

Impact case study (REF3b)

<p>Institution: Royal Holloway, University of London</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 35B: Music, Dance and Performing Arts (Music)</p>
<p>Title of case study: Enhancing Public Understanding of Mahler and Viennese Musical Modernism</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Julian Johnson’s work on the contemporary status and meaning of Viennese musical modernism and its relation to ideas of social modernity has had impact well beyond academia. Through broadcasts, public lectures, consultancies, essays, programme notes and web-based documentaries for international music festivals he has shaped the presentation of Mahler’s music, and that of his contemporaries, for the general public. These activities, undertaken with institutions such as the BBC, the South Bank Centre, the Philharmonia Orchestra and Glyndebourne Opera, have made a long-standing, substantial and far-reaching contribution to public discourse around this repertoire, and to its heightened appreciation.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Johnson’s research work on Viennese modernism has been carried out over more than 15 years and at three different institutions – the University of Sussex (1993-2001), the University of Oxford (2001-07) and Royal Holloway, University of London (2007-present). This case study focuses on post-2007 activities alone. Johnson’s work has been published in a number of academic journal articles and in two monographs, the most important of which is his most recent: <i>Mahler’s Voices. Expression and Irony in the Songs and Symphonies</i> (Oxford: OUP, 2009, 348pp). This is the first single-authored, full-length study in English of Mahler’s complete output for over 25 years, and crosses the borders between academic scholarship and a broader readership while at the same time providing a radical reappraisal of the ways Mahler’s music constructs and deconstructs its meanings for contemporary audiences.</p> <p>The research embodied in this monograph is further elaborated and supplemented by a range of essays published in scholarly journals and edited volumes and by high profile papers presented at international conferences. Johnson was an invited speaker in Cologne for the international symposium ‘Ferne Heimatklänge: Gustav Mahler und die Moderne’ (6-7 May 2010), gave the keynote lecture at the international Mahler Centenary Conference at Surrey University in July 2011, and a further keynote lecture at the international symposium ‘Transformations of Modernism’ in Paris, October 2011. This research has also been developed in public formats – such as shaping the discussion of Mahler’s symphonies on BBC Radio 3’s ‘Building a Library’ (in November 2011 and January 2013) or public lectures (as part of the BBC ‘Proms Plus’ talks in 2010 and 2011, at the Sage, Gateshead in November 2011, the University of Stavanger in April 2012, and the South Bank Centre in January 2013). In May 2013 he accompanied the South Bank Centre and the Aurora Orchestra to frame, present and discuss a series of concerts of 20th-Century Music at the Shanghai Concert Hall, China.</p> <p>At the heart of all Johnson’s research is a central question about the contemporary resonance and value of music’s engagement with social modernity over the past two hundred years. His specific research on Mahler and Viennese musical modernism is placed in the context of this broader question in two further books, aimed at a non-specialist readership, exploring the wider social and cultural importance of the art music tradition to modern society – <i>Who Needs Classical Music?</i> (revised paperback Oxford: OUP, 2011; original 2001), and <i>Classical Music: A Beginners’ Guide</i> (Oxford: Oneworld, 2009). The first of these has currently sold around 6,000 copies and is very widely reviewed in academic and non-academic journals in the UK and USA (including <i>The Independent</i>, <i>The Economist</i>, <i>The New Republic</i>, <i>BBC Music Magazine</i>, <i>Gramophone</i>).</p>
<p>3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)</p>

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Single Authored Books

1. *Mahler's Voices: Expression and Irony in the Songs and Symphonies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009, 348pp.) ISBN 978-0-19-537239-7

Praise for *Mahler's Voices*: 'In the ever-increasing literature on Mahler, there remains a need for analysis and interpretation that is useful to both the listener and performer. Julian Johnson's *Mahler's Voices* fills that gap: it is provocative, engaging, and, particularly for the performer, valuable.' (Leon Botstein, President, Bard College). '[T]he most original and compelling single volume on the composer's music available in the English language.' (Karen Painter, University of Minnesota). 'One is tempted to say: The new Adorno (but beautifully written)! Essential reading for anyone deeply committed to Mahler's music.' (Stephen E. Hefling, Professor of Music, Case Western Reserve University; Editorial Board, *Gustav Mahler: Neue Kritische Gesamtausgabe*).

