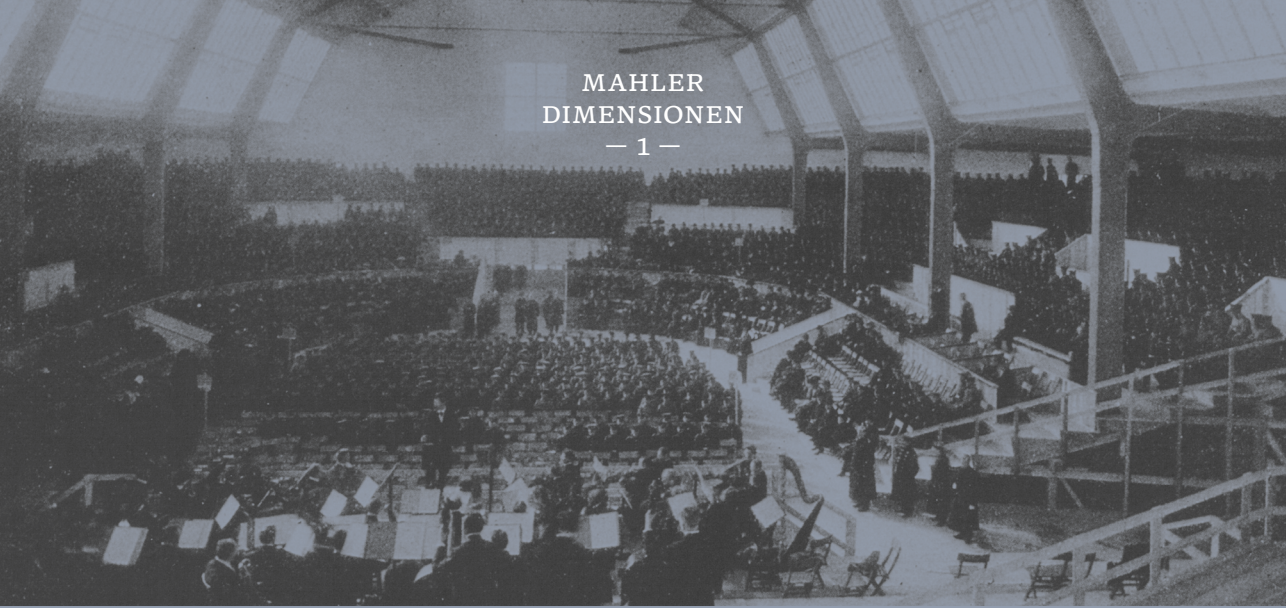




MAHLER
DIMENSIONEN

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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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The Mahlerian Shape of Timbre Studies

Emily I. Dolan

Introduction: Mahlerian Moments?

A number of years ago, in an undergraduate course on Haydn and Mozart, my students and I were thinking about the orchestration in Haydn's London Symphonies. We were listening for especially remarkable moments, which abound in these symphonies. Many are found in the symphonies' internal movements, and often in the third movements, whose small, nested forms allow for striking contrasts. We were especially drawn to the third movement of Symphony Hob. I:97 in C major. The constantly changing textures and timbres of the minuet were immediately dazzling: this minuet has no internal repeat signs, so the theme continually returns in different sonic guises. But even more striking was the shift from the grand and refined minuet to the more rustic trio. Such refined/rustic contrasts are not uncommon in Haydn's third movements: his Symphony Hob. I:88 in G major also balances a regal minuet with a pastoral trio punctuated by slightly comic horns. In the trio of Symphony No. 97, the main theme culminates in an understated violin solo, labeled in the score as "Salomon Solo ma piano."

