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## Brettl-Lieder

Title	Brettl-Lieder [Cabaret Songs]
Time of origin	1901
Premiere	unknown
Duration	ca. 23 min.

1. Der genügsame Liebhaber (The contented suitor)
2. Einfältiges Lied (Simple-minded song)
3. Der Nachtwandler (The night reveler)
4. Jedem das Seine (To each his own)
5. Mahnung (Warning)
6. Gigerlette (Gigerlette)
7. Galathea (Galathea)
8. Langsamer Walzer (Slow waltz)

In 1901, the Viennese Carltheater, whose musical direction had been in the hands of Arnold Schönberg's brother-in-law Alexander Zemlinsky since 1900, hosted the Berlin cabaret "Überbrettl." Founded by Ernst von Wolzogen, the cabaret oriented itself on the model of the Parisian "Chat noir." Otto Julius Bierbaum, Christian Morgenstern, Richard Dehmel and Gustav Falke were among the poets whose texts were read in the newly built "Buntes Theater" from November 1901 on. In his memoirs "Wie ich mich ums Leben brachte" (How I spent my life), von Wolzogen, who had written the libretto for Richard Strauss' "Feuersnot," recalled his first encounter with Arnold Schönberg: "During the time we were guesting at the Carltheater in Vienna, the Jewish day of atonement Yom Kippur occurred and Oskar Strauss was not permitted to perform by order of his rich uncle. He introduced to me as his substitute for that evening a young musician of small stature, hard features and dark complexion, whose name, Arnold Schönberg, was at that time completely unknown."

Between April and September 1901, Schönberg composed eight songs, using, among others, texts from the anthology "Deutsche Chansons (Brettl-Lieder)" published by Bierbaum, and offered them to von Wolzogen for the "Überbrettl" in Berlin. From this compendium, the latter purchased two songs for the winter season 1901/02:

"Nachtwandler," based on a text by Gustav Falke, which he found "highly original and musically charming" (letter of June 7, 1901), and "Jedem das Seine." The "Brettl-Lieder," named after the occasion for which they were written, led to Schönberg's appointment as Kapellmeister at the "Überbrettl," which he took up on 16 December 1901. Originally, the contract was to conclude at the end of July 1902, but as late as 1903, Schönberg was still listed as Kapellmeister in the "Berliner Adreßbuch," a directory listing inhabitants, organizations etc. of Berlin. To his first biographer, Egon Wellesz, he reported that

“Nachtwandler” had been a failure at its premiere in Berlin because the trumpeter was unable to master the intricacies of his part.

Wolzogen’s theater was designed by the Jugendstil architect August Endell, who had already attracted attention with his Atelier Elvira in Munich, and was equipped with a modern stage as well as an orchestra pit. Despite its initial popularity with Berlin’s high society, the venture became an economic failure. Wolzogen abandoned ship in June 1902, heavily in debt, and Arnold Schönberg returned to Vienna in 1903.

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