interpreted as belonging to a neo-baroque aesthetics (see Degli-Esposti 1996a, pp. 158–159).



Music example 2. Lars Johan Werle: *Die Reise*, act I, scene 3 (excerpt).

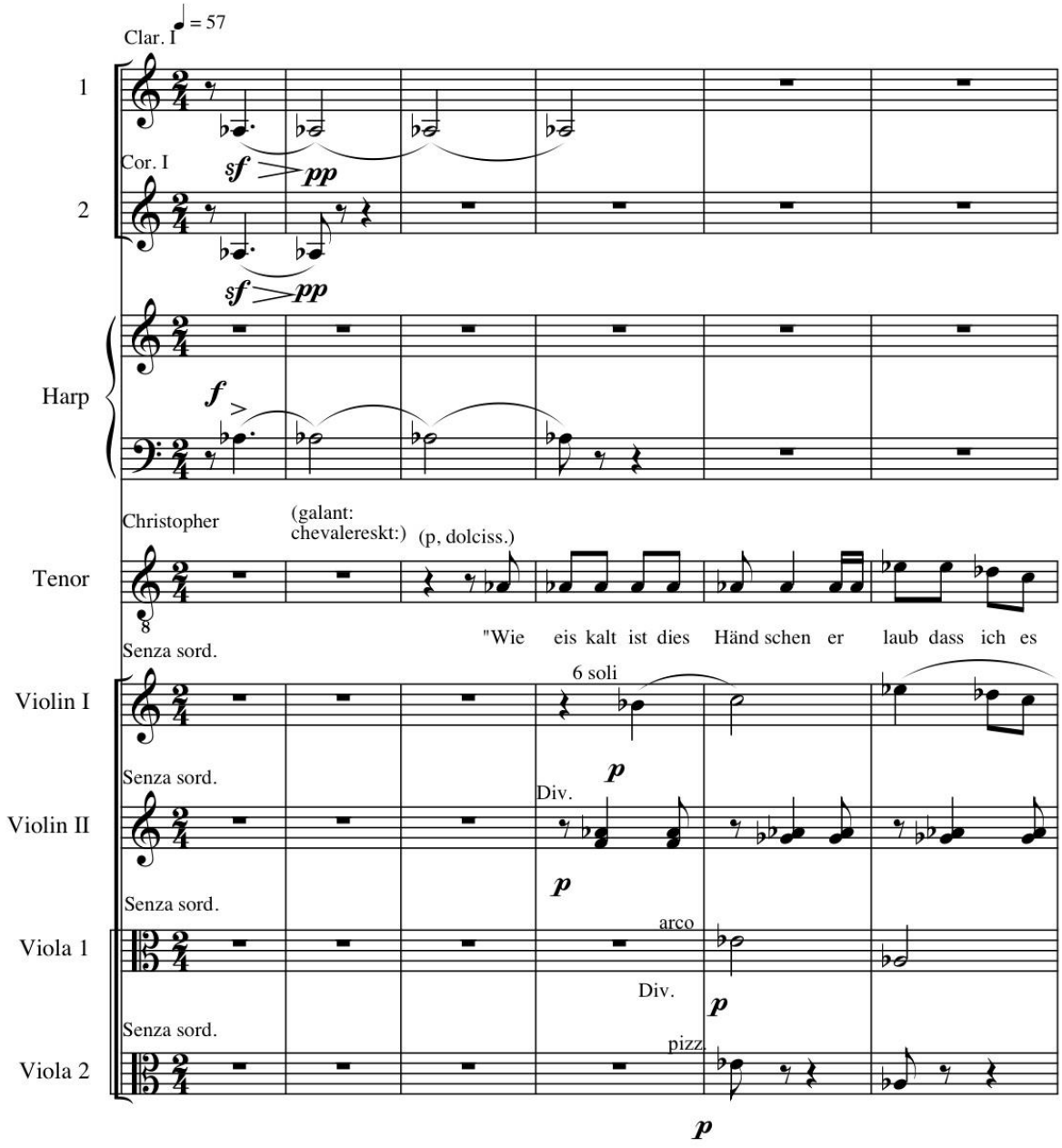
The part that is quoted is when Tamino sings the words 'Oh endless night, when will you vanish' (he then continues with 'When will my eyes again see light?'), expressing confusion/frustration over the message he receives from the priest he encounters in his search for Sarastro and Pamina. The quotation is an isolated instance and thereafter the music continues as before (but the strings and oboe continue to accompany the song together with the organ). However, after the first stanza (the interlude initiating in bars 32–41), the oboe elaborates on a variation of the melody.