Listening to this passage in the seminar that day, my students and I all agreed that it sounded "Mahlerian," owing to Haydn's striking use of instrumental color. Furthermore, the violin solo seemed theatrical in character and there was something poignant in the juxtaposition of the various characters in the movement and the wistful quality of the miniature violin solo in particular. Our invocation of Mahler did not stem from a probing, comparative analysis of Haydn and Mahler, nor did we reflect for long on our agreement that this moment sounded "Mahlerian"; rather it was a shared, almost instinctual reaction. That we all alighted on the same description for this brief solo, lasting a mere ten seconds in performance, might seem like a stroke of luck. And yet, perhaps its brevity was essential to our experience: beyond its poignant and theatrical timbral contrasts, the fleetingness of the moment was perhaps one of its most Mahlerian qualities.

In the months leading up to the 2024 Toblach conference that led to the present volume, two colleagues on two separate occasions asked me if the focus of my research was Mahler's hammer in his Symphony No. 6. It was not my focus, though given my fascination with unusual instruments, their assumptions were not so outlandish. But beyond my own instrumental interests, their immediate gravitation towards the hammer upon hearing about a conference on sound and Mahler is hardly surprising. The hammer is clearly organologically interesting and timbrally ambiguous, and has a life and reception of its own, almost apart from the symphony. On YouTube, one finds numerous excerpts of the hammer blows with spirited titles such as "Gustav Mahler: Symphony No.6 !!!!!HAMMER!!!!"¹ It has been photographed, written

1 See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_z2xWjIK9U (30/06/2026).

about, and excerpted, and induces delight and sometimes disappointment from listeners.² This widespread fascination shows how invocations of Mahler and sound quickly lead to the most exceptional and striking examples, just as extraordinary orchestral moments – like Haydn’s violin solo – easily call Mahler to mind.

In this chapter, I reflect on this exceptionality. I am interested in the position of timbre in analyses of Mahler’s musical language and what this can teach us about the study of timbre more generally. This focus draws attention to broader, somewhat contradictory impulses at work in timbre studies: scholars argue for what we might call timbre’s “ubiquitous importance” as a kind of “ground zero” in the ontology of music.³ At the same time, however, this power is demonstrated most saliently not through timbre’s ordinary or normative behavior, but rather when it functions in extraordinary ways.

A word of warning: by design, I do not offer any satisfying definitions of “timbre” in what follows. I use the term to refer to the “color” of a particular instrument, but also to instrumental texture, and sometimes as a stand-in for something more general like “sound.” Timbre is historically and socially contingent in the most radical sense. This presents us, I believe, with two options: either to use the term broadly or else to attempt a reconstruction of the particular meanings of timbre in a specific time and place. At the same time, the very existence of the modern idea of timbre, as I touch on later in the chapter, reflects the concept’s dependence on its generalizability.

Timbre Studies Today

As a subfield, timbre studies has often involved a certain amount of advocacy: timbre, many scholars have argued, is simultaneously central to a range of musical experiences, but also overlooked, undertheorized, and misunderstood. Robert Fink, Zachary Wallmark, and Melinda Latour, in their introduction to *The Relentless Pursuit of Tone*, argue that the “‘tone deafness’ within humanistic music studies [...] is the result of centuries of neglect driven by a wide range of factors [...] including the predominance of music notation, an aesthetic value system that privileges harmonic structure over ‘secondary parameters,’ and a general focus on composition over performance.”⁴ Isabella van Elferen writes how:

[t]imbre puzzles music researchers to the point of frustration. Despite continued efforts, researchers from the areas of organology, acoustics, psychoacoustics, neuroscience, (ethno) musicology and music philosophy have not been able to find a satisfying definition for it.

2 When the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra performed Mahler’s Sixth Symphony in April 2024 in Chicago, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra prepared their audience on their website with a short article, “Dropping the Hammer in Mahler’s Sixth Symphony,” [17 April 2024] <https://cso.org/experience/article/9839/dropping-the-hammer-in-mahlers-sixth-symphony> (30/06/2026). In 2025, percussionist Benjamin Schäfer provided a brief Mahler Hammer tutorial on the Philharmonie Luxembourg’s YouTube channel https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_byORFC_I-E (30/06/2026).

