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 ground-breaking 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.

**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 Werner Henze: Tristan* (2011).
After Mahler

Britten, Weill, Henze and Romantic Redemption

STEPHEN DOWNES
Ich komm' zu dir, traute Ruhestätte!
Ja, gib mir Ruh, ich hab' Erquickung not!
(I come to you, beloved resting place!
Yes, give me rest, I have need of reviving.)

'Der Einsame im Herbst’ (Hans Bethge/Tchang-Tsi, alt. Mahler)
For Alice Marianne
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Acknowledgements

I was very fortunate to have world leaders in Mahler and Britten studies as colleagues in the School of Arts at the University of Surrey. Jeremy Barham was a constant source of information and advice as I repeatedly pestered him on all things Mahlerian; the Britten scholar, Chris Mark, read a draft of Chapter 2 with characteristically meticulous thoroughness and made many valuable comments and corrections.

Parts of the final section of Chapter 1 were given as a paper at the conference ‘Gustav Mahler: Contemporary of the Past?’, University of Surrey, July 2011 and at the International Nineteenth-Century Music Conference, University of Edinburgh, June 2012.

I am grateful to Lucy Walker and Nicholas Clark for their help during my visit to the Britten-Pears Library in October 2011 and for subsequent email correspondence. They answered all my queries and requests with speed, efficiency and warmth. Thanks again to Victoria Cooper and to her assistant Fleur Jones at Cambridge University Press for all their expert guidance in the final stages of preparing the manuscript.

The musical examples were prepared with consummate skill by Jake Willson. The cost of licensing and preparing musical examples was supported by the School of Arts, University of Surrey. The extracts from the following works are reproduced by permission.

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During the period of work on this project I have, as always, been sustained 
by the love, patience and support of my wife Rachel. Our daughter Alice 
Marianne was born as I started to write my first drafts, and it is to her that I 
dedicate this book.