

Title of lecture: PT II (Paper 12) Brahms's *Ein deutsches Requiem* in Context

Response from: Martin Ennis (4 December)

It was good to see that so many of the respondents offered a 4 or a 5 in the main categories ('Contents' and 'Delivery' of lectures); I'd like to express my gratitude for this. A number of points were, however, raised. Several students expressed reservations about the supervision arrangements. This came as something of a surprise to me, as the same arrangements (with three of this year's four supervisors) were generally deemed very effective last year. I shall reflect on this and, if the course runs again next year, will look into consolidating the small-group teaching, at least to some degree. One or two asked for more information on the slides. This seems to be a recurrent request across the Music Faculty. In my defence, I'd say that at least one student complained about too much material here, so perhaps the balance wasn't so far off the mark. In fact, the slides supplied for the Brahms lectures are among the richest I have produced for any course; nevertheless, I'll attempt to add some further signposts, should the course be repeated. One or two students asked me to clarify the point about unreliable sources in the Brahms literature. To be honest, to do so *in extenso* would make for very dull lectures, as many issues are relatively petty. However, I attempted to use the lectures to flag up, repeatedly, aspects of Brahms reception where significant questions can be raised; what's more, many of the theories explored in detail in my presentations – such as the chorale source of the *Requiem* – were so obviously at odds with much of the mainstream Brahms literature that further advertising of this fact seemed unnecessary. The only other recurrent issue seemed to be a desire for more on the music itself. Most of the lectures engaged in some detail with scores by Brahms, but perhaps I need to make it clearer that discussions of works other than the *Requiem* are often very germane to the work itself; this is what I understand by placing the *Requiem* in a broad context. There is, of course, one more lecture to come, at which I shall again offer the chance for students to ask questions about the exam; I do hope this will prove useful.