

ADRIAN POP - IN SEARCH OF A LONG LOST SMILE

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SUMMARY. An anniversary, especially in the case of a generation colleague, the renowned composer Adrian Pop, generates the remembrance of a long series of musical events that have become notorious, with works included in the national and international concert repertoire. The avoidance of nostalgic memories made that a stage miniature be chosen for the present paper, an incursion of the author into the naive world of childhood reading. The result was a modern, glamorous musical transposition of a sequence with Max and Moritz, the playful heroes created by the famous humorist and cartoonist Wilhelm Busch in the middle of the 19th century. The musical act *Onkel Fritz* by Adrian Pop was first performed in Cluj in 2016, on October 22, on the occasion of his previous anniversary, within the Cluj Musical Autumn Festival. The graceful performers of the act, presented under the title “Anniversaries at the Festival, Adrian Pop compositional portrait”, were soprano Mihaela Maxim, in the role of Max and pianist Eva Butean, in the role of Moritz. How did composer Adrian Pop manage to musically enliven a 150 years old humorous story? The author of the following text will try to answer this question.

Keywords: Adrian Pop, Wilhelm Busch, Max und Moritz, Unkle Fritz, musical act

1. Prologue

Inspired by the famous comic book sequences created by the comedian and cartoonist Wilhelm Busch, composer Adrian Pop metamorphosed in a stage performance one of the antics of the two malevolent protagonists, Max and Moritz. In the 2016 Cluj Musical Autumn

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Adrian Pop, host of the anniversary recital, briefly presented the genesis of his work, saying that “the piece is an act, or maybe even a joke for voice and piano” that “borrows playful words from a very erudite author from the 19th century, Wilhelm Busch, a specialist of comic books”. In the composer’s childhood, his mother insisted that in the 50’s her children would learn German, because, she claimed, “you don’t learn German when you feel like it, you have to learn it when you are young”. As always, his mother was right and over the years he was deeply grateful to her: “a great cultural horizon has opened up for me”, says the author. Thus, *Onkel Fritz*’s story became a musical transposition on stage of the childhood readings of many of us.

The idea of composing a musical act came from the composer’s sister, the teacher of a boys’ choir of the “Knaben” tradition, the model being the one at St. Stephen’s Church in Vienna where Joseph Haydn, himself a Knaben-Sänger, once performed. The first performance of the work took place in 2015, in Germany, at Kandel, at the Special Music School, and the soloist was a young boy² from the choir.

2. Adrian Pop – Onkel Fritz and a previous anniversary

The musical act was first performed in 2016, on October 22, as part of the Cluj Musical Autumn Festival, under the title *Anniversaries at the Festival, Adrian Pop compositional portrait*. The performers were soprano Mihaela Maxim, in the role of Max, the storyteller, and pianist Eva Butean who, at a crucial moment in the act, left the role of the orchestra-woman to give life to Moritz.

The story comes down to one of the funniest tricks set up by the two naughty characters created by Wilhelm Busch and transposed musically with a lot of humor by Adrian Pop. We therefore thank Cristina German, the composer’s sister, without whom “he would not have thought of composing such a thing ever”.

² Adrian Pop: “The little singer is called Tony Mureșan (of course, of Romanian origin), accompanied by Johann German, my brother-in-law, accompanist at the Karlsruhe Opera; the performance is from a 2015 concert at the Special Music School in Kandel, Germany, where children singers are trained, mainly in a boys' choir in the traditional German-Austrian style (see the model Wiener Knabenchor at St. Stephen's Cathedral), all related of course to the Catholic tradition; my sister, who commissioned this song written especially for her and her class of little singers, also teaches at this school.”

3. The Author's Questions

Can we still have fun today with a 150-year-old humorous story of naughty children? The answer is certainly affirmative, knowing the refined humor of the composer as proved in his previous creations.

What was humorous 150 years ago and what is today? The present study will present only some of the many facets of humor selected from contradictory treatises and writings.

What do we know about children, childhood and education? Problems will be addressed only as much as space and time allows.

4. Childhood

The refuge in memories that project the antics of childhood can be found in many authors and in various genres. Starting from local examples, Ion Creangă's autobiographical stories about Nică, son of Ștefan of Peter, are perhaps the most relevant: "Let's talk better about childhood, because only childhood is happy and innocent." Play is the law of childhood and the father's opinion has become an aphorism: "If he is a child, let him play; if it is a horse, let it draw the carriage; if he is a priest, let him preach". Suffice it to mention only the episodes that made our childhood happy, such as the one about the river bathing, stealing Mariuca's cherries or selling the village hoopoe, catching flies with the Horologion or tying the lumber on the fingers of the sleeping colleague. The physical punishment would not be long, as then it was considered that "beating was from heaven." The antics of childhood, although punished, remain the charm of those years without responsibility. Instead, Till Eulenspiegel's mischief as an adult will be relentlessly punished with the gallows.