3 See Nina Eidsheim, *Sensing Sound: Singing and Listening as Vibrational Practice*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press 2015, 10.

4 Robert Fink, Zachary Wallmark, and Melinda Latour, “Introduction,” in: *The Relentless Pursuit of Tone*, ed. by Robert Fink, Zachary Wallmark, and Melinda Latour, New York: Oxford University Press 2018, 2.

[...] As a result, timbre has become simultaneously one of the most interdisciplinary and one of the least understood areas of music and sound research.⁵

I too have played the role of timbral advocate: in my own work on Haydn and orchestration, my focus was on tracing the birth of timbral discourse and recovering timbre's centrality to late Enlightenment musical practice and aesthetic discourse.⁶ As I have written about elsewhere, the increasingly robust scholarly literature on timbre brings with it new opportunities and new challenges: we perhaps no longer need to argue that timbre is radically overlooked.⁷ Scholars of timbre are freed from a position of perpetual advocacy. Instead, we have reached a stage where we can think more critically about when precisely timbre matters and what it means for timbre to matter or not matter.

The relationship between timbre and Mahler does not follow the broader contours of contemporary timbre studies. This is because, in the context of Mahler, timbre never had to undergo an arduous process of recovery. We might speak of the subfield of timbre studies as a largely 21st-century phenomenon, but to look at the history of Mahler scholarship is to be humbled: composer and musicologist Egon Wellesz was publishing on Mahler's instrumentation a century ago, including in his two-volume *Die neue Instrumentation*, published in 1928.⁸ Mahler also featured prominently in Hermann Erpf's 1927 *Studien zur Harmonie- und Klangtechnik der neueren Musik*.⁹ Anton Schaefer's 1935 dissertation on Mahler's instrumentation is likewise remarkable.¹⁰ In the second wave of Mahler scholarship that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, dissertations on Mahler's orchestration appeared regularly.¹¹ In the last twenty years, of course, this literature has only multiplied, from work explicitly on orchestration by scholars such as John Sheinbaum and Altug Ünlü, to work that focuses on other aspects of Mahler's compositional style, but nevertheless engages deeply with questions of sound and orchestration, such as Julian Johnson's 2009 book *Mahler's Voices*.¹² This chapter will not undertake a complete review of the literature; rather I want to make the basic point that timbre studies has long been a central component of Mahler studies in a way that sets Mahler apart from perhaps any other composer.

5 Isabella van Elferen, *Timbre: Paradox, Materialism, Vibrational Aesthetics*, New York: Bloomsbury Press 2021, 3.

6 Emily I. Dolan, *The Orchestral Revolution: Haydn and the Technologies of Timbre*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2013.

7 See Emily I. Dolan, "Gluck's Orchestra, or the Future of Timbre," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 36 (2024), no. 1, 1–29.

8 Egon Wellesz, *Die neue Instrumentation*, Berlin: Hesse 1928; see also Egon Wellesz, "Mahlers Instrumentation," *Musikblätter des Anbruch* 12 (1930), no. 3, 106–110.

9 Hermann Erpf, *Studien zur Harmonie- und Klangtechnik der neueren Musik*, Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel 1927.

10 Anton Schaefer, *Gustav Mahlers Instrumentation*, Düsseldorf: Nolte 1935.

11 See for example Wesley Hanson, *The Treatment of Brass Instruments in the Symphonies of Gustav Mahler*, DMA Dissertation, University of Rochester, Eastman School of Music 1976, Philippe Chamoniard, *Caractère et évolution de l'orchestre dans l'œuvre symphonique de Gustav Mahler*, Dissertation, Université de Paris, Sorbonne 1978, John Edward Bostley, *The Horn in the Music of Gustav Mahler*, PhD Dissertation, University of Missouri 1980, and Virginia Taylor, *The Harp and Mahler's Klangfarbengruppe*, PhD Dissertation, Washington University, St. Louis 1988.

