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Kurt Weill on Bertolt Brecht (1927)

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The reason I am drawn to Brecht is, first of all, the strong interaction of my music with his poetry, which surprised all those in Baden-Baden who were competent to judge. But further I am convinced that the close collaboration of two equally productive individuals can lead to something fundamentally new. There can certainly be no doubt that at present a completely new form of stage work is evolving, one that is directed to a different and much larger audience and whose appeal will be unusually broad. This movement, whose strongest force in the spoken drama is Brecht, hasn't had any effect upon opera to date (except in *Mahagonny*), although music is one of its most essential elements. In long discussions with Brecht I have become convinced that his idea of an operatic text largely coincides with my own. The piece we are going to create won't exploit topical themes, which will be dated in a year, but rather will reflect the true tenor of our times. For that reason it will have an impact far beyond its own age. The task is to create the new genre which gives appropriate expression to the completely transformed manifestation of life in our time. You were able to observe in Baden-Baden that this art, in spite of its novelty, can have a sensational effect.

Source of English translation: Jürgen Schebera, *Kurt Weill, an Illustrated Life*, translated by Caroline Murphy. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995, pp. 101-02.

Source of original German text: Nils Grosch, *Kurt Weill. Briefwechsel mit der Universal Edition*. Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler, 2002, no. 229, pp. 78-79.