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Fall 2005  
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## Music 467: Mahler, Modernism, and the Symphony

Senior Seminar, W1:30-3:20 SML 107: A music-analytical study of Mahler's Symphonies Nos. 1-4, considered in the context of an emerging European musical "modernism," ca. 1885-1905. Most of the seminar will involve close analyses of selected movements, linked to larger interpretations of program and structure. We shall also sample current and influential discussions of this music—including especially the views of Adorno, Floros, and Knapp. The seminar's larger aim is to provide an introduction to the theory of sonata deformations, rotations, and hermeneutics.



### Required purchases:

Mahler: Symphonies Nos. 1 and 2 in Full Score (Dover).

Mahler: Symphonies Nos. 3 and 4 in Full Score (Dover).

Adorno, Theodor W. *Gustav Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*. Trans. Edmund Jephcott. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992; orig. German edition, 1971.

Floros, Constantin. *Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies*. Trans. Vernon and Jutta Wicker. Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993; orig. German edition, 1985.

Knapp, Raymond. *Symphonic Metamorphoses: Subjectivity and Alienation in Mahler's Re-Cycled Songs*. Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2003.

**Assigned reading will also be drawn from the Selected Bibliography provided on the final pages of this syllabus. Some additional listening will also be expected: see the Seminar Schedule, pp. 3-6.**

## Seminar Expectations:



- This is most essentially a seminar involving intensive music analysis. All students in the seminar must keep up with the work and prepare adequately for each upcoming meeting. In practice, this means: attaining a *close familiarity* with all of the music assigned (listening to it several times over several days) and beginning to sketch out potential analyses of these pieces; studying all of the readings relating to that piece; accomplishing any additional assigned listening.
- Regular attendance in the seminar and active participation in the discussions: approximately 20% of your final grade. You will sometimes be called upon to provide your assessment of analytical “situations” or moments in these works: keys, thematic zones, structures of broad sections, hermeneutic implications, relationships to earlier moments of Mahler that we have considered (“where have we seen this before?” and so on).
- “E-mail assignments”: Brief written assignments to be submitted quasi-informally to the instructor via e-mail before several of the seminar sessions. (The e-mail must be in by 10:00 a.m. on the day of the seminar.) These are often short reports (two or three paragraphs, etc.) responding to assigned preparatory work, which will have asked you to confront certain analytical or reading issues before they are addressed in class. One of them (Due Week 6) will be an Adorno “summary.” Your e-mail may be used as a basis for a question or a discussion during the seminar; come prepared to explain or defend what you have written. The e-mails themselves are ungraded and will usually not be returned to you. Nonetheless, they must consistently attain a level of thoughtfulness and care, and, of course, they must be always submitted on time—before class. With those guidelines in mind, they will constitute 20% of your final grade.
- PAPER 1 (ESSAY) (approximately 2000 words). Select a telling extract (not one discussed in the seminar) from Adorno’s book on Mahler that makes a strong critical-interpretive point. Write a considered response to this way of thinking about Mahler (and music). Explicate and evaluate Adorno’s perspective, making sure to interweave your own thoughts with the details of a specific movement or passage not dwelt upon in the seminar. **DUE ON WEDNESDAY, 19 OCTOBER, AT THE SEMINAR MEETING (TOPIC 8):** approximately 30% of the final seminar grade. (This paper must be completed to pass the course.)
- PAPER 2: an analytical-interpretive essay on any movement of the Fifth or Sixth Symphonies or on any song not discussed in the seminar (2500-3000 words); **DUE DURING EXAM WEEK;** exact date to be determined: approximately 30% of the final seminar grade. (This paper must also be completed to pass the course.)

**Seminar Procedure:** Normally, each session will be concerned with analyzing and discussing individual movements of the Mahler symphonies: going through these movements phrase-by-phrase with open score (and listening to recordings). Most of this—particularly the close analyses of the orchestral scores—will be presented by the instructor. (Several sessions may consist primarily of this.) As much as is possible and productive, the students will be responsible for engaging in the seminar discussions, questions, and analyses. For each seminar session you must have familiarized yourself thoroughly with the assigned pieces and must be prepared to present or discuss your own analytical understandings of the various sections that will come up for discussion in the seminar.

## Seminar Schedule

(Modifications may occur as the semester proceeds.)

The reading and listening for each topic is to be done *before* the seminar meets for that week.

Reading references are to the Selected Bibliography on the final pages of this syllabus.

