

Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 4 in the Chamber Version by Klaus Simon:

Performance, Discussion, and Recording

by

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ABSTRACT

The symphonies of Gustav Mahler (1860 - 1911) constitute an essential element of the orchestral repertory; they are therefore essential for young conductors to understand and for instrumentalists to play. Yet they are impractical in many school situations because they call for large orchestras. One solution to this problem is for the conductor to study the original, full version of the works as Mahler composed them, but to consider performing one of the reduced instrumentations now available. A smaller-scale version provides an opportunity for both the conductor and the instrumentalists to confront the challenges of performing Mahler's music and to explore Mahler's musical language and style in a more manageable setting.

This project focuses on Mahler's Fourth Symphony, which is available in two reduced orchestrations: one by Erwin Stein made in 1921 and another by Klaus Simon from 2007. This paper is part of a larger project that includes a lecture-recital with commentary and a performance of the symphony in the more recent Simon arrangement (documented on video). It presents some background on Mahler's Fourth Symphony and compares the two reduced instrumentations to Mahler's original and to one another. Taken together, the parts of this project demonstrate an approach to learning and performing Mahler's music in a more accessible and practical setting for student conductors.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The symphonies of Gustav Mahler (1860 – 1911) constitute an essential element of the orchestral repertory; they are therefore essential for young conductors to understand and for instrumentalists to play. Yet they are impractical in many school situations because they call for large orchestras. One solution to this problem is for the conductor to study the original, full version of the works as Mahler composed them, but to consider performing one of the reduced instrumentations now available. A smaller-scale version provides an opportunity for both the conductor and the instrumentalists to confront the challenges of performing Mahler's music and to explore Mahler's musical language and style in a more manageable setting.

The tradition of providing smaller-scale versions of Mahler symphonies extends back to the first quarter of the twentieth century. Within a decade of the composer's death, Erwin Stein, a pupil of Arnold Schoenberg, arranged several of the symphonies for presentation by Schoenberg's *Verein für Musikalische Privataufführungen* [Society for Private Musical Performances]. These arrangements have made the concept of performing reduced versions of Mahler's works a generally accepted practice in the world of concert music. Many of the reduced versions have been recorded by major ensembles and are widely available commercially.

This project focuses on Mahler's Fourth Symphony, which is available in two reduced orchestrations: one by Erwin Stein made in 1921 and another by Klaus Simon from 2007. This paper, part of a larger project that includes a lecture-recital with

commentary and a performance of the symphony in the more recent Simon arrangement (documented on video), will present some background on Mahler's Fourth Symphony and will compare the two reduced instrumentations to Mahler's original and to one another.

Through examining this work both in its original and reduced forms, and through having rehearsed and performed the newer arrangement, I hope to offer some insights into the performance of Mahler's Fourth Symphony and to offer some conclusions on the merits of the newer Simon version.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND

Mahler, one of the most important composers of the late nineteenth century, composed Symphony No.4 in 1899 and 1900. The last movement, “Das himmlischen Leben,” featuring a soprano soloist, was composed in 1892 as an orchestral song. Mahler originally planned to use it in the Third Symphony, but eventually chose not to include it. The function of this last movement is not only to close the symphony but also to serve as the seed from which the three previous movements grow. Although all of the first three movements are quite separate, thematic materials in the first three movements are connected with the last movement.¹

The original instrumentation of Symphony No.4, while still calling for a large orchestra, is somewhat smaller than Mahler’s standard. The work calls for four flutes (flutes 3 and 4 double piccolos), three oboes (oboe 3 doubles English horn), three clarinets in A, B-flat, and C (clarinet 2 doubles clarinet in E-flat and clarinet 3 doubles bass clarinet), three bassoons (bassoon 3 doubles contrabassoon), four horns in F, three trumpets in F and B-flat, percussion (timpani, bass drum, cymbals, sleigh bells, triangle, tam-tam, glockenspiel), harp, strings, and soprano soloist.

In contrast, Mahler’s Third Symphony calls for four oboes instead of three, a total of five clarinets, and four bassoons. The brass section of the Third Symphony has eight horns (instead of four), four trumpets (instead of three), and trombones and tuba, which are not used at all in the Fourth Symphony. The percussion section is much larger in the

¹ Constantin Floros and Reinhard G. Pauly, *Gustav Mahler: the symphonies* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1993), 109.

