APPENDIX I: SYNOPSIS

Scene I: Ulrike sits alone in the common room. Andreas and Gudrun are away at the trial in Stammheim; Ulrike has not attended for several weeks. Andreas and Gudrun return from trial, fuming at the judge for disallowing their latest tactic. Gudrun explains that they had attempted to submit a justification for the bombing of an American military base that had been supplying munitions for the war in Vietnam. Gudrun summarizes their defense: "If we killed a few soldiers, we saved ten thousand innocents." As part of this tactic, Andreas and Gudrun had planned to call Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger to testify. When Ulrike questions the logic of these actions, Andreas and Gudrun retort with a broad summary of the RAF's goals. Andreas quickly changes the subject; he has received word that their compatriots on the outside have planned a hijacking of a Lufthansa flight in an attempt to trade hostages for the leadership's release. Ulrike expresses reservations about the hijacking plot, only to be rebuffed again. She then retreats to a corner, sulking, while Andreas and Gudrun review the hijacking plans with increasing excitement. Her mood begins to lift, and she joins the others in a trio where they sing of their impending release and a unique concept of "freedom."

Scene II: Ulrike sits alone in her cell, composing her memoirs at a typewriter. She sings of former life: her career as a left-wing journalist, her husband, and her two daughters. Ulrike describes how she abandoned this world to go underground with the RAF. She then expresses doubts about the violence inherent to their struggle.

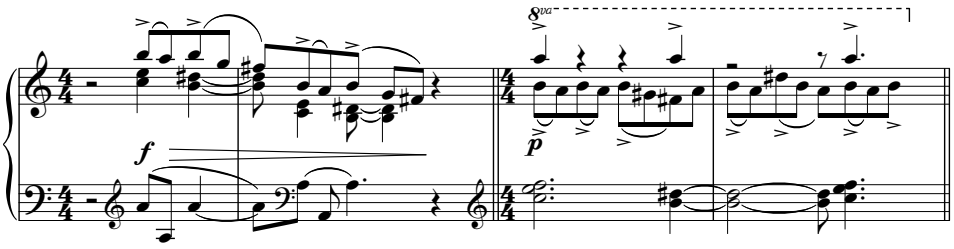
Suddenly, screaming erupts from offstage, disturbing Ulrike. As she begins to collect herself, a Lawyer enters her cell. He introduces himself and explains that he is there on his own accord to defend her in court. As a condition of preparing her defense, he presses Ulrike to explain the motivations behind her violent struggle. The Lawyer attempts to summarize her revolutionary philosophy, but is continually rebuked by Ulrike. He then changes course, suggesting that Andreas' and Gudrun's tactics in court may not be in the best interests of the group; Ulrike should speak for the RAF instead. He goes on to claim that Andreas cheated during one of the hunger strikes that the group held. Furious, Ulrike throws the Lawyer out. She then overhears Andreas delivering a long-winded speech from the common room. When she enters the common room, she finds Andreas and Gudrun preparing their latest tactic for the trial. Andreas continues his speech, which deplores their incarceration and treatment by the hands of the government. Gudrun acts as the judge, interrupting Andreas to pose questions. Andreas' speech gradually becomes a list of absurd demands, including access to a conjugal cell and cigarettes. To reinforce his point, Andreas threatens to call for another hunger strike. Ulrike is shocked by the absurdity of Andreas' speech and pleads with him to change tactics. Andreas is annoyed, quickly adding that the hijacking will free them in any case. Ulrike finally expresses her disgust at this idea. Andrea and Gudrun then heap insults upon Ulrike and question her commitment to the cause. Ulrike, exasperated, cries out: "I've sacrificed my life." Gudrun coldly suggests: "Now that is something useful you can do."

Scene III: Ulrike is sitting alone in the common room, when she hears a voice from offstage calling out in German: “Welche Niedrigkeit begingest du nicht, um die Niedrigkeit auszutilgen?” This line, quoting Brecht, roughly translates to: “What vile act would you not commit, in order to extirpate vile acts?” The Lawyer then returns and resumes their earlier conversation. He asks Ulrike what she intends to do about her current situation, highlighting the urgency of the hour. The Lawyer brings up the trial, a subject that Ulrike quickly dismisses, claiming that her personal freedom is unimportant to neither Andreas nor herself. Seizing upon this statement, the Lawyer brings up the hijacking plot, of which he has become unexpectedly aware. Ulrike, shocked, suggests that the Lawyer is some sort of agent for the government. When the Lawyer asks Ulrike of her involvement with the plan, she disavows the plot, claiming that she does not kill for personal gain. The Lawyer is unconvinced by this argument and continues to press Ulrike. Finally, she tacitly acknowledges both the existence of the plot and her disapproval of it. She also acknowledges the futility of the trial and asks the lawyer what she should do. He suggests that she either give up and accept her imprisonment, or embrace her persecution to advocate for her cause, becoming a sort of “chained, living martyr.” She rejects both of these choices, claiming that she does not have the energy for life in prison. The Lawyer is surprised by this assertion and reminds her of the sacrifices she has made and the family she gave up for the cause. He then reminds her that the path that she is tacitly following is one “steeped in blood and fire.” Screaming erupts from offstage again while the lawyer, aware of Ulrike’s mental anguish, cries: “listen!” and joins the voices in their screaming. Ulrike leaps up and attempts to recommit herself to Andreas and the hijacking plot.

