

# INTRODUCTION

by Elmar Juchem

*Zaubernacht* was Weill's first theatrical work to be completed and staged professionally. After the work's premiere in Berlin in 1922 and a subsequent production in New York City in 1925, the orchestral score and parts disappeared. The children's pantomime remained virtually unknown for eighty years until, in a moment of serendipity, the original (and presumably only) set of orchestral parts resurfaced in a vault at Yale University in 2005. For reasons that remain unclear, the New York performance replaced the two vocal numbers that originally opened and closed the otherwise wordless pantomime. The first of these has survived intact; the second, however, known to have been forty-two measures in length, survives in fragments only, which are not sufficient for inclusion in this edition. Although Weill incorporated some of the music of *Zaubernacht* in his *Quodlibet*, op. 9, an orchestral suite explicitly based on the pantomime that he prepared in 1923 and Universal Edition published in 1925, the ordering of musical material there does not reproduce that of *Zaubernacht*. Only now, therefore, is it possible to assess and perform Weill's first theatrical score in its original orchestration and continuity.

## I. Prehistory and Genesis

A number of sources indicate that *Zaubernacht* was the brainchild of its scenarist, Wladimir Boritsch, an elusive theatrical figure and occasional poet from Russia, the spelling of whose surname changed as he moved from country to country: Боричъ in Russia (1891–1918), Boričas in Lithuania (1919–21), Boritsch in Germany (1921–24), and Boritch in the United States (1924–54). His path resembles that of tens of thousands of Russians escaping the turmoil of revolution, civil war, hunger, and pogroms in their country. Between 1921 and 1923 Berlin hosted as many as three hundred fifty thousand Russian citizens, among them a fair number of well-known artists. After relations warmed between the German government and the Soviet Union in the wake of the 1922 Treaty of Rapallo, and particularly after November 1923, when the hyperinflation that had enabled an affordable life for those with access to foreign currency ended, many Russians, Boritsch among them, moved on to other destinations.

Because no biographical sketch of Boritsch has been published, information can be gleaned only from archival sources. U.S. immigration records provide valuable biographical data about Weill's early collaborator, who arrived in New York on 30 March 1924. The records indicate that he had been born in 1891 in the Russian town of Starodub, close to the borders of Belarus and Ukraine, where Jews had a large and ancient presence; his full name is given as "Wladimir Scheersohn [*sic*] Boritsch."<sup>1</sup> Asked for the name of his closest relative in his last country of residence, Germany, Boritsch identified a cousin named Salomon Jacobsen, who lived in Berlin at Viktoria-Luise-Platz 3—a building, coincidentally, directly across from Ferruccio Busoni's luxurious apartment at number 11. Berlin had been Boritsch's home for two and a half years, as can be gleaned from a report in the newspaper *Rul*, one of several Russian-language dailies published in Berlin at the time. On 2 October 1921 the paper announced Boritsch's arrival in Berlin, adding that he planned to establish a children's theater in Berlin, something he had accomplished in 1918 in Petrograd, a hotbed for not only revolutionary activities but also experimental theater.<sup>2</sup>

*Rul*'s two-sentence report did not mention that Boritsch had left the tumultuous Russian metropolis apparently around 1918/19 and that he had spent a good portion of the years until 1921 in Lithuania. In September 1919 the municipal theater of Vilnius (then under Soviet rule) staged a pantomime by Boritsch entitled *Stebuklinga naktis*, which translates as "magic night," or "Zaubernacht" in German. A review in the newspaper *Vilenskij kurjer*, published on 11 October 1919, indicates that the work followed the same storyline as does *Zaubernacht*; the music, however, was not by Weill but by the Lithuanian composer Konstantinas Galkauskas (1875–1963), whose biographer Aldona Matulaitytė described the event:

V. Boričas prepared a performance of his pantomime for children titled *Stebuklinga naktis*. Galkauskas wrote the music for this piece. On 27 September 1919, the production opened in the municipal theater and was subsequently repeated. During these performances, the composer himself performed the music. The newspaper [*Vilenskij kurjer*] reported: "The public liked the production very much. Galkauskas's music was subtly bright and illustrated the wakening of the toys in the still of the night; the artist Varnas had designed original masks . . . the light composition of all pieces created the feeling of a toy kingdom for the audience."<sup>3</sup>

Boritsch may have taken *Stebuklinga naktis* to Kaunas, the interim capital of Lithuania after Vilnius, which changed hands several times between Polish and Russian-Bolshevik forces, had come under Polish control in a coup in October 1920. Boritsch spent some time in Kaunas in 1921, and while there he organized at least one literary-musical "intimate evening of fairy tales" and gave a lecture on the Lithuanian composer and painter Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis.<sup>4</sup> In interviews with the *New York Times* after his arrival in the United States, Boritsch did not mention his time in Lithuania, stating, instead, that he had lived in Warsaw between 1919 and 1921 and established a children's theater there.<sup>5</sup>

One can only speculate on how Weill's and Boritsch's paths may have crossed. Weill's years as a "disciple" of Busoni's master class (1921–23) are some of his least documented, in that few records and correspondence—rich for the years 1917–20 and from 1924 on—survive.<sup>6</sup> The fact that Boritsch's cousin and Busoni were neighbors could have provided the opportunity for Boritsch to meet Busoni or his students. Among the latter, a likely candidate for Boritsch to approach would have been Wladimir Vogel, who had emigrated from Russia to Berlin in 1918 and whose progressive leanings may have appealed to Boritsch.<sup>7</sup> As Tamara Levitz has observed, Weill's and Vogel's relationship as classmates was amicable rather than competitive, so Vogel may well have introduced Weill to Boritsch or passed on an offered commission.<sup>8</sup> At any rate, students in Busoni's master class would have considered composing music to a pantomime a worthwhile endeavor. Busoni is known to have emphasized that pantomime in opera can provide the composer with the opportunity for self-contained musical numbers (in particular dance idioms) that are unencumbered by words. The master class, on contractual break at the end of December 1921, did not resume until 22 June 1922, when Busoni began to focus his teaching on Mozart and chamber music.<sup>9</sup>

Weill's only letter to Busoni from 1922, dated 13 February, does not mention a pantomime but rather *Fantasia, Passacaglia und Hymnus*. Weill

reports of his intense studies of the music of Mozart and those who followed him, especially Bizet and one of the *L'Arlesienne* suites. The first documented reference to the *Zaubernacht* project comes six months later, when in a letter of 1 September 1922 addressed to his sister, Ruth, Weill writes: "After the joys of composing the pantomime, the work will now enter the daunting and upsetting rehearsal process, and I'm afraid that in the coming weeks this will make more trouble than the whole affair might be worth. But even that will be a lesson. . . . Further work in this situation is very difficult, especially since the full score for the pantomime will keep me busy for the next three to four weeks."<sup>10</sup>

Weill probably started to compose the music to Boritsch's scenario of *Zaubernacht* in the summer of 1922. Neither sketches nor a continuity draft for the work have been preserved. Before Weill was able to write out the full score, the exigencies of preparing a staged production required his providing rehearsal material for the dancers. The surviving holograph piano-vocal score appears to be just that. Although the score's many instrumental cues give it the appearance of a piano reduction of the full score, a comparison with the instrumental parts indicates that Weill must have created it before he finished the orchestral score. This sequence of events is implied by the different tempo markings in the two sources, but conclusive evidence can be found in rebarred measures and in music that appears in the piano score but not in the instrumental parts; these passages were subsequently canceled in the piano score (see Critical Report, "Source Descriptions," as well as critical notes to mm. 114, 404–405, 737, 904, 931 passim). With what can be presumed to have been consideration for performance practicalities, Weill scored the pantomime for a nine-piece ensemble, an imaginative combination of one flute and a bassoon joining five string players (Vn I, Vn II, Br, Vc, Kb), piano, and percussion. Weill's continuous score, roughly one hour long, also included two short vocal numbers for the character of the Toy Fairy: the opening "Lied der Fee" and a closing number.

Although a cover or title page for the piano score has not survived and the full score is lost entirely, one of the five copyists who excerpted the parts may have preserved Weill's original title when he wrote the words "Musik zur Pantomime 'Die Zaubernacht' v. Kurt Weill" on some of the parts;<sup>11</sup> the other copyists simply wrote "Die Zaubernacht." But all billings of the work in Germany displayed the title without the definite article, a decision that Weill adopted when he referred to his work after its premiere. Given that Weill assigned op. 6 to his *Fantasia, Passacaglia und Hymnus*, which was composed in spring 1922, and op. 8 to his String Quartet, which he began at the end of 1922, number 7 would seem to be the obvious candidate for *Zaubernacht*. Nowhere, however, do sources transmit an opus number for the work.<sup>12</sup>

Preparations for the production of *Zaubernacht* were well under way by September 1922, as Weill's letter to his sister indicates, and the choice of Franz Ludwig Hörth as stage director evinces yet another connection with Busoni's circle, for it was Hörth who had staged the lavish production of Busoni's "theatrical capriccio" *Arlecchino* at Berlin's Staatsoper in May 1921, after which he and Busoni had remained in close contact.<sup>13</sup> It may, in turn, have been Hörth who suggested the soprano Elfriede Marherr-Wagner, who had joined the Staatsoper's roster in 1916, for the role of the Toy Fairy. Mary Zimmermann, a former dancer and choreographer at the Deutsches Opernhaus in Charlottenburg, who had established her own ballet school in Berlin, created the choreography for the work's many dance sequences. The surviving handbill (see Plate 9) shows that at least ten of Zimmermann's students (newspapers described them as children) were in the cast. Three professional actor-dancers of Russian origin—Olga Valery, Larissa Alexeyeva, and W. Konstantin, all of whom had performed in Berlin for some years—were cast as the Boy, the Girl, and the Chinese Doctor. Ivor Karmann, whom a newspaper identified as "a professor," played one of the violin parts, indicating a high level of musicianship within the nine-piece ensemble.<sup>14</sup> *Zaubernacht* found a home in the Theater am Kurfürstendamm, the same venue that would host *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* in December 1931. Built by Oskar Kaufmann, a celebrated architect of theaters, the house, which had a seating capacity of 865, had

opened only in October 1921; it was operated by the Robert-Bühnen, that is, Eugen Robert, as a non-subsidized enterprise.<sup>15</sup> Rafael Larto, the designer of both sets and costumes, had been active in Berlin's Russian theater circles; he may also have been associated with the Berlin Secession, an art association that, coincidentally, had had its quarters at what would become the address of the Theater am Kurfürstendamm before itself relocating a few blocks west when the theater was built.<sup>16</sup>

It is unclear how Weill's and Lenya's recollections of their first meeting—on the occasion of her auditioning for the production—fit into this picture. An account of that meeting appeared first in the *New York Post* on 20 October 1943; Weill recounted a more detailed version in an interview for the *New York Post's* "Week-End Magazine" on 18 September 1949: "We were doing a children's ballet in Berlin, and we were looking for a girl 15 or 16 who could dance, sing and act. One day someone brought in a young lady who I thought was charming. I was playing the piano in the pit. After she'd tried out, she went away and I asked the director where she'd gone. 'She'll be back,' he said. I looked for her, but she didn't come back."<sup>17</sup> After Weill's death, Lenya recalled that the Swiss director Richard Révy, her mentor at the time, who had been considered for the stage director, had suggested that she should audition; when he failed to secure the job, she declined a role.<sup>18</sup> Lenya, who had just turned twenty-four at the time, may have auditioned for the role of either the Boy or the Girl.

