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ALPHONS DIEPENBROCK AND THE EUROPEAN WORLD OF COMPOSERS AT THE FIN-DE-SIÈCLE

Abstract: The article consists of three parts. In the first part the author gives a survey of the large artistic renewal that took place in the Netherlands around 1900. Special attention is given to “de beweging van Tachtig” (the movement of the “Tachtigers”), a renewal movement in literature in which the composer Alphons Diepenbrock was involved. In the second part a short description of the life and work of this most important Dutch composer of the end of the nineteenth century is given. In his early years Diepenbrock orientated himself to composers like Wagner, especially around the First World War (in which the Netherlands remained a neutral country), and he became a fervent admirer of French art. His music is a unique synthesis of Wagner’s chromaticism, the word-bound rhythms of plain-chant and the polyphonic music of the old Flemish schools of Ockeghem and Josquin. In the third part the author deals with a couple of Diepenbrock’s (artistic) contacts. There are highlights on Mahler, Schönberg and Debussy, primarily based on their correspondence.

Key-words: Alphons Diepenbrock, Dutch music, Gustav Mahler, Richard Strauss, Claude Debussy

«A New Spring, A New Sound»

In his celebrated Preface to the 1907 edition of Potgieter’s *Het Rijksmuseum* (a glorification of the Dutch Golden Age, the age of famous painters like Rembrandt, Vermeer and Hals), Albert Verweij (1865-1937), one of the satellites around the German poet Stefan George, wrote among other statements, the following: «We see that during the last quarter of the last century the Netherlands participated more and more in European life.»¹ The fin-de-siècle in the Netherlands certainly didn’t only mean decadence and melancholy. In the first place it was a time of renaissance. The windows were wide open. The hope that a better and richer future was to come resounds wonderfully in the first line of the long poem *Mei* (1888) by the renowned poet and socialist Herman Gorter (1864-1927): «A new spring, a new sound».

The Netherlands, and especially its big cities like Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam brimmed with activities. In 1876, after much ado, the North Sea Channel finally opened, thus safeguarding the position of Amster-

¹ Albert Verweij, in: *Potgieter, E.J., Het Rijksmuseum*, Haarlem 1907, p.V.

dam as a harbour. Everywhere in the city canals were filled and houses were built, enlarged and altered, although - alas - they were too often demolished. In 1874 a new theatre opened at the Leidseplein. In 1877 the first good university opened in Amsterdam, followed by a second one in 1880. In 1883 a number of leading Amsterdam residents founded the Wagner Society. Several of Wagner's operas had already been performed in Rotterdam. The Rembrandt Society (founded to prevent Dutch art from being sold abroad) was founded in 1883 and still plays a very important role in the preservation of works of art and the growth of art collections in Dutch museums. In 1884 the Amsterdam Academy of Music opened. The Rijksmuseum, a beautiful building by the architect P.J.H. Cuypers (1827-1921) that houses the national treasure, was opened in 1885; the Concertgebouw opened its doors in 1888, the same year in which the Concertgebouw orchestra started. Between 1898 and 1903 Hendrik Petrus Berlage built the new Amsterdam Beurs - the stock-exchange. From 1915 to 1917 he worked on an elaborated town-plan of the south part of Amsterdam. One of the highlights of his later work is the Gemeentemuseum of The Hague, the museum that now houses, among other works, the largest collection of paintings by Mondriaan in the world.

Next to the pioneers of the movement Carel Vosmaer (1826-1888) and Joseph Alberdinck Thijm (1820-1889), an important role was played at the Amsterdam University by a group of students of classical languages and their friends. Together they proved to be the core of the movement later called the "Beweging van Tachtig" and included : a.o. Jacques Perk (1859-1881), Willem Kloos (1859-1938), Herman Gorter, Frederik van Eeden (1859-1938), Lodewijk van Deyssel (1864-1954) and, as the only composer among them, Alphons Diepenbrock (1862 -1921). The title of their magazine is typical: *De Nieuwe Gids* (The New Guide) a firm answer to the older and much respected *De Gids* (The Guide). The "Beweging van Tachtig" was in the first place a movement that resisted the too facile poetry of the vicars of the Romanticism who intended to educate and preach. The "Tachtigers" strove - partly following the example set by the English poets Shelley and Keats - to find absolute Beauty, l'art- pour-l'art. Due to hyperindividualism, the movement soon fell apart.