Nietzsche writes in *The Metamorphoses of the Spirit*: "But ... can a child do what the lion himself cannot? Why should the lion become a child? Because the child is innocence and forgetfulness, new beginning, game, wheel that spins by itself, first cause and holy affirmation".³

5. A voyage in the world of comic

The comic and implicitly its effect, the liberating laughter, have triggered many controversial opinions over time. Some judge it critically given that "the bearer of the comic ideal, either theme, or motive, or hero

³ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Așa grăit-a Zarathustra (Thus Spoke Zarathustra)*, Edinter, 1991: 28.

himself, etc., is constructed according to negative structures. It is actually an anti-structure of the hero”, says aesthetician Ștefan Anji.⁴ And Bergson believes that “laughter is made to humiliate, it must give the person who serves as its object an embarrassing impression ... Laughter would not achieve its purpose if it bore the mark of sympathy and kindness.”⁵ In contrast, Jean Fourastié, more optimistic, argues in *Le rire* (1983) that the laughable will be, along with desiring, reasoning and stating, “one of the four fundamental ways of thinking.”⁶

Umberto Eco, in *The Name of the Rose*, defends, through his character, the Franciscan monk Guglielmo (William of Baskerville) the comic and laughter as being a refuge of the simple man in the face of dogmas and constraints. But the blind Jorge, the oldest monk in the abbey, sees in laughter a danger to the Church, “weakness, rottenness,” and wants to destroy the Second Book of Aristotle’s *Poetics* on Comedy and all who have read its pages. Here is a short excerpt from the dialogue between the two:

Guglielmo - There are examples that Aristotle gave in the first book of *Poetics* and in *Rhetoric*... Then Aristotle sees the inclination towards laughter as a good force, which can also have knowledge value, when through refined enigmas and unexpected metaphors, still telling us things otherwise than they are, as if they were lying, it actually forces us to look at them better and makes us say: look, that’s the way things are, and I didn’t know. The truths that are reached by representing people and the world, worse than they are or than we believe, worse, in any case, than the way the heroic poems, tragedies and lives of the saints showed us. Right? ... But what scared you in this discussion about laughter? You won’t make laughter disappear by throwing away this book.

Jorge - No, of course not. Laughter is the weakness, the rottenness, the tastelessness of our flesh. It is the tickling for the peasant, the shamelessness for the drunkard, even the Church, in her wisdom, has allowed for the moment of celebration, of carnival, of fairs, this diurnal defilement that unloads your humors and diverts you from other ambitions ... But so laughter it

⁴ Ștefan Anji, *Prelegeri de estetică muzicală (Lectures on Musical Aesthetics)*, vol. 1, tome 2, Oradea, 2004, p. 383.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 390.

⁶ Vasile Morar, *Estetica. Interpretări și texte (Aesthetics. Interpretations and texts)*, <https://ebooks.unibuc.ro/filologie/morar/7.htm>, accessed April 16, 2021.

remains a despicable thing, within the reach of the simple, a secret revealed to the common people. And this book, justifying comedy as a wonderful thing, as well as satire and mime, which could produce the cleansing of passions by depicting defect, vice, weakness, would urge the false wise men to try to redeem (with a devilish overthrow) the heavens by allowing those below..."⁷

Thomas Wright's book, *A History of Caricature and Grotesque in Literature and Art*, was published in London in 1865, at the same time as William Busch's comics. The treatise traces the evolution of comedy from ancient Greece to Dionysian ceremonies, following the course of ancient comedy, the parody of Apollo at Delphi, and continues with ancient Rome - the use of masks, satire, caricatures, animals introduced to characterize people, pygmies, political caricature at Pompeii, and graffiti. It continues with the transition from Antiquity to the Middle Ages - mime, Teutonic entertainment, clerical satire, monstrous animals, dragons, the church of San Fedele, the taste for the grotesque, demonic figures, caricatures in manuscripts and sculptures. He then captures the evil in caricature, the medieval preference for the ridiculous and the demonic that will influence the pious works of the wrong monks - the gloomy and hideous caricatured, the demon in the miraculous works and the demons of Notre-Dame. He goes through medieval satires, the popularity of fables (Fauvel), preserving the character of pantomime after the fall of the empire - the minstrel and the juggler - popular stories, the macabre dance, Rabelais, reaching the political caricature directed against Henry the 3rd and Louis the 14th.

