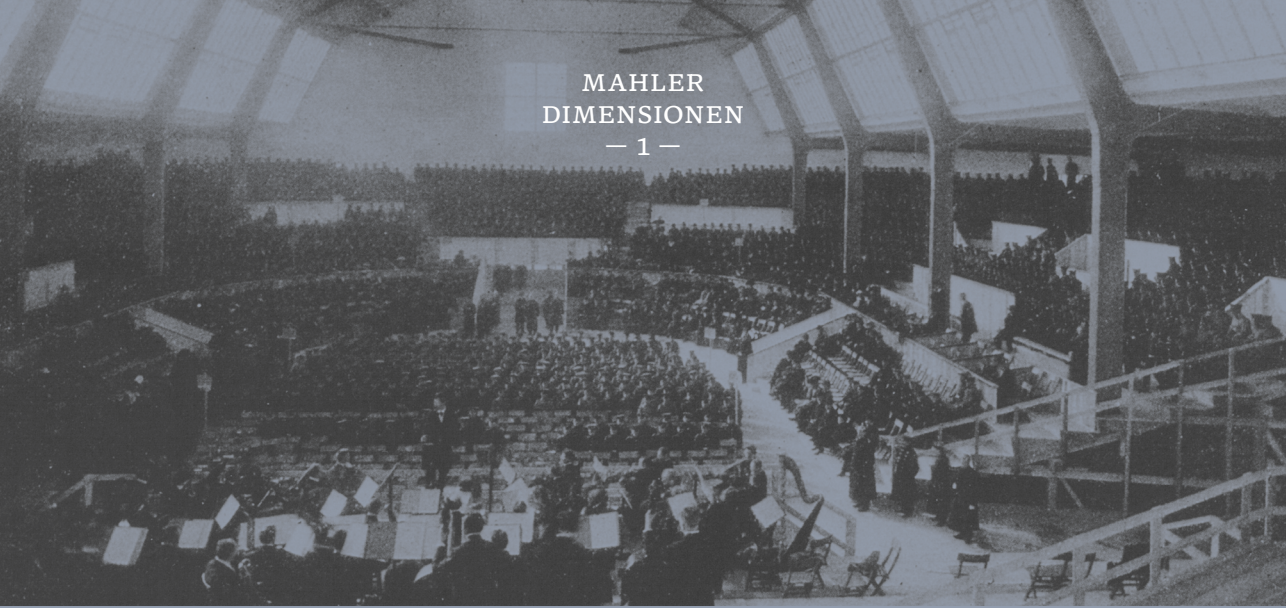




MAHLER
DIMENSIONEN

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TOBIAS JANZ & CHRISTIAN UTZ (HG./EDS.)

Gustav Mahlers Klang

*Zwischen Schaffensprozess,
Interpretation und Rezeption*

Gustav Mahler's Sound

Between Compositional Process,
Performance, and Reception

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Introduction

Tobias Janz & Christian Utz

The sound of Gustav Mahler's music is unmistakable and yet difficult to define. Whether in chamber-music-style songs or large-scale symphonies featuring soloists and choirs, Mahler's idiosyncratic "sound" evokes the era in which his works were composed – that of Viennese Modernism and the European *fin de siècle* – with all its social fault lines and upheavals. While this might be explained by the peculiar way in which the sonic characters of Mahler's music speak and narrate, their musicality and function nonetheless resist straightforward interpretation, whether programmatic or cultural-historical. As a result, Mahler's works, including those with vocal parts, do not have a single, clearly definable "content"; at the same time, they remain highly discourse-productive, continuously reproducing their meanings in the processes of interpretation and reception. In this context, Mahler's musical sound – with its distinctive characteristics – is not merely one element among others, nor is it merely passively perceived. Rather, it assumes the role of an aesthetic object with its own agency and the capacity to trigger strong reactions in listeners, while also initiating thought processes of the kind more typically associated with the discursive and fictional arts. Far from conveying an impression of conformity, surveying the diverse ways that Mahler's music is received today thus demonstrates its ease of adaptability to a wide variety of contexts and social and cultural milieus.