If interpreted in relation to the diegetic situation, the song performed by Christopher can be seen as projected by the memory and by the feelings of confusion and frustration that are aroused in Lili as she reads the letter. The modern shape of the vocal melody appears as an expressionistic transformation of the song through her

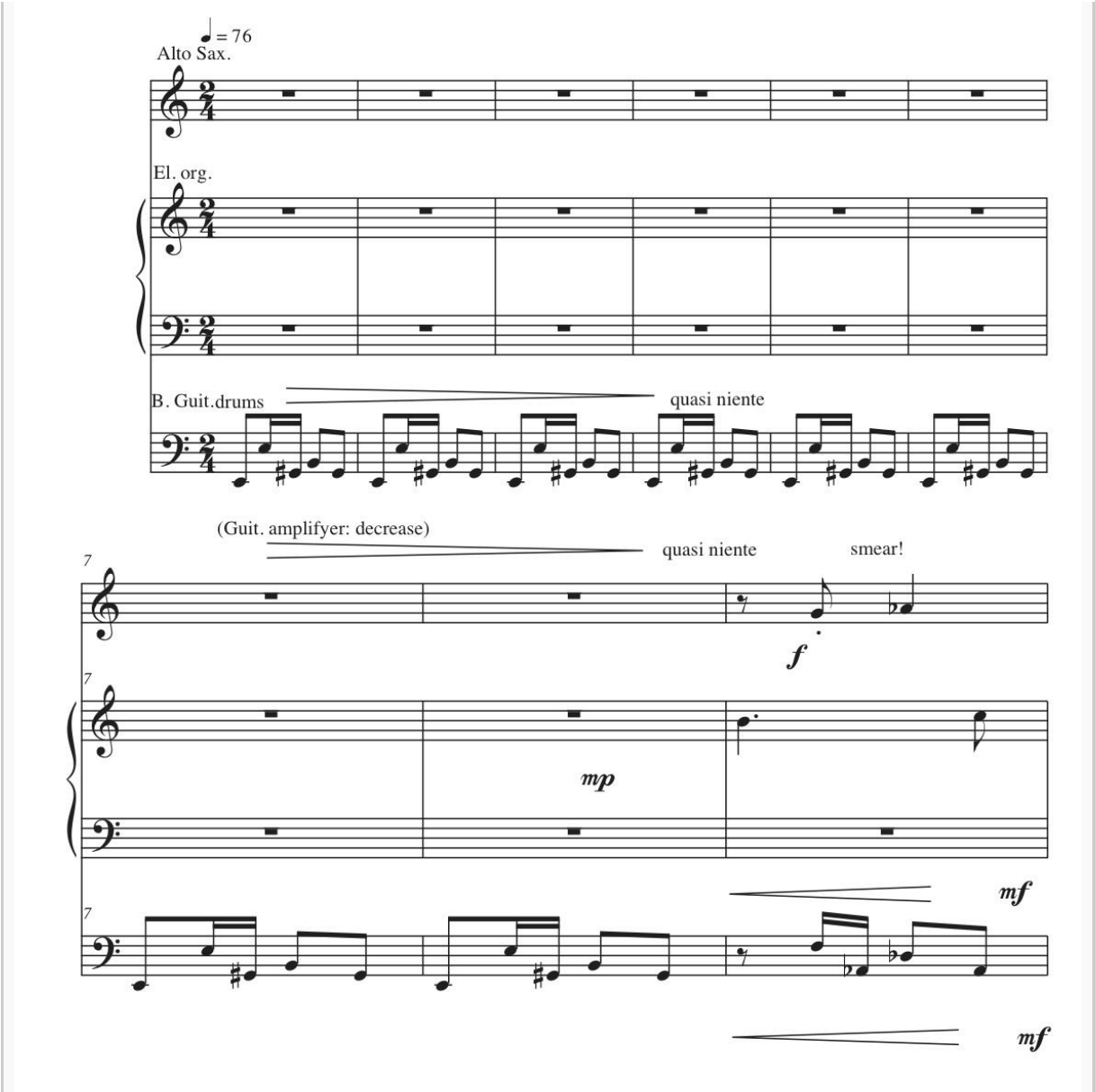
mentality (her subjective confusion is interlaced with the picture of Christopher she remembers), and the quotation emphasizes how Lili connects Christopher with opera. The quoted passage is also a parallel to the situation, as Tamino in this moment expresses the same kind of feeling as Lili. Through the quotation, Lili's confusion and frustration are represented on a more general level.

