

# **Book of Abstracts**

## **Symposium**

### **Musikwissenschaft Modern – Musicology's Modernist Moment 1918-1933**

**Universität Wien, Musikwissenschaftliches Institut  
27.-29. November 2024**

#### **Keynotes**

#### **Olha Kolomyets: Bloodied Blossom: Ukrainian Ethnomusicology and the Avant-garde at the Dawn of Modernism**

**Dr. Olha Kolomyets** is an ethnomusicologist. As an Associate Professor at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv (Ukraine) she teaches disciplines related to the various aspects of the phenomenon of music and its roles and functions in the life of people of her native country, Ukraine, and the other world cultures, the East including. Her pedagogical activity, which embraces not only National University of Lviv, but also Jagiellonian University (Poland) as well as University of Music FRANZ LISZT Weimar (Germany), The University of Chicago (USA), is strongly connected to her scholarly interests, the main area of which encompass music and widely interpreted identity, music and ethnic minority and musical aspects in South Asian studies. Dr. Olha Kolomyets is a Fulbright Scholar. She conducted her Fulbright research project at the University of Chicago in 2015-2016 with prof. Philip Bohlman being her project faculty advisor. She is professionally affiliated with the International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance (ICTMD) since 2007 and is a Liaison Officer for Ukraine.

#### **Federico Celestini: „Eine weitere Wiener Schule? Guido Adler, seine Schüler und die Neue Musik“**

**Univ-Prof. Dr. phil. Federico Celestini** is Professor of Musicology at the University of Innsbruck. He studied musicology, literature, and aesthetics at La Sapienza, University of Rome, and wrote his PhD dissertation and Habilitation at the Karl-Franzens University of Graz. His research interests range widely across the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, with special emphasis on Gustav Mahler, Friedrich Nietzsche, and aesthetics. Among his

contributions to the study of modernism in the arts is his 2006 book, *Die Unordnung der Dinge: Das musikalische Grotteske in der Wiener Moderne (1885 – 1914)*. His service to music scholarship includes the presidency of the Österreichische Gesellschaft für Musikwissenschaft (2017–2022) and co-editorship of *Acta Musicologica* (2011–2022), the journal of the International Musicological Society. Federico Celestini has held numerous international fellowships and guest professorship, including a Mellon Foundation Professorship at the University of Chicago (2010).

**Alexander Wilfing: "Wissenschaft, Musikwissenschaft, Musikgeschichtswissenschaft: Wiener Konzepte der Musikforschung, 1856–1918"**

**Alexander Wilfing** studied musicology and philosophy at the University of Vienna. His research interests include aesthetics, musical criticism, cultural history, the history of science, and the relations between musicology and art history. From 2021 to 2023, he oversaw a project on the establishment of musicology as an academic discipline in 19th-century Vienna. At the Austrian Academy of Sciences, he is currently leading three projects on (1) Hanslick's criticism and its relation to his aesthetics (2022–25), (2) the reviews of the initial edition of *On the Musically Beautiful* (2024–25), and (3) the argument structure of Hanslick's treatise (2025–27).

**List of Abstracts and Bios:**

**Panel 1:**

**Christian Thomas Leitmeir: An 'inner relation to the modernism of our day'  
Rudolf von Ficker's 'Music of the Gothic Era' at the Beethoven Centenary Festival 1927**

The Beethoven Centenary celebrations in Vienna marked the culmination point of Guido Adler's lifelong campaign for a genuinely 'universal' musicology that would transgress national as well as (sub-)disciplinary boundaries. His symbiotic conception of a congress-cum-festival promoted a holistic experience of music, in which high-powered academic research shared the stage with creative practice and performance. Adler strategically used Beethoven as a springboard for a celebration of musicology in all its facets and of music of all periods. Showcase performances of Beethoven's iconic works were accompanied by 'historical' concerts that were devoted to 18th-century Austrian 'Kleinmeister', the operatic traditions of England, France and Italy and 'Musik der Gotik'. The latter, which featured previously unheard polyphonic works from the 12th to the early 15th centuries, turned out to be the surprise sensation of the festival. In the aural representations of Adler's former student Rudolf von Ficker, medieval music came to life with such vitality that audiences, critics and composers could not but recognise its 'inner relation to the modernism of our day' (Adler). Drawing on recently discovered performance materials and

archival sources, this paper traces the global repercussions of Ficker's 'modernist movement' from the Beethoven Centenary to the Machtergreifung of 1933.