Relating once more to the concept of sound, the global spread of this diverse reception and its manifestation in a variety of different forms may be attributed to the music's remarkable adaptability to the media shifts of the past hundred years; indeed, its enduring popularity today is founded in many ways on the possibilities of its mediatization. The "Mahler Renaissance" of the 1960s was, if not triggered, then certainly significantly advanced by the shift in media from the concert hall to the record, by the transition from live performance to technically (re)produced sound. The fact that this has resulted, up to the present day, in a sometimes bewildering breadth of competing, often diametrically opposed sonic interpretations makes Mahler's music an exemplary field of musical performance research and evidence for the thesis that a contemporary concept of the work must be understood in terms of performative materiality. In addition, anyone wishing to understand Mahler's current popularity must not only engage with conductors, soloists, symphony orchestras, and concertgoers, each with their own historically evolved dynamics of influence, but also examine the vast abundance of social media feeds featuring Mahler's music. While Mahler's sound also serves here as a vehicle for very specific traces of cultural memory, this is counterbalanced by a desire for sometimes seemingly arbitrary recordings or re-encodings, for more or less subjective appropriation, and for aesthetic reinterpretations or re-definitions.

It stands to reason that the two aspects of Mahler's sound mentioned above – his aesthetic appeal and discursive-interpretive productivity on the one hand, and the wealth of institutional and media formats through which he presents himself to today's listeners on the other – should be understood not as separate but as interconnected, mutually reinforcing phenomena. If one understands Mahler's sound in this sense as a point of intersection between

aesthetic-musical, cultural, and media-, technology-, and listening-historical lines of flight, questions arise that are not easily answered. A multi-perspective approach seems necessary if one wishes to better understand the unique situation of Mahler's sound at the nexus of composition, performance, technical reproduction, and auditory reception, a position whose very complexity promises new insights.

This is, in essence, the idea behind this volume and the symposium that preceded it. Specifically, it involves, for once, not focusing solely on the work, its form, or its historical background, but rather bringing research perspectives on Mahler's sound into a dialogue and, from there, developing new approaches to the analysis and historical and cultural interpretation of his works. The volume was produced in the context of the four-year research project "Multiple Dimensions in Performances of Mahler's Symphonies (MMD): Developing Resources on the History and Analysis of Mahler Performance" (01/06/2021–30/09/2025, FWF P 34710, <https://doi.org/10.55776/P34710>, "MMD Project," University of Music and Performing Arts Graz, Principal Investigator: Christian Utz). In this project, the research team examined the historical diversity and development of the interpretation of Mahler's symphonies using a large corpus of audio recordings and demonstrated how performances are shaped by individual, technical, and cultural factors. With the establishment of the freely accessible research platform *Mahler online* (<https://www.mahler-online.at>) and the publication of data on analysis, tempo, and duration values, a comprehensive foundation was established for future empirically oriented research on Mahler interpretation (<https://zenodo.org/communities/mahler-symphonies>, published on 31/03 and 01/04/2026). The aim of the symposium "Gustav Mahler's Sound: Between Creative Process, Interpretation, and Reception," held in July 2024 at the Grand Hotel Toblach, was to expand the project's analytically, historically, and empirically oriented research methods through multi-perspective approaches to the sonic materiality, performativity, and mediality of Mahler's music and its reception, thereby defining a new state of research regarding "Mahler's Sound." This was based on the two editors' decades-long shared research interest in integrating the historical, analytical, and social dimensions of sound phenomena in music history. Following several individual contributions and the publication of the data, this is the first comprehensive book publication in the context of the MMD project, to be followed by a multi-volume *Handbook on Mahler Interpretation*, forthcoming also in the new *Mahler Dimensions* series. This handbook will present a detailed history of the interpretation of all of Mahler's works based on the research data and numerous other sources.

In working on this volume, it was crucial not to strip the term "sound" of the semantic openness it possesses in German and in many other languages. The term "sound" can be understood in at least three distinct ways: first, with regard to the dimension of a purely physical sound (*Schall*) and its musical utility, with historically shifting transitional overlaps with the neighboring concepts of tone and timbre, as well as the connotation of a predominantly harmonic (that is, overtone-based) "sound spectrum" that distinguishes it – albeit again with gradual transitions – from noise. The historical semantics of music theory become relevant here when they speak of "triads," "tone," "tonal composition," instrumentation, or orchestration (signifying a distribution of instrumental timbres across the structure). Second, in contrast to physical sound, the term "sound" can also be used to describe the *phenomenon of hearing* – that is, not the objectivity of vibrating air molecules, but their subjective perception as this or that musical sound. Several trends in the contemporary philosophy of music use this

concept of sound synonymously and as a *pars pro toto* for music as an aesthetically autonomous art form; from a phenomenological perspective, this can be taken so far as to question whether sound can be conceived at all apart from subjective auditory perception. Third, because music is not only heard analytically, through unconscious calculation (Leibniz), but also physically, affectively, and with uncontrollable semantic associations, sound must also be conceptualized as a *cultural carrier of meaning*. The context of this meaning ranges from generally comprehensible musical topoi to involuntarily personal, seemingly private, yet culturally specific epiphanies in the manner of the famous madeleine or hawthorn hedge in Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*.

It is no coincidence that sound, as a vehicle of cultural meaning, appears in the poetry that sparked Mahler's musical imagination: whether it is the pastoral alphorn echoing across to the lonely soldier in the distant Strasbourg ramparts, or the line "with joy it rang blissfully in heaven," which the entire fifth movement of the Third Symphony seems to herald, or the "resounding" morning greeting of the bellflower in the second wayfarer's song: Even in its purely instrumental form, Mahler's music seems permeated by such synesthetic literary-auditory images. Conveyed through musical sound, the cultural meanings that emerge from these associations are still communicated to today's listeners.

The authors of this volume each address, in their own way, the semantic openness and disciplinary blurring of boundaries relating to sound in Mahler. While maintaining hermeneutic diversity, the chapters nevertheless focus on thematic areas loosely centered on the musicological fields of *Sound Analysis*, *Sources and the Creative Process*, *Performance Practice and Performance History*, and *Mediatized Sound*.

A first group of chapters seeks approaches to musical analysis that examine the compositional-historical, technical, aesthetic, and performative dimensions of instrumental, orchestral, and vocal sound, without losing sight of the traditional perspective of structural and formal analytical methods. The boundaries between immanent musical- and cultural-studies-based sound analysis are fluid in this context.

Karol Berger traces the arc of Mahler's sound dramaturgy between two instrumentally colored sounds of particular semantic significance: the tam-tam, which Mahler associates with death and mourning, and the hopeful sounds of small bells, such as those of the glockenspiel or celesta. Beginning with an analysis of the *Kindertotenlieder*, Berger develops a sound-based perspective for a comprehensive interpretation of Mahler's symphonic works. He conceives of this corpus as an engagement with suffering, transience, and death, and then outlines the various solutions to these existential problems that Mahler's music offers across the three main phases of his creative career.

Using the example of the chronological proximity of the *Kindertotenlieder* and the Sixth Symphony, Tobias Janz examines fundamental challenges in the analysis of Mahler's sound: the historical coexistence of tendencies toward chamber-music linearity and orchestral monumentality in Mahler, the contingency of a sound subject to constant revisions and refinements, and realizations in various instrumental media, as well as its historical significance in light of the development of the symphony since Haydn. The relationship between musical composition and instrumentation in Mahler's work is specific in that – as Arnold Schoenberg pointed out early on – the relative contingency of timbral concretization is the flip side of a relatively autonomous and remarkably stable musical structure. However, instrumental

timbre is by no means aesthetically subordinate. On the contrary, the separation of these dimensions seems to have been Mahler's way of simultaneously emancipating and integrating timbre compositionally.

Emily Dolan's self-reflexive chapter begins with a review of her work on Haydn's orchestration and, building on this, attempts to situate Mahler's sound within the discourse of timbre studies. With a horizon of meaning as open as that of "Klang" in German, the English term "timbre" presents a paradox in its discursive use. On the one hand, timbre is a quality inherent in every sound event; on the other hand, in a musical context, timbre primarily manifests itself in exceptional situations – what Dolan, referring to Theodor W. Adorno and John Sheinbaum, calls the "timbral breakthrough." According to Dolan, the reception – not always positive, as is well known – of the spectacular and exceptional manifestations of Mahler's sound, such as the hammer blows in the Sixth Symphony, along with the very early scholarly reflection on his instrumentation, created the conditions for a heightened sensitivity to listening. It is on this foundation that the interdisciplinary field of timbre studies, which has flourished in recent decades, has been able to establish itself.

Jack Adler-McKean demonstrates how complex, yet productive, contemporary research in the history of musical instruments can be pursued by combining analysis of musical works with cultural-historical contextualization, organology, and artistic research methods. Drawing on a detailed and richly documented case study, his chapter focuses on the lowest-pitched instrument in the brass family, the (contrabass) tuba, for which – due to confusing terminology – a wide variety of instrument types of different origins have been considered since the 19th century. The instruments on which Mahler's sometimes prominent tuba parts are played today are not derived from the (Viennese) tuba that Mahler would likely have been familiar with, but rather from instruments known in Mahler's time as bombardons, which were favored by military and marching bands. A historically informed performance practice is called upon to experiment with different types of instruments in order to ensure the clarity of Mahler's tuba sounds.

Klaus Aringer identifies the choral treatment of the horns as a key element of Mahler's sound: The deliberate use of multiple horn parts – up to six, seven, or eight horns – appearing in unison, octaves, or polyphonic writing, produces a homogeneous, form-supporting collective timbre that combines the possibilities of a monumental ensemble with those of a nuanced timbral design. Derivations from works by Franz Schubert, Anton Bruckner, and Richard Strauss, the technique of the valve horn, military *ripieno* traditions, and *colla parte* practices are illustrated using key passages from the First to Fifth, and Eighth Symphonies. Particular attention is given to the innovative transformation of the horn from an individual solo instrument into a "group solo" as a structural means of achieving clarity and spatial layering.

Dimitrios Katharopoulos reads Mahler's sound dramaturgy as a systematic interplay between instrumentation and form, grounded in a novel categorization of instrumental techniques and the formal segmentation analyses developed in the MMD project. Range and disposition serve as basic parameters, supplemented by a three-tiered system comprising soloistic structures, structural sound (chamber-music-like/orchestral/tutti-like), and tutti (perforated/full), as well as mixed types of instrumental balance (woods/brass/strings). Using case studies, including the first movements of the Second, Seventh, and Ninth Symphonies, Katharopoulos demonstrates how Mahler frequently groups formal sections under an overarching instrumen-

tation category, yet simultaneously employs “instrumentation across the bar line,” dynamic shifts in the mixed types, and processual mechanisms of proliferation and reduction to create a continuously flowing sound organization, whose internal plurality is further intensified in his late works.

The starting point of Fredrica Roos’s chapter is Mahler’s conviction, expressed to Natalie Bauer-Lechner and later to Jean Sibelius, that composing a symphony was, for him, an act of constructing a world. Roos takes this statement at face value and, building on her dissertation, develops an approach that combines instrumental analysis with the “possible worlds theory” from recent narrative research. The long-standing discussion regarding the explicit or implicit programs of Mahler’s symphonies and the affinity of his symphonic language to the prose of the novel take on a postmodern twist in that Roos is not concerned with fictional worlds (in musical form) intended by Mahler or obvious to contemporary audiences, but rather with the plurality of possible worlds that today’s listeners can experience in Mahler’s symphonies. Timbre here becomes a decisive interface in two respects: on the one hand, through its mimetic reference to non-musical sound worlds; on the other hand, by enabling instruments to become quasi-protagonists through timbral individualization. Even if Roos makes this point only implicitly, her chapter is nonetheless a contribution to understanding contemporary ways of listening amongst a generation that no longer experiences Mahler’s works through the lens of 19th-century education, but rather draws on immersive experiences from film, streaming series, or video games.

Sam Reenan connects approaches from current gender and queer studies with an analysis of Mahler’s orchestration. He begins by addressing the biographical aspects of Mahler’s sexuality and sexual identity – which have been extensively discussed in Mahler scholarship – with the aim of giving them analytical substance. “Von der Schönheit” from *Das Lied von der Erde* serves as an obvious starting point for exploring possible connections between a particular sensitivity to timbre and culturally mediated notions of femininity and masculinity. Reenan’s analysis suggests that, when heard through gender categories, Mahler’s sound both confirms and subverts the conventional binary of the sexes. His chapter concludes, however, by arguing that this latent openness to fluid forms of gender is significantly neutralized in Arnold Schoenberg’s and Rainer Riehn’s chamber music arrangement of *Das Lied von der Erde*.