12 See for example John J. Sheinbaum, "The Artifice of the 'Natural': Mahler's Orchestration at Cadences," *Journal of Musicological Research* 24 (2005), no. 2, 91–121, Altug Ünlü, *Gustav Mahlers Klangwelt: Studien zur Instrumentation*, Frankfurt/M: Lang 2006, Peter Jost, "Mahlers Orchesterklang," in MH, 114–126, Julian Johnson, *Mahler's Voices: Expression and Irony in the Songs and Symphonies*, New York: Oxford University Press 2009, and Thomas Peattie, *Gustav Mahler's Symphonic Landscapes*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2015.

Attention to Mahler's orchestration has been present since its initial reception. This reception was often negative. As Karen Painter has documented, many early 20th-century critics took aim directly at Mahler's treatment of his orchestra as evidence of his compositional decadence. Robert Hirschfeld, who had long derided Mahler, wrote witheringly in 1909:

The longer we deal with Mahlerian symphonies, even with the same good intention, the more empty the emptiness strikes us, the more hollow the hollowness, the more trivial the scattering of instrumental trivialities [...]. The weakness in invention is brilliantly scored, the inability in form always interestingly orchestrated.¹³

As Painter documents, for many of these critics the centrality of timbre to Mahler's music rendered it aesthetically empty, a mere play of sensations. Timbre was also something that stood outside any musical logic. Max Kalbeck likened Mahler's timbre to "random, unruly noise," as opposed to "measured, determined pitch."¹⁴ As Painter puts it, "[i]nstrumentation was [...] not part of the 'musical kernel' of a symphony. It was merely the sounding surface of the music."¹⁵

This means that, while attention to Mahler's orchestration has a venerable history, this attention to timbre and sound has never been a neutral subject. Rather, orchestration has been one of the key battlegrounds on which arguments about Mahler's compositional prowess have been fought. To confront Mahler's symphonic language is to formulate arguments for (and sometimes against) his approach to orchestral sound, and in many of these arguments, it is the very relationship between orchestration, form, and questions of extra-musicality that is at stake.

Adorno's groundbreaking study *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy* directly addressed the tensions between Mahler's "insider" and "outsider" status, both in his biography and his music. Part of his critique took aim at the very idea that timbre belongs to the surface while form bespeaks depth.¹⁶ As John J. Sheinbaum has written, "[f]or Adorno, Mahler exhibits the closest approximation of an ideal relationship between instrumental color and the entirety of the work."¹⁷ The question is not the relationship between Mahler's orchestration and his form, but rather how Mahlerian form is constituted by and through timbre. Sheinbaum's reading of Adorno makes clear just how deeply imbricated timbre is in each of the three formal categories of Mahlerian form that Adorno lays out: *Durchbruch* (breakthrough), *Suspension* (suspension), and *Erfüllung* (fulfillment). As Sheinbaum argues, the dual quality of "outsider-ness" is central to Adorno's conception of the breakthrough. Discussing Adorno's reading of the breakthrough in the second movement of Mahler's Fifth Symphony – the D major chorale-like pas-

13 Robert Hirschfeld, Review of Symphonies No. 3 and No. 7, *Wiener Abendpost*, 5 November 1909, quoted and translated in Karen Painter, "The Sensuality of Timbre: Responses to Mahler and Modernity at the 'Fin de siècle,'" *19th-Century Music* 18 (1995), no. 3, 236–256: 243.

14 Max Kalbeck, "Pastoral- oder tragische Symphonie," *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, 7 January 1907, quoted and translated in Painter, "The Sensuality of Timbre," 240.

15 Painter, "The Sensuality of Timbre," 239–240. The question of what constitutes "musical content" has been taken up by Jonathan Gentry in his "Unveiling Musical Production: Strauss, Mahler and Commodity Fetishism in the Late Nineteenth Century," *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* 19 (2022), no. 3, 459–480.