However, the quotation is short and has an indicative rather than a manifest function. It may be too short to be recognized by the audience. Certainly it is noticed as a musical moment that stands out in the musical context of the situation and creates an effect of surprise. In this way it has a rhetorical effect on the listener. It is a way for the composer to speak to the audience directly. The unexpected melody was probably experienced as a musical rather than a narrative moment. Quotation of traditional opera can be seen as a way to reinforce Christopher's song as an act of musical performance. Taking statements by contemporary critics into consideration, the unexpected and dramatically more-or-less unmotivated combination of newly composed music and music by Mozart may also have had a provocative effect.

In the following moment Lili remembers when she and Christopher went together to a café. The environment and the time of the situation are represented through popular music, played by a jukebox (Juke Pop performed by the pop-jazz band on stage: electric organ, drums and bass guitar, and later a solo performed by alto saxophone is introduced) (Score pp. 24-25). The music is diegetic. Lili has chosen the music and later she dances to it. Unexpectedly, Christopher sings Rodolfo's vocal line from Puccini's duet between Rodolfo and Mimi 'How cold your little hand is! Let me warm it for you.' (*La Bohème* act I, scene 8) (Score p. 25). It is a quotation of the vocal line and of the accompaniment (clarinet, horn, harp and strings), and of the dynamics of this initial phrase.



Music Example 3a. Lars Johan Werle: *Die Reise*, act 1, scene 3 (excerpt).



Music Example 3b. Lars Johan Werle: *Die Reise*, act 1, scene 3 (excerpt).