## II. Premiere and Reception in the Press

Even though Boritsch was a newcomer to Berlin and Weill still a student with no major credits, the production apparently achieved a considerable degree of professionalism and, consequently, attention. A press release must have been sent to local newspapers, as nearly all of Berlin's dailies carried similarly couched brief news items announcing the premiere. For example, on 17 November 1922 the *Neue Berliner Zeitung: Das 12-Uhr Blatt* informed its readers that a children's theater named "Märchentruhe" (Chest of fairy tales) was to open the following day at the Theater am Kurfürstendamm with a program consisting of *Zaubernacht* by "Dr. W. Boritsch," with music by Kurt Weill, and a shadow play, *Die goldene Gans*, after Grimm; additional performances would be held on 25 November and 2 December, for which tickets were already on sale. Comparable announcements turned up in the Russian dailies *Rul*, *Dni*, and *Nakanune*. A small paid advertisement, presumably arranged by the Robert-Bühnen, appeared in the *Berliner Tageblatt* on 17 November.

Other preparations for the premiere on 18 November included mailing printed invitations. On the back of one, sent to a young fellow composer, Weill added a handwritten note: "Dear Dr. Brav, please come see this performance—delivered with forceps—of my children's pantomime. I hope we can get together soon."<sup>19</sup> Weill's humorous tone downplayed expectations, as he was sending the invitation to someone who was not only a friend but also a potential reviewer: Ludwig Brav worked as a part-time music critic for a small monthly journal, *Der Fechter*, published by the Robert-Bühnen. However, no review by Brav or any in that journal has surfaced.<sup>20</sup>

As is appropriate for a production intended primarily for children, the premiere of *Zaubernacht* took place in the afternoon. Weill and Boritsch attended the opening, as did Weill's erstwhile teacher and mentor from Dessau, Albert Bing.<sup>21</sup> Busoni apparently did not. A Swiss student in Busoni's master class, Robert Blum, later recalled that he was the only classmate present when the curtain rose at 4 P.M.<sup>22</sup> Levitz has noted the oddity of Busoni's absence, given the fact that Weill adhered in *Zaubernacht* to many of his mentor's teachings: "[Weill] had turned to the genre of pantomime, adopted a 'fairy-tale' subject as a libretto, developed his ballet partly in closed numbers, used a reduced ensemble and transparent orchestration, as well as bells, contrapuntal techniques, and colorful, fairy-tale-like sets."<sup>23</sup> However, Busoni's health was deteriorating at the time, and he may have wanted to conserve his energies for his own Berlin premiere two days later, on 20 November 1922, when Ernest Ansermet was scheduled to conduct the Violin Concerto, op. 35a, with Josef Szigeti as soloist. None of the press reports of the *Zaubernacht* premiere, not even a

paper that ran separate reviews of Weill's and Busoni's performances on the same page, identified Weill as Busoni's student.<sup>24</sup> This opportunity arose when the first official concert of the master class took place less than three weeks later, on 7 December 1922. It is conceivable that Busoni chose not to be associated with *Zaubernacht* because it was not a class project proper, or maybe he simply did not wish to distract from Weill's first major public exposure, for his own presence surely would have caused a stir and perhaps even have biased some critics. It is also possible that Busoni attended a rehearsal or a subsequent performance.

Reviews of the premiere appeared in such prestigious papers as the *Berliner Börsen-Courier*, *Berliner Tageblatt*, and *Vossische Zeitung*, and also in *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, *Berliner Volks-Zeitung*, *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, *Germania*, *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, and Germany's first and foremost tabloid, *B.Z. am Mittag*. In most cases, the critics were second-stringers, whose names were not printed in full as bylines. The first two reviews appeared on 19 November 1922, the day after the premiere. "R.W." (probably Richard Wilde) provided a detailed report for the *Berliner Börsen-Courier*:

It is a pre-Christmas guest performance by Dr. W. Boritsch and his children's theater that he calls "Chest of Fairy Tales." In the beginning a young gentleman in tails jumped out of this chest, announcing a cancellation: the shadows that had been hired for the shadow play *Die goldene Gans* had caught a cold—the wicked November weather—technical difficulties . . .

Miss Friedel Hintze appeared as a replacement for the shadows and narrated, rather straightforwardly, Andersen's fairy tale *Die Prinzessin und der Schweinehirt*. And then a pantomime followed: *Zaubernacht*, its idea of nocturnally enlivened toys also going back to Andersen, authored by W. Boritsch, and set to music by Kurt Weill.

Perhaps a new path to children's theater. Most plays offered to the little ones either are not fully adjusted to their understanding or are of low taste and questionable pedagogical value. Hence it is a remarkable idea to steer the freewheeling imagination of children towards pantomime, to which they can add words as they please, and which will be more rewarding than pompous would-be poetry or burlesque clown pranks and fisticuffs.

*Zaubernacht* may set an example and—judging from the enthusiastic response by the little nippers—a successful one at that. Certainly the neat little work had sets and costumes (designed by Rafael Larto) full of humor and artistic appeal. Franz Ludwig Hörth tailored his stage direction to the work's light-hearted nature, and the cast, most of them children, did their job delightfully. . . .

Weill's music is appealing in its thematic structure, its fresh colors, its liveliness, and its illustrative power that does justice to each of the ever-changing moods, supporting and deepening them. The scoring for a small orchestra is flawless and well calculated in its effects. The young conductor George Weller brought out the music just right.<sup>25</sup>

Wilde was primarily a theater critic, as were most of those who reviewed the performance, and they scarcely mention Weill's score. The majority of the critics considered *Zaubernacht* a success, according particular praise to Hörth's imaginative staging, Zimmermann's choreography, and the exuberant cast. Most reviewers also appreciated Larto's sets, which appear to have had a modern touch. Opinions diverged, however, about the appropriateness of the production—as to the pantomime genre in general and the work in specific—for children. Whereas the critics mostly accepted Larto's modernity, some of them considered Weill's music too modern. The *Germania* reviewer "—n." observed, "The idea is not new, but it is presented in a new and tasteful staging. The sets . . . are delightful and exude an artistic appeal to the eyes of the grown-ups, but the little ones will have enjoyed it, too. The little ears, however, certainly rejected Kurt Weill's accompanying orchestral music, with its unmelodic dominants and paraphrases. When it comes to the artistic education of children, let's not get carried away."<sup>26</sup> The *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* commented: "This magic night passes by in blurring colors and shapes (designed by Rafael Larto)—as the imagination of a modern child will surely picture it. Kurt Weill's accompanying score is finely attuned to the alternately joyous and frightful sensations of a tranquil dream. Franz Ludwig Hörth's staging is exceptional. But the magic that we see remains merely a colorful spectacle. It fails to offer something to the heart and soul, an idea that captivates the mind

of the child and stimulates his will."<sup>27</sup> An infrequent second-stringer ("—tزش.") for the *B.Z. am Mittag* rejected altogether the idea of a pantomime for children: "A pantomime, illustrated with a score by Kurt Weill that no child can grasp, will be a short-lived diversion for the youth; more so than an adult, a child needs the clarifying word that appears to have been omitted here out of respect for the guests from Moscovia. . . . It is not enough to bring a few pieces of furniture to life. Children have to be talked to, talked to!"<sup>28</sup> The venerable *Vossische Zeitung* gave a more Solomonian comment by introducing a touch of solipsism: "Kurt Weill's music might give reason for concern, for it turned out to be a little too modern and problematic. Then again, what do we know about the ears of our children who, as we all know, don't love it one bit if we treat them like children. At any rate, we grown-ups were not bored at all by the music and thankfully acknowledge that a sensitive and inventive musician has so lovingly dedicated himself to the young."<sup>29</sup> Among others who praised Weill's score were the critic of the *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, who called it a "lucid and also quite humorous Weillian music," and "E.N." of the *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, who described it as "very pleasing, patently illustrative music."<sup>30</sup>

This last-named reviewer, apparently a dance critic, also gave the most detailed synopsis of the scenario and information about the audience:

Afternoon performance at the Theater am Kurfürstendamm! Children whooping with joy, full of expectations. All around one can hear lots of Charlottenburg vernacular—Russian—being spoken. Dr. W. Boritsch, who heads this children's theater, was clever enough to draw for the most part on pantomime. The mute language of this artistic genre is intelligible to these new Charlottenburg children, who have not yet penetrated the German language, or only insufficiently so. Unfortunately the children had some bad luck. The performance was supposed to start with a shadow play, *Die goldene Gans*, after Grimm's fairy tale. Regrettably, it was announced that the shadows had become "hoarse" and would not be able to perform. Instead, the superb *recitatrice* Friedel Hintze told Andersen's fairy tale of the princess and the swineherd. But even the best performer telling the most interesting story cannot captivate eagerly anticipating children, especially when they cannot understand it. They listened, but there was not the connection to the stage that materialized later on, when the exuberant children laughed loudly during the action and gave voice to surprise and other expressions of childlike unruliness as the pantomime had its "say": *Zaubernacht* by W. Boritsch, music by Kurt Weill.

A neat and cleverly wrought Christmas play. Admittedly, the story is not particularly new or original, but for children who naturally don't have years of experience as theatergoers and who have not seen all those ballets on the adult stage involving dolls (beginning with *Coppélia* and *Puppenfee*), the plot is surely new enough. Franz Ludwig Hörth of the Staatsoper has staged it so well and interestingly that even grown-ups will be able to enjoy it. During the magic night a Toy Fairy—this the only sung part, performed by Elfriede Marherr-Wagner of the Staatsoper—appears in the dreams of a pair of sleeping siblings—the slim Boy is played by the ravishing Olga Valery, the charming Girl by the delightful Larissa Alexeyeva—offering them the most glorious toys: the Ball, the Jumping Jack, the Horse, the Kitchen Stove, the Doll, the Bear, the Chinese Doctor, and the round-bottom Roly-Poly. Finally, a thick volume of Grimm's fairy tale "Hänsel and Gretel" appeared on stage, and from the book's pages emerged the delicate pair of children and the wicked Witch. All of these characters, portrayed by protégés of Mary Zimmermann's ballet school, performed very beautiful and droll dances, and it was hilarious to see the Kitchen Stove dancing with the Doll or the Ball jumping in circles around the clumsy Bear. All those little things were full of ideas, created in equal part by the stage director, the choreographer Mary Zimmermann, and likewise Rafael Larto, who was responsible for the sets. . . . The children greeted the performance with lively applause.<sup>31</sup>

The reference to Josef Bayer's and Josef Haßreiter's *Die Puppenfee* (*The Doll Fairy*, 1888) was an appropriate analogy to *Zaubernacht*, as that extremely popular ballet surely adumbrated much of Boritsch's scenario. *Die Puppenfee* tells the story of dolls who come to life in a toy store and obey a fairy who wakes them at midnight; the work features a few exotic characters, among them a Chinese doll. Boritsch could have seen a performance of *Die Puppenfee* (expanded with music by Riccardo Drigo) in St. Petersburg in 1903; Weill could have seen a performance in Dessau in 1911.<sup>32</sup> Tchaikovsky's *Shchelkunchik* (*The Nutcracker*, 1892), on the other hand,

could not have been a model—at least not for Weill—for the work failed to trigger many subsequent performances after the lukewarm reception following the premiere in St. Petersburg. Part of the criticism stemmed from the fact that the roles of the children were, in fact, performed by children. Although the Bolshoi Theater staged the work with adult dancers in 1919, a complete staging outside Russia did not occur until 1934 in London. George Balanchine, in his now famous choreography of 1954, returned to the idea of casting children in the roles of the children.