16 Theodor W. Adorno, *Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*, translated by Edmund Jephcott, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press 1992, 18–39.

17 John J. Sheinbaum, "Adorno's Mahler and the Timbral Outsider," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 131 (2006), no. 1, 38–82: 41.

sage – Sheinbaum delves into the novelty of this moment and how it is “irreducibly timbral” in its use of massed brass and harp.¹⁸

This emphasis on exceptionality runs through many analytical approaches to Mahler. Lawrence Bernstein’s analysis of theatricality in Mahler’s First Symphony explores the question of Mahler’s operatic influences, taking up Max Brod’s observation that Mahler’s symphonies were “operas without words.”¹⁹ In Bernstein’s analysis, much of Mahler’s “stagecraft” is timbral and achieved through a mixture of motivic handling and orchestrational development.²⁰ Fredrica Roos’s recent dissertation draws on narrative theory to help unpack the world-making of Mahler’s symphonies.²¹ Central to her analysis is an engagement with ideas of diegetic and non-diegetic sound as useful analytical categories for thinking about Mahler’s musical logics.

At this point, we might be struck by a recurring theme across this admittedly fast-paced spring from Mahler’s initial reception to contemporary Mahler studies: talk of sound repeatedly leads us away from traditional musical parameters and analytical categories. Whether one is an early 20th-century grumbling critic or a 21st-century lover of Mahler, timbre – *Klangfarbe* – points outwards, towards the extra-musical, the non-musical, the theatrical, the programmatic, the operatic, the cinematic. Put another way, whether one is denigrating or exalting Mahler’s orchestration, there is an underlying consensus of its “otherness” or “outsiderness.”

This is not an original observation. In his 2013 essay on the orchestration of Mahler’s *Das Lied von der Erde*, Jürgen Maehder called out what he perceived as shortcomings in the study of orchestration.²² It was hindered, he argued, by a lack of a clear methodology and too often did not transcend organology and the basic cataloging of how composers used specific instruments. Too much of this work, Maehder contended, gravitated towards “examples of outstanding – and therefore mostly solo – uses of instruments.”²³ For Mahler, this meant a preoccupation with very specific, outstanding details: the scordatura tuning of the solo violin in the Fourth Symphony or the hammer blows in the Sixth Symphony. Maehder strives to move away from such a “rule-oriented instrumentation analysis” to a “result-oriented timbre analysis,” one that can account for the temporal development of orchestral sound over time.²⁴

Karen Painter has offered a partial explanation for this gravitation towards the extra-musical. While there was generally increased attention being paid to timbre in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna, she argued that it was Mahler’s symphonies that specifically attracted the most attention and critique because they were purely instrumental works: “The immediacy of Mahler’s orchestration [...] thrust listeners out of contemplation and into the vibrant moment, compelling reviewers to seek security in visual metaphors or other culturally driven analogues.”²⁵

18 Ibid., 56.

19 Max Brod, *Prager Sternhimmel: Musik- und Theatererlebnisse der Zwanziger Jahre*, Vienna: Zsolnay 1966, 248–249.

20 Lawrence F. Bernstein, “On the Interface of Theatrical Gestures and Symphonic Process in Gustav Mahler’s First Symphony,” ed. by Bella Brover-Lubovsky and Irit Youngerman, *Musical Networks across Borders: The Multiplicity of Musical Creation* (Ad Parnassum Studies, vol. 15), Bologna: Ut Orpheus Edizioni 2024, 145–171.

21 Fredrica Roos, *Scoring the World: The Musical Imagery of Orchestration in Gustav Mahler’s Symphonies no. 4 and 5*, PhD Dissertation, Uppsala University 2023. See also Roos’s chapter in the present volume.

22 Jürgen Maehder, “Orchesterbehandlung und Klangfarbendisposition im Spätwerk Gustav Mahlers: *Das Lied von der Erde*,” *Archiv für Musikwissenschaft* 70 (2013), no. 1, 31–65.

