conference synopsis

Among the Jewish composers who died in the Holocaust, or whose music was suppressed by the Third Reich, these two stand out for their productivity, the quality of their musical imaginations, and the unusual and fraught contexts in which they worked. Both were simultaneously exceptional and representative, and their teachers and associates include Debussy, Schoenberg, George Grosz and Alexander Zemlinsky. While both Schulhoff and Ullmann spent time in concentration camps and were killed by the Nazis, they were very different kinds of Jewish intellectuals; Ullmann was a committed follower of Anthroposophy who became an important music critic during his time in Terezin, while Schulhoff became a committed Communist, ending up in Würzburg, where he died of tuberculosis. Their compositions, incorporating everything from jazz to Dada, and from duodecaphony to national songs, are remarkable in their power and scope. The lives and activities of both composers raise questions about Jewish identity and Jewish music. Schulhoff wrote a Symphonia Germanica, a Sonata Erotica and a Sonata Eroica, and movements in Czech, Slovak and Gypsy style, but nothing “alla Hebraica,” while Ullmann was brought up as a Christian and only began to consider Jewish musical models while in Terezin, particularly in his final piano sonata.

This conference seeks to reevaluate the musical legacy of Ullmann and Schulhoff and their contemporaries, connecting it with other strands, themes and contexts in European culture. This will be a two-day event featuring both scholarly presentations and performances.

sponsors

Center for Jewish Studies
Irving and Miriam Lowe Professor of Modern Judaism
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jewishstudies.asu.edu/legacies
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University Club | 425 East University Drive, Tempe

noon-1 p.m.
lunch | presenters and invited guests

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welcome

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Rachel Bergman  
*George Mason University*

Jory Debenham  
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Sivan Eitedgee  
*Boston*

Gwyneth Bravo  
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“The Garden of Atlantis”
artwork by
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inspired by the music of
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Der Kaiser von Atlantis, oder Die Tod-Verweigerung
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