Topic 1           **Framing Mahler historically: some issues. Mahler: Symphony No. 1, first movement, introduction**

Topic 2:           **Mahler: Symphony No. 1, first movement**

- Recommended background reading: Hepokoski 2001 (“Beethoven Reception”), pp. 424-59 (the nineteenth-century symphonic tradition and its concerns).
- Floros 1993, pp. 15-18, 21-23, 25-36.
- **ADDITIONAL LISTENING and first e-mail assignment:** Mahler: *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, complete. Once you have heard the whole cycle, focus on No. 2, “Ging heut’ morgen über’s Feld.” (Which portions of this Lied appear “directly” in the Symphony? Where? Map the one onto the other.)
- Knapp, “Songs into Symphonies: Problems and Rationales,” *Symphonic Metamorphoses*, pp. 1-12. (Read also: pp. 13-15 on “the Kuleshov effect.”)
- Knapp, “Subjectivity and Selfhood: *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* and the First Symphony,” *Symphonic Metamorphoses*, pp. 151-93.

SUBSEQUENT (OFTEN WEEKLY) E-MAIL ASSIGNMENTS ARE NOT LISTED FOR THE FOLLOWING WEEKS. THOSE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE PROVIDED ON AN *AD HOC* BASIS IN CLASS.

Topic 3           **Symphony No. 1, first movement (concluded, if needed); slow movement; if time: finale (initial discussion); Adorno on Mahler**

- Floros, pp. 36-43.
- JH typescript handout: “Notes on Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno (1903-69).”
- Adorno 1992, pp. 3-17 (“Curtain and Fanfare”), pp. 52, 110-4 (on counterpoint; slow movement mentioned on p. 113), 124 (disintegration in I/3).
- Darcy, “What Lies Buried under the Linden Tree?” [on the Funeral March, First Symphony] (unpublished typescript)
- **ADDITIONAL LISTENING:** *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen*, No. 4 (again), “Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz.”

Topic 4           **Mahler: Symphony No. 1, finale (concluded)**

- Floros 1993, pp. 43-48.
- McClatchie 1996 (“The 1889 Version”), pp. 99-124.
- Buhler 1996 (“Breakthrough”), pp. 125-43.
- Knapp, “Beyond Selfhood: The Autonomy of Musical Presence (II), *Symphonic Metamorphoses*, pp. 195-207.

Topic 5 **Mahler: Symphony No. 2, first movement; program issues; introduction to hexatonic key and chord relationships.**

- Floros 1993, pp. 50-61 only.
- Hefling 1988 (“Mahler’s ‘Totenfeier’”), extract, pp. 30-32 only.
- Extract from Cohn, “As Wonderful as Star Clusters,” pp. 213-18. (This essay is an introduction to the recent theory of hexatonicism, in this case, as illustrated with the music of Schubert. This “neo-Riemannian” theory offers an efficient way to grasp aspects of chromatic harmonic practice in play in much later nineteenth- and twentieth-century music. Hexatonicism—a technical term not emphasized by Cohn in this particular article, though Figs. 1, 2, and 3 essentially illustrate that system—can be used as a juxtaposed, “coloristic” alternative to standard diatonic tonality. Thus it may be called upon to explicate portions of Mahler’s first movement. What might be its expressive implications? )
- Main points of Cohn, “Uncanny Resemblances,” complete (pp. 284-323): cf. expositional keys of Mahler, Symphony No. 2.
- Adorno 1992, pp. 7-9 (again), 19-39 (“Tone”).

Topic 6 **Mahler: Symphony No. 2, first movement (concluded); Scherzo and “Urlicht”; Adorno on Mahler**

- Floros 1993, pp. 61-67 only.
- Knapp, “Representing Alienation: ‘Absolute Music’ as a Topic,” *Symphonic Metamorphoses*, pp. 71-119. (Note: complete familiarity with this scherzo is crucial for understanding the Second Symphony—especially its finale-to-come, but we will probably not deal at length with it in the seminar: Knapp’s and Darcy’s work—which differ in important respects—provide the analytical and expressive background that you will need to grasp the tone and issues at stake.)
- Darcy, “‘Sie bleiben wie Allen’: Rotational Form and the Thematization of Failure in Mahler’s Fish Sermon.” (Unpublished typescript 2001).
- Adorno 1992, 41-52 (from “Characters,” especially the [famous] new material categories of form, 41-44)
- ADDITIONAL LISTENING: Selections from the orchestrated version of *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. (Listen at least the following Lieder: “Der Schildwache Nachtlied,” “Der Tamboursg’sell,” “Verlor’ne Müh,” “Wer hat dies Liedlein erdacht?” “Das irdische Leben,” “Des Antonius von Padua Fischpredigt,” “Rheinlegendchen,” “Urlicht,” “Lob des hohen Verstandes,” and “Wo die schönen Trompeten blasen”).
- (e-mail) ADORNO “SUMMARY” ASSIGNMENT DUE

