

BERG

Lulu

A Guide for Educators



The Met
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Opera **HD**
LIVE

Lulu

Alban Berg's *Lulu* is a work of astonishing complexity. Based on two highly controversial plays by German author Frank Wedekind, the opera is both an unapologetic attack on bourgeois morality and a tragic character study of one woman's meteoric rise and catastrophic fall. With its refusal to present a tidy moral conclusion and its uncompromising depiction of sexuality, the opera held a stark mirror up to 1930s Viennese society. And its mysterious title character—at once a femme fatale and a tragic victim, a pitiless temptress and a pitiful pawn—continues to move and shock audiences to this day.

Besides the opera's grisly story, *Lulu's* music has challenged listeners since its premiere. Berg's score features 12-tone composition, a technique pioneered by Berg's teacher Arnold Schoenberg, and the musical landscape is intricate and intellectually rigorous. Despite the intended thorniness of the compositional style, however, Berg managed to craft a score of considerable nuance and emotional depth. From its palindromic form to its dodecaphonic leitmotifs, the score rewards careful analysis. The Met's production, too, is at once superbly crafted and dramatically compelling. Helmed by acclaimed artist and director William Kentridge, the production draws inspiration from the rich cultural tapestry of Berg's time, including the works of German Expressionism and the silent cinema of the Weimar era. Providing an interpretive key to Berg's rich score, Kentridge's design draws the audience into the emotional urgency of the opera's music and plot.

This guide invites students to explore *Lulu* through both historical and contemporary lenses. On the one hand, contextualizing this extraordinary opera (and the plays that preceded it) in the artistic, literary, and sociopolitical world of the late 19th and early 20th century will help students engage with the work's surprising twists and turns. On the other hand, modern analytic techniques—including those drawn from critical theory, gender studies, and media studies—can help students plumb the work's depths while relating it to contemporary events. By examining the nuances of its text and music, exploring the dramaturgical strategies of director William Kentridge, and thinking deeply about the opera's central concerns, students will gain a better understanding of what makes *Lulu* such a rich subject for study as well as one of the greatest operas of the 20th century.



PETERSEN



REUTER



GRAHAM



BRENNA



GRUNDHEBER



GROVES

THE WORK

An opera in a **prologue and three acts, sung in German**

Music by **Alban Berg**

Libretto by the composer
Based on the plays ***Earth Spirit*** and ***Pandora's Box*** by **Frank Wedekind**

Acts I and II first performed **June 2, 1937**, at the **Opera House, Zurich**

Act III edited and orchestrated by **Friedrich Cerha**

Completed version first performed **February 24, 1979**, at the **Paris Opera**

PRODUCTION

William Kentridge
Production

Luc De Wit
Co-Director

Catherine Meyburgh
Production Designer

Sabine Theunissen
Set Designer

Greta Goiris
Costume Designer

Urs Schönebaum
Lighting Designer

PERFORMANCE

The Met: Live in HD
Broadcast: November 21, 2015

Marlis Petersen
Lulu

Johan Reuter
Dr. Schön/Jack the Ripper

Susan Graham
Countess Geschwitz

Daniel Brenna
Alwa

Franz Grundheber
Schigolch

Paul Groves
Painter/African Prince

Lothar Koenigs
Conductor

A co-production of the Metropolitan Opera, Dutch National Opera and English National Opera

Production a gift of
The Kirsh Family Foundation

HD Live in Schools is supported through a partnership with the New York City Department of Education.

Opera in the Classroom

The Metropolitan Opera Educator Guides offer a creative, interdisciplinary introduction to opera. Designed to complement existing classroom curricula in music, the humanities, STEM fields, and the arts, these guides will help young viewers confidently engage with opera whether or not they have prior experience with the art form.

On the following pages, you'll find an array of materials designed to encourage critical thinking, deepen background knowledge, and empower students to engage with *Lulu's* story, music, and themes. These materials can be used in classrooms and/or via remote-learning platforms, and they can be mixed and matched to suit your students' individual academic needs.