Reviews for *Mahler's Voices*:

- Vera Micznik in *Twentieth-Century Music* 8/1 (2011), 105-113
 Thomas Peattie in *Music and Letters* 93/3 (2012), 422-35
 Arnold Whittall in *The Musical Times* Vol.150, no.1909 (2009), 107-10
 James L Zychowicz in *Journal of Musicological Research* 30/1 (2011), 85-88
 Molly Breckling in *Notes* 66/3 (2010) 535-37

Co-Edited Book

- 2. F. Celestini, G. Kokorz and J. Johnson (eds), *Musik in der Moderne/Music and Modernism*, Wiener Veröffentlichungen zur Musikgeschichte, (Vienna: Böhlau, 2011, 352pp.) ISBN 978-3205774389

Chapters in Edited Books

- 3. 'Schoenberg, Modernism and Metaphysics' in J. Auner and J. Shaw (eds) *The Cambridge Companion to Schoenberg* (Cambridge: CUP, 2010), 108-119.
- 4. 'Irony as Homelessness' in Arnold Jakobshagen (ed) *Gustav Mahler und die musikalische Moderne* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2011), 97-102

Journal Article

5. 'The Breaking of the Voice' in Special Mahler issue of *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* Vol. 8, (2011), 179-95

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Johnson's research provides cultural benefit by enhancing public education in respect of music which often bewilders the general listener. Across every available dissemination medium, publicly accessible versions of his research have framed live and recorded performance of this repertoire, and have shaped audience understanding of key musical documents of cultural modernity. By revealing connections between this music and more familiar repertoire, and between music and other forms of aesthetic and social modernity, Johnson has made a substantial and far-reaching contribution to the public understanding of music's cultural significance. He has done so through media that all involve world-class public venues and institutions (BBC Radio 3; BBC 2 and BBC4 Television; BBC Proms; Philharmonia Orchestra; Glyndebourne Festival Opera; South Bank Centre; Aspen Music Festival).

Philharmonia Orchestra Series Consultancy, 2009, 2011

The public reach of this work is epitomized in Johnson's role as Series Consultant to the Philharmonia Orchestra for two major concert series, given throughout the UK and Europe: *Vienna: City of Dreams, 1900-1935* (in 2009) and *Maazel: Mahler Cycle 2011* (in 2011). In addition to advising David Whelton (Managing Director) on specific programme choices, Johnson provided the intellectual framework in which these concert series were presented. Through series programme books, educational films available on the orchestra's website, BBC Radio 3 interviews, study days and pre-performance talks, he shaped the public understanding of a wide international audience.

The Programme book for the Philharmonia's series *City of Dreams* sold 3,300 copies in the UK alone. Around 48,000 people in 20 European cities attended the concerts. As author-editor, Johnson wrote the introductory essay and all programme notes, commissioned three further essays, chose images and provided a timeline and further reading, thus shaping the public understanding of audiences internationally. The series was shortlisted for a 2010 South Bank Show Award. Hugh Canning (*Times*, 8 March 2009) referred to Johnson's 'brilliant introductory essay to a book of outstanding programme notes'. The Programme book for the Philharmonia series *Maazel: Mahler Cycle 2011* sold around 6,000 copies. Johnson contributed an introductory essay, notes to 10 separate concerts, further reading and a timeline (25,000 words total). Around 56,000 people in 16 European cities attended these concerts:

<http://www.philharmonia.co.uk/mahler/> and <http://www.philharmonia.co.uk/mahler/artists>

Johnson's 21 short films and podcasts on Mahler and Viennese modernism are on the Philharmonia website (<http://www.philharmonia.co.uk/thesoundexchange>); many are also on YouTube. User comments include: "Thank you so much for this video! It was very helpful to me as I am doing research for a novel set in Vienna in the early 1900s!" (see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEywJ3qyNdk>). The Philharmonia's 'City of Dreams' website received 8,500 visitors in the six months of the series in 2009.

In the course of these two series, Johnson gave 13 pre-performance talks and led 4 study days, each attended by an audience of around 200 members of the public. Audience feedback forms (held by the Philharmonia) provide compelling evidence not only of event quality but also of educational benefit. Selected comments include: "Hard to imagine what could be improved – the study days have all been hugely enriching and intriguingly different – thank you!". "Julian [was] particularly good at chairing the discussion session and linking introductions to the songs in the Lieder session."

Broadcasting on Mahler, Bruckner, and Viennese Modernism

Since 2009 Johnson has contributed regularly to BBC TV coverage of the Proms, giving live pre-concert and interval interviews as a direct result of his research expertise. Viewing figures range from c.500,000 (mid-week) to over 2 million (Saturday evenings). Since 2010 he has given 10 live interviews on BBC Radio 3's *Performance on Three* (average UK audience c.700,000); and has made four guest appearances on *Building a Library* (c.90 mins, average UK audience c.400,000; independent figures from Radio Joint Audience Research). In November 2011 he presented a Radio 3 *Building a Library* (45 mins), reviewing currently available recordings of Mahler's 8th Symphony and in January 2013 similarly for Mahler's 6th Symphony. This programme, presented by respected authorities on the repertoire in question, directly shapes audience listening through sales of recommended CDs. All these broadcasts, in enriching audience's understanding and experience of this musical repertoire, have a direct impact on quality of life.

Other Impacts

Johnson's ability to communicate new ideas to a wide international audience was underlined in May 2013 when he was asked by the South Bank Centre to present a series of concerts, talks and lectures at the Shanghai Concert Hall as part of a mini-festival 'Listen to the 20th Century'. In addition, his research has recently impacted on international audiences through: (i) essays in concert series programme books (including for both the 2010 and 2011 Aspen Music Festival (print run 35,000), covering the entire 7-week season of this prestigious US concert series), and the Edinburgh International Festival (2011, 2013); (ii) chairing of Study Days, most recently interviewing Vladimir Jurowski and David McVicar for Glyndebourne Opera; (iii) educational podcasts (Glyndebourne opera); (iv) CD liner notes for Deutsche Grammophon (Gustavo Dudamel/Mahler 9) and Signum Records (Salonen/*Gurrelieder* and Maazel/Mahler cycle).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Audience Feedback Forms

1. The Philharmonia Orchestra collects feedback from those attending their study days.

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Copies of these can be made available that make clear the benefit of these to users and the specific contribution of Johnson's work as both Study Day leader and speaker.

2. Online comments on Johnson's video on Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* for Glyndebourne are posted on Glyndebourne's website at: <http://glyndebourne.com/introduction-die-meistersinger> Glyndebourne does not collect feedback on live lectures.

Organisations and Contacts

The following organisations might be contacted, as 'users' of Johnson's research in the public sphere. Their repeated requests for further talks, study days, essays and broadcast interviews is evidence of the value attached to Johnson's highly effective public communication of the perspectives emerging from his research.

3. Managing Director, Philharmonia Orchestra. (This contact can corroborate the full extent of Johnson's work with the Orchestra, from programming to educational work and concert presentation).
4. Head of Music, BBC 4. (This contact can corroborate the extent and success of Johnson's participation in the BBC's television coverage of the Proms).
5. Head of Education, Glyndebourne Opera. (This contact can corroborate the nature, extent and success of Johnson's work for Glyndebourne opera over the last 15 years).
6. Head of Music, BBC Radio 3. (This contact can corroborate the nature, extent and success of Johnson's broadcasts for Radio 3).
7. Head of Classical Music, South Bank Centre. (This contact can corroborate Johnson's contribution to the recent South Bank 'The Rest is Noise' Festival and the related mini-festival in Shanghai in May, 2013).