German 4900
Music & Politics in German Culture

Goals

What is the relationship of music and ideology? How did contemporary "music torture" come to be? Why do so many Holocaust films include classical music? This special topics course begins with musical propaganda during the 30 Years' War, moves on to Beethoven, Napoleon, and German nationalist choirs in the 19th century, and focuses the second half of the semester on music and politics during the 20th century, from the Nazi period to Cold War protest music and beyond. The course is taught in English, with German components for students in the language program.

Requirements

10 % Active class participation
30 % Weekly reading responses & performance review
30 % Research presentation
30 % Final paper

Grading Scale

A (100-93)  A- (92-90)  B+ (88-89)  B (83-87)  B- (82-80)  C+ (79-78)  C (77-73)
C- (72-70)  D+ (69-68)  D (67-60)  F represents a grade below 60

Materials

Weekly reading and listening materials provided on Canvas, with additional research sources chosen by each student.

Activities

Sharing your research
Each student will present a conference-style talk on his or her final research paper to the class.

Performance Review
Students will attend a live musical performance and write a short review that takes into account the music's ideological/political resonances.

NOTE: The $24.00 course fee you have paid is used to staff and maintain the Language Lab (MAIN 004), provide language specific materials, and to pay teaching tutors who assist instructors in the classroom and lab.
Weekly Schedule

Week of Jan. 9  
Course overview and first topic: Music and the Thirty Years’ War  
Readings from Courasche and Mother Courage  
Listening/viewing: Jephtha, Theater of War

Week of Jan. 17  
Mozart, Beethoven, and Napoleon  
Reading: Excerpts from Scott Burnham, Beethoven Hero  
Listening: The Marriage of Figaro, Eroica Symphony, “Les Adieux” piano sonata

Week of Jan. 23  
Men’s choruses and Poet’s Love  
Readings from Barbara Eichner, History in Mighty Sounds and Perrey, Schumann’s Dichterliebe and Early Romantic Poetics  
Listening: Schumann’s patriotic choruses and Dichterliebe cycle

Week of Jan. 30  
Hitler’s Favorite Composer  
Reading: Selection of opera reviews, Wagner, “Das Judenthum in der Musik,” and “Nietzche contra Wagner”  
Listening: Parsifal, excerpts from the Ring cycle

Week of Feb. 6  
Mahler, Strauss, and Music in the Streets  
Readings from Lawrence Kramer, Musical Meaning and Bryan Gilliam, Richard Strauss and Music and Performance During the Weimar Republic  
Listening: Mahler First Symphony, Strauss excerpts, Eisler choruses

Week of Feb. 13  
Nazi Propaganda and Appropriation  
Readings from Karen Painter, Symphonic Aspirations and Günter Grass, Die Blechtrommel  
Listening/viewing: Ewiger Wald, The Tin Drum

Week of Feb. 21  
Musical Resistance  
Readings from Hanns Eisler, interviews and Alex Ross, The Rest Is Noise  
Listening: Brecht/Eisler songs and popular protest music

Week of Feb. 27  
Music in the Holocaust  
Readings from selected articles  
Listening/viewing: music from Theresienstadt, Passenger, Shutter Island

Mar. 6-12  
SPRING BREAK

Week of Mar. 13  
Postwar Reckoning  
Readings from Ingeborg Bachmann, Paul Celan, and William Vollmann (Europe Central)  
Listening/viewing: “Auferstanden aus Ruinen,” “Todesfuge,” Die Mörder sind unter uns

Week of Mar. 20  
Music in the Cold War  
Readings from Hanns Eisler, interviews, and Frackman and Powell, Classical Music in the German Democratic Republic  
Listening: Songs of Wolf Biermann and Kurt Schwaen

Week of Mar. 27  
Austrian Problems  
Readings from Thomas Bernhard, Elfriede Jelinek, and Beate Schirrmacher  
Listening: Strauss' Der Rosenkavalier and Schubert’s Winterreise

Week of Apr. 3  
Punk in Berlin  
Reading: selected articles  
Listening: Male, Slime, PVC
Week of Apr. 10
Politics and Protest in German Music Today
Readings from selected articles
Listening: Nina Hagen, Misuk, German-Turkish music

Week of Apr. 17
Techno: Apolitical?
Readings from Toffler's *The Third Wave* and selected articles
Listening: Kraftwerk, Sølyst, S036 clips

Week Apr. 24
Research conference

**Final Paper due Friday, May 5 at 5:00 p.m.**

**Attendance**

In accordance with USU policies, regular attendance is expected of all students. As this is a fast-paced and group-oriented method of learning, attendance is mandatory. Attendance means physical as well as mental attendance. Planned absences should be discussed with the instructor beforehand. If you need to be absent due to an emergency, please notify me at your earliest convenience. Examples of planned absences that are excused are: university duties or trips and required court attendance. Examples of emergency absences that are excused are: serious illness or injury of the student or a close member of the student’s family. Medical excuses have to be signed by a physician. Written documentation for excused absences must be provided at your next attendance. All missed work must be completed and handed into to me within one week from the day you return. It is the responsibility of each student to make up missed material. Please get notes from someone else in the class or talk to me during my office hours.

Students should plan to arrive on time and stay for the duration of the class. I reserve the right to regard constant tardiness (more than twice) as an unexcused absence. Excessive unexcused absences (more than three) will result in a lower grade. Classroom etiquette will be expected (e.g. students will refrain from reading material not related to class and packing up possessions prior to the end of the lecture). Cell phones are to be turned off before class begins (silent not vibrate). If you feel like an exception is necessary, please see me. Students are encouraged to take thorough notes, participate in class discussion, and ask clarifying questions.

**Weekly reading/listening responses**

A weekly written response, in English (for non-language-program students) or German is required following class readings, listening assignments, and film excerpts viewed in class. Students will summarize the assigned reading and/or describe the music or film, with a personal reflection on the material.

**Oral participation**

Active participation of the student in class is required. Class discussion will be in English with some German components, and students in the German program are encouraged to try out their spoken German whenever possible. Final oral presentations will be graded on preparedness, engaging communication, and ease in responding to class questions.

**Research Project**

Students will research, write a final paper, and present to the class on a topic of their choice within the course framework. Potential topics include the history of German anthems, contemporary opera stagings with political overtones, concert-going under the Third Reich, music in current German demonstrations and counter-demonstrations, political themes in contemporary German pop music, music in German fiction such as Thomas Mann’s *Doktor Faustus*, music in postwar German “ruins” film, or music in refugee communities in Germany.
Physical Impairments

Students with ADA- documented physical, sensory, emotional or medical impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for services. All accommodations are coordinated through the Disability Resource Center as early in the semester as possible. In class alternate format materials (braille, large print, digital or audio) are available with advance notice.

Honor Code Policy

As stated in The Student Code, “Each student has the right and duty to pursue his or her academic experience free of dishonesty. The Honor System is designed to re- enforce the higher level of conduct expected and required of all Utah State University students.” Complete academic honesty is expected in this course. Cheating on exams or plagiarism on written assignments will result in a failing grade and may result in further action according to university policy.