Above all, this guide is intended to help students explore *Lulu* through their own experiences and ideas. The diverse perspectives that your students bring to opera make the art form infinitely richer, and we hope that your students will experience opera as a space where their confidence can grow and their curiosity can flourish.

WHAT'S IN THIS GUIDE:

Philosophical Chairs: A series of questions that will introduce students to the opera's main themes while sparking their creativity and encouraging debate

Who's Who in *Lulu*: An introduction to the opera's main characters and their roles in the plot

Synopsis: A complete opera synopsis for young readers

The Source: Information about the literary sources and/or historical events that inspired the opera

Timelines: One or more timelines connecting the opera to events in world history

Deep Dives: In-depth looks at various topics relating to the opera

Active Exploration: Interdisciplinary activities connecting the opera to topics in music, the humanities, STEM, and the arts

THROUGHOUT THE GUIDE, YOU'LL ALSO FIND:

Critical Inquiries: Questions and thought experiments designed to foster careful thinking

Fun Facts: Entertaining tidbits about *Lulu*



FUN FACT

The character of Alwa has often been interpreted as a self-portrait of Berg. In Wedekind's plays, Alwa is a writer, but Berg changed the character's occupation to composer and embedded several musical references to his own opera *Wozzeck* in Alwa's music.

Above: Sketch of Alban Berg by Emil Stumpp

DEUTSCHES HISTORISCHES MUSEUM

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

This guide invites students to explore the opera through:

English Language Arts
German Literature
Drama
Art History
Music
Music Theory
Composition
Film and Media Studies
Psychology
Sociology
Gender Studies
LGBTQ+ Studies

Philosophical Chairs

Philosophical Chairs is an activity designed to foster critical thinking, active inquiry, and respectful dialogue among students. To play a game of Philosophical Chairs, participants agree or disagree with a series of statements, but the game doesn't end there. The most crucial element of the game is what happens next: Participants discuss their points of view and can switch sides if their opinions change during the discussion. (For more tips on using Philosophical Chairs in a classroom or via a remote-learning platform, see the activity description in your Google Classroom.)

Each topic statement is deliberately open-ended yet ties into a number of the themes present in *Lulu*—including love, identity, self-improvement, bad habits, justice (or lack thereof), and consequences. As you and your students explore and learn about *Lulu*, you can return to these statements: What do they have to do with the opera's story? How might these questions help us explore the opera's story, history, and themes?

THE STATEMENTS

- Love is fleeting—here today, gone tomorrow.
- All mistakes that are left uncorrected will become bad habits.
- Bad habits bring about destructive lifestyles.
- Destructive lifestyles will always end in illness or death.
- You cannot change someone else's perception of you.
- You can never fully know someone.
- Everyone is different behind closed doors.
- Justice will always be served.
- Blackmailing doesn't harm anyone.
- Adultery may be justified.
- You can never escape your past.



Keep in mind that the *process* of this activity is just as important as the statements themselves. Imagine a world in which everyone actively listens to one another and engages in respectful dialogue, honoring others and showing respect for the wide array of diverse ideas and opinions that others hold. Philosophical Chairs fosters exactly this kind of space, encouraging students to take what they've learned and change the global landscape for generations to come.

Who's Who in Lulu

CHARACTER	PRONUNCIATION	VOICE TYPE	THE LOWDOWN
Lulu A young, beautiful woman	loo-LOO	soprano	Irresistible to men and women alike, Lulu manipulates everyone around her with a combination of seduction, naiveté, and callous calculation.
Dr. Schön Lulu's former guardian and one of her lovers	Doctor SHERN	baritone	Dr. Schön is deeply tortured by his love for Lulu. Though he wants to lead a respectable life with his fiancée, he is unable to give Lulu up.
Alwa Dr. Schön's son and another of Lulu's lovers	AHL-vah	tenor	A composer, Alwa has loved Lulu since they were children growing up together.
Schigolch An old, sickly beggar	shee-GOLSH	baritone / bass	An asthmatic, aging beggar, Schigolch's relationship to Lulu is unclear. Dr. Schön calls him her father but also says he was once her lover. Whatever their past, he and Lulu have a deep connection.
Countess Geschwitz A wealthy noblewoman	Countess geh-SHVITS	mezzo-soprano	Utterly in love with Lulu, Countess Geschwitz is willing to sacrifice everything for Lulu's happiness.
The Physician Lulu's first husband		spoken	The Physician, Lulu's first husband, jealously guards her every move.
The Painter Lulu's second husband		tenor	The Painter is working on Lulu's portrait in the opera's first scene and marries her after her first husband's death. Though he loves her, he never truly understands Lulu.
The Animal Tamer A showman with exotic animals		bass	The Animal Tamer opens the opera by introducing his menagerie, in which Lulu, "the snake," is the star attraction.



