

The Paul Sacher Foundation

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Sacher's most durable contribution may be an archive. In 1973 he established the Paul Sacher Foundation, which opened its research centre in 1986 in the Haus auf Burg on the Münsterplatz, a few steps from the cathedral.¹ The foundation first collected the manuscripts of the works that Sacher had commissioned. In 1983 it acquired the estate of Igor Stravinsky, which made it at a stroke one of the leading centres for the study of twentieth-century music.² The collection of Anton Webern's manuscripts and the estates or substantial holdings of composers such as Bartók, Boulez, Ligeti, Berio, Martin, Maderna and Rihm followed, alongside the papers of many other musicians of the period.³

The foundation is a research institution with a public purpose. It is open to musicologists, performers and composers from around the world, who come to Basel to consult the sources. Its publications, editions and conferences have made the name of the city familiar in music departments from Tokyo to California.⁴ The model repeats the Amerbach pattern a third time: a private collection is held for scholarship, kept in the city and made accessible to those with a legitimate interest. It is also a striking example of soft power exercised through knowledge, because the foundation's influence rests on the authority of the sources it holds.

1 Notes

1. On the Paul Sacher Stiftung, established in 1973, and its research centre in the Haus auf Burg on the Münsterplatz, opened in 1986, see the publications of the foundation. Dates to be verified. ↩
2. On the acquisition of the Stravinsky estate by the Paul Sacher Stiftung in 1983, reportedly after competition with American institutions, see the publications of the foundation and contemporary reports. Details to be verified. ↩

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3. On the holdings of the Paul Sacher Stiftung, including the Anton Webern collection and the estates or collections relating to Pierre Boulez, György Ligeti, Luciano Berio, Frank Martin, Bruno Maderna, Wolfgang Rihm and others, see the publications of the foundation. Names to be verified. ↩
4. On the research programme, publications (including the Mitteilungen der Paul Sacher Stiftung) and visiting scholars of the Paul Sacher Stiftung, see the publications of the foundation. To be verified. ↩

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