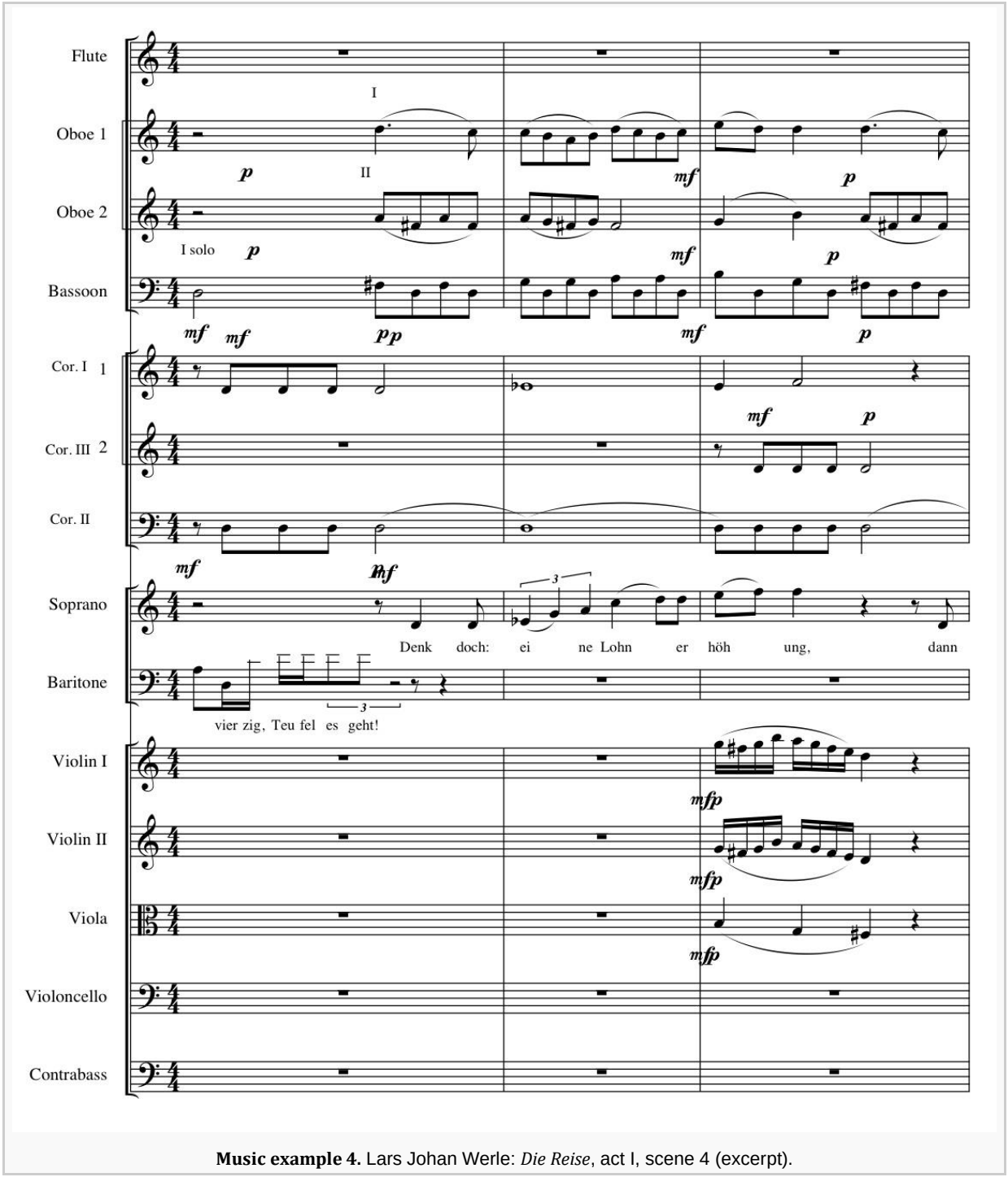
The quotation is diegetic, as the Juke Pop partly continues in the background (the rhythm in the bass guitar) and Christopher and Lili comment on the performance. The quotation can also be interpreted as Lili's remembrance of Christopher as a man with operatic ambitions and as a man whose behaviour is somewhat strange and tense.

However, even if the Juke Pop continues in the background, the unexpected vocal performance (performed in a gallant, chivalrous manner) presents an abrupt deviation from the environment of the café. The quotation renders the effect of surprise, this time in a comic fashion (scenically, too, the unexpected romantic parallel to *La Bohème* adds a marked comic effect). It appears as an excessive mode of expression in the context of popular music. In this way it can also be interpreted in a performative manner, as a means of adding the level of 'operatic' extravagance (music as 'excess'). Its part in the narrative (as a comic parallel) probably made the quotation easier to accept for musicians and audience than the above-mentioned Mozart-quotations (the Puccini quotation is not mentioned by many critics).

That Werle had different ways of handling opera quotations in mind when composing is indicated by a statement made by the composer himself in an interview about *Die Reise*. Werle here refers to two further quotations from operas by Mozart that appear in the opera:

> Let's take the two quotations from Mozart. One is the guardian song from *The Magic Flute*, the other is a part from the first scene from *The Marriage of Figaro*. They demonstrate two radically different attitudes to Mozart's music. In the bedroom in the *Marriage of Figaro*, Figaro measures the bedroom; in *The Journey* Peter counts money instead. *Here I play with Mozart and the audience laughs*. (Connor 1971 p. 149. My italics and trans. J.E.P.)