23 Ibid., 33 (“Beispiele hervorstechender – und daher zumeist solistischer – Verwendungen des Instrumentariums”).

24 Ibid., 37 (“von der regelorientierten Instrumentationsanalyse zur resultatorientierten Klangfarbenanalyse”).

25 Painter, “The Sensuality of Timbre,” 255.

But what if our preoccupation with the exceptional was neither a shortcoming of orchestration studies nor bound to the status of Mahler's symphonies in *fin-de-siècle* Vienna, but rather evidence of something important about our ways of listening? Here I want to take a few steps back to think more broadly about criticisms of timbre and this gravitation towards the exceptional. It is commonplace for scholars – including Painter – to invoke an idea of a late 19th-century “emancipation of timbre” in discussions of Mahler and his contemporaries. Within this paradigm, early criticisms of Mahler can be understood as the inevitable birthing pains of a radical new approach to music. Such arguments, however, risk overstating how new “striking orchestration” was in the late 19th century. Indeed, many of the criticisms leveled against Mahler sound not so different from complaints about abuses of the orchestra that first began to circulate among critics in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. These frequently took humorous forms, such as the small poem which appeared at the end of an issue of the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* in 1799:

Nun wackre Gesellen, seyd fertig! habt Acht!
 Die Symfonie hab' ich selber gemacht!
 Was klirret und trommelt und klimpert und pfeift,
 Das blaset und pauket und rasselt und greift!
 Dann können die Herren Oktaven und Quinten
 Nicht finden!²⁶

Now, worthy fellows, be ready! Take care!
 I made this symphony myself!
 It's what jingles and drums and tinkles and whistles,
 What blows and booms and rattles and strikes!
 Now the gentlemen won't be able to find
 Octaves and fifths!

These complaints often took aim at what were called “orchestral effects” and usually involved pointing out and decrying – as in the poem – the misuse and/or overuse of wind instruments and percussion.²⁷ For many critics of the period, orchestral effects masked bad composition; as a result, “orchestrally rich” music was viewed as noisy and ultimately empty. These criticisms directly foreshadow those leveled against Mahler.

One explanation for the prevalence of these complaints could be the difficulty of articulating any “rules” of orchestration. It is easier, for example, to single out specific moments that are excessive or incoherent than it is to articulate what makes good orchestration. But spending time with Mahler's reception might lead us to second guess this. What if the principle of “breakthrough” did not just describe those special moments in Mahler's symphonies that have long attracted analysts, but was rather a *pre-condition* of timbral discourse? In other words, while Jürgen Maehder might have fought a valiant fight against the gravitation towards the most exceptional Mahlerian sounds, there is a larger issue that undergirds this tendency.

26 “Der Symphonien-Komponist,” *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 2 (1799–1800), col. 224. Translation by the author.

27 For an extended discussion of these complaints, see the chapter “Abuses of the Orchestra” in Dolan, *The Orchestral Revolution*, 221–257.

Another Timbral Paradox

Numerous paradoxes lurk in the study of timbre. For Cornelia Fales, in her now-classic essay, timbre's fundamental paradox was the fact "that while timbre is a dimension of central importance to identifying sources, it is also the dimension that is most divergent from the sound in the physical world."²⁸ More recently, Isabella van Elferen has expanded on this with a robust list of timbral paradoxes and tensions: timbre does and does not function as both an index and icon, as both a surplus and a lack, and it is at once material and immaterial.²⁹ The idea of timbral breakthrough suggests yet another paradox.

