

Second Viennese School : Alban Berg and Anton Webern

- There were many other composers in the group, but Schoenberg, Webern and Berg are the main ones.
- Each developed a very personal style, very different from each other. Generally, Berg used Schoenberg's more conservative aspects as point of departure; Webern used more radical aspects.
- **Alban Berg (1885-1935):** Became Schoenberg's pupil in 1905, early works are late romantic
 - shared Schoenberg's interest in counterpoint; pieces have very linear style
 - made rich use of tone color
 - works tend to be very lyrical despite their dissonance
 - never completely gave up tonality, although it was used more for effect than functionally in his works
 - Best known work is the expressionist opera **Wozzeck** (1921)
 - Based on the play Woyzeck by Georg Büchner (1813-37), based on true story
 - Uses Leitmotives and Sprechstimme
 - Draws from ideas behind *Wunderhorn* texts: folk character and deliberately folk-like music Berg composed for certain parts of the opera
 - Wozzeck is expressionist, but also socially relevant: Berg comments on sad state of downtrodden people, and the dark, nightmarish place into which circumstances push them
- **Anton Webern (1883-1945).** Of the three main Second Viennese School composers, Webern made most complete break with tonality.
 - His style is very economical: every thought stated as simply as possible, then varied but never repeated.
 - He used very soft dynamics, and most works are very short
 - He seldom used large ensembles, but sometimes unusual combinations
 - He liked to use instruments in extreme registers

- He sometimes wrote melodies with each note in different instrument or ***Pointillist***: each note is a miniature pinpoint of sound. In these passages, color is at least as important as pitch, a different kind of ***Klangfarbenmelodie***
- Example: **Five Pieces for Orchestra**, Op. 10 (1911-13)
 - extremely short, no repetition of ideas
 - sounds very abstract, but some allusion to nature in 3rd piece: suggests cowbell