**Christian Thomas Leitmeir** is Associate Professor of Music at the University of Oxford and Tutorial Fellow in Music at Magdalen College. An expert on medieval and Renaissance music and music theory, he has developed a strong interest in the history of musicology, especially during the first half of the 20th century. He is currently preparing a monograph on, and documentation of, the Beethoven Centenary Festival in Vienna.

### **Florian Walch: Lebensphilosophie, the study of musical form, and the reception of Anton Bruckner's music from ca. 1900 to 1933**

So far, the study of how politics and philosophy influence the reception of Anton Bruckner's music has focused on the fin-de-Siècle conflict between establishment liberalism and ascendant conservatism, as well as the National Socialist appropriation of German music after 1933. (Korstvedt 2011, Yan 2016) This paper examines the intervening reevaluation and promotion of Bruckner's music in the light of Lebensphilosophie, or the philosophy of life. I argue that this populist bridge discourse not only mediated between earlier liberalism and totalitarianism in ways that resonate ominously with our present but provides a vital background for understanding key impulses in the study of musical form that still shape musical scholarship today.

Today, Lebensphilosophie, a heterogeneous body of philosophy that saw both Idealist and scientific rationality as incapable of grasping the dynamism of life, is somewhat of an intellectual curiosity (Beiser 2023). But in the early 20th century, its vitalist language and concepts permeated German-language intellectual life and politics. Appeals to body over mind and soul over spirit were made by liberals, conservatives, and, infamously, the soon-ascendant National Socialists. It also left its mark on the study of music: Guido Adler's theory of style, the energeticist music theory of Schenker, Kurth, and Halm, and the Spenglerian framework of Felix Salzer's early work are quintessential Lebensphilosophie. Yet this shared infrastructure - and its interfaces with political fault lines of the period - is rarely considered in studies of Bruckner or formative music theorists. To provide some impulses for a remedy to this and to call the stakes to our attention, I first reconstruct shared figures of thought in musical thinkers of this period before showing how the philosophy of life scaffolds the re-evaluation of irrationality and religiosity in the music of Bruckner. I suggest that neglecting the once-ubiquitous philosophy of life risks flattening theoretical and political nuances of interwar thought.

**Florian Walch** is a music theorist who researches how genres enjoin us to hear media and history. Across popular and classical repertoires, he analyzes tensions between musical norms

and the technologies enlisted to support them. His book project, tentatively titled *Extreme Metal: Subgenre Across the Digital Divide*, proposes that extreme metal's conflicted attachment to technology makes it an exemplary case for understanding how genre, as a form of repetition, is marked by the memory of past media. He has also published on chromatic passages in Mozart that challenge canonical analytical technologies and lines of influence in black metal music.

### **Bernardo Illari: Modernism in Tension: Carlos Vega, Julián Ribera, and Argentine Folk Musicology**

The foundational work of Argentine musicologist Carlos Vega (1898–1966) thrived within the intensely Modernist milieu of early-twentieth-century Buenos Aires—but not without internal tensions. Acting out of heightened individualism, Vega modified shared ideas to distill his own, univocal categories for understanding traditional music, and he applied them to a sturdy *Kulturkreis* history of South American folk music in his impressive *Panorama de la música popular argentina* (1944). Here, Vega's redefined language is used systematically to produce the *cancioneros* (repertoires) and *promociones* (waves) of Argentine folk music, and situate them within the larger continental context.