Federico Celestini addresses the exceptionality of Mahler’s instrumentation and use of timbre as a central means of artistic expression, a topic also touched upon in other chapters, such as those by Emily Dolan and Anne Holzmüller. Drawing on Roland Barthes’s reflections on the voice as well as theories of the grotesque, Celestini distinguishes three possibilities or modes employed by Mahler to transcend the normal symphonic sound by means of instrumentation and the performative use of instruments, thereby resisting symphonic “domestication”: (1) the mode of phantasmagoria, in which Mahler’s sound seems to approach natural soundscapes; (2) the mode of alienation, in which Mahler joins the ranks – traceable from Romanticism to the avant-garde – of those more interested in the aesthetic of noise and sound than the ideal of beautiful sound, and in the grotesque body rather than the classical ideal body; (3) the mode of a brilliant, radiant overall sound, constituting an abundance of instrumental brilliance. Celestini already hears all three modes being clearly expressed in Mahler’s First Symphony.

The second group of chapters conceives of sound as a product of Mahler's specific creative method and explores what can be learned about the genesis of the composer's sound worlds through the means of philology and genetic criticism.

Nikolaus Urbanek begins with a fundamental reflection on the relationship between sound and philology. Taking a historical-disciplinary perspective, he traces this relationship in the opposition between two successive musicological paradigms: the score-based analytical paradigm, which tended to neglect aspects of sound; and the performance-oriented paradigm that has prevailed since the 1990s following the "performative turn," in which sound becomes a central theme, albeit principally in its performative dimension. Philologically, as Urbanek shows, Mahler's sound occupies a space between these two paradigms that is as interesting as it is challenging. Mahler's works typically remain "works in progress," with the boundaries between composition and performance-related revisions – which primarily concern sonic details – remaining unusually fluid. Urbanek concludes by posing a question to Mahler philology: should the editorial focus on "final" text stages ("Fassung letzter Hand") not give way to text-genetic editorial principles that document the fluidity of the musical score and the sound it captures?

Anna Ficarella's chapter then follows with a detailed examination of a passage from the first movement of the Fifth Symphony. Building on earlier studies, she demonstrates how Mahler's sonic ideas only take concrete form through the interplay of composition, rehearsal, and performance practice. In the case of the selected passage from the "Trio II" of the first movement of the Fifth, the surviving work-genetic sources allow for a detailed reconstruction of this collaborative process. Similar to Urbanek, Ficarella concludes that Mahler's work on sound undermines the clear separation of primary and secondary parameters as well as primary and secondary layers of text. As a corollary, the methods and terminology of a genetic textual criticism developed for works by Beethoven or Schumann require adaptation in the case of Mahler.

Peter Revers's chapter serves as a bridge to the following section of the volume on performance research. The author demonstrates how, at the end of his Eighth Symphony, Mahler decisively refocuses the "Chorus mysticus" from Goethe's *Faust II* through late revisions: between the autograph and the first edition, various significant changes can be observed that sharpen the textual dramaturgy in favor of the "eternal feminine." Building on this philological foundation, the chapter analyzes the tempo disposition at the beginning of the "Chorus mysticus" using data from the MMD corpus: older recordings (Adrian Boult, Dimitri Mitropoulos) show relatively consistent, moderate accelerations, while recordings since the 1960s have sometimes featured marked accelerations (e.g., Leonard Bernstein, and later, among others, Neeme Järvi). Mahler's Eighth is thus understood as a borderline case of vocal-symphonic theatricality, in which text, tempo, and sound direction are integrated into the final formal intensification, a concept that has been realized in sometimes drastically divergent ways in the history of its interpretation.

The third group of chapters focuses on such realizations of Mahler's sound in performances. They seek points of reference and methodological tools and approaches to the vast and dynamically growing field of research on performance practice and history, with a view to the history of interpretations and recordings of Mahler's works, which now spans more than a century.

