

Joevan de Mattos Caitano

Kay Dreyfus (ed.): *The Fractured Self. Selected German Letters of the Australian-born Violinist Alma Moodie, 1918-1943*

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Dreyfus' 'The Fractured Self' provides a thorough overview of the various letters that the accomplished violinist Alma Moodie wrote to various contacts in Central Europe over the course of several years. Her book reflects her trilingual skills to communicate in English, French, and German. Born in Australia, in 1898, this virtuoso musician moved to Belgium in 1907 to study at the Royal Conservatoire of Music, but she did not start trying to establish a career there until 1911. Alma Moodie was compelled by First World War circumstances to relocate to Brussels, where her mother passed away in May 1918.

Her return to Germany was distinguished by frequent communication with Carl Flesch, a well-known violin instructor in Berlin at the start of the 20th century. Beginning in 1919, Alma Moodie performed the world premières of many pieces by artists like Stravinsky, Pfitzner, Hindemith, and Krenek. Some composers created musical pieces for her performance. Developing interdisciplinary connections with artists from other fields, such as the poet Rainer Maria Rilke in literature was also possible.

Out of the 500 letters that were gathered over decades, the book only includes 270 letters. Soon after leaving Queensland in 1907, Alma Moodie's first English-language messages were sent to friends and family there. Other letters cover subjects such as holidays, travel, concerts, and other personal matters. According to some correspondence, Moodie frequently moved residences in the years prior to getting married while also traveling nonstop. In correspondence with influential figures on the old continent, the First World War's destructive effects, the musical climate under Hitler's rule, etc.

The epistolary collection also contains significant letters that Moodie wrote to her pupils. They shed light on her work as a violin instructor in the late 1930s and early 1940s. The majority of the recipients of the letters were men. This is important for the discussion of the letter-writing exchange because, in the early 20th century, male musicians predominated in the musical world, placing Alma Moodie in an unusual situation. Moodie communicated with some women when she discussed specific issues relating to housework, her responsibilities as a wife and mother, and cordial relationships with friends and colleagues. The Werner Reinhart interactions dominate the collection of letters in this book. They comprise 136 letters traded between 1922 and 1943 and reveal varying degrees of intimacy and formality.

This book has five sections, plus an 'Addendum' and texts that have been added. The numerous endnotes provide extensive information about each individual cited in Alma Moodie's letters. The editor enables the reader to place Alma Moodie's social network in relation to how her career and emotional activities developed in the first half of the 20th century.

The book depicts exchanges between Alma Moodie and some of the protagonists, including Carl Flesch, Arthur Schnabel, Kurt Atterberg, Eduard Erdmann, Hans Pfitzner, Werner Reinhart, and Louis d' Hage, in 'Part One: Starting Over 1918-1923', which contains the first 46 Letters (1-78).

Letters 47-148, are collected in 'Part Two: Complications and Resolutions 1924-1928', where they discuss interactions with Rainer Maria Rilke and activities with conductor Hermann Scherchen. Through interactions with people like the ethnologist Ernst Carl Gustav Grosse, the artist Franz Marc, the expressionist Karl Christian Ludwig Hofer, the poet Hans Reinhart, the composer Ernst Georg Wolff, the conductor Karl Muck, the American mezzo-soprano Sara Cahier, the African lyric tenor Roland Hayes, the Polish conductor Grzegorz Fitelberg, and others, interdisciplinary relationships were forged. Moodie's statements include brief mentions of concert visits to some German cities and to the Netherlands.

Photos of Alma Moodie's Australian family, the pair Eduard and Irene Erdmann, as well as images of five renowned conductors—Arturo Toscanini, Erich Kleiber, Otto Klemperer, and Wilhelm Furtwängler—, illustrate important figures in her career in this second section (79-262).

The third section concerning the letters covers the 1929-1932 'Years of Trouble and Fulfillment'. During this time, contacts were made to discuss personal issues regarding the precarious health of Moodie's husband and recital events (263-324).