The same impulse, however, led Vega to adopt the prescriptive ideas on the Andalousi origin of medieval secular monody put forward by the Spaniard Julián Ribera (1858–1934), perhaps out of an ethnic and ideological identification that Vega otherwise shunned. Self-taught, highly critical, and the son of Andalusian immigrants, Vega adopted Ribera as model and mentor. If the *Panorama* concentrates on the scientific construction of oral music “cycles,” Vega's later work on medieval song, left incomplete, draws on Ribera for the sake of imaginarily tracing the precedents of Latin American folk music in a new and grandiose intellectual construction that is nevertheless problematic.

Vega's musicological practice emphatically partakes in the High Modernist, intellectual demolition of the past and remodeling of the future from an ultra-individualist and authoritarian perspective. Yet his reliance on Ribera seems a nineteenth-century holdover, and the tension they introduce was never addressed within the confines of Vega's work. Subsequent researchers did not feel invited to dialogue with his ideas, a consequence of the author's practice that could profitably be revised today.

**Bernardo Illari** is an Argentine-Italian musicologist and composer mainly specializing in Latin American music between 1600 and 1800, and nationalism and music in Argentina in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. He has published the book *Doménico Zipoli: para una genealogía de la música “clásica” latinoamericana* (Cuba: Casa de las Américas, 2011). He earned a career recognition award from the Konex Foundation (2009), the Otto Mayer-Serra Award (2013), the *Premio de Musicología “Casa de las Américas”* (2003), and the Samuel Claro Award in Latin American Musicology (2000). He has been teaching at the University of North Texas since 2001.

## **Panel 2:**

### **Pramantha Tagore: From Salon to Stage: The All Bengal Music Conference and the Public Life of Hindustani Music**

The early 20th century marked a period of profound transformation in Hindustani music as it navigated the tides of colonial modernity and nationalism. One emblematic site of this transformation was the All Bengal Music Conference, initiated in 1934 in colonial Bengal. This event was not merely a gathering of musicians but a crucial turning point that signaled a shift in the spatial and social dynamics of Hindustani music—from the intimate, private spaces of the salon (*sangeet baithak*) to the public, performative arena of the music conference. This paper examines the conference as a site of both continuity and rupture, foregrounding its role in redefining musical sociality.

Drawing on archival materials and personal narratives, I explore how the All Bengal Music Conference embodied a convergence of participatory and presentational paradigms. The conference reflected the tensions between a hereditary elite of performers, who shaped their identity through lineage and tradition, and a newly emerging public, which comprised a more diverse and nationalistically charged audience. Musicians not only adapted their art to these shifting dynamics but also actively sought to shape their audiences through curated repertoires and the performance of mood (*rasa*) that resonated with the aspirations of a modernizing Bengal.

This study interrogates the spatiality of the conference, juxtaposing it with its predecessor, the salon, to argue that the move from private to public spaces was not merely logistical but symbolic. It marked a negotiation of power, where musicians reclaimed agency within modernity's cultural framework. Moreover, I propose the concept of "interstitial spaces" to analyze the overlaps and slippages between private and public domains, illustrating how these liminal zones allowed for experimentation with new forms of musical identity and community. In situating the All Bengal Music Conference within the broader context of musicology's modernist moment (1900–1930), this paper contends that the event epitomized the intersection of music, space, and sociality, offering insights into how colonial modernity reconfigured artistic traditions and their publics.

**Pramantha Tagore** is a PhD Research Fellow in the Department of Music at the University of Chicago. His research explores the interplay between music, race, and cultural politics in the long nineteenth century. A prominent emphasis of his work has been on the historical practices of music-making in modern South Asia, in particular, colonial Bengal, and how these practices help shape cultural identities.

### **Willemien Froneman: Epiphanies of Postcolonial Radiance: Boeremusiek's Failed Modernism and the Discursive First Encounter**

This paper explores modernist tropes in 1950s South African ethnomusicology, focusing on Jo Fourie's epiphanies of boeremusiek. In modernist literary frameworks, epiphanies are moments of aesthetic revelation that catalyze transformation of self and object. Fourie – South Africa's first woman ethnomusicologist – peppered her autobiography with epiphanic narrations of her conversion from skeptic to enthusiast, illustrating what Philip Bohlman has referred to as the power of the “first encounter” in ethnographic writing. By considering these moments of truth as modernist techniques and technologies – attempts at writing boeremusiek into radiance – her epiphanies show up the tensions that belie postcolonial modernity. Apart from “radiance”, “translucency” emerges as a key term in this modernist language of transformation. I use these terms as analytic for appraising her transcriptions, recordings, and radio broadcasts of the early 1950s, showing how these efforts amounted to a modernism that defined boeremusiek through a negative discursivity that devalued live performance and created “possible worlds” in which the same sonic material were interpreted radically differently.