LULU



DR. SCHÖN / JACK THE RIPPER



ALWA



SCHIGOLCH



COUNTESS GESCHWITZ



THE PAINTER / THE AFRICAN PRINCE

CHARACTER	PRONUNCIATION	VOICE TYPE	THE LOWDOWN
The Marquis A rich nobleman		tenor	One of the few men not enamored of Lulu, the Marquis blackmails her in Act III.
The Acrobat Lulu's suitor		bass	Blustering and shallow, the Acrobat ends up blackmailing Lulu instead of marrying her.
The Schoolboy Lulu's suitor		contralto	Still in high school, the Schoolboy falls in love with Lulu and remains devoted to her even after going to prison.
The Prince Lulu's suitor		tenor	A rich suitor, the Prince loses interest in Lulu when he realizes she loves Dr. Schön.
The Professor Lulu's client		silent	At the end of the opera, Lulu has become a prostitute in a desperate attempt to survive. The silent, awkward Professor is her first client.
The African Prince Lulu's client		tenor	Unwilling to pay Lulu in advance, the African Prince gets into a physical confrontation with Alwa.
Jack the Ripper Lulu's client		baritone	Lulu's final client turns out to be the notorious serial killer.



Synopsis

PROLOGUE

An animal trainer in a circus introduces his many exotic animals. He presents Lulu, the star of his collection, as “the snake.”

ACT I

Lulu is sitting for a portrait. The painting session is initially observed by Dr. Schön, a wealthy newspaper publisher with whom Lulu is having an affair, but after Dr. Schön leaves, the Painter tries to seduce Lulu. Just then, Lulu’s husband, the Physician, is heard at the door. Forcing his way into the room, he sees the Painter making a pass at his wife, collapses from shock, and dies. Lulu, who is strangely unmoved by what has just happened, realizes she is a rich widow. The Painter wonders what her future will hold.

Lulu and the Painter have married. She is surprised to learn that her former lover Schön has become engaged. The Painter leaves, and Schigolch enters. Schigolch, an old man, clearly has a long history with Lulu: It is implied that he may be her father or her former lover, although their true relationship is never made clear. In any case, what he wants from Lulu now is money. She agrees to pay him.

As Schigolch leaves, Schön arrives. Schön, who years before found Lulu as a waif and paid for her upbringing and education, has kept her as his mistress, but now he wants her out of his life so that he can marry another woman. When the Painter returns, Schön tells him about Lulu’s past. Horrified, the Painter kills himself by cutting his own throat. Schön, seeking to avoid a scandal, calls the police. He is shocked by Lulu’s cold reaction to her husband’s suicide. Lulu, as shrewd and calculating as ever, says that Schön must marry her or risk losing everything.

Sometime later, Lulu is appearing in a ballet composed by Schön’s son, Alwa. In her dressing room, she tells Alwa of her latest admirer, the Prince, who wants to take her away to be his wife. After Lulu has gone on stage, the Prince appears and talks to Alwa of his love for her. Suddenly Lulu storms back in: She has seen Schön in the audience with his fiancée, and she refuses to dance for the new woman. Schön soon enters the dressing room and demands to be left alone with Lulu. He begs her to stop standing in the way of his marriage, but when she mentions her plans to marry the Prince, he realizes that he is incapable of letting her go. Following Lulu’s directions, he writes a letter to his fiancée, breaking off the engagement.