Third Symphony, two harps are required (instead of one), and there are offstage instruments and even two choirs in a gallery. Table 1 compares the instrumentation of Mahler's Third Symphony to his Fourth.

Table 1. Instrumentation in Mahler's Third and Fourth Symphonies

	Symphony No. 3	Symphony No. 4
Woodwinds	4 flutes 4 oboes 5 clarinets 4 bassoons	4 flutes 3 oboes 3 clarinets 3 bassoons
Brass	8 horns 4 trumpets 4 trombones Tuba Offstage post horn	4 horns 3 trumpets
Percussion	Timpani (2 players) Bass drum Snare drum Cymbals Tambourine Tam-tam Triangle Rute 2 Glockenspiels Offstage snare drums	Timpani Bass drum Cymbals Tam-tam Triangle Glockenspiel Sleigh bells
Other	2 Harps Alto soloist Women's chorus Boys' chorus	1 Harp Soprano soloist

Mahler's Fourth Symphony came from his intention to compose something different from his previous symphonies. The first three symphonies are large-scale and in a somewhat Wagnerian style. On the other hand, the Fourth Symphony, with its more

intimate scale, expressed his inner personal thought.² The smaller orchestra also evokes the later Haydn and early Beethoven symphonies, though it is still quite a bit larger than any orchestra either of those composers called for. Raymond Knapp describes Mahler's Fourth Symphony as "Haydnesque" in style. Knapp also suggests that Symphony No.4 represents an ideal of childhood. The childlike perspective of innocence and faith is a central characteristic in the symphony.³ Mahler's use of the sleigh bells in the first movement is a childlike element, according to Knapp: "First and foremost, there is the sound of the opening sleigh bells deployed so as to make their timbre foreignness the center of the sound....Even the indistinct harmonic environment and the absence of string tone in the opening derive from the sleigh bells and their associations, projecting the coldly resonant emptiness of an open fifth oddly touched by *naïveté*."⁴

Another element that connects Mahler's Fourth Symphony to the roots of the symphonic tradition is its use of traditional formal elements. Preston Stedman points out that the form of each movement in Symphony No.4 is linked with absolute form. This is summarized in table 2.

² Burnett James, *The music of Gustav Mahler* (Rutherford [N.J.]: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1985), 95.

³ Raymond Knapp, *Symphonic metamorphoses: subjectivity and alienation in Mahler's re-cycled songs* (Middletown, Conn: Wesleyan University Press, 2003), 210.

⁴ Knapp, 216.

Table 2. Forms in Mahler's Fourth Symphony⁵

First movement	Sonata form
Second movement	Scherzo
Third movement	Variation
Fourth movement	Strophic

Mahler conducted the premiere of Symphony No. 4 with the Kaim Orchestra in Munich in 1901. Prior to this, Mahler had conducted a reading of the work with the Vienna Philharmonic, where Mahler was music director from 1898 to 1901. The relationship between Mahler and the Vienna Philharmonic was already breaking down, however, and Mahler found their style inappropriate for the delicacy of the Fourth Symphony, so he decided not to give the first public performance of the work in Vienna. Even though the level of performance was not as high, the Kaim Orchestra was far more receptive to Mahler. The premiere took place on November 25, 1901, with a soprano who came from the Vienna court Opera, Margarete Michalek.⁶

Audience response to the Fourth Symphony was less than enthusiastic. Concert goers still recalled Mahler's Second and Third symphonies and expected something with the same monumental sound. By the end of the second movement, there was audible hissing in the audience. Despite this discouraging beginning, Mahler tried the work again, this time in Berlin. Despite a hostile reaction from critics—one described it as “sickly, ill-

⁵ Preston Stedman, *The Symphony* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1979), 230.

⁶ Jens Malte Fisher, *Gustav Mahler*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011), 333.

tasting super-music,” the audience was more responsive. Richard Strauss complimented Mahler, telling him that he could not have composed anything like the Adagio in the Fourth Symphony. The popularity of the work grew, and Mahler continued to revise the orchestra almost until the time of his death in 1911.⁷

Mahler had used voices in both the Second and Third symphonies, both in a grand manner. The Second Symphony includes soprano and alto soloists and a large chorus; the Third Symphony calls for alto soloist, women’s chorus, and boys’ chorus. So while the use of the voice to conclude the symphony (an inspiration partly taken from Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony), Mahler’s usage of the voice in the Fourth Symphony was a departure from his earlier style. Where the previous works were monumental, the vocal writing in the Fourth Symphony is innocent and intimate.

The music that comprised the fourth movement was originally composed as an orchestral song in 1892. The text, from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, was originally called “Der Himmel hängt voll Geigen” (Heaven is full of Violins). Mahler changed the title to “Das himmlische Leben” (The Heavenly Life) and omitted four lines from the fourth verse of the original.⁸ The title was meant to be a contrast to “Das irdische Leben” (The Earthly Life), another setting from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* that Mahler had written in 1892 and that he originally planned to include in the Fourth Symphony but eventually omitted.

⁷ Jens, 334.

⁸ Constantin, 129.

The poem's five stanzas deal with four subjects. The first verse explains heavenly joys: Heaven is a cheerful place where peace reigns and Saint Peter watches as everyone dances and sings. The second stanza is more serious, with its references to the Slaughter of the Innocents by Herod and the death of Jesus, "the little lamb." But at the end of the verse there is again an atmosphere of merriment: bread and wine—the elements of communion—are free in Heaven. The third and fourth stanzas celebrate the abundance of Heaven, where such delicacies as asparagus and string beans and fruits such as apples, pears, and grapes grow. On fast days, the fish come in plenty so that Peter can catch them and Martha can cook them. The final stanza praises heavenly music.

Here is the complete text of the poem as it appears in the symphony in both the original German and in an English translation:

Das himmlische Leben

(aus *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*)

*Wir genießen die himmlischen Freuden,
D'rum tun wir das Irdische meiden.
Kein weltlich' Getümmel
Hört man nicht im Himmel!
Lebt alles in sanftester Ruh'.
Wir führen ein englisches Leben!
Sind dennoch ganz lustig daneben!
Wir tanzen und springen,
Wir hüpfen und singen!
Sankt Peter im Himmel sieht zu!*

*Johannes das Lämmlein auslasset!
Der Metzger Herodes d'rauf passet!
Wir führen ein geduldig's,
Unschuldig's, geduldig's,
Ein liebliches Lämmlein zu Tod!
Sankt Lucas den Ochsen tät schlachten*

The Heavenly Life⁹

(from *The Boy's Magic Horn*)

We enjoy the heavenly pleasures
and avoid the earthly things.
No worldly tumult
does one hear in Heaven!
Everything lives in the gentlest peace!
We lead an angelic life!
Nevertheless we are very merry:
we dance and leap,
hop and sing!
Meanwhile, Saint Peter in the sky looks on.

Saint John has let his little lamb go
to the butcher Herod.
We lead a patient,
innocent, patient,
a dear little lamb to death!
Saint Luke slaughters oxen

⁹ Emily Ezust, "Das himmlische Leben," *LiederNet Archive*, accessed March 12, 2016, http://www.lieder.net/lieder/get_text.html?TextId=4501.

*Ohn' einig's Bedenken und Trachten!
Der Wein kost' kein Heller
Im himmlischen Keller!
Die Englein, die backen das Brod!*

without giving it thought or attention.
Wine costs not a penny
in Heaven's cellar;
and angels bake the bread.

*Gut' Kräuter von allerhand Arten,
Die wachsen im himmlischen Garten,
Gut' Spargel, Fisolen
Und was wir nur wollen,
Ganze Schüsseln voll sind uns bereit.
Gut' Äpfel, gut' Birn' und gut' Trauben!
Die Gärtner, die alles erlauben.
Willst Rehbock,
 willst Hasen?
Auf offener Straßen sie laufen herbei!*

Good vegetables of all sorts
grow in Heaven's garden!
Good asparagus, beans
and whatever we wish!
Full bowls are ready for us!
Good apples, good pears and good grapes!
The gardener permits us everything!
Would you like roebuck,
 would you like hare?
In the very streets they run by!

*Sollt ein Fasttag etwa kommen,
Alle Fische gleich mit Freuden
 angeschwommen,
Dort läuft schon Sankt Peter
mit Netz und mit Köder
Zum himmlischen Weiher hinein!¹⁰
Sankt Martha die Köchin muß sein!*

Should a fast-day arrive,
all the fish swim up to us
 with joy!
Over there, Saint Peter is running already
with his net and bait
to the heavenly pond.
Saint Martha must be the cook!

*Kein' Musik ist ja nicht auf Erden,
Die unsrer verglichen kann werden.
Elftausend Jungfrauen
Zu tanzen sich trauen!
Sankt Ursula selbst dazu lacht.
Cäcilia mit ihren Verwandten
Sind treffliche Hofmusikanten!
Die englischen Stimmen
Ermuntern die Sinnen!
Daß alles für Freuden,
 für Freuden erwacht!*

No music on earth
can be compared to ours.
Eleven thousand maidens
dare to dance!
Even Saint Ursula herself is laughing!
Cecilia and all her relatives
are splendid court musicians!
The angelic voices
rouse the senses
so that everything
 awakens with joy.

¹⁰ Mahler omitted four lines of the original text here: "Willst Karpfen, willst Hecht, willst Forellen, / Gut Stockfisch und frische Sardellen? / Sanct Lorenz hat müssen / Sein Leben einbüßen. (Would you like carp or pike or trout, good dried cod and fresh sardines? Saint Lawrence must sacrifice his life.)"

As with his previous symphonies, Mahler originally had a program in mind for the Fourth Symphony. Of the original labels Mahler assigned to the movements, the only one we know for certain is that for the second movement, “Todtentanz-Freund Hein spielt zum Tanz auf” (Dance of Death-Friend Hein, strikes up the dance). Freund Hein is a character in German folk tales who leads people to their deaths by playing the violin. As with the earlier symphonies, Mahler suppressed the program, fearing that audiences would not take his music seriously unless it could be viewed as absolute music.¹¹

Because Mahler originally planned to use “Das himmlische Leben” as the end of the Third Symphony, we may view the Fourth Symphony as a kind of sequel to the Third. Yet it stands alone as Mahler’s most intimate, chamber-like symphony; these qualities make it especially suitable for adaptation into a setting for a smaller ensemble.

¹¹ Constantin, 112.

CHAPTER 3

KLAUS SIMON'S ARRANGEMENT OF MAHLER'S FOURTH SYMPHONY

Klaus Simon arranged Mahler's Fourth Symphony for the Holst-Sinfonietta and first performed it with them in May of 2007. It is among the most recent efforts to produce smaller-scale versions of Mahler's symphonies. Simon has also arranged Mahler's First Symphony and Ninth Symphony.

Simon strives to preserve both the intimacy of the original work and its wide range of orchestral colors. He keeps the percussion section the same, but he greatly reduces the number of woodwind and brass players. He adds harmonium and piano, partly to replace the harp and partly to cover elements of the harmony and texture that must be omitted because of the smaller ensemble. Because there are fewer players overall, the string section can be similarly reduced; indeed, this version can be performed with only one player per string part. Simon gives the option of using a larger string section of up to nineteen players if the size of the hall and the orchestra's budget can accommodate it. The differences between Mahler's original orchestration and Simon's arrangement are summarized in table 3.

Table 3. Original Instrumentation vs. Reduced Instrumentation

Symphony No.4 Original version	Symphony no.4 Chamber version (Klaus Simon)
4 flutes (3 and 4 double piccolo)	1 flute (doubling piccolo)
3 oboes (3 doubles English horn)	1 oboe (doubling English horn)
3 clarinets in B-flat, C and A (2nd doubles E-flat, 3rd doubles bass clarinet, B-flat clarinet and A clarinet)	1 clarinet in B-flat and A (doubling bass clarinet)
3 bassoons (3 doubles contrabassoon)	1 bassoon
4 horns in F	1 horn in F
3 trumpets in B-flat	
timpani	
Percussion: glockenspiel, triangle, cymbal, tam-tam, sleigh bells, bass drum	Percussion: glockenspiel, triangle, cymbal, tam-tam, sleigh bells, bass drum
harp	
	harmonium
	piano
strings	strings
soprano solo	soprano solo

For the most part, the string parts in the reduced version follow Mahler’s original. In addition, Simon kept intact Mahler’s dynamics, articulations, bowings, etc. He preserves all of Mahler’s German instructions. To compensate for the smaller string section, Simon occasionally adds passages for such instruments as the viola or double bass to create a more substantial sound or to replace a “missing” instrument. For example in measures 21-25 in the first movement, he adds viola to the cello and bass passage. In measures 318-25 in the third movement Mahler originally had a timpani solo to create the climax. Simon assigns some of the material originally given to the timpani to the double bass and piano.

Mahler's original practice of using many solo passages for the woodwinds lends itself particularly well to adaptation into a chamber version. The single woodwinds preserve this solo material where possible, but beyond this, the chamber version gives them some additional material. In many places, the woodwinds take over material originally given to the now-absent brass instruments. This is a common solution in reduced orchestrations because of similarities of range between some of the woodwind instruments and the brass instruments. Additionally, the woodwinds can reproduce the style and articulation of the brass instruments fairly faithfully, especially in places where several instruments are playing. Because there is sparse use of the trumpets in the original version (there are fewer than twenty measures for the trumpets in each of the last three movements of the work), it is possible to replace them with minimal loss of color.

In Mahler's original, the horns and trumpets frequently sustain notes to support melodies in the strings or woodwinds with homophonic harmonies. The brass section also adds color by making sudden changes of dynamics and using articulations such as *sforzando*. To assume these functions, Simon uses a harmonium (a small chamber organ). For example, in the first movement, in measures 174-175 and measure 178-182, the harmonium plays a long pedal tone to support the other instruments and also carries some of the harmonies originally played by the trumpets and horns. The one horn called for in the chamber version assists with these functions but also appears as a solo instrument in each movement.

The addition of the piano is possibly the most significant departure from Mahler's original, performing a variety of functions in the chamber version. The piano is a natural substitute for the harp, so it fairly consistently takes over the material originally assigned

to the harp. The piano often enhances the overall sound by playing with the string section. In particular, the left hand of the piano reinforces the cello and bass lines with rhythmic phrases and some articulations. Finally, the piano takes over the harmonic functions that the additional woodwind players performed in the original, supporting the solo instruments, often in the right hand. This is clearly displayed in the opening measures of the work: the piano plays the introduction originally assigned to the flute. Then the flute and clarinet take over. The piano plays the material originally played by the strings, mimicking their *pizzicato* technique. Finally, the piano and harmonium take over the harmonies in homophonic material originally assigned to the winds.

It is interesting to compare this newer version by Klaus Simon with the arrangement made in the 1920s by Erwin Stein. The instrumentation in the two adaptations is very similar. They both use single woodwinds, the full percussion called for in the Mahler original (omitting only the timpani), harmonium, and piano. The earlier version, by Stein, calls for two pianists at one keyboard for a fuller piano texture. The most significant difference between the two versions is Stein's choice to omit the bassoons altogether from the woodwind section and to leave out all of the brass instruments. Simon's version includes one bassoon and one horn, neither of which are used in Stein's arrangement. Table 4 lists the differences between Stein and Simon's versions.

Table 4. Instrumentation of the Arrangements by Stein and Simon.

Erwin Stein (1921)	Klaus Simon (2007)
1 flute (doubling piccolo)	1 flute (doubling piccolo)
1 oboe (doubling English horn)	1 oboe (doubling English horn)
1 clarinet in B-flat, C, and A (doubling bass clarinet)	1 clarinet in B-flat and A (doubling bass clarinet)
	1 bassoon
	1 horn in F
Percussion: glockenspiel, triangle, cymbal, tam-tam, sleigh bells, bass drum	Percussion: glockenspiel, triangle, cymbal, tam-tam, sleigh bells, bass drum
harmonium	harmonium
piano, 4 hands	piano
strings	strings
soprano solo	soprano solo

Stein's version, with its slightly smaller ensemble, is the more chamber-like of the two arrangements. But the absence of the bassoon and horn also create some compromises. For example, certain prominent solo passages for the horn, such as the one in the first movement, measures 10-12, and the introduction to the second movement are performed on the clarinet in Stein's version, which preserves the pitches, but not the original color or effect. Although the melody line of the clarinet is exactly the same as horn solo, it does not match Mahler's opulent horn sound.

The absence of the bassoon comes at a similar cost. Though the bassoon rarely has a solo melody in Mahler's original, it is nevertheless crucial as harmonic support. Stein solves this by assigning some of the material for the bassoon to the viola and the double bass. Most often, Stein gives the bassoon material to the left hand of the harmonium.

The woodwind, percussion, and string writing in the two versions are mostly similar. As does Simon, Stein closely followed Mahler's original string writing. He keeps all of the solo woodwind passages in his chamber version. However, his arrangement is focused on the string section rather than the woodwind section. The effect is of a string quintet with other instruments; it gives a greater impression of chamber music than does the more recent Simon version. At the same time it sacrifices some of the orchestral grandeur of Mahler's original. This is more fully maintained in Simon's arrangement.

Learning, Preparing, and Rehearsing the Work

For the most part, learning and preparing to conduct the chamber version of Mahler's Fourth Symphony was no different from working on the original version: I had to learn about the background of the work, study the score fully (including translating and understanding the detailed instructions in the score), learn the text of the final movement, etc. It proved particularly helpful to understand that Mahler had originally given titles to the movements, especially the second movement with its Dance of Death. This study, coupled with study of historical recordings of the work (especially by conductors who knew Mahler, such as Willem Mengelberg and Bruno Walter), helped me to develop my understanding and interpretation of the piece. Mastering the subtle changes in tempo and dynamics and being fully in command of Mahler's almost measure-by-measure instructions required special concentration.

The arrangement poses a few unique challenges for study. First, it is necessary to know the original, full orchestration to understand Mahler's intentions. Only by doing this was it possible to realize fully the desired colors and effects, even with the reduced

ensemble. For example, knowing that some of the clarinet passages were originally for the trumpet and that some of the harmonium parts were originally for horns helped me to know the style and manner in which they should be played in the chamber version. In order to capture the essence of Mahler's original, I found that it was necessary to ask the chamber ensemble to play with a much wider range of dynamics than normal; this replicated to some extent the large changes in texture and sound achieved by the full orchestra. It was particularly important for the ensemble to play with a full *forte* sound at climactic moments.

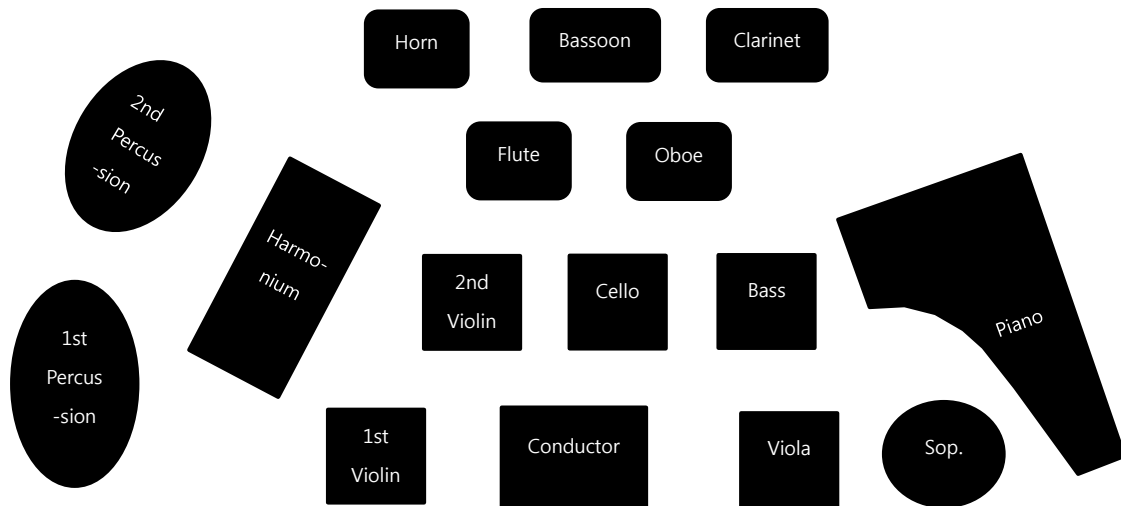
Once I began to work with the ensemble in rehearsal, I found additional challenges. The greatest of these was the intonation for the strings in the second movement where Mahler uses *scordatura*, requiring the solo violin to tune each of the strings a whole tone higher than normal. *Scordatura* makes it easier in some respects to play the notes the composer wants, because the player uses the appropriate fingerings according to the notation, but the pitches that sound are different because of the altered tuning. On the other hand, this makes it hard for the player to be sure that the notes are in tune, since it is not immediately obvious what the concert pitches should be, and violinists are not used to thinking of their instruments as transposing instruments, which is the ultimate effect of *scordatura*. There was an additional challenge in our performance, because our first violinist has perfect pitch. She found the difference between the notation and the sound of the pitches confusing.

To solve these problems, I wrote out a portion of the *scordatura* section at concert pitch. The first violinist could play from this part using normal tuning, and both she and the rest of the string players found it much easier to adjust intonation, balance, and

dynamics with this transposed part. Once everyone understood the sound that would result, it was then possible for the player to return to the part as originally written, with the *scordatura*, and for everyone to play with good results. We further improved on these issues by having ample rehearsal time—a total of 10.5 hours—some of which we used for detailed sectional rehearsals.

Another major issue was balance. With each player functioning as a soloist, but sometimes standing out from the texture and at other times blending with it to support another instrument, it was especially important for each player to understand his or her function at each moment within the piece. It was also important for each player to be able to hear other parts for sections where they had to play in duets, trios, etc. This required some changes to the traditional seating arrangements. Instead of seating the strings in the normal setup for a string quartet plus a double bass, I chose instead to place the cello and double bass near the center and to put the viola player on my right at the front (see the diagram on the next page). This also allowed the cello and bass to be near the piano, which was important since the piano often reinforces the bass line. Similarly, it was helpful to place the horn next to the harmonium, since the harmonium often replaces the brass instruments of the original instrumentation. Since the bassoon and horn frequently play the same rhythms and sometimes the same material, I found it helpful to seat them beside one another. So I altered the usual placement of the winds and seated the clarinet player to the bassoon player's left, allowing the horn and bassoon to sit side-by-side.

Figure 1. Orchestra setup diagram.



Because each player is a soloist in the chamber version, and because all the musicians play nearly constantly, the arrangement of Mahler's Fourth Symphony fully taxes the endurance of the instrumentalists. We had to take this into account in rehearsals, being sure to build up our stamina to the point where it was possible for everyone to be as fully engaged as necessary by the time of the performance. Meticulous attention to articulation and the broader range of dynamics required to achieve a full orchestral effect also required both physical and mental perseverance. Beyond this, the challenges of performing Mahler's Fourth Symphony in a chamber version are fairly similar to those of performing the full version: everyone needs a subtle approach to phrasing, tempo, dynamics, and articulation. The conductor must insist on these, along with attention to balance and awareness in ensemble playing to ensure a successful performance of the reduced version of Mahler's Symphony No. 4.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

As I prepared to give my final lecture-recital, I listened to the earlier arrangement of Symphony No. 4 by Erwin Stein many times. As I studied the Stein version, however, there seemed to be something lacking in the harmonies, dynamics and expression because of the absence of instruments. The sound was much lighter than I thought appropriate, lacking in depth, and somehow not matching Mahler's profound philosophy. This led me to explore other options, and eventually I came upon the more recent version by Klaus Simon, which seemed more faithful to the original. I then decided to perform this version of the work.

It was necessary, however, to make a thorough study of the original instrumentation, and I want to emphasize the importance of this for anyone wishing to perform an arrangement of a Mahler symphony. Studying the original instrumentation is crucial to understanding the composer's intention. This is especially true in the Fourth Symphony, in which Mahler uses some extraordinary effects to create the atmosphere. These include the sleigh bells with their childlike affect in the first movement and the *scordatura* violin to mimic the sound of the death dance in the second movement, and so on. These unique features were preserved much more faithfully in Simon's version.

A goal of a reduced version must be to present as much of the original as possible while remaining practical. There is not much difference in the number of players required for the two different arrangements, and including the bassoon and horn in the Simon version may seem like a small change. Nevertheless, this one difference adds

immeasurably to the ability to retain the character of Mahler's ideas in such matters as dynamics, articulation, and abruptly changing moods.

For these reasons, I chose to discuss and perform Simon's version of the Mahler Fourth Symphony. I hope that this project makes clear the benefits to conductors, instrumentalists, and audiences the merits of an arrangement of Mahler's work—provided, as I believe Klaus Simon's does—that the reduced instrumentation preserves as much of the character of the original as possible.

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APPENDIX A
VIDEO INFORMATION

YouTube URL: <https://youtu.be/HHui0ege-Go>

Performance date: Jan, 25, 2016, 7:30 pm

Location: Katzin Concert Hall

Performer: ASU Chamber Ensemble

Conductor: JungHwan Kwon

Program: Symphony No.4 (1899-1900), Gustav Mahler (1860-1910), Arr. Klaus Simon
(2007)

- I. Bedächtig: nicht eilen
- II. In gemächlicher Bewegung, ohne Hast
- III. Ruhevoll, poco adagio
- IV. Sehr behaglich

ASU Chamber Ensemble Personnel

Violin 1: Aihua Zhang

Violin 2: Vladimir Gebe

Viola: Yen-Fang Chen

Cello: Yeil Park

Bass: Kelsey Mines

Flute/Piccolo: Nayoung Ham

Oboe/English horn: Alexis Mitchell

Clarinet/Bass clarinet: Patrick Englert

Bassoon: Kiefer Strickland

Horn: Alex Manners

Percussion: Jingya Zhon, Young Lee

Piano: Nathan Uhl

Harmonium*: Nathan Arch

Soprano: Kyla McCarrel

*The Harmonium for this performance was on loan from the collection of Dian and Eckart Sellheim and dates back to the Civil War. The ASU Chamber Ensemble thanks Professor Sellheim for his generosity in loaning the instrument.

APPENDIX B

SCRIPT OF THE LECTURE-RECITAL

This evening, we are performing Mahler's Symphony Number Four in a chamber version arranged by Klaus Simon in 2007. Mahler's symphonies are essential for young conductors to understand and for instrumentalists to play, but they are impractical in many school situations because they call for large orchestras. A chamber version, such as the one we will perform tonight, provides an opportunity to explore Mahler's musical language and style in a more manageable setting.

There is a tradition of reduced orchestrations of Mahler's symphonies extending back to the first half of the twentieth century. The best-known of these are the arrangements by Erwin Stein. Klaus Simon made the version we are playing for the Holst Sinfonietta and first performed it with them in May of 2007. It is among the most recent efforts to produce smaller-scale versions of Mahler's symphonies. Simon has subsequently produced a version of the First Symphony and is working on a reduced version of Mahler's Ninth Symphony.

Among Mahler's symphonies, the Fourth already has a more intimate character than the others, using the smallest orchestra. Nevertheless, the original instrumentation still calls for an expanded woodwind section with four flutes and three each of oboes, clarinets, and bassoons; and a modest brass section of four horns and three trumpets. The rest of the orchestra consists of timpani, a large percussion section, harp, and strings. The string section that would be required to balance the other forces would need to be fairly large.

Simon reduces this to one of each woodwind instrument (though many of the players play a second instrument at various points), 1 horn, a 2-member percussion section without timpani, a harmonium, piano, and strings. Simon retains the most distinctive feature of the Mahler original, with the soprano soloist in the final movement. He gives the option of using either one string player per part as we are doing or using a larger section of up to 19 players if the size of the hall and the orchestra's budget can accommodate it.

For the most part, the string parts in the reduced version follow Mahler's original, though Simon occasionally adds passages for such instruments as the viola or double bass to create a more substantial sound. He assigns some of the material originally given to the timpani to the double bass.

Here is an example. First, we'll hear a brief recorded excerpt from the third movement in Mahler's original:

RECORDING: Mahler, 3rd movement, mm. 318-25

Now here is the same passage, in the reduced orchestration.

PLAY: Simon, 3rd movement, mm. 318-25

As you heard, the double bass takes over the timpani's function in building the climax. Some of the material omitted from Mahler's instrumentation is taken by the added piano.

Mahler's original practice of using many solo passages for the woodwinds lends itself particularly well to adaptation into a chamber version. Beyond this, the chamber version gives them some additional material. In many places, the woodwinds take over material originally given to the brass. Listen to this excerpt from the original version, and notice especially the trumpet solo:

RECORDING: Mahler, 1st movement, mm. 253-58

Here is the same passage in the reduced orchestration. Notice that the trumpet solo is now played by the clarinet.

PLAY: Simon, 1st movement, mm. 253-258

The substitution is quite effective.

To compensate for the missing brass instruments, Simon uses a small chamber organ, called a harmonium. Here is a passage that features the harmonium playing a long pedal tone to support the other instruments and plays some of the harmonies originally played by the trumpets and horns.

PLAY: Simon, 1st movement, mm. 174-182

The piano in Simon's version similarly replaces other instruments. In some cases, it handles the original percussion material, in other places, it takes over material from the original wind parts and even, occasionally, the strings. The very opening of the work provides an excellent comparison. Here is the original version. Notice that the woodwinds begin, and then the strings enter after the end of the woodwind phrase.

RECORDING: Mahler, 1st movement, mm. 1 – 9.

Now listen to the same passage from the reduced orchestration:

PLAY: Simon, 1st movement, mm. 1-9

In this version, the piano took over the introduction originally assigned to the flute. Then the flute and clarinet take over. The piano plays the material originally played by the strings, mimicking their *pizzicato* technique. Finally, the piano and harmonium take over the harmonies in homophonic texture originally assigned to the winds.

Simon's version manages to capture the colors and textures of Mahler's original. Even though he uses a much smaller ensemble, he successfully retains the character of the original. Such a reduced orchestration makes the work available in circumstances where the full version is impractical.

I hope you enjoy our performance of Klaus Simon's chamber Version of Mahler's Fourth Symphony.