Laughter in Thomas Wright's conception appears as a necessity of human nature, evolved in various forms, with social influences. „Cicero of Antiquity and Erasmus of the Modern Age" looked upon it (mert a laugter-re vonatkozatunk) with indulgence, and Aristophanes is considered the greatest comedian, a model in literature. "The divine Plato writes how, at the siege of an unconquerable temple, (the Greeks, the graces?) they found Aristophanes' madman."⁸

The grotesque comic is not missing from one of Verdi's darkest creations, *The Force of Destiny*, the scene of the monk Fra Melitone, and the pranks of the "Happy Wives of Windsor" in *Falstaff* will end his lifelong work in comic nuances.

⁷ Umberto Eco, *Numele Trandafirului (The Name of the Rose)*, Polirom, 2004, pp. 470-471.

⁸ Thomas Wright, *A History of Caricature and Grotesque in Literature and Art*, London, Virtue Brothers & Co., 1865, p. 312.

6. Interest for the Children's World

Childhood has long been seen in history as a stage of transition to the future, transient, and the child - an ignorant adult, says Locke.⁹ The child rarely appears alone, or in the lead role. However, there are a few examples in the visual arts, two famous Greco-Roman sculptures from the Hellenistic era: *Spinario*¹⁰, also known as *Fedele*¹¹ - *Boy with Thorn* (of an unknown author) and *Boy with Goose* by Boethos¹². In Spanish Baroque painting Murillo captures the image of a disadvantaged or working child: *The Young Beggar* and *The Little Fruit-Sellers* (17th Century).¹³

In literature, the stories of our childhood written by the Grimm Brothers¹⁴ and Hans Christian Andersen¹⁵ were preceded by the anthology of the *Arabian Nights*, translated into French by Antoine Galland (1704) and into English by Richard Francis Burton (1885).

7. The image of the child in literature

Emile or On Education (in French: *Émile ou De l'éducation*) by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, published in 1762 and considered the author's most influential writing was burnt publicly by the orders of the Parliament in Paris, while its author was excommunicated by the ecclesiastic authorities. Even though Rousseau proved to be an absent parent in real life, he formulated his own pedagogical principles that still persist today. These place the child in the center of attention and help raise a good natured person into a perfect adult. The basic ideas of his work are freedom, moral virtue and the pursuit of happiness.¹⁶ In Japan, the child development authority requires all kindergarten educators to read Rousseau's book. An

⁹ https://research-management.mq.edu.au/ws/portalfiles/portal/86960771/Publisher_version.pdf, accessed May 15, 2021.

¹⁰ Spinario, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Musei Capitolini.

¹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boy_with_Thorn, accessed May 12, 2021.

¹² <http://www.hellenicaworld.com/Greece/Art/Ancient/en/ChildGoose.html>, accessed May 12, 2021.

¹³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bartolom%C3%A9_Esteban_Murillo, accessed May 18, 2021.

¹⁴ Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm, *Kinder-und Hausmärchen (Stories for Children and Family)*; the volumes include 156-200 stories published in 1812-14 and 1857: https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fra%C8%9Bii_Grimm, accessed May 19, 2021.

¹⁵ Hans Christian Andersen - 156 stories published in 9 volumes:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hans_Christian_Andersen, accessed May 19, 2021.

¹⁶ https://hu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emil,_avagy_a_nevel%C3%A9sr%C5%91l, accessed May 15, 2021.

analogy has been observed between some passages from *Émile* and *Letters to my son* by Mme d'Épinay, a book published four years earlier. In the next century, the playwright and politician of the French Revolution, Jean-Nicolas Bouilly, - known in the music world for the subject provided to Beethoven's only opera *Fidelio* - was also the author of several children's novels.¹⁷

8. German humor

The comedian Wilhelm Busch (1832-1908), a contributor to Munich illustrated magazines and a world-famous cartoonist, camouflaged the criticism of the provincial Philistines in the innocent caricatures of the book he dedicated to Max and Moritz (1865). The cheerful mask hides a disillusioned satirical spirit, which depicts with aphoristic laconism his own social critique as grotesque-comic images.¹⁸