Christian Utz examines the relationship between time and sound in the first movement of the Seventh Symphony, drawing closely on data from the MMD project and supported by a corpus of 95 audio recordings and annotated conducting scores (Mengelberg, Scherchen, Swarowsky, Bernstein, Abbado). He focuses on the relationships between the Adagio and Allegro tempo levels and their macro-formal consequences, the ritornello-like structure and its tempo architecture, as well as the proportions between the three thematic groups. The extreme interpretations of Hermann Scherchen and Otto Klemperer serve as a point of contrast, juxtaposing the stability of the main tempo (as in the cases of Michael Gielen and Jonathan Nott) with its variability in the service of an escalating overall dramaturgy (as in the cases of Leonard Bernstein, Mariss Jansons, or Simon Rattle), featuring diverse combinations and intermediate stages. Ambiguities in the history of editions are linked back to the corpus-based tempo data and interpreted as key indicators of the historically evolving sonic character of the performances. Utz's concept of "performative form" emphasizes the close interdependence of time, form, and sound in the sonic manifestation of Mahler's "performative composing."

Julian Caskel focuses on the intricate grammar of dynamic design, which, owing to its difficulty in systematization, is often treated peripherally in performance research. He understands the intensification of dynamic contrast in Mahler as an independent contrapuntal device and combines compositional and interpretive analytical perspectives by quantitatively evaluating the basic layer of standardized dynamic markings and cross-referencing it with findings from recorded performances. Additionally, "Expert Ear" classifications and Sonic Visualiser measurements at a reference point from the second movement of the First Symphony demonstrate both progress in performance practice since around 1970 and methodological and philological limitations that may be caused by recording artifacts or issues in the history of editions. The chapter thus raises awareness of the role of dynamic parameters as vehicles of form, semantics, and timbre – and positions Mahler as a composer who understands dynamic contrast as a sound structure that is realized in performance.

Anna Stoll Knecht reconstructs Mahler's sound through Richard Wagner's theory of interpretation and vocal practice during the early years of the Bayreuth Festival under Cosima Wagner's directorship. Wagner's concept of *melos* (the orchestra's singing, clarity of delivery, tempo modification) and his counter-principle for singers ("do not sing," but rather breathe, articulate, and portray) form the theoretical framework. Cosima Wagner codified these principles in the "Bayreuth style" (priority of diction, declamation that is sometimes close to speech, slow tempi), whose uniformity the author differentiates based on early recordings (including Theodor Bertram and Leopold Demuth) and redefines as a varied spectrum, manifesting between the performance centers Bayreuth and Vienna. The focus is on the documented collaboration between Gustav Mahler and Cosima Wagner and their shared approach to breathing, diction, and gestures, as well as the preservation of the melodic line as a connection between text and melody. The chapter illustrates how singing principles from the Wagner tradition were incorporated into Mahler's vocal and orchestral rehearsals and helped shape his conception of sound (including his orchestral structures).

Finally, Lóránt Péteri presents Mahler's "Bach Suite," arranged in 1909, as a deliberately hybrid sonic laboratory bridging grand orchestral sound and historicizing practice. Mahler conducted the numerous performances of the suite from the "Bach Piano," an instrument developed by Steinway around 1906 from a baby grand piano that sounded like a harpsichord,

which Mahler used to shape the continuo part. In the competition among New York orchestras around 1910, the Suite became a hit, simultaneously popularizing Bach and, through its sequence of movements, bringing it closer to symphonic dramaturgy with a deliberate affinity for Brahms. With philological precision, Péteri demonstrates how Mahler used practical editions as a template and, through interventions in instrumentation, movement order, dynamics, and continuo, produced an independent kind of “Klangrede.”

The fourth group of chapters examines the mediatization of Mahler’s sound, focusing on perspectives from the history of media and listening. Anne Holzmüller explores facets of an everyday phenomenology of listening, starting from the observation that in contemporary listening, not only has the early incomprehension of the novelty of Mahler’s sound disappeared, a later distanced, meta-reflexive mode of listening – characteristic of modern and postmodern Mahler reception since 1960 – may have lost its significance as well. The question of Mahler’s “enigmatic popularity” (Carl Dahlhaus) directs Holzmüller’s attention to contemporary media formats and practices, such as the Mahler Chamber Orchestra’s experiments with head-mounted displays and VR glasses, which aim to create an immersive spatial sound experience. According to Holzmüller, however, such experiments remain inherently contradictory because they give rise to conflicts between a spatially realistic sound mix and Mahler’s orchestral sound, which, while effectively aiming for spatiality, remains fundamentally “flat” due to its frontal projection from the podium, despite the occasional use of spatially remote instruments.