ACT II

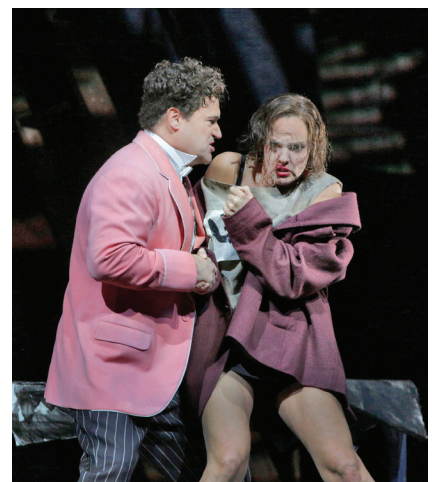
Schön and Lulu, now married, live in a luxurious home, but she continues to attract admirers. Among them is the lesbian Countess Geschwitz, who has just invited Lulu to a ball for women artists. Schön regrets that he must now engage with a social circle that he considers beneath him, and he leaves. Schigolch, an Acrobat, and a Schoolboy appear. All three declare their love for Lulu, but they hide when Alwa enters. Alwa assumes that he is alone with Lulu, and he also declares his love. Meanwhile, Schön has returned unnoticed and observes the scene. He drives his son away and hands Lulu a revolver, demanding that she shoot herself to protect his reputation. The Acrobat runs from the room, and Schön, searching everywhere, discovers the Countess and locks her in an adjoining room. Lulu justifies herself, declaring that she has never pretended to be anything but what she is. Raging, Schön forces her to her knees, but the Schoolboy's cries for help distract him. Lulu fires five shots into her husband's back. Alwa rushes in, and Lulu throws herself at his feet, begging him not to turn her over to the police.

An orchestral interlude depicts Lulu's arrest, murder trial, imprisonment, illness with cholera, commitment to the hospital, and the plans for her escape: The Countess, who has allowed herself to be infected with the same disease, is to take Lulu's place in the hospital.

Alwa, together with the Countess and the Acrobat, awaits Lulu's return to Schön's former apartment. When she arrives on Schigolch's arm, the Acrobat is appalled by her wasted appearance and leaves, threatening to betray her to the police. Alone with Lulu, Alwa again proclaims his love and agrees to go to Paris with her.

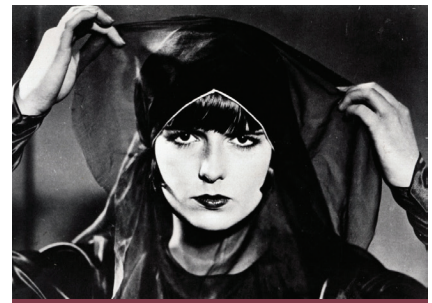
ACT III

The Acrobat proposes a toast in honor of Lulu's birthday to a crowd assembled in Alwa's Paris mansion. Several of the men present have invested in the Jungfrau Cable Railway and question a banker about their prospects. The Marquis, threatening to reveal Lulu to the police as Schön's murderer, tries to blackmail her into working in a brothel, but she defies him. Everyone has been winning at cards, and the Jungfrau shares are booming. When the crowd has gone to dinner, the Acrobat also tries to blackmail Lulu. Next, Schigolch appears, asking her for money. Lulu breaks into tears. She and Schigolch hatch a plan to dispose of the Acrobat: They will make him believe that the Countess is in love with him then persuade the Countess to take him to Schigolch's lodgings, where he will be killed. There is an uproar as the news spreads that the Jungfrau shares have collapsed—everyone is ruined. In the general confusion, Lulu escapes, just as the Marquis arrives with the police.