The fourth section deals with 'Uneasy Accommodations 1933 - 1938'. The content of the correspondence is enriched by a sequence of illustrations, including postcards to Irene and Eduard Erdmann, Werner Reinhard, and Igor Stravinsky in 1930 as well as an image of Alma Moodie in performance with Werner Ferdinand von Siemens conducting the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in the early 1930s. Also photos of Berta Volmer, moments on the beach with Carl Flesch, photo of Alma Moodie's daughter, Eduard Erdmann, and their children Jobst, Jolanthe, Piers, and Judith in the garden of their house in Langballigau in 1937, Lotte Seeger in 1938, the program of the Recital of Alma Moodie and Erdmann in 1942 at the Staatliche-Hochschule für Musik in Frankfurt a. M. and a photo of Alma Moodie in Frankfurt in the early 1940s (325 - 409).

The letters reproduced in section five, relate to the war and deaths between 1939 and 1943. During this time, Moodie was a violin teacher at Frankfurt's Hochschule für Musik, and key figures like musicologist Friedrich Schnapp, Maria Louise Schnapp, and others are mentioned. Concerts with important people in Germany and Switzerland are addressed. The bombing attacks on Cologne and other German towns are highlighted in some letters (411-453).

The 'Addendum' letters by Alexander Spengler to his friends Irene and Eduard Erdmann, in which the author's focus was on the memory of Alma Moodie, who had already gone away. On 12 September 1943, Spengler requested written testimonials from some individuals who had a significant impact on Alma Moodie's

career, including Eduard Erdmann, Hermann Reutter, Hermann Abendroth, Peter Knorr, and Hans Erich Riebensahm. In commemoration of Alma Moodie, Spengler intended to release a book of roughly 70 pages that also contained letters the Moodie had with Rainer Maria Rilke. Its main goal was to consolidate an engaging memorial for Moodie's students, colleagues, and family. This memorial book was never published, despite Spengler's brilliant concept and efforts (455-457).

The compilation of letters is followed by highly valuable articles. The author Eduard Erdmann of "Some Memories of Alma Moodie's Artistry" attests to the creative seriousness and cerebral insight of this violinist whose career was distinguished by sensitivity and assurance on stage (461-468).

The goal of Goetz Richter's article, 'On the Higher Values of Artistic Personality: Alma Moodie's Path in Response to Carl Flesch', was to inform readers about the initial encounter between Moodie and Flesch in 1919, which influenced Moodie's artistic growth in terms of both technical and aesthetic qualities (469-475).

Alma Moodie and Eduard Erdmann met in Berlin in the winter of 1920-1921 and struck up a successful partnership, performing with great passion in a variety of recitals (477-480).

Alma Moodie did not speak German as her native language; but the author of the essay 'Moodie's Linguistic Style in the Letters to Eduard and Irene Erdmann' makes it clear that she still managed to express herself with clarity, ease, and humor despite this. According to her, Moodie was proficient in grammar but did not place much importance on punctuation in her correspondence (481 f.).

According to Peter Tregear's essay 'Moodie and Krenek: Challenging Ernst's Earnestness', the Moodies' transition into maturity was profoundly influenced by the military and geopolitical repercussions of the First World War. Other topics covered include Ernst Krenek's aesthetic inspirations and Alma Moodie's participation in performances of some of this composer's works (483-486).

According to Michael Haas' essay 'Alma Moodie and the Third Reich', the Australian violinist's charisma and capacity for inspiration piqued the interest of numerous German and Austrian composers, including Max Reger, Eduard Erdmann, Hans Pfitzner, Egon Wellesz, Hermann Reuter, Karl Höller, and Gerhart München. They wrote concertos and solo pieces for her. Alma Moodie's career was filled with numerous appearances, but there are no recordings of her concerts or recitals because they were either lost or destroyed. Haas emphasizes that during the Nazi regime in the 1930s, the record labels were not ideologically drawn to the contemporary music that Moodie played in the 1920s.

Politically conservative but socially and artistically progressive individuals made up Alma Moodie's musical circle. She had a large Jewish social network that included Schnabel, Braunfels, Flesch, Rostal, and Wellesz. She agreed to take a position as a professor at Frankfurt's Staatliche Hochschule für Musik in 1937 (actually the Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst Frankfurt Main - HfMDK) despite the deaths of many Jewish musicians, and she remained there until her passing on 7 March 1943, where she taught violin. Alma Moodie was affected in 1939 by the censorship and regulation of different forms of correspondence that the post office moved as a result of the Nazi regime.

Alma Moodie's professional career was cut short, but her impact has created opportunities for numerous scientific studies. The publication of Dreyfus' 'The Fractured Self' advances the field of music and gender study and increases the visibility of Australian women who were instrumental in the first half of the 20th century's male-dominated classical music world.