At the beginning of the 19th century, Austrian literature still preserves and promotes the legacy of German classicism, but from the second half of the century, the Habsburg Monarchy shows tendencies towards an introspection into its specific issues. During this period, the common man appears in prose - the Viennese citizen and the Austrian peasant.¹⁹ "German laughter seems to be the expression of the demonic side of humanity, it becomes eschatological, it gives rise to agitations and utters obscene curses. It takes monstrous shapes, as in Bosch and Cranach's drawings. He aspires to the Apocalypse." – according to Vito Pandolfi. We learn from his treatise that Goethe also approached the comic genre and used it in Puppenspiel (puppet theater) during his time as a director of the Weimar Theater ... The name of Hans Sachs, immortalized by Wagner in *The Master Singers* from Nuremberg (1868) is linked to the "representative humor", as he was the composer and director of the pranks played on carnival night, those "rustic pictures for the Renaissance Festnachtspiel". On his way from village to castle, humor will become "demonic" and grotesque in the hands of charlatans, then ironically in

¹⁷ Jean-Nicolas Bouilly (January 24, 1763 – April 14, 1842), author of children's novels: 1819: *Contes à ma fille*, 1824–1825: *Contes offerts aux enfants de France*, 2 vol., 1827: *Contes à mes petites amies, ou Trois Mois en Touraine*, 1827, 1830: *Contes populaires*. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean-Nicolas_Bouilly, accessed May 18, 2021.

¹⁸ Előd Halász, *A német irodalom története (The History of German Literature)*, Gondolat, Budapest, 1987, p. 586.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

Gozzi's enchanting plays. In the 19th century, Johannes Nestroy (1801-1862) "composed pleasant environmental paintings, in which figures of the people stand out and jokes with a happy ending take place, much liked by the Viennese public." ... The "semi-dialectal" language is close to the spoken one, it proves to be malleable and surprising", writes Pandolfi.²⁰

9. The image of the child in music

As in the visual arts, the child as a main character appears late. Johann Sebastian Bach introduces a children's choir in the *Matthäus-Passion* score, and in the Singspiel *The Magic Flute* by Mozart, three wise and benevolent boys appear. In Bizet's opera *Carmen*, the children give up playing and imitate the rhythmic march of the soldiers, and in Puccini's *La Boheme* (act 2), a group of noisy and conceited little charlatans appears. Ravel, in *The Child and the Spells*, will give the leading role to a boy who disobeys, destroys and is cruel to animals, but who will be corrected at the end.

The attention of composers Saint-Säens (*The Carnival of the Animals*) and Prokofiev (*Peter and the Wolf*) is directed towards the education of the young generation through dedicated moralizing works, not lacking in candour and humour. In the stories of Max and Moritz Busch does not foresee the remorse, the two rascals fully enjoy the comic of the created situation, and the composer Adrian Pop largely respects the original story. The script he created reduces the characters to two, the singer and the pianist. The singer will play in turn the role of the narrator - a naughty boy - and that of the fooled uncle. The pianist will be in turn the other rascal and the orchestra-man creating the comic and grotesque narrative sound effects required by the score and script.

10. The story behind Busch's manuscripts

Wilhelm Busch offered his publisher, Richter, the manuscripts of Max and Moritz, waiving taxes. Richter rejected the manuscript because the prospects for sale seemed uncertain. Instead, Busch's former editor, Braun, agreed to edit the story. If at first the interest in the book was modest, after the second edition in 1868 the success became resounding, so much so that during the author's lifetime it reached the impressive number of 56 editions

²⁰ Vito Pandolfi, *Istoria teatrului universal (A History of Universal Theatre)*, Meridiane, București, 1971, pp. 312-313.

and over 430,000 copies sold. The reviews were not unanimously favorable, the teachers of the 1870s described Max and Moritz as frivolous and with an undesirable influence on the moral development of young people.²¹

Meanwhile, The Times was stating in 1870 that “The French are now writing the darkest page of their history, that is, of the history of the world.”²²

11. Music for children in our country

Romanian music includes opera and ballet works for children (Alexandru Zirra, the opera *Capra cu trei iezi – The Goat with Three Kids* (1940) as well as the ballet works of young composers from Cluj, Ciprian Pop, Șerban Marcu, Cristian Bence-Muk and Răzvan Metea.²³

In Adrian Pop’s creation we find several instrumental works, especially for piano and choirs (carols) for children, composed in the ‘80s.²⁴

12. The composer’s humour

When asked how he would define quality humour nowadays, Adrian Pop wrote to me:

“I didn’t answer your question about quality humour ... it’s hard to answer, because while the notion of humour represents that which makes us laugh or at least smile, the notion of quality is much more subjective; I am not for the elimination of thick humour, even gross, nor would I give exclusivity to subtle humour; it depends a lot on the one to whom it is addressed - but even more on the one who generates it.”

²¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wilhelm_Busch, accessed May 10, 2021.

²² Nagy Zeneszerzők (*Great Composers*), Etűd Könyvkiadó Budapest, 1995, p. 204.

²³ The ballets of the young generation of composers (Ciprian Pop, *Capra cu trei iezi – The Goat with Three Kids*, Răzvan Metea, *Corbii și bufnițele – Ravens and Owls*, Șerban Marcu, *Arahneea - Arachne* and Cristian Bence-Muk, *Strigoiiul - Ghosts*) are the results of a project in 2006 and are addressed to the young ballet students of the “Octavian Stroia” Choreography Highschool in Cluj-Napoca.

²⁴ *Patru miniaturi pentru coarde- Four Miniatures for Strings* (1982), 2 violins, viola and cello; *Toccatina* (1986), piano solo; *Din cimpoi- From Bagpipes* (1986), piano; *Rondino* (1987), piano; *Uncle Sam* (1987), piano; *Nori de toamnă- Fall Clouds* (1988), piano; *Colinde-Carols* (1998), children’s choir on 2 and 3 equal voices (Contains: *Colo sus și mai în sus - Up there and up*; *Trei crai de la răsărit - Three kings from the east*; *Miron Vânătoriu – Miron the Hunter*; *În vârfuri la nouă meri - On top of nine apples*; *Sus boieri, nu mai durmiți - Up boys, stop sleeping*).

In fact, in Adrian Pop's creation, the humour transpires even from the first work composed outside of the composition class. As it was loved by the public even from its first performance and it quickly became part of the repertoire of prestigious choirs, *Colinda de pricină*, or *Vine hu-hulpè di la mu-muntè...*²⁵ was launched in 1974 by the composer's father, Maestro Dorin Pop, conductor of the *Cappella Transylvanica* choir. The folklore teacher, Traian Mârza guided him to this "folk jewel from Sălaj, recorded by Ileana Szenik"²⁶, as Adrian Pop tells us. The text is satirical, and the vulgar popular inventiveness musically amplifies the narrator's stutter: *Vine hu-hulpè di la mu-muntè*, and the chorus with Romanian-Slovak resonance, *le brăna- brăna, dobrăna, n-are ropci-aşa să hañe rupte-n cot*, reminds us of the children's folklore. The charm of the song is achieved by increasing the tension of the musical discourse during the five stanzas with shifts of the song, the end being a *tutti* marked by a short kick to the floor.

The group of Secular *carols* continues and completes, in a short act, a ritual of carolling children where the funny cheers of the children in Transylvanian dialect are charming due to spontaneity and humour.

13. Adrian Pop and Wilhelm Busch's characters

The complete title of the musical piece is *Onkel Fritz – Musik-Szene aus Wilhelm Busch' "Max und Moritz"* 2014, while the music, script, stage direction and translation into Romanian belong to Adrian Pop. In 1906 Wilhelm Busch's book was in its 53rd edition and was known throughout Germany and the United States. But what kind of stories should a children's book contain in order to become famous? The composer answers us and we acknowledge that these clarifications are welcome: "A story with two rascal boys in seven typical German tough pranks who are finally given through the mill, turned into grains and eaten by their chickens. At that time, the stories had a macabre note"– says Adrian Pop giving also the example of Hänsel and Gretel's story and noting that "today educators say that these stories should be avoided so as not to scare children." This could also be the reason for the author's choice of the most innocent prank of the seven committed by Max and Moritz, to the horror of the community. But in order to appreciate the charm of the story, there is the presentation of the original German text and in parallel, the delicious translation made into English, by Roxana-Paula Huza:

²⁵ *The carol in question, The fox is coming from the mountains...*

²⁶ *Aşa-zisul cântec de pricină - The so-called carol in question*, study published in the Collection of prize-winning works from the National Conference of Student Circles, 13th edition, the folklore section, Bucharest, 1976.

Wilhelm Busch - *Onkel Fritz*

Jeder weiß, was so ein Mai-
Käfer für ein Vogel sei
In den Bäumen hin und her
Fliegt und kriecht und krabbelt er.

About the Maybugs you must know,
You all see them in the trees
Flying, buzzing, rambling.