In a shabby garret in London, Schigolch and Alwa, now syphilitic and homeless, await Lulu's return from her first night as a prostitute. They hide when she enters with a client, the Professor, who remains silent throughout the proceedings. After his departure, the now destitute Countess appears, bringing with her Lulu's portrait. Lulu and her three admirers contemplate its beauty and consider how their lives have changed since it was painted. Lulu goes into the street again, followed by the Countess, while Alwa, alone with Schigolch, reflects on the mess he has made of his life. The men hide again when Lulu returns with another client, an African Prince. In a clumsy attempt to protect Lulu, Alwa attacks the Prince, who smashes his opponent's skull and leaves. Lulu, in despair, rushes out into the street once more. Schigolch drags Alwa's body out of sight and disappears. The Countess returns. Gazing at Lulu's portrait, she considers suicide, but her thoughts are interrupted by Lulu's arrival with yet another customer, Jack the Ripper. Lulu asks Jack to stay the night. They argue about money, and then she leads him into her room. The Countess remains behind, still contemplating the portrait. Suddenly Lulu is heard screaming as Jack stabs her. The Countess rushes to her aid, but Jack stabs her as well. He washes his hands and leaves as the dying Countess cries out for Lulu.



FUN FACT

In addition to serving as the inspiration for Berg's opera, Wedekind's *Lulu* plays also found a home in the emerging medium of cinema. In 1929, the acclaimed Austrian director G.W. Pabst produced a silent film version of *Pandora's Box*, starring American actress Louise Brooks. It is now considered one of the cinematic masterpieces of the Weimar Republic.

Above: A film still of Louise Brooks from *Pandora's Box*
 TVTROPE.ORG



Deep Dive

OPERATIC SYMMETRIES

Like much of Berg's other music, the score of *Lulu* is built on an unrelentingly precise formal plan. The opera's overall structure is shaped like an arc, with the rise and fall of the arc each corresponding to one of the Wedekind plays on which the libretto is based. The first half of the opera (from Wedekind's *Earth Spirit*) tells the story of Lulu's rise to the top of society. The second half (corresponding to *Pandora's Box*) concerns her downfall and squalid end at the hands of Jack the Ripper.

At the opera's midpoint, halfway through the second act, Berg inserted an orchestral interlude to accompany a silent film depicting Lulu's arrest, trial, imprisonment, sickness from cholera, hospitalization, and liberation. This episode represents the dramatic turning point of the opera, and the interlude's musical structure reflects the arc shape of the opera's narrative: It is a compositional palindrome, with the music running backwards after the mid-point.

Berg also bolstered the dramatic symmetry of the opera through a unique kind of double casting, with certain performers reappearing in different roles. The Physician, Lulu's first husband, also plays

the silent role of the Professor; the Painter also plays the African Prince; and Dr. Schön returns as Jack the Ripper. While role doubling is common in theatrical productions, it is usually employed as a cost-saving measure. In this case, Berg's casting is entirely purposeful, demonstrating an essential connection between Lulu's husbands and her clients as a prostitute later in the story. This connection is made more explicit by the fact that the doubled roles share music between their initial appearances and their returns later in the opera. In a letter to his former teacher, Arnold Schoenberg, Berg wrote: "[The] men who visit Lulu in her attic [in Act III] have to be represented in the opera by those singers who have represented the men who become Lulu's victims in the first half of the opera—in inverted order of appearance, to be sure."

CRITICAL INQUIRY

Think about the double casting in Berg's opera: What similarities between these characters might Berg want us to find? How do these similarities impact our understanding of Lulu and her rise and fall?

The Source

THE PLAYS *EARTH SPIRIT* AND *PANDORA'S BOX* BY FRANK WEDEKIND



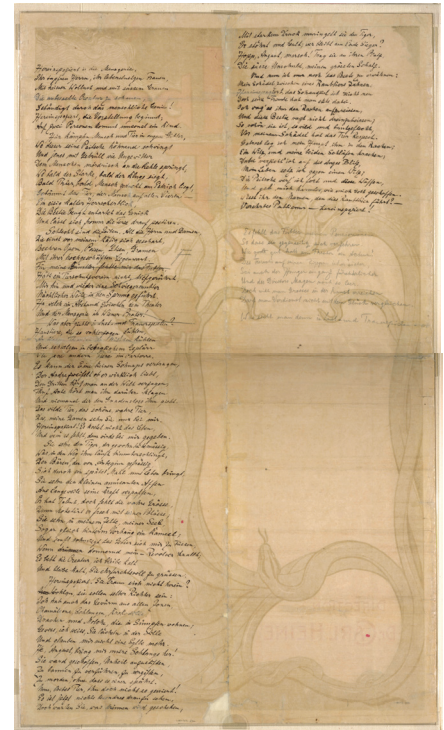
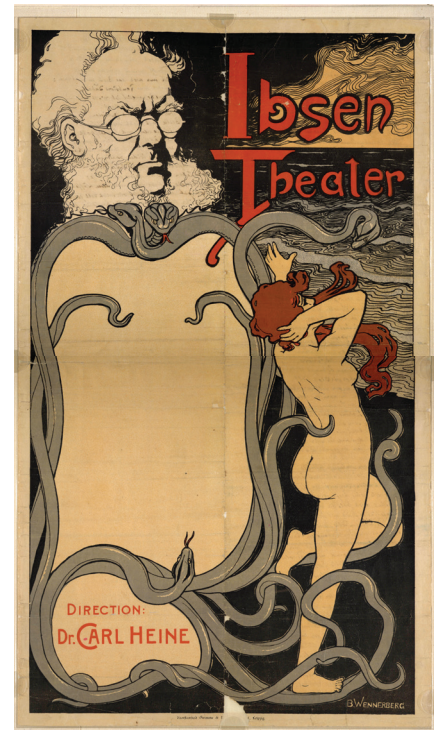
One of a small number of opera composers who wrote their own librettos, Berg drew from two plays by German playwright Frank Wedekind when crafting the text for *Lulu*. A controversial figure, Wedekind used his writing to attack what he saw as the hypocritical morality of turn-of-the-century society. For instance, his first major play, *Spring Awakening* (1891), features rape, a well-meaning but ill-advised attempt by the victim's mother to cover up the resulting pregnancy, and the horrible death of the teenaged girl after a botched abortion.

Wedekind's unsparing social critique is similarly apparent in *Earth Spirit* (1895) and *Pandora's Box* (1904), his so-called "Lulu" plays. The enigmatic central character of this dramatic diptych is defined by her dangerous and unrestrained sexuality: In classic femme-fatale fashion, Lulu unapologetically uses sex to control those around her. Yet Wedekind also makes clear how Lulu's upbringing—her impoverished childhood, her "protection" by the predatory Dr. Schön—have taught her to harness her sexuality for her own survival. Lulu may be guilty of blackmail and murder, but ultimately it is capitalist cronyism and the jockeying of men for money, power, and her attentions that lead to Lulu's lupanarian demise. As the Viennese critic Karl Kraus observed, "Lulu became the destroyer of all because she was destroyed by all."

The frank discussion of social taboos in Wedekind's works often attracted the notice of state authorities and censors and even led to his brief imprisonment in 1899. Nevertheless, his work did find a number of admirers in Vienna's artistic circles, including the young composer Alban Berg. In 1905, Berg attended a private performance of *Pandora's Box* hosted by Kraus, with Wedekind himself playing Jack the Ripper and Wedekind's future wife, Tilly, playing Lulu.

CRITICAL INQUIRY

Frank Wedekind's works are part of a long list of books, plays, movies, and even songs that have been censored or banned. What do you think of censoring books? Are there some kinds of books that should be banned? Why or why not?



A poster advertising a tour by the Ibsen Theater (above), on the back of which Wedekind drafted the prologue for *Earth Spirit* (below)

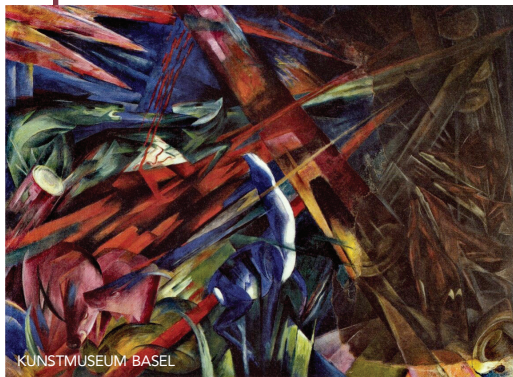
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Left: Frank Wedekind in 1883
WIKICOMMONS



CRITICAL INQUIRY

Consider the examples of Expressionist art included on this page, or look up some examples of your own. What kind of emotions do you feel looking at these paintings? How would you describe this style? What historical events might have impacted the development of Expressionism in the visual and performing arts?



Deep Dive

EXPRESSIONISM

Alban Berg has often been associated with the artistic movement of Expressionism. Originating in the visual arts in early-20th-century Germany and Austria, Expressionism sought to convey the turbulence of modern life in a new representational style that employed simplification and distortion to reflect the changing times. In a reaction to the soft-edged naturalism of the Impressionists, Expressionist painters strove to invigorate their art with a new visceral sensibility.

In music, the Expressionist movement inspired the atonal and emotionally charged style then developing around Arnold Schoenberg and his circle in Vienna. An accomplished amateur painter himself, Schoenberg had been strongly influenced by Expressionism in the visual arts and produced several paintings in that manner. Much of his music before 1920 likewise embraced an Expressionist approach in its portrayal of violent emotional states.

But musical Expressionism was short-lived. While some composers continued to draw on it for inspiration, it was already falling out of favor by the 1920s. Berg's *Lulu*, written between 1928 and 1934, displays an Expressionist perspective but at the same time contains other features—such as a tightly organized formal structure and a distinctive melodic quality—that were less typical of the movement.

Top Left: Emil Nolde, *Die Grablegung (The Burial)*, 1915; **Center Left:** Wassily Kandinsky, *Der Blaue Reiter (The Blue Rider)*, 1903 **Bottom Left:** Franz Marc, *Tierschicksale (The Fate of the Animals)*, 1913; **Top Right:** Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, *Berlin Street Scene*, 1913.

FUN FACT

The first major group of German artists to explore Expressionism called themselves Die Brücke (The Bridge) because they hoped to use art to bridge the old and the new. The second major Expressionist group named themselves The Blue Rider after a painting included on this page.

Timeline

THE COMPOSITION OF LULU



Alban Berg
WIKICOMMONS

1885

Alban Berg is born on February 9, the third of four children, to a wealthy Viennese family.

1888

A string of brutal murders of prostitutes in London's impoverished East End is attributed to a serial killer nicknamed "Jack the Ripper." Despite strenuous investigation by the police and extensive coverage in the press, the perpetrator is never caught. Jack the Ripper becomes one of the most iconic and well-known figures in the history of crime, with representation in works of literature, drama, opera, and film.

1870s–80s

Rapid advances in photographic technology pave the way for the first motion picture recordings. In 1888, Louis Le Prince films two brief moving picture sequences without sound, *Roundhay Garden Scene* and *Leeds Bridge*, both less than five seconds long. By 1900, the creation of moving pictures has developed into an entertainment industry.



6-frame sequence of *Leeds Bridge*
NATIONAL MEDIA MUSEUM, BRADFORD

1899

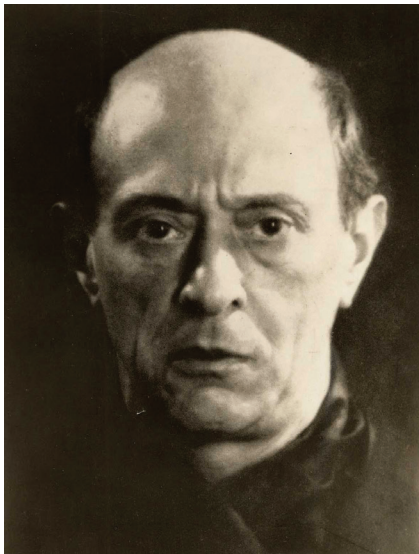
Karl Kraus begins publishing the satiric literary periodical *Die Fackel* (*The Torch*), which he continues to manage, write, and edit until his death more than 30 years later. Kraus and his newspaper become one of the most influential cultural voices of Vienna's waning golden age, as well as a particular favorite of Berg.

