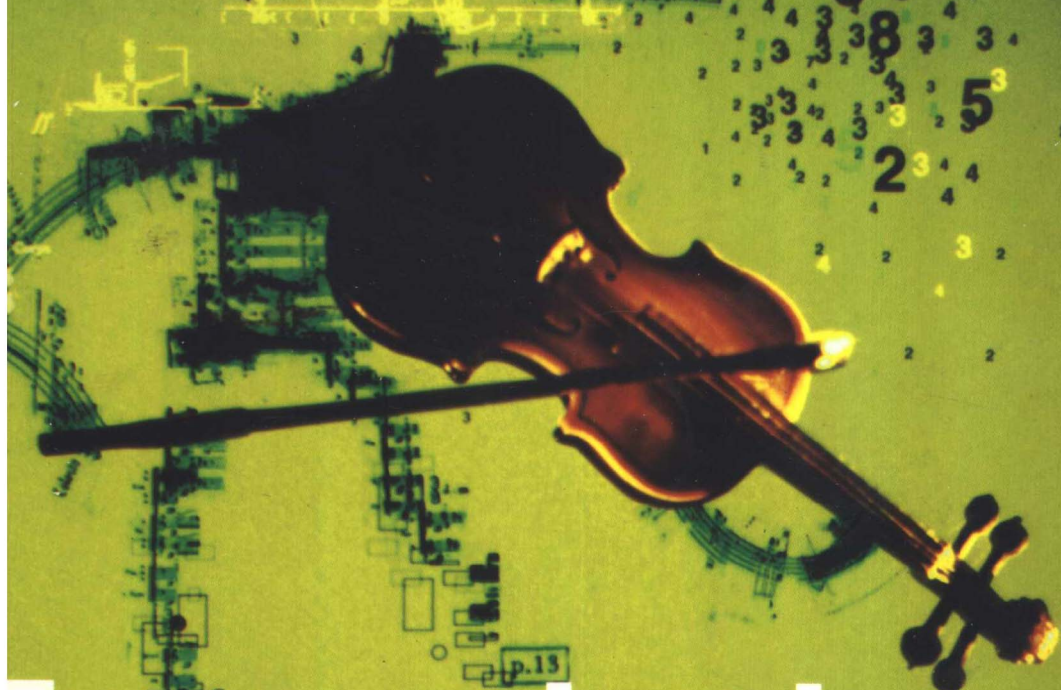


Mark Morris | The Pimlico Dictionary of



Twentieth-Century Composers

Published by Pimlico 1999

2 4 6 8 10 9 7 5 3 1

Copyright © Mark Morris 1996

Mark Morris has asserted his right
under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988
to be identified as the author of this work

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not,
by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, resold, hired out, or otherwise
circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding
or cover other than that in which it is published and without a
similar condition including this condition being imposed
on the subsequent purchaser

First published in Great Britain as
A Guide to 20th-Century Composers by
Methuen London 1996
Pimlico edition 1999

Pimlico
Random House, 20 Vauxhall Bridge Road,
London SW1V 2SA

Random House Australia (Pty) Limited
20 Alfred Street, Milsons Point, Sydney,
New South Wales 2061, Australia

Random House New Zealand Limited
18 Poland Road, Glenfield,
Auckland 10, New Zealand

Random House South Africa (Pty) Limited
Endulini, 5A Jubilee Road, Parktown 2193, South Africa

Random House UK Limited Reg. No. 954009

A CIP catalogue record for this book
is available from the British Library

ISBN 0-7126-6568-4

Papers used by Random House UK Limited are natural,
recyclable products made from wood grown in sustainable forests.
The manufacturing processes conform to the environmental
regulations of the country of origin

Printed and bound in Great Britain by
Mackays of Chatham PLC

Acknowledgements

This book could not have been written without the very many people who answered my queries or pointed me in the right direction to find information, and without those among my friends who encouraged me to keep on with it. It took a number of years to research, compile and write; if, in these acknowledgements, there are those whom, through time and distance, I have forgotten to include, I hope they will forgive me, and rest content that their contribution is, nevertheless, to be found in the book itself.