When Yuri Ofrosimov reviewed *Zaubernacht* for *Rul* a week after its opening, the Russian theater critic introduced a different perspective. Although he had come from Moscow to Berlin in 1920, his review sheds some light on the situation in Petrograd at the time Boritsch left that city. In his assessment of the work, however, Ofrosimov struggled, just as some of his German colleagues had, to differentiate between the views of children and adults:

The idea of a theater designed expressly for children is not new. In fact, might it not be better to renew or even dispense entirely with the arbitrary, hastily compiled repertoire that our large theaters regularly offer for Christmas and Easter? One recalls that a children's theater organized according to such principles was supposed to be created in St. Petersburg in 1918; its repertoire already comprised works by Kuzmin and Gumilyov. Blok, Remizov, and Meyerhold were closely associated with its projects—but for some reason the theater never got off the ground. In the end only a few Krylov fables were staged by a touring company that played in various theaters.

Today there is the "Children's Theater" in Moscow, but from the fragmentary reports that reach us it is hard to gauge what sort of institution that may be. In Western Europe, the idea of establishing such a theater has never been realized; in fact, it has never come up. Hence V. Borich's attempt in the Theater am Kurfürstendamm is a first.

The experiment is a good one, and it would be a shame not to embrace it; but its realization is not entirely successful. Let's be upfront: the "little" audience present at the performance showed a level of enthusiasm only rarely seen—there was no end to the jubilation. To say the least, the "audience" was grateful to a fault, but this very fact demands far more attention when it comes to the selection of works and the unavoidable introductory announcement at this matinee, "Due to technical difficulties, the management apologizes" etc.

The idea of staging a play around pantomime can succeed only when a powerful plot substitutes for the words, which are indispensable to children. But this was precisely what was absent in the "specifically childlike" content of the pantomime, *Zaubernacht*, with its usual tropes of toys coming to life, falling asleep, and awakening. There was a plot, though it was but a series of episodes of a dancelike, entertaining character, and it was no surprise that my neighbor wondered, "How can children keep quiet for such a long time?! I couldn't do it . . ."—and indeed, they all kept quiet for a long time—one hour and a quarter; so the pantomime ought to be shortened, though several very amusing tricks save it.

Kurt Weill's very interesting music is suitable for children only because it does not overload the stage action; it serves instead as a backdrop. But it doesn't really stimulate the imagination, and the lack of a simple melody makes it difficult for children to comprehend it.

About half of the performance consists of dances, often technical routines that are of little interest to children. Grown-up eyes will find Mary Zimmermann's school pleasing, as her students stand out in comparison to the apprentices of the average German "choreographic studio." Among the "mimic" performers, Valery stood out in her cleverly acted portrayal of the "Boy," and Alexeyeva, with her expressive face and body movements, in hers of the "Girl," though the former could do with greater thoroughness and dedication, and the latter with more simplicity, because her role is not that of an *ingénue coquette*!

Larto's costumes are amusing enough, but for this production for children his set design ought to be more realistic and less stylized. . . . The performance gave the overall impression that it is still "raw" and in need of polish. A little tinkering will improve much and, of course, a change in the program should do even more—because the participants of this real, good, and genuinely artistic "children's theater" are already in place.<sup>33</sup>

Despite scattered criticism of his music as being unmelodious or too modern, which may actually have gained him respect among his peers, Weill had ample reason to be pleased with the press's reaction to his work. The fault line that would soon divide German newspapers and critics in

their assessment of his music did not yet exist, and he must have been encouraged by the praise for his effective score.

The second performance of *Zaubernacht* proceeded as planned, but the third performance, scheduled for 2 December, fell victim to an actors' strike motivated largely by the inflation that had been rampant in Germany since June 1922. On the evening of 25 November, just hours after the second performance of *Zaubernacht*, wage negotiations between the Genossenschaft deutscher Bühnenangehöriger, representing the actors, and the Bühnenverein, the Association of German Theaters, failed, and Berlin's actors began a walkout that left most of the city's theaters dark for precisely two weeks. According to the Russian dailies, the third and supposedly final performance of *Zaubernacht*—to which they referred by the Russian title, "Volshebnyaya noch"—took place at the Theater am Kurfürstendamm on 16 December 1922; *Rul* noted, however, that further holiday performances would be held at a different location.<sup>34</sup> At least one such performance during the holiday season did take place, again at the Theater am Kurfürstendamm, on 30 December 1922.

In response to *Zaubernacht*'s modest success but limited exposure, Weill created an orchestral suite in April 1923 that he titled *Quodlibet*, op. 9, and gave the explanatory subtitle "Vier Orchesterstücke aus einer Kinderpantomime." The work did not follow the sequence of events in *Zaubernacht*; instead, Weill grouped sections according to musical considerations, and he scored the effective potpourri for double-wind symphony orchestra. The work's dedicatee, Albert Bing, conducted the premiere of *Quodlibet* on 14 June 1923 in Dessau, and the suite enjoyed numerous concert performances during the 1920s.

### III. Premiere of *The Magic Night* in New York

In February 1924, when Weill began to negotiate his contract with the Viennese publisher Universal Edition, he at first excluded *Zaubernacht*, stating that "a large local publisher and licensor of stage works has just obtained . . . the children's pantomime *Zaubernacht*, which will be performed in New York this fall (first performed here at the Theater am Kurfürstendamm in 1923 [*sic*])."<sup>35</sup> About two months later Weill reported to Universal Edition that he had not finalized the deal for *Zaubernacht* with the publisher, Die Schmiede, and he indicated that he would reorchestrate the work for larger forces if the U.S. performance were indeed to become reality. In a letter of 3 June 1924 Weill announced, "as I've just learned from the impresario and author of the book, Dr. Wladimir Boritsch[,] . . . my children's pantomime will probably be produced by [Mikhail] Fokine in New York. As soon as I hear something definitive about this performance, I will create a new orchestral score for Mozartean forces (the full score for the performance here had only nine instruments). Would you be interested in taking over the piece now, and would you be willing to help to make this New York production happen? All the material except the full score is already in America."<sup>36</sup> On 7 July 1924 Weill sent a final letter about the project: "The scenario and the piano reduction of the pantomime *Zaubernacht* are in New York with the impresario Dr. W. Boritsch, c/o Shidlow, 130 William Street; I should receive the detailed English-language scenario any day now, and I will forward it to you immediately."<sup>37</sup> Universal Edition's replies to Weill's letters from this period do not survive; one can only assume that the publisher expressed little interest in adding the work to its catalogue, for there is no evidence for further correspondence on the subject. Weill's association with *Zaubernacht* appears to have ended here; there are no documents to suggest that he was involved with the New York production that eventually opened in December 1925.

Boritsch had boarded the SS *Conte Rosso* in Genoa, Italy, on 18 March 1924, equipped with a letter of recommendation from Busoni, dated February 1924: "In *Magic Night* Dr. Boritsch has composed a pleasing and effective production, particularly suited for children's and Christmas plays. In addition Mr. Kurt Weill has written an orchestral accompaniment which I consider admirably successful, melodious, and in character. The production is earnestly recommended to all stages wishing to offer their public a light yet artistic piece."<sup>38</sup> Plans for a production in the fall of 1924 came

to naught, probably because Boritsch was unable to secure sufficient sponsorship. Within one year, however, he had won the support of major patrons in New York and found a suitable venue at the Garrick Theatre. Underwriters for the production of *The Magic Night* included Mrs. August Belmont, Mrs. Otto H. Kahn, Henry Rogers Winthrop, Charles Dana Gibson, Theresa Helburn, and the famed actresses Laurette Taylor and Ethel Barrymore. Multimillionaire Otto Kahn had bought the Garrick Theatre in 1919, lending it to the fledgling Theatre Guild, coproduced by Theresa Helburn.

The production of *The Magic Night* that premiered on 27 December 1925 differed significantly from the event in Berlin. The work was choreographed not by Fokine, as Weill had thought, but by Michio Ito, and Boritsch himself directed the work. He introduced a number of changes, among them the excision of Weill's "Lied der Fee" and closing farewell song, replacing them with the settings by Galkauskas, which were titled "Prologue" and "Epilogue." An unknown arranger, perhaps Lazar Weiner, the conductor of the production, orchestrated Galkauskas's piano settings for Weill's forces.<sup>39</sup> Because the Garrick Theatre was smaller than the Theater am Kurfürstendamm (650 seats to that theater's 865), Weill's orchestration for nine instruments sufficed. According to the program, the New York production also introduced two new characters, Yawn and Stretch, at the beginning of the pantomime, as well as a large-scale ballet of Good Dreams and Bad Dreams; Weiner composed the music to these new sections. The program notes expressly stated that "this particular production is designed especially for the youngest children." As in Berlin, *The Magic Night* was to be preceded by a shadow play version of *The Golden Goose*, but ironically, as in Berlin, this portion of the program had to be canceled at the last minute.

In preparation for the premiere, Boritsch issued several slightly exaggerated statements, among them the claim that he had successfully established three children's theaters in three different countries.<sup>40</sup> Probably in an effort to forestall some of the criticism that the Berlin production had encountered, Boritsch, in an interview given to the *New York Times* on the educational aspects of his enterprise, emphasized that the pantomime was targeted to very young children:

Parents who are worried by the fondness of their children for moving pictures, even very young children, may learn something to their advantage from Dr. Wladimir Boritch. It is a matter of psychology. "The child understands pure action best," he says, "and likes picturesqueness most." Words have as yet a significance and charm somewhat limited, but the visual sense is acute and the imagination far nimbler than it will be by and by in taking up the cues of suggestion. If the moving picture addressed itself only to this child mind, it would do little harm, possibly much good. But it addresses primarily adolescents and adults, who live in the world of matters of fact and occupations. The more keenly the child responds to this pantomime medium, the more surely his mind becomes sophisticated. Even when the moving picture is otherwise unobjectionable, it quenches the faculty of primitive imagination.

In his Children's Theatre Dr. Boritch appeals directly and exclusively to the child mind, confident that by delighting it and strengthening its sway he is making a contribution of value to education and to character development. Differences between good and evil that are stamped upon the early imagination persist through a lifetime and exert an influence which is powerful because largely subconscious. Though clarified by mature reason and corroborated by experience, they yet owe much of their vigor and color to the fact that they first took substance in the age of myth and fairy tale. In establishing esthetic sensibilities a properly child-like theatre is important. Too often plays for the young have been carelessly mounted and crudely acted. The colors on Dr. Boritch's palette and the tempo of his action are those that most delight the wide eye of childhood; but he is mindful that primitive art has a beauty and a rhythm of its own, that esthetically also the child is father of the man. In an age when sophistication invades the cradle and the pulse of life beats like a drum, his effort is to prolong childhood, to develop and deepen its peculiar faculties to the utmost and to blend them into the maturer moral fibre.<sup>41</sup>

Boritsch had expressed similar views in an extensive interview published in the same newspaper on 25 May 1924, about two months after his arrival in New York.

