Lulu

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Alban Berg (1885–1935) died on 24 December 1935, before he could finish his opera Lulu; the orchestration of the third act is incomplete, existing only as a short-score. Of the 1300 bars of this short score (comprising the totality of Act III), 416 are orchestrated by Berg himself; the best part of the remainder consists of instrumental indications, and the music of 88 bars is somewhat uncertain.

Berg wrote his "Symphonic Pieces from the Opera Lulu," the Lulu Suite, a year before his death, in order to give the eagerly expectant music world an impression of his new creation.

After a long and thorough study of all the related material and similar consideration of the positive and negative aspects involved, Friedrich Cerha (b. 1926) decided to make a playable version of Act III. He worked on it from 1962 to 1974 and, after Helene Berg died, he revised it again in 1976–1977 and 1981 in light of newly accessible sources.
Since comparison of the short score and the full score of the first two acts and the orchestrated parts of Act III shows that there are no significant divergences, Cerha saw no reason why he should not adhere to the layout as it was set down in the short score.

The posthumous premiere of the first two acts took place in Zurich on 2 June 1937, while the first performance of the entire opera was given on 24 February 1979 in Paris. Cerha's reconstitution of Act III made it possible to choose between the two-act and the three-act versions.

A performance in Copenhagen on 15 October 2010 added a third version to the two foregoing ones; Eberhard Kloke (b. 1948) devised a type of "module system" for Act III which gave performers the option of shaping scenes and dramatic developments more freely, with the intention of reducing the act's duration.

Kloke's new version of Act III attempts to open up the work; he does not consider the short score as an absolute authority as regards its horizontal course of development. He arrived at some independent solutions of his own in the course of studying the sources and the subsequent editing work. There are several places where he offers

ossia variants and options for shortening some passages via vi – de cuts, based on which of the performers can find their own solutions.

One of the premises on which Kloke's version devolves is that all the sections Berg orchestrated should remain as they were, using them as the foundation for Act III. His intention in adding new and old parts of Acts I and II, as well as sections of the Symphonic Pieces (which Berg completed after the short score and which of course constitute a kind of further development of material from Act III) was to add coherence and to underline formal interrelations among the three acts.
But Kloke also reverted directly to Cerha's version since at times it did not seem to make sense to derive alternative solutions to the existing source material.

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OVERVIEW OF THE VERSIONS

Lulu
Opera in 2 Acts (1927–1935)
incl. Variations and Adagio Original version
Orchestration: 3 3 4 3 – 4 3 3 1 – timp., perc. (6), harp, pno., alto sax, strings
onstage music
Duration: 120 min.

Lulu
Opera in 3 Acts (1927–1935)
Act III reconstructed by Friedrich Cerha (1978)
Orchestration: 3 3 4 3 – 4 3 3 1 – timp., perc. (8), harp, pno., alto sax, strings
onstage music
Duration: 180 min.

Lulu
Opera in 3 Acts (1927–1935)
Act III reconstructed by Eberhard Kloke (2008)
Orchestration: 3 3 4 3 – 4 3 3 1 – timp., perc. (6), harp, accordion, pno., alto sax, str.
onstage music*
Duration: approx. 165 min. (maximum variant)

The opera also exists in a version for chamber orchestra, Act III arranged by Eberhard Kloke:

Lulu
Opera in 3 Acts (1927–1935)
Act III arranged by Eberhard Kloke (2008)
Version for chamber orchestra by Eberhard Kloke (2009)
Orchestration: 1 1 2 1 - 1 1 1 0 - perc. (1), pno., accordion, strings (at least 2 2 2 2 1)
onstage music*
Duration: approx. 165 min. (maximum variant)

* Onstage music: the stage music for Kloke's versions of Lulu is available for performance audio feed on CD, on hire from UE.