The part that Werle refers to is based on the duet between Figaro and Susanna 'Five … ten … twenty … thirty' that introduces act I, scene 1 in Mozart's *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Act I, scene 4 in Werle's opera is an allusion to the duet, initiated with Peter's declamatory vocal melody in combination with tone repetitions in the violin and a flowing melody in the bassoon (Score p. 41, bars 1–34). When Lili's voice is introduced as an allusion to the part of Susanna, this is to a quotation of Mozart's accompaniment (that follows the vocal melody) in winds (oboes and bassoons) and strings (with harmonic deviations in horns) (bars 12–16, returns in bars 27–30). The final cadence is a modernistic transformation of the original (bars 16–17).



Music example 4. Lars Johan Werle: *Die Reise*, act I, scene 4 (excerpt).

Peter counts money and hopes to be able to buy a car. There is a connection between the scenes in the two operas. Both appear as comic, but the comic effect is reinforced in the later opera, through the technique of musical parody. The effect appears as similar to the effect of the quotation from *La Bohème*.

According to Werle's statement the quotation functions as parody, and has a comic effect meant to be experienced by the audience. However, as he did not expect the spectator and listener to recognize quotations and allusions, it is rather the stylistic

deviation that is supposed to create this effect.[39] The quotation can be seen as a comment on the part of the composer and creates a distance in relation to the situation of the fictive world (cf. Heile 2006b pp. 109–110). Instead of being absorbed into the narrative, the parallel to *Le Nozze di Figaro* makes the spectator and listener experience a deviation in the shape of traditional opera.

Continuing the discussion on quotation technique, Werle mentions another quotation from *Die Zauberflöte*. Here his intention seems to have been somewhat different.

> The case is entirely different when it comes to the guardian song from the *Magic Flute*, where the chorale is performed by the orchestra. *Here I retrieve Mozart, expose him and place him back*. (…) When Mozart enters, my music retires (…). And this time (…) there is no laughter from the audience. (Connor 1971 p. 149. My italics and trans. J.E.P.)

In act I, scene 7 (The Border, Passacaglia), Christopher and Stefan are at the frontier station to hell. On two cubes stand the percussionists, performing with long, ritual movements that create a visual effect. They create a fragmentary and dissonant sound web in *piano pianissimo* against more continuous movements in strings and winds. Unexpectedly, a quotation from Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* is introduced in the orchestra, the chorale 'He who treads this road full of care' (the finale in act II, scene 21). It is the orchestral part (strings and winds) that is quoted (Score pp. 114–115, bars 1–10), but Werle remains with his own music in some instrumental parts (see the composer's statement above) and the fragmentary and dissonant facture continues after the quotation. A motivic transformation of the quotation returns briefly later in the scene (Score p. 122, bars 2–4), punctuating a cadence in a duet between Christopher and Stefan. The quotation represents the narration. The situation in the opera is a parallel to the situation in Mozart's opera, where Tamino meets the guardians to hell. Accordingly, the people in the audience who recognize the quotation may achieve a deeper understanding of the situation in Werle's opera.

Turning to the intentions of Werle as they appear from the interview, with this quotation the ambition seems to have been more ambiguous than with the quotation from *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Mozart's music is exposed to the audience as a clear contrast to the background of Werle's own music. Reviewers of the opera also stressed the importance of this musical moment. The Swedish reviewer Åke Brandel sees it as the opera's musical and dramatic climax and it is the quoted part that he finds most important for the effect (Brandel 1969, cf. Linder 1970). Accordingly, quotation of traditional opera intensifies the expression and creates an effect of wonder. The quotation is something that deviates from the dramatic and musical context and that the audience recognizes, even if they do not recognize exactly what it is. Just as in the examples mentioned above, Werle here adds the level of operatic extravagance through musical means of contrast.