The press reaction to *The Magic Night* was generally positive, although the reviews provided even less information about the music than had the Berlin critics. The reviewer for the *New York Evening World* offered the following report on 28 December 1925:

With two performances, afternoon and evening, at the Garrick Theatre yesterday, the first steps were taken toward the establishment of a permanent theatre for children. This beginning was made under the auspices of the Playhouse for Children, Inc., which has Michel Barroy for its manager and announces a notable board of patrons.

The double bill arranged for the opening performances included a shadow play, *The Golden Goose*, contrived by Dr. Wladimir Boritch from a Grimm fairy tale, and a pantomime ballet, *The Magic Night*, the work of Dr. Boritch, with music by Curt Weill [*sic*].

It was the pantomime which formed the principal feature, the shadow play being used as a curtain raiser.

In *The Magic Night*, two children, a boy and a girl, go to sleep to their mother's lullaby. They have good dreams and bad dreams. Then, following the visit of a fairy queen, they have a vision in which the Ball, the Clown, the Kitchen Stove, the Doll, the Bear, the Chinese Doctor, and the Soldier appear, along with Haensel, Gretel and the Witch. All these visitors dance, gambol, and cut quaint capers, and the children seem to themselves also to take part in the revels.

This pantomime is picturesquely set, brightly and fittingly costumed and, under Dr. Boritch's own direction, very briskly and smoothly produced. We found it delightfully entertaining, last night, as did the youngsters who formed a considerable portion of the audience. It well may prove a happy opener for the Playhouse project.

On the other hand, "A. S.," writing for the *New York World*, gave a humorous and mildly cynical assessment of the whole venture:

With *The Magic Night* the Garrick was transformed yesterday into the earnest aspect of "a playhouse for children" as distinguished from a mere playhouse where children may go if they like.

We must confess that we approach these sanctums of carefully organized juvenile entertainment with a certain trepidation—the trepidation of one who, years ago, was inevitably dragged to these pantomimes for tiny tots by conscientious elders, the sort of elders who beamed down at you from the next seat, watching eagerly to see how you "took it." With the defensive hypocrisy of nine going on ten, we always said it was beautiful, but our secret enthusiasms were all for the gory adventures of *The Prisoner of Zenda*, where the grown-ups were too busy "taking it" themselves to worry about our reactions. That half-forgotten mood of helpless rebellion came back in full force at yesterday's performance.

It is a venture launched by Dr. Wladimir Boritch, who has conducted similar playhouse for children in Petrograd and Moscow. This imported production is a deft and colorful piece of work, a triumph of Russian aestheticism with music in overtones from Tchaikovsky and settings in the purples and vermillions of Boris Anisfeld. Its pantomime celebrates the not so usual tendency of toys to come to life while the children are sleeping. These toys were about as childlike as Stravinsky and they behaved with that sophisticated and determined artlessness which fools grown-ups sometimes but not a first-nighter aged five. However, the adults' enjoyment made for a merry afternoon, accompanied by a dutiful patter of small hands from the children for whom it was intended.

A shadow play, *The Golden Goose*, was to have preceded the pantomime but was omitted at the last minute. The explanation, given by a gracious patroness before the footlights, was that the naughty, shy shadows didn't like to come out in the afternoon, but that they wouldn't be afraid to dance at the evening show. Another less engaging theory was that the naughty, shy operators couldn't work the lighting effects until something had been done to the shadow machine. You may take your choice of these alibis with the assurance that the shadow goose will appear at all following performances.

*The Magic Night* ran for five performances; an evening performance followed the afternoon premiere on 27 December, after which the curtain rose on the following three afternoons.

Boritsch's plan to establish a permanent children's theater in New York appears to have shared the same fate as had his endeavors in Petrograd, Vilnius, and Berlin. Although press reports announced in March 1926 that the Playhouse for Children, Inc., would open in the fall, the project was postponed in October, and after that it seems to have died altogether.<sup>42</sup>

A manuscript copy of Weill's holograph rehearsal score, written on American music paper and copied presumably shortly after Boritsch's arrival in New York, lists on its outside back cover several addresses of Boritsch. Aside from three addresses in the Bronx, the New York City borough where Boritsch lived during his years in the United States, there is also one address each in Paris and "Haifa, Pal.," but it is not known whether Boritsch attempted to produce *Zaubernacht* in France and what was then Palestine.

#### IV. Subsequent Commentary on *Zaubernacht*

In October 1927 the music critic Heinrich Strobel published an essay about Weill in which he discussed the premieres of Weill's one-act operas *Der Protagonist* (1926) and *Royal Palace* (1927) at the state operas of Dresden and Berlin, respectively, and the recent *succès de scandale* of *Mahagonny: Ein Songspiel* (1927) in Baden-Baden. In a passage about Weill's early instrumental music Strobel called attention to *Zaubernacht*:

The strong dramatic tension inherent in this absolute music could release itself only in the theater, for which Weill wrote a piece back in 1922: music for a pantomime, *Zaubernacht*, extraordinarily light in its flow, lively, and delicate in the sonic treatment of the small orchestra. . . . Though certainly not weighty, and though outside the realm of drama, this work is of utmost importance as a developmental stage, because here for the first time we see a changed attitude toward theater. For the student of Busoni, stage and music could be combined only on the basis of play. This personal development represented liberation from the coloristic and intellectual elements that had ultimately made absolute music making during late romanticism impossible—liberation from those musico-dramatic ties that had gradually destroyed all immanently evolved forms of music in the theater and subjugated music into complete obedience to texts created according to purely literary principles.<sup>43</sup>

In his observations, Strobel echoed some of Weill's own comments, published a year earlier on the occasion of the premiere of *Der Protagonist*: "The intense concentration of Russian theater taught me two things: that the stage has its own musical form whose laws derive organically from the unfolding of the action, and that something significant can be said on stage only with the simplest, most modest means."<sup>44</sup> Even in later years Weill asserted that his experience with *Zaubernacht* had a decisive impact on his career—which of course eventually included more than thirty stage works. In one interview he called it "a stepping stone to success"; in another he spoke of it as the work in which his style "finally and permanently reverted to simple and direct theater values."<sup>45</sup> In addition to initiating him successfully as a theater composer, *Zaubernacht* also brought Weill a number of contacts in the theater world that would prove useful—some were even crucial—in the years to come: according to Weill, Georg Kaiser's becoming aware of *Zaubernacht* may have led to their collaboration; Franz Ludwig Hörth would stage *Royal Palace* in 1927; *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* would play in the Theater am Kurfürstendamm in 1931; and—although this is speculative—*Zaubernacht* may have been a conversation topic when Weill encountered Lenya at Kaiser's house in Grünheide in 1924, or when Weill discussed an adaptation of Molnár's *Liliom* with Theresa Helburn in 1937, or perhaps even in 1948, when Weill worked on *Love Life* with the set designer Boris Aronson, who had emigrated from Russia to Berlin in 1922, leaving for New York in November 1923.<sup>46</sup>

#### V. Disappearance of the Score

It is generally believed that Weill's full score of *Zaubernacht* was among the unpublished holograph scores he left behind when he fled Nazi Germany in March 1933; except for the First Symphony, all of those scores are now lost. After Weill's death, Lenya and her second husband, George Davis, embarked on a quest to trace lost materials and find information about Weill for a biography. They visited Boritsch, who at some point before he died in September 1954 gave them Weill's holograph piano score to *Zaubernacht*, but he kept the original set of orchestra parts and the copyist's manuscript of the piano score. Then in the late 1950s Marie Boritsch,

who was apparently Boritsch's second wife, showed these materials to David Drew.<sup>47</sup> In March 1959 she donated them to Yale University, where they were supposed to become part of the newly established American Music Theatre Collection (whose advisory board counted Lenya among its members). The quarterly *Yale University Library Gazette* announced the acquisition in its July 1959 issue;<sup>48</sup> however, the library's accession process was disrupted by the illness of the American Music Theatre Collection's first curator, Robert Barlow, who died in 1966. Instead of depositing the *Zaubernacht* materials in the acquisitions safe, library staff members placed them in a safe in the office of the assistant university librarian, James T. Babb. After his retirement, the safe, which was presumed to be empty, was moved to the library's basement, where it was soon forgotten.<sup>49</sup> The chances of rediscovering these *Zaubernacht* materials were further hampered by the fact that in later years Marie Boritsch could no longer remember to which institution she had donated the materials; she vaguely but erroneously recalled that it had been Brandeis University.

In the late 1990s the British composer and orchestrator Meirion Bowen approached the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music to request permission to reconstruct Weill's orchestration of *Zaubernacht* on the basis of the scattered instrumental cues in the holograph piano-vocal score. In his subsequent reconstruction Bowen added a clarinet and harp to the ensemble but omitted the double bass that had been part of the original scoring (possibly he was tempted to believe that Weill's inconsistent use of abbreviations for "Klavier"—variously "Klav." and "Kl."—could have meant that the score called for both piano and clarinet; similarly, Weill's notation "wie Harfe" may have led him to believe that the original scoring also included a harp). Bowen's version of *Zaubernacht* received its premiere in a concert performance on 1 June 2000 in Cologne; a staged production choreographed by Milan Sládek followed in March 2003, produced in Dessau and Düsseldorf, with subsequent performances a year later in Essen. The Capriccio label released a recording of Bowen's reconstruction in 2002, performed by the Ensemble Contrasts Köln under the direction of Celso Antunes.<sup>50</sup>

*Zaubernacht*'s original set of parts resurfaced in the fall of 2005, when staff members of the Yale University Library Business Office needed to move a safe in the basement of Sterling Memorial Library. The safe had been hiding behind several filing cabinets in a locked cage within a locked room of the basement. Because the safe's combination had been lost, staff members had to call in a locksmith. When opened, the safe revealed a variety of materials, all of which were transferred to the Manuscripts and Archives Department, which, in due time, turned over the music manuscripts to the Music Library.<sup>51</sup> In August 2006, the Music Library informed the Kurt Weill Foundation about the discovery, and staff members of the Foundation were able to identify the parts as those created for the first production in Berlin in 1922.

#### VI. Observations on the Score and Vocal Numbers

Even if one were to disregard *Zaubernacht*'s prehistory, a cursory glance at Weill's music reveals that he must have had the scenario in hand when he began to compose. As befits the pantomime genre, Weill created prominent musical motives to identify and characterize the roles—though he did not assign each character's motive to a single instrument (as Prokofiev would do in *Petya i volk* [*Peter and the Wolf*] in 1936). In one case Weill explicitly wrote into his rehearsal score the words "Thema der Puppe" (theme of the Doll), and he identified a variation of that motive as "Thema der kranken Puppe" (theme of the ailing Doll). All the character-related motives appear and reappear when the characters do. The scenario also called for a number of solo dances, for which Weill employed a variety of dance types: slow and fast waltzes, various marches (*Reiter-*, *Geschwind-* and *Trauermarsch*), cancan, fox-trot, and gavotte.