The birth of the concept of timbre in the 18th century marked a way of talking about sound in general that was distinct from the specific sonic experience of a singular performance. Here is Jean-Jacques Rousseau's inaugural definition of timbre, from the *Encyclopédie* (1761):

A sound's timbre describes its harshness or softness, its dullness or brightness. Soft sounds, like those of a flute, ordinarily have little harshness; bright sounds are often harsh, like those of the *vielle* or the oboe. There are even instruments, such as the harpsichord, which are both dull and harsh at the same time; this is the worst timbre. The beautiful timbre is that which combines softness with brightness of sound; the violin is an example.³⁰

So, while timbre enters discourse as a name for something immediate in musical performance, the very process of naming it allows us to speak in generalities about those immediacies. In other words, the concept of timbre seems to open up a vast, unbounded world of sound, ready and ripe for analysis. But while timbre is a seemingly inescapable and omnipresent feature of music, we can only begin to name it when it sets itself apart and marks itself as something else. Timbre is made possible by generalization but is named in moments of exceptionality. This is to suggest, in part, that the common criticism that orchestration detracts or distracts from traditional musical values tells us less about the actual quality of any particular composition and more about what happens to our audile habits in the face of timbral breakthroughs.

This is what I mean by this chapter's title, "The Mahlerian Shape of Timbre Studies": Mahler's music and its reception lay bare the basic stakes of the general study of timbre, while simultaneously showing how it becomes discursively available. "Breakthrough," as theorized by Adorno, then, does not simply point to the ways in which Mahler's music plays with the complex relationship between orchestration and form, but thematizes the very idea of timbral attention itself. Perhaps this is the reason why, as challenging as it is to talk about timbre and orchestration, Mahler's music and reception have long led the way in helping us find our timbral bearings.

This does not mean, of course, that scholars cannot attend or have not attended to timbre in moments that are not striking, but it does perhaps suggest that we need to recognize a basic ontological difference between "breakthrough" timbre and other forms of timbre that recede into the background. In her introduction, van Elferen suggested, "[t]imbre is the most basic

28 Cornelia Fales, "The Paradox of Timbre," *Ethnomusicology* 46 (2002), no. 1, 56–95: 58.

29 See van Elferen, *Timbre: Paradox, Materialism, Vibrational Aesthetics*, 51–90.

30 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Tymbre," in: *Encyclopédie*, vol. 16, ed. by Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d'Alembert, Paris 1765, 775. On the longer history of timbre, see also Daniel Muzzulini, *Genealogie der Klangfarbe*, Bern: Lang 2006.

attribute not just of music, but of sound: there is no sound without timbre [...].”³¹ But if timbre is born through timbral attention, then perhaps a challenge for timbre studies is to seek a more nuanced understanding of what it can mean to “have timbre,” and even, perhaps, to entertain the possibility of sounds without timbre. Ultimately, this is to ask what timbre studies might look like if the field gave up its implicit Mahlerian values. While it might be difficult to talk about Mahler without talking about the power of orchestral sound, we might discover that it is equally, if not more, difficult to talk about sound and timbre without the influence of Mahler.

This chapter reflects on the position of timbre in analyses of Mahler’s musical language and what this can teach us about the study of timbre more generally. The power of orchestral sound occupies a somewhat paradoxical place in Mahler, functioning as a basic structural element in his music, while directing attention beyond the purely musical toward extra-musical phenomena. The chapter explores these tensions in the context of broader contradictory impulses in timbre studies: scholars argue for timbre’s ubiquitous importance, that it functions as a kind of “ground zero” in the ontology of music. At the same time, this power is demonstrated most saliently not through timbre’s ordinary or normative behavior, but rather when it functions in extraordinary ways, as what Adorno called “breakthrough.” Ultimately, this leads us to a kind of timbral paradox: timbre is made possible by generalization but is named in moments of exceptionality. This suggests, in part, that the common criticism that orchestration detracts or distracts from traditional musical values tells us less about the actual quality of a particular composition than about what happens to our audile habits in the face of timbral breakthroughs.

Schlagworte/Keywords: Außergewöhnlichkeit der Klangfarbe, breakthrough, Durchbruch, musical moments, musikalische Momente, Paradox des Timbre, paradox of timbre, Theodor W. Adorno, timbre exceptionality

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31 van Elferen, *Timbre: Paradox, Materialism, Vibrational Aesthetics*, 4.