



THE ROLE OF MUSIC, PERFORMING ARTISTS  
AND COMPOSERS IN GERMAN-CONTROLLED  
CONCENTRATION CAMPS AND GHETTOS  
DURING WORLD WAR II

by

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Krechtst nisht, shrayt nisht, zingt a lid.

Don't moan, don't cry, sing a song.

Line from a song by Emanuel Hirshberg,  
an inmate of the Lodz ghetto (Rubin 1963:432)

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## SUMMARY

This thesis examines the role of music in the concentration camps and ghettos during World War II.

Chapter 2 gives a brief overview of the role of music in general, including its effect on emotions, morale and religion, as well as its uses as propaganda, protest, documentation, entertainment and therapy.

Chapter 3 explains the term "concentration camp", and the way in which these camps operated. Subsequently the musical activities in the following concentration camps are discussed in Chapters 4 to 10:

Auschwitz (Chapter 4)  
Belzec (Chapter 5)  
Bergen-Belsen (Chapter 10)  
Börgermoor (Chapter 10)  
Buchenwald (Chapter 6)  
Budzyn (Chapter 10)  
Cieszanów (Chapter 10)  
Dachau (Chapter 7)  
Dinaverk (Chapter 10)  
Dora (Chapter 10)  
Flossenburg (Chapter 10)  
Fürstengrubbe (Chapter 10)  
Ganov (Chapter 10)  
Gleiwitz (Chapter 10)  
Gross-Rosen (Chapter 10)  
Kaiserwald (Chapter 10)  
Lipa (Chapter 10)  
Majdanek (Chapter 10)  
Mauthausen (Chapter 10)  
Mechelen (Chapter 10)  
Plaszow (Chapter 10)

Ravensbrück (Chapter 10)  
Sachsenhausen (Chapter 10)  
Sobibor (Chapter 8)  
Treblinka (Chapter 9)  
Westerbork (Chapter 10)  
Wülzburg (Chapter 10)

Chapter 11 introduces the second part of the thesis by defining the term "ghetto", and gives a concise overview of how the ghettos functioned. Chapters 12 to 19 concentrate on the musical activities in the following ghettos:

Bedzin (Chapter 19)  
Bialystok (Chapter 19)  
Chelm (Chapter 19)  
Cracow (Chapter 12)  
Czestochowa (Chapter 19)  
Kovno (Chapter 13)  
Libau (Chapter 19)  
Lodz (Chapter 14)  
Lublin (Chapter 19)  
Lvov (Chapter 15)  
Radom (Chapter 19)  
Sosnowiec (Chapter 19)  
Terezin (Chapter 16)  
Vilna (Chapter 17)  
Warsaw (Chapter 18)

The final chapter draws conclusions arrived at in this study, i.e. that music considerably affected the lives of inmates, serving as a morale-booster, as entertainment for both inmates and camp authorities, and as a means of propaganda. Many songs reflected the inmates' dissatisfaction with the way they were treated, some served as a form of documentation of daily events, while others called for revenge.

The thesis concludes with a Glossary of terms used and two Appendices, one containing the names of musicians in the concentration camps and ghettos, and the other the titles of works composed in the concentration camps and ghettos.

## OPSOMMING

Hierdie verhandeling ondersoek die rol van musiek in die konsentrasiekampe en ghetto's van die Tweede Wêreldoorlog.

Hoofstuk 2 gee 'n kort oorsig oor die rol van musiek in die algemeen en sy invloed op die emosies, moreel en godsdienste. Dit verwys ook na musiek as 'n middel ten opsigte van propaganda, protes, dokumentasie, vermaak en terapie.

Hoofstuk 3 definieer die term "konsentrasiekamp" en verduidelik hoe hierdie kampe gefunksioneer het. Die musiek-aktiwiteite in die konsentrasiekampe word vervolgens in Hoofstukke 4 tot 10 bespreek:

Auschwitz (Hoofstuk 4)  
Belzec (Hoofstuk 5)  
Bergen-Belsen (Hoofstuk 10)  
Börgermoor (Hoofstuk 10)  
Buchenwald (Hoofstuk 6)  
Budzyn (Hoofstuk 10)  
Cieszanów (Hoofstuk 10)  
Dachau (Hoofstuk 7)  
Dinaverk (Hoofstuk 10)  
Dora (Hoofstuk 10)  
Flossenburg (Hoofstuk 10)  
Fürstengrubbe (Hoofstuk 10)  
Ganov (Hoofstuk 10)  
Gleiwitz (Hoofstuk 10)  
Gross-Rosen (Hoofstuk 10)  
Kaiserwald (Hoofstuk 10)  
Lipa (Hoofstuk 10)  
Majdanek (Hoofstuk 10)  
Mauthausen (Hoofstuk 10)  
Mechelen (Hoofstuk 10)  
Plaszow (Hoofstuk 10)

Ravensbrück (Hoofstuk 10)  
Sachsenhausen (Hoofstuk 10)  
Sobibor (Hoofstuk 8)  
Treblinka (Hoofstuk 9)  
Westerbork (Hoofstuk 10)  
Wülzburg (Hoofstuk 10)

Hoofstuk 11 lei die tweede deel van die verhandeling in met 'n beknopte uiteensetting van die term "ghetto" en die wyse waarop die ghetto's gefunksioneer het.

Hoofstukke 12 tot 19 is toegespits op die musiek-aktiwiteite in die volgende ghetto's:

Bedzin (Hoofstuk 19)  
Bialystok (Hoofstuk 19)  
Chelm (Hoofstuk 19)  
Cracow (Hoofstuk 12)  
Czestochowa (Hoofstuk 19)  
Kovno (Hoofstuk 13)  
Libau (Hoofstuk 19)  
Lodz (Hoofstuk 14)  
Lublin (Hoofstuk 19)  
Lvov (Hoofstuk 15)  
Radom (Hoofstuk 19)  
Sosnowiec (Hoofstuk 19)  
Terezin (Hoofstuk 16)  
Vilna (Hoofstuk 17)  
Warsaw (Hoofstuk 18)

Die laaste hoofstuk bevat die gevolgtrekkings van die studie, naamlik, dat musiek die lewens van die kamp- en ghettobewoners aanmerklik beïnvloed het, onder meer as middel om die moreel te versterk, as vorm van vermaak vir beide inwoners en kampowerhede, en as propagandamiddel. Baie van die liedere weerspieël die inwoners se misnoeë met die wyse waarop hulle behandel is, terwyl



sekeres dien as dokumentasie van die daaglikse gebeure en nog ander om wraak roep.

Die verhandeling sluit af met 'n Woordelys van gebruikte terme en twee Bylaes, een waarvan die name van musici in die kampe en ghetto's bevat en die ander die titels van werke wat in die kampe en ghetto's gekomponeer is.

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