The quotation may also have been one of the musical moments that had a provocative effect on the audience (and the musicians), as it is not clearly motivated by the diegetic situation. Werle instead creates a striking contrast, borrowing a musical expression from Mozart and relating it to modernistic music. It is a technique of composition that

[39] See the review by Törnblom (1970), which stated that the comic effect presupposes that the quotation is recognized.

is rooted in a baroque aesthetics: the composer borrows music to be able to create a rhetorical effect.[40]

[7] Conclusion

Die Reise is an opera where musical pluralism of styles is not only a means of narrating a story, but where it also functions as a means of reflecting the musical consciousness of the contemporary listener and spectator. This is an idea that is important in the neo-baroque aesthetics that has been brought forth by scholars such as Calabrese, Ndalianis and Degli-Esposti. Musical quotations, allusions and contemporary popular music can also be said to manifest a neo-baroque aesthetics as these techniques emphasize a contemporary view of the 'artwork' as something superficial through fragmentation, collage and duplication.

Even if the pluralism of musical styles often appears as a figurative device that has a representative or narrative role, more significant is how quotations, allusions and popular music are rhetorical means, just as in opera from the historical baroque period. The opera's first act contains some examples that display this rhetorical effect in a distinct way. Quotations of historical music here create a contrast in relation to the otherwise realistic representation. Both through extension and through expression many of these passages appear to distort the illusion of the narrative. Exaggeration of expression and representation has the effect of seducing and overwhelming the audience in line with a neo-baroque aesthetics.

According to the director Runsten, the drama is characterized by the realism of everyday life on the one hand, and by the fantastic on the other. These two levels can be said to characterize the opera when it comes to the roles of music, too. Sound and music may have the role of representing the fictive world. However, often there is a 'slip' that makes the music deviate from this world. Through exaggerations and through unexpected means in relation to other media in the opera the music achieves a status of excess. From the contemporary reception it can be concluded that the musical pluralism of styles also had a provocative effect, at least during the performance in Hamburg. Above all, it was the quotations from Mozart's operas that were perceived as means of disturbance. This way of creating the 'fantastic' belongs rather to a neo-baroque than to a Romantic aesthetics. Provocations and the unexpected generate a more active participation from the listener and the spectator than an aesthetics based on the ideals of reflection and interpretation.

During the same period as Werle collaborated with Runsten on *Die Reise* (1965–69), he also collaborated with the Swedish film director Ingmar Bergman on the films *Persona* (1965–66) and *Vargtimmen* (*Hour of the Wolf* 1968).[41] The quotation from the finale of the first act of Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte* 'Oh endless night, when will you vanish' (act I, scene 8) appears not only in *Die Reise* (act I, scene 3), but also in *Vargtimmen*.[42] The opera can also be related to this film, as well as to *Persona*, when it comes to the combination of the realistic and the fantastic. The realism is transformed into a dreamlike character (cf. Broman 2012 pp. 24–26 and Steene 2000

[40] Hähnel (1969) compares Werle's technique of composition to Mozart rather than to Wagner.
[41] See the letter from Bergman to Werle, Stockholm, 8 September 1964 and the letter from Runsten to Werle, Gentofte, 27 October 1965.
[42] See Swedish musicologist Per F. Broman's interpretation of this moment in the film (2012 p. 24).

pp. 24–43). As already stated, what contributed to this dimension were not only music's role as narration, but also even more so music's role as excess.[43]

[43] I want to express my gratitude to Dr Joakim Tillman from the Department for Musicology and Performance Studies, Stockholm University, to whom I am indebted for important material on which this article is based. I also wish to extend warm thanks to Dr Mårten Snickare from the Department of Art History, Stockholm University, for inspiring discussions on the subject and to Dr Kate Maxwell for style review of the article.

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Endnotes

[1] For how this trait is exploited by composers such as Bernd Alois Zimmermann, Luciano Berio, Alfred Schnittke, George Crumb and Mauricio Kagel, see Heile 2006 p. 106. See also Tillman 1999a and Tillman 1999b.