I would like especially to thank the staff of the Banff Centre Library, and of the Performing Arts (formerly the Music) Library of The University of Calgary, for their patience and cheerful assistance, and for the foresightedness that has made the holdings of both libraries so interesting and comprehensive. Many of the International Music Centres provided useful help, notably the Australian, British, Czech, Donemus (Holland) and Icelandic. In the early stages of the book, a number of recording companies also provided answers to queries or material I could not otherwise obtain, notably BIS, Bulgariton, Chandos, Claves, Crystal Records and Marco Polo. I would also like to thank the Alberta Foundation for the Arts for their assistance in the early stages of writing.

I have been extremely fortunate in my editors, Penelope Hoare, Kate Goodhart and Charlotte Mendelson, who have made the relationship between author and publisher not only professionally fulfilling by their guidance through the various stages of the book's creation, but personally rewarding by their good humour and encouragement. Three other people have made major contributions. Anthony Mulgan, on behalf of the publishers, used his considerable knowledge and expertise to ferret out every date and reference in the manuscript, and to query and suggest when my writing was unclear or when I went off at a tangent; an invaluable and unenviable task. My two copy-editors, Chris Wood and Steve Dobell, then performed a similar task on the final manuscript; all three succeeded in that rare achievement, making the author enjoy their corrections, emendations, and comments. Last, but not least, my agent, Deborah Rogers, has steered me over these years through all the difficulties of getting a book like this launched, and I, and this *Guide*, are gratefully indebted to her.

Equally important has been the personal encouragement of friends, four of whom are to be found in the dedication of this *Guide*. At the inception of the book, John and Jenny Morris, Eric Jenkins and his family, and especially Carolyn Landrum, got me going. Once the book was underway, it would not have continued without the input and kindness, in another field, of Sandra Hayes-Gardiner. Keith Turnbull and Graham Cozzubbo, of the Banff Centre, and Dr Zoltan Roman at the University of Calgary, have all kept me writing during its later stages, and, I suspect, have impatiently waited for me to finish it. Finally Janice Tole has followed the creation of the manuscript with me, suffered hours and hours of often strange music issuing from the stereo, worked her pencil where I had been

viii Acknowledgements

dyslexic, shared the excitement, and ensured I continued when the task seemed overwhelming. Every writer who takes on such a crazy undertaking as this *Guide* needs friends and companions like these. I hope they will all find pleasure in the result.

Mark Morris, June 1996

Introduction

There are few cultural experiences more exciting and more difficult than discovering the art of our own times. Exciting, because contemporary or near-contemporary art addresses our own experience, our own concerns, our own possibilities. It speaks to the tenor of our age, and it opens new horizons. Difficult, because sometimes it involves new languages and expressions with which we have to become familiar, because sometimes it evokes feelings and emotions we may prefer not to acknowledge, and because it does not carry the evaluation and familiarity of a century or more of acknowledgment.

Of all the art-forms, serious classical music has perhaps suffered most from misunderstanding, ignorance and neglect in the general culturally-aware populace, for a variety of reasons (some of which are touched upon in 'A Brief history of 20th-century music' later in this guide). How many times has one heard 'Oh, I can't stand any of that modern stuff' or 'I won't go if there's any 20th-century music in it', even though that 'modern stuff' may have been written in 1917? Yet, guilty though we may all have been of such sentiments at one time or another, they are the product of dogma, not common sense. Take anyone who enjoys Mozart and Beethoven, with a smattering of the later 19th-century composers (a little Brahms and Tchaikovsky, and perhaps some Verdi and Wagner), a couple of hours of their time, and some appropriate recordings, and I guarantee they will soon become hooked on one classic 20th-century score or another. Those works may not be very extreme (though they will be in a language almost unimaginable to the 19th century), but from them it is but a short series of steps to understanding, appreciating, and loving 20th-century music with more complex idioms.

The problem with encountering 20th-century music has been one of access, of knowing where to start without being put off, of developing one's knowledge. This *Guide to 20th-Century Composers* is, in part, an attempt to provide something of that access, by giving an idea of what listeners might encounter in the music of a particular composer, and by suggesting what composers and what works an interested person might explore (see 'How to use this guide', below).

But it has also been written in response to all those, from composers, conductors and musicians to ordinary music lovers who already have a knowledge of 20th-century music, who wish to explore further, be it the other works of a composer they have enjoyed, or the music of a particular period or country in which they are interested. I also hope it will be of value to those who already have a considerable knowledge of 20th-century music, by introducing yet more composers.

