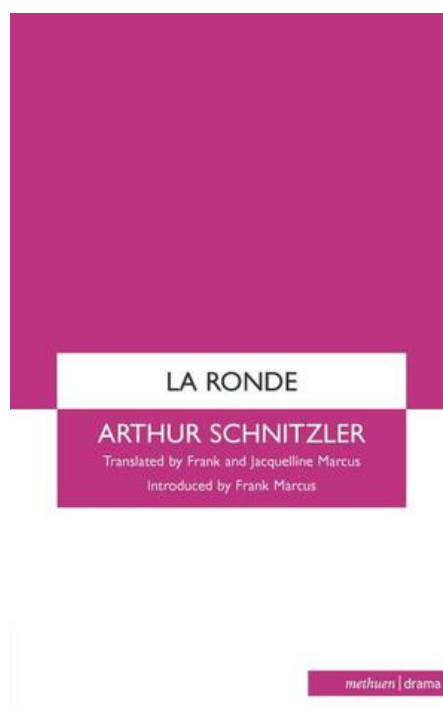




La Ronde

Arthur Schnitzler , Eric Bentley (Translator)

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Schnitzler explores human sexual behavior in a series of ten vignettes of couples preparing for romantic interludes and assignations.

La Ronde Details

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From Reader Review La Ronde for online ebook

Sean says

Ich habe nur gestern dieses Buch fertig gelesen, aber ich hatte ja schon vor, es irgendwie auf Deutsch zusammenzufassen, oder zumindest meine Empfindungen davon zusammenzufassen (bin nämlich keine Muttersprachler, wollte ich es aber kurz probieren). Für mich (und ich spreche ja in den 21. Jahrhundert) thematisiert dieses Stück, das vor allem die nicht zu fangende Sexualhunger (wenn wir es nach Freud nennen würden) behandelt, das Sexualrisiko. Oberflächlich wird die Dialoge wie ein "Reigen" strukturiert, aber ganz genauer reist (oder reißt?) die Lust wie eine Infektion. Es gibt etwas kränklich in Schnitzlers Darstellungen von Männer und Frauen, die Sehnsucht nur nach einen anderen Körper haben. Vielleicht andersrum könnte man sagen, dass die im Buch dargestellte ideologische Vorstellung von Liebe die wahre Infektion ist. Damit meine ich nichts bestimmtes, sondern das allgemeine und vielmehr vage Idee von Liebe, die einen Körper völlig auslöscht. Das heißt, die Liebe als Ideal, das Ideal eines Körper. Schau mal nach dem Dichter. Er erlöscht sogar das Licht, wenn er mit dem süßen Mädels und mit der Schauspielerinnen spielt. Der Dichter sagt, und Schnitzler schreibt dabei in der Regieanweisung, dass er es "ernst" äußert, "Du, das ist beinahe unheimlich, ich kann mir dich nicht vorstellen. -- In einem gewissen Sinne hab ich dich schon vergessen -- Wenn ich mich auch nicht mehr an den Klang deiner Stimme erinnern könnte ... was wärest du da eigentlich? Nah und fern zugleich ... unheimlich." Was stellt er sich im dunklen Zimmer vor? Warum schläft er nicht einfach ein? Was treibt ihn weiter? "Sag, ob du mich liebhabst." Dieser Satz kommt immer wieder vor. Als ein Amerikaner, ich meine, als jemand, der deutsch nicht völlig unbewusst begreifen kann, dachte ich immer, "Sag, ob du mein Leib hast." Diese Infektion ergreift man. Diese Infektion tötet. Sag, ob du meine Leiche hast. Sag, ob du meine Leiche hasst.

Andrea says

Macht Lust auf Wien und auf Beischlaf.

Marina (Sonnenbarke) says

Non voglio mettere in dubbio il valore dell'opera che, per l'epoca in cui è stata scritta, è certamente scandalosa e coraggiosa. E' lo stesso Schnitzler ad ammettere che "qualcosa di più irrepresentabile non s'è ancora visto". Infatti, come veniamo a sapere dalla prefazione, alla prima rappresentazione seguirono un processo, interpellanze in parlamento e tumulti in sala. Tuttavia, a me non è piaciuta. Non è che un giudizio personale. Ci ho trovato (il che, dirà qualcuno, è normale trattandosi di un'opera di Schnitzler) più psicologia che letteratura. Purtroppo io preferisco la letteratura venata di psicologia, piuttosto che il contrario. (Se avete già letto il commento su ibs, è perché ce l'avevo scritto io.)