The Lawyer sees through this guise, and reminds Ulrike of her objections to violent action. Ulrike quickly sees the futility of this path and begins to work out a new solution. She realizes that her selfish desires have clouded her vision. In order to completely commit herself to the revolution, she must take her own life. In doing so she will become a martyr and set an example for others to follow. The Lawyer, in apparent approval of this plan, exits. Andreas and Gudrun suddenly enter the common room, and inform Ulrike that the Lufthansa plot is set to go ahead. While they sing of freedom, brotherhood, and violent struggle, Ulrike sings of death. She urges the others to follow her and take their own lives as well; it is the only "path to freedom." They are unmoved by her plea, and exit the stage. Left alone as the lights dim, Ulrike sings: "In solidarity we carry on, in solidarity, in solidarity."

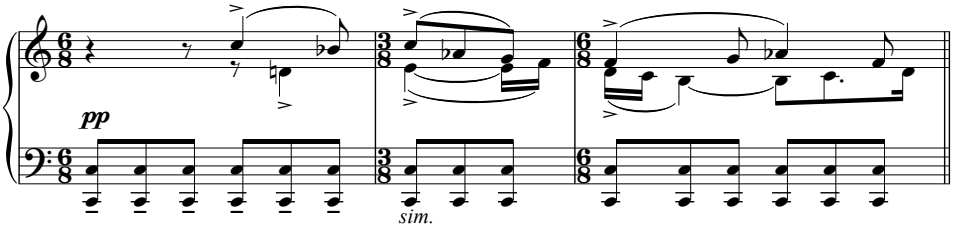
APPENDIX II: LEITMOTIFS

"Ulrike" mm. 150-151

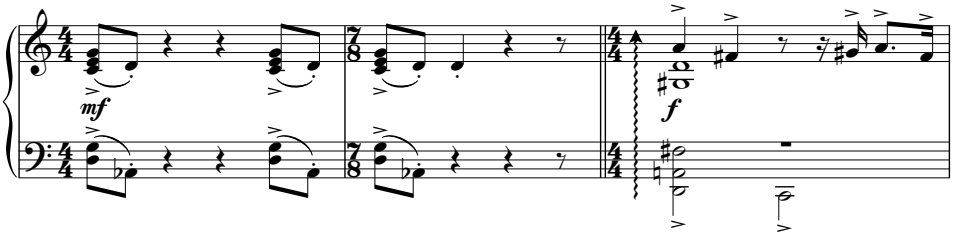


"Ulrike"/Typewriter Music, mm. 385-386

"Ulrike"/"Andere die Welt, sie braucht es" quotation mm. 877-879

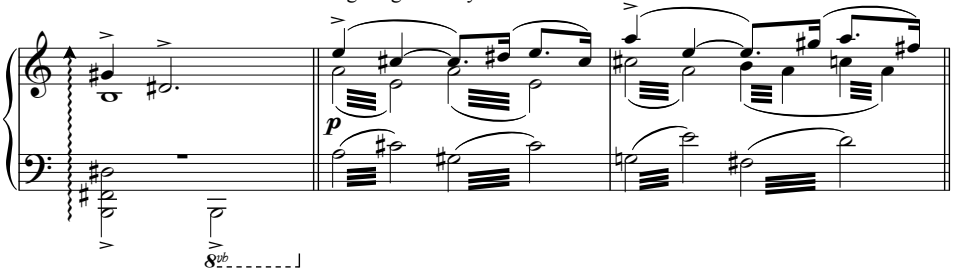


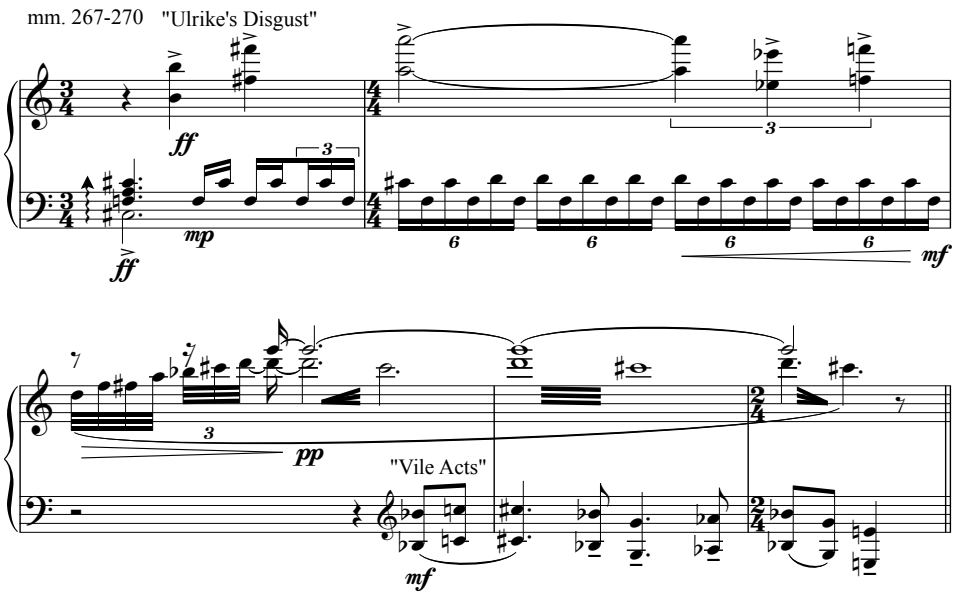
"Andreas/Swine" mm. 1-2



"Solidarity" mm. 169-170

"Lighting the Way" mm. 616-619




mm. 267-270 "Ulrike's Disgust"
"Vile Acts"