It is, however, a *guide*, and not a dictionary or an encyclopedia. A guide should have practical application, and this one has been designed so that when confronted with a variety of situations – whether to go to the concert with the unfamiliar modern composer's work, whether to buy that 20th-century recording in the second-hand store, what to listen to by that unfamiliar composer whose work on the radio you so liked – it will at least provide some idea of the music and what to

xii Introduction

explore. Consequently, there is little biography in the guide; there are many other publications (some of them discussed at the end of this introduction) which give biographical information. This one concentrates solely on the music. I have tried to avoid getting bogged down in technical description, which properly belongs to the realm of musicology: to hear a work with the sole intent of recognizing the retrograde inversion of the second tone-row may be a cerebral experience, but it is hardly a musical one. To try and describe music in descriptive phrases (rather than by technical exposition) is always a thankless task, and one that has become unfashionable; but words are still the major vehicle for transmitting ideas, experiences and enthusiasms to others, and if they will never match the music, that is no reason not to try.

The other feature of guides is that they are personal. This is not an objective book, and it would be boring if it were. I have attempted to be as objective as I can, but if the majority of opinions and assessments will meet with general concurrence, some will not. I am fortunate in finding excitement in all the myriad styles of 20th-century classical music, but I am not immune to bias, including the belief that if a piece of contemporary music is so conservative that it belongs to a bygone era then it is almost certain not to speak to us or our age except on the most superficial level. Guides should come from personal experience, and to write the guide I have listened to virtually all the works discussed in the main entries; I trust it will be clear where I have been unable to do so, and was unable to consult a score. However, such subjectivity can also be a virtue: if the guide starts an argument at a musical dinner-table over the exclusion of that composer and the inclusion of another, and the CD player is turned on, it will have achieved at least one of its objectives.

I have undertaken all the research and typing myself. I could not have done so without many writers on various aspects of the subject whose works I consulted. Sometimes in that research I came across a paragraph that had migrated from one book to another, and yet another; I hope I have avoided following such a dubious example. But any errors that escaped the eagle eyes of my copy-editors – and errors there will inevitably be in any work of this size – should be laid at my door, and mine alone.

Who has been included in the guide and why

The exact term '20th-century composer' is a debatable one. For this guide I set the following criteria for the inclusion or exclusion of a particular composer.

First, the composer had to live in the 20th century, with a date of death at least 1917 or later. The only exceptions to this are those composers who died before 1917 but whose works, written in the 20th century, had a conspicuous influence on the development of 20th-century music. Mahler is a prime example. Similarly, composers who lived well into the 20th century, but wrote nothing of significance in this century, are excluded. Saint-Saëns is an obvious example.

Second, there would have to be a reasonable expectation of access to that composer's work, in concert or recording form, not just in the country of origin, but outside. In some cases, such access will require considerable perseverance, and

lesser composers have been relegated to a brief survey in the introductions to each country, rather than in a lengthier main entry.

These criteria still left so many composers that the guide would have been unusable and untransportable. Consequently, the exclusion of other lesser-known composers has been made on a personal basis. In particular, composers in their forties or younger have generally been excluded; in many cases it is still too early to get a comprehensive overview of their work, and a moment's reflection will confirm that the majority will be 21st-century, not 20th-century composers, with the height of their powers and fame expected in the 2010s and life-expectancy to the 2030s. The guide is not therefore comprehensive; but if a reader started at the beginning and listened once to every work mentioned in the main entries, listening for a couple of hours each and every day, it would still take virtually a decade to reach the end.

One of the regrets of this guide is the relative paucity of women composers, which reflects an historical fact. But one of the delights of the contemporary classical music scene is that this barrier seems at last to be broken, with the emergence of many women composers still too young or too little known to meet the criteria of this guide – something that will, I am sure, no longer hold in twenty years' time.

It should be noted that in music, more than all the other arts, the work of a particular composer is invariably and identifiably fertilised by the work of other composers, especially in the earlier years of a composer's career. This is in part because music is a complex abstract art that requires the starting point of patterns and models, and in part because the human mind has an extraordinary ability to store and recall sounds, consciously or subconsciously. Consequently, when this guide suggests that a composer's work is influenced by another composer, or has echoes of another composer, there is no derogatory critical intention. Such comparisons can also be useful to readers unfamiliar with a particular composer's work, by placing the music within the general sphere of a more familiar composer. Of course, sometimes a composer is so influenced by the style of another that their own individuality is almost completely suppressed; such situations should be clear in this guide.

It proved too lengthy to include in the guide lists of the works of a given composer, in addition to those works recommended. However, readers with access to the Internet will find such lists of works of all composers with a main entry in the book in the guide's World Wide Web site.

The address is: <http://www.reedbooks.com/methuen/morris/index.html>

Mark Morris

Conventions used in this guide

CLASSICAL MUSIC

For the purposes of this guide 'classical music' means music with a serious intent and expectation, written within the western tradition that emerged from European antecedents. There are, of course, other classical traditions (such as those of the *rāga* of India). 'Classical music' (with a capital C), following convention, refers specifically to the music of the end of the 18th and very beginning of the 19th centuries, the time of Haydn and Mozart.

DATES

The dates given with a particular work are, wherever possible, the dates of composition.

SONATA

Following general usage, the expression 'sonata', as in *Violin Sonata*, refers to a work for violin and piano. If the work is for solo instrument, it is stated, as in *Sonata for Solo Clarinet*.

SERIALISM AND 12-TONE MUSIC

The language used for Schoenberg's harmonic innovations and their subsequent development has become confusing, with expressions overlapping in meaning. This guide follows what seems to be developing as the convention. '12-tone' refers to the harmonic system of organizing melodic motivational material into rows of 12 notes ('tone-rows'), using all the notes of the chromatic scale, as invented by Schoenberg (and also known as 'dodecaphonic' music, or '12-note' rows). 'Serial music' or 'serialism' refers to the system, developed by composers following Webern, of organizing not just the melodic motivational material according to such rules, but also other parameters of the music, such as rhythm, dynamics, or timbre.

'AVANT-GARDE'

The expression 'avant-garde' has historically described contemporary advanced new art. However, in terms of 20th-century music, it has become exclusively used for the period of extreme experimentation in the 1950s and 1960s, and is used in this context in this guide.

TITLES

The titles of works are generally given in their original language. However, this can be confusing when referring to better-known works that are invariably titled in English in the English-speaking world (Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*, for example). In these cases English titles have been used.

How to use this guide

Countries

The guide is divided into COUNTRIES, in alphabetical order of country.

At the beginning of each country there is a short INTRODUCTION to the history of 20th-century music in that country, indicating the main trends and composers. These introductions also include briefer information on those 20th-century composers of that country who do not seem to warrant, for one reason or another, a major entry.

Where applicable, at the end of the introduction to the country there is the address of that country's International Music Centre, an organisation dedicated to the modern music of that country, and the best place to address a detailed query about one of that country's composers. The International Association of Music Information Centres (IAMIC) maintains its own page on the Internet at <http://www.lab.sce.nyu.edu/stacie/iamic/iamic.html> ; readers should note that Internet addresses are subject to change, and if they have difficulty, should search for the address using the keyword IAMIC.

Following the historical summary, individual COMPOSERS of that country have their own entry in alphabetical order of composer.

Composers

The entry for each individual composer is arranged as follows:

NAME of composer with DATE and
PLACE OF BIRTH and DEATH:

Stravinsky Igor Fedorovich***
born 17th June 1882 at Oranienbaum
died 6th April 1971 in New York

MAIN ENTRY describing the works
and development of the composer:

Igor Stravinsky was for many years the most influential and highly acclaimed of 20th-century composers, the touchstone by which others were judged. The residue of this eminence remains, in that the older generation of current musicians, composers, and critics formed their musical outlook when Stravinsky was to all intents and purposes infallible. Yet that.

References to other composers who
have their own entries in the guide
are in bold type:

... the orchestra while emphasizing the rhythmic element. Those who respond to the music of **Orff** will enjoy this work, the direct predecessor of **Orff**'s idiom.

xviii How to use this guide

LIST OF RECOMMENDED WORKS in
alphabetical order with dates:

RECOMMENDED WORKS:

'monodrama' *Erwartung* (1909)
Five Pieces (1949) for orchestra
oratoria *Gurre-lieder* (1900–1911)
opera *Moses und Aron* (1930–1932)
Ode to Napoleon (1942) for reciter and
orchestra
Pelleas und Mellisande (1902–1903) for
orchestra
Piano Concerto (1942)
staged song-cycle *Pierrot lunaire* (1912)

BIBLIOGRAPHY (where applicable). The books chosen are generally the standard works on the composer concerned, so that the reader who discovers a special affinity for a particular composer can have a more comprehensive overview of the life and works of the composer than this guide can provide. For the more academically minded, such books will usually include a full bibliography of articles in journals, books, etc.

FINDING A PARTICULAR COMPOSER

If you know the composer's country turn to that country and then to that composer.

If you don't know the composer's country go to the index at the back of the guide. Composers with main entries are in capitals (upper case). The main entry for that composer is in **bold type** and listed first. Other references to the composer follow in normal type, and then references to individual works:

STRAVINSKY, Igor 416–425, 12, 94, 119, 343, 579, 603, 911

Agon, 419, 895, *Apollo*, 418, 421 etc.

If you want a list of a composer's works: it has not been possible to include a list of a given composer's works in this guide. However, such information can be found on the guide's WWW site at <http://www.reedbooks.com/methuen/morris/index.html>

If you know the name of a work, but not the composer: there is an index of 20th-century works by name, with that of the composer concerned, on the guide's WWW site at <http://www.reedbooks.com/methuen/morris/index.html>

EXPLORING THE WORKS OF A COMPOSER

The recommended works of each composer are given at the end of each composer entry. Most, if not all, of these will be discussed in the main portion of the entry, and it is suggested that readers who want to explore a composer's work, perhaps because they have heard a work that has attracted them, or because they are already familiar with some of the composer's output, follow this recommended list first. Similarly, works that are *not* included in these recommendations might be better avoided until the reader is familiar with the composer's important works.

Many 20th-century composers have drastically changed their styles during the course of their output, and works from one period might attract the reader, while those from another may not. A combination of the recommended works list and the main entry should point the reader to those periods and changes of style.

EXPLORING THE WORKS OF UNFAMILIAR COMPOSERS

The main entry should give a clear indication of the style(s) of the composer concerned, and a general evaluation of their work. If this seems attractive, the reader should explore the works in the list of recommended works first.

EXPLORING THE MUSIC OF THE 20TH CENTURY

For those who wish to explore the music of our century, and encounter composers and works unfamiliar to them, there are various levels of personal recommendation to make this fascinating experience easier. Alongside each composer entry is a bullet-point 'rating', as follows:

- *** indicates a composer who is among the best known and most influential composers of our century. It is suggested that those relatively unfamiliar with 20th-century music might start with these major figures; their music will provide a secure foundation of knowledge of modern music.
- ** indicates a composer who is less well known, but still of considerable stature, often of importance in their own country but less heard abroad. Many readers will already be familiar with the music of the major composers; they may care to explore the works of these composers.
- indicates a composer who will be of significance mainly to those with a considerable involvement in 20th-century music and with an already broad knowledge of the repertoire, who may find these composers of particular interest.

(No bullet-point) indicates a composer who may be encountered, but whose music is not recommended except to specialists.

To facilitate such an exploration, there are lists of composers marked with *** and ** on p. 21.

Finding Recordings

For many, recordings will be the major resource for listening to 20th-century music.

RECORDINGS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

To find a current recording, there are two invaluable publications, regularly updated. The *Gramophone Classical Music Catalogue* is published in Britain, and will be found in most good record stores on both sides of the Atlantic. *Opus* is its American equivalent. Less easy to find outside Germany, but extremely comprehensive, is the German *Bielefelder* catalogue. All three catalogues list the works of composers currently available, with the name of the recording company and its recording number. If your record store does not stock the item, most good stores will order it in; alternatively, there are many mail-order companies on both sides of the Atlantic.

In the case of major composers, there may sometimes be dozens of different recordings of the same work; in this situation the recording guides published by

xx How to use this guide

Penguin are invaluable, offering sensible evaluations and with regular supplements, though weaker on less well-known 20th-century composers. Most good record stores have their own copies; alternatively, they can be found in most good book stores from the Orkneys to the Yukon.

To keep up-to-date on new recordings, there are a number of magazines reviewing new classical releases. Two are especially recommended, though both can sometimes fall into the annoying trap of assuming that readers are familiar with the styles of 20th-century composers known only to specialists:

Gramophone, published monthly in the UK but available world-wide, has comprehensive, sober, and informed reviews and articles. On 20th-century music it is inclined to be conservative but informative.

Fanfare, published bi-monthly in paperback in the USA is even more comprehensive, including issues from the most obscure companies, and with a vast knowledge of past recordings. Always entertaining and informative, its bias is the opposite of that of *Gramophone*, sometimes allowing personal enthusiasm or specialist interest to overcome objective evaluation, but it will be of especial interest to the musician, the specialist, or the collector. The *American Record Guide* also regularly covers 20th-century music in a less imposing format than *Fanfare*, as do such magazines as *CD Review*. The *BBC Music Magazine* has well-balanced articles and reviews in an attractive format.

RECORDINGS OUT OF PRINT

A remarkable amount of 20th-century music has already been issued (or re-issued) on CD. Unfortunately, recordings of 20th-century music often do not stay in the catalogue, even in CD format, and are quickly deleted (out of print). However, virtually all the recommended works in this guide have been recorded at one time or another (there are some exceptions). Fortunately, many of these will be found in the libraries of major cities, and especially university libraries. The catalogue systems of such libraries can be difficult to browse through, and it is recommended that you take with you the name of the composer and the work(s) in which you are interested.

In addition, there are a number of major mail-order stores in the USA and Europe specializing in older second-hand recordings, usually with a huge inventory. These stores issue lists for a modest fee which can be browsed through at home. Such recordings can be relatively inexpensive, though some rare items can fetch very high prices, and since many of them are in LP format, a good turntable is mandatory. The major mail-order stores advertise in both *Gramophone* and *Fanfare*.

Finally, second-hand record stores carrying records almost invariably have some interesting 20th-century music hidden away somewhere, but since this is often a case of turning up an interesting record rather than finding something specific, it is recommended that readers take the guide with them. These are often in LP format; with the advent of the CD, many people are selling their LP collections, and this is a particularly fruitful period for those prepared to buy LPs, as well as an inexpensive way of exploring modern music. Those developing a

collection of 20th-century recordings should consider investing in a really good turntable and cartridge while they are still available.

A brief history of 20th-century music

The music of the 20th century has seen more developments, more divergent styles, more ferment and contrasts of idea, than any prior century except perhaps the 16th. The disparity between, say, a work of 1905 and a **Kagel** piece of the 1960s is so vast that it has no parallel in earlier times, not even between the music of Bach and Beethoven, divided by a similar time-period. With such a span to cover, any attempt to outline the history of 20th-century music in a brief introduction will be inadequate. But it may still be useful, provided the danger of over-simplification is noted, if it can give some order and perspective to what can seem, especially to someone unfamiliar with the music of the century, a very confusing picture.

Musically, the latter half of the 19th century was dominated by the Romanticism of German-speaking Europe, and by two composers, Wagner and Brahms, both of whom had in their own particular fashions developed the German tradition stemming from Beethoven. Other countries had their own veins of Romanticism, notably the Russian, and the Czech (Smetana and Dvořák), but in lesser musical countries such as Britain, the USA or Sweden, composers attempted to emulate German models. The other major force of the 19th century, Italian opera, remained a law unto itself, barely affecting the course of musical history outside Italy. French composers thrived, many with conspicuous success in their time, but (with the exception of Berlioz) without lasting influence outside their own sphere: there is no French composer in his maturity in the second half of the 19th century of the stature of the major German composers.

The continuity of the German tradition through the 19th century, from the birth of Romanticism to the brink of its collapse, is striking, and has its parallels in the relative but considerable peace, stability and continuous economic growth and development of Europe from the Treaty of Vienna (1815) until the outbreak of World War I. It is not difficult to trace the progression of musical idiom and idea through the 19th century, as each new development in the areas of both harmony and form unfurls in a logical and linear flow. Indeed the basic forms of music and the different genres remained essentially unchanged through the century, even if their content evolved: the main exception was the continuous flow of the music-dramas of Wagner.

The Romantic aesthetic, in both form and content, continues to echo to this day. But, at the beginning of the 20th century, these 19th-century traditions underwent such a huge upheaval, setting the course for all the progressive elements of 20th-century composition throughout the century, that it amounted to a second Renaissance of classical music.

By the turn of the century, the traditional harmonic system had been stretched to its limits in the search for more extensive modes of expression. In that traditional system, known as the tonal system, the melodic and harmonic progression follows a predetermined pattern (exemplified by the music of Mozart). It is a fundamental basis of the tonal system that a recognizable key is set up, then

modified or departed from, and finally returned to, both on a long-term scale (for example, movements) and in short-term passages. The exception of that return is always present, exemplified by the final cadences in any Classical work. This principle of calculated tension and release has its obvious satisfactions, which is why it has remained so popular, and it informs popular music to this day.

Any notes outside the seven notes of the key concerned are perceived as dissonance, and such dissonance can create colour and effect. Through the 19th century the dissonances gradually became more complex, and were increasingly used to reflect more complex ideas. The piling up of tension upon tension, with limited or long-delayed release, entirely suited the late Romantic aesthetic, moving far from the collective 'natural' order of the Enlightenment to an appreciation of the power and force of nature and of the individual psyche. This increased use of the extra five notes available in a scale is known as 'chromatic', after the Greek work for colour. In a famous turning-point, the opening chord of the Prelude to Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* (premiered in 1865), the sense of key is almost completely dissolved. But however complex the tensions, the traditional key structure still remained the foundation of composition at the end of the 19th century, with any departures eventually returning to provide a sense of resolution. Parallel with these developments, and in the search for deeper and more varied forms of expression, works became longer and the forces larger, especially in orchestral and operatic works.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the complexities of the late-Romantic tensions became untenable and collapsed, and the centre of that collapse was located in two cities, Paris and Vienna. The French musical reaction to Romanticism was much more subtle and less dramatic than the Viennese, and has received less attention, but in terms of changing the way musicians and composers think, its effects on 20th-century music have been just as far-reaching. Its central figure was **Debussy**: to encapsulate his contribution, he reasserted the ability and the right of music to state effects without recourse to the patterns of tension and release, and without the Romantic emphasis of constantly developing internal psychological states. He redefined the possibilities of motion (and thus of beginnings and endings) in classical music, but in doing so he maintained the basis of key (the triadic structure), which is why his contribution is not so obviously dramatic as those who abandoned it. Rather, he simply broke almost every rule governing how such triadic structures were to be organized, reordering progression using juxtapositions that were not supposed to work, but patently did; in this he is rightly compared to the contemporary movement of Impressionism in painting. In addition, in a process of profound importance to later composers, he drew on the experience of musics outside the prevailing German classical tradition: earlier French musics, folk scales (pentatonic scales), the music of Bali. In other words, he opened up to composers a new palette of freedoms, immediately utilised in a less revolutionary way by his younger contemporary **Ravel**.

The focus of new European ideas in all fields at the turn of the century was to be found in Vienna. It has been stated, without too much exaggeration, that all the principal developments of 20th-century thought can be traced back to there, from atomic physics to architecture to psychology. What was happening in Vienna was

revolutionary: a rethinking of the nature and place of the individual, drawn from the experience of Romanticism, but in reaction to the failures and inadequacies of the Romantic approach. Psychology and the concept of the subconscious were being developed by Freud; Otto Wagner led the movement for functionalism in architecture; the Vienna *Sezession* revolutionized painting; and the *Jugendstil* movement in literature turned into Expressionism. Building on Nietzsche and Darwin, humankind's relationship with God was being completely reappraised. The new science of sociology was emerging, and the older one of mathematics was rewriting the knowledge of the physical universe. Major thinkers and artists from outside Austria, such as Einstein (who taught at Prague, one of the three great cities of the Austro-Hungarian Empire), Ibsen, Oscar Wilde, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Max Weber, or Bertrand Russell, were as well known (in some cases better known) in Vienna as in their home countries. The exodus of so many artists and thinkers following the rise of the Nazis helped disseminate the influence of this Viennese intellectual tradition, notably in the USA. In the political sphere, Vienna's turmoil at the beginning of the century continues to resonate, not least in the Balkans. In those terms our current European political history is still a continuation of events set in motion in and around 1914, and this is equally true of musical history.

Artistic technical developments rarely occur outside a social and cultural context. The tonal discipline of the Classical age of Mozart reflected the preoccupation with Rational social order and grace; the darker and more complex harmonies of Beethoven, the changes wrought by Napoleon and French thought; the tone-poems of the later part of the century, the increasing Romantic awareness of the darker internal recesses of the soul that were to emerge in concrete fashion in the work of Freud. The crisis that engulfed composition in the first two decades of the 20th century can be seen in part as a response to the technical impasse: the tonal system could be stretched no further without destroying the very basis of the system, and forces were already so large as to be unextendable. But it can also be seen as a reflection of the age: an awareness that the orders of European empires, the social and intellectual structures of élite aristocracies, and the patterns of thought that had developed through 19th-century Europe, were no longer viable. It is no coincidence that such a musical crisis occurred in the period of the slaughter and massive social change of World War I and the Russian Revolution. But the locus of that change at the turn of the century was undoubtedly Vienna, the centre of a decadent Empire in a state of collapse.

Musically, the hinge of that crisis was **Mahler**, who died in 1911. In one sense, he represents the culmination of the Romantic development, in his huge, psychologically turbulent, religiously and philosophically striving symphonies and song-cycles. In another, he heralded what was to come, in his use of musical sound-sources that had been considered outside the area of serious music, in his extension of chromaticism to the edge of atonality, and in his reversion to chamber forces within the large-scale orchestration. It was **Schoenberg**, together with his pupils **Berg** and **Webern**, who wrought the revolution. At the end of the first decade of the century they broke down the whole concept of key (and thus of traditional tension and release) in the so-called 'atonal' works. Crucial to this change was an

appreciation that dissonances were not an adjunct to the consonance of tonality, a departure from the norm, but perfectly worthy musical elements in their own right. In other words, the tonal system was in itself a construct, sanctified by much usage and the passage of time but not necessarily given by nature. This is a concept still argued about, and still very difficult for many to understand, so steeped are we in that tonal tradition. But the concept of tonality as a natural order is a very Western ethnocentric view: other systems exist perfectly viably elsewhere, such as in some Eastern European folk musics, in the classical *rāga* of India, or in most Eastern musics. Consequently, once this concept had been established, 20th-century Western composers have found it possible and profitable to learn from those other musics.

The problem for Schoenberg and his followers was that the traditional structures of music had been inextricably linked to the harmonic system, and the collapse of the latter led to problems with the former. Their return to a primacy of small-scale, often chamber, works was in part a reaction to Romantic inflation, in part a response to the economic stresses of the period, but also a necessity. Traditionally, larger-scale structures had been based on harmonic progression; it was not clear how one could build new, larger-scale works using the new harmonies. In the 1920s Schoenberg responded to this by inventing the 12-tone system, which organized the ordering, or patterning of the 12 notes of the complete chromatic scale, each carrying equal weight (i.e. without any note acting as a traditional dissonant), and being arranged according to mathematical and strict rules. This system was developed by all three composers in their different fashions during the next two decades. Schoenberg largely followed his system until late in his life. Berg developed the more expressive possibilities and the interweaving of 12-tone principles with echoes of a tonal base. Webern created complex and compressed miniatures. There are still composers (albeit not many) following Schoenberg's system. Webern, however, opened up new possibilities, for he realized the potential of the system to be extended to parameters of music other than harmony (dynamics, duration, rhythm).

The possibilities of Webern's developments were exploited by a whole new generation of younger composers after World War I, notably by **Boulez** in France and **Stockhausen** in Germany; **Messiaen** had already, to a large extent, combined the legacy of Debussy and that of Webern in his own very individual fashion. This strand of modern music has become known as 'total serialism', or more commonly simply 'serialism'. When these developments were married to ideas from other developments in 20th-century music, they produced the avant-garde period of the 1960s. Thus the first of the continuities of 20th-century music can be drawn, from Mahler through to the avant-garde composers of the 1960s. The influence of Berg has perhaps been even greater, for he showed later composers not prepared to be as experimental as the main figures of the avant-garde that some of the controls and organization of the 12-tone system could be fruitfully merged with elements of more traditional harmonic organizations.

Although Schoenberg's followers continued their developments in the city, the importance of Vienna as a cultural centre waned after 1918, its empire defeated and dismembered. Its place was taken by the capital of one of the major victors.