Katja says

Ein - zur Zeit des Erscheinens - skandalöser sexueller Reigen zwischen Figuren zumeist heterogenen sozialen Standes. Handlungsort: Wien. Wie man dieses Stück, das beim Lesen erst durch die Auslassungen anregend wird, auf die Bühne zu bringen vermag? Eine spannende Frage! (November 2016)

Gustl says

Much ado about nothing; se penso allo scandalo e al relativo processo di Berlino, per la pubblicazione di questa commedia mi viene da ridere. Evidentemente all'epoca vedere rappresentata l'essenza del rapporto uomo donna dava fastidio alle mentalità tedesche, grette e bigotte, che negli anni 20 del XX secolo, ben di altre cose in arrivo si sarebbero dovuti preoccupare. Qui va in scena il girotondo della "sveltina", e tutto il corollario di menzogne che i protagonisti devono recitare affinché vada in porto nel modo migliore. Protagonisti che, per non far torti a nessuno, rappresentano tutte le categorie sociali, e grazie ad un geniale espediente narrativo, ci propongono le loro avventure in una struttura circolare praticamente infinita.

Henrique Vogado says

O mundo é pequeno! Uma peça de teatro divertida e com alguns diálogos bem construídos. 10 cenas curtas com 10 personagens. Imaginamos as situações mais quentes pelas pausas e interrupções. No início do século xx foi uma peça escandalosa e proibida, mas aos nossos olhos é quase inocente e normal, habituados que estamos aos limites do sexo e as suas linguagens de hoje em dia. É interessante perceber como meio mundo engana o outro meio e isso é o que permanece actual. Leitura rápida e divertida. Falta vê—la em cena.

Edward Cheer says

I think I have a new favorite play.

I've never seen a play this unique before. La Ronde follows a free-flowing narrative between multiple characters as they go out and have sex with their different partners. It paints a very unique picture on sex, as if Schnitzler is saying that love is very untrustworthy. That love is two-sided and easy to change as time goes on. And this infidelity isn't something that only streetwalkers and simple soldiers partake in, as the play introduces, but it carries on to the nobility, the wealthy, and the artists of the world. It's a cynical approach, but it's so effortlessly and simply executed that the play is a truly seamless experience, flowing between one couple and another.

Each couple is also incredibly fleshed out. The fact that Schnitzler writes each character in two scenes, shows two sides to them- they're more "honest" side or their more "secret" side, but whether that side is truly honest or secret is blended into a faded grey for certain characters, like the Poet, who feigns pure romance between his partners.

La Ronde is a truly unique and unforgettable play, and a definite must-read if ever there was one. And this is going high up as one of my favorite plays I've read.

Teresa Proença says

Da sinopse:

"Desde 1905 que circulavam rumores em Viena sobre uma obra «licenciosa» que Arthur Schnitzler teria escrito. Era A Ronda, que nenhum teatro se atreveu a encenar e começou por ser divulgada em edição de autor. Foi preciso esperar por 1921, depois do colapso do Império Austro-Húngaro, para que a peça pudesse ser representada em Viena, causando grande escândalo."

Percebo as "comichões" dos vienenses pois esta peça é uma pouca vergonha. Dez casais, em dez diálogos, que se encontram apenas pelo desejo e a sua satisfação, sem essas chatices do amor. Algumas das mulheres ainda pecam perguntando: «amas-me?», mas eles, depois de despachadinhos, vão andando ao encontro da próxima senhora; elas, sem dramas, aperlaltam-se e vão até ao quarto do cavalheiro que se segue. Apesar de ser uma peça atrevida, nada na linguagem é explícito; é tudo com muito respeitinho.

Diverti-me muito a ler esta peça e a seleccionar algumas imagens para colorir cada acto com uma ligeira indecência.

I — A GALDÉRIA E O SOLDADO

(Ernst Ludwig Kirchner)

II — O SOLDADO E A CRIADA

(Patrick Procktor)

III — A CRIADA E O JOVEM CAVALHEIRO

(Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec)

IV — O JOVEM CAVALHEIRO E A JOVEM SENHORA

(Lucian Freud)

V — A JOVEM SENHORA E O MARIDO

(Felix Vallotton)

VI — O MARIDO E A DOCE DONZELA

(Jan Steen)

VII — A DOCE DONZELA E O POETA

(Theodore Gericault)

VIII — O POETA E A ACTRIZ

(Toyen)

IX — A ACTRIZ E O CONDE

(Eric Fischl)