Weill's musical language is firmly rooted in tonality—despite the irritations it caused a few of the theater and dance critics. When Adolf Weißmann, one of Berlin's most prominent music critics, reviewed a performance of *Fantasia, Passacaglia und Hymnus* in March 1923, he observed that Weill was by no means an "atonaler Radikalinski," and that though his



music in that piece seemed gloomy, that was only right because, as he explained, it had captured “the colossal tragedy of these desperate times.” Weißmann added, “This barely 23-year-old . . . has already written rhythmically effervescent music, brimming with life, for a pantomime.”<sup>52</sup> Compared to Weill’s *Symphony* (1921) and the extant portions of his *Fantasia, Passacaglia und Hymnus*, the music for *Zaubernacht* does indeed appear more energetic. And, unlike those earlier pieces, it does not push the boundaries of tonality, nor does it recall the earlier pieces’ brooding expressionism. Occasional dissonances that may have caused some frowns—such as the bouncy chromaticisms in a waltz “played” onstage by the Boy, who picks up a harmonica (see m. 1427ff.)—are dramaturgically motivated, and Weill “apologizes” for these playful excursions by resolving them into clear cadences. Throughout the *Zaubernacht* score Weill emphasizes melody and transparency, clearly following Busoni’s call for a “young classicality” and responding directly to the task at hand: that of creating music that will be accessible to children.

David Drew has observed that *Zaubernacht* contains a number of self-borrowings.<sup>53</sup> This practice—which would become one of his trademarks—allowed Weill to resurrect material from earlier compositions that he deemed superseded (in only a few instances during his career would he use self-borrowing to create an intertextual allusion). In *Zaubernacht* Weill incorporated substantial portions of the second and fourth movements of his String Quartet in B Minor. Most prominently, he lifted the theme of the Girl (*Zaubernacht*, m. 252ff.) wholesale from the Quartet (second movement, m. 36ff.), even retaining the original key. Weill also borrowed material from an earlier fox-trot, often referred to as “Algi-Song,” which appears three times in *Zaubernacht* (including in the Bear’s dance, m. 911ff.). Antony Beaumont has suggested that Weill’s use of a timpani ostinato in *Quodlibet* may have been inspired by a pervasive ostinato in Busoni’s *Turandot*.<sup>54</sup> The ostinato in Busoni’s opera occurs prominently at the end of the first scene, at the point when the first suitor is being beheaded offstage; similarly, Weill uses his ostinato in *Zaubernacht* at the point when the Bear is being hunted offstage (mm. 1062ff. and 1090ff.).

For reasons unknown, Weill revised “Lied der Fee,” the first of *Zaubernacht*’s two vocal numbers, but it is not clear whether he did so shortly before the premiere or during the pantomime’s limited run in Berlin. Weill wrote out the parts himself, but only those for bassoon and piano survive (see Plates 11 and 12). The original “Lied der Fee,” as it appears here in mm. 37–82, comprised forty-six measures, preceded by a four-bar slow introduction. Weill replaced these fifty measures with a recomposed version comprising only thirty-five measures. One can only speculate about what could have triggered this revision: perhaps the original vocal part was too difficult for anyone but a trained opera singer; perhaps Weill heeded some of the criticism following the premiere and simplified the song for the target audience; perhaps Boritsch wanted to use his Russian text for subsequent performances, and Weill accommodated this wish as best as he could. There is no evidence that explains why Boritsch discarded even Weill’s revised version in New York: either he did not approve of the new setting or the material was already incomplete by then.

Other aspects of the two vocal numbers are also shrouded in mystery. Boritsch, whose literary publications evince poetic aspirations, appears to have written the original Russian lyrics as they are preserved in the surviving materials of Galkauskas’s settings.<sup>55</sup> There is no documentation, however, for the authorship of the German text of “Lied der Fee,” which is an adaptation—rather than merely a translation—of the Russian original. Upon arriving in the United States Boritsch conspicuously entered “German” in response to the “Race or people” question in the immigration questionnaire and also claimed to be able to read and write German in addition to Russian. But two pieces of information indicate that he was probably not responsible, at least not solely, for the German adaptation of the Russian text: In the manuscript of Galkauskas’s settings, a French translation is inserted above the Russian text; below it is the beginning of a German translation, but this one is flawed and full of misspellings, and it peters out after only a few lines. The linguistically well-crafted (if uninspired) text of “Lied der Fee,” on the other hand, doubles the number of syllables

and organizes them in alexandrines, a poetic meter not encountered as often in Russian literature as it is in German and not used in Boritsch’s cycle of poems, *Lyubovnyi krug*. Like the Berlin program, which gave neither author nor translator credit, the 1925 New York program, too, though crediting the poet Babette Deutsch with the translation of the lyrics, did not specify an author and identified the work merely as “a fairy pantomime by Wladimir Boritch.”

Little can be said about the second vocal number—titled “Proshchalnaya ariya fei” (Farewell song of the fairy) in the precursor of 1919—as both the German text and Weill’s vocal line are lost. Weill’s instrumental accompaniment comprises thirty measures in 2/4 meter and twelve measures in 3/4 meter. Boritsch’s Russian text, which survives in Galkauskas’s setting, consists of four stanzas, the first three of which have four lines of roughly eight syllables each, the last one four lines with only six syllables each.<sup>56</sup> The Lithuanian composer decided to set the first three stanzas in 2/2 meter and the last stanza in 3/4 meter. This suggests that the German text that Weill set to music may have been closer to the original Russian text than was the case for “Lied der Fee.” This hypothesis is supported by cue notes in the piano part of Weill’s setting that give the first four measures of the vocal line with the text “Verweht die Nacht, die Zeit verrinnt”; the awkward, perhaps Yiddish-infused German in Galkauskas’s setting begins “Sfar-get di nacht der demmer welt.”

## VII. Editorial Challenges and Solutions

The rediscovery of the original set of parts (**Im**) and a copyist’s manuscript (**Vm**) of Weill’s rehearsal score (**Vh**) at Yale University in 2005 made this edition of *Zaubernacht* possible. Editorial challenges abound, however, caused first and foremost by lacunae: missing are Weill’s full score, his continuity draft, and all sketches, as well as an authoritative scenario. The loss of actual music in the case of the Toy Fairy’s farewell song poses an insurmountable challenge for this edition: collectively, the instrumental parts preserve Weill’s orchestral setting, but there is no part for the soprano who sang the number. The page that contained her music for the farewell song was removed from **Vh**, and none of the extant sources includes either the vocal line or the lyric (though in all likelihood the full score and continuity draft would have contained this information).<sup>57</sup> As the song is not performable, the editors consequently have no choice but to omit it from this edition, but Weill’s instrumental accompaniment and all clues to the vocal line are made available in the Critical Report (see pp. 56–58). Fortunately, it is possible to link the ends created by omitting the Toy Fairy’s farewell song with a minimally invasive procedure that requires no more than changing a quarter rest to an eighth rest. The text and melody of the Fairy’s opening song, “Lied der Fee,” survive in **Vh**, and the edition can compile it in combination with information from **Im**. But, as discussed above, the sources for Weill’s revised version of the “Lied der Fee” are incomplete, and this edition includes only Weill’s original “Lied der Fee.”

The thorniest task the editors faced was evaluating the alterations present in all the sources. Especially **Im** and **Vh** contain large numbers of markings in blue, red, and purple crayon, as well as others in ink and pencil. Alterations range from added articulation marks to changes so drastic that scraps of paper—some with newly written-out music, others blank to obscure chaotic cuts—were pasted in to ensure legibility. These alterations were clearly introduced at various stages in the work’s production history and they are in a variety of different hands, but it is impossible to isolate the changes and establish when, where, and why each was introduced or who was responsible.

In dealing with these alterations, the editors have distinguished between two types of changes: (1) cuts and (2) all other changes. This edition simply rejects all cuts applied to **Im**, a decision based on the lack of an authoritative scenario and a complete set of stage cues. Because the stage cues contained in **Vh** do not allow a critical edition of *Zaubernacht*’s scenario, it would be arbitrary to adopt cuts marked in the music that resulted from changes to a scenario whose scenic realization can no longer be reconstructed. Many of the cuts—they appear to have been introduced in great

haste—are also musically problematic and could only be adopted with additional editorial intervention. The first layer of **Im** is not, however, completely disconnected from the staging process: it is the closest representation of the state of the full score at the point when the copyists extracted the parts, a time when piano rehearsals with the onstage performers had begun and—as can be gleaned from the many measures omitted in **Im** and subsequently canceled in **Vh** (where some of the omitted measures transmit stage cues)—had already started to inform the full score.

The guiding principle for addressing all other changes results from a process of elimination. Because Weill was not involved in the New York production, the edition seeks to exclude all changes made at that time, insofar as they are identifiable. Here **Vm** becomes a crucial source, because it was created in New York and served, in all likelihood, as a score for the conductor Lazar Weiner. The copyist who created **Vm** omitted hundreds of measures in the copying process, so it is reasonable to assume that all alterations subsequently entered into **Vm** and also present in **Vh** and **Im** were made in New York. It also seems safe to assume that all English-language entries found in **Vh** or **Im** originated in New York.

Editing the musical text of an edition from instrumental parts also entails a number of problems inherent in the source. With no information available about the instrumentation order in the full score, the editors have arranged the orchestral score to conform to the most common model for orchestral music: woodwinds (high-low), percussion, keyboard, vocal part, and strings (high-low). The different notation habits peculiar to the five copyists who extracted the parts from Weill's full score led to a number of inconsistencies among the parts. Although many of these are insignificant, the editors have had to resolve such issues as how to print tempo markings and performance indications. Furthermore, the copyists invariably introduced errors during the copying process. Weill tended to be somewhat imprecise in notating his pitches, yet in instances of ambiguity a copyist had to make a decision one way or the other. Thus a note that appears to have been written clearly in **Im** may actually be an incorrect pitch. In these cases **Vh** can be helpful, but the information offered by **Vh** needs to be balanced against the possibility that Weill changed the music—as he did in a number of unrelated instances—when he orchestrated the work. Editorial decisions of this kind can be made only on a case-by-case basis, and the editors document every such action in the Critical Report.

Without an actual copy of a scenario and only incomplete and sometimes cryptic stage cues found in **Vh**, it is impossible to provide a critically edited, performable scenario. That said, the editors have included a “composite scenario” based on **Vh**, with additional information taken from newspaper reports and a very few deducible editorial additions. In order to make this process transparent, the Critical Report presents the information found in **Vh** in an appendix (see pp. 61–63). The decision to include a

scenario emphasizes the fact that *Zaubernacht* is a stage work; even a skeletal scenario helps us to understand the mechanics and spirit of the work as well as its genesis and truncated performance history.

## VIII. Performance Issues

Future stagings of *Zaubernacht* may indeed choose to follow the scenario offered here, but choreographers will find no clues in this edition for the many passages of pure dance. Alternatively, stage directors and choreographers may wish to create an entirely new scenario that corresponds to the character of Weill's music. Some repeat marks in the score serve as obvious vamps for accommodating stage action (e.g., m. 1090ff.); repeats of larger sections also offer flexibility in establishing a desired running time. Although this edition rejects all cuts found in **Im**, information about cuts introduced for Hörth's and Zimmermann's staging in 1922 can be gleaned from the passage in the Critical Report under “General Issues” subheaded “Structural Emendations.”

