



BERG • LULU

Opera in three acts

Libretto by the composer, adapted from Frank Wedekind's *Erdegeist* and *Büschel der Pandora*



BERG Lulu

Cast

(in order of singing)

Disc One

- 1 Prologue (4:15)
- 2 Act 1 Scene 1 (13:40)
- 3 Act 1 Scene 2 (20:51)
- 4 Interlude (3:13)
- 5 Act 1 Scene 3 (15:51)

Disc Two

- 1 Act 2 Scene 1 (25:35)
- 2 Interlude - Film Music (3:18)
- 3 Act 2 Scene 2 (23:01)
- 4 Act 3 - Finale (orchestral music from Scene 2) (11:40)

Vienna Symphony Orchestra
Herbert Häfner, conductor

Karl Loida, *bass* - Animal trainer
Hans Libert, *tenor* - Alwa
Otto Wiener, *baritone* - Dr. Schön
Ilona Steingruber, *soprano* - Lulu
Waldemar Kmentt, *tenor* - The Painter
Claus Logau, *speaker* - The Doctor
Emil Siegert, *bass* - Schigolch
Waldemar Kmentt, *tenor* - The Prince
Hilde Matheis, *contralto* - Dressing-room attendant
Hans Wild, *bass* - Manager
Maria Cerny, *mezzo-soprano* - Countess Geschitz
Karl Loida, *bass* - Rodrigo
Friedl Riegler, *contralto* - Schoolboy
Willy Bacher, *tenor* - Servant

World première recording, made in Spring 1949, original issued as Columbia Masterworks SC-121.

This is the original unfinished version of the opera, with the orchestral music Berg had written for the finale. A "completion" of the opera by Friedrich Cerha was published in 1979, following the death of Berg's widow, Helene.

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BERG LULU

WORLD PREMIÈRE RECORDING

KARL LOIDA
HANS LIBERT
OTTO WIENER
ILONA STEINGRUBER
WALDEMAR KMENTT
CLAUS LOGAU
EMIL SIEGERT
HILDE MATHEIS
HANS WILD
MARIA CERNY
FRIEDL RIEGLER
WILLY BACHER

VIENNA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

CONDUCTOR
HERBERT HÄFNER



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PACO 049

Lulu is an opera by the composer Alban Berg. The libretto was adapted by Berg himself from Frank Wedekind's plays *Erdgeist* (Earth Spirit, 1895) and *Die Büchse der Pandora* (Pandora's Box, 1904). Berg first saw *Die Büchse der Pandora* in 1905 in a production by Karl Kraus, but did not begin work on his opera until 1929, after he had completed his other opera, *Wozzeck*. He worked steadily on the score until 1935, when the death of Manon Gropius, the daughter of Walter Gropius and Alma Mahler, prompted him to break off work to write his *Violin Concerto*.

Berg completed the violin concerto swiftly, but the time he spent on that meant he was unable to complete the opera before his death later in 1935. The following portions of the third and final act were fully scored: the first 268 bars; the instrumental interlude between scenes 1 and 2; and the finale of the opera, beginning with the monologue of Countess Geschwitz. (The last two of these passages comprise the fourth and fifth movements of the "*Lulu-Suite*" which Berg compiled for concert performance.) The rest of the work remained in short score with indications of instrumentation for much of it.

The opera was first performed by the Zurich Opera in an incomplete form in 1937. Erwin Stein made a vocal score of the whole of Act III following Berg's death, and Helene Berg, Alban's widow, approached Arnold Schoenberg to complete the orchestration. Schoenberg at first accepted, but upon being sent copies of Berg's sketches he changed his mind, saying that it would be a more time-consuming task than he had thought. Helene subsequently forbade anybody else to complete the opera, and for over forty years only the first two acts could be given complete, usually with the Act 3 portions of the *Lulu Suite* played in place of Act III. The last recording made of the original two-act version — Christoph von Dohnányi conducting the Vienna Philharmonic, with Anja Silja in the title role (Decca/London, recorded 1976 and released 1978)—presented it in this form.

Director Heinz Ruckert shot the silent film featured at the midpoint according to Berg's exacting specifications. The film wordlessly depicts Lulu's arrest, trial, incarceration, and ultimate liberation thanks to the cunning of the Countess Geschwitz. Like the music for this sequence (and the opera as a whole), the film has a palindromic structure. The original film is lost save for four stills which remain in the Zurich Stadtarchiv. Each successive production requires a new film to be shot with the stage actors.

In its two-act form plus sketches of the third act, *Lulu* made its American debut at the Santa Fe Opera in New Mexico during the 1963 season, with the American soprano Joan Carroll in the title role. The Opera's general director, John Crosby, attempted to negotiate for Santa Fe to stage the American premiere of the full three-act opera, but was not successful.

Helene Berg's death in 1976, just six months before the Metropolitan Opera was due to present the American premiere (in a production by John Dexter), paved the way for a new completed version to be made by Friedrich Cerha. Published in 1979, this version premiered on February 24 of the same year at the Opera Garnier and was conducted by Pierre Boulez, with Teresa Stratas singing the lead role; the production (by Patrice Chéreau) was a sensation and the recording won the Gramophone Award for 1979. The Santa Fe Opera's John Crosby had previously negotiated with the opera's publisher, Alfred Kalmus of Universal Edition, to present the American premiere of the complete version and "on July 28th 1979, nearly forty-four years after Berg's death, *Lulu* [with Nancy Shade] was finally performed in its entirety in this country".

NOTES FROM WIKIPEDIA - FURTHER NOTES ARE ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM