

Impact case study (REF3b)

Institution: University of Manchester
Unit of Assessment: 35a (Music)
Title of case study: Raising the public and professional recognition of Mieczysław Weinberg
1. Summary of the impact
<p>This research has had a significant impact on raising the profile of the Polish born composer Mieczysław Weinberg. Prior to Professor Fanning's work little was known in the West about this composer's extensive musical output and his music was rarely performed. Professor Fanning's research has enhanced public and professional awareness of the music of Weinberg, impacting on musicians, record companies, arts venues and audiences in Britain and Europe. It has led to the first ever performance cycle of his 17 string quartets as well as world premieres of his <i>Requiem</i> and his comic opera <i>Lady Magnesia</i>, alongside other performances and numerous recordings. The research has established the University of Manchester as the main repository of information and source material concerning Weinberg in the Western world.</p>
2. Underpinning research
<p>The impact is based on research that took place in Manchester from 1992-date, with the first major publication in 1993. The key researcher was Professor David Fanning (1992-date) who was aided by Marc Danel, Giles Millet, Vlad Bogdanas and Guy Danel of the Belgian string quartet Quatuor Danel (2004-date).</p> <p>The aim of the research was (and continues to be) to reveal the full range and significance of the music of Mieczysław Weinberg. The pianist and composer was born in Poland in 1919 and twice fled Nazi invasions before finally settling in Moscow where he became one of the most highly regarded composers in the Shostakovich circle. Professor Fanning wanted to explore his contribution to both Soviet and international musical development and how Weinberg's work reflects wider social and cultural issues.</p> <p>The key research steps were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Building on work published in 2004 [3.6] Professor Fanning embarked on intensive research into Weinberg's life and music. In 2006 he was invited to speak on Weinberg at the conference "Shostakovich and Weinberg" at the University of Rochester in New York.2. On the strength of this and his track record in Soviet music, he was entrusted with the legacy of Per Skans, the Swedish broadcaster and scholar who had amassed a substantial collection of biographical materials concerning Weinberg. Skans died in February 2007.3. Professor Fanning visited the Weinberg family archive in Moscow in 2006 and 2010 and his research led to the first book-length survey of Weinberg's life and works in any language [3.1].4. During this time the Belgian string quartet Quatuor Danel embarked on performances of all 17 Weinberg string quartets, in conjunction with CD recordings for the German label CPO. The group performed the complete cycle in November 2009. <p>The key research outputs were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An assessment of all Weinberg's manuscripts, which amounted to some 20,000 pages of material [3.1, 3.2].• A critical analysis of his works including 154 opuses and more than 70 film and theatre scores [3.1, 3.2].• The translation of vocal works, both literal and for singing [3.4].• The preparation of performing editions of the string quartets, which were done in partnership with Quatuor Danel [3.3].

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The research is still active with recent and prospective productions of Weinberg's operas, notably *The Portrait* (Opera North, 2011) and *The Passenger* (English National Opera, 2011). These have been influenced by Professor Fanning's translations and research. The string quartets are also increasingly performed.

3. References to the research (AOR – Available on request)

The research was published as a monograph [3.1], book chapters [3.5, 3.6] and journal articles [3.2]. It also led to publications in sources for a non-specialist readership, such as CD booklet essays [3.3] and newspaper articles. The research has also contributed to performance events in national and international venues [3.4, 3.5] and recordings [3.3]. It was supported by a Leverhulme Research Fellowship for 'The Life and Works of Mieczysław Weinberg', October 2009-January 2010 worth £36,254.

Key Publications

[3.1] D. Fanning. *Mieczysław Weinberg: In Search of Freedom*, Hofheim, Wolke, 2010, 220 pages; simultaneously published in German, trans. Jens Hagestedt, as *Mieczysław Weinberg: auf der Suche nach Freiheit*. Monograph. (AOR)

[3.2] D. Fanning. "Was aber zählt ist die Musik": Mieczysław Weinbergs Leben und Werk', *Osteuropa*, 60/7 (July 2010), 5-24. Journal Article. (AOR)

[3.3] Quatuor Danel. *Mieczysław Weinberg String Quartets*. CD recordings: vols. 1-6, CPO 777 313-2, 777 392-3, 777 393-2, 777 394-2, 777 566-2, 774 587-2 [2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012] with accompanying CD booklet essays by Fanning. Performances [over 90 concerts in the UK and Europe between 2005 and 2012.] (AOR)

Other Relevant Publications

[3.4] D. Fanning. Singing Translation for Weinberg's *Lady Magnesia* (Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Clark Rundell, November 2010). World Premiere Performance. (AOR)

[3.5] D. Fanning. 'The Symphony in the Soviet Union', in Robert Layton (ed.) *A Companion to the Symphony*, London, Simon & Schuster, 1993, pp. 292-326, pbk repr. as *A Guide to the Symphony*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995. Book Chapter. (AOR)

[3.6] D. Fanning. 'Shostakovich and his Pupils', in Laurel Fay (ed.) *Shostakovich and his World*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2004, 275-302. Book Chapter. (AOR)

4. Details of the impact

Context

The life of Mieczysław Weinberg illuminates our understanding of cultural responses to the mass migration provoked by the Second World War. Following his flight from Poland to Soviet Belorussia, Uzbekistan and finally Moscow, Weinberg's experiences led him to produce vocal and stage works that number among the finest musical commemorations of the Holocaust. Weinberg's music is now recognised to be of far greater range, social resonance and intrinsic value than had been previously realised thanks to the work of Professor Fanning and the performances by Quatuor Danel. The important influences that Weinberg had on his friend and mentor Shostakovich and others are also now recognised.

Pathways to Impact

The research was disseminated and promoted through a wide variety of sources, including scholarly publications such as a monograph (796 copies sold June 2010-December 2012), essays and conference papers. It has also been published in CD booklet essays and newspaper articles. There have also been various recordings and performance events in national and international venues. All performances referred to here were given to non-academic audiences in commercial settings.

Reach and Significance of the Impact

Impact on public knowledge of Mieczysław Weinberg

Before Professor Fanning's research there was just one book on Weinberg - a specialised study in Russian, dealing with 10 symphonies - and no scholarly articles. Recordings of his music were also limited in number. Roughly four times as many CDs are now available, of which most are directly or indirectly connected to the research. Professor Fanning's publications on Weinberg are seen as essential sources. *Gramophone* said his work "Will serve as the key reference point for enthusiasts and skeptics alike" (February 2011) and *BBC Music Magazine* wrote "A totally sympathetic yet balanced appraisal of this highly significant figure... Fanning's book is a voyage of discovery... his enthusiasm is vividly conveyed" (December 2010).

Professor Fanning has also contributed to commercial documentaries by Österreichischer Rundfunk (2010) and Neos (DVD/BluRay issue of Weinberg's opera, *The Passenger* - NEOS 51005, 2010).

Broadcasters and journalists routinely refer to Professor Fanning's writings as their principal source of information. For example, a journalist from *The New Yorker* says: "It is difficult to think of another example of scholarly work having such immediate impact on the repertory of ensembles and opera houses around the world... only when I came across Fanning's researches, the quartet performances that the Danels executed under his supervision, and, perhaps, most importantly, the masterly Holocaust opera *The Passenger*, which Fanning translated and helped to ready for performance, did I take the measure of Weinberg's extraordinary gifts." [5.1]

Fanning's public talks relating to Weinberg's work have occurred with Quatuor Danel at the University of Manchester. There have also been talks with Weinberg's friend Tommy Persson [5.5], the composer Reinhard Flender and at the Royal Northern College of Music and Opera North. His talks on Weinberg have also proved popular at the German festivals Bregenzer Festspiele and Gohrisch Festival. [5.8]

Impact on music

The Quatuor Danel's performance of Weinberg's 17 string quartets in November 2009 attracted an audience of 751 people from Sweden, USA, France, Belgium, Holland, Germany and the UK to the University of Manchester's Martin Harris Centre of Music and Drama [5.2]. The group also performed the complete cycle in Belgium in 2011. Before that Quatuor Danel performed Weinberg's quartets individually at the University of Manchester from 2008-2011 (10 concerts, averaging 125 attendees each [5.2], including 10 UK and 5 world premieres) and then more widely in 57 European and UK concerts (2008-11).

The University of Manchester Quartet cycle (and *Lady Magnesia*) were nominated as the 'most adventurous programming [in the UK] of 2009' by Ivan Hewett in *The Daily Telegraph*. The first volume of CD recordings of the cycle (2007-2012) was nominated by BBC Music Magazine as 'Chamber CD of the month' (March 2008, p. 72; magazine circulation 47,091).

Record companies in the UK, Germany, Sweden and Switzerland (Chandos [5.3], CPO, BIS, Divox, and Toccata Classics [5.4]) have published booklet essays by Professor Fanning accompanying their CDs of Weinberg's music. BIS and Divox reported sales of 1390 and 993 units respectively, as of Oct 2011. The companies have also drawn on his advice over repertoire and scores, described as "a vital element in the success of the recordings". [5.4]

Impact on musicians

The significance of the research is evident through its promotion of, and influence on, performances of Weinberg's works. It has enabled professional music organisations to provide innovative programmes for their audiences. For example:

- Professor Fanning's translation was used in preparation for the world premiere of Weinberg's *Requiem* by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra (RLPO) in 2009 [5.7].

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- His singing translation of *Lady Magnesia* led to the world premiere of this opera [5.7], conducted by Clark Rundell (RLPO, 2010).
- His literal translation for the opera *The Passenger* formed the basis of David Pountney's libretto for the English National Opera's production in 2011. [5.8]
- His research on Weinberg's *The Portrait* influenced the Bulgarian conductor Rossen Gergov's approach to this opera which was performed by the Bregenz Festspiele in August 2010 and Opera North in February 2011.

Professor Fanning's research has also impacted on performers' choice and interpretation of repertoire. For example, the American pianist Allison Brewster Franzetti has recorded the complete works of Weinberg's piano music on four Naxos CDs [5.6].

Recent and forthcoming premieres of operas in Germany and Houston (where Professor Fanning is an invited speaker) testify to the growing international reverence for Weinberg. A large part of this new-found interest is as a result of the Manchester research.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

All claims referenced in section 4.

[5.1] Letter from the correspondent at the New Yorker, 3 September 2011, pp. 82-3 confirming monograph knowledge transfer

[5.2] University of Manchester's Martin Harris Centre of Music and Drama audience attendance

[5.3] Letter from the Literary Editor at Chandos Records confirming recording sales and professional influence

[5.4] Letter from the Proprietor at Toccata Classics confirming recording sales and professional influence

[5.5] Letter from a friend of the composer Mieczyslaw Weinberg and his family confirming the promotion of Weinberg's reputation through publication and performance

[5.6] Letter from the acclaimed pianist confirming the influence of research on professional music practice

[5.7] Confidential document from Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra

[5.8] Confidential document from Peer Music Classical GmbH