[2] For a description of this device from a baroque and from a neo-baroque perspective see Cubitt 2009 p. 50. Compare with Degli-Esposti 1996b.

[3] See Cubitt's brief description of the field (2009).

[4] See Ndalianis (2004 p. 7) who states that 'baroque' (during the 18th century) '…implied an art or music of extravagance, impetuousness, and virtuosity, all of which were concerned with stirring the affection and senses of the individual'.

[5] See Cubitt (2009 p. 50) who explains this concept in the following manner: 'Stylistically, the neo-baroque like its predecessor is characterized by excess, by spectacle, and by the elaboration of decoration to the point where it takes over from the structural principle to become the characteristic formal property of cultural production'.

[6] The architectural historian Robert Harbison (2000 p. 221) suggests that pluralism of styles is a device that, through the confusion it creates, makes postmodern art a manifestation of baroque aesthetics.

[7] Compare with the idea on which the musicologist Michael L. Klein (2005 p. 21) bases his intertextual investigation that is to say that our place in history questions the stylistic integrity of a text. Compare also with Nicholas Cook's performative approach in 'Between Process and Product' (2001 http://www.societymusictheory.org) and with Michael Chion's idea of a new sound reality in *Audio-Vision: Sound on Screen*(1994 p. 103).

[8] The opera was commissioned in 1965 and in 1966 work on the opera was underway. Runsten sent a version of the first act to Werle. See the letter from Runsten to Werle, Gentofte, 13 October 1966 and the letter from Runsten to the committee of the Royal Theatre in Stockholm, Copenhagen, 1 December 1966.

[9] In reviews of the productions for Hamburg and Stockholm by Swedish critics the opera was seen as the most important Swedish opera since *Aniara* and even as comparable in importance with *Wozzeck*. See Brandel 1969, 1970 and Sällström 1970.

[10] According to Bergendal (1968/69 p. 34) the opera was received with enthusiasm during the performances in Hamburg, even if the newspaper critics were mainly negative. When it comes to the negative criticism in German journals he suggests that these may have been the result of the Germans not fully understanding the content of the drama, depicting the problems of suburban life in the Swedish welfare state.

[11] See the score that belonged to the composer at The Music and Theatre Library of Sweden. See also the correspondence between Runsten and Werle, Veddinge, 2 July 1969, Veddinge, 6 July 1969, Huvaborg, 12 August 1969.

[12] The first performance of the production was also recorded and broadcast by Sveriges Radio.

[13] Here Jarno Hilloskorpi and Paul Suominen replaced the director Runsten and scenographer Svoboda.

[14] See Ndalianis's description of how an open and process-oriented form enhances the active participation of the spectator (2004 p. 72).

[15] The German critic Klaus Wagner (1969) observed this in his review of the opera.

[16] See also how Tillman (1999b p. 14) characterizes the opera. From the correspondence between Runsten and Werle predating the première in Hamburg it can be concluded that the idea of musical pastiche and parody was important in the construction of the opera. See the letter from Runsten to Werle Gentofte, 14 October 1967.

[17] Tillman (1999b p. 14), on the other hand, reaches the conclusion that the fluctuation between styles is not clearly connected to the text-illustrating or narrative functions in the drama.

[18] The composer in relation to the later opera *Tintomara* presents a similar view of the role of the music. See Johnson and Werle p. 50. See also Ethnersson Pontara and Tillman 2010.
[19] Compare with P.C. Jersild's intention concerning the novel revealed by the interview that was distributed in relation to the broadcasted Swedish version of the opera (1970). The author stated that his intention with the novel had been to create social engagement. Compare also with Werle's tendency to compose unpretentious music as a way to create contact with and engage the audience. This tendency was stronger in the operas composed after *Die Reise*. See Bergendal 1971 p. 79.

[20] See Calabrese 1992 p. 54 and Degli-Esposti 1996b.

[21] Werle not only quoted and alluded to other composers, but also borrowed material from his own earlier productions. See Hedwall 1987 p. 299.

