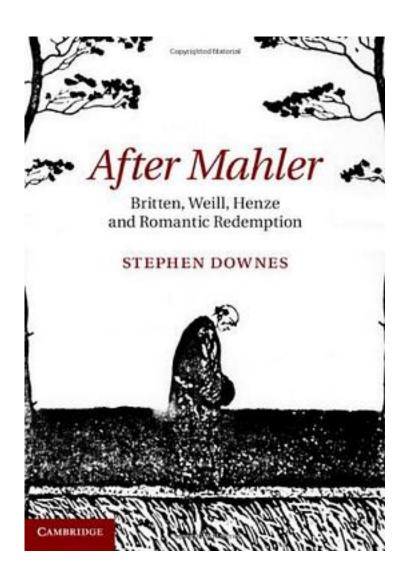
After Mahler



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The music of Gustav Mahler repeatedly engages with Romantic notions of redemption.

This is expressed in a range of gestures and procedures, shifting between affirmative fulfilment and pessimistic negation. In this groundbreaking study, Stephen Downes explores the relationship of this aspect of Mahler's music to the output of Benjamin Britten, Kurt Weill and Hans Werner Henze. Their initial admiration was notably dissonant with the prevailing Zeitgeist – Britten in 1930s England, Weill in 1920s Germany and Henze in 1950s Germany and Italy. Downes argues that Mahler's music struck a profound chord with them because of the powerful manner in which it raises and intensifies dystopian and utopian complexes and probes the question of fulfilment or redemption, an ambition manifest in ambiguous tonal, temporal and formal processes. Comparisons of the ways in which this topic is evoked facilitate new interpretative insights into the music of these four major composers.

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Stephen Downes is Professor of Music at Royal Holloway, University of London. He is the author of two books on the music of Karol Szymanowski and won the Wilk Prize for Research in Polish Music (University of Southern California) and the Karol Szymanowski memorial medal. He is also the author of The Muse as Eros (2006), Music and Decadence in European Modernism (2010) and Hans Werne Henze: Tristan (2011).

目录: List of music examples [page x]

Acknowledgements [xiii]

1 Mahler's moment [1]

2 Naïve and sentimental: Britten and Mahler [60]

3 Real and surreal: shocks, dreams and temporality in the music of Weill and Mahler [131]

4 Tyranny and freedom: Henze and Mahler [196]

Bibliography [254]

Index [271]

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