

### *Bride of the Wind: Alma's Loss of Independence*

Bruce Beresford's *Bride of the Wind* is a captivating story of Alma Mahler who allows her talent and free spirit to be overshadowed by a series of imperious husbands and lovers. Alma was the inspiration for Gustav Mahler's successful compositions, Walter Gropius's architecture, and Oskar Kokoschka's famous painting *Bride of the Wind*. Undoubtedly genius was Alma's aphrodisiac, but it was this same preference of geniuses which caused turmoil and disorder in her life. Alma was the muse of her lovers because she was tolerant, self depriving, and insecure.

In the beginning of the film, Alma is portrayed as a person who does not care what others may think of her, including her own step father. She broke all the rules, from sneaking off to "inappropriate" parties to seducing a man twice her age, Gustav Mahler. The first sign of tolerance was when she gave up her passion for composing when asked to by Gustav before being married. During the marriage she was a very devoted wife but once again was tolerant to him isolating her and basically choosing music above all other things. Instead of Gustav giving Alma the attention of a wife he treated her rather like a secretary, keeping him financially balanced, making copies of his compositions, and accompanying him to events like a sidekick. She was also very tolerant with her other lovers, including Oskar's violent behavior whenever he became frustrated with her or impatient because she would not accept his hand in marriage. Alma also accepted criticism from Walter towards her choice to keep Oskar's paintings. As she was tolerant with the men she chose to be with at the same time, she was being very selfish with herself.