The painters followed the writers and poets. Here it is also observed that slowly but surely traditional romantic and academic art was rejected in favour of a much more free use of form and colour. Representatives of the more academic style are Lourens Alma Tadema (1836-1912) and Ary Scheffer (1795-1858), who mostly worked abroad. Important Dutch artists that contributed to the "renaissance" were George Hendrik Breitner (1857-1923), Jan Toorop (1858-1928), Johann Thorn Prikker (1868-1932), Johan Barthold Jongkind (1819-1891) and, of course, Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890).

Alphons Diepenbrock

Born in Amsterdam, Alphons Diepenbrock descended on his father's side from an ancient Roman Catholic Westphalian family. The Diepenbrock castle still exists and can be found slightly north of Bocholt, close to the Dutch border. His mother, Johanna Kuytenbrouwer, descended from a family from Amsterdam. The very pious Diepenbrock family was in contact with the leaders of the Dutch Roman Catholic revival.

When he was young Diepenbrock proved to be musical but he never received a proper music education. He taught himself to play on a beautiful Erard grand piano, had some lessons, and, at the age of 18, went to the University of Amsterdam to study classical languages. He graduated cum laude with a dissertation on Seneca. During his student years he became involved in the "Beweging van Tachtig". For his career, Diepenbrock took practically no lessons - excepting some instruction by Bernard Zweers (1854-1924). He studied Bach's *Wohltemperierte Klavier* soon followed by Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, *Rheingold* and *Tristan und Isolde*. For some time Diepenbrock considered going to Vienna to take lessons in composing from Anton Bruckner, a composer who at that time was hardly known at all in the Netherlands (or in the rest of Europe). In Diepenbrock's compositions, almost all of which are vocal works, he strove to find a synthesis of Wagner's chromatic language and the polyphonic world of both Palestrina and Bach. Being a classicist himself, he paid a lot of attention to the (free) rhythm of the texts.

The first work to show Diepenbrock's genius is the elaborate *Missa in die festo* for tenor, 8-part male choir and organ, which was printed in 1895. It was an almost impossible task to write a very modern work in combination with the religious naivety of composers like Palestrina and Bach. As such, a fervent admirer of Nietzsche wrote a work in which he, almost tragically, struggled with his profound religious conscience and the equally profound notion that in the intellectual Europe religion had become an idle game. In this aspect he deeply resembles a composer like Gustav Mahler.

Diepenbrock's music is nearly always polyphonic, poly-melodic. Just like Wagner's compositions (and like the plain chant that was so important to Diepenbrock), the melody is free from strict meter, the music breathes along with the text. In the poly-melodic aspect of his music - which is also found in the work of two other Dutch composers: Matthijs Vermeulen (1888-1967) and Rudolf Escher (1912-1980) - we hear the echoes of composers like Josquin and Ockeghem.

At first Diepenbrock's contacts in the world of art were mostly literary. The only professional composer with whom he was in correspondance was the Dutch-Belgian composer Carl Smulders (1863-1934), who lectured at the University of Liège. For several years Diepenbrock befriended the Hungarian composer Emanuel Moór (1863-1931).

In the meantime Diepenbrock gradually began to dislike the extreme l'art-pour-l'art of the "Beweging van Tachtig" (and Wagner!). He tried to find - still deeply imbedded in Roman Catholicism - music that wasn't too individual. Typical in this aspect is Diepenbrock's (still very Wagnerian) arrangement of Nietzsche's *Im grossen Schweigen* (*Morgenröthe*, aphorism 423) from 1906. When the philosopher laments over the speechlessness of nature and the silence of mankind, Diepenbrock quotes the hymn *Ave Maria stella* as an answer to the questions the philosopher asks.

He became increasingly interested in the clear Latin world of composers like Debussy. And he gradually renounced the music of Wagner and Richard Strauss. A definite choice in favour of French music (which proved to be of great influence on Dutch music) was prompted by the first World War. Diepenbrock opposed the Prussian-German expansion in fierce articles and compositions. The Dutch composer (and Diepenbrock's adept) Willem Pijper (1894-1947) wrote: "*In this context it is worth noticing that one spoke with belittlement of 'war neurosis' and 'Germanophobia'. It may be useful to correct this view. In 1912, when nobody here thought about the bombardment of Rheims or the 'rücksichtslose' submarine war, Diepenbrock already composed his Berceuse on a text by Van Lerberghe, a short work which is as French as can be. It is so very French that it proved to be one of his lesser works. His first songs on words by Verlaine date back to 1898. In 1892 he wrote his famous study on De Gourmont's 'Le latin mystique'. His love for French literature and music meant much more than just a reaction to the matters occurring in the world; his almost prophetic enrapture was a reaction to his own yesterday that had died.*"²

His interest in a composer like Debussy of course was evident in his own compositions, such as in his music for the play *Marsyas* by Balthazar Verhagen (1910).