Max und Moritz, immer munter,
Schütteln sie vom Baum herunter
In die Düte von Papiere
Sperrn sie die Krabbeltiere.
Fort damit und in die Ecke
Unter Onkel Fritzens Deckel!
Bald zu Bett geht Onkel Fritze
In der spitzen Zippelmütze;
Seine Augen macht er zu,
Hüllt sich ein und schläft in Ruh.

Max and Moritz, playfully,
Shatter them beetles from trees,
Stuffed in paper bag.
Then the paper bag is hidden
Under uncle Fritz's bed.
As their Uncle Fritz withdraws,
With his peaking bonnet,
All tucked in in bed sheets,
Off to sleep he goes.

Doch die Käfer, kritz, kratzel!
Kommen schnell aus der Matratze.
Schon faßt einer, der voran,
Onkel Fritzens Nase an.
»Bau!« schreit er — »Was ist das hier?«
Und erfaßt das Ungetier.
Und den Onkel voller Grausen
Sieht man aus dem Bette sausen.
»Autsch!« — Schon wieder hat er einen
Im Genicke, an den Beinen;
Hin und her und rund herum
Kriecht es, fliegt es mit Gebrumm
Onkel Fritz, in dieser Not,
Haut und trampelt alles tot.
Guckste wohl! Jetzt ist's vorbei
Mit der Käferkrabbelei!
Onkel Fritz hat wieder Ruh'
Und macht seine Augen zu.

But the bugs go kritz-kratz,
Climbing up the mattress,
While the foremost of them all,
Squeezes uncle's nose.
"Ouch! What was that?"
And he snags the guilty,
Jumping out of bed,
In utmost dismay.
Alas, some are plucking at his neck,
And some stinging on his calves,
While the others in a swarm,
Roam around in discord.
Therefore, uncle Fritz in frenzy,
Stomps and smashes them to pieces.
Thank you, God Almighty!
No more climbing Maybugs!
Uncle Fritz can now repose,
So that he can recompose.

14. Adrian Pop: *Onkel Fritz* – analytical presentation

The act is structured in five movements with 126 bars: the first part (A) is dedicated to the free beetles, in the second one (B) we get to know Max and Moritz and their plan, to capture the beetles and place them under their uncle' mattress. The third part (C), slow, is dedicated to the sleepy

uncle preparing to go to bed. The fourth part (D), presents the war of the released beetles against the bewildered and terrified uncle. Finally, the fifth part (C varied), a replica of the third one, brings forth the happy ending and the sleeping uncle.

A) The Maybugs

The story begins with the first scene (A) “once upon a time”, in Moderato tempo, like a May story when beetles scatter trees in a zig-zag pattern.

E.g. 1

ONKEL FRITZ

Musik-Szene aus Wilhelm Busch' „Max und Moritz“

Adrian Pop, 2014

Mäßig ♩ = 96 *mf* *P* **Più mosso** *P*

Je - der weiß, was so ein Mai - Kä - fer für ein Vo - gel sei In den Bäu - men hin und her

Mäßig ♩ = 96 *mf* **Più mosso** *P*

Bars 1-10

B) Max und Moritz

A first contrast, the second scene (B) launches an energetic *poco forte* march, at the presentation of the boys Max and Moritz and their plan: catching the beetles in a paper cone...

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E.g. 2

Mäßig, munter ♩ = 96

21 *poco f* *subito p* *cresc.*

Max und Mo - ritz, im - mer - maa - ter, Max und Mo - ritz, im - mer -

Mäßig, munter ♩ = 96

poco f *subito p* *cresc.*

28 *mf, sempre cresc.*

mun - ter, Schüt - teln sie vom Baum he -

Bars 21-31

... and placing the flying package in their uncle's bed. The *clausula* in B quotes the end in A and marks the strategy concluded with one of the author's favourite figures, the *anaphora*.

E.g. 3

32 *flüsternd*

run - ter In die Dü - te von Pa - pie - re Sper - ren sie die Krab - bel -

pp misterioso *f*

39 *gesungen* *f* *molto rit.* *p*

tie - re. Fort da - mit und in die E - cke Un - ter On - kel Fri - tzens De - cke...

p *f* *molto rit.* *p*

Bars 32-45

C) Onkel Fritz

In the third scene (C) Uncle Fritz enters with a *lex minima* theme, in quarters (as in the past), in tempo “slowly and very leisurely”, says the author and on an ostinato cadence on the double bass, the uncle puts on his nightcap, goes to bed and falls asleep peacefully.