**Willemien Froneman** is an interdisciplinary researcher with degrees from the Universities of Cambridge and Stellenbosch. Building on her research on music, whiteness, and affect, and how these issues intersect with popular music in South Africa, her current work focuses on musical experimentalism, avant-gardism and modernism in the Global South. She is currently an Extraordinary Associate Professor at the Centre for the Study of the Afterlife of Violence and the Reparative Quest at Stellenbosch University. Her book, *The Groovology of White Affect: Boeremusiek and the Enregisterment of Race in South Africa*, was published in 2024 by Palgrave Macmillan.

### **Panel 3:**

#### **Hannah Judd: Collections Becoming Canons: Circulation and Influence of Early Sound Archives in the Interwar Period**

This paper explores the interwar period's foundational role in the early circulation and cross-regional influence of key sound archives and scientific collections as a byproduct of comparative musicology and the technological foundation for studying non-notated music in depth. During this era, institutions such as the Library of Congress and the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv and events like the Cairo Congress of Arab Music (1932) not only gathered extensive audio collections of traditional music but also cultivated new methods for categorizing and sharing their collections across global research communities. I examine the impact of influential circulated showcases of these archives, including the Anthology of American Folk Music, *Music of the Orient*, and the Phonogramm-Archiv's Demonstration Collection to examine how the movement of these resources beyond national borders catalyzed a shift in cross-cultural and

global musicology centered around circulation and new technological possibility. By focusing on these collections' circulation and interdisciplinary reach, the paper highlights how emerging technologies—such as the portable recording devices developed in the 1920s—expanded access to field recordings creation but also their circulation, enabling ethnographers to not only document music from sources but for librarians, musicologists and archivists to share these records internationally.

**Hannah Judd** is an ethnomusicologist and a PhD candidate at the University of Chicago, with research focused on recording technologies and their circulatory possibilities. Since 2022 she has been a guest researcher at the Berlin Phonogramm-Archiv, assisting with audio digitization and documentation of sound archives as well as participating in the Second World Music project and the revival of socialist dances.

### **Aria Torkanbouri: Modernism and Musicking: Embodied Emotional Practices and Social Change during the Spanish Flu Pandemic in Azerbaijan (1918-1920)**

This presentation examines the intersection of modernism and 'musicking' as 'embodied emotional practices' during the Spanish Flu pandemic (1918/1919) in early 20th-century Azerbaijan. This period, marked by profound societal transformation driven by war, famine, and disease, coincided with the establishment of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, the first secular democratic state with a Muslim majority, emphasizing women's roles as symbols of social change, secularism, and resistance.

Utilizing Scheer's praxeological approach and Small's concept of musicking, this study integrates historical musicology and ethnomusicology to analyze the emotional, cultural, and socio-political functions of musicking within the cultural realities of this crisis period. Despite the high mortality rates from disease and war, performances in concert halls and informal gatherings became essential sites for communities navigating shifting values and tensions.

The research investigates how musicking emerged as a vital medium for emotional expression, serving as a key component of Azerbaijan's broader modernization movement. While highlighting Uzeyir Hajibeyli as a significant composer in this context, the study explores his contributions alongside various written sources, drawings, videos, and musical performances, alongside Hajibeyli's compositions were actively performed not only in Baku but also in neighboring countries throughout the crisis.

By facilitating collective emotional expression, musicking enabled communities to confront the harsh realities of illness and death while fostering cultural renewal and social resilience. This study situates Azerbaijan's musicking practices within the broader context of global modernism, underscoring their critical role in mediating the challenges of societal transformation and contributing to discussions on the intellectual history of music scholarship.