Strangely enough his sympathy for French music didn't lead to many friendly contacts. His meeting with Debussy (who was by then fatally ill) was a straightforward disappointment. His only true friend was Gustav Mahler. His sympathy for the music of Strauss and Schönberg proved to be temporary.

Gustav Mahler

Diepenbrock and Mahler became friends when Mahler conducted the Concertgebouw orchestra as they played his Third Symphony.³ As is known, Mahler in this work combines a text by Nietzsche (*Zarathustras Mitter-*

² Willem Pijper, *Alphons Diepenbrock 1862-1921*, in: De Quintencirkel, Amsterdam, 1964, p.14-15.

³ It was the second performance in the Netherlands: Mahler's Third symphony – the first of his symphonies to be played in that country – had its opening performance in Arnhem on October 17, 1903.

nachtslied) with a text from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (“Es sungen drei Engel”). Diepenbrock, an authority on both Nietzsche and the world of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, was at first surprised by this grotesque combination of texts. But soon afterwards he became familiar with both Mahler and his work.

On October 21 Mahler wrote from the Dutch city Zaandam to his wife:

“...*Gestern die Generalprobe war herrlich. Zweihundert Jungen aus der Schule unter Begleitung ihrer Lehrer (6 Stück) brüllen das Bim-Bam und ein famoser Frauenchor von 330 Stimmen! Orchester herrlich! Viel besser als in Crefeld. Die Violinen ebenso schön wie in Wien. Alle Mitwirkenden hören nicht auf zu applaudiren und zu winken. Dass du nicht dabei sein kannst! [...] Einen sehr interessanten holländischen Musiker, namens **Diepenbrock**, der sehr eigenartige Kirchenmusik schreibt, habe ich hier kennen gelernt. -Die musikalische Kultur in diesem Lande ist **stupend**. Wie die Leute bloss zuhören können!*”⁴

And Diepenbrock wrote to a friend in an elaborate letter:

“...*I met Gustav Mahler last week. This man impressed me very much indeed. I've heard and admired his Third Symphony. The first movement contains a lot of ugliness, but, after listening to it a second and third time and knowing what it means to say, it already seems to be different. Mahler is a very simple man, he doesn't pose himself as a celebrity, he is just as he is. I admire him very much...Bon enfant, naive, sometimes a little bit childish, he looks through large crystalline glasses with magic-filled eyes. In every aspect he is modern. He believes in the future.*”⁵

Mahler's first visit to our country was an immediate success. A success also made possible by Willem Mengelberg who had rehearsed the Concertgebouw orchestra with a high degree of accuracy. On October 30, 1903 a very grateful Mahler wrote him a letter from Vienna:

“*Lieber und werter Freund! Anbei, wie versprochen, ein Schock von uns 'eingerichteter' Partituren. Lassen Sie mich Ihnen bei dieser Gelegenheit nochmals sagen, wie wohl mir die schönen Tage gethan, die ich in Ihrer und Ihrer lieben Frau Gesellschaft verlebt, und das ich das Gefühl habe, das mir in Amsterdam eine zweite Heimath erstanden ist, dank Ihrer freundschaftlichen Fürsorge und Ihres so innigen künstlerischen Verständnisses. Nochmals herzlichsten, treuesten Dank für alles. Ihr stets verbundener Gustav Mahler.*

Diepenbrock, den ich auch herzlich liebgewonnen, grüssen Sie vielmals mir. Bei Gelegenheit antworte ich auf seinen sehr lieben Brief, den ich in der Bilderrolle erst nach meiner Ankunft in Wien aufgefunden.”⁶

⁴ Cited from: *Alphons Diepenbrock. Brieven en Documenten. Bijgebracht en toegelicht door Eduard Reeser*, Deel IV, Den Haag, 1974, p.135-136.

⁵ *Ibid*, p.138.

⁶ *Ibid*, p.141.