In a very similar way, yet with a different emphasis, Minoru Shimizu addresses the question of why Mahler’s highly nuanced musical sound organization failed to resonate to the extent one might expect – given the sensibilities and preferences involved – neither with a tech-savvy, audiophile conductor like Leopold Stokowski nor in the discussion forums of Japan’s widespread audiophile vinyl culture. Shimizu suspects that it is precisely this proximity that has made Mahler uninteresting to audiophile conductors and record listeners. Paradoxically, music whose sound has already absorbed contemporary reproduction technology lends itself less to the demonstration or enjoyment of audio technology than comparatively technology-neutral music. Shimizu subsequently interprets Mahler’s relationship to contemporary audio technology in a rather pessimistic light, drawing on Jean Baudrillard. Comparable to Edouard Manet’s affinity for the emerging medium of photography, this music signals the beginning of the decline of its art form. Holzmüller takes a more optimistic view of the new focus on experience addressed also by Roos, framing Mahler’s sound as a starting point both for the pursuit of immersive sound experiences and for the “everyday ecstasies” frequently documented on platforms like TikTok. In her analysis, Holzmüller considers the positive aspects of individualized Mahler experiences, made possible by contemporary consumer electronics, but also the disillusionment in the face of prosaic reality, from which such mediatized experiences offer only sporadic and seemingly illusory liberation. Such practices nevertheless show how Mahler’s music still offers valid forms of expression for the “disembedded” individual of modernity, even in the age of social media platforms.

Edwin Li discusses a case of cultural appropriation of Mahler’s sound – one that, at first glance, seems unrelated to the individualistic approach to listening to Mahler that concludes Holzmüller’s chapter – namely, the idea of retranslating the poems underlying *Das Lied von der Erde* into Cantonese and the attendant challenges of their musical realization. Daniel Ng

Yat-chiu's 2004 adaptation of *Das Lied* sets Mahler's original music to a Cantonese rearrangement of the original Tang Dynasty poetry, producing a cultural hybrid that offers interesting interpretive possibilities in the context of current debates on identity politics. Li speaks of a "mishearing" that fails to fulfill precisely what one would expect from a translation – making the content of the poetry set to music by Mahler comprehensible to a Hong Kong audience. Yet this very failure, he argues, suggests a postcolonial reading. Ng's experiment thus comes to be understood as a disclosure of cultural asymmetries from the time of Mahler's composition, and an artistic statement that appears thoroughly ambivalent in light of today's global asymmetries.

Finally, Robert Samuels explores the young Benjamin Britten's experiences of listening to Mahler's music. Drawing on a wealth of archival material, Samuels demonstrates the formative influence of works such as the Fourth Symphony on the young Britten, and the ways this influence was conveyed by different media. While concert visits and purchases of scores were undoubtedly formative, Samuels observes that it was above all gramophone recordings – such as those of the *Kindertotenlieder* or *Das Lied von der Erde* – that left their mark on Britten's musical imagination. The signs of wear on Britten's copies are still visible today. Samuels' chapter concludes with analytical observations on the related compositional reception in the song cycle *Our Hunting Fathers* and the opera *Peter Grimes*.



A total of five chapters in this volume contain audio and video examples that can be accessed via the aforementioned MMD Zenodo community (<https://zenodo.org/communities/mahler-symphonies>) and at the respective points in the chapter via DOI permalink (also via QR code). The same applies to the additional research data in Julian Caskel's chapter. The book is published in open access and in a small print run. It constitutes the first volume of the newly established book series "Mahler Dimensions: New Library of the International Gustav Mahler Society and the Gustav Mahler Research Centre Toblach," edited by Federico Celestini and Christian Utz. The volume thus reconnects, after several decades, with the books in the series "Library of the International Gustav Mahler Society," including Herta Blaukopf's seminal editions of Mahler's letters.

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