E.g. 4

Langsam und sehr gemächlich ♩ = 60

mp

Bald zu Bett geht On - kel Fri - tze In der spi - tzen

Langsam und sehr gemächlich ♩ = 60

mp

Bars 46-51

D) The beetles' assault...

In the fourth scene (D), the tempo “Moderate at first, then more and more agitated”, announces that the flying insects have freed themselves and spread around the room, aiming in their chaotic flight at the uncle’s nose and waking him up. The discourse is divided into a melodic one (*interrogatio*) and a *Sprechgesang* with onomatopoeic character (*kri-tze kra-tze*).

E.g. 5

4 Mäßig am Anfang (♩ = 66) , dann immer bewegter
mp sempre cresc. poco a poco (accel.)

64

Doch die Kä - fer kri - tze kra - tze, kri - tze kra - tze, Kom - men schnell aus der Ma - tra - tze,

während dieser Sektion sollen sie kriechende Käfer nachahmen, indem sie im Rhythmus der Viertel den Kopf und den Brust nach rechts und links bewegen, mit Annahme des Tempo und Dynamik richten sie sich nach und nach

Begleiter: parlando in modo grottesco

Kri - tze kra - tze

Mäßig am Anfang (♩ = 66) , dann immer bewegter
mp sempre cresc. poco a poco

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68 (♩ = 72) (accel.)

Schon faßt ei - ner, der vo - ran On - kel Fri - tzens Na - se an!
 kri - tze kra - tze kri - tze kra - tze kri - tze kra - tze kri - tze kra - tze

Bars 64-71

The tempo accelerates, the musical discourse becomes more and more agitated and the insect hunt begins, as they are the victims of the strategy of the two swindlers.

E.g. 6

76 (accel.)

Und der On - kel vol - ler Grau - sen Sieht man aus dem Bet - te sau - sen.



78 (♩ = 86)

"Autsch!" schon wie - der hat er ei - nen Im Ge - nic - ke,

Bars 76-80

We witness a meticulous rhythmic-melodic fabric, with mixes of combined chords of fifths, fourths and seconds alternating in successive and simultaneous passages, raising the uncle's despair to paroxysm - the culminating point of the scene.


E.g. 7

81 (accel.) (♩ = 90)

an den Bei - nen; Hin und her und rund - herrrr - rum

Die Interpreten haben sich schon gerichtet und sind sehr aufgeregt;

(♩ = 90)

col 

Bars 81-83

After a measure of astonishment (*suspiratio*) the pianist unleashes in a cascade of clusters in desperate *forte*, with an amplified pedal effect.

E.g. 8

6


Meno mosso, ma molto pesante ♩ = 60

54

Kriecht es, fliegt es mit Ge - brrrum! On - kel Fritz, in die-ser Not,

Bei den Worten „Onkel Fritz“, hebt der Sänger plötzlich die Arme hoch, als stünde er vor einer Katastrophe:

Meno mosso, ma molto pesante ♩ = 60

col 

fff sehr schrill

58


f *schreiend, wie in ein nervlichen Zusammenbruch*

Haut und tram - pelt al - les tot.

Beide bleiben unbeweglich und sehr gespannt, dann ...

... hat der Sänger heftig mit den Armen in die Luft, als er die viele böse Käfer vernichten wolle; der Begleiter suggeriert dasselbe, indem er unregelmäßig clusters auf der Tastatur schlägt.

lasciar vibrare, dann allmählich das Pedal aufheben

col 

Bars 84-90

Cv) Onkel Fritz goes to sleep peacefully
 Four measures of calm follow, the cadence silence falls (“They calm down slowly”)...

E.g. 9

Langsam und sehr gemächlich ♩ = 60

Sich beruhigend *p* mit seligen Ausdruck

Langsam und sehr gemächlich ♩ = 60

Bars 92-101

... and the work ends with the varied reprise of Part C, dedicated to the Uncle, at the same tempo - Slowly and very leisurely, in a clear, evanescent major A, while the scene ends *Meno mosso* - *Lento sognando*, with uncle Fritz slowly drifting back into the dream world.

E.g. 10

Meno mosso ♩ = 52

109 *pp*

sei - ne Au - gen zu _____ die Au - gen zu _____

Meno mosso ♩ = 52

p lontano

118 rit. *Lento, sognando* *pp*

die Au - gen zu _____

Der Sänger schließt die Augen zu, als wäre er eingeschlummert. Nachdem der Hall aufgehört hat, kann er sogar leise schnarchen...