Mahler was to stay several times in the Netherlands.⁷ A year later already, on October 19, he was in Amsterdam again. The day before Diepenbrock's *Te Deum* was performed in Strassburg without Diepenbrock being there. Diepenbrock's wife Elisabeth wrote in her diary on October 20:

*"Mahler is again in the city. Fons [Alphons, G.v.d.L.] will pay him a visit today, there's a lot of warmth between them; they will take a walk through the city after which Fons will play his Te Deum. Mahler is enthusiastic and wants to perform it in Vienna."*⁸

On October 23 Mahler conducted a programme that became famous: his Fourth Symphony was played twice. Mahler wrote to his wife:

*"Liebste! Das war ein erstaunlicher Abend! Das Publikum ist von Anfang an so aufmerksam und verständig gewesen und war von Satz zu Satz wärmer. - Das zweite Mal wuchs die Begeisterung, und nach dem Schluss gab es etwas ähnliches wie in Crefeld. Die Sängerin⁹ hat das Solo mit schlichtem und rührendem Ausdruck gesungen und das Orchester hat sie begleitet wie Sonnenstrahlen. Es war ein Bild auf Goldgrund. Ich glaube nun wirklich, dass ich in Amsterdam jene musikalische Heimat finde, die ich mir in diesem vertrottelten Köln erhofft habe. - Heute geht es an die Hauptproben zur Zweiten. Das giebt noch eine harte Nuss. Das Orchester ist hier wieder reizend zu mir! Ich küsse Dich vielmals, mein Almschi."*¹⁰

Elisabeth wrote:

*"... After the concert supper at Mengelberg's, and when everybody had left, Mahler didn't want Fons to leave (they were sitting close together), we had to stay. Mahler then said wonderful things about the essence of music, it was a moment never to be forgotten in which Fons encouraged him again and again so that he was all in flame. Fons calls him Orfeo and tells him that he has a classical opinion of music."*¹¹

A day later Mahler, Diepenbrock and Willem Mengelberg together paid a visit to the Frans Hals museum in Haarlem. Unfortunately they arrived too late so that two days later Mahler ended an afternoon rehearsal earlier than usual in order to visit the museum.

On October 27 Mahler, Diepenbrock and Mengelberg walked from Hilversum to Laren.

⁷ A complete overview of Mahler's contacts in the Netherlands can be found in: Eduard Reeser (ed.), *Mahler und Holland. Briefe*, publ. by the Internationale Mahler Gesellschaft, 1980.

⁸ Cited from: *Alphons Diepenbrock. Brieven en Documenten...*p.288.

⁹ Alida Oldenboom-Lutkemann, according to Mahler, "ein kleines, dickes Weib-erl...singt aber herrlich mit glockenreiner Stimme."

¹⁰ Cited from: *A.D. Brieven en Documenten...*, p.292.

¹¹ *Ibid*, p.292.

Elisabeth wrote:

“Tilly¹² and I will go later, we will catch up with them. Mahler often walks in front alone, without a hat, silent, he sometimes returns and talks, he is delighted with the country, the village, (...), and at dinner compellingly tells about the contents of the Second Symphony. Then we walked back and listened to the repeated Second that evening.”¹³

Another nice comment on Mahler: Mahler - being used to the sober Wiener Secession - absolutely didn't feel at home in Mengelberg's over-decorated Neo Gothic home – Mengelberg's father was the owner of a renowned studio of Neo Gothic church decorations. At a certain moment Mahler is said to have exclaimed: “*Das Geschwätz des Vaters hängt bei dem Sohn an der Wand!*”

When Diepenbrock proclaimed that Berlage's Beurs (the stock-exchange) wasn't to his liking Mahler said he found Berlage a great architect.

In March 1906 Mahler visited the Netherlands for the third time conducting several concerts of his Fifth Symphony, the *Kindertotenlieder* and *Das klagende Lied*.

For various reasons, amongst others conducting in the USA, Mahler returned to the Netherlands as late as 1909. On March 25, 1908 Diepenbrock conducted the Concertgebouw orchestra in a concert of Mahler's Fourth Symphony. Diepenbrock wrote a programme note on Mahler's work for the occasion.¹⁴

On September 27, 1909 Mahler was in Amsterdam again to conduct his Seventh Symphony. Mahler wrote to his wife on September 29, 1909:

“...Diepenbrock fand sich auch schon zur ersten Probe ein. Das ist so ein prachtvoller Kerl...”¹⁵

Except for a visit that he kept secret from his friends in Amsterdam - he payed a very short visit to Leiden to consult Sigmund Freud on his psychical and sexual problems in his marriage with Alma - this was to be the last visit of Mahler to the Netherlands.