Conductors will have to address the issue of seating the unconventional instrumental ensemble. Several models are possible, as the combination of two woodwinds, percussion, piano, and five strings allows for both balance and separation. As in many of his scores, Weill's placement of slurs tends to delineate musical phrases but not necessarily indicate binding articulation (e.g., bowing). This approach is only seemingly casual: Weill here actually adheres to Busoni's idea of a “young classicality”; performers may wish to think of a Mozart score when performing *Zaubernacht*. The percussion part requires special attention. Weill's writing for the part is fairly dense, and it appears that the players in Berlin and New York had difficulty performing all the music, as the original part contains many cancellations in red crayon that facilitate switches between instruments. It may therefore be advisable to divide the part among two percussionists.

Finally, the role of the “Stehaufmännchen” deserves comment. In 1925 the program of the New York production translated the character's name as Roly-Poly. That term and the old-fashioned toy itself have begun to fade out of public memory in the English-speaking world, unlike in Germany, where the term enjoys continued popularity (largely because it has entered figurative speech), or in Boritsch's native Russia, where the toy is known as “Nevalyashka” or “Vanka-vstanka.”<sup>58</sup> A roly-poly or cork tumbler is a toy in human form with a round bottom and a low-placed weight inside; when tipped over, it automatically regains its upright position.

With its mixture of mime and dance, *Zaubernacht* offers the potential for a variety of staging concepts. Although it might be an overstatement to label the work a *Zwischengattung*—Weill's creative, playful, and often provocative signature blend, or juxtaposition, of genres—his first stage work already appears to contain more than a hint of what was to come.

## Notes

1. The Ellis Island records give Boritsch's place of birth as Starodul [*sic*], undoubtedly meaning Starodub. Here anti-Semites staged a pogrom just days before Boritsch's birth; for information on the pogrom see Simon M. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland: From the Earliest Times until the Present Day*, trans. I. Friedlaender, vol. 2 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1918), 411–13.
2. *Rul's* report of Boritsch's arrival in Berlin is indexed in *Chronik russischen Lebens in Deutschland 1918–1941*, ed. Karl Schlögel et al. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1999).
3. “V. Boričas rengė savo pjesės-pantomimos vaikams ‘Stebuklinga naktis’ pastatymą. Muziką pjesei parašė K. Galkauskas. Rugsėjo 27 dieną spektaklis pasirodė miesto teatro scenoje, o netrukus buvo ir pakartotas. Spektakliams akompanuodavo pats muzikos autorius; . . . perpildytos salės susižavėjimas buvo begalinis. Skaidri Galkausko muzika, taip subtiliai pailiustravusi nakties tyloje arbundančius žaislus, originalios dail. Varno kaukės [. . .], lengva visos pjesės kompozicija sukėlė žiūrovams tikrą žaislų karalystės pojūtį.” Aldona Matulaitytė, *Konstantinas Galkauskas* (Vilnius: Vaga, 1975), 69. (English translation by Eglė Stalnionienė). The set designer referred to was probably Adomas Varnas (1879–1979).
4. Cf. Pavel Lavrinec, “Stanovliene russkoy literaturnoy zhizni v Vilniyuse i Kaunase posle Pervoy mirovoy voyny,” in *Baltijsko-russkij sbornik*, vol. 1, ed. Boris Ravdin and Lazar Fleishman, Stanford Slavic Studies 27 (Stanford, Calif.: Dept. of Slavic Languages and Literatures, Stanford University; Oakland, Calif.: Berkeley Slavic Specialties, 2004). On p. 45 Lavrinec writes: “In June 1921 the Kaunas-based *Free Lithuania* counted V. Borich among its staff, and its bibliographic section mentioned the publication of his book of poems, *Love Circle*, in Vilnius in 1920. Its author, who was ‘famous for the production of personally composed artistic pantomimes and children's performances’ (in Vilnius), lived in Kaunas in March 1921, according to *Echo* (2 March 1921, no. 49), and on 16 March 1921 he gave a lecture on Čiurlionis. . . . In April 1921 Borich organized a literary-music ‘intimate evening of fairy tales’ in Kaunas, where he read both the poetic and prose versions of his own fairy tales and also those of E.K. Metner. In early 1921 Borich released his tale *Miraculous Kingdoms* in Vilnius, and in March 1920, during the Polish administration of Lithuania, he had also organized an analogous ‘intimate evening’ of fairy tales together with Sasha Chernyi.” (English translation by George E. Hudson). “Каунасская Вольная Литва в июне 1921 г. называла в числе своих сотрудников В. Борича и упомянула в



- библиографической рубрике его книгу стихов *Любовный круг*, выпущенную в 1920 в Вильнюсе. Ее автор, «известный постановкой художественных пантомим собственного сочинения и детских спектаклей» (в Вильнюсе), с марта, по сообщению Эха (1921, № 49, 2 марта), жил в Каунасе и выступил 16 марта с лекцией о Чюрленисе. . . . В апреле 1921 г. Борич организовал в Каунасе литературно-музыкальный «интимный вечер сказки», на котором выступил с чтением своих сказок в стихах и прозе, а также сказок Э.К. Метнера. В Вильнюсе в начале 1921 г. вышла его сказка «Чудесные царства», а в марте 1920 г., при польской администрации, Борич устроил аналогичный «интимный вечер» сказки вместе с Сашей Черным.»
5. Louis Rich, "Says Children Require Theatres of Their Own," *New York Times*, 25 May 1924; H.I.B., "City Child's Play Guided in a New Way," *New York Times*, 24 January 1926.
  6. For the most detailed account of these years see Tamara Levitz, *Teaching New Classicality: Busoni's Master Class in Composition, 1921–1924*, Ph.D. diss. University of Rochester, N.Y., 1993 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1994). A revised and abridged version of the dissertation appeared as *Teaching New Classicality: Ferruccio Busoni's Master Class in Composition*, European University Studies, Series 36, vol. 152 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996). All citations in this essay refer to the 1994 publication.
  7. Boritsch published articles about proletarian culture and the tasks of Proletkult in Lithuania; cf. V. Borič, "Apie proletarių kultūrą ir proletkulto uždavinį," *Švietimo reikalai* 1, no. 3 (15 March 1919), 4–6; and V. Borič, "Proletkulto darbo planas ir organizacijos schema," *Švietimo reikalai* 1, no. 4 (1 April 1919), 7–9.
  8. Levitz, *Teaching New Classicality*, 236–37. Levitz's observation is confirmed by a letter from Vogel to Ronald Sanders dated 21 March 1978; Ronald Sanders Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, New York Public Library.  
Another possible catalyst for Weill's and Boritsch's meeting could have been the music critic, art historian, and dance expert Oscar Bie, a friend of both Busoni and Weill, who took a special interest in Berlin's Russian theaters, as can be seen from his many reviews of such programs. A guestbook of the city's most prominent and influential Russian cabaret, Der blaue Vogel, lists Bie among the "friends of the cabaret"; see Michaela Böhmig, *Das russische Theater in Berlin, 1919–1931*, Arbeiten und Texte zur Slavistik, vol. 49 (Munich: Sagner, 1990), 127–28.
  9. Levitz, *Teaching New Classicality*, 246.
  10. "Die Pantomime beginnt nun nach den Freuden der Komposition in das sorgenreiche u. aufregende Stadium der Proben zu treten, u. ich fürchte, ich werde in den nächsten Wochen mehr Ärger damit haben, als die ganze Sache wert ist. Aber auch das soll Schule sein. [...] Natürlich ist es mit der Arbeit bei all dem schlecht bestellt, zumal ich mit der Partitur der Pantomime noch reichlich 3–4 Wochen zu tun habe." Kurt Weill, *Briefe an die Familie (1914–1950)*, ed. Lys Symonette and Elmar Juchem (Stuttgart and Weimar: J. B. Metzler, 2000), 280–81.
  11. The wording anticipates a tentative title that Weill considered for *Die Dreigroschenoper*: an early holograph title page for this piece reads "Musik / zu / 'The Beggar's Opera' / (Des Bettlers Oper) / op. 25."
  12. Around the time when the *Zaubernacht* parts were created, the same team of copyists excerpted the parts for the last movement of Weill's *Divertimento*, op. 5, titling it "Schlußsatz aus dem Divertimento op. 5 v. Kurt Weill." Thus it is likely that Weill's lost title page for *Zaubernacht* contained no opus number.
  13. A letter from Busoni to Hörth, dated 20 August 1922, in which he recommends a tenor named Nusselt for a vacancy at the Staatsoper, does not mention the *Zaubernacht* project; 55 Nachl 33/15, Musikabteilung, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin.
  14. *Berliner Volks-Zeitung*, 21 November 1922 (morning edition). Karman(n), Hungarian by birth, continued his career in the United States, where he performed with the New World String Quartet, Maurice Ravel, and Aaron Copland.
  15. *Deutsches Bühnen-Jahrbuch* 33 (1922), ed. Deutscher Bühnen-Verein and Genossenschaft Deutscher Bühnen-Angehöriger, 296.
  16. Cf. *Chronik*, ed. Schlögel et al., 124, 189. See also Böhmig, *Das russische Theater in Berlin*, 120–45.
  17. Facsimiles of both newspaper interviews in David Farneth with Elmar Juchem and Dave Stein, *Kurt Weill: A Life in Pictures and Documents* (Woodstock, N.Y.: Overlook Press, 2000), 225, 264.
  18. See *Speak Low (When You Speak Love): The Letters of Kurt Weill and Lotte Lenya*, ed. and trans. Lys Symonette and Kim H. Kowalke (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1996), 21–22. In his interview given to the *New York Post* in 1943 Weill simply stated that Lenya "did not get the part."
  19. "Lieber Dr. Brav, bitte sehen Sie sich diese mit Zangen geborene Aufführung meiner Kinderpantomime an. Ich hoffe, wir sehen uns bald." Photocopy in WLRC, Series 40; original held by Kurt Weill Zentrum, Dessau.
  20. Weill had the opportunity to meet Brav (1896–1951) at the Hochschule für Musik in 1918/19 or during his studies at the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität in the fall of 1920, where Brav received his Ph.D. in musicology in August 1921.
  21. See Weill's letter to Peter Bing, n.d. [7 or 8 March 1923]; WLRC, "Peter Bing Collection," Series 30, Box 8, Folder 3.
  22. Levitz, *Teaching New Classicality*, 323. However, Maurice Abravanel remembered that Busoni attended the premiere, after which he praised Weill's conducting but not the work. This account appears to be unreliable as Weill did not conduct. "Maurice Abravanel: An Oral History Interview with Alan Rich," Fall 1981; WLRC, Series 60.
  23. Levitz, *Teaching New Classicality*, 324.
  24. *B.Z. am Mittag*, 21 November 1922, reviewed both performances. A review of Busoni's premiere in the *Deutsche Tageszeitung* (23 November 1922; evening edition) by the paper's chief music critic, Prof. Dr. Hermann Springer, who happened to be a friend of Busoni's, mentioned Weill in passing, identifying him as a student of Busoni, and added a paragraph about Weill's having written "a score to a pantomime that should be mentioned here as an artistically valuable attempt. It [the music] shows intellectual agility and an inventive mind for colorful fairy tale grotesquerie"; "[...] die Musik zu einer Pantomime geschrieben, die hier als künstlerisch wertvoller Versuch angemerkt werden soll. Sie zeigt geistige Beweglichkeit und erfinderischen Sinn für bunte Märchengroteske.").
  25. "Es ist ein weihnachtliches Gastspiel des Dr. W. Boritsch mit seinem Kindertheater, das er 'Märchentruhe' nennt. Zuerst kam aus dieser Truhe ein befackter junger Herr, der eine Absage ansagte: Die Schatten, die für das Schattenspiel 'Die goldene Gans' verpflichtet wurden, seien erkältet – das böse Novemberwetter – technische Schwierigkeiten . . .  
Als Schattensatz erschien Fr. Friedel Hinze [*sic*], die recht brav Andersens Märchen 'Die Prinzessin und der Schweinehirt' erzählte. Und dann gab es eine Pantomime: 'Zaubernacht', die in ihrer Idee des nächtlich belebten Spielzeugs ebenfalls auf Andersen zurückgeht und von W. Boritsch verfaßt, von Kurt Weill in Musik gesetzt worden ist.  
Vielleicht ein neuer Weg für das Kindertheater. Die meisten Stücke, die den Kleinen geboten werden, sind entweder ihrem Verständnis nicht restlos angepaßt oder von geringem Geschmack und fragwürdigem erzieherischen Wert. Darum ist es ein beachtlicher Gedanke, die frei schaffende kindliche Phantasie zur Pantomime zu führen, der sie beliebig Worte unterlegen mag, und die ihr vermutlich mehr schenken wird, als hochtrabende Auchpoesie oder burleske Clownsspieße und Prügeleien vermögen.  
'Zaubernacht' mag als Beispiel gelten und – nach der begeisterten Aufnahme, durch die Dreikäsehohe – als geglückter Versuch. Allerdings hatte man auch dem hübschen Werkchen eine Ausstattung (nach Entwürfen Rafael Lartos) voll Humor und künstlerischem Reiz gegeben. Franz-Ludwig Hörths Spielleitung wußte sich auf den heiteren Grundton einzustellen, und die Mitwirkenden, meist Kinder, machten ihre Sache entzückend. [...]  
Weills Musik ist interessant in ihrem thematischen Aufbau, in ihrer frischen Farbigkeit, in ihrer Belebtheit und mit ihrer illustrierenden Kraft, die jeder wechselnden Stimmung gerecht wird und sie fördert und vertieft. Das Arrangement für kleines Orchester ist sauber und wohlabgewogen in den Wirkungen. Der jugendliche Kapellmeister George Weller brachte die Komposition zur rechten Geltung."
  26. "Keine neue Idee, aber in neuer geschmackvoller Inszenierung. Das Bühnenbild [...] ist reizend und künstlerisch für das Auge der Großen, auch die Kleinen werden ihre Freude daran gehabt haben. Die untermalenden Orchesterklänge von Kurt Weill mit ihren unmelodischen Dominanten und Paraphrasen sind aber sicherlich als zu gesucht von den kleinen Ohren verweigert worden. Bei den Ideen von der künstlerischen Erziehung des Kindes muß man auch die Kirche im Dorf lassen." *Germania*, 19 November 1922.
  27. "In verschwimmenden Farben und Formen (entworfen von Rafael Larto) zieht diese Zaubernacht vorüber – wie sie sich im Kopfe eines modernen Kindes sicherlich malt. Feingetönt ist die begleitende Musik von Kurt Weill im Wechsel von freudigen und schreckhaften Erregungen eines leichten Traumes. Ausgezeichnet die Regie von Franz Ludwig Hörth. Aber das Zaubhafte, das hier zu sehen ist, bleibt nur ein sehr farbenprächtiges Schauen. Es fehlt eine Gabe für Herz und Gemüt, ein Inhalt, der des Kindes Geist beschäftigen und seinem Wollen einen Antrieb geben könnte." *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, 22 November 1922 (signed "—uss."; probably Georg Buss).
  28. "Eine Pantomime, von einer Musik von Kurt Weill illustriert, die kein Kind erfassen kann, wird die Jugend nur als kurzes Zwischenspiel reizen können; mehr als ein Erwachsener braucht das Kind das verdeutlichende Wort, das hier anscheinend mit Rücksicht auf die Gäste aus Moskowien gestrichen wurde. [...] es genügt nicht, ein paar Möbelstücke lebendig werden zu lassen. Vor Kindern muß geredet, geredet werden!" *B.Z. am Mittag*, 21 November 1922.
  29. "Die Musik Kurt Weills könnte Anlaß zu Bedenken geben, sie ist ein bißchen gar modern und problematisch geraten. Indessen: was wissen wir von den Ohren unserer Kinder, die es bekanntlich gar nicht lieben, als Kinder behandelt zu werden. Wir Großen haben uns jedenfalls bei ihr nicht gelangweilt und müssen dankbar anerkennen, daß sich ein feinfühligere und erfinderische Musiker mit so viel Liebe der Jugend widmete." *Vossische Zeitung*, 20 November 1922 (signed "ps.").
  30. "klare, auch recht humorvolle Weillsche Musik," *Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger*, 21 November 1922 (evening edition; signed "i."); "sehr gefällige, klar illustrierende Musik," *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, 21 November 1922 (morning edition; signed "E.N.").
  31. "Nachmittagsvorstellung im Theater am Kurfürstendamm! Jauchzende Kinder voller Erwartung. Man hört um sich herum viel im Charlottenburger Idiom – russisch – sprechen. Dr. W. Boritsch, der die Leitung dieses Kindertheaters inne hat, war klug genug, sich zumeist der Pantomime zu bedienen. Die stumme Sprache dieser Kunstgattung verstehen auch diese neuen Charlottenburger Kinder, die noch nicht oder