1904

Berg begins private composition instruction with Arnold Schoenberg, the preeminent avant-garde composer of the day and an instrumental figure in the development of a post-tonal musical system.

1905

Berg attends a private performance by Karl Kraus of Wedekind's *Pandora's Box*, the second of two plays that would later form the source material for his opera *Lulu*.



Arnold Schoenberg, 1927, by Man Ray
MAN RAY / WIKICOMMONS



Joseph Goebbels (Nazi Minister of Propaganda) views the Degenerate Art Exhibition. The exhibition included many German Expressionist artists, as well as other modern artists (like Picasso).
WIKICOMMONS



The premiere of *Lulu* at the Paris Opera in 1979
DANIEL CANDE / BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE DE FRANCE

1928

Berg begins composing *Lulu*.

1933

Adolf Hitler becomes Chancellor of Germany. With the increasing power of the Nazi party, atonal and experimental music, which is considered subversive and “degenerate,” becomes dangerous to perform. From this time on, Berg’s financial situation worsens steadily as fewer theaters are willing to produce his most popular work, *Wozzeck* (1922).

1934

Berg completes the rough score of *Lulu* but has no prospects for the opera’s production in a German or Austrian opera house. In order to encourage a performance elsewhere, Berg adapts excerpts of the opera into a five-movement concert suite. It premieres in Berlin on November 30 even as the Nazi regime begins to ban performances of atonal music.

1935

Berg dies on December 24 from blood poisoning following an insect sting that became infected. His sudden death leaves the orchestration of the third act of *Lulu* incomplete.

1936

Berg’s widow, Helene, asks Arnold Schoenberg and Anton Webern to complete *Lulu*. When both composers decline, she refuses all subsequent offers to finish the opera and attempts to restrict access to the manuscript.

1937

The first two acts of *Lulu* premiere in Zurich on June 2. The incomplete third act is not performed.

1962

Encouraged by Berg’s publishers, Friedrich Cerha, a Viennese composer and conductor, discreetly begins to finish the orchestration of *Lulu*’s third act, using Berg’s original manuscripts to guide his work.

1979

Lulu is performed in its entirety for the first time at the Paris Opera.



Active Exploration

The following activities will help familiarize your students with the plot of *Lulu*, forge connections between a variety of classroom subjects, and encourage creative responses to the opera. They are designed to be accessible to a wide array of ages and experience levels.

THE OBJECT OF MY AFFECTION: EXPLORING "THE GAZE" IN *LULU*

Ask students to consider how Lulu is perceived by herself and others. Then, invite them to create a visual representation contrasting her inner identity with the way other characters regard her.

FEMME FATALE: GENDER AND POWER IN *LULU*

Help students explore the intersections of gender and power in *Lulu* by teaching them about (or inviting them to analyze for themselves) the gender expectations that constrain the character. To what extent does she embody and/or defy these expectations?

THE BODY AS COMMODITY: TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION IN *LULU*

Invite students to analyze and reflect on the ways in which Lulu's body is represented in the opera. Then have them research contemporary examples of human trafficking and exploitation to analyze its dehumanizing effects.

UNLOCKING THE MYSTERY OF *LULU'S* TONE ROWS

Teach students about serialism and 12-tone rows. Then, introduce them to a variety of serial leitmotifs in *Lulu*, help them analyze how Berg uses these rows to affect narrative and character development, and invite them to create a 12-tone row of their own.

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WERTHER PRODUCTION PHOTOS: KEN HOWARD/MET OPERA



FUN FACT

In 2011, legendary rockers Lou Reed and Metallica released an album, *Lulu*, based on Wedekind's plays. It was the final studio album Reed produced before his death in 2013.

Above: *Lulu* album cover
WARNER BROTHERS

COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

These activities directly support the following ELA-Literacy Common Core Strands:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.11-12.11

Interpret, analyze, and evaluate narratives, poetry, and drama, aesthetically and philosophically by making connections to other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.11c

Develop innovative perspectives on texts, including historical, cultural, sociological, and psychological contexts.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1c

Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.