For the last time, on April 14, 1910 Diepenbrock conducted Mahler's Fourth Symphony (which to him was the most beautiful), this time with Aaltje Noorderwier as a soloist.

On May 18, 1911 Mahler died. Even though Diepenbrock had been warned in a letter by Carl Moll¹⁶, Mahler's death came as a severe blow. It

¹² Tilly Wubbe, Mengelberg's wife.

¹³ Cited from: *A. D. Brieven en Documenten...*, p. 294.

¹⁴ This explanation is to be found integrally in *De rode Leeuw* 62, 26.April 1995.

¹⁵ Cited from: *A.D.Brieven en Dokumenten...*Deel VI, Amsterdam, 1991, p.147.

was evident to him that he had to be present at Mahler's funeral. As an official delegate of the "Maatschappij tot bevordering der Toonkunst" he placed a funeral wreath.

Elisabeth Diepenbrock wrote in her diary on June 7, 1911:

*"A lot of memories welled up. How he came to us for the first time to see Joannetje [Diepenbrock's first child G.v.d.L.] lying in her crib and how he watched the tiny lovely thing with warm tenderness. Later on he remarked on her and the last time I saw him with the little ones on the street he suddenly stood still and said: 'Ach, gnädige Frau, ich erkenne Sie an den Kleinen.'"*¹⁷

Mahler's funeral impressed Diepenbrock so much that he left Vienna immediately after the ceremony even though he had never seen Vienna before.

Arnold Schönberg

On November 28, 1912 Arnold Schönberg conducted his Symphonic Poem *Pelleas und Melisande* op.5, that he wrote in 1902/1903, in the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam. Schönberg was in the Netherlands on an invitation by Willem Mengelberg.

Diepenbrock and his wife Elisabeth went to both the rehearsal and to the concert. Elisabeth wrote in her diary:

"... After that we met Arnold Schönberg. He conducted on Nov. 28 his Pelleas et Melisande, that was composed at the same time as Debussy's work which he admired very much, and of which he said: Dass ist die wahre Musik zum Pelleas, because he himself expressed his self more than the poetical text.

So very many bad things are told and written about him like: the destroyer of all musical tradition, but we rather liked him. He is a nice and witty fellow, agile but not fatiguing, flexible and modest.

We were at the rehearsal in the morning and his wife was there too, and we asked them to visit us that evening for an hour or so. They were pleased to do so and we also invited Dopfer, Cornelis and Zimmermann. I was in a very good mood and we talked about Mahler, an acquaintance of Schönberg's whom he admired very much indeed. When Fons asked him whether or not he'd met Mahler, Schönberg answered: Er liess uns zu, to express his admiration and his own position in the presence of the Master. We found the Pelleas much too long and too heavy, too German in sound,

¹⁶ Carl Moll (1861-1945), a painter from Vienna who played an important role in the Secession. His house was a place where artists like Klimt, Moser and Mahler met each other. Alma Mahler was his step-daughter.

¹⁷ Cited from: *A.D. Brieven en Documenten...Deel VII*, Amsterdam, 1985, p.204.

but with a lot of beauty and very real, not like the work Scriabin makes. It shows a real personality. On Friday afternoon Fons took him and his wife to see the collection of Drucker, and Schönberg was raptured by the work of Maris (even though he makes cubistic paintings himself), and later on we met each other accidentally at the Japanese auction, where I was with the little ones and we had tea together at Ledeboer. In the evening they came over to tea and Fons played his Marsyas (fragments) and Te Deum on Schönberg's request. He especially liked the Te Deum and he immediately wrote to his friend Schreker in Vienna, who had asked for a copy of it. On Saturday we saw them home to the train; he went to The Hague to conduct Pelleas and we warmly departed, and they said their visit to Amsterdam had been very pleasant thanks to us and that we were the only ones that took notice of them.”¹⁸

Schönberg immediately wrote to Diepenbrock on December 7, 1912:

“...Verehrter Herr Diepenbrock, beiliegende Karte von Schreker Ihnen zu senden, macht mir grosses Vergnügen. Ich glaube, dass Schreker unbedingt Wort hält. Jedenfalls wird es gut sein, wenn Sie ihm das entsprechende Material gleich schicken, ehe er fürs nächste Jahr Programm macht. - Ich will Ihnen bei dieser Gelegenheit (Ihnen und Ihrer Frau!) nochmals auch namens meiner Frau aufs herzlichste danken für Ihre Gastfreundschaft. Und hoffentlich haben wir bald in Berlin Gelegenheit, sie zu erwidern. Mit den herzlichsten Grüssen Ihr Arnold Schönberg.”¹⁹

The answer of Diepenbrock, Amsterdam, December 13, 1912:

“Verehrter Herr Schönberg, Besten Dank für Ihren Brief und die Empfehlung an Schreker. - Morgen gehn Klavier Ausz. und Partitur nach Wien. Die Zusage S's an Ihnen [sic] genügte mir um Herrn S. dieselben zu senden. Nach Kenntnisnahme steht es ihm selbstverständlich frei wenn das Werk ihm aus irgend einem Grunde nicht passt, auf die Aufführung zu verzichten. Uns war es eine Ehre und Freude Ihre und Ihrer liebe Frau Bekanntschaft zu machen, und wenn wir Ihnen beiden den Aufenthalt in irgend einer Weise angenehm gemacht haben, freut uns das doppelt. - Im Ganzen können Sie mit der Kritik zufrieden sein, wie mir scheint. Ich habe Einiges bewahrt und werde es Ihnen schicken. Vielleicht kennen Sie in Berlin einen der vielen dort ansässigen Holländer, der sie Ihnen übersetzen kann. - Erlauben Sie mir eine Bitte. - Mein Copist ist der Musiker der in dem Orchester das Englische Horn bläst. Er sagte mir Sie seien mit ihm zufrieden gewesen, und er hätte Ihnen gerne ein Zeugnis fragen wollen, aber nicht den Muth dazu gehabt. Er möchte bloss zu seinem Vergnügen dieses Zeugnis haben, nicht um damit etwa sich um eine andere Stelle zu bewerben. - Wenn Sie also über ihn zufrieden sind, machen Sie ihm die

¹⁸ Cited from: A.D...., Deel VIII, Amsterdam, 1996, p.66.

¹⁹ Ibid, p.66.

Freude. Er ist ein armer Kerl, der sich schwer plagen muss. Ohne Ihre Zustimmung wird er sich auch gewiss nie dieses Zeugnisses bedienen. Name und Adresse sind W. Tiel (TIEL) Hobbemakade 169. - Leben Sie wohl, und kommen Sie zurück!"²⁰

Schönberg immediately provided what he was asked for and wished to be informed about the Te Deum, Berlin, December 30, 1912:

*"Sehr geehrter Herr Diepenbrock, verzeihen Sie, dass ich Ihnen so spät erst antworte. Ich war in St. Petersburg, Pelleas aufzuführen und fand bei der Rückkehr viel dringende Arbeit vor. - Ich sende Ihnen beiliegend den Brief für Herrn Thiel. Es ist mir höchst angenehm, ihm ein Vergnügen zu machen. Wenn Sie glauben, dass es so recht ist, bitte ich Sie es ihm zu geben. - Gerne wüsste ich, wie Sie mit Schreker stehen. Hat er sich schon geäußert? - Ich bitte Sie, Ihre Frau Gemahlin herzlichst von meiner Frau und mir zu grüssen. Ebensolche Grüsse auch an Sie, und Prosit Neujahr! Ihr Arnold Schönberg."*²¹

Schönberg soon received a typical Diepenbrock letter, Amsterdam, January 8, 1913:

"Verehrter Herr, Besten Dank für Ihren Brief auch von Tiel der ganz entzückt war. Ich danke Ihnen auch noch dass Sie die Güte hatten, meiner Bitte Folge zu leisten. - Leider habe ich von Herrn Schreker nichts gehört, obwohl ich ihm zugleich bei der Übersendung der Partitur und des Kl. Ausz. gebeten habe mir die gute Ankunft auf einer Karte mit ein Paar Worte [sic] zu melden. Ich vermuthe jedoch dass Ihr Freund falls ihm die Musikalien nicht erreicht hätten, mir davon Kunde gegeben hätte. Übrigens habe ich in meinem Leben - und ich bin leider schon 50 - schon so viele schlechte Erfahrungen in dieser Hinsicht gemacht, dass ich gelassen und unempfindlich geworden bin. Dies selbe Te Deum was ihm Gustav Mahler empfohlen hatte und um dessen Übersendung Herr Schalk in Wien mir bat, hat derselbe Schalk, weil es seinem Chor nicht lag, unfrankirt [sic] zurückgesandt. Mahler war darüber entrüstet. Grämen Sie sich nicht über Herrn Schreker wenn er nicht antwortet. Ich habe ihm geschrieben er hätte sich zu gar nichts verpflichtet. Wenn das Werk ihm aus irgend einem Grunde (subjectif oder objectif) nicht taugt, könne er die Musikalien zurück schicken. Das verstehe ich ja sehr gut, dass eine Arbeit einem nicht zusagt und dem anderen gefällt, oder auch in Hinsicht des Publikums oder der technischen Schwierigkeit etc. nicht passt. Aber man kann immer eine Kiste frankiren aus Respect - für einen Gustav Mahler, man kann auch eine Karte schreiben. Ich bin aber deshalb dem Herrn Schreker nicht böse. Es ist das Los der 'unberühten'. Werde ich jemals diese Linie überschreiten, und mich in den Gefilden der Seligen mit den Heroen herumtummeln? Wer weiss es? -

²⁰ Ibid, p.71.

²¹ Ibid, p.82.

Leben Sie wohl, lieber Herr Schönberg. Ich wünsche Ihnen und Ihrer Frau Gemahlin alles Schöne und Gute im neuen Jahre 1913. Auf Wiedersehen. Ihr ergebener A. Diepenbrock."²²

In the letter from Schönberg to Diepenbrock of June 23, 1913 we read for the first time of his plans to produce the gigantic *Gurrelieder* in Amsterdam:

*"Verehrter Herr Dr. Diepenbrock, Sie waren so freundlich mir zum Mahler-Preis zu gratulieren und ich musste (da durch meine Uebersiedlung meine ganze Zeit mit Beschlag belegt war) so unartig sein, Ihnen nicht sofort zu antworten. Seien Sie mir nicht böse deshalb und nehmen Sie jetzt noch meinen umso herzlicheren Dank für Ihre Liebenswürdigkeit. -Ich freue mich dass ich Sie und Ihre Frau Gemahlin im nächsten Jahr wieder sehen werde. Denn ich dirigiere im Februar meine Orchesterstücke in Amsterdam. Vielleicht auch die Gurrelieder (im Dezember). - Mir geht es sonst im Ganzen gut. Auch meiner Frau. Wie geht es den Ihrigen? - Kommen Sie nicht einmal nach Berlin? Viele herzlichste Grüsse, Ihr Arnold Schönberg."*²³

In March 1914 Schönberg was in Amsterdam again to conduct his *Fünf Orchesterstücke* Op. 16, splendid music but still too complicated for most people. (Richard Strauss described it as "inhaltlich und klänglich [...] gewagte Experimente" and never conducted it...(Especially the third part (Farben) with the very subtle tone changes was too much for most people.

Schönberg to Diepenbrock, Amsterdam, Hotel-Pension Boston, March 9, 1914:

*"Verehrter Herr Dr. Diepenbrock, ich bin - für mich 'unerwartet' - bereits gestern abends hier angekommen und probiere heute morgens schon. - Wann kann ich Sie sehen? - Ich bin mit drei Freunden [Anton Webern, Alban Berg and Erwin Stein, G.v.d.L.] hier und möchte gleich nach dem 'Lunch' ins Reichsmuseum gehen. - Kann ich Sie dann um 4 Uhr irgendwo treffen? ..."*²⁴

The next day Diepenbrock was at the rehearsal of the *Fünf Orchesterstücke*. In the afternoon Schönberg payed Diepenbrock a visit at his house in the Verhulststraat, and left Anton Webern and Alban Berg to wait outside in the pouring rain as they were but students at the time! In an in memoriam article after Schönberg's death, which appeared in *De Groene Amsterdammer* of September 8, 1921, the composer Matthijs Vermeulen remembers:

"When I went to visit Diepenbrock [...] I met at his door two young men waiting there, one a little more chestnut and tall, the other one a little bit

²² Ibid, p.86-87.

²³ Ibid, p.184.