[22] Werle's intention to base the musical content and structure on the musical consciousness of the contemporary spectator/listener reflects also the idea on which, for example, Klein (2005 p. 21) bases his intertextual investigation, that is to say that our place in history questions the stylistic integrity of a text. The idea of using the musical consciousness of the contemporary audience is also observed by the Swedish critic Ulla-Britt Edberg in her review of the production of the opera in Hamburg. See Edberg 1969.

[23] See Edberg 1969. The Swedish critic Åke Brandel (1969) observes the expressive and dramatic effects of the projections on the cubes. See also Tamsen 1969.

[24] See Werle's statement in Hedwall 1987 p. 299. See also Edberg 1969.

[25] Tamsen (1969) observed in her review that the sounds and films/pictures were correlated.

[26] This is true for the Coro suburbano I, II and III in act II, scene 13. Coro suburbano II also concludes with a signal. See also the dental choir (act I, scene 5) that is initiated by a signal performed by percussion, piano and harp.

[27] Compare with Berg's *Wozzeck*. In many ways *Die Reise* is reminiscent of Berg's opera not least through its use of allusions and quotations. See for example Juke Jazz in act I, scene 3.
[28] Compare with *Wozzeck* act II, scene 4, where Marie dances with the drum major.

[29] Another clear example of a multimedia distribution of different levels of events occurs in act 1, scene 6. Lili prepares dinner for Peter with the intention of making a confession about the letters from Christopher. At the same time as this is acted out on stage, the cubes show what response she hopes to receive from the confession. See also act II, scene 1, where Peter is represented both through a film projected on a cube and on stage communicating with Lili.

[30] Compare with the opera *Dreaming about Thérèse*. This technique can be interpreted from a 'baroque aesthetics'. See Fischer-Lichte 2008. See also the examples from *Die Reise*, act I, scenes 1, 2 and 3.
[31] Compare with the interpretation of how opera is represented in the film *Citizen Kane* by the scholar Michelle Lekas 2000. See also the review by the Swedish critic Folke Hähnel (1969, cited above), who insinuated that the 'number' had a comic effect.

[32] See Edberg's description of the music in her review of the production for Hamburg (1969).

[33] Compare with how Monteverdi lets music illustrate single words in *L'incoronazione di Poppea*. See Rosand 1989.

[34] The section is also interpreted as a comic moment. See Mangs 1970 and Edberg 1969.

[35] As well as in act I, scene 5 examples of this occur in act I, scene 1, act II, scene 9, 11 and 12.

[36] According to Rolf Liebermann the opera was a 'Bildungsoper' and he meant that it was important to recognize the quotations to achieve the right experience (Brandel 1969). See also Brandel 1970. Also, the Swedish critic Folke H. Törnblom (1970) sees the quotations in relation to the drama and states that they do not fulfil the dramatic function.

[37] Fischer-Lichte contends that the theatre performance of the 'performative turn' of the 1960s bears affinities to the theatre performance of the 17th and early 18th centuries. Both enhanced a kind of communication between actor and audience that was based on materiality and inter-activity. The audiences of the 17th and early 18th centuries were, just like audiences of the experimental performances after 1960, supposed to *experience* and *act*, whereas audiences from the late 18th century until around 1960 were supposed to have an *interpretive*relation to what was happening on stage.

[38] The fleeting combination of memory, fantasy and invention that is revealed by the mentality of Lili, as well as the morphing of musical forms that characterizes the scene, are devices that also can be interpreted as belonging to a neo-baroque aesthetics (see Degli-Esposti 1996a, pp. 158–159).

[39] See the review by Törnblom (1970), which stated that the comic effect presupposes that the quotation is recognized.

[40] Hähnel (1969) compares Werle's technique of composition to Mozart rather than to Wagner.

[41] See the letter from Bergman to Werle, Stockholm, 8 September 1964 and the letter from Runsten to Werle, Gentofte, 27 October 1965.

[42] See Swedish musicologist Per F. Broman's interpretation of this moment in the film (2012 p. 24).

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