doch nur unvollkommen ins Deutsche vorgedrungen sind. Freilich ein wenig Pech hatten doch diese Kinder. Die Vorstellung sollte aus einem Schattenspiel ‚Die goldene Gans‘ nach Grimms Märchen beginnen. Wie aber leider angekündigt werden mußte, waren die Schatten ‚heiser‘ geworden und konnten nicht spielen. Dafür erzählte die treffliche Rezitatrice Friedel Hintze Andersens Märchen von der Prinzessin und dem Schweinehirt. Aber die beste Vortragende kann nicht erwartungsvolle Kinder mit der interessantesten Geschichte fesseln, zumal wenn sie sie nicht verstehen. Man hörte zwar zu, aber es fehlte der lebendige Konnex mit der Bühne, der sich dann erst später durch lautes Hineinlachen in die Szene, Ausrufe des Erstaunens und anderer Äußerungen kindlicher Unbeherrschtheit lebhaft erregter Kleinen zeigte, als die Pantomime zu ‚Worte‘ kam: Zaubernacht von W. Boritsch, Musik von Kurt Weill.

Ein hübsches, geschickt gemachtes Weihnachtsstück. Freilich ist die Handlung nicht gar sonderlich neu und originell, aber für Kinder, die ja über eine langjährige Theatererfahrung nicht verfügen, die alle die Puppenballetts auf der Bühne der Erwachsenen von ‚Coppelia‘ und ‚Puppenfee‘ angefangen, nicht gesehen haben, ist die Handlung eben neu genug, und sie ist durch die Regie des Herrn Franz Ludwig Hörth von der Staatsoper so hübsch und originell herausgesucht, daß auch die Erwachsenen Gefallen daran finden können. Dem schlafenden Geschwisterpaar, – den schlanken Knaben gibt die entzückend hübsche Olga Valeri, das anmutige Mädchen die reizende Larissa Alexeeva, – erscheint in der Zaubernacht im Traume die Spielzeugfee, – diese einzige Gesangsrolle gab Elfriede Marherr-Wagner von der Staatsoper, – und führt ihnen alle die Spielzeugherrlichkeiten vor: den Ball, den Hampelmann, das Pferd, den Kochherd, die Puppe, den Bär, den chinesischen Arzt, das kugelfunde Stehaufmännchen. Und schließlich kam ein dicker Band von Grimms Märchen ‚Hänsel und Gretel‘ auf die Szene, und den Blättern des Buches entstieg das zarte Kinderpaar und die böse Hexe, und alle diese, – dargestellt von Zöglingen der Ballettschule Mary Zimmermann, – führten gar schöne und drollige Tänze auf, und es sah urkomisch aus, wenn der Kochherd mit der Puppe tanzte, oder der Ball um den schwerfälligen Bären hüpfte. Dieses reizende Drum und Dran war voller netter Einfälle, an denen ebenso die Regie wie die choreographische Leiterin Mary Zimmermann, sowie Rafael Larto, von dem die Entwürfe herrühren, schöpferisch beteiligt waren. [...] Eine Vorstellung, die die Kinder mit lebhaftem Beifall annahmen.“ „E.N.,“ *Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*, 21 November 1922 (morning edition).

32. For information about the performance of *Die Puppenfee* in St. Petersburg see Alfred Oberzaucher, article “Die Puppenfee,” *Pipers Enzyklopädie des Musiktheaters*, ed. Carl Dahlhaus et al., vol. 2 (Munich and Zurich: Piper, 1987), 727; the Dessau production is listed in Hartmut Runge, *Dessauer Theaterbilder: Zur 200-jährigen Geschichte des Theaters in Dessau* (Dessau: Anhaltische Verlagsgesellschaft, 1994), 138.

33. “Идея устройства театра специально для дѣтей—не новая; въ самомъ дѣлѣ, можетъ быть лучше обновить или совсѣмъ «вывести въ расходъ» тотъ случайный, спѣшно пригнанный репертуаръ, который регулярно появлялся у насъ на большихъ сценахъ каждую Пасху и Рождество? Такой художественно ограниченный дѣтскій театръ долженъ былъ, помнится, возникнуть въ Петербургѣ въ 1918 году; въ репертуарѣ его уже были пьесы Кузьмина, Гумилева, ближайшее участіе въ его работахъ принимали Блокъ, Ремизовъ, Мейерхольдъ—но, по нѣкоторымъ причинамъ, открыть его такъ и не удалось и дѣло, кажется, ограничилось въ концѣ концовъ лишь инсценировками ряда басенъ Крылова—въ видѣ гастролей по отдѣльнымъ сценамъ . . .

Сейчасъ «Дѣтскій театръ» существуетъ въ Москвѣ—но въ какомъ видѣ—судить по долетающимъ до насъ отрывочнымъ свѣдѣніямъ трудно; въ Западной же Европѣ идея возникновенія его не только никогда не осуществлялась, но даже и не возникла и попытка спектаклей В. Борича въ Theater am Kurfürstendamm—первая.

Попытка хорошая и грѣхъ было бы её не привѣтствовать; по воплощенію ея нельзя признать окончательно удачнымъ. Нельзя не оговориться: той маленькой аудиторіей, которой спектакль былъ показанъ, былъ онъ принятъ съ рѣдкимъ восхищеніемъ, восторгамъ не было конца. Что и говорить—«публика» благодарная на рѣдкость, но поэтому то хотѣлось гораздо большей внимательности и къ выбору пьесы, и къ столь необходимой на этомъ утрѣ присказки: «по техническимъ затрудненіямъ дирекція проситъ» и.т.д.