**Aria Torkanbouri** studied piano, composition, orchestra conducting and music theory in various music universities in Tehran/Iran, Baku/Azerbaijan, Berlin/Germany, Istanbul/Turkey and Graz/Austria, and was graduated in ‘composition and music theory’ in 2020 at University of Music and Performing Arts Graz/Austria. He embarked on scientific research in 2018, leading to acceptance into master of ethnomusicology at Department of Folk Music Research and Ethnomusicology, University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna/Austria (MDW), where he graduated with ‘distinction’ grade in 2023 and won the ‘MDW Würdigungspreis 2024’ research award. Currently, he is employed in pre-doctoral position in ‘Going Viral: Music and Emotions during Pandemics (1679-1919)’ project founded by ERC at MDW, where he is working on a PhD thesis with the topic ‘Harmonies of Resilience: Emotional Dimensions of Azerbaijani Music during the Spanish Flu Pandemic’

#### **Panel 4:**

#### **Melani Shahin: A Sacred Bridge: Jewish Music Research, Gregorian Chant Studies, and A. Z. Idelsohn’s Cultivation Scholarly Authority in the 1920s**

Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, often hailed as the “father of Jewish musicology,” made pathbreaking recordings and transcriptions of the music of various Middle Eastern Jewish communities in Jerusalem between 1911 and 1913, which were later published in the first five volumes of the *Hebräisch-Orientalischer Melodienschatz* (1914-1929). Idelsohn’s comparative approach to the study of Jewish musical traditions, coupled with his use of recording technology, are often cited as evidence of the modernity of his research. But there is another, less-often discussed, aspect of the “modernity” of Idelsohn’s work that this paper will address: the connection between his research and Gregorian chant studies—another subfield of musicology that was also buzzing in the early twentieth century.

I argue that Idelsohn’s contributions to Gregorian chant research in the 1920s, and the interest that medieval music scholars, such as Peter Wagner, had in Idelsohn’s research, helped stake a place for Jewish music research as a legitimate subfield in musicology, which was, by and large, Eurocentric and Christocentric. By offering new empirical evidence to demonstrate that Gregorian chant developed from traditions of Jewish liturgical chant, Idelsohn argued that Jewish music played a crucial role in the history of Western art music. My examination of Idelsohn’s chant research will also shed light on his attempts to secure and elevate his scholarly reputation in the sphere of German musicology at a time of rising antisemitism and German nationalism. As a Jewish scholar interested specifically in Jewish music without a formal degree in musicology, Idelsohn was an outsider in German academe. However, he nevertheless published in major journals such as the *Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft* and contributed to Guido Adler’s *Handbuch der Musikgeschichte* (1924), in part, by strategically emphasizing and connecting his research to the interests of plainchant scholars.

**Melani Shahin** is a PhD Candidate in Music History & Theory at the University of Chicago. Her dissertation examines the intellectual history of Jewish music research in German-speaking lands



during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. She is specifically interested in investigating the ways in which Jewish music scholars associated with the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (Science of Judaism) movement critically engaged with early modern Christian writings that discuss music in the Bible and Jewish musical practices more broadly. Her research is currently supported by the Leo Baeck Fellowship for German-Jewish Studies.

### **Hannah Goldberg: Envisioning Jewish National Art Music: A.Z. Idelsohn, Imagined Institutions, & *Yiftah--Chezion Negini***

In April of 1910, Jewish folk-song collector, cantor, and ethnomusicologist Abraham Zvi Idelsohn, in collaboration with Shlomo Z. Rivlin, published a broadside entitled “An Institute of Jewish Music in Jerusalem,” in which he discusses his vision for creating a national school of music in the Mandate of Palestine/Eretz Yisrael. Following decades of transnational debates about the fragmented state of “Jewish Music,” Idelsohn’s broadside functions as a product of attempts to clearly articulate a Jewish musical identity that reconciled historical/traditional authenticity with Modernist ideals (Bohlman 2002). This emphasis on striking such a balance sits at the core of Idelsohn’s vision in establishing the Institute, consistent with his dedication to preserving and revitalizing Jewish music, and his active involvement in the Cultural Zionist movement.