Topic 7 **Mahler: Symphony No. 2, finale**

- Floros 1993, pp. 67-78.
- Adorno 1992, pp. 83-96 (from “Variant—Form”: especially the concept of themes as gestalten, pp. 87-88, and the important discussion of traditional sonata-form and its categories, 92-96 [here, through the Fifth Symphony]).

- Topic 8      **Mahler, Symphony No. 3, first movement—“Der Sommer marschert ein”**
- (Review the seminar’s analysis and discussion of Mahler I/1.)
  - Floros 1993, pp. 79-97
  - ADORNO ESSAY DUE (with photocopies to be handed out to the entire seminar)
- Topic 9      **Mahler, Symphony No. 3, finale**
- Floros 1993, pp. 105-07.
  - Notley 1999 (“Late-Nineteenth-Century Chamber Music and the Cult of the Classical Adagio”), pp. 33-61.
  - ADDITIONAL LISTENING: Beethoven, Quartet in F, op. 135, third movement, Lento assai, cantabile e tranquillo.
  - ADDITIONAL LISTENING: Beethoven, Quartet in A minor, op. 132, third movement, Molto adagio (“Heiliger Dankgesang”).
  - ADDITIONAL LISTENING: Wagner, *Parsifal*, Prelude to Act 1.
- Topic 10      **Mahler, Symphony No. 3, movements 4 (“O Mensch! Gib’ Acht!”) and 5 (“Es sungen drei Engel”)**
- Floros 1993, pp. 97-105.
  - ADDITIONAL LISTENING: From *Lieder und Gesänge aus der Jugendzeit*: “Ablösung im Sommer.”
  - Knapp, “The Autonomy of Musical Presence (I): “‘Ablösung im Sommer’ and the Third Symphony,” *Symphonic Metamorphoses*, pp. 121-49. Discusses primarily the third movement, which we shall not deal with directly in class.
  - Nietzsche, excerpts from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*: From Part One, “Zarathustra’s Prologue” (excerpt. From Part Three, “The Convalescent,” “Of the Great Longing” and “The Second Dance Song.” From Part Four: “The Intoxicated Song.”
  - CHOOSE TOPIC FOR FINAL (ANALYTICAL) PAPER THIS WEEK

Topic 11      **Mahler, Symphony No. 4, first movement**

- Floros 1993, pp. 108-25.
- Knapp, “Epilogue: Reclaiming Childhood in the Fourth Symphony,” *Symphonic Metamorphoses*, pp. 209-58.
- Adorno 1992, pp. 52-59, 90-92, 95-96 (“Once upon a time there was a sonata”).

Topic 12      **Mahler, Symphony No. 4, Adagio**

- Floros 1993, pp. 125-29.
- ADDITIONAL LISTENING: Beethoven, Symphony No. 9 in D minor, op. 125, third movement, Adagio molto e cantabile.

Topic 13      **Mahler, Symphony No. 4, finale, “Das himmlische Leben”**

- Floros 1993, pp. 129-31.
- Adorno 1992, revisit p. 57.
- ADDITIONAL LISTENING: revisit “Das irdische Leben,” from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*.
- Knapp, “Montage and Contexture,” *Symphonic Metamorphoses*, pp. 13-69.