²⁴ Ibid, p.309.

shorter and darker, both of them probably 25 years old in a rather awkward position. In the hall near the staircase Schönberg walked by and I, a newcomer myself, and having no right to his attention, saluted him. Upstairs, in his working room, Diepenbrock reached me his hand and asked me, both satirical and emotional: Did you see him, the master and his pupils? Then I heard that the two young men that I had met as an outsider at the entrance already had their legend. They followed their master everywhere. But not being inaugurated themselves, they had to stay outside when masters met each other. To Schönberg this was a matter of course and to them it was just their duty to pay such a respect... ”²⁵

Diepenbrock wrote to Johanna Jongkind on March 11, 1914:

“At the moment the prince of Kakaphonikers is here, a certain Schönberg (Arnold) a Jewish fellow from Vienna now residing in Berlin: he looks Japanese with a round, yellow and bald head, circa 40 years old, an extraordinarily gifted musician, but lacking - in my opinion - every sense of beauty. I was at the rehearsal yesterday but I didn't go today. It's as if everyone is playing what's entering his head at that moment, a continuous series of terrible sounds, a cacophony. I can't imagine anyone else who - although seeming to be an honest person and an absolutely naive artist, if possible even more so than Mahler, and possessing an absolutely unbelievable musical talent, as is proved by his earlier compositions - could produce such ugliness. ”²⁶

In April 1914 Mengelberg wrote to Schönberg of his intention to perform the *Gurrelieder*. Schönberg was to conduct the rehearsals himself. The First World War precluded this. In 1920 Schönberg went back to Amsterdam where he conducted his *Verklärte Nacht* and *Vergangenes* from the *Fünf Orchesterstücke* op. 16 (the other parts couldn't be performed due to his late arrival in Amsterdam).

There was never to be any further contact between Diepenbrock and Schönberg. The *Gurrelieder* were performed in Amsterdam in 1921, when Diepenbrock, the author of the wonderful stage music to Sophocles' *Electra* and the almost forgotten music to Goethe's *Faust*, was already on his deathbed.

²⁵ Ibid, p.533.

²⁶ Ibid, p.311-312.

Герард ван дер Леу

АЛФОНС ДИПЕНБРОК И СВЕТ КОМПОЗИТОРА FIN-DE-SIÈCLE-A

(Резиме)

Последње две деценије 19. века у Холандији биле су обележене новим процватом културе и уметности. Истакнуто место у уметничком животу је заузимала група уметника окупљена око «Beweging van Tachtig» на амстердамском универзитету. Ови уметници, међу којима је једини музичар био Алфонс Дипенброк (1862-1921), супротстављали су се старијој генерацији романтичара и окретали се идејама l'art-pour-l'art-a.

Дипенброк потиче из побожне католичке породице. Завршио је студије класичних језика, док је у музици био скоро самоук. Већина његових дела је вокална. Тежио је синтези вагнеровске хроматизације и полифоније Ђ. П. Палестрине и Ј. С. Баха. Његово прво запажено дело била је *Missa in die festo* (1895) за тенор, осмогласни мушки хор и оргуље. Током времена све више га је привлачио светао латински свет композитора као што је К. Дебиси, што се огледа у неким његовим делима, на пример музици за комад *Марсијас* (1910).

Сачувана је Дипенброкова кореспонденција са Г. Малером и А. Шенбергом. Са Малером се упознао 1903. године а сваки њихов каснији сусрет био је прилика да се пријатељство потврди. Године 1910. Дипенброк је у Амстердаму дириговао Малеровим делом које је нарочито волео – *IV симфонијом*. Био је на Малеровој сахрани у Бечу следеће године.

Године 1912. Дипенброк је упознао А. Шенберга, који је дошао у Амстердам да би извео своју симфонијску поему *Пелеас и Мелизанда*. Из дневника Дипенброкове жене могу се сазнати детаљи о разговорима које су водили, посебно о Малеру. Шенбергу се допао Дипенброков *Te Deum*, па је одмах писао Ф. Шрекеру да би га замолио да се ангажује око извођења овог дела у Бечу. Међутим, до реализације те идеје није никада дошло, што је Дипенброк прокоментарисао на свој карактеристично скроман начин у писму Шенбергу од 8. јануара 1913. године, у којем се пита да ли ће икада ући у круг музичких хероја. Остало је и писано сведочанство о Шенберговој посети Дипенброку у марту 1914. године, када њиховом разговору нису могли да присуствују тада још сасвим млади А. Берг и А. Веберн, који су морали да остану пред вратима куће.

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