X — O CONDE E A GALDÉRIA

(Jack Vettriano)

Kc Blau says

Brilliantly clever. Turn of the Century Vienna was all about Schein (appearance) and Sein (to be) and Schnitzler seems to be taking a jab at his contemporary Austrians, all haughtily proper with white gloves and polished shoes in good company, and all hot and bothered romping from duvet to duvet behind closed doors. I mean, Felix Salten, one of Schnitzler's contemporaries, is the same Austro-Hungarian who wrote the adorable tale of Bambi and the sexually inexhaustible exploits of Josefine Mutzenbacher. In the past, the infamously discreet Hotel Orient in Vienna, a favored spot for secret liaisons where rooms have been rented by the hour for over a century, has even offered its suites as a stage for Performances of Reigen (La Ronde).

Sherrymoon says

Bin sehr gespannt auf diesen Reigen der Lüste, ich werde mich sicher selbsterkennen, wie schon in anderen Werken von Schnitzler.

Das Zeitalter Schnitzlers hat mich schon immer fasziniert. Welche Menge ausserordentlicher Künstler, zu jener Zeit vorallem noch Männer, die meisten vollbarttragend, was sie aussehen lässt wie grobe Holzhacker, hat es hervorgebracht. Zu Schnitzlers jahrgangsmässig engeren Zeitgenossen gehörten:

(Schnitzler 1862-1931)

Freud 1856-1939

Klimt 1862-1918

Munch 1863-1944

Cam. Claudel 1864-1943

Vallotton 1865-1925

Toul. Lautrec 1864-1901

Bonnard 1867-1947

Vallotton 1865-1925

Schiele dann 23 Jahre später

Herm.Hesse 1877-1962

R.M.Rilke 1875-1926

Stefan Zweig 1881-1942

und sicher noch viele mehr, die mir nicht so präsent sind.

Welch ein Feuerwerk von Genialität! Fast möchte man sagen: Nie kehrst du wieder goldne Zeit!

(Vielleicht kennt ihr die letzte Wendung aus dem Studentenlied: "Oh wonnevolle Jugendzeit"... eines meiner Lieblingslieder aus der Studentenzeit...mit "Freuden ohne Ende..."

Nadine says

More like 2.5 stars

mk iliev says

"?????: ?????? ????, ?????????, ????????? ?? ??????????. ? ?????? ?????, ?? ????? ???-???? ?? ?????, ?????? ?? ??????????...???????? ??????????. ? ?? ? ??? ?????"

Kristen says

I read this a while back in English class cuz my teacher has an unhealthy obsession with oversexualized mid 19th century Austria-Hungary

Fun.

David Fulmer says

In *Hands Around*, a short play by the Austrian playwright Arthur Schnitzler, ten characters are portrayed before and after the physical act of love in and around the cafes, restaurants, and drawing rooms of turn of the century Vienna. The play has an unconventional structure which departs from any traditional form of dramaturgy to follow the patterns and rhythms of human sexuality as it was practiced in fin de siècle Austria. Beginning with a scene in which a prostitute accosts a soldier on his way back to his barracks and convinces him to have sex with her on the shore of the beautiful blue Danube, each subsequent scene includes one character from the preceding scene and one new character either seducing or being seduced by the man or woman from the earlier scene. It concludes in the rooms of that first prostitute as she awakes with a Count through whom one can trace a circle of nine lovers or spouses which concludes with the very same woman.

The unusual structure has the effect of emphasizing sex and all the emotional, psychological, economic, and strategic dimensions of it. The characters in the play include members of the military, the nobility, and the bourgeoisie, as well as a poet, an actress, a husband and a wife. This diversity of social stations and subcultures permits Schnitzler to dissect a wide variety of attitudes towards sex and sexuality as well as to use sex as a mirror to show a reflection of these classes through his cynical perspective. Using their most private lives, he is able to show the way in which they fool themselves into believing in a variety of myths. Some believe in love and romance even when their partners can't even remember their names. Others simply take a cold-hearted view of things and say anything they believe they need to in order to get what they want. Misunderstandings and jealousy abound and while one partner often feels a strong attraction for the other, the opposite partner in each scene often will make any excuse to leave.