At the same time that Idelsohn published “An Institute for Jewish Music in Jerusalem” (1910), Idelsohn was composing the first Hebrew-language opera, *Yiftah-- Chezion Negini* (published 1922) in accordance with the ideals he discusses in the broadside. Despite its benchmark status, *Yiftah* has been underexplored by scholars and remains unrecorded, unperformed, and generally obscure. This paper examines Idelsohn’s *Yiftah* in tandem with his broader institutional aims, situating both the opera and the composer-collector in the context of a rapidly developing Jewish musicology. Through textual and musical analysis, I argue *Yiftah—Chezion Negini* serves a paradigmatic purpose for Idelsohn’s vision of a modern Jewish national art music. Though both his imagined Institute for Jewish Music in Jerusalem and *Yiftah* were ultimately failures in reception and implementation, this paper asserts that they laid the necessary groundwork for more successful Jewish national music initiatives in the decades that followed.

**Hannah Goldberg** is a PhD student at the University of Chicago. A violinist, she did her undergraduate studies at the University of Pennsylvania, following these with a research assistantship at the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania. Her interests and research range widely across ethnomusicology and Jewish music studies, with a special focus on the formations of Jewish art music in the writings and compositions of Abraham Zvi Idelsohn.

## **Phil Bohlman: “In Chorus Let Us Sing the Builders’ Joyous Song” – On the Modernist Moment of Exile**

The modernist moment realized by the political upheaval in 1933 marked both ending and beginning. For European Jewish musicians and music scholars in Europe, whose contributions to musical life at all levels of society had been revolutionary and who had contributed so remarkably to the rise of modern musicology in the years following World War I, 1933 symbolized “*der Anfang vom Ende*,” the beginning of the end of the very European musical life they had so richly transformed. That beginning would lead quickly to a new modernist moment, now shaped by exile and a more precarious reckoning with the future. The dialectical tension that had marshaled the *fin-de-siècle* Moderne of Vienna and Berlin, and the modernist revolution of the arts in interwar Central Europe collapsed for Jews forced into exile. A third element of historical tension opened the binaries of previous modernist moments, rerouting history in such ways that it would converge in the Eastern Mediterranean, in an Israel realized by the end of exile.

The exile of Jewish musicians and music scholars (and European Jews generally) in 1933 formed what I call the “modernist moment of exile” in this presentation. Modernism at this moment, no longer formed only from the dialectic of past and present, afforded a new, immediate call to action, which I analyze through triangulation. I examine three global projects of the 1930s that consciously strove toward a new modernism that could resolve exile: 1) the establishment of the World Centre for Jewish Music in Palestine in 1936; 2) the compilation of a new corpus of art song in the modern Hebrew language, the *Shireh HaChalutzim*, or “songs of the pioneers”; and 3) Robert Lachmann’s transferal of the Archive of Oriental Music from Berlin to Jerusalem in 1935. Each of these projects was collaborative, combining musicological research and musical practice, and together they engendered a modernist moment of exile that was extensively intersectional. I illustrate the convergence of the three projects with documents and recordings from my research in Jewish musical modernism over the course of many years.

**Philip V. Bohlman** is Ludwig Rosenberger Distinguished Service Professor in Jewish History at the University of Chicago and Honorarprofessor at the Hochschule für Musik, Theater und Medien Hannover. He took his MM and Ph.D. from the University of Illinois, and he received a doctor honoris causa from the Romanian National University of Music Bucharest (2019). His research addresses the intersections of music with race, nationalism, and colonial encounter. Among recent books are *Wie sängen wir Seinen Gesang auf dem Boden der Fremde!* (LIT 2019) and *Wolokolamsker Chaussee* (Bloomsbury 2021), and with the New Budapest Orpheum Society the Grammy Award-nominated CD, *As Dreams Fall Apart: The Golden Age of Jewish Stage and Film Music, 1925–1955* (Cedille 2014). Phil Bohlman is the recipient of the 2022 International Balzan Prize in Ethnomusicology.

**Symposium Organizers**

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