

## Introduction

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With the present issue of *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* we celebrate and pay tribute to one of the foremost scholars of late nineteenth-century music and Gustav Mahler – Stephen E. Hefling, *professor emeritus* of Case Western Reserve University, and a treasured colleague and friend. Stephen’s distinguished career has spanned some thirty years from 1985, when he completed his groundbreaking dissertation on the compositional process behind Mahler’s Second Symphony (‘The Making of Mahler’s *Todtenfeier*: A Documentary and Analytical Study’, Yale University), to 2016, when he announced his retirement from Case Western Reserve University. Over the course of these decades, he served on the faculties of Stanford University, Yale University, Oberlin College and Case Western Reserve University. An accomplished violinist and conductor, his interests have always extended well beyond Mahler. My earliest memories of meeting Stephen are actually of spirited conversations about *scordatura* in Biber’s *Rosary Sonatas* that led to impromptu readings of seventeenth-century violin sonatas of Marco Uccellini and Giovanni Paolo Cima. Sooner or later, though, the topic at hand usually shifted to later centuries, and in particular often focused on the burgeoning Bruckner and Mahler cycles recorded during the 1960s and 1970s, encouraging in turn comparative re-hearings into late evenings of Bruno Walter, Leonard Bernstein, George Szell, Bernard Haitinck, and all the rest.

For all his devotion to the music of Mahler, Stephen is a scholar equally conversant in the intractable aspects of *notes inégales* in baroque performance practice (at the beginning of his career, he did not hesitate to enter the fray fully in his first book, *Rhythmic Alterations in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Music: Notes Inégales and Overdotting*). An inveterate chamber musician – for 45 summers, Stephen has been an avid participant at chamber music gatherings held at the Kinhaven Music School in Weston, Vermont – he drew upon his experiences to explore in print the full range of Schubert’s chamber music (with, for example, detailed readings of the relatively neglected *Rondeau brilliant* in B minor, D. 895 and Violin Fantasy in C major, D. 934; see the Schubert chapter in his *Nineteenth-Century Chamber Music*, New York, 1998). But in the world of Mahleriana, Stephen has always been in his special element, and scholars who have turned to him with queries about this seminal figure have profited from drawing upon the generous resources of a veritable *wandelnde Enzyklopädie*. Indeed, the range of his knowledge and insights seem to touch nearly every aspect of Mahler’s life and music, whether tracing the broad philosophical underpinnings of the composer’s art to Schopenhauer (in his Cambridge Music Handbook on *Das Lied von der Erde* Stephen asserts in the very opening gambit: ‘Fundamental to an understanding of Mahler’s work as a whole is the Schopenhauerian worldview, embraced and extended by Wagner and Nietzsche, in which Mahler was steeped from his student days in Vienna’); cataloguing and evaluating the unwieldy corpus of primary sources, all too easily scattered by the passing of time; teasing out from

Mahler's manuscripts the labyrinthine processes through which he produced his major works; reminding us in several articles of, as it were, 'what the sketches tell me'; presenting and evaluating critical new primary sources, not the least of which is the first edition and translation of Natalie Bauer-Lechner's substantial letter to Hans Riehl about Mahler's relationships with women; or serving as Vice President of the Internationale Gustav Mahler Gesellschaft and co-director of the *Neue kritische Gesamtausgabe*, while preparing the authoritative new edition of the orchestral score of *Das Lied von der Erde*, to accompany the already released *Klavierauszug*.

Those who have read Stephen's work or been fortunate enough to attend his meticulous lectures have inevitably come away challenged, stimulated and enlightened by the brilliance and reliability of the scholarship. And those of our colleagues who count themselves among music theorists have come to admire the elegance of his analyses and the way in which his well-refined reductions effectively reveal the essential structural outlines of what is admittedly some of the most conceptually complex music in the Western symphonic tradition. It is not often that a scholar in our discipline is able to straddle the historical/theoretical divide, and to elucidate either side convincingly. To be sure, there is a certain irony in applying a (modified) Schenkerian methodology to the music of Mahler. Though a contemporary of Mahler who survived the composer by some two decades, Heinrich Schenker (1868–1935) admired him only as a conductor and had little use for his music, which (presumably for Schenker) deviated from the main Austro-Germanic tradition promoted by the theorist. And so, after attending an open rehearsal of the Sixth Symphony in 1907, Schenker dismissed the *Angst*-ridden work as 'childishly grotesque'. That said, along with other tonal composers whom Schenker did not admit into his pantheon, Mahler characteristically fashioned his music from quintessential motivic cells, in which, as he confided to Anton von Webern, was 'contained the germ of everything that is yet to be'. The Schenkerian ideal of musical organicism was surely not at all a foreign concept to Mahler. What is more, as Stephen has shown in his lucid discussion of the extensive sketches that survive for the Rückert setting 'Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen', Mahler seems to have been intent *ab initio* upon magnifying simple motives into larger scale middleground events, thereby relating individual details to over-arching temporal events. In the case of this particular Lied, he chose as his basic motive an anhemitonic pentatonic scale, from which the composer segmented smaller portions, all of which nevertheless allowed the music to 'project a sense of timeless, contemplative withdrawal, yet maintain organic continuity throughout, from "primeval cell" to larger structure, in accordance with Mahler's aesthetic standards'. ('The Composition of "Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen"', in *Gustav Mahler*, ed. Hermann Danuser (Darmstadt, 1992), 155)

If Schenkerian applications are one recurrent *leitender Faden* in Stephen's research, there are many other approaches, musical and non-musical alike, that he has profitably applied as well. At least two compelling examples come easily to mind. In 'Techniques of Irony in Mahler's Oeuvre' (*Gustav Mahler et l'ironie dans la culture viennoise au tournant du siècle* (Castelnau le-Lez, 2001), 99–142), Stephen makes the bold claim that Mahler was 'the first composer for whom irony is a fundamental and relentlessly recurring element of his works', and then proceeds to support his case by distinguishing over the course of Mahler's career no fewer than six types of irony, from the use of parody and allusion in the early *Winterlied* of 1880 to the bittersweet nostalgia of the late style. Thus, there is the *ingénu* irony

of the Fourth Symphony, whereby 'the ironist creates a naïve innocent who lures victims into his ironizing'; the tragic irony of the Sixth Symphony, in which 'we know what fate demands, but the music seems not to'; and the ambivalent irony of the Seventh, in which the score 'refuses to behave like a Mahler symphony'. Quite another tack is taken in an illuminating article about Mahler's conflicted relationship with Richard Strauss ('Miners Digging from Opposite Sides: Mahler, Strauss, and the Problem of Program Music', in *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*, ed. Bryan Gilliam (Durham, 1992)). Here Stephen examines Mahler's and Strauss's 'different appropriations' of their common Wagnerian heritage to reveal their contrasting attitudes to programme music: if for Strauss the programme determined the formal boundaries of a tone poem, for Mahler, the music of his symphonies evolved *toward* and in the end attained a programmatic goal, principally as a point of clarification, not necessarily as a pre-compositional determinant.

In recognition of Stephen's substantial contributions to Mahler research, the present offerings include three articles devoted to the composer by Paul Banks, Jeremy Barham, and Peter Franklin. In 'Mahler and "The Newspaper Company"', Paul Banks examines the numerous challenges the composer faced when he struggled to publish his early large-scale works. At the time there were few Austrian music publishers, and none could competitively rival German firms (Universal was not founded in Vienna until 1901, and not until 1906 did that firm acquire the rights to the first four symphonies). Popular music filled Austrian publishers' catalogues, so that from a purely business perspective Mahler's early symphonies, for all their weight and monumentality, were received in the publishing world as commercial anomalies rather than prestigious acquisitions. Against most odds, then, Mahler's first four symphonies, which he regarded as no less than a self-contained 'tetralogy', first appeared in print not from a major firm but from a company that primarily printed newspapers. Now, for the first time, the early publication history of the symphonies, the cantata *Das klagende Lied* and the *Wunderhorn* songs is revealed in detail, owing to the rediscovery of a draft publishing agreement reviewed by the composer.

The other two Mahler articles, by Jeremy Barham and Peter Franklin, confront two controversial though undeniably salient features of the symphonies: 1) the extent to which Mahler deliberately alluded to folk/popular materials or to the 'spirit' of *das Volkstümliche*, and 2) the significance of Mahler's massed orchestral climaxes that test if not breach the boundaries of musical taste as it was generally understood in the first decade of the twentieth century. For Jeremy Barham ('The Ghost in the Machine'), a productive way to address Mahler's assimilation of popular musical materials into symphonic contexts is through his admitted borrowing in the second movement of the Fifth Symphony from 'An dem blauen See' of Thomas Koschat (1845–1914), a singer and composer who was regarded as 'the true voice of Carinthian folk culture'. Mahler's admission notwithstanding, no tune titled 'An dem blauen See' actually survives from Koschat's hand, though his popular *Kärntnerisches Liederspiel* titled *Am Wörther See* was performed 40 times between 1880 and 1912 at the Vienna Opera, where Mahler would have heard it (though he did not conduct it). In the unpretentious, naïve melodies of Koschat's *Liederspiel*, Barham suggests, Mahler found sources that in effect allowed him to 'tap into the kind of aesthetic of the ingenuous', and, what is more, to apply it to the broad canvas of the Fifth Symphony.

If Mahler did draw, consciously or not, on the popular music of Koschat, for Peter Franklin ('Mahler's Overwhelming Climaxes: The Symphony as Mass

Medium'), the composer's carefully calculated placement of shattering orchestral climaxes in the symphonies – what Franklin describes as 'structurally nodal effects of extreme volume and emotional impact' – betrays a modernist agenda of using symphonic platforms to communicate directly to 'democratically inclusive lay audiences'. The full power of Mahler's climactic utterances could convey examples of 'anti-music', that is, something 'to be rejected, or *escaped from*'. But his 'rainbow-coloured scores' also arguably facilitated the subtleties and technological advances of 'those great works of twentieth-century mass culture' – films.

A recurring and contentious issue in the world of Bruckner research has been the so-called *Bruckner Streit*, the fractious debate that broke out in the 1930s and 40s about the relative value of Bruckner's autographs versus the early editions. In 'A Bequest and a Legacy: Editing Anton Bruckner's Music in "Later Times"', Paul Hawkshaw reconsiders the controversy in light of the recent launching of the *New Anton Bruckner Collected Works* with the release of the Linz version of the First Symphony. After re-examining a clause in Bruckner's will about the disposition of his manuscripts, Hawkshaw sets down two guiding premises for the new *Gesamtausgabe* – that the 'final reading' of the composer, whether it occurs in a manuscript or early edition, must be respected; and that revision was integral to Bruckner's compositional process and must 'be allowed to play a major role as the present generation takes its turn at shaping his legacy'.

How we shape composers' legacies is indeed a complicated process that often shifts in unpredictable ways, as different generations measure in different ways their understanding of major figures in the narrative of Western music. In the case of Brahms, the significance of his late style, with its 'invocation of memory in the immediacy of a most personal work',<sup>1</sup> has long challenged our critical understanding – the late style is at once redolent of autumnal romanticism even as it anticipates compositional techniques of the next century. 'Late Brahms, Ancient Modes' offers readings of the Clarinet Trio, Op. 114 and String Quintet No. 2, Op. 111, focusing on Brahms's increasing attraction to modal structures as a means of finding new creative spaces to explore within the increasingly attenuated tonality of the late nineteenth century.

The five articles in this issue are the result of an idea first proposed by Stephen's wife, Deborah, who has proved to be a most worthy co-conspirator. I am indebted to her for organizational assistance, and, in particular, for helping to maintain a veil of secrecy around this project. And I thank as well the contributors and the editorial direction of this journal for their many efforts in bringing Deborah's suggestion to fruition.

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<sup>1</sup> The phrase is borrowed from Stephen Hefling's discussion of Mahler in 'Aspects of Mahler's Late Style', in *Mahler and His World*, ed. Karen Painter (Princeton, 2002), 215.