Hands Around offers a cynical satire of the desires of a group of characters from every strata of society linked by their mutual appetites in an endless chain of libido. Schnitzler holds up the desires of the rich and the poor, the fooled and the foolers to his bitter gaze and extracts timeless truths from this decadent milieu. The portrait he paints of Vienna's cafe society is witty, stylish, and sophisticated.

the gift says

now i want to again see the movie 'la ronde' by max ophuls... possibly because of him- the director- it is a very adult film, a mature, bittersweet meditation, a romance that is not a romance, a series of assignations

revealing two sides of each of the ten characters as they hook up in fin de siecle, decadent, romantic vienna: prostitute, soldier, housemaid, young gentleman, young woman, husband, sweet young thing, poet, actress, count... each leading to the other then starting again. the play is concise, engaging, comic, satiric. excellent portrayal of entire society. fast scenes of few pages each sketch clearly each character, each compromise, each deception, and maybe i am moved by thinking of how it might be updated for our 21st century world...

Julia says

"Geschrieben hab ich den ganzen Winter über nichts als eine Scenenreihe, die vollkommen undruckbar ist, literarisch auch nicht viel heißt, aber, nach ein paar hundert Jahren ausgegraben, einen Theil unserer Cultur eigentümlich beleuchten würde" schreibt der 35-jährige Author in einem Brief im Februar 1897. In 1900 druckt Schnitzler "Reigen" privat in 200 Exemplare für Freunde. Das Stück wird schnell „ein bekanntes unbekanntes Buch“, das in Deutschland und Poland offiziell verboten ist. Als ganzes wird es erst fast 24 Jahre später auf der Bühne aufgeführt, löst ein Skandal aus und setzt den Author einer Attacke als "judischer Pornograph" aus. Nach der zweiten Aufführung zieht Schnitzler "Reigen" aus der öffentlichen Produktion im deutschsprachigen Raum zurück und so bleibt es bis 1982.

Liest sich "Reigen" auch heute als skandalös? Gar nicht, ist eher aus dem kulturanthropologieschen Sicht interessant, wie der Author in 1897 vorausgesagt hat.

Sandra says

Potentially very interesting, but a lot of the impact will really depend on the actors and actresses involved. There's loads left to the imagination when it comes to character interaction, so it could be either a disaster or really good. It's definitely easy to understand why this play caused such a scandal.. very interesting if just for that. It's just that I felt the text was rather plain, and that made it more boring to read than it would be to watch.

ETA: On reread this made a lot more sense to me, especially the relationships between the characters and the way they were treated according to the social hierachy. Very interesting.

Dwight says

My review

Arthur Schnitzler's play *La Ronde* (*Reigen* in German), written in 1897 but not performed until the winter of 1920/21, looks at a chain of ten sexual encounters. While known by several names depending on the language of translation, the title, named after a circular dance, often goes by *La Ronde* since France was the one country Schnitzler allowed the play to be performed after the initial riots and complaints in Berlin and Vienna. An English version, translated as *Hands Around*, can be found here (no translator noted other than it was 'authorized').

In general each of the ten scenes focus on a pair of lovers, fades out for their sexual encounter, then returns

for a post-coital conversation. Each character appears in consecutive scenes, except for the prostitute who starts and ends the play. The scenes as listed using the linked translation's names are as follows:

1. The Girl of the Streets [Prostitute] and the Soldier
2. The Soldier and the Parlor Maid
3. The Parlor Maid and the Young Man
4. The Young Man and the Young Wife
5. The Young Wife and the Husband
6. The Husband and the Sweet Young Miss
7. The Sweet Young Miss and the Poet
8. The Poet and the Actress
9. The Actress and the Count
10. The Count and the Girl of the Streets

As you would guess from such a topic and structure, Schnitzler was very open on sexuality despite the veiled language used at times. The structure goes well beyond the alternating couples. The one licit coupling appears at the center of the play between the wife and husband, but even that scene involves the exertion necessary in a marriage (as opposed to the exertion needed for...other things) in addition to the baggage that is brought into a marriage. In a sense, this is the most complicated pairing in the entire play.

There are other devices used in the structure that adds to the play. Generally there is a rise in class from scene to scene until we get to the count and a shift back to the lower class with the prostitute--we have come full circle. To complicate that pairing with her and the count, the sex happened the night before, or so she says...the count can't remember. Another part of the structure I found interesting was the transition between male dominance in the pairings early on that transitions to female dominance in the latter pairs. Or maybe it would be more correct to say the female dominant sexual power is better disguised in the early pairings.

The play is fun to read to see how each pairing unfolds. It's clear both parties are willing participants early in each scene, the woman sometimes putting up the appearance of resistance for propriety's sake. Her actions usually don't match her protestations, though. The resistance is more pronounced in the earlier scenes, less so in the latter ones. There's more to explore in the pairings, especially the similarity between scenes with the common character. Often there is a hitch in the pairing, the funniest (to me) is the temporary impotence of the young man in Scene Four. His discussion of *Stendhal* after the disappointment leads to a successful conclusion. So to speak.