Bars 109-126

Maybeetles	Max and Moritz	Uncle Fritz	The beetles in the assault	Uncle Fritz
A	B	C	D	Cv
Moderato	Moderato full of life	Slowly and very leisurely	Moderate at first, then more and more agitated	Slowly and very leisurely
Theme with anabasis-catabasis profile (a=4m.) Playfully resumed with rhythmic diminution (a'=20m.)	The moment of the strategy, the "zig-zag" motif appears	The last 2 measures prepare the assault of the beetles <i>Misterioso</i> The „zig-zag” motif appears	Wave I. onomatopoeic effects, <i>glissandi</i> , <i>interrogatio</i> Wave II. <i>Mixtures of overlapping</i> P4,A4,P5,d5, M2,m2 <i>Chords</i> ; Wave III. Chromatic passages, rhythmic diminution, peroration towards climax – cluster waterfall; <i>suspiratio</i> and <i>clausula</i> .	Harmonic part: <i>Meno mosso</i> , <i>cantabile sognando</i> , <i>pianissimo</i>
C major- A minor	D major- C major	C major - A minor	E major-B \flat minor- G \flat minor-B minor... - E major	C major- A minor- A major
20m.	24m.	15+2m.	31m.	20m.
mm.1-20	mm.21-45	mm.46-63	mm.64-95	mm.96-126

Stage movement

The score does not only contain the score of the vocal soloist and pianist: Adrian Pop, with his well-known known rigour and meticulousness, also devises the comic of the act.

15. Conclusions

Comparing the stories of Max and Moritz, always ready for pranks, the story of the beetles hidden in the sleepy uncle's mattress and the comic resulting from their hunting seems to be the most innocent farce of all the others humorously put in verse and masterfully illustrated by Wilhelm Busch. But the composer's intention is not at all a musical return in time after Ravel's model. Even though Max and Moritz resemble *Enfant* (the child -

Ravel's naughty hero), the musical adaptation differs: Ravel had declared (1925) that the score of *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, on Colette's libretto: - "It is a mélange très fondu of all styles from all eras, from Bach to ... Ravel! ... They range from opera to American operetta stopping by a jazz band!"²⁷

Adrian Pop, however, creates a piece in his own modal chromatic style:

- thematic in scenes A, B and C when approaching the diatonic world of children's folklore, but with motifs evolving in the conflicting D;
- the accompaniment, on the other hand, is chromatically modal from the beginning, based on the harmonies of fourths and fifths superimposed with thirds and seconds in mixtures or arpeggios - in fact the vertical transposition of the thematic motifs;
- the fourth scene (D) becomes tonally unstable; interrogation sequences modulate chromatically and enharmonically;
- the part D represents the culmination of the piece and is meticulously made in three waves (*hypotiposys*);
- the first wave, mysteriously prepared by a "zig-zag" fourth and sixth motif marks the rhythmic invasion of bugs underlined onomatopoeically in *Sprechgesang* by the pianist;
- the singer plays the role of the bewildered and puzzled uncle (*interrogatio*) awakened from sleep;
- the second wave is the chromatic *catabasis-anabasis* passage in mixtures - suggests the swarm of beetles;
- the third wave combines the chromatic gait (*passus duriusculus*) and the *abruptio* octave jumps of the soloist in the "zig-zags" of the dizzying demisemiquavers of the piano, culminating in the cascade of clusters;
- tonal ending (Cv) with an extended epilogue with Uncle Fritz's rhythmic hiss in sleep, calms the spirits and no one will be punished.

16. Epilogue

In the stage version, Adrian Pop brings a moralizing attempt, in the moment of *suspiratio* and *aposiopesis* (general pause): thus the pianist (playing Moritz) also helps to annihilate the beetles with a paddle, then

²⁷ <https://pad.philharmoniedeparis.fr/0764491-l-enfant-et-les-sortileges-de-maurice-ravel.aspx>, accessed May 19, 2021.

returning to the piano and performing the same movements on the keyboard, this time with the clusters inscribed in the score.

This gesture of goodwill brings Adrian Pop's musical act closer to Ravel's work, where the angry child is punished by the destroyed objects and the injured animals, but the gesture of attending to the injured squirrel will bring him forgiveness.

In conclusion, the musical *Onkel Fritz* by Adrian Pop is a charming 21st Century humorous work, which can and should enter the universal repertoire dedicated to children.

(translated by Roxana-Paula Huza)

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