Мысль положить въ основу спектакля пантомиму—удачная только тогда, когда необходимое дѣтямъ слово можетъ замѣняться насыщенностью дѣйствія—этого то и не было въ «специфически дѣтскомъ» содержаніи пантомимы «Волшебная ночь» съ обычнымъ оживленіемъ игрушекъ, засыпаніемъ и пробужденіемъ: существовалъ сюжетъ, а былъ лишь рядъ эпизодовъ танцевально-дивертисментнаго характера и немудрено, что мой сосѣдъ все время подумывалъ: — какъ могутъ дѣти молчать такъ долго?! Я бы не смогъ . . . и, дѣйствительно, «молчали» очень долго—часть с четвертью; сократить пантомиму бы слѣдовало, хотя её и спасаютъ рядъ забавнѣйшихъ трюковъ.

Очень интересная музыка Курта Вейля для дѣтей хороша, только тѣмъ, что она не загромождаетъ сценическаго дѣйствія, а служитъ только фономъ, но отнюдь не способствуетъ возбужденію фантазіи и, лишенная простой мелодики, очень трудна для дѣтскаго воспріятія.

Исполненіе на половину основано на танцахъ, очень часто на техническихъ упражненіяхъ, для малышей также мало интересныхъ; для «взрослаго» же глаза—школа Мэри Циммерманъ пріятна и ученики ея замѣтно выдѣляются среди питомцевъ обычныхъ нѣмецкихъ «хореографическихъ студій». Изъ «мимическихъ» участниковъ запомнились Валери съ остроумно намѣченнымъ рисункомъ «мальчика» и Алексѣева—«дѣвочка» съ выразительными лицомъ и движеніями; но отъ первой хотѣлось бы большей тщательности, а отъ второй—простоты: вѣдь все же роль ея—не ingénue coquette! . . .

Забавны костюмы Ларто, а отъ декораціи хотелось бы именно для этого дѣтскаго спектакля поменьше манерности и побольше логичности. [...] Въ общемъ,

отъ спектакля осталось впечатлѣніе, что показанъ онъ еще въ нѣсколько сыромъ видѣ; отдѣлка смягчить многое. Но, конечно, еще больше должна дать перемѣна программы—вѣдь участники для «Дѣтскаго театра»—хорошаго, настоящаго, съ художественной программой—уже на лицо.” *Rul*, 24 November 1922 (English translation by Daniil Leiderman).

34. *Rul*, 16 December 1922; see also *Dni*, 16 December 1922.

35. “Ein hiesiger grosser Bühnenverlag hat soeben [...] die Kinderpantomime ‚Zaubernacht‘ [erworben], die im Herbst in New York aufgeführt wird (im hiesigen Theater am Kurfürstendamm 1923 uraufgeführt).” Letter from Weill, 16 February 1924; see Kurt Weill, *Briefwechsel mit der Universal Edition*, ed. Nils Grosch (Stuttgart and Weimar: J.B. Metzler, 2002), 2.

36. “wie ich eben von dem Unternehmer u. Autor des Buches, Herrn Dr. Wladimir Boritsch erfahre [soll meine Kinderpantomime ‚Zaubernacht‘] mit ziemlicher Gewissheit in New York durch Fokin herauskommen [...]. Sowie ich über diese Aufführung Definitives erfahre, will ich eine neue Partitur des Werkes für Mozartsche Besetzung herstellen (die Partitur der hiesigen Aufführung hatte nur 9 Instrumente). Haben Sie an der Übernahme des Stückes schon jetzt Interesse u. würden Sie an dem Zustandekommen der New Yorker Aufführung mitarbeiten? Das gesamte Material ausser Partitur ist schon in Amerika.” *Briefwechsel mit der Universal Edition*, 5.

37. “Szenarium u. Klavierauszug von der Pantomime ‚Zaubernacht‘ sind in New York bei dem Unternehmer Dr. W. Boritsch, c/o Shidlow, 130 William Street; in der nächsten Zeit bekomme ich das genaue Szenarium in englischer Sprache, das ich Ihnen gleich einsenden werde.” *Briefwechsel mit der Universal Edition*, 7.

38. David Drew quotes Busoni’s letter in *Kurt Weill: A Handbook* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987), 141. Franz Ludwig Hörth appears to have recommended *Zaubernacht* as well; see “Children’s Theatre to Open Next Fall,” *New York Times*, 18 March 1926.

39. Galkauskas’s settings and the parts are in the Wladimir Boritsch Collection, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University.

40. *New York Sun*, 18 December 1925; *New York Times*, 25 May 1924, 25 and 27 December 1925.

41. “The Child Mind at the Play,” *New York Times*, 25 December 1925.

42. *New York Times*, 18 March 1926 and 17 October 1926.

43. “Die starke dramatische Innenspannung dieser absoluten Musik konnte sich nur im Theater entladen, für das Weill bereits 1922 ein Stück geschrieben hatte: Musik zu einer Pantomime, die ‚Zaubernacht‘, ausserordentlich leicht fließend, lebendig, delikat in der Klangbehandlung des kleinen Orchesters. [...] Dieses gewiss nicht schwer wiegende, abseits vom Dramatischen liegende Werk ist als Entwicklungswert von höchster Bedeutung. Denn hier dokumentiert sich zum ersten Mal die veränderte Einstellung zum Theater. Für den Schüler Busonis konnte die Verbindung von Szene und Musik nur auf der Basis des Spiels geschehen. Die eigene Entwicklung war Befreiung von den koloristischen und gedanklichen Elementen, die absolutes Musizieren in der Spätromantik schliesslich unmöglich machten. War Befreiung von jenen musikdramatischen Bindungen, die allmählich jede Eigengewachsenheit der Musik im Theater zerstört und sie in völlige Hörigkeit der nach rein literarischen Prinzipien angelegten Texte gebracht hatten.” Heinrich Strobel, “Die Lebenden: Kurt Weill,” *Melos* 6, no. 10 (October 1927), 431; reprinted in *Über Kurt Weill*, ed. David Drew (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1975), 32–33.

44. “An der geballten Konzentriertheit russischer Theaterkunst lernte ich zweierlei: daß die Bühne ihre eigene musikalische Form hat, deren Gesetzmäßigkeit organisch aus dem Ablauf der Handlung erwächst, und daß Bedeutsames szenisch nur mit den einfachsten, unauffälligsten Mitteln gesagt werden kann.” Weill, “Bekanntnis zur Oper,” in *Blätter der Staatsoper* [Dresden], season 1925/26, no. 13 (1 April 1926), 98–99; reprinted in Kurt Weill, *Musik und musikalisches Theater: Gesammelte Schriften. Mit einer Auswahl von Gesprächen und Interviews*, ed. Stephen Hinton and Jürgen Schebera, exp. and rev. edition (Mainz: Schott, 2000), 46.

45. The Talk of the Town, *New Yorker*, 10 June 1944, 16; “Protagonist of Music in the Theatre,” *American Hebrew*, 8 January 1937, 757. In 1930 Weill already stated in an interview about his opera for students, *Der Jasager*: “The first work where one can recognize the simple style was probably the ballet *Zaubernacht*.” (Das erste Werk, aus dem der einfache Stil zu erkennen ist, war wohl das Ballett *Zaubernacht*.); “Aktuelles Zwiegespräch über die Schulooper zwischen Kurt Weill und Dr. Hans Fischer,” *Die Musikpflege* 1, no. 1 (April 1930), 51; reprinted in Weill, *Musik und musikalisches Theater*, 450.

46. Coincidentally, a commercial run of *Liliom* had opened at the Theater am Kurfürstendamm just days before the premiere of *Zaubernacht*. It featured Max Pallenberg in the title role, who happened to be a good friend of Alfred Polgar. Polgar, in turn, had adapted Molnár’s initially unsuccessful play for the German stage. Although Polgar worked in Vienna at the time, he may have attended the premiere of this *Liliom* production and thus could have been the author of a short, favorable review of *Zaubernacht* that appeared in the *Berliner Tageblatt* on 21 November 1922, signed “A. P.”

47. When Boritsch arrived in the United States, he was married to the twenty-one-year-old artist Helene Scheersohn Boritsch, a native of Vilnius but a Polish citizen, who appears to have collaborated with Michio Ito on the choreography of *The Magic Night*

- (the program cocredits a “Nellie Boritch”). Drew recounts his visit to Marie Boritch in his *Handbook*, 140.
48. Under “Recent Acquisitions” the journal listed “Weill, Kurt. The original music manuscripts and orchestra parts of ‘Die Zauber Nacht’ [sic]. Given by Mrs. Marie Boritch in memory of William [sic] Boritch.” *Yale University Library Gazette* 34, no. 1 (July 1959), 53.
  49. For details of this sequence of events see Suzanne Eggleston Lovejoy, “From the Depths of the Library . . .,” *Kurt Weill Newsletter* 24, no. 2 (Fall 2006), 6.
  50. Capriccio 67011. An in-depth review of the recording by Edward Harsh appeared in *Kurt Weill Newsletter* 20, no. 2 (Fall 2002), 22.
  51. See Eggleston Lovejoy, “From the Depths of the Library,” 6.
  52. “die ungeheure Tragik dieser krampfhaften Zeit”; “Dieser kaum 23-jährige [...] hat schon eine lebensprühende, rhythmisch vibrierende Pantomimen-Musik hören lassen.” *B.Z. am Mittag*, 20 March 1923.
  53. Drew, *Handbook*, 141.
  54. See Beaumont’s liner notes for his recording of *Quodlibet*, op. 9 (combined with Weill’s two symphonies) on Chandos CHSA 5046 (released 2006), 11.
  55. Verified publications by Boritsch include *Lyubovnyi krug* (Love circle) (s.l.: Orion, 1920) and *Chudesnye tsarstva: skazka v 3-kh chastyakh* (Miraculous kingdoms: a tale in 3 parts) (s.l.: Orion, 1921). A bibliography by L. M. Turchinskiy (“Russkie poety XX. veka, 1900–1955: novye materialy k bibliografii A. K. Tarasenkova,” *De Visu* 2, no. 8 [1993], 69) credits Boritsch as the author of a third book, *Irochka v detskoy: stikhi* (Irochka in the nursery: poems) (Moscow: I. Knebel, n.d.), though the book itself lists only the illustrator, D. Shokhin.  
The music manuscript of Galkauskas’s setting gives the Russian title “Volshebnyaya Noch” (Magic night), the subtitle “pantomima,” and the credits “Words: V. Borich | Music: K. Galkovskash”; Wladimir Boritch Collection, Irving S. Gilmore Music Library, Yale University.
  56. For the Russian lyric, see Critical Report, p. 55.
  57. Oddly, the page was a single leaf loosely inserted into the last gathering of Vh. See “Source Descriptions” in the Critical Report.
  58. In March 1922 a Russian cabaret named Vanka-Vstanka had opened in Berlin, playing in a venue at the corner of Kurfürstendamm and Uhlandstraße, just steps away from the Theater am Kurfürstendamm. The opening night cast included Larissa Alexeyeva, and a few months later Rafael Larto joined the creative team as set designer; cf. Böhmig, *Das russische Theater in Berlin*, 130–35.