### Selected Additional Bibliography

- Abbate, Carolyn. "Mahler's Deafness: Opera and the Scene of Narration in *Todtenfeier*." Ch. 4 of *Unsung Voices: Opera and Musical Narrative in the Nineteenth Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991). Pp. 119-55.
- Adorno, Theodor W. *Gustav Mahler: A Musical Physiognomy*. Trans. Edmund Jephcott. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992; orig. German edition, 1971.
- Bonds, Mark Evan. "Ambivalent Elysium: Mahler's Fourth Symphony. In *After Beethoven: Imperatives of Originality in the Symphony*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996. Pp. 175-200.
- Botstein, Leon. "Whose Gustav Mahler? Reception, Interpretation, and History." In Karen Painter, ed., *Mahler and His World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Pp. 1-53.
- Buhler, James. "'Breakthrough' as Critique of Form: The Finale of Mahler's First Symphony." *19th-Century Music* 20 (1996), 125-43.
- Cohn, Richard L. "As Wonderful as Star Clusters: Instruments for Gazing at Tonality in Schubert." *19th-Century Music* 22 (1999), 213-32.
- Cohn, Richard. "Uncanny Resemblances: Tonal Signification in the Freudian Age," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 57 (2004), 285-323.
- Darcy, Warren. "Mahler: 'Ablösung im Sommer'" (Unpublished Typescript 2001).
- Darcy, Warren. "Mahler III/2: Was mir die Blumen auf der Wiese erzählen." (Unpublished typescript 2001).
- Darcy, Warren. "'Sie bleiben wie Allen': Rotational Form and the Thematization of Failure in Mahler's Fish Sermon." (Unpublished typescript 2001.)
- Darcy, Warren. "What Lies Buried under the Linden Tree? Form, Tonal Process, and Meaning in the Funeral March of Mahler's First Symphony." (Unpublished typescript, 2005.)
- Dahlhaus, Carl. *Nineteenth-Century Music*, trans. J. Bradford Robinson. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1989; orig. German 1980. Extracts from Chapter 6, "1889-1914": pp. 330-32; 332-39 ("Modernism as a Period in Music History"); 360-68 ("Program Music and the Art Work of Ideas").
- Floros, Constantin. *Gustav Mahler: The Symphonies*. Trans. Vernon and Jutta Wicker. Portland, Oregon: Amadeus Press, 1993; orig. German edition, 1985.
- Franklin, Peter. "Gustav Mahler." In *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*. 2nd. ed. Ed. Stanley Sadie. London: Macmillan: 2000. Vol. 000, pp. 000-000.
- Franklin, Peter. *The Life of Mahler*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1997.
- Franklin, Peter. *Mahler: Symphony No. 3*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991. Pp. 37-52 and Appendix 1.

- Hefling, Stephen. "Mahler's 'Todtenfeier' and the Problem of Program Music." *19th-Century Music* 12 (1988), 27-53.
- Hefling, Stephen E. "Mahler: Symphonies 1-4." In *The Nineteenth-Century Symphony*. Ed. D. Kern Holoman. New York: Schirmer, 1997. Pp. 369-416.
- Hefling, Stephen E. "Miners Digging from Opposite Sides: Mahler, Strauss, and the Problem of Program Music." In Bryan Gilliam, ed., *Richard Strauss: New Perspectives on the Composer and His Work*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1992. Pp. 41-53.
- Hepokoski, James. "Beethoven Reception: the Symphonic Tradition." In *The Cambridge History of Nineteenth-Century Music*. Ed. Jim Samson. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2001. Pp. 424-59.
- Hepokoski, James. "Introduction: Sibelius and the Problem of 'Modernism.'" Chapter 1 of *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993. Pp. 1-9.
- Hepokoski, James. Review of Walter Werbeck, *Die Tondichtungen von Richard Strauss*. *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 51 (1998), 603-25.
- Knittel, K.M. "'Ein hypermoderner Dirigent': Mahler and Anti-Semitism in Fin-de-siècle Vienna." *19th-Century Music* 18 (1995), 257-76. [cf. Kravitt]
- Kravitt, Edward F. "Mahler, Victim of the 'New' Anti-Semitism." *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 127 (2002), 72-94. [a response to Knittel]
- La Grange, Henry Louis de. *Mahler*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1973.
- La Grange, Henry Louis de. *Gustav Mahler*. Vols. 2 and 3. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- McClatchie, Stephen. "The 1889 Version of Mahler's First Symphony: A New Manuscript Source." *19th-Century Music* 20 (1996), 99-124.
- Mitchell, Donald and Andrew Nicholson, eds. *The Mahler Companion*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. Extracts from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Trans. R. J. Hollingdale. London: Penguin, 1961.
- Notley, Margaret, "Late-Nineteenth-Century Chamber Music and the Cult of the Classical Adagio," *19th-Century Music* 23 (1999), 33-61.
- Notley, Margaret, "Volksconcerte in Vienna and Late Nineteenth-Century Ideology of the Symphony," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 50 (1997), 421-53.
- Painter, Karen. "The Sensuality of Timbre: Responses to Mahler and Modernity at the Fin de siècle." *19th-Century Music* 18 (1995), 236-56.
- Painter, Karen, ed. *Mahler and His World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.