Highly recommended. It would be easy to dismiss the play as simple fun that Schnitzler intended for his friends but the deceptions, and more importantly the self-deceptions, lend themselves to deeper meaning. The married couple provides the most philosophical pairing as the husband waxes eloquently on friendship, love and passion while the wife provides a wistful counterpoint, sardonic at times. His simultaneous understanding and ignorance yields some of the funniest lines of the play. The wife complicates things by bringing up past lovers while the husband does his best to evade the topic. For all his bluster, the husband sums things up rather well:

Husband: If we hadn't sometimes forgotten that we are in love with each other during the five years we have been married—we might not be in love any longer.

Young Wife: That's beyond me.

Husband: The case is simply this. We have had perhaps ten or twelve love-affairs with each other [in five years of marriage].... Doesn't it seem that way to you, too?

Young Wife: I haven't counted them!

Husband: If we had enjoyed the first one to the last drop, if I had from the very beginning surrendered without restraint to my passion for you, the same thing would have happened to us that has happened to millions of other lovers. We would be tired of each other.

Update: I've added some comments on the play in my post on Max Ophuls' 1950 movie version of *La Ronde*.

Rosie Dempsey says

A humorous series of dialogues in which a "world" of characters progressively sleep with each other (the whore with the soldier, followed by the soldier with the parlor maid, followed by the parlor maid with her employer, etc.). The play explores the breaking or enforcement of class barriers, and the fetishization of people outside a character's social world. It also brings up interesting questions of love and lust, and whether people "sleep around" because of loneliness or mere boredom.

Two of the five women in this play show initiative in seducing a man, whereas all five men freely express their sexual interest. While this is a product of the play's time, it made each woman seem more shallow than the man she interacted with.

Steven Godin says

Arthur Schnitzler deemed his 1897 play 'La Ronde' too raunchy and provocative for a public audience. Understandable, seeing the year. And only kept it for the eyes of friends when printed some three years later. When it finally received its very first public viewing in Vienna some twenty years later it was shut down by the Austrian police and Schnitzler was prosecuted for obscenity. There have been many productions of his play since, and in recent years even Nicole Kidman took to the stage in her birthday suit, leaving one critic to declare it "pure theatrical viagra". Unfortunately for me, I wasn't there, or any of the other productions (had a chance to see it in London but turned down the offer). At least I can say I read it.

An example of the text,

YOUNG WIFE: But you're tearing everything!

YOUNG GENTLEMAN: Don't you wear a corset?

YOUNG WIFE: I never wear a corset. Neither does Duse, incidentally. You can unbutton my boots.

(The Young Gentleman unbuttons her boots, kisses her feet.)

YOUNG WIFE (slipping into the bed): Oooh, I'm cold.

YOUNG GENTLEMAN: It'll get warm.

YOUNG WIFE (laughing softly): You think so?

YOUNG GENTLEMAN (not liking this, to himself): She shouldn't have said that! (He undresses in the dark.)

YOUNG WIFE (tenderly): Come, come, come.

YOUNG GENTLEMAN (in a better mood at once): At once

YOUNG WIFE: It smells of violets here.

YOUNG GENTLEMAN: It's you. . . yes (close by her) . . . you.

YOUNG WIFE: Alfred . . . Alfred!!!!

YOUNG GENTLEMAN: Emma

La Ronde is made up of ten interconnected scenes, each scene contains just two characters, which are, A Whore, a Soldier, A Parlour Maid, a Young Gentleman, a Young Wife, a Husband, a Miss, a Poet, an Actress, and a Count. The moments featured are before or after a sexual encounter and By choosing characters across all levels of society, the play offers social commentary on how sexual contact transgresses through different individuals. Besides being a literal symbolisation of the play's title, this roulette wheel offers an element of excitement to a piece that has lost some of its allure in this desensitised era, where sexual preferences and perversities are no longer the taboos they were at the turn of the twentieth century. It certainly has lost the shock factor when you think of the world of today, and of the ten scenes only about four really stood out for me being excellent.

As far as I am concerned nothing beats the stage, reading a play just isn't the same as seeing it with your own eyes. This was worth reading though, and reading plays is starting to grow on me. This is the second piece of Schnitzler's work I have read and want to read more. I like him, just from this it's easy to see his talent as a dramatist.