Musicologica Austriaca

Special Issue: “Austrian Music Studies: Topics, Perspectives, Concepts”: Editorial Introduction

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Received: 19/09/2022
Accepted: 19/09/2022
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Published: 13/04/2023
Last updated: 13/04/2023
How to cite: Federico Celestini, Special Issue: “Austrian Music Studies: Topics, Perspectives, Concepts”: Editorial Introduction, ‘Austrian Music Studies: Topics, Perspectives, Concepts,’ special issue, Musicologica Austriaca: Journal for Austrian Music Studies (April 13, 2023)
Tags: 19th century; 20th century; 21st century; Austrian studies; Cosmopolitanism; Film music; Musical agency; Musical theatre; National history; National Socialism; Popular music studies; Shoah; Trieste

Federico Celestini (ed.), Special Issue, “Austrian Music Studies: Topics, Perspectives, Concepts”

Overview of all articles

- Gregor Kokorz, Carlo Ferdinando Lickl: The Life of a Nineteenth-Century Triestine Composer; a Case Study on Music History Construction in a Border Region of the Habsburg Empire
- Susanne Scheiblhofer, Confronting the Past Through Popular Musical Theatre: The Effects of Austrian Postwar Cultural Policies on the Reception History of Musicals
- Elias Berner, The Sound of Austria in Films about the Shoah and National Socialism
- Christa Brüstle, “Atlas der gesamten Musik und aller angrenzenden Gebiete”: Austrian Stereotypes, Music, and Material Agency as a Relational Model in Georg Nussbaumer’s Concert Installations
- Bernhard Steinbrecher, “Austrian Popular Music Studies”: A Critical Assessment

A collaboration between the doctoral program of Austrian Studies, the Department of Music, and the Research Centre Concepts of Europe at the University of Innsbruck led to a series of three interdisciplinary conferences on Austrian studies in December 2019.[1] One of these was the annual conference of the Austrian Society for Musicology. This issue contains texts developed from papers presented at the conference.

Austrian studies, as part of a global history, are not meant to be a sum of national histories but aim to explore contact zones, lines of connection, and transfer processes. The term “Austrian music studies” narrows down the broader field of Austrian studies by referring to music. The task of musicology is to position itself within this broad field and to address specific musical perspectives. The production, reception, and cultivation of music plays a lively part in processes of identity construction, the formation of plural identities, and the definition of cultural spaces

and border regions. Music is co-determined by these processes, but on the other hand also contributes to shaping them. The following texts are concerned with the musicological dimensions of the (supra)national, the post-colonial, and the neo-colonial, as well as the critique of these dimensions. Music-related discourses of identity are the subject of analysis, as are collective identities brought forth performatively through music, questions of cultural transfer within and outside Austria, interconnections, and demarcations, all from the varying perspectives of different subdisciplines.

(1) Gregor Kokorz

The biography of the composer, pianist, and teacher Carlo Ferdinando Lickl (1803–64) in multicultural Trieste provides Gregor Kokorz with the opportunity to interweave different national and supranational perspectives in his article "Carlo Ferdinando Lickl: The Life of a Nineteenth-Century Triestine Composer; a Case Study on Music History Construction in a Border Region of the Habsburg Empire." In this way, a reflection on the construction of cultural spaces and their demarcation is initiated, which questions the national orientation of traditional (music) historiographies and offers alternatives.

Gregor Kokorz, Carlo Ferdinando Lickl: The Life of a Nineteenth-Century Triestine Composer; a Case Study on Music History Construction in a Border Region of the Habsburg Empire

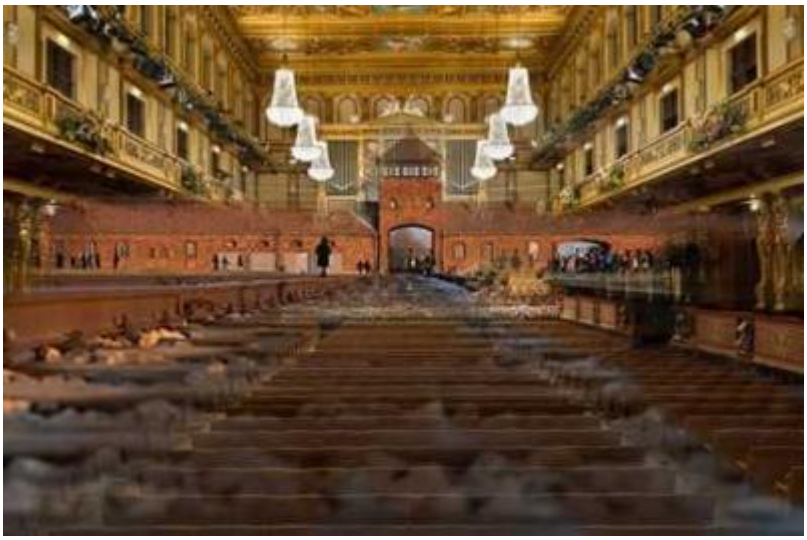
(2) Susanne Scheiblhofer

In her article "Confronting the Past through Popular Musical Theatre: The Effects of Austrian Postwar Cultural Policies on the Reception History of Musicals," Susanne Scheiblhofer examines the Austrian reception of three Broadway musicals that deal with different aspects of National Socialism: *Cabaret*, *The Sound of Music*, and *The Producers*, first performed in Austria in 1970, 1993, and 2008 respectively. Through a discourse-analytical examination of the reviews of these musicals, she comes to the conclusion that—in addition to the *Opfermythos* (victim myth)—another myth determined the reception of the musicals in Austria, namely the myth of the *Kulturnation* (nation of culture). According to Scheiblhofer, this is the cause of the persistent cultural elitism that has shaped Austria's cultural politics from the post-war period to the present day.

Susanne Scheiblhofer, Confronting the Past through Popular Musical Theatre: The Effects of Austrian Postwar Cultural Policies on the Reception History of Musicals

(3) Elias Berner

In "The Sound of Austria in Films about the Shoah and National Socialism," Elias Berner explores the question of how indicators of a specific "Austrianness" are shaped in sound in international films about National Socialism and the Shoah. The focus of the investigation is on the Hollywood blockbusters *Inglourious Basterds* and *Schindler's List* as well as on Claude Lanzmann's monumental documentary *Shoah*. Both the bitter irony of the cliché of Austria as a country of music and the connotation of the perpetrators through Austrian pronunciation and inflection come into play.



Elias Berner, The Sound of Austria in Films about the Shoah and National Socialism

(4) Christa Brüstle

In "'Atlas der gesamten Musik und aller angrenzenden Gebiete': Austrian Stereotypes, Music, and Material Agency as a Relational Model in Georg Nussbaumer's Concert Installations," Christa Brüstle examines the use of material and immaterial Austrian stereotypes in Georg Nussbaumer's

concert installations. She focuses both on the texture of the material used and on the way it is dealt with compositionally. In order to take into account the cultural-historical weight of the materials, the author refers to the concept of agency, thus bringing to light the relation between significant materials, the composer, and the audience.

Christa Brüstle, "Atlas der gesamten Musik und aller angrenzenden Gebiete": Austrian Stereotypes, Music, and Material Agency as a Relational Model in Georg Nussbaumer's Concert Installations

(5) Bernhard Steinbrecher

In "'Austrian Popular Music Studies': A Critical Assessment," Bernhard Steinbrecher analyzes the research field of Austrian popular music studies. Thematic foci, approaches, and discourses as well as blind spots and desiderata are presented and identified. The aims of this critical evaluation are to make the field more visible in the national and international research landscape and to achieve a systematic record of the values, experiences, and meanings of popular music in Austria.

Bernhard Steinbrecher, "Austrian Popular Music Studies": A Critical Assessment

References

1. A volume containing contributions from these three conferences includes chapters by the ethnomusicologists Philip Bohlman and Ursula Hemetek: *Was heißt Österreich? Überlegungen zum Feld der Austrian Studies im 21. Jahrhundert*, ed. Sieglinde Klettenhammer and Kurt Scharr (Klagenfurt: Wieser, 2021). ↑

Cover picture: composite by Alexander Wilfing of (1) a photograph of Hermann in the tympanon frieze of the Walhalla, by courtesy of Wikimedia Commons; (2) a photograph of a golden statue of Johann Strauss II in City Park Vienna, tourism advertising poster (1994), by courtesy of Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Bildarchiv Austria; (3) a video still (musician with antlers), "Salon Q, Georg Nussbaumer, Opera Lab Berlin," YouTube, Ackerstadtpalast Berlin, September 11–13, 2015, director: Evan Gardner, video: Swen-Erik Scheuerling; and (4) a photograph by Christian Skrein (March 13, 1965) of a protest against The Beatles visiting Salzburg in 1965 for shooting their film *Help!*, by courtesy of